

Impact of “Alleviating Hunger Together” Programme on Food Security in Bojanala District in South Africa

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ABSTRACT The study presents the Impact of “Alleviating Hunger Together” Programme on Food Security in Bojanala District in South Africa. The study was conducted among 100 households in Moretele from different villages. Respondents were selected randomly and information was gathered through the use of questionnaires. The results showed that 13 percent of the respondents were less than 30 years, 24 percent were between 31-40 years. Twenty-two percent were aged between 41-50 and 41-50 respectively. Although a high percentage of respondents had access to land, resources such as money were not available to carry on the agricultural activities. Most of the respondents had child support grant as their source of income, used for feeding. Significant determinants of attitude towards AHT are marital status ($t = -2.22$), race ($t = 2.22$), religion ($t = -4.27$), sources of income ($t = 2.567$) and membership of group ($t = 6.245$). Based on the findings, the study recommends that there should be an improvement in resources for the proper execution of the project.

INTRODUCTION

Food is the basic need of life. Every individual has the right to food. Quality food is the secret to a productive life every day. Food plays a very vital role in maintaining proper health and also helps in the prevention and cure of diseases. Good nutritive food makes good health, while bad or unhealthy food can lead to a diseased condition, therefore, it is important to have food and not any food but healthy food. “We are what we eat” (FAO 2008; Tirado 2011). The nutritional status of an individual, the health, physical and mental faculties depend on the food they eat. Therefore for good human existence, access to good and quality food is important (FAO 2008, 2013). However, several authors, Van Liere (1994), Leonard (1989) and Abdullah and Wheeler (1985) Turner (2012) submitted that there is a variation in the quantity and quality of food consumed among groups of individuals in different income strata, particularly energy given food and protein intake between seasons within and outside Africa, a scenario that depicts food insecurity.

Food security is availability at all times of adequate world supply of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuation in production and price (Tirado 2012; UN 1975). It is access to food in quality and quantity, to meet all nutritional requirements for all household members

throughout the year. Food security is explained by the following concepts, food availability which means effective or continuous supply of food at both national and household level, food accessibility, which is access by households to sufficient food on a sustainable basis, food reliability which is access to safe and nutritious food, food distribution which is timely and equitable provision of food at the point of demand and food utilization which is proper processing, storage and consumption of food.

However, achieving food security in its totality continues to be a challenge even for the developed world, and much more for the developing nations. In South Africa, the story is not different, food security issues have been very critical. Therefore, like it is in other parts of the world and Africa, goals at achieving food security remain paramount in their agricultural policy thrust. In ensuring food security in South Africa, the right to or access to sufficient food was embedded in the constitution after independence in 1994 (Toit 2011; Swaminathan et al. 2012). This culminated into food security oriented policies and support programmes to ensure that South African citizens are given access to opportunities that will enable them to meet their basic food needs. One of these support programmes include the land reform which made land available to emerging farmers and Alleviating Hunger Together (AHT), just to mention a few. AHT as a concept was introduced to alleviate poverty

among vulnerable poor rural people in very remote areas who have limited access to help from government support like social grants. The objective of AHT was to improve household food security and income generation using available agricultural resources and to draw the attention of the civil society to the plight of the poorest of the poor in trying to secure a livelihood. This programme, intended to eradicate malnutrition, and to make beneficiaries in poultry production to earn a living was designed to make these participants active players in designing strategy that will not only make their business grow, but also encourage and lobby business and civil society as a whole to contribute to alleviating hunger amongst them, and thereby improve their economy.

The Alleviating Hunger Together programme (*Letseama la mantsha tlala*) was aimed at making small holder poultry farmers to increase their scale of egg production in such a way that their nutritional status, their income and that of the entire rural communities will be enhanced. This programme which has been in existence for some time will no doubt, have impacted on the lives of the farmers, their families and the entire rural populace, it therefore becomes important to find out the extent of this impact in order to have a feedback as to the performance of the programme in line with the intended objectives of the stakeholders.

This study therefore seeks to: identify personal characteristics of participants in AHT, determine attitude towards AHT, ascertain the impact of AHT in HFS, compare the food security status of participants before and after AHT and identify constraints faced by farmers in the AHT programme

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Bojanala District Municipality. The district is located in the north-eastern side of the North West Province and also shares boundaries with municipalities in other provinces like Gauteng and Limpopo. It is made up of Moretele, Madibeng, Moses Kotane, Rustenburg and Kgetleng Local municipalities. Bojanala District Municipality is one of the four districts within the North West Province. Moretele was chosen for the study because it was selected as a pilot village for the AHT

programme. Moretele is situated in the far east of Bojanala and covers an area of 1369 square km; it is located strategically to join four provinces like Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West. It has 28 wards and 70 villages. In Moretele specifically, beef production is the main commercial agricultural activity although crop production is also practiced. Most small scale farmers produce vegetables whereas some are involved in poultry farming.

Bojanala has a temperate humid subtropical climate. It has very warm summer and mild winter. Temperatures range from 17°C to 31°C in summer, and from 3-21°C in winter. Annual rainfall totals about 360mm with almost all of it falling during the summer months between October and April.

The population of the study were the one hundred and seventy-five people who participated in this poultry project from 10 villages in Moretele. The project was mainly for eggs production on a very small scale, for household production and surplus was sold locally. However, during the sample survey, only 100 people were selected for the survey to determine the impact of alleviating hunger programme within the community. The participants were selected from Tlounane, Utsane, Swartboom, Ngobi, Bosplass, Mathibestad, Moeka, Lebalangwa, D grens, De stan, are villages in Moretele local municipality. Simple random sampling was used to select one hundred households that benefited in the AHT, 67 females and 33 males (Table 1).

Table 1: Study population and sample

Villages	No. of participants	Sample
Tlounane	20	12
Utsane	10	5
Swartboom	20	14
Ngobi	10	8
Bosplaas	20	8
Mathibestad	15	14
De grens	20	12
De stan	20	9
Lebalangwa	10	8
Moeka	30	10

A structured questionnaire was designed as a tool for the collection of primary data, and administered to respondents through oral interview. Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

RESULTS

In Table 2 it was shown that 24% of the respondents fall between 51 to 60 years old while 13% were less than 30 years old. The reason for the low percentage of respondents in this age bracket may be because people in this age bracket are usually young school leavers who prefer white collar jobs and regard agriculture as an activity meant for older people. Forty-five per cent of the participants were married and 3% were divorced. The reason for this high percentage of married people is because traditionally, women depend on men for support and so men will want to engage in livelihood activities that will boost their income to meet the needs of the family (Gürkan and Sanogo 2013). Also the family members will provide labour for the project.

It is also shown in Table 2 that 80% of people were unemployed and only 3% was temporarily employed. The reason for the high percentage of unemployed respondents is that this project provides opportunity to be self-employed particularly in the increasing paucity of job opportunities in government establishments. Table 2 also reveals that 57% of the respondents have child support grants as their source of income, 25% are on the old people support grants, 6% on orphan grants, and 12% other grants like disability.

Percentage Distribution of Attitude towards Against Hunger Together

It was revealed in Table 3 that 91% of the respondents strongly agreed that AHT benefited them while 1% strongly disagreed. Sixty-two percent of the respondent underscored the positive contribution of the programme and admitted that their living condition before the intervention was very bad. It is also shown in Table 3 that 52% of the respondent agreed and welcomed the intervention while 2% of the respondent did not want the intervention. Seventy-one percent of the people own their land. In rural areas, land ownership is not a problem, people go to the tribal authority to request land, if they are members of that community, and they will be allocated land (Grobler 2013). It is also revealed in Table 3 that 62% of the respondents are not members of any farming group while 37% of the people are members of farming group. In all different villages, there are farming groups that

Table 2: Percentage distribution of respondents' personal characteristics

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	33	33.0
Female	67	67.0
<i>Age</i>		
Less than 30 yrs.	13	13.0
30 – 40 yrs.	22	22.0
41 – 50 yrs.	22	22.0
51 – 60 yrs.	24	24.0
Above 60 yrs.	19	19.0
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Single	41	41.0
Married	45	45.0
Widowed	10	10.0
Divorced	3	3.0
<i>Race</i>		
African	92	92.0
White	2	2.0
<i>Level of Education</i>		
Primary school	38	38.0
Secondary school	27	27.0
High school	33	33.0
College	2	2.0
<i>Religion</i>		
Christianity	81	81.0
Bahai	14	14.0
Hinduism	2	2.0
Islam	3	3.0
Other	0	0
<i>Number of Dependants</i>		
1 - 3	42	42.0
4 - 6	54	54.0
7 - 9	4	4.0
<i>Number of Household</i>		
1 - 3	67	67.0
4 - 6	22	22.0
7 - 11	12	12.0
<i>Total Number of People in the Household</i>		
4 - 6	83	83.0
7 - 9	15	15.0
10	3	3.0
<i>Employment Status</i>		
Unemployed	80	80.0
Casual	17	17.0
Self employed	3	3.0
<i>Source of Income</i>		
Old age grant	25	25.0
Child support grant	57	57.0
Orphan grant	6	6.0
Other	12	12.0
<i>Source of Land</i>		
Personal	71	71.0
Rented	5	5.0
Allocation	22	22.0
Other	2	2.0
<i>Membership of Farmers Group</i>		
Yes	37	37.0
No	62	62.0
Other	1	1.0
<i>Non-farming Activities</i>		
Yes	26	26.0
No	72	72.0
<i>Types of Non-farming Activities</i>		
Artisan	1	1.0
Baking	3	3.0
Sewing	3	3.0

work directly with extension officers; the reason for farming groups is to help to facilitate the agricultural activities in the village

Table 4 explains that 90% of the participants agreed that product was available throughout the production cycle while the remaining ten percent disagreed. The reason for the disagreement is that, there was some mortality. Sixty percent of the produce was mainly for household consumption and the remaining was for sale. 84% agreed that 40% of the surplus were sold.

As per the objective of the programme 77% agreed that the beneficiaries were provided with production inputs while 23 % said not all the production inputs were provided. Majority of the participants were satisfied with the programme and 40% were not happy with the AHT. Fifty-one percent agreed that produce were always available to consumers while 49% disagreed with this. The purpose of AHT is to make sure that everyone has food on the table every day, 85% agreed that AHT achieved this objective,

Table 3: Percentage distribution of respondents on the attitude towards Against Hunger Together on Household Food Security

	<i>S A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>S D</i>
Do you benefited from the programme?	91	8	0	0	1
Was there a need for government's intervention?	62	38	0	0	0
The living conditions were bad before the intervention	68	32	0	0	0
Level of poverty changed for the better	1	29	70	0	0
The implementation of the project was properly done	41	41	3	13	2
The community welcomed the project	41	52	5	2	0
Your participation in the implementation was recognized	58	36	4	1	1
All required inputs were provided	57	41	1	0	1
Produce were of good quality	48	45	5	0	2
The surplus were sold	53	36	7	3	1
The profit made from the produce were saved	30	58	8	4	0
There was no problem with the market	38	51	8	3	0
The project improved the community's standard of living	33	48	18	1	0
There were challenges during production cycle	25	56	13	6	0
The mortality was 5% during production cycle	27	49	12	9	3
Training was done before the implementation	30	56	12	1	1
Training offered played a role in my management of project	42	37	16	2	1
Experience of poultry rearing even before training	40	37	9	4	9
Have experience of vegetable production even before training	36	30	17	6	9
Shared the experience and knowledge with other beneficiaries	50	39	7	4	0
We share the market	18	47	20	14	1
We sell at the same price as per agreement	43	33	17	5	2
The project is sustainable and beneficial	27	53	13	6	1
Other members of the family participate in the project	26	50	19	5	0
Veterinary services were available when needed	26	46	15	8	5
Other stakeholders were involved	31	46	17	3	3
Community benefited from the project	48	39	10	3	0
Monitoring was done during the production cycle	45	35	16	4	0
Evaluation was done at the end of the production cycle	28	56	9	5	2
The project was handed over to beneficiaries	27	56	12	5	0
Beneficiaries are responsible for the project	34	45	13	8	0
Department played a major role in this project	60	27	13	0	0
The project should never have been implemented	33	34	2	23	7
Other communities must benefit from the project	49	38	7	6	0
Extension officer is available when needed	53	29	9	4	4
Not only chickens were provided	36	29	5	21	9
Fruit trees were not necessary	21	36	10	14	19
Seedlings were provided	22	42	10	11	15
We never struggled with planting the seedlings	19	34	12	20	14
Fruits are doing well	11	43	4	24	18

Agree – A, Strongly agree – S A, Disagree – D, Strongly disagree – S D, Undecided – U

Table 4: Percentage distribution of respondents based on impact of Against Hunger Together on Household Food Security

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Produce were produced throughout the production cycle	90	10
60% of produce was for consumption	90	10
40% of the produce was sold	84	16
Production inputs were provided	77	23
Production was satisfactory	60	40
Produce was always available to the consumers	51	49
Never went to bed on an empty stomach	85	18
Did you spend money on production inputs?	70	30
There was no need to look for a job	62	38
Money from the produce is satisfactory	61	39
Always having money to buy basic food	70	30
Vegetables produced were sold	55	45

while 18% said it did not achieve this objective. Seventy percent agreed that they did not spend money in production as indicated that the production inputs were provided and they were also satisfied with the money they received from the surplus sold. Generally, a large percentage agreed and supported the AHT and wished that other villages be introduced to this programme.

Food Security before and After the Intervention of Against Hunger Together

The differences in Household Food Security before and after intervention of Against Hun-

ger Together are captured in Table 5. It was revealed in Table 5 that before the intervention of Against Hunger Together (AHT), 91% did not have food while after the intervention, 93% had food on daily basis but did not have money to buy basic stable food. After the intervention, they managed to save money for the daily use. Eighty eight percent agreed that the dependents were not properly fed before the intervention and after the interventions; they agree they were properly fed. People were malnourished before AHT and after the intervention, 79% agreed that, the vitamins and minerals needed by the body were received. Most of them did not have interest in agricultural activities; they only developed one after the intervention. The reason for the interest was that, they noticed that through agriculture, they could get food at a lower cost; they had their own land and water to produce food and could rear indigenous chickens in their yard. AHT helped them to have access to the right food, balanced diet and their standard of living improved. Initially, they thought that AHT was not appropriate for their needs, after the intervention, they noticed that it was supposed to be implemented a long time ago. They were not aware of their right to food and water but through the process, they knew their right. The intervention was an eye-opener to them.

The regression model indicates R Square value of 0.21 which implies that the independent variables included in the analysis explain 0.21% of the variation in the dependent variable (Table 6). The significant determinants are marital sta-

Table 5: Proportion of household Food Security before and after the intervention of Against Hunger Together

	<i>Before</i>		<i>After</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Have enough food	9	91	93	7
Have income	10	90	95	9
Dependent well fed	12	88	94	6
Timing was adequate	34	66	12	88
Food security was unsecured	60	40	75	25
Went to bed without anything to eat	57	43	62	38
Have access to cash	41	59	71	29
Have nutrients required by the body	66	34	79	21
Have interest in agricultural production	47	53	85	15
Have the knowhow of rearing chicken	33	67	81	19
Have information about the project	28	72	82	18
Know their right of access to food	37	63	83	17
Have information on vegetable production	31	69	83	17
Know the importance of balanced diet	27	73	83	17
Household standard of living is acceptable	17	83	92	8

tus ($t = -2.22$), race ($t = 2.22$), religion ($t = -4.27$), sources of income ($t = 2.567$) and membership of group ($t = 6.245$). It therefore means that married people had positive attitude towards AHT because they have a family to feed, same with race because they were previously not engaged in agricultural activities as the owners of the project. Sources of income are one of the variables that responded positively towards AHT because most of the participants do not have stable sources of income and AHT helped them to be financially independent.

Table 7 shows the difference in the Household Food Security before and after Against Hunger Together intervention among the respondents. The mean score on the HFS shows that the respondents had higher score after the AHT when compared to the period before the introduction of AHT. The t -value (10.34) at $p = 0.00$ shows that, there is a significant difference in the HFS of the respondents before, and after AHT. The implication of these results is that, the introduction of AHT has positive impact on the HFS of the respondents. The programme of AHT has helped in a way to improve the HFS in

Moretele. According to Albert (2000), similar programme like AHT was introduced as a pilot programme at Vietnam. The objective of the pilot programme was to establish a home garden to produce both food and generate income by selling the surplus. In Thailand, the government implemented an ambitious community-based nutrition programme throughout the country. It included nutrition, better primary health care, improved food production and supplementary feeding for young children. Efforts to improve were matched with income-generating. Within ten years, severe malnutrition dropped to less than 10% down from 35%.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that AHT was really needed to address the issue of food insecurity in Moretele Municipality. It is clear that before the intervention, respondents were food insecure but after AHT, their standard of living improved for the better. A large number of respondents were older people, between 51 to 60 years. This is an indication that young people are not in-

Table 6: Multiple regressions showing attitude of participants towards Against Hunger Together

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std error	Beta		
Gender	8.73E-02	.411	.019	.212	.83
Age	2.39	.015	.159	1.59	.12
Marital status	-.642	.289	-.233	-2.22	.03
Race	2.99	1.350	.197	2.22	.03
Level of education	.441	.235	.184	1.88	.064
Religion	-.129	.301	-.390	-4.27	.00
Number of households	2.18E-02	.078	.025	.28	.78
Employment status	.147	.294	.042	.499	.619
Source of income	.534	.208	.223	2.567	.012
Source of land	2.91E-02	.148	.017	.197	.844
Membership of farming group	-2.208	.354	-.519	-6.245	.000
Labour sources	.193	.170	.096	1.130	.262
R	0.68				
R square	0.47				
F	6.29				
P	0.00				

Table 7: t -test showing differences in Household Food Security before and after Against Hunger Together intervention

	N	Mean	Std deviation	Std error mean	MD	SD	t	df	P
HfSA after	28.17	100	4.44	0.44	8.03	7.6	10.34	99	0.00
HfS before	20.14	100	4.87	0.49					

interested in agricultural activities and are not capable of taking care of their household needs; they are looking for instant cash. It was observed that most respondents had access to land but could not make use of it because they do not have production inputs to carry out the agricultural activities. The source of income is mainly from social grants. This is an indication that the level of unemployment is very high. The results of linear regression model revealed that the attitude of participants in AHT is affected by the participants' socio-economic characteristics. The independent variables were able to explain 21% of variation in attitude of the participants to AHT. The statistically significant variables, at 5% level are: marital status, race, and religion, source of income and membership of group were inversely related to AHT.

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