

**Impact of Food Security Projects on Poverty Alleviation in Limpopo Province, South
Africa**

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ABSTRACT

Globally food security projects are initiated to feed the entire world population at a level adequate to ensure that everyone can be free of hunger and fear of starvation. South Africans are engaging themselves in community projects in order to fight against poverty. The aim is to ensure that no one should live without enough food because of economic constraints or social inequities. The existence of most food security projects in Limpopo Province was not known and most of them were not properly profiled. Currently, the food security projects are not properly profiled in Limpopo Province and therefore, there is little evidence of their contribution towards poverty alleviation.

Throughout the world, food security projects are introduced in order to combat hunger and fear of starvation. Since 1994, local, provincial and national government Departments, business and non-governmental organizations in South Africa have been introducing various types of food security projects. However, rarely have these projects been adequately evaluated or profiled to build an understanding of their performance. Thus, this study of food security projects in Limpopo Province was carried out to provide answers to these issues. Agro-based food security projects in Capricorn, Mopani, Sekhukhune, Vhembe and Waterberg Districts were mapped out and profiled. A mixed methods approach was adopted. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 62 respondents. Stratified sampling was used to select the type of project such as vegetable production, livestock production, broiler production, and pig production in all the five districts of Limpopo Province, while purposive sampling was used to select the participants to represent each sampled project. Each project was 'audited', specifically focusing on the following components: economic, political, environmental, social, health and education. In Limpopo Province, seventy percent of the food security projects were government funded and thirty percent were self-financing. Most of the food security projects under this study were found to be nineteen years old. Various statistical tests were conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Out of the 361 projects studied, 345 were found to be functional. The Limpopo Departments of Agriculture, and Health and Social Development funded 138 of the food security projects. ANOVA was used to test if significant difference exists between the effects of functional and dysfunctional food security projects on members.

It was confirmed that the food security projects were alleviating poverty. Most of the projects enhanced access to food in surrounding communities, apart from creating temporary employment and providing space for youth to practice farming.

The findings of this study cannot be generalized as this study was conducted in Limpopo Province of South Africa. The findings may not necessarily produce the same results for other

provinces in the republic of South Africa, therefore there is a need to conduct similar study in other provinces within the republic of South Africa.

Key words: Evaluation; food security; poverty; poverty alleviation; audit.