



Report: Western Cape NGO-Government Food Relief Coordination Forum

3 September 2020

Introduction

The Western Cape Economic Development Partnership (EDP) convened a Zoom call on 3 September 2020, to discuss the ongoing work being done by NGOs, the Western Cape Government (WCG) and the City of Cape Town to provide Covid-19 food relief and humanitarian support. It was noted that a number of organisations were not able to attend the meeting because connectivity problems caused by of load shedding.

Agenda

1. Civil Society Organisations (CSO) food relief data collection for June and July
2. City of Cape Town food relief programme: feedback from NGO applicants and from CoCT
3. Getting from food aid to food security: Engaging the WCG Recovery Plan
4. For information: food meetings and webinars
5. Next steps

1. CSO food relief data collection for June and July

Thanks to Jan Schenk and his team for the collection efforts at Ikapadata.com, and to the 18 intermediary food organisations and networks that submitted their data on time.

Data collection for June and July was completed yesterday for a 53-day period. The full report is being compiled and will be circulated. This report is important for quantifying collective CSO efforts in the Western Cape, for understanding current and future demand for food, and for moving beyond food aid to more secure food systems and better nutrition.

In summary, 2 235 385 'people days' of food relief were recorded, based on a calculation of the amount of food necessary to feed an adult for a day. Note: This is not the same as the total numbers of meals (soups, stews, sandwiches, porridge), parcels, hampers, digital vouchers and bulk donations supplied over this period, which vary in quantity, nutritional value and frequency of delivery.

This averages to 42 177 'people per day', for the 53-day period (nearly equivalent to the capacity of the Cape Town Stadium!). This figure measures the overall impact of CSO efforts, based on the total recommended daily nutritional input of 2100 kilojoules per day, as recommended by the World Food Programme. (It should be noted that the total number of people that benefited from these efforts is much higher.)

The figures reveal that civil society organisations and private donors, despite donor and volunteer fatigue, continued to play a massive role in addressing hunger during this two-month period. Their work was part of a combined effort, including the Western Cape Education Department (school feeding schemes), CoCT Mayors Relief Fund (where there

was some overlap in the figures) and the SASSA Special Covid-19 grant, which continued to be paid. For the latter, Henry de Grass of SASSA confirmed that, as at 12 August 2020, 325,053 Western Cape SASSA Covid-19 Grants had been approved. Of these, 248,243 had received payment by the same date. A breakdown per area, ward or municipality was not provided.

There is a need to follow up on this data with more specialist discussions, under four main headings or themes:

- Measuring solidarity: The role played by wider networks of supporters, donors (local and foreign), citizen volunteers, foundations, private sector infrastructure, farming sector donations, CANs, etc.
- The process of obtaining CSO data, and the potential use of Airtable software as a common basis for recording data and mapping distribution points.
- Motivating for a shift from quantity (amount of starch) to quality (nutrition) of food relief. This entails exploring the role of traders, vendors, small scale food producers and food gardens in supplementing diets with fresh food and vegetables. Specifically, the Yebo Fresh model should be examined.
- The value of private sector expertise in supporting community initiatives, especially with data, logistics and distribution systems.

Claire McGuinness of the Tableview/Blouberg CAN proposed a sub-group gathering of data collection/research/tech specialists. If anyone could suggest how best to go forward, she volunteered to facilitate or be involved. Claire can be contacted at agentmcguinness@gmail.com.

3. City of Cape Town food relief programme: feedback from NGO applicants and from CoCT

It was explained that the CCT food relief programme is bound by the requirements of the City's grant-in-aid process. This requires applications to be submitted to the Portfolio Committee, the MayCo, and the full Council. Given the monthly schedule of meetings for these bodies, the deadline of 3 September for applications cannot be extended, as this will cause the whole programme to be delayed by a month or more. Implementation from 01 November 2020 is still the aim.

It was reiterated that the programme aims to be as transparent as possible, in order to avoid any queries or come-backs.

Clarity was provided about the COA (Certificate of Acceptability): *every kitchen that is providing food needs to have a COA*. It is not sufficient for only the parent NGO in an application to have a COA, as was previously advised. If kitchens in applications do not have COA's, applicants should still submit their applications by 3 September. The CCT Health team have committed to moving quickly to inspect these kitchens within a month, to allow for implementation in November should their applications be successful.

Similarly, organisations that are struggling to submit applications because of loadshedding complicating the scanning of signatures should still submit by the deadline, and submit scanned signatures afterwards.

A number of organisations on the call reflected on significant barriers to successful application.

- Breadline Africa managed to apply, but it took over 100 man hours to collect the data and compile the 20 attachments, and it was a scramble to get registered on the Treasury Supplier database!
- Souper Troopers ultimately withdrew from the application process because the administrative burdens were too high for their current model (and could not provide

for someone to handle reporting challenges moving forward, as that did not fit in the 7% operational expenses allowed).

- The Delft Action Network was also unable to submit an application. The community kitchens had many questions around reporting requirements that could not be managed within the limitations and complexities of the network structure. This had the unfortunate consequence of some of the community kitchens feeling excluded by the City's application requirements.
- Regrettably, several NPO's did not apply due to not having COAs. If they had been made aware of the "extension" to the deadline in this one respect, they would have applied.

It was clarified that there is only one application process for this food relief programme, despite the money (R25m) being paid out in two tranches.

Luzuko Mdunyelwa of the City of Cape Town committed to providing data to the Forum on numbers of applications as soon as he was able.

Given that CCT is also looking at healthy food systems, beyond the food aid programme, it is important that the Forum should engage with CCT, on co-designing and co-implementing such systems.

The struggle experienced by a number of NGOs in applying for the CCT Food Relief funding is partly as a result of the very formalised regulatory framework of government not being set up to deal with informality – which represents the majority of SA society. If the costs of compliance in this application process could be evaluated, useful information that could be applied to better enabling such processes in future, could be acquired.

Luzuko Mdunyelwa will also provide the data from the previous Mayors Relief Scheme to Jan Schenk to be incorporated into the food data report.

3. Getting from food aid to food security: Engaging the WCG Recovery Plan

The internal process of prioritisation within WCG with respect to the WCG Recovery Plan, is still under way. Relevant items for the Forum within that Plan are therefore not yet ready for discussion. Andrew Boraine is meeting with the WCG next week, and proposed that the Forum meeting on 17 September focus on this issue.

In terms of CSO ideas on community-led recovery, input was received from Erica Inches on behalf of the Cape Town Together Food-Growers' Initiative. This input raised a number of important issues, including:

- Relationships between CSOs and government
- Government policies on urban agriculture, as well as a more enabling environment
- Accessing City infrastructure, support systems and resources
- Alternative economic models.

Erica Inches also submitted a case study from the Helderberg CAN on existing relationships between community-facing organisation ('first responders'), water and sanitation, community gardens and growers (grow what you CAN), and mentoring and crafting, and how to move towards more resilient and thriving communities (attached).

An article on Cape Town Together and the role of CANs appeared in the Daily Maverick: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-08-26-cape-town-together-a-neighbourhood-based-network-of-170-organisations/>.

The experimental Community Recovery Programme was also discussed. This is a partnership between WCG, the DG Murray Trust, the EDP, and 225 community kitchens and local retailers, spazas and informal vendors in 13 Covid-hotspot areas (6 in the Metro

area and 7 in the non-Metro area) in the Western Cape. The aim of the project is not just to provide food aid to vulnerable communities, but to stimulate local economies by circulating money in local areas through use of digital vouchers.

4. For information

Last week saw a Food Governance Community of Practice Meeting on the potential role of Urban Agriculture as a 'site of struggle' in a broader movement for food justice. The link to the report of the CoP meeting is here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12fSd-Uoi5R-0-VrNFe8qWG5mPnR8ItV5/view>.

The list of participants can be seen here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HLtTSkq_ey_8y-ZCV4Bi5BY11FUewKuI/view.

The reports on the Food Dialogues Cape Town 2020 are also being produced, and will be shared with the Forum when they are available. In the interim, they are still available for replaying online at <https://capetown.fooddialogues.info/replays/>.

Forthcoming food meetings and webinars:

There is a free webinar on 9th September 2020 at 4pm (SAST) in a conversation with [Dr Grieve Chelwa](#), MBA Programme convenor and Senior lecture at UCT GSB, to discuss "*The Economic Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Sub-Saharan Africa*". This talk will discuss the economic impact and policy choices of the covid19 pandemic on the economies of Sub Saharan Africa. Date: 9 September 2020. Time: 4pm – 5pm (SAST). [REGISTER HERE](#)

5. Next steps

The next meeting of this forum is in two weeks' time, on **17 September 2020 at 2:00 p.m.**

Invitations will be sent out; participants are encouraged to nominate other role-players in this area who would benefit from, or contribute to, the discussion.

For further information or questions about this report, contact Andrew Boraine of the Western Cape Economic Development Partnership (EDP) at Andrew@wcedp.co.za.

Attachment 1: Food Relief Forum attendance 3 September 2020

Attachment 2: Case study of role of Community Action Networks (CANS) in the Helderberg area