



Report: Western Cape Food Forum

12 November 2020

Introduction

The Western Cape Economic Development Partnership (EDP) convened a Zoom call on 12 November 2020, to discuss a proposal for the future role and approach of the Forum in building a common agenda and joint action between government and civil society (and other sectors) in the Western Cape food and nutrition system.

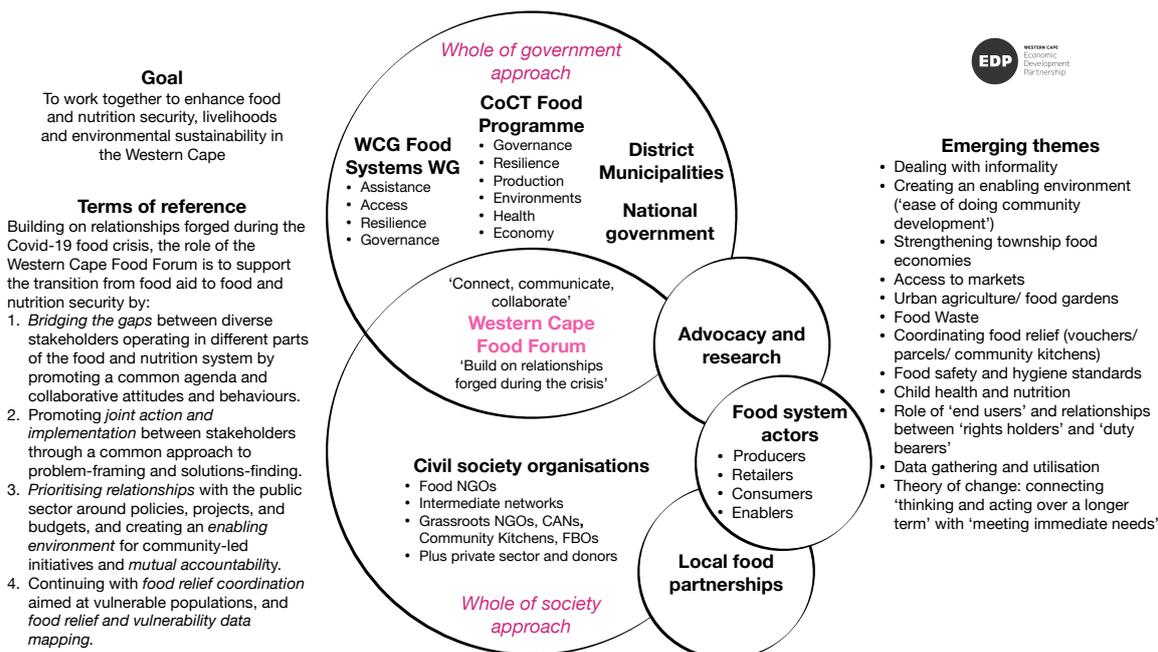
Agenda

1. Proposed goal of the Food Forum and new terms of reference
2. How we aim to do our work – our values and principles
3. Emerging themes and possible work groups
4. Forum participation and engagement strategy
5. Update on public sector participation
6. Knowledge sharing and learning activities
7. Food Forum EU funding proposal
8. Next steps

1. Proposed goal of the Food Forum and terms of reference

Based on input from Forum members over the last month, a proposed goal for the Forum, and proposed terms of reference, were discussed. As depicted in the diagram below, there was consensus on the following:

- **Proposed goal:**
To work together to enhance food and nutrition security, livelihoods, and environmental sustainability in the Western Cape.
- **Proposed terms of reference:**
Building on relationships formed during the Covid-19 food crisis, the role of the Western Cape Food Forum is to support the transition from food aid to food and nutrition security by:
 1. Bridging the gaps between diverse stakeholders operating in different parts of the food and nutrition system, by promoting a common agenda and collaborative attitudes and behaviours.
 2. Promoting joint action and implementation between stakeholders through a common approach to problem-framing and solutions-finding.
 3. Prioritising relationships with the public sector around policies, projects, and budgets, and creating an enabling environment for community-led initiatives and mutual accountability.
 4. Continuing with food relief coordination aimed at vulnerable populations, and food relief and vulnerability data mapping.



It was noted that the process does not yet include all elements of the food system. Some of the elements that were suggested for further consideration and inclusion were:

- The private sector – commercial farming and large retailers, for example. An opportunity for creating trust between the private sector and other food system role players was identified, with a view to non-confrontational discussion of private sector practices. It was suggested that this could include engaging, via the Forum, with chambers of commerce or business organisations.
- The transformation of small-scale activities in the food system should also form part of the discussion, such as converting garden activity to farming, establishing cooperatives, etc.
- Training and capacity-building within the food system was also raised for consideration and inclusion.

Forum members are encouraged to continue to contribute to the refining of the Forum's goals.

2. How we aim to do our work – our values and principles

The discussion then centred on a number of key values and principles that should inform how the Forum does its work. These included:

- Collaborative attitudes and behaviours
- Frequent communication
- Utilising an adaptive leadership approach. This implies not waiting for the 'perfect' data or 'perfect' plan but stepping into action (and building trust in action). At the same time, it means creating space to pause and reflect, learn, and regularly adapt and adjust the plans.
- Decentralisation – encouraging direct action between partners at the local level. The Food Forum is not to act as a centralised gatekeeper.
- Having a partnering approach: help your partners to deliver on their mandates, in a collaborative way.
- Knowledge sharing and learning

- Seeing the food system as a whole, and not just our own projects or local areas or organisation (systems thinking, rather than starting with prescribed mandates). It was noted that permaculture already has a framework for systems thinking, which includes sustainable and resilience thinking. 'Donut Economics' was also noted for intersecting neatly with these principles.
- Having a transdisciplinary approach: building closer links between science (evidence, data, and analysis) and society (needs, priorities, and agency).

3. Emerging issues requiring a common agenda and joint action:

Emerging issues requiring a common agenda and joint action have emerged, based on previous inputs from members, as well as ongoing consultations. The work of the Forum should not, however, be limited to these themes or issues: priorities will emerge in action. This will facilitate the development of a programme of action for the Forum for next year, as well as the potential establishment of thematic working groups.

The emerging themes that were discussed in the Forum include:

- Dealing with informality (i.e., community kitchens, food gardens, unregistered ECD centres, informal traders, spazas, waste pickers, grassroots NGOs, etc.) Public authorities in South Africa, constrained by rigid and highly complex regulatory systems, find it very difficult to transact with informal sector.

Note: SALGA has been doing work on a revised municipal by-law to support informal trading. This could be extended to look at all types of informality. There is also a draft Public Procurement Bill, Chapter Four of which makes potential provision for a community preferential procurement framework, which could form the basis of better community-government partnerships.

- Creating an enabling environment. There are well-established government programmes for reducing red tape or increasing the ease of doing business, aimed at the private sector and stimulating the market. What about 'ease of doing community development' to stimulate social innovation and to create an enabling environment for community-led initiatives?
- Strengthening township food economies
- Access to nutritious food through both formal and informal markets
- Joined up support for urban agriculture / micro farmers / household and community food gardens
- Food Waste
- Coordinating food relief (vouchers/parcels/soup kitchens)
- Food safety and hygiene standards
- Child health and nutrition (with reference, for example, to school feeding schemes and ECDs)
- A focus on 'end users', with a view to combating crime and entitlement
- Relationships between 'rights holders' (generally citizens) and 'duty bearers' (generally the public sector)

- Data gathering and utilisation (including public sector initiatives) – determining what to measure and how, who should collaborate, and how this data should be used.
 - It was suggested that data gathering could begin by mapping all food security programmes, from partners and collaborators, for a comprehensive picture.
 - It was also suggested that the Forum look at creating a 'wiki' of sorts, to start storing research, reports and data sets that members are willing to share. A system for gathering and sharing data could thus be developed.
- Developing a theory of change: connecting 'thinking and acting over a longer term' with 'meeting immediate needs'.

The creation of working groups focused on any of these themes received significant support in the Zoom chat. It was suggested that design thinking and Agile could help to form effective working groups, and that IDEO design group, who work in multi-disciplinary groups, is a helpful case study in this regard.

Forum members who are interested in convening or participating in working groups focused on any of these themes should contact Andrew Boraime at Andrew@wcedp.co.za. These will be discussed further at the next meeting.

4. Forum participation and engagement strategy

The discussion then centred on potential contributors to the goals of the Forum. In all cases, Forum members are encouraged to add individuals, entities or networks to the list below.

Advocacy and research institutions and networks, such as:

- Centre of Excellence in Food Security, UWC and UP
- Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies
- African Centre for Cities, UCT
- Southern Africa Food Lab
- GSB, UCT
- Sustainability Institute, US
- Centre for Complex Systems in Transition, US
- Children's Institute, UCT
- C40 Cities Food Systems Global Initiatives
- ICLEI

Relevant research processes, such as:

- Engaging civil society organisations in food security governance (CoE-CHEC)
- Development of policy briefs concerning food governance (CoE-CHEC)
- Urban food systems for healthy diets in South Africa (US, UCT, UL) + Nourished Child food environment mapping
- Assessing potential for employment-intensive land reform in South Africa (PLAAS)
- Food sensitive planning and urban design
- History and role of food charters
- Two Cape Town food, water, and energy nexus projects, one focusing on governance, one on new technologies

Local food partnerships (food systems work in action, with interesting experimentation), such as:

- Gugulethu Urban Farming Initiative
- Ikhaya Garden, Site C, Khayelitsha
- Food Flow SA (food producers, restaurants, community distribution partners)
- VPUU Community Urban Gardening
- Philippi Agri-hub project
- PHA Food and Farming Campaign

- Cape Town Together Food Growers Initiative
- Stellenbosch Food Security Platform
- Garden Route Food Bank
- SEED in Mitchell's Plain

Food and nutrition advocacy NGOs, such as:

- DG Murray Trust
- Solidaridad Network
- Tekano
- Surplus People's project
- Women on Farms
- People's Health Movement
- Healthy Living Alliance
- WWF
- Southern African Faith Communities Environment Institute
- Ndifuna Ukwazi
- Heinrich Boll Foundation networks

It was then also suggested that the Forum draw in other sectors in the food and nutrition system, over time, such as:

- Production and processing: rural and urban, commercial and small scale
- Retail: Formal and informal, big and small
- Consumers (to address issues of purchasing power, location and distance, pricing)
- Enablers and support organisations

5. Update on public sector food and nutrition security processes

City of Cape Town food relief programme:

It was confirmed that the City of Cape Town programme of assistance for community kitchens is still be implemented before the end of the year.

WCG Food Systems Working Group:

The WCG Food Systems Working Group, in the process of being established, will consist of:

- Convenor – Mogale Sebopeisa, HoD, Department of Agriculture
- Cross-cutting WCG departmental representation with various areas of focus, i.e.
 - Health (First 1000 days, Western Cape on Wellness)
 - Education (National School Nutrition Programme)
 - Cultural Affairs and Sport (After school programme)
 - Social Development (ECD, Community Development, Data)
 - Economic Development (township economies, informal economies)
 - Agriculture (resilient food production, food gardens)
 - Environmental Affairs and Planning (food sensitive planning and design, food waste)
 - Transport and Public Works (public spaces and infrastructure)
 - Department of the Premier (data management)
 - Local government

The aim of this working group is to join forces with the City of Cape Town Food Security Programme and the five District Councils for a 'whole of government' approach to food and nutrition security.

Objectives and outputs of the working group:

1. Build a common cross-cutting approach to food and nutrition security between WCG departments and submit a 'Nourish to Flourish' programme framework to Cabinet for approval by April 2021.
2. Coordinate the WCG's ongoing participation in the Western Cape Food Forum and prepare a list of challenges and blockages in the food system to be addressed by WCG departments.
3. Design and implement three area-based food and nutrition system initiatives to inform the development of an area-based service delivery model.
4. Develop systems to update the mapping of vulnerable areas and populations and the delivery of food relief.
5. Create a food-systems learning platform to enhance continual reflection, feedback, adaptation, and the capturing of learning.

6. Knowledge sharing and learning

- Feedback from Hungry Cities webinar (ICLEI, ACC)

The key outtakes from this webinar were:

- Countries with low food insecurity have an explicit approach to foster food access at a local level.
- The informal economy is central as a key food access strategy for most of the poorest sectors of the population.
- Food insecurity has been a long-term issue which is only really gaining traction now.

In discussion, it was noted that township entrepreneurs and agripreneurs in the food system are operating widely, but are cautious of working with government in any extended way. "They are under the radar, and want to stay there". www.goodtogether.co.za and www.ucangrow.earth are two such small Microenterprise township solutions.

Access to working capital was also identified as a key issue for small-scale businesses in the food system.

- In the lead up to the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021, Forum members are encouraged to join an International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) event on 25 November (starting 4pm) to learn how food systems transformation can be relevant for people living in poverty. Jane Battersby-Leonard from SA one of the keynote speakers. <https://www.iied.org/food-systems-poor-shaping-agenda-for-food-systems-summit>
- The next Centre of Excellence for Food Security engagement, formatted as a workshop with breakout groups in association with ICLEI, is being held later this month. Details are available from Camille Adelle at cadelleup@gmail.com.

7. Food Forum funding application

Andrea Couvert, one of the Forum members, notified the EDP of an EU call for proposals on Enhancing Accountability in South Africa. The specific objective of this call is to reinforce the role of civil society, the private sector and specific state institutions to enhance accountability, democratic engagement, and transparency in South Africa. The proposal would be for a three-year funding programme, starting from July next year.

The first step is to submit a concept note by 8 December. If successful, a full proposal should be submitted by April 2021.

It is proposed that the submission is based on the role of the Food Forum in promoting relationships of mutual accountability between CSOs, government and other stakeholders in the food and nutrition system.

To this end, the EDP will circulate concept note for feedback in about a week's time. Potential co-applicants as well as associates are needed. Forum members who wish to participate in the process should contact Andrew Boraine. (Claire McGuinness and Karen Hewson indicated their willingness to be involved.)

8. Next steps

The next meeting of this forum, the last of the year, will take place on **3 December 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 Forum attendance 12 November 2020