

UNIT 3

Stakeholders and action for food security



Introduction

How do you react when you read a statement such as the one below?

“More money is spent on advertising processed foods and junk foods than on nutritious and healthy foods. Children are exposed to much of this advertising. About 80% of food commercials aired on a Saturday morning on TV shows for children are foods of low nutritional value, such as high sugar cereals and sweets. (Adapted from Media Awareness Network)”

Should there be a response to such statements? Who should take control? Do you, as an individual, have control over the situation? What policies and programmes are in action in South Africa to address household food security and other food matters?

Unit 3 is about who is doing what in the community and government structures to support food insecure households and promote food security. A number of questions are raised and discussed: What do we mean by vulnerability? How can you tell that a household is vulnerable? What strategies are most suitable to assist vulnerable households? Who are the stakeholders in the community? What actions and services do they offer? What food security government policies and programmes exist? How are you able to influence policy?

As you work through this unit and investigate these questions you will become aware that strategies and actions must be responsive to the degree of vulnerability and food insecurity of a household. You will get a good picture of the different intervention strategies that are intended to address the issue of food insecurity and how you, as a household food security facilitator can become involved in making a difference.

Unit 3 sections

1. The link between vulnerability and food security
2. Strategies to address food insecurity
3. Policy in action for food security

Take Action



This section gives you detailed information about the portfolio activities that are linked to Module 1. They focus on the actions with households and are the main assessment activities.

Learning outcomes

The information in this table is like a good road map for your learning journey. It gives you a clear idea of what are expected to know and do at the end of Unit 3. The workbook, portfolio



and assignments are all assessment activities that are linked to the learning outcomes. By completing these activities you can show what level of knowledge and skill you have achieved.

The time estimate for doing the activities helps you to manage your study time. Some of you will take longer while others may need less time. You can keep a check on how long the activities actually take by filling in the time you spent.

Learning outcomes	Assessment activities	Actual time spent
	Workbook activities	
1. Explain how vulnerability relates to food security.	3.4 How vulnerable are households? (90 minutes)	
2. Evaluate critically various strategies to address food security.	3.11 Programmes that promote food security (40 minutes) 3.12 The pros and cons of strategies to address food security (60 minutes) Portfolio Activity 1.3 Venn diagram identifying stakeholders (1.5 to 3 hours)	
	Portfolio activities	
3. Establish the link between food security-related policy and actions.	The impact of policy on household food security (60 minutes) Interventions to address specific food security challenges (90 minutes)	
4. Establish contact with stakeholders in the community.	Portfolio Activity 1.4 Meeting with stakeholders who work in food security (4 hours) Logbook Reflection on the meeting with stakeholders (20 minutes) Portfolio Activity 1.5 Report of meeting with stakeholders (1.5 hours)	
	Assignment tasks	
5. Assignment 2	The work in Unit 3 will cover part of Assignment 2. You can find information on this assignment in Tutorial Letter 101. (3 hours)	



Key words

An important goal of this programme is introduce you to the concepts and words in the food security field. To assist you we present a list of key words that are introduced in each unit. The meanings of these words appear in a glossary at the end of the module.



strategy
vulnerability
shocks
risks

chronic food security
transitory food security
capacity building
stakeholders

policies
programmes
interventions

3.1 The link between vulnerability and food security

Food security is a very dynamic concept and is influenced by many different factors. People may be food secure today, but they may become food insecure tomorrow. Households that struggle to cope may be pushed into hunger when the price of food increases dramatically, when the main breadwinner loses her job or when there are natural disasters such as floods and droughts. The more food insecure a household is the more vulnerable it is to all kinds of threats that impact on food security.



Activity 3.1: Do this activity in your study guide

Food and nutrition related facts and figures

Here are some facts and figures that show how big the food security problem and challenge is in South Africa. Do you know that:

- An estimated 20% of South African households have inadequate or severely inadequate access to food? Food access problems are the most serious in Free State province where 33,5% of households have inadequate or severely inadequate food access; followed by KwaZulu-Natal (23,1%), Eastern Cape (21,4%) and Mpumalanga (21,5%). Limpopo (11,9%) and Western Cape (14,5%) have the least problems with food access.
(Statistics South Africa, 2010)
- About 18% of children in South Africa are stunted. Stunting is higher in rural formal areas (24, 5%), tribal areas (19, 5%) and in urban informal areas (18, 5%). Because of mono-cropping little green and yellow vegetables are grown.
- Underweight affects 9, 3% of children.
(Department of Health Food Consumption Survey, 2005)



- The majority of households in South Africa are dependent on incomes from salaries. Nationally, salaries (63,5%) and grants (43,7%) were received by the highest percentages of households. *(Statistics South Africa General Household Survey, 2009)*

Statistics are usually presented in the form of percentages and when we read them as such we do not necessarily get a full picture of how many people are involved. Now look at this statistic again using a different way of communicating it.

1 in 5 households or about 10 million people in South Africa have inadequate or severely inadequate access to food.

What is your reaction to this fact?

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Comments on Activity 3.1

Statistics that are accurately gathered, compiled and analysed enable policy and decision makers at national, provincial and local level to establish the severity of the food security problem and to plan suitable strategies to respond to the needs of those people who are most vulnerable.

The above statistics appear in a report, *Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment in South Africa, July 2010*. The report is based on a series of vulnerability assessments that were conducted in areas across the country. It recognizes that an assessment of 20% is significant and that the food security status of a large group of people is seriously under threat. A linked challenge is the fact that less than 20.7% of South Africans actually produce food whether for commercial or subsistence purposes. The report concludes that what is required are “*short and long term solutions as deliberate efforts to subsidize and sustain individuals*”.

3.1.1 What is vulnerability?

The word vulnerable can mean: under attack, threatened, defenceless, insecure or capable of being hurt. The term *vulnerability* is often used in food security assessments, policies and interventions. In this programme we will use the definition provided by Robert Chambers who says:

“*Vulnerability is defencelessness, insecurity and exposure to risk, shock and stress....and difficulty in coping with them.*’ (Chambers, 1989) ”



Chambers (1989) adds that vulnerability has two sides:

- It has an *external side* which consists of the risks, shocks and stress to which an individual or household is subjected or exposed.
- It also has an *internal side*, which amounts to defencelessness, in other words a lack of any means of coping with damaging loss.

Robert Chambers (1932-) is an academic and development practitioner who has, since the 1980s, been one of the leading advocates for putting the poor, destitute and marginalised at the centre of the processes of development policy. (Wikipedia)

When you examine the above definition you will notice that it refers specifically to shocks, stress and risks.

This extract from *Learning about livelihoods - Insights from Southern Africa* highlights the direct link between a household's level of access and use of resources and their ability to respond to external and internal threats.

People are vulnerable when they do not have the resources or defences to cope with change. When the range of livelihood options, assets and risk-reducing activities available to people is reduced, their vulnerability increases.

Households are not all equally vulnerable to the same shock or stress. Poorer households may be forced to sell important assets like cattle early on to cope with a shock. Better-off households are likely to have more resources to fall back on before they are forced to sell major assets. Households also respond to shocks by changing their activities. In general, shocks and stresses widen the gap between better-off and poorer households.

(Disaster Mitigation Programme for Sustainable Livelihoods at UCT www.egs.uct.ac.za/)

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SHOCKS, STRESS AND RISKS?

Here is a true story of households devastated by floods that swept through large tracts of land in Mozambique in 2000. Their story illustrates what happens when a natural disaster strikes vulnerable households. The extract is from a well-documented case study, *Dealing with natural hazards in Mozambique: the case of the 2000 floods (FAO)*



The impact of successive floods on the livelihoods of households in Mozambique

The 2000 events caused serious damage and disruption to crops with resulting food scarcities within two communities (Boca and Munamícuá). These two communities are in the District of Búzi in Mozambique. What made the situation worse is that these events came a few weeks before the harvesting, when there were high expectations of a good harvest after almost six months of food insecurity. In Búzi district the average annual crop production only lasts three to six months, with chronic food insecurity even during normal years (GOM, 2000). Compounding the food scarcity after the flooding was the absence of a second harvest. In the aftermath of the disaster, both communities faced serious food shortages, increasing the need for emergency assistance.



“Since 2000 we have been living in a state of growing hunger, with winds [cyclones] and floods destroying our crops before they have been harvested. We were hoping for a good harvest so that we could survive the drought. Hunger is high. The winds destroyed all the crops, especially maize and sorghum. The possibility of having something to eat is very limited, and we have to depend on donations or labour-for-food strategy. We have no time to increase the potential of our land. This has put us in a situation of permanent shame because we do not rest. We do not know what we have done to be punished like this. Our children leave school because when they come from school they do not find anything to eat at home; so they prefer to stay at home or move around the forest collecting wild fruit.”

These are the words of sixty-year-old woman in the community of Munamícu. They reflect how she saw the impact of the floods on the lives of people in the area. In a normal year the communities in this area have to deal with chronic food insecurity because their annual crop production only lasts three to six months. After the flooding, which came before the harvest, the people faced serious food shortages. What are shocks in the context of food security?

What are shocks?

Shocks are sudden events that impact on the livelihood security of people as you read in the story of the communities in Boca and Munamícu, Mozambique. Examples of shocks include:

- Floods
- Political violence and instability
- Theft
- A fire that destroys grazing and crops
- Outbreaks of infectious diseases, such as foot-and-mouth, which affect cattle, sheep, pigs and goats
- The untimely death, illness or accident of an economically active household member.

The flood that swept away the harvest in the Boca and Munamícu areas had a long lasting effect on the daily lives of people. Read what happened.



How the flood disrupted the lives of people

As well as the very serious food insecurity there were high levels of housing destruction, displacement of flood-affected households and, in some areas, increased health risks due to the emergence of water-borne diseases. Disease outbreaks were associated with the spreading of waste by floodwaters, the disruption of safe water supplies and the persistence of water in low-lying areas creating breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Compounding health risks was the disruption of what little in the way of health services had been available in the district. The implications were that household recovery rates were reduced substantially, with increasing water-borne diseases, malnutrition and limited access to health services all impacting negatively on household resilience.



This story shows how a sudden event like a flood can result in more long-term stress conditions for people that make it very difficult for them to make a living and plunge them into chronic food insecurity. It is not only a natural disaster like a flood or drought that compromises the household's ability to be food secure. Political strife and unrest, the severe illness or death of a breadwinner in the household and violence in the household all contribute to chronic food insecurity.

What is stress?

Stress is a long-term set of circumstances that impacts negatively on livelihoods. Examples of external stress are poor transport and communication systems, inadequate public services, inferior education and health systems, a steady decline in the quantity and quality of natural resources, national or regional economic decline and climate change. Some stresses are internal and come directly from within the household, such as alcoholism, violent and disruptive behaviour, or the illness of a household member.



Living with the risks of flooding

As Blaikie et al. (1994) point out, people facing cyclical flood hazards live in a situation of permanent vulnerability; the disruption to assets and livelihoods by one event often makes households yet more vulnerable to future flood hazards. In Búzi district after each flood, the same families tend to lose their homes, possessions and means of livelihood, increasing their vulnerability to the next disaster event (Few, 2003). This is because local communities insist on living in the lower areas close to the river, where good soils and water conditions are made available for crops production and livestock farming. They move to safe places when a disaster (especially floods) comes, but once the threat passes the tendency is to return back. In these areas homesteads and their fields were both at risk from the river.

The chances of the flood happening again are very high because the communities live in a low-lying area close to a river. During the rainy season the river swells and floods the area. The people live with the risk of recurring floods.

What are risks?

Risks indicate the *likelihood* that negative events, such as the examples under the headings *Shocks* and *Stress*, will take place (De Sagte, 2002).





Activity 3.2: Do this activity in your study guide

How did the flood affect the lives of people?

Draw on the three parts of the case study to answer these questions.

1. What was the immediate impact of the floods on the households?

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2. What were the long-term effects of the floods on households?

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3. Do households in your community have to cope with floods?

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4. What other natural disasters happen in your area?

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5. Do you know any organizations or stakeholders in your community that provide support for households during natural disasters?

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Comments on Activity 3.2

The immediate result of the floods was the destruction of the crops, houses and community infrastructure. This meant that people suffered food shortages and were displaced from their homes within hours of the floodwaters washing away their resources. In the days and weeks



following the flood, disease outbreaks occurred. These were caused by unsafe drinking water, waste spread by the water and mosquitoes. The households now faced malnutrition and water-borne diseases but had limited access to health services. The households' ability to recover from this hazardous situation is very low. Without external help it is doubtful that they will be able to be food secure in the short and long term.

Shocks and stress such as natural disasters, political conflict and strife, alcoholism and abuse, severe illness and death can have severe consequences for households. How seriously the shocks and stresses affect households and their ability to recover depends on these factors:

- The scale, severity and duration of the shock.
- Opportunities to replace a loss of income.
- The normal household food security status and livelihoods strategies.
- The decisions and choices that a household makes.
- The degree of dependency on the market and on businesses.

HOW VULNERABLE ARE HOUSEHOLDS?

Some people say that households have limited or no control over certain shocks and stresses. Other people disagree with this view and believe that this makes people seem powerless. They say people do have control because they can prepare for and react to the events that contribute to vulnerability. For example, if the people living in the Boca and Munamícuá communities know why and when the floods happen, they can be prepared and plan for this inevitable event. Which view do you support?



Coping with severe weather conditions

Using their traditional knowledge, people knew the period of the year when floods, cyclones and droughts occur and what places are most at risk. In response, households have developed a number of strategies to reduce flood impact. For example, a man about 50 years old explained as follows: "By the tenth month we start to improve our houses, putting stones on the roof to avoid our houses being destroyed by strong winds, because we know that the rainy season is coming."

Rural communities have a traditional mechanism for predicting natural hazards through the interpretation of natural signs such as the movement of birds, the appearance of insects or the position of the new moon.

However, the uncharacteristic nature of the 2000 event marked a change in the perception of natural hazards by the two communities. It also marked changes in terms of community organisation and mechanisms for local institutional coordination.

A man of about 47 years said that since 2000 he has received early warnings from the traditional authorities but, because cyclones usually start at night when people are sleeping, all the preventive measures become useless.



A widowed woman of about 44 years from Boca explained that sometimes she receives information that a cyclone is coming, but sometimes it is when the cyclone it is already blowing in the area. "I don't do anything to minimise the event; I just wait for miraculous help from God," she said.

A man of about 50 years from Boca said, "Sometimes the régulo warns that a cyclone is coming but they are not sure exactly when. We stay at home with some food provided, but we end up finishing the food because no cyclone happens. The consequence is that when it comes at last we have to face the danger of looking for food in rain and strong winds."



Activity 3.3: Do this activity in your study guide

Minimizing the risk of becoming food insecure

1. Did the communities have any control over avoiding becoming food insecure during the severe flood of 2000? Give reasons for your answer.

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2. How can households in flood prone areas reduce the risk of food insecurity during times of flooding?

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3. What do households in your area do to cope with floods or other natural disasters?

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Comments on Activity 3.3

The floods in 2000 were much more severe than in previous years and the people living in the area could not have predicted the devastation that would occur. The timing of the flood was a factor that increased their food insecurity. People did not have time to harvest their crops. Not only did the floodwaters wash away their crops but also any food they might have stored.

To cope with similar events in future households could build more secure homes in high lying areas and store food that does not perish during the rainy season. The community could work together to establish links with organizations that provide food in the event of disaster flooding.

The case study shows that a crisis situation such as a severe flood can be quite complex. People learn to cope but when their ability to cope is severely diminished they need external help.

What are coping strategies?

In any crisis situation communities and households, poor or less poor, will develop short-term responses, known as coping strategies, in order to reduce the risks to their lives and livelihoods.



As evident from the above case study people who live in flood prone areas learn to take actions to protect themselves, e.g. they move to higher ground, store food and strengthen their houses. A traditional household copes with drought in different ways: they sell livestock, stop planting crops that depend on a lot of water, plant drought-resistant crops and indigenous crops. People in informal settlements cope with the lack of space for gardens by planting vegetables in used motorcar tyres, or wooden boxes.

Figure 3.1 Bag-gardening for growing vegetables



Here are some coping strategies that households use in countries in the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region to reduce their vulnerability to food insecurity.

Switch expenditure

Food insecure households divert expenditure from other items or commodities in order to buy staple food such as maize. Some of the households for example, are not spending on health, clothing or school fees in order to buy maize and other cereals for food. In some cases food insecure households are forced to buy cheaper, poor quality food just to ensure that their households have adequate food. In some countries like Namibia, there are also increased levels of cash borrowing and in-kind food credit.

Casual labour

Some of the affected households have intensified casual labour in order to find food or money to buy food. One disadvantage of this is that it is sometimes done at the expense of important activities such as farming in their own gardens. This pushes these households into a vicious cycle of poverty and food insecurity.

Sale of assets

All countries in SADC reported an increased sale of household assets such as livestock and other household items by the affected households in order to buy food. In Namibia for example, food insecure households are selling their livestock at cheaper prices due to the increased number of people selling livestock while others are bartering their livestock for staple food and other basic needs. Increased sale of household assets is likely to reduce the households' ability to withstand future shocks and hazards.

Rural to urban migration

Many countries reported an increase in rural to urban migration especially by men and young women in search of employment. At regional level there is also migration into South Africa in search of employment opportunities.

Reduction in number of meals

During the lean period and based on past experiences from different Member States findings, the situation if not controlled through appropriate intervention may lead to some households resorting to reducing the number of meals taken per day from three times to two times or even one meal per day. In some instances households may forgo regular meals and start eating less preferred foods such as wild plants and fruits.

Increased in reliance on social support programmes and networks

In some Member States, a number of households are relying on social support in terms of cash transfers, humanitarian food support, public works programmes and school feeding. Countries such as Botswana, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Tanzania are implementing input subsidy programmes that are targeting some poor groups of people to allow them to access subsidized farm inputs such as seed and fertilizer. A number of households are also relying on remittances from relatives working in urban centres and other countries.

(Report, State of Vulnerability to Food Insecurity and Poverty in the Southern African Development Community (SADC, April 2010 to March 2011, prepared by SADC Regional Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis Programme, August 2011)



What is the resilience of a household or community?

Resilience is defined as *the ability of the community to keep within a certain level of well being (e.g. food security) by withstanding shocks and stress, depending on the options available to the community for making a living and its ability to handle risks.*

Households show resilience in the following ways:

- Reduce vulnerability to floods by building their houses in high lying areas, using stronger building materials, planting bamboo around their houses to protect them from the wind, establishing an early flood warning system in the community, establishing evacuation and food emergency measures.
- Reduce vulnerability to drought by introducing drought-tolerant varieties of crops, improving soil and water management, or introducing crop insurance schemes.
- Reduce dependence on money from salaries by maintaining a vegetable garden, having small livestock such as chickens and goats, establishing a community market where households can exchange food products.

How vulnerable are households?

Shocks and stress influence households differently. What is the household's degree of vulnerability? How resilient are they? What is their level of coping? Only when we understand the influence of shocks and risks on the food security and the livelihood strategies of households will it be possible to empower households to deal with them.

We have to consider three key components when identifying the household's degree of vulnerability and their ability to cope with shocks and stress:

- What resources do they have (assets)?
- What do they do (activities)?
- What skills do they have (capabilities)?

Figure 3.2 gives a visual summary of these three components.

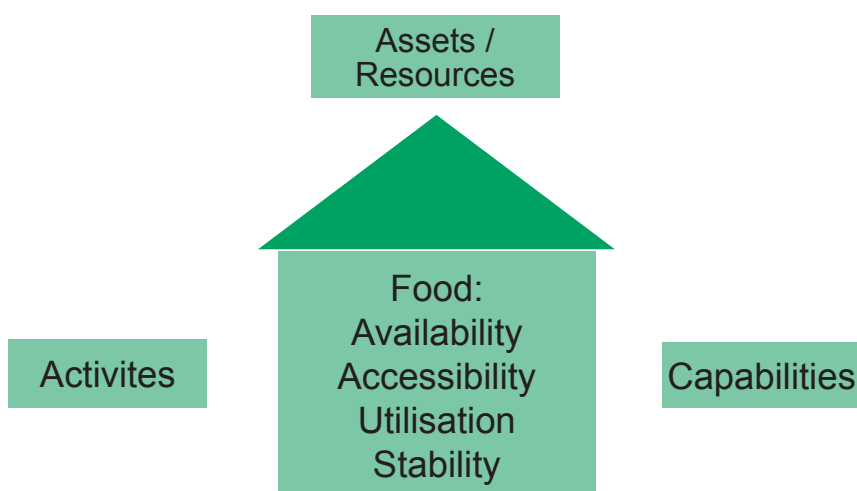


Figure 3.2 Household livelihood assets, activities and capabilities

(Adapted from De Sagte, 2002)



It is very important to gather and analyze accurate information about these three components to determine the possible impact of shocks and stress on a household. Such an analysis makes it possible to consider two main intervention options:

- Reduce the degree to which the household or community is exposed to the shock or stress.
- Increase the ability of the household or the community to cope.

In Module 2 you will learn about simple vulnerability assessment tools that you and the households can use to identify their degree of vulnerability. For now it is important that you understand the concept of vulnerability and how you can recognize the signs of vulnerability in households.



How vulnerable are these households to food insecurity?



Household A: Peace

Household composition

- The household head is a single female parent with Grade 10.
- There is also a grandmother or “gogo”.
- The grandmother has had no schooling.
- Peace has three sisters, one being a baby.

Food consumption strategies

- They eat maize as staple food.
- They eat yellow and green vegetables on a daily basis.
- The baby receives a baby food parcel and supplements.
- They exchange food with neighbours for variety.
- They eat dry fruit and vegetables and store different kinds of food.

Livelihood strategies

- The grandmother has a vegetable garden and the children help her.
- The mother has a piece-job and uses a taxi or walks.
- The mother sells extra food.
- They own four goats and often exchange a young goat (kid goat) for an adult goat.
- They regularly visit the clinic.
- The mother is a member of the Mothers’ Care Group at church and in the community.
- All the children of school-going age attend school.
- They use the communal tap for water.





Household B: Dikgang

Household composition

- The father who is the household head.
- The father has Grade 10 and is a trained driver.
- The mother has Grade 2, was a girl-child bride and was forced into marriage.
- She is depressed and always complains that she is tired, the neighbours say she is lazy.
- Dikgang has two brothers and three sisters, but only the two boys, who are older than Dikgang are at school. The children are often sick.
- The two cousins whose parents have died of HIV/AIDS.

Food consumption strategies

- Maize porridge or bread once a day with tea.
- Sometimes relish from cabbage or other leafy vegetables.
- A meaty relish once during the weekend.
- They sometimes buy on credit from the general dealer.
- They often go to bed hungry.

Livelihood strategies

- The father and mother do not have permanent jobs, but work on a contract basis.
- The two cousins are unemployed youths that wander around the village and play games for money.
- The fields belonging to the household are no longer ploughed.
- They own three cows, but no goats.



Household C: Lesedi

Household composition

- The father who is the household head.
- The father has Grade 12.
- The father received training at college and dropped out.
- The mother has Grade 9.
- Lesedi has two brothers and a sister.

Food consumption strategies

- They eat large portions during mealtimes.
- They eat meat two or three times a week.
- They eat green and yellow vegetables once or twice a week.
- They eat bread as a staple food.
- They regularly eat biscuits, sweets, cold drinks and ice-cream.

Livelihood strategies

- The father owns a general dealer business in the community.
- He sells on credit to the community, so they owe him money.
- The father bought a small truck on credit.
- The father will use his truck to provide transport services in the community, but his transport service is very expensive.





Household D: Thabang

Household composition

- The father is the household head.
- The father has Grade 8.
- The mother has Grade 4.
- Thabang and his sister are the only children.
- Both children attend the farm school.
- Thabang and his sister are slow learners.

Food consumption strategies

- Maize porridge with tea every day.
- The household receives two meals a day, sometimes with a little relish.
- They sometimes receive vegetables from the farm, but this does not include yellow or green vegetables.

Livelihood strategies

- The father works on a local farm for a small salary.
- They receive a large bag of maize meal from the farmer every month.
- The mother does piece jobs on the farm.
- Thabang sometimes helps in the garden, but often feels too tired to do so.
- The mother receives a small irregular stipend and some vegetables.



Household E: Sarah

Household composition

- A female head of household with Grade 10.
- She has four children of her own, of whom three are in school.
- Sarah is a niece who is an orphan. She tends to baby Siphso and so is not attending school.

Food consumption strategies

- Maize porridge or bread once a day with tea.
- The school going children receive meals at school that consist of dried beans and sometimes fruit.
- Sarah does not go to school and receives smaller portions than the other children.
- During the day Sarah shares her food with the baby.

Livelihood strategies

- The mother is working two days a week as a helper in the city.
- Transport is expensive.
- She receives social grants for the four children and for Sarah.
- Sarah, the orphan, does the household chores and looks after the baby.
- They do not own animals.
- They tried making a garden but found the water to be too expensive.
- The other girls are too lazy to help water the garden.





Workbook Activity 3.4: Do this activity in your workbook

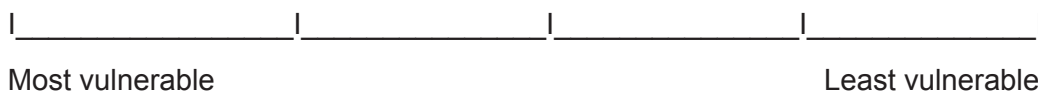
How vulnerable are households?

Read the information about each household in the case study above and answer these questions.

1. Extract from the case study the information to complete this table in your workbook.

Households	What resources do they have? (Assets)	What do they do to make a living? (Activities)	What skills do they cope? (Capabilities)
A Peace			
B Dikgang			
C Thabang			
D Lesedi			
E Sarah			

2. Which one of the five households is the most vulnerable? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Which one of the five households is the least vulnerable? Give reasons for your answer.
4. Rank the five households in order of their vulnerability from the most vulnerable to the least vulnerable. Fill in the households A, B, C, D and E on the continuum below.



Comments on Activity 3.4

The main purpose of this activity was to raise your awareness of the signs of vulnerability in households. You probably found that Dikgang's household (B) is the most vulnerable and Peace's household (A) is the least vulnerable. Despite the simple ranking that you did, more specific information is needed in order to assess accurately the vulnerability of a household.



You are now aware that vulnerability leads to various degrees of food insecurity. There are important differences in the duration and severity of food insecurity and how this impact's on people's lives.

3.1.2 What is the duration of food insecurity?

Not all households or communities suffer food insecurity for the same period of time. This may vary from a short-term experience to a long-term condition.

CHRONIC AND TRANSITORY FOOD INSECURITY

Food security analysts and researchers have found it helpful to define two general types of food insecurity: *Chronic food insecurity and transitory food insecurity*. The table below shows what each means and how they differ.

	Chronic food insecurity	Transitory food insecurity
is.....	long-term or persistent.	short-term and temporary.
happens when...	people are unable to meet their minimum food requirements over a sustained period of time.	there is a sudden drop in the ability to produce or access enough food to maintain a good nutritional status.
results from....	extended periods of poverty, lack of assets and inadequate access to productive or financial resources.	short-term shocks and fluctuations in food availability and food access, including year-to-year variations in domestic food production, food prices and household incomes.
can be overcome with....	typical long term development measures also used to address poverty, such as education or access to productive resources, such as credit.	short term measures. It is relatively unpredictable and can emerge suddenly. This unpredictability makes planning and programming more difficult and requires different capacities and types of intervention including early warning capacity and safety net programmes.

Table 3.1 Chronic and transitory food insecurity

(Adapted from the FAO, 2008)

SEASONAL FOOD INSECURITY

A third type of food insecurity falls between chronic and transitory food insecurity and is known as seasonal food insecurity. It is similar to chronic food insecurity as it is usually predictable and follows a cyclical pattern of inadequate availability and access to food. The seasonal food insecurity is associated with seasonal fluctuations in the climate, cropping patterns, work opportunities and the prevalence of diseases.

Food shortages could occur in the pre-harvest period, when stocks on farms are used up and other resources of food, such as wild foods, are not available. In rural communities seasonal food insecurity is commonly referred to as “hungry gaps or periods”. Times when food is in



abundance are referred to as “periods of plenty”. They are linked to the agricultural calendar or cyclical availability of employment.



Activity 3.5: Do this activity in your study guide

Chronic, transitory and seasonal food insecurity

Test how well you understand the terms chronic, transitory and seasonal food insecurity. Read the descriptions in the table below and decide whether it refers to chronic, transitory or seasonal food insecurity. Simply write the correct word in the column next to each description.

	Descriptions of chronic, transitory and seasonal food insecurity	Refers to which kind of food insecurity?
1	“Occurs when there is a temporary inability to meet food needs, which is usually associated with a specific shock or stress such as drought, floods or civil unrest”	
2	“During harvest season part-time employment provides an income to farm families to enable them to buy more food.	
3	“A persistent inability to meet minimum nutrient intake requirements.”	
4	“The sudden reduction of a community’s access to food to below the nutritiously adequate level.”	
5	“Food shortages occur in the pre-harvest period every year.”	
6	“When a community is unable to meet the food requirements of its members over a long period of time.”	
7	“A consequence of persistently inadequate diets in terms of quantity and/or quality of food resulting from community poverty”.	
8	“Affects communities that are able to meet their minimum food needs at normal times, but are unable to do so after a shock.”	

(Adapted from the FAO, 2008)

Answers are given later in the Unit as a footnote.





Comments on Activity 3.5

Compare your answers with those at the bottom of the page.¹ Did you notice that seasonal insecurity is linked mainly to agricultural activities that occur at specific times of the year? As seasonal food insecurity is predictable, households should be able to prepare for such food insecure times. Transitory food insecurity is usually not permanent and can follow sudden events such as floods or drought or the loss of income when someone loses a job. When the food insecure situation continues after transitory or seasonal food shortages, then a chronic food insecurity situation can arise.

Why it is important to recognize the duration of food insecurity

The duration of food insecurity is an important factor to consider when assessing food security. It influences food policies and the nature of programmes, strategies and interventions. You will find out more about food policies and programmes in the last part of this Unit.

3.1.3 What is the severity of food insecurity?

Most households have times when they have access to enough food, when they have just enough food, when they have little food and when they have very little food or sometimes no food at all. In Unit 1 you learned that food security is not a stable concept but that it is changeable and dependent on a number of external and internal conditions. How can you tell how severe the level of food insecurity is in a household over a period of time? Food security researchers have come up with different criteria or measures that show how severe food insecurity is. They use two main approaches to determine the severity of food insecurity in households, communities, areas, and countries.

They look at:

- Levels of food intake
- A range of livelihood aspects.

SEVERITY OF FOOD INSECURITY ACCORDING TO FOOD INTAKE LEVELS

The first measure relates the severity of food insecurity to the amount of food people eat and the energy it provides. The **energy value** of food is measured in kilocalories (kcal) per day. Usually adults need 2,100 kcal per day to provide them with enough energy from the food consumed. Any intake of less than 2,100 kcal per day makes a person vulnerable to food insecurity.



People are grouped according to the **energy value** of the food they eat. According to this measure people can fall into one of four groups:

¹ Answers to Activity 3.5

1. Transitory 2. Seasonal 3. Chronic 4. Transitory 5. Seasonal 6. Chronic 7. Chronic 8. Transitory



- Food secure
- Mildly food insecure
- Moderately food insecure and
- Severely food insecure.

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO, 2008) uses the measure of *undernourishment* to group people. This measurement relates food insecurity to **hunger**. **If the pre-determined energy value for adults is 2,100 kcal per day, then people who get less than 2,100 kcal per day do not get enough energy from the food they consume, and they are considered *undernourished*.**



SEVERITY OF FOOD INSECURITY ACCORDING TO LIVELIHOODS ASPECTS

Another approach to determine the severity of food insecurity is to link it to livelihoods aspects. Do you still remember what they are? You discovered in Unit 2 that livelihoods refers to people, their capabilities, their assets, their income and the activities needed to sustain a means of making a living, including ways of obtaining food.

The *Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC)* is an example of an assessment approach that describes the nature and severity of food security situations. This classification system creates a common language to describe food insecure households and is broadly accepted by a wide range of stakeholders in countries across the world. It is based on nutrition livelihood measurements of assets, food and resource access, and strategies. The IPC includes five levels of food security (called 'phases'):

- Generally food secure
- Chronically food insecure
- Acute Food and livelihood crisis
- Humanitarian emergency, and
- Famine/humanitarian catastrophe

These measures are used to classify food insecure households, as you can see in Table 3.2 below.

IPC phases	Indicators
Generally food secure	The death (mortality) rate is low
Chronically food insecure	Malnutrition is always present in most children
Acute food and livelihood crisis	Low availability of food and food access
Humanitarian emergency	Usually only staple food available Limited clean water is available
Famine/humanitarian catastrophe	Food coping strategies become ineffective Loss of livelihood assets Selling livelihood assets

Table 3.2 Integrated Phase Classification for food security (Adapted from the FAO, 2008)



Look at our completed food security model (Figure 2.19) in Unit 2. Do you notice that the IPC phases are included in our model?

The term *acute food insecurity* is used to describe a severe and life threatening situation. The most extreme situations are usually associated with substantial loss of life and will warrant the description of *famine*.



Activity 3.6: Do this activity in your study guide

Read and interpret a text about vulnerability and food security

Read this text and answer the questions that follow. The text is an extract from a report on a comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis in Angola. The report reflects the findings of a survey conducted in Angola in 2005.

Most households (78%) have suffered from at least one shock (drought, locust, etc.) during the 12 months prior to the survey, while 44% suffered from two shocks 30% suffered from three or more shocks. Livelihoods are highly dependent on agriculture and livestock, and therefore lack of seeds, crop infestation and death of animals are the primary production related risks encountered by the population. Crop infestation and death of animals have a direct and severe impact on households' ability to meet their food requirements. Other risks such as the death of a productive household member, fluctuation in food prices, and sudden adverse weather causing drought or flooding also can negatively impact household food security.

The three most common shocks are lack of seeds due to market fluctuation (mentioned by 34% of households), drought (29%) and illness or death of a household member is 31%. Most other risks are related to the productive cycle: death of animals (15%) and crop infestations are 10%. External factors such as increase of food commodity prices negatively affected 12% of the sample households, while the end of food aid (6%) and decreasing prices for selling agricultural products (5%) were also reported by some of the households.

(From: Angola: Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA))

Questions

1. What shocks do households have to cope with?

.....
.....

2. How do most households make a living?

.....
.....



3. Is the statement below true? Give reasons for your answer.
High food prices are the biggest threat to the households' food security.

.....

.....



Comments on Activity 3.6

Compare your answers with these:

1. *The biggest shocks that households have to cope with are linked to their ability to make a living from agricultural activities: lack of seeds to plant crops, weather conditions such as drought, and illness or death of a household member which impacts on their capacity to farm.*
2. *Most households grow crops and farm with livestock.*
3. *This statement is false. Crop infestation and the death of animals severely threaten the households' food security.*

This is the end of the section on vulnerability and food security. The main purpose was to help you understand why households become vulnerable and how their vulnerability impacts on their food security. You will realize now how important it is to assess accurately the degree of vulnerability of a household to ensure that any actions and strategies focus on the most relevant needs. You will learn to use simple assessment tools in Module 2.

3.2 Strategies to address food insecurity

Most households have coping strategies to deal with times when food is scarce. What are some of the strategies that can be implemented to help households that suffer the effects of shocks and those that are chronically food insecure?

Over the years various stakeholders have used different kinds of strategies to respond to and address food insecurity. These strategies can broadly be divided into three main categories that focus on:

- short-term relief
- building household and community capacity strategies
- changing the system through improved policies.

What are stakeholders?

Stakeholders are people who are interested in, or affected by an issue, and who want to be involved in looking for solutions.

3.2.1 Short-term relief strategies

Strategies such as food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens and children's feeding programmes are meant to help people who are the most food insecure. These strategies provide short-term



relief for the immediate issue of hunger. However, they do not address the underlying causes of food security, such as inequity, inadequate income and social exclusion

FOOD BANKS

Have you heard of a food bank? What is it? Who is it for? Who runs it?



Food banks and food pantries help food insecure people

Free State MEC for Social Development in the Free State, Ouma Tsopo says that food banks aim to benefit orphaned and vulnerable children, as well as the elderly and individuals who are not receiving government financial assistance by means of benefits such as social grants and social relief programmes. Through the Social Relief of Distress, many people have been able to receive food parcels.

According to the department, the beneficiaries of the food banks include non-profit organisations operating as part of a church and government or community group. They operate food pantries in the communities. Whilst some food pantries serve only a few families each month, many others provide emergency food support to hundreds of families.

“A food bank is like the wholesale arm of the food distribution system for those living in poverty, while food pantries are the retail arm that serves people directly with the emergency food,” said the department. Food banks receive their food from companies or supermarkets that have excess stock, as well as by means of donations from businesses. They then distribute goods, including canned and boxed dry groceries, fresh produce, frozen foods, bakery products and some personal hygiene or household cleaning products to food pantries, soup kitchens and other related organisations providing support to the vulnerable in communities.

The department said the need for food banks and food pantry services has been growing in recent years, since people’s incomes have not kept up with rising costs. The department emphasised the importance of sustaining the project, noting that food banks must not be a once-off activity (Khumalo, 2008).



Figure 3.3 A household that benefits from a food bank and pantry

(<http://www.betterplace.org/projects/1514/pictures/57596>)



People who have to use food banks have a variety of experiences and stories to tell. A grandmother says that food banks are a great help, but that the food is often not enough and only lasts for a meal or two. A mother of four says that the food is not always nutritious and is often inedible, because it is damaged in some way. Most people are very embarrassed about having to go to a food bank. They try to hide it from their children. Although volunteers working in the food banks mean well, they sometimes, quite unintentionally, add to the embarrassment of those who are obliged to receive food from food banks.



“ So for some of us who don't have enough to eat, we already know shame. Shame is so comfortable. It just fits like a jacket. So, you go somewhere and someone gives you a bit more, you take it. It fits. It feels normal. ”



Activity 3.7: Do this activity in your study guide

How helpful are food banks to address food insecurity?

Answer these questions based on the above case study.

1. Is a food bank the same as a food pantry?

.....
.....

2. Which organizations and structures are involved in food bank and food pantry activities?

.....
.....

3. Who should receive food from food banks?

.....
.....

4. Here is a critical view of food banks. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion? Give reasons for your answer.

Food banks encourage people to be dependent. By getting food free people get to rely on this food source and do not look for more sustainable ways of becoming food secure.

.....
.....



5. Do you know about food banks or someone who uses a food bank? What are their experiences?

.....
.....



Comments on Activity 3.7

A food bank is an organization that collects all types of food from producers, manufacturers, retailers, government agencies and other donors. The food is repackaged and stored in large warehouse from which it is distributed to food agencies and outlets such as food pantries, soup kitchens and children’s feeding programmes. Poor and vulnerable people can do directly to food pantries in their communities to receive free food and they can get hot meals from soup kitchens. Church organizations, community based organizations and NGO’s are involved in food pantry and food bank activities. For example Food Bank South Africa (FBSA) is an NGO that was established in 2009. It is South Africa’s leading food banking network and is a member of the Global Food Banking Network.

Food banks serve the poorest of the poor and provide a valuable support service to thousands of food insecure people. Without this service the most vulnerable people in our country would suffer from malnutrition, hunger and even starvation. But this strategy can only be a short-term solution. There is always a danger that people become dependent on food banks and soup kitchens and that they and communities stop finding other ways of making sure they have food for today and tomorrow. As a food security facilitator you can help households realize the importance of using different strategies of getting and using food to increase their ability to be food secure.



Figure 3.4 Schools link up as Lunch Buddies, and sandwiches are delivered to less privileged schools.
(<http://www.facebook.com/LunchBuddies>)



3.2.2 Household and community capacity-building strategies

Food security strategies to develop the skills of individuals can help to build their capacity to become self-reliant and food secure. Consider this example: If an individual like Thandi is involved in a community garden programme, she, and the other people involved, develop gardening skills and, in the process, learn about growing their own food. At the same time they are producing inexpensive food and contributing to improving their immediate environment.

What is capacity building?

Capacity building makes use of a range of interventions that build and strengthen the skills and commitment of people.

The underlying approach is to empower people and enable them to improve their own household resources and community structures. The overall aim of capacity building initiatives is to create sustainable food security in households and communities.

Strategies that build individual skills also build communities that can be self-reliant and sustainable. This happens because programmes such as the garden programme give people a chance to get together and develop social networks. By coming together, talking and learning about issues that affect food security, people become motivated and work together to address these issues.

Capacity building is most effective when people in the community are involved in finding solutions together. Participatory approaches are particularly well suited to involving the community in finding out what their problems are before looking for suitable solutions.

Capacity-building strategies include individual skills training and development and community development initiatives. The overall purpose of all capacity building interventions is to develop human, social and financial capabilities and assets.

GROUPS WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

People in a community can form groups that can take initiatives to respond to food security issues in their immediate environment. Read about one such group in the case study below.



The Kgora Basadi Group

A group of ladies in the east of Mamelodi belong to a skills-building group called 'Kgora Basadi' (Food Women). One of the tasks the group set itself was to investigate the food prices of different stores. To their surprise they found that the spaza shop nearest to them charged more for almost all food products than other stores that were further away, but still within walking distance. They wrote letters to the owner of the more expensive spaza shop to inform him of their investigation and to complain about his food prices. After further negotiations the owner of the spaza shop changed the pricing practices to be more in line with those of the other shops.





Activity 3.8: Do this activity in your study guide

Working together for change

Answer the following questions based on the Kgora Basadi case study above.

1. Complete this sentence:

The shop owner changed his prices because

.....

2. How do the members of Kgora Basadi benefit from belonging to the group?

.....

.....



Comments on Activity 3.8

The shop owner may have changed his prices because he realized that he would lose customers if his prices remain higher than his competitors. Belonging to a group such as the Kgora Basadi has many benefits: people break out of their isolation and can learn from one another; people can come up with many ideas on what to do and how to do it; the group provides support for members to carry out their respective tasks; the energy generated in the group can help to keep people focused, motivated and committed; people begin to feel a sense of power to do things that will change their situation.

Another example of a capacity-building strategy used by the *Kgora Basadi* is the system of food and recipe exchange activities. The women bring nutritious traditional vegetables to the meeting and exchange healthy, inexpensive recipes using traditional foods, as well as providing seeds for the home garden. They then arrange presentations to the women in their social networks. These types of activities encourage and build people’s capacity to grow and reintroduce traditional foods into their household diets.

Capacity is not built overnight. For the most part it is built gradually, and depends on:

- people who are committed and willing to become involved
- people with skills and knowledge related to the key issues
- support from organizations and businesses and leaders in the community
- availability of economic and financial resources.

As a facilitator you will be working with households in communities in a variety of ways. Do you regard yourself as committed, motivated and prepared to learn from the people in the



community? Are you ready to use the correct channels to work together with households towards positive change?

HOME-BASED COMMUNITY CARE GIVERS

The programme of home-based community caregivers (HCBC) is implemented by the Department of Social Development to enable people and communities affected by HIV and AIDS to access social development services.

The idea for home-based care is that vulnerable children and adults receive better support in their own communities. Programmes are developed and implemented with the community and community based organizations and the aim is to empower the community. Caregivers and volunteers come from the community and are trained to provide relevant services according to norms and standards developed by the Department of Social Development.

The document Norms and Standards for home-based caregivers has the following norms for the cluster 'sustainable livelihoods'.

Food security

- Qualifying families in need have access to one food parcel for three months whilst an alternative solution is arranged.
- Where meals are provided for qualifying families, provide at least one meal per day.
- Organizations to assist to establish one small vegetable garden.
- Record keeping of projects.

Income generation

One income-generation project is initiated and run within a period of three years of the Community Home-based Care Programme's existence.

(Department of Social Development (2008))



Activity 3.9: Do this activity in your study guide

Read and interpret norms and standards for home-based caregivers

Answer the questions based on the above extract from the Norms and Standard for home based caregivers.

1. What kind of short-term relief can households that qualify for support get from caregivers?

.....

.....

.....



2. What kind of capacity building project can households that qualify expect?

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. Why is it important to have norms and standards for home-based caregivers?

.....

.....

.....



Comments on Activity 3.9

Each qualifying household can expect to receive one meal a day and one food parcel for three months. The households are assisted to establish a small vegetable garden and they can expect to participate in an income-generating project.

Norms and standards are necessary to ensure that the services offered to households are of an acceptable standard. Norms and standard provide clear criteria against which the performance of caregivers can be measured.

Primary health care clinic services

Children who are examined and identified as undernourished (this includes children and adults who are HIV positive and with tuberculosis) are given food supplements including fortified maize meal and a high-energy drink. Health workers provide counselling, information and education about healthy diets and the healthiest ways of preparing food.



One goal of capacity building is to mobilize people in a community to use strategies to change policies and adopt systems that support the health and wellness of communities. What strategies will change the system and make it more responsive to the needs of food insecure people?



3.2.3 Strategies to change the system

High food prices are at present a daily topic of conversation and are a major concern to the poor and the hungry. Did you know that people living in rural areas pay higher prices for food than those who live in urban areas? Statistics show that in April 2010 people in rural areas paid R17.78 more for the same food basket than those in urban areas. (Statistics SA, 2010). It seems the poor are getting poorer. What can be done to change the system that continues to place food insecure people at a disadvantage?

It is obvious that short-term relief strategies like food parcels and food banks are temporary solutions. While these supplementary strategies are very important and much needed they do not address the underlying issues that perpetuate the cycle of food insecurity. The South African government has recognized the need to deal comprehensively with the food security challenges. In 2000 the Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) was launched.

The vision of the Integrated Food Security Strategy is to attain universal physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food by all South Africans at all times to meet their dietary and food preferences for an active and healthy life. This statement is also a definition of food security by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). Its goal is to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity over 2015. And its strategic objectives to realise this goal and the vision of the Integrated Food Security Strategy are to:

- Increase household food production and trading;
- Improve income generation and job creation opportunities;
- Improve nutrition and food safety;
- Increase safety nets and food emergency management systems;
- Improve analysis and information management systems;
- Provide capacity building;
- Hold stakeholder dialogue.

(Integrated Food Security Strategy for South Africa, July 2002)

This integrated strategy aims to change the system and make it part of the food security solution. How is the department giving expression to the vision of the Integrated Food Security Strategy? An article on the Internet shows how the Department of Agriculture responded to the sharp increases in food prices in 2002.

The sharp increase in food prices during 2002 is one of the most important issues facing the Department (of Agriculture), due to the impact it has had on the poor and on food security in the southern African region as a whole.

Government's response has centred on a package of relief measures to supplement the income of the poor, contain price pressures on basic foods, and strengthen the ability of the poor to grow their own food. These measures have helped to cushion the impact of inflation on vulnerable groups.

Social grants have been increased by an average of 15,2%, and the private sector has also responded through limited maize subsidies. Government's interventions were effected through the 2002/03 Adjusted Estimates, which set aside R400 million for targeted food relief to the most vulnerable. The funds will go mainly towards food parcel distribution on the domestic front (R230 million), and 100 000 tons of white maize for affected SADC countries (R170 million).



Government is also examining the feasibility of a longer-term food security programme to provide households with seeds and tools for subsistence agriculture. In addition, a Food Pricing Monitoring Committee has been established to monitor the prices of a basket of basic food items.
(South Africa Online – Agriculture)



Activity 3.10: Do this activity in your study guide

Government's response to the impact of food prices

Read the above extract and answer the following questions.

1. What did the department do to help food insecure households become less reliant on buying food?
.....
.....
2. What does this sentence mean? *'The private sector has also responded to limited maize subsidies.'* Select and tick the statement that gives the correct meaning.
 - (a) Companies that produce maize will produce more maize so that the price of maize is kept low.
 - (b) Companies that produce and sell maize will provide a partial financial grant to keep the price of maize affordable for poor households.
 - (c) Companies that produce and sell maize will provide poor households with financial assistance so that they can buy maize at current prices.
3. What does the Food Pricing Monitoring Committee do? Select from the options below. You may select more than one option.
 - (a) Get retailers to agree to set a low price for basic food items.
 - (b) Monitor the prices of a basket of 26 basic food items
 - (c) Investigate any sharp or unjust price increases.
 - (d) Establish a national food pricing monitoring database.
 - (e) Recommend food productivity improvements.
 - (f) Organize actions to bring down the price of basic foodstuffs.
4. Do you think households and communities must get involved to develop workable policies and strategies with regard to any food security related issues? Give reasons for your answer
.....
.....





Comments on Activity 3.10

The Department of Agriculture wants to encourage and strengthen the ability of food insecure households to grow their own food. This involves providing households with seeds and tools for subsistence farming and training them to farm effectively.

A food subsidy is a financial grant by government and in some cases the private sector to keep the price of basic foods such as maize affordable. Option (b) is correct.

The main role of the Food Pricing Monitoring Committee is to investigate, monitor, gather information, report and make recommendations to government about the food pricing strategies and practices by all those involved in the manufacture, distribution and sales of food. Options (a) and (f) are incorrect. The Committee does not have the power to engage directly with food producers and retailers (shops).

Households and communities must make their voices heard. Policies are meant to help make the lives of people better. If a food security policy or linked strategy does not work then people need to say why it does not work and give suggestions.

The diagram below gives an integrated picture of the different programmes that promote food security.

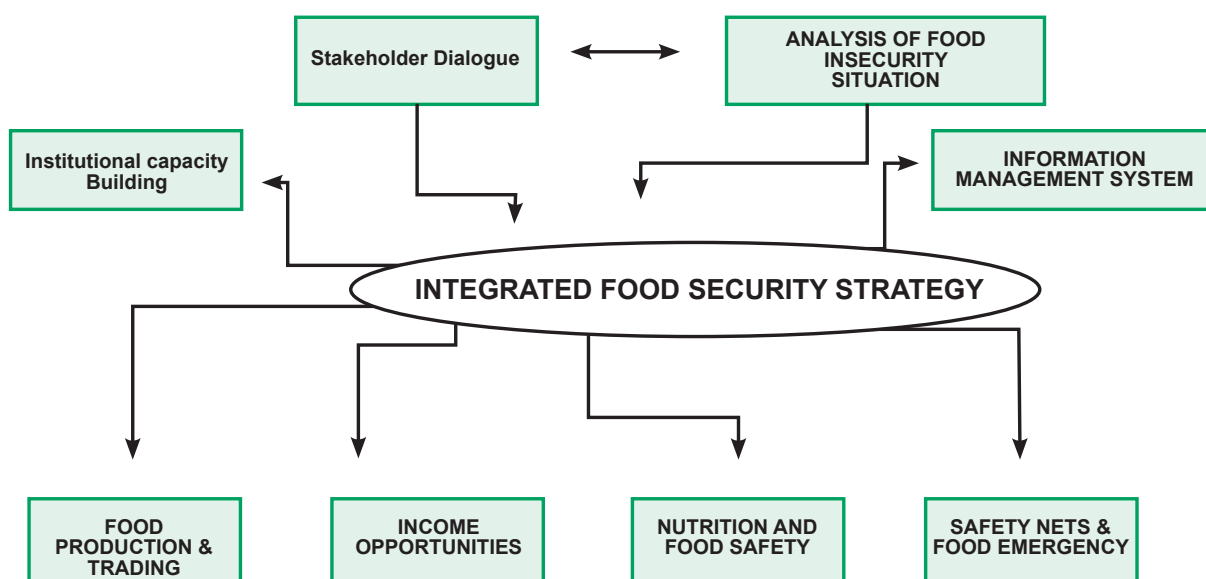


Figure 3.5 Programme and Processes

(Adapted from EU Food Aid and Food Security Programme, Brussels, 1998/99:32-33)



CHILD FEEDING PROGRAMMES

The National School Nutrition Programme

The school feeding scheme is officially called the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). Initially the programme provided food to vulnerable school going children in primary schools but in 2009 the programme was extended to include secondary schools.

The National School Nutrition Programme is part of the Integrated Food Security Strategy for South Africa and involves the Departments of Health, Social Development, Land Affairs and Agriculture. The NSNP is one of a range of projects that respond to the nutritional needs of poor and vulnerable people

The following information is adapted from the Department of Education's Guide for Secondary Schools.

What is the purpose of the National School Nutrition Programme?

According to the Education Department's Guide the overall aim is 'to enhance the educational experience of needy learners through the provision of a healthy meal at school.'

(Department of Education publication, National School Nutrition Programme, A Guide for Secondary Schools, 2009, <http://www.education.gov.za>)

Why provide meals at school?

The NSNP aims 'to provide meals to the neediest learners. Good food provides energy for the brain. The meals, which are provided at schools, are intended to give energy for mental and physical activities for the body and brain to function and to make the learners alert and receptive during lessons.'

Who gets the meals?

The Department of Education has a system of identifying primary and secondary schools where most of the learners come from poor families. These schools are eligible for participating in the NSNP and they get funding to run the nutrition programme at the school. The learners only get meals during school times and not during holidays. Young children under six years of age who do not yet go to school do not have access to the programme.

What kind of meals do children get?

Schools are advised to provide nutritious and tasty meals. Each meal must fulfil at least 30% of the child's daily nutritional requirements. The meals must be balanced and include:

- Protein
 - vegetable protein, e.g. dried beans and peas, soya products, lentils, and nuts;
 - animal protein, e.g. meat, milk, eggs and fish depending on affordability
- Starch:
 - e.g. maize meal, samp, mealie rice, rice, bread, potatoes. Maize meal, bread or flour products should have the logo depicting that they have been fortified with essential macronutrients.



- Vegetables: at least one green and one red or yellow or orange vegetable per meal.
- Fats and oils must be used in moderation.
- Iodated/iodized salt must be used in moderation.
- Learners must drink at least 8 cups or glasses of water.

NGO driven initiatives

Joint Aid Management or JAM is an NGO founded in Africa that provides humanitarian relief and development. Information from the organization’s website provides a good overview of its nutrition and relief and development programmes in different parts of Africa.

JAM’s focus in South Africa is on nutritional feeding programmes in South Africa to improve Early Childhood Development (ECD) in the country. JAM currently provides a fortified porridge to young children in more than 300 childcare centres in Gauteng. As part of their sustainability strategy JAM will withdraw from the childcare centres when they are able to stand on their own.

Feeding schemes, whether organized by government or private funding, provide only a small amount of food to help to relieve child hunger. They also relieve poor caregivers from some of the burden of worry when they are unable to provide enough food for their children.



Workbook Activity 3.11: Do this activity in your workbook

Programmes that promote food security

1. What do you know about the National School Nutrition Programme?
2. What government officials or organizations are involved in food security programmes in your community?
3. Describe one of the food security programmes or initiatives in your community. Complete information about this programme in the following table.

N	
Name of the food security programme or initiative	
Name of the organization or government official(s) involved in the programme	
What services are offered?	
How can people access these services?	





Comments on Activity 3.11

As a household food security facilitator you have to be informed about the various programmes and initiatives that promote food security for households in the community. This information enables you to see how the households can benefit from such services and how they can access this support. An important aspect of your role is to help households to become aware of the services that are available and to integrate this support in their food security action plans.

Change does not happen overnight. It requires the involvement of all stakeholders especially those who live with food insecurity each day. To develop good sustainable policies, communities must be involved because there has to be a link between the policy and the actual experience of the people. By becoming involved, communities will gain a better understanding of the policy process, which, in turn, will empower them to influence the formation of policies that address issues such as food insecurity. Good collaboration between communities and government structures can result in stronger and healthier communities and more responsive government officials, structures and strategies.



Figure 3.6 Community members consulting with government officials





Workbook Activity 3.12: Do this activity in your study guide

Pros and cons of strategies to address food security

Examine the pros and cons of strategies designed to address food insecurity.

1. In your groups think of an example of each of the strategies discussed in your study guide. You may use your own examples, or those given below.

Examples

Food parcels as short-term relief strategy

Food gardens, as a community capacity building strategy

Changes to income support programmes, as a system change strategy

2. Brainstorm the pros and cons of each example. The words pro and con are Latin words. Pro means arguments for something. Why is it good? Con means arguments against something. Why is it not good? Or, why is it bad?
3. Complete the main points of the discussion in the table below.

St		
Strategies and examples	Pros	Cons
Short-term relief strategy Example		
Community capacity building strategy Example		
Systems change strategy Example		



Comments on Activity 3.12

A good starting point for your group discussion is to revisit the definition of food security you learned in Unit 1:

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

Did you find that in thinking through arguments for and against a strategy it encouraged you to be more critical? Were you surprised to discover that a strategy could even stand in the way of sustainable food security for households? Did your discussion raise awareness that a short-term relief strategy is never enough on its own but needs to be complemented with longer-term strategies?



The three different main categories of strategies used to address food insecurity are interrelated and often build on one another. We say that the strategies can be considered along a *continuum*, in other words a *scale*. For example, strategies to develop individual capacity can develop community capacity, which in turn, can improve policy, as you can see in Figure 3.7 below:



Figure 3.7 Food security and intervention continuum

(Adapted from NSNC & AHPRC Food Security Projects, 2005)

It is important to note that strategies that may work for one household may not work for another household and what suits a household in one community is not suitable for a household in another community. Each community has different stakeholders, resources and abilities and will need a unique approach tailored to the particular context.



Portfolio Activity 1.2: Do this activity in your portfolio sheets

Venn diagram identifying stakeholders

Work as a member of a group to identify key stakeholders who are active in the community. They include internal and external organizations, groups, and significant individuals. Identify who participates in local organizations and institutions by gender. Find information on how the different organizations and groups relate to each other in terms of contact, co-operation, flow of information, and provision of services.

Draw a Venn diagram that shows:

1. institutions, organizations, groups and individuals that are working in the community
2. the participants' views of the importance of organizations in the community
3. the degree of contact and cooperation between participants and the organizations
4. which organizations work together
5. which organizations are for women only and which for men only. Which organizations provide a service for men or for women only



6. which organizations or groups address household food security and nutritional issues.
(Find details in the **Take Action** Section)

3.3 Policy in action for food security

People often think that policies are rules and regulations that only politicians and other government officials deal with. This is a false impression. Policies operate on all levels of society.

Think of policies within your own environment. For example, a policy within a household may be *buying only food that is locally produced*. Schools have policies that describe how children should behave and what they should wear. Workplaces have policies on sick leave. Shops have policies on returning goods. Governments have policies on a range of issues that affect the people living within its borders as well as foreigners. In this section we reflect on some food security policies.

Is there a difference between the policies in households, communities and businesses and government? The difference is the *level* on which the policy operates. Essentially *a policy is a guide for action* that:

1. outlines rules
2. defines roles and responsibilities
3. provides principles
4. reflects values and beliefs
5. states an intention to do something

Think again of the return goods policy and how it reflects the above definition of a policy. Return goods policies are based on the shop's customer service values and principles. They set out clear rules and guidelines for actions that customers and staff have to follow.

What is a policy?

A policy can be defined as a plan of action agreed to by a group of people with the power to carry it out and to enforce it (Dood and Boyd, 2000).

What is a public policy?

A public policy is a broad framework of ideas and values within which decisions are taken and action or inaction is pursued by governments in relation to some issue or problem. (Brooks, 1989)

For example, most return good policies state that the customer must return the item within a specified time, that she must produce the till slip as proof of purchase and that she must return the item in the packaging it came in. An employee examines the returned item, places it in the return item area, and pays back the money the customer paid for the item. When you interrogate any policy you will discover that it is based on specific values, principles and beliefs. The policy aims to achieve

a particular action or set of actions and it provides clear rules and guidelines for all those who will be involved in the actions.

Policies operate on the micro, meso, exo and macro levels. Government's policy on the macro level is also referred to as *public policy*.



3.3.1 Policies on a micro level

We all have household or personal policies that are based on what we value and believe, and that guide our decisions and actions. A household policy may be that the caregiver will only buy local produce to support local farmers and the local economy.

Whether people are aware of it or not, each household has a policy on livelihoods. The household makes decisions on a range of livelihood related issues. We call the decisions made inside the household *intra-household decisions*. The household policy on livelihoods is influenced by three aspects that are related to how the household allocates and manages household resources. These are listed below:

Livelihood capabilities, rules and power

This aspect relates to how things are done and by whom, in other words, it relates to norms, values, traditions and customary law. Who decides, who controls, who owns and who benefits?

Livelihood activities

This aspect relates to what is done, in other words, it relates to the routine activities of the household members, their age and gender, and the practices that identify who does what. Who gets what, who can claim what and who benefits from what?

Livelihood resources

This aspect relates to what is used. What is produced? (Resource mobilisation and distribution of resources based on responsibilities, gender roles and rules)

(March, 1996) We need a reference here

Unfortunately, because of household relationships or economic constraints, it is sometimes difficult to implement important household policies on food availability, accessibility, utilization and measures, which will bring about stability. For example it may be difficult for a poor insecure household to implement a healthy eating policy for economic reasons. The primary concern of the caregiver in a food insecure household is *food first*. The caregiver will use the little money available to buy food she can afford and food that will be adequate for each member of the household. Only lastly will she worry about buying healthy food. Usually a household's food security is dependent on the community and the external environment.

3.3.2 Policies on the meso and exo levels

Policies on the meso and exo levels guide how tribal structures, organizations, business and local government operate in communities. As individuals we have little say in these policies, which can have a major negative impact on food security. What do we mean by this? Think about the way in which water committees function, the way in which waste removal is handled, or how land developers use land that should be used to produce food. Another example is the way in which supermarkets over-charge for food. Even though individuals and communities do not have a direct say in how policies are made and implemented, they can be involved in stakeholder dialogue channels to make their voices heard when policies and strategies impact negatively on their lives, or when there are needs that are not addressed by existing policies.



People usually experience the impact of policies through strategies that are implemented. What is the difference between a policy and a strategy? Simply put a policy is a statement that describes the principles and rules to guide particular actions. A strategy is the actual plan of action that is informed by the policy. For example, the government has a food security policy that specifies that emergency relief must be provided to vulnerable and food insecure households. The strategies to implement this policy include the provision of emergency food parcels, the school nutrition programme, other child feeding schemes, and any programmes that provide emergency food aid.

The following is an example of how the short-term food relief strategies of an NGO operating at a meso level can collaborate with and support the government's macro food relief policy.



Foodbank South Africa collaborates with Government

For food-secure South Africans the problem of hunger is often underestimated, but according to Food Bank SA's Executive Director Geoff Penny, more than 14 million South Africans don't know where their next meal is coming from.

Over the next three years, Food Bank SA plans to open 20 Food Banks around the country and to increase its food supply by five-fold, says Penny.

"What we really want to do is halve hunger over the next five years and eventually eradicate hunger altogether. But we have to be realistic. There are other factors involved such as drought and food prices. But we do believe we will make a difference to food security in South Africa," he adds.

Based on a food security model promoted by the Global Food Banking Network, Food Bank SA will act as the national governing body for a network of community-based Food Banks, the first of which was established in March 2009 in Cape Town.

The community Food Banks, as well as the national body, actively procure food on behalf of agencies (social services organisations and NGOs) operating in the area of food security. Food is mainly acquired through donations from major retailers and manufacturers, as well as from government agencies, private organisations and individuals. The food is then stored safely and sorted into nutritional packages before being made available or delivered to the relevant agencies.

In addressing their own mandate to eradicate hunger, the South African Government recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Food Bank SA, thereby showing their support for the programme.

(Adapted from Banking on food for SA's hungry, 2009)





Activity 3.13: Do this activity in your study guide

Collaborating to improve household food security

Answer the questions based on the above article.

1. Which of the following options describes best what a memorandum of understanding or MoU is?
 - (a) A memorandum of understanding or MoU is a binding contract between two or more parties that clarifies relationships and responsibilities.
 - (b) A memorandum of understanding or MoU is an agreement between two or more parties that clarifies relationships and responsibilities but it is not fully binding in the way that a contract is.
2. Is it important for NGO's to collaborate with government to achieve household food security? Give reasons for your answer.

.....

.....

.....



Comments on Activity 3.13

A MoU is an agreement but it is not fully binding in the way that a contract is. The MoU specifies clearly the relationships between the parties and how they will work together.

The support of government for the food relief actions of Food Bank South Africa gives the organization credibility in the eyes of communities and local government officials. This can make it easier for the organization to work at the meso or community level. At the same time duplication of services can be avoided and government can spend money on complementary food relief services. This kind of agreement benefits households and communities.

3.3.3 Policies on a macro level

Do you feel it is important that policies must be developed to:

1. protect our children, families and communities?
2. protect our natural environment and therefore our natural resources?
3. support our local businesses and build the local economy?
4. protect our people's livelihoods, food security, nutrition and health?



All government or public policies, whether at the national, provincial or municipality level, are developed to address specific issues, such as health, education and training, job creation, agriculture, transport, food insecurity. The purpose of all policies is to create a just and equitable society in which all people can have access to the resources they need to lead healthy and productive lives. This is the overall goal but the reality is quite different. Some policies do not achieve what they set out to achieve and in fact they can have a negative impact on food security.

Before examining South Africa's food security policies and strategies in some detail in the next section, reflect on how food security policies on micro, meso, exo or macro levels can affect individuals and households.



Workbook Activity 3.14: Do this activity in your workbook

The impact of policy on household food security

This is a group activity

1. Look at the given examples of policies on micro, meso, exo and macro levels. Discuss the impact of these policies on households.

Policies implemented by households (micro level)

We try to buy only fruit and vegetables that are produced locally.

We buy only from spaza shops and try to avoid buying from large supermarket chains.

- 1.1 Discuss the following with regards to your household:
 - What are your own household policies regarding food?
 - How do your household policies benefit your household's ability to be food secure?
 - What are some of the barriers to your household's food security?

Policies implemented by the community (meso level)

The Women's Group plants traditional sorghum to make traditional dishes and beer for celebrations.

As a household, it is expected that its members of the group invite the extended family to celebrate a wedding and that they provide food for all who attend.

Women in the Women's Group learn about nutrition and healthy food.



1.2 Discuss the following with regards to your community:

- What is the policy of the community with regard to who is invited to celebrations?
- What role do cultural foods play in the community?
- What impact does land allocation by the tribal chief have on household food security?
- What are the barriers to obtaining community food security?

Policies implemented by local organizations (exo level)

Some supermarket chains will not buy a product from a smallholder farmer unless the farmer can provide all the stores in the supermarket chain with the same product.

Some schools earn money by selling the exclusive rights to sell products in the school to certain snack-producing companies.

1.3 Discuss the following with regards to your community:

- Who is affected by the policies of the supermarket chains and schools mentioned above?
- Why do these policies affect the people you identified in the previous question?
- How do these policies affect food security?
- What other policies implemented by organizations and businesses in your community affect food security?

Policies implemented by government (exo and macro levels)

The transportation policies of some municipalities result in poor public transportation and a greater dependence on taxis.

Some land use policies allow the development of farmland for other uses.

1.4 Discuss the following:

- How do these public policies impact on your own and your community's food security?
- What other public policies impact on food security?

2. After your group discussions write your ideas on how policies affect household food security.



Comments on Activity 3.14

The group discussion you had may have revealed how different people thought about impact of the different levels of policies on households. Were you surprised to discover that some policies could actually make it more difficult for households to be food secure? As a food security facilitator you have to help households to reflect critically on their household or micro policies as well as community, local government and national government policies. When they understand the impact of policies on their daily lives, they may be more willing to become involved to take appropriate actions to change things.



One of the issues you may have discussed is the benefit of buying locally produced vegetables and fruit. The example below illustrates the ripple effects of the policy on the buying of locally produced food on households, communities, the natural environment and the economy.

Why is it important to buy locally produced food?

Buying locally produced food, such as vegetables and fruit, has positive implications for the health of people in these communities, as well as on the natural environment and on the economy.

Social, cultural and physical health

Local food is fresher, tastes better and is healthier, since it invariably contains fewer chemicals, additives and preservatives. Local food links you with your local farmers and with their food production. It is a move away from globalisation and celebrates diversity.

The health of the natural environment

Local food reduces the amount of fuel used for transport, which, in turn, reduces global warming. Well-managed family farms and food gardens contribute to cleaner environments.

What is globalisation?

Globalisation is a complex process of spreading businesses and markets throughout the world. This links markets across countries and makes countries interdependent.

Healthy economies

Buying local food supports local farmers.
Local food keeps your money within your community.



Figure 3.8 Producing food locally is good for the socio-cultural and the natural environment

People in communities can work together to change those policies that have a negative effect on food security.



3.3.4 South African food security policy and strategy

Have you wondered how policy is made? Traditionally, public policy has been a “top-down” process where decisions are made at government level, passed down to the groups and organizations responsible for implementing the policy and, as a last step, reach the people in the communities who are affected by the policy. Is this still the case with South African public policy?

Today South Africa uses a consultative approach to policy making. Policies are submitted for comment by parliamentary committees and, in addition, for comment by the public. Comments are accommodated where feasible and the proposed draft policy reworked. Once ready, it is approved or ratified by parliament for approval by the Minister or by the President.

Households often have little understanding of the policy-making process and therefore have very little input into how they are formulated, unless the households are represented by competent community leaders or representatives of certain organizations.

Let us take a closer look at the process that South African policy-makers follow. A policy is developed by means of four main steps:

1. Situation analysis
2. Implementation
3. Evaluation

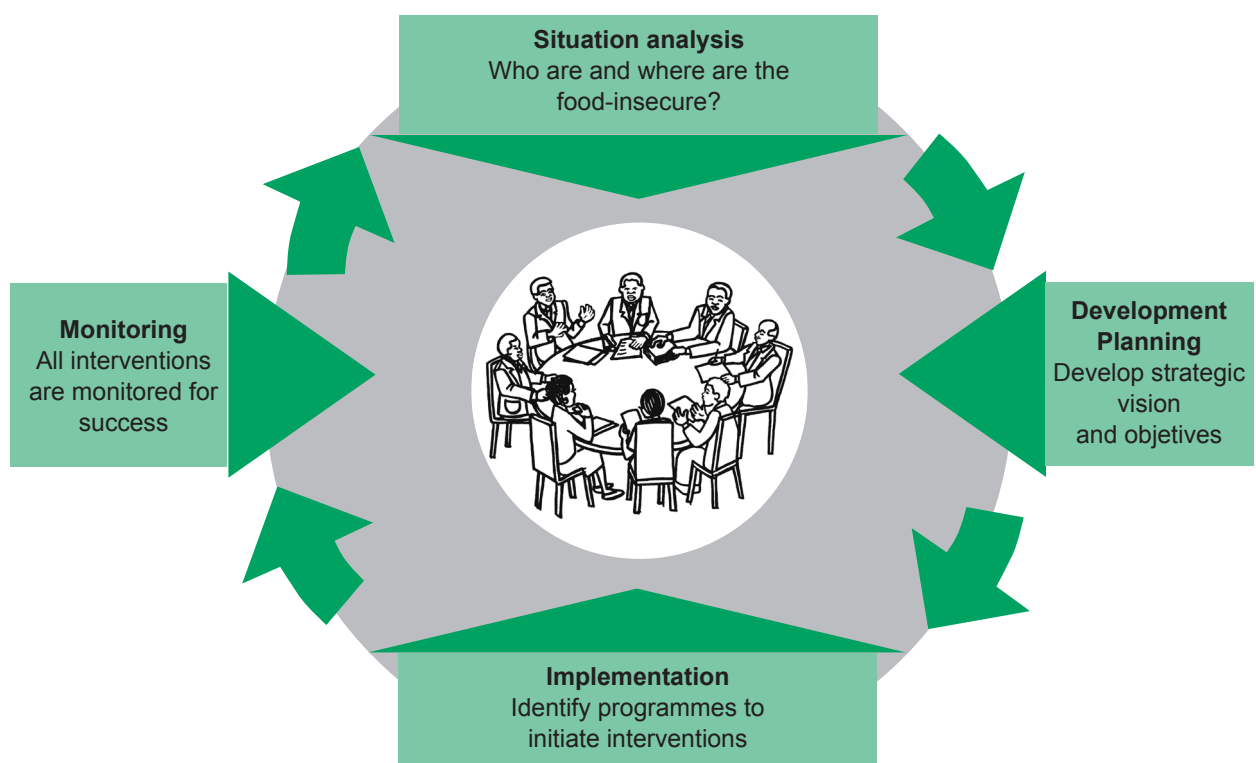


Figure 3.9 The policy-making process



STEP 1: Situation analysis

When carrying out a situation analysis, questions have to be answered such as; *Who are the food-insecure? Where are the food-insecure?* The results of an analysis based on recent statistics (2002) show that food-insecure people in South Africa are:

1. 35% of the total population.
2. overwhelmingly (mainly) black people.
3. women, the elderly, children, orphans, the disabled and the chronically ill.
4. the landless, the low income earners, the social security grant-dependents and the unemployed.
5. natural disaster victims and other categories of disaster victims.
6. living in rural areas: rural towns, commercial farming areas and former homelands.
7. living in urban areas: townships, informal settlements and metropolitan inner cities.

Challenges in addressing food security issues

The data analysis indicates that the food insecurity issues to be addressed can be linked to the following challenges:

- Lack of access to productive resources
- Unstable household food production
- Weak household food trading systems
- Lack of household purchasing power
- Lack of income and job opportunities
- Poor household nutrition and food safety practices
- Weak social security and food crisis management systems
- Overlapping policies and strategies
- Weak institutional and organizational structures
- Weak analyses of food security vulnerability, information and communication.





Activity 3.15: Do this activity in your study guide

What are food security challenges?

The following problem statements are drawn from the data gathered about food security issues in 2002. This type of information is analyzed during the situational analysis stage in the policy making process.

- Read the problem statements in the table below and link each statement with the relevant food security challenges indicated above. The first row shows an example of a typical answer.
- Complete the table and show the challenges linked to the problem statements

Problem statements	What is the challenge for households?
35% of the South African Population is vulnerable to food insecurity and lives off less than R20 a day.	Lack of access to productive resources. Lack of income and job opportunities.
Social grants provide the main income for around 12 million people (29%) at a cost of around R60 billion a year.	
At present, the South African population is around 48 million people. 5.3 million of them are living with HIV/AIDS. Around 500 000 new infections a year occur. Only one in every five of these people has access to antiretroviral (ARV) treatment.	
There are 1 million children in South Africa who are orphans twice over, which means that they have lost both their parents.	
Poorer households spend around 71% of their income on purchasing food.	



Comments on Activity 3.15

In compiling your answers you would have become aware that more than one challenge could be linked to a problem statement. This activity highlights the importance of gathering accurate data and interrogating the data to identify possible challenges that exist.

The next step in the analysis process is to examine possible interventions on the macro, exo, meso and micro levels to respond appropriately to the identified challenges. Table 3.3 shows interventions for household food security on the four levels.



STEP 2: Development planning

The policy-makers used the results from the situation analysis to develop the following strategic vision and objectives. The vision of food security in South Africa is:

Universal physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food by all South Africans at all times to meet their dietary needs and preferences for an active and healthy life.
(Integrated Food Security Strategy for South Africa, July 2002)

What do you notice about the vision for food security in South Africa? South Africa has used as its vision the definition of food security by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

The strategic objectives are to:

1. enhance household food production and trading
2. improve income and job opportunities
3. improve nutrition and safety
4. improve safety nets and food emergency management
5. integrate strategies and improve institutional capacity
6. promote stakeholder dialogue
7. improve analysis, information and communication
8. implement legislation on the right to food.

STEP 3: Implementation

The policy-makers used the above objectives to identify a number of programmes to initiate interventions in order to implement the policy. Programmes and interventions specify the actions that have to be taken.

What programmes were proposed?

1. A special food security programme on food production and trading
2. A community development programme
3. An integrated nutrition and food security programme on nutrition and food safety
4. A comprehensive social security and food emergencies programme – safety nets
5. A national school nutrition programme
6. A public works programme – income and job creation
7. Stakeholder dialogue
8. A capacity-building programme
9. Information and communication management.

Table 3.3 on the next few pages provides a summary of food security interventions for implementation on the macro, exo, meso and micro levels.





Table 3.3 Interventions for household food security (WRC, 2009)

Macrolevel	Exolevel	Mesolevel	Microlevel
National government	Local / Provincial government	Groups / Community	Households
FOOD AVAILABILITY			
<p>Agricultural policy on smallholders and food gardens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage local and community food production • Provision of inputs: seeds and fertiliser • Farmer support service (extension) for increasing productivity 	<p>Programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local production of food • Production of staples, vegetables and animals for income • Participatory extension: Household food security gardens 	<p>Projects and learning groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household gardens • Community gardens • Community seed banks 	<p>Households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce stable foods or sell for income • Plant vegetables and fruit according to the seasons • Increase household food production
<p>Water policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building of dams and reservoirs for local government • Irrigation scheme policies 	<p>Programmes water management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work for water programme • Smallholder irrigation schemes • Building homestead water tanks 	<p>Community Water groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of communal taps, water wells 	<p>Household Water use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and maintain household water tanks for food production • Use permaculture strategies to reduce water use strategies- Permaculture
FOOD ACCESS			
<p>Macro-economic policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importing and exporting of foods • Tax controls (VAT exemption on basic foods) • Food prices- control price of certain basic foods 	<p>Programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower food prices on basic staple foods 	<p>Project activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education on value of good food • Buy from local food vendors • Negotiate reasonable food prices 	<p>Encourage household resources to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • buy low cost high quality staple food • buy close to home • buy nutritious foods • plan shopping
<p>Transport policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidise bus transport for the masses 	<p>Local transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide bus and taxi transport against reasonable prices 	<p>Project activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate reasonable transport prices • Community transport • Use animal traction eg donkeys 	<p>Encourage household to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spend less on transport • plan shopping trips
<p>Social policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social safety net-grants • Emergency food relief 	<p>Social Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing points for grant payments • Target and distribute food for relief 	<p>Cash in hand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of grants responsible for household food security • Target vulnerable households 	<p>Household capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible use of relief handouts • Consider sustainable livelihood strategies • Plan household finances and allocation

Employment policies	Programme public works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job creation Work for water Small business development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job creation for food access Income generation projects Encourage getting extra food and crafts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use cash to buy food Manage household income Work for income
FOOD UTILISATION			
Health policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated food and nutrition intervention 	Community Nutrition Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food intake Care practices Sanitation and hygiene 	Education, learning group activities and campaigns - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food based nutrition education Food intake Care practices Sanitation and hygiene 	Encourage effective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> food selection and preparation practices care and feeding practices sanitation and hygiene practices
Health policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provisions of health system for public and primary health care 	Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and nutrition, immunisation and infections Growth monitoring, food parcels Pregnancy and breastfeeding 	Learning Groups and Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning groups to promote good health practices and awareness of clinic services Train community-based caregivers 	Encourage effective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> visits to clinics for HIV/AIDS, immunization and infections, growth monitoring breastfeeding and using food parcels for babies
FOOD STABILITY			
Governance: Integrated food security policy and strategic plans	Coordination of implementation of strategic plans	Coordination between stakeholders on targeting of households for community projects	Participate in learning groups and facilitation sessions
Food intervention vulnerability information system (FIVIMS)	Warnings on risks and shocks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Floods, heavy rain Drought Conflict 	Community awareness of vulnerability interventions Receiving information on taking immediate action	Make households aware of vulnerability and develop preventive strategies for immediate action
National food storage for food security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Food Banks 	Farmer Co-operatives storing food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local organisations distributing food for food parcels, school feeding, food banks and for soup kitchens 	Food-based projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Food-based projects processing and value-adding projects Food parcel distribution, Community soup kitchens and food banks 	Household resource use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage effective household food storage and processing practices Receive free food or food for work to stabilise food consumption





Activity 3.16: Do this activity in your study guide

Interventions to address specific food security challenges

Identify possible interventions on the macro, exo, meso and micro levels that are appropriate to address specific food security problems and challenges

This is a group activity. Use Table 3.3 as your main resource.

Reading Table 3.3

- Name the policies listed in the *Macrolevel* column in Table 3.3.
- Which of these interventions take place on the *micro, meso, exo* levels? Write the correct level next to each intervention listed in this table.

Interventions	Level (micro, meso, exo)
1. Buy low cost nutritious staple food	
2. Manage points for paying grants	
3. Education on the value of food	
4. Sanitation and hygiene services	
5. Warnings on risks and shocks	
6. Lower food prices on staple foods	
7. Soup kitchens and food banks	
8. Health and nutrition programmes	
9. National food banks	
10. Effective household storage and food processing practices	

Identify available interventions

- In Activity 3.13 you linked challenges to problem statements. Copy the challenges you listed and write them in the Challenges column in the table below.
- Discuss possible interventions to respond to these food security problems. Find information about interventions from Table 3.3 and use your own ideas as well. Write down the group's ideas in the *Possible Interventions* column. Make sure you include interventions on the macro, meso, exo and micro levels.



Problem statements	Challenges	Possible interventions
35% of the South African Population is vulnerable to food insecurity and lives off less than R20 a day	Lack of access to productive resources Lack of income and job opportunities	Macro Meso Exo Micro
Social grants provide the main income for around 12 million people (29%) at a cost of around R60 billion a year		Macro Meso Exo Micro
At present, the South African population is around 48 million people. 5.3 million of them are living with HIV/AIDS. Around 500 000 new infections a year occur. Only one in every five of these people has access to antiretroviral (ARV) treatment.		Macro Meso Exo Micro
There are 1 million children in South Africa who are orphans twice over, which mean that they have lost both their parents.		Macro Meso Exo Micro
Poorer households spend around 71% of their income on purchasing food.		Macro Meso Exo Micro



Comments on Activity 3.16

A multi-level approach to food security issues offers the highest likelihood for sustainable food security. As a household food security facilitator you will be working with households to plan micro level actions to improve their food security. They will have more effect if they are aligned with macro policies and interventions that are implemented at the exo and meso levels to provide services and support.

STEP 4: Monitoring

All the interventions highlighted in Table 3.3 have to be monitored and evaluated to assess whether they have been successfully implemented. The monitoring and evaluation process highlights aspects that are working well and those that are not working well. This type of information is necessary to inform future planning and implementation strategies.

Do you now have a good understanding of what a policy is and how it affects food security? You have discovered that individuals and households in the community can influence policy. *What process can people follow to increase their ability to influence policy?*



We can influence policy by following four steps:

1. Know the issues, goals, supporters and opponents.
2. Identify and engage stakeholders and develop networks; that is, connect different people and groups.
3. Understand the policy process, and the policy makers.
4. Take action.

In this section you have already begun to understand how to influence policy. These questions show in which ways you are starting to follow the above four steps.

- Do you know the government's vision and goal for food security?
- Do you know what the food security issues are? (Think of availability, access, utilization and stability)
- Do you know what the policy making process is?
- Have you identified stakeholders in the community who are working in food security?
- Are you aware that households are also stakeholders and not mere beneficiaries and that they should play an active part in addressing issues related to the food security of the household?
- Are you aware that as a household food security facilitator you are a stakeholder?
- Do you have a good idea of how interventions on different levels can respond to food security challenges?

In Portfolio Activity 1.4 you have an opportunity to contact significant stakeholders who work with food security as a way of establishing a network. From Module 3 onwards you will be working with households to come up with actions to improve their food security on the micro level.





Portfolio Activity 1.4: Do this activity in your portfolio sheets

Meeting with stakeholders who work in food security

Participate with members of your group to organize a meeting with identified stakeholders in the community. The aim of the meeting is make face-to-face contact with a group of individuals who work in organizations and community on food security issues. You will get know who they are, what they do, and how they work towards food security in the community. At the same time the invited stakeholders will get to know what the Household Food Security Programme is about and how household food security facilitators work with selected households.

The task involves key activities:

Plan the meeting

- Draw up a list of identified stakeholders and their contact details
- Contact identified stakeholders to determine their availability and dates for the meeting
- Prepare an agenda for the meeting
- Write and send an invitation to the meeting
- Organize the venue
- Carry out final preparations

Participate in the meeting

- Make contributions to the meeting by asking questions
- Record information about the stakeholders

Actions after the meeting

- Write and send thank you letters after the meeting
- Reflect on the meeting.

*(Find details in the **Take Action** Section)*

Record your reflection on the activities to organize the meeting of stakeholders in your logbook.





Log

Reflection on organizing the meeting with stakeholders

Reflect on your group's efforts to organize the meeting with stakeholders. These questions can help you to organize your thoughts. Write your responses in your log notebook.

1. What worked well? Why?
2. What did not work well? Why?
3. What have you learned about teamwork?
4. What have you learned about yourself as a team player? Reflect on your performance as a team player on this group task.

After the meeting with stakeholders the group can reflect on the event. The group discussion will inform your own report of the meeting in Portfolio 1.5.



Portfolio Activity 1.5: Do this activity in your portfolio sheets

Write a report on the meeting with stakeholders

The aim of the report is to record information about the stakeholders and to reflect on the insights gained through the interactions with stakeholders. You are expected to write responses to these questions:

1. What were your impressions of the meeting?
2. What new insights have you gained about food security issues and challenges in the community?
3. What new insights have you gained about the stakeholders who were present?
4. How will you, as a household food security facilitator, be able to work with the stakeholders?
5. Do you have any other comments you think are important?

*(Find details in the **Take Action** Section)*





Concluding Comments

In Unit 3 you discovered what is meant by vulnerability and how important it is to assess the level of household vulnerability before planning actions. A vulnerability analysis can show how assets and livelihood strategies combine to create a situation in which households are at risk to be food insecure. Although households use different strategies to cope with food insecurity, many need external help to reduce the effects of shocks and stresses. No one strategy or intervention can bring about real change for food insecure households. A multi-pronged approach is necessary. Short-term relief interventions must be complemented with long term capacity building initiatives and changes to existing systems to make them more responsive and supportive.

As household food security facilitator you play an important role in helping households to become active participants. In Module 2 you will learn practical techniques and tools to involve households in assessing their own situation and planning actions on the micro level.



