



FEAD Programme Evaluation Report

Qualitative & Quantitative Research

March 2022

Prepared by
Larry Ryan & Katie Kirkwood

Prepared for:



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection



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RESEARCH
& INSIGHT

Background & objectives

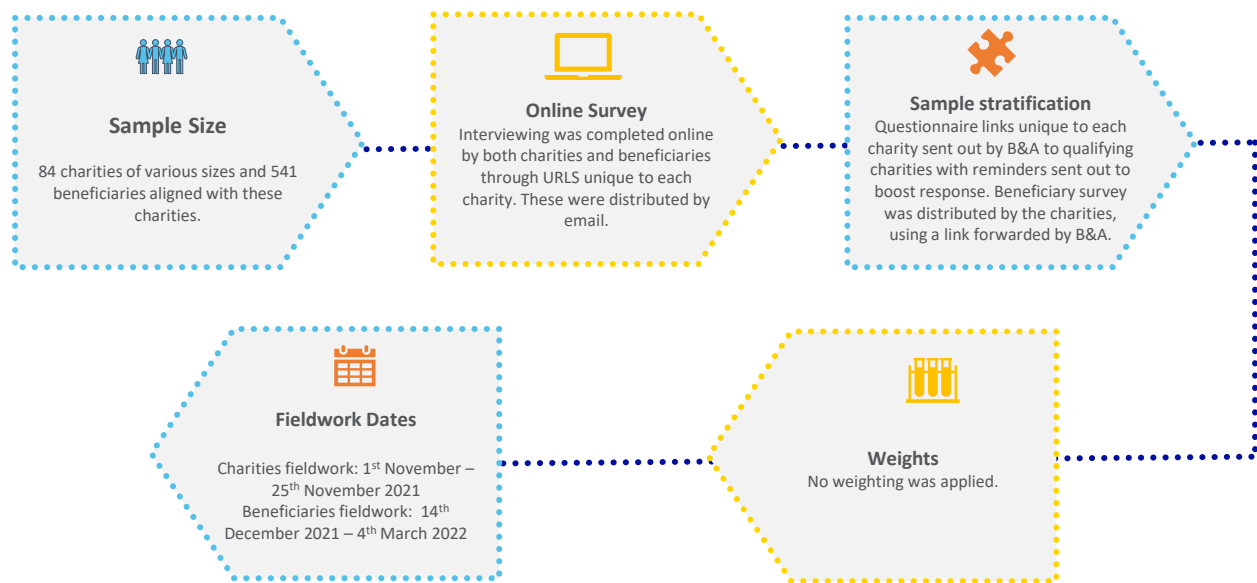
- The Fund of European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) provides support to European member states to address the basic needs of deprived people within their societies.
- As FEAD is an EU funded programme, the Department of Social Protection, which has been tasked with its implementation in Ireland, is required to carry out a periodic evaluation of the programme.
- Behaviour & Attitudes (B&A) was commissioned to carry out this assessment. It involved quantitative research with both the charities and the beneficiaries of the FEAD programme, as well as smaller-scale qualitative research among stakeholders and beneficiaries, to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness and relevance of the programme.
- The 5 main criteria under evaluation are:
 - ❖ Effectiveness
 - ❖ Efficiency
 - ❖ Relevance
 - ❖ Coherence
 - ❖ EU-added value

A Robust Methodology

- A thorough, multifaceted research-based review process was undertaken.
- B&A and the Department of Social Protection worked closely together on the questionnaire design process to ensure the development of a robust questionnaire, addressing the key evaluative parameters of relevance. The questionnaire was distributed to two key charity stakeholder groups:
 - ❖ The charities who distribute FEAD aid to beneficiaries
 - ❖ The beneficiaries themselves
- The quantitative research was undertaken online and survey links/invitations were distributed by email. Questionnaires were accessed through specific URLs that were assigned to each charity.
- In terms of the beneficiary questionnaire, these URLs were also emailed to the charities, for subsequent re-distribution among beneficiaries, to ensure anonymity.
- In addition to this, the researchers interviewed a number of other stakeholders qualitatively including FoodCloud and a number of charity representatives, to ensure all aspects of the programme were covered appropriately in the evaluation.

Methodology

An online survey of 84 charities & 541 beneficiaries was undertaken. The Beneficiary data collection process was necessarily quite lengthy as data collection was (a) at arms length and (b) needed to be handled sensitively.

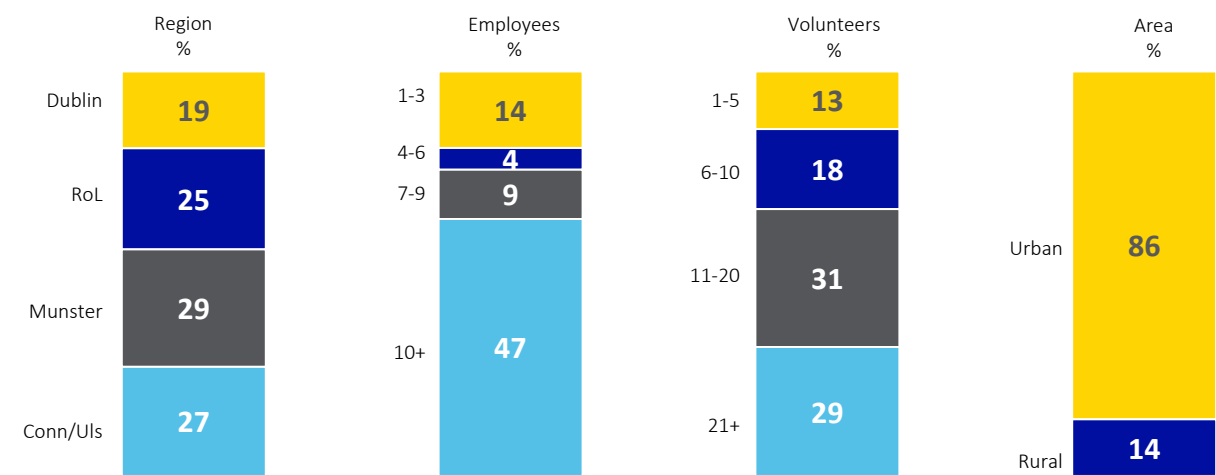




Profile of Sample

Profile of Charity sample

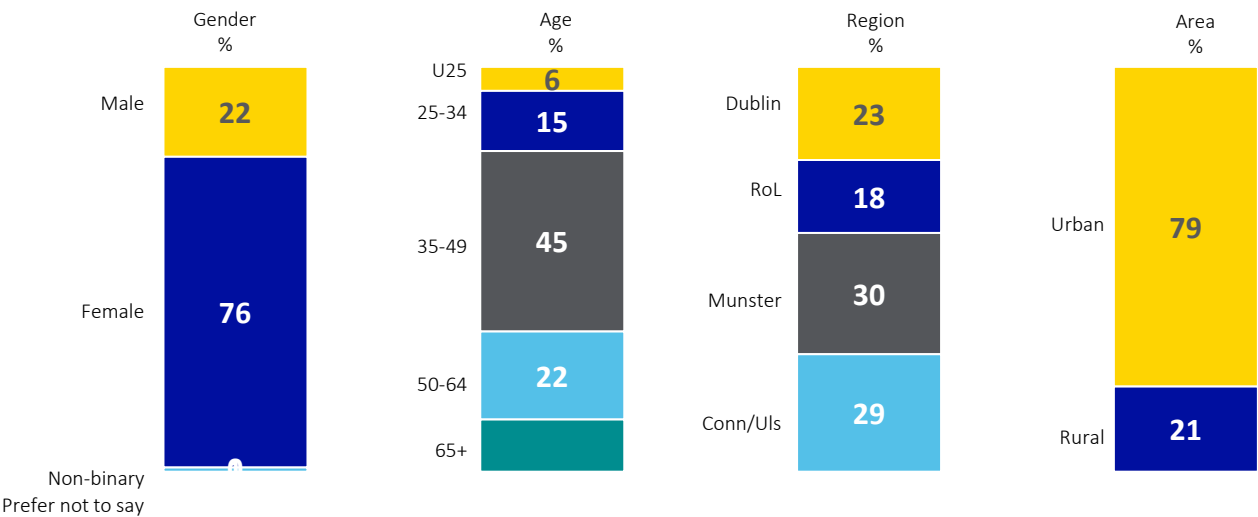
Base: 85 Charities participated in a survey which was largely online-completed, with some being followed up (and in a few instances, interviewed) by phone



The charities participating in the study were well spread by region, with half employing more than 10 but generally also having larger numbers of volunteers in parallel. These charities are mainly urban-based.

Profile of Beneficiary sample

Base: 541 Beneficiaries participated with these being across a variety of charities with questionnaires/survey links being relayed by the charities to the beneficiaries

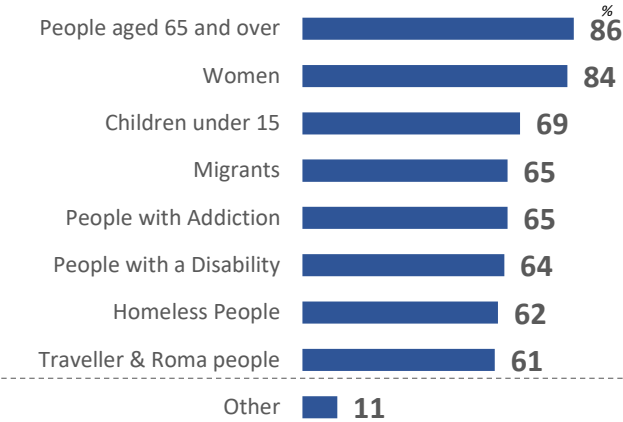


541 beneficiaries of FEAD aid participated in a survey-based review. The majority of participants were female and concentrated in middle age. In common with the charities themselves, most are in urban areas and broadly mirror the regional distribution of the charities.

Charities: FEAD product recipients

Base: 85 Charities

A wide range of cohorts are helped by FEAD with the average charity accommodating just under six (5.56) of these groups. Older people over 65, children under 15 and women specifically, are the most commonly cited recipients of FEAD aid.



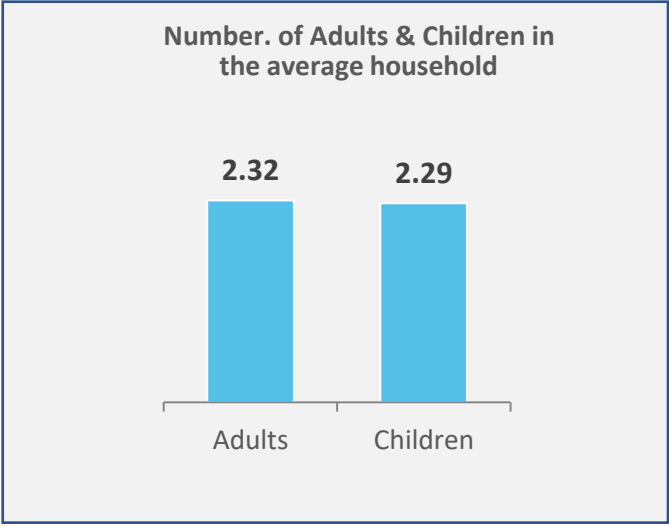
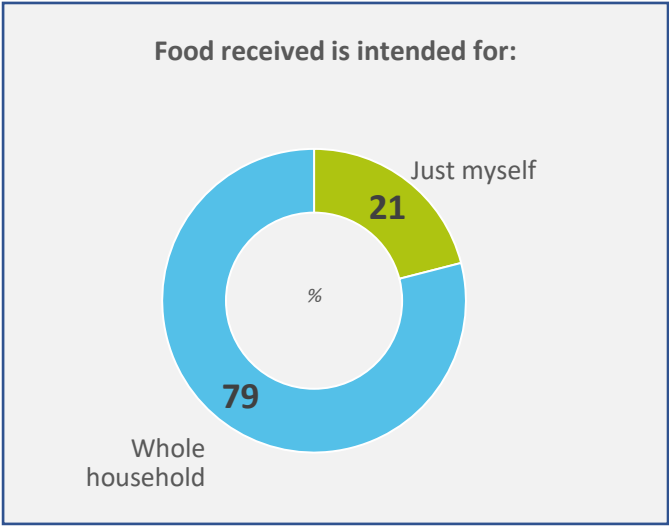
Region				
Dublin	RoL	Munster	Conn/Uls	
16	21	24	23	
%	%	%	%	
88	81	88	87	
81	71	92	87	
50	62	79	78	
44	67	75	70	
69	71	63	57	
50	62	63	78	
88	67	54	52	
50	57	67	70	
13	10	13	9	

Q.1 Who do you provide FEAD food products to?

The main regional difference is in respect of a much greater number of homeless beneficiaries in Dublin, whereas Munster and Connaught/Ulster-based charities are relatively more likely to aid women, children, migrants and Roma/Travellers specifically.

Beneficiaries: Food intended for

Base: 541 Beneficiaries

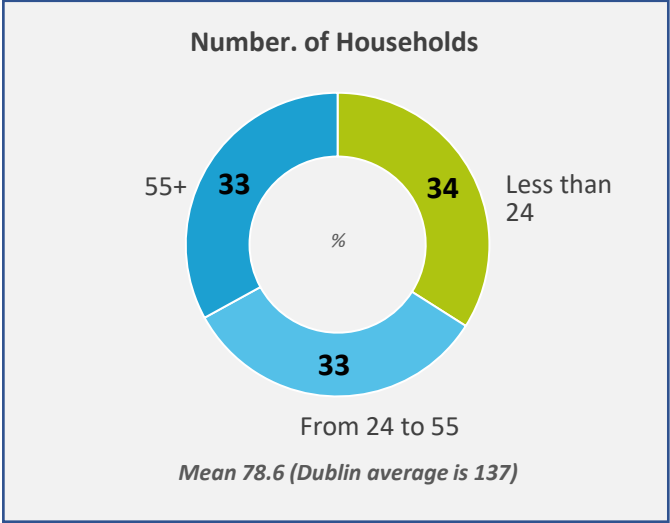
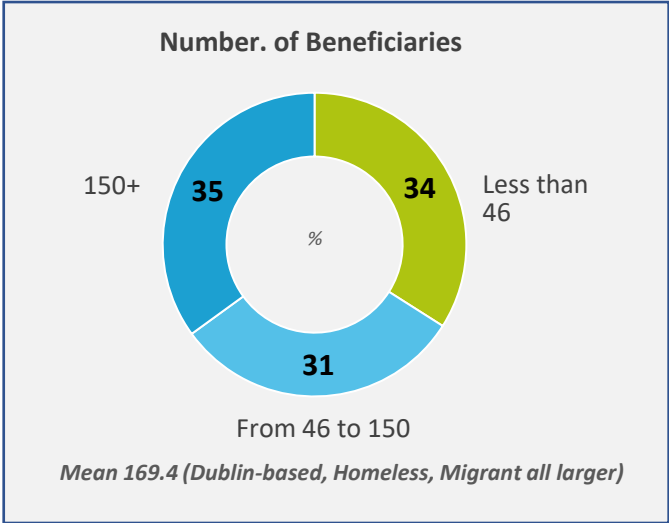


Q1a Is the food that you receive just intended for yourself or is it provided for all of your household?
 Q.1b Number of adults

The majority of beneficiaries are feeding their whole household, which, on average, is comprised of slightly more than 2 adults and 2 children.

Charities: Beneficiaries supported on a weekly basis

Base: 85 Charities

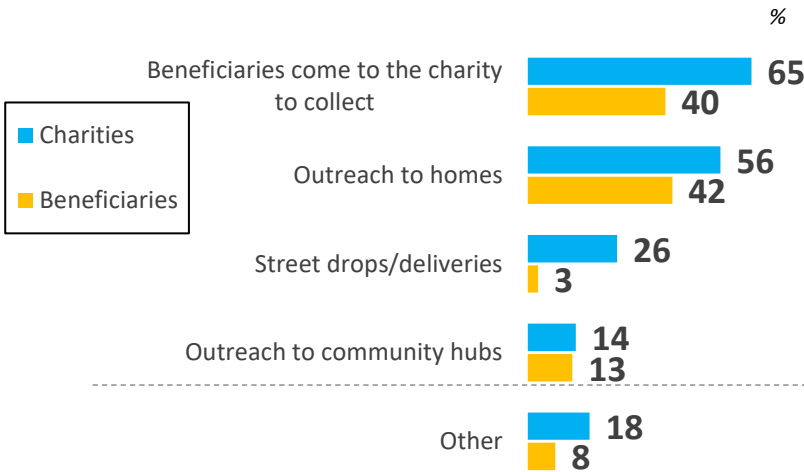


- Q.1a And roughly what number of beneficiaries do you support on a weekly basis?
- Q.1b When thinking about the number of beneficiaries you support, roughly how many households does this equate to on a weekly basis?

The average number of people helped per week is just under 170, with a mean number of households of slightly less than 80.

How aid is distributed

Base: 85 Charities/541 Beneficiaries



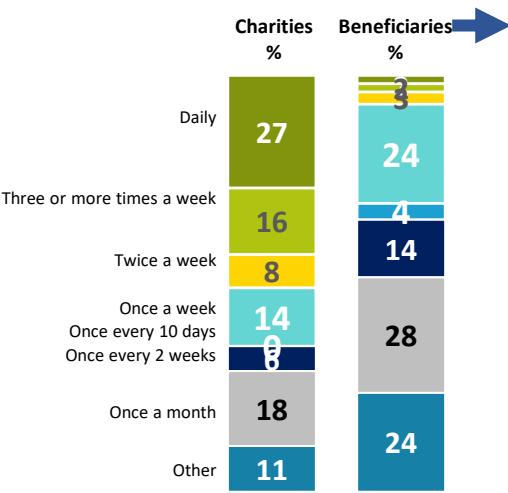
Region			
Dublin	RoL	Munster	Conn/Uls
%	%	%	%
69	52	54	83
45	37	34	45
63	43	50	70
32	54	56	26
38	29	29	13
3	4	1	4
19	5	8	26
10	4	10	24
19	29	17	9
15	10	2	7

Q.2a And how do you distribute aid to these people?
Q2a And how do you access FEAD food?

Predominantly these charities enable beneficiaries to visit the charity to collect aid, with home outreach offered by slightly less than 3 in 5. Street drops noteworthy in Dublin in particular. The beneficiary responses aligns with the charities, though there are lower numbers saying that they attend a charity or have food delivered to their home.

Frequency of distributing aid

Base: 85 Charities/541 Beneficiaries



Daily X Demographics (Charities)	
	%
Dublin	50
R. Leinster	24
Munster	29
Conn/ULster	13
1-3 Employees	27
4-6 Employees	-
7-9 Employees	-
10+	42
Recipient Type (Groups providing aid to)	
Children under 15	17
Women	24
People aged 65 and over	22
Migrants	20
Traveller & Roma people	23
Homeless People	34
People with Addiction	33
People with a Disability	15

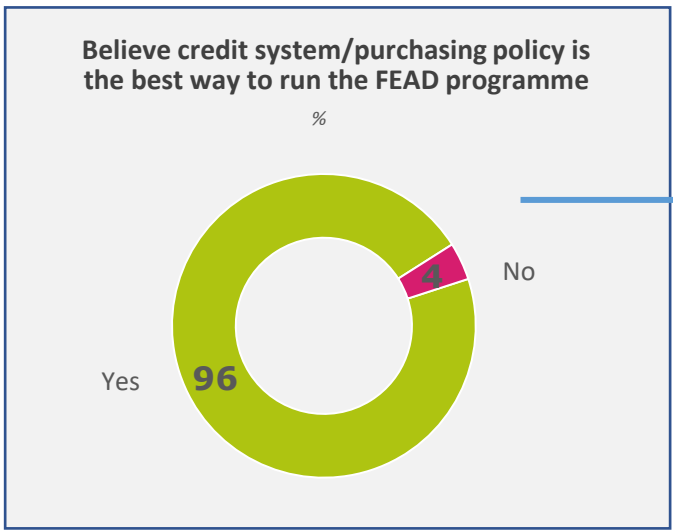
Daily X Demographics (Beneficiaries)	
	%
Male	6
Female	1
U24	3
25-34	6
35-49	1
50-64	3
65+	-
Dublin	5
R. Leinster	-
Munster	2
Conn/ULster	1
Primary Carer	
Yes	1
No	4
Prefer not to say	-
Ethnicity	
White or White Irish	2
Non-White (any)	2

• Q.2b How often do you distribute aid?

Slightly more than half distribute aid at least twice weekly - Daily delivery much more common in Dublin (and among charities with a larger employee base). Beneficiaries' experiences do not appear to align with charities, with only 30% stating they receive aid once a week or more. Evidently the charities are serving a much broader array of beneficiaries.

Charities: Believe credit system/purchasing policy is best way to run the FEAD programme

Base: 85 Charities



- "It can be very confusing - we don't know how many items is in a unit so sometimes cannot determine what quantities we are ordering."
- "I don't know about the credit system"
- "Can be a bit confusing in that it is not clear if we are getting the credit allocated quarterly or yearly"

Q.11 Do you believe the credit system/purchasing policy is the best way to run the FEAD programme?

Q.11a If not, why?

There is almost universal agreement that credit system is the best way to run the FEAD programme, irrespective of misgivings felt by almost 2 in 5 regarding credit allocation.

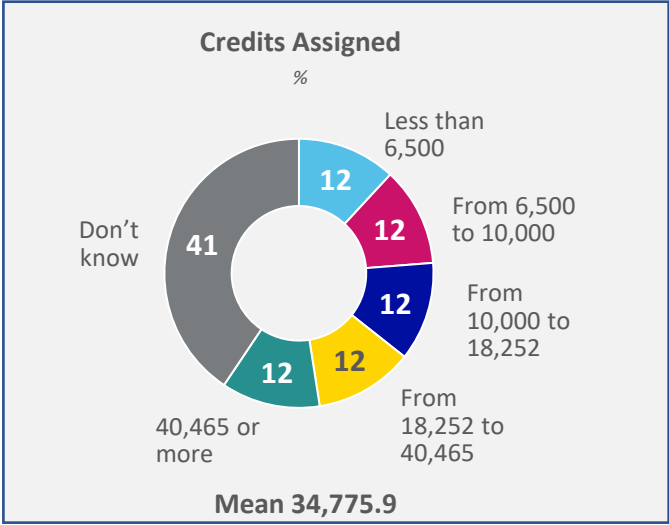
Charities: Aid products received from FEAD/credits assigned to charity

Base: 85 Charities



Q.3 Which of the following aid products or services do you receive from FEAD?

All are in receipt of food aid with four out of five also distributing education/ school kits.



Q.4 How many credits are assigned to your charity?

Quite a wide distribution of values, with the average at roughly 35,000 credits. Notable that 2 in 5 don't know their credit allowance.

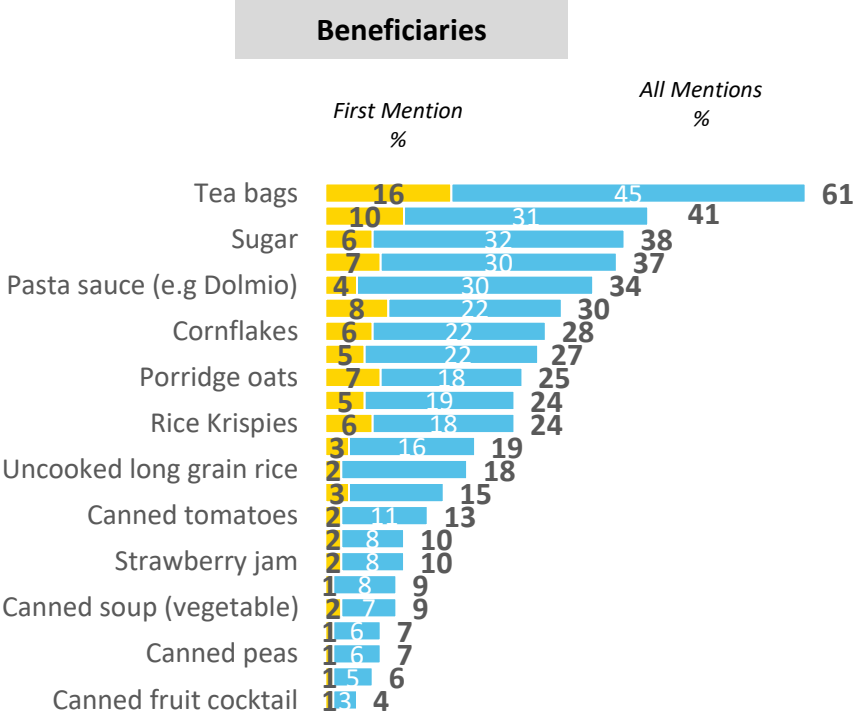
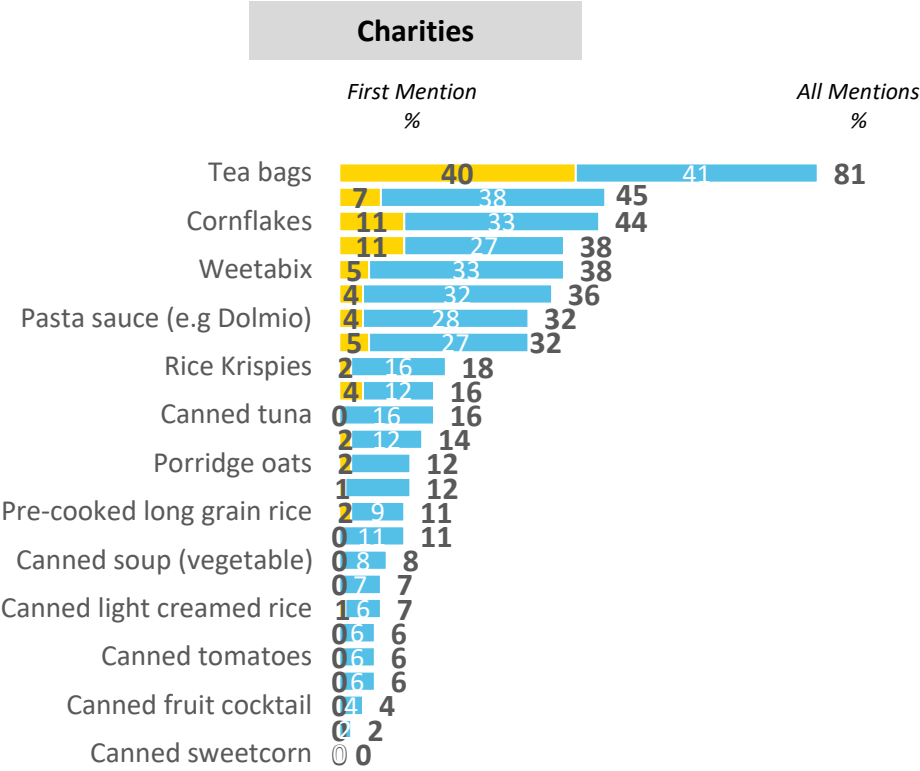


Data Gathered



Most important food items

Base: 85 Charities/541 Beneficiaries



Q.6c From the list of food items listed below, please rank the top 5 food items in terms of popularity.

When focusing on charities, warm drinks/ breakfast items, beans and pasta are among the key favourites, whereas canned produce, jam and soup are less salient. The pattern is broadly similar among beneficiaries.

Important food items x charity



Base: 85 Charities

	Total	Region				Employees				Groups providing Aid to							
		Dublin	RoL	Munst er	Conn/ Uls	1-3	4-6	7-9	10+	Child- ren under 15	Wo- men	People aged 65 and over	Migr- ants	Trav- eller & Roma people	Home- less People	People with Addict- ion	People with a Disa- bility
UNWTD	85	16	21	24	23	11	3	7	38	59	71	73	55	52	53	55	54
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Tea bags	81	94	86	67	83	64	100	86	84	81	77	78	80	77	83	82	80
Coffee	45	44	48	46	39	45	-	57	47	39	38	38	42	35	45	38	41
Cornflakes	44	56	48	38	35	45	33	29	39	49	45	44	47	44	49	49	50
Penne pasta	38	13	29	50	52	45	33	43	37	47	41	38	47	44	34	36	41
Weetabix	38	38	38	33	43	18	33	29	45	39	38	37	36	42	36	35	35
Canned beans	36	50	33	33	35	45	67	43	39	39	37	37	38	40	38	36	37
Pasta sauce (e.g. Dolmio)	32	19	19	42	43	55	33	43	21	39	35	36	42	40	32	38	41
Sugar	32	25	43	38	22	45	-	29	29	29	28	30	27	33	34	35	30
Rice Krispies	18	13	29	17	13	18	33	14	16	25	21	21	24	21	23	24	24
Pot Noodle (chicken & mushroom)	16	19	10	29	9	-	-	14	18	15	17	15	16	15	19	16	11
Canned tuna	16	6	19	13	26	-	33	-	21	14	18	16	16	17	15	22	17
Instant porridge oats	14	13	19	13	13	18	33	-	13	12	17	16	11	12	9	13	13
Porridge oats	12	13	19	8	9	27	33	14	5	7	8	12	7	6	8	5	9
Canned salmon	12	13	19	4	13	9	33	14	16	5	10	12	9	10	8	11	11
Pre-cooked long grain rice	11	19	5	8	9	9	-	-	16	10	11	10	7	12	11	13	7
Cup-A-Soup 4 pack (vegetable)	11	19	14	8	4	-	-	-	13	5	8	8	4	8	11	7	7
Canned soup (vegetable)	8	6	5	13	4	18	33	-	3	7	10	10	7	4	4	9	9
Uncooked long grain rice	7	6	5	8	9	9	-	14	8	8	8	8	9	10	11	9	7
Canned light creamed rice	7	6	5	4	13	-	-	29	5	5	4	7	5	8	6	2	6
Instant soup (family packet – vegetable)	6	13	5	4	4	-	-	14	8	5	7	7	7	4	8	5	6
Canned tomatoes	6	13	-	8	4	9	-	-	8	7	7	7	7	10	8	5	7
Strawberry jam	6	6	5	8	4	9	-	-	5	7	7	7	5	6	6	5	7
Canned fruit cocktail	4	-	-	4	9	9	-	14	3	3	4	4	4	2	4	4	4
Canned peas	2	-	-	4	4	-	-	14	-	2	1	1	-	2	-	-	-

Q.6c From the list of food items listed below, please rank the top 5 food items in terms of popularity.

Important food items x beneficiaries

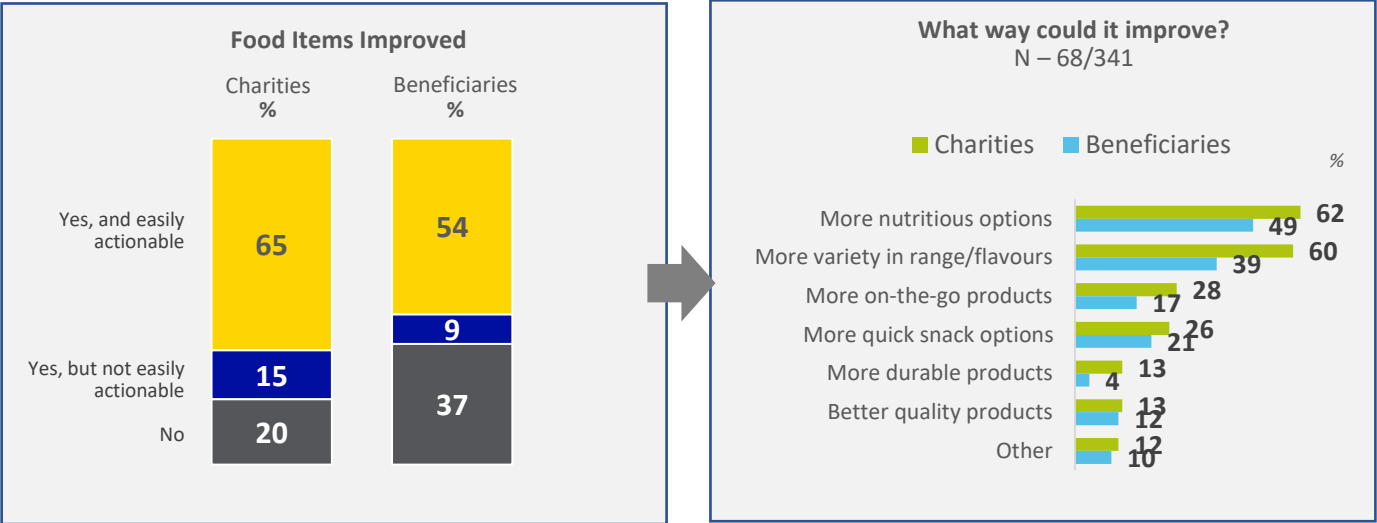
Base: 541 Beneficiaries

	Total	Gender		Age					Region			
		Male	Female	U25	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Dublin	R.Lein ster	Mun- ster	Conn/ Uls
UNWTD	541	121	412	30	83	241	119	68	122	98	164	157
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Tea bags	61	54	63	57	51	57	73	68	61	61	61	61
Weetabix	41	36	42	33	47	39	38	46	35	48	39	42
Sugar	38	47	35	53	36	36	39	37	36	45	37	36
Penne pasta	37	25	41	50	48	41	31	12	33	36	37	40
Pasta sauce (e.g Dolmio)	34	23	37	30	34	41	31	15	34	32	35	34
Coffee	30	41	27	43	27	25	39	32	26	34	29	34
Cornflakes	28	39	25	23	29	29	32	21	34	30	29	22
Canned beans	27	28	27	17	23	30	30	24	29	23	26	30
Porridge oats	25	25	25	10	24	20	25	50	16	32	23	31
Canned tuna	24	21	25	27	16	24	30	24	30	14	27	22
Rice Krispies	24	15	27	20	35	29	17	9	33	22	24	19
Pot Noodle (chicken & mushroom)	19	27	16	37	28	18	18	3	26	13	21	14
Uncooked long grain rice	18	17	18	20	16	20	13	16	21	14	18	17
Instant porridge oats	15	20	13	7	18	12	14	22	12	17	18	11
Canned tomatoes	13	12	14	10	11	17	12	9	12	8	17	13
Cup-A-Soup 4 pack (vegetable)	10	9	10	13	13	7	6	21	11	12	6	11
Strawberry jam	10	10	10	13	12	9	5	19	5	11	8	15
Pre-cooked long grain rice	9	10	8	3	10	8	7	13	7	7	10	9
Canned soup (vegetable)	9	11	9	13	6	9	8	13	11	8	9	8
Instant soup (family packet – vegetable)	7	12	6	7	7	6	7	12	7	11	7	4
Canned peas	7	9	6	3	6	6	8	10	10	5	5	8
Canned sweetcorn	6	2	7	3	4	6	8	4	3	4	7	7
Canned fruit cocktail	4	4	4	3	-	3	3	15	4	4	2	7

Q.4c From the list of food items listed below, please indicate the 5 items you use most?

Improving food items available

Base: 85 Charities/541 Beneficiaries

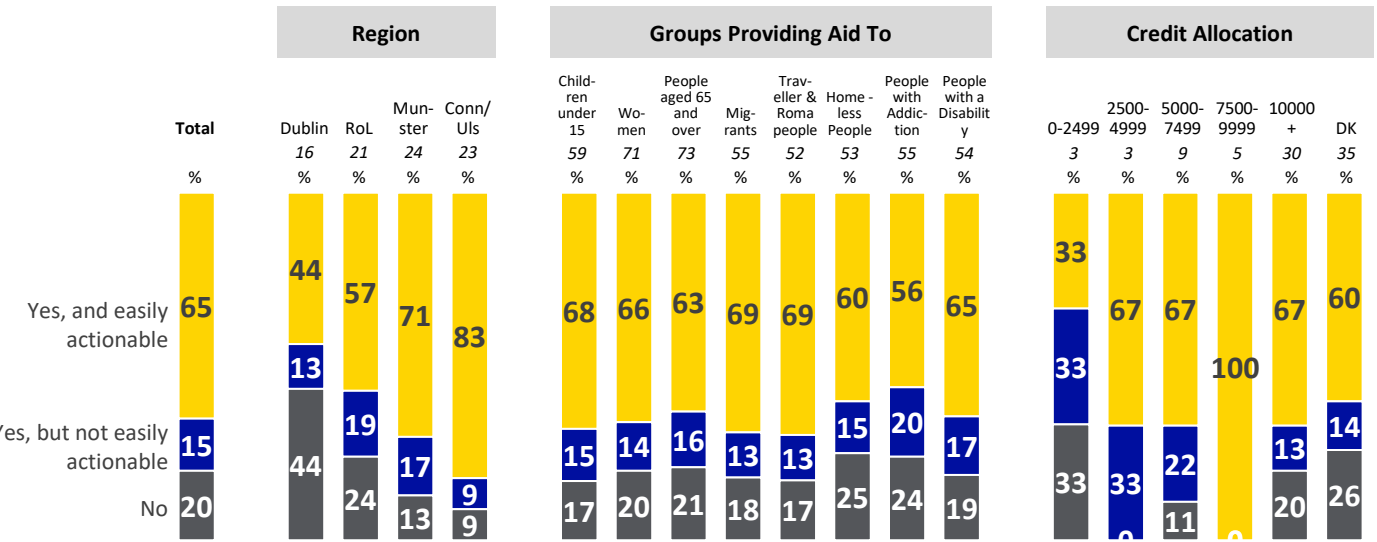


Q.6a Do you believe that the list of food items available could be improved upon?
 Q.6b If so, in what way could it improve? Please bear in mind, there is a continued (& deliberate) focus on non-perishable food options.

Many are enthusiastic to see actionable change though 15% of charities & 9% of beneficiaries suspect the changes needed would be difficult to achieve. A further 1 in 5 charities & almost 2 in 5 beneficiaries believe food items do not need improvements. A lack of nutritious options and/or variety are the key areas of improvement needed for both. Quality and Durability not viewed as significant shortcomings.

Charities: Can Food Items be Improved?

Base: 85 Charities



Q.6a Do you believe that the list of food items available could be improved upon?
 Charities based in Munster & Conn/Ulster are more likely to believe that there could be easily actioned improvements, while those working with people experiencing homelessness or addiction are less likely to believe such changes can be easily actioned.

Charities: Consideration of food waste when ordering food

Base: 85 Charities

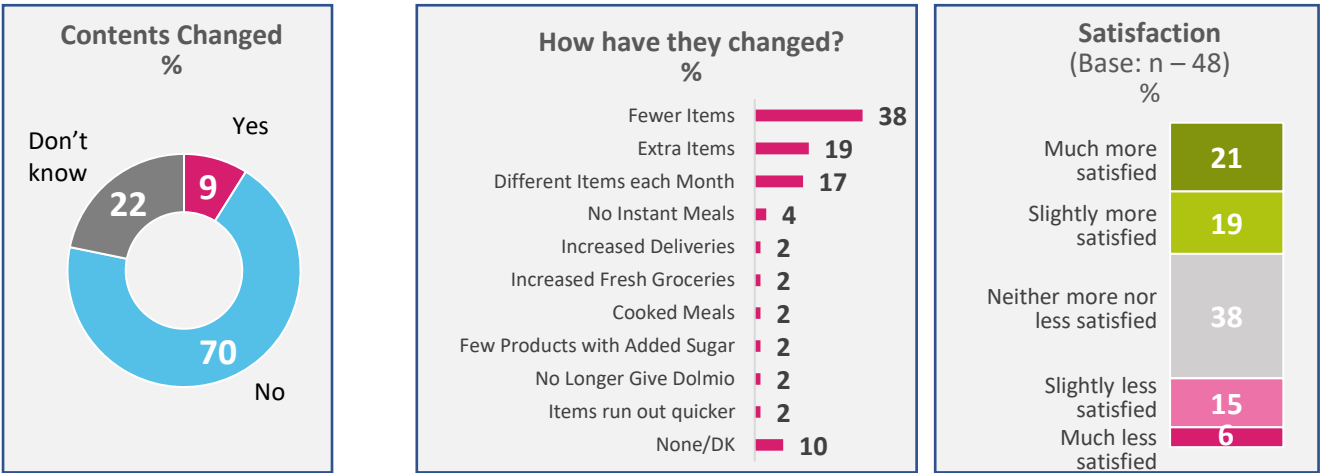


Q.9a When ordering food, does consideration of food waste play a factor in how much food you order?
 Q.9b If not, why is this not a consideration?

Three out of four are conscious of issues around food waste. From the 27% that do not consider food waste, 70% note that there are never any leftovers to contribute to food waste, while 3 in 5 suggest that the food distributed is non-perishable.

Beneficiaries: Changes to food parcels during COVID-19

Base: 541 Beneficiaries

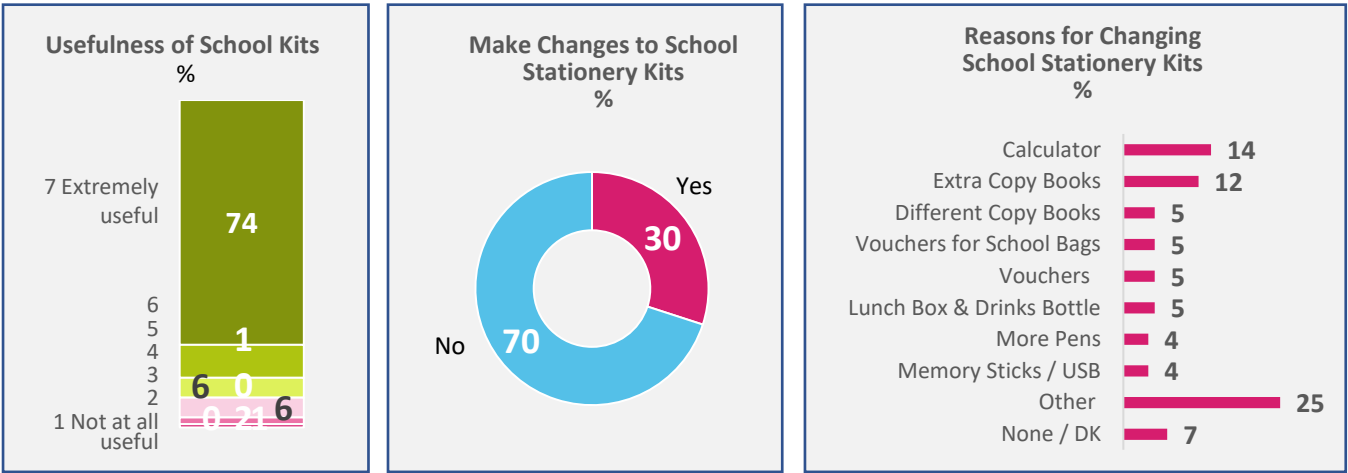


Q.6a Has the contents of your food parcel changed due to COVID-19?
 Q.6b In what way have the contents changed?
 Q.6c Are you more satisfied or dissatisfied with your food parcel now than before Covid-19?

The vast majority noticed no difference in their food parcel during covid, with only 1 in 10 noticing a difference. Of those who noticed a change, there was a clear divide in experience, with 2 in 5 being more satisfied, while more than 1 in 5 were less satisfied.

Beneficiaries: Rating of school stationery kits

Base: 541 Beneficiaries

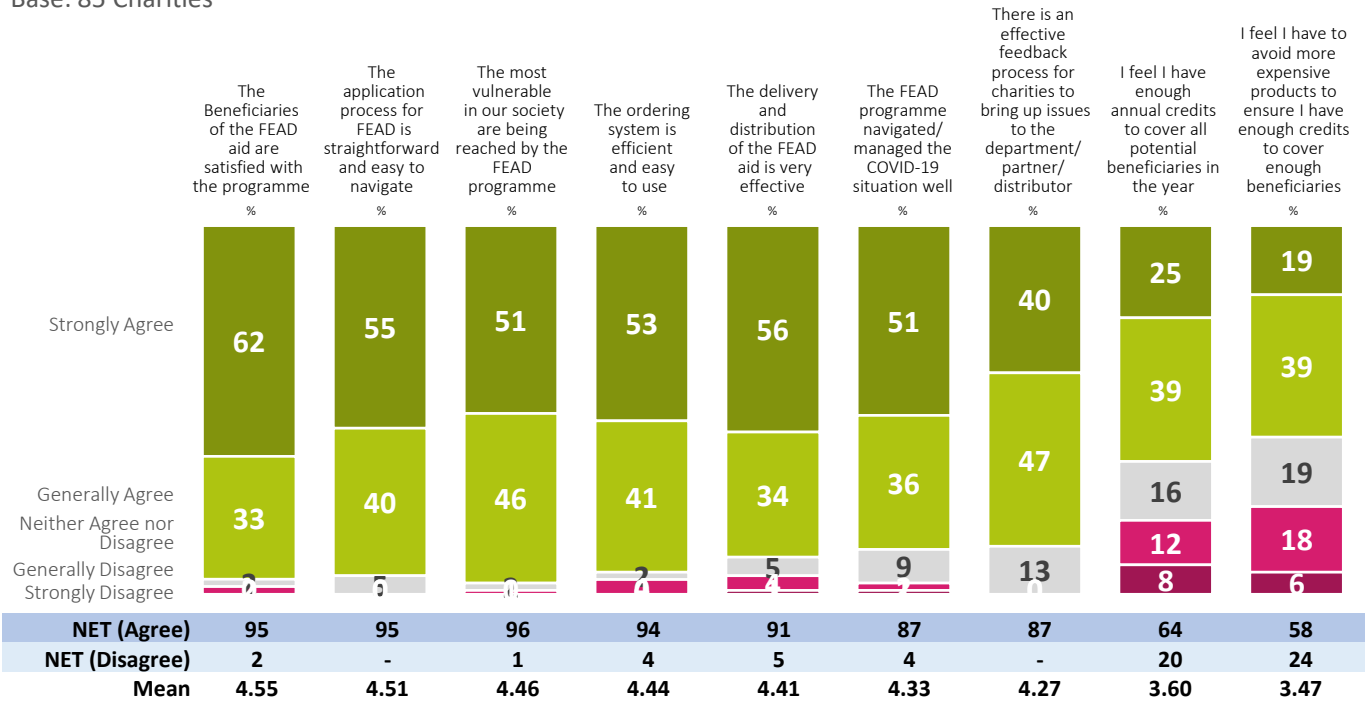


Q.3b How do you rate the school stationery kits in terms of usefulness?
 Q.3c If possible, would you make any changes to the school stationery kits?
 Q.3d What would you change about the school stationery kits?

The vast majority view the school kits as useful with 3 in 4 rating them as extremely useful. However, 3 in 10 do feel that there is some room for improvement. Areas of improvement include the provision of a calculator and extra copy books.

Charities: Perspective of FEAD programme

Base: 85 Charities



Q.8 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? -
 Most feel that the beneficiaries are happy, the application process works well, and that the programme is meeting the objective of helping the most vulnerable. There are some issues surrounding not having sufficient credits, with some indicating they steer clear of expensive items to stretch their credit allowance further.

Agree at all x demographics

Base: 85 Charities

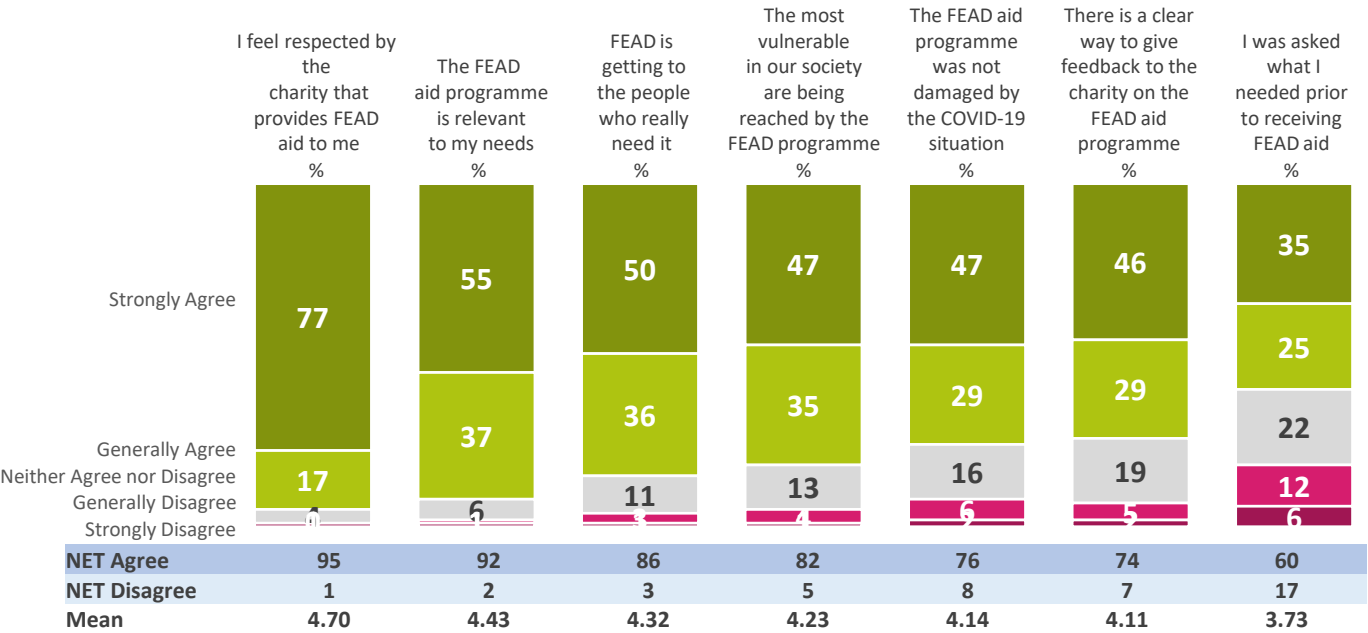
	Total	Region				Employees				Groups providing Aid to								
		Dublin	RoL	Munster	Conn/Uls	1-3	4-6	7-9	10+	Children under 15	Women	People aged 65 and over	Migrants	Traveler & Roma people	Homeless People	People with Addiction	People with a Disability	
		85	16	21	24	23	11	3	7	38	59	71	73	55	52	53	55	54
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The application process for FEAD is straightforward and easy to navigate	95	94	100	100	87	100	100	100	92	93	94	95	98	96	94	96	94	94
There is an effective feedback process for charities to bring up issues to the department/ partner/distributor	87	94	95	88	74	91	100	100	84	83	86	86	85	83	87	89	81	81
The beneficiaries of the FEAD aid are satisfied with the programme	95	94	95	96	96	91	100	100	92	93	94	95	93	94	92	93	94	94
The beneficiaries of the FEAD aid are satisfied with the programme	96	100	95	96	96	91	100	100	97	95	96	96	96	94	96	96	94	94
The ordering system is efficient and easy to use	94	94	95	92	96	82	100	100	97	92	93	93	95	92	92	93	91	91
The delivery and distribution of the FEAD aid is very effective	91	88	90	88	96	82	100	100	87	90	90	89	91	90	87	87	87	87
I feel I have enough annual credits to cover all potential beneficiaries in the year	64	44	76	67	61	73	33	86	55	59	61	60	64	65	64	67	61	61
I feel I have to avoid more expensive products to ensure I have enough credits to cover enough beneficiaries	58	63	62	58	52	82	100	57	47	58	59	60	65	62	55	58	56	56
The FEAD programme navigated/ managed the COVID-19 situation well	87	81	100	79	87	91	67	100	87	81	85	85	85	81	85	85	85	85

Q.8 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? -

Charities in Dublin are much less likely to agree that they have adequate credits. This is possibly due to increased demands placed on charities in Dublin, with larger amounts of people needing aid.

Beneficiaries: Perspective of FEAD programme

Base: 541 Beneficiaries



Q.5 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? -

There is a generally positive attitude toward FEAD, with strong agreement in terms of respect, relevance, and stability during the COVID-19 pandemic. There may be some room to provide more of a voice for beneficiaries in terms of their needs, with almost 1 in 5 suggesting they have not been asked what they needed prior to receiving FEAD aid.

Perspective of FEAD programme x demographics

Base: 541 Beneficiaries

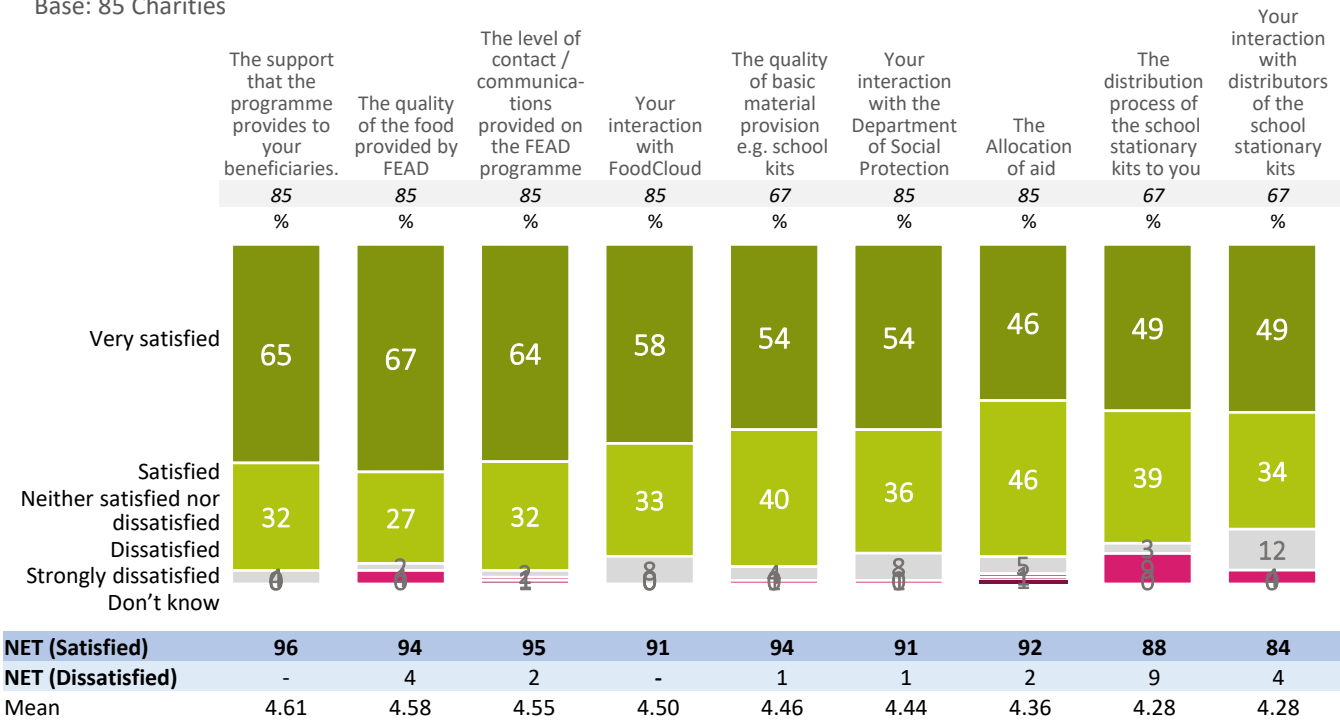
	Total	Gender		Age					Region				Primary Carer			Ethnicity		
		Male	Female	U25	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Dublin	R.Leinster	Munster	Conn/Uls	Yes	No	Prefer not to say	White/White Irish	Non-White (Any)	Prefer not to say
UNWTD	541	121	412	30	83	241	119	68	122	98	164	157	308	221	12*	465	65	11*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I feel respected by the charity that provides FEAD aid to me	95	97	94	93	92	96	93	99	94	99	93	95	95	94	100	94	97	100
The FEAD aid programme is relevant to my needs	92	92	92	90	89	92	92	96	92	99	87	92	91	93	100	92	91	91
FEAD is getting to the people who really need it	86	86	86	97	81	88	82	88	89	91	83	83	86	85	92	85	88	100
The most vulnerable in our society are being reached by the FEAD programme	82	83	82	83	77	84	82	84	84	92	79	78	82	81	100	83	82	82
The FEAD aid programme was not damaged by the COVID-19 situation	76	73	77	63	72	73	81	90	80	81	67	80	75	77	75	76	75	82
There is a clear way to give feedback to the charity on the FEAD aid programme	74	72	75	73	72	76	67	85	74	84	70	73	76	73	58	73	82	82
I was asked what I needed prior to receiving FEAD aid	60	59	61	73	61	60	55	65	65	73	54	56	60	61	50	58	77	55

Q.5 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? -

Those over 65 have consistently stronger levels of agreement across all metrics, showing signs of a particularly positive experience of FEAD among this age cohort.

Charities: Satisfaction with FEAD programme

Base: 85 Charities



Q.5 To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the following aspects of the FEAD programme School Stationery Kits? -

The majority of charities are satisfied across all metrics. Quality and Support are strengths for the programme, while communications are strong and the relationship with FoodCloud and interactions with the Department invariably positive.

Beneficiaries: Satisfaction with FEAD programme

Base: 541 Beneficiaries

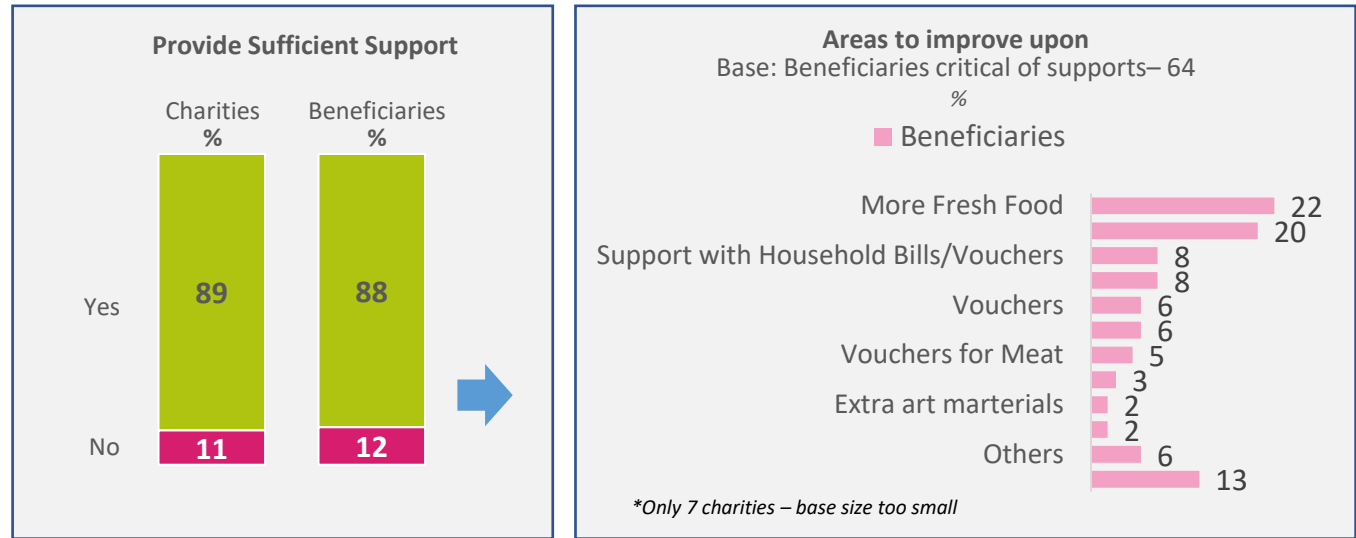


Q.7 To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the following aspects of the FEAD programme School Stationery Kits? -

There is strong satisfaction in regard to the quality, distribution and amount of aid received, both in the context of food and of school stationary kits.

Does the FEAD programme provide sufficient supports?

Base: 85 Charities/541 Beneficiaries



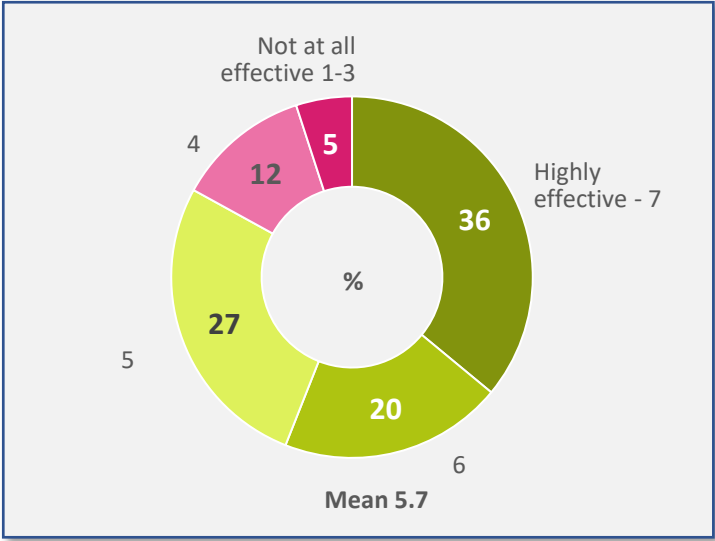
Q.7 Outside of the basic food and material aid provided, do you believe the FEAD programme provides sufficient supports?

Q.7a If not, what could they provide more of? Anything else?

The vast majority feel that the programme does have sufficient supports. Of the 1 in 10 beneficiaries, who do not feel the programme provides sufficient supports, 2 in 5 cite either the need for more fresh food or toiletries.

Charities: Effectiveness at helping the most vulnerable towards social inclusion

Base: 85 Charities



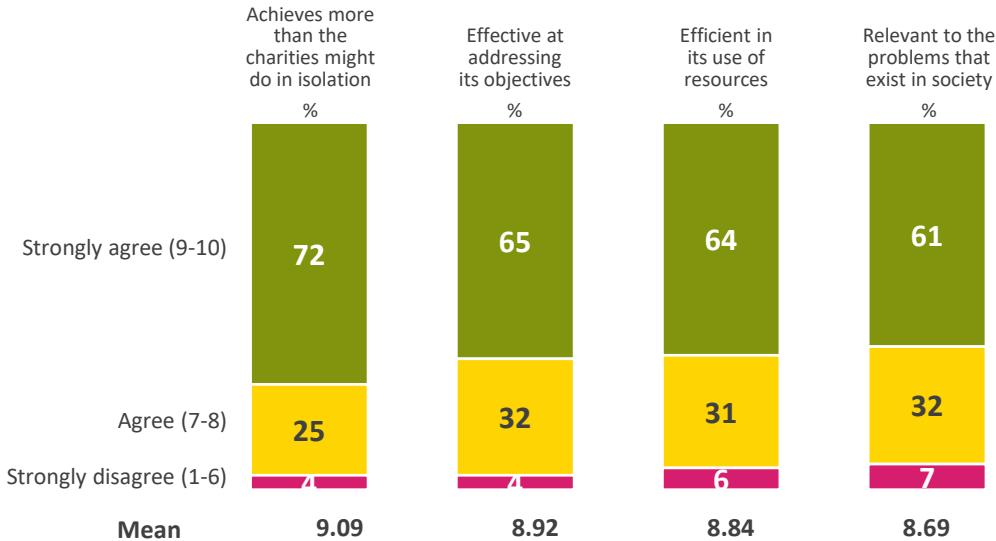
Mean X categorisations	
	%
Dublin	5.8
R. Leinster	6.0
Munster	5.7
Conn/Ulster	5.5
1-3 Employees	5.6
4-6 Employees	4.3
7-9 Employees	6.1
10+	5.7
Children under 15	5.5
Women	5.6
People aged 65 and over	5.6
Migrants	5.7
Traveller & Roma people	5.7
Homeless People	5.7
People with Addiction	5.8
People with a Disability	5.6

Q.10 To what extent do you believe the FEAD Programme is effective in helping the most vulnerable towards social inclusion?

Very few are critical of the effectiveness of the programme in its ability to help the most vulnerable. The mean score (almost six on a seven point scale) is quite stable across the various cohorts.

Charities perspectives of the programme

Base: 85 Charities



Q.12 And finally thinking about the FEAD programme as you deal with it, to what extent (using a ten-point scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 10 being strongly agree), would you describe it as....

There is very strong agreement that the programme achieves more than the charities would do alone- only small numbers doubt it's relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness at addressing its objectives.

Charities: Difference in programme perspectives

Base: 85 Charities

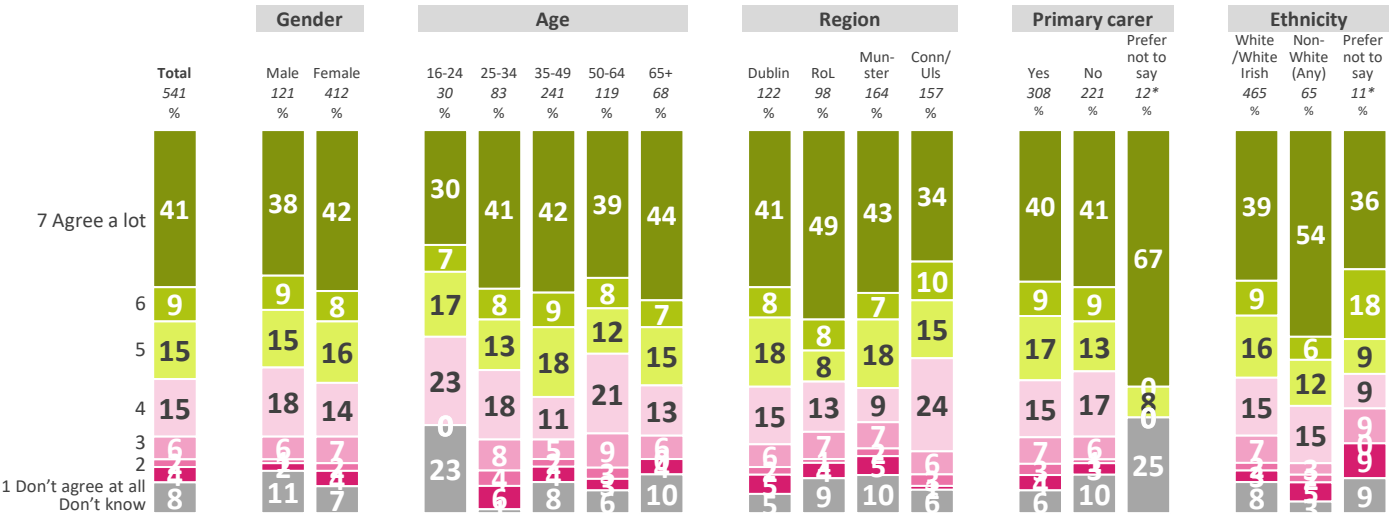
Meanscores where 10 is Strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree	Total	Region				Employees				Groups providing Aid to							
		Dublin	RoL	Munster	Conn/Uls	1-3	4-6	7-9	10+	Children under 15	Women	People aged 65 and over	Migrants	Traveller & Roma people	Homeless People	People with Addiction	People with a Disability
	85	16	21	24	23	11	3	7	38	59	71	73	55	52	53	55	54
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Effective at addressing its objectives	8.9	9.1	9.5	8.7	8.5	8.8	9.3	9.0	8.6	8.8	8.9	8.9	9.0	8.9	8.8	9.0	8.9
Efficient in its use of resources	8.8	9.0	9.4	8.5	8.6	8.6	8.3	9.1	8.6	8.7	8.7	8.8	8.8	8.6	8.6	8.8	8.7
Relevant to the problems that exist in society	8.7	9.3	9.3	8.4	8.1	8.5	8.3	8.7	8.5	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.8	8.6	8.7	8.9	8.6
Achieves more than the charities might do in isolation	9.1	9.4	9.5	8.8	8.9	8.7	9.7	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.2	9.1	9.1	9.2	9.1

Q.12 And finally thinking about the FEAD programme as you deal with it, to what extent (using a ten-point scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 10 10 being strongly agree), would you describe it as....

Charities based in Dublin and Leinster are marginally more likely to score the programme better.

Beneficiaries: FEAD helps me to move out of poverty

Base: 541 Beneficiaries

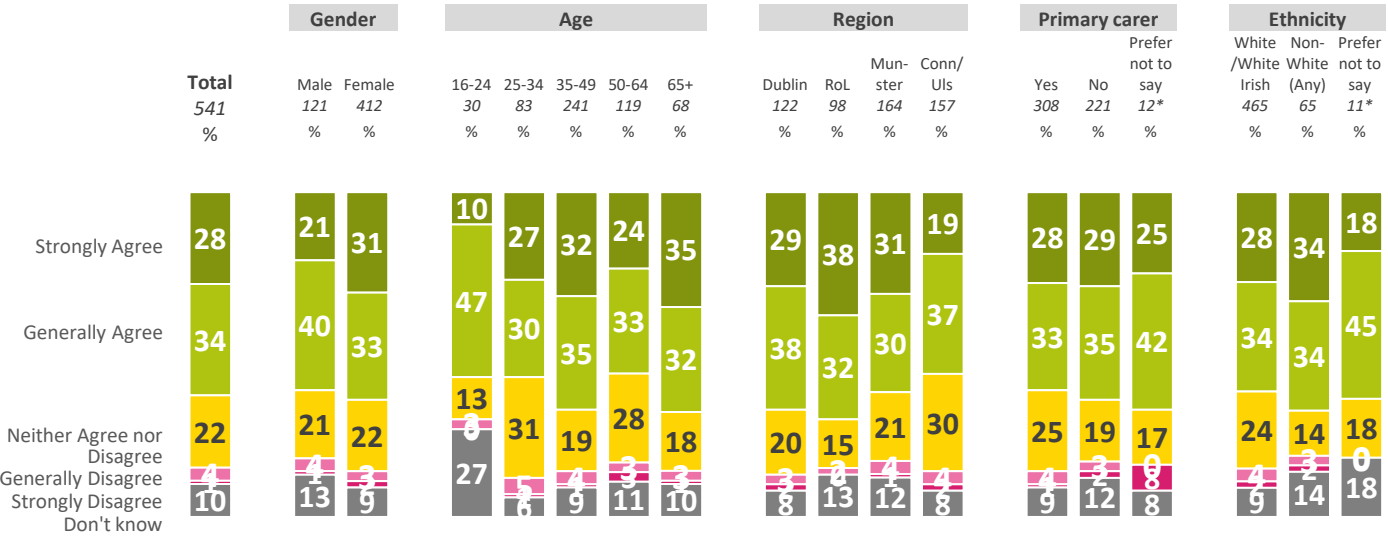


Q.9a To what extent do you believe the FEAD programme is providing a stepping-stone for you to move out of poverty?

Almost 2 in 3 believe that the programme will aid in moving out of poverty. Those under 25 are less likely to agree as are those based in Conn/Ulster and, to a lesser extent, those in Munster. Those who are non-white are more likely to agree with this.

Beneficiaries: FEAD provides a stepping-stone out of social exclusion

Base: 541 Beneficiaries



Q.9b To what extent do you believe the food and materials supplied by the FEAD programme is providing a stepping stone out of social exclusion?

Similar to the previous question, almost 2 in 3 agree that the programme will aid in moving them out of social exclusion. Those aged 35 to 49 and over 65, and those based in Dublin and Leinster are more optimistic

Qualitative In-depth interviews

- A small number of individual in-depth interviews was undertaken with key charity contacts in respect of FEAD. In addition, a further interview was also undertaken with one of the main co-ordinators at FoodCloud.
- Invariably, the feedback on the FEAD programme was very positive and there appear to be limited operational issues, notwithstanding some slight confusion occasionally about credits.
- The allocated produce is generally of good quality, if somewhat limited in terms of breadth and, in the view of some, perhaps nutritionally questionable. Conversely, there is some demand too for convenience items like pot noodles and packet soups, which charities acknowledge may be of debatable nutritional benefit, but which can provide instant and easy nourishment.
- Many of the charities involved also use Food Cloud's system of re-distributing perishable food collected from supermarkets etc. This is not an element of FEAD per se, but is often used by them to prepare meals and food at drop-in centres for the homeless etc.
- It was suggested that the distribution of perishable food would benefit from assistance under the FEAD programme, were this practicable, and equally that charities themselves would be keen to benefit from additional aid in the provision of distribution or logistics assistance, currently not provided for under FEAD.
- Nonetheless, these criticisms are relatively minor and for the most part, the programme is felt to address its aims and objectives and to do so in an efficient and worthwhile manner. The possible broadening of the scope of the programme to incorporate Food Cloud's perishable produce was raised spontaneously by respondents.

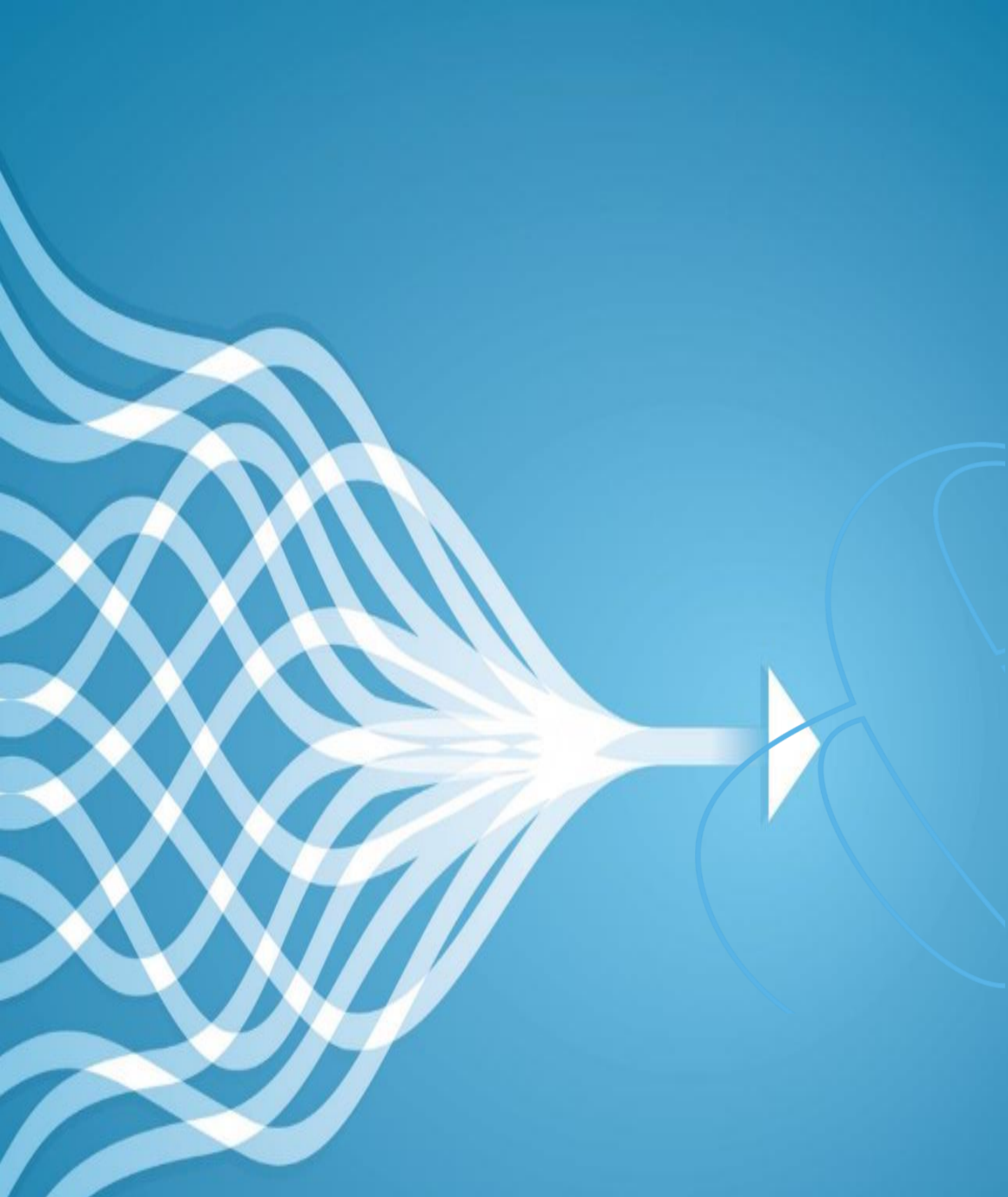
Qualitative findings: The household kits are vital but awareness of where they had come from is minimal

Though the kits are viewed as essential by those receiving them, the understanding of where these kits come from is poor, with respondents unsure of the provider. This is easily explained by the fact that all items are already in the homes prior to the recipients entering the residence.

Positives:	Areas to work on:
<i>All items are useful</i> – no items are seen as having no use in the home, though some are of more use than others (kitchen equipment and vacuum the primary mentions here)	<i>Some additional communication would have been useful</i> – respondents felt it would have been helpful if they had been told that items would already be in the home, to avoid any unnecessary stress.
<i>The items are good quality</i> – no issues in relation to poor quality items, with respondents reporting no breakages or issues.	<i>More choice would have been helpful</i> – the fact that the items are in the house is comforting to many on first arrival, though some feel more choice in the items would be a nice addition.
<i>The ease of access is a key strength of the kit</i> – for respondents, this period of moving into the home is chaotic and stressful, and so the fact that items are already in the house is a huge benefit for them and helps to reduce stress.	Additional items mentioned by respondents included both dishwashers and tables to eat at . These are potentially outside the remit of FEAD however.

Other items required/suggested

<p>“</p> <p><i>Sanitary products (Personal and household)</i></p> <p><i>Toiletries Domestic hygiene products Financial aid for charities to operate the programme, storage, transportation costs, staff resources, administration</i></p> <p><i>Perishable foods such as meat and bread potatoes vegetables.</i></p> <p><i>In general, the use of funds has the potential to be more efficient whilst also benefitting local suppliers e.g. school kits. Low income families have the ability to purchase pens, pencils, copybooks little by little over time. Larger purchases such as school bags are more of a strain. Instead of purchasing, packing and delivering school kits which is of high cost, the equivalent in credit to local businesses for the purchase of school kits could be introduced. This is less logistically difficult, has a smaller environmental footprint and could be rolled out in a sufficient timeframe.</i></p> <p><i>Support for families with new-borns, e.g., nappies, baby food etc.</i></p>	<p><i>While the food products are great many of the beneficiaries lack food preparation knowledge and sometimes struggle to use raw ingredients to prepare meals. A strong education programme would be a great addition.... Providing easy to follow, step by step cooking instructions and showing variety in sauces and ingredients. This, along with provision of more variety in sauces... would be a worthwhile initiative</i></p> <p><i>Education Cooking utensils Counselling.</i></p> <p><i>Clothes would be a good addition to the programme, especially for vulnerable families.</i></p> <p><i>Household items for those who are moving into accommodation such as bedding, towels small white household toaster kettle etc</i></p>
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Key findings from the research

Charities in overview

Base: 84 Charities

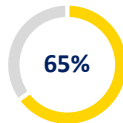
Who do they help?



All cohorts are represented well however, with lowest percentage being 61% of charities aiding the traveler & Roma community.



Distribution of Aid



....state that beneficiaries come to the charity to collect



....state that they provide outreach to homes.



Views on the credit system under which FEAD is administered



Strong support for the credit system.

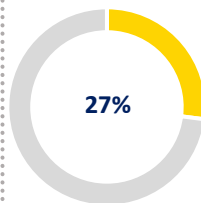
Of those who feel the credit system is not the best approach, the key issues are:

- 1) Unsure of the quantity being ordered
- 2) Confusion regarding the credit allocation – is it quarterly or yearly

How many are supported?

169 Beneficiariesthe mean number of beneficiaries helped by charities. However, 34% of charities aid less than 46 beneficiaries.

79 Householdsthe mean number of households helped by charities, but once again we see 34% of charities supporting less than 24 households.

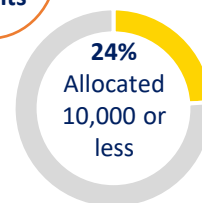


....state they distribute aid daily, with 65% distributing on a weekly basis or more often.

Number of credits assigned

Average credits are high, however:

34,776 Average credits



FEAD aid is far reaching across these charities with an average of almost **170 beneficiaries** being helped by each charity. It is important to acknowledge however, that a **third of charities support less than 46 beneficiaries** and are thus, inherently small operations. For FEAD to remain effective, **charities of all sizes must be considered.**

There is a **varied approach to distribution**, with some crossover in approaches.

The vast majority of charities **engage on a frequent basis with the beneficiaries** with 27% distributing aid daily, while two thirds distribute weekly or more often.

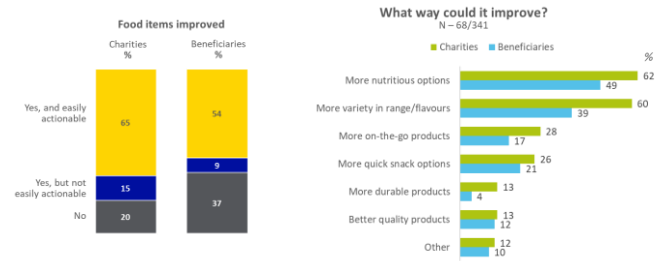
While most prefer the credit system, there are some issues regarding charities understanding of their own credit allocation which might be addressed.

1. Effectiveness

- As noted previously, the FEAD programme is far reaching with an average of almost 170 beneficiaries receiving aid within each charity, **with 56% accessing just food supplies**, while **44% accessed both food and school stationery kits**.
- School stationery kits* are rated particularly highly by beneficiaries, with **74% stating they are extremely useful**. Furthermore, **70% would not make any changes to the school kits**.
- When focusing on *household kits*, it's clear that beneficiaries view **all items as useful within the home**, with no items being identified as having no use. However, some products stand out as vital; kitchen equipment and vacuum cleaners were the key products mentioned.
- There is a strong understanding that **the most vulnerable in society are being reached by the programme**, with 96% of charities & four in five beneficiaries agreeing with this.
- In terms of FEAD's objectives, it should be noted that:



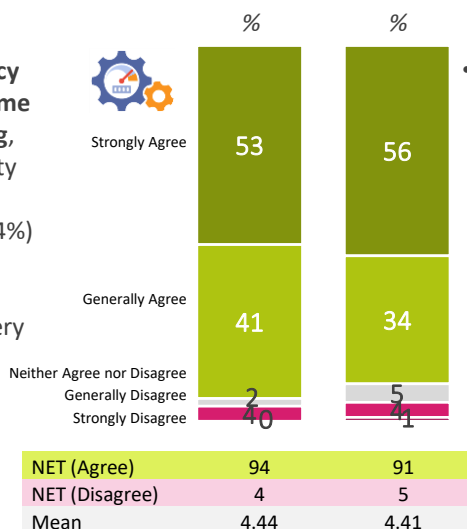
- When focusing on the goal of **social inclusion**, it becomes clear that there is strong belief in the FEAD programme, with over half of both charities and beneficiaries giving a **score of six or seven out of seven** indicating that **FEAD is highly effective** in bringing about social inclusion for those most vulnerable.
- However, **some improvements could be made to the food products**, with two-thirds of charities and over half of beneficiaries believing that such improvements could be easily actionable.



- Improvements that could be made revolve around **more nutritious options** and **more variety in range/flavours**. In addition to this there are calls for more **on-the-go type food options**.

2. Efficiency

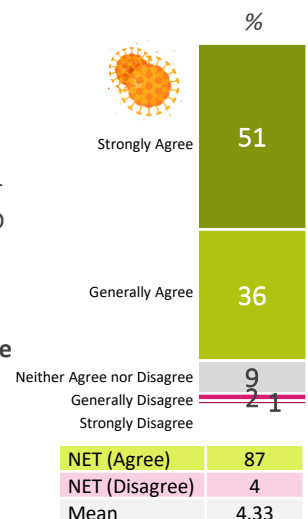
- The **level of efficiency within the programme appears to be strong**, with the vast majority of charities agreeing that the ordering (94%) and delivery/distribution (91%) process are very efficient/effective.



- The vast majority (94%) of charities agree that the programme is *efficient in its use of resources*, while 96% agree that the programme **achieves more than the charities might do in isolation**. This indicates that the programme is effective in aiding charities to bring about change in society in an efficient manner.



- COVID-19 was a volatile period for many in the charity sector, with logistical issues emerging throughout the period for many. However, the FEAD programme provided steady assistance with **87% of charities stating that the FEAD programme navigated the COVID-19 situation well**.

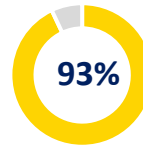
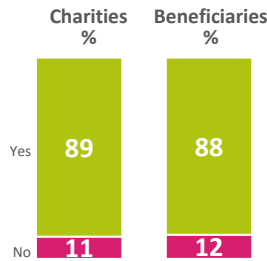


- 3 in 4 beneficiaries** also agreed that the programme was not hampered by the COVID-19 situation, with 70% noting no change in their food parcels during the period. Of the 9% that noted a change, 4% were more satisfied, while 2% were less satisfied.



3. Relevance

- From the research, the programme appears to be very relevant for both the charities and the beneficiaries, with almost **9 in 10 stating that FEAD provides sufficient supports for beneficiaries**

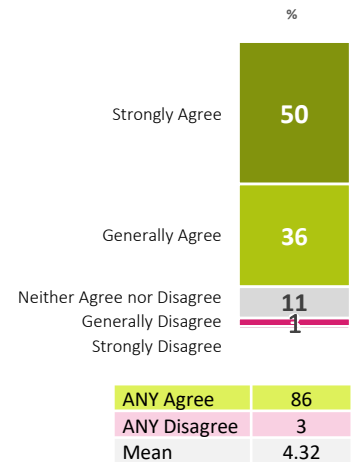


of charities also **agree** that the FEAD programme is relevant to the problems that exist in society.

- Of the 1 in 10 who disagreed, **more fresh food and toiletries were the key additions** that they suggested.
- However, it should be noted that there is **some room for improvement in terms of food aid**, with 65% of charities & 54% of beneficiaries suggesting that food aid could easily be improved upon.

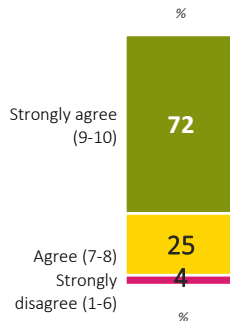
- There is also a belief that the **beneficiaries are satisfied with the programme** (95% of charities agree), which is reinforced by *high satisfaction rates across the board* for beneficiaries (& charities).

- It is also clear that FEAD aid is **reaching those who really need it**, with **86% of beneficiaries** noting this.

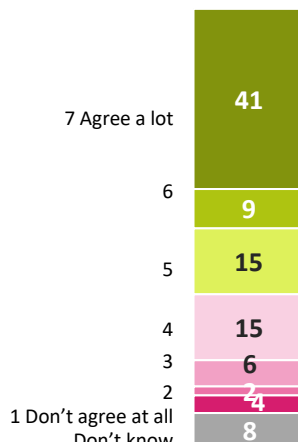


4. Coherence

- The FEAD programme plays a clear and impactful role in poverty alleviation in Ireland, with 96% of charities noting that the programme achieves more than the charities might do alone.

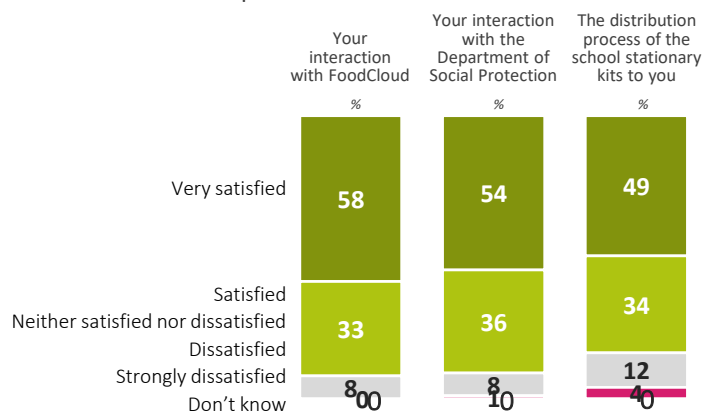


- In addition, half of beneficiaries strongly agree that **the programme aids them in moving out of poverty**.



- The programme does so in a seamless manner, with the **partnership between stakeholders running smoothly**.

- For example, charities are notably satisfied with their interactions with FoodCloud (91%), Dept. of Social Protection (91%), and the distributors of the school stationary kits (84%).
- Echoes qualitative feedback



NET (Satisfied)	91	91	88
NET (Dissatisfied)	-	1	9
Mean	4.50	4.44	4.28

- There also appears to be strong agreement that the **programme allows for feedback from stakeholders**. 87% of charities agreeing that there is an effective feedback process to address issues, while 74% of beneficiaries agree that there is a clear way to give feedback.

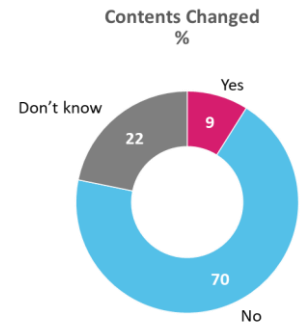
5. EU-added value

- The role of the EU and, more specifically, the FEAD programme cannot be understated
 - This is exemplified by the **97% of charities agreeing that more is achieved by FEAD than what the charities might be able to achieve in isolation**
 - This is reinforced by the level of agreement surrounding **effectiveness and efficiencies**, and the level of relevance attributed to the programme.



- COVID-19 also reinforced the importance of receiving institutional aid, with the large-scale nature of the programme also undoubtedly aiding many throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with **very little disruption experienced by beneficiaries or charities.**

- 70% of beneficiaries say they saw no change in their food parcels, with 3 in 4 agreeing that the programme was not damaged by the COVID-19 situation. This is key as there was a noted uptake in the need for food parcels during this period of upheaval.





End of Report

Prepared by
Larry Ryan & Katie Kirkwood

Prepared for:



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection



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