



**LEVERAGING PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TOWARDS SCALING UP
FOOD SYSTEMS SOLUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING AND BEYOND
COVID-19**

**PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS IN SOUTH AFRICA
NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL FOOD SYSTEMS DIALOGUES
AUGUST 2021**

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ABBREVIATIONS

APAP	-	Agricultural Policy Action Plan
BFAP	-	Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy
NPCPDS	-	National Policy on Comprehensive Producer Development Support\
BSLAP	-	Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation Policy
BPCP	-	Black Producer Commercialisation Programme
CASP	-	Comprehensive Producer Development Support
CoGTA	-	Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs
DALRRD	-	Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
DBE	-	Department of Basic Education
DHS	-	Department of Human Settlement
DoH	-	Department of Health
DSBD	-	Department of Small Business Development
DSD	-	Department of Human Settlement
DTIC	-	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
DWS	-	Department of Water and Sanitation
FAO	-	United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation
IADFPF	-	Integrated Agricultural Development Finance Policy Framework
IDC	-	Industrial Development Agency
Land Bank	-	Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa
LDS	-	Land Development Support
MAFISA	-	Micro-Agricultural Financial Institutions of South Africa
NAMC	-	National Agricultural Marketing Council
SASSA	-	South African Social Security Agency
SLLDP	-	State Land Lease and Disposal Policy
STATSSA	-	Statistics South Africa
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
PDAs	-	Provincial Departments of Agriculture,
WUSs	-	Water Users Associations
SALGA	-	South African Local Government Association

INTRODUCTION

Parliament in November 2011 approved the National Development Plan (NDP) with a Vision to eliminate hunger and poverty, reduce unemployment to 6%, and reduce inequality to 65 Gini Coefficient by 2030. In 2014, the AU Summit declared its intent to eliminate hunger and to half poverty by 2025. This was echoed by Cabinet in South Africa approving the National Food Security and Nutrition Policy to attain food security and nutrition at household level. And in 2015, South Africa joined other countries to approve 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – two of which are zero hunger and zero poverty by 2030.

However, by February 2021, left with 10 years to meet both the NDP Vision 2030 and the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, South Africa's rate of unemployment was 32.5% or 11.2 unemployed people, 10.1 million of whom are African people from a total of nearly 50 million, 64.2% or about 30 million of whom are living below the upper poverty level of R1 286 per month and the bulk of them being part of the 25% that live below the food poverty level of R585 per month (Figure 1).

Summary of Statistics South Africa's Economic and Social Data
Table 1.

All South Africans	
Population size	59,6 million
Unemployment rate	32,5%
Expanded unemployment rate	42,6%
Numbers of people unemployed	11,2 million
Numbers of people employed	15 million
Number of people one wage supports	3,97
NMW February 2021	R3 321,60
NMW dispersed through a family	R836,68

Black South Africans	
Population size	48,2 million
Unemployment rate	36,5%
Expanded unemployment rate	47,2%
Numbers of people unemployed	10,1 million
Numbers of people employed	11,2 million
Number of people one wage supports	4,29
NMW February 2021	R3 321,60
NMW dispersed through a family	R774,27

The upper-bound poverty line [UBPL]	R1 268,00
The lower-bound poverty line [LBPL]	R840,00
The food poverty line [FPL]	R585,00
% of people living below the UBPL (30,4m)	55,5%
% of people living below the FPL (13,8m)	25,2%
% of Black South Africans living below the UBPL (±29,9m)	64,2%

Household Affordability Index, Johannesburg, 2021: p1.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN FOOD SYSTEM

In 2019 the Secretary General of the United Nations called on Member States to initiate Food Systems Dialogues to leverage the power of food systems to deliver progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, come up with bold actions and solutions to address food systems challenges; and report progress at the UN Food Systems Summit that will be held on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on the 23rd of September 2021.

The food system is defined as “*the interconnected system of everything and everybody that influences, and is influenced by, the activities involved in bringing food from farm to fork and beyond. It includes: • the chain of activities from producer to consumer; • the factors that influence the chain of activities and are influenced by it; these are drivers and outcomes of the food chain, which have economic, political, environmental, health and social dimensions; • the many entities, institutions and people directly and indirectly involved; • the connections between all these elements, meaning that action in one part of the system has repercussions across the system*” (Kelly Parsons et al, 2019, p1),

The UN Food Systems Summit has the following objectives that will be addressed through five Working Groups/Action Tracks for action:

- Action Tracks 1: *Ensuring Access to Safe and Nutritious Food for All.*
- Action Tracks 2: *Shifting to Sustainable Consumption Patterns.*
- Action Tracks 3: *Boosting Nature-Positive Production at Sufficient Scales.*
- Action Tracks 4: *Advancing Equitable Livelihoods and Value Distribution.*
- Action Tracks 5: *Building Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stresses.*

His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa, will lead the South African delegation in September 2021 to deliver South Africa's position on 1, 2 and 5 of the above objectives, as well as reflections on inclusive, sustainable and competitive value chains under the theme: ***Leveraging public-private partnerships towards scaling up food systems solutions in South Africa during and beyond covid-19.***

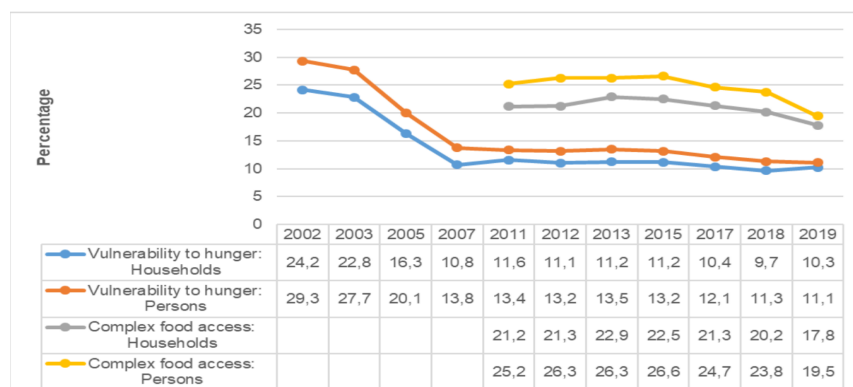
South Africa is explicit in Section 27 (1) (b) of the Constitution that “*everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water and that the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights*”.

On 11 June 2021, the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Land Reform, Honorable Thoko Didiza, launched a process of provincial and national virtual dialogues to address challenges of South Africa's Food Systems at the national food system dialogue attended by diverse key stakeholders. The Food Systems Dialogue initiation meeting noted that the UN Food Systems Dialogue fundamentally seeks to realise our Constitutional promise to “*improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person*”; and that South Africa is now a signatory to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

While the current South African food system shows increased labour productivity and has delivered sufficient inexpensive calories, this has come at a cost to the environment, rural vibrancy and livelihoods and has resulted in territorial imbalances and inequalities.

On the state of the South African Food System, South Africa is generally perceived as the breadbasket in Africa. But more than 10% or nearly 2 million households and more than 11% or 6.6 million people in the country are vulnerable to food insecurity, chronic poverty, endemic hunger and malnutrition. Hunger declined promisingly from 2002 to 2007 but almost froze from 2011 to 2019, with a worrying tendency of levelling and rising before the country was condemned to junk status by the rating agencies, the onset of the covid-19 pandemic and the unrests that spread in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces (Table 2).

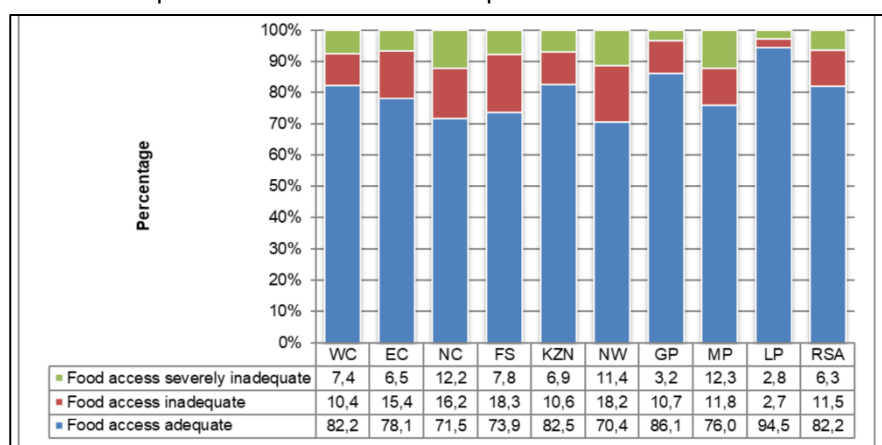
Table 2. Proportion of households who were hungry and with poor access to food



(Source: Prof Sheryl Hendrik, 2021)

Of the provinces - Limpopo, Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal and Western Cape, in that order, have most of their households with adequate access to food and the least households with inadequate access to food (Table 3).

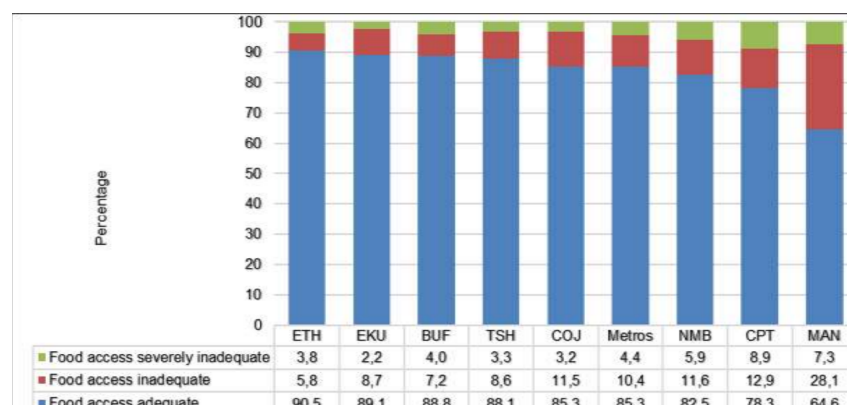
Table 3. Proportion of households with poor access to food



Source: Ibid.

Of the metros, eThekweni, Ekurhuleni, Buffalo City, Tshwane and City of Johannesburg, in that order, have most of their households with adequate access to food and the least households with inadequate access to food; Mangaung, City of Cape Town and Gqeberha, in that order, having most households with inadequate access to food and the least households with adequate access to food (Table 4).

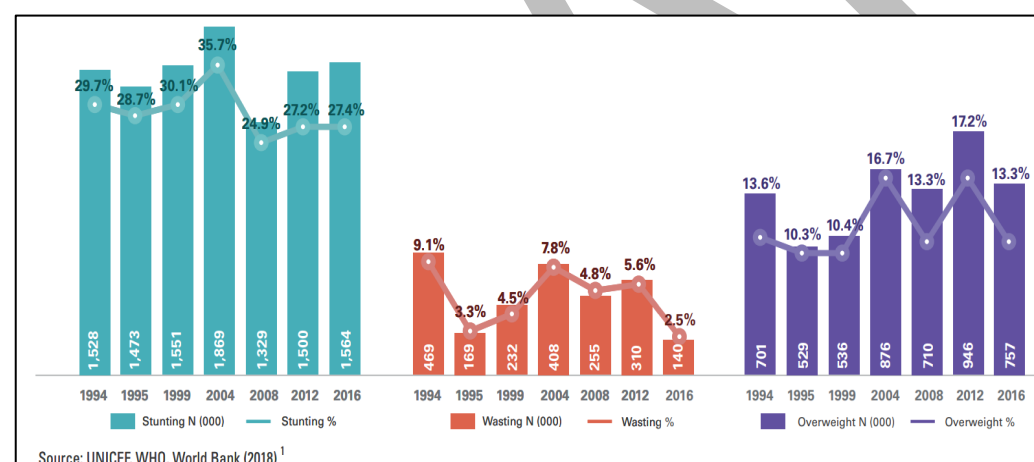
Table 4. Proportion of households with poor access to food



Source: Ibid.

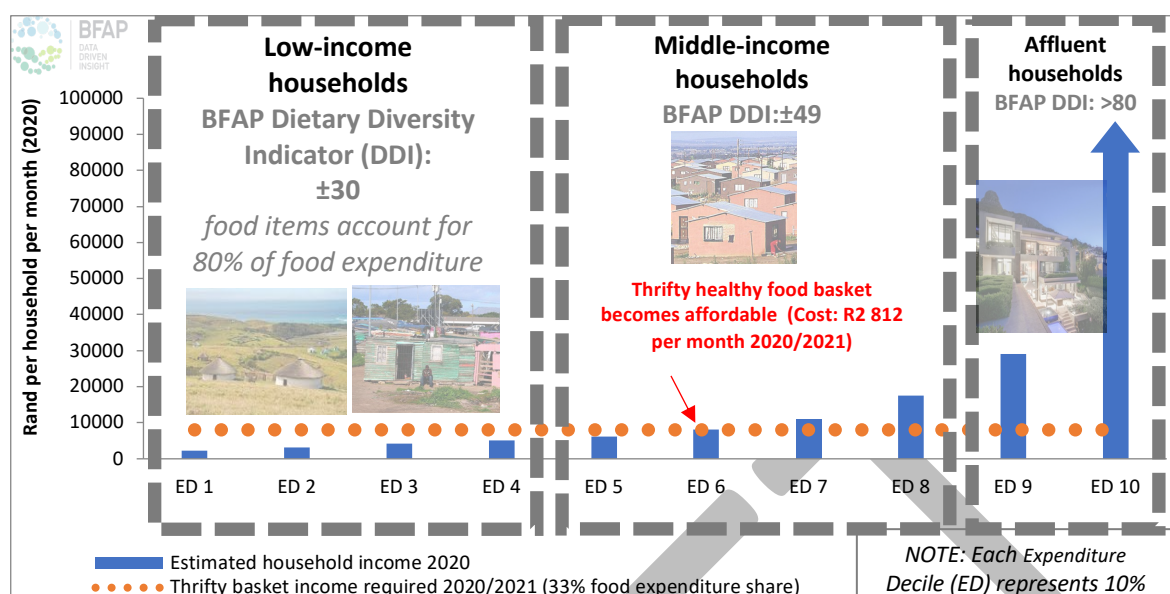
Inadequate access to nutritious food is such a problem that one in three children is stunted, one in four is wasting and one in eight children is living with obesity (Table 5).

Table 5. Child nutrition in South Africa



Food items account for 80% of food expenditure of households in urban and rural areas in the former bantustans, commercial farming areas, black townships and informal settlements, with up to 60% of households spending at or below the thrifty healthy food basket of R2 812 per month in the 2020/2021 financial year (Table 6).

Table 6. Households food expenditure in South Africa



Source: BFAB, 11 July 2021, slide 4.

A Community Survey by Statistics South Africa revealed that in 2011 there was about 3 million agricultural households in the country - 596 573 in the Eastern Cape, 201 286 in the Free State, 279 110 in Gauteng, 717 006 in KwaZulu Natal, 468 494 in Limpopo, 225 282 in Mpumalanga, 214 049 in the North West, 55 150 in the Northern Cape, and 84 574 in the Western Cape (Stas SA: p14).

Table 7. Diverse farming systems

Number of farms and households	Commercial				Households		
	Large	Medium-small	Micro	Total	Small holder	Sub-sistence	Total
Growing of cereals and other crops	387	2 474	5 698	8 559			
Mixed farming (crops combined with farming of animals)	812	4 409	7 237	12 458	162 583	975 776	1 138 359
Horticulture	649	1 966	2 028	4 643	15 054	176 829	191 883
Farming of animals	703	3 431	9 505	13 639	123 443	1 174 696	1 298 139
Agricultural services and fertiliser production	59	290	474	823			
South Africa	2 610	12 570	24 942	40 122	301 080	2 327 301	2 628 381
Employment/households	389 421	284 111	84 097	757 628			

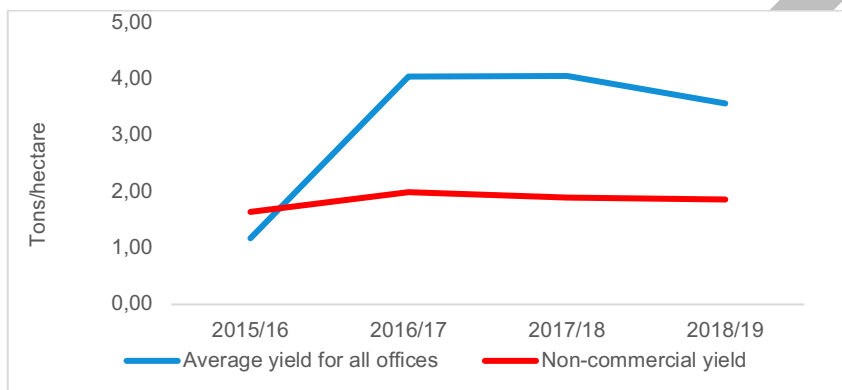
Source: BFAB, 11 June 2021, Slide 12

By 2019 these agricultural households constituted over 98% of the total number of 2 668 503 farmers in the country, when combined with 301 080 smallholders – being

a labour dormitory with their members working in government, mines, industries, commercial farms and agribusinesses, metros and urban centres of the South African economy (Table 7).

They farm on tiny land holdings mainly for subsistence on an average 1.5 tonnes maize per hectare to supplement low total household incomes most of which consist of wages, social grants and migrant remittances (Table 8).

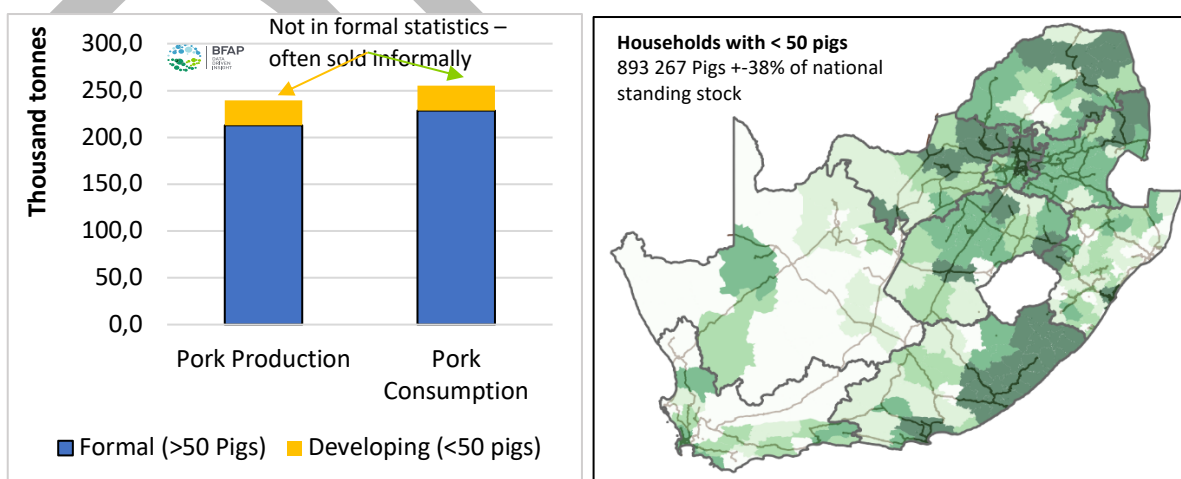
Table 8. Low household productivity and tiny land holdings



Source: BFAB, 11 June 2021, Slide 12

They own less than 50 pigs and much of cattle, goats and sheep – but they own the largest overall herd in cattle and goats in the country (Table 9).

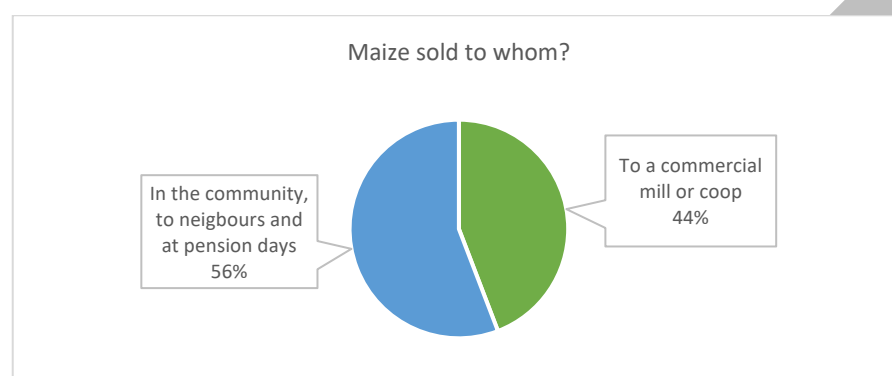
Table 9 Household livestock ownership



Source: BFAB, 11 June 2021, Slide 12

The bulk of the output for these household farmers is sold within local community markets, 44% to coops or commercial mill. It's worth is around R360 billion a year, accounts for up to 50% of the food and grocery sector; employs more people than in the formal food trade at some three million people; and has about 70% share of the poor consumer market; (Table 10). Overall, the informal market is neglected, ignored, unknown and unsupported by government.

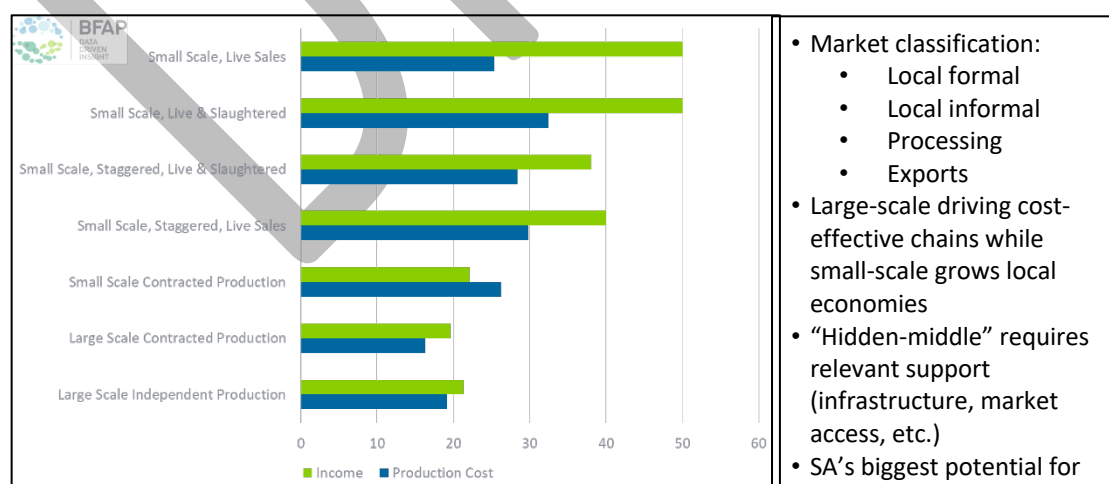
Table 10. Diverse farming systems



Source: BFAB, 11 June 2021, Slide 12

On the extreme end of the farming sector continuum, large corporate enterprises and farmers dominate agri-food value chains after deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation of agriculture cooperatives, foreign trade, abolition of agricultural price controls, and closure of direct state agricultural financing in the 1990s (Table 11).

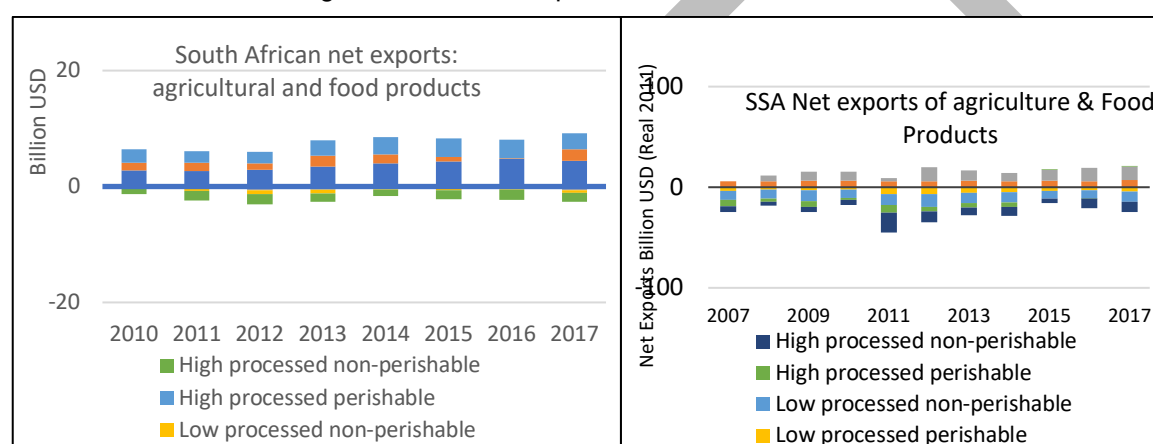
Table 11 Diverse agriculture and food value chains



Source: BFAB, 11 June 2021, Slide 13

The market share of the maize staple food consumed by the majority African people is controlled by heavily mechanised large scale 40 000 commercial farmers who outcompete, employ and trade with 2.6 million households and smallholder farmers in factor and commodity markets of the agriculture and food sector; private cooperatives control more than 75% of grain storage facilities in the country; big agri-businesses control the seed industry and compete with indigenous seeds; the retail food sub-sector own big farms and produce their own food; malls are moving in rural villages and townships with large food retailers; 9 to 10 million tons of food is lost and wasted out of about 27.4 million tons of food that is produced in SA (Table 12).

Table 12. South African agricultural net trade position



Source: BFAB, 11 July 2021, slide 3

Large agribusinesses and commercial farmers represent powerful interests that have the potential power to lobby policymakers to pursue policies that favour and bring benefits not just to less than 1% of their constituency, including agricultural input subsidies, trade and investment policies, nutritional standards, land tenure regulations, energy subsidies, environmental regulations, public procurement practices, food safety regulations, and social policies – but can be creatively used to spread good to benefit the 98% of the rest of the 25 000 micro small farmers, 300 000 smallholders and 2 300 000 household farmers in the food and agriculture system of South Africa.

NATIONAL PATHWAY

From wide consultations at the national level and provinces, game-changing solutions have been identified, the implementation of which shall transform the food systems of South Africa and put it on a trajectory of achieving goals outlined in its NDP 2030, the UNSDGs 2030 and the AU's Agenda 2063.

The national pathway point of departure is the recognition of the weaknesses in the current food systems, what purpose they serve, who they serve and whether they enable progress towards achieving the national goals of elimination of poverty, hunger and malnutrition, the reduction of inequality and growing an inclusive economy by 2030.

There is broad agreement about building a new national food system to eliminate hunger and poverty and improve food security, health and nutrition of everyone; livelihoods of those working in food systems; resilience of people's lives in the face of climate change, pandemics, social unrest, and other unknowns; the well-being of women and children (especially between conception and a child's second birthday); and the regeneration of natural ecosystems and preservation of biodiversity.

Through the 2 National and 9 Provincial Dialogues the following components of South Africa's pathway were highlighted:

- Changes that must be made and decisions that must be taken and implemented for national food systems to meet the defined expectations by 2030?
- The recognition of the power of collective action which may include forging powerful partnerships and creating mutually reinforcing interventions.
- The need to draw on foundations of science and traditional knowledge and sharing of policy choices and practices that contribute to sustainable food systems.
- The need for voluntary commitments from different stakeholders who undertake to support the transformation of food systems as a contribution to realizing the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The affirmation that strategic instruments and compass for building, directing, monitoring, evaluating, measuring and certifying the progress of structurally transforming food systems in South Africa are the NDP, CAADP and SDGs 2030

- All spheres of government, business, labour and communities must integrate and streamline policies and legislation based on the National Development Plan, National Spatial Development Framework, Provincial Spatial Development framework, District Spatial Development Model, Integrated Development Plan - towards sustainable, community-based food system.

A. STRATEGIC ACTIONS TOWARDS FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION.

South Africa seeks to transform its current food system through actions based on the following key inter-related objectives:

- Enhance Sustainable Local Production for Local Consumption of safe, nutritious and indigenous foods.
- Promote social, economic and environmental resilience.
- Facilitate inclusive, sustainable and competitive value chains; and
- Promote Integrated Food Systems Policies, Legislation, Planning and Governance.

These objectives are interdependent and are anchored on objective two of the NFNSP, i.e. establish inclusive local food value chains to support access to nutritious, affordable food; and the AAMP goal of facilitating inclusive, sustainable and competitive value chains; and will require a comprehensive set of tools and holistic approaches to be realized.

1. Enhance Sustainable Local Production for Local Consumption of safe, nutritious and indigenous foods.

- a) Youth, graduates and women must be elevated by prioritisation, fast tracking and growing their number in access to land and participation in the food system to ensure food and nutrition security at household level.
- b) Smallholder producers should be comprehensively supported to farm sustainably and ensure food availability and income retention at community level.
- c) Agriculture and food production should be reintroduced in school curriculum as a practical subject in schools so that children know the importance of

food production and its effect on their overall health and economic well-being.

- d) Awareness campaigns must be conducted on the importance of breastfeeding to mother and child to prevent stunting, child and adult obesity in households.
- e) Indigenous and aquatic or “blue foods” in the food basket should be promoted to producing these foods at household level.
- f) Marine and inland fresh-water fisheries and aquatic farming must be promoted to address challenges faced by small fishers, harvesters and farmers.
- g) Healthier lifestyles must be promoted through public awareness campaigns to educate consumers on food to serve their nutritional values.
- h) Our country’s food basket must be revised to reflect healthier food options.

2. Promote social, economic and environmental resilience.

- a) Food safety standards should be improved throughout the value chain across provinces to ensure quality food reaches all households and communities.
- b) A tracking and traceability system should be built into our food system to enable anyone to be able to trace back whatever food starting from farm to fork.
- c) Strengthen existing national social protection systems’ design and implementation to enhance their impacts on poverty reduction, health and malnutrition and human capital development by linking to and improving food systems’ performance, inclusiveness, and resilience.
- d) Networks of resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses must be built into social infrastructure and relationships to channel resources, including social protection measures, to households in the rural and areas.
- e) The productivity of natural ecosystems through improved land and water-use planning, climate adaptation and mitigation practices and environmental governance must be continued to promote food security particularly to low-income communities that depend directly on natural resources for their subsistence and livelihoods.

- f) Effective system of biosecurity across the food systems must be maintained to ensure credibility and success.
- g) South Africa's biological resources diversity must include indigenous breeds and the "forgotten" and neglected crops to broaden the food basket and mitigate food security risks through diversification.
- h) Reducing food waste through incentivising repurposing of food, agro-processing opportunities, supporting redistribution of healthy food products and using 4IR to link actors.

3. Facilitate inclusive, sustainable and competitive value chains.

- a) Agri-tourism markets should be used as a leverage to transform food systems' sustainability and market access, increase opportunities for diverse and dynamic markets and create sustainable jobs.
- b) Build inclusive, sustainable and competitive value chains across stakeholders to help identify bottlenecks within the value chain and assist in building a business case for investment, research, learning and development.
- c) The informal food system sector must be equipped and empowered with resources across the entire food systems' value chains.
- d) Food and agricultural hubs in or near rural and peri-urban markets must be established to absorb the output of household farmers and agribusinesses; and
- e) Community land and water food administration systems must be established to facilitate equitable access to quality water, energy, infrastructure, food safety for rural and urban communities.
- f) Balance should be maintained between domestic production and food exports to strengthen the food system and its resilience; and
- g) Food system aggregators must be established in the villages, rural towns and townships to ensure sufficient throughput of the products and services from schools in the villages, community production centres and household producers on a sustainable basis.

4. Promote Integrated Food Systems Policies, Legislation, Planning and Governance

- a) Launch, enhance and fund the already existing centrally coordinated food system governance structure, i.e., the Food Security Council, with a clear mandate, roles and responsibilities supported by clear policies, legislation planning, and governance.
- b) Reconsider the model of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to include communities and academia as part of partnerships

B. LEVERS OF CHANGE

1. Efficient and Effective Governance System

A central coordination structure for the food system must be established or enhanced to coordinate and monitor all food systems activities between government departments, the private sector and community organisations to eradicate hunger and poverty.

2. Information and Technology

The big data and information for food producers must be established including about the 3 million household farmers and their members in former bantustans, commercial farms, mines, towns, townships, informal settlements and metros.

- 4IR and digitisation opportunities across the food system need to be pursued for a variety of purposes, including:
 - a) Sharing information – from supporting farmers to improve soil microbiology to price and market opportunities.
 - b) Mapping and tracking community-level food insecurity and responses.
 - c) Climate-related and agronomy feedbacks – two-way communications.
 - d) Waste management and linking actors to reduce waste.
 - e) Linking stakeholders in the system.
 - f) Early warning systems and alerts;
 - g) Monitoring and tracing zoonotic diseases; and
 - h) Creating awareness about biodiversity and its conservation
 - i)

3. The Competition Act drive of efficiency and competitiveness

Re-examine the Competition Act drive of efficiency and competitiveness in the food system to unlock billions worth of exports and jobs.

4. Government and Business Procurement

Redirect Government and business procurement towards household farmers and small agro- enterprises to promote sustainable community-based production and consumption.

5. Financing

Align and integrate public, community and private investments around a local coordination point to make necessary changes for smallholder producers and communities to access capital and grant funding.

6. Participate in Coalitions

The following coalitions are proposed for consideration to advance the Food Systems Transformation Agenda nationally and regionally:

- Coalition of Actin for Zero Hunger
- Urban Food Systems Coalition
- Healthy diets from sustainable Food Systems for Children, Families and All.

C. INSTITUTIONALIZING¹ STRATEGIC ACTIONS AND LEVERS OF CHANGE

The following are four strategic actions and 5 levers of change, together with the actors, stakeholders and the instruments to effect the building of the new food system in the next nine years in South Africa to meet the NDP and the SGDs goals by 2030 and the AU Agenda 2063:

STRATEGIC ACTIONS	ANCHOR	ACTORS
1. Enhance Sustainable Local Production for Local Consumption of safe and nutritious and indigenous foods.	NFNSP, NDP, NSDF, AAMP, BF, CRDP, EPWP, NGP, PLAS, MAFISA, CASP, Land Care, BSLAP, INP.	DALRRD, DTIC, CoGTA, DWS, DHS, DSD, DSBD, IDC, Land Bank, PIC, DoH, NAMC STATS SA, UNICEF, FAO, SASSA, DBE, Provinces, WUSs, Labour, Industry, Municipalities, SALGA, Banks.
2. Promote social, economic and environmental resilience.	NFNSP, INP, AAMP, BSLA, MIYCF, IYCF, EPWP, CASP, Land Care, SRD, BSLAP	DALRRD, DTIC, DPME, CoGTA, DWS, DSD, DSBD, IDC, Land Bank, PIC, DoH, NAMC, Stats SA, UNICEF, FAO, SASSA, DBE, Provinces, Municipalities, WUSs, Labour, Banks.
3. Facilitate inclusive, sustainable and competitive value chains.	NFNSP, INP, AAMP, EPWP, MAFISA, Blended Finance, CASP, BSLAP	DALRRD, DoH, DTIC, DSBD, NAMC, Stats SA, Land Bank, IDC, PIC, UN Agencies, AU Agencies, EU CoGTA, Provinces, Municipalities, SASSA, DBE, WUSs, Labour, Banks.
4. Promote Integrated Food Systems Policies, Legislation, Planning and Governance	NFNSP, INP, AAMP, EPWP, CPDS, BSLAP	DALRRD, DPME, DBE, DSD, DOH, COGTA, Stats SA, PDAs, UNICEF, FAO, Agricultural Colleges, Universities, Banks.

¹ Levers of change are common to all the strategic actions.

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