



social development

Department:
Social Development
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY ON SOCIAL RELIEF
OF DISTRESS (FOOD PARCELS OR RELIEF
INTERVENTION) IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE**

COMPILED BY: RESEARCH AND EVALUATION UNIT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

NORTH WEST PROVINCE

MARCH 2024

i. ACRONYM AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACDP	Assistant Community Development Practitioners
ASW	Auxiliary Social Workers
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CDP	Community Development Practitioners
CNDC	Community Nutrition Development Centre
CWP	Community Works Programme
DoH	Department of Health
DSD	Department of Social Development
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FDC	Food Distribution Centres
IFSS	Integrated Food Security Strategy
GHS	General Household Survey
STATS SA	Statistics South Africa
HF&NSP	Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme
HFIAS	Household Food Insecurity Access Scale
SA	South Africa
SRD	Social Relief of Distress
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SW	Social Workers
PFDC	Provincial Food Distribution Centre
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPOs	Non Profit Organizations
ToC	Theory of Change

This report has been independently compiled and produced by the Sub – Directorate: Research and Evaluation in the Department of Social Development in the North West Province.

Submitted by:

Mr TPL Mosieleng

Acting Accounting Officer:

Department of Social Development
North West Province

Provident House Building

University Drive

Mmabatho

2735

Tel: 018 388 3787

Email: tmosieleng@nwpg.gov.za

Submitted to:

Mr. Mawelela

Deputy Director General:

Office of the Premier
North West Provincial Government

3rd Floor Ga-Rona Building

Private Bag x 129

Mmabatho

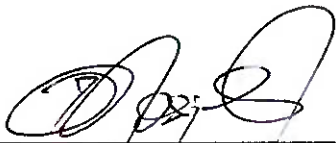
2735

Tel: 018 388 3040

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Department	North West Department of Social Development
Project	Evaluation of Food Relief Intervention
Document Type	Evaluation Report
Title	Impact Evaluation of the Food Parcels/Intervention
Author	Research and Evaluation Unit
Document Number	DEP 2023/24

Official Sign Off



Mr TPL Mosieleng

Acting Accounting Officer

North West Department of Social Development

Date: 15/08/2024

ii. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The departmental Research and Evaluation Unit, would like to express their profound gratitude to the Social Relief of Distress programme for their support in granting the Research & Evaluation Unit acquiescence, to undertake the impact evaluation of their Food Relief Intervention programme implemented by the Department across the Province. The Unit is grateful to the following management team, Ms M. Mekgwe; Dr. L. Gasealahwe; Mr. E. Gaaname Mr. T. Moreo; Ms. L. Tlhaganeng to mention few.

The Research and Evaluation team would also like to express gratitude for the Chief Director: Integrated Social Services, for the approval of the Evaluation concept or proposal and the implementation plan thereof. The support of the Chief Directorate is always appreciated and embraced.

A sincere appreciation goes to all the participants of this evaluation study, who willingly shared their experiences about food parcels and its impact thereof. This evaluation study would not have been possible to complete if it was not for the submission and willingness of the participants, to make meaningful contributions in this study. The Research and Evaluation team is truly indebted to you, Community Development Practitioners; CDP Supervisors; Social Workers, SW Supervisors, Auxiliary Social Workers and Assistant Community Development Practitioners.

The team is also grateful to the Officials of the Department of Social Development across all the four (04) districts, which were instrumental in ensuring that this evaluation becomes a success. The districts and service points facilitated communication and mobilization of beneficiaries of the SRD Programme.

On a final note, great thanks to the Research and Evaluation team for their tireless efforts during fieldwork of data collection, capturing and analysis. Your efforts are appreciated and will not go unnoticed.

iii. DECLARATION

This report was prepared and compiled by the Sub-Directorate Research and Evaluation. The Departmental Evaluation Technical Steering Committee comprised of the programme managers at head office and districts respectively was

established. The technical steering committee included the acting Deputy Director: Research and Evaluation, who served as the chairperson of the committee. The key responsibility of the technical steering committee was to oversee the implementation of the evaluation, make improvement comments and approve the report.

Steering Committee Members:		
Position	Organisation	Designation
Chairperson		
Mr T. Moreo	DSD	Acting Deputy Director: Research and Evaluation
Members		
Mr. E. Gaaname	DSD	Director: Social Relief of Distress
Ms. L. Tlhaganeng	DSD	Social Work Supervisor: Social Relief of Distress
Secretariat and Project Management		
Mr T. Mtotoba	DSD	Evaluation Practitioner
Mr P. Kgopane	DSD	Evaluation Practitioner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Department of Social Development undertook the Impact Evaluation study on Food Relief Intervention, as part of the approved 2023-26 Departmental Evaluation Plan implemented in the 2023/24 financial year and as part of the Provincial Research and Evaluation Agenda. The evaluation focused precisely on the data provided in the 2019-2023 Annual Reports of over 50 000 beneficiaries who received food parcels from the Social Relief of Distress Programme. The Department through the Social Relief of Distress Programme serves as an important support intervention that responds to the triple challenges that continue to impede most communities, by reducing the impact of poverty through social support that promote optimal achievement of a better quality of life.

2. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the impact of Food parcels or Relief Intervention has on the beneficiary's livelihoods and to explore the in-depth understanding and experiences on what changes were brought by, as a result of the implementation of the Food Parcels or Relief Intervention largely amongst individuals and household affected by disasters or undue hardships in the province.

3. APPROACH TO THE EVALUATION

The evaluation applied the mixed method research approach. This is often referred as triangulation of research methods. According to Creswell (2009) the purpose of triangulation is to increase the credibility and validity of the results. Triangulation is a process of verification that increases validity by incorporating several viewpoints and methods. In the social sciences, it refers to the combination of two or more theories, data sources, methods, or investigators in one study of a single phenomenon to converge on a single construct and can be employed in both quantitative (validation) and qualitative (inquiry) studies.

4. EVALUATION METHOD

The respondents of this evaluation included food parcels recipients as the actual beneficiaries of the intervention and key respondents identified (SASSA, Municipalities, Home Affairs, Tribal Authority, and Health Department). The evaluation used different methods to collect data, including Literature Review, Interviews, Focus Group Discussions and a Semi-qualitative structured survey.

5. OVERVIEW OF THE INTERVENTION

South Africa's Social security policies have been made known to improve livelihoods and food security. These policies have proven to be beneficial between 1997 and 2006 with 53% of households reportedly lifted out of poverty. Social Relief of Distress is an important intervention that has the potential to provide temporary relief for poor households and those whose livelihoods and access to food may be limited by disasters. Social Relief of Distress is one of South Africa's key Social Assistance Programmes, designed to address specific lifecycle and other risks to groups of people that cannot partake in the labour market and therefore face the risk of poverty.

Given the high unemployment rate and limited access to unemployment insurance for workers not in formal employment, the programme underscores the critical role in mitigating poverty and an important government intervention to respond to the triple challenges. The SRD Programme is part of the adopted Departmental approach that focuses and responds to the cause and effects of social vulnerability and marginalisation.

6. KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

6.1. RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS

The evaluation questions were, as follows;

- To what extent is the intervention relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries?

- Is the intervention meeting its intended objectives or goals in its current design or form?

The findings of the evaluation demonstrated that the SRD Programme is relevant and meeting the needs of the majority of its beneficiaries. The findings of this evaluation also demonstrated that the majority of the respondents (63%) were females as compared to the (37%) of their male counterparts. Women and Children are normally the ones who are vulnerable and bear the brunt of poverty. However, there was no biasness in terms of gender during the mobilization of the beneficiaries. The Social Relief of Distress Programme caters for all the age categories of the People who are vulnerable and poor. These included Children, Young People, adults and Older Persons. The majority of the respondents (58%) were from rural areas, (29%) semi-urban areas and (13%) from farm areas. The above responses clearly demonstrated the relevance and appropriateness of the SRD Programme.

6.2. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME/INTERVENTION

- Is the Food Relief Intervention achieving its intended objectives or goals?
- How effective are food parcels to beneficiaries?

The majority of the respondent's demonstrated positive impression and important significance of the food parcels on their livelihoods. The majority of the respondents were content with the food items of the food parcels as being sufficient enough to provide all individual needs in their respective household. This clearly indicates that the implementation of this programme is being executed properly to reach its intended goals and objectives.

6.3. EFFICIENCY

The majority of the respondents (65%) agreed with the fact that the SRD Programme is reaching the intended beneficiaries. It was also appealing to note that the majority of the respondents, wish for the Department to continue to support the intervention as majority of people are without employment. The operational challenges as captured were noted. There were areas wherein it was difficult tracing beneficiaries due to changes on their contact details. The efficiency in terms of the implementation of the SRD Programme is as per the design of the programme.

6.4. IMPACT

The SRD Programme with its food parcels or relief intervention has a profound impact on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries. There is noticeable change brought by this intervention into the lives of beneficiaries. The majority of the respondents demonstrated that the programme is addressing the state of hunger for the majority of the households. The majority of them expressed sentiments that *"It makes a significant difference for me because I am on chronic medication"*; *"The intervention creates a multilink for beneficiaries with different stakeholders to responds to our problems"*. The impact of the SRD Food Relief Intervention brings change on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries in terms of hunger, crisis situation and in their hardships. People are able to take their medication after receiving the food pack and that ensures well-being of individuals. They emphasised the significance of this programme and that it should be supported continuously.

6.5. SUSTAINABILITY

The majority of the respondents demonstrated that there is absolute value for money in the implementation of this programme. This programme has a significant impact on the livelihoods of the majority of the respondents, such that they suggested strategies on how the Department can meaningfully contribute to their sustainability.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following four key recommendations were made with the view to strengthen the implementation and impact of the SRD Programme:

- Social Relief of Distress Programme to institutionalise the Standard Operating Procedure to ensure that there is a uniform and standardised approach in terms of implementation.
- There is a need for the Department to develop a turnaround strategy in relation to beneficiary identification and distribution as this hinders the operations of the

programme for better impact. This was of the view that identification of beneficiaries are effected daily without realising distribution timeously.

- It is recommended that monitoring systems be introduce for strengthening of the SRD food parcels or relief intervention to ensure effectiveness and efficiency that beneficiation reach the most vulnerable households.
- The Social Relief of Distress Programme's intervention strategies should be in line with the findings of the household needs assessment, given that it is an urgent program with a practical focus.

CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Social Development in the North West Province, undertook the Impact Evaluation of the Food Relief Intervention. The evaluation is part of the approved 2023-26 Departmental Evaluation Plan implemented in the 2023/24 financial year and it is also part of the Provincial Research and Evaluation Agenda. DSD in the North West Province has a functional evaluation system in place and culminates in the development of the Departmental Evaluation Plan. It is a Multi-Year Evaluation Plan compiled within the context of the National Evaluation Policy Framework (2019).

The emphasis of evaluation approach in this report seeks to give the insight on the impact of the food relief intervention fondly known as “*food parcel*”, on how it has altered the livelihoods of its beneficiaries. The evaluation focused precisely on the data provided in the 2019-2023 Annual Reports of more than 50 000 beneficiaries who received or benefited from food parcels provided by the Social Relief of Distress Programme. Since the introduction and implementation of the food relief intervention, there has never been any evaluation conducted to assess its impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and its sustainability. The evaluation study seeks to answer the question; had it not been for the implementation of the SRD Programme, what would have been the situation of individuals and households affected by disasters or undue hardships in the province? What changes were brought about as a result of the implementation of the SRD Programme?

For the purpose of this evaluation report the terms food parcels, social relief of distress or food relief will be used interchangeably. Social Relief of Distress Programme aims to render short term intervention response both dealing with conventional temporary situations of need and rapidly in emergency situations in respect of an individual, a household or a community in the case of a disaster,

hunger or temporary relief in the cases of insufficient means. The primary purpose of SRD is to ensure that vulnerable people in dire material need who are unable to meet their families' most basic needs, have a means of subsistence.

The Department of Social Development in the North West Province is responding to the triple challenges that continue to impede its communities, by reducing the impact of poverty through social support programmes that promote optimal achievement of a better quality of life for those fronting hardship situations. It is against the aforementioned stance that the Sub-Directorate: Research and Evaluation jointly with Social Relief of Distress programme, saw it fit to undertake an impact evaluation study on Food Relief Intervention in responding to the needs of vulnerable individuals and households in the North West Province.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE INTERVENTION

Poverty, unemployment, and inequality are central contributing factors to the persistent food insecurity in South Africa. Over 50 per cent of the population lives in poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2017). The majority of those living in poverty are children, the elderly and the disabled. These individuals are unable to contribute to the country or to their household economies (Todaro and Smith, 2015). South Africa has a high dependency ratio, which was estimated by the World Bank to be 52.28 per cent in 2017. The dependency ratio is the number of people below the age of 14 and above 65 who do not participate in the workforce, compared with the total population between the ages 15 and 64. These vulnerable groups are not only supported by families, but by other government programme through of social assistance.

The problem associated with hunger experienced by an increasing number of citizens due to social vulnerability and high unemployment rate is linked mostly to high poverty rates in the country. The Constitution offers rights to services for citizens through the Bill of Rights. Section 27 provides that every citizen has the right to access sufficient food and water, and social assistance should be provided to those unable to support themselves. Within this framework, The North West

Department of Social Development derived the mandate from Social Assistance Act No.13 of 2004 which makes provision for the implementation of Social Relief of Distress interventions. Social Relief of Distress is an important intervention that has the potential to provide temporary relief for poor households and those whose livelihoods and access to food may be limited by disasters.

SRD Programme through its food relief intervention have a positive and important impact on a wide variety of outcomes, including nutrition and food security, educational attainment, health, and enhanced livelihoods. SRD is provided for a period of a month in the form of food parcels. SRD beneficiaries receive food parcel containing starch-rich foods (10kg maize meal and 5kg rice), protein-source foods (1kg soya, four tins of baked beans, four tins of fish), two litres of cooking oil, 1kg salt and three non-food items.

SRD is one of South Africa's key Social Assistance Programme's designed to address specific lifecycle and other risks to groups of people that cannot participate in the labour market and therefore face the risk of poverty. The current institutional arrangement of SRD programme in the Department facilitate for the SASSA to issue retail food voucher in a grant administration system during a declared state of disaster and DSD in a material support arrangement through food parcels.

Food Parcels beneficiaries within the context of the North West Department of Social Development are assessed by social workers as a normal social work practice. The assessment allows Social Workers to gain a thorough understanding of the situation that each household is in, how prevalent their socio-economic is, and in what way their situation affects them. Then this process takes place in relation to determining the socio-economic situation/status of every household, directly or indirectly affected. Social workers assess the information supplied by applicants telephonically or physically, and against the set qualification criteria. The beneficiaries of this programme are households and individuals without visible means of support to sustain themselves, households affected by disasters; Youth-headed households who require food relief; beneficiaries who are sick at home, weak and require food relief; households with no income, those experiencing undue hardship and hunger; Households experiencing death under exceptional circumstances.

The Department of Social Development in the North West Province has been implementing SRD or distributing food parcels to majority individuals and households. SRD intends to complement other existing Departmental food security programmes, despite these efforts there are limited evaluations of their effectiveness and no evaluations of post programme outcomes (Betancourt et al., 2013; Cluver et al., 2012; King et al., 2009). It is against this stance that the Sub-Directorate: Research and Evaluation jointly with the Social Relief of Distress Programme, saw it fit to undertake the Impact Evaluation of Food Relief intervention. Since the introduction of this intervention or measure, there has never been any evaluation conducted to assess the in-depth understanding and experiences of beneficiaries and considerations on how the intervention seeks out measures in achieving economic and fostered social reliance objectives.

3. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The following were the objectives of this evaluation as derived from the overarching purpose of the evaluation:

- To assess the impact of the food relief interventions and to determine how the intervention or measures impact on the livelihood of beneficiaries.
- To explore challenges linked to its implementation.
- To identify the linkage of food parcel beneficiaries to developmental opportunities.
- To provide possible recommendations or inputs to achieve profound developmental outcomes.

4. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions are normally developed based on the objectives of the study. In the context of this evaluation, questions were developed using the OECD Evaluation Criteria for Development Assistance as follows.

4.1. RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS OF THE INTERVENTION

In the context of this evaluation, the evaluation questions are, as follows;

- To what extent is the intervention relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries – Diagnostic evaluation or situational analysis?
- Is the intervention meeting its intended objectives or goals in its current design or form?

4.2. EFFECTIVENESS

- Is the Food Relief Intervention achieving its intended objectives or goals? How effective are food parcels to beneficiaries?

4.3. EFFICIENCY

- How efficient is the food relief intervention or measures, towards meeting its intended objectives?
- How has the intervention been implemented? Is the intervention reaching all the beneficiaries on time?
- What are the challenges in terms of the implementation of the food relief intervention?

4.4. SUSTAINABILITY

- What is the sustainability plan for the food parcels in its current design in the schools across the North West Province? (Will beneficiaries realise self-reliance goal after Departmental support?)
- What are the best practices and key lessons learnt from the implementation of the intervention?
- What are the key recommendations to improve the impact and profound developmental outcomes across the Province?

5. DEFINITION OF CENTRAL CONCEPTS

Household: One person or a group of people who occupy a common dwelling and who provide themselves jointly with food and other essentials for living.

Risk of hunger: The limited or uncertain access to nutritious, adequate and safe foods, including involuntarily cutting back on meals or food portions, or not knowing the source of the next meal. Consistent access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources.

Social protection: All initiatives that: (1) provide income (cash) or consumption (food) transfers to the poor; (2) protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks; (3) “Enhance the social status and rights of the excluded and marginalised” (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004, p.9).

Vulnerability: Refers to the full range of factors that place people at risk of becoming food insecure. The degree of vulnerability for an individual, household or group of persons is determined by their exposure to the risk factors and their ability to cope with or withstand stressful situations.

Inequality: The existence of unequal opportunities and rewards for different social positions or statuses within a group or society.

Food Relief: Meeting the needs of individuals and families during emergencies and crises such as natural disasters. Food relief are not adequate to meet the demands or to address the food security requirement of providing families with ongoing access to nutritious food in socially acceptable ways (Berg & Gibson, 2022; Hall & Partners, 2022)

Social Relief: Refers to the alleviation of the need of persons by means of the temporary and immediate rendering of material assistance. Social Assistance Act No 59 of 1992 states that the Director-General may, subject to the provisions of the Act make a financial award if are satisfied that such person is in need of Social Relief of Distress.

Social relief of distress: Social relief of distress is defined as “a temporary provision of assistance intended for persons in such dire material need that they are unable to meet their families’ most dire needs” (Department of Social Development, 2010, p. 2).

6. THE SIGNIFICANCE OR VALUE OF THE EVALUATION

The findings of this evaluation seek to sensitise or conscientious the Departmental Management, of the value and significance of SRD Programme in respect of its food relief intervention, seeks to suggest alleviation approaches to lift people out of poverty.

The evaluation study intends to display the use the food parcel programme as a starting point on a family's journey out of poverty. The findings of the evaluation will also sensitise the Departmental Management Committee on the areas of this intervention that need to be refined and improved where necessary. It necessitates improvement or strengthening. The findings of this evaluation will enable identification of gaps and policy considerations or imperatives to guide programme decisions.

7. EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOLLOWED IN THIS STUDY

The following evaluation procedures were followed through out until the completion of the evaluation study:

- The terms of references or what is normally referred as the evaluation proposal or concept documentation for the evaluation study was developed and approved by Chief Director responsible for the Integrated Social Services.
- The implementation plan was developed and approved by the Acting Head of Department.
- Once all these technicalities are addressed, a provincial evaluation team undertook inception meetings with all Service Points and Districts to deliberate on the introduction and purpose of the study and to solicit their support for the implementation of the study.
- Data collection tool (questionnaire) was developed in consultation with the programme managers at head office and districts to ensure ownership of the end-product. The Department has also fostered a research partnership with the North West University to form part during the development of the questionnaire.

- There was also communication to all stakeholders and participants on the study, both by emails and telephonically.
- It was also relevant to obtain permission to collect data from all beneficiaries across the Province. For data collection, research and evaluation officials were working with each district to facilitate data collection.
- Data was collected; captured and analysed by the research and evaluation team and a report was compiled.

8. LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION STUDY

This study was delimited to the four Districts offices of the Department of Social Development namely: Bojanala District, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District, Dr Ruth Segomotsi-Mompati and Ngaka Modiri Molema District. The participants of this study were Social Relief of Distress Beneficiaries and other Key role players, such as Department of Health, Social Security Agency and Local Municipalities. Qualitative data were collected from the participants only.

In the context of this evaluation study, limitations refer to those issues that are considered to be the weaknesses of the study. The limitations of the study can easily be understood to mean the parameters within which the research is to be undertaken. In the context of this evaluation the following limitations were registered.

- The number of beneficiaries reached was lower than the planned target of at least 50% of the beneficiaries per service point. This was largely due to the fact that the majority were of the view that they are forever on the waiting list and others were untraceable from the databases.
- The number of key stakeholders or role players participated in the study was also substantially low and this was attributed to competing activities and other engagements from their respective agencies or departments.
- The majority of the respondents could not read nor write, therefore the evaluation team had to translate questions into their vernacular and write their responses, which was exhaustive and time consuming.

- Financial and Human resource for this evaluation was a serious limitation.
- The report did not cover interview schedule for Departmental officials attached to the programme.
- The evaluation and research team does not have a designated budget for research and evaluation activities. Therefore all evaluation and research activities are undertaken internally by the Sub: Directorate Research and Evaluation. The financial implications are incurred on the operational costs such subsistence and travelling and accommodations were possible. Budget constraints pose many challenges for the research team to meticulously execute the research projects.
- The Sub: Directorate Research and Evaluation is grossly under-staff and this has had a significant impact on ensuring the successful implementation and completion of the project. The evaluation team is comprised of Acting Manager and three research assistants.

9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Researchers have an obligation to ensure that they adhere to certain ethical standards in all phases of the research process. In the case of the evaluation study, reported here, the following ethical aspects or considerations were adhered to during the course of the evaluation.

Furthermore, the following ethical considerations were considered but not limited to the following:

- **No harm to the respondents**, In this evaluation study, the research and evaluation team protected and maintained the respondents against any harm, sensitivity towards emotionality and physical discomfort (De Vos et al. 2005). The respondents' rights to withdraw from participating in the study at any time was respected and upheld.
- **Violation of privacy**, in this evaluation report the research and evaluation team respected each respondent's rights to privacy, (De Vos et al. 2005).
- **Voluntary participation**, in the context of this evaluation report, the research participants voluntarily participated thus they were not coerced to take part in this

evaluation. The respondents knew that they had a choice to participate and could withdraw at any stage.

- **Confidentiality and anonymity**, all information provided was treated with strict confidentiality and maintained as such. Anonymity was emphasized at all times, thus no identification particulars of the respondents will be required (Rubin & Babbie, 2005).

-

10. LINKAGE OF THE EVALUATION STUDY TO 14 NATIONAL DEVELOPEMNT PLAN OUTCOMES/PROVINCIAL DEVELOPEMNT PLAN AND DEPARTMENTAL STRATEGIC PLAN

NDP Outcome Two: A long and a healthy life for all South Africans

This is done through the implementation of integrated services aimed at mitigating the social and economic impact of poverty. The services aim at creating a temporary safety net for people who experience hunger, poverty, affected by disasters and undue hardships and linking the affected to sustainable livelihood programmes.

NDP Outcome Seven: Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities and food security

This is aimed at improving access to integrated services that include implementation of food securing programme (food parcels). The department also responds to the needs identified in communities by providing financial assistance in the form of social grants to individuals and households, Implementation of programmes that facilitate effective linkages between grants and sustainable livelihood programmes that are mainly in rural communities.

NDP Outcome Eight: Sustainable Human Settlements and an improved quality of household life

The Department is responsible for improving access to basic services through programmes which are nearest to the communities based on their felt needs. Identification of individuals and households are facilitated through home visit conduct. Distribution of food parcels to households is therefore intended to contribute to their economic development and untimely improved their lives.

Sectoral MSTF Priority 4: Consolidating the Social Wage through reliable and quality basic services

The Department is responsible to responds to food security programmes by implementing services that responds to poverty, inequality and vulnerability. This is achieved at improving access to integrated services that includes provision of food parcels to food insecure households and to set integration between multiple stakeholders across socio ecological spectrum in order to move from a limited or small-scale programme implementation to a larger societal application of integrated strategic interventions.

Departmental Strategic Plan Outcome 3: Empowered, resilient, individuals, families and sustainable communities

The Departmental Strategic Plan **Page 93** intends to contribute to the reduction of poverty and food insecurity through empowering individuals and households to be resilient and self-sustainable by implementing food security programmes that has developmental opportunities (linkage to sustainable livelihood programmes). This is achieved through initiating community development interventions that builds assets, capacities and capabilities to the poor marginalised individuals and households.

CHAPTER TWO: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

2. THE TYPE OF EVALUATION STUDY

The main focus of this evaluation was on the Impact evaluation.

2.1. IMPACT EVALUATION

The National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF, 2019) describes impact evaluation as an approach that measures changes in outcomes, and the well-being of target beneficiaries, that are attributable to a specific intervention. Impact evaluations assess the causal links between an intervention and identified changes, usually comparing with a counterfactual (what would have happened if the intervention had not happened).

This impact evaluation seeks to assess and determine the impact of the Food Relief Intervention or measures on the beneficiaries of the Programme.

2.2. APPROACH TO IMPACT EVALUATION

The DPME (2014:2) proposes the following elements for approaching an impact evaluation study:

- Clarifying objectives and values;
- Developing a theory of change;
- Answering descriptive questions;
- Answering causal questions; and
- Summarising evidence into an overall judgement

2.3. LINKING DAC CRITERIA TO EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criterion provides an appropriate framework for synthesising and consolidating the findings and structuring the evaluation report. The five DAC evaluation criteria are based on the notion that evaluation is an assessment “to determine the relevance and fulfilment (appropriateness) of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability” of efforts supported by aid agencies (OECD, 1991). The evaluation criteria are explained briefly below and linked to the evaluation questions.

2.4. LINKING DAC CRITERIA TO EVALUATION QUESTIONS

DAC Criteria	Related Evaluation Question(s)
<p>Relevance: the extent to which an intervention is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipients, and funders</p>	<p>Does food relief interventions responds to issues of food insecurity and reaching the needs of all intended beneficiaries?</p>
<p>Effectiveness: the extent to which an intervention achieves its intended objectives.</p>	<p>Is the food relief interventions meeting the needs of all the beneficiaries?</p>
<p>Efficiency: measuring programme outputs against programme inputs. It looks at how well a programme is being implemented to achieve its intended objectives</p>	<p>Are food relief interventions implemented as planned?</p> <p>Are the operational procedures of the intervention effective to ensure the timely delivery of the food to beneficiaries?</p>
<p>Impact: Positive and Negative changes produced by an intervention, whether these have been produced directly or indirectly. Impact evaluation assesses the main impacts and effects on local social, economic, and other development indicators.</p>	<p>Are there any noticeable evidence that suggest that the intervention changes the lives of people?</p> <p>Are there any noticeable improvement or changes on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries in any positive way?</p>
<p>Sustainability: the extent to which the benefits are likely to continue after the intervention has been withdrawn or as it continues. This includes assessing environmental as well as financial aspects of the programme design and efficiency.</p>	<p>Will the beneficiaries be optimally independent even after the withdrawal support of the Departmental?</p> <p>How can the SRD Food Relief Intervention be strengthened and up-scaled for better impact?</p>

2.5. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

For this Evaluation, the evaluation team opted for the mixed method research approach. This is often referred as triangulation of research methods. According to Creswell (2009) the purpose of triangulation is to increase the credibility and validity of the results.

Triangulation is a process of verification that increases validity by incorporating several viewpoints and methods. In the social sciences, it refers to the combination of two or more theories, data sources, methods, or investigators in one study of a single phenomenon to converge on a single construct and can be employed in both quantitative (validation) and qualitative (inquiry) studies.

In terms of sampling frame for the purpose of this evaluation, the purposive sampling as a technique of non-probability sampling method was utilized. Walter (2008:199) explains purposive sampling as a systematic way based on what the researcher knows about the target population and the purpose of the study. A purposive sample is one that is selected based on the knowledge of a population.

The study was undertaken to all Service Points and interview sessions was conducted in the respective households of identified beneficiaries and in other areas Non-Profit organizations, community halls were used as central place's for the purpose of collecting data. It was an inclusive sampling approach. The respondents of this evaluation included key respondents identified (SASSA, Municipalities, Home Affairs, Tribal Authority and Department of Health), food parcels recipients as the actual beneficiaries of the intervention. Key supporting human resources were Community Development Practitioners, Assistant CDP, Social Auxiliary Workers and Social Workers and other stakeholders involved in or working closely with the programme.

The respondents of this intervention were essentially engaged to provide their understanding of the food parcels, their perceptions; their experiences and more specifically the impact of the intervention on their livelihoods. The respondents were also required to relate success and challenges in their own experiences regarding the implementation of the food parcels.

Stakeholders who were identified as key respondents in the implementation of the food parcels were also engaged given their experience of the intervention and solicit possible recommendations for the improvement of the intervention.

All the stakeholders enlisted above were engaged to obtain the required primary data based on their own experiences, insights, and observations to answer key evaluation questions during the implementation of the Food Relief Intervention. The evaluation leverages both qualitative and quantitative methods including a literature and programme document review; focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs) with key informants.

In the context of this evaluation the utilisation-focused evaluation approach was used. It is premised on the idea that “evaluations should be judged by their utility and actual use” (Patton, 2003). It should be borne in mind that the evaluation questions normally guide the decisions regarding the methods used to collect and analyse data. The following methods were employed for the purpose of this evaluation:

- Literature review on the Social assistance legislations, systems and programme in the South African context, both national and international perspectives were used.
- A review of relevant legislations, policies, implementation frameworks, guidelines, and reports on Social Relief of Distress Programme.
- Various research Projects on the area of food relief intervention were consulted.
- Interviews with perceived key stakeholders or involved in the implementation of the SRD Programme.
- Exploring the ToC of the Social Relief of Distress Programme and development of a log-frame.
- Consultations with the Evaluation Steering Committee for inputs on the programme.
- General observation on the implementation of Social Relief of Distress Programme.

2.6. SAMPLING PROCEDURES AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Arkava and Lane as cited in (De Vos, 1998: 191) define a sample as "the element of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study". A sample is a subset of the population being studied. It represents the larger population and is used to draw inferences about that population.

2.7. EVALUATION PARTICIPANTS

The strategy for recruiting participants for the purpose of this evaluation involved the non-probability sampling procedures. For this evaluation, purposive and random sampling method was utilized to select beneficiaries in terms of their geographical location to ensure both rural and urban coverage across most deprived wards in the province are represented and where great concentrated distribution of food parcels were incurred.. In the context of this evaluation the participants were selected purposively.

The population under study included beneficiaries of SRD programme as useful case study in understanding approaches to poverty reduction used as well as the successes and failures of these approaches. In order to fully capture and understand the approach, purposive sampling was used to identify key individuals who were involved in the implementation of the intervention. Beneficiaries were identified by the research and evaluation team in consultation with the Programme Managers from the Social Relief of Distress Directorate both at head office and at the District and Service Point level. A database of these beneficiaries was provided, which disaggregates them per service point against their respective ward and area of location. These beneficiaries are found in all the four Districts of the North West Province, and there is also fair representation of all the local municipalities. A total of **840** beneficiaries who benefited from the food parcels participated in the evaluation study.

2.8. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection refers to various methods applied by the research and evaluation team to collect data for the purpose of this evaluation study. The following data collection instruments were developed and used for the purpose of this evaluation:

This evaluation was intended to evaluate the impact of food relief intervention in the North West Province. This evaluation necessitated the use of two data sets to address the two aspects of the evaluation study. Data was gathered from various sources, including:

- Interview schedules and personally administered Questionnaires were used and completed by the beneficiaries of the intervention with the view to assess the impact and the general challenges associated with the implementation of the intervention.
- Data was also collected from the key respondents (stakeholders) and the implementing agents at various service points involved in supporting the intervention. Thus data was collected and analyzed and identify challenges linked to the implementation of the intervention. This analysis will assist in identifying and recommending potential improvements for the Programme.

In the main, data from the beneficiaries and other stakeholders constituted the primary data source. Secondary data used included the policy frameworks, legislations and reports on food security and insecurity in the South African Context and the international perspectives. This also constituted literature review and documentation. Literature review assist in defining the key concepts and provide a framework for both national and international perspectives. The document review provided the evaluation team with an understanding of the programme and its context. It also provided a basis for the development of specific evaluation questions and to triangulate data collected.

2.9. PREPARATION FOR DATA COLLECTION

2.9.1. STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT

The research and evaluation team identified various stakeholders to participate in this project. Consultative meetings with the service point's having the responsibility to implement the intervention were held with the view to introduce the project and brief them of the expectations of the evaluation. These consultations were also intended to allay fears of evaluation on the beneficiaries during mobilisation.

This was also done to obtain their support for the study. The Research and Evaluation team also engaged the Steering Committee for this evaluation for inputs.

2.9.2. FIELD WORK

Field work essentially entailed conducting data collection amongst the available and selected beneficiaries in all service points in the province. Field work was conducted in line with the operational plan developed by the research and evaluation team. The research and evaluation team served as field workers for this evaluation. This evaluation was executed in-house by the Research and Evaluation team. The Acting manager for research and evaluation was responsible for supervising and overseeing the data collection process as per the operational plan.

Data collection was conducted in a form of administering questionnaires to the individual beneficiaries of the intervention and key stakeholders identified.

Focus group discussions were held with a number of the respondents brought together and assisted in responding to the focus group discussion questions. Focus Group discussions was also chosen as one of the primary methods of data collection for the purpose of this evaluation. Focus groups provide a platform or a means to collect diverse perspectives and opinions from more respondents. The focus group discussions in the main, they follow a storytelling approach, where you give the respondents the opportunity to share their experiences of the study under evaluation. It encourages openness and participation of the respondents and creates the possibility of identifying case studies of good practice and collective learning. Data collection took place from October 2023 until February 2024.

2.9.3. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

For the purpose of this evaluation the research and evaluation team opted for multiple-instruments for data collection. Data was also collected using desktop research and analysis of relevant documents and legal frameworks, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and semi-qualitative surveys.

A set of causal and descriptive questions was developed in order to answer the main evaluation questions based on the objectives of the evaluation.

The personally administered questionnaires, used for collecting data, were designed to ensure that all the relevant information for the evaluation is collected with ease and without ambiguity. The aim of the design was also to ensure that standardized results are obtained from the data collection that could be tabulated for ease of analysis and interpretation. In designing the questionnaire the following factors were taken into consideration:

- Size of the questionnaire
- Clarity of questions
- Logical sequence of questions
- Simplicity and less ambiguous words
- Comprehensiveness and answerability
- Sensitivity

This evaluation was based on the primary data, given that this is for the first time an impact evaluation study on the food relief intervention's is conducted under the auspices of the Department of Social Development in the North West Province. Data was therefore collected through interview schedules and administered questionnaires. The research and evaluation team applied a structured data collection method, using a formal questionnaire whereby a prescribed sequence of questions was followed during data collection. This method of data collection was adopted taking into account the relatively large field of investigation and the large number of respondents and the wide spread of the geographical area where identified beneficiaries are located. The team conducted face-to-face interviews with the respondents at their respective household's.

The data collected using this method has an added advantage in that:

- The information collected in this way is more accurate because the field worker has the opportunity to clear up doubts of the respondent on questions where such doubt arise and therefore obtain correct information.
- Often the respondents are eager to provide information required from them when contacted personally.
- The method provides the scope for obtaining supplementary information from the respondents which prove to be very useful later in the study.

- Allow for the field workers to handle difficult/delicate questions/situations and obtain the required information.
- The field workers were able to adjust the language to accommodate the respondents' status or level of education to avoid inconvenience and misinterpretation on the part of the respondents.
- There is very little scope for non-response as the field workers went personally to collect the information.

2.9.4. DATA QUALITY

The validity of the findings or the results of the evaluation is mainly dependent on the quality of data collected. In order to ensure the quality of data collected and curtail instances of data inaccuracy, the research and evaluation team has defined and implemented data quality control measures, before, during and after data collection.

These include but not limited to the following:

- Focus on clarity during questionnaire design
- Intensive training of the research and evaluation team to address issues of unintentional bias and prejudice and common understanding of the questions.
- Review of completed questionnaires for completeness, inconsistencies, errors, inaccuracies and homogeneity.

The validity of findings also reflected of what the approved 2023 Evaluation Quality Assurance Framework (EQAF) to require relation to sureness for credible and quality evaluations are being produced and that the evaluation process is conducted in a way that meets the highest standards of quality, integrity, and that the findings are credible and actionable.

2.9.5 DATA CAPTURING TOOL

The Research and Evaluation team developed and implemented an electronic database, based on Microsoft Access platform, as a tool for capturing and processing the completed evaluation questionnaires. The system was designed to be user-friendly and allow for ease of capturing of the evaluation questionnaire and eliminate human errors.

2.10. DATA ANALYSIS

According to De Vos; Fouche; Delpont and Strydom (2005:339) data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. Sarantakos (2002:213) states that quantitative data analysis contains a minimum of quantitative measurements, standardization and mathematical techniques. According to Salah-Din (2003:230) qualitative data analysis involves recording, transcribing, and organizing information from interviews, observations, documents in order to derive meaning from it. For the purpose of this evaluation the research team employed thematic data analysis.

The approach used for data analysis was essentially judgmental. The data collected was analysed with the aim of answering both causal and descriptive questions, exploring the impact of the food relief intervention on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries including that of their significant others and also identifying challenges linked to its implementation with the view of developing recommendations in order to improve the intervention.

An evaluation matrix and analytical framework were developed to guide the analysis of this evaluation. Graphs were generated in Microsoft Excel. Open-ended questions were analysed, and, where possible, the open ended responses were coded. Fieldwork notes compiled by the evaluation team were also reviewed and coded. All interviews were recorded and transcribed and the themes developed based on the evaluation questions.

2.11. SAMPLING FRAME

When conducting research or evaluation, it is almost always impossible to study the entire population that you are interested in. If you were to survey the entire population, it would be extremely timely and costly. As a result, researchers use samples as a way to gather data. A sample is a subset of the population being studied. It represents the larger population and is used to draw inferences about that population.

For the purpose of this evaluation, the research and evaluation team opted to cover all service points and geographic locations wherein greater distribution was incurred. These included coverage from both rural and urban areas across most deprived wards in the province.

A sample was drawn from databases provided by service point prior data collection and a sampling size of at least 50% of the beneficiaries per service point participated in the evaluation study.

The strategy for recruiting participants for the purpose of this evaluation involved the non-probability sampling procedures. For the purpose of this evaluation, purposive sampling as a technique of non-probability sampling method was used. Walter (2008:199) explains purposive sampling as a systematic way based on what the researcher knows about the target population and the purpose of the study. A purposive sample is one that is selected based on the knowledge of a population.

In terms of the sampling decision with regard to the beneficiaries' identification and mobilization, the research and evaluation team engaged with the relevant Programme Managers. It was therefore agreed that all service points be sampled to participate in the evaluation.

A database of all the beneficiaries from 2018-2023 financial years was provided by the programme. The steering committee therefore decided to take at least 50% of the beneficiaries from each service point to form part of the evaluation. This sampling approach, given the representation factor, could be classified as non-probability, non-random, deliberate, judgment or purposive sampling.

2.12. THEORY OF CHANGE

It was apparent from the concept development of Terms of Reference on the evaluation study that it did not have a theory of change. The evaluation team then proposed that a roundtable discussion or workshop to facilitate a ToC with all key stakeholders should be arranged. The ToC for the social relief or distress programme will then be used to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the programme in the future.

The intended workshop will provide the research and evaluation team with a good understanding of the context in which the programme takes place, the understanding of the objectives and outcome of the programme from the implementing agents' perspectives, what drives change in their context and who are the key stakeholders for the implementation of Social Relief of Distress Programme. This avowed workshop on the ToC for the SRD Programme will also inform the whole design and model of the Programme accordingly.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW AND INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING

3.1. INTRODUCTION

South Africa's high levels of income divergence are manifested in very high levels of chronic poverty and few high-income earners and a relatively small middle class. Although some progress have been made in reducing poverty since 1994, the trajectory of poverty reduction was reversed between 2011 and 2015, threatening to erode some of the gains made since 1994. Approximately 55.5 percent (30.3 million people) of the population is living in poverty at the national upper poverty line (~ZAR 992) while a total of 13.8 million people (25 percent) are experiencing food poverty.

Food security is a constitutional right in South Africa, and the government views it as a core strategic priority. According to 2022 Census Count, South Africa has an approximate population of 62 million people and one in every four people is implicit to experience hunger on an ongoing basis, with over 50% of the population at risk of chronic hunger (Tsegay et al., 2014). North West Province in particular has about 42.5% poverty rate and its background is characterized by deep-rooted social and economic challenges with its population poorly integrated into the formal economy. The proportion of people living in poverty, experiencing disasters and distress in the province is high and require immediate interventions. The households living in poverty are sinking deeper into poverty and disasters are a frequent phenomenon which exacerbates poverty conditions of households. Poverty has become a feature of the living conditions and life situation of the vast majority in the province.

The Department of Social Development through the SRD Programme intervention have implemented Food Parcels to address some of the social problems that are continuing to encumber the majority of vulnerable people that is aimed at poverty alleviation.

3.2. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE INTERVENTION

The Department is mandated by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa to provide social assistance to those who cannot support themselves and their dependents (Section 27(1) (c)); uphold and ensure the rights of children to appropriate care (basic nutrition, shelter, healthcare services and social services). Section 13 of the Social Assistance Act No.13 of 2004 makes provision for Social Relief of Distress. Section 9(1) of Social Assistance Act regulations No.31356 dated 22 August 2008 sets out the criteria for people eligible for Social Relief of Distress. The legislative provisions give the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) a mandate to administer Social Relief of Distress. However, due to the restrictive and non-empowering nature of these provisions, the provincial Department of Social Development has developed the Social Relief of Distress Programme. This programme is a contingency measure in cases where access to SASSA Social Relief of Distress programme is delayed or impossible.

Key Deliverables of Social Relief of Distress Programme

The key deliverables of the programme are as follows

- To create a temporary safety net for people who experience undue hardship and are faced with exceptionally difficult circumstances in their lives.
- It is aimed at making provision for primary and immediate interventions while longer term solutions are sought for the affected people
- It is aimed at completing the efforts of other poverty measures within and outside the department to specifically address the daily challenges confronting poor households and vulnerable groups
- To guide appropriate interventions and provisions at the household level in the event of unforeseen and unavoidable contingencies such as loss of support, disasters, emergencies and crises that threaten the household's wellbeing.

- To sets out details for the uniform implementation and monitoring of the SRD programme

3.3. OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIAL RELIEF OF DISTRESS

The Department SRD programme renders material assistance in the form of food parcels to households who experience conditions of distress or undue hardship as a result of extreme poverty and various social ills. The nature of the service is urgent and requires immediate interventions upon identification of conditions of distress or under hardship. The Departmental Social Relief of Distress Programme is intended for those people who cannot be assisted under the categories in Social Assistance Act regulations or access is delayed.

Overall, the Social Relief of Distress Programme addresses primary interventions to individuals and households who have a challenge in meeting their basic necessities of life as a result of extreme poverty and are in such dire straits that need immediate assistance. The provision of these material assistance to vulnerable individuals and households acknowledges the fact that social ills that afflict communities are interlocked in vicious cycle and such immediate provision will reduce prevailing vulnerabilities.

Through this programme, social service professionals deployed within various wards across the province provide a momentous developmental support to vulnerable individuals and their families. They are trained in Life Space work and developmental programmes, and they learn how to provide counselling in times of grief and loss during crisis situations.

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF SRD PROGRAMME

- To provide timely and appropriate services to alleviate and prevent the effects of poverty and hunger.
- To prevent hunger and vulnerability, which exists as a result of a sudden crisis, from being continuous.
- To strive to enable households to achieve normal social functioning to the extent possible.

3.4. SOCIAL RELIEF OF DISTRESS METHODS OF INTERVENTIONS

Social Relief of Distress provide the following methods of interventions:

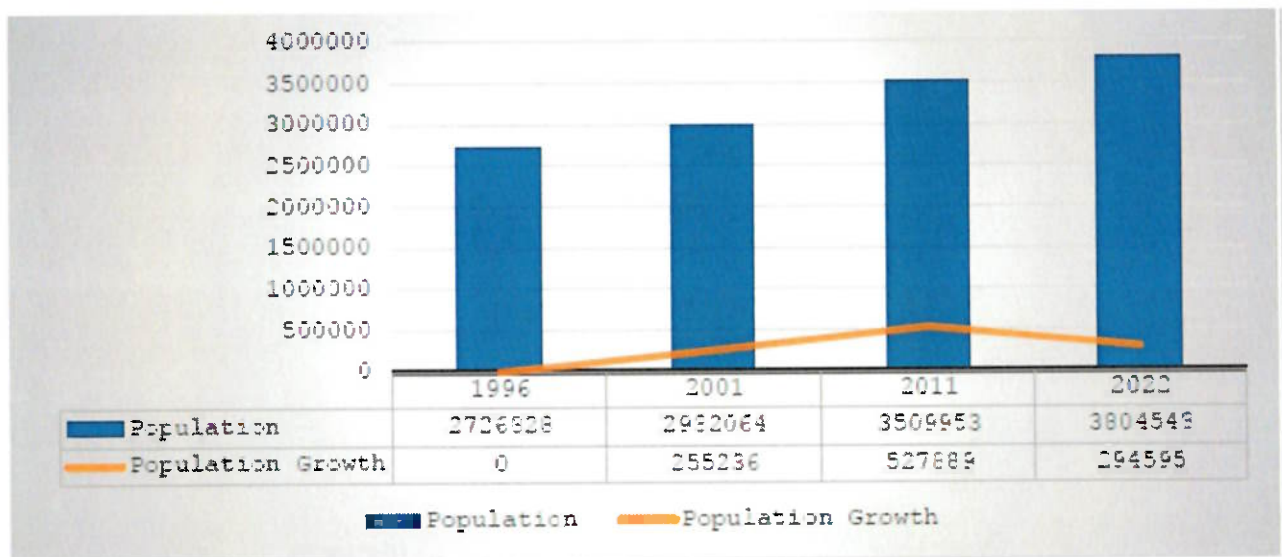
- Food parcels: Food is the most basic, physical human need and food parcels are therefore seen as the main source of assistance when rendering Social Relief of Distress services.
- School uniforms;
- Mattresses and blankets for elderly people and people with disabilities;
- Hygienic packs for elderly people, learners and people with disabilities;
- Cooked meals for displaced people and
- Seeds and garden tools for poor households food production initiatives
- Any other material assistance that may be identified by the Department

3.5. PROFILE OF THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE

According to Census 2022 released by the Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) indicates that the population size of the country has been increasing. The population increased from 40 583 573 in 1996 to 62 027 503 in 2022, representing a growth rate of 4,1%. The results show that the female population was 31 948 745 while the male population was 30 078 757 in 2022.

The 2022 Census report also demonstrated that the total population of the North West sits at **3 804 548**. There was a general growth of the Population in the country, such that the Provinces also experienced a population growth. The Province recorded the population growth from 3 509 953 in 2011; 3,856,200 million in 2017; in 2018; 3, 979, 000. There has been a proportional population growth by 1.5% between 2011 and 2019.

NORTH WEST POPULATION GROWTH



SOURCE: CENSUS 2022,2011, 2001,1996

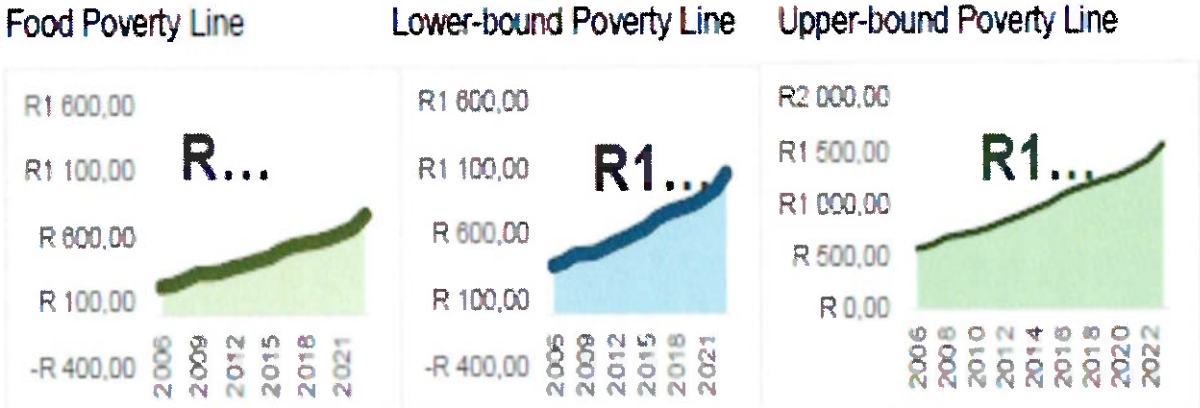
The North West Province faces the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality. The province is predominantly rural with a poverty headcount of 8.8% and poverty intensity of 42,5%. Poverty levels are consistently highest among female-headed households, black South Africans, the less educated, the unemployed, large families, and children. Members of female-headed households are up to 10 percent more likely to slip into poverty and 2 percent less likely to escape poverty than members of male-headed households. Race remains a strong predictor of poverty in South Africa, with black Africans being at the highest risk of being poor. Large families, children, and people in rural areas are especially vulnerable to being in poverty for a long time.

The 2021 General Household Survey findings demonstrated that the North West Province had the second highest position of poverty headcount of all provinces. The majority of the parts of the North West Province are rural in nature. Poverty in the North West Province requires intensive investment in rural development with emphasis on programmes and projects such as agriculture, manufacturing and provision of basic services including food and security programmes.

According to May (2000), the common finding in the literature is that in South Africa, the majority of people living in rural areas are poor and the majority of the poor live in rural areas. Substantively, about 70% of people living in rural areas are living in poverty, compared to about 30% of people in urban areas. Although less than 50% of the total population lives in rural areas, 70% of all poor people in South Africa live in rural areas. Mbuli (2008) expressed that post-apartheid South Africa continues to show a persistent correlation between poverty and the following factors: (i) race (ii) age (iii) gender (iv) poor education (v) unemployment (vi) large household size (with a high dependency ratio) and (vii) inadequate access to basic services

3.6. NATIONAL POVERTY LINE

Relating from the national picture of poverty line the North West Province is not far from that of a country. Food Poverty Line in South Africa in July 2023 was estimated to be R760.00 (R25.00 per day) which is below the World Bank updated international poverty line of 2,15\$ (R46.00) per day person per month which has been reported to have increased from R663 previously. This refers to the amount of money that an individual will need to afford the minimum daily energy intake. The lower bound poverty line is now R1 058.00 per month from R945.00 per person per month whilst the Upper-Bound Poverty Line is R 1 558.00 which increased from R 1 417.00 previously as per the current inflation adjusted national poverty lines for 2023.



Source: StatsSA National Poverty Lines, 2023,

The province faces the same challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality. Increase in unemployment poses the likelihood of poverty intensity to increase above the baseline 42.5%.

Poverty levels are consistently highest among female-headed households particularly black Africans, the less educated, the unemployed, large families and children. Household's members of female-headed are up to 10% more likely to slip into poverty and 2% likely to escape poverty than members of male-headed households. Race remains a strong predictor of poverty in South Africa with black Africans being at the highest risk of being poor. Large families, children and people in rural areas are especially vulnerable to being in poverty for a long time.

3.7. RELATED EFFECTS TO VULNERABILITY, FOOD INSECURITY AND EMOTIONAL TRAUMAS ENCOUNTERING BY BENEFICIARIES

Food insecurity refers to the lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food insecurity exacerbates vulnerability both in the short run in turn forces people to sell their productive assets due inadequate food. Being food insecure it is often associated with the uncertainty of having, or being able to acquire, sufficient food due to insufficient money or other resources. And it's not just about the absence of food, but also about the absence of the right kind of nutritious food. Insufficient nutrition leads to a host of health and social problems, impacting children and adults alike.

Families on a low income face a range of food stressors, both economic and other social challenges such as illness, family dysfunctional ties and parenting, these factors affect people's mental, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. As well, people often experience multiple financial stressors at one point as such their collective impact on food security needs to be considered. (Ward et al., 2013) Food stress occurs if the household food costs $\geq 25\%$ of their disposable income. (Landrigan et al., 2017, Ward et al., 2013). Food stress is a robust precursor to food insecurity, having chronic disease increases the likelihood of needing food assistance in some families (Ward et al., 2013, Kettings et al., 2009). Australian surveys reveal that the dietary intake of people who had run out of food in the last year contained less meat, fruit, iron, Vitamin C and Folate. (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

The experience of accessing food relief is often coupled with conflicting emotions from gratitude to guilt, shame, disempowerment and a sense of feeling judged. Evidence from peer-reviewed literature has identified and explored six key themes related to the experience of using food relief (Booth, Begley et al., 2018; Booth, Pollard, Coveney, & Goodwin-Smith, 2018; McKay, Haines, Beswick, McKenzie, & Lindberg, 2020).

These themes are illustrated by reference from participants in Australian studies on food assistance and relief (Booth, Pollard et al., 2018, McKay et al., 2020).

- **Confused dignity** – the problem with most of these aspects is that applicant have to go to an agency where they make you feel so degraded. They're like "how much do you earn? What do you do with that money? Why don't you have any money to buy food?" and it is embarrassing.'
- **Lack of choice and the need for more independence** – The problem associated with lack of choice relates to sound unappreciative of what is being provided and more of wanting independence even the socio-economic household circumstance put a facial shame.
- **Dissatisfaction with services (access, types of food available)** – The situation around service dissatisfaction goes with what is already decided of and what is to be provided, it's a business structure of what is being serviced. Recipients don't have any options to request the type of food they will prefer. Due to the need of needing food to survive one tend to get the same food.
- **The need for mutual benefit** – The theme discovered that recipient do not have an option to sightsee their skills to perform what they have known for other food relievers. The giving back to the community notion do not ring bells in their ears due to what is already affecting them. They tend not to transfer knowledge and experiences to the next relievers. The vulnerability circle of being disempowered continues as no one is actually taking an action to remove themselves from being disempowered.

3.8. THE IMPACT OF FOOD RELIEF PROGRAMME ON FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

The positive impact of food relief intervention and how it has evolved into a food safety net to meet the chronic ongoing needs of families struggling to put food on the table has been observed as a strategic intervention that responds to immediate circumstances endured by majority of deprived areas. Food relief programmes adequately meet the demands or addresses the food security requirement of providing families with ongoing access to nutritious food in socially acceptable ways (Berg & Gibson, 2022; Hall & Partners, 2022). Hart (2009, p.372).

According to a study conducted by Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Food Relief Programmes are designed to meet the needs of individuals and families during emergencies and crises such as natural disasters and individuals facing undue hardships. They have a considerable impact on food security in South Africa that's these initiatives have contributed to a reduction in the percentage of households experiencing hunger. They also played a critical role in providing much-needed relief to those affected by the economic fallout and they helped prevent many people from slipping into extreme poverty and hunger during this challenging period.

Food Relief Programmes have also made strides in improving nutrition in South Africa, especially among children through the Child Support Grant, which provides financial assistance to low-income families with children, has been linked to improved child growth and development. The grant has led to better dietary diversity, increased consumption of nutrient-dense foods, and a lower prevalence of stunting among young children. The Programme, too, has contributed to better nutrition in beneficiary households with the food parcels containing a variety of staple foods, canned protein sources, and fortified products, help ensure that recipients have access to a balanced diet. This access to nutritious food is crucial for maintaining good health and preventing micronutrient deficiencies, such as iron-deficiency anaemia and vitamin A deficiency, which can have long-term health consequences.

3.9. SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE TO TRIPLE CHALLENGES (INEQUALITY, POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT)

According to World Bank Assessment report on Social Assistance Programs and Systems Review (World Bank.(2022).*South Africa - Social Assistance Programs and Systems Review : Policy Brief (English)*. Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group.) highlighted that South Africa's social assistance system of programs is effective, well-targeted, and provides sizeable benefits to the poorest households. The social assistance system effectively reduces poverty and inequality rates. These programs are having positive and important impacts on a wide variety of outcomes, including nutrition and food security, educational attainment, health, labour supply, and livelihoods. In an environment of high unemployment, persistent poverty, weak economic growth and shrinking fiscal resources that has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social Assistance Programs underscores the critical role in mitigating poverty. Given the high unemployment rates and limited access to unemployment insurance for workers not in formal employment, the system has been an important government intervention and a critical policy response in the post-apartheid era. South Africa's strong and effective social protection programs have helped protect vulnerable people and ensured that they can meet their basic needs

3.10. DSD PROGRAMMES RESPONDING TO FOOD INSECURITY

The Department of Social Development adopted the mandates from the National Food and Nutrition Security in which it has identifies several programmes and strategies that give directives at improving the nutritional status of children and adults that are being implemented at a national, provincial, and local government levels. The FSN aims to sustainably improve the food security and nutrition of the most vulnerable populations while also developing their resilience and their capacity to resist and overcome shocks and crises. The following are the programmes implemented by the DSD as part of Food and Nutrition Security interventions:

- **Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme**

In September 2013, Cabinet approved a National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security, together with the Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy. The focus of the strategy is on household-level food security and nutrition and proposes immediate steps for DSD to establish the coordinating structure from national to provinces and Establish a robust network of Food Distribution Centres (including but not limited to food kitchens), backed by a substantially larger financial commitment from the fiscus.

The Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme (HFNSP), which include the establishment of a network of Food Distribution Centres (FDCs) in which are operated by NPOs as Implementing Agents to distribute food to Community Nutrition Development Centres (CNDCs). The HFNSP is therefore a response to the most vulnerable members of the society that seeks to provide direct food to the affected in order to raise their productive capacity.

The HFNSP seeks to achieve seven (7) programme objectives which aim to address holistic needs of food security

- Address poor and vulnerable household's access to food
- Establish food distribution infrastructure to strengthen community feeding programmes
- Address household's nutrition insecurity,
- Reach the food insecure including those in rural areas.
- Improve food production capacity of households, SMMEs and corporative
- Develop market channels through bulk government procurement of food;
- Fostering partnerships with relevant stakeholders within the food supply chain;

The establishment of Provincial Food Distribution Centres (PFDCs) is a strategic intervention aimed at fulfilling the objective of ensuring access to food for the poor and vulnerable. It is envisaged that the PFDCs will foster economic transformation by unlocking government market and source food through bulk procurement and ensure participation of emerging food producers in the government feeding and food distribution programmes. Food would be sourced as a priority wherever and

whenever from local suppliers. This would ensure that resources are circulated within communities and also stimulate local production with guaranteed government markets.

- **Comprehensive Social Security System and Policies**

The Comprehensive Social Security is social protection systems aimed at alleviating and reduce poverty, vulnerability, social exclusion and inequality. This involves in preventing vulnerability and destitution as a result of the loss of income through social assistance. This social protection system contributes to poverty reduction and mitigating the impact of vulnerability through social insurance. Strategically the system intends to facilitate effective and efficient implementation of social policies and procedures and ensure compliance through regular appraisals and reviews of implementation options.

The social protection systems encompasses of

- Social assistance (old age, disability, war veterans),
- ***social relief of distress (short-term relief programme)***, and
- Child grants (foster child, care dependency, child support grant).

The aim of the programme is to develop comprehensive social security policies and provide income support to vulnerable groups e.g., persons affected by disasters and to ensure vibrant, equitable sustainable rural communities contributing towards food security for all.

- **Community Development- Sustainable Livelihoods (Food Banks)**

The aim of the programme is to create an enabling environment for empowering the poor and vulnerable through the promotion of and support for community development work, strengthening of institutional arrangements, and dialogue with civil society, e.g., the establishment of food banks to feed the poor, the hungry, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

3.11. IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONALS PRACTISE AND APPROACHES OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF FOOD RELIEF PROGRAMMES

Food Relief Programmes largely are not considered as service provision and do not have a direct experience of food insecurity in decision making on the type of service and how it is delivered and moreover to provide opportunities to draw upon beneficiaries' strengths and assets for them to contribute to a specific service. Food Relief programmes do not have the design to model functions and the building blocks that constitute the service management and control. Identification of food relief beneficiaries needs to developments roles and their relationships.

If clients are using food relief regularly to meet ongoing needs, there is a need to consider re-orienting their services or aspects of their services to address the reasons for food insecurity. This would include actions to prevent household food insecurity; that is, actions that promote employment, increase income, manage debt and facilitate stable housing (Loopstra, 2018; Pollard & Booth, 2019). In addition, actions that promote regular access to food that is provided in more empowering ways can be beneficial. Questions around what service is needed for food relief beneficiaries require a multi-disciplinary approach to guide professionals to apply developmental phonology. In realisation of transformations agenda's beneficiaries need to be more involved and participate in decision making

Food Relief Intervention in the context of the North West Department of Social Development was implemented through the approved National Policy on Households Food and Nutrition Security Strategy proposes, for government in the short term, efficiently and effectively to the problem of hunger and malnutrition. The SRD Food Relief Intervention implementation approach to the realisation of developmental agendas as emphasised by the Strategic Plan took a different form which was prompted by various development outcomes. SRD approach to the achievement of development outcomes is currently coordinated and implemented in the Community Development Programme under Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Livelihoods Directorate, the programme is strategically located as part of the collaborative efforts that is aimed at improving the social, economic, and cultural well-being of individuals by fostering sustainable growth and empowering individuals.

The primary aim of most social development strategies is to reduce poverty, vulnerability and social ills. Poverty is a major cause of social tensions and threatens to divide families and society because of inequality issues. Priority actions on poverty eradication includes improving access to sustainable livelihoods entrepreneurial opportunities and productive resources, providing universal access to basic social services and progressively developing systems to support those who cannot support themselves.

The findings of the evaluation study will reflect on the approaches and the uniqueness positions the importance in identifying client-specific needs and implement broader holistic support taking into consideration the perceptions and development practitioner's implications around the non-empowering of SRD food relief intervention.

4. KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

Selecting a research design, as cited by Patton (2002) such as quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods, suggested reflecting on the purpose of the inquiry and the types of answers the evaluator seek. Qualitative methods allow studying issues in depth with data collection often occurring through open-ended questions permitting "one to understand and capture the points of view of other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire categories".

Evaluators use narrative analysis to understand how participants or respondents construct story and narrative from their own personal experience. This narrative are derived from in-depth interviews, focus groups or other types of narrative qualitative study, that means there is a dual layer of interpretation in narrative analysis. Firstly, the participants interpret their own lives through narrative. Then the evaluator interprets the construction of that narrative.

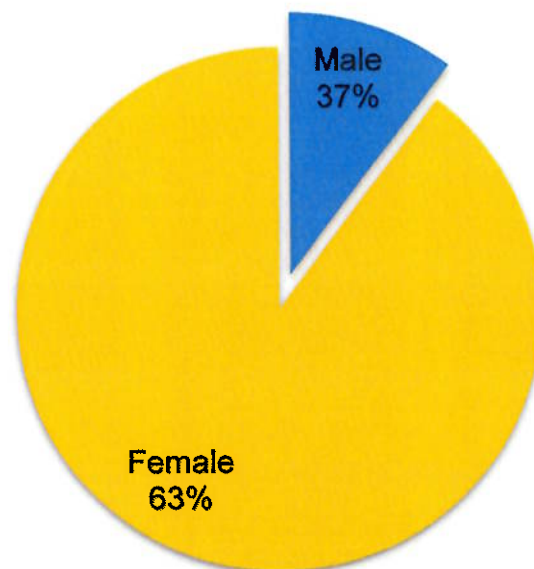
The primary type of data collection applied was in-depth interviews. Participants were generally beneficiaries of the programme. Interviewed participants were selected using the 2019-2023 beneficiaries database from SRD Programme.

Participants were probed to give the experiences and understanding of SRD programme, to tell or document success stories on how the programme made impact or change in their lives, how the programme has assisted them in bettering their home situations and to give verbatim related to programme improvements and challenges to its implementation.

The secondary type of data collection was Focus Group Discussion with key respondents (stakeholders) to facilitate their in-depth understanding on how the SRD programme have positive strides in terms of its footprint on beneficiaries lives and their understanding on how the intervention intend to work or operate using themes derived from the main key evaluation questions and objectives.

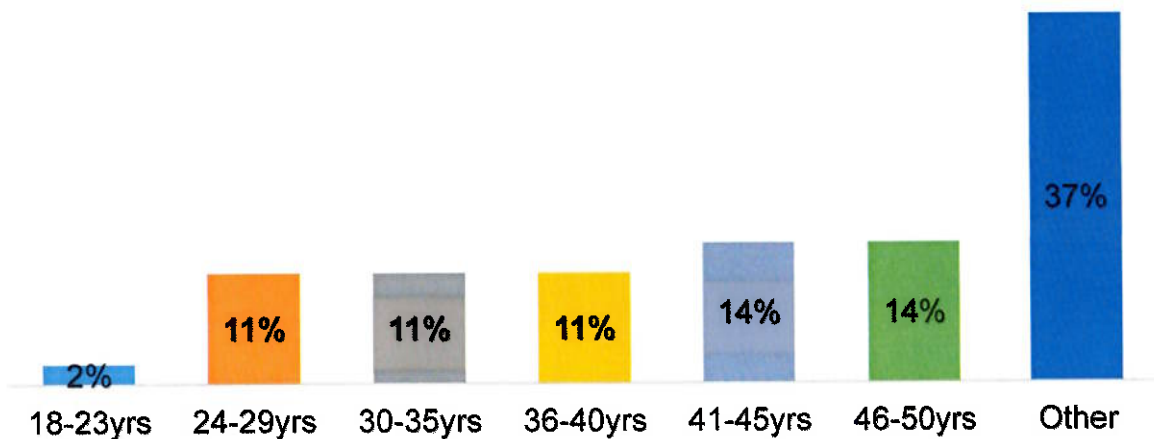
4.1. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENT'S

Graph 1: Gender of the respondent's



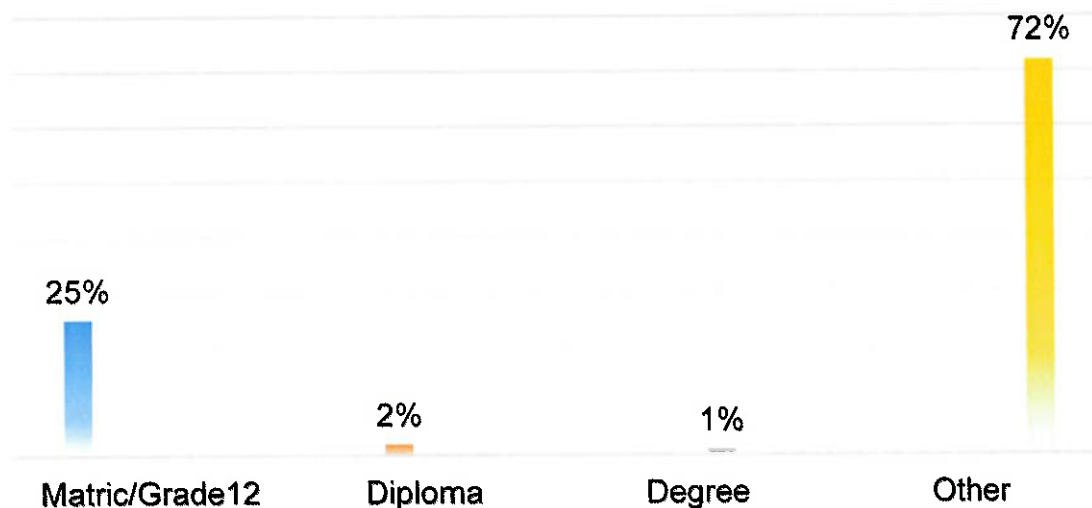
According to the information provided on the graph above, the majority of the respondents (63%) were females and (37%) were their male counterparts. Women and Children are normally the once who are vulnerable and bear the brunt of poverty.

Graph 2: Age of the respondents



The graph above explored the age cohort of the participants, where it was found that there was an immense difference between respondents from the age cohort 18 – 23 yrs (2%); and between 24 – 40 yrs (33%), followed by those in the age bracket of 41-50 yrs (28%). The age unit of 51+ consisting of (37%) were in majority as observed in this evaluation study. This age group demonstrated a fair representation of all the age cohorts and that also of a strong element of intergenerational mix. SRD Programme caters for all the age categories of the People who are vulnerable and poor. These included Children, Young People, adults and Older Persons.

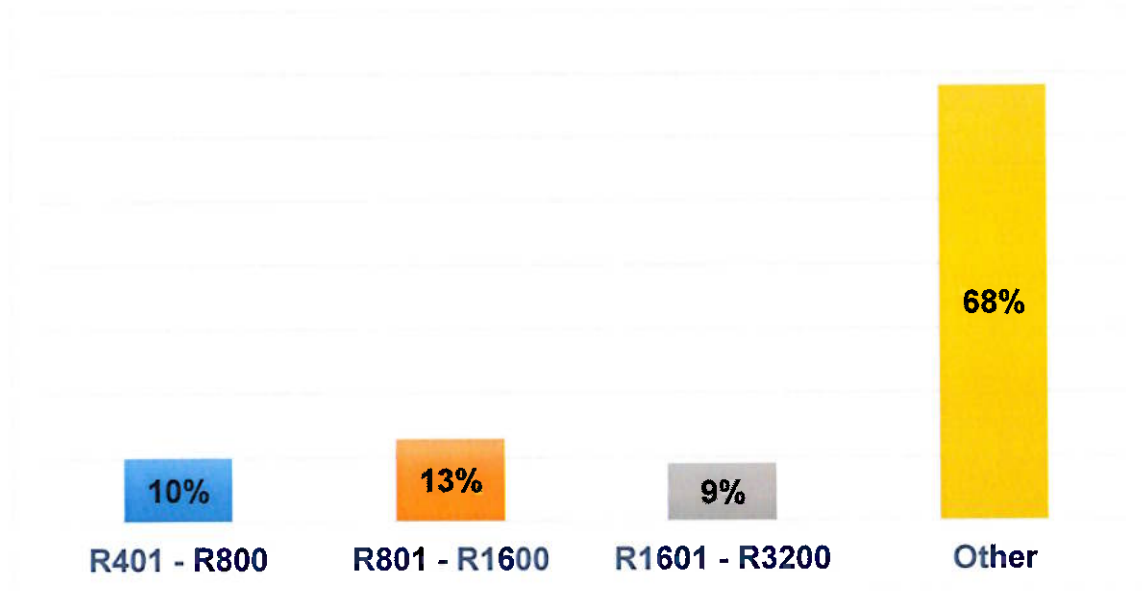
Graph 3: Educational Level



According to the information provided in the graph above the majority of the respondents (72%) demonstrated that they do not have any form of education. Only marginal difference (25%) of the beneficiaries indicated that they have grade 12 and

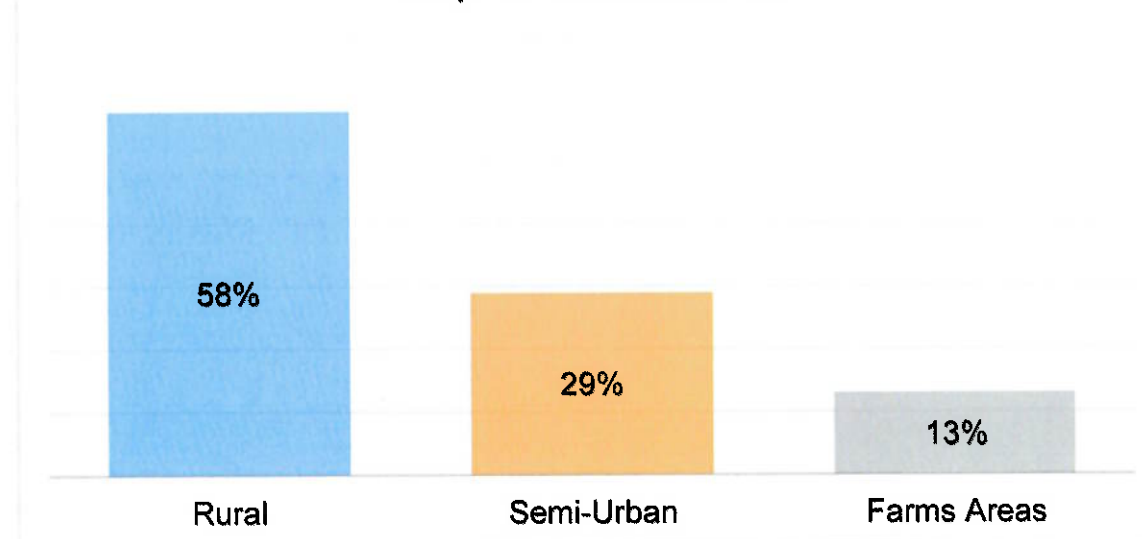
(2%) had a diploma. This could be the major factor contributing for the majority of the people to be living in poverty and being unemployed.

Graph 4: Household income



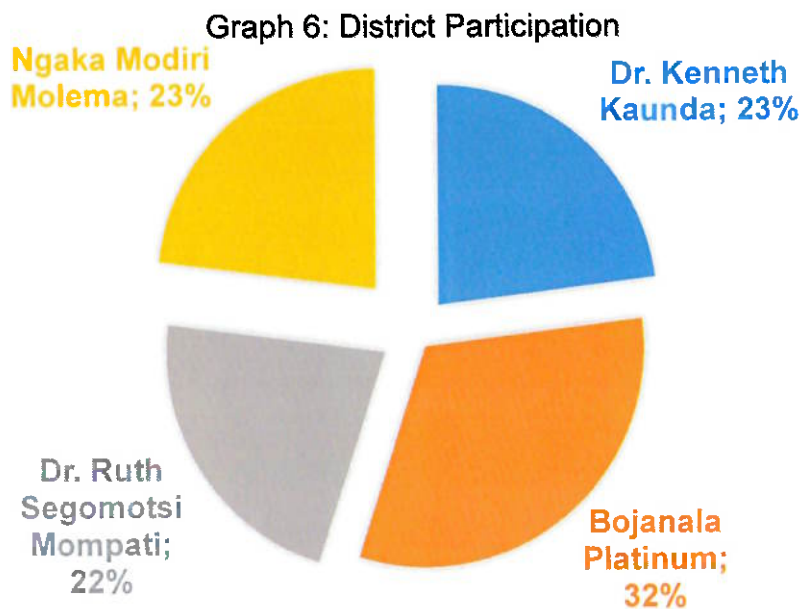
According to the graph above the majority of respondents (68%) demonstrated that their household income derived from the various types of social grants they receive from the government. The minority (32%) expressed that they have this earnings through temporary jobs including Community Works Programme and Extended Public Works Programme. It is evident from this display that the SRD Programme has targeted their beneficiaries within its intended objectives.

Graph 5: Residential Area



According to the majority of the respondents (58%) were coming from rural areas,

(29%) semi-urban areas and (13%) were coming from farm areas. This could be attributed to the general provincial make-up, which is mostly rural in nature. It is the intention of Social Assistance Programmes to reach the most far flung villages in rural areas wherein most vulnerable peoples originate.



The graph above, demonstrated the participation of the respondents per district. According to the information presented above, the majority of the respondents were coming from Bojanala Platinum District (32%), Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District and Ngaka Modiri Molema District respectively have (23%) of the respondents. Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti had (22%) of the participants.

4.2. OPINION QUESTIONS ON THE OVERVIEW OF THE FOOD PARCELS/

RELIEF INTERVENTION – The Efficiency and Effectiveness

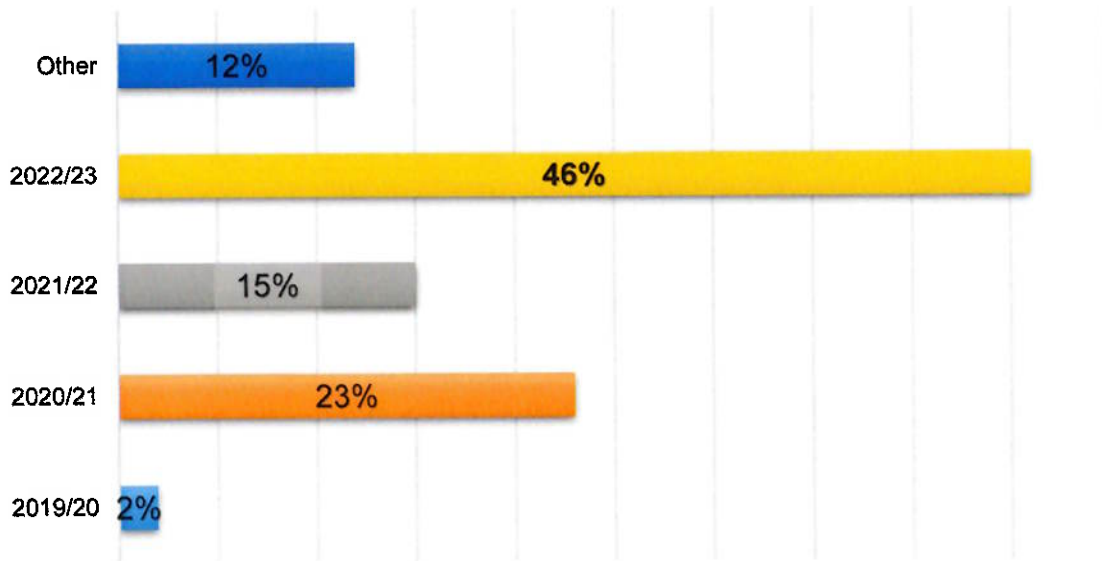
What is your general understanding of food relief intervention and its intended purpose?

- Intervention preventing individuals resorting to be homeless and to seek assistance to families and probably neighbors.
- It assist households and individuals who are in distress about their socio-economic situation.
- it's a relief of hunger towards people who have encountered disaster and its purpose is to make that household to be as they were before the disaster.

- To address food security in low income households particularly areas pronounced as deprived.
- To ensure access to food security and nutritious meal when there is a need or a crisis.
- To provide short term intervention and refer beneficiaries to relevant stakeholders for medium to long term intervention.
- Intervention that alleviates poverty due to Department nature of integrated poverty reduction programmes.
- To assist households and relief the pressure they are experiencing in order to function optimally.
- To relief the distressed individuals and household once off in their midst condition but when food are finished they recourse back to their initial identified circumstance's.
- By means of profiling and prioritize to the most needy individuals.
- To provide support to individuals on chronic medication so they able to take treatment in order to improve their health status.
- To reduce poverty, malnutrition and enhance the quality of life.

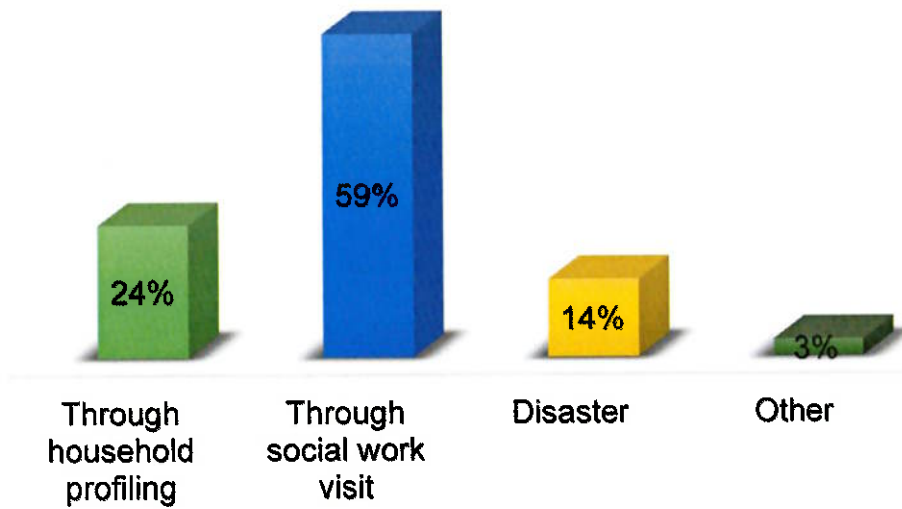
It can therefore be concluded that the majority of the respondents clearly understood the aim and objectives of what Social Relief of Distress stands for. With this understanding, the impact of the programme could easily be reached.

Graph 7: When did you receive food parcel?



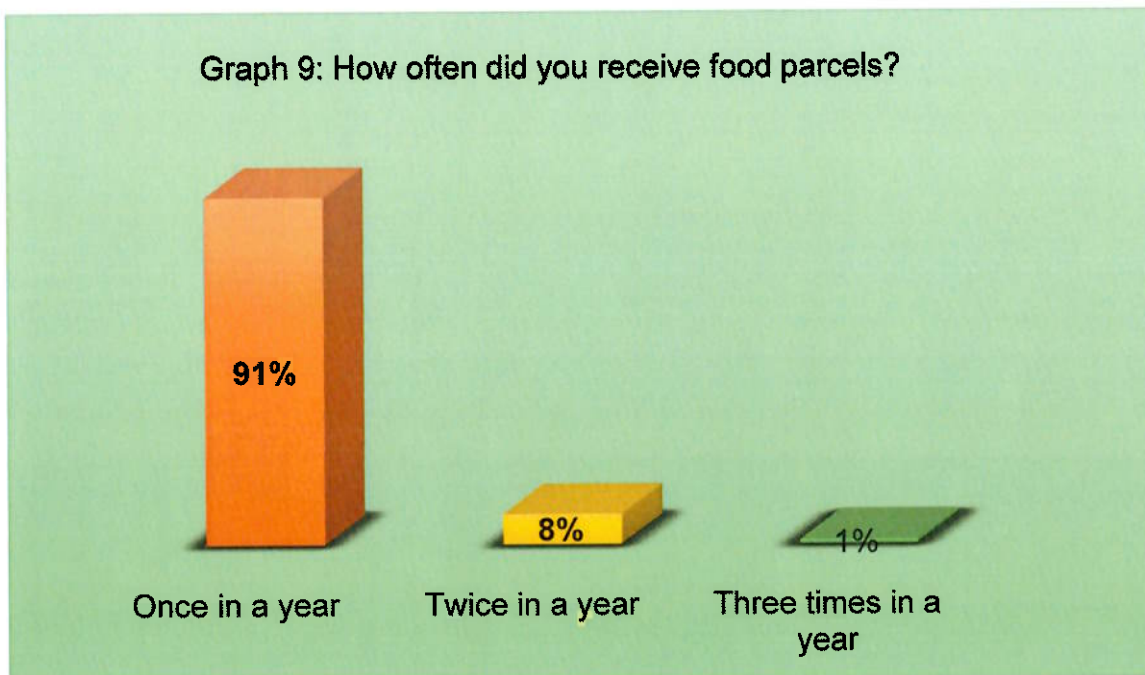
Legislative provisions of 2008 set out the criteria for people eligible for Social Relief of Distress. The programme intends to empower the Department to carry out its mandate of caring and protecting vulnerable groups and individuals within the communities as such the programme has been with the Department for the past 15 years. According to the information presented in the graph above, a small number of the respondents (2%) benefitted from the programme during the 2019/20 financial year, followed by those who benefitted during 2020/21 financial year (23%). During the 2021/22 financial year only (15%) benefitted and majority (46%) during the 2022/23. The less number of participants may be attributed to the inception phase of the implementation of the programme and the financial resource of the programme against performance target.

Graph 8: How did you become the beneficiary of food relief intervention?



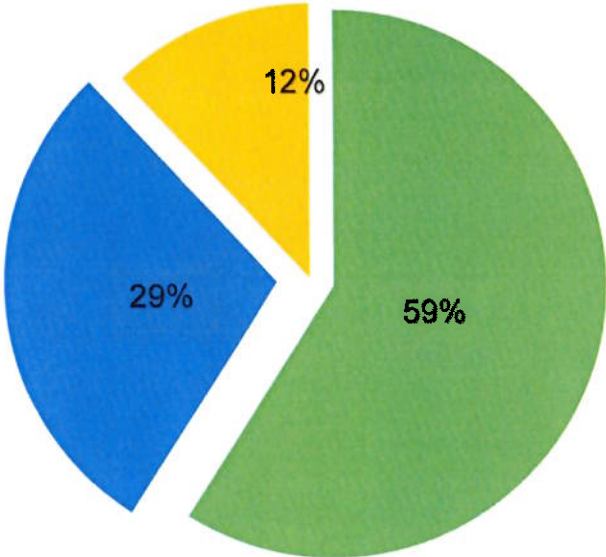
According to the above graph the majority of respondents (58%) demonstrated that they became beneficiary of the SRD programme through an assessment practise performed by Social Workers followed by (24%) who were identified through household profiling. Only 14% demonstrated that they benefited in a form disaster related incidents.

Graph 9: How often did you receive food parcels?



According to the graph above, it is was obvious as the SRD programme provide short term interventions a demonstrated figure (98%) of respondent received the food pack of the intervention for once since its introduction and a marginal difference (8%) benefitted twice, this can be attributed to a number of factors based on the socio-economic observations by Social Service Professionals to extend the period of beneficitation to the beneficiaries and only (1%) of respondent have received thrice, this figure may give reflection of those beneficiaries benefitted during the Covid-19 period.

Graph 10: How many people live in the household?



The graph above demonstrated that majority (59%) of respondents with their household size or composition are verged between 1 to 5 members, followed by a marginal figure (29%) confirming that they have over 5 member's in the household. Only 12% revealed that they have over 11 member's in the household. The evaluation also wanted to explore the understanding how does the household manage for all household members to have access to these food, it was apparent during the in-depth interview that those household with over above 5 members do not find food parcels sufficient to indulge their hunger situation.

Who should be the beneficiaries of food parcels?

- Individuals with low level of income that is below wage bill requirement
- Unemployed individual
- Social grant recipient's

- Elderly people who are pensioners
- The needy people and those who have no income
- People living below poverty line
- People who are in need
- Those who have no income, needy and unemployed
- All those who have experienced disaster and the people who live under the poverty line.
- The needy, unemployed and those who have no income at all
- Those who are in dire situation and does not know where their next meal will come from

From the responses above the respondents understood with confidence that individuals with this socio-economic situations and those that cannot participate in the labour market resembles what the Social Relief of Distress Programme is intending to address in assisting those people who cannot be assisted under the categories in Social Assistance Act or their access is being delayed are the appropriate people who should benefit from the food parcels.

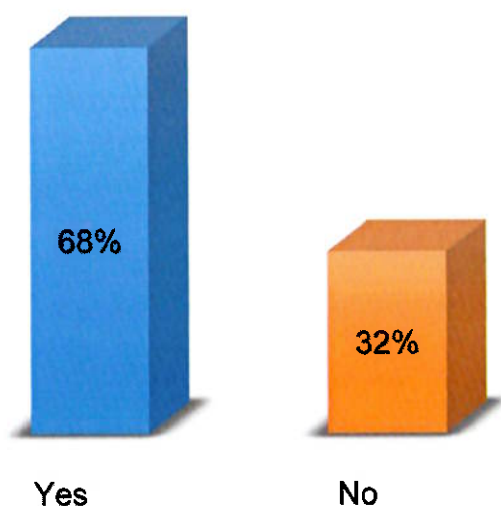
How do food parcel meet your needs?

- It has , but it was sufficient to meet holistically the needs of a household
- It has assisted a lot as I could cater for other basic necessities as bath soaps and others
- It assisted me to cover other expenses and able to top up on maize meal
- I was having nothing to cook and it met my need by that time.
- It has assisted to cover other necessities at household for sorting out basic essentials
- We were able to have three meals a day
- It met our needs as there was nothing in the household because of the rains that made havoc
- It has effectively address the need because of the household situation

The primary aim of social relief of distress programme is to create a temporary safety net for people who experience undue hardship and are faced with exceptionally difficult circumstances in their lives. From the verbatim responses above, it was

crystal clear that the programme meets the needs of the target individuals and households. It must also be understood that the nature of SRD programme interventions are short-term as such the impact of the programme shall confined itself in the short-term scope.

Graph 11: Do you think the food items are sufficient enough to provide all individual needs in the household?



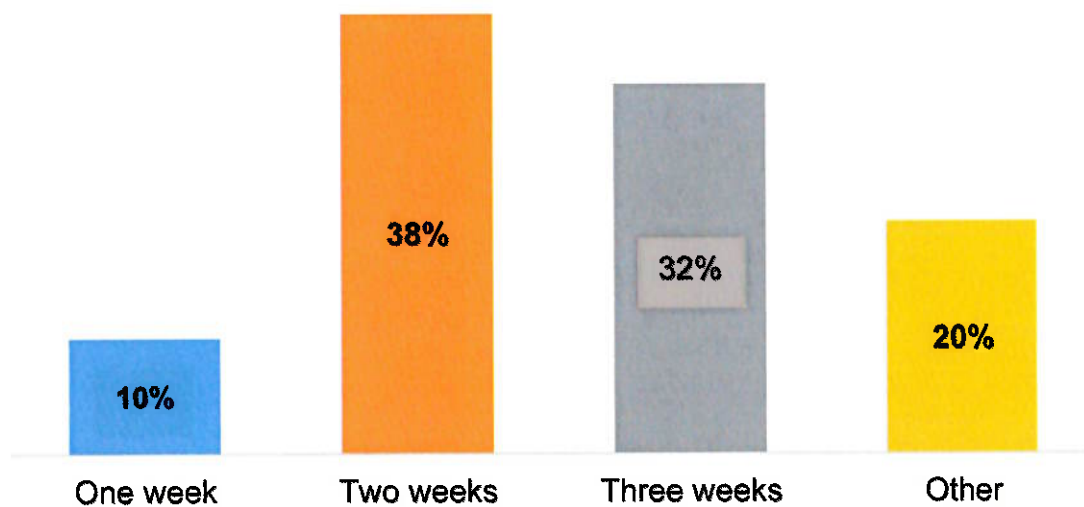
Majority of respondents (68%) shown that the food items of the food parcels are sufficient enough to provide all individual needs in their respective household. Only (32%) of respondents submitted a different view as to the food contents sufficiency. The finding in this graph can attribute what in graph 09 has allude due to reasons that given the high number of individuals in beneficiaries respective household's some may not have access to the food parcels thus it is recommended that the review of food specifications to consider the add-ons given the high number of household members.

Why do you feel about the food items or contents distribute are enough or not to your household?

- To cover for over the week period and other items may looked elsewhere and depend on the number of household
- As they are able to last a household for over two weeks

- Due to a higher number of household members and being on a chronic medication
- It is enough because it has helped our household for a relief
- Though they are not sufficient because other items are not there, the sizes of other items are small
- They are not enough as they come once in a while therefore they does not help us.
- We saw everything as sufficient because we were under a serious duress, there was no time to choose or to scale the contents of the foo given.
- The government must cater for vegetables and increase on maize meal and other staple foods

Graph 12: How long does the food parcel last in the household?



According to the graph above, majority of (38%) respondents demonstrated that the food pack lasts for about a period of two weeks, followed by a margin reaction of (32%) which lasts them for over three weeks. Only (20%) shown that they either last them for over a month period and (10%) respondents for few days. This results also captured their narrative's that this are the effects of experiencing hunger for longer period hence they preserve the food parcels for such period.

What other means or source of survival does the household rely on?

- Social grant
- Temporary jobs
- Begging from other people/neighbors
- Contract employment
- Hustling and small scale work that is doing gardens for people

It was evident from the responses of SRD Programme beneficiaries that majority are unemployed individuals and social grants recipient. It is quite clear that identification and assessment of beneficiaries was done accordingly.

What do you think should be done to reduce dependency on the food parcel?

- Job creation (linkage of developmental initiative on a long term base]
- Skills development (identification of household members with their skills need)
- Funding from government to establish small businesses.
- Registering small business and NPO's
- If the government could open job opportunities and give funds to those who wants to open small businesses

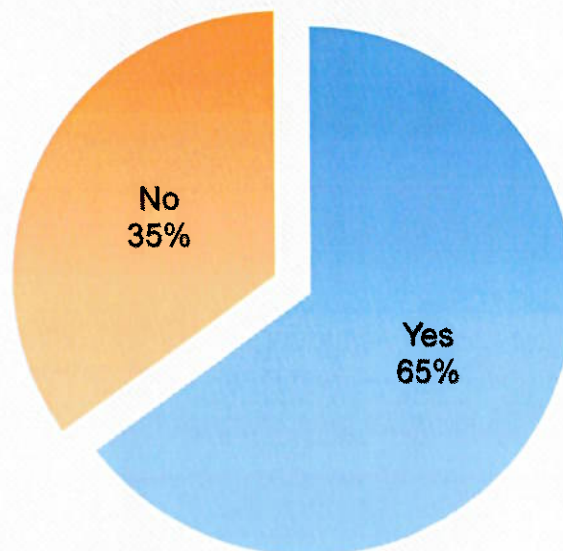
4.3. OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED OR OBSERVED BY THE BENEFICIARIES AND KEY RESPONDENTS

- The price value of food parcels is seen not to be fairly comparable to that of Social Relief Distress grant from SASSA
- Shifting of food parcels from one service point to the other in case of declared disaster results in inefficiencies or impact of the programme
- There is a need to define and outline clearly who qualifies to receive the food parcels as in some instances a beneficiation can be directed to a household classified or seemed to be materially supported
- Challenges associated with limited budget against number of population size or beneficiaries in a particular ward awaiting to receive food parcels or are on the waiting list.

- Lack of monitoring system for developmental programmes on beneficiaries particularly those identified and potential to facilitate or have skills to sharpen their awareness
- Beneficiaries in exchange of food parcels for alcoholic materials
- Clear communication amongst stakeholders for those referring clients against the Departmental responsibilities on beneficiaries
- Challenges related to transport resource's wherein other areas of interest for conducting assessment are not reached
- Unbranded food items which may be regarded as alimentary
- The intervention lack relevant expertise to satisfy or qualify the outcome objective achievement
- Stakeholders expending the intervention as a society programme during funerals
- Overpopulation and favoritism from Social workers

These are areas of improvement that the programme need to take into consideration for maximised impact of the programme and good implementation.

Graph 12: Do you think the intervention is reaching the intended beneficiaries?



The information presented in chart 12 here express that majority of the respondents (65%) agreed with the fact that the SRD Programme is reaching the intended beneficiaries. It can therefore be concluded that the programme

is implemented accordingly in line with its objectives and design structure. Only (35%) had a different view that the programme is reaching the intended beneficiaries due to factors associated with its operational challenges registered above.

Who do you think are supposed to be the beneficiaries of the food parcels?

The following responses resonate to what most respondents are assenting to be the target beneficiaries the programme is intending to reach. The SRD Programme is targeting all vulnerable and poor individuals in various communities. The following are the categories of targeted beneficiaries of the Programme: Elderly people, Disabled people, Households without income, anyone individual who is unemployed, Orphan and vulnerable groups, School children, etc.

Why do you think that the Department should continue to support the intervention?

The Evaluation team in this question wanted explore the importance of SRD programme particularly with its food parcels intervention has on the livelihoods of beneficiaries and how valuable does the intervention brought any change in their lives. The following verbatim accounts to what the programme stood for conferring to its current formation and design:

- It make a great impact to household as the time of distribution the family is in a hardship situation
- It should continue as there are a lot of people who depends on these food
- Many people are out of work therefore the department must continue
- To help people who cannot sustain themselves
- The department is assisting a lot of hungry people
- Due to high rate of poverty and unemployment, this programme is very important.
- The programme is trying its level best to combat inequality and poverty amongst communities.

What do you think should be done to improve the successful implementation of food parcels?

- Review/consultation with nutritional specialist for allergic food items and consideration on the items that are known to be allergic (Tinned products)
- Updating of the programme database and re-profile wards to assess the situations

4.4. IMPACT OF FOOD PARCELS ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF THE BENEFICIARIES

Majority of the respondent has expressed heartfelt sentiments on how the food parcels are bringing changes to their lives. Their responses are captured as follows:

“It makes a significant difference for me because I am on chronic medication but small efforts are registered for me to move out from state of being food insecure”

The intervention creates a multilink for beneficiaries with different stakeholders to responds to community problems

“Given high rate of unemployment the intervention made a huge difference, though its current design solely assist those on hardship situation but there is a need for developmental programmes that realizes self-reliance”

My family left me struggling but was able to restore my relationship with my partner due to food parcels

“I was able to bake vetkoek with 5kg cake flour and sunflower oil and sell them at a nearby school for income generation”(A Kligpat respondent in Madibeng Service Point who was inventive to find a determination to fight for what many would not have thought)

“I was able buy other essentials like toiletries for the household”

“I managed to pay the burial policy that was due to lapse”

“It has provided a great impact on the household as we a able to buy school uniform for the children and basic essentials with social grants”

“It has assisted the household to have something to eat”

How has the food parcels intervention assisted you with the inevitable shocks and stresses you have experienced during times of your distress situation?

- It assisted a lot because it was distributed on second week after social grant pay date.
- Stress level went drastically down as we were not thinking much about where we are going to get the next meal.
- It assisted just for a while and it did not last.

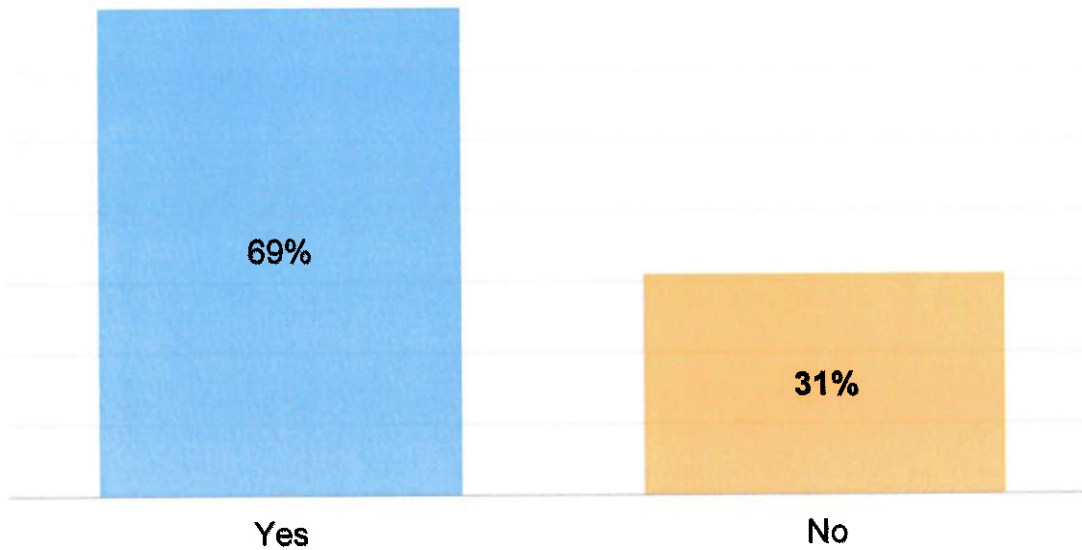
It is quite evident from the responses that beneficiaries are contend with what the programme has assisted in their undue hardship situations. It can therefore be recommend that for impact maximisation there is a need to consider high distribution to take course during festive seasons and school reopening days as it was observed and felt that the food parcels made a significant impact in that period due to averting social grants to basic necessities such as clothes, school uniform, toiletries etc.

What do you think would have happened to the household situation if the Department did not intervene at the time of your undue hardship or distress situation?

- People would be living in debts solely relying on grant to cover debts
- People would be living distress.
- Stress level was going to be very high
- We were going to create more debts to get food on the table
- Children would have walked to school without shoes if the department did not come to help
- Elderly would have taken their medication on an empty stomach
- Funeral policies would have lapsed and the debts were going to increase
- The house hold would experience hardship situation

It is clear from the narrative provided above from the majority of the respondents, that the SRD Programme had a profound impact on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries.

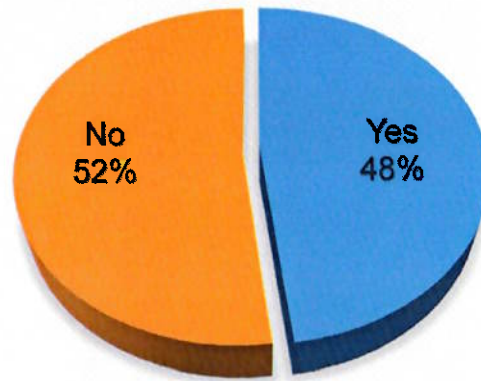
Do you generally think that food parcels are bringing about a change on the lives of individuals and community



Majority of respondents embraces resilient observations that (69%) food parcels brings about change into lives of individuals and communities across the North West Province. Only (31%) withheld a disparate view that the intervention has brought changes into beneficiaries' lives. This is attributed that the question was about generalisation on how the SRD programme intends to intervene on different levels around communities in the Province.

4.5. IDENTIFICATION OF LINKAGE OF FOOD PARCEL BENEFICIARIES TO DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES

Do you think the Department is doing enough for referring food parcel beneficiaries to other developmental programmes?



The Evaluation Team as part of the evaluation project overarching operational objectives wanted to strongly challenge the beneficiaries and to register some progress on efforts and commitment's made by the Department on intending to reduce the poverty rate by 2% in 2025 as resultant from the Departmental Strategic Plan. It was evident from the above graph that, (48%) respondents are ascertain that the Department in some degree did respond to refer beneficiaries to developmental programmes that's involves Community Nutrition and Development Programme. (52%) respondent withheld an open view that the Department is not doing enough to refer its beneficiaries to developmental opportunities. It is therefore recommended that measures be introduced to include SRD beneficiaries to developmental programmes.

What are the other ways the Department should put in place to identify and refer food parcel beneficiaries to developmental programs

- For agricultural purpose, the food parcels pack to be accompanied by seed for household intending to grow their own food.
- Information sharing on opportunities that may be linked to household needs
- Department must provide booklets or pamphlets about these developmental programs.

- The department to conduct house visits and workshops
- The department to market their services on the radio platforms so that many people could hear about their developmental service.
- Engagement with different stakeholders to capacitate young people from household to establish their own food backyard gardens
- Call to develop or standardize assessment tools to identify skills beneficiaries may possess that can be presented at community based structures (inclusive of stakeholders) for developmental referral purposes
- Engagement processes with other stakeholders to continually update referral process as stakeholders vary with their referral system

It was quite stimulating and pleasing to register some of these responses from respondents which clearly paint a representation as to the understanding that beneficiaries have about on how they prospects their sustainability phase in future. It is therefore recommended that linking of beneficiaries to developmental programmes have a policy context that impasse the Department to attain self-reliance.

4.6. MEASURING DEPARTMENTAL POVERTY REDUCTION TARGET

Do you have of any stories that we can document on how the Department is responding to reduce poverty by 2% in 2025?

- Through Youth Skills development programmes
- Through establishment of Community Nutrition Development Centre's
- Two women in Tshing Location, JB Marks Service Point were identified during household and materially supported to register and run with small business through identification of the SRD Programme.

The Evaluation Team with this question wanted to capture the successes the Department has attained with its food security programmes as part of its Strategic target for 2% poverty reduction. It was disconcerting during data collection that some responses were unwelcoming about programmes that steer food security programme as key programmes identified to respond to the 2% poverty reduction. It is against the afore mentioned stance that measures be introduced to oversee that the Department have a coordination function that account to Departmental Food

Security programmes and is responsible to steer sustainable developmental programmes.

4.7. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS EMANATED FROM THE EVALUATION STUDY OF SRD FOOD RELIEF INTERVENTION

The following recommendations were drawn from the possible inputs made by various stakeholders in ensuring that the SRD Programme is strengthened accordingly and has maximum impact on the livelihoods of the majority of individuals in various communities. The recommendations has been disaggregated by programme and departmental specific.

Programme Specific Recommendations

- There is a critical need for institutionalization of Standard Operating Procedure of the Social Relief of Distress Programme including its Guidelines ad Strategy to ensure that there is a uniform and standardized approach in terms of implementation as it was demonstrated that the transition and process Flow of the SRD programme to Community Development was not effectively communicated
- There is a need for a clear documentation of the Programme in terms of its design and structure, including the theory of change. This will assist in clear stakeholder management relations guidelines and protocols to ensure their roles and responsibilities are spelt out clearly. This will also maximize the impact of the Programme as each stakeholder will have a meaningful contribution or commitment towards the outcome of the Programme. The District Development Model will come handy in this regard to ensure a collaborative and partnership approach.

- It is recommend that monitoring systems be introduced for strengthening of the SRD food parcels or relief intervention to ensure effectiveness and efficiency that beneficitation reach the most vulnerable households.
 - There is an absolute need for reconsideration of making provision of food parcels for three months. This was of view that unemployed individuals are not catered for by the South African Social Assistance provisions
 - To review the current food parcels specifications to solicit expansion of other food items including sugar, tea, rice, meat, dishwashers, bathing soaps and vegetables as with the expressed view that it is not sufficient to satisfy or reach all household needs
 - There is a need for the Department to integrate services and linkage of beneficiaries to poverty alleviation programmes for sustainability purposes. This was of the view that SRD beneficiaries do not have access or being referred to other Departmental programmes.
 - The Programme to look into the possibility of consulting Department of Health Dieticians for certificate approval with the current specification. This was of the view that dieticians do not have knowledge of what nutritional contents are and are they of an accepted nutritional standard

Departmental Specific Recommendations

- There is a critical need for the development of Intervention Model concept for Poverty Alleviation programmes to strategically identify and implement sustainable livelihoods initiatives that builds capacities for the beneficiaries. This is in adoption of the approaches set asides by the Strategic Plan to integrate economic and social objectives activities. There is a need to adopt this concept or strategy as is an area for maximum impact and sustainability.
- The majority of the inputs suggested the need for establishing strategies or plans to graduate social protection beneficiaries from dependency.

- This is with the view to discourage the total dependency on the social protection system.
- There is a complete need for the introduction of reporting progress of linking or graduating social protection beneficiaries specifically for Poverty Alleviation and Sustainability Livelihoods programmes with the responsibility of initiating community development interventions. This is of the view that majority of social protection beneficiaries are still dependent on the social development service without exiting the system. In this fashion the proposed strategy will give effect on progress on the attainment of self-reliance from programme performance indicators.
- It is also recommended that the Department cease from duplicating programme mandates as this pose an adverse insignificancy on programme strategic outcomes, budget and performance.

References

1. Arkava & Lane, cited in. Strydom & De Vos, 1998: . The population of this study comprised of all the Students Social workers.
2. Booth & Pollard (2019) Food Insecurity and Hunger in Rich Countries—It Is Time for Action against Inequality
3. Berg & Gibson, 2022; Hall & Partners, 2022), Responding to food reliefs needs Australia
4. Creswell, J. W. (2009). Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative and mixed-methods approaches. London: Sage
5. Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004, Transformative social protective for Africa's child
6. De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. and Delport, C.S.L. (2005) Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Science Professionals. 3rd Edition, Van Schaik, Pretoria
7. Hart T (2009) Exploring definitions of food insecurity and vulnerability: time to refocus assessments.
8. Kettings C (2009) A healthy diet consistent with Australian health recommendations is too expensive for welfare-dependent families
9. H McKay, BC Haines, H Beswick, H Mackenzie, H Lindberg. (2020) The prevalence, severity and experience of food insecurity in Australia: An investigation of food aid use

10. Loopstra (2018) Interventions to address household food insecurity in high-income countries
11. Mbuli (2008) The impact of educational attainment on household poverty in South Africa: A case study of Limpopo province
12. Rubin and Babbie (2005) Research methods for Social workers
13. S. Booth, C. Pollard. Goodwin-Smith Published in International Journal of... Sociology, Environmental Science. Sustainable' Rather Than 'Subsistence' Food Assistance Solutions to Food Insecurity: South Australian Recipients' Perspectives on Traditional and Social Enterprise Models
14. Salah-Din, S. (2003). Social work research, an applied approach. New York: Pearson education
15. Sarantakos, S. (2002). Social research (2nd edition). New York: Palgrave
16. Tsegay M (2014) Students' Experience in Student-Centered Learning at Higher Education Institutions in China: A Case Study
17. Ward, T. (2013). Addressing the dual relationship problem in forensic and correctional practice. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*,
18. (World Bank. (2022). *South Africa - Social Assistance Programs and Systems Review: Policy Brief (English)*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.