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Social Innovation & Responses To Food Insecurity

Professor Alex Murdock, Professor Emeritus, London South Bank University

Monday, 20 February 2023



A Word From Today's Chairman

Mike Wardle
CEO & Head of Indices
Z/Yen Group





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Today's Agenda



- 12:00 – 12:05 Chairman's Introduction
- 12:05 – 12:25 Keynote Presentation – Professor Alex Murdock
- 12:25 – 12:45 Question & Answer



Today's Speaker

Professor Alex Murdock

Professor Emeritus
London South Bank
University



FS/ZYen
Feb 20th 2023

***Social Innovation And Responses To Food
Insecurity***

Prof. Alex Murdock
London South Bank University
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Outline

- Nature of food support & origin of food bank
- Collaboration : The key to Social Entrepreneurship in food insecurity
- The nature and types of innovation
- Various Models
- Conclusion




Publications



Original Paper | Published: 30 March 2020

Food Banking and Food Insecurity in High-Income Countries

Laurie Mook , Alex Murdock & Craig Gundersen

VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations 31, 833–840(2020) | [Cite this article](#)

586 Accesses | 3 Citations | [Metrics](#)

Abstract

Food banks are a particular type of voluntary sector organization that bridges the government sector, private sector, and civil society. This special issue of *Voluntas* adds to the stream of research on the role of food banks in addressing food insecurity in high-income countries. We begin by outlining the concept of food insecurity and a number of direct responses to alleviating food insecurity at the household and individual level by governments and the voluntary sector. We then look at the potential and limitations of food banks in addressing food insecurity in high-income countries, distinguishing between anti-hunger research and research framed as addressing community food security. Based on the set of seven papers included in this special issue, we call for further research that bridges both these approaches.

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Accountability and Relationship-Definition Among Food Banks Partnerships

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Among Food Banks Partnerships

María A. Parker , Laurie Mook, Chen-Yu Kao & Alex Murdock

VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations 31, 923–937(2020) | [Cite this article](#)

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Abstract

Food pantries typically operate in a partnership structure where they are primarily supported by a larger food bank. However, the ability to execute that mission through cooperative arrangements greatly depends upon accountability, a key dynamic that ensures partners are fulfilling expectations and key roles. This exploratory study utilizes qualitative interview data ($n = 61$) from a large food bank network to understand the extent to which a lead agency (i.e., a large food bank) meets expectations of accountability among partners. The interview results demonstrate that the extent to which expectations are met relate to different types of relationships between the lead agency and partner members. Furthermore, the ways in which partners assess the strengths or weaknesses of the food bank's accountability reveal different types of relationships within the network, namely that of supplier–customer, supporter–customer, and supporter–collaborator.

Introduction

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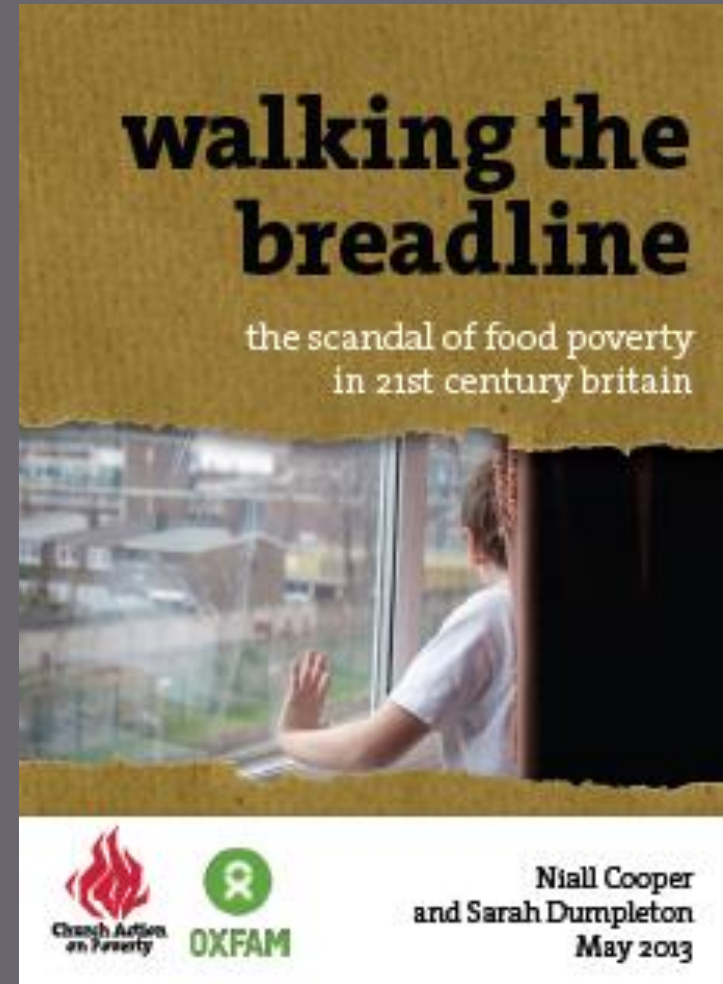
How it all began?

- During research in 2016 in Phoenix I was provided with the unpublished personal account of Jon Van Hengel of how food banking started in the USA

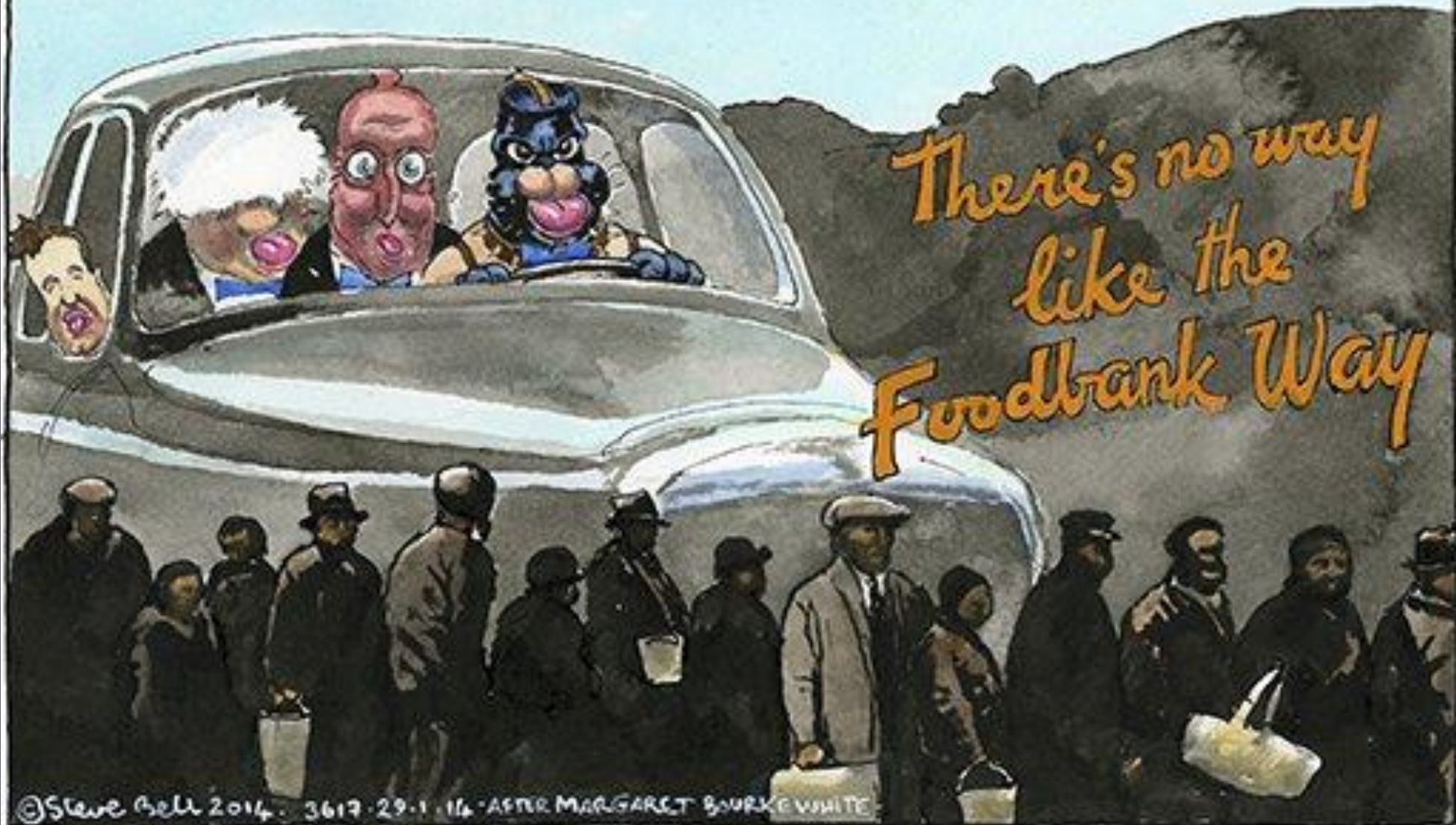


Key focus

- The issue of food and access to food is something attributed to third world poverty and crisis
- However food has been an issue in developed countries and arguably has been a neglected area of social enterprise and social innovation research
- The global crisis has highlighted aspects of food deprivation and need in developed countries



EUROPE'S FASTEST RATE OF GROWTH



The political dimension.. Or is it economic?

The 'Left' critique

- Food banks are being used as a means for the state to avoid responsibility
- Food banks are stigmatising (scrounger syndrome)
- There is a risk of Food Banks becoming 'institutionalised' as opposed to just a crisis response
- The demand is driven by welfare cuts and 'sanctioning'
- Food banks represent a provision which should not exist in a rich modern welfare state.

The 'Right' critique

- Food banks are 'society responding'
- Food banks enable redistribution of food surpluses and avoidance of waste
- Food banks are 'efficient' and attractive to donors and volunteers
- Food banks are a better allocation than EU 'food mountains'
- The demand is supply driven (why are there 10 commandments instead of one or two... because they are free!)

Dilemmas in food banking?

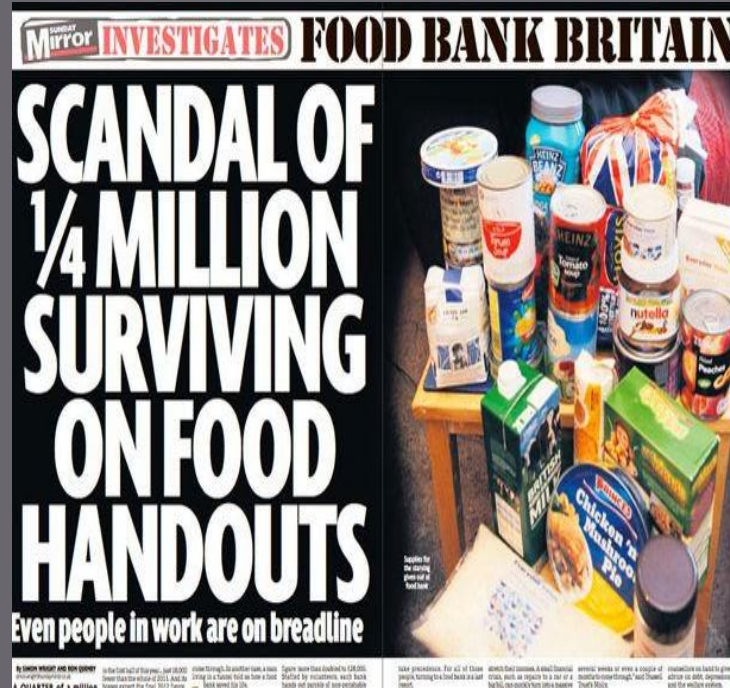
- Feed the line **OR** shorten the line
- Waste not and refuse nothing offered **OR** only accept 'healthy food' and discard to trash what you do not/cannot use
- Work with government as a partner **OR** challenge and seek to change government
- Be cautious about liability for food **OR** regard formal food practice as simply advisory
- Engage in high trust with partners **OR** focus on faith based and/or have strong governance

VARIATION AND INNOVATION IN FOOD INSECURITY

As food is a basic and immediate need then there is an issue of choice.

Welfare payments or income do not enable choice if they are insufficient to meet basic need

The discourse is often focused on 'individual failure' (the scrounger/claimant image) but the discourse is also of 'state failure'



COLLABORATION: Key to Social Entrepreneurship in Food?

LeRoux and Goerdel (2009) suggest 4 types of collaboration between non profits and the state:-

1. Piloting new programmes or services
2. Collaborating to reduce costs
3. Collaboration as a funding requirement
4. Other types

This is a useful typology but neglects the aspects where food is concerned especially in terms of obtaining resources (whether actual food or storage and distribution facilities)

It does not specifically include the private sector and does not really consider collaboration with / between individuals (such as volunteers and beneficiaries)



INNOVATION AS A FACTOR?

In terms of innovation in a managerial or enterprise context consider the conventional Schumpeterian notion of innovation which encompasses the following:-

- **Product:** The introduction of a new good
- **Process:** The introduction of a new method of production,
- **Business model:** The opening of a new market,
- **Source of supply:** The conquest of a new source of supply
- **Mergers & divestments:** The carrying out of the new organization
- (Schumpeter 1944)

Level	Objective	Focus	Example Organization (Sector)
Incremental	To address identified market failures more effectively: e.g. negative externalities and institutional voids	Products and services	Kickstart (low-cost irrigation foot pump) Aurolab (low-cost intraocular lenses) Afghan Institute of Learning (female education)
Institutional	To reconfigure existing market structures and patterns to create new social value	Markets	MPESA (mobile banking) Institute for One World Health ('orphan' drugs) Cafedirect (Fair Trade)
Disruptive	To change the cognitive frames of reference around markets and issues to alter social systems and structures	Politics (social movements)	Greenpeace (environmental change) BRAC (micro-finance) Tostan (human rights)

A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

INNOVATION -> COLLABORATION	Incremental	Institutional	Disruptive
In existing services/products	Food Banks and Soup Kitchens	Partnerships with suppliers and supply chain	food distribution, usability and sources
In new services/products	linked community facilities Health, Education and training	One stop shops/ Food regulations regarding use by /sell by dates	Farming technology (LED internal vertical 'farms')
In reducing costs	Volunteers and corporate partnerships	Food recycling Bartering Imputing costs to partners	Fareshare Gleaning
As a requirement	Regulations of networks and rules of eligibility and practice	Assessing for eligibility to wider provision than food	Regulations about wastage and use of waste food

- Using the collaboration typology of LeRoux and Goerdel and the social innovation levels from Nicholls and Murdock
- This provides a two dimensional space to consider where to place responses to food insecurity

INCREMENTAL INNOVATION THROUGH COLLABORATION

– Existing products and services

The Soup Kitchen (guess whose?)

The soup Run



The Soup Kitchen type model

It has been around for a long time – Much longer than Food banks themselves
(Victorian type philanthropy)



The model can be sophisticated – “The line of people waiting to eat is too long,” he told Toyota engineers . “Make the line shorter.” They did.



INCREMENTAL INNOVATION THROUGH COLLABORATION –New products and services

The Normal Food Parcel



But what about someone with no access
to any means to cook?



INCREMENTAL INNOVATION THROUGH COLLABORATION – In reducing cost

The normal idea of volunteering



Volunteering through corporates



INCREMENTAL INNOVATION THROUGH COLLABORATION – As a requirement

- The USA has possibly evolved the most in terms of regulations which require collaboration
- The SNAP (Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Program) aka Food Stamps created a fairly complex regulatory setting
- USDA sets regulations re expiry dates on food (how long after expiry date can you use cookies (biscuits to the UK)?
- Much emerges from experience between the sector partners through collaboration

INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION – in existing products and services

- The USA is possibly the most institutionalised collaborative environment in responses to food insecurity
- The food banks interact with a large range of partners both upstream (food companies etc) and downstream to distributors to the actual end user.
- This creates a complex landscape with a degree of sophistication in logistics which matches that of the private food sector.
- Some institutional collaboration may raise concerns such as the use of inmate (prisoner) labour in food banks

INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION – in new products and services

Griffith Laboratories (a private research company) worked with the Bangalore Food bank in India to develop a food product called kitchdi



“500 kg of khichdi, a nutritionally balanced meal, (mixture of lentils, rice, vegetable, nuts and seasoning) will be produced and donated to the Bangalore Food Bank.

5,000 meals to the hungry ..

We saw an opportunity to create something different – not only are we producing to stop hunger, but also improving the quality of life of those who are hungry...

...important for us to utilize our culinary and R&D expertise to create an enjoyable experience for those we are helping.”

INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION In reducing cost

Question : why do USA food banks (and indeed many others) measure food donation and distribution by weight and charge by weight(as opposed to the type of food)

What would happen in your supermarket if they just ‘weighed’ your basket and charged you £1 per Kilo

Answer It is simply the easiest way to measure food throughput AND to input a cost to actually transporting the food. It is a ‘postal service’ approach.. You charge by weight rather than what is in the parcel. John Van Hengel devised it in the USA



INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION as a requirement

In the USA some food banks have acquired delegated powers to assess their users for some welfare entitlements and training programmes

Enhanced collaboration has benefits and risks...

Food Banks as civil society organisations might become quasi state entities or dependent on private companies which renders criticism of other sectors difficult

Do you need more money for food?

If your household income is at or below the following range you may now be eligible for Food Assistance.

Household Size	Gross Monthly Income	Household Size	Gross Monthly Income
1	\$1,490	5	\$3,602
2	\$2,018	6	\$4,130
3	\$2,546	7	\$4,658
4	\$3,074	8	\$5,186

For each additional person, add \$528

You can apply online at www.oasis.iowa.gov

Iowa Food Bank Association
 Feeding Iowa

For remote assistance with an application, or questions about the Iowa Food Bank Association's SNAP Outreach program contact:
Cindy Jones: 319-529-0533
cjones1@feedingamerica.org
or
Katie Reidy: 319-529-0566
kreidy@feedingamerica.org

To learn more about the Iowa Food Bank Association visit www.iowaFBA.org

Funded by USDA, an equal opportunity provider and employer, through the Iowa Departments of Public Health and Human Services.

Rev. 12/2012

DISRUPTIVE – In existing products and services

The example of Incredible Edible – a global social movement

Free food grown wherever you feel like growing it

Possibly the fastest growing social food movement in the world?

Started in 2007 in one small UK town.

Has spread throughout the UK with networks in USA, Canada , Australia and France

It seems to mirror the countries food banking took off



DISRUPTIVE – In new products and services

The German Tafel originally started as food banks to distribute surplus fresh produce

However variations emerged which in Southern Germany led to 'social supermarkets'

The shopping experience is customer driven and choice based with a small percentage being paid for the food and range of other household products



The German Tafel:

- **The Berlin model:**

Recycled mainly fresh produce to range of religious based organisations (akin to the US food bank model except focus is on fresh produce)

- **The Bernau Model**

Provides food parcels directly to eligible people but seeks (de facto obliges) a financial contribution in return

- **The Magdeburg model**

This is run by the municipality and was originally set up as part of an employment initiative following the reunification of Germany which led to a loss of jobs in the area

- **The 'Stuttgart' or Southern German model**

This is a social supermarket where eligible people can buy certain goods at substantial discount (as can the volunteers and staff who run it)

How to make a food bank totally integrated?

In Hong Kong the St James Settlement provides as well as a food bank possibly one of the most diverse range of social provision under one roof anywhere in the world.

- A one stop shop
- Kindergarten to funeral services

In effect it removed the stigma of using a food bank



DISRUPTIVE – new products and services from new technology

VERTICAL FARMING

- A possible Kuhnian moment?
- The key resource for agriculture ceases to be arable land
- LED technology enables many plants to be grown indoors with no natural light
- Food can be grown close to the end user
- A dramatic move of a whole industry from a rural to an urban setting
- The nearest in London is the 'unused' tunnels beside the Northern Line in Clapham – about 25 people are employed in the underground farm there'



New Jersey Warehouse becomes a farm

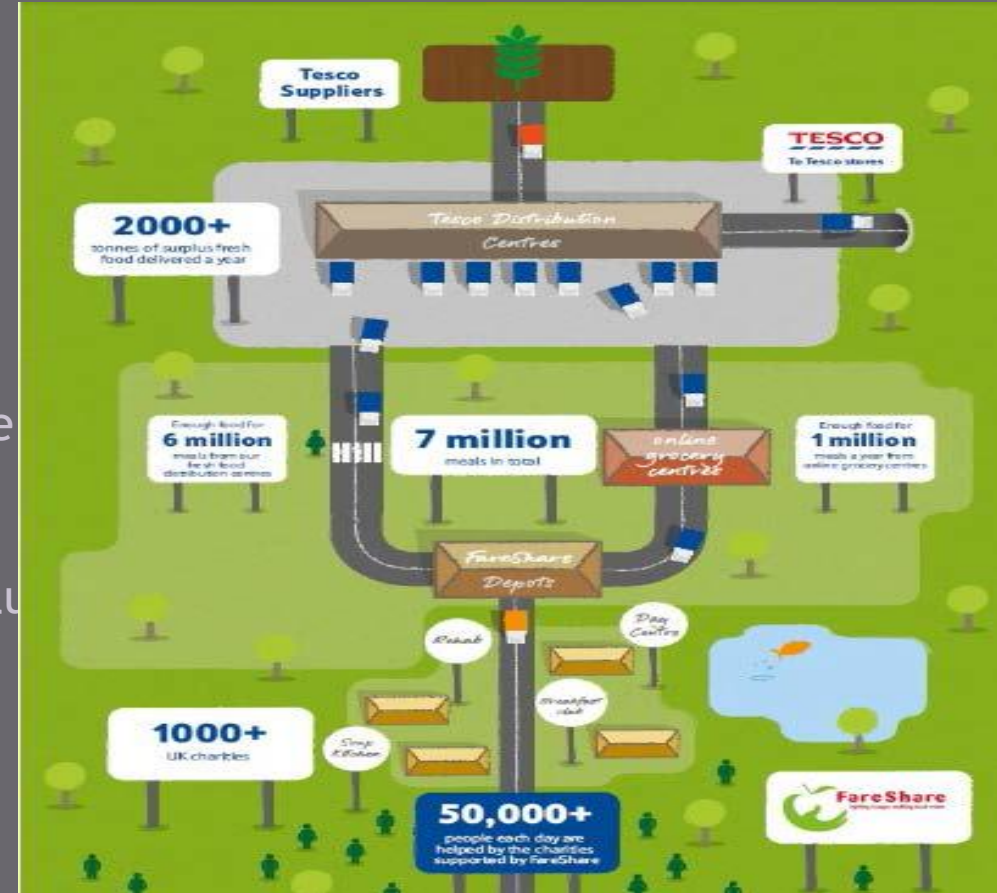
The RBH Group, Goldman Sachs Urban Investment Group, Prudential Financial Inc., and AeroFarms have partnered with Newark city officials and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority on a \$30 million renovation that will turn an old industrial site into a vertical urban farm

At AeroFarms' headquarters in

Newark, N.J., the company has taken a typical warehouse building and converted it into a test farm—a vertical farm to be exact.

DISRUPTIVE - in reducing cost

- FARESHARE in the UK worked with a major supermarket to establish donation and diversion links further back in the company value chain
- FARESHARE set up in the actual food production and distribution centres of the company
- Processes to identify and deliver surplus food to FareShare within 3 Tesco Operational Manuals:
 - Chilled Distribution Centres
 - Tesco.com home shopping
 - Frozen warehouse



Disruptive : New Social Movements

Real Junk Food

- Adam Smith - founder and co-director of the visionary, multi-award-winning, global initiative: The Real Junk Food Project (TRJFP). Set up in December 2013, to revolutionise the disposal of avoidable food waste into landfill, the pioneering movement's manifesto is to: feed bellies, not bins.
- Aspects of 'over production' and misuse of food donation :- 'The Bread Scandal'

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07w5y6b>



DISRUPTIVE - as a requirement

The Real Junk Food Project

In UK and in Copenhagen

Cafes and restaurants which will only use recycled or discarded food



- ***Rub & Stub** is a non-profit restaurant and part of the Danish Refugee Council.*
- *The first restaurant of its kind in Europe. Its purpose is to fight food waste.*
- *it receives donated surplus food from farmers, food cooperatives, local food stores, bakeries, and Food Bank Copenhagen.*
- In first 1.5 years it has served around 3.5 tons of food which was being thrown away
- The donated food is typically fruits and vegetables with the “wrong” size, shape, colour, etc., or simply just food so close to the “best before” date that producers or stores do sell though it is still edible.

DISRUPTIVE – Innovation in the Collaboration by al Rescate (Mexican Association of Chefs)

AT THE END OF 2013 RESCATE ESTABLISHED AN ALLIANCE WITH BANK OF AMERICA AND FOOD BANK MEXICO, IN ORDER TO RESCUE FOOD FROM RESTAURANTS.



Funding



The Restaurant Association Operates the program and makes the food donation



Food Bank of Mexico the Charitable Institution and distributes food



DISRUPTIVE: Food rescue in Mexico



A RESCUE PROGRAM THAT PROVIDES BENEFITS TO SOCIETY'S MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY WHERE THE RESTAURANT IS LOCATED.



CMR collects the food that guests will not be served , but still retains its nutritional value and safety.



The rescued food is selected , frozen, certified and donated to Charitable Institutions that are no more than 5 km away from the restaurant.



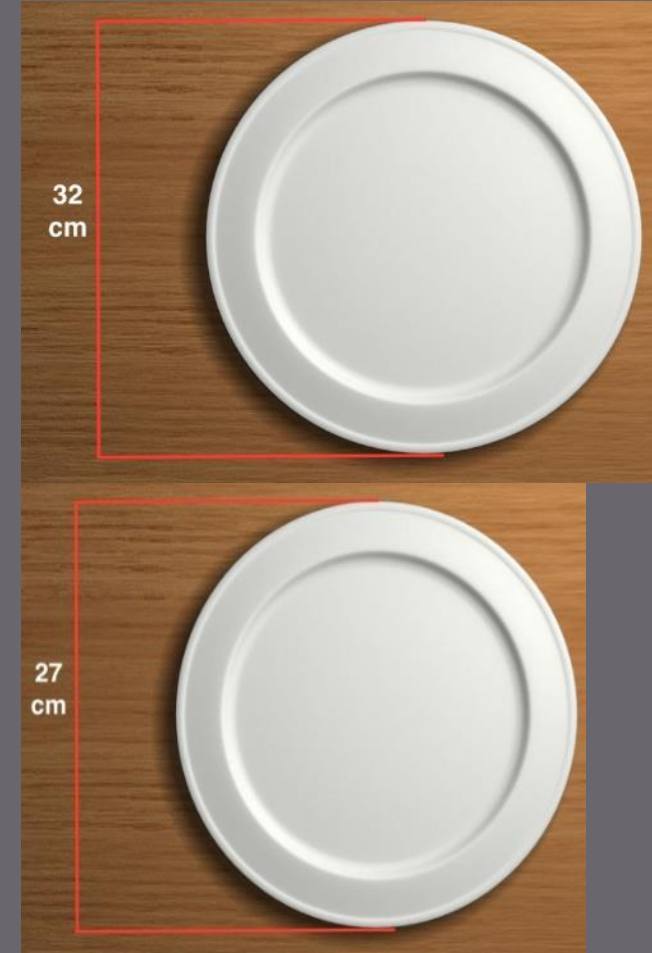
These restaurants make a difference in the community demonstrating a social conscience

DISRUPTIVE - The best comes at the end.. (remember your last buffet meal !)

In Egypt there is one of the most sophisticated food collection and distribution networks which gets surplus food from hotels , restaurants and from private homes for almost immediate redistribution to hungry people.

One of the innovations which the founder instituted with hotel and restaurant buffet provision was to reduce the plate size so that people took less food... so leaving more in the buffet for distribution by the Egyptian food rescue organisation.

SO SIMPLE AND SO EFFECTIVE.....



Some conclusions....

- Initially this research journey purely focused on the dramatic growth of food banks in the UK
- But food banking is a wider phenomena with a focus upon developed countries (such as USA and Canada) – **The paradox** of food banks... they emerge in the countries where you would think they are least needed
- Food insecurity has a range of responses which reach beyond food banks . It involves a range of social entrepreneurial activities
- The concepts of **collaboration and innovation** are central to the evolution of social entrepreneurial responses to food insecurity.
- **Combining these** may offer way to develop responses to food insecurity especially using the experience of other countries.



Comments, Questions & Answers



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- Tue, 28 Feb (15:00-15:45) The Future Cybersecurity Landscape
- Thu, 02 Mar (11:00-11:45) Employee Share Plans And The Benefits For SMEs
- Mon, 06 Mar (11:00-11:45) Catastrophes – Are They Becoming Too Big To Insure? Are Cats Eating Reinsurers' Lunch?

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