

Research Report for Kaibosh:

Food Rescue, connections, people and processes

Summary

Kaibosh has become one of the most celebrated and well known food rescue organisations in New Zealand, attracting donors, volunteers, and community partners, contributing to legislative change (such as the 'good samaritan' clause added to the Food Act 2014), and winning numerous community and environmental awards. Kaibosh rescues up to 25 tonnes of food each month which equals more than 71,000 meals and a monthly reduction of up to 19,400 kg in carbon emissions.

This research seeks to better understand how Kaibosh's successes have been achieved, the motivations and experiences of food donors and community partners, and document what Kaibosh enables in the wider community.

The research was conducted by Dr Louise Lee (Open Polytechnic) and Dr Gradon Diprose (Massey University), with research assistance from Sonja Bohn, and funding from the Open Polytechnic and Massey University.

A qualitative mixed method approach was employed that included; 28 interviews - with Kaibosh staff, Kaibosh board members, food donors/funders and community partners; data analysis of 2017 Wellington and Lower Hutt Kaibosh Volunteer surveys; participant observation at Kaibosh and community partners' events; and an analysis of media reporting about Kaibosh.

The report is structured in four sections, with overall key findings, and then a summary of more detailed findings in relation to Kaibosh staff, board members and volunteers, food donors/funders, and community partners who distribute Kaibosh food.

Key findings

- Kaibosh staff and board members demonstrate high levels of engagement and commitment to the goals of the organisation. All staff and board members interviewed value and actively work towards positive relationships with food donors/funders, volunteers and community partners.
- Kaibosh staff, board members and volunteers emphasised how Kaibosh enables them to *'do something'* practical about the pressing issues of food poverty and food waste in Wellington. There was a strong sense from all staff and board members interviewed that being involved with Kaibosh was personally fulfilling and they valued helping to bring about positive change in Wellington.
- All food donors/funders interviewed reported positive interactions with Kaibosh, and particularly valued the good communication, reliability, and flexibility of Kaibosh staff.
- All food donors/funders and community partners interviewed commended the ease of the process Kaibosh uses to undertake food rescue, describing it as *'professional'* and *'well organised'*. Volunteers also appreciated the professionalism of Kaibosh operations and the ethos of care that underpins the organisation.
- All food donors described their support for food rescue in terms of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. In addition to financial-strategic incentives, such as reducing waste costs and improving business reputation, food donors expressed moral concerns to *'do the right thing'* by contributing to the common good and actively caring for the well-being of others.
- All community partners interviewed reported positive interactions with Kaibosh staff, and particularly valued their ability to listen, adapt, and accommodate specific food/logistical requests.
- All community partners interviewed described the important value Kaibosh food adds to their services and programmes as they were generally not funded to provide food. Without access to Kaibosh food, community partners noted that the health and wellbeing of their service users would be significantly reduced or compromised. Many emphasised important therapeutic benefits that Kaibosh food provides for their service users.
- All community partners valued the high quality and wide range of nutritious and often fresh Kaibosh food. They described many examples of how Kaibosh food attracted people to their services, modeled healthy eating, and provided access to healthy food that their service users couldn't normally afford, thereby meeting a pressing need in the Wellington community.
- Community partners noted that Kaibosh facilitated a fair distribution process for quality surplus food in the Wellington region, and were not sure how they would continue to operate their services as currently organised and funded, without access to Kaibosh food.

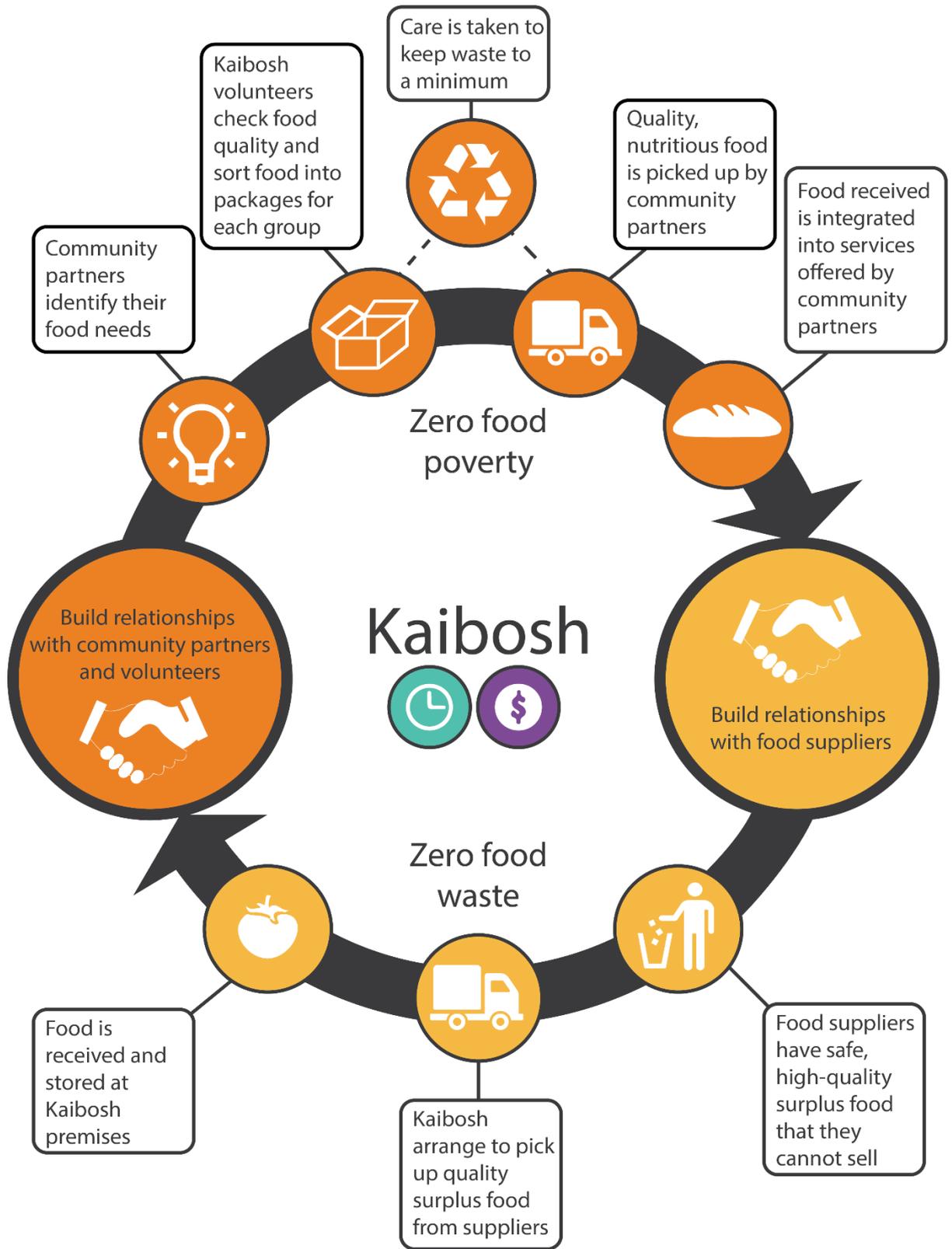


Figure 1: Kaibosh – how it works. The connections, people and processes

Kaibosh Staff, Board Members and volunteers

Personal motivations for working with Kaibosh

All Kaibosh staff and board members interviewed spoke about how being involved helped them contribute to solving practical issues in the Wellington region and provided a sense of personal fulfillment. The practical and tangible focus on rescuing and sorting food, which doesn't require specialist skills, was seen as important. Participants noted that Kaibosh enabled them to demonstrate 'care' about an issue(s) they were already concerned about, *'using resources we have, to address a problem we see'*. Responses to the 2017 volunteer survey re-iterated these themes. For example, many volunteers noted the importance of being *'hands-on'* and *'feeling like I'm doing something useful'* to address food poverty and waste. In this way Kaibosh reflects the feminist political theorist, Joan Tronto's (2017) framework of care, where Kaibosh enables people who already 'care about' an issue(s), to move to taking collective responsibility to 'take care of' that issue(s). For some participants, this sense of responsibility to care *and* act is fuelled by a view that if they do nothing it normalises food poverty and food waste, but that being involved in Kaibosh demonstrates to others that they can act to bring about change in their community.

Many participants noted that the dual goals of zero food waste and zero food poverty were key in attracting a wide range of support in terms of funding and volunteers. Some interviewees spoke about how when they first got involved they were more concerned about food poverty, or waste, but that through working with Kaibosh had learnt to care about the other focus. Volunteer survey results indicate that the reasons volunteers worked with Kaibosh were slightly stronger for social justice motivations (*'I want to get food to people who need it'*) compared with environmental reasons (*'Food rescue is good for the environment'*).

Some staff and Board members also described the tensions they saw within the food rescue model which reflects wider societal issues. For example, getting high quality food from certain donors was useful to address food poverty, but was also an example of unethical overproduction and waste built into the food market structure. For example, one participant noted – *'I love the fact that we help these people, the charities, but at the same time I'm shocked at the waste. The waste is crazy...how can a vegetable be ugly? It's got the same nutritional value, it just doesn't look perfect. I see no justification for that. But if we can get it and give it to people then that's great. I don't have an answer to that'*.

Kaibosh operations and relationship management

A key theme that emerged from interviews was that working with Kaibosh is essentially about nurturing, valuing and respecting the relationships within the food rescue process. All staff and board member participants talked about the importance and value of building positive relationships with each other, with food donors/funders, with volunteers, and with community partners. Words participants used to describe Kaibosh included *'openness'*, *'passion'*, *'commitment'*, *'fairness'*, and *'collaboration'*. These descriptions reflect the understanding that to be an effective broker requires strong relationship-building skills and effective systems to support this.

Staff and board members interviewed talked about the ‘professionalism’ of Kaibosh – in terms of operational aspects, governance and relationship management. For example, one participant described Kaibosh as a ‘*professional charity*’ that set ‘*high standards for how they conduct themselves*’. In the survey volunteers also acknowledged the professionalism of Kaibosh staff and operations, frequently expressing appreciation for ‘*how well everything is run*’. In terms of operational aspects, this professionalism was demonstrated through the attention paid to timing, sequencing and scheduling of food pick ups, the measuring and accounting systems used to track food and waste, the strict safety and health policies for sorting food, and the care taken to deliver high quality food to community partners. Importantly, this ‘*professionalism*’ was not associated with rigidity or hierarchy, but rather reflected through flexibility and responsiveness and an ethos of care.

The importance of relationship management came through in all interviews. Participants praised other staff and board members in Kaibosh who had worked to develop good relationships with key donors and funders and designed operational systems to minimise the effort and time for food donors. Many participants noted that these relationships had enabled Kaibosh to recruit donors who provided high quality, fresh and nutritious food. This was seen as an important point that differentiated Kaibosh from other food charities, such as food banks which tend to get large amounts of non-perishable food such as canned goods. It was also noted by some participants that developing relationships required different approaches, especially when working with national food donors (like Countdown) versus locally owned and operated businesses. A number of participants also described the importance of getting ‘buy-in’ at multiple levels of a food donor organisation – ‘*it literally comes down to the people on the ground at the store...even if the owner has a lot of buy-in*’. Building strong relationships with the shop-floor staff was seen as vital to accessing good quality surplus food, as one participant noted – ‘*So I deal with a whole bunch of individual departments in the supermarket...I’ve got 64 names I need to know...It’s really about those key relationships, if you have a good relationship with the person in that department, they’re more inclined to put the food aside and keep it for you rather than just saying ‘oh I can’t be bothered’ and throw it into the rubbish bin. It’s really about relationships*’.

Relationship management was also a common theme for volunteers who responded to the 2017 volunteer survey. Many volunteers described Kaibosh as a caring organisation, using phrases such as - ‘*you care about the safety and wellbeing of your volunteers*’; ‘*love the staff – so kind and communicative and supportive*’ and ‘*Kaibosh cares about its impact on the community*’. The opportunity to build social connections through volunteering at Kaibosh was highly valued with many volunteers welcoming opportunities Kaibosh provided to ‘*meet cool people*’ and ‘*share time with like-minded people*’. Comments reflected the importance some volunteers attach to ‘*being part of a team*’ and ‘*hanging out with a fun and friendly group of volunteers*’.

This ethos of care underpinning both the operational systems and prioritising relationships reflects Tronto’s (2017) description of ‘care giving’, where aspirations are turned into actions. Importantly this care ethos isn’t just about ensuring food is diverted and gets to the people who need it, but includes a sensitivity to the actual processes and people involved. For example; the care shown for meeting the food needs of particular recipient community groups; taking care in the handling and presentation of food; the care to reduce the waste generated within Kaibosh,

and the care taken to value all of the people involved. These careful actions all help to foster a sense of dignity for the food recipients and volunteers.

Balancing growth, care and relationships

A number of participants talked about the tension between Kaibosh growing while maintaining the values of relationships and careful practices. Some participants expressed this in terms of making sure that in the desire to achieve efficiencies, the *'human experience'* of working and volunteering for Kaibosh wasn't lost, and that it didn't become so automated that people could no longer connect with each other and the food. Others talked about the challenges of growth in terms of ensuring the right staff were employed and that existing relationships could continue to be effectively managed. Others spoke about the importance of Kaibosh being a *'Wellington organisation'*, and how embedded and supported they felt because of their connection to a specific place and community of support. These responses suggest that any plans for growth need to consider the values of care and relationships that underpin Kaibosh operations.

Funding and long term viability

Almost all Board and staff member participants talked about funding and the ongoing viability of Kaibosh, reflecting the financial constraints most non-profits experience. While some participants acknowledged that Kaibosh had relatively healthy financial reserves due to good governance decisions, funding still emerged as a key source of both opportunity and anxiety. Most participants suggested that growing regular, smaller donations from a large number of supporters was the safest way to avoid donor capture and reduce dependence on one or two major sources of funding. Some participants were reluctant to explore central government funding because they felt it came with too many 'strings' that could compromise Kaibosh's independence, and that because of the dual focus of Kaibosh there wasn't much targeted funding available. When asked about charging community partners, all participants stated that this would run counter to Kaibosh's core values. When asked about charging food donors, most participants suggested that this would lead to a drop off in donations as it is generally cheaper and easier just to dump food. In many ways the funding issue reflects a specific impasse in current food and waste markets, where the true cost of disposing of 'waste' is not accounted for. Kaibosh is also in an interesting position as it clearly adds value and saves many community partners both time and money, but because Kaibosh are a broker, accounting for and narrating this value can be difficult in current government funding arrangements. Due to the holistic nature of the benefits Kaibosh creates, identifying specific government funding sources is also difficult.

Food Donors/Funders

Working with Kaibosh

All food donors and funders interviewed noted that Kaibosh operates in a professional manner. This professionalism was described in terms of clear reliable systems and processes, the employment of suitably skilled staff, and good governance and strategy at an organisational level.

In terms of systems and processes, some donors described how Kaibosh provided an efficient single point of contact for food rescue. They considered this preferable to working with multiple charities and organisations because it saved time, confusion and competition for surplus food.

In terms of working with Kaibosh staff, all donor participants described Kaibosh staff as professional, reliable, friendly, and well organised. Specific attributes donors appreciated included the good communication, reliability, and flexibility that Kaibosh drivers and other staff displayed. For instance, picking up food on time, while still being flexible to change pick-up times if need be. It was noted by some donors that Kaibosh staff were particularly proactive and skilled at developing and maintaining relationships, especially with store/stock room staff. One donor praised Kaibosh for prioritising paying drivers to ensure they had staff who were reliable with the right relationship building skills in this key role.

In terms of governance and strategy, one donor participant with good knowledge of food rescue organisations in New Zealand stated that Kaibosh had very good leadership, strong governance, a clear strategy and funding model, and a supportive volunteer base compared to other food rescue organisations. It was also noted by some donors that Kaibosh staff, board members, and volunteers have worked to effectively embed themselves in Wellington and have developed key strategic relationships that were useful in terms of increasing visibility and funding.

All donor participants described Kaibosh as having a strong ethical and trusted 'brand' and clear logo. Some participants noted that this was important in terms of their decisions about who they partner with and support in terms of food donations, funding grants, and fundraising events (ie. they didn't want to work with organisations who might be a risk to their own brand). Participants used terms like '*human-ness*' and '*values-driven*' to describe Kaibosh and some noted that this resonated with their own values around reducing waste or redistributing surplus. One participant described Kaibosh as '*the glue between people who have something to give and the people who have the need*'. Most of the donor participants noted how it was the combination of Kaibosh's ethical brand, and the simplicity of what they do, that appealed to such a wide range of people and made them an ideal organisation to work with and support either financially and/or through food donations.

Reasons for supporting food rescue

In terms of donor motivations for getting involved in food rescue, most participants described food rescue as being '*good for the bottom line*' because it reduced waste costs, while also being '*the right thing to do*'. For instance, one donor participant noted that '*before Kaibosh we had a much bigger rubbish bill*'. Other donor participants described how food rescue reflected pressures they were seeing in the food sector and wider society, to address issues such as plastic

reduction and waste minimisation generally. Support for food rescue was also described as a way to lessen the 'demoralising' psychological effects that some employees experience through unnecessary food waste. While the key aim for all donors is to sell food, all donors interviewed indicated a strong preference for directing safe food that couldn't be sold to food rescue, over landfill or composting/animal feed. No donor participants felt that food rescue created a risk to their product's brand or reputation. In fact, some noted that it was preferable to donate products to food rescue over lowering the sale price too far as low prices were seen as incredibly damaging to brand loyalty and customer perception.

Finally, most of the donor participants described how food rescue just *'made sense to them'* in terms of reducing waste and food poverty. For some donor participants there was a clear sense of frustration with the current food system that generates so much waste when food that requires a lot of energy or care to produce is thrown out - particularly dairy and other animal products, like meat. Some donor participants talked about the ethics of this, and noted that food rescue helped alleviate their personal frustration and guilt at having to throw out quality food just because it could no longer be sold – *'We can't just dump this, that's horrible. Someone's got to want it and need it and it just made sense that it would go to people who really truly did need it'*. In this way working with Kaibosh enabled individual food donors who already cared about food waste to express those concerns through collective action. For other donor participants working with Kaibosh enabled them to *'give back to the community'* and take action on issues they personally cared about. For example, one small Wellington-based manufacturing enterprise talked about a special product they have developed, some of which is donated to children in Wellington-based community groups, supported by Kaibosh - *'We were really aware of children not having access to food on a regular basis ...there's kids who never get to celebrate their birthdays, there's some really sad stories about the children not being hugged and not having all of these things that you just take for granted. We came up with this idea of birthday cake - we'd like to make this available to community groups, who have children coming in and out so they have an opportunity to celebrate with whomever is a part of their lives'*. Kaibosh also receives 10% of all retail sales for this product.

Future of food rescue

When asked about the future of food rescue in relation to government regulation in New Zealand, most donor participants noted that the best way to encourage food rescue would be to charge the 'true cost' of waste disposal. They suggested that if landfill costs were increased, this would make food rescue more viable and encourage more businesses to contribute to the costs of it. Some donor participants mentioned national taxes on waste that could then be used to fund the work of food rescue organisations.

Participants also mentioned the increasing effects of climate disruption on food production and distribution in New Zealand, such as flooding and other extreme weather events. They suggested that these disruptions affect planning and the sale of food, and going forward climate disruption may affect the amount of food that gets donated for food rescue.

Finally, participants noted that questions of scale were important. Some more localised participants described how working with Kaibosh was so easy because they were a local organisation. Other participants from national businesses noted that it would be easier for them

to work with 1-2 national or regional food rescue organisations (like a franchise model). They suggested that the advantages of 1-2 New Zealand food rescue organisations would be increased brand recognition, coordinated funding, greater ability to lobby central/local government, and other economies of scale.

Community Partners

Working with Kaibosh

All community partner participants described working with Kaibosh as 'easy'. They noted that Kaibosh staff were 'awesome', 'reliable', 'flexible', 'listened effectively', were 'responsive' and often 'went the extra mile'. Participants described Kaibosh staff as having an effective 'learning' approach to relationships and appreciated the way Kaibosh staff communicate, ask what is needed, and then adjust their systems and practices to meet different organisations' needs. Some community partner participants noted how they valued having the ability to request specific kinds of food from Kaibosh. Others described how they had learnt about food safety and handling practices through working with Kaibosh. Finally, many noted that they really valued Kaibosh and wanted to pass on their thanks to Kaibosh staff, board members and volunteers.

Quality of Kaibosh food

All community partner participants praised the high quality and nutritious nature of Kaibosh food. Many participants described how Kaibosh food provided either all, or vital perishable food like produce, dairy and meat that they did not have access to prior to working with Kaibosh. All participants felt that this was a real advantage of Kaibosh because it enabled them to provide healthy food to clients, many of whom could not afford or access this kind of food normally. *'Some of the food that comes in here, I mean it's expensive stuff you know, I go grocery shopping, you know how much an avocado costs or, you'll walk past and think can't afford that. So they might get a few avocados in there, and it's nice, it's normalising and then they might get frozen steak which they can't afford. It's good. I think it's good for their wellbeing and self-esteem as well'.* All community partners interviewed noted that they had never had any negative feedback from their clients about the quality of Kaibosh food and commended the care Kaibosh staff and volunteers take in sorting and packaging food.

The value Kaibosh adds

Community partner participants described the following ways they use Kaibosh food:

- Emergency food parcels for service users
- For outreach and delivery to Council and Housing New Zealand accommodation
- For feeding service users in temporary and emergency accommodation services
- In programmes (lunch, dinner, snacks) for service users attending drug and alcohol, healthy relationships, mentoring, mental health and wellbeing, and youth development programmes
- For cooking classes with whanau, young people and refugee background people
- For distribution to people in their homes who are disabled, house bound, struggling financially or terminally ill.

All community partners greatly value what Kaibosh does and described how Kaibosh enables them to do more with their limited resources because they are not using their time or funding to buy and collect food. The key benefits of Kaibosh food that community partner participants described include:

- Providing people with access to healthy and nutritious food
- Providing people with the opportunity to learn about new food and cooking skills
- Providing an incentive for service users to join and attend programmes/services
- Providing a way to alleviate people's immediate anxieties about food poverty, which then creates an opportunity to address other issues in their lives
- Creating a focus through which people can connect and develop relationships
- Giving people a chance to be active participants in reducing waste, rather than just recipients of 'charity'.

Kaibosh food not a 'nice to have'

Every community partner interviewed noted that Kaibosh food was vital to their work, but that food was generally not budgeted for in their funding arrangements. They all agreed that Kaibosh was not a *'nice to have'* but was in fact vital to their work and the success of their programmes. Most participants described how Kaibosh food is used to attract people to their programmes or services, how food is the *'fastest way to someone's heart'* and how it was used to bring people together and often forms a focus that programmes and services are then based around. Many described how through using Kaibosh food to meet an immediate need in people's lives, they were then able to initiate other conversations and connect people with their other services – *'we started the community kitchen [using Kaibosh food] as an attractive magnet to get all of the families in here... They're a little resistant so we feed them, have a big whanau feed session [as part of] the parenting programme'*. There was a sense in many participants descriptions of the therapeutic nature of Kaibosh food itself, the good smells, tastes and cooking processes that helped to alleviate their service users' anxiety, exhaustion, sadness and shame – *'food is everything... If people are sad... food takes you out of the pōuri, so that state of sadness'*. All participants agreed that Kaibosh food enabled them to do their jobs better and further extended their limited resources in significant ways.

Promoting healthy eating

Most community partners noted that the high quality food provided by Kaibosh helped them to implement and model healthy eating practices within their own programmes and provided their clients with access to kai they wouldn't normally be able to afford. For example, one participant noted their service has a healthy eating policy, but without Kaibosh they would have to go back to buying cheaper bakery food and would not be able to model their healthy eating policy to service users. Others described how Kaibosh food helps them to promote holistic understandings of the food cycle. For instance, one participant talked about how they connect Kaibosh produce to cooking classes and the community garden they use – *'We are doing cooking classes with the Kaibosh kai, for our children...I'm teaching them everything. Not just cooking but we work alongside the kaitiaki of most of the gardens around Wanuiomata so he teaches the kids where kai comes from, how to look after it, how it grows, everything, the cycle of kai'*.

Being part of reducing waste

Some community partner participants also described the way Kaibosh food enabled their service users to be active participants in reducing waste. This was seen as important because it helped to alleviate the shame or humiliation that is often experienced by those seeking help from government welfare services or through more conventional food bank models. In this way, most of the participants didn't think of Kaibosh as a traditional 'charity' where someone with resources 'helps' those in need. Rather, Kaibosh was seen as a way to redistribute surplus in Wellington which does not reinforce the often unhelpful binaries between those giving and those receiving 'charity'. One participant who worked primarily with Māori noted how being part of the Kaibosh network helped them to demonstrate to their service users that food poverty was an issue affecting many different people, including pākehā in Wellington – *I also want our rangatahi to see that it's actually, it's not just Māori, that are, that are in hardship... [there's] a whole raft of other organisations and cultures that are going through this.* This participant felt that Kaibosh's promotion of food dignity and work with a wide range of community partners was significant in helping to reduce the shame and stigma associated with food poverty for Māori in particular.

Life without Kaibosh

When we asked what community partner participants would do without Kaibosh, everyone described how it would significantly affect their ability to operate and deliver services in their current form, and would adversely affect their service user's wellbeing, recovery, and lives. One community partner participant noted - *'There's a lot of people who would have no other option, the consequences of that would mean they wouldn't have food, even if it just gets them by for a couple of days'*. Participants noted that they don't have the time to build relationships with food donors, or the resources to pick up and store food, or the interest in 'competing' with other charities for surplus food. Some went as far as saying that if Kaibosh stopped it would be a *'disorganised mess'* and *'create a 'scrum'* as different community groups competed with one another for surplus food. There was a clear sense from most community partner participants that Kaibosh provided an effective way of ensuring that surplus was distributed fairly amongst various community partners and that Kaibosh could be trusted in this role.

Meeting need in the 'here and now'

Finally, all community partner participants noted that in their experience Kaibosh food did not lead to 'dependency' in their service users' lives. Participants described how Kaibosh food is used in conjunction with their other services that promote learning, collective interdependence and positive relationships for their service users. This is achieved through cooking classes where people take responsibility to share and cook for others, through other programmes and services that incorporate Kaibosh food, and the way in which the high quality Kaibosh food 'normalises' their service user's situation and fosters a sense of dignity in their lives. One community partner commented on the issue of dependency in this way - *'Like for us it's, it [Kaibosh] actually compliments what we do. You know, it's all part of their recovery which is what we're all about... We know they've got AOD issues, we're providing services to help with that and Kaibosh is just part of a programme for us really. So over time, if they can deal with their addiction, if they can deal with issues around income, like we refer people to Workbridge if they are looking for work.'*

Yeah that will improve them. It'll improve their wellbeing and living, but right now they're not there. Yeah, so this is how we use Kaibosh and our new programmes to actually, which they're interested in coming to, to live better in the community.' Rather than dependency, most participants noted that Kaibosh food meets an immediate and often temporary need in their service users' lives. Community partner participants described how once the immediate need of food poverty was met, they could then work with their clients to focus on other issues in their lives. In this way, Kaibosh food helps to create choice for people and leads to more balanced diets and new learning around healthy eating.

Some of the major criticisms in academic literature around emergency provision of food (including food rescue) relates to the often unhealthy and poor quality nature of the food, fears that 'charity' like food rescue fosters dependency, and that such practices do not lead to wider structural change (see for instance; Caraher and Furey, 2017; Cloke et al, 2016; Poppendieck, 1998). Our findings suggest that the first two concerns are not relevant to Kaibosh due to the emphasis on food dignity, the way Kaibosh has recruited food donors who contribute high quality, healthy food, and the way Kaibosh work with community partners who provide wrap-around services. The debate around addressing symptoms versus structural change tends to pitch actions like food rescue *against* structural change in some kind of binary opposition. Our personal view is that actions like food rescue can exist alongside calls for wider structural change, and may actually help to make visible and politicise food poverty and waste while still meeting material needs.

Implications: Key Questions Moving Forward

Scale and growth

The first key question that emerged through this research relates to the growth and ‘scaling up’ of Kaibosh. Specifically, how does Kaibosh maintain good local relationships and a strong ethic of care, while potentially growing and expanding their reach and operations? Our findings suggest that while it may be relatively easy to replicate Kaibosh’s operational systems (such as safe food handling techniques, scheduling, and other processes), recruiting skilled staff who can build and maintain positive and caring relationships will be key if growth is prioritised.

Funding

The second key question is how to develop diversified and secure funding streams. Food donor and funding participants suggested that central and local government had a key role to play in legislating the ‘true’ cost of waste disposal. For example, local/central government could add an extra levy to prevent food waste going to landfill which could then create revenue for food rescue organisations. This would also incentivise food businesses to reduce their food waste. Some donor participants suggested that Kaibosh should focus their funding applications on environmental and waste minimisation sources rather than social sources. This research indicates that Kaibosh already plays a crucial role in promoting healthy eating for many people in the Wellington region. Going forward there may well be opportunities here in terms of funding through District Health Boards or the Health Promotion Agency.

Branding and narrating impact of food rescue

The third key question relates to maintaining and developing the Kaibosh ‘brand’. It was suggested by participants that going forward, capitalising on the Kaibosh brand while ensuring it is not compromised may provide new funding and relationship opportunities. This research indicates that Kaibosh is having real and significant effects in Wellington, so highlighting these positive effects through stories may be a useful way to further increase visibility and attract funding. Further to this, some community partners expressed interest in getting their service users to volunteer at Kaibosh. This may further build that sense of collective interdependence, care and responsibility that Kaibosh already cultivates in the Wellington community.

Legislation, advocacy and wider societal changes

The final question relates to the increasing global and national focus on reducing waste, and ongoing concerns about social inequality. Globally we have observed new legislation relating to food rescue in some countries and an increase in the visibility and support from certain governments. This research suggests that Kaibosh is a highly trusted organisation and resourcing permitted, would be well placed to contribute to advocacy around food rescue and potential policy or legislative changes. If it was considered beyond the scope of Kaibosh’s core business to enter into direct food rescue advocacy, this research indicates that Kaibosh provides a ‘good practice’ model for other organisations around New Zealand which could inform any development of policy or legislation relating to food rescue. Kaibosh could also play a key role in building knowledge of food waste reduction by aligning the organisation more directly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12 to reduce global food waste.

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