

Unemployment, Living Wages and Food Security in Alice, Eastern Cape, South Africa

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ABSTRACT As unemployment and inflation affect the South African economy, employment opportunities continue to be minimal for those living in pastoral areas making residents more prone to hunger, starvation and food insecurity. The principle objective of this paper was to investigate the effects of unemployment and living wages on household food security in Alice, Eastern Cape as well as indicate important issues that policy makers and governments should deal with in order to assist households to be food secure.

Structured interviews incorporating the household hunger scale and selected demographic characteristics were administered to 441 respondents in Alice, Eastern Cape, South Africa. Cluster sampling was used to select respondents where the population was divided into mutually exclusive groups and systematic random sampling was then employed within each cluster. The findings of this research indicate that the higher the unemployment level and the lower the living wage and the more likely households are to be food insecure. There is thus a need for job creation and community based projects to help eradicate household food insecurity amongst the unemployed.