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DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION OF THE HOUSEHOLD FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY PROGRAMME



SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT (1-5-25)

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Design and implementation Evaluation of the Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme

EVALUATION REPORT

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Policy Summary

The NHF&NSP is seen as critical in the provision of safety net through interim or short-term feeding of the vulnerable population, as part of their constitutional rights to food as per Section 27(1)(b) and in terms of Section 28 (1) (c), *vis*, every child has the right to 'basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services, and social services, in terms of section 35(2)(e).

It is also instrumental in DSDs contribution towards achieving the NDP vision 2030 agenda, through its developmental component, but requires significant coordination of relevant stakeholders, such as Department of Agriculture, Economic Development, Education, Home Affairs, and Health among others, to come together and integrate their services in order to make a significant impact on hunger and malnutrition eradication, by addressing the fundamental causes of such, including unemployment, poverty and inequality.

The programme is inherently aligned towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly, Goal 1, ending hunger through food security and improving nutrition; Goal 2, dealing with ensuring healthier lives in terms of SDGs principle 2 "no one left behind". For these to be realised, however, the implementation of the developmental component of the programme is key, as the continuous dependence on short term food provision is not seen as sustainable in the long run given the magnitude of the problem and the limitation of resources.

The programme currently also lacks an exit criterion which makes it difficult for beneficiaries to exits, in addition to the fact that their conditions have not changed significantly for them to create their own food. Nonetheless, it is highlighted that an exit criterion be stipulated in the HF&NS Plan as a guide for provinces to use.

The introduction of Circular 21 by National Treasury, which led to the classification of the programme procurement as goods and services has impacted the programme procurement processes and the fundamental design of the programme. Before Circular 21, DSD was able to tailor the procurement process to target mainly NGO-based service providers to meet its social protection needs. This is no longer the case as the new classification requires going through general tender and bidding process is now open and is attracting mostly those who are mainly profit driven, rather than underpinned by humanitarian intent. This generally set the stage for a reduction in proportion of the funds for food provision. This is seen in the higher operational cost of the programme implementation in most provinces. It is highlighted that DSD and stakeholders need to sit internally to agree on the design of the programme, to find consensus on the use of implementing agents, or a way to ensure proper targeting of service providers that suits its social needs within the ambit of the PFMA and treasury procurement regulations.

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

The Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme (HF&NSP) aims to provide adequate access to food for the vulnerable in society as part of National Department of Social Development (DSD)'s social relief and social protection mandate. The HF&NSP has been in operation since 2014 to date. To reassess and validate the design and assess whether the programme is meeting its set objectives, the National DSD commissioned a design and implementation evaluation of the programme. This report presents the findings of the evaluation, including conclusions and recommendations emanating from the analysis of programme historical and current data, and inputs from programme officials and beneficiaries.

2. Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation intent to assess the appropriateness of the design, the efficiency and effectiveness of the Implementation of the Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme in addressing the identified food and nutrition security challenges in South Africa.

3. Methodology

This evaluation utilised a Theory-based and participatory approach in collecting and analysing both secondary and primary data from officials and beneficiaries. Historical quantitative and qualitative data was collected from previous reports, including provincial and national annual reports and previous evaluation reports and general literature around the subject matter. These were consolidated to make sense of programme reach and operational costs. This was then topped up with additional primary data from survey of beneficiaries and interviews of programme officials at national and provincial spheres of operation.

4. Conclusions

4.1 Relevance and Appropriateness: of the programme design and alignment to DSD and National Legislative mandates

4.1.1 Legislative alignment

Primarily the HF&NSP intends to provide access to food for the vulnerable in society especially in times of hardships. The HF&NSP is relevant to DSDs contribution towards achieving the NDP vision 2030 agenda, through its developmental component, but requires significant coordination of relevant stakeholders, such as Department of Agriculture, Economic Development, Education, Home Affairs, and Health among others, to come

together and integrate their service as recommended by the national food and nutrition security plan.

The developmental orientation of the HF&NP is well aligned to the NDP Outcomes 2, 3 and 7 in terms of eradicating hunger, and creating employment, as per the Medium-Term Strategic Framework outcomes. This is also aligned towards with attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly, Goal 1, ending hunger through food security and improving nutrition; Goal 2, dealing with ensuring healthier lives in terms of SDGs principle 2 “no one left behind”.

4.2 Effectiveness: Have the intended programmes adequately addressed the food & nutrition problem in the ward/municipality/community that services are provided in?

According to the General Household Survey (GHS) data published by StatsSA 2022, about 23.6% of the population (7 332 200) is food insecure. There are about approximately 353 CNCS aimed to have a feeding capacity of 250 people per day, totalling a planned reach of a little above 88250. Through CNDCs the programme is able to create access to food for about 11% of the food insecure households, leaving at least 6,7million unmet demand. **It is therefore concluded that, technically the programme is effective in providing access to food, but not adequate as the unmet need is still huge with the 11% effectiveness.**

4.3 Efficiency: Are all the institutional arrangements and the operational procedures at all the relevant spheres of government in place to implement the programme and plan?

Institutional arrangements and coordination: The coordination and oversight are happening efficiently at National sphere of government through the National Technical Working Group led by the DPME. There are attempts to cascade this structure to provincial spheres. This process is however noted to be proving a little difficult in that, some provinces couldn't get all the sector departments to attend such meetings regularly and consistently. The office of the Premier in most provinces such as KZN, MP, and NC were seen active in coordinating the oversight role. Others are yet to make any such commitments.

4.3.1 Conclusion on where the programme be located.

There is a consensus within both national and provincial respondents that the programme implementation is best located at provincial sphere of government, led by DSD and supported by other sector Departments. OTP is to provide the necessary oversight and hold all stakeholders accountable, through efficient reporting, monitoring and evaluation.

4.3.2 Is the programme designed in the most cost effective and efficient manner?

The analysis of the data from provinces shows that currently, the programme is spending about R 220 450 842 on feeding. However, a disaggregation of spending show there is a disproportionate allocation spend on program running. Apart from the Western Cape, which spent an average of 53% of the allocation on food and 47% on operating costs, all other 8 provinces spent an average of 44% of the allocation on food and 53% on operating costs. Thus, **on average, the operational cost of the programme is more than the actual feeding costs, which can be described as cost inefficient.**

4.4 Sustainability: *How many successful and sustained projects were developed by CNDCs beneficiaries since the beginning of the HFNSP?*

The current continuous feeding of the masses (the food insecure) through the programme, is not seen as a sustainable approach, in that government is not able to provide enough resources for the continuous feeding of the current magnitude of beneficiaries in the short term, let alone keep it up for long term. It is highlighted that developmental interventions take time to mature, or yield tangible results, but when they do, it will be much more sustainable result, as this will offer a way of beneficiaries to exit the feeding programmes as their economic conditions improve sustainably.

- 4.4.1** The stakeholders noted that a radical approach towards an exit strategy is needed to be introduced into the programme. A more sustainable solution is to invest in the developmental component of the programme, to ensure that in the long run, people will exit the programme.
- 4.4.2** The responses highlight that without the participation or the full functioning of the provincial level Technical Working Group (institutional structure) it will be difficult to put together the necessary resources and integrate and coordinate the activities of the programme. The silo working of sector departments is seen as inefficient as it results in duplication of efforts and uneven programme reach and the neglect of some remote areas.

4.5 (Lesson learnt) *What are the key lessons that DSD can draw from other food relief programmes?*

- 4.5.1** As per the literature and document review findings, the cases of Brazil and China were considered and served as immutable examples. A strong element of leadership and accountability provided in those countries, where each sector department is made accountable for their contribution to the holistic solution is considered a key factor of success in developing and implementing a solid food and nutrition security programme.

4.5.2 Currently there is low level of commitment and proper coordination of the programme at Provincial Spheres in some provinces. It is important that provincial departments commit sufficiently in terms of programme interventions, adequate targeting and prioritisation and associated budgets for a consistent number of years. This is critical for the successful implementation of diverse but coordinated interventions to address hunger in all forms.

4.5.3 From Equity point of view, it is critical to ensure participation of local communities in the long-term economic agenda, and to correct the systemic exclusion from the food production value chain currently due to monopolisation by commercial large food producers. Programme stakeholders highlighted that this will be a backbone towards long-term sustainability of the HF&NSP.

5. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the data and conclusions drawn herein, the following recommendations are put forward towards improving various aspects of the programme.

5.1 Policy recommendations

5.1.1 Though officials at national and provinces agree that there is a need to engage National treasury to find a solution to this policy change around Circular 21, there is a need for DSD to first sit internally and decide on what the best approach is, to handling the impacts and then use the results to then engage national treasury.

5.1.2 It is suggested by some provincial officials that DSD officials should sit in the BID specification committee of supply chain, to make inputs into the bid speciation for the types of service providers required.

5.2 Recommendations on improving programme design.

5.2.1 There is need to significantly improve on the developmental aspect of the programme supported by budget allocations. The following suggestions are put forward:

- a) A proportion of the budget should be ring-fenced for developmental component and made compulsories for all CNDs to implement and report on.
- b) It is also suggested that potential service providers must demonstrate in their bid a component of developmental aspect and this component should be substantial in the selection process.

5.2.2 There is need to increase efforts towards exiting people out of the CNDs or strengthen exit programmes where they exist. The exist criteria should also be iterated and included in the plans.

5.3 Recommendations Towards improving Efficiency.

5.3.1 Strengthen provincial coordination of activities to reduce Silo-operation among line departments, through PTWGs and development and implementation of FNS Plans.

- a) The provincial TWG should be formed to consist of all relevant sector departments, and the appropriate department selected to coordinate the oversight. Office of the premier (OTP) is suggested to play this oversight role.
- b) The targets of the provincial commitments to the PF&NSP should be reported on in the National Forums to ensure accountability and follow through.

5.4 There is a need to strengthen programme monitoring and data collection. The need to create a centralised database for real time data capturing and monitoring is emphasised.

5.5 How can the programme be redesigned to ensure less money is spent on operational expenditure and more on food? Ratio of funds spent on operational cost must be reduced in favour of feeding.

The following courses of action might be beneficial in carrying out programme redesign.

- (a) Overall, the study suggests that there is a need for a participatory planning section to review the programme design to see if the current changes that are resulting, (such as from Circular 21) still make the operational model possible, and if not, put in the necessary corrective measures including points (b) and (c).
- (b) Cost benefit analysis of each cost of running programme should be established.
- (c) Detailed cost review of each program cost component with a view to identifying inefficiencies, identify functions that could be carried out at department level and eliminate duplications.

5.5.1 There is a need to do a budget split (line items). Programme budget should also include specific components towards the developmental interventions.

5.5.2 There is the need to link the HF&NSP to the Sustainable Livelihood Programme, where beneficiaries are engaged in sustainable livelihood activities such as food production, communal farms, and other employment activities.

5.5.3 Stakeholders suggested that National DSD should consider bringing back or creating a regular feedback forum, say on Quarterly basis, where each province

will share their lessons and progress on the implementation of their FNS Plan/programme to learn from each other on what is working or not.

- 5.5.4** The programme currently does very little to address fundamental or broader environmental issues affecting communities such as effects of climate change and resilience mechanisms. This component is not included in the strategic objectives of the FNS Plan, and therefore not really considered at programme Level. This objective of addressing impacts of climate change and resilient building mechanisms (such as revitalisation of agriculture land/soil) should be included and included in major discussions and platforms.
- 5.5.5** Key stakeholders such as the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs should be included in the TWGs and should make inputs into how to build resilience for communities against natural disasters such as draught and floods as a basis of long terms sustainable food security.

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Acronyms

ACRONYM	MEANING
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CDP	Community Development Practitioner
CNDC	Community Nutrition Development Centre
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DSD	Department of Social Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
HBC	Home-Based Care
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NDA	National Development Agency
HFNSP	Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
INP	Integrated Nutrition Programme
NF&NSP	National Food and Nutrition Security Plan
NISIS	National Integrated Social Information System
NISPIS	National Integrated Social Protection Information System
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NRF	National Research Foundation
NTWG	National Technical Working Group
PF&NSP	Provincial Food and Nutrition Security Programme
PDS	Public Distribution System
PFDC	Provincial Food Distribution Centre
PMT	Proxy-Means Testing
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SRD	Social Relief of Distress
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TPDS	Targeted Public Distribution System
WHO	World Health Organisation

DETAILED EVALUATION REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme (HF&NSP) aims to provide adequate access to food for the vulnerable in society as part of National Department of Social Development (DSD)'s social relief mandate. The HF&NSP has been in operation since 2014 to date. To reassess and validate the design and assess whether the programme is meeting its mandate, the National DSD intends to undertake a design and implementation evaluation to determine whether the programme is being implemented according to the plan and if not, what corrective measures to put in place for improvement. This report presents the findings of the evaluation, including conclusions and recommendations emanating from the analysis of programme historical and current data, and inputs from programme officials and beneficiaries.

1.2 Background and policy context to the food and nutrition security

Food insecurity exists when people lack sustainable physical or economic access to enough safe, nutritious, and socially acceptable food for a healthy and productive life. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal, or temporary. Nutritional consequences of insufficient food or under nutrition include protein energy malnutrition, anaemia, vitamin A deficiency, iodine deficiency, and iron deficiency. Food insecurity and malnutrition result in catastrophic amounts of human suffering. The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 60 percent of all childhood deaths in the developing world are associated with chronic hunger and malnutrition.

There is a high rate of children in the parts of Africa who suffer from severe malnutrition (Countries like Zambia, Madagascar, and Uganda). It is therefore imperative to give children enough food to avoid malnourishment and to help children get their normal level of health.

In the South African context, with unemployment levels at about 25% nationally and over 19 million people receiving social grants, millions of people face food insecurity. People in employment or who have casual jobs indicated that they are food secure in the first week after their wages are paid but are often food-insecure for the remaining three weeks in the month. Low-paid and irregular work reduces stability of access to food. Social grants provide a crucial safety net to many. Women face hunger more often than men, due to disparities in income, limited access to employment or means of production and cultural practices that put them last or allow them smaller portions when food is in short supply. Women in the communities covered by this study are still largely responsible for feeding their families and are further burdened when family members are suffering from diseases such as HIV or AIDS, with time and money needed for food spent on caring for the sick.

To realize the objectives of the NDP, South Africa approved its Food and Nutrition Security Policy to ensure the availability, accessibility, and affordability of safe and

nutritious food at national and household levels to its citizens. The Policy also strives to respond to the triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment, which are the foundations of food and nutrition insecurity. The right to food is enshrined in Section 27 of South Africa's Constitution, which states, 'Everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water'.

Cabinet approved the National Policy on Food & Nutrition Security (NPFNS), the Household Food and Nutrition Strategy and Fetsa Tlala Food Production Initiative in September 2013. The strategy proposes an inter-sectoral approach of existing policies and programmes in health, education, social protection, trade, agriculture, and environmental protection. The policy proposes integrated responses to food insecurity and further provides a broad framework in which the various social and economic programmes of government and civil society can be coordinated. There are several stakeholders, such as Government Departments, research institutions, academia and civil society organisations, responsible for the implementation of the proposed interventions to ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of safe and nutritious food at national and household level.

The strategy recommends amongst many things that DSD should take immediate steps to deliver on the following:

- Initiate work to establish a proper network of food distribution centres, backed by a larger financial commitment from the fiscus than is presently the case.
 - Develop and test mechanisms to support ECD centres to offer meals to the children in their care.
- In the medium-term, government should:
- Phase out the food parcel system, while developing and testing food voucher systems that can assist in addressing the food insecurity of those who are not adequately catered for through other governmental mechanisms and interventions.

1.3 Problem statement

At present 21% of South Africa's population regularly experiences hunger and an additional 28.3% are at risk of hunger (GHS 2022). Food insecurity affects formal and informal settlements in both rural and urban areas. According to the SANHANES survey, the largest groups actually experiencing hunger live in urban informal (32.4%) and rural informal (37.0%) areas. The same areas account for the biggest percentages at risk of hunger: 36.1% in urban informal areas and 32.8% in rural informal areas. The lowest prevalence of hunger, at 19%, was reported in urban formal areas. The National Development Plan, Vision 2030, provides a plan for the reduction of poverty and inequality in the next 15 years. A key element of both poverty and inequality is food security; it is both a consequence of poverty and inequality as well as a cause. As a result, the National Development Plan makes reference to a number of steps that will improve food security, including the expanded use of irrigation, security of land tenure,

especially for women, and the promotion of nutrition education.

The inability of the current Household Food and Nutrition Security programme to adequately address the prevalence of hunger in South Africa is underpinned by the following challenges:

- There are inadequate safety nets and food emergency management systems to provide for all those who are unable to meet their immediate food needs.
- Citizens lack the knowledge and resources to make optimal choices for nutritious diets.
- In cases where land is available, it is not always optimally utilised for food production, often due to insufficient supply of inputs (including finance, equipment, and water), or skills.
- There is limited access to storage, processing facilities and markets for developing farmers and fisher folks particularly in rural areas.
- High cost associated with appropriate storage (e.g. Warehousing) and distribution (e.g. fuel and trucks) of food at a large scale.
- Climate change (and drought) and its associated impacts of seasonal rainfall altered patterns pose a threat to domestic food production.
- Lack of sustainable food production is a key threat to the country's food self-sufficiency and the concentration of controls with our food system governance perpetuate food prices volatility.
- There is no adequate, timely and relevant information on food and nutrition security; hence the impact of food and security programmes is not ascertained.

A previous evaluation of nutrition interventions done for children from conception to age 5, to assess the implementation of 18 nutrition interventions being delivered by the Departments of Health, Social Development, and Agriculture and to determine the enabling and inhibiting factors for implementation pointed that South Africa has made limited progress in improving child nutrition since 1999. Among all children under 5, stunting rates remain high at 27%. Poor nutrition is the principal factor in the courses of deaths among South African children, despite the presence of the Integrated Nutrition Programme (INP).

Evidence points to unequal commitment to nutrition across departments (DOH, DSD, DBE and DALRRD) with varying leadership, management, planning, budgeting, and staffing. The absence of both a coordination body of the above-mentioned departments (to hold each department accountable) and a consolidated operational plan with a common goal/objectives and common metrics for tracking interventions across all sectors, has in the past led to a silos and somewhat fragmented approach to addressing child nutrition in South Africa.

1.4 A paradox of the South African household food and nutrition security context

In South Africa, the aftermath effects of the dual economy continue to exacerbate an already severe situation, particularly at the household and individual level. South Africa is regarded as a food secure nation on a global scale and as an upper-middle-income country, but this could not be said for households and individuals on the lower end of the economy.

The country has made progress in reducing food and nutrition (in) security at household and individual level, see figure 1a. In 2017 only 6,8 million South Africans experienced hunger (Stats SA 2019). Sadly, the strides to improve the wellbeing of its citizens since its transition to democracy has stagnated in the last decade. The numbers of people suffering from hunger and food insecurity have been slowly on the rise in the last few years. Food inadequacy and hunger remain a challenge being project to cross over as priority even post SDGs cycle which is 2030. Nationally, 21% of the households are reported to have inadequate access to food (Stats SA 2021). This situation is even more dire when taking a closer look at the provincial level, as six of nine provinces suffer from inadequate food access are above the 21% status mark represented by the national level (see figure 2).

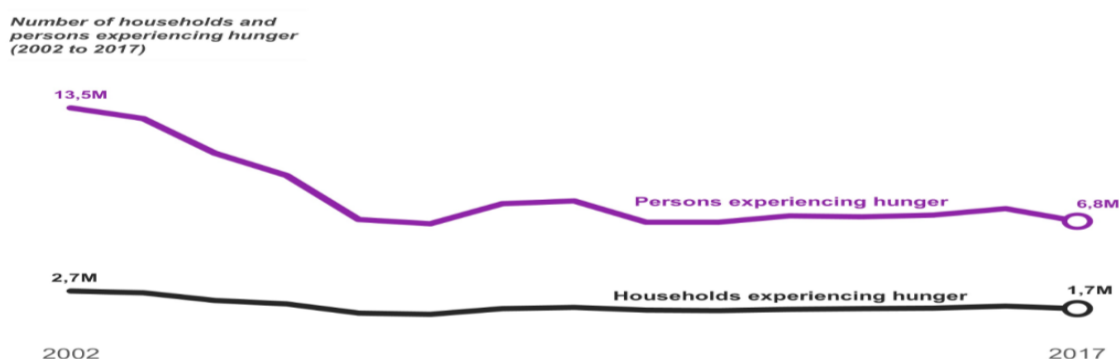


Figure 1 Hunger and food inadequacy before the pandemic

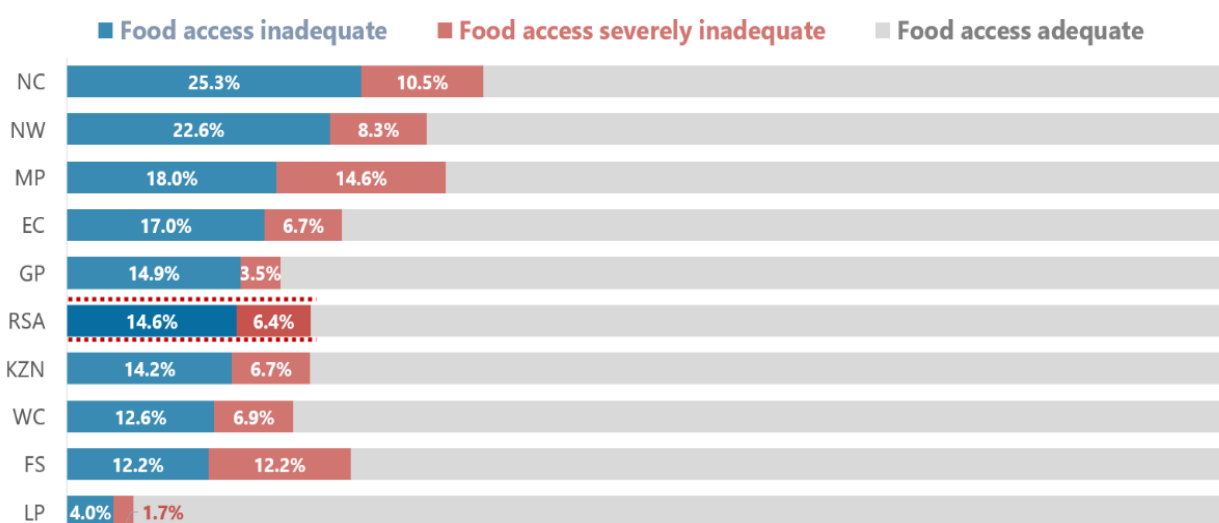


Figure 2 Household experiencing inadequate access to food by province.

2. Overview of the Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme

2.1 Overview of the Programme

The focus of this evaluation is on the design and implementation of the Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme managed and funded by the National Department of Social Development delivered via Provincial Food Distribution Centres (PFDCs) and Community Nutrition and Development Centres (CNDs). The Department made some progress such that in 2019/20 financial year when the programme was handed to the provinces, there were only 9 Provincial Food Distribution Centres to manage the distribution of food to households; and 167 CNDs in the Provinces which are managed by NPOs. These have increased to about 353 CNDs.

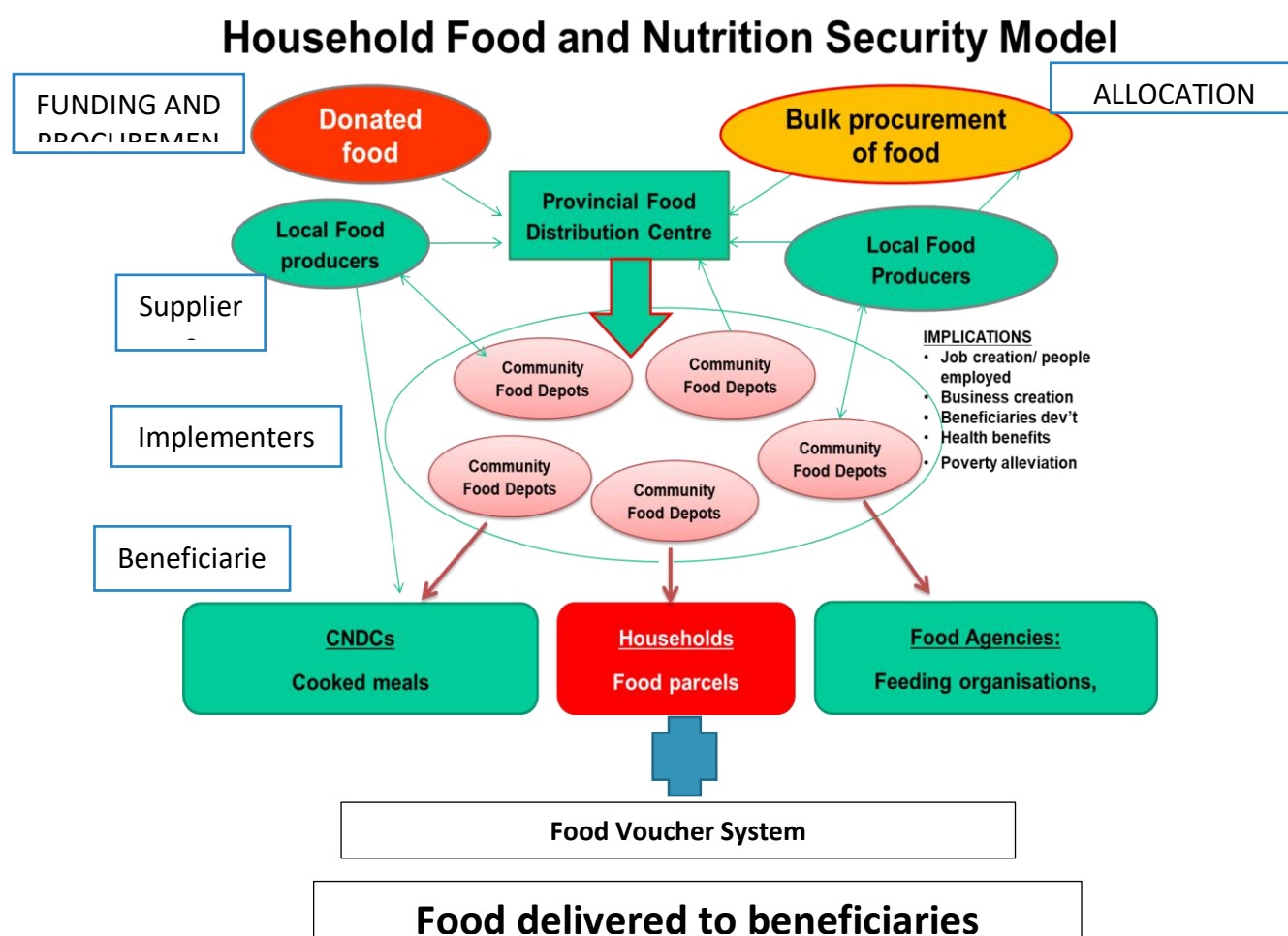


Figure 3 CND Programme model

The main purpose for establishing CNDs was to feed the hungry with nutritiously cooked meals and promote the development of beneficiaries towards creating sustainable livelihoods. The systematic mapping of the programme/model is depicted in the diagram below (figure11):

2.2 Main Objective of the intervention/programme

The main objective of the HF&NS programme is to reduce levels of hunger and increase access to safe and nutritious food in communities by:

- Enabling poor and vulnerable households' access to food through increasing distribution of food to such households, procurement of food from local food producers, while attaining cost efficiencies through bulk procurement
- Support households to attain self-reliance and self-sustenance.
- Improve nutrition security of citizens who participate in the programme.

2.3 Purpose of CNDCs

CNDCs are designed to empower people through training and skills development, support beneficiaries and their households to become food secure, while the nutritional support is an interim safety net measure. A vital area for development in the CNDC model is the training of the cooks, who plays a pivotal role in the operation of the CNDCs.

The CNDCs serve meals, usually during lunchtime, five days a week. A weekly menu is to be provided that will be posted in the facility and reflect the meals cooked for that week. Beneficiaries participating in the meal have to be seated at a table and enjoy a nutritious meal that will be served with appropriate cutlery and crockery. The CNDC as a centre should collect food directly from the local food producers such as community vegetable gardens that will be included as ingredients in preparing the meals for vulnerable individuals. This is designed to stimulate local food production, lower food prices, stimulate local economic development, enable the people access to diverse nutritious foods in communities.

Selection Criteria for the NPOs that could operate a CNDC are iterated as follows:

- The NPO should be involved with some kind of feeding programme;
- The NPO should have a valid NPO number with DSD;
- The NPO must be well received and accepted by the local communities;
- It will be beneficial if the NPO have existing feeding infrastructure such as cooking equipment, vehicles, storage facilities, etc.;
- The NPO must be accessible to beneficiaries utilising the CNDC;
- The NPO must be willing to share resources with surrounding and similar NPOs;
- The NPO must demonstrate that it has the capacity to implement basic Monitoring and Evaluation processes such as keeping a database of how many people are fed each day.

2.4 Provincial Food Distribution Centres (PFCDs)

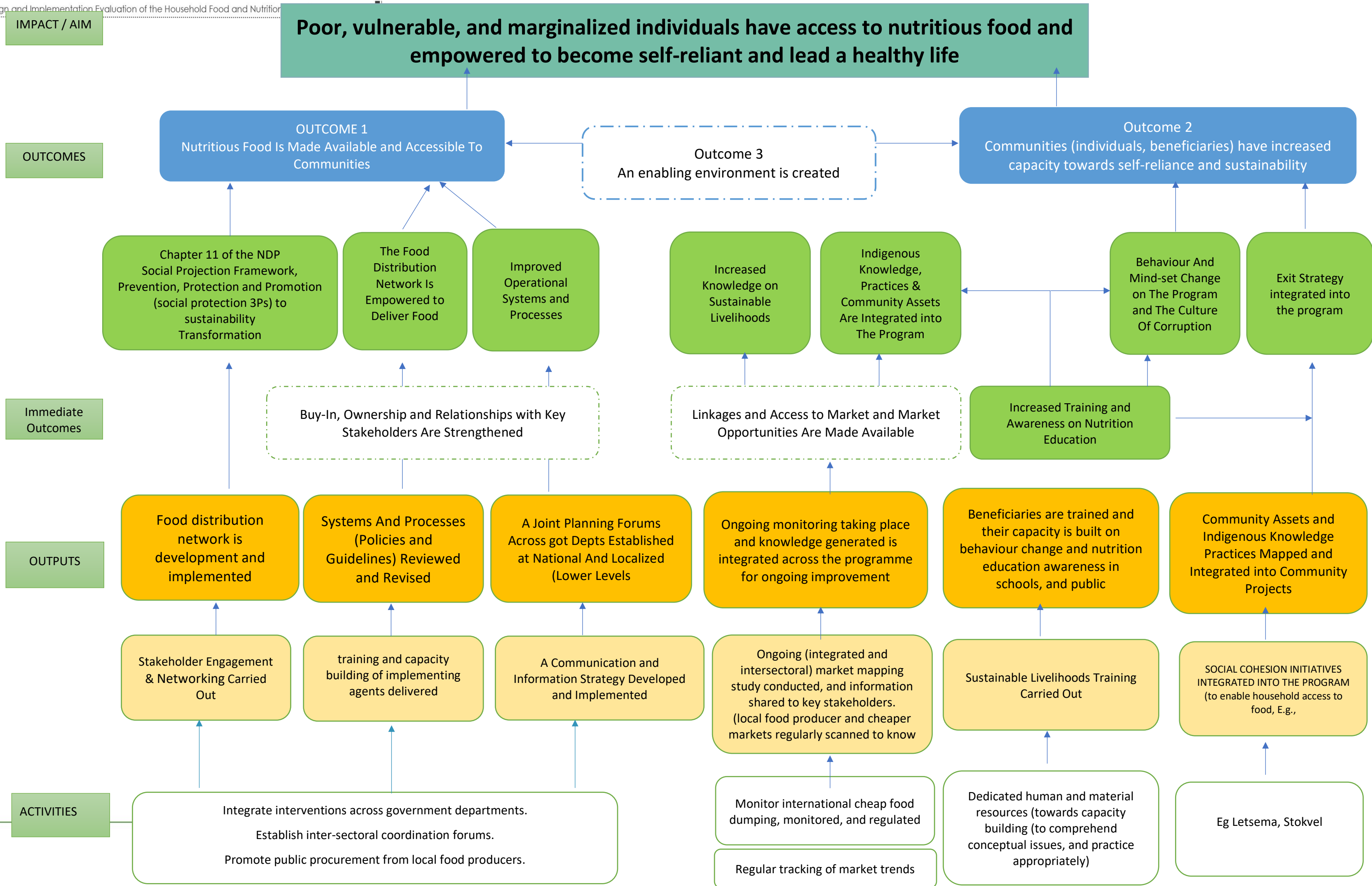
A Provincial Food Distribution Centre (PFDC) is the central coordinating facility for the provincial network of food distribution centres. The PFDC delivers donated and procured food to

Community Food Depots (CFDs) and Community Nutritional Development Centres (CNDCs). The PFDCs will function as a central storage, packaging, and distribution centre to supply CFDs with food parcels and CNDCs with dry and fresh ingredients for cooking meals.

2.5 Programme Logic and Theory of Change

The programme theory of Change (ToC) identifies the desired end or the ideal state that a programme intervention intends to be and maps the way of how to get there. The logical framework approach helps in identifying related short term and long-term outcomes that must be attained in order to deliver the main desired state of the programme. The related activities required and resulting outputs are also then mapped out as the basis of planned actions towards attaining the desired goals. The evaluation then tests the level of attainment of these desired goals and objectives by testing the extent of implementation of the theory of the ToC. For this evaluation, the existing theory of change was re-examined at the beginning of this evaluation in a two-day ToC workshop with programme officials and key stakeholders. This aided the design of the data collection instruments.

The programme logic suggests the approach of ensuring that there is enough food provision to the vulnerable in society as a short-term measure while pursuing long term developmental programmes aimed at taking people out of poverty. The short-term measures aim chiefly to create access to nutritious meals through centre-based feeding schemes such as CNDCs, PFDCs and capacitating them to be able to earn their own livelihood. The revised theory of change is presented in Figure 4.



2.6 Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the appropriateness of the design, the efficiency and effectiveness of the Implementation of the Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme in addressing the identified hunger challenges in South Africa.

2.7 Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation intends to measure different aspects of the intervention, vis:

- Programme interventions implemented by HF&NSP.
- Classification of funding for HF&NSP operations.
- Scope and coverage within each province.
- Compliance to the national HF&NSP model - PFDC, Strategic food sourcing (Bulk & local procurement), compliance to menu, cooks training, uniforms, stipends paid to Cooks.
- Development interventions implemented in CNDCs.
- Number of beneficiaries that exited the CNDCs.

2.8 Evaluation Questions

This section identifies the main questions and sub-questions:

2.8.1 (Relevance and appropriateness)

- How is the programme implemented at Provincial level?
- What is the most appropriate model for sourcing food and balancing bulk procurement with local sourcing?
- Is the model appropriate (double loop learning) to address the needs of food insecure households or does it need rethinking, especially in view of likely future needs?
- Is the programme designed in the most cost effective and efficient manner?
- What sphere of government is best placed to manage and implement the programme?

2.8.2 (Effectiveness)

- Have the intended programmes adequately addressed the food & nutrition problem in the ward/municipality/community that services are provided in?
- What are the key binding constraints/challenges currently experienced by PDC's and CNDC's in delivering the programme?
- What outcomes can be seen, or are likely to be achieved?
- What are the key success factors presented by PDC's and CNDC's in delivering the programmes that can be deemed as best practice?
- How can the NPO selection process (of both PDCs and CNDC's) be managed better to ensure adequate capacity?

- How were the developmental interventions implemented?
- Are CNDC's more successful if they operate individually as separate organizations or if they affiliated to other existing services (such as drop-in centres, luncheon clubs, etc.)?
- How many beneficiaries exited the programme?

2.8.3 (Efficiency)

- Are all the institutional arrangements and the operational procedures at all the relevant spheres of government in place to implement the programme and plan?
- What was the scope and coverage within each province?
- Is there sufficient oversight, coordination, and management capacity to implement the programme within government, PDCs and CNDCs?
- How were compliance to the national HF&NSP model – PFDC, Strategic food sourcing (Bulk & local procurement), Compliance to menu, cooks training, uniforms, and stipends paid to Cooks, dealt with?
- Were there sufficient finances, human resources, and administrative management to implement the programme?
- How is the province got affected by classification of funding for HF&NSP operations?
- Is the programme designed in the most cost effective and efficient manner?
- Does the current design facilitate rapid scale up at minimal cost?
- How can the programme be redesigned to ensure less money is spent on operational expenditure and more on food? Ratio of funds spent on operational cost must be reduced in favour of feeding.

2.8.4 (Sustainability)

- How many successful and sustained projects were developed by CNDCs beneficiaries since the beginning of the HFNSP?

2.8.5 (Lesson learnt)

- What are the key lessons that DSD can draw from other food relief programmes?

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Evaluation approach

This evaluation utilised a Theory-based approach in the analysis of both secondary and primary data from officials and beneficiaries. Historical quantitative and qualitative data was collected from previous reports and provincial and national annual reports and consolidated to make sense of programme reach and operational costs. This was then topped up with additional primary data from the interviews of programme officials at national and provincial spheres of operation and surveys of beneficiaries.

3.2 Data collection

Fieldwork was undertaken between 17 October and 12 December 2022, covering six selected provinces. One-on-one computer-assisted interviews or surveys were conducted with programme beneficiaries using structured questionnaires loaded on the Dooblo Survey-to-Go application. Field workers were then trained on the use of this scripted questionnaire in each of the participating provinces.

3.3 Sampling, population and sample sizes

Purposive sampling was used to identify key stakeholders to engage with and to understand the performance issues in the current system and to make valuable inputs into the improvement of the programme. CNDCs were also selected purposefully using quota sampling to cover both rural semi-rural/urban CNDCs. Once a CNDC is selected, beneficiaries are sampled randomly, as in whoever is available on the day of the data collection gets interviewed.

Table 1 Data Samples and sample sizes

Sample Units /Participant Categories	Suggested Sample Sizes	
	Interviews / FGDs	Surveys
National Programme Officials	3	
Provincial Programme Officials	2 per province (18)	
Municipal and Local Government Levels	1 per province (9)	
NGOs /NPOs/ Implementing Agents of Food Distribution programmes	2 per province (18)	
Programme Operations Staff CNDCs	2 per province	‘
NGOs /Shops	2 per province	
Programme beneficiaries TBD (also can use previous Data, where applicable) + Add Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Free States		100 per province (300)
Totals	52	1229

3.4 Ethical considerations

At high level, letter of introduction was circulated by the national DSD's Evaluation and Research Director's office to all heads of department in the provinces to notify them of the evaluation and to request permission for the evaluation team to work in the provinces.

At beneficiary level, a consent clause was incorporated into the data collection instruments, which was implemented during the data collection process. The study was explained to each respondent beneficiary, and they were asked about their willingness to participate. Only when the participant agreed, could the interview proceed. COVID-19 protocols were observed during the evaluation process, and in engaging with the various participants. Online engagements were also used where possible to minimise in-person contacts, especially with officials' interviews. In the western Cape the special Ethical Clearance was granted after several deliberations with officials and provincial Ethical Committee on the ethical protocols.

3.5 Quality assurance

Quality assurance measures were built into the evaluation process at various stages. The participatory approach ensures that the information gathered is validated and triangulated using mixed methods. At inception, the objectives were clarified and agreed on by the team and the DSD's technical committee. Thuso's data collectors were trained efficiently, and the data collected was properly cleaned prior to analysis. Validation workshops and input sessions were also used to ensure a high-quality process and evaluation output.

3.6 Data processing and analysis

Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. Information from the literature and a document review was used to craft a skeletal problem tree, which was then further interrogated at the stakeholder workshop. This was used to contextualise and provide more in-depth understanding of the ToC which was also reviewed to contextualise the studies.

Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics and presented using tables, graphs, and charts. Further analysis was carried out to measure the level of effectiveness of the CNDC model in addressing food insecurity, looking at coverage and cost. Thematic analysis and narrative methods were used to analyse and present the qualitative data, teasing out the key issues highlighted and suggestions brought forth by stakeholders during the interactions with them, in the workshops and interviews.

4 EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In line with the evaluation terms of reference, the findings present an appraisal of the programme design and implementation looking at its appropriateness and alignment with DSD policy mandates as well as its relevance to other government programmes. The chapter begins with a brief discussion of the relevant policy intentions of government and how the various components of the HFSNP are relevant to this agenda.

4.2 RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS

4.2.1 Legislative Alignment

The programme is relevant terms of the provisions of the constitution of South Africa in Section 27(1)(b) which states that “everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water.” This obligation is extended in section 27(2), according to which “the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources. Additionally, **Section 28 (1)(c) of the Constitution** states that every child has the right to ‘basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services, and social services. According to Section 35(2)(e) of the constitution prisoners and detainees also have a right to sufficient food. **Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No.97 of 1998)**: Provides for the measures that employers are required to take to improve the levels of skills of employees in workplaces.

Furthermore, the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, outlines the development vision of the country in addressing the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. **The Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019-2024 Priorities**: The MTSF 5-year government plan aims to make tangible progress in realising the transformative NDP Vision 2030. The 2019- 2014 MTSF Focuses on seven priorities that guide the mandate of the Government Departments which include: Priority 1: Building a capable, ethical, and developmental state. Priority 2: Economic transformation and job creation. Priority 3: Education, skills, and health provision. Priority 4: Consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic services. Priority 5: Spatial integration, human settlements, and local government. Priority 6: Social cohesion and safe communities. Priority 7: A better Africa and World.

This is also aligned to the **Sustainable Development Goals** commitment to the 2030 agenda for SDGs, which opts to assist countries in responding to the urgent need of ending poverty in all its forms everywhere (Goal 1), ending hunger by achieving food security, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture (Goal 2), ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all ages (Goal 3), ensuring the inclusive and equitable quality of education(Goal 4, and promoting long-life learning opportunities for

all) (Goal 5). Progress is dependent on reducing inequality within and between countries (Goal 10), combating climate change (Goal 13), and strengthening partnerships among actors for sustainable development (Goal 17).

4.2.1.1 The HF&NSP strategic alignment.

Several interventions are used by government (and DSD in particular) towards tackling the issue of hunger and poverty in general. These are in the form of grants and other interventions that create jobs and empowerment such as EPWP and related. The relevance of the HFNSP lies in its direct approach as expressed in its objectives in tackling the short-term hunger problems for many households and communities in emergency and critical situations, so that the vulnerable in society do not live under dire conditions.

The CNDC Model is seen as an appropriate model in that it brings people together to not only eat, but also share knowledge and be capacitated to participate in development interventions towards improving their lives.

4.2.2 What sphere of government is best placed to manage and implement the programme?

The findings show that, there is a general consensus that the programme is better implemented at provincial level compared to it being centralised at national DSD. Stakeholders at national levels share the sentiment that by relinquishing the operational management to provinces, the national department is better able to focus on crafting policy direction and strategic guidelines to structure implementation and provide general oversight in monitoring implementation.

It is highlighted that the sheer volume of implementation and implementing agents and NPOs means that much capacity is needed at national level to provide adequate attention and monitoring of implementation. This was resulting in delay in dispensing of funds prior to the decentralisation. From provincial officials' points of view, it is important that the programme is implemented at provincial sphere with clear guidance and direction from national DSD.

4.3 PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS

The concept of "programme effectiveness" refers to programme's ability to achieve its intended results or immediate outcomes. The focus of effectiveness in this evaluation attempt to assess the degree to which the Household Food and Nutrition Programme adequately address the food & nutrition security problem in the country, using data from

provincial reports and national APPs, and complimented with inputs from the Key Informant Interviews. As per the programme theory of change, immediate outcomes include providing access to food in the short term as a social protection measure and capacitating beneficiaries to produce their own food in the long run. Other aspects such as institutional arrangements are in support to ensure a conducive infrastructure and environment through which these objectives can be achieved.

4.3.1 How is the programme implemented at Provincial level?

The implementation of the programme in many provinces have similar core elements but varies in terms of combinations of interventions being used. Most provinces only use the CNDC as a delivery model for immediate food delivery, while other provinces still use the PFDC together with CNDCs to distribute food parcels and cooked meals respectively.

4.3.1.1 Targeting and intervention types implemented:

On the broader scope, a variety of interventions are used to support individuals and households, who are impoverished and food insecure. This includes grants and feeding schemes which also help to cater for the nutritional aspects of the population. The scope of the programme across provinces varies significantly, in terms of activities carried out. The typical interventions being implemented across provinces is presented in Table 3, covering different age groups, and vulnerable groups in society.

Table 2 Targeting various groups of the population with different modes of interventions.

Population Age group	0-5	6-18	19-59	60+
Interventions covering segments of the population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Support Grant Foster care grant Early Childhood Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSNP Child Support Grant Foster care grant Early Childhood Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R350 (Unemployment Grant) Community Nutrition and Development Centers Programme Social Relief of Distress EPWP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old Age Grant Community Nutrition and Development Center Programme Social Relief of Distress

Early Childhood Development programmes are targeted at children in preschool programmes, in addition to child support grants received by qualifying parents. At school, school feeding programmes implemented by Department of Basic Education caters for the hunger and nutritional needs for school children. Those who are out of school, but cannot find work, and are in food insecure homes, then utilises the CNDCs and other feeding centres. Number of CNDCs per province is presented in Table 4. Different

provinces employ different combinations of these interventions, based on their specific needs and availability of resources. Figure 5 illustrate typical intervention spectrum.

No. of CNDCs Per Province

In general, the number of CNDCs per province has increased over the years since the inception of the programme. Table 4 presents the number of CNDCs per province between 2017 and 2022.

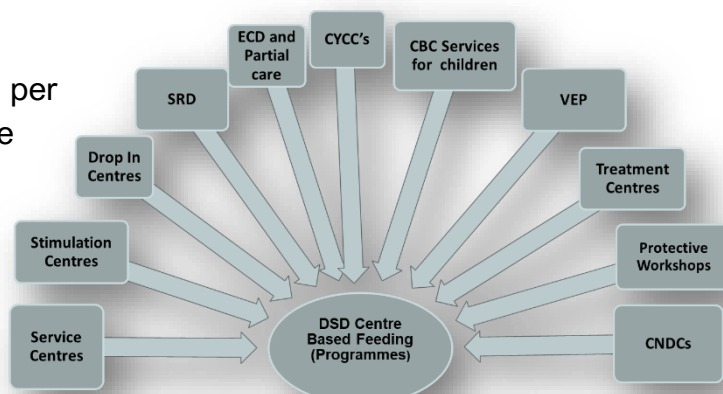


Figure 5 Typical programme interventions of the NHFNP in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal: Source NF&NSP Hybrid Model Evaluation report 2022.

Table 3 No. of CNDCs Per Province

		Planned Beneficiaries (250 beneficiaries per CNDC)			
	Provinces	No. Of CNDCs			
		2017		2022	Planned
1	Eastern Cape	22	5 500	36	9000
2	Free States	40	10 000	50	12500
3	Gauteng	12	3 000	31	7750
4	KwaZulu-Natal	52	13 000	49	12250
5	Limpopo	19	4 750	19	4750
6	Mpumalanga	9	2 250	11	2750
7	Northern Cape	22	5 500	22	5500
8	North West	25	6 250	33	8250
9	Western Cape	20	5 000	102	25500
		221	55 250	353	88250

In Gauteng, implementation is through 31 CNDCs out of which five are mobile ones. There are five PFDCs, one in each corridor, distributing food parcels to remote areas that do not have proper infrastructure. NPOs are contracted for warehousing and running arounds. The provincial department bought trucks, customise them and handed them to CNDCs. The provincial manager indicated that only 1 is working and other two will start before the year end 2023. In Gauteng also, it is noted that there is still lots of unmet needs. The province is said to be feeding only 500,000 people out of about 10million who need food relief.

In KwaZulu-Natal: The province started with 5 CNDCs in 2012. This increased to 22 in 2014, 44, in 2018 and sitting at 49 CNDCs since 2020. KZN no longer utilise the implementing agents or the PFDC due to funding issues. It is indicated that Implementing Agencies operating through the PDFDCs are more costly to deliver food because they have their own additional costs, though they create some level of employment to those who work on the CFDCs. From the interview with an implementing agent in the Free States, there are about 20 - 25 staff, and some of whom are earning a stipend of up to R16,000 a month (the highest paid staff), and a number of other workers at the operations side who are interns from the community and who also earn some stipends.

In Mpumalanga, there are two PFDCs and 11 CNDCs. Two NPOs are appointed as implementing agents, who run the day-to-day aspects of the food procurement and delivery of the programme. The provincial office of DSD provide oversight to the Implementing Agents. According to the province, there is still high demand for the programme, as most of the CNDCs are feeding more community members than initially registered. In some cases, there are about 260 to 300 people per CNDC aimed at feeding 250. This leads to quicker depletion of the limited budget allocated.

In Northern Cape there are currently 21 CNDCs operating out of the 22. One of them is closed due to financial mismanagement and replacement being sort at the time of the interview/evaluation. No Implementing Agent are used in the NC as the province funds NPOs directly to operate the CNDCs.

Limpopo

Not all provinces, were coping with the change after Circular 21. As seen in the case of Limpopo, the CNDCs and feeding scheme was closed down since Covid-19 and the introduction of the Circular-21 and has not operated since 2021/2022 financial years to date. This is said to lead to an open tender process, where non-philanthropic based and profit-oriented service providers rather get appointed to operate the programme.

4.3.1.2 *Effectiveness of Compliance with the Operational Guidelines:*

The actual sitting like in a restaurant format is not happening in all CNDCs. Observations in some CNDCs in Mpumalanga, Free States, and in the Western Cape shows beneficiaries queue to receive foods. They bring “take-away” containers and take home the served foods. Others come and simply find some places around the buildings to sit and eat and go. For those who sit around, some level of interaction and social cohesion is happening as intended.

Generally, there is good level of compliance with administrative processes especially in the kitchen area (refer to Figure 6 and 7). Other aspects, such as keeping of attendance registers, and menu display were observed in most CNDCs visited during the data collection. Handwashing facilities are provided in some CNDCs but not in others..



Figure 7 Fairly common scene at CNDCs where members come and wait in que to be served.



Figure 6 Some common practices observed.

4.3.2 Have the intended programmes adequately addressed the food & nutrition problem in the ward/municipality/community that services are provided in?

4.3.2.1 How effective is the programme in creating access to food and nutrition.

DSD's current provision of access to short term food for the vulnerable is mainly through the CNDCs in most provinces and augmented with few food parcel distribution centres as seen in the case of Gauteng, from 2013 up to 2019/2020 when food parcels were introduced in large quantities. As of 2017, about 221 CNDCs were established to provide

cooked meals to beneficiaries in all provinces. According to the available data, the current number of CNDCs is about 353 as reflected in the table below.

Table 4 Number of CNDCS 2021/22 and budget (Source: National DSD Programme Office).

Province	Number of CNDCS	Budget
Eastern Cape	36	R13 313 654 .60
Free State	50	R11 427 000,00
Gauteng	31	R17 671 000,00
KwaZulu Natal	49	R20 400 000,00
Limpopo	19	R13 188 621,00
Mpumalanga	11	R10 063 000,00
Northern Cape	22	-
North West	33	R22 500 000,00
Western Cape	102	R53 611 000,00
Total	353	R148 860 621,00

The number of people to be served by each CNDC which is budget driven, is set to 250 people per CNDC, in terms of the national fund allocations. It is noted that other than the Western Cape, most provinces are noted to provide additional funding to top up.

Analysis of the data shows that the 2018/ 19 period is characterised by a 311% increase in the beneficiaries fed against 6% increase in programme budget expenditure.

The number of beneficiaries budgeted for remained constant over the years since 2013, until spiked up by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 (figure 8). The Actual expenditure

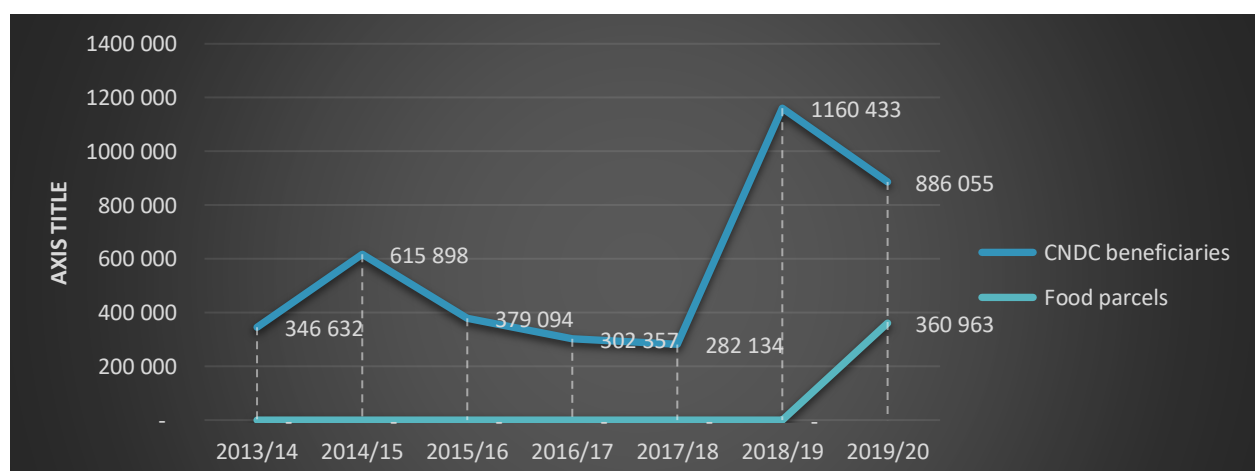


Figure 8 Figure 18 Beneficiaries fed 2013/14 to 2019/20

however fluctuated for the same periods then went up significantly during the Covid-19 period. The number of beneficiaries assisted is depicted in the following graphs.

From 2013/14 to 2018/19, the program did not have the food parcel component. With notable decreases in 2016/17 and 2017/18 an increase in 2018/19, Average beneficiaries fed during the period was 567 515 at an average cost per beneficiary of R141.

2020/21 was predominantly characterised by food parcels as CNDC activity was limited due to lockdown restrictions. The 2022 numbers fed is reflective of the fact that food insecure individuals are in excess of 1,6 million. Based on the General household Survey¹, which estimates that 11.3 % of individuals are affected by hunger (about 7 million individuals), the programme reach is around 20%.

4.3.2.2 How adequate is the programme in creating access to food– Programme coverage.

To measure the level of programme effectiveness (reach) in each province, we compared the translation of the percentages from the STATSA data, into proportion of the actual current population that is food insecure and comparing this number with the number of beneficiaries fed in CNDCs in each province. Based on a trajectory of 250 people per CNDC, the number being fed compared to the population in numbers, reveals to an extent the limited coverage of the programme, through the CNDC model.

province	2017: no of CNDCS	2017: Planned beneficiaries reached	Household survey: 2017	Programme reach
Eastern Cape	22	5 500	786 343	0,7%
Free State	40	10 000	346 871	2,9%
Gauteng	12	3 000	1 727 723	0,2%
KwaZulu Natal	52	13 000	1 340 051	1,0%
Limpopo	19	4 750	699 186	0,7%
Mpumalanga	9	2 250	537 748	0,4%
Northern Cape	22	5 500	146 894	3,7%

¹ General Household Survey 2022, Statistics SA.

North West	25	6	466	1,3%
Western Cape	20	5	787	0,6%
	221	55 250	6 839	10,80%
			262	

The CNDCs are designed to feed about 250 vulnerable individuals a day in each centre. As per the mid-year population estimates (STATS SA) and based on the current official number of funded CNDCs, 12,1% individuals did not have access to food in 2017 (GHS, 2017). It can be seen that the planned programme reach and the contribution of CNDCs to the actual magnitude of the problem is less than 5% of the need in all provinces. However, it's a little above 11% when combined efforts are considered. A similar level of effort is also made in 2022, as presented in Table 8.

Table 5 Table 8 Programme reach by CNDCs 2022

Province	2022: no of CNCDS	2022: Planned beneficiaries reached	House Hold survey : 2022	Programme reach
Eastern Cape	22	5 500	817 400	0,7%
Free State	40	10 000	353 800	2,8%
Gauteng	31	7 750	1 964 200	0,4%
KwaZulu Natal	49	12 250	1 354 200	0,9%
Limpopo	19		719 800	0,0%
Mpumalanga	11	2 750	573 400	0,5%
Northern Cape	21	5 250	158 600	3,3%
North West	25	6 250	512 400	1,2%
Western Cape	20	5 000	878 400	0,6%
			7 332 200	10.40%

The pattern of efforts remains consistent in most provinces for the last five years, with the percentage in provinces such as Gauteng, Western Cape, Free States, KwaZulu-Natal and North West remaining almost the same (exact or less than 0.10% change). There is a slight drop in the proportion of efforts in the Northern Cape, North West and KwaZulu Natal attributable to the increase in demand. At the time of conducting this evaluation the feeding programme through CNDCs in Limpopo was not operational due to delayed processing of funds. The provincial percentage change in programme reach is shown in Figure 9.

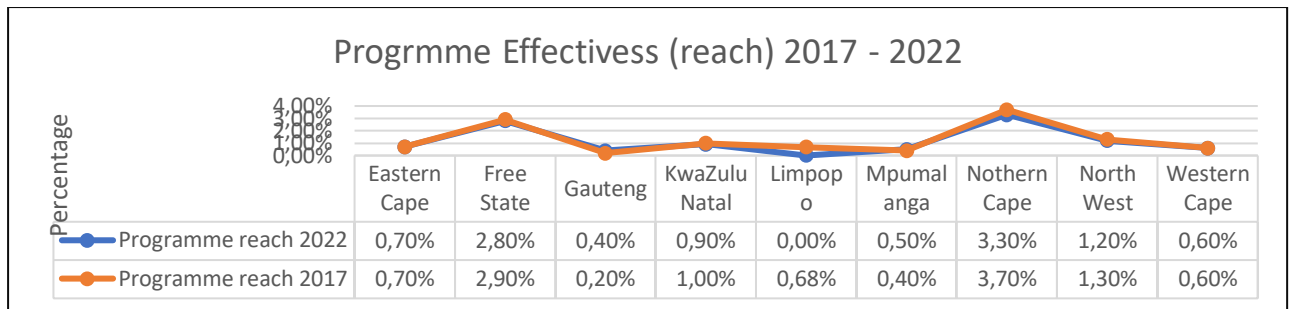


Figure 9 Change in Programme Effectiveness using CNDs from 2017 to 2022.

Based on the comparison with the General Household Survey estimate for the proportion of the population vulnerable to hunger of 12.1%, the average programme reach is low at 3%. This translates to a shortfall of close to 6 695 915 individuals translating to a budget shortfall of R5,6 billion based on the average cost per beneficiary between 2017/18 and 2019/20 of R835. The graph below summarises the unmet need:

Table 6 Summary of programme reach and unmet needs.

Province	2020: Actual beneficiaries reached	House Hold survey : 2017	Actual Programme reach[1]	House Hold survey : 2017(%)	Unmet need
Eastern Cape	4 168	786 343	0,50%	12,10%	782 175
Free State	12 505	346 871	3,60%	12,10%	334 366
Gauteng	9 759	1 727 723	0,60%	12,10%	1 717 964
KwaZulu Natal	31 582	1 340 051	2,40%	12,10%	1 308 469
Limpopo	18 453	699 186	2,60%	12,10%	680 733
Mpumalanga	22 485	537 748	4,20%	12,10%	515 263
Northern Cape	15 003	146 894	10,20%	12,10%	131 891
North West	7 448	466 600	1,60%	12,10%	459 152
Western Cape	21 844	787 746	2,80%	12,10%	765 902
Average programmes reach	143 247	6 839 162		12,10%	6 695 915

4.3.3 Findings from the Surveys of beneficiaries (beneficiary opinions and experiences of the programme)

4.3.3.1 Demographics

As presented in the methodology section, the assessment of the opinions and experiences of programme beneficiaries made use of existing data collected previously for the Food Distribution Hybrid model design evaluation and additional data including 3 provinces not previously covered, vis, Free States, Mpumalanga, and Limpopo., 1229 beneficiaries were surveyed. The provincial number of responds are presented in Figure 10.

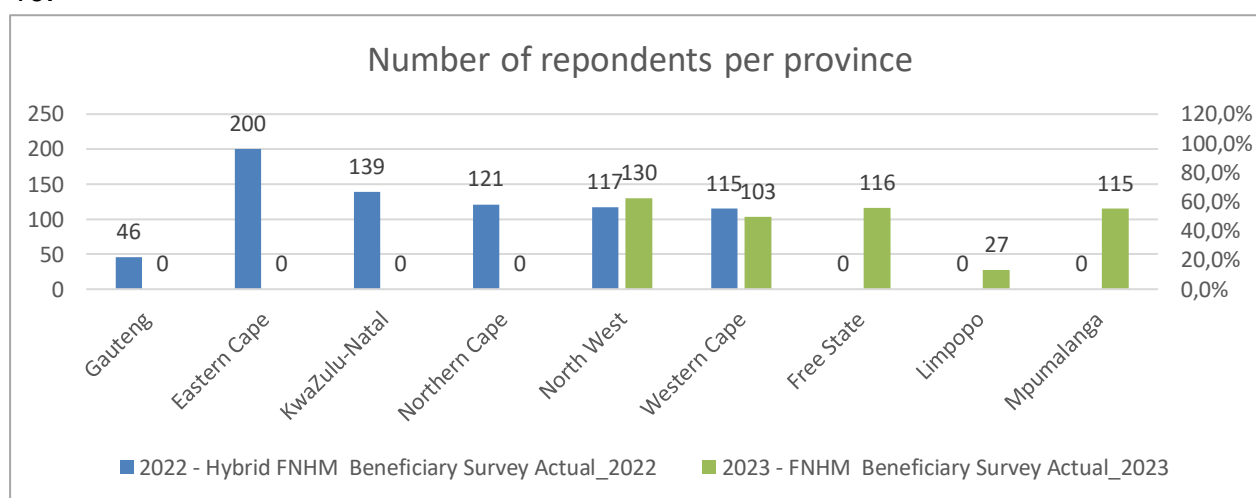


Figure 10. Number of respondents analysed per province.

4.3.3.2 Age distribution

The age distribution of beneficiaries is characterised by youth and middle-aged participants. Almost a third of beneficiaries (34%) are between ages 20 and 50, while about half (54%) are between 50 and 70. This implies almost 88% of beneficiaries are within the working group and can do some form of work. About 10% are above 70 years of age and may not necessarily be within the active working group. This number excludes those at the old age homes and luncheon centres who are being fed by other interventions of the food relief programme. The age structure of the programme being predominantly on the younger and active side of life is considered good for the programme as it indicates the possibility of or provides the basis for implementing participatory developmental programmes (figure 11).

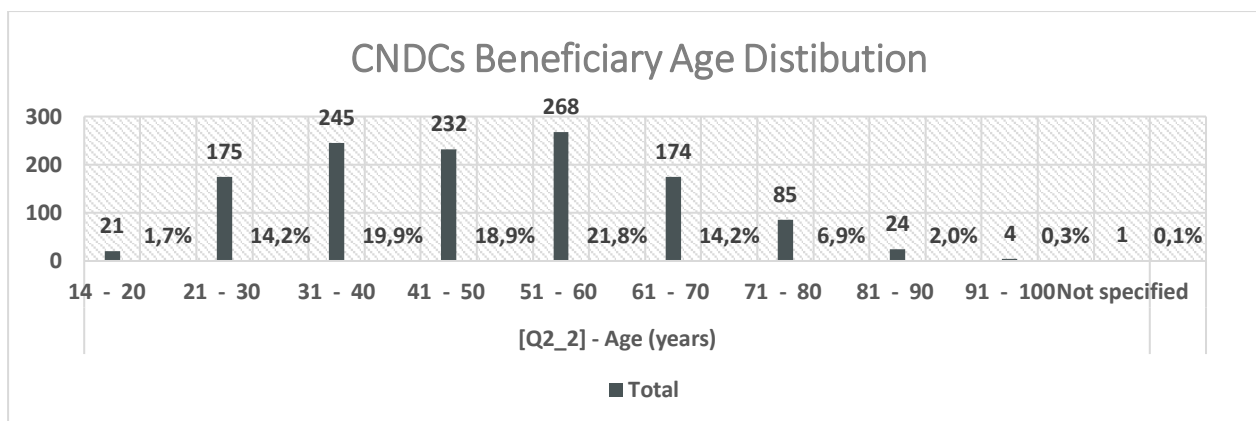


Figure 11 CNDCs Beneficiary Age distribution

4.3.3.3 Gender and Heads of Households Status

Of the 1229 beneficiaries analysed, about a third (29%) are males and the remaining 70% are females who come to receive food at the CNDCs. Figure 12. This is because, most of the females who visit the CNDCs are predominantly breadwinners of their household (Figure 13). As seen in the responses, apart from Gauteng Province, almost a third of respondents are heads of their household.

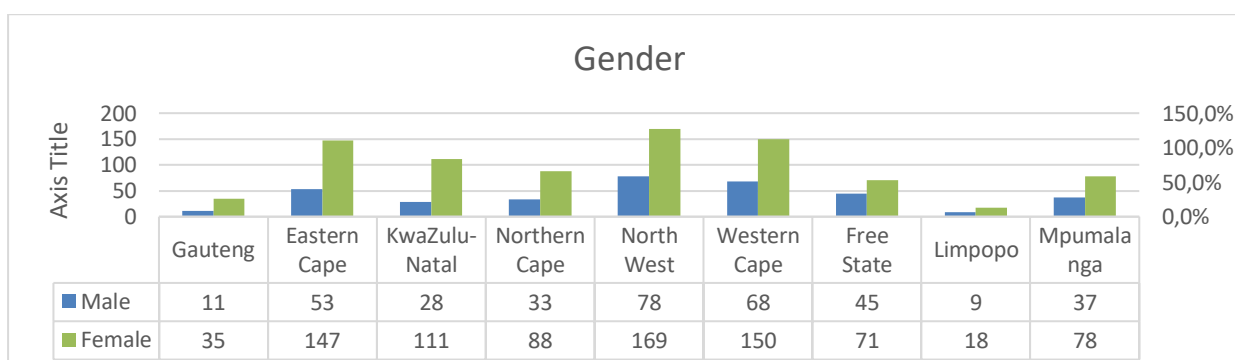


Figure 12 Gender dispersion of respondents

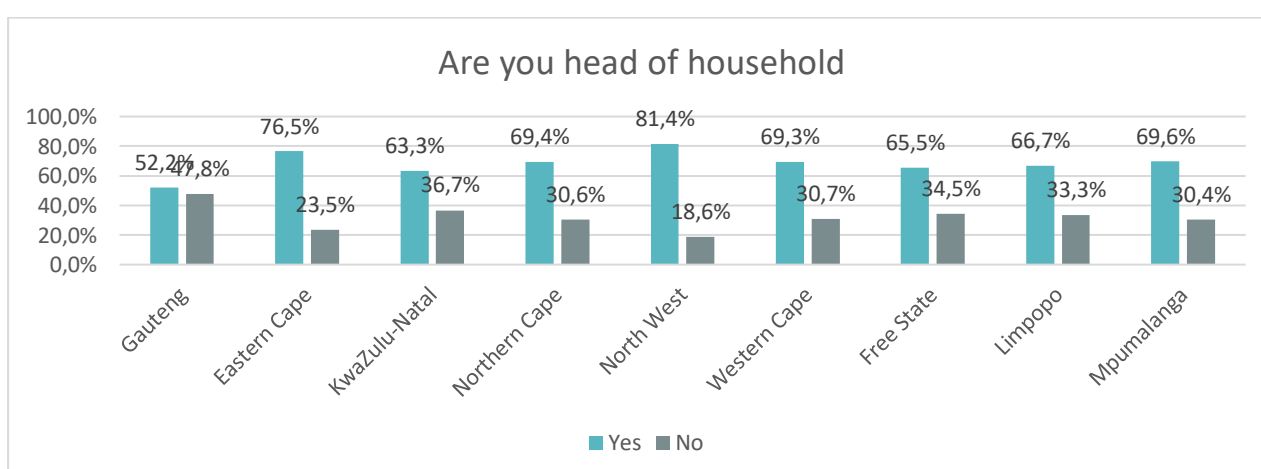


Figure 13 Percentage of respondents who are heads of their households.

4.3.3.4 Geographic dispensation of beneficiaries

Though, an attempt is made to conduct the interviews across different geographic dispensations, the composition of respondents is either from rural or peri-urban areas as presented in Figure 14.

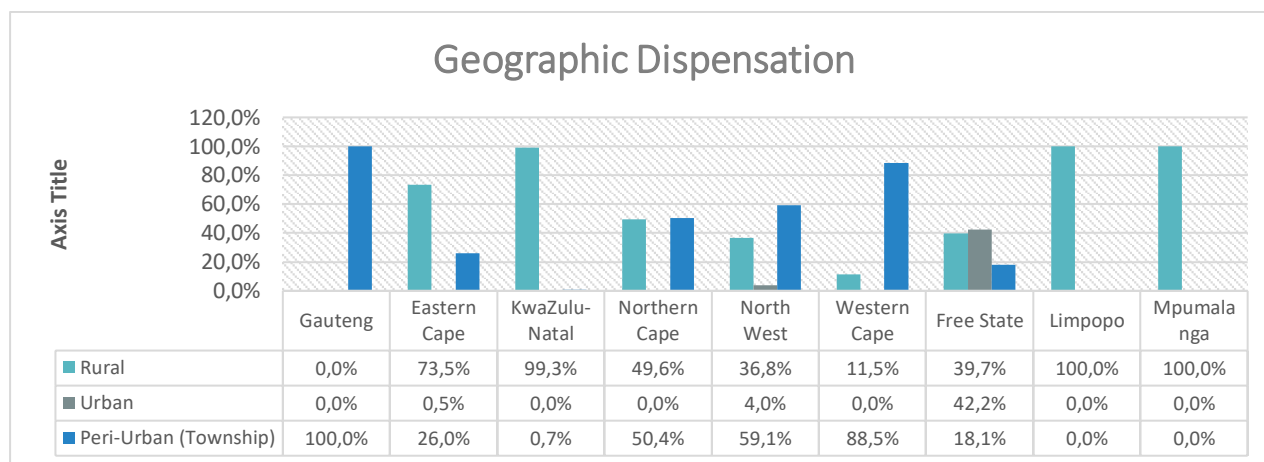


Figure 14 Geographic distribution of respondents

4.3.3.5 Educational levels and income

Formal schooling levels are quite low among beneficiaries. Majority of respondents have completed at least some secondary school (52%) while a third only completed primary school (33%). The low level of education is somehow attributable to the low level of formal employment and income levels of beneficiaries. Majority (77.2%) indicated not earning any income. From the results, only about 20% earn a cumulative household income of up to R5000. This lack of income can explain to an extent the reliance on grants and other forms of government assistance by beneficiaries. While about a third of beneficiaries do not receive any form of grants, the only form of income for some is grants of various kinds.

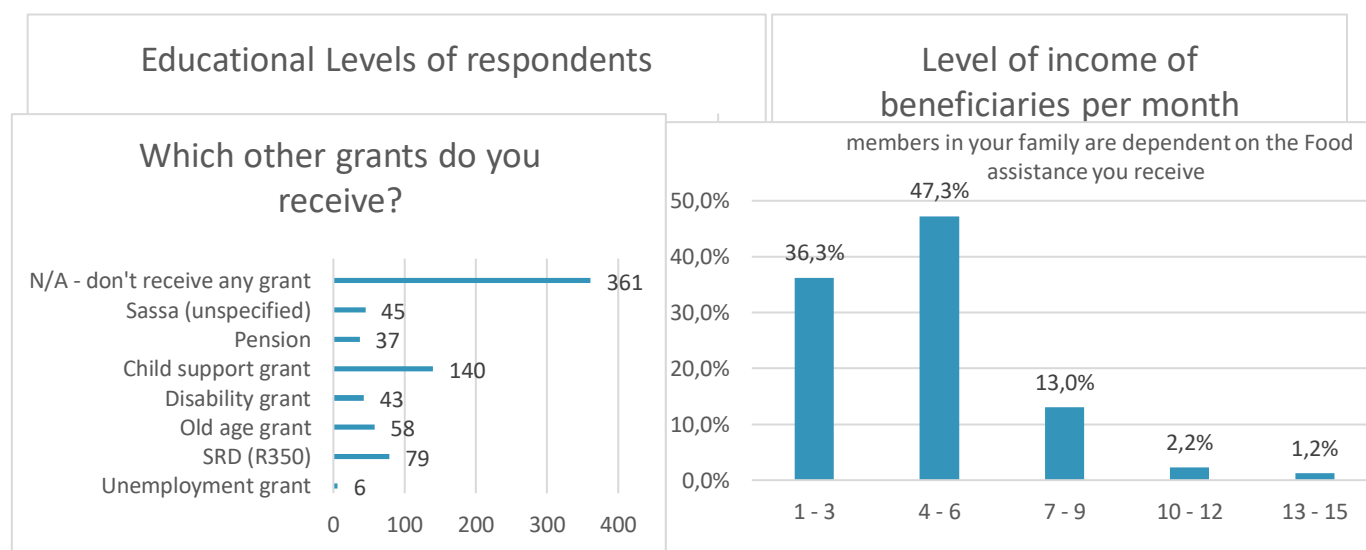


Figure 16 Types of rants receive by beneficiaries.

Figure 17 Beneficiary relying on the food assistance.

It is also highlighted that about a third of respondents have at least three members of their family relying on the government food assistance. Also, almost half (47%) have between 4-6 members relying on government food provision. The responses are present in Figure 16. This also emphasises the relevance of the current programme to beneficiaries and their households (Figure 17).

In addition to low education levels and other socio-economic issues, for about a third of respondents, the issue of lack of income and food is contributed to also by one form of natural disasters, such as draught and flooding at least sometime in the last five years. The responses are presented in Figure 18. Respondents also indicate that, in such circumstances, they received more assistance from government and CNDCs are more patronised during these times followed by distribution of food parcels. This further highlights the relevance of the HF&NSP as a safety net.

Figure 18 Proportion of respondents who have suffered some form of natural disasters over the last five years.

As per the programme design, most of the CNDCs serve food five times in a week. Food parcels are however distributed rather occasionally during times of disasters. For those who eat from the CNDCs, at least 88% consistently feed there for the entire week, while another 10% visits at least 1-3 times a week.

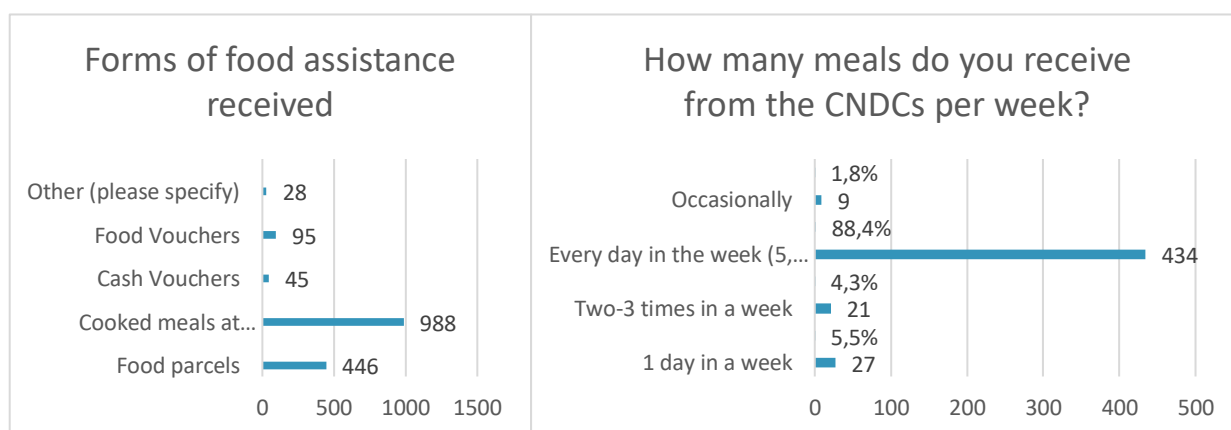
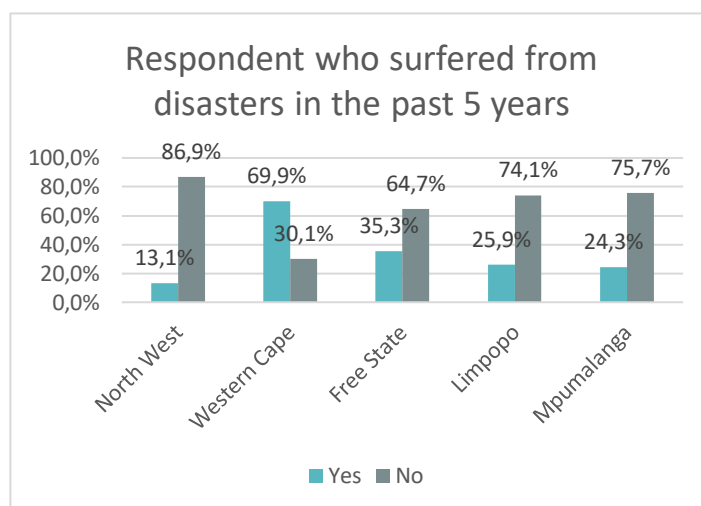


Figure 19 The forms of food assistance received, and the frequency of CNDC visits by beneficiaries.

4.3.3.6 Beneficiaries level of Satisfaction with Government Food relief assistance

More than two-thirds of respondents indicate satisfaction with the food relief assistance they are receiving. The survey results 95% show high satisfaction with the content of the food provided at the CNDCs. In general, at least 73% of respondents are satisfied with the food assistance being provided. Even though they wish to be having their own food and preparing in their own homes, as expressed by few respondents in the open-ended questions.

4.3.4 How many beneficiaries exited the programme?

There is hardly any record kept in the CNDCs in any province of the number of beneficiaries existing the programme.

The survey of beneficiaries show that most people who get on the programme remain for longer periods of time. Only about 6% of respondents have been visiting CNDCs for less than 1 year. 12% of respondents have been at the centre for at least a year. Majority (65%) have been on the food assistance for at least 2 to 6 years, while 22% have been receiving the food assistance for between 6 to 9 years. 10% receive for 10 years or more, as presented in the survey results in Figure 20.

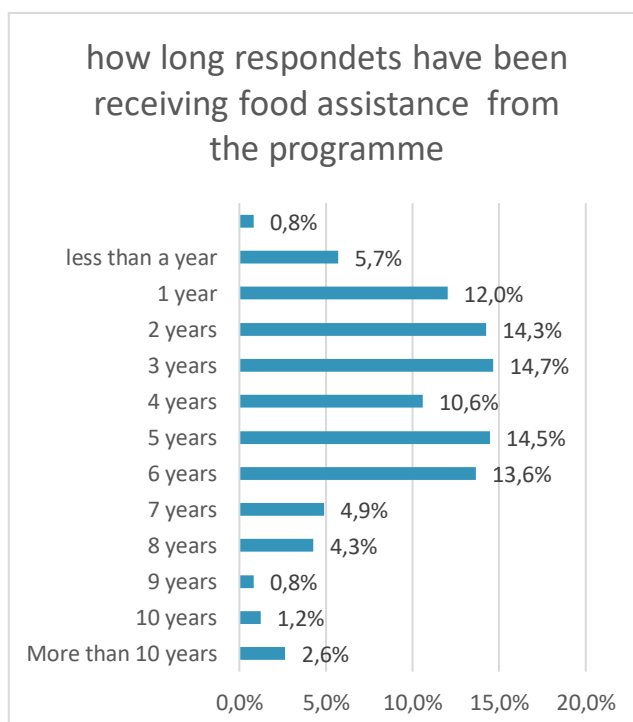


Figure 20 beneficiary responses of how long beneficiaries have been on the programme.

Several reasons were provided from the interviews as to why people are not able to graduate out of the programme. Among many, the following are cited including (i) beneficiaries not being fully capacitated sufficiently to earn their own income (ii) the lack of or limited implementation of the of the development component of the plan (iii) the lack of exit strategies and exit criteria.

These issues are noted to be consequences of the lack of a radical approach to dealing with the issue at hand, including that targets are not enough to eradicate the current magnitude of food insecurity as departments are operating as business as usual.

Stakeholders also highlighted broader systems issues such as the systemic Exclusion of segment of the population from active participation in the production of food due to historical structural designs. The monopoly and scale and consistency of supply required

by these retail shops, naturally eliminates smallholder and subsistence farmers in their supply chain.

4.4 PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY

Efficiency of Implementation relates to a measure of the level of optimal operation of the programme and the conditions created to allow for optimal performance of the programme. These include the efficiency of administrative processes, resource allocation and institutional arrangements made for programme coordination and communication. Cost efficiency then measures the value for money being derived from the allocation and utilisation of programme resources.

4.4.1 Budget allocations and people fed

The programme budget mainly comes from the allocation from the National Government to provinces, from the provincial equitable share. It is also said that provinces also fund some components of the programme over and above what is allocated from National DSD. So far the administrative processes of budget distribution to CNDCs is noted to be more efficient, since the function is handed to provinces. .

The budget is however noted to be severely inadequate to commensurate the magnitude of the need in each province. It should however be noted that the HFNSP consist of many other components where the budget goes, which are not included in this analysis. This analysis only covers CNDCs and does not include other feeding schemes such as Launchmen Clubs and other Centre-Based Feeding programmes. The table below summarizes the programme budgets for each province for the years for which data was available.

Table 7 Programme costs per province

Total Cost per province ²				
Province	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Eastern Cape	5 104 800	5 452 943	3 991 692	5 955 681
Free State	5 104 800	5 452 943	6 056 396	5 955 681
Gauteng	5 104 800	5 452 943	6 056 396	5 955 681
KwaZulu Natal	5 104 800	5 452 943	6 056 396	5 955 681
Limpopo	5 104 800	5 452 943	6 056 396	5 955 681
Mpumalanga	5 104 800	5 452 943	6 056 396	5 955 681
Northern Cape	5 104 800	5 452 943	3 991 692	5 955 681
North West	5 104 800	5 452 943	6 056 396	5 955 681
Western Cape	10 207 600	10 181 456	12 335 240	12 297 395
Total Cost for all provinces	51 046 000	53 805 000	56 657 000	59 942 842
Total 2015/16 to 2018/19	221 450 842			

² Programme budgets for the Provincial Food Distribution Centre and CNDCs (and authors 'calculations)

Table 8 Total Programme costs and change in total costs and beneficiaries fed for all provinces.

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Total Program costs All provinces	51 046 000	53 805 000	56 657 000	59 942 998
Change in Total Program costs All provinces		5%	5%	6%
Change in beneficiaries fed for All provinces		-20%	-7%	311%

The total program costs show an upward trajectory even in 2016/17 and 2017/18 when the number of beneficiaries fed were decreasing. The expectation is that as the number of beneficiaries decrease, the total cost should decrease. (Figure 33)

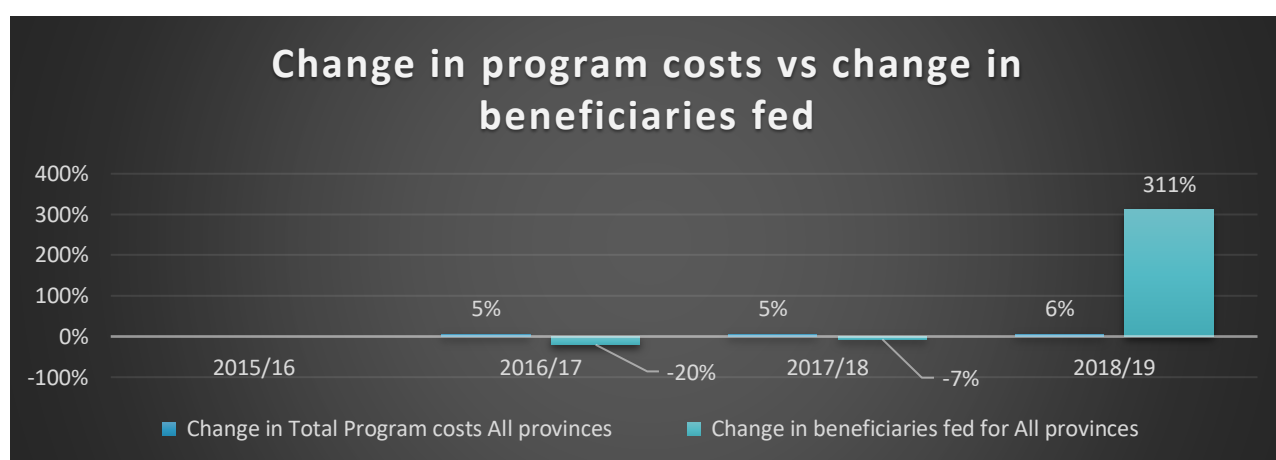


Figure 21 Programme Cost change vrs beneficiaries.

This is not the case as they majority of the allocated costs is made up of program running costs. This relation is part of the reason for the higher cost per beneficiary in 2016/17 and 2017/18 as reported. The table below summarizes the costs for each province for the years for which disaggregation of data was possible:

Table 9 Programme costs per province

Details	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Total Program costs Western Cape Only	10 181 456	12 335 240	12 297 551
Food Costs Western Cape Only	5 320 000	6 702 740	6 561 523
Total operating costs (PFDC and CNDC) for Western Cape only	4 861 456	5 632 500	5 736 028
Total Program costs for other 8 provinces	43 623 544	44 321 760	47 645 447
Average Total programme cost per province	5 452 943	5 540 220	5 955 681
Food Costs for other 8 provinces	19 404 000	19 498 880	20 996 874

Total operating costs (PFDC and CNDC) for other 8 provinces	24 219 544	24 822 880	26 648 573
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The programme reporting is done at two levels to national DSD. Western cape is reported on its own and allocated a separate budget to run **one PFDC** and **20 CNDCs**. The other provinces, except for isolated additional allocations made to Eastern Cape and Northern Cape in the period under review, get a fairly similar allocation to run **one PFDC** and **8 CNDCs** per province. As reflected below, the program design for these two provincials models seem different and exhibits different allocative efficiency:

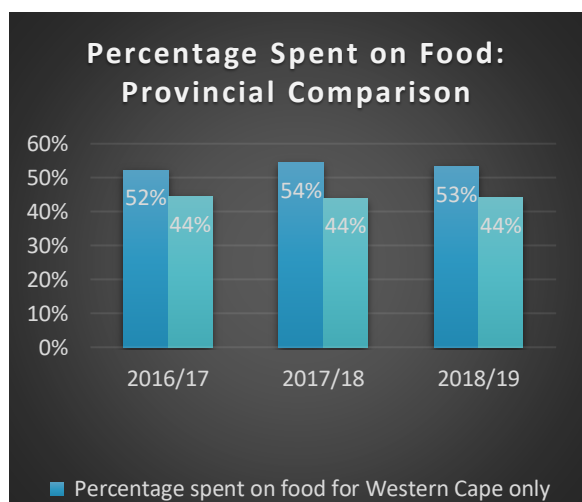


Figure 22 Provincial Fund utilisation¹

Western Cape spent an average of **53% of the allocation on food and 47% on operating costs**. All other 8 provinces spent an average of **44% of the allocation on food and 53% on operating costs**. Compared to other 8 provinces, Western Cape is better at allocating the funds received to the food and nutrition deficit. From the analysis, it appears Western Cape is achieving a better allocative efficiency as there is a lower leakage of funds meant for food to program running costs.

4.4.2 Is the programme designed in the most cost effective and efficient manner?

As explained earlier, the total program costs show an upward trajectory even in 2016/17 and 2017/18 when the number of beneficiaries fed were decreasing possibly due to the majority of the allocated costs being made up of program running costs. This relation is part of the reason for the higher cost per beneficiary in 2016/17 and 2017/18 as reported below:

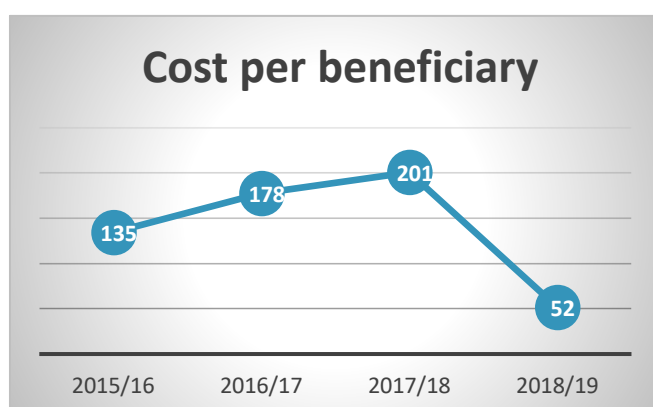


Figure 23 : Cost per beneficiary.

From 2015/16 to 2017/18, the cost per beneficiary increased as a result of an average decrease in beneficiaries fed of -13% against a modest increase in programme expenditure of 5%. The expectation is that as programme expenditure increase, the

number of beneficiaries fed will increase or in this case remain constant given that the increase is closer to the average rate of inflation. There are three plausible reasons for such a relationship between program expenditure and beneficiaries fed for the period 2015/16 to 2017/18:

- The greater expenditure increase was not allocated to food but rather to operating expenditure for the programme. On average 56% of program costs are allocated to program running costs.
- General unwillingness of beneficiaries to visit centres as a result of different socio-economic factors.
- The proportion of the amount earmarked for food did not increase by a large enough magnitude to at least maintain the current level of service provided to beneficiaries.

4.4.3 Program design and cost efficiency

Overall, as reflected in the graph below (Figure 26) and the ensuing discussion, the PFDC and CNDC programme is not appropriately designed to reduce vulnerability effectively and efficiently in a cost-effective manner. Overall, all the 9 provinces spent an average of 46% of the allocation on food and 54% on operating costs. The overall program design can be seen as not efficient in terms of allocating food to vulnerable beneficiaries as 54% of value is transferred to running costs. This anomaly will need to be re-looked at, whereby the programme needs to be redesigned in a way that allocates the significant portion to food rather than to programme costs.

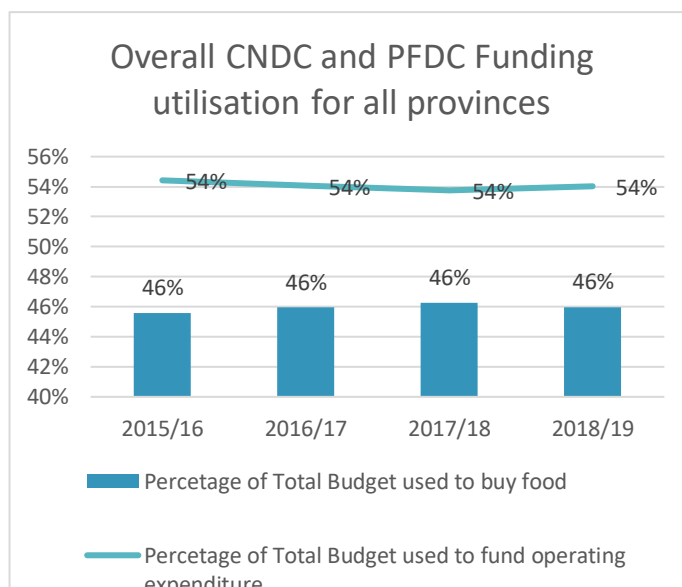


Figure 24 Proportion of Programme Expenditure spent on feeding and on operation of the programme.

4.4.4 Institutional Arrangements and programme coordination

The National Household Food and Nutrition Security Plan suggest a multisectoral approach to the implementation of the programme. At the moment, this is effectively being followed at national level, through the National Intergovernmental Technical Working Group (NTWG), led by the DPME. Provinces are expected to cascade this structure at Provincial spheres of implementation, where the programme will be

steered by the Provincial DSD, and other sector departments, but leadership to be provided by the Office of the Premier (OTP), the provincial counterpart of the DPME in terms of oversight. The provincial technical working group then is expected to develop a provincial FNS Plan, that will implement the national plan within the provincial context thus ensuring that provincial specific issues leading to food and nutrition insecurity are properly addressed. This also allows for some flexibility in implementation in provinces but within the framework of the national agenda.

4.4.5 Strategic Documents and Food and Nutrition Security Plans

The Evaluation noted that, at the moment, 6 out of the 9 provinces have since developed or at least drafted the provincial food and nutrition plans, with the support from the national DSD. Provinces that at least have a final draft include Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Western Cape, Limpopo and North-West. Gauteng, Eastern Cape are in the process of developing their plans in this (2023/24) financial year. While in some provinces, the plan is seen as a blueprint for the integration of food and nutrition security activity and programmes, it is also seen as a mechanism and opportunity for the sector departments to come together and work instead of the current silo approach.

There is a consensus across provinces that the food plans need radical approach and commitments from key sector departments in terms of targeting as well as new interventions to be implemented if the current need is to be met, or at least reduced significantly.

4.4.6 Monitoring and reporting

The general programme reporting is ongoing well, where provinces constantly prepare and submit reports to national DSD and is compiled into the DSD Annual Performance Plan (APP). On another level, the provinces also prepare their APPs, which have a component on Food and Nutrition. It was however difficult during this evaluation to locate or obtain these provincial level APPs. Most of these are not published on their websites. In few cases, these were collected directly from the Provincial managers. There is note of monitoring systems available in some provinces.

The Current household profiling ongoing in most provides is expected to generate sufficient data, which will make the planning and in-time access to information on the programme possible. It is also expected to solve issues such as duplication, where households participate in several interventions at the same time. There is however the a challenge of no universal database that will harmonise these at a central point where all key stakeholders, such as DSD National and Provinces, Departments of Health,

Home Affairs, Agriculture, Education and Economic Development among others can have access to beneficiary profiles for evidence-based decision making.

4.4.7 How Sustainable is the Programme in terms of current implementation trajectory?

The sustainability in this regard relates largely to governments ability to maintain the status quo of continuously feeding the vulnerable households and individuals at the current rate and make additional resources available to tackle the unmet demand.

The resounding question being asked is, “how long can this go on, without creating dependency among beneficiaries?”. Some respondents argue that, with the increasing levels of poverty and unemployment in most provinces, there is more likelihood that the demand for government assistance for food is also increasing. This makes may make the current trajectory unsustainable as more resources need to be allocated to food provision. As seen in the efficiency analysis the current efforts are only tackling an average of about 11-12% of the current demand. With the current needs not being met fully, the situation seems to be poised to persist for longer, with more than 78% of beneficiaries not having any other form of income or very limited and inconsistent income (Figure 38). Also, majority (95%) generate between R100 and R5000 a month which is not sufficiently meeting their needs.

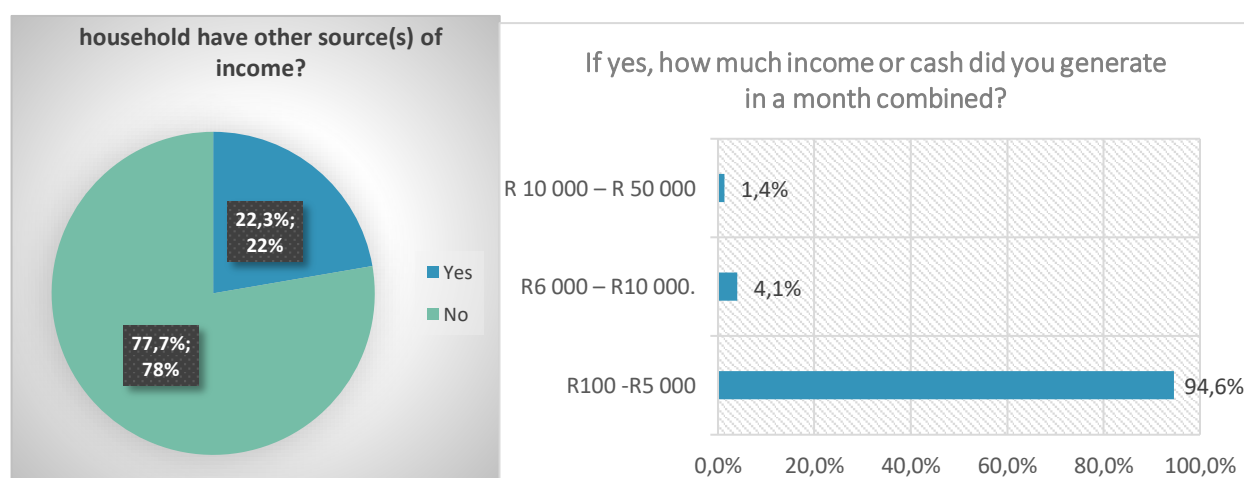
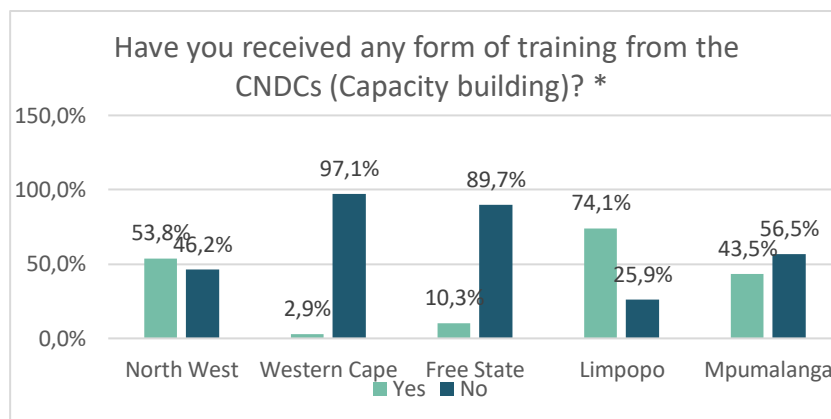


Figure 25 Household income levels.

There is however a strong dilemma as whether increasing budgets for the feeding programmes is the best. As argued by some respondents, the status quo is not sustainable in the long run, especially having same sets of beneficiaries for many years with increasing numbers. This highlights an increasing **important to invest in the developmental aspects of the programme, where a set number of people can exit the programme consistently each year when their circumstances have improved.**

4.5 Level of implementation of Development /capacity development component of the programme is quite low across provinces.

Developmental aspect of the programme is not really being implemented in most CNDCs to the scale and extent expected. The programme design expected that the gathering of beneficiaries at CNDCs is a good opportunity to implement some targeted training programs to improve the skills and be linked to job opportunities. In the provinces where this question was posed, at least more than half of beneficiaries indicated not being capacitated in each of the 5 provinces as per the results in Figure 26.



In North West province, at least 53% responded receiving some form of training, and in Mpumalanga the number is also close to half (43.5%) and the least being in the Western Cape where only 3% responded affirmative to receiving some form of training.

Overall, the average number of people who receive some form of training or capacity building is far less than those who do not received any form of training. It is encouraging however that most respondents (at least 75%) indicate high level of willingness among beneficiaries to be capacitated to earn their own livelihood (figure 27).

This can be seen as a good foundation and an indication of the likelihood of success if developmental initiatives when implemented, and ultimate sustainability of the programme.

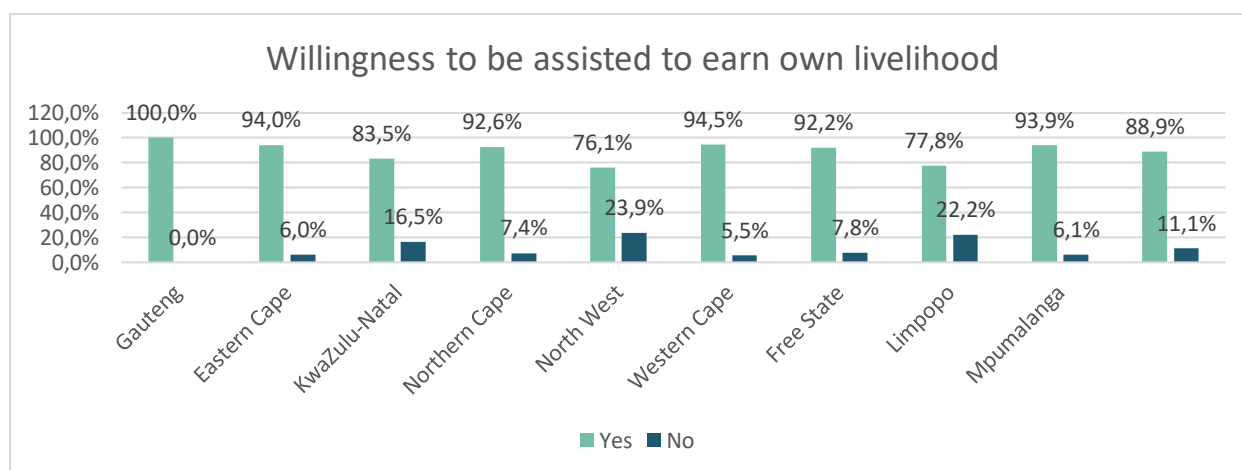


Figure 27 percentage of beneficiaries who are willing to be capacitated to earn their own livelihood.

4.6 KEY LESSONS FROM PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

4.6.1 What are the key success factors presented by PDC's and CNDC's in delivering the programmes that can be deemed as best practices.

- I. The programme is noted to be in operation for these years due to several factors in addition to the share demand or continued prevalence of the issue of food insecurity in the country which perpetuates the need to keep it going. It is highlighted that on one level, the success should lead to a reduction in food security. However, in this case, we look at factors that make it possible for government or the department to be able to continue to provide food relief to those in need since the inception of the programme. These include but not limited to: (i) supportive instructional arrangements (ii) Regular visits and oversight. (iii) Community ownership and local knowledge by street level managers to attend to needs of the local people (iii) the continuous capacity building of programme staff at CNDCs and (iv) the consistent dedicated allocation of human resources to run the programme at various levels.

4.7 Key Challenges in programme implementation

Despite the successful operations over the years, some key challenges are also reported during the interviews with various stakeholders, which hamper the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme delivery.

- I. **Variance/Deviation from design in implementation across provinces in that the NPO advantage intention in the initial programme design is no longer working after the opening of the programme to general tender which now attracts profit-oriented service providers rather than philanthropic based ones.** Unlike profit-oriented service providers, it is also argued that Implementing Agents (NPOs) have the advantage of sourcing additional funding for the programme or source food donations, but this was not happening. The food donation aspect of the programme, an envisaged in its design, almost completely neglected.
- II. **The actual sitting in a restaurant format is not happening in all provinces and CNDCs post Covid-19 as provinces try to re-adjust.**
- III. **There is however good level of compliance with administrative processes Kitchen area.** Other aspects, such as keeping of attendance registers, and

menus display were observed in most CNDs visited during the data collection. Handwashing facilities are provided in some CNDs but not in others.

- IV. Inadequate funding of the feeding component and almost no budget for the development components, leading to the non-implementation of developmental initiatives for beneficiaries.
- V. Beneficiaries are unable to graduate out of the programme voluntarily due to limited capacity, and lack of exit criteria.
- VI. The developmental aspect of the programme is not being implemented as much as it should.
- VII. It is also reported that the provincial version of the FNS Plan lacks a drive for improvement and commitment from other stakeholders, including budget commitment.
- VIII. Systemic Exclusion of households from active production of food, and economically viable activities, through the use of technology and monopoly.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions are arrived at based on the analysis of the data and review of the relevant information. Inputs received during the stakeholder engagement and feedback section were also taken into consideration. The conclusions are structured according to the Evaluation criteria or the evaluation questions.

5.6 Relevance and Appropriateness: *Is the programme design still in alignment to DSD and National Legislative mandates? Is the design likely to lead to the attainment of the intended objectives?*

5.6.1 Constitutional and legislative alignment of the programme

The evaluation concludes that the NHF&NSP is very relevant to the provision of safety net through interim or short-term feeding of the vulnerable population, as part of their constitutional right to food as per Section 27(1)(b). The emphasis on nutrition is also aligned to the constitutional rights of beneficiaries in terms of Section 28 (1) (c) that every child has the right to 'basic nutrition. Shelter. Basic health care services, and social services, and According to Section 35(2)(e).

5.6.2 Relevance of the programme in to DSD's legislative mandates

The programme objectives are thus in alignment with the national developmental agenda, as per the NDP Outcomes 2, 3 and 7 of eradicating hunger and creating employment. It is also aligned to the MTSF Priority Outcomes and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly, Goal 1, ending Hunger through food security and improving nutrition, Goal 2 dealing to ensure healthier lives in terms of principle 2

“no one left behind” where social development endeavours to cater for the segment of the population that seems not to be coping with economic hardships. However, without implementation, these will not be and are not being realised, therefore programme developmental component is deemed critical and needs to be strengthened.

5.6.3 The programme requires the coordination of relevant stakeholders, such as Department of Agriculture, Economic Development, Education, Home Affairs, and Health among others, to come together and integrate their services as recommended by the national plan. This will ensure a holistic solution to combating hunger and poverty and malnutrition in the long run while providing social safety net in the short term. The multisectoral approach of the programme design is appropriate in ensuring this integration and maintaining the interconnectedness of services offered by various sector departments.

5.6.4 Conclusion on programme classification in terms of the PMFA: (Circular 21 Impacts): The introduction of Circular 21, impacted the programme procurement processes, which further impacted on the fundamental design of the programme. The evaluation noted that as per the design, implementing agents were expected to be appointed to do the “running around” of procuring of food in bulk, sourcing additional funding, and be NPO based to be able to receive food donations for the programme. Provinces now fund and run the programme directly, and service providers are appointed through a PFMA tender processes to supply the food items to CNDs which has its own advantages and challenges, mainly relating to capacity, and the elimination of the non-profit component in the programme.

5.7 Effectiveness: *Have the intended programmes adequately addressed the food & nutrition problem in the ward/municipality/community that services are provided in?*

The programme currently uses different interventions to address the issues of food insecurity across the country and the various components are led by different sector departments. Some of these interventions include school feeding and ECD centres, CNDs and all other Centre-based feeding programmes, including old age homes. Cash based interventions include child support grants to parents, SRDs 350 and other social grants.

All these programmes contribute, to an extent, to cushioning of hunger and malnutrition for beneficiaries and should ideally be factored into the measuring of effectiveness of government programme in addressing food and nutrition security.

This evaluation however focussed mainly on the activities of CNDCs and outcomes thereof.

According to the GHS data published by StatsSA 2022, about 23.6% of the population (7332 200) is food insecure. There are about approximately 353 CNCS aimed to have a feeding capacity of 250 people per day, totalling a planned reach of a little above 88500. Through CNDCs the programme is able to create access to food for about 11% of the food insecure households there is still at least 6,7million unmet demand.

It is therefore concluded that, technically the programme is effective in providing access to food, but not adequate as the unmet need is still huge even with the 11% effectiveness. (This percentage could increase slightly if other programmed other than the CNDCs are added).

Furthermore, the issue of hunger and malnutrition still persists among the population as most of the beneficiaries are not able to exit the programme because their conditions have not improved. This is largely because the developmental aspect of the programme is not being implemented effectively in most CNDCS.

5.8 Efficiency: *Are all the institutional arrangements and the operational procedures at all the relevant spheres of government in place to implement the programme and plan?*

5.8.1 Institutional arrangements and coordination: the study observed that the coordination and oversight is happening efficiently at National sphere of government through the National Technical Working Group led by the DPME. There are attempts to cascade this structure to provincial spheres however, this is proving to be little difficult. Some provinces couldn't get all the sector departments to attend such meetings regularly. The office of the Premier in most provinces such as KZN, MP, and NC were seen active in coordinating the oversight role. Others are yet to make such commitments.

5.8.2 Conclusion on where the programme be located.

There is a consensus within both national and provincial respondents that the programme implementation or operations is best located at provincial sphere of government.

However, within provinces, there is not much clarity or uniformity on which sector department should lead the programme. It is observed that various components of

the programme lie with different sector departments. ECDs and School feeding reside in Department of education, CNDCs and Social Relief with DSD, Youth Employment is with Economic Development and COGTA, and Food production with Agriculture. While Office of the Premier is generally accepted across provinces to play the oversight role, some provinces argue that the programme is agriculturally based, while others think it belongs to social development.

This, to some extent, affects the coordination and integration of services as line departments do not seem to have the necessary influence on each other's budget decisions. Unless each stakeholder commits sufficiently to allocating or increasing their efforts (targets) and budgets as appropriate, progress is likely to remain slow.

5.8.3 *Is the programme designed in the most cost effective and efficient manner?*

The analysis of the data from provinces shows that currently, the programme is spending about R 220, 450 842 on feeding. Also, the data shows a disproportionate allocation of spending on program running more than actual buying of food. Apart from the Western Cape, which spent an average of 53% of the allocation on food and 47% on operating costs, all other 8 provinces spent an average of 44% of the allocation on food and 53% on operating costs. **On average, the operational cost of the programme is more than the actual feeding costs, which can be described as cost inefficient and** may require re-designed as discussed above to reallocate more funds to food acquisition.

5.8.4 *What is the most appropriate model for sourcing food and balancing bulk procurement with local sourcing? Is the model appropriate (double loop learning) to address the needs of food insecure households or does it need rethinking, especially in view of likely future needs?*

As, discussed in the various parts of the value for money section, the current CNDC model requires rethinking in order to ensure the funds allocated for alleviating food shortages and effectively reduce vulnerability. The use of implementing agents is noted for the ability to procure in bulk and also receive donated food (as NGOs) and sometimes they procure from local producers which ensures freshness of foods supplied, while supporting the local producers and local economy in general. In their absence, commercial procurement by profit oriented organisations from larger retail shops such as Pick and Pay, Spar ShopRite etc, due to lower prices is sometimes leading to exclusion of local producers. Worse off, is that the lower prices or discounts are not necessarily resulting in lower food costs, as these get consumed by profits margins.

The ideal is suggested to be a model that includes local producers in the supply chain. This will not only ensure fresh produce, but also stimulate the local economies of these producers, thereby capacitating them to absorb some of the unemployed in their communities.

5.9 Sustainability: *How many successful and sustained projects were developed by CNDCs beneficiaries since the beginning of the HFNSP?*

The data available could not be disaggregated to answer this question. In few CNDCs, examples of small-scale poultry farms were seen in MP, FS and parts of N C. Others also engage in vegetable gardening observed in NW, FS, and parts of EC. Few CNDCs also created linkages between the programme and the sustainable livelihood programme where beneficiaries are recruited to agricultural activities. The EPWP programme is also noted to be able to absorb few beneficiaries occasionally.

- 5.9.1** The current continuous feeding of the masses is through the programme is not viewed by stakeholders as sustainable approach, in that government is not able to provide enough resources for the continuous feeding of all potential beneficiaries in the short term. It is highlighted that developmental interventions take time to mature, or yield tangible results, but when they do, it will be much more sustainable result, as this will offer a way of beneficiaries to exit the programme as their economic conditions improve sustainably.
- 5.9.2** Without skills development, creation of employment activities, and without linking of beneficiaries to such economic activities, the number of people who need such continuous short term food assistance, will remain and even increase, and eventually become a long term situation. This is evident in the significant number of beneficiaries that have been on the programme continually for more than 5 years, others even more than 9 years.
- 5.9.3** A radical approach towards an exit strategy suggested to be introduced into the programme. A more sustainable solution is to invest in the developmental component of the programme, to ensure that in the long run, people will exit the programme. As it is now, as long as their economic condition does not change, and no effort is made to facilitate employment for beneficiaries, the problem may persist and possibly worsen.
- 5.9.4** Without the participation or the full functioning of the provincial level Technical Working Group (institutional structure) it will be difficult to put together the necessary resources and integrate the coordination of the activities of the programme.

5.10 (Lesson learnt) *What are the key lessons that DSD can draw from other food relief programmes?*

5.10.1 From the literature review, the cases of Brazil and China were considered and served as immutable examples. A strong element of leadership and accountability provided in those countries where each sector department is made accountable for their contribution to the holistic solution is considered a key factor of success in developing and implementing a solid programme.

5.10.2 Currently there is low level of commitment and proper coordination of the programme at Provincial Spheres in some provinces such as KZN, NC and EC. The study highlights importance of provincial departments commitment and adequate targeting and prioritisation with associated budgets.

5.10.3 To ensure participation of local communities in the long-term economic agenda, and to correct the systemic exclusion, communities /households level production of food is considered essential in addition to the capacitation thereof, to earn their own income to afford the foods sold on the shelves. This will be a backbone towards long-term sustainability of the HF&NSP.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the following recommendations are put forward towards improving various aspects of the HF&NS.

6.1 *Policy recommendations*

Based on the analysis of the data and conclusions drawn herein, the following recommendations are put forward towards improving various aspects of the programme.

6.1.1 Recommendations on handing Circular 21 impacts. There is currently consensus that the introduction of Circular 21 has changed the programme design. While some provinces support the use of the implementing agents, others do not, as they were noted to be contributing to the programme operation cost. It is also noted that the introduction of Circular 21 makes it uneasy for DSD to procure the right calibre of service providers especially those who are NGO based and non-profit oriented. The Tender process attracts the opposite who are profit oriented and therefore siphon most of the funds into operational aspects of the programme rather than into the feeding.

6.1.2 Though officials at national and provinces agree that there is a need to engage National treasury to find a solution to this policy change around Circular 21, there

is a need for DSD to first sit internally and decide on what the best approach is, to handling the impacts and then use the results to then engage national treasury.

- 6.1.3** It is suggested by some provincial officials that DSD officials should sit in the BID specification committee of supply chain, to make inputs into the bid specification for the types of service providers required. A decision needs to be made on this at national level and cascaded to provinces.

6.2 Recommendations on Relevance and Appropriateness

- 6.2.1** Programme is still relevant to the National Development Outcomes in terms of poverty reduction. There is need to significantly improve on the developmental aspect of the programme supported by budget allocations. The following suggestions are put forward:

- 6.2.2** A proportion of the budget should be ring-fenced for developmental component and made compulsory for all CNDs to implement and report on. It is also suggested that bidding organisations must demonstrate a component of developmental aspect and this component should be substantial in the selection process.

- 6.2.2.1** Alternatively additional budget should be provided for the developmental component of the programme and should be reported on quarterly by provinces.

- 6.2.3** There is need to increase efforts towards exiting people out of the CNDs or strengthen exit programmes where they exist.

- 6.2.4** DSD need to clearly specify what the exit criteria should be, whether based on length of dependence on the programme or income levels. This may create the awareness that the feeding is temporary measure and push people to find solutions as well, and thereby reducing the tendency to create dependency syndrome among programme beneficiaries.

6.3 Recommendations Towards improving Efficiency.

- 6.3.1 Strengthen coordination of activities**, to reduce silo-operation among line departments, as there could be some double dipping, where many people who are getting several grants still are benefiting from CNDs cooked meals.

- 6.3.2** A strong provincial TWG, with strong leadership, e.g. led by Office of the Premier as seen in the Case of Mpumalanga, Limpopo and others is needed to strengthen programme coordination at provincial level. Each province needs to form these structures and report on it, as per the Strategic goal 1 of the F&NS Plan.

- c) Each province must complete their provincial food and nutrition security plan and demonstrate a reasonable targeting and budgeting that will address the level of food insecurity in that province, progressively towards a target period.
- d) The provincial TWG should be formed to consist of all relevant sector departments, and the appropriate department selected to coordinate the oversight. Office of the premier (OTP) is suggested to play this oversight role, given the difficulty of sector departments in not having the necessary influence or authority to influence others to take the necessary actions.
- e) The targets of the provincial commitments to the PF&NSP should be reported on in the National Forums to ensure accountability and follow through.

6.3.3 Strengthen selection criteria to improve equity and proper targeting of individuals included in the CNDC.

6.3.4 There is a need to strengthen programme monitoring and data collection. The need to create a centralised database for real time data capturing and monitoring is emphasised. Provinces must assist with beneficiaries profiling to feed into a centralised database.

6.4 How can the programme be redesigned to ensure less money is spent on operational expenditure and more on food? Ratio of funds spent on operational cost must be reduced in favour of feeding.

The following courses of action might be beneficial in carrying out programme redesign.

- (d) Overall, the study suggests that there is a need for a participatory planning section to review the programme design to see if the current changes that are resulting, (such as from Circular 21) still make the operational model possible, and if not, put in the necessary corrective measures including points (b) and (c).
- (e) Cost benefit analysis of each cost of running programme should be established.
- (f) Detailed cost review of each program cost component with a view to identifying inefficiencies, identify functions that could be carried out at department level and eliminate duplications.

6.4.1 There is a need to do a budget split (line items). Programme budget should also include specific components towards the developmental interventions. NDSD should give a directive of the component of each budget which must be used, for developmental interventions, and this should be made a reporting item on which CNDCs, and Provinces should report on in their APPs.

Where possible, in order not to reduce the current budget for actual feeding, additional funding should be allocated by National Treasury/DSD//Provinces. It is

recommended that this directive should be documented in the FNS Plan and implementation plan.

- 6.4.2** There is the need to link the HF&NSP to the Sustainable Livelihood Programme, where beneficiaries are engaged in sustainable livelihood activities such as food production, communal farms, and other employment activities.
- 6.4.3** Stakeholders suggested that National DSD should consider bringing back or creating a regular feedback forum, say on quarterly basis, where each province will share their lessons and progress on the implementation of their FNS Plan/programme and share lessons on what is working and what is not. The accountability element is envisaged to force provinces to do more in terms of developmental interventions.
- 6.4.4** Though most provinces have introduced the Provincial FNS Plans, it is highlighted that these currently spell out the status quo. In order to increase the efforts towards meeting the unmet needs of food security in the short term and in the long term, there is a need for accelerated approach and higher commitments from sector departments, backed by appropriate budget commitment.
- 6.4.5** The programme currently does very little to address fundamental or broader environmental issues affecting communities such as effects of climate change and resilience mechanisms. This component is not included in the strategic objectives of the FNS Plan, and therefore not really considered at programme Level. This objective of addressing impacts of climate change and resilient building mechanisms (such as revitalisation of agriculture land/soil) should be included and included in major discussions and platforms.
- 6.4.6** Key stakeholders such as the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs should be included in the TWGs and should make inputs into how to build resilience for communities against natural disasters such as draught and floods as a basis of long terms sustainable food security.

7. APPENDIXES

7.1 References

7.2 Summary Definitions and terms

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7.2 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Summary: People accessing adequate safe and nutritious food that is acceptable to their holistic preferences all the time for active life

Household food security is the application of this concept at the community and household level, with individuals within households as the focus of concern.

Summary: Individual and households' abilities and capabilities to access food for improved quality of life and wellbeing

Food insecurity exists when people are undernourished as a result of the physical unavailability of food, their lack of social or economic access to adequate food, and/or inadequate food utilization. Food insecure people are those individuals whose food intake falls below their minimum calorie (energy) requirements, as well as those who exhibit physical symptoms caused by energy and nutrient deficiencies resulting from an inadequate or unbalanced diet or from the body's inability to use food effectively because of infection or disease.

Summary: A combination of inadequate or no food accessible from production or through purchase nor other means to be consumed and utilised to satisfy the basic nutritious diet for active and healthy life. The other focus could be on nutrient deficiency due to other myriad factors.

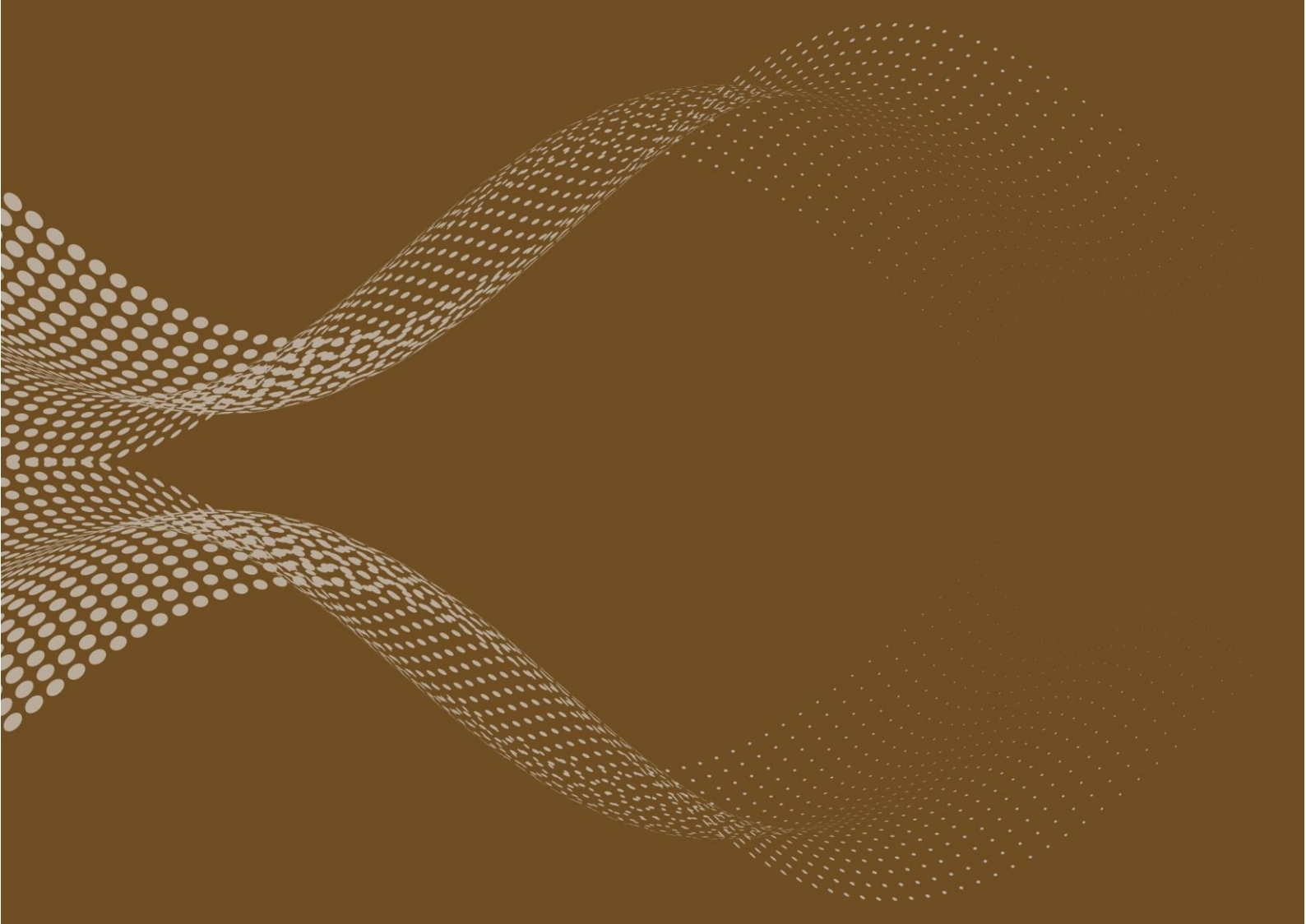
Nutrition security may be defined as a situation where all people at all times are able to utilise sufficient nutrients to live an active life. Food security is a necessary but not sufficient condition for nutrition security. This is because other factors, chiefly individual health, the levels of hygiene in the environment and the quality of care can interfere with the translation of food security into nutrition security (Marsland:2004).

Summary: Access to safe and nutritious food, preparation, consumption, and utilisation by the body

Food and nutrition security exists when all people at all times have physical, social, and economic access to food, which is consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, and is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care, allowing for a healthy and active life.

Summary: All people capable and have ability to acquire food in a dignified manner, prepare food to retain nutritional value, utilise acceptable, nutritious, and safe food all the time for an active and healthy life.

Vulnerability to food insecurity refers to the full range of factors that place people at risk of becoming food insecure. The degree of vulnerability of individuals, households or groups of people is determined by their exposure to risk factors, and their ability to cope with or withstand stressful situations.



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