



Report: Western Cape Food Forum

22 April 2021

Introduction

The Western Cape Economic Development Partnership (EDP) convened a Zoom call on 22 April 2021, Earth Day, one year after the establishment of the original Western Cape Food Forum (For background to the Food Forum, see [here](#)). The EDP wishes to thank everyone who has been part of a whirlwind collaborative journey over the past 12 months, for responding to immediate food needs brought on by the pandemic, and for investing in more long-term programmes that seek to make the food system more accessible and sustainable, with better nutritional outcomes.

The theme for this year's Earth Day is [Restore Our Earth](#) "which focuses on natural processes, emerging green technologies, and innovative thinking that can restore the world's ecosystems. In this way, the theme rejects the notion that mitigation or adaptation are the only ways to address climate change. It is up to each and every one of us to Restore Our Earth not just because we care about the natural world, but because we live on it. We all need a healthy Earth to support our jobs, livelihoods, health & survival, and happiness. A healthy planet is not an option — it is a necessity".

Agenda

1. Strengthening local food systems updates
2. Food Forum Working Groups updates
3. Information updates and knowledge sharing
4. Next meeting

1. Strengthening local food economy systems

Strengthening local food economy systems is an important way of starting to transform the food system beyond food relief. The concept of strengthening local food economy systems also ties to the Western Cape Government Nourish to Flourish programme; one of the key focus areas of the programme is how the public sector can better support and enable local food economy systems, and in turn, how these can support better nutritional outcomes. Three examples of ecosystem collaboration at different scales (precinct, neighbourhood, and municipal) were shared with the forum:

Langa food economy system:

- A site visit was hosted on 16th of April to showcase how collaborative organizations are shaping the food system in Langa. The six sites that were visited included a food garden, a future agri-food hub which will provide inputs, seedlings, tools, etc. and become a hub for bringing harvest to pack, grade, and store to strengthen micro farms, a long-standing community kitchen, a cooking school for local youth,

a popular local restaurant, a fruit and veg informal trader, and the Langa Quarter which includes the Ikhaya le Langa restaurant, coffee shop, and entrepreneurship hub.

- Key takeaways from the group included the foundational need for food as well as its cultural ties, the opportunity to use food as a gateway to address non-food related issues, the power of relationships with local officials as well as tried and tested NGOs, the need for places of experimentation, and the need for everyone to see themselves as part of a wider interconnected system.
- Feedback was provided to the Forum by Kurt Ackermann kurt@fairfood.org.za on behalf of the 'strengthening local food economies' working group. A more detailed report of the visit is attached to these minutes.



Figure 1: Lerotholi food garden in Langa adjacent to site of planned agri/food hub

Greater Knysna Food Security Forum:

- The Greater Knysna Food Security Forum was created in September 2020 with a vision to address growing food insecurity exacerbated by the pandemic through empowering people to grow their own food (through home, school, church, creche, and community gardens) using sustainable methods. The Forum's impact is focused on individual, familial, and communal levels and work has already begun in a variety of spaces.
- The Forum is comprised of community members, as well as municipal and government partners and aims to break down isolation and redundancy with transparency. It is coordinated through working groups and the groups share information through Google Drive folders.
- The presentation was provided to the Forum by David Thesen dthesen@gmail.com on behalf of the Knysna Forum. The full presentation can be accessed [here](#).



Figure 2: Members of the Greater Knysna Food Security Forum in action

V&A Waterfront SOLVE Food Cluster Launch:

- Last month, SOLVE was launched as a department of the V&A Waterfront and it will become a non-profit that will lead and amplify the Waterfront’s build back better work – specifically focusing on the ocean economy and food ecosystem. The strategy is anchored around sustainability, opportunity, and inclusivity.
- To date, 150 small businesses already have access to markets through V&A Waterfront efforts, including the new food incubator at Makers Landing which is focused on providing business skills to food entrepreneurs.
- The Food Cluster will pull together existing efforts, look at the ecosystem and value chain of food, and identify which areas the waterfront can intervene most usefully in to test things and potentially scale them. The advantage of the Waterfront is that it is a private sector entity and offers opportunities for experimentation as a “mini city”. The Food Cluster will develop projects (from procurement to waste management) to sort out projects to test, fail, share learnings, build on successes, and create prototypes that can be used outside of the waterfront (hunger, food gardening, waste management are all focus areas).
- For more information contact Heather Parker hparker@waterfront.co.za.



V&A Food Projects

FOOD HUB



- Wholesale opportunity to the Waterfront – plus immediacy
- Convenience, consistency, pricing and market access for inclusive small scale and shorter supply chain suppliers.
- Supporting and developing regenerative suppliers
- Expanding retail market for small scale food producers.

FOOD WASTE

Major waste categories are:

- Food that can be “rescued” for consumption
- Organic waste that cannot be consumed
- Inorganic waste

How can we extract the value in these categories of waste?

Zero plastics

URBAN FARMING

- Bees
- Seaweed/Aquaculture
- Urban agriculture/ working urban gardens
- Tech solutions



INNOVATION SPACE

- How might the Waterfront amplify the innovation agenda?
- Where is the need, and where is the opportunity in Food labs? Plant-based? Vegan? Increasing access to food? Education? Tech solutions?

STORY TELLING & THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

- There's a richness of stories about food that need to be told
- Food Indaba/ dialogues and other events
- Documenting the work that is done, and synthesising thought leadership.
- Shared learnings
- Data analysis

BADGING & BEHAVIOUR

How might behavioural science be enlisted to:

- Increase consumer awareness?
- Nudge our food value chain into increasing their support for sustainability, inclusivity and opportunity?

FOOD RELIEF

- Crisis response is one thing. But food insecurity is always with us. How can we make our response sustainable?



Feedback from participants:

- Amy Murgatroyd (UCOOK) – there has also been a collaboration called KHULISA AMAFAMA between UCOOK, PEDI, and Abalimi Bezekhaya working with four farmers to test a model of production planning for UCOOK’s market needs and support them with inputs and mentorship as well as connections to funding from the WCG Department of Agriculture or the Violence Prevention for Urban Upgrade (VPUU). For more information contact amy@ucook.co.za, or view [here](#).

2. Update from Food Forum Working Groups

In addition to the site visit hosted by the Strengthening Local Food Economies working group, the Enabling Urban Agriculture working group participated in/attended the Cape Town Together Food Growers Initiative Circular Economy “Waste” Solutions co-learning webinar on 20th of April to showcase solutions from the smallest to largest efforts. A replay of the event can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6kTyH1az0g> and the group is thinking about ways to become involved in the upcoming International Compost Week in the first week of May.

There has also been a proposal to convene a working group to look at data for development approaches. SA Harvest and Claire McGuinness have both been working in and around data so far, Claire has volunteered to convene a food and development data group. Those interested in participating can respond to this Forum report email or contact Claire directly at agentmcguinness@gmail.com.

3. Information updates and knowledge sharing

- **Food Governance Community of Practice Meeting: [Impact of Covid on Small-scale Fisheries](#)**
 - Feedback from Camilla Adelle: fisheries are sometimes fragmented from food systems conversations even though they are an important component of the food system (particularly in Western Cape). Challenges in the fisheries group mirror other challenges in the food system – impact of lockdown, resources leaving communities, relationships with government and permitting.
- **Article - [Responding to Covid at street level: Working with love to feed hungry children in Imizamo Yethu](#), Daily Maverick, 15 April.**
- **Cape Town Fresh Produce Market**
 - The [Cape Town Fresh Produce Market](#) plays an important role in the Cape Town food system. To date, there have been issues with transportation and storage for small actors operating in the food system. ICLEI Africa has been working to identify solutions (such as distributed storage facilities) to reduce costs of transportation through the Cape Town Fresh Produce Market Lever for Increased Nutrition, Food Availability and Economic Participation project
 - More time will be spent in a future Forum to learn about the Cape Town Fresh Produce Market. For more information, see the short video in the link (courtesy Sherwyn Thompson, Cape Town Market): <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DH2k58j4q8vedbJjDyP9YqbJRRcpejQ/vi>
- **Real Reform for Early Childhood Development (ECD) campaign**
 - Claire McGuinness drew the attention of the Forum to an ECD reform campaign, as there is a close connection between local food systems and ECDs. The campaign calls for five simple reforms.



- Further details of the campaign can be accessed [here](#).
- The Western Cape Government is also interested in promoting universal access to ECDs, this can provide a potential link between the Forum, the Nourish to Flourish working group, and ongoing ECD efforts.
- **Feedback on submission to EU proposal call: "Building accountability in action and from the community level in the Western Cape food and nutrition system"**

- The proposal unfortunately did not qualify to go into the next round. However, EDP feels the proposal is still valid and will be approaching other potential donors.

Upcoming events ([noted in the events calendar](#)) include:

- 6th of May workshop co-hosted by the Western Cape Food Governance Community of Practice and the City of Cape Town on the role of the informal food trade in Cape Town's food system. Outputs will feed into the informal trade bylaw review process. [Register here for this online dialogue.](#)
- 11th of May feedback session on the research conducted by the Centre of Excellence in Food Security on the "Mobilisation of Civil Society Organisations providing Food Aid during the Covid Crisis". Zoom meeting - Register [here](#).
- 24-28th of May ICLEI Rise Africa Urban Festival. Register for sessions [here](#).
- ICLEI/ FAO Food Dialogue for Cape Town (more information will be shared with the Forum soon).

4. Next steps

The next meeting of this Forum will take place on Thursday **20 May 2021 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. If any attendees were participating for the first time, are not on the contact data base, and would like to receive regular invitations and reports, they should provide their name, organisation and contact details to Rhonda Snyders of the EDP at rhonda@wcedp.co.za.

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

Attachment 1: Food Forum attendance

Attachment 2: Report on visit to Langa local food economy ecosystem