



# REPORT

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## Food Bank management: transforming challenges into opportunities, together

9-11 DECEMBER 2019 / ATHENS, GREECE



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# Introduction

The training session “Food Bank management: transforming challenges into opportunities, together” was organized by the European Food Banks Federation in collaboration with Food Bank Greece in Athens on 9-11 December 2019. This session was organized especially for Food Banks in their initial or development stage.



**For three days, 12 Food Bank representatives from 9 European countries shared best practices and experiences on Food Bank management, and mainly on food and fund raising and the management of volunteers. The training was therefore an opportunity to establish future set of actions to be implemented in the following months and years for Food Banks that are still in their early stage.**

In this document you will find a summary of the information and best practices shared during the training session.

# Skill-sharing session Summary / 9th December

**Location:** Location: Food Bank Greece - Kryoneriou Av. 124, Athens / Greece

As the training session was organized in collaboration with Food Bank Greece, it was very fitting that the participants could gather in the office of the Food Bank in Athens.

## Introduction / Food Bank management: why?

The training session started with an introduction about the history of Food Banks in the world.



*Angela Frigo, Secretary General, FEBA*



**The poor we shall  
always have with us,  
but why the hungry?**

*John Van Hengel, Founder of the first Food Bank*

John Van Hengel was the founder of the first Food Bank. He grew up in Los Angeles and moved to Phoenix, Arizona in 1965 where he became a volunteer at a soup kitchen. The refectory had an annual budget of only \$ 8,000 and this induced John Van Hengel to seek out sources for free products. In the beginning he recovered vegetables left in the fields and fruit remaining on the trees. However, he obtained more products than the need of the soup kitchen where he was helping as a volunteer. So, he delivered the remaining

products to other charities, making it possible for them to offer additional meals.

After a while, the need to give structure to this operation led to the creation of the first Food Bank in an old bakery of Phoenix, the St. Mary's Food Bank, which is still in operation today. The news about this new kind of bank went viral and following the example of the St. Mary's Food Bank more Food banks were established: in the USA and a few years later also in Canada.

In 1984 in France, Sister Cécile Bigo heard about the concept through Francis Lopez, founder of the Edmonton Food Bank in Canada. In order to cope with rising poverty in Paris, she contacted Bernard Dandrel at the Secours Catholique who cooperated with other charities like Emmaüs and the Salvation Army to launch the Food Bank of Paris-Ile de France in July 1984. In Belgium

André Hubert soon followed this example and established the first Food Bank in Brussels.

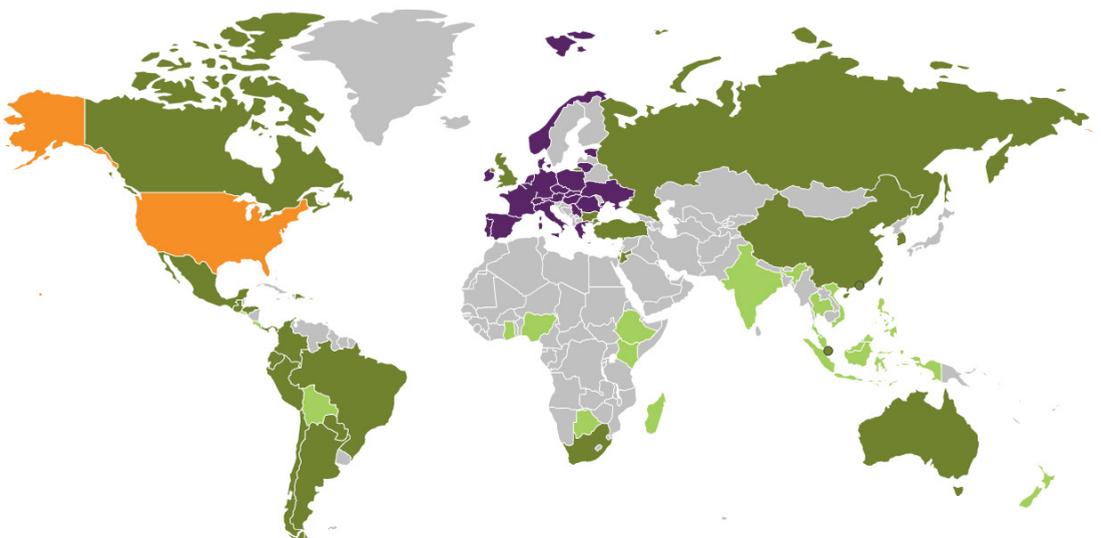
Then Bernard Dandrel and André Hubert realized the need for a single and organized body that would represent Food Banks at a European level. The Fédération Européenne des Banques Alimentaires - European Food Banks Federation (FEBA) was launched on 23 September 1986.



At the beginning, we had very simple means, then all of this became technically professional, and I am in awe of the professional quality that has been developed for the safety of both the volunteers and the population who benefit from it.

*Bernard Dandrel, founder of the Food Banks in France & first President of FEBA*

### Food Banks in the world today



■ GFN Certified Members   
 ■ GFN Network   
 OUR PARTNERS:   
 ■ European Food Banks Federation   
 ■ Feeding America

Source: The Global FoodBanking Network



## Sharing experience / Experiences from countries



### Czech Republic



Česká Federace potravinových bank

#### → Successes

- Record number of donations for the food collection 2019
- Involvement of all major retail chains in the food collection
- SDGs Awards 2019

#### → Challenges

- Awareness raising of Food Banks
- Strengthening of the cooperation between all Food Banks in Czech Republic
- Lobby on Politicians and retailers

#### → Objectives

- Find more funding/donors
- Increase Public Relations
- Increase the number of food pick-up points
- Develop the food collection



## Hungary

Magyar  
Élelmiszerbank  
Egyesület



### → Successes

- Food raising projects
- Fundraising projects
- Awareness raising projects
- Food Collection 2019 (283 tons of food collected in 207 stores with the help of 5,500 volunteers)

### → Objectives

- Increase the amount of food recovered (from producers, restaurants...)
- Extend the express delivery (from retailers to charities)
- Develop the partner organization
- Launch new Food Banks



## Malta



### → Successes

- Premises (infrastructure, logistics challenges, permits)
- New Board Members
- Stakeholders (relationships with donors and NGO's, distribution of food)

### → Objectives

- Have a stable stream of food from donors
- Develop the Food Bank (volunteers and equipment's)
- Create a sustainable Food Bank structure



## Poland

Bank Żywności  
w Trójmieście



### → Organization

Tri-City Food Bank regroups the Food Banks of Gdansk, Gdynia and Sopot. The organization is member of the Federation of Polish Food Banks.

### → Challenges

- Food waste reduction law
- Financial sources
- Brand recognition

### → Successes

- Social shops: an immediate food support for people in need
- Documentation about food safety and food redistribution
- Media coverage of Food Banks activity

### → Objectives

- Increase the amount of food recovered
- Find stable financial sources
- Partner with local businesses



## Romania



### → Successes

- Development of regional Food Banks
- Event “Food Waste in Romania and the Role of Food Banks”

### → Challenges

- Doubling the amount of recovered food
- Establishment of new regional Food Banks
- Increasing budget

### → Objectives

- Establish 10 regional Food Banks
- Create a national structure representing all the Food Banks
- Organize food collections at national level
- Become a FEBA Full Member



## Serbia



### → Successes

- Delegated collection of fresh fruits and vegetables (between charities and Ahold Delhaize)
- Recognition of the Food Bank activities (contribution to SDGs and participation to working groups, conferences...)
- Participation to a project to develop a food donation platform

### → Challenges

- Sustainability
- Lobby for law amendments
- Development of the cooperation with the company GDMP about the crowdfunding platform Glook.me

### → Objectives

- Find funds to extend the work capacity of the Food Bank
- Ensure regular and higher quantity of food donations
- Expand the delegated collection of fresh fruits and vegetables through a digital platform



## Slovenia

### → Successes

- Changes in legislation in order to be more equal to other NGO's
- Member of a working group for lowering food waste at national level and of the FEAD working group at national and European level
- International projects (WSS Effect, Eurostep 2019)

### → Challenges

- Restrictive legislation
- Lack of capacities
- Development of Food Banks network



### → Objectives

- Change the legislation to have a better position as a Food Bank
- Work on FEAD and become a group member for social inclusion at national level
- Develop the network of Food Banks and the capacities (funding and premises)

## Sharing experience / Food Bank Greece

### About Food Bank Greece

Food Bank Greece was founded in 1995, as an initiative of Gerassimos Vassilopoulos, who envisioned a non-profit organization that would provide daily food to children, elderly people and people in need.

Today there are four Food Banks in Greece, gathered under the Hellenic Union of Food Banks. The Food Banks share the same mission and values: fighting hunger and food waste.

The Food Banks organize food collections throughout the year. More and more charities join the food collection every year.



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



## Figures of the Food Collection 2018

# 300 volunteers

# 50 tons

of collected food in 2018

# 1,740 hours

of volunteer work

Dimitris Nentas, Secretary General of Food Bank Greece, started his intervention with these words: "Don't try to be perfect". Establishing or developing a Food Bank is not just replicating what other countries do. The possibilities of the organization and the environment must be evaluated.

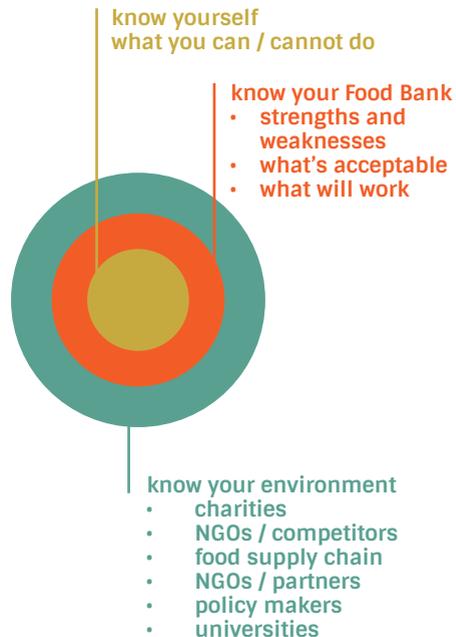
- Make decisions: if there is no actions, procedures or campaigns, create them!
- Analyse the prospects
- Take whatever you think is useful: something is better than nothing
- Take opportunities or make them!

” **It is better to make a bad decision that not to make a decision at all.**

*Dimitris Nentas, Secretary General,  
Food Bank Greece*

Making decisions is also taking risks. Participants shared some thoughts about the risks they are facing in their respective country. The Food Bank in Serbia mainly relies on food donations

## What to take into consideration to launch/develop your FoodBank?

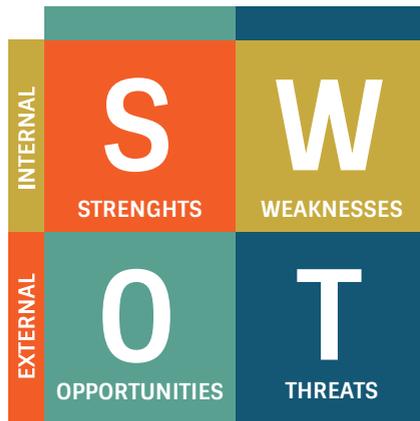


from one supermarket chain. This is one kind of risk because they must be very careful with what they do and say in order not to lose this supplier.

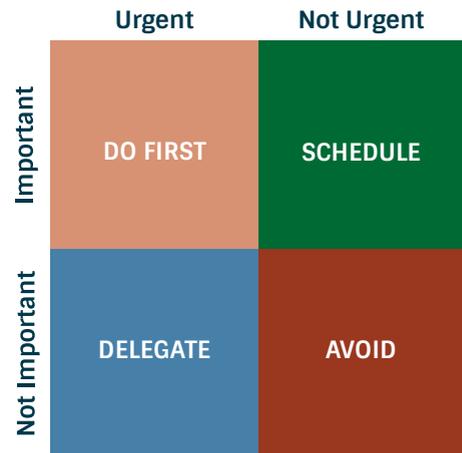
Dimitris Nentas underlined that it is better to assess the risks before starting the action. In order to be prepared, some questions must be answered: what is acceptable? How do we prepare for the risks? How can we manage them? It is very important to think about the risks today but also in the mid and long-term period.

## Two useful tools

*The SWOT analysis to face the challenges of your Food Bank*



*The Eisenhower Matrix to manage your time and prioritize actions*



## Wrap up / Conclusions

- ➔ Problems can be solved. Do you lack employees and volunteers? Repeat simple and standardize actions.
- ➔ Nothing is perfect. Don't judge, act!
- ➔ Don't postpone, just be careful. If the worst-case scenario is not too bad, act!
- ➔ Small successes and short-term targets keep you motivated.
- ➔ Be very sincere on what you can and cannot do.
- ➔ Human relationships are important.
- ➔ Be positive, optimistic.

## Visit of the warehouse / Food Bank Greece

As the training session took place at the premises of Food Bank Greece, participants had the chance to visit the warehouse where the food is stocked until charities come to pick it up. Dimitris Nentas explained the functioning of the Food Bank.



## *Visit of the Museum of Ancient Greek Technology & dinner*



After the first day of the session, participants had a private visit of the Museum of Ancient Greek Technology where they could admire and experiment several operating models of ancient Greek inventions.

After the visit, participants shared a typical Greek dinner in a restaurant in the city centre of Athens.



# Skill-sharing session Summary / 10th December

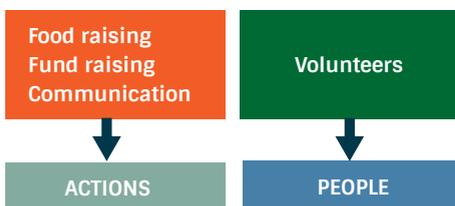
**Location:** Food Bank Greece - Kryoneriou Av. 124, Athens / Greece

## Getting involved / Transforming challenges into opportunities, together

The second day of the training session started with an exercise on how to prioritize actions for the Food Bank, using the Eisenhower matrix that participants discovered on day 1. The participants focused on what is important and urgent (do first).



After sharing the results, participants identified four priorities:



### Attract volunteers

What are the reasons for a volunteer to work at a Food Bank?

- Sharing of the same values
- “I need you”
- Good will feeling
- Motivation
- Experience
- Involvement in a vision
- Enjoyable

Volunteers are the main ambassadors of the Food Bank. They need to know the values, activities, problems that a Food Bank is facing.

### Define and analyze the actions

For each prioritized action, the needs must

be defined. Why do we need to raise money? To buy a lift for managing the food in the warehouse, for example. A good advice is to list all the things that the Food Bank needs, as a “shopping list”. Once the list of actions and needs is defined, the SWOT analysis will be very helpful. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses is essential to start asking for funds, food, etc.

### **Communicate**

In this process, other people will be involved. How to attract them? By using communication. Social Media is a great communication tool to involve people. There is no need to create stories to share on social media, the activities of the Food Banks are the best communication stories.

## Sharing experience / The perspective of external experts

The intervention of **Alexia Macheras from AB VASSILOPOULOS**, a branch of Ahold Delhaize, demonstrated how a real collaboration between Food Banks and supermarkets is possible for the reduction of food waste and the donation of surplus food to Food Banks. One of the most important commitment of Ahold Delhaize is to reduce their food waste by 50% by 2030. Therefore, the partnerships with Food Banks is very strong and useful. Alexia Macheras also underlined that it is not always easy for the Food Banks to recover the food as they are not present on the entire territory, compared to the supermarkets. This is why they created a specific project in which charities go directly to the supermarkets to recover the surplus food that is soon expiring.

**Rea Lambou from CHEP Greece** explained how CHEP is collaborating with Food Bank Greece by promoting the Food Banks when they visit a FMCG company or when they send an email. This visibility is much needed and appreciated by the Food Bank.



*Alexia Macheras, Sustainable Retail & Corporate Communication Manager, AB VASSILOPOULOS*



*Rea Lambou, Customer Service & Asset Manager, CHEP Greece*



A Brambles Company



## Sharing experience / Challenges & opportunities for communication

Charlotte Daneau made an intervention on the importance of communicating for a Food Bank. She gave an overview of different communication channels (website, social media, newsletter, etc.) and she presented some free and intuitive tools that could be used by the participants in order to communicate about their activities.



*Charlotte Daneau,  
Communication Manager, FEBA*

Charlotte also underlined that although there are a lot of free tools on the market, it is important to take into consideration that working on communication takes time. Therefore, it is better to focus on one or two channels but do it right rather than wanting to be everywhere but not being able to follow.

### **Why communicate as a Food Bank?**

- Raise awareness about the activities of the Food Bank
- Find donors / volunteers / funding
- Raise awareness about food waste and food insecurity
- Have an online presence, which is essential nowadays

## *Visit of a charity & dinner*

At the end of day 2, participants were invited to the charity St Euthymius in Keratsini, which is working with the Food Bank in Athens.

They followed a presentation about the story of the charity and shared tea and homemade pies with people working there. Participants also had the opportunity to visit the premises of the charity and to learn more about their way of working.

After the visit, participants gathered for a dinner in Piraeus, a famous neighbourhood next to the port of Athens.



# Skill-sharing session Summary / 11th December

**Location:** Meropeio Foundation - Dionysiou Aeropagitou St. 45, Athens / Greece

## Sharing experiences / Taking stock of what we learnt during these days

The aim of the training session was to share experiences and best practices on Food Bank management, and mainly on food and fund raising and the management of volunteers. Participants realized that these three elements were the top priorities of a Food Bank.

The session was a good opportunity to take stock of different tools to facilitate the development of the Food Bank. They learnt that in order to launch or develop a Food Bank, you need to know three things: know yourself, know your Food Bank and know your environment.



**Opportunities give birth to actions**

*Dimitris Nentas, Secretary General, Food Bank Greece*

Once you have a good knowledge of the situation, you can recognize and take the opportunities. Participants also discovered how to analyse their actions with the SWOT analysis and how to prioritize them with the Eisenhower Matrix.

### Example of SWOT analysis for the food collection

#### **STRENGTHS**

Donation of pasta, rice, etc, which is more needed by the Food Bank

#### **WEAKNESSES**

Lack of volunteers

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

Possibility to work with new retailers

#### **THREATS**

Unexpected challenges with retailers

## Q&A / What is FEBA for you?

The training session ended up with a small quiz about FEBA. Participants were asked some questions: how many Board members does FEBA have? Who is the FEBA team? What does FEBA do? What is the organigram?

This exercise was the opportunity for participants to learn more about the functioning of the European Food Banks Federation.



# Programme

## December 9th

10h00 - 10h30	<b>Welcome</b> / Getting to know each other	Plenary Session
10h30 - 11h00	<b>Introduction</b> / Food Bank management: why?	Angela Frigo, Secretary General, FEBA
11h00 - 11h30	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
11h30 - 13h00	<b>Experiences from countries</b>	Plenary Session
13h00 - 14h30	<b>Lunch</b>	
14h30 - 16h00	<b>Sharing experiences from Greece</b>	Dimitris Nentas, Food Bank Greece
16h00 - 16h30	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
16h00 - 17h00	<b>Wrap-up</b> / Urgent questions and solid answers	Plenary Session
19h00	Visit to the Museum of the Ancient Greek Technology	
20h00	Dinner in the city centre and bus back to the hotel	

## December 10th

9h30 - 11h00	<b>Getting involved</b> / Transforming challenges into opportunities, together	Plenary session
11h00 - 11h30	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
11h30 - 12h15	<b>Sharing experiences from experts</b>	Alexia Macheras, Sustainable Retail & Corporate Communication Manager, Delhaize
12h15 - 13h00	<b>Q&amp;A</b>	Plenary session
13h00 - 14h30	<b>Lunch</b>	
14h30 - 16h30	<b>Insights from experts</b> / Challenges & opportunities for communication	Charlotte Daneau, Communication Manager, FEBA
16h30 - 17h00	<b>Wrap-up</b>	
17h45 - 18h30	Visit to a charity	
20h00	Dinner together in a restaurant	

## December 11th

9h30 - 11h30	<b>FEBA for you</b>	Plenary Session
11h30 - 12h00	<b>Closing remarks</b>	Angela Frigo, Secretary General, FEBA
12h00 - 14h00	<b>Final lunch together</b>	

# Acknowledgement

The European Food Banks Federation takes this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, European Commission for concretely supporting the capacity building of FEBA and its membership.

A deep appreciation to Dimitris Nentas, for hosting the training session at the Food Bank Greece and for his precious help in organizing this session. A special thanks to Nikos Koskinas for the organizational support.

Thank you to St Euthymius in Keratsini and Meropeio Foundation for the warm and tasteful welcome!

A huge thank you to Alexia Macheras from AB VASSILOPOULOS and Rea Lambou from CHEP Greece for the inspiring presentations and their commitment to collaborate with Food Banks and support their activities.

Last but not least, many thanks to all the participants who actively contributed to the success of the training session!





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