



IDENTIFYING A TARGET FOR FOOD SECURITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Purpose and Approach

- To motivate the need for a household food security for South Africa
- To investigate the *conceptual and methodological* issues involved in determining food security targets
- To use a *food expenditure approach* to identify a preliminary household food security target

Why a food security target?

- “Food security” is a policy priority in South Africa:
 - “Right to food” is entrenched in the Constitution (Section 27)
 - IF&NSS adopted in 2002- a inter-departmental policy framework to respond to food insecurity (DFS in DAFF)
 - Top priority of the 2009-2014 administration

Why a food security target?

- So, how many people in South Africa are food insecure?
- Given the evidence on FI, what are appropriate policy interventions?
- Unknown extent and degree of food insecurity in South Africa, compounded by the multi-faceted nature of food (in) security and lack of good quality data

Benefits of food security targets?

- A food security target has two immediate benefits:
 - It helps to focus pro-poor policy interventions
 - It raises the efficiency of fiscal spending aimed at assisting the poor to access enough food of the right quality

Food expenditure and targeting

- Poor people spend a higher share of their total income/expenditure on food
- “Food poverty” is a basic form of deprivation that many poor people face.
- What does government’s 2014 target for a 50% reduction of poverty mean in terms of “food poverty”?
- How might the 2014 target be translated into food security target?

The idea of a food security target

- A food security target is a well-defined and measurable goal to reduce the numbers of people who lack enough food of the right quality to live healthy lives.
- It requires a food consumption or nutrition norm against which to assess the food security status of a person, household or community.

Complex ingredients of food security targets

- **Household composition:** household size and the number of children (to account for economies of scale in consumption)
- **Wealth and livelihood strategy:** income and assets (land, livestock, labour etc.)
- **Geography:** rural/urban location and formal/informal settlements
- **Institutions:** markets, the state, social capital/networks
- **Time:** whether the food security condition is transitory or chronic
- **Risk:** shocks that are weather-related, health-related and so forth, commodity price movements

Mapping food security indicators

Indicator /measure	Focus	Examples
Food availability	National or household agro-food output/supply	Food balance sheets
<i>Food consumption/ Access</i>	Food demand or consumption at the household level (ways in which institutions regulate access to food)	Household expenditure models; food expenditure ratio; income elasticity
Composite food Security	Simultaneously captures each dimension in a single indicator	Poverty Hunger Index; Rose-Charlton Indicators; Food Security Gap Index

Example: Rose-Charlton method

Food expenditure

Nutritional intake

Food Poverty indicator (FP)

Low Energy Availability indicator (LEA)

$$FP \equiv \frac{HS}{FCP} < 1$$

HS = household spending on a nutritional diet

FCP = cost of a nutritionally adequate household food plan

$$LEA \equiv \frac{EA}{REA} < 1$$

EA = energy available from food supplies

REA = recommended energy intake

Lessons from previous studies

- *Content of food security indicators*: the predominant focus is on food consumption and access and less so on composite indicators.
- *Underlying data/survey*: describes the data collection instrument and gives a sense of the suitability of this tool for gather meaningful information on food security.
- *Food spending share*: a percentage indicating the weight of food expenditure in the overall household spending basket; for example- 'shortfall to afford a basic food-secure basket'.
- *Household food security status*: expresses the percentage of households below the food consumption/expenditure threshold.

Food expenditure approach

- Food expenditure data in IES 2005/06
 - Example of IES limitation: “zero food” expenditure for upper income deciles raises two issues: measurement error and non-response
 - Consequence, likely underreporting of food expenditure
- NAMC cost of basic food basket
 - Monetary value across major food groups (R344 per person per month in 2008)
 - Independent of clear nutrient intake indicators (kilocalories to produce energy levels)

Food expenditure shares, by income deciles

Income Deciles	Real Total Expenditure	Real Food Expenditure	Food Expenditure Share	Average Household Size
1	4,075.80	1,387.47	38.6	5.0
2	4,331.63	1,551.95	37.7	5.3
3	4,987.26	1,612.25	35.0	4.8
4	6,099.21	1,926.18	34.1	4.3
5	7,687.27	2,167.88	31.0	3.8
6	9,048.60	2,306.12	28.7	3.5
7	12,511.41	2,722.21	25.1	3.3
8	20,185.97	3,559.20	20.9	2.9
9	37,063.06	4,426.56	14.6	2.9
10	94,379.89	7,207.74	9.3	2.5
Total	20,032.89	2,886.50	27.5	3.8

Cost of NAMC Food Basket at ADEQ Scales

Adults	Children	HH Size	ADEQ	Basic food cost (R/c)	ADEQ food cost (R/c)
1	0	1	1.0	344	<i>344.00</i>
0	1	1	0.54	344	<i>184.35</i>
1	1	2	1.44	344	<i>495.50</i>
2	1	3	2.28	344	<i>784.70</i>
2	2	4	2.69	344	<i>924.63</i>
2	3	5	3.09	344	<i>1 062.23</i>

Conclusion- key insights (1)

- Approximately 19 or 24 million South Africans live below the poverty-line (40-50%)
- Given the cost of a basic food basket (R344), some low-income households below the official R462 (income) poverty-line are clearly unable to afford this food basket while others are probably more likely to be able to afford it.
- Average adult equivalent (ADEQ) food expenditure seems to be sufficient to cover the cost of a basic food basket (\pm R1 100).

Conclusion-key insights (2)

- ‘*Transitory hunger*’ could be present among the average low-income household of five, comprising two adults and three children;
- These households are likely to be vulnerable to “food price shocks”
- Ultra-poor households, roughly the bottom 50% of all the poor, must be a key food-insecure group to target (10–12 million people).
- ‘*Chronic hunger*’ might be prevalent among the ultra-poor.