

Government Policy and Practices to Support Malaysian Food Donors in Redistribution of Surplus Food. Are there sufficient?

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ABSTRACT

Food waste has been described as a global problem with numerous root causes (Minor et al., 2019; Narvanen et al., 2020; Niina et al., 2022; Weber and Khademian, 2008). Food waste has reached alarming proportions, with approximately one-third of all food produced going to waste (FAO, 2014; Gustavsson et al., 2011). Food waste accounts for 20% of all food produced in the European Union (EU), costing 143 billion EUR annum (Stenmarck et al., 2016). A study was done by Future Directions International (FDI) in 2016 found that 25% of the globe's food waste happens in South and Southeast Asia. Food waste prevention at the source must be the main priority. Still, the EU's food waste hierarchy puts redistribution of surplus food for human consumption as the second-best option when food waste cannot be avoided (European Commission, 2020). Some Southeast Asia countries managed 64% of avoidable food waste by redistributing it to those in need (Tech Collective, 2019). Most food waste is managed via lower-priority methods, including composting, incineration, or landfill (European Commission, 2020; Eurostat, 2020; Obersteiner et al., 2021). Redistribution of surplus food or food donation to a marginalised community can be advantageous. Aside from the environmental, economic and social benefits, using the food for its intended purpose preserves its energy and nutrient content. Furthermore, surplus food redistribution is increasingly recognised to address food insecurity and food waste (Schneider, 2013). In Malaysia, the government is concerned with redistributing surplus food operated by a food bank or charity organisation via donations from the food retail industry (Hamik et al., 2021).

Keywords: Redistribution, Surplus Food, Food Donor, Government Policy and Practices