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## Spain – Online management system for food distribution

Red Cross Catalonia

### WHY?

Food distribution centres in large urban areas face many challenges when it comes to distributing food in an efficient way, without duplicating the services of other providers. This is even more of an issue if the centres are spread out geographically and lack a coherent coordination system. A particular challenge for organisations distributing food in Catalonia is tracking the time of the reception, the origin of the delivery and the name of the organisation receiving the products. Catalan food distribution centres (like Red Cross and Caritas) have therefore introduced eQuàliment, a **system to manage the distribution of food** in an efficient, equitable and transparent way.

### WHAT?

eQuàliment is an online platform that helps manage the distribution of food in large urban areas, where duplication in terms of providing the service twice to the same recipient is a logistical challenge. It is used by local governments, charities and food banks, some of which are FEAD partner distributors. The platform supports **all elements of the food distribution process**, from managing the list of eligible beneficiaries, to tracking the food distribution. It also helps to prevent the duplication of beneficiaries' data; to optimise resources, to provide better and more equitable assistance, to promote voluntary services, and to increase planning capacity and transparency, as well as rigorous statistical information.

## WHO?

eQuàliment was created by an IT consulting firm named Districte Digital and a corporate social responsibility consulting firm named Bidea, in collaboration with the Open University of Catalonia. The platform is used by several distribution centres of the Red Cross and Caritas, both of which are partner organisations participating in the FEAD programme.

## HOW?

eQuàliment is an online platform that anyone with an account and internet connection can access, without having to install an additional software. The website is regularly updated and provides support at four different levels:

1. To manage the allocation of beneficiaries to the various distribution centres of an area in accordance with data protection laws;
2. To help distribution centres with the planning and management of deliveries for all beneficiaries to avoid overlaps and duplications;
3. To help organisations manage stock and categorise the food they receive from supermarkets and individuals;
4. To provide summary statistics of the food that has been distributed by keeping track of deliveries, and of quantities of products distributed to end beneficiaries.

All of these services are provided through a single, centralised platform that allows the **holistic management of food distribution**, making management easier and minimising the time and resources spent on coordination. The platform let users choose the type of assistance needed in their project management cycle. Although the platform is not financed through FEAD as such, it has proven popular among FEAD partner organisations in Catalonia.

For more information regarding the project, contact **Joaquim Ventura i Molina**, Technical Team Secretary at the Red Cross in Catalonia:

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## Spain – Solidarity supermarkets to dignify food distribution

Spanish Food Bank Federation

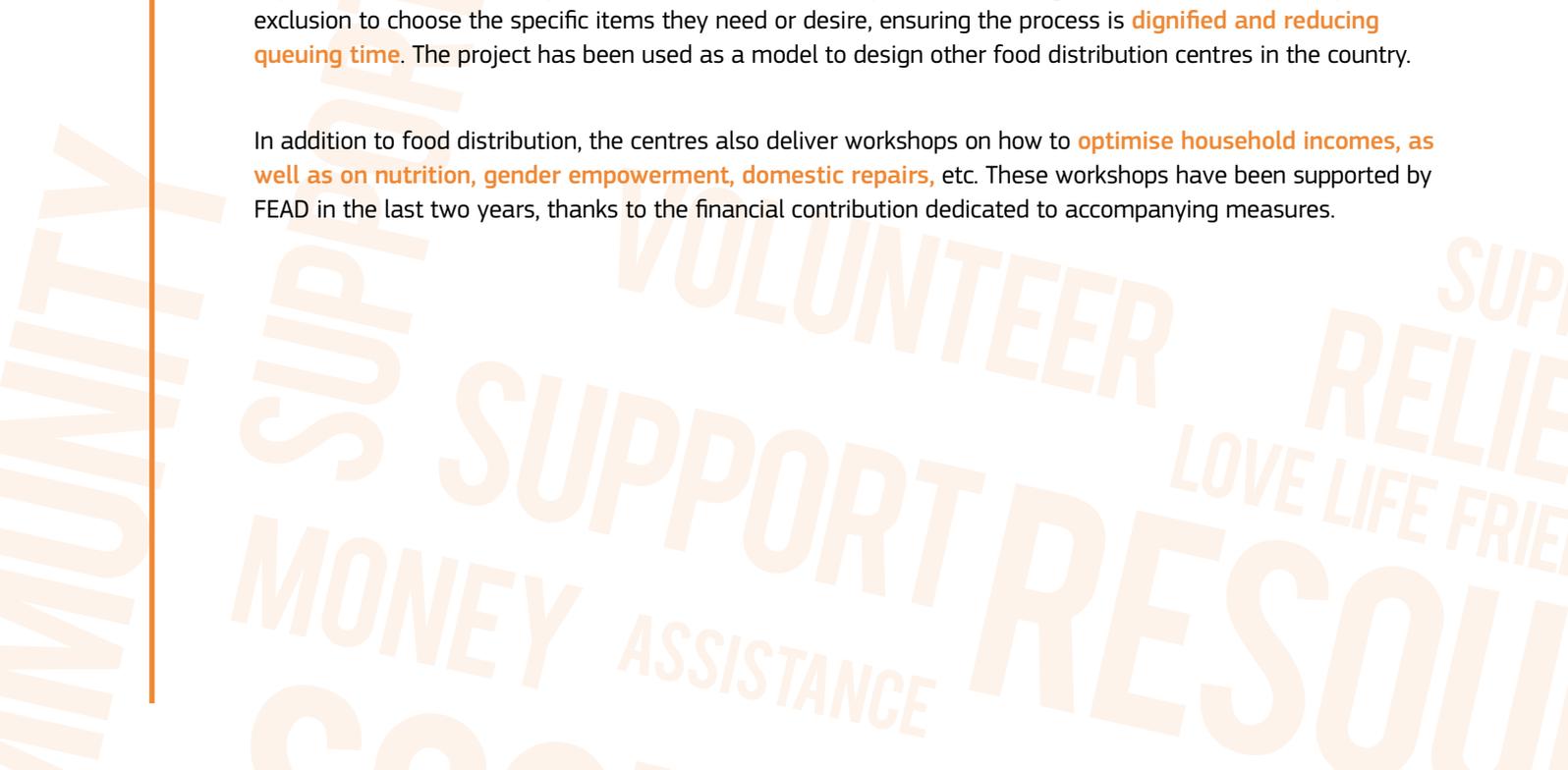
### WHY?

**Food Distribution Centres (or CDAs)** were introduced in Girona, a province of Catalonia, in 2009 as a response to the increased need for food provision to the most deprived after the economic crisis hit Spain. The lack of stable food supply to food distribution centres encouraged the managing institutions to partner up with food donors such as supermarkets to set up 'solidary supermarkets'.

### WHAT?

CDAs look like commercial supermarkets, although they are supplied by municipalities. These solidarity supermarkets provide food products and basic household products, allowing families at risk of poverty and exclusion to choose the specific items they need or desire, ensuring the process is **dignified and reducing queuing time**. The project has been used as a model to design other food distribution centres in the country.

In addition to food distribution, the centres also deliver workshops on how to **optimise household incomes, as well as on nutrition, gender empowerment, domestic repairs**, etc. These workshops have been supported by FEAD in the last two years, thanks to the financial contribution dedicated to accompanying measures.



## WHO?

The project is led by the CDA Consortium, the Food Bank of Girona and the Spanish Food Bank Federation, and receives support from local councils, Caritas of Girona, the Food Bank of Girona, Girona's regional government, the Caixabank Foundation and the Catalan regional government. Volunteers help end recipients and provide advice on how to make the best possible use of their food basket. In addition, two people at risk of social exclusion are trained and employed in the centres for a duration of two years,

## HOW?

Ten CDAs provide services to the largest municipalities in the province of Girona. The social services of each municipality select the eligible families and refer them to CDAs. The project operates in areas with high rate of immigration, where only 40% of the families supported are Spanish. Each year around a third of families are newly incorporated into the programme and a similar number manage to exit extreme poverty. However, over a third of recipients have benefitted from the programme for three years or more, which indicates poverty remains a concern in the province.

Eligible families get a bi-weekly appointment to access the food distribution centres. On average, each family receives around 20 kg of FEAD funded food every two weeks, in the form of a pre-set **nutritionally balanced food basket**. They can also purchase products according to a system of vouchers, which is financed through national funding streams.

CDAs support **around 27 000 people** (8 500 families), representing 75% of the total people supported in the province of Girona. Almost **three million kg of food** were distributed through CDAs in 2017. Most food products are provided by the Food Bank of Girona through FEAD support, as well as from donations of producers or supermarkets, or own purchases done by CDAs.

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