

**Slice of Bread from Heart conference**

**October, 16th, 2017**

**Lublin**

**Providing food assistance through a specialized solidarity centers: the whole**

**person approach of Secours Populaire Français**

Secours populaire français in figures:

* An independent and non-profit organization created in 1945
* 80 000 volunteers
* 2.8 million people received / helped per year, including 1 million children
* More than 1 200 reception centers located all over France : big cities, suburb, rural area
* 1 757 800 people received food aid in 2015

Approach: the generalist whole person approach of SPF and the role of FEAD

People benefit from an unreserved welcoming and from a comprehensive approach of their situation. Providing people with comprehensive care consists in taking all the aspects into account: economic, social, family… There is neither people segmentation nor people categorization. Thanks to differentiated aid, precarious, poverty and great poverty situations are all taken into account.

The FEAD, that first provides people with food assistance, allows the implementation of all forms of solidarity because the initial need of people is food assistance.

Food assistance is the gateway for all people. Then, SPF offers, as part of its comprehensive approach, a range of accompanying measures. Indeed, SPF provides long term support for individuals and families regarding their applications and rights:

* access to housing,
* access to healthcare,
* access to holidays, culture, leisure, sports
* and access to professional insertion

Besides aids, people who wish to do so have the opportunity to become volunteers. It enables people to lead their social inclusion. Indeed, they become able to take initiatives, responsibilities and to strengthen their network of contacts, which are key factors to successful integration.

Becoming volunteers also enables them to promote their personal/professional skills and to regain self-confidence and self-esteem.

“Solidarity reception centers” (PAS) and “Solidarity self-service” (LSS): two devices at the heart of the comprehensive whole person approach

Two devices provide effectiveness to this comprehensive whole person approach:

* The “Solidarity reception center” (PAS) is a place where people, which come to get help, (families, and single persons), benefit from an unreserved welcoming. People have a confidential interview which measures the household situation. Above all, these PAS are places where a climate of confidence and respect leads people to empowerment.

The aim is to find a way to “work together” in order to find the best way to overcome difficulties. Thanks to this bond of trust, which aims to create a relationship of equals between volunteers and beneficiaries, it becomes easier to consider all aspects of the individual situation and to know precisely the difficulties faced by people in their everyday life.

Besides those permanent reception centers, SPF set up mobile devices in order to answer the specific needs of people who live rural areas and homeless people.

* SPF food aid device relies on its “Solidarity self-services” (LSS). Following the confidential interview at the “Solidarity reception centers”, people have the opportunity to access to the “Solidarity self-service” where they can benefit from food support. People will also find clothes, hygiene products for adults and babies, cultural items (books, CDs…), home equipment etc.

In these places, people can choose products they need, food they like and they can cook unlike the usual system based on distribution of food parcels. Thus, using LSS, people keep their dignity.

During the “Solidarity self-service”, a welcoming and listening time is set up in order to promote friendliness. During this specific moment, people in need talk with volunteers about their life and issues. They can also ask for advice and inform volunteers about their needs.

The food component is very significant because it is the first need people express. The FEAD plays a significant part insofar as it represents 40% of the food which is distributed. Other foodstuffs come from in-kind donations made by supermarkets, farmers, food companies and private individuals.

Means of action

*Volunteers’ training*

Training volunteers is necessary in order to strengthen the quality of action in those reception centers.

Trainings provide by SPF are made of modules:

* Base-modules about values of the SPF.
* Specific modules about the reception of people: listening posture, issues of precarious people, knowledge of the existing social measures, build a local network to improve the efficiency of their action.
* Specialized seminars about health, rights, access to holidays, access to culture

*An information system for reception*

SPF developed a web platform in order to capitalize information about people helped by the association (sex, age, household situation, housing situation, health coverage, fiscal situation…).

Those data are useful to adapt the activity in view of identified needs.