

The Implementation of the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy in South Africa

Strategies for Multisectoral Coordination

H M Nkwana

School of Public Management and Administration
University of Pretoria

ABSTRACT

In South Africa, the right to access to adequate food is entrenched in the Bill of Rights of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996. The government of South Africa has committed itself to promote and protect the right to access to adequate food, and to directly afford this right to people who are unable to enjoy it for reasons they cannot control. Access to adequate food is one of the pillars of food security, interrelated with food availability, food utilisation and stability of food supply. The approval of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security and the Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy in 2013 by the cabinet indicates a commitment by government to promote the eradication of hunger and the achievement of food security. There is however fragmentation in the current and proposed institutional arrangements applicable to food security in the Policy and the Strategy. This article advocates for a coordinated approach in the implementation of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security, as the guiding framework for maximising synergy between government departments and civil society. The article recommends strategies to promote the coordination and collaboration of the various government departments that are responsible for implementing programmes that have an impact on the four pillars of food security.

INTRODUCTION

According to McCalla and Revoredo (1999:96) food security implies that every individual has access to enough food to maintain a healthy and active life. The

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (2009) define food security as access by all people at all times to food required for a healthy life. The National Policy for Food and Nutrition Security identifies four pillars of food security in South Africa namely; adequate availability of food, accessibility of food, utilisation and quality of food and stability of food supply. The multidimensional nature of food security necessitates a public policy approach that requires the coordination of government departments in the various sectors. The National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security was approved by the cabinet with the aim of providing a framework to streamline and harmonise the various initiatives by diverse government departments, civil society and the private sector. The policy was approved with the Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy and the Fetsa Tlala Production Plan. Through a conceptual and theoretical review of relevant literature, this article provides a discussion of the institutional arrangements to address the four pillars of food security.

THE FOUR PILLARS OF FOOD SECURITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

This section of the article identifies the four pillars of food security in South Africa and provides an overview of the government departments responsible for each pillar. The aim of this section is to contextualise food security in the current public policy framework and to highlight the need for a coordinated approach between government departments.

Food availability

According to the National Development Agency (2013:3) food availability refers to the production and procurement of adequate quantities of food available on a continuous basis. The Integrated Food Security Strategy, 2002, views food availability as the effective and continuous supply of food at both nationally and in households. Food availability is affected by market conditions and the production activities in the agricultural sector. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) is the lead department in terms of ensuring availability of food in South Africa. According to Statistics South Africa (2015:41) 18.3% of the households in South Africa participate in agricultural activities. 77.5 % of the population who engage in agricultural activities, rely on agriculture as an extra source of food, 5.1% utilise agricultural activities as an extra source of income, 1.9% of households engage in agricultural activities as the main source of income and 9.6% of households in South Africa undertake agricultural activities as a central food source (Statistics South Africa 2015:41). Nationally, South Africa is able to produce sufficient food and is able import the

food that cannot be produced within the country in order to provide enough food to its citizens. The National Self-sufficiency index indicates that South Africa is self-sufficient in maize, sugar, citrus, fruit, vegetables, milk and chicken (Du Toit 2011:8). The importance of the agricultural sector to food security is evident in that participation in agricultural activities assists households with extra sources of income and agriculture is significant to decrease the impacts of poverty and hunger. The agricultural sector, through the DAFF is one of the sectors that have a significant role in addressing the food availability pillar of food security.

Food access

Food access refers to the accessibility of adequate resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet and food distribution relates to the provision of food at the right time to places where the food is needed. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (2013:20), economic access to food is determined by the income that households and individuals have at their disposal, the fluctuations in the prices of food and the way in which individuals and households have access to social assistance. Economic access to food is also determined by people's power to procure food. Physical access is determined by the infrastructure that is available in terms of roads, railways and ports of entry.

In 2014, 11.4% of households were vulnerable to hunger and 13.1% of individuals in South Africa experienced vulnerability to hunger, 22.5% of households experienced complex food access and 26.2% of individuals experienced complex food access (Statistics South Africa 2015:59). South Africa faces a challenge at the household level, where there are some households that do not have access to adequate food. Food access is one of the pillars of food security and therefore the inability to access adequate food is a challenge to household food security. The challenge of food security in South Africa exists at the household level where 5.9% of the total household population in South Africa suffered from severe access to food, and 16.6% of households, experienced inadequate food access. 77.6% of households have adequate access to food (Statistics South Africa 2015:60).

Social protection is important for hunger reduction in different ways; protection for the most vulnerable and contribution to more rapid economic growth and to strengthen the ability of the poor to access food. Hunger and malnutrition reduction require short and long-term interventions. The Department of Social Development (DSD) provides nutritious meals through the Early Childhood Development Centres, and through food distribution centres, food parcels are provided to vulnerable individuals (Department of

Social Development 2013:2). The Programme for Social Relief and Distress implemented by the DSD is one of the key programmes in ensuring economic access to food, this programme along with the Expanded Public Works Programme and the Community Works Development Programme implemented by the Departments of Public Works and the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) respectively, are aimed at assisting households and individuals with income to procure food.

Food utilisation

Food utilisation refers to the final use of food by households and individuals. It is important for individuals to use food for their nutritional wellbeing, and the preparation of food must provide the maximum nutrients. Two key factors influence food utilisation; dietary diversity and food preservation and utilisation. According to the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security the diversity of diet is pivotal to the attainment of food and nutrition security, since diverse diets tend to be richer in micro and macro-nutrients. The consequences are high levels of micro-nutrient deficiency induced diseases in South Africa, arising from insufficient Vitamin A and Zinc, and manifesting as anemia. The Department of Health established the food fortification of maize meal and wheat flour with the aim of addressing deficiencies of micro-nutrients including iron, zinc, Vitamin A, folic acid, thiamin and riboflavin (Republic of South Africa 2013:9). The Department of Health is also responsible for introducing micro-nutrient sprinkles to food that is already prepared. It is important to acknowledge the importance of nutrition education in terms of food utilisation. Nutrition education is essential to educate individuals in planning their meals and also for interpreting the nutritional indices and the information on the proper preparation of food in order to retain the micro-nutrients that may be lost in food preparation. The Department of Health and the Department of Basic Education are responsible for nutrition education in South Africa. The Department of Basic Education is responsible for the implementation of the National School Nutrition Programme which includes nutrition education.

Stability of food supply

The fourth pillar of food security in South Africa is the stability of food supply. The supply of food in South Africa is impacted by natural, market, political and economic conditions. The multiple pillars of food security necessitate a multidimensional and multisectoral approach to policy implementation as each pillar of food security is addressed by various government programmes including school feeding, programmes for social relief and distress, support

for smallholder and subsistence farmers, Community Works Development Programmes and Expanded Public Works Programmes. The multisectoral and multidimensional nature of food security is evident in the diverse programmes aimed at addressing each of the four pillars. It is of significance to this research to highlight that this is not an exhaustive discussion on the multisectoral programmes and strategies in place in order to promote the attainment of the right to sufficient access to food provided by government.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK APPLICABLE TO FOOD SECURITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

The need for a coordinated approach in addressing the pillars of food security can also be contextualised in the legislative framework in South Africa. The right to access to food is a constitutional right entrenched in the Bill of Rights of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*. Sections 27(1) 28(1) and 35(2) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*, entrenches the right to access to sufficient water and food to all citizens, the right of every child to basic nutrition and the right of detained person and sentenced prisoners to access to basic nutrition.

The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* emphasises the requirement that the state must take reasonable and other measures within its available resources to achieve the realisation of these rights. Section 8 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*, binds all organs of state to ensure that the rights in the Bill of Rights are protected, promoted and respected. The government of South Africa is constitutionally bound to promote adequate access to food.

The White Paper on Agriculture, 1995, recognises the contribution of agriculture in the improvement of income, food security, employment and the quality of life. *The White Paper on Agriculture, 1995*, states the need for a multidimensional view to enhance household and national food security. South Africa is a net food exporter and is self-sufficient in terms of maize, wheat, vegetables, sugar and sunflowers (Du Toit 2011:8). *The White Paper on Land Reform, 1997*, identifies land reform as a way to ensure that more households will be able to continually access enough food. *The White Paper on Land Reform, 1997*, also identifies the consequences of the absence of household level security on the physical and mental development of children, and this is of importance to the Department of Basic Education which aims to improve the physical and mental development of children through its National School Nutrition Programme. Household food security is impacted by agricultural activities as sources of food and income, and household food security has an

impact on nutrition, health and education, and thus requires a multisectoral approach to food security.

The *White Paper on Land Reform, 1997*, makes provision for the access to productive land through which households have opportunities to access to more food and financial resources to purchase food. The *White Paper on Land Reform, 1997*, recognises the contribution of land to economic growth and poverty alleviation, and highlights the impact of poverty and income on food security and identifies the need for coordinated effort between the agricultural sector and other sectors. The *New Growth Path* identifies three challenges: poverty, inequality and unemployment that directly impact the ability of people to access food. The *New Growth Path* also recognises a microeconomic package that aims to contain the impact of increases in the prices of basic food items. Since 1994 economic policies in South Africa have focused on poverty reduction, and promoting employment. In terms of food security the agricultural sector plays a significant role in employment. In terms of multisectoral coordination, economic policies are relevant to other sectors which aim to promote the ability of people to access food and promote food security.

South Africa still faces many developmental challenges. The National Development Plan is a strategy developed by the National Planning Commission in the office of the Presidency in 2011 and provides a strategic framework to guide key choices and actions in order to achieve specific goals in 2030. The aim of the National Development Plan is to ensure that South Africans attain a decent standard of living by focusing on the provision of basic services, public transport, the development of human capacity, health care services and adequate nutrition (National Planning Commission 2011:41). Food and nutrition security are regarded as a top priority in South Africa as stated in the National Development Plan. The National Development Plan identifies poverty as a principal challenge in South Africa.

In order to alleviate poverty, social welfare policies are crucial. The DSD administers social security with the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), as mandated by the *Social Assistance Act, 2004* (Act 13 of 2004) and the *South African Social Security Act, 2004* (Act 9 of 2004). It is evident that the ability of people to access food influences a person's food security. The role of the DSD becomes imperative as the department responsible to ensure that those that do not have the material resources to access their basic needs, such as food, are provided with assistance. For the purpose of this article the DSD and the Social Relief and Distress programme focus on the income opportunities created for the purpose of assisting individuals in terms of income generation.

The *White Paper on Social Welfare, 1997*, stated the necessity of government departments to work together in order to guarantee that people who suffer from malnutrition are assisted with programmes such as feeding programmes, public

works, capacity building and other programmes that contribute to household food security. Poverty cannot be measured by income only; there is a need for the different sectors to work together in terms of the different programmes they offer related to poverty reduction and food security. School feeding programmes are provided for as part of the programmes made provision for in the *White Paper on Social Welfare*, 1997. The school feeding programme offered by the Department of Basic Education is the National School Nutrition Programme. The National School Nutrition Programme is the key programme relevant to the nutrition and food safety element of food security. There is a clear link between the agriculture, economy, social, health and education policies in South Africa.

The National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security acknowledges the complex nature of food security and aims to provide a framework for synergy between the various programmes and policies in place. The Household Strategy on Food and Nutrition Security specifically targets the availability and affordability of food to households and identifies a need for interaction between the spheres of government. The multidimensional nature of food security is evident in the legislative framework applicable to food security in South Africa.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR FOOD SECURITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to Macqueen, Zapata, Campbell, Baral, Camara, Chavez, Grouwels, Kafeero, Kamara, Rametsteiner, and Rodas (2014:ix) multisectoral platforms are processes which often become institutionalised bodies, drawing together various stakeholder representatives from different sectors to make decisions. Multisectoral platforms are formed to connect and harness the advantages of collaboration in dealing with challenges that span more than one sectoral jurisdiction and require a coordinated response in policy formulation and implementation.

The difference between multisectoral platforms and dialogue is that members go beyond networking; they make commitments, resource those commitments and hold each other accountable to coordinated responses. The public policy context for food security in South Africa has since 1994 reflected recognition for the multisectoral nature of food security in South Africa. This is displayed in the institutional arrangements for food security identified in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994), the Integrated Food Security Strategy (2002), Outcome 7 (2010), the Household Strategy on Food and Nutrition Security (2013), Fetsa Tlala Production Plan (2013) and the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security (2013). The challenge remains that there are currently a myriad of task teams for food security in South Africa.

The National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security

The National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security identifies a National Food and Nutrition Security Advisory Committee comprised of organised agriculture, food security and consumer bodies and representatives of organised committees chaired by the Deputy President. The National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security highlights that the same committees will be established in the provinces and municipalities. The Policy does not indicate how these structures could be established. There are no clear guidelines on how the participation of civil society organisations and the private sector will be fostered in the implementation of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security. The DAFF cannot determine the service delivery performance of the departments of agriculture and there is currently a need for comprehensive evaluation for provincial service delivery in the provinces (Financial Fiscal Commission 2014). The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996, identifies agriculture as a function of national and provincial departments which have to consider directives as guiding principles but these are not mandatory. The provinces do not need to be accountable to the national DAFF. It is therefore significant that there is a need for a synergy between all three spheres of government in the forming of the provincial and municipal advisory committees. The National Policy does not indicate the way in which the advisory committee would function specifically in relation to the proposed institutional arrangements in the Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy, the Fetsa Tlala Production Plan and the established Outcome 7. The National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security will not be implemented in isolation and there is a need for an explanation on how the advisory committee will be aligned with institutional arrangements that currently existed.

The Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy

In 2013 three key guiding strategies were approved by cabinet, the Fetsa Tlala Production Plan and the Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy as well as the National Policy of Food and Nutrition Policy. The approved Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy also indicates a multisectoral approach to food security through the inclusion of different sector departments involved in the different pillars of food security in South Africa. Table 1 depicts the Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy.

The Strategy identifies the need for a Ministerial Household Food Security advisory committee and the significance of the role of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), Department of Water Affairs (DWA) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

Table 1: The proposed institutional arrangements for the Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy

National Working Group	Departments involved
Food Fortification	DOH
Improving access and availability of food	DAFF (DTI and EDD)
Support for small scale producers and food production	DAFF
Nutritional needs of the most vulnerable and most food insecure	DSD

Source: Adapted from The Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy 2013

A centralised food control system

Food control is a concurrent responsibility that requires multiple government departments from all spheres of government. Currently three government departments share the responsibility for food control in South Africa; the DAFF, the Department of Health and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Table 2: The Outcome 7 government departments

Outcome 1 DAFF & DRDLR	DWA,CoGTA, DTI, DED, Provincial Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development, Tourism, DST	Other relevant national and provincial sector departments Finance institutions, Land Bank, Farmer organisations, Local Government, public entities etc.
Outcome 2 DAFF	DRDLR,DBE, DoH, DTI,DPW,DSD,DWA,DoCG, DHS, DoCG, provincial sector departments, Local Government, Traditional leaders	Farmer’s organisations, NGOs, CBOs, Public entities, Private sector, and competition commission etc.
Outcome 3 DRDLR	DoH, DAFF DWA, DST,DBE, DSD, DHA, DHET, DHS COGTA, DoL, DMR, , Energy, DOC, DOT DPW,NYDA, Tourism	Provincial government departments, Local Government, SOEs, public entities
Outcome 4 DRDLR	DTI DPW, DAFF, DWA, DSD, DoL, DED, DPW, Mineral Resources, Tourism, DEA,DOC,DST, ,YDA	Provincial government departments, Local government, SOE, Public Entities, Financing institutions, Private sector, Farmers organisations, construction industry
Outcome 5 COGTAand DRDLR	DTA, DAC, SRSA, Provincial DoCOG Provincial depts. with rural development function, SRAC, YDA	SALGA, MDB, ward committees, CDWS, Local Government, NGOs, CBOs, NPOs ,social and sports clubs and sports bodies

Source: Adapted from The Presidency 2010

The DAFF is the lead regulatory authority tasked with the responsibility for food security, the Department of Health is responsible for foodstuffs and the DTI through the National Regulator of Compulsory specifications is responsible for canned meat, meat products, canned and frozen fish. The DTI is also responsible for accessible and sustainable meat placement for consumer products (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Department of Health and Department of Trade and Industry 2013:12). Outcome 7 identifies five outcomes that are led by DAFF, Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs respectively and support departments as well as the private sector, provincial and local governments and civil society. This is a further indication of the recognition of the multisectoral participation of government departments in the multisectoral platforms applicable to food security in South Africa Outcome 7 has five outputs with a representation by similar departments led by the DRDLR and DAFF. Table 2 depicts the five outputs and the institutional arrangements for Outcome 7.

The Fetsa Tlala Production Plan

The Fetsa Tlala Production Plan identifies the following institutional arrangements for a task team to implement the Production Initiative; DAFF (Convenor), DRDLR, DWA, DTI, DSD, DPW, NT, and PDAs. The Fetsa Tlala Production Plan also indicates a multisectoral approach to food production as a pillar of food security in South Africa. The leadership of the programme is done by the DAFF (DAFF 2013:11).

A challenge in multisectoral coordination identified in this article is the interface between the DAFF and the DRDLR as convenors of multisectoral platforms for food security. The DAFF is responsible for establishing a national task team comprised of government departments and the private sector in the implementation of the Fetsa Tlala Production Plan. The Department has a role as convenor and coordinator and will also serve as the secretariat for the task team (DAFF 2013:11).

The DRDLR is responsible for coordinating the activities of Outcome 7 (The Presidency 2010) which aims to ensure vibrant sustainable rural communities and food security for all. The DRDLR is the chair of the implementation forum whereas the DAFF is the co-chair. The two government departments each have their own mandates with regard to ensuring food security in South Africa; both the departments are sectoral in nature in that they concentrate and target a particular segment of the economy, the agricultural sector and rural development and land reform. There needs to be a clear interface and clarification of the roles between these two departments as convenors of multisectoral platforms for food security in South Africa. In terms of policy coordination and effective implementation as the main aim of these processes it, requires participation

from decision-makers in some form, multisectoral platforms can benefit from inputs and participation from broader constituencies.

A further challenge in ensuring multisectoral integration in South Africa is in the lack of convening power by a government department over other line ministries. The DAFF has no convening powers over other sector departments and therefore the role of the department as a convenor of working groups and task teams applicable to food security in South Africa presents a challenge to multisectoral coordination as there is no obligation for the other departments to attend the meetings if there is no law for enforceability.

Chitiga-Mabugu, Nchemachena, Karuaihe, Motala, Tsoanamatsie, Mashile (2013:7) state that the institutional location for coordinating a national response is a limitation in ensuring the emergence of a multi-dimensional response to food security in South Africa. There is a need for clarity regarding the way in which DAFF can coordinate other ministries. The sectoral coordination of multisectoral platforms by the DAFF is also highlighted by Drimie and Ruysenaar (2003) the challenges that were evident in the Integrated Food Security Strategy is that coordination was done by the DAFF in the food security directorate. This challenge is evident in the coordination of the Fetsa Tlala Production Plan where DAFF is the convenor.

The DAFF information management functions are to coordinate the review, generation and to update food security information and enhance the coordination of the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Systems (DAFF 2015). In order to effectively address food security in South Africa, it is imperative to develop a national database of food security information. The key strategies, policies and programmes that have been developed in South Africa applicable to food security have since 1994 established task teams and working groups as a multisectoral platform for coordination. Each of the task teams consists of a lead department and supporting departments that are responsible for a specific pillar of food security in South Africa with a sector department such as the DAFF and the DRDLR as a convenor of the task team or group. The task teams that have been established identify similar departments as key stakeholders in ensuring that all the pillars of food security are addressed. This article argues that the numerous task teams and working groups create a need for multisectoral integration.

STRATEGIES FOR MULTISECTORAL COORDINATION

The introduction of the *National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security* was aimed at addressing the challenges of the *Integrated Food Security Strategy* in coordinating and streamlining different sectors and programmes addressing food security. The strategies recommended in this article are aimed at addressing the above mentioned challenges.

An assessment of the current institutional capacity for public policy implementation

The coordination of activities by government departments, each with its own organisational structure, vision, mission and strategic objectives creates the need for an assessment of institutional capacity to carry out activities that are common to a task team or working group. Institutions that lack the financial and administrative capacity to implement their own activities also hamper multisectoral coordination. Benson (2008) identifies the lack of capacity in implementation; monitoring and evaluation can be a barrier to multisectoral coordination. Management involves the task of policy planning, capacity for policy analysis, organisation of work, decision-making, roles and responsibilities, accountability and feedback review and evaluation (Garret and Natalicchio 2011:33). It is vital for the institution responsible for the management of multisectoral platforms to be able to work with, and around rules, structures and partners in bureaucracies and other organisations.

Two key elements are highlighted as challenges in the institutional capacity of the government departments to implement their programmes; the funding for programmes and human capital management capacity. The National Development Plan (2012:361) asserts that the social sector is currently fragmented and under-resourced and facing challenges and constraints from the apartheid era. There is a lack of coordination and integration of systems, weak and limited funds available and capacity shortages. In South Africa the implementation of programmes as identified in the Policy, the Household Strategy and the Fetsa Tlala have to take into consideration the allocation of budget items by the National Treasury. There are no funds that are specifically dedicated to food security in all spheres of government. An analysis of the capacity of government departments that are involved in the public policymaking, implementation, monitoring and evaluation is recommended. A determination needs to be made on who the representatives from the different government departments are on the multisectoral platforms and also on where in the organisational structure, the interested stakeholders are placed. There are skills shortages and fragmentation in the social sector and it is therefore important that an environmental analysis is made to ascertain the extent to which adequate capacity exists to achieve policy goals prior to targets being set.

Clearly defined guidelines for institutional arrangements in the provincial and local government spheres are recommended

The National Food and Nutrition Security Policy will be implemented under the leadership of the DSD and the DAFF. The Policy states that similar structures are to be convened in the provinces and local spheres of government. It

is imperative given the multidimensional and multisectoral nature of food security, that the policy be implemented with clear and specific work-based implementation plans that clearly indicate the role of the various departments in the national and provincial sphere involved and their role in policy-making, implementation, analysis and monitoring and evaluation.

The development of guidelines for participation by the local sphere of government in the implementation of the Policy is advocated for and recommended in this research. Section 152 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996 identifies the provision of a safe and healthy environment and the promotion of social and economic development as the objects of local government. The inclusion of municipalities in the public policy process is significant as municipalities are responsible for the provision of basic services which have an impact on food access, food use, food production and stability of food supply which are pillars of food security. If there is no water or electricity households cannot prepare and cook certain kinds of food. The local sphere of government is at the coalface of service delivery and in this sense is the sphere closest to the people. COGTA (2009:21) states that progress and success of the local government system in South Africa is increasingly being overwhelmed by factors such as poor governance, service delivery failures, their capacity and performance and by the unique challenges experienced in the varying spatial locations of municipalities. Challenges relate to the availability of human resource capacity, degree of economic activity and overall institutional strength. Some municipalities face huge infrastructure backlogs, the negative impacts of demographic change and prevailing apartheid-based socio-economic legacies. It is of significance to note that the 278 municipalities have unique characteristics for which a one-size-fit all approach is inadequate. It is important therefore that municipalities are included in the engagement of stakeholders and role-players in the development of guidelines for an advisory committee to lead the implementation of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security.

Evidence-based decision-making for policy monitoring and evaluation

A criteria and consideration used by the Food and Agriculture Organisation considered to be a critical feature in the enabling environment for food security is evidence-based decision-making. Decision-making of food security is based on evidence generated and functional systems that monitor trends, track and map actions and assess impacts in a timely manner and enabling lessons learned to be fed back into the policy process (The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation 2014:20). The United States Agency for International Development (2013) highlights the importance of the existence of quality data for monitoring the

policy objectives and to set performance targets to monitor the achievement of policy objectives. Policy evaluation is an assessment activity and can be conducted before implementation, during implementation and after implementation. Evaluation is used in order to generate information on a policy and to inform decision-making.

Pre-implementation evaluation such as a feasibility study is used in order to avoid administrative inefficiencies (Ille 2014:193). The DAFF, Subsistence Farming Directorate, the Information Management Unit are responsible for coordinating the monitoring of food security policy information in South Africa (DAFF 2015). In addition to the surveys such as the General Household Survey and the Labour Force Survey, that are used to inform the pillars of food security in South Africa, the various departments responsible for food security programmes have their own indicators and monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems. It is important to investigate the systems in place and the extent to which the various government departments provide information that enables a clear picture of the state of food security in South Africa. It is recommended that uniformity is applied to the indicators used for monitoring and evaluation of government programmes aimed at addressing the four pillars of food security.

The active participation of civil society and private sector organisations in public policy implementation

Reddy and Govender (2014:172) differentiate between policy role-players and policy stakeholders. Policy stakeholders are defined as those having either direct or indirect influence on policy-making. Direct policy stakeholders are political institutions and actors including governments and public institutions and researchers. Indirect policy stakeholders are interest groups, non-governmental organisations, and academic institutions. Policy role-players are directly involved in the process of formulation, implementation and evaluation of the policy. The role-players are actual participants in the policy process. Public participation processes serve to strengthen institutions of representative democracy by democratising those institutions. In a participatory democracy, the public is actively involved in the decision-making processes of the government.

Civil society organisations have platforms where they are able to communicate policies and strategies that aim to address food security both globally and nationally depending on the prevalent conditions in each country. Civil society organisations highlight the need for strategies to include the participation of marginalised groups, such as women, children, youth, small holder farmers, indigenous peoples, pastoralists and fishers in order to be effective (Chitiga-Mabugu *et al.* 2013 viii).

The *National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security* identifies the participation of civil society and the private sector in the advisory committee; however it is not clear what the roles of these organisations will be. It is also important

to note that civil society includes a wide array of non-governmental and non-profit organisations, community groups, charitable organisations, labour unions, indigenous groups, faith based organisations, professional associations and foundations. There is a need to clearly state how these organisations will be included in the institutional arrangements in all three spheres of government. Timney (2011:87) states that in some situations public input in decisions of administration is likely to be solicited after administrators have defined the problem and developed proposed solutions. Even though the citizens are provided an opportunity to provide input what they recommend often does not change the outcome as the most important decisions are already taken. It is recommended that clear guidelines for the participation of civil society and non-governmental organisations are set out in the implementation and work-based plans of the policy. There is a need for the establishment of avenues of communication and collaboration between government and these organisations and for civil society to be included in the development of policy implementation plans.

CONCLUSION

Food security is multisectoral and multidimensional in nature as it consists of four pillars that require the participation and active involvement of various government departments. In South Africa, each of the four pillars of food security is addressed by multiple departments across the agriculture, land reform, health and social development sectors. The introduction of the Integrated Food Security Strategy in 2002 and the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security in 2013 indicate the recognition by government of the need for a coordinated approach to addressing food security. The main aim of this article is specifically to provide recommendations for multisectoral coordination in the implementation of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security, taking cognisance of the current institutional arrangements and those proposed in terms of the *Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy* and the *Fetsa Tlala Production Plan*. It is envisaged through this article that the participation by different policy role-players and stakeholders may be coordinated to promote a multisectoral approach to addressing the four pillars of food security.

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AUTHOR'S CONTACT DETAILS

Ms H M Nkwana
School of Public Management and Administration
University of Pretoria
Tel.: 012 420 2051
E-mail: Mapula.Nkwana@up.ac.za