

PRACTICE ABSTRACT #17

Multi-Actor Partnerships in Budapest to reduce food waste and promote food literacy in schools

Minimising food waste is a priority for Budapest (Hungary) and an important element in the city's food strategy. To achieve this goal, **the city has built strategic partnerships with the Hungarian Food Bank Association and its municipally owned school caterer, ÉSZGSZ (Economic Organization for Catering Services)**. This multi-actor cooperation enables coordinated action across public services, civil society and social support organisations.

Through this partnership, the Food Bank developed a methodology to save unserved school meals by installing blast chillers in canteen kitchens and providing food safety training for staff. By December 2025, nine schools had joined the initiative, saving 52,871 meals. **Meals are redistributed to vulnerable groups through partnerships with charities, including BMSZKI (Budapest Methodological Centre of Social Policy and Its Institutions), operated by the municipality. The initiative also acts as an educational tool for schoolchildren, linking food donation with awareness, learning, circularity and social responsibility.**

Through FoodCLIC, **the city is strengthening this approach by working with Budapest Bike Maffia to develop an online food-saving platform functioning as a 'Meal Distribution Center'**. Supported by volunteer couriers, the platform will enable private individuals to donate food to vulnerable groups or homeless people, with optional delivery, reducing barriers to participation.

Key lesson for municipalities: building strong partnerships between municipal institutions, food banks, caterers, charities and volunteer networks is essential to scale food rescue actions, maximise social impact and create replicable models to reduce food waste while promoting food literacy.



Picture by Cottonbro Studio

Find out more about the FoodCLIC Living Lab of Budapest [here](#):

