As poverty levels increase, #CashFirst is common sense.

When it comes to getting food, most of us will choose and buy what we need.

If we can't afford to buy food, we're faced with a far more difficult journey.

First, many of us will put off trying to seek help
Stigma can mean people have not eaten for some time before they eventually find help.

and then there's the journey to the food bank
People may need to walk long distances or spend money to get to a food bank if they don't deliver. Food banks are only open at specific times.

you may need to get a referral from a local agency
Many food banks work on a referral only basis and it can be hard to get appointments.

to receive a parcel of food chosen by someone else
Many food banks work hard to offer choices, but this depends on what food is available.

For food bank teams, sourcing food is complex and challenging.

This parcel is made up of donated and surplus food
Food supply can be inconsistent and is dependent on donations and availability. Many food banks will also purchase food.

transported by volunteers
Food is often picked up by volunteers in their own vehicles. Surplus food may not be usable meaning food banks teams then have to dispose this waste.

sorted and packed in the food bank
Donated food is collected, checked for safety and quality, sorted, stored, packed and sometimes transported again before distribution.

to repeat the cycle again
If household income is not increased, the cycle is likely to repeat. Sometimes there is also a limit on the number of food bank visits allowed.

Stigma can mean people have not eaten for some time before they eventually find help.

to repeat the cycle again
You may need to get a referral from a local agency.

Food parcels can't solve poverty, but raising incomes can.

A #CashFirst approach would mean everyone could afford and choose their own food with dignity.

www.foodaidnetwork.org.uk | @IFAN_UK