CULTIVATE PROJECT - EIP AGRI PRACTICE ABSTRACTS

ASSESSING THE SUSTAINABILITY IMPACTS OF FSI:
SHARING SOLUTIONS SERVICES

Sustainability reporting for large food corporations is emerging in Europe, but contributions of other food actors, including food sharing initiatives (FSIs) such as community gardens, kitchens and food redistribution initiatives, are rarely captured. **Sharing Solutions services** support FSIs, municipalities and food supply actors to establish **sustainability impacts from food sharing activities**. Services include the **Toolshed**, a free, automated, **online Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) tool for FSIs**. It comprises 104 indicator questions across 34 impact areas covering social, environmental, economic and governance pillars. Each question is mapped to a relevant Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). Through the CULTIVATE project, 12 FSIs, three municipalities and multiple food supply actors in Barcelona, Milan and Utrecht trialled the services. The resulting SIAs indicate that **FSIs contribute to 15 of the 17 SDGs** and have significant aggregate impact at the UPU scale across all pillars of sustainability. FSIs can register for free on the Sharing Solutions platform to gain access to The Toolshed SIA. Once registered they can complete a starter or main SIA report. FSIs can share their impact reports, videos, and photos on The Talent Garden platform, and they can join The Greenhouse, an online community of practice. Municipalities can use Sharing Solutions to conduct an SIA for their area and food supply actors can commission an SIA of their support for FSIs. Sharing Solutions services enable a greater understanding of UPU food system sustainability. The Toolshed helps FSIs examine their impacts in relation to their goals and SIA reports communicate impacts to key stakeholders including participants, investors, donors and regulators. Municipalities can develop a fuller picture of their food systems to ensure sound policy development. Food supply actors can use Sharing Solutions services to better understand and communicate the impacts created by their supports to FSIs.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATIONS

The co-design of Sharing Solutions services for FSIs has greatly increased the relevance of these resources for this user group. **The structure is flexible** and can be used by new or established initiatives which can be large or small and working at any stage in the food system from seed sharing to community composting. **Challenges** include the limited resources often available to FSIs for their existing work which can affect capacity to undertake sustainability reporting. While seen as useful, sustainability reporting is not a mandatory requirement and can feel like an additional burden. The starter SIA was developed to support FSIs with very limited capacity and **'how-to' guides are available** to help FSIs embed reporting in their daily practices. The additional benefits provided by Sharing Solutions, The Talent Garden and The Greenhouse, support further engagement by potential users. Large-scale food supply actors in Europe are now required to undertake holistic sustainability reporting through the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). Reporting is organised from company headquarters with individual stores unable to autonomously develop their own strategies. Research found indvidual stores were interested in SIA reporting around their food donations to FSIs, but participation in trials was vetoed at headquarter level. SMEs and micro food supply enterprises will likely be key actors interested in Sharing Solutions services in the future. Additional supports for food supply actors will include guidelines for surplus food donation. **Sharing Solutions services form part of CULTIVATE's Food Sharing Calculator**, a tool supporting actors to fully understand the costs, benefits and impacts of FSIs. The Food Sharing Calculator, launching in 2026, forms one point on the Food Sharing Compass, an online decision support platform, to promote resilient and sustainable urban and peri-urban food systems. For further details contact us at: info@sharingsolutions.eu

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Link to SIA on platform: sharingsolutions.eu/food-sharing-initiatives/

Sharing Solutions LinkedIn:linkedin.com/company/sharing-solutions-eu/posts/?feedView=all

Project Youtube channel: youtube.com/@Cultivate-project

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