

Our customers  
like to know  
that we are not  
**wasting food**

- Christian,  
The Bread & Butter Project

THE  
BREAD & BUTTER  
PROJECT

**BECOME A DONOR**  
**WOW FOOD! INNER WEST**

PROJECT OF THE ADDISON ROAD COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

# WOW FOOD! INNER WEST PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

Prepared for the NSW Environment Protection Authority  
June 2021





## Acknowledgments

Our thanks go to the wonderful and committed staff and volunteers of the WOW Food! Project at Addison Road Community Organisation. CEO Rosanna Barbero championed and nurtured the project's success, while Damien Moore the Food Pantry Manager utilised his experience and knowledge to garner support and partnerships and to develop and skill staff and volunteers alike. Mark Taylor brought his expertise and passion to the media campaign, producing compelling images and content. They all, tirelessly, never failed a challenge. And of course without our generous food donors, too many to name here, there would be no food to save and redistribute. The dedicated Food Pantry shoppers' trust and encouragement keep us operating. Our acknowledgment also to the Environmental Protection Authority for funding what is increasingly critical to our environment - analysis, testing and evaluation. Colleen Sutherland collected, sifted and pulled the pieces back together for this report.

## Table of Contents

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>BACKGROUND TO THE WOW FOOD! INNER WEST PROJECT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>FINDINGS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	<b>26</b>



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Food waste is a system-wide problem the solution to which entails a whole-system approach. Prevention of food waste is the ideal, food rescue and recycling are significant activities towards the reduction of food waste.

This Report evaluates the implementation and outcomes of four objectives whose overarching aim is to decrease the amount of unavoidable food waste going to landfill by increasing the number of donors, forming food rescue alliances, awareness raising and educating about food rescue and influencing food waste policy and legislation.

The evaluation relates to a not-for-profit organisation in the Inner West of Sydney.

Importantly what was intended at the outset to be a steady, incremental project development became food rescue and redistribution, highly intensified for the second year of the two- year project, due to the COVID emergency. Quantities and numbers in the report, therefore, also reveal the vital role that food relief and rescue can fulfill in disaster and emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

Strengthening food rescue involves growing the salvage of quality, nutritious food by increasing the capacity of food rescue/distribution organisations, to deal with issues such as food circulation blockages, consistency of supply, fresh food and other food storage, staff capacity, information flows with food donators, rescuers and consumers.

Increasing the volume of food donated to rescue, relies on donors being willing to donate excess food and on a network and variety of redistribution options.

Issues considered in this evaluation include scale, self- sustainability of food relief organisations, food rescue alliances, approaches to education and training and whether food waste policy without legislation or sanction against food waste, is effective.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report details the findings of the final evaluation of Addison Road Community Organisation's (ARCO) 2018-2020 project, WOW Food! Inner West (The Inner West War on Food Waste)<sup>1</sup>. **The Project is referenced in this report as WOW Food!**

WOW Food! began in June 2018 with the Funding Agreement and by August 2018 was operational primarily from ARCO's site in Addison Road, Marrickville in Sydney's Inner West. Significant to this evaluation, is that the original and intended project staff, timeline and activities were, to some extent, derailed due to the COVID emergency and the necessity to reallocate ARCO's resources towards scaling- up, for emergency food distribution. The original project metamorphosed from a food rescue and redistribution project, into a disaster response, food rescue and redistribution prototype.

Restaurant and food outlet closures and limitations, resulted in increased food donations to ARCO from which alliance and partner organisations were able to retrieve and distribute food across Sydney to those most vulnerable and in the process, significantly decrease food waste. That said, the evaluation focuses on WOW Food! four key objectives during the period August 2018 until 31 July 2020.<sup>2</sup>





<sup>1</sup> Included are supplementary survey material and other relevant material from a draft independent consultant report, EJD Consultants and Associates

<sup>2</sup> Selected data from August 2020 to April 2021 is included to demonstrate ongoing Project strength




## 1.1 Project Methodology

The following activities were undertaken as part of the overall methodology. This data informs the evaluation of the WOW Food! four key objectives.

<p><b>WOW Food! documentation, promotions</b></p> 	<p>Desktop review of WOW Food! documentation, including policies and procedures, communications and promotions for period August 2018- July 2020.</p> <p>This review also includes preliminary observations from the Food Donor Study<sup>3</sup> commenced, but overtaken, during the COVID emergency, by significant increases in food donations and a change of circumstance for project staff.</p>
<p><b>WOW Food! data analysis</b></p> 	<p>Desktop review of available WOW Food! statistical data for the period August 2018- April 2021</p>
<p><b>Surveys</b></p> 	<p>Food Rescue Survey<sup>4</sup> to internal and external stakeholders</p> <p>Customer Survey to Food Pantry users</p>
<p><b>Process Mapping</b></p> 	<p>Mapping the steps and stages of how WOW Food! was established</p> <p>Mapping the steps and stages of food rescue and redistribution throughout WOW Food!</p>

3 The Food Donor Study, still to be published.

4 Due to the small sample size the survey is indicative only. It was distributed to internal and external stakeholders of ARCO throughout October and November 2020, in which a total of 67 responses were collected: 39 internal respondents, including ARCO staff (6), ARCO volunteers (30), Board members (3), external stakeholders (28), including food donors (14), food rescue and redistribution collaborator (12), Government staff members (1) and others (1).



There's so much  
food made in the  
**Inner West**  
if every business  
donated it would  
help a lot

- Alexi, The Italian Bowl

**BECOME A DONOR**  
**WOW FOOD! INNER WEST**

PROJECT OF THE ADDISON ROAD COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

## 2. BACKGROUND TO THE WOW FOOD! INNER WEST PROJECT

### 2.1 About the Food Donation Education Grant Program (FDEGP)

The Food Donation Education Grant Program, a component of the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Waste Less, Recycle More initiative, aims to increase diversion of both food and garden waste from landfill in NSW. With the FDEGP grant, it is anticipated that food relief organisations will be able to strengthen their capacity and proficiency in education, communication and training support, aimed at increasing the volume of food donated.

The stated objectives of the FDEGP are to:

- Decrease the amount of unavoidable food waste going to landfill that is fit for human consumption
- Increase the amount of quality food donation infrastructure grant applications
- Increase the amount of surplus food donated by food businesses in NSW through improved relationships with existing and potential food donors.
- Increase the number of partnerships between food relief organisations to assist in the establishment of more durable and efficient food rescue organisations.
- Improve the ability of food relief agencies by facilitating an increase in skilled volunteers.



## 2.2 Addison Road Community Organisation

Located in Marrickville in the Inner Western suburbs of Sydney, ARCO as a not-for-profit organisation spearheads a rights- based approach to community development projects in arts, culture, environment and social justice as well as providing affordable spaces for non-government and community organisations and artists on its 9- acre heritage site.

In December 2016 ARCO released its report, Mind the Gap, which was an inquiry into the increasing inequalities faced by CALD communities in Marrickville LGA. The findings about increased food poverty synchronised with environmental concerns about waste and furthered the development of ARCO's food rescue Initiative and Food Pantry during 2015-2017. In 2018 ARCO applied for, and was successful in receiving the grant, subject of this evaluation, of \$143,814 over two years with four key objectives detailed below at figure 1.

## 2.3 WOW Food! Focus and Objectives

WOW Food! was a two-year project with a focus on engaging new food donors and increasing levels of food rescue across the Inner West leading to a decrease in the amount of edible food going to landfill. The three interconnected elements of the WOW Food! initiative:

1. An action-research study to identify and develop new food donors, working with ten potential donors to discern key challenges and solutions
2. A high visibility campaign to mobilise potential food donors and increase general participation in food rescue across the Inner West
3. Formation of an alliance of food relief organisations to increase their capacity for the effective collection and distribution of rescued and donated food.

*Figure 1: Objectives of WOW Food!*

<b>Objective 1:</b> Increase food donations to ARCCO and other Inner West Food Rescue Alliance members in the Inner West local government area.
<b>Objective 2:</b> Build collaboration between food relief organisations in the Inner West local government area (LGA) to increase food rescue capacity.
<b>Objective 3:</b> Raise awareness about the problem of food waste and the social, environmental and economic benefits of food rescue.
<b>Objective 4:</b> Influence policy to legislate businesses to donate surplus food to charities.

*Targets and Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for each objective are attached at Attachment 1.*



## 3 FINDINGS

This section outlines the key inputs, outputs and outcomes of WOW Food! based on the four key objectives of the project.

### 3.1 Objective 1: Food Donations

**Objective 1:** Increase food donations to ARCO and other Inner West Food Rescue Alliance members in the Inner West local government area: **ACHIEVED**

#### 3.1.1 Food Donations - Data Analysis

Between August 2018 and July 2020, WOW Food! rescued in excess of 197 tonnes of donated food, collected from over 50 different sources. Of note, 2020 was the COVID year when food outlets were suspended or closed, as were other businesses and organisations. People were often isolated and food insecurity was on the increase. ARCO's infrastructure, after some reconfiguration, was able to house, sort and distribute the significant increase in food volume.

Prior to 2018 the average monthly tonnage of donated food was 4.6 tonnes. The total weight donated across Year 1 (August 2018 – July 2019) was 69,118 kg (69 tonnes). Comparing this to Year 2 (Aug 2019 - July 2020), the total weight donated increased to 127,842 (128 tonnes).



As depicted in Figure 2, from August 2018- July 2019, the monthly average amount of donated food was 5760.09kg (5.75 tonnes).

From August 2019- July 2020, the monthly average donation was 10653.50kg (10.65 tonnes) Figure 3.

Figure 4 (August 2020 to April 2021) indicates a consistent monthly intake of food donations and a marked increase in food rescued since August 2018.

Figure 2:

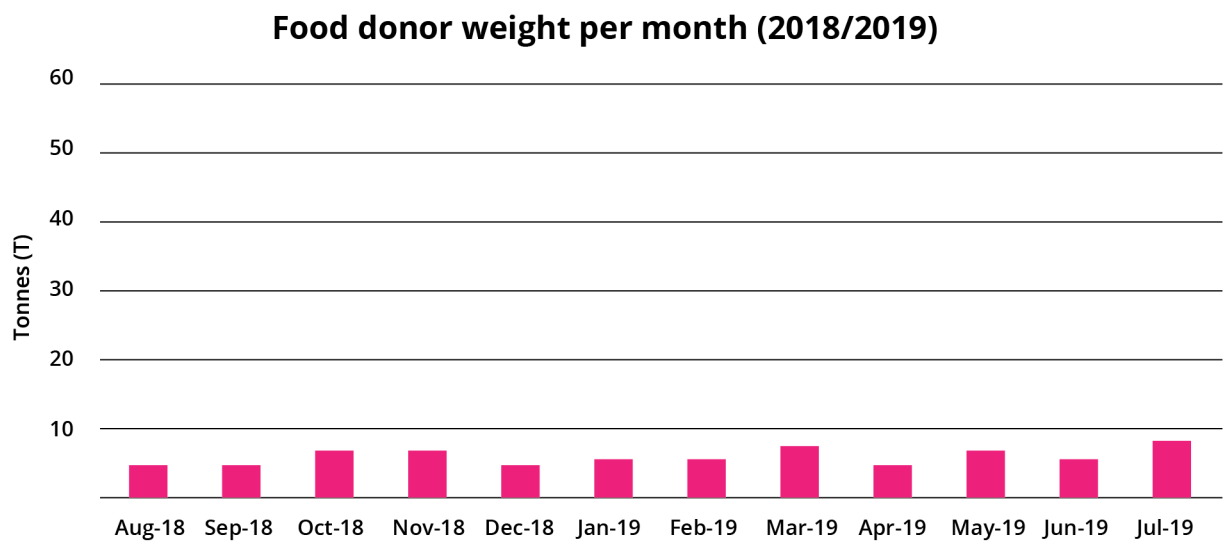


Figure 3:

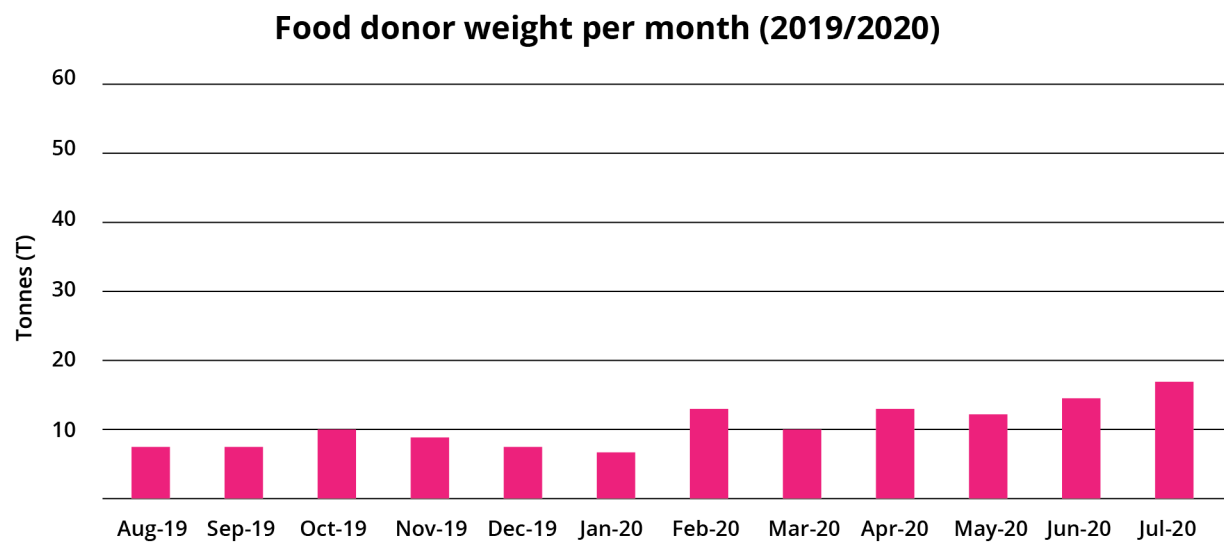
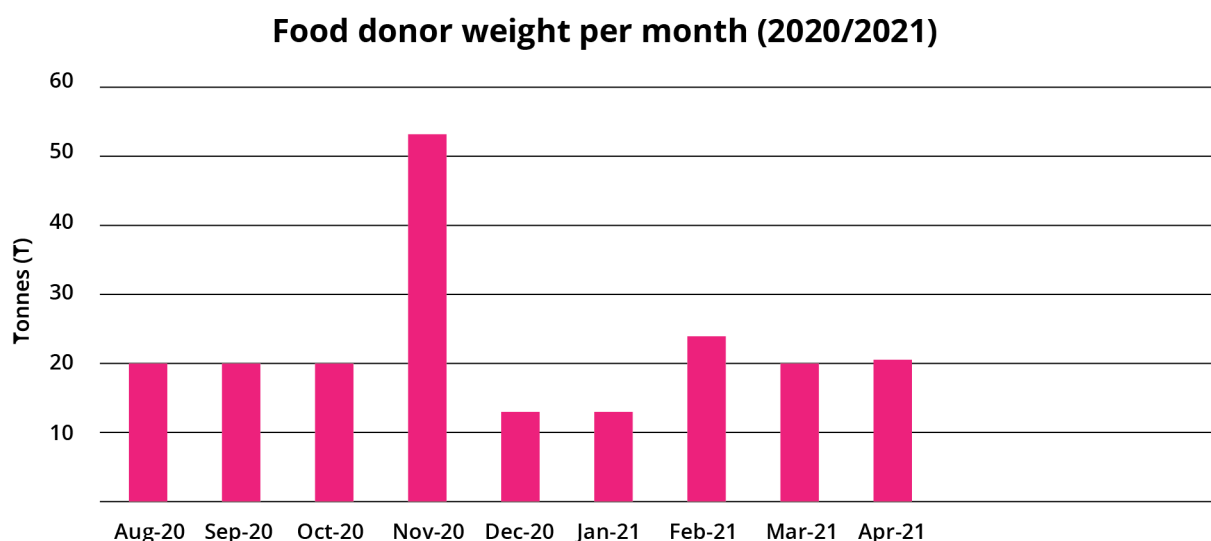


Figure 4 - Food donor weight per month 2020/2021



### 3.1.2 Monthly Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

The 4 tonne per month KPI set by ARCO for Year 1 was met on eleven of the twelve months of August 2018- July 2019.

The increased 8 tonne per month KPI set by ARCO for Year 2 was met on eight of the twelve months of August 2019 – July 2020, far exceeding the 8 tonne KPI on five of those eight months. Towards the end of Year 2, the total yearly donations pushed the upper threshold of 10,000 kg (100 tonnes), eventually hitting 315 tonnes for the nine-month period, August 2020 to April 2021 (Figure 4). These numbers are far in excess of the intended KPI's, illustrating the success of the project in respect to the key objective of increasing food donations.

A breakdown of types of donors across the month of July 2020 is further explored in Figure 5. Noted is that this breakdown is solely descriptive. It does not take into account the weight of each donor's contribution, but rather the range and type of donations.

Year 1 - 4 Tonnes



Year 2 - 8 Tonnes

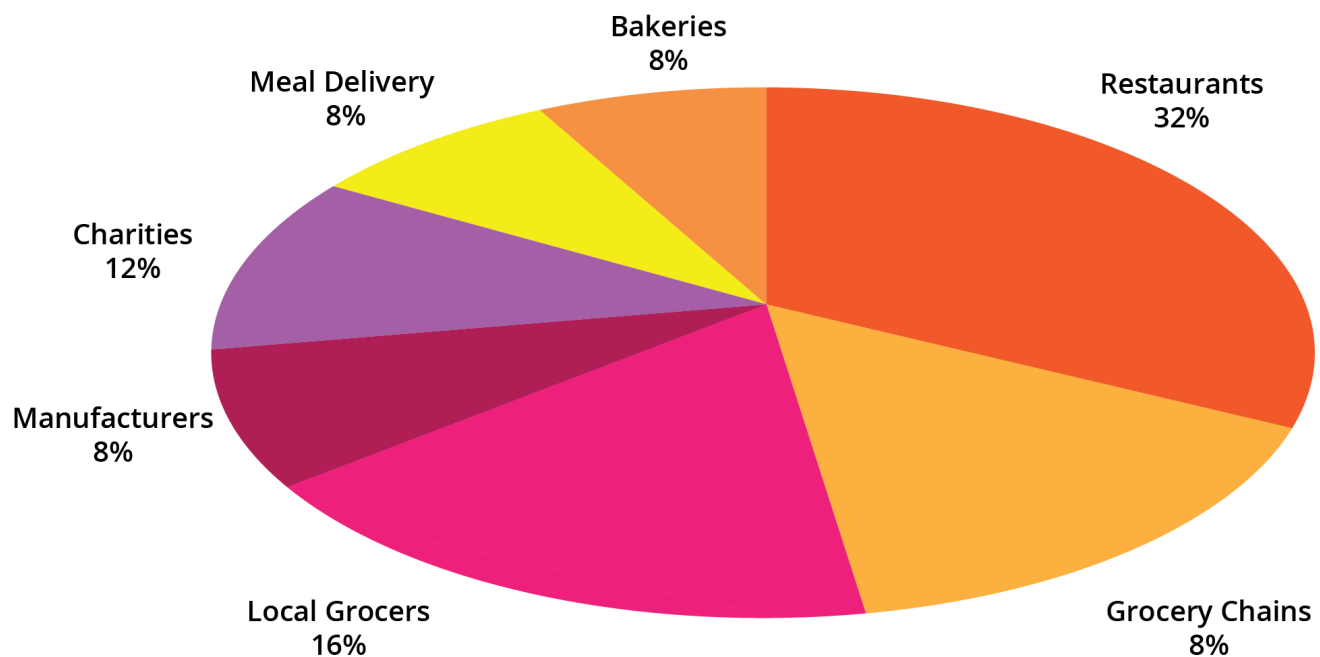


Year 3 - 100 Tonnes





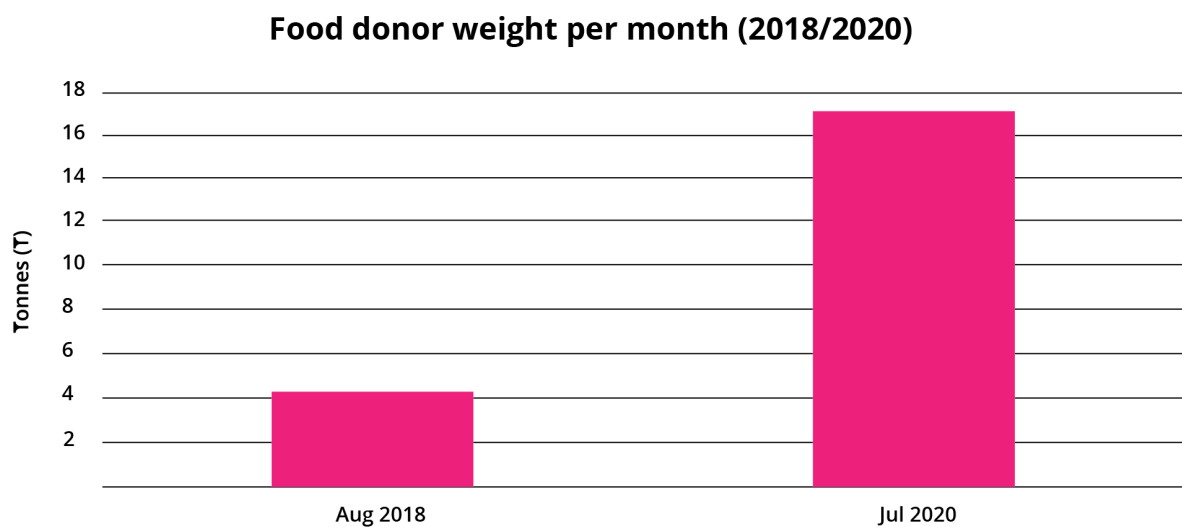
Figure 5: Type of Donor Contribution for July 2020



### 3.1.3 Number of Donors Donating

Three times as many donors were on ARCO's register in July 2020 (59) when compared to August 2018 (18) as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6:



### 3.1.4 Average Number of Donors Donating

Year 1 of the project included an average number of donors donating equal to 12.3 and in Year 2, the average number increased to 16.58 indicating success in reaching new donors and having the capacity to deal with this increased inventory.

Across both years, the average number of donors donating was equal to 14. In year 2, every single month had 14 or more donors, suggesting a growth in donor awareness and willingness to donate. Year 1 received the largest number of donors donating in one month, with 20 in both August and September of 2018.

### 3.1.5 Food Donor Study



The Food Donor Study, still to be published, was proposed to look at the range of issues that prevent businesses from donating food, as well as the potential benefits that can derive from being an active food rescue partner. COVID food emergency needs of businesses, community partners and their clients served to focus attention and provided experiential evidence of the potential for food rescue and redistribution, far more swiftly than was originally envisaged. Unfortunately, the two consultants consecutively engaged by ARCO for the Food Donor Study element of the Project had to withdraw for personal reasons. In addition the donor relationship building and engagement analysis, of the reference group of potential donors, became subsumed by COVID emergency food relief work. Until this point, fifteen potential food donors had been identified and work to pinpoint challenges and solutions had commenced.

### 3.1.6 Action Research in Action

The Food Donor Study was to be conducted, consistent with action research methodology, combining real-time activity and research. Rather than pause the Study entirely, the Study was adapted for the COVID emergency experience to provide critical insights, into why potential donors may be reluctant to donate.

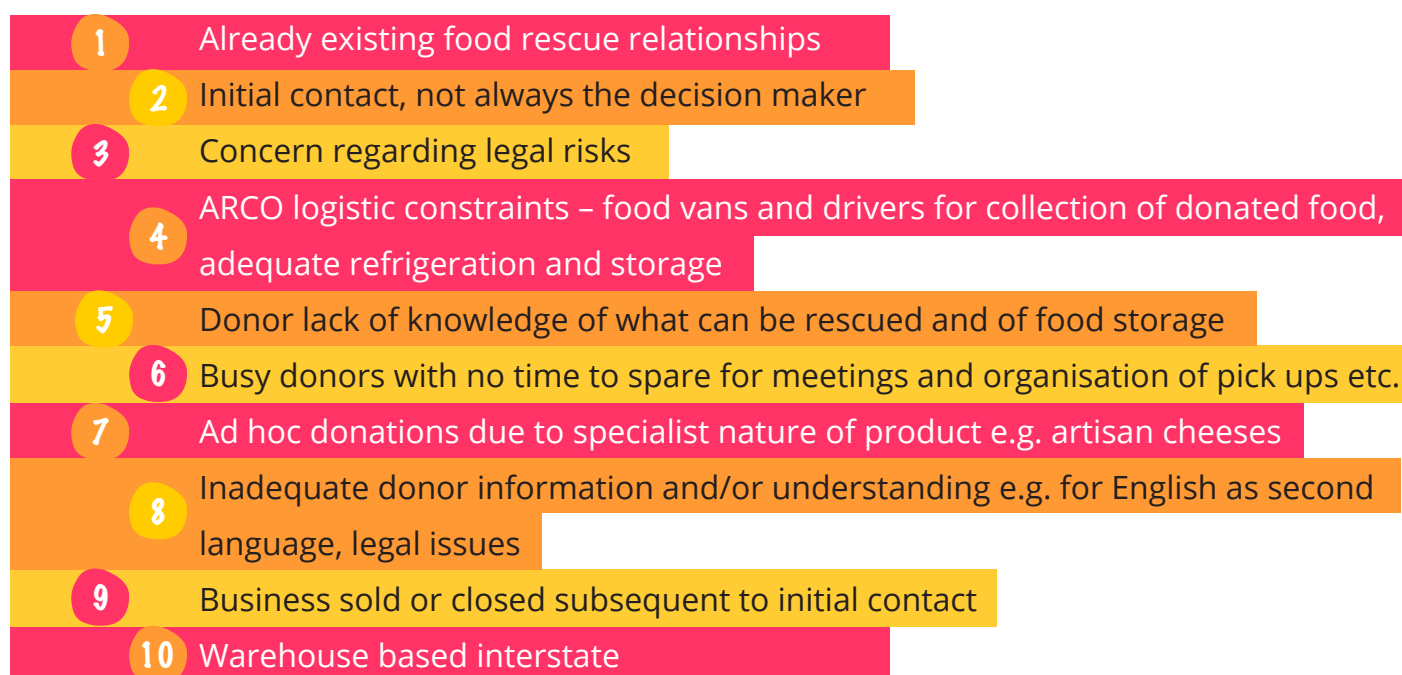
ARCO utilised the Study's initial findings with the result that the quantity of donations was tripled after an extra driver was employed to fit food-runs with the timeframes of donors. Enhanced relationships with donors resulted in increased donations, while additional infrastructure (refrigeration, warehousing logistics and storage space) resulted in increased capacity to accept and recycle donated food, including fresh food. ARCO's own resources were put towards better addressing shortfalls in donations and in so doing, increased its Food Pantry shoppers, emergency hampers and its capability to provide a wider selection of food groups and culturally appropriate foods. Better communication and donor packs (Attachment 2) provided additional donor confidence about legal issues and liabilities, while at the same time identifying the benefits of donating food.



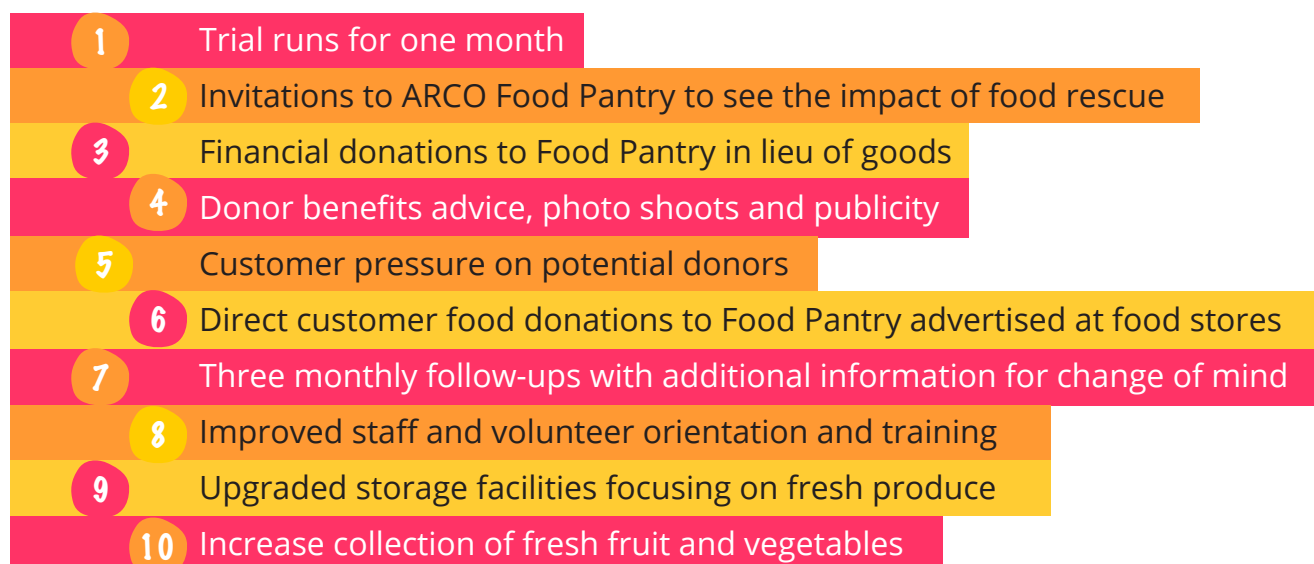
The COVID experience in itself alerted potential donors to ARCO's food rescue work with the result that ARCO was able to massively reduce food waste by redistributing rescued and donated food to partners and the more vulnerable in our communities. For example, ARCO staff and volunteers put together and distributed approximately 5,000 emergency food hampers each month during 2020 to more than 70 charity and civil groups.

Figure 7 identifies the main challenges pre COVID, while Figure 8 provides some proposed strategies to encourage food donations. (The forthcoming Food Donor Study report will provide more detailed insights and strategies with regard to working with potential food donors).

*Figure 7: Pre-COVID preliminary findings - challenges to donor contributions*



*Figure 8: Proposed strategies to overcome some of the initial concerns included*





## 3.2 Objective 2: Collaboration

**Objective 2:** Build collaboration between food relief organisations in the Inner West local government area (LGA) to increase food rescue capacity: **ACHIEVED**

### 3.2.1 WOW Food! Partnerships and Networks

During 2018-2019 ARCO instigated a series of eight meetings with its existing food relief partner organisations- Inner West Council, Asylum Seeker Centre, Newtown Neighbourhood Centre, Rozelle Neighbourhood Centre, St Vincent De Paul, Inner West Neighbour Aid and Exodus Foundation - with the aim of developing key skills in areas such as recruitment, training and sustaining volunteers, marketing and grant preparation and writing. In all, eight of the projected eight meetings were delivered but what became increasingly clear was that participants were reluctant to allocate time to this process and the requisite minimum ten participants was difficult to achieve. Key staff changes in member organisations also inhibited this particular method of alliance building.

Feedback suggests that many of those involved are best appreciated as “doers”, learning best by activity, meeting challenges and sharing knowledge.

### 3.2.2 Learning – Community of Practice

Collaboration and learning on-the-job tend to occur more seamlessly beginning with needs and problem solving. For example, when alliance partners recognized that their smaller organisations did not have sufficient infrastructure for effective and efficient food collection, storage and distribution, they joined together with a local (ARCO) centralised, larger capacity organisation which was able to act as the collection, storage and distribution hub.

The many smaller organisations were able to pick up food hampers and distribute them to their service users. In this way the organisations with specialist services – Aboriginal and migrant communities, mental health, LGBTQI communities, women’s and youth refuges, rape crisis and sexual assault services – effectively distributed food to often hidden and/or hard-to-reach community members.

The ARCO hub also became a point of contact and support for those workers who essentially lost their jobs overnight and for international students, who began to organise, operate and advertise food distribution on set days each week for other like students.

The alliance was further strengthened when the alliance partners worked together in order to develop a COVID related funding submission to go to Inner West Council.

Extreme disruption as experienced during COVID, provided a learning-at-work, collaborative environment which was arguably just as effective in this context (with some strategic alignment of time and resources) as more formal qualifications and skills training. Permission and confidence to problem solve at all levels of the organisation becomes even more valuable at times of emergency or disaster.

ARCO’s energetic leadership, community connections and physical and human infrastructure (including volunteers) served as foundation for a growing food alliance network. ARCO shared with alliance partners, information and advice around:

- ✓ **Compliance and food safety**
- ✓ **‘Best-before’ and ‘Use-by’ dates**
- ✓ **Transporting food**
- ✓ **Food Storage**
- ✓ **Food Handling**
- ✓ **Food Packaging**

- ✓ **Excess stock, slow-moving stock or deleted lines**
- ✓ **Product with damaged packaging**
- ✓ **Sample-size and bulk produce**

ARCO’s food rescue evidenced a broad increase in collaboration during the COVID food emergency. 32 volunteers became 500 volunteers at the height of the food relief, 70 charities/ food relief organisations distributed 5,000 emergency hampers with approximately 220 tonnes of good food saved from landfill, equivalent to over 400 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.



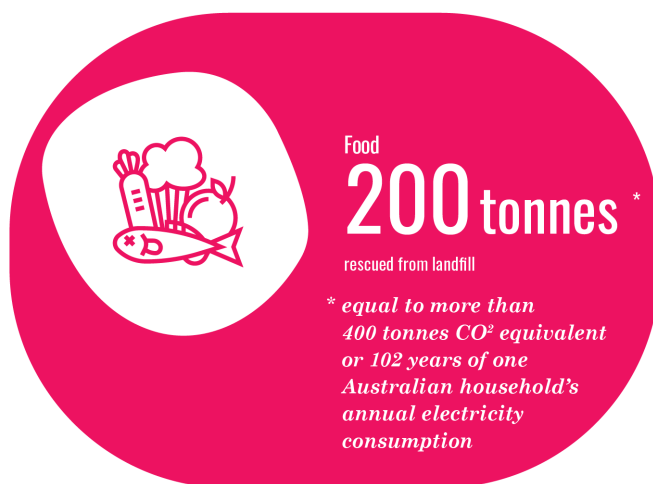
In September 2020 ARCO opened Addi Road Camperdown Food Pantry, expanding access to affordable food and increasing ARCO's food rescue potential.

Partnerships and food rescue capacity can be found in more detail at pages 21-22 of ARCO's Annual Report 2020:

<https://addiroad.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2020-Annual-Report.pdf>

## 2020 Achievements

Highlights from a big year for Addi Road



### 3.2.3 Survey responses - Perceptions on success of collaboration

Contributors to a small survey (67 total respondents) were asked how successful they believed ARCO has been in terms of building collaboration between different parties involved in food rescue. Internal respondent's responses were very positive, with over 92% selecting either 'very successful' or 'successful'. Interestingly, external respondents were even more positive about ARCO's collaborative efforts, with all external respondents selecting 'very successful' or 'successful'.

From the seven food rescue & redistribution collaborators who responded, all selected 'very successful' to this question.

## 3.3 Objective 3: Raise Awareness

**Objective 3:** Raise awareness about the problem of food waste and the social, environmental and economic benefits of food rescue: **ACHIEVED**

### 3.3.1 Strategic Media Campaign

Starting in December 2018 a variety of communication media were developed and utilised in two high visibility food rescue awareness-raising campaigns over the two years of the Project. Figure 9 provides a summary chart.

The Inner West of Sydney was targeted with the following outputs:

#### Print

The first roll out of ARCO's high-visibility campaign utilised the print medium: 200 shirts/aprons, 200 flyers, 1200 postcards, 1500 stickers and 240 posters, a billboard for public display and advertisements in two different publications. The designs and posters for this aspect of the campaign are at Attachment 3.





## Video

A 10-minute mini-documentary was developed to highlight the Food Pantry and the issue of food waste. The video had over 3,900 views on ARCO's Facebook (Attachment 4).



## Social Media

ARCO made further promotional efforts through social media. Ten posts on ARCO's Facebook reached 27,423 individuals. The website built in December 2018 features donor stories, documentary videos and donor information updates. The WOW Food! page had 3,478 unique viewers (Attachment 5) while the Food Pantry page received 31,842 unique viewers (Attachment 6). 12 posts (2 per week over 2 months) were made to ARCO's Facebook (Attachment 7), reaching 43,176 individuals with 2,449 engagements.

## Digital Posters

High-profile food donors were showcased on ARCO's Facebook page reaching 7,248 people (Attachment 8).



## Donor Landing Page

The page has been developed pending publication.



Figure 9 Summary - Awareness Raising Media

<b>Social Media (Not Paid)</b> <p>10 social media posts weekly over 3 months for which key analytics data was used</p> <p>Post Reach total = 57,427 Paid Reach = 23,561 Engagement's total = 3,639 Video views = 7,114</p>	<b>Social Media (Paid)</b> <p>Digital design aspects - Facebook and Instagram advertisements</p> <p>6 Still image advertisements 6 Video advertisements (Attachment 9)</p> <p>Key analytics used included link clicks, engagement, click through rates, impressions, and likes/shares</p>
<b>Media Campaign</b> <p>Press release to 30 media outlets, with 8 published stories (Attachment 11)</p>	<b>Website outputs</b> <p>Webpage built and maintained Food rescued and donor information updated monthly Donor stories published 10-minute Documentary video added</p> <p>Key analytics used included pages visits, user behaviour, referral sources, search engine optimisation, demographic, and user information</p>
<b>Video Campaign</b> <p>3 x 30 &amp; 3 x 10 second TVC's Used for Facebook, Instagram and Youtube, but not appropriate for Cinema (Attachment 9)</p>	<b>Documentary</b> <p>10-minute documentary around issue of food waste, not an original KPI, was added</p>

### 3.3.2 Awareness Raising – Food Waste Avoidance Partnerships

The creation of (food waste) relationships or 'food waste avoidance partnerships' can significantly increase awareness of the social, environmental and economic benefits around food waste. One such example is the food waste avoidance partnership between ARCO and The Hilton Sydney hotel.



New ideas and processes for food rescue and redistribution were developed and trialed in partnership between ARCO and The Hilton Sydney, in order to address a range of unmet needs. For example, hotels generate a large amount of food waste. As a result of this collaboration, food waste was diverted from landfill thereby decreasing methane gas, which is negatively impacting our climate.

Quality low price food choices and consequently food turnover at ARCO Food Pantry increased, better meeting the needs of those who are food insecure at the same time, decreasing food waste.

*'The Hilton Sydney Executive Chef Kruno Velican said donating to the [ARCO] Food Pantry can improve profits, customer satisfaction and provide accessible and affordable food to those in need'.*

### 3.3.3 Community Response - Awareness

Apart from the analytics gleaned from social media, the absence of a comprehensive system for tracking community response rates, of raised (or not) awareness of food rescue, has proved to be an oversight and is the least strong aspect of this objective.

Perhaps the strongest impact came from the twelve-minute documentary made for the WOW Food! launch, which coupled the narrative impacts of the social (who benefits) with the gains for the environment. The Chamber of Commerce commented positively on the posters and the highly visible billboards. Anecdotal advice from staff and volunteers in the field suggests there was a cumulative awareness raising impact. A sample of collected feedback:

*"Great news. In 2 days we have garnered 4 enquiries re donation/food drive for Pantry and 1 x EOI for Corporate Volunteering Day – all attributed to WOW Posters"*

### 3.3.4 Survey Responses - Awareness

The majority of internal respondents 11 (28.2%) selected 'very successful' or 'successful' 19 (48.72%) while 9 (23.08%) took a neutral or negative view when asked whether they thought ARCO had been successful in raising awareness about food waste. 12 (44.44%) external respondents selected 'very successful' and 8 (29.63%) 'successful' with 6 (22.22%) unsure. 68% of all respondents selected 'very aware' or 'somewhat aware' when asked how aware they personally were of ARCO's food rescue work. Respondents were asked where ARCO sources its rescued food, redistributes its rescued food and to whom, how ARCO promotes its food rescue and redistribution, links in with other food rescue organisations and how the food rescue work links to other ARCO activities.

## 3.4 Objective 4: Influence Policy

**Objective 4:** Influence policy to legislate businesses to donate surplus food to charities:  
**ACHIEVED**

### 3.4.1 Networks of Influence

By capturing the attention of the local Council, ARCO was successful in influencing local Council's policy and commitment, to alleviate unnecessary food waste and in the process, ARCO advanced its relationships with the local Chamber of Commerce and local businesses.



ARCO strategic approach:

- Hosted three meetings with Inner West Mayor, Council staff and Councillors about the WOW Food! project.
- Inner West Council staff attended ARCO to learn from ARCO's WOW Food! in order to explore the potential for implementing a pilot project in the Inner West.
- ARCO put forward a motion (Figure 10) to go before the Inner West Council, promoting and encouraging a food waste project directed towards reducing the amount of food waste going into landfill.
- ARCO CEO and IWC Councilors spoke to the motion at a Council meeting in November 2018 and the motion was passed.
- In principle the motion preferred 'encouragement' and 'education'. However, indications are, that sanctions and/or Federal or State legislation (similar to the French Garot Law), for businesses to donate excess edible food, to food-rescue, might prove more effective.



*Figure 10- Motion to Inner West Council Meeting in November 2018*

That the Inner West Council:

1. Notes the efforts undertaken by local community based organisations in setting up food relief initiatives and diverting surplus food to those in need.
2. Develops a comprehensive plan within the IWC Local Government Area focussing on strategies and actions to prevent unnecessary food waste, which include:
  - a) Educating individuals and business members on options to donate surplus food that would otherwise be sent to landfill.
  - b) Encouraging local food businesses to donate unsold and edible food-to-food rescue organisations of their choosing.

Subsequent to the successful motion, Inner West Council demonstrated its commitment to decreasing food waste. One such example, piloted in apartment blocks, is the IWC food recycling service that is now available across the Inner West Council area for apartment buildings with 10 or more units. Apartment buildings with less than 10 units can 'opt-in' to the service.

Leichhardt Market Place analysed their food waste system and has 'encouraged' shop owners to separate their food waste into food bins, otherwise they are charged 29 cents per kilogram of rubbish.

Inner West Council Business Unit organised a meeting between Council, ARCO and the President and 'food related' members of the Chamber of Commerce.

Five new donors resulted from this meeting. In addition, commercial kitchen appliances from a restaurant closure were donated and are earmarked for the evolving ARCO kitchen project whose goal is to value- add to ARCO food rescue, by offering food and nutrition education and converting excess food into products such as soups, sauces, jams, or prepared meals.





## 4. CONCLUSION

ARCO met its four objectives, albeit under conditions not envisaged when the project was first initiated, due in the main, to the COVID experience.

What is clear is that while food relief organisations and charities may be committed to food rescue and redistribution, they are dependent on, and must be open to the level, type and frequency of donations on offer. Such a dependency lends itself to a downturn in project control, to inefficiencies and barriers to food collection and redistribution.

Moreover, effective food rescue is heavily reliant on having adequate infrastructure like, refrigeration, food rescue vehicles, drivers, storage space and methods for redistribution. Here scale becomes important because small organisations are not equipped to manage the complexities of sourcing, collecting, handling, storing and distributing rescued food. The main hub at ARCO evidenced during COVID, from which smaller organisations collected and distributed food to their service users, was well positioned for both food rescue and redistribution because of its size, central location, infrastructure and because it is embedded in the community as a result of its other community development undertakings.

Various modes of food rescue education can be made available, but experience from this project suggests that both food donators and food rescuers and distributors err on the side of pragmatism and practicality. Educational tools and training to increase 'food literacy' could be developed to reflect the requirement, for experiential and/or no-frills formats like a legal issues fact sheet in plain English and other Community languages or clear explanations of 'best before' and 'use by' dates. A central technology driven clearing- house for up-to date advice and communication would be valuable because currently information on all aspects of food rescue is fragmented, withheld or simply not available.

Food rescue organisations should be thoughtfully developed to ensure that they don't become solely driven by size, profit, government funding or prestige, but are as committed to a cost -recovery model as they are to other forms of sustainability.

Finally, in order to avoid food waste, attention from Governments at each level, to front-end food waste policy and practice is urgent.



## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents recommendations that could be explored to assist in the reduction/diversion of food waste that is fit for human consumption from going to landfill.

- Consider scalability. Build a 'Goldilocks model' for food rescue organisations. Organisations too small don't have sufficient infrastructure and organisations too big, become too big to fail, relying ultimately on Government funding.
- Consider sustainability of food recovery activities by reinforcing support for model food rescue organisations that aim to be self-sustaining with a cost recovery aspiration rather than being reliant on recurrent Government funding.
- Consider reliability. Unpredictable food pick-ups mitigate against the rescue of short shelf life products like fresh fruit and vegetables and products requiring refrigeration. Resource organisations properly.
- Government at all levels to ensure that comprehensive food waste avoidance strategies are implemented. Currently most efforts are directed towards food waste management. Strategies for waste prevention are preferable because they end food waste and conserve the resources used in food production and distribution.
- Delegate more responsibility for food waste to front -end waste generators like industry, distribution centres, and large retailers. Much of the responsibility is currently on the shoulders of organisations with a lesser capacity to make the difference.
- Improve, capture and share, food waste monitoring and evaluation data utilising technology. Include food distribution centres, industries, wholesalers and retailers, rescue organisations and all levels of government.
- Establish and keep up-to-date, a central 'clearing-house' of food-rescue information to increase coordination and matching, for better efficiency.
- Facilitate analysis of comparative quantitative and qualitative data, for improved policymaking and implementation measures.

## 6. ATTACHMENTS

### **Attachment 1: Targets and Key Performance Indicators**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/4417cuqv2d09ro8/Attachment-1-KPIs.docx?dl=0>

### **Attachment 2: Donor Pack**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/xta8eotpexsu68c/Printed%20Booklet%20final.pdf?dl=0>

### **Attachment 3: WOW FOOD! Artwork Materials**

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xri4pzzdcypzs1s/AADkCic4ErP32tU0e0M4\\_M5za?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xri4pzzdcypzs1s/AADkCic4ErP32tU0e0M4_M5za?dl=0)

### **Attachment 4: WOW FOOD! Mini Documentary**

<https://www.facebook.com/358724424204191/videos/691861771303803>

### **Attachment 5: Addison Road's WOW FOOD! Food Website**

<https://addiroad.org.au/wow-food-innerwest>

### **Attachment 6: Addison Road's Food Pantry**

<https://addiroad.org.au/the-food-pantry/>

### **Attachment 7: Social Media Posts**

#### **Campaign 1**

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/6gqf0jyj126a1hh/WOW\\_facebook%20Metrics.xls?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/6gqf0jyj126a1hh/WOW_facebook%20Metrics.xls?dl=0)

#### **Campaign 2**

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/2ism8sm083v1wkv/WOW\\_2\\_facebook%20Metrics.xlsx?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/2ism8sm083v1wkv/WOW_2_facebook%20Metrics.xlsx?dl=0)

### **Attachment 8: Digital Posters**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wassvcbakb3bgrs/AAAYMokmq0pW2ZXjwkoQJxc4a?dl=0>

### **Attachment 9: Three 30 and three 10 second advertisement videos for Campaign 2**

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/161lz7a7ygprisi/AAD95H8WjluHhYQES-c\\_mmP3a?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/161lz7a7ygprisi/AAD95H8WjluHhYQES-c_mmP3a?dl=0)

### **Attachment 10: 8 Video interviews with high profile donors for Campaign 2**

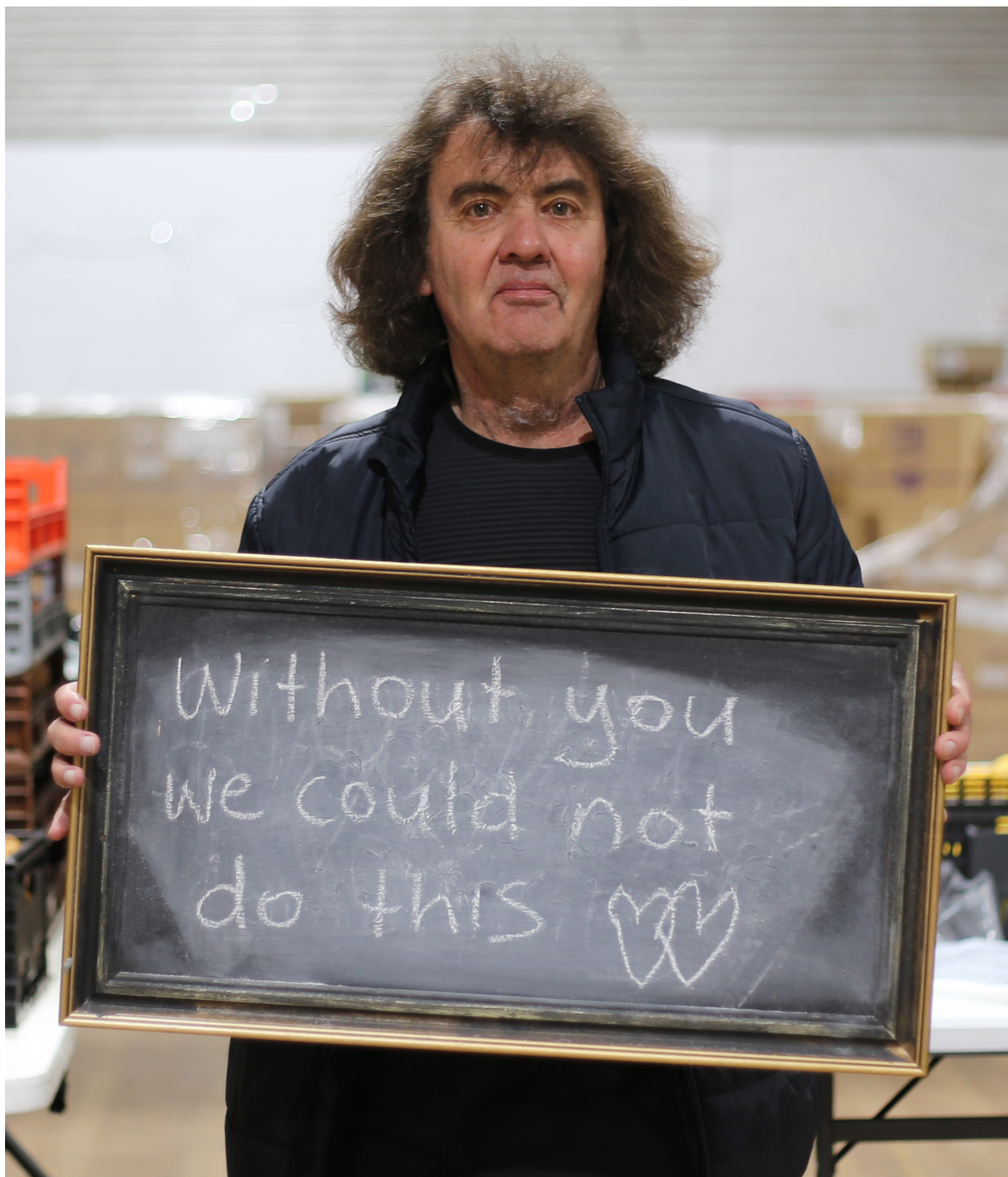
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/dpwtgmxluit8lue/WOW%202%20Campaign%20Video%20Links.docx?dl=0>

### **Attachment 11: Media**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/o63jh63pp6q1tee/Press%20Clipping%20Links.xlsx?dl=0>







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