SavingFood

An innovative solution to tackle food waste through the collaborative power of ICT networks

SavingFood – White paper I
(part of D5.4: Behaviour change analysis)
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Introduction

This deliverable reports the outcomes of the behaviour change analysis that was performed during the pilot implementation trials of the SavingFood project. The pilot trials were set up in 2017 and continued until April 2018, with communities of the SavingFood food redistribution organizations in Greece (Boroume), Hungary (HFA), Belgium (FoodWin) and the United Kingdom (Feedback). During these pilot trials, the SavingFood platform was used for organizing two types of food saving events, being (1) gleaning events to collect leftover crops from farmers’ fields and redistribute it to recipient organisations, and (2) farmers’ market events to redistribute unsold food at the end of the market to recipient organisations. Through the SavingFood platform, coordinators of the food redistribution organizations were able to plan and schedule these events, while citizens (or volunteers) could subscribe and find all the necessary details about it. Through the provided ICT solution, the food redistribution organisations learnt new ways of how to organise their food saving events in a more connected way with volunteers, food donors and recipient organisations.

During the pilot implementation trials, the behaviour change analysis had the purpose to investigate changes in behaviour on the following levels: (i) the degree of participation and volunteer effort in food waste reduction such as during food saving events, (ii) the degree of knowledge about how to save food in a collective way and information gained about the food redistribution process, (iii) the degree of awareness about food waste in general. To reach these objectives, an extensive engagement strategy was set up that included different behaviour change techniques, being motivational videos, a quantification report with statistics about the amount of saved food, ambassador or leadership tactics, awareness raising events, social media pictures, crowdsourcing tips for new donors and charities, and a pledge campaign. The engagement-related behaviour change approach relied on principles of community based social marketing (Lee & Kotler, 2015) and the 7E-framework (Bambust, 2015).

For more information about the outlined strategy, the following documents can be consulted:

- SavingFood Deliverable 2.5: Strategizing SavingFood – Engagement and behaviours V1
- SavingFood Deliverable 2.6: Strategizing SavingFood – Engagement and behaviours V2

A short description of each white paper is provided below:

- **White Paper I – Supporting behavioural change around food waste through awareness raising events:** In this white paper, explanation is provided of how an awareness raising event about food waste can be organised, and how it can lead to behaviour change among citizens. The white paper specifically investigates the change in beliefs and knowledge about food waste with citizens through the participation in the awareness-raising events. Results and lessons learned are reported through a self-assessment survey filled in by volunteers and participants from the events in Greece, Hungary, Belgium and the United Kingdom.
• **White paper II: Supporting behavioural change around food waste through crowdsourcing, ambassadorship and pledges:** In this white paper, explanation is provided of how a crowdsourcing campaign can be organised for collecting tips from citizens about potential (new) food donors and charities as recipients, how ambassador and leadership tactics can be set up, and how a pledge campaign can be organised. Lessons learned are reported through collected logging statistics and interviews with the four food redistribution organisations.

• **White paper III: Supporting behavioural change around food waste through the SavingFood platform: gleaning and farmer market events:** This white paper focuses on the actual usage of the SavingFood platform for organising food saving events. The development process of the platform is explained, in relation to the development of the behaviour change strategy. Results and lessons learned are reported through a user survey with registered users from the platform, as well as through in-depth interviews with coordinators of the SavingFood pilots.
White paper I: Supporting behaviour change around food waste through awareness-raising events

Summary
This white paper learns from food waste warriors about how to set up an awareness-raising event around food waste, such as “disco soup” events, food festivals and wholesale markets, and how it supports in reaching behaviour change among citizens. The purpose of these awareness-raising events is to raise public awareness about food waste, and to inform citizens about the easy and effective ways of how to rescue and redistribute surplus food. During the SavingFood awareness-raising events, participants learnt how to make delicious meals out of saved surplus food through cooking demonstrations, and could participate in lots of different side activities such as informative workshops about food labels, interactive narration for children, photo exhibitions, etc. Participants were also motivated to take direct action by joining up as a volunteer at the local food redistribution organisations with support of the SavingFood online platform. Feedback was collected from 175 participants in the events through self-assessment surveys. The surveys investigated the self-perceived change in behaviours on the level of increased awareness, knowledge, self-efficacy and intentional behaviour towards fighting food waste. The results indicate that the awareness raising events were an effective means in supporting behavioural change towards the former stated variables and helped contributing in increasing motivation towards reducing food waste on the individual and collective level.

1. Introduction
During the SavingFood project (January 2016 – April 2018), a series of awareness raising events were organised by four local food redistribution organisations in Greece (Boroume), Hungary (HFA), Belgium (FoodWin) and the United Kingdom (Feedback). In total, eleven events were organised that reached in total around 9000 citizens in the four different countries. The purpose of these awareness-raising events was to increase public awareness around food waste, and to motivate citizens in taking direct action by joining the collective movement of saving and redistributing surplus food through the local organisations and with the support of the SavingFood online platform.

Feedback and FoodWin are specialised in organising “disco soups”. These events are fun feasts during which meals are cooked and consumed with surplus food that would have otherwise been wasted. In this format, participants learn how to make meals out of food waste ingredients, after which they are invited to celebrate it with a drink and a DJ party. Some side activities are also organised, such as a series of talks, film screening, juggling, fermenting/pickling workshops, etc.

Another format is the food festivals as practiced by Boroume and HFA. The food festivals were large-scale organised events in the public space, often in collaborative partnerships with other organisations. To reach as many citizens as possible, these events were promoted through radio announcements, television coverage, press releases, etc. During these events, different types of activities were organised to sensitize the general public around food waste, and which were made accessible for all age groups. Examples of activities include cooking demonstrations by well-known food bloggers, photo exhibitions, workshops on sustainable food systems, interactive narration for children and educational activities, “say cheese” photo booths with imperfect fruits and vegetables, etc. Last, there was also the format of wholesale markets as practiced by HFA, which is very similar to the set-up of food festivals, but mostly targets farmers and food donors.
From the above examples, it is clear that there is not a fixed format on how to organise an awareness-raising event. An awareness-raising event can include many different activities that create enthusiasm, make it fun and enjoyable, educate, and enable action. However, a choice in format is being made depending on the number of invited participants, the profile of the target audience (e.g. wholesale markets), the type of organised activities, and to what extent it is preferred to be positioned as a community feast (i.e. disco soups) or as a larger public awareness-raising campaign (i.e. food festivals).

The awareness-raising events organised in the framework of the SavingFood project were mostly done in collaborative partnerships with other organisations (e.g. with Ethelon and WWF Greece for Boroume in Greece). The partnerships were set up with organisations that set up similar activities with community groups, and were open to partner up about this particular cause. The partnerships strengthened the dissemination efforts and recruitment capacities of the event, and resulted in a more effective organisation and cost efficiency.

Depending on the type of activities that were organised during the awareness-raising events, an appropriate venue was chosen either indoors or outdoors (or combined). Ideally, a venue was chosen where similar types of events in sustainability were organised before, or which was managed by one of the hosts of the event. All venues were easily accessible for participants by public transport, and were located at a central spot in the city where also passers-by were motivated to participate. All venues had kitchen facilities, cooking equipment, and some tables and chairs. Further, space was also foreseen for organising a DJ party afterwards.

In advance of all awareness-raising events, surplus food was collected from food donors in the local neighbourhood, or through an organised gleaning or farmers’ market event. Through the SavingFood platform, a gleaning or farmers’ market event can be organised through which leftover crops from farmer’s fields can be redistributed, or from unsold food at the end of the farmers’ market (See White paper III). The surplus food, mostly fruits and vegetables, was used to cook and to demonstrate that delicious meals can still be made out of the waste ingredients.

Besides the central cooking activities, lots of side activities were organised to make the event informative and enjoyable at the same time. Examples of side activities were: juggling, fermenting/pickling workshops, talks by experts in food sustainability, workshops about food labels and how to conserve food at home, interactive narration for children, pottery sessions, photo exhibitions with food waste related pictures and projections and animations about food waste and how to prevent it, info points with brochures, “say cheese” photo booths with pictures of participants holding “imperfect” fruits and vegetables, etc.

Figure 1: Food festival organised by Boroume (left) - Disco soup organised by Feedback (right).
2. Behaviour change through eliciting engagement

Within the SavingFood project, the main objective of the behaviour change campaign is to set up a social movement consisted of citizens (as volunteers), food donors and recipient organisations to save food surplus through the organised food redistribution processes using the SavingFood ICT solution, therefore the online platform. By creating synergies among these three stakeholders, the project aims to increase the level of participation and volunteer effort of all stakeholders in redistributing surplus food, increase the degree of knowledge about how to save food in a collective way, and to increase the degree of awareness about food waste and food sustainability in general.

The behaviour change framework of the SavingFood project consists of eight behaviour change techniques, or interventions, that try to understand, and influence citizens’ behaviour related to food waste. The framework is based on insights from a large-scale survey that measured the initial motivations and barriers to take action against food waste prior to the deployment of the SavingFood platform. This survey was launched among the existing communities of the four local food redistribution organisations, but also targeted at citizens without volunteer experience or awareness about the topic. The results showed that citizens were mainly interested in joining the SavingFood project out of social and intrinsic motivations. Citizens (volunteers) reported that they would like to become part of a broader like-minded online community, and that they would like to help and contribute to the organisation of food saving events and matching of food donors with charity organisations. Based on these insights, the SavingFood behaviour change framework outlined an approach with eight interventions to reduce barriers for participation and increase benefits for the encouraged behaviour. The behaviour change framework is underpinned by principles of community based social marketing and the 7E-framework (See info box 1).

Amongst those eight interventions, the awareness-raising events is one specifically chosen tactic to involve citizens, and to let them experience food saving practices in an enjoyable way. The SavingFood awareness-raising events show that a group of people are behind the action, and share the same concerns and beliefs around food waste. The events support social behaviour and motivations, as participants could connect, collaborate together on a specific task and feel connected.

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To enable behavioural change outcomes around food waste, the following principles were applied during and also after the events:

- **Supporting the group** in practising or showing the desired pro-environmental behaviour towards fighting food waste: During the SavingFood awareness raising events famous food bloggers were present that gave cooking demonstrations. They gave an (exclusive) example that others could follow. Furthermore, active volunteers of the local food redistribution organisations were also present during the events. These active volunteers exchanged their experience with potential new volunteers, and acted as an “ambassador” to motivate and build trust with others. During the events, information stands were also available where participants could gather some brochures, were educated about causes and impact of food waste, and could ask for more specific information about the food redistribution model of SavingFood.

- **Putting the group into the spotlight** through communicating stories and pictures of participants who adopt the desired behaviour: After and during the SavingFood awareness-raising events, photographs and videos were taken of participants that put the food saving behaviour into a positive spotlight. Pictures were taken of participants chopping and slicing vegetables and fruits, and these stories were shared (real-life) through Instagram and Facebook. As such, it triggered the curiosity of others, and also a fear of missing out (lots of others are doing it, why shouldn’t I?).

- **Feeling the group** - People often practice (a new) behaviour when they feel inner pressure, or group pressure: During the SavingFood awareness raising events, a public event was created on Facebook through which citizens could indicate their presence. This evoked the possibility that also others in the network saw this, and reacted or liked it. As such, it increased the chance of moving from an intention to join the event towards actual participation. Further, during the events, participants could also sign (online and offline) a pledge to state their good intentions for joining the SavingFood movement and fighting food waste. The amount of signed pledges is stated on the SavingFood website, which shows the size of the community and motivate towards signing it by others.
For defining the behavioural tactic of the awareness raising events and measuring the actual change, principles of several theories on behavioural change models, and stages of change were followed. Behaviour change models help to explain specific behaviours by identifying the underlying factor that influence them. On the contrary, theories of change explain how behaviour can be changed over time, and how behaviour changes in stages from one type of behaviour to another one. This paragraph shortly reflects upon these theoretical frameworks for the development of the tactic.

**Self-efficacy theory:** The tactic of organising awareness-raising events for reaching behavioural change is greatly in line with the principles of the self-efficacy theory of Bandura. The self-efficacy theory explains that one’s belief in one’s ability is related to judgements of how well one can execute a specific task. This judgement is based on different types of information that one has, such as personal bad or good experiences related to the task, vicarious knowledge gained through modelling, etc. The judgement about self-efficacy will determine if one has control to perform the behaviour or is less likely to do it. Through the awareness-raising events, one’s judgement might be affected by the provided information that can shape a positive attitude toward food surplus redistribution, and through the direct experience of making meals out of surplus ingredients, or modelling of the food saving behaviour of other volunteers. The possession of the necessary skills and knowledge, and one’s perceived capabilities to perform the behaviour are essential

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requirements to reach sustainable change in behaviour\textsuperscript{6}. Therefore, the awareness raising events organised particular activities to enhance skills and knowledge to influence the self-efficacy of citizens towards food saving behaviour.

**Self-perception-theory:** Another related behaviour change model is the self-perception theory\textsuperscript{7} of Bem. The self-perception theory investigates how people perceive themselves and develop attitudes after a certain experience. People observe their own behaviour and reflect if they will sustain the action. The theory also states that the more people are engaged in the desired behaviour, the greater the chances are to sustain it. This happens because people tend to perceive themselves as the type of person who participates in these types of actions, which upon reflection alters their beliefs about themselves. In other words, when someone engages in an awareness-raising event, it is likely that the person forms the perception of being a “food waste warrior”. Through the awareness raising events, people are also motivated to join in other (future planned) actions, such as in volunteering in gleaning and farmers’ market events, which in turn might lead to a greater belief in the importance of food surplus distribution and actual volunteering behaviour. The self-perception of being a food waste warrior is also reinforced through social media messages that are spread during and also after the organised events.

**Stages of change:** Last, the tactic of organising awareness-raising events also greatly contributes to raising consciousness among people who are not yet aware of the food waste issue. In order to maintain the pro-environmental behaviour towards fighting food waste and volunteering in food redistribution processes, one has to pass several stages from pre-contemplation (not intending to make a change), towards contemplation (intending to make a change), towards preparing the action, and maintaining it. Without the necessary support, people will remain in the first stages due to lack of motivation, especially those who are in the pre-contemplation stage. Therefore, in line with Prochaska and Johnson (1998)\textsuperscript{8}, it is important to raise awareness and consciousness about the issue and provide feedback and information about the causes. During the SavingFood awareness-raising events, information about the causes of food waste and statistics were provided at a booth, or were shared by the food chefs who organised the cooking demonstrations. This information was provided to raise consciousness about the food waste issue and find motivation to act.

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4. Behaviour change results

During the SavingFood awareness-raising events, feedback was collected from participants to rate their experience with the event, and to know if any change occurred in their ways of thinking, attitude or actual behaviour towards fighting food waste. The feedback about the awareness raising-events was collected in different ways. In 2017, feedback forms were distributed during the events in Greece and Hungary that were printed on postcard size. After the completion of the questions, the participants could tear a food saving recipe along the dotted line from that postcard. In 2018, a survey was distributed during the events in Belgium, the UK and Greece and which participants could complete on paper or online through a tablet.

4.1. Feedback form – postcard

Design of the feedback form

In total, 91 responses were gathered through the feedback form during the food festivals, with 70 responses from Hungary and 21 for Greece. The postcard included six questions: (1) a satisfaction score from 1 to 10 to rate the overall experience with the event, (2) communication and dissemination channels through which participants heard about the event, (3-4) two rating scales to measure change towards food saving behaviour, one specifically about knowledge increase and one about self-efficacy, (5) the intention to join the SavingFood platform, and (6) an open text box for further feedback and comments.

Results

The mean satisfaction score about the overall experience with the event was 7.60 (on a scale of 10), with a minimum score of 4 and a maximum score of 10 (μ = 7.60; SD= 1.68). The mean score for participants in Greece (μ = 9.66) was higher than in Hungary (μ = 6.98). Most participants got to know the event through local organisations and volunteers who spread the word (63.74%), and social media (14.29%).

The outcomes on the behaviour change statements for increase in knowledge and perceived self-efficacy are reported in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>Mean score</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge: By participating in this event, I feel my knowledge about food waste and surplus redistribution has increased</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>.719</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy: By participating in this event, I feel I can take more individual action to help reduce food waste</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Rating scales for measuring behaviour scale: knowledge and self-efficacy (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree).

The high mean scores indicate that participants in the food festivals, for both Hungary and Greece, perceived to have learned something new about food surplus redistribution by participating in the events, and also felt more able and confident to take individual actions against food waste. These statements proof that organising awareness-raising events is an effective mean for supporting behaviour change around food waste, and support in an increase of the necessary skills and knowledge and one’s perceived capability to perform the behaviour.
Furthermore, a linear relationship could be identified between the satisfaction score about the overall experience with the event and the behaviour change statement on knowledge \((r=0.615, N=90, p<0.000 \Rightarrow \text{moderate to strong correlation})\), and the statement on self-efficacy \((r=0.737, N=90, p<0.000 \Rightarrow \text{strong correlation})\). This means that a higher satisfaction about the overall experience with the event is correlated with increases in rating of the behaviour change statements, a better overall experience with the event will thus more likely result in behaviour change. However, no significant results could be found between Hungary and Greece for these two statements.

Last, participants could also indicate their intention towards registering on the SavingFood platform as a volunteer, donor or recipient organisation. 79.1% of the participants affirmed to do so, 17.6% would not and 3.3% was already a registered member. It should be noted that at that point in time the SavingFood platform was still in beta-testing phase, and not open to the general public. Only a selected group of volunteers was permitted access to the platform for testing purposes. The intention to register on the SavingFood platform was higher in Greece than in Hungary, although no significant differences were found with the former mentioned variables on behaviour change.

In the open text boxes, some feedback was written down, such as the reasons for (not) willing or able to register, e.g. “no time”, “I don’t know how”, “would love to, but cannot”, “this is a lovely idea”, “keep going”.

![Figure 2: Feedback form printed on postcard size (front and back).](image-url)
4.2. Survey results

Design of the survey

During the awareness-raising events in March and April 2018 in Belgium, the UK and Greece, a survey was prepared for gathering feedback from participants. Again, the purpose of this questionnaire was to gather feedback about the overall experience with the event, and to investigate whether any behaviour change occurred on the levels of way of thinking, attitudes or actual behaviour towards fighting food waste. For this, five statements were included to measure the concept of behavioural change, and were related to different types of intrinsic motivations for joining the event and socio-demographic characteristics such as age and gender.

In total, 84 responses were gathered through the questionnaire during the events, with 53 responses from the UK, 25 from Greece and 6 from Belgium. Overall, there were more female participants who filled in the questionnaires at the events: 67.5% females, 28.9% males and 3.6% other; and most survey participants were between 21 and 30 years old (32.5%), followed by 41-50 years old (21.7%), younger than 20 years (16.9%), and 31-40 years old (15.7%). These results are in line with the first in-take questionnaire that was organised in August - September 2016 for having a baseline measurement about food saving practices, concern, knowledge and volunteering behaviour before the start of the SavingFood pilots and usage of the online platform. During the events, there was a large presence of females and also a higher expected percentage of participants younger than 20 years old.

Results

In 2018, the mean satisfaction score about the overall experience with the event was higher, being 8.83 (on a scale of 10), with a minimum score of 3 and a maximum score of 10 (\( \mu = 8.83; SD = 1.28 \)). The mean score for Greece was higher (\( \mu = 9.08 \)) than the UK (\( \mu = 8.62 \)) and Belgium (\( \mu = 8.17 \)). Most participants got to know the event through social media (39.3%), via friends, colleagues or family members (33.3%), or via other means (23.8%), which were mostly via communications of other related food saving organisations or via collaborative organisations in the event (such as OLIO, Ethelon, etc.), or by noticing the event as a passer-by.

Participants’ motives for joining the awareness-raising events were mainly out of the intrinsic motivations for providing support to the food saving community (34.5%), out of interest (33.3%) and out of concern (27.4%).
To measure any self-perceived change on the levels of knowledge, attitude or actual behaviour towards fighting food waste, five rating scales were included in the questionnaire. After participating in the event, participants could give a score on these statements (on a scale of 5) to indicate whether they felt more aware about the food waste issue, felt to have learned more about the causes of food waste and need for food surplus distribution, perceived to obtain more knowledge about how to get involved in reducing food waste, and if they feel more motivated towards taking individual and collective actions against food waste.

The outcomes on the behaviour change statements for increase in knowledge, awareness and change in behavioural intention are reported in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>Mean score</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness: After attending the event, I am more aware of the importance of food waste</td>
<td>4,16</td>
<td>.956</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge: By attending this event, I have learned more about the causes of food waste and the need for food surplus redistribution</td>
<td>4,24</td>
<td>.815</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge: By attending this event, I have learned how I can get involved in reducing food waste</td>
<td>4,27</td>
<td>.786</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional behaviour (individual level): After attending this event, I am more motivated to reduce my own food waste</td>
<td>4,24</td>
<td>.840</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional behaviour (collective behaviour): After attending this event, I am more motivated to join a saving food action of the SavingFood food redistribution organisation</td>
<td>4,16</td>
<td>.853</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Rating scales for measuring behaviour scale: awareness, knowledge and intentional behaviour *(1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree).*

All rating scales obtained high mean scores, especially the statement about gained information about how to get involved in reducing food waste (\(\mu = 4,27; SD=.786\)). Again, the high mean scores indicate that the participants in the food festival in Greece and the disco soups in the UK and Belgium perceived to have learned something new, are more aware and consciousness about the food waste issue, and feel motivated (especially on the individual level) to take action. These statements prove again that organising awareness-raising events is an effective mean for supporting behaviour change around food waste, and can help in increasing motivation towards the pro-environmental behaviour.

Further, a linear relationship could be identified between the awareness statement “After attending the event, I am more aware of the importance of food waste” and the knowledge statement “By attending this event, I have learned more about the causes of food waste and the need for food surplus redistribution” (\(r=.800, N=80 \Rightarrow \) strong correlation). This means that a higher score for the awareness statement is correlated with increases in rating of the knowledge statement about the causes of food waste and need for food surplus distribution. This finding can be explained through the trans-theoretical model of behaviour change\(^{10}\), as in order to raise awareness and consciousness about a particular matter one has to share (educational) information, proof or confront people with the issue.

Last, the intention of participants after the event for sustaining the pro-environmental behaviour is also positive. 59.7% indicates that they would like to register as a volunteer for the next upcoming gleaning or...

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farmers’ market event, and 50.6% states to visit the website of SavingFood after the event. By combining both questions, results show that 52.2% has the intention to visit the SavingFood platform and to register as a volunteer for the next upcoming gleaning or farmer market event (of which 11.9% is currently already registered). 20.9% does not have any further intention to sustain the action (neither to visit the website, nor to register as a volunteer for an upcoming event), while 26.8% indicates that their intention is rather likely that they will visit the website (again) and register as a volunteer for an event. This time, no significant relationship could be found between the satisfaction score about the event and the intention to register as a volunteer. Further, it should also be noted that the intention to join another SavingFood (or any saving food activity) event was higher for Greece (65.2%) and Belgium (100%), than the UK (51.3%).

Last, some feedback was given through the open text boxes. Overall, the feedback was very positive and mentioned that it was a great occasion to meet like-minded people. However, the feedback from the UK participants also revealed that some participants were already attending the events for multiple times. These participants mentioned that the events should be more widely advertised and broadened up to other target groups who are less aware of food waste.

Some illustrative quotes from participants at the event:

“Excellent event! I really enjoyed the time I have spent with the Boroume people. The volunteers were passionate about what they were doing! I understood that they really believed in the cause.” (Greece, female, 41-50 years)

“The place and venue was nice. Liked atmosphere and people. Good to meet likeminded people” (UK, female, 31-40 years old)

“Really good, could do more expansive advertisement on Instagram and around Manchester” (UK, male, 21-30 years old)

“I really liked learning how to use up all the broccoli and the soup was delicious” (Belgium, female, 20 years)

“Target more groups who are less aware of food waste, and advertise more widely on social media” (UK, female, 61 to 70 years old)

5. Conclusions

The organised awareness-raising events during the SavingFood project were able to reach out to a significant amount of citizens, donors and recipient organisations in the four pilot communities in Greece, Hungary, the UK and Belgium. In total, around 9000 citizens were engaged through these events, and which led to a positive behavioural change through their participation. The feedback form and the survey results showed that the events are an effective tool for raising awareness about food waste, help in increasing self-efficacy for fighting food waste on the individual and collective level, and in distributing knowledge about the matter. Further, the participants in these events were also very positive towards taking further action after the event, e.g. more than 50% indicated to have the intention to visit the SavingFood website, or to register as a volunteer in the next upcoming gleaning or farmer market event. The food redistribution organisations also testified that indeed a number of participants in these events joined as a new volunteer in their network (around 5 to 10 volunteers per event), and has led to an increase in visibility and recognisability of their organisation through the press contacts. Overall, the awareness-raising events were an effective tactic to engage citizens in a motivating way and in a festive atmosphere – and it will be sustained also after the SavingFood project as to further outreach and extend the food saving community.