

Interreg
CENTRAL EUROPE



STREFOWA

European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

D.T2.2.4. SWOT ANALYSIS

06/2019

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Evaluation of implementation effectivity – SWOT analysis of Food Bank for Prague and Central Bohemian Region

Situation depiction

As a non-profit, in fact a charitable organization, food bank distributes food surpluses to those who have difficulty purchasing enough to avoid hunger. At the same time it reduces food-waste, e.g. food that is discarded or lost uneaten.

The aim of the food bank's effort is to eliminate food-waste and to ensure further redistribution of the food.

Last year the Czech Republic ranked among the EU Member States which by law ordered retail chains to donate unsold food suitable for further human consumption to organizations like food banks.

Supporting food banks is therefore a straightforward way to positively impact local community and help the most vulnerable people in society. Food banks are not a standalone initiative, but a global trend, spreading quickly across all the world. Not only is it important in central banks, but especially in regional and smaller centers that can provide food reception, processing and redistribution on site. Food banks should be encouraged to advocate for long-term solutions to the underlying causes of food waste.

Low durability food – how to distribute?

With the expectation of increasing supply of food from retail chain food banks prepared a strategy how to handle the new volume. One of the solutions in Food bank for Prague and Central Bohemia region was to create a kitchen that would enable processing of raw food and especially of that food arriving on Fridays which would not last over the weekend, thus depreciated.

Kitchen as a part of the food bank can be an effective solution. In the kitchen, food like fruits, vegetables and some other is preserved to last longer.

Secondary positive effect is that the kitchen can host workshops for food bank customers and they can be taught how to handle distributed food in healthy and effective manner. These lectures positively impact further food waste at the customers' homes and also can improve their economic situation by fully utilizing donated goods.

Pros and cons, risks and potentials are discussed in the following SWOT analysis.

This analysis is based on

- several visits to Food bank for Prague and Central Bohemia region located at Zdiby
- participation at workshops for Food bank's clients
- cooperation within Friday cooking sessions preserving fruits and vegetables
- analyzing Food bank's economic and legal background
- multiple interviews with employees, volunteers and professional chefs, that lead the cooking classes
- visits to commercial professional kitchens



	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal origin (attributes of the system)	<p><i>Strengths</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - variable funding sources (finance and equipment) in place by supporting organizations who have helped to equip the kitchen - excellent leadership skills of the director Mrs. Doušová - team of workers partially employed and partially on voluntary bases - there was originally a kitchen in the building - enthusiasm based on positive feedback and experiences provided high energy for the staff to boost success - demonstration of full effectiveness to retailers and financial contributors as well as innovative solutions to prevent food waste and fully utilized resources 	<p><i>Weaknesses</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the building is quite old and needs major repairs - no adequate power supply is provided, experiencing power cuts - obsolete wastes and sewers - the food bank has received/purchased/arranged long-term loans of equipment, but this equipment is not always on professional level (usually due limited financial resources); homelike equipment cannot handle large volume of food - some basic equipment still missing (e.g. a professional food-processor) - despite some essential equipment missing other non-priority but expensive equipment has been provided by some donors (e.g. professional cooling drawers from local restaurants)
External origin (attributes of the environment)	<p><i>Opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - food-bank clients are street-based organizations or people who receive products that they can miss information/knowledge on how to further process, but are willing to learn - processing food at the edge of durability (especially on Fridays due to weekend closure) not only saves from depreciation, but creates new food to be redistributed - positive media impact - potential to use the premises to teach students about food waste and how to handle food more reasonably and economically 	<p><i>Threats</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the building is not owned by the food bank but in rent = uncertainty with long-term future - limited and irregular long-term funding , majority at yearly basis - variation of the food delivered from retail can limit the kitchen to be able to cook from available resources reasonable recipes - deliveries from retail chain as the main source of food are not guaranteed because retail chains are obviously minimizing their own economic impact of food waste



Conclusion

Based on this analysis other organizations similar to Food bank for Prague and Central Bohemia region are recommended to follow these guidelines.

Secure initial investment funding as well as long term operational resources for kitchen and its activities.

If possible, build kitchen in own premises. Analyze and secure capacities of the building.

Evaluate what type of food would be mostly processed and based on this create a priority list of necessary equipment.

Promote all activities and potential of the kitchen for clients and public.

Allocate motivated staff within the food bank to secure kitchen operations.

Gradually build recipe book that can be used by any operating personnel.

Ensure preserved food distribution. Example of good praxis – unified brand sticker on all kitchen products.

This analysis was created with the financial support of the European Union program – Interreg Central Europe and CzechAid

