



Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

Reducing deprivation, supporting inclusion:

FEAD case studies

2016

Social Europe

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Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

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FEAD case studies 2016



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Foreword

I am very pleased to present the FEAD Network's first case study catalogue, a selection of examples of how the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) is used across the European Union.

The crisis had a devastating impact on our society, throwing too many people into poverty. Between 2009 and 2012, nearly one quarter of the EU population were at risk of poverty and social exclusion and approximately 8.8% lived in conditions of severe material deprivation. Only this year the share of people suffering from poverty has returned to its 2008 level but it still remains too high with around 119 million people affected. Our Europe 2020 target is to lift at least 20 million people out of poverty.

To help achieve that goal, the European Union has earmarked €3.8 billion for FEAD for 2014 to 2020. Moreover, EU Member States are contributing at least 15% in national co-financing to their respective national programmes. We can see that the Fund is on the right track to alleviate the worst forms of poverty in the EU: over 22 million people are estimated to have benefitted from FEAD support in 2014 and 2015 and in that period over 489,000 tonnes of food co-financed by FEAD were distributed to those that are most in need.

As this new Fund is gradually rolled out across Europe, it is important that all the actors involved – and even more importantly those hoping to become involved – in FEAD are able to learn from each other and exchange experiences. To facilitate this mutual learning process, the Commission has supported the development of a “FEAD Network” creating a platform where stakeholders involved with FEAD are able to interact.



This community of practice brings together stakeholders such as Managing authorities (MAs), partner organisations, other local, regional and national actors, European Commission representatives, EU level partner organisations, the wider EU community, as well as academic and research organisations. They are encouraged to share tools, ideas and resources that can help with the delivery of FEAD-funded initiatives.

As Member States are free to determine how they deliver assistance, there is wide variety in the kinds of initiatives that are funded. This catalogue provides a snapshot of some of the initiatives that can be found across the EU. It builds on the exchanges in the FEAD Network and includes a number of FEAD case studies that have been presented at the various face-to-face FEAD Network events throughout 2016. The case studies detail the experiences of both Managing Authorities and partner organisations in working with FEAD, as well as ways in which FEAD can complement initiatives under the European Social Fund.

We are all working towards the same goal: helping Europe's most deprived in their transition out of poverty. I hope that you find these examples inspiring for your own work and encourage you to get in touch with the organisations featured in this catalogue if you see potential for collaboration or the exchange of expertise.

Marianne Thyssen

*European Commissioner for Employment,
social affairs, skills and labour mobility*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Thyssen', enclosed within a circular flourish.



Belgium - Effectively offering social services alongside food distribution

Horizons Nouveaux

WHY?

The provision of food assistance is an effective springboard to alternative services that further the beneficiaries' transition out of poverty. This is why, even if in Belgium FEAD funding is predominantly used to finance food assistance. The partner organisations distributing food offer a range of **accompanying measures** aimed at fostering the social inclusion of their beneficiaries. Some partner organisations, like Horizons Nouveaux, have decided to go a step further.

WHAT?

Horizons Nouveaux offers several accompanying measures with the aim of **reintegrating** end recipients into mainstream society. The measures accompanying food aid include:

- Provision of temporary housing;
- Personalised counselling services;
- Administrative support;
- Financial support in cases of emergency;
- Material support in the form of clothing and furniture;
- The organisation of a regular flea market with donated goods; and,
- Homework support for young people.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT VOLUNTEER RELIEF LOVE LIFE FRIEND MONEY ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

WHO?

Horizons Nouveaux was created in 1991 as part of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. Horizons Nouveaux is one of the main FEAD food distributors in the region. They have four partnership agreements with four different public welfare offices and are active across four municipalities. They offer a range of social services to end recipients, including the provision of food parcels (2850 delivered in 2016).

HOW?

Social support in the form of counselling services, administrative assistance and budgeting counselling is offered on Horizon's premises. These premises include a multipurpose room where beneficiaries can receive computer classes, language classes, homework support. They can also use the room for relaxing as there is a television and a library. They furthermore have a recreation room with a play area, fitness equipment and table tennis tables.

The organisation additionally owns fourteen homes in the form of studios and apartments for families up to four people. While end recipients are residing in one of these **temporary homes** they receive personalised support in addressing their immediate needs.

Lastly, Horizons Nouveaux owns three second-hand shops in which donated household items and materials are sold at bargain prices.

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Belgium - Giving FEAD end recipients an opportunity to gain work experience

OCMW Antwerp

WHY?

In order to assist FEAD end recipients in their transition out of poverty, the public social welfare centres (OCMW/CPAS) recognise that more support is needed than merely offering food aid. They see food aid as a lever for **activation and social integration** and therefore offer a range of services alongside FEAD food aid.

Job integration is certainly one of the most difficult steps in the trajectory out of poverty. One notable initiative of the OCMW of Antwerp is the opportunity for FEAD end recipients to gain work experience through a job at their business centre PAX.

WHAT?

At PAX, FEAD end recipients have the opportunity to gain work experience by holding a regular job in which they receive education and training in several occupations. Employees **rotate** across teams in order to gain skills in a range of areas.

Employees are offered formal fixed-term employment contracts (up to 24 months) at a minimum wage. Throughout their employment, they are given the opportunity to develop their skills in several fields by moving across different divisions. This improves their employability and subsequently leads to an increased chance of finding a new employment opportunity (with the help of the PSWC) following the termination of their contract. It should be noted that the service is funded through other public funds, as opposed to FEAD funding.

WHO?

The distribution centre PAX is operated by the public social welfare services (OCMW) of Antwerp.

HOW?

To illustrate, PAX runs a furniture store, in which donated furniture is sold as well as a clothing department. Employees can work in furniture or clothing repair as well as help run the department.

They also have a “renovation team” which carries out maintenance and renovation of OCMW buildings. While part of this team, employees learn skills needed to be professional painters or handymen. The “transport team” supports the clearing out of buildings and collection of items donated to the OCMW. They also deliver furniture bought at the OCMW furniture store. Employees in this team receive experience in the maintenance and recycling of furniture as well as how to be a professional mover. There is also a “window cleaning team” that professionally cleans the OCMW buildings as well as the inside of communal areas of buildings with social housing.

The FEAD food distribution in Antwerp is predominantly coordinated by the PAX distribution centre. FEAD end recipients are thus involved in the entire distribution process of FEAD food products to NGOs and public social welfare centres. In the “logistics team,” for instance, employees can become order collectors, as well as learn how to drive a forklift.

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Images © Nele Bossuyt (2015)

Belgium - A collaborative selection procedure for a balanced FEAD food parcel

Federal Public Service for Social Integration

WHY?

When the Belgian Managing Authority (MA), the Federal Public Service for Social Integration, initially started distributing FEAD food items, it was noted that changes needed to be made in the selection of items on offer. It was deemed that there was insufficient **variety** in the food products as FEAD end recipients, for instance, received the same type of pasta, cereals, vegetables, fish, etc. for two consecutive years. It also became apparent that certain items that were distributed in bulk were not appreciated as much as other items (as vanilla pudding powder). It was furthermore noted that the distributed food products were not always ecological or **sustainable**. In 2013, for instance, the product list contained two items with tuna, a fish that is considered an over-exploited species. Lastly, some issues were experienced with the packaging of the food parcels as certain items were unattractively packaged (large white packages with big blue letters and a European flag). This packaging could be considered as **stigmatising** for FEAD end-recipients.

WHAT?

Based on the input received from all relevant stakeholders, the MA endeavours to create a **balanced** food parcel that stimulates a healthy diet for the end recipients. The MA simultaneously seeks to broaden their awareness on different types of food as well as their ability to use them in balanced meals. When products are distributed that the end-recipients are potentially unfamiliar with, like lentils for instance, recipes are published on the packaging of the products.

The MA also actively seeks to avoid **food waste** by avoiding purchase and distribution of large quantities of 'unattractive' food products. Consequently, in 2016, it was decided that using the same budget, 21 items would be purchased instead of only 15, so as to increase the diversity of the products included in the food parcels.

Another priority for the MA is to avoid stigmatisation by increasing the attractiveness of food products. Since 2015, all contractors are obliged to deliver products in packages that are visually similar to products available in supermarkets. Moreover, the MA validates all of the packaging before printing.

“

There are 2 types of beneficiaries:
 (1) Those who want to cook themselves, have the equipment and want basic products;
 (2) Those who do not like or can't cook and want products ready for consumption. It's important to take this into account when elaborating the list of products to purchase under FEAD.”

Nutritional expert at the annual meeting with the Managing Authority

WHO?

The food selection is carried out by the Federal Public Service for Social Integration, the FEAD Managing Authority of Belgium.

Lastly, the MA takes into account **sustainability** aspects in the public procurement procedure for the purchase of food. They take into account sustainable fishery, the presence of palm oil or genetically modified foods, the amount of additives and sugars as well as ensuring that at least one of the products purchased originates from fair trade.

HOW?

The Belgian MA established the list of food products to be purchased using FEAD funds through extensive **consultation** with a range of partners. They conducted an opinion poll on the content of the food parcels in 2014 and organised regular stakeholder consultations. A consultation with experts in healthy diet, sustainability, fair trade and food safety as well with experts in poverty and social exclusion from within the MA is held annually. In addition, quarterly consultations with representatives from FEAD partner organisations (the Red Cross, the Federation of Food Banks, the Federation of Social Services and the associations of cities and municipalities) are organised. As of early 2016, the MA also discusses this topic during their on the spot checks in order to maximise direct **feedback** from practitioners and FEAD end-recipients.

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Denmark - The Compass project Helping Denmark's homeless 'navigate' their way through the regular social services

Kirkens Korshær

WHY?

It has become apparent that a growing number of mobile EU/EEA citizens are finding it difficult to navigate through the Danish social and administrative system. Many mobile EU/EEA citizens are not yet registered in the Danish social registry (and thus do not have a social registration number) and consequently fall through the bureaucratic cracks of the Danish social system. As a result, individuals can be excluded from certain welfare and support services offered by the state. Ultimately, their inability to **gain access** to the regular welfare system can lead to individuals losing their homes and having to live on the streets or in emergency shelters.

WHAT?

Kirkens Korshær established the Compass (Kompasset) project in order to support homeless EU/EEA citizens by helping them to **'navigate'** through the Danish social service system. Volunteers offer **counselling services** and Compass can also provide **emergency shelter** to those in need. On average approximately 100 counselling sessions are carried out per week.

HOW?

A **multilingual outreach** team actively contacts groups of homeless EU/EEA citizens in Copenhagen. The organisation additionally runs their own emergency and drop-in centres where they not only offer beds and resting spaces, but also an opportunity for individuals to shower and store their luggage. The centres are run by multilingual staff and volunteers, who in turn are able to carry out counselling sessions.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT MONEY ASSISTANCE RESOURCES LOVE LIFE FRIEND RELIEF SUPP

“The target group didn't want food, they wanted something else from us. They had rights as EU citizens but they couldn't get access to normal things in the Danish system. We went to embassies with them for example. It's difficult for them to be a part of Denmark.”

Lotte Molsing,
Head of social work at Kirkens Korshær,
2nd FEAD Network Meeting

WHO?

The Compass (Kompasset) project has been run by Kirkens Korshær since January 2013 and is since 2016 co-funded by FEAD.

Counselling sessions generally consist of advice on:

- How to register in Denmark
- Legal rights and obligations (as well as specific information on labour rights).
- Housing and social services in Copenhagen
- How to report lost documents
- How to apply for a yellow card/personal ID number
- How to open a bank account
- Understanding employment contracts
- Drafting a curriculum vitae (CV)

Kirkens Korshær runs several **emergency shelters** for the homeless. In August 2016 they had approximately 25 available beds available, and by November this number is set to increase to 50. They additionally offer 40 “day” rest beds and 60 lockers where individuals can store their luggage. These shelters are run by two multilingual staff members and approximately 40 volunteers (with an additional ten multilingual staff members able to step in when needed).

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Denmark - Helping the homeless to access regular social services

UDENFOR project

WHY?

Through the FEAD, Denmark seeks to foster the social inclusion of **homeless people** (particularly mobile EU/EEA citizens). The UDENFOR project targets the most vulnerable rough sleepers, including individuals that are unemployed, experiencing mental health problems, suffering from drug and/or alcohol abuse, or challenged by high levels of debt. These circumstances generally leave individuals excluded from many parts of social life, increasing the likelihood of them living in impoverished and deprived circumstances.

WHAT?

The main objectives of the UDENFOR project are to ensure that the most socially vulnerable homeless people are able to live in healthier and safer living conditions.

The project supports vulnerable individuals through **outreach** initiatives, **social support** and **counselling services**. It seeks to build bridges between homeless individuals and mainstream society, as well as gather information on homelessness in Denmark to help inform the political debate. The project is currently running in Copenhagen, with another site to launch in Aarhus in December 2016.

HOW?

The teams carry out outreach activities, with volunteers and staff going out into the streets and speaking with homeless individuals to encourage them to participate in UDENFOR activities.

The '**locker room**' in Copenhagen consists of a room with a number of storage boxes where homeless people can leave their belongings. The volunteer overseeing the room can then engage with the homeless person and offer them support or advice relating to finding employment, food, access to

“ We want to help people to get reconnected to their home country. In Denmark we have seen several attempts to help people back to home countries but we are one of the first to realise how difficult it is and how we have to prepare the person and their paperwork in detail before we reconnect them to their home country.”

Ninna Hoegh,
Director of the Fonden project UDENFOR,
2nd FEAD Network Meeting

WHO?

The UDENFOR project is co-financed by FEAD and run by the homonymous Foundation (Foundation projekt UDENFOR) established by Dr. med. Preben Brandt in 1996.

healthcare services, administrative support, etc. They actively seek to build a bridge between the homeless person and relevant authorities responsible for social care services.

The **'Transit Programme'** particularly supports vulnerable homeless EU/EEA citizens in preparing for their journey back to their country of origin. The programme can assist them by providing clothing, bags for travelling, and by getting in touch with family or other individuals that remained in the country of origin. The programme is carried out in cooperation with a joint monitoring group that consists of the National Board of Social Services and several NGOs.

The project in Copenhagen will give 50-70 homeless people access to a locker annually, as well as help 12-15 individuals to receive intensive help. The project also aims to support one to five individuals a year by providing temporary paid jobs in the locker room and between 15 and 20 homeless people will be assisted in reconnecting with their country of origin per year. In Aarhus, the project's objective is to receive 40-60 homeless café guests per year, support 15-25 through intensive help over a three year period, include 15-25 homeless individuals as volunteers in the café annually, and employ one to five homeless individuals in the café. In addition, construction activities to build mobile homes are foreseen.

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Germany - Building bridges between homeless people and service providers in Berlin

Frostschutzengel Plus project
(GEBEWO – Soziale Dienste and Caritasverband Berlin)

WHY?

The Frostschutzengel Plus project was started in 2016 in response to certain needs that were identified during the fieldwork carried out in Berlin to reach out to homeless people. The provision of food, medical services and overnight accommodation was not enough to target and alleviate poverty, while there was a strong need for building bridges between services provided at state level and the target group. There was also a need to raise awareness across society and policy-makers about the precarious situation homeless people face daily, as well as to promote public initiatives seeking to improve conditions for them. In this context, **overcoming linguistic barriers is a pre-requisite to ensure that homeless people have equal access to the existing mechanisms for claiming social rights.**

WHAT?

This project focuses on **promoting the social inclusion of homeless people** in Berlin by establishing **new communication channels between them and existing service providers**. The ultimate goal is to end homelessness and achieve social inclusion across the city.

In the period January–October 2016 266 individuals received social counselling and 195 received health counselling. 25% were German citizens and 75% were citizens of other EU Member States. About 20% were women.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT VOLUNTEER
SUPPORT MONEY ASSISTANCE RESOURCES
SUPPLY RELIEF LOVE LIFE FRIEND

“

Long-term inclusion is only possible when a person can participate socially and economically in society.”

Petra Schwaiger,
social worker at Project Frostschtzengel Plus,
during a presentation at the 2nd FEAD Network Meeting

WHO?

Frostschtzengel Plus is supported financially by the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Germany. It is jointly implemented by GEBEWO- Soziale Dienste and Caritasverband für das Erzbistum Berlin.

HOW?

The project carries out outreach work in low-threshold service institutions for homeless people in Berlin. Low-threshold services are those that don't require homeless people to have referrals or identification and only have a few rules for residents. An innovative feature of this project is that **counselling services are offered in different languages** such as German, English, Bulgarian, Russian, Polish, Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian.

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Germany - Building bridges for newly arrived Union citizens

EUROPE.BRIDGE.MUENSTER

WHY?

EUROPE.BRIDGE.MUENSTER is a project that seeks to foster social inclusion of newly arrived Union citizens who are affected by poverty and have no or only insufficient access to the counselling and support services in the regular assistance system (particularly the homeless) by **building bridges** to the regular social system. The project strives to address the challenges and issues faced by this particular target group, such as the language barrier, missing health insurance, lack of affordable accommodation, prejudice (particularly against the Roma minority), ambiguous legal status and lack of recognised education.

WHAT?

Counselling services are provided for newly arrived Union citizens in precarious circumstances (particularly the homeless). There are four social workers helping clients find their individual pathway to the regular system with support of **participative counselling**. In the first quarter of 2016, the project supported 192 individuals (155 men, 37 women). 184 of these individuals were homeless predominantly originating from South-eastern Europe (particularly Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia). In about 70% of the cases the proposed solution for the addressed issue (e.g. accommodation shelter) was actually used. Through counselling the project raised awareness of clients with regards to their rights and duties, helped them enrol in a language course, found them shelter or accommodation, assisted those in need of health care in receiving medical treatment or gaining access to health insurance.

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LOVE LIFE FRIEND
SUPPORT

WHO?

The project EUROPE.BRIDGE.MÜNSTER is supported financially by the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Germany in 2016-2018. The project is implemented by the Bischof-Hermann-Stiftung in cooperation with the city of Münster.

HOW?

There are four counsellors who provide counselling both in specific locations and in homes of the clients. Their main aim is to build bridges between the clients and available social services (such as migration counsellors, health insurance funds or public authorities) in order to develop a comprehensive network of support fostering the social inclusion of newly arrived Union citizens in Münster. In order to do so, the first step is to get to know the clients and establish their needs. The counsellors visit the clients in their own settings and conduct an initial interview to determine their needs. Clients can also receive counselling support at the project office from Monday to Friday (08:30-11:00) as well as upon appointment.

Counsellors make use of an interpreter if needed to overcome the language barrier. They then offer relevant advice depending on the clients' needs, and are even able to accompany the clients to the relevant offices if such support is required.

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Germany - Working with the homeless in the streets of Berlin

StreetBer

WHY?

In Berlin like in other big cities homeless people who live in the street in small groups are a particularly hard-to-reach target group for social work. They include a wide range of vulnerable people: from victims of gentrification who have lost their homes, particularly in the newly regenerated business districts; newly arrived Union citizens, sex workers, or people with addictions. There has been a need for a flexible outreach service that could provide assistance to these people.

WHAT?

The StreetBer project aims to improve the access of homeless people, people at risk of becoming homeless and particularly disadvantaged newly arrived Union citizens to the provision of guidance and assistance from the regular support system.

The project started in March 2016. Around 100 client contacts had been made by October 2016 and the plan is to have around 200 by the beginning of 2017.

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LOVE LIFE FRIEND

“

Everything we do is on the street, the street is our office. So we have a very good chance of finding people”
 “Networking is extremely important. Alone you are just not strong enough.”

Csaba Szikra,
 social worker at the Gangway Association,
 speaker at the 2nd FEAD Network Meeting

WHO?

Gangway e.V. is a volunteer association working with young and adult people on the streets of Berlin which aims to help beneficiaries to take their life in their own hands. Gangway e.V. was founded in 1990. The project is supported by donations and sponsored by the senate and the district offices as well as by the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Germany.

HOW?

The key feature of StreetBer is that its team works everywhere in the city – parks, streets and other public areas – and not just at particular “hotspots”. Once the homeless person is located and contacted, counselling is provided. There are no language barriers since the team is multilingual. The counselling is short term and the client is often referred to other institutions and groups. The contact with the client is anonymous, no data is registered and there is no long-term case management. Sometimes people are only known by their first name or a nickname.

The StreetBer team works continuously with other organisations and authorities, and all these partners form a circle of help. There is an ongoing cooperation with the district government and a dialogue with law enforcement but no specific mandate from them.

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Images © Thekla Priebst (2016)

Germany - Providing contact points for European Roma and Non-Roma

Amaro Foro e.V.

WHY?

The insertion process for many newly arrived Union citizens from Bulgaria and Romania coming to Berlin often begins with stigmatisation and exclusion, especially if they are Roma. In addition to existing prejudices, the media portrayal in recent years has led to an intensified negative perception. As a result, many of these EU citizens are excluded from almost all areas of life because of their origin and do not have access to social infrastructure.

This stigmatisation is compounded by limited knowledge of assistance structures upon arrival, lack of education, language barriers, and discrimination experiences. Newly-arrived Roma subsequently need easily accessible counselling and mediation services provided by people who speak their mother tongue.

WHAT?

A team of 13 Amaro Foro members of Roma and non-Roma origin provide outreach work and counselling in Romanes, Bulgarian and Rumanian languages to particularly disadvantaged newly arrived Union citizens of Roma and non-Roma origin. Beneficiaries are also accompanied to meetings with local services and authorities.

The project started in 2016 and is expected to assist 720 people.



The project is very well known among the target group, the authorities and the administrations, and has been well received.”

Representative of Amaro Foro

WHO?

The project is funded by the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Germany and run by Amaro Foro e.V. in partnership with the Berlin Senate. Amaro Foro is an association for Roma and non-Roma youth with the aim of providing a space for young people to become active citizens through empowerment, mobilisation, self-organisation and participation.

HOW?

The outreach work takes place regularly and proactively at a number of locations, which the organisation knows can host vulnerable newly arrived Union citizens. The team contacts the target groups and assesses their needs, refers them to the organisation's office and gives them important information and addresses where they can spend the night, take a shower and have a meal. The relevant district is also contacted so the care of the target groups can be coordinated between all parties.

Counselling is provided in the office and is organised as an open consultation on three days, during which various appointments are made. Often multiple concerns are addressed for the same person. The counsellors try to find a realistic and pragmatic solution to the various issues and to link the person and his/her family to existing local services.

Accompanying clients to meetings with authorities, administrations and other advisory services does not only require translation but also empowerment, so that clients can gradually learn to solve their problems themselves.

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Spain - An app to coordinate volunteers and help them manage their own involvement

Red Cross Spain

WHY?

6,407 Spanish Red Cross (SRC) volunteers are involved in FEAD.

Besides food distribution, SRC volunteers provide accompanying measures such as information and support to access social services, psychosocial care, interventions to improve employability and labour market integration, counselling and courses in household economics, advice on healthy diets.

Volunteers are employed in a **range of positions**: project management, counselling and coaching, psychosocial care, logistics and warehouse keeping, administration, etc. The efficient scheduling of thousands of volunteers with the right qualifications to respond to a variety of requests is an everyday challenge for SRC. A volunteer must not be discouraged by a cumbersome planning process so special attention is given to overcoming these challenges. Apart from good management, technology can help create an efficient system. Therefore a dedicated app was developed.

WHAT?

Back-office applications register activities and **define needs of volunteers according to positions**. When an activity is organised, potential volunteers are automatically contacted based on the parameters of the particular operation and their own preferences.

Volunteers can check proposed activities through the self-management application and confirm their participation. Requests are easily and quickly processed.

In addition, the app allows volunteers to update their contact details, to indicate their availability, etc.

“Those volunteers who use the self-management app consider that they have more control on their participation into the different activities proposed by the Red Cross.”

José Javier Sánchez Espinosa,
Deputy Director of the Social Inclusion
Department of the Spanish Red Cross

WHO?

This project is funded by the Spanish Red Cross. Based in Madrid and founded in 1864, the SRC is one of the 188 national Red Cross societies. It has more than 200.000 volunteers, who remain for 7 years on average. Active volunteers give, on average, 1.43 hours per week. In 2015, volunteers gave more than 3.500.000 hours.

The non-profit organisation has been involved in food distribution through FEAD and its predecessor MDP since 1986.

The organisation distributes food to other partners and directly to the most deprived people. 57.117 metric tons were delivered in 2015 (70% more than 2014) to 2.878 organisations throughout the country to the benefit of 843.406 deprived people.

HOW?

In 2012, SRC launched a **web application** – which includes a mobile version enabling volunteers to better self-manage their participation in activities that are planned through different back-office applications.

In 2015, 63.387 volunteers managed their participation in various activities through this application.

Halfway through 2016, SRC launched a native **self-management application for smartphones**, connected to the web application and available for Android (more than 1.000 downloads) and iOS (more than 100 downloads).

The combined use of back-office applications to plan activities and the front-office application to facilitate volunteers' self-management **reduces management time up to 65%**. This has also a positive impact on FEAD delivery.

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France - The 'Ulysse' software to support the improvement of data collection through digitalisation

Les Restaurants du Coeur

WHY?

Les Restaurants du Coeur ("Les Restos") supports approximately one million persons per year (e.g. through free meals) across more than 2000 distribution centres throughout France.

As the activities of the association have been rapidly expanding and diversifying (with growing emphasis on social inclusion measures), there was an urgent **need to move from traditional forms of data collection and application procedures to a digital tool**. This is also important for monitoring the needs of the end recipients other than food support (e.g. language lessons, employment advice or financial advice).

WHAT?

Digitalisation is a key process in improving the food distribution activities that are carried out by Les Restos. Les Restos aims mainly to improve the follow-up of beneficiaries through better monitoring and data collection systems. By monitoring different kinds of support provided, as well as additional key data, the organisation is able to **tailor their services to the needs of its beneficiaries**. Furthermore, Les Restos can more effectively **monitor aid delivery** and avoid instances when people access help simultaneously at different delivery points.

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WHO?

Les Restaurants du Coeur is an association created by Coluche in 1985. The starting point was a call for solidarity that the French comedian launched on radio: 'Why are there hungry people on the streets and why don't we do anything about it?' After his speech, many people started donating food. Presently financial resources come from both private donors and public bodies. Over the period 2014-2015, 11% of the resources of the association and 25% of food distribution came from European funding programmes, i.e. FEAD.

The activities of the association for fostering social inclusion go beyond the distribution of food. They also include: (i) budget/microcredit counselling service; (ii) access to justice and benefits; (iii) job search and professional integration support; (iv) social housing; (v) cooking workshops; (vi) French language classes and school tutoring.

HOW?

The development of the 'Ulysse' software **started in 2012** and a demonstration version of the tool became available in 2015. Initially, the tool was used only in three centres as a pilot. Currently, there are 26 centres using it to efficiently carry out their activities. This tool will be fully operational at **national level by 2018**.

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Italy – A joint planning mechanism involving stakeholders and partners

FEAD Managing Authority

WHY?

In Italy, FEAD aid is distributed through a complex network of partners and relies on the cooperation of state agencies with several important private, non-profit organisations. Over the years the need has emerged for a mechanism involving these organisations not only in the implementation, but also in the **strategic and operational planning of FEAD delivery**. The existence of a longstanding relationship between the Managing Authority and a number of stakeholders committed to the fight against poverty and social exclusion has made it easier to set up this mechanism for FEAD.

WHAT?

The food distribution network in Italy is based on a joint planning mechanism and involves a considerable number of actors. The product basket is selected on the basis of a **needs analysis and assessment carried out by AGEA together with seven charities** (Croce Rossa Italiana, Caritas Italiana, Fondazione Banco Alimentare, Comunità di S. Egidio, Banco delle opere di Carità, Associazione Banco Alimentare Roma e Associazione Sempre Insieme per la Pace). These charities work as coordinating bodies for partner organisations at the national level.

HOW?

The Managing Authority established a **National working group for Operational Coordination**, which also involves the Ministry for Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies. The working group identifies the product basket, which is approved by the Ministry of Labour.

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The Italian food distribution network is interesting because it is based upon a planning and delivery mechanism which involves a broad range of stakeholders. This ensures an effective implementation of FEAD food assistance and above all a better identification and quantification of needs.”

Patrizia De Felici,
Managing Authority

WHO?

The FEAD Managing Authority in Italy is based at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

The food basket aims to provide a balanced regime and a typical Mediterranean diet, in addition to products that are normally long-lasting.

The distribution of food is based on an estimate of needs, which takes into account the number of beneficiaries assisted during the previous year and the capacity of the organisation for storage and further distribution.

AGECONTROL (the agency for audits and community actions, which works under the Ministry of Agriculture and AGEA) conducts checks and verifies that food quality and quantity requirements are satisfied, and that the storage and distribution areas are suitable for their purpose. In 2015, 1.148 checks have been carried out.

Chief partner organisations carry out administrative, accounting and stock checks on local partners and their associate organisations. The main problems encountered are then discussed at the aforementioned working group.

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Italy - Training volunteers in social work skills

Red Cross Italy

WHY?

The Italian Red Cross (CRI) accompanies the distribution of food with psychological and social support interventions. Beneficiaries often include **homeless people, people with addictions and other vulnerable groups**. The Italian Red Cross believes in the added value of having volunteers providing such accompanying measures because they more easily build a relationship with beneficiaries.

However, the range of skills that is required from volunteers involved in such outreach activity is very complex. Volunteers deliver FEAD aid at the beneficiary's home most times. Often material deprivation is associated with other issues. Understanding the situation requires the **ability to quickly and properly assess needs**.

WHAT?

The Italian Red Cross has developed training **modules for volunteers who want to become voluntary social workers ("operatore sociale generico")**. At the end of the course participants receive a certificate showing they are qualified for this role. Training is delivered by CRI staff and external experts. 900 volunteers have been trained in the course so far. Moreover, two specific courses are provided on supporting homeless people and dealing with addictions. These specialist courses have been attended by 227 and 92 people respectively (with 225 more people to be trained on homelessness by December 2016).

Volunteers trained in social work skills are now able to lead a dialogue with beneficiaries in a more efficient and appropriate way when distributing food to their homes and assess whether there are other vulnerabilities to address and whether the beneficiary is ready for further social inclusion interventions.

HOW?

The **general course for voluntary social workers** lasts 26 hours and covers subjects such as: the welfare state and social work, beneficiaries and local needs assessment, working in a network, planning a social action, active listening and building a helping relationship.

The course on **supporting homeless people** includes 20 hours of theoretical and 20 hours of practical training

“

Volunteers should be trained not only to respond to the beneficiaries' needs but also to recognise and prevent their own burn-out or the one of their fellows. Well-supported volunteers deliver more effective interventions.”

Silvia Piscitelli,
responsible for the Planning,
Monitoring and Evaluation of the Italian Red Cross activities

WHO?

The Italian Red Cross is one of the FEAD partner organisation in Italy.

and focuses on the profile and needs of - and services for - homeless people, with emphasis on psychosocial aspects. It also gives practical advice of first aid, self-protection, monitoring and evaluation procedures.

The course on **addictions** is a 32 hours training, including visits to relevant projects. Modules cover drug abuse, gambling and social network addiction. They focus on stigma, discrimination and harm reduction. Support to the family of an addicted person is also covered. Special attention is paid on measures to avoid volunteer burn-out, a frequent phenomenon when dealing with this target group.

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Lithuania – Offering accompanying measures on a tight budget

FEAD Managing Authority

WHY?

Supporting Europe's most deprived persons using accompanying measures is challenging due to the **diversity** of the target group. The needs of particular individuals differ – and therefore the type of the accompanying measures that is needed to help them in their transition out of poverty also differs.

Accompanying measures are used to help large families, single parents, families at risk, seniors with low income or with no income at all – the main goal is to attract target group to take part in the accompanying measures and that those measures would be selected in such way that would have added value for target group. Also accompanying measures support is important for individuals dependent on psychotropic substances (drugs, alcohol, etc.), the long-term unemployed. These are people that are generally socially excluded with low motivation..

In Lithuania, the FEAD budget is at the moment used for food aid only; accompanying measures are provided free of charge. However looking into the future and seeking to ensure synergy between FEAD and ESF, efforts are made to offer accompanying measures by using 5 % flat rate.

WHAT?

At present, at municipal level (potential) FEAD end recipients are offered **counselling**. Furthermore, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (FEAD Managing Authority - MA) is discussing with partners the possibility of organising **training** opportunities (e.g. on resources planning, hygiene and cooking with FEAD products) as well as talking about how they can involve the target group in volunteering activities and other assistance based on individual needs of those unwilling to participate in trainings and other activities.

WHO?

The Ministry of Social Security and Labour coordinates all FEAD initiatives.

HOW?

Individual counselling is provided on various topics such as social care, financial planning and hygiene. Municipal staff subsequently encourage beneficiaries to partake in social projects (particularly European Social Fund-funded projects).

In order to expand accompanying measures, the MA is holding discussions with partner organisations to determine in what way they can best use the funds under the **5% flat rate** foreseen by the FEAD Regulation for such activities. Currently the only accompanying measures provided are those being delivered free of charge by partner organisations, based on their existing activities. The MA also actively seeks to complement FEAD activities with existing European Social Fund measures.

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Luxembourg - Distributing aid in social groceries where end recipients can choose food items

Caritas Luxembourg and Red Cross Luxembourg

WHY?

In food aid projects it is always important to avoid stigmatisation and maintain the dignity of those who receive assistance. Care also has to be taken to avoid food waste in the delivery process if recipients dislike or have no use for the suggested food items. To solve these issues, the Luxembourg branches of Caritas and the Red Cross have since developed the “**social grocery**” concept (“**buttek**” in Luxembourgish). In these supermarkets prices are approximately one third of the market price. The stores are open five days a week and offer a range of items including staple foods, fresh food products, hygiene items, cleaning products, and other general groceries.

WHAT?

Thanks to the existence of the network of social groceries, FEAD food and material aid takes shape somewhat differently in Luxembourg than in other countries. Instead of simply being offered food parcels with selected items, end recipients are given the opportunity to select their own food and household items from designated social groceries.

The FEAD products distributed at this opportunity are **free of charge**. However, by additionally encouraging food aid recipients to purchase goods at a physical store, **participation** is made possible and the target group is able to receive aid without stigmatisation and a loss of dignity.

HOW?

To have access to a buttek, customers are required to register with Social Services and subsequently receive a personal customer number. Depending on the personal situation of the individual (such as the number of adults and children in the household) the social worker determines the monthly maximum amount that an individual is entitled to spend in the social supermarket. Again the household is used to set quantities defined

“FEAD represents a real help for the people in need. It also has the value-add of being flexible. Should we receive some products free of charge through a donation, the FEAD allow us to adapt quantities and product types to reflect the new situation, providing a better help for the end recipients.

It works hand in hand with the concept of the Buttek, which aims to reduce food waste while increasing at the same time the product range on offer in the social supermarkets, all of which at a reduced cost for beneficiaries.”

Fabien Schmit,
Spëndchen Association

WHO?

The social groceries are coordinated by the Spëndchen Association, which consists of several NGOs, including the Luxembourg branches of Caritas and Red Cross and Aarbechtshëllef (a grocery logistics partner).

within the FEAD program. Using the individual **customer number** the system subsequently recognises the amount of FEAD products that an individual is entitled to. The receipt will indicate how many items they are still able to receive at a later date. Once the monthly maximum has been reached, the individual needs to wait until the following month before they can get new items. The maximum duration of food support is six months.

The **social groceries** are able to offer their products at such low prices through partnerships with several suppliers. At present, the Spëndchen Association has thirty stable suppliers who provide their products either free-of-charge or at low prices. Agreements have been signed with these suppliers to ensure the regular delivery of essential goods. The suppliers working within the Spëndchen Association are professionals that are experienced in the coordination and distribution of goods.

As well as providing customers with the opportunity to purchase low-priced goods, the stores operate as meeting spaces where **informal exchanges of information** (e.g. on health education) can take place. Trained employees as well as volunteers engage with the individuals and offer them a listening ear. Activities are also organised on a monthly basis to further engage the customers and can range from cooking classes, first aid courses for beginners and a parents café, to sewing classes and counselling sessions.

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Malta - The LEAP Project – Helping the most deprived ‘take the leap’ out of poverty

Foundation for Social Welfare Services

WHY?

In 2013, nearly a quarter of the population in Malta (equivalent to 99,020 people) were at risk of poverty or social exclusion and 29,290 households were receiving non-contributory social security benefits. As a result, the national EU2020 target aimed to lift approximately 6,560 people out of poverty and social exclusion by 2020. The Maltese FEAD Operational Programme contributes to this target by focusing on alleviating food deprivation. While FEAD support mainly tackles food deprivation across Malta, the LEAP project, (initiated through the European Social Fund), acknowledges that in order to help the most deprived out of poverty, more assistance is needed than the distribution of food packages. As a result, the project offers **accompanying measures** to the distribution of FEAD food packages. Ultimately, the project strives to make its target group less dependent on social support by helping one or more family members enter the labour market (either through further education or direct employment).

WHAT?

The LEAP project offers **personalised support** to families and uses its elaborate network to direct families to the relevant social service providers (e.g. housing authorities, social security services, labour market intermediaries, education pathways, childcare facilities, after school programmes, etc.). With the consent of the families, LEAP Project staff spend approximately an hour with the families by carrying out **home visits** which are then used to put together a family profile. A SWOT analysis of the family is conducted to help see which channels are to be followed to effectively help families out of poverty. For instance, some individuals may need support in finding employment while others require healthcare services or support in suitable finding housing (A SWOT analysis generally takes approximately 30 minutes, depending on the complexity of the family).

A social mentor is assigned with every family so as to build a relationship with its members. The joint work carried out by the social mentor (supported by a multidisciplinary team) and the family members eventually lead to the identification of present and emerging needs. Following this process an agreed care plan is created to address the needs of the family through a holistic approach.

“FEAD brought a paradigm shift in the way we deal with social benefits. Some families are taking up the social mobility challenge and are coming up with their own strategies to ensure that their standard of living improves by becoming financially stable and independent from social hand-outs.”

Stephen C. Vella,
Group Senior Manager, Foundation for Social
Welfare Services

WHO?

The LEAP Project falls under the mandate of the Ministry of Family and Social Solidarity and is executed by the Foundation for Social Welfare Services.

The personalised strategy takes into account the needs of each family member, in order to ensure that they offer support to the family as a whole. There is regular follow-up contact between the family and their mentor (through visits and telephone calls) to make sure that families are following through with steps laid out in their personalised plan.

HOW?

Prior to the launch of the project, a resource mapping exercise was carried out in each region producing a network overview of each governmental and non-governmental organisation offering social services in the area. The LEAP project was implemented through the **ESF Operational Programme in Malta**, and once the co-funded project ended in November 2015, national funds from the Ministry of Family and Social Solidarity were allocated to continue supporting the development of synergies and good practices of the project. Notably, from 2016 onwards, LEAP activities were incorporated as an integral part of the FEAD food distribution in Malta. As a result, the strategy shifted to predominantly target Malta's 'most deprived' individuals, particularly those receiving FEAD food aid.

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Austria - 'School starter parcels' support for the most deprived families

Red Cross Austria

WHY?

The FEAD Managing Authority of Austria has opted to dedicate its resources to address the **material deprivation** experienced by Austria's most deprived families and their difficulties in purchasing school supplies at the beginning of the school year. These are mainly single-parent families or parents with labour market issues, mental or physical health problems or of a migration background (in combination with the non-recognition of their skills). As a result, they have limited financial stability and school supplies pose an additional financial burden on these deprived families, especially at the start of the new school years, when the pressure is very high.

WHAT?

Families dependent on social benefits receive parcels containing basic educational materials (e.g. a school bags, stationary supplies, painting materials, etc.) depending on the age of the children. In 2015, there were 19 different parcels that the applicants were able to choose from and the value of each parcel was approximately €70. In 2016, 11 varieties were offered. It is important to note that every item in the parcel is also sold in regular shops, so as to avoid the issue of **stigmatisation**.

In addition to the parcel, families receive a "For Me" brochure which has relevant information on further measures fostering social inclusion. This brochure is tailored according to information relevant to each region of Austria. They provide, for instance, information on other services that the Red Cross offers such as financial training, food aid, clothing distribution, etc.

In terms of outputs, in 2015 there were 47,840 pupils eligible to receive the school starter parcels and 33,213 (69%) parcels were collected. Red Cross Centres also distributed a questionnaire among the end recipients that showed that 98% of respondents felt that the service provided offered useful support and 97% indicated that they were satisfied with the composition of the parcel. Overall, there was a 92% rate of satisfaction with the organisation of the service. One of the key objectives of the project is to support large families, and the survey indicated that approximately 45% of the end recipients were from households with three or more children.

“The organisation of this activity is very complex and it is only possible thanks to the high engagement of our volunteers who support the distribution of the school starter parcels. The high take up rate show us that the measure is useful for the families and we are glad that we have the possibility to support those deprived families.”

Monika Wild, Head of Health and Social Service,
Red Cross Austria

WHO?

The school starter parcels are funded with EU means and cofinanced by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, the FEAD Managing Authority in Austria. The partner organisation responsible for distributing the parcels is the Austrian Red Cross.

HOW?

The process is divided into three key steps. Firstly, letters are sent to potential beneficiaries together with an application form for every child as well as an explanatory note on how the process works. The target group are families dependent on social welfare assistance (“means-tested minimum income”). There are in total 19 different parcels that an applicant can choose from, depending on the needs of the child.

In the second step, applicants visit one of the 138 Red Cross distribution offices in Austria with their vouchers and application forms. The applicants’ identities are verified and they receive advice in determining which **parcel** is most suitable.

After a delivery period of roughly 1-2 weeks, applicants are then able to pick up the parcel at one of the Red Cross distribution offices.

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Poland – Workshops to improve culinary skills, decrease food waste and enhance nutritional awareness

Federation of Polish Food Banks

WHY?

The Culinarily Strong project was launched by the Federation of Polish Food Banks to actively engage and inform FEAD food aid recipients. Partner organisations had highlighted that there was a distinct need for additional support to end recipients as they frequently **lacked nutritional awareness** as well as the **independent skills** to prepare food. As a result food is often wasted and end recipients were not eating healthy, balanced meals. It was additionally noted that activities were needed to encourage end recipients to leave their houses as they frequently experience loneliness or depression due to a lack of social interaction. Mothers with small children, for instance, are often limited to dealing with household duties, and would benefit from a break from the daily routine and an opportunity to meet other individuals in similar situations, experiencing similar issues.

WHAT?

Culinary workshops are carried out by the Federation of Polish Food Banks and 32 affiliated food banks. They are organised throughout the country and generally take place **in the kitchens at local welfare centres, social centres or NGO premises**. Workshops last approximately 3 hours and generally include up to 20 individuals.

The workshops are open to a range of participants, including homeless people and families. Workshops for **families, children and youth** are deemed most popular. In 2015, the composition of the participants of the workshops was as follows: 40,388 (53%) unemployed, 9,506 (13%) disabled, 3,044 at-risk individuals, 2,937 (4%) homeless, and 23,547 (31%) other participants.

“Conversations carried out after the workshops were also significant. The participants often walked together to the bus stop, or were making arrangements for another meeting together. I have the impression that by participating in the workshop, they felt noticed, no longer anonymous numbers in a queue for food. It was important for them. The chances are that some of them at least will also no longer look at a food bank and local partner organisation (OPL) as some distant institution.”

Food bank representative

WHO?

The Federation of Polish Food banks works together with several private organisations operational in the food industry, in order to deliver the workshops.

HOW?

An important feature of the workshops is that participants **learn to use recipes that include products from the FEAD food parcels**. At the beginning of a session, participants introduce themselves and discuss the recipes. They are then put to work in activities in which they prepare soups, salads, appetisers, main courses, desserts and cakes. Generally participants are divided into groups and are asked to focus on one particular recipe. Participants wear aprons and use protective gloves as hygiene in food preparation is an important aspect of the practical education. At the end of the session, participants join together at a table and share the prepared meal and discuss the lessons that they learned.

Teachers are continuously **trained** to ensure that they are able to provide professional, engaging workshops. Food bank employees, for instance, were able to take part in a series of workshops themselves in which they were taught innovative approaches to preparing and carrying out workshops. Following their training, employees are required to take an exam and subsequently receive a certificate of completion. Several workshops are run by known radio and TV chefs and their celebrity status sparks the interest of many participants.

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Workplace Diversity

Poland – Promoting the transition into employment for people with disabilities

The Lubelskie Voivodeship's Self-Help Centre (LOS)

WHY?

Some beneficiaries of the 'Operational Programme Food Aid' face a common situation in every-day life: the lack of the relevant skills that could make them employable and suitable to do paid work. 'A chance for tomorrow' aims at tackling the problem of limited financial resources by focusing on its 'root' cause and solve the **challenges of getting into employment due to the lack of skills**.

These **difficulties become particularly serious in the case of those with a disability**, who quite often do not receive training that is tailored to their needs and become long-term unemployed.

WHAT?

The project "A chance for tomorrow", co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), offers **professional training, along with counselling services**, to facilitate the transition into employment of the beneficiaries. Moreover, training is followed by the enrolment into a **three month paid placement**. Further to the completion of the training, some **advisory services** are provided by the organisation that hosted the training.

With a view to create complementarity and synergies between the two Funds, this ESF initiative specifically targets 60 beneficiaries of the FEAD food aid programme who have a mild or moderate disability and live in the province of Lublin and who have been supported by the Food Bank in Lublin. Other project participants are recruited among 40 unemployed people registered in the employment agency and requiring special support and 20 people with low qualifications.

WHO?

Founded in 1993, LOS is a non-governmental organisation that provides information, offers counselling services and delivers training. Additionally, LOS promotes cooperation across NGOs that operates in the Lublin province.

LOS mainly focuses on the following areas: social assistance, education, science, culture, health, ecology, media, public security and business development.

HOW?

Following the training, participants enrol in a **three month paid work placement**. Completion of the training is rewarded with a sum of PLN 1024.80, while the placement includes a PLN 1280.66 gross monthly payment. During the training **lunches and refreshments** are also provided.

An interesting aspect of the training is that it is delivered in the form of a four or five day (per week) programme, while the placement will involve seven or eight hours of work per day. The duration and frequency of both will depend on the type individual needs assessment and take into account the type of disability when the person is concerned.

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Poland – A more user-friendly check of recipients' status

FEAD partners

WHY?

In Poland, the FEAD programme supports the provision of food assistance to those in the most vulnerable social groups. However, some of the potential beneficiaries of this service were being discouraged by the status verification process, which was normally operated by social services (Social Welfare Centres). The reasons for this discouragement included a number of different factors, such as the stigma they associated with this type of process, practical difficulties or reluctance to be 'registered' within a state facility. To address the issue, the FEAD Managing Authority decided to make this new option available for food assistance registration.

WHAT?

As of this year, the Ministry for Family, Labour and Social Policy has implemented a new mechanism for status verification. This mechanism allows beneficiaries to start the verification procedure through the partner organisation that's providing the food assistance. Besides helping those people who do not want to go to Social Welfare Centres to register for FEAD assistance, the option also allows for a better tracking of the beneficiaries and provide them with additional accompanying measures.

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“Every person matters.”

Edyta Zalewska,
FEAD Managing Authority

WHO?

The initiative has been taken up by the Managing Authority and all FEAD partner organisation (Caritas Polska, Federacja Polskich Banków Żywności, Polski Komitet Pomocy Społecznej, Polski Czerwony Krzyż).

Measure co-financed by the FEAD under Operational Programme “Food Aid”.

HOW?

The beneficiary fills in the food assistance form and delivers it to the partner organisation. The organisation then sends the form to the Social Welfare Centres who are still responsible for verifying the eligibility of individual applicants. One part of the form (Part A) is returned to the partner organisation, while the other part (Part B) is kept at the Social Welfare Centre.

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Images © Jozica Marija Licen (2016)

Slovenia – accompanying measures to support the most deprived

Caritas Slovenia

WHY?

Caritas Slovenia has been distributing European food aid since 2006, and since the initial stages has emphasised the importance of complementing food aid with accompanying measures. While the Slovenian Managing Authority has opted to dedicate its resources predominantly to FEAD food distribution, Caritas recognises that the only way to sustainably support an end recipient's transition out of poverty is by offering the necessary support to address the barriers that they face to social inclusion. They thus use the distribution of food aid as an effective springboard to other anti-poverty measures. One of the main goals of the organisation is to support end recipients in such a way that they are able to maintain their dignity. The main target groups (end recipients) represent families and individuals in need - more specifically - single mothers, families with low income where one or both parents are unemployed, people who find themselves in sudden need (like affected by natural disasters, unpaid wages), homeless people, elderly with low pension, refugees, asylum seekers and foreigners with working visas and without job and socially disadvantaged people.

WHAT?

The organisation offers a range of services. They, for instance, offer a range of counselling services including: support from social workers at Mother's homes and safe houses in case of domestic violence, professional advice on childrearing, home visits for the elderly and the sick and professional help for drug and alcohol addicts. They can also receive legal counselling from volunteer lawyers.

They additionally organise informative lectures and workshops for different target groups. An example of a theme covered in a lecture is: "Women usually cry, men solve problems in bars" and an example of a workshop is: "Do we really need everything that the advertisements encourage us to buy?"

They adjust the services that they offer according to the specific needs of particular target groups. Following the onset of the financial crisis, for instance, they started offering support in financial planning and budgeting. They also offer specific activities for children such as psychosocial support and summer camps.

Notably, Caritas also takes specific steps to help end recipients that seem comfortable being reliant on social welfare aid, to help them become independent and self-sufficient.

“ ‘Man does not live by bread alone’ is an established truth, of which we at Caritas Slovenia have been aware for a long time. Therefore the measures accompanying distribution of the EU food to the most deprived have been the only natural thing for us to do. The first packages of the EU food arrived to Slovenia in 2006 – at that time numerous factories went bankrupt due to the recession and consequently many people lost their jobs. The EU food proves that the EU is not indifferent towards the people in need. I hope and wish that this kind of aid continues to exist until prosperity returns, which is only possible by creating new jobs. A big thank you on behalf of everyone who was through this aid given hope in the goodness of a fellow man!.”

Jožica Ličen, volunteer

WHO?

The counselling services and workshops are organised by Caritas Slovenia and its network (6 diocesan/ regional Caritas, 311 parish/local Caritas and 2 Caritas Institutions).

HOW?

Caritas volunteers engage with FEAD end recipients when they pick up their food packages and offer a listening ear. This is one of the more difficult parts of the process as end recipients are generally hesitant to open up and share their stories. The conversations gradually increase in length as the volunteers are able to gain the trust of the end recipient. Ultimately, volunteers attempt to make an individual assessment of the end recipient's needs so as to determine which services are most appropriate. The volunteers subsequently direct the FEAD end recipients to appropriate professionals within the Caritas network.

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Slovakia – Combining food aid with simultaneous counselling services

Red Cross Slovakia

WHY?

In Slovakia the preferred form of aid under OP I is to address both food and basic material needs (in the form of toiletries) to help decrease the economic burden shouldered by at-risk social groups. However, more support is needed than simply the provision of physical goods. There are generally a range of social issues barring deprived individuals from inclusion into multiple parts of social life. As a result, alongside food and material aid, counselling and advice are used to assist individuals in addressing these issues, supporting the target groups through sustainable transition out of poverty.

WHAT?

While distributing the food parcels, qualified staff (qualified social workers or assistants) offer direct individual counselling. Trained staff are able to provide information and advice on a range of issues. They can, for instance, offer information on what beneficiaries can cook from FEAD products, how to store food and how to minimise the food waste. They can also provide counselling about healthy eating and hygiene habits. The social workers additionally refer end recipients to other relevant organisations where they can receive additional material aid and social services.

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WHO?

Red Cross Slovakia implements accompanying measures and food distribution.

HOW?

When an individual picks up their food parcel at the distribution centre, qualified social workers offer them tailored social counselling services. Through conversations at the distribution point, the social workers talk to individuals to discover which particular social problems an individual is facing. In past experience, the project found there is less take-up of counselling services when they are organised on separate occasions (e.g. due to the additional travel expenses). Advice tailored to the individual for how to tackle these issues is offered at the same time as the distribution of the food parcels, increasing the number of beneficiaries reached.

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Images © Heikki Jokinen (2001)

Finland - “The gourmet chef’s tips”: Recipe booklet distributed with food

Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)

WHY?

FEAD partner ADRA helps to distribute food packages at social events that are organised in cooperation with the Adventist Churches. Many of those who received the food packages were reporting that they didn’t know how to cook and that **some of the food items were going to waste** because recipients wouldn’t be able to properly use them. Many also **wished to receive simple and clear information** to assist them in their everyday living, especially when it came to **healthy food preparation**. It was therefore decided to produce a booklet of recipes as an accompanying measure to the FEAD food delivery.

WHAT?

A 10-page recipe book is included in the parcel with the food items. The objective of the recipe booklet is to help people use the provided food more effectively and **to reduce food waste**.

The booklet has been well-received by the target group, who have found it useful and easy-to-use, and have been happy to be able to add more variety to their diets.

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“

This is a very good recipe booklet; I have tried every recipe and they were all great.”

FEAD beneficiary

WHO?

ADRA is a national level NGO (part of a global humanitarian organisation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church) and is one of the FEAD partner organisations selected by MAVI (the Agency for Rural Affairs, which is the managing authority for FEAD and also responsible for the use of agricultural aid and rural development funds of the European Union in Finland.).

The recipe booklet project is part of a larger project to help people in need in Finland. These people are provided with a warm lunch by ADRA and receive clothes, shoes and toys that are used, but in a good condition. They also receive services such as back massaging and blood pressure testing, and a parcel containing food items. All of these items and services are free of cost for those people who need help.

HOW?

Each recipe contains a simple name for the complete dish, the ingredients and their required quantities, and step-by-step instructions in an **easy-to-understand text format**. Some of the recipes also contain additional information such as what ingredients can be used as a substitute if something is missing. The majority of the required items for the recipes are included in the package, with the only exception being fresh products such as fruit.

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Finland - Practical strategies to recruit and motivate volunteers

Red Cross Finland

WHY?

The role of volunteers is crucial for the Red Cross, and volunteers have a key role also in delivering FEAD assistance including accompanying measures. Volunteers need to be trained and made aware of other services available. A long-term investment in them is needed that only pays back if volunteers remain engaged for sufficient period of time. It is therefore important to cater for their needs and expectations. Moreover, the Finnish Red Cross (FRC) has the ambition to recruit volunteers also amongst its beneficiaries.

Research conducted on volunteers in the country revealed that **volunteers want to help, feel that they have been heard, and have social contacts** when providing help (RAY Barometer 2016 (n = 1551); FRC Volunteer questionnaire 2016 (n = 1891)). They volunteer to be active citizens, help others and make a new social circle.

WHAT?

Over the years the FRC has developed a number of practical strategies to attract and retain volunteers (in general and among its beneficiaries). These start from the acknowledgement that to keep volunteers motivated, it is important to give them responsibilities that are suited to their interests and skills. Furthermore, the need for social contact is taken into account in organising and supporting volunteer groups.

The ability to recruit and retain volunteers has allowed the FRC to increase the number of its branches that deliver FEAD aid – from 15 in 2016 to about 30 planned for 2017. **This will enable to reach out to remote areas of the country** where there is great need for assistance.

“

Social contacts and appreciation from the group are core elements of human wellbeing and they are also the glue of an active volunteer group.”

Matti Hetemäki,
Health and Care Unit,
Finnish Red Cross

WHO?

The Finnish Red Cross (FRC) is present in 12 districts and has 500 local branches. It has approximately 90 000 members and 30 000 active volunteers. These are complemented by more than 150 000 blood donors and 60 000 regular contributors.

The Finnish Red Cross is one of the FEAD partner organisations in Finland. Besides FEAD, main activity areas are crisis preparedness and response, youth activities and school cooperation, refugee and migration work, health and care.

HOW?

As far as the retention and motivation of volunteers is concerned, a number of measures are taken. The number of volunteers is planned in such a way that there is not too many of them, so no one feels not needed. The **distribution of tasks** among volunteers is carefully planned. While experienced volunteers are motivated with more skilled tasks, easier tasks are identified for newcomers. In order to allow people with limited time availability to contribute, larger tasks are broken down into smaller ones. Group leaders are advised on the importance of responding to social contact needs of volunteers. They are trained to be good listeners. Moreover, resources are made available to groups for **recreational activities** that foster a sense of connection.

Specific strategies are also put in place to achieve the goal of recruiting volunteers among beneficiaries. Food distribution points are not a suitable place to engage with beneficiaries on volunteering opportunities, but beneficiaries are often directed to the **health check-up points** as an additional service offered to them. There, it is easier to provide them with information on other FRC services and activity groups including opportunities for volunteering.

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Finland - Support for mental health

Mielenterveyden Keskusliitto
(Finnish Central Association for Mental Health)

WHY?

Severely deprived people living in poor conditions, such as those supported by FEAD in Finland, sometimes suffer from mental health problems. Recovering from such problems is often difficult without sufficient social support and other basic services that allow those affected to live autonomously and feel they are part of society. While specialist professional organisations exist, deprived people are often unaware of them or live in areas where such services are lacking. There is therefore a need to provide information about such services and referrals to them for those people most in need.

WHAT?

A partnership was established between FEAD and Mielenterveyden Keskusliitto, the Finnish Central Association for Mental Health.

Through this partnership, the Association aims to raise awareness of mental illness and the existing services for rehabilitation through the distribution of leaflets and the organisation of self-help groups conducted by local associations. This has been introduced as an accompanying measure to FEAD support.

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WHO?

Mielenterveyden Keskusliitto was established in 1971 and is the largest association of its kind in Europe. The Association focuses on actions related to mental illness stigma and loneliness; legal rights, rehabilitation and integration into society. Currently the Association has around 19 000 members, including patients recovering from mental health problems, their families and friends, but also professionals and volunteers interested in mental health issues.

The financial resources of the Association come from **international and national donors** such as the EU, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and municipalities. Additionally, the Association raises funds from the **sale of its own publications and products**.

HOW?

When FEAD material assistance is provided to the most deprived, the Association distributes their leaflets to refer interested end recipients to their **information centre**. The centre in turn puts them in **contact with mental health rehabilitation services and self-help groups** available in Finland.

Rehabilitation counselling services are provided in the centres that the Association has in Helsinki, Turku and Kuopio, as well as in the municipalities that offer supported housing for the target group, i.e. Jyväskylä, Rovaniemi and Vantaa. Self-help groups are conducted by local associations and provide a forum for patients and family members to share coping skills and build self-esteem.

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Finland - Delivering food aid in remote rural areas

Kainuu Citizens' Centre

WHY?

In the poorest region of Finland, Kainuu, and the area of Kuhmo in particular many people are unemployed, living conditions are extremely difficult and suicide rates are very high. The unemployment rate has typically oscillated between 17 and 24%. Currently in the region of Kuhmo, around 1000 families depend on food aid (400 families with children, 300 elderly people living alone and 300 adults living with alcohol addictions and mental illness).

WHAT?

Kainuun Kansalaiskeskus (Kainuu Citizens' Centre) provides around 10 000 people with FEAD-funded food aid every year.

When end recipients cannot come to town to collect food, it is delivered at their homes by a team of volunteers. Transport presents a logistical challenge because of long distances in the Kuhmo area (individuals must travel up to 100 kilometres in often unfavourable weather conditions). However this is overcome thanks to the enthusiasm and good organisation of the volunteers, who are members of the partner organisations. Some of them are also in need and benefit from a food bag themselves. In small villages there is intense social pressure, but many volunteers can "save face" by helping others, and receive help at the same time.

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Life is better when you make it yourself."

Motto of Kuhmon Hanka-Martat,
one of the partner organisations delivering food
aid in Kuhmo

WHO?

Kainuun Kansalaiskeskus RY (Kainuu Citizens' Centre) is an umbrella organisation of six local associations: Seilosen Kylä; Kuhmon Selkäyhdistys, Kuhmon Reumayhdistys and Kuhmon Invalidit (an organisation supporting disabled people); Kuhmon eläkeläiset (an elderly people association) and Kuhmon Hanka-Martat (a family welfare association). These organisations offer various health, nutrition and self-management courses and organise recreational activities. These will potentially develop into accompanying measures for FEAD beneficiaries in the coming years.

HOW?

30 000-40 000 kilos of food are delivered every year. Bags of food are prepared for adults (7-10 kilos) and for children (4-7 kilos) containing ten products: wheat flour, bread flour, macaroni, pasta ready meals, thin crispbread, porridge flakes, muesli, pea soup, preserved meat (swine-beef), and powdered milk.

Around fifty volunteers from the partner organisations assist with food distribution. The municipality offers the distribution centre free of charge and gives the owner of the tractor transporting the food a loan when the cargo remains unloaded. The President of the Hanka-Martat organisation, Eine Lundberg, is the lead organiser. She makes rosters and distributes tasks to volunteers when food-aid arrives. Volunteers often live in remote areas themselves. Some of them are elderly or suffer from sicknesses but work to help and pick the bags of food for their fellow village members. Volunteers receive coffee and sandwiches during the packaging and distribution days. They use their own cars for transporting food and pay for the fuel.

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Sweden - FRISK: Health assistance and advice to vulnerable groups

Doctors of the World

WHY?

One of the biggest challenges for some migrants living in Sweden is that they fall between the cracks of the public health insurance system, resulting in a lack of access to basic healthcare. This **lack of access** is not only a problem in itself, but additionally presents a significant barrier to other aspects of life (e.g. in finding employment). The aim of the project is therefore to improve access to specific health assistance particularly with regard to sexual and reproductive health and infectious diseases. The project mainly targets mobile EU citizens including Roma, but also third-country nationals. The project additionally seeks to create a strong network of NGOs offering healthcare services and aims to create a bridge between these organisations and the public sector. They ultimately seek to develop the capacity of these organisations to address specific healthcare needs of the target group.

WHAT?

With a budget of €932,000 (SEK 8,969,000) the FRISK project offers preventive health interventions, empowerment (target group on-demand education) and capacity building in NGOs. The two main focal areas are sexual and reproductive health and infectious diseases.

The project delivers both **individual and group counselling sessions** on relevant healthcare and disease prevention issues. At this stage they mainly provide information through individual and group counselling sessions as well as workshops. They also refer beneficiaries to other healthcare services. The project aims to avoid establishing a parallel, informal healthcare system, and thus actively strives to integrate its beneficiaries into the regular healthcare system by providing them with information on clinics and health services. At present, the project itself provides only a limited amount of material support (e.g. the provision of contraceptives). Lastly, through the FRISK project, Doctors of the World seeks to establish **strong partnerships** with public organisations through lobbying activities.

“FEAD is helping Doctors of the World Sweden provide vulnerable EU citizens in Sweden with a holistic, human rights based, approach to health. There is a great need when it comes to sexual and reproductive health, and the FRISK project is highlighting these crucial issues within the most vulnerable population in Sweden.”

Johanna Arvidson,
Doctors of the World Sweden

WHO?

The FRISK project is implemented by Doctors of the World Sweden (Läkare i Världen Sverige) and builds on partnerships with the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (Riksförbundet för sexuell upplysning, RFSU) and other organisations within the civil society and the public sector.

HOW?

Both individual counselling and group sessions are offered to beneficiaries directly and through local partner organisations (e.g. churches and NGOs). Group sessions are generally provided on the premises of partner organisations where the target group gathers to receive other services. As a result, it is possible to reach out to individuals who would not generally seek support from organisations such as Doctors of the World.

These activities help raise awareness and inform participants on the routes to access health services. Volunteer healthcare professionals additionally offer individual counselling services and Doctors of the World operate two mobile clinics through which they seek to reach out to the hard-to-reach target groups. The project actively engages with approximately 20 individuals a week, and seeks to increase this number to 50 a week in the near future. Reports about the health situation of project participants are regularly produced.

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Sweden - Po Drom: Mobile teams to empower vulnerable EU citizens and facilitate dialogue against prejudice towards Roma people

Gothenburg Rescue Mission

WHY?

In Sweden, a number of EU citizens, often of Roma background, live on the streets. In the last years they have had to face an upsurge of anti-gypsyism and have been frequently affected by crime and accidents. This has hardened their already vulnerable conditions and created conflicts in a society that according to the Gothenburg Rescue Mission lacks knowledge and structures to mitigate social tensions.

WHAT?

The aim of the project is twofold. Firstly, it focuses on Roma EU citizens living in vulnerable conditions to educate and empower them, with a special focus on improving their health and safety. Secondly, it addresses the existence of fear and prejudice against Roma people by facilitating the dialogue between the target group and the rest of the society. Crime prevention has been another fundamental issue in the implementation of this programme as crime has a role in fostering anti-gypsyism.

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“Approaching the target groups in their own environment, i.e. temporary settlements, increases the success of the programme.”

Po-Drom Team

WHO?

The Project has been initiated with FEAD funding by the Gothenburg Rescue Mission, a charity founded in 1953 to alleviate the desperate needs of the people who had gathered to board the ships bound for America and which is nowadays focusing on helping various groups of homeless people. Several other public and civil society organisations are involved in the project.

HOW?

Mobile teams work in the street environment, as well as in temporary settlements of the cities of Gothenburg, Malmö and Jönköping. Teams include people who can communicate with the target group in their ‘mother tongues’ and have a deep understanding of their cultural background, along with co-workers who are trained and experienced in outreach work. The mobile teams establish dialogues with vulnerable EU citizens to improve their knowledge of their rights and obligations in the Swedish society. They put them in contact with other social actors, support them with information on safety and security issues and help with the resolution of conflicts. Since Roma EU citizens tend to see the police as a distant entity to be best avoided, they are also encouraged to report crime.

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REDUCING DEPRIVATION, SUPPORTING INCLUSION

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This catalogue presents 28 case studies of Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) implementation across the European Union and encompasses a range of initiatives related to the organisation of food and material assistance schemes, accompanying measures and social inclusion initiatives as well as the manner in which FEAD initiatives can potentially complement other EU-funded (e.g. ESF) programmes.

The catalogue is one of several outputs deriving from knowledge-sharing activities of the FEAD Network in 2016. This community of practice has been established by the European Commission to allow all stakeholders and partner organisations to share tools, ideas and resources that can help with the delivery of FEAD-funded initiatives.

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