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## **Independent Food Bank Emergency Food Parcel Distribution February to November 2019/2020**

- **83 independent food banks (out of a total of at least 961) distributed 168,560 emergency food parcels from February to November 2019 compared to 354,613 emergency food parcels from February to November 2020 - an 110% rise in demand.**
- **Independent food banks saw an 137% increase in need for 3-day food parcels from February to November 2020.**
- **Comparing November 2019 with November 2020 the number of 3-day emergency food parcels given out by independent food banks increased by 123%.**
- **IFAN is calling on the UK Government as well as England's local authorities to take urgent action to reduce the need for food banks and stop the institutionalisation of a charitable food aid system.**

**IFAN's is calling for changes that would reduce the need for food banks:**

Urgent action is needed to significantly reduce the need for charitable food aid provision in the UK. The fragile charitable food aid system is being stretched too far.

The Government's recent pledge of over £400 million to help support families and individuals unable to afford to buy food is welcome in the here and now. However, yet again, policy changes that would reduce the need for food banks in the long-term have been avoided.

The poverty crisis driving increasing food bank use pre-existed Covid-19. The provision of yet more emergency food parcels will not solve poverty and a charitable food aid system is being further embedded with every week that passes.

We urge the UK Government to look beyond an emergency response and to make changes to our social security system and to our economy that will mean everyone is able to afford to buy food.

IFAN is calling on the UK Government to:

- make the £20 uplift to Universal Credit permanent and extend it to legacy benefits;
- remove the benefit cap;
- end the 5-week wait for a first Universal Credit payment by removing the loan element of advance payments;
- end the two-child limit;
- end the sanctions system;
- permanently suspend No Recourse to Public Funds status.

In addition, IFAN is calling on local authorities in England to use their share of the recent DWP's £170 million allocation to distribute cash grants to individuals and families whenever possible and to avoid bolstering a food aid system in place of a 'cash first' approach.

**More about the Independent Food Aid Network:**

- The UK-wide [Independent Food Aid Network](#) (IFAN) connects, supports and advocates on behalf of frontline food aid organisations including over 400 independent food banks. IFAN has identified at least 961 independent food banks operating across the UK.
- IFAN envisions a society without the need for charitable food aid.
- Since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, independent food banks across the UK have seen a large increase in need for emergency food parcels. You can read IFAN's latest reports [here](#).
- Since June 2020, IFAN has been running a [Cash First Project](#) in Scotland that is currently being extended to England.
- **For further information please contact Sabine Goodwin at [sabine@foodaidnetwork.org.uk](mailto:sabine@foodaidnetwork.org.uk) or on 07971-010-991.**