

Report on the Evaluation of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)



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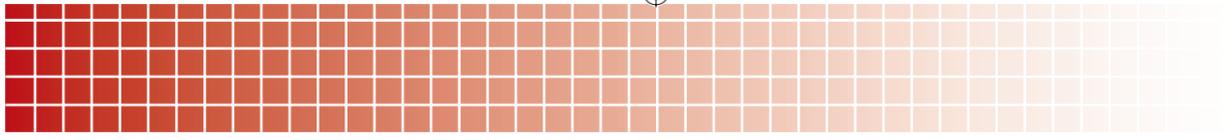
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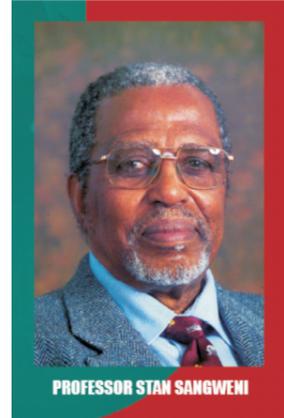
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Foreword

The importance of education in the improvement of the quality of life of people is generally acknowledged. As a result, many countries today, including ours, have placed education among the key priorities for national development. However, given the prevalence of poverty in communities across the country, learners face the risk of reduced capacity to learn as a result of nutritional deprivation. It was against this background that the democratic government established the Primary School Nutrition Programme (PSNP) in selected schools in 1994, which was later renamed to the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) following an intensive review.



The programme aims to provide well-balanced meals to learners in the hope that their concentration and performance levels will improve and ultimately influence their learning process. Viewed in this way, the NSNP is, therefore, an important part of government's interventions for creating a better life for all. The success of this programme can undoubtedly also contribute towards the country's realisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) especially in halving poverty and making education accessible to the population by 2014.

Given the critical role of the NSNP in the promotion of effective learning in schools, the Public Service Commission (PSC) found it necessary to evaluate the implementation of the NSNP to determine its progress, challenges and to advise on areas that require attention. The evaluation focused only on two provinces, namely, Eastern Cape and Limpopo. These two provinces were carefully selected based on their poverty status in the country. They are the poorest provinces that are also least resourced compared to the rest of the provinces. The PSC hopes that the findings and lessons drawn from this study can be applied to improve the programme in the rest of the country.

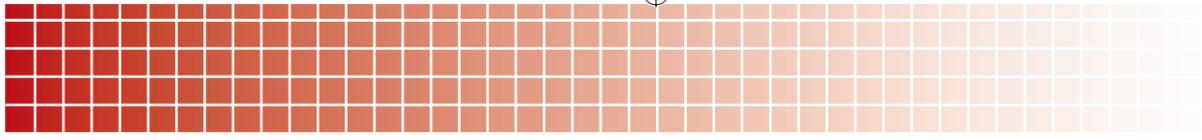
The PSC wishes to thank all the officials, communities people and learners in the two provinces for their willingness to participate in this study. I trust that this report will add the value to the effective management of the National School Nutrition Programme.

PROF SS SANGWENI
CHAIRPERSON



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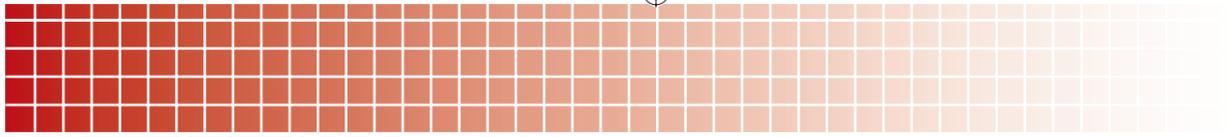
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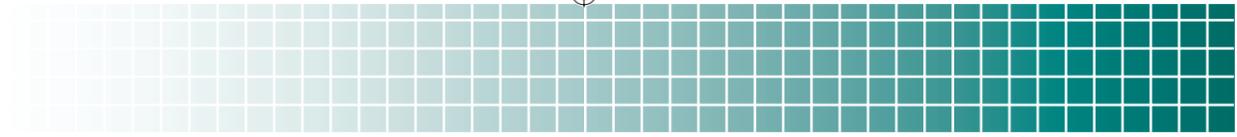
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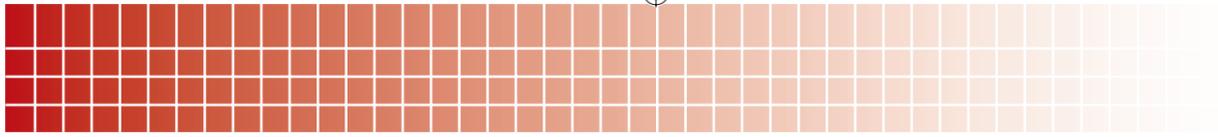


GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ANC	African National Congress
CAF	Local Schools Meals Councils (Portuguese)
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CHU	Child Health Unit
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
DoLG	Department of Local Government
DoSD	Department of Social Development
DFID	Department for International Development
ECDOE	Eastern Cape Department of Education
EDO	Education Development Officer
FFE	Food For Education
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
HST	Health System Trust
IFSNP	Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Programme
IFSS	Integrated Food Security System
INP	Integrated Nutrition Programme
INS	Integrated Nutrition Strategy
LED	Local Economic Development
MEC	Member of Executive Council
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIC	Middle-Income Country
NCDE	Northern Cape Department of Education
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NFCS	National Food Consumption Survey
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSNP	National School Nutrition Programme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPSC	Office of the Public Service Commission
OVC	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children
PEDs	Provincial Education Departments
PoD	Proof of Delivery Documentation
PSFS	Primary School Feeding Scheme
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSNP	Primary School Nutrition Programme
PSRP	Public Sector Reform Programme
RDA	Recommended Dietary Allowance
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SADC	Southern Africa Development Co-operation
SFP	School Feeding Programme



SGB	School Governing Body
SMME	Small Medium and Micro Enterprise
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization
WV	World Vision International



Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

The right to education is one of the social rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights contained in the constitution. However, given the prevalence of poverty in communities across the country, the learning process in school tends to be negatively influenced by factors such as malnutrition and hunger. It was against this background that the democratic government established the Primary School Nutrition Programme (PSNP) in schools in 1994, which was later renamed the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) following an intensive review.

The NSNP has been an integral part of the overall strategy of government to address the imbalances and inequities of the apartheid era. The overall purpose of the NSNP is to "improve the health and nutritional status of South African primary school children, to improve levels of school attendance and to improve the learning capacity of children",¹ which should in turn level the playing field for the poor in terms of access to education. The programme has been in operation for thirteen years. During the first ten years of its implementation, the programme was coordinated by the Department of Health. However, in 2004 the programme was relocated to the Department of Education. Given the importance of learner nutrition in the promotion of good health and effective learning, the Public Service Commission (PSC) deemed it necessary to evaluate the NSNP to establish whether it is meeting its objectives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall purpose of the study was to evaluate the implementation of the National School Nutrition Programme provided by the Departments of Education in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo provinces. The specific objectives were to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the NSNP;
- Identify and highlight successes of the programme, as well as problematic areas that adversely influence the optimal implementation of the programme; and
- Provide recommendations in terms of the effective implementation of the programme.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

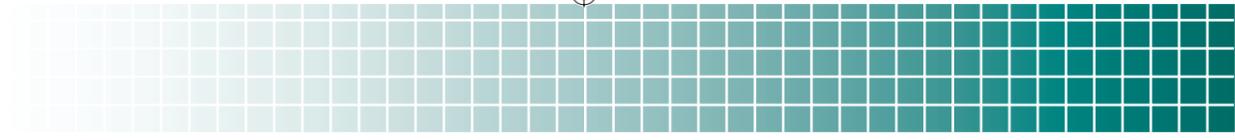
Two provinces participated in this study, namely the Eastern Cape and Limpopo. The two provinces are the poorest in the country and are also predominantly rural.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was applied in this study. In each province, the study focused on samples of school districts, circuit coordinators, schools, principals, teacher coordinators, learners, members of school governing bodies, food handlers, food suppliers and teacher union representatives. A list of district and schools participating in the NSNP was provided by each provincial Department of Education and this served as the basis for sampling. In the selection of both school districts and schools in both provinces, concerted efforts were made to ensure that both rural and urban areas were equally considered.

¹ Chopra M, Dr; and Tomlinson M, Dr: "Food security and nutrition in East and Southern Africa: A Synthesis of case study evidence", in Regional Network for Equity in Health in East and Southern Africa (EQUINET), Discussion Paper No 47, February 2007, p17.



Data Collection Methodology

A study of this nature and magnitude required a combination of data collection methodologies. The following data collection methodologies were applied in this study.

Interviews

A semi-structured questionnaire was developed and used as the main data collection tool in this study. One-on-one interviews were held with the following stakeholders: district managers, circuit co-coordinators, members of the SGBs, school principals, teacher coordinators, food handlers and food suppliers.

Focus Groups

Focus groups sessions were organised with learners of Grades 3 to 7. This data collection methodology was deemed appropriate for this population because it allows the collection of data from a big sample at the same time.

Literature Review

Key documents were reviewed as part of data collection in this study. The documents were the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994), White Paper for the Transformation of the Health System (1997) that gave birth to the then Primary School Nutrition Programme (PSNP) and now National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) and literature on the international perspective of the programme.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

To ensure validity and reliability of the semi-structured questionnaire that served as a data collection tool, there was a pilot conducted and comments received were used to fine-tune the tool that was finally used to collect data.

DATA ANALYSIS

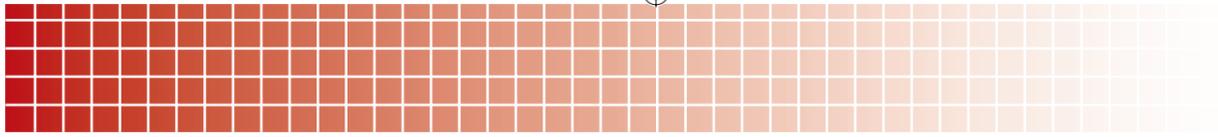
Quantitative and statistical data was computed using MS Excel, while qualitative data was analysed based on themes developed from the objectives of the study.

LIMITATIONS OF THE METHODOLOGY

The following were the limitations of the study:

- Most educators, including circuit co-coordinators were actively organizing for the last term of the year during the time of data collection. Therefore, the majority of them were not readily available for interviews;
- The data collection process coincided with the public servants strike, which made educators more difficult to find at their respective schools;
- In the Eastern Cape, there were teachers who did not want to participate in the study due to the sensitivity of the NSNP in the province;
- Some schools in Mount Fletcher, Sterkspruit, Ngcobo and Libode in the Eastern Cape and Vhembe and Sekhukhune in Limpopo were inaccessible due to heavy rains which made the gravel roads impassable; and
- Difficulties in securing appointments with food suppliers were also encountered. This was due to the 'tender briefing meetings' which were taking place in various centres at the time of data collection. Suppliers were travelling from centre to centre attending the briefing sessions.

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, the study collected enough data to facilitate detailed analysis.



FINDINGS

The following are the key findings of the study. They are presented according to the themes which emerged during the analysis of the data.

Majority of beneficiaries come from poor backgrounds

In both provinces, the majority of the learners who are benefiting from the NSNP programme come from poor background. Most of the learners stay with relatives and not their biological parents. The biological parents of these learners have either passed away or do not have the capacity to look after them. Some of the learners also come from child-headed households.

Role players have varying levels of awareness regarding roles and responsibilities

Various stakeholders such as school principals, members of school governing bodies (SGBs), teacher coordinators, and food handlers were at different levels of awareness of the roles and responsibilities that are expected to play in the implementation of the programme. While there are stakeholders that are aware and carrying out the roles and the responsibilities they are expected to do in the programme, there were some who did not know what was expected from them, especially in Limpopo.

There is active community involvement in the programme

There is active community involvement in the implementation of the NSNP. Community involvement is ensured through active participation of parents on the school governing bodies (SGBs) which appoint local community members as food handlers and where possible, as food suppliers. Some of the food handlers are volunteers who belong to local cooperatives.

There are varied levels of compliance with the Guidelines of NSNP

Compliance with the Guidelines for the implementation of the programme vary from one province to the other. In the Eastern Cape, the provision of food to learners was not done every day of the week as prescribed by the Guidelines. In Limpopo, the provision was done everyday of the week. In all instances, learners are provided with food during break time which ensures that the nutrition programme does not interfere with the teaching and learning at the respective schools.

Infrastructure for the NSNP is not adequate

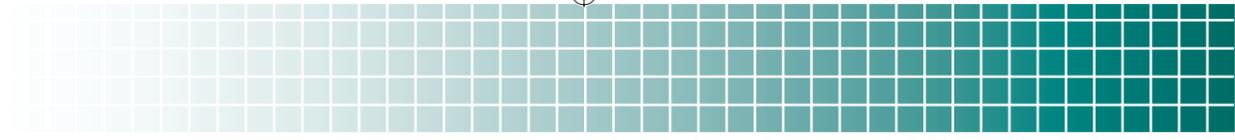
The majority of the schools do not have adequate infrastructure to support the effective implementation of the NSNP. The schools do not have infrastructure such as storage facilities for food supplied, refrigerators to store perishable food, kitchen and cooking equipment. The lack of these facilities poses a problem because meals are prepared at the school premises.

The NSNP is perceived to have impacted positively on the learners

The NSNP is generally perceived to have contributed in addressing hunger and poverty among the learners and families and communities in which participating schools are located.

There has been an increase in the school attendance, concentration levels, and social and physical participation by learners in school related activities. The level of absenteeism by learners has dropped among the schools participating in the programme in both provinces.





Perceived impact of the NSNP on the local community

The NSNP has played an important role in stimulating local economic development. The food that is supplied at schools is from local suppliers. Items such as vegetables and bread are produced by the local communities. Again, local people are employed as both food handlers and suppliers in the NSNP programme. Therefore, the programme has contributed towards job creation in these areas.

Capacity to implement the NSNP varies

The capacity of participating stakeholders to play their respective roles in the programme varies. Some of the school principals, teacher coordinators, food handlers and food suppliers indicated that they were not well-prepared to deal with the challenges of the programme. This is despite the fact that these stakeholders were trained and went through an induction programme when they started to participate in the NSNP.

Key challenges to the implementation of the NSNP

The NSNP has encountered the following challenges during its implementation:

- Unavailability of the necessary and needed infrastructure;
- Non-delivery of supplies;
- Delayed deliveries of the supplies;
- Substitution of other items due to shortages of the necessary items of the day;
- Some stakeholders were not aware of the role they are supposed to play in the implementation of the programme;
- Delivery of supplies which is not according to the prescribed requirement; and
- Centralization of the programme at the provincial level.

Suggestions for the improvement of the NSNP

The following were the suggestions made to improve the implementation of the programme in future:

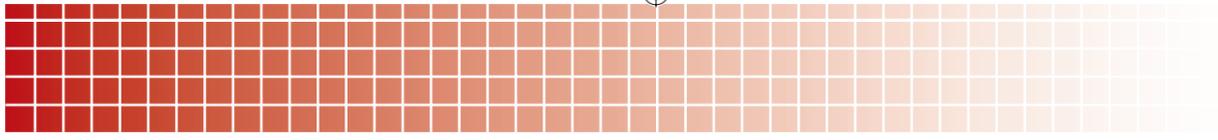
- Feeding of all learners instead of the selected few;
- Improving the quantity and quality of food currently served to learners;
- Adding animal protein like milk, meat and eggs to the menu;
- Training of the stakeholders on their respective role in the programme;
- Provision of NSNP infrastructure at schools by providing kitchen facilities and other equipments;
- Frequent monitoring of the programme;
- More use of regular food suppliers of the programme; and
- Remuneration of food handlers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made in study.

Create adequate infrastructure to implement the NSNP

Schools in both provinces seem not have adequate infrastructure and facilities to implement the NSNP effectively and successfully. Many schools did not have refrigerators, kitchen and cooking facilities, yet meals for learners were said to be prepared on schools premises. It is recommended that the basic infrastructure such as kitchens and refrigerator be budgeted for and provided at the respective schools. Rural schools are already poorly resourced because they lack adequate and proper classrooms and teaching facilities. The provision of the infrastructure might be regarded as of less importance in this regard, but it is nonetheless important if the NSNP is to succeed. It is recommended that provincial departments of Education consider developing a plan that will result in the provisioning of such infrastructure.



Capacity building to implement the NSNP

There have been concerted efforts in both provinces to actively involve local communities in the provision and supply of food at the schools that are participating in the programme. This initiative has significantly contributed to local economic development. However, there were also concerns about the capacity of the local food suppliers. It is therefore recommended that local food handlers and suppliers are capacitated by the provincial departments of Education to carry their tasks effectively and efficiently. The provincial departments of Education are the custodians of the programme and are well informed as to how the programme should be implemented. Some of the food handlers and food suppliers have indicated that they have received some adequate training at the beginning of the programme, but it seems as if regular training and induction is needed to deepen the quality of the programme.

Supply of food to schools participating in the NSNP

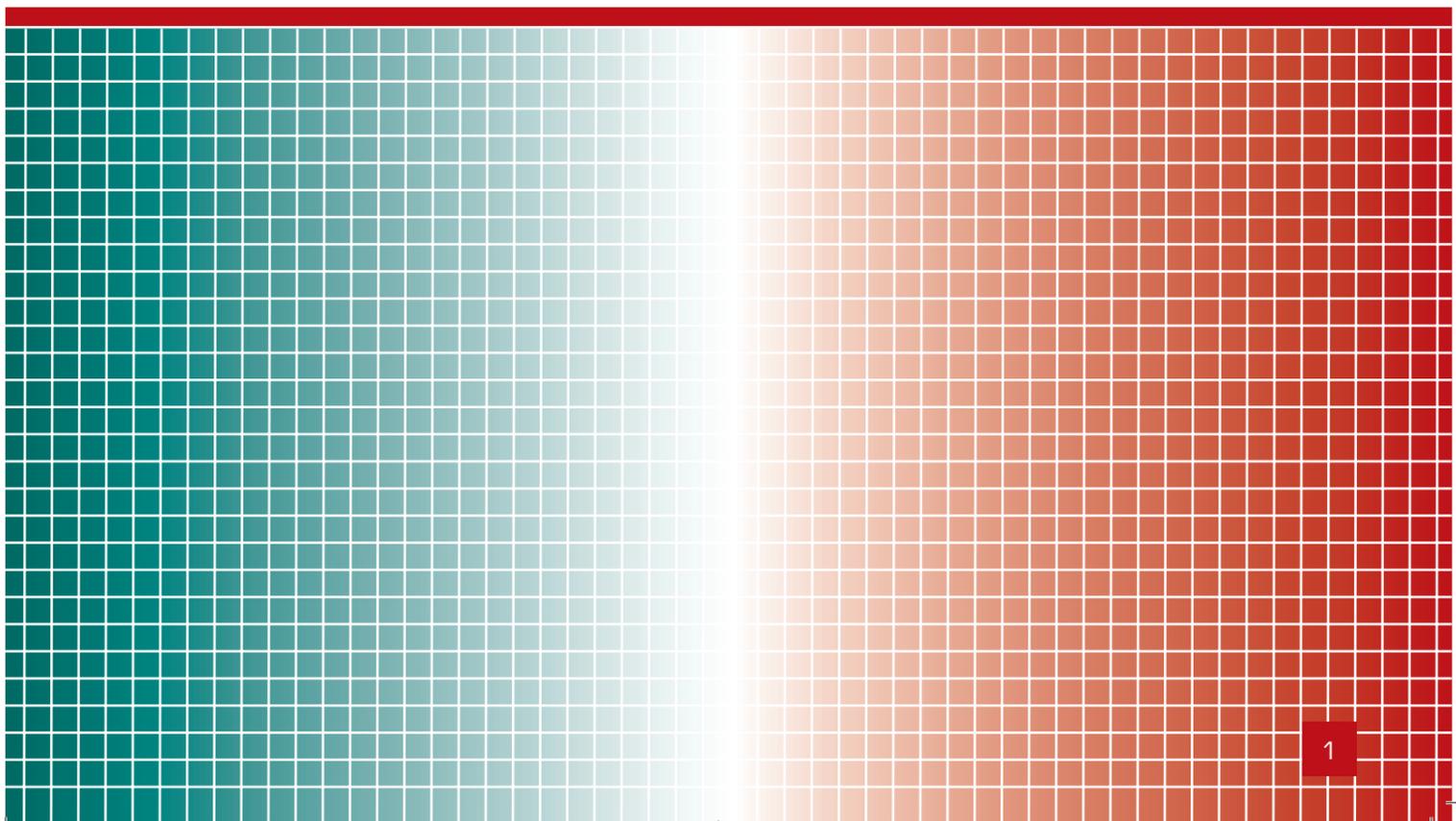
Several cases of non-delivery, delays in delivery and delivery of wrong or poor quality of food were reported in both provinces. It is important that a tight system is put in place to monitor the supply of food. Without such a system, suppliers may invoice the department as if they have supplied the required quantity and quality of food to the contracted schools. The departments of education could be paying the suppliers money for services not rendered satisfactorily. The respective departments can only know and stop unnecessary payment to the food suppliers if correct information is supplied to them. Therefore, adequate system should be developed and put in place to ensure that there is regular quality check and control during the delivery of food at the respective areas.

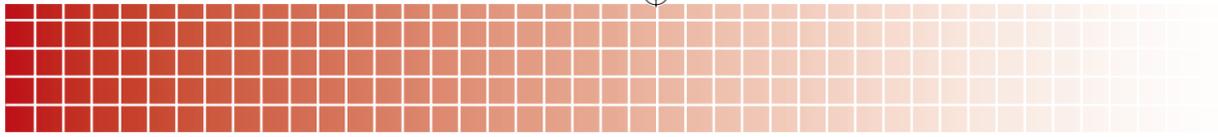
CONCLUSION

Overall, the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) has had positive impact in the two provinces the study took place. The learners who benefited from the programme seemed to have their health improved, their performance in class increased and their level of attendance and participation improved. Both the learners and other significant stakeholders such as principals, teacher coordinators and members of the school governing bodies (SGBs) shared a common understanding on the value of the programme and appreciation of the value add the programme has had in the lives of the communities. The NSNP has also significantly contributed to the local communities in which the participating schools are located. Local people are employed to serve as food suppliers and food handlers. This appointment of local people contributes to the local economic development (LED).

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION





1.1 BACKGROUND

Education is amongst the basic Constitutional rights which every South African is entitled to. However, given the prevalence of poverty in communities across the country, the learning process in school tends to be negatively influenced by factors such as malnutrition and hunger. It was against this background that the democratic government established the Primary School Nutrition Programme (PSNP) in schools in 1994, which was later renamed the National School Nutrition Programmer (NSNP) following an intensive review.

The NSNP has been an integral part of the overall strategy of government to address the imbalances and inequities of the apartheid era. The overall purpose of the NSNP is to “improve the health and nutritional status of South African primary school children, to improve levels of school attendance and to improve the learning capacity of children”,² which would in turn lead to an improvement in the quality of education. The programme has been in operation for thirteen years. During the first ten years of its implementation, the programme was coordinated by the Department of Health. However, in 2004 the programme was relocated to the Department of Education.

Given the importance of learner nutrition in the promotion of good health and effective learning, the Public Service Commission (PSC) deemed it necessary to evaluate the NSNP to establish whether it is meeting its objectives. This is part of a series of evaluations the PSC is conducting on government's poverty reduction programme and projects.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall purpose of the study was to evaluate the implementation of the National School Nutrition Programme provided by the Departments of Education in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo provinces. The specific objectives were to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the NSNP;
- Identify and highlight successes of the programme, as well as problematic areas that adversely influence the optimal implementation of the programme; and
- Provide recommendations in terms of the effective implementation of the programme.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

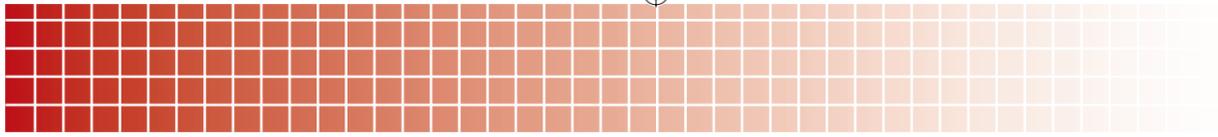
The report is structured in the following manner:

- **Chapter Two** discusses the history and the legislative framework of the NSNP.
- **Chapter Three** discusses the methodology that was used to facilitate data collection.
- **Chapters Four** discusses the key findings from the Eastern Cape.
- **Chapter Five** discusses the key findings from Limpopo.
- **Chapter Six** presents the conclusion and the recommendations of the study.

² Chopra M, Dr; and Tomlinson M, Dr: "Food security and nutrition in East and Southern Africa: A Synthesis of case study evidence"; in Regional Network for Equity in Health in East and Southern Africa (EQUINET), Discussion Paper No 47, February 2007, p17.

Chapter Two

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME



2.1 INTRODUCTION

Nutrition and health have powerful influences on a child's learning performance in school. Children who lack certain nutrients in their diet (particularly iron and iodine) or who suffer from protein-energy malnutrition, hunger, parasitic infections or other diseases, are likely not to have the same potential for learning as healthy and well-nourished children do³. This is because learners who are hungry have more difficulty in concentrating and performing complex tasks, even if otherwise well nourished.

This chapter presents the background on the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). The chapter first discusses how the programme has evolved over the years since its inception in 1994, including factors that led to the relocation in 2004 from the Department of Health to the Department of Education. The chapter then gives an international perspective on the school nutrition programme.

2.2 THE HISTORY OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME (PSNP)

The PSNP was introduced in 1994. At its inception, the programme was called the Primary School Nutrition Programme and its aims were⁴:

- To improve education outcomes by enhancing active learning capacity, school attendance and punctuality by providing an early morning snack. Specially to provide primary school children with an early morning snack, meeting not less than 25% of the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) of energy for 7-10 year olds, and not less than;
- To improve health through micronutrient supplementation;
- To improve health through parasite control/eradication;
- To improve health through providing education on health and nutrition; and
- To enhance broader development initiatives especially in the area of combating poverty, and to link the PSNP to other RDP programmes and to integrate the PSNP into a broader Integrated Nutrition Programme.

At the time, the programme was coordinated by the Department of Health because the programme was mainly regarded as health promotion initiative.

To ensure the success of the Programme, policy and operational guidelines, systems and procedures were put in place by the Department⁵. Monitoring and evaluation tools were also introduced, and personnel were recruited and trained to manage the programme. Furthermore, community participation was one of the core facets in the implementation of the project and as such structures such as School Governing Bodies (SGBs) were brought on board to monitor the Programme's implementation. Aspects of local economic development (LED) were factored in through the introduction of a tendering system that promoted the contracting of small medium and macro enterprises (SMMEs) as service providers (food suppliers) to schools. Women volunteers were recruited to be food handlers during the preparation of food at the respective schools and were paid a monthly stipend⁶.

Several evaluations on the programme took place between 1996 and 2003. The overall purpose of these evaluations was to provide a comprehensive but rapid assessment of the main problems, weaknesses and strengths of the programme, and its management and implementation. This was in order to make recommendations to the Department of Health on how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, and how it can best become part of the Department of Health's Integrated Nutrition Programme (INP). A host of issues such as management and beneficiaries of the programme were identified during evaluation and they needed to be factored in the programme to improve it. Emanating from the evaluations, the following critical issues were identified⁷:

³ Kallman, Food for Thought. A review of the National School Nutrition Programme. 2005

⁴ Fourth Draft of the Department of Health's National Policy Framework and Operational Guidelines for the PSNP (1995).

⁵ Republic of South Africa. White Paper on Reconstruction and Development Programme. 2004.

⁶ Food handlers are women volunteers who are selected from local communities by SGBs and Teachers to come and prepare, cook, and serve food to learners.

⁷ Republic of South Africa. National Department of Education. National School Nutrition Programme. 2004.

- School feeding programmes are expensive and logistically complicated as has been proven through the administrative challenges experienced at all levels of management;
- Capacity (both personnel and skills) had been lacking and management systems especially in rural areas were inadequate and under-resourced;
- The quality and quantity of school meals were not being adhered to at provincial level;

The evaluations also provided an opportunity to reflect on whether locating the coordination of the programme in the Department of Health was appropriate. Based on among other, the following three key considerations, the coordination of the programme was relocated to the Department of Education.

The relocation was accompanied by a refinement of the aims of the programme as follows:

- The focus of the programme was on educational outcomes of school feeding, and not necessarily on nutrition;
- Since school feeding was being implemented in schools, it was the functional responsibility of the Education Department; and
- Managing the programme would provide an opportunity for the Department to include school feeding into the broader context of educational development.

In addition, the name of the programme was changed from Primary School Nutrition Programme to National School Nutrition Programme.

- Contribute to the improvement of education by enhancing primary school pupils' learning capacity, school attendance and punctuality and contribute to general health development by alleviating hunger;
- Educate pupils on nutrition and also improve nutritional status through micro-nutrition supplementation;
- Eradicate parasites wherever indicated; and
- Develop the nutrition component of the general education curriculum⁸.

It is important to note that these aims of the NSNP were meant to respond to the articles in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of South Africa, sections 27, 28 and 29 (page 13) which stipulate the constitutional rights of citizens to health care, food, water and social security, children and education. The important sections of the Constitution related to the programme are:

- Section 27 (1) (b) on the right of access to sufficient food;
- Section 28 (1) (c) on right of children to basic nutrition; and
- Section 29 (1) (a) on right to basic education⁹.

According to the above-mentioned constitutional sections, children's rights to basic nutrition entitle them to receive at least a level of nutrition that enables them dignified survival, and basic physical and mental development.

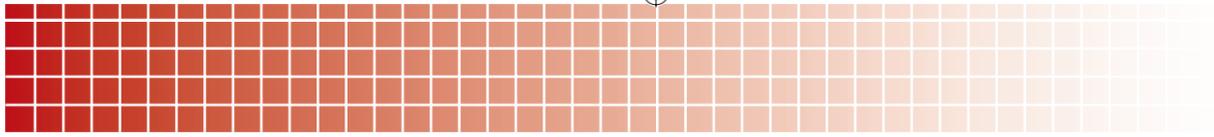
The NSNP was conceptualised primarily as an educational intervention aimed at addressing children's ability to learn, rather than a health intervention to improve the nutrition of children¹⁰. It is important to note that when the PSNP was coordinated by the Department of Health, the Department was responsible for menu planning and the nutrition component, while the Department of Education was responsible for implementing the programme in the schools. With the programme under the coordination of the Department of Education, provincial Departments of Education are responsible for both drawing up targeting criteria for schools and the selection of menu. The targeting processing is based on the quintile system¹¹. Furthermore, provincial Departments of Education are the ones that are responsible for the

⁸ Republic of South Africa. Annexure of the White Paper contains information on the RDP Lead Projects, of which the NSNP is on them. It appears as Project 3.3 under the broader section on Human Resource & Development Programme.

⁹ Republic of South Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, Act 108.

¹⁰ Kallman, K Foot for Thought. A review of the National School Nutrition Programme. 2005.

¹¹ The quintile system (1-5) was determined by Department of Education which identified schools from the "poorest to list poor" targeting from all ordinary public schools. These schools are ranked based on physical conditions, facilities and crowding, and the relative poverty of the community around these schools.



management of the programme including the procurement of services and facilitation of the establishment of school gardens which are meant to serve as the source of vegetables to be served at the respective schools.

2.5 THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE NSNP

The implementation of the NSNP gives effect to and is based on the following legislative provisions contained in the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development, (1994)¹²:

The provisions of the legislative framework within which the NSNP is implemented are summarised below:

- Access to quality food and basic nutrition as enshrined in the South African Constitution, and part of the International Children's Charter;
- Access to quality basic education and learner success as stipulated in the National Educational Policy Act 27 of 1996, South African Schools Act 84 of 1996;
- Targeting of schools for school feeding as informed by the Norms and Standards for funding of Public Schools, according to the Department of Education General Notice 2362 of 12 October 1998;
- Provision of Grade R as enshrined in the White Paper no 5 and the Cabinet Resolution of January 2002 in which the transfer of the National School Nutrition Programme is addressed¹³; and
- Caring for children affected by HIV/AIDS, and with regard to Orphans and Vulnerable Children as espoused in the strategic objectives of the Department of Education (Strategic Plan for the Department of Education 2003-2005).

The National Department of Education Business Plan (2004)¹⁴ states that existing frameworks and provisions are intended as broad principles only and that province should enhance the scope and depth of the Programme in response to the unique challenges and dynamics of their respective environments.

2.6 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON NSNP

National school nutrition programmes have been implemented in several countries across the globe. The programmes were introduced in response to particular needs the respective countries sought to address at the time. For example, Brazil introduced its School Nutrition and Food Security Programme (SNFS) at schools after the Second World War in 1945¹⁵. Brazil's programme was supported by both the United Nations and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Because of the vast nature of the country, Brazil adopted a decentralization approach as a strategy to manage the programme where the implementation of the programme was managed by the Local Schools Meals Councils. The councils were constituted of representatives from the government, teachers, parents and civil society organisations (CSOs). The councils decide on how the funds should be spent and the actual delivery of the necessary meals and other related products. India also has a School Nutrition Programme (SNP)¹⁶ and a similar approach to the one applied in Brazil has to have been adopted.

Both Brazil and India experienced some challenges during the implementation of the programme. The key challenges were the lack of managerial skills among the stakeholders involved in the programme such as principals, teachers, food suppliers and members of school governing bodies, lack of community consultation and participation, insufficient involvement of intra-and inter-sectoral partners, and inconsistency and low coverage of number of feeding days.

Within the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), both Malawi and Zambia¹⁷ are among the

¹² Republic of South Africa. The White Paper on Reconstruction and Development. 1994

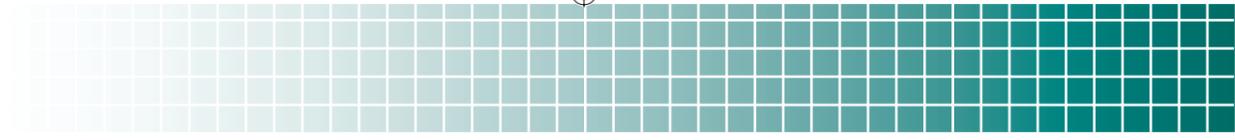
¹³ Cabinet Resolution was based on a thorough review of the PSNP on the progress of the programme in ensuring that food security was the cornerstone of the primary school children in poor communities. Cabinet resolved, among other aspects, that "the primary target of school feeding should also include Grade R learners in targeted primary schools." Cabinet Statement January 2002, from "Notes in Idasa Occasional Papers, Reviewing Ten Years of the School Nutrition Programme, Wildeman R and Mbebetho N, December 2005, p40.

¹⁴ Limpopo Provincial Department. Department of Education. NSNP Business Plans. 2007/08.

¹⁵ FAO and Brazil collaborate to promote school nutrition and food security. 2005.

¹⁶ Bapna S. Reaching the rural poor: India's experience with the public distribution of food grain. 1991.

¹⁷ Plan International. Promise of a meal helps keep kids in School. Malawi Projects. Undated.



countries that have implemented the School Nutrition Programmes. In both countries, the programme is being supported both financially and technically by the United Nations, through the World Food Programme (WFP).

In Malawi, the programme is called the Food for Education (FFE), and it serves in-school meals and/or snacks in order to reduce short-term hunger and achieve the commonly intended aspects of improving school enrolment, attendance, learning and community-school links. The Malawian FFE programme also provides 'take-home rations' which are targeted at girl learners, orphans and vulnerable children. These rations are only provided to those learners who attend school regularly. In Zambia, the programme only targets learners from poor families, and a strict screening system has been put in place to ensure that only learners from such families are given priority in the programme. As a result of high poverty level in the country, schools appear to struggle to deny any learners access to the food because every learner seems to come from a poor background.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research methodology followed in the study. The key areas that are detailed in this chapter are sampling procedures, data collection methods, data analysis techniques and limitations of the study.

3.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The two provinces which participated in this study are Eastern Cape and Limpopo. They are the poorest provinces in the country, and are also predominantly rural. The PSC therefore, found it important to focus on these two provinces to assess the implementation of the NSNP as a poverty reduction programme.

For the purpose of understanding the context in which the NSNP is implemented in these provinces, the following is a brief overview of each of them:

3.2.1 Overview of the Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape has 23 school districts. The boundaries for the school districts are different from those of the municipal districts. School districts are seemingly defined according to major cities and towns in the Eastern Cape. According to the provincial database, there are 2 089 schools and 595 480 learners in the ten districts but only 41 300 learners are on the programme due to the quintile¹⁸ targeting system of selecting learners.

3.2.2 Overview of Limpopo

Limpopo is demarcated into five district municipal boundaries of Capricorn, Greater Sekhukhune, Vhembe, Mopane and Waterberg. The Department of Education in the province has also adopted these boundaries for school administration. The provincial DoE applies the quintile system (1-5) for selecting the poorest schools that qualify for the NSNP. Since Limpopo has large percentages of rural populations, the majority of its schools and learners qualify for the NSNP. All the schools that were sampled fall into the poor to poorest categories (quintiles 1-3) of schools.

According to the information provided by the Provincial Department of Education, there are 1 824 primary schools in the three districts with a total of 722 087 learners participating in the school feeding scheme.

3.3 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Purposive sampling was applied in this study. Such sampling seeks to select sections of the research population which in the researcher's judgement, will provide the most useful information for the study¹⁹. In other words, only participants that would yield the information needed in the study should be sampled. A list of district and schools participating in the NSNP was provided by each provincial Department of Education and this served as the basis for purposive sampling. In both provinces, the study focused on samples of school districts, circuit coordinators, schools, principals, teacher coordinators, learners, members of school governing bodies, food handlers, food suppliers and teacher union representatives. In the selection of both school districts and schools in both provinces, concerted efforts were made to ensure that both rural and urban areas were equally considered.

¹⁸ Is a system used by the DoE to determine the level of impoverishment in a community

¹⁹ Babbie,E and Mouton, J,The Practice of Social Science Research. Oxford University Press. Cape Town. 2001.

Table 1: Categories and numbers of respondents in Eastern Cape per district

District	Categories and numbers of respondents sampled								
	SP	TC	FH	SGB	UR	FS	EDO	LFG	Total
1. Sterkspruit	16	11	13	11	7	1	-	65	124
2. Ngcobo	16	16	22	15	15	2	-	80	166
3. Cradock	16	14	16	14	10	1	1	75	147
4. Uitenhage	16	10	23	7	6	-	-	55	117
5. Port Elizabeth	16	15	18	12	10	3	-	60	134
6. King Williams Town	16	14	18	14	13	2	-	70	147
7. East London	16	14	19	13	15	-	-	80	157
8. Mount Fletcher	16	14	20	14	12	1	-	65	142
9. Libode	16	15	28	14	14	-	-	75	162
10. Mthatha	16	15	24	13	10	1	-	65	144
TOTAL	160	138	201	127	112	11	1	690	1440

SP: School Principal TC: Teacher Coordinator FH: Food Handlers SGB: School Governing Body
 UR: Union Representative FS: Food Suppliers LF: Learners EDO: Education Development Officer

The **table 1** above gives a breakdown of the respondents for each category per district. In total, 1440 respondents were sampled in the Eastern Cape.

In Limpopo, a total of 496 respondents were sampled as shown in **table 2** below.

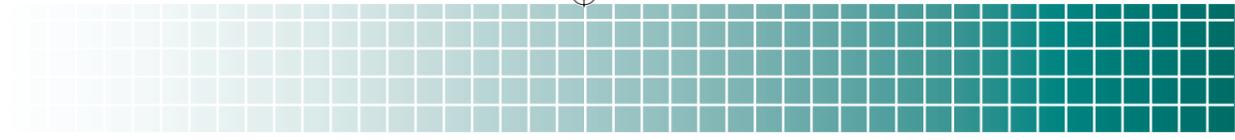
Table 2: Categories and numbers of respondents in Limpopo per district

District	Numbers of respondents sampled									
	SP	TC	FH	SGB	UR	FS	CC	DC	LFG	Total
Capricorn	16	15	25	13	15	4	4	1	80	173
Sekhukhune	16	15	22	12	14	1	3	1	78	162
Vhembe	16	16	24	15	16	2	4	1	67	161
TOTALS	48	46	71	40	45	7	11	3	225	496

SP: School Principal TC: Teacher Coordinator FH: Food Handlers SGB: School Governing Body
 UR: Union Representative FS: Food Suppliers LF: Learners DC: District Coordinator
 CC: Circuit Coordinator

3.3.1 Districts

In the Eastern Cape, ten (10) school districts were sampled. They are Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Cradock, East London, King Williams Town, Mthatha, Libode, Ngcobo, Mount Fletcher and Sterkspruit. In Limpopo, the three (3) districts that were sampled to participate in this study are Capricorn, Greater Sekhukhune and Vhembe.



3.3.2 Schools

In total, 160 schools were sampled in the Eastern Cape and 48 schools in Limpopo. Out of the 160 schools sampled in the Eastern Cape it was established that 45 schools were farm schools, 82 were rural schools, ten were in townships and 23 were urban-based schools, whereas in Limpopo, of the 48 schools sampled, one is a farm school, six schools are in townships around Polokwane and the remaining 41 schools are in the rural areas. Concerted efforts were made to ensure that both rural and urban schools were selected to participate in the study.

3.3.3 School principals (SP)

School Principals are the key source of information regarding the management of school affairs including the NSNP. In the Eastern Cape, 160 principals were sampled whereas in Limpopo 48 principals were sampled.

3.3.4 Teacher coordinators (TC)

These are the educators who are appointed to coordinate the NSNP at school level and their inputs regarding implementation of the programme is vital. There were 138 teacher coordinators sampled in the Eastern Cape and 46 in Limpopo.

3.3.5 Learners (LFG)

Learners are the primary beneficiaries of the NSNP. Their views on food quality and quantity as well as the impact of the NSNP are crucial in a study of this nature. One of the aims of the Programme is to contribute to the improvement of education by enhancing primary school pupils learning capacity, school attendance and punctuality and contribute to general health development by alleviating hunger. Therefore, the views of the learners contribute towards the assessment of the aims of the Programme. In the Eastern Cape 690 learners were sampled and 225 were sampled in Limpopo.

3.3.6 Food handlers (FH)

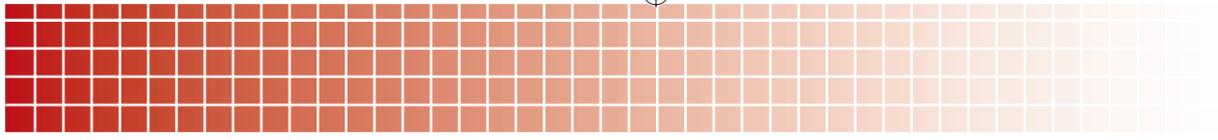
Food handlers are the people responsible for preparing and serving food to learners and as such have important input to make on the operations of the programme. In addition, food handlers are parents who come from the local community and would provide key information in terms of the community perspective. There were 201 food handlers sampled in the Eastern Cape and 71 sampled in Limpopo.

3.3.7 Members of school governing body (SGB)

Members of school governing bodies (SGBs) are an integral part of the management of the NSNP in their respective communities. They are an important source of information both as parents and as members of the body that manages the affairs of the school including the programme. In the Eastern Cape, 127 members of the SGB were sampled whereas 40 were sampled in Limpopo.

3.3.8 Teacher union representatives (UR)

Responding to a request from the national Department of Education NSNP unit, the teacher union representative was included on the list of respondents so that the opinions of educators regarding the NSNP are taken into consideration in the study. There were 112 teacher union representatives sampled in the Eastern Cape and 45 in Limpopo.



3.3.9 Circuit coordinators: Limpopo only

Four circuits were sampled from each district, making a total of twelve. The selected circuits were Mankweng, Vlakfontein, Pietersburg and Sekgosesse West in Capricorn; Ngwaabe, Drakensburg, Malokela and Malegale in Sekhukhune and Hlanganani North, Vhumbedzi, Tshinane and Niani in Vhembe. Forty-eight schools were then sampled from these twelve circuits. The circuit coordinators play a key role in the monitoring and evaluation of the NSNP and their input was important in the assessment of efficiency and effectiveness. Only 11 circuit coordinators were sampled in Limpopo. The Eastern Cape does not have circuit coordinators hence they were not referred to in this study.

3.3.10 Education development officers (EDOs)

These respondents represent the Provincial Department of Education officials who are tasked to coordinate and manage the NSNP at district level. Their inputs in the study are necessary as they bring departments' perspective to the programme.

3.3.11 Food suppliers (FS)

Food suppliers are the contracted service providers who play an important role of ensuring that the food is delivered to schools according to the NSNP Guidelines and contract agreements. It was crucial to obtain their views on efficiency and effectiveness of the programme. Food suppliers are well-positioned to share information on the availability and accessibility of food items to be supplied to schools, which in turn will prepare to the learners.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

A study of this nature and magnitude required a combination of data collection methodologies. The following data collection methodologies were applied in this study.

3.4.1 Interviews

A semi-structured questionnaire was used as the main data collection tool in this study. One-on-one interviews were held with the following stakeholders: district managers, circuit co-coordinators, members of the SGBs, school principals, teacher coordinators, food handlers and food suppliers.

3.4.2 Focus Groups

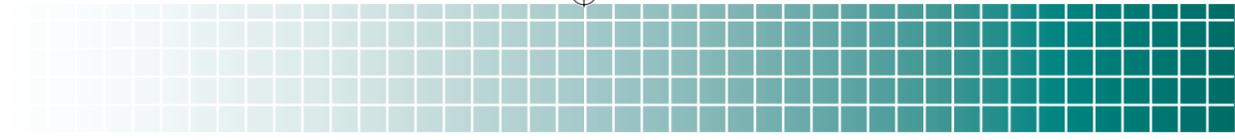
Focus groups were conducted with learners of Grades 3 to 7. This data collection methodology was deemed appropriate for this population because it allows the collection of data from a big sample at the same time.

3.4.3 Literature Review

Key documents were reviewed as part of data collection in this study. Such key documents were the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994), the White Paper for the Transformation of the Health System (1997); and literature on school nutrition programmes implemented in other countries. Key issues drawn from the literature review can be found in Chapter 2 of this report.

3.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

To ensure validity and reliability of the semi-structured questionnaire that served as a data collection tool, there was a pilot conducted and comments received were used to fine-tune the tool that was finally used to collect data.



3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative and statistical data were computed using MS Excel, while qualitative data was analysed based on themes derived from the objectives of the study. The themes are socio-economic status of the learners, who are beneficiaries of the NSNP, programme organization and management, programme co-ordination and support, community involvement in NSNP, availability of infrastructure of the NSNP, programme integration initiatives, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, impact of NSNP, and challenges experienced in the implementation of the programme.

3.7 LIMITATIONS

The following were the limitations of the study:

- Most educators, including circuit co-coordinators were actively organizing for the last term of the year during the time of data collection. Therefore, the majority of them were not readily available for interviews;
- The data collection process coincided with the public servants strike, which made educators more difficult to find at their respective schools;
- In the Eastern Cape, there were teachers who did not want to participate in the study due to the sensitivity of the NSNP in the province which includes the dismissal of the Member of Executive Council (MEC) responsible for Education and suspension of senior officials in the Department who were alleged to have influenced the tendering process for the appointment of food suppliers and food handlers in order to benefit themselves;
- Some schools in Mount Fletcher, Sterkspruit, Ngcobco and Libode in the Eastern Cape and Vhembe and Sekhukhune in Limpopo were inaccessible due to heavy rains which made the gravel roads impassable; and
- Difficulties in securing appointments with suppliers were also encountered. This was due to the 'tender briefing meetings' which were taking place in various centres at the time of data collection. Suppliers were travelling from centre to centre attending the briefing sessions.

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, the study collected enough data to facilitate detailed analysis.

Chapter Four

FINDINGS – EASTERN CAPE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings on the Eastern Cape. The findings are presented according to the themes derived during the analysis of the data. The themes are socio-economic status of the learners who are beneficiaries of the NSNP, programme organization and management, programme co-ordination and support, community involvement in the NSNP, availability of infrastructure for the NSNP, programme integration initiatives, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, impact of NSNP, and challenges experienced in the implementation of the programme. Suggestions to improve the programme are also made in this chapter.

4.2 KEY FINDINGS

4.2.1 Majority of beneficiaries come from poor backgrounds

The study sought to establish the socio-economic situation of families from which beneficiary learners came, and the impact of the NSNP on the lives and learning circumstances of the learners. The findings show that the average size of households from which learners who benefit from the NSNP come from is 6 persons. According to the findings 55% of the learners live with relatives and not their biological parents. Furthermore, 15% of learners live in single headed households. Three percent of learners come from child-headed households. Learners from single-headed households, especially those headed by females and child-headed households are exposed to social vulnerabilities such as poverty and hunger. These households are likely not to have dependable and sustainable means of income, which further deepen their vulnerability.

Figure I below shows the breakdown of the households learners that participated in the study come from.

Figure I: Child headed household – Eastern Cape

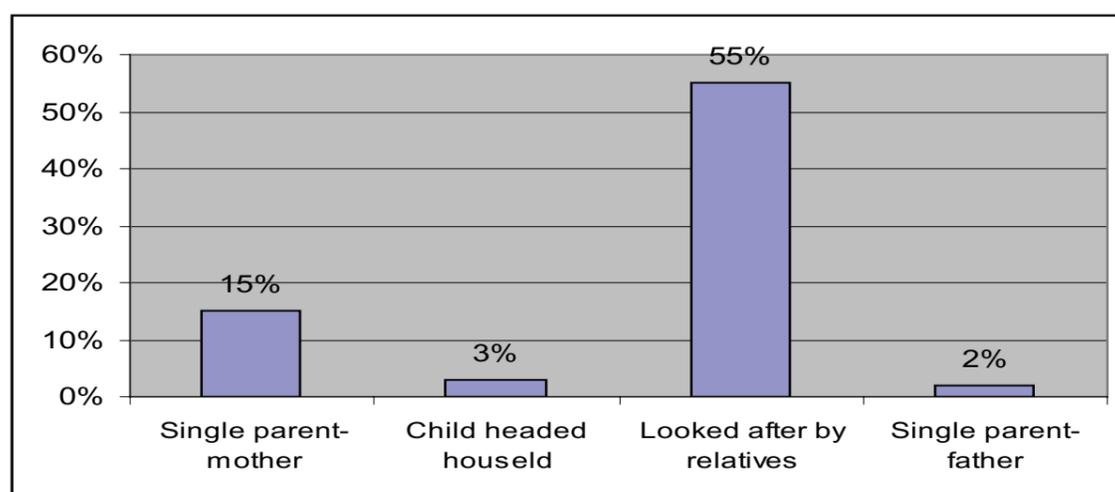


Figure I above shows that the majority of children do not live with parents. The type of family background of the learners shown in these findings suggests that the NSNP is reaching beneficiaries who indeed need it.

The study also sought to establish whether hunger was prevalent among the learners and what the perceived effects of this are.

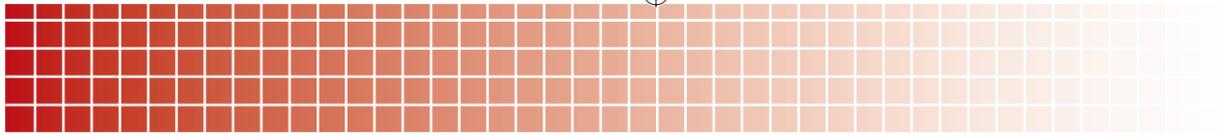
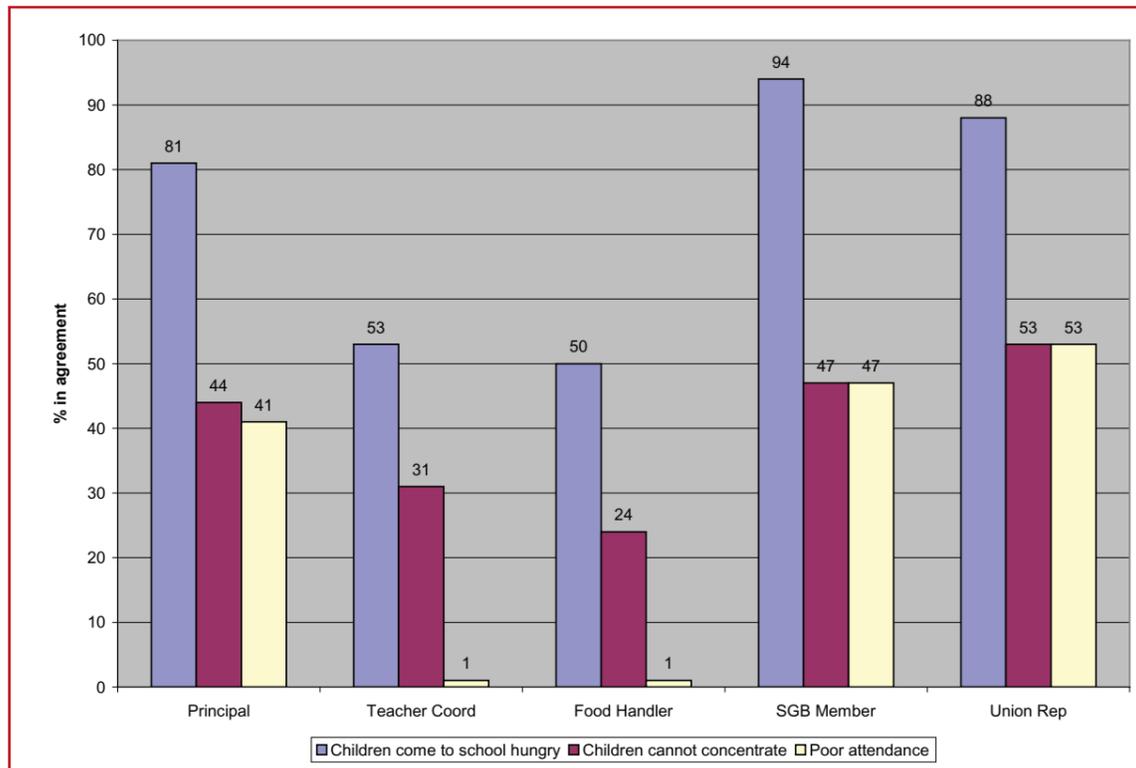


Figure 2 below shows the effect of hunger to learners as seen by the key stakeholders at schools.

Figure 2: Effects of hunger among learners



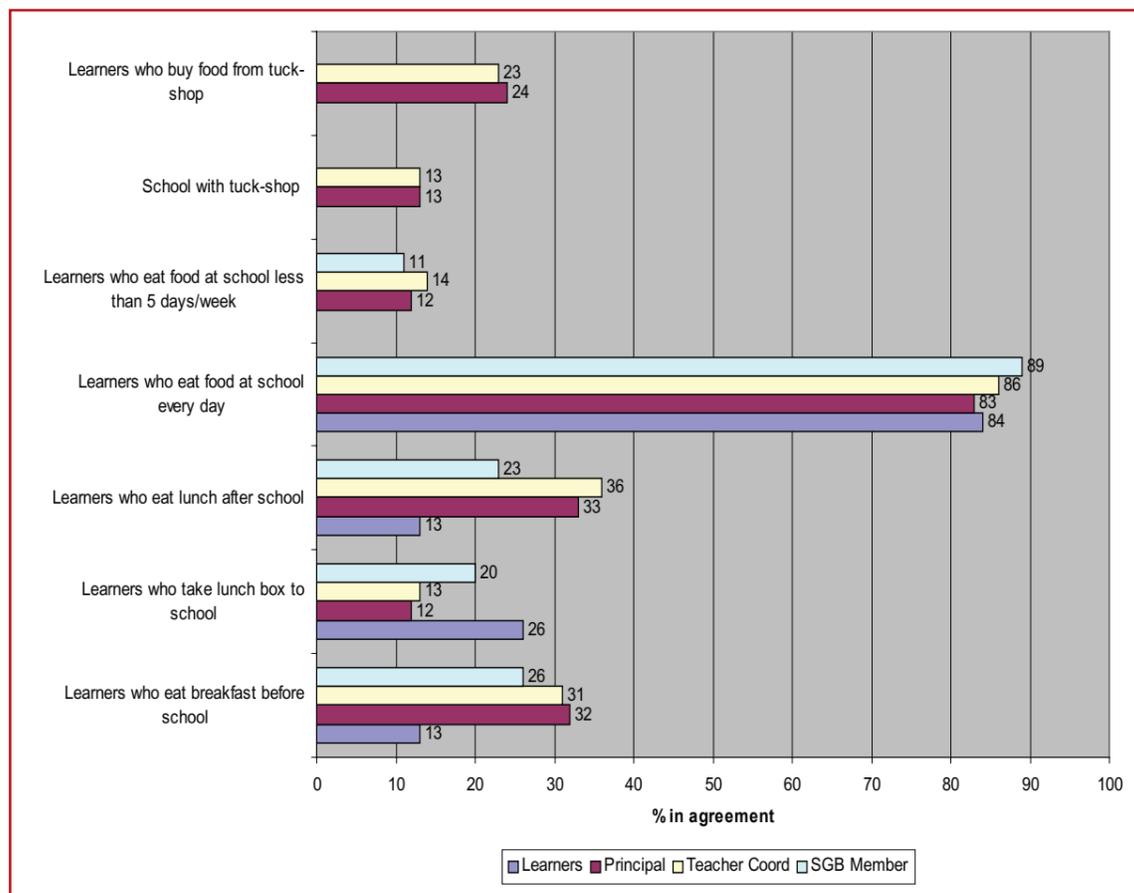
According to the findings, the majority of members of the SGBs (88%), Union representatives (84%), principals (81%) and teacher coordinators (72%) were of the opinion that most learners come to school hungry in the morning. As a result of hunger, learners could not concentrate in class. The findings suggest that learners leave in conditions of poverty and hunger in their respective families. Food handlers and SGB members, who are parents themselves and live within the communities, have also indicated that indeed, learners come to school hungry. Principals and educators, on the other hand, also reported that learners' behaviour in class before feeding was introduced show lack of concentration and learners would sleep during class sessions and attendance of school and participation in the class session were poor.

4.2.2 LEARNER ACCESS TO FOOD/MEALS VARIED

The prevalence of hunger among the learners was further assessed in terms of the extent of access to meals. The findings show that the majority (80%) of learners eat food at their respective schools. Less than 37% of learners seem to have eaten breakfast at their homes.

Figure 3 below shows the breakdown of the access to food/meals by learners.

Figure 3: Access to food/meals among learners



4.2.3 Role players have varying levels of awareness regarding the responsibilities

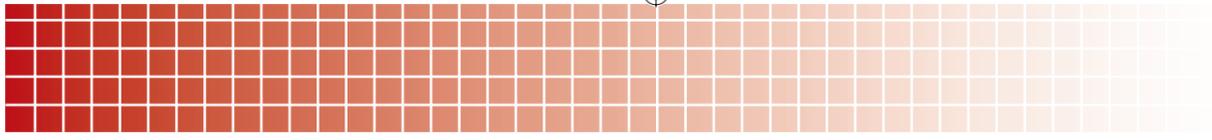
The study sought to establish the effectiveness of the management of the NSNP. To this end, it was important to investigate the following areas:

- Roles and responsibilities of the key role players,
- Compliance with the Guidelines on NSNP develop by the Department of Education, and
- Satisfaction with the meal/food provided through the programme.

4.2.3.1 Roles and responsibilities of key role players

The roles and responsibilities of the SGBs, principals, and teacher coordinators in the management of the NSNP are defined in the manual on the "Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting Manual"²⁰. The findings indicate that 40% of teacher coordinators and 22% of principals are aware that they are responsible for the overall supervision of the programme, quality control and monitoring of food provision to learners. These two key stakeholders (teacher coordinators and principals) in the programme also indicated that they were responsible for the management and administration of the programme. Twenty percent of the SGB members said that they are involved in the operations of the programmes in terms of ensuring that food is delivered on time, prepared and served to learners according to the timetable as provided by the Guidelines on the programme.

²⁰ Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting Manual.2004.



The findings also show that there are principals, teachers and members of the school governing bodies who seem not to know their roles in the implementation of the programme. Since these stakeholders are central to the successful implementation of the programme, their lack of understanding of their roles might affect the implementation of the programme and its intended goals might be compromised.

4.2.3.2 There are varied levels of compliance with the Guidelines of NSNP

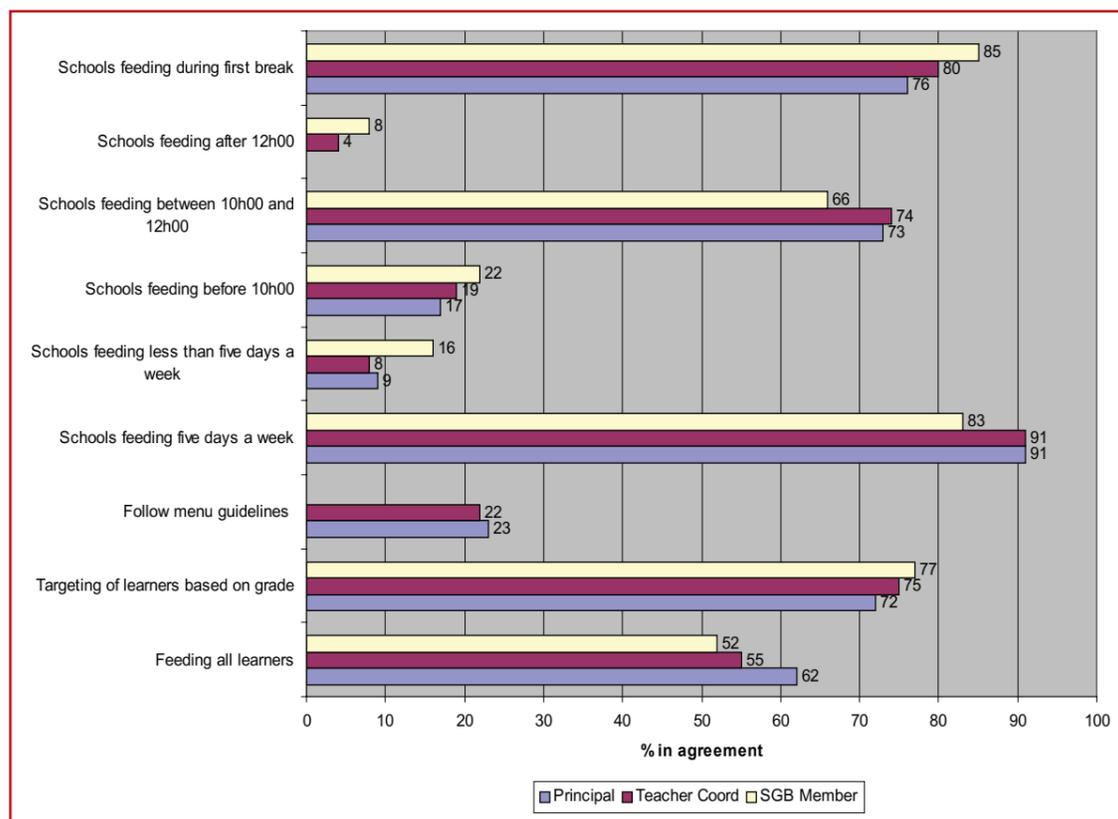
Compliance with the NSNP Guideline is of critical importance to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency in the management of the programme. To this end, the study sought to establish if schools were complying with the Guidelines provided.

The findings in **Figure 4** below show that principals, teacher coordinators and members of the SGBs have indicated that there was compliance with the NSNP guidelines. According to the findings, 70% of these stakeholders have indicated that learners get their food during the first break time which is between 10h00 and 12h00. The findings further show that meals are provided five days a week as required by the Guidelines. However, the findings also show that in 20% of the schools, the feeding of learners does not take place five days a week. The feeding of the learners could take place two days or three days a week. Challenges in the delivery of food by the suppliers were the main reason, especially unreliable delivery or non delivery of food.

The findings also show that as a result of challenges in the delivery of food, there are times where menus were substituted with the food that was available. Bread was the main food item that was mentioned to be the one that is often substituted with vegetable soup.

Compliance with the Guidelines of the programme is important in the realisation of the overall objectives of the programme. Key food items should be regularly served to the learners if the programme is to be effective.

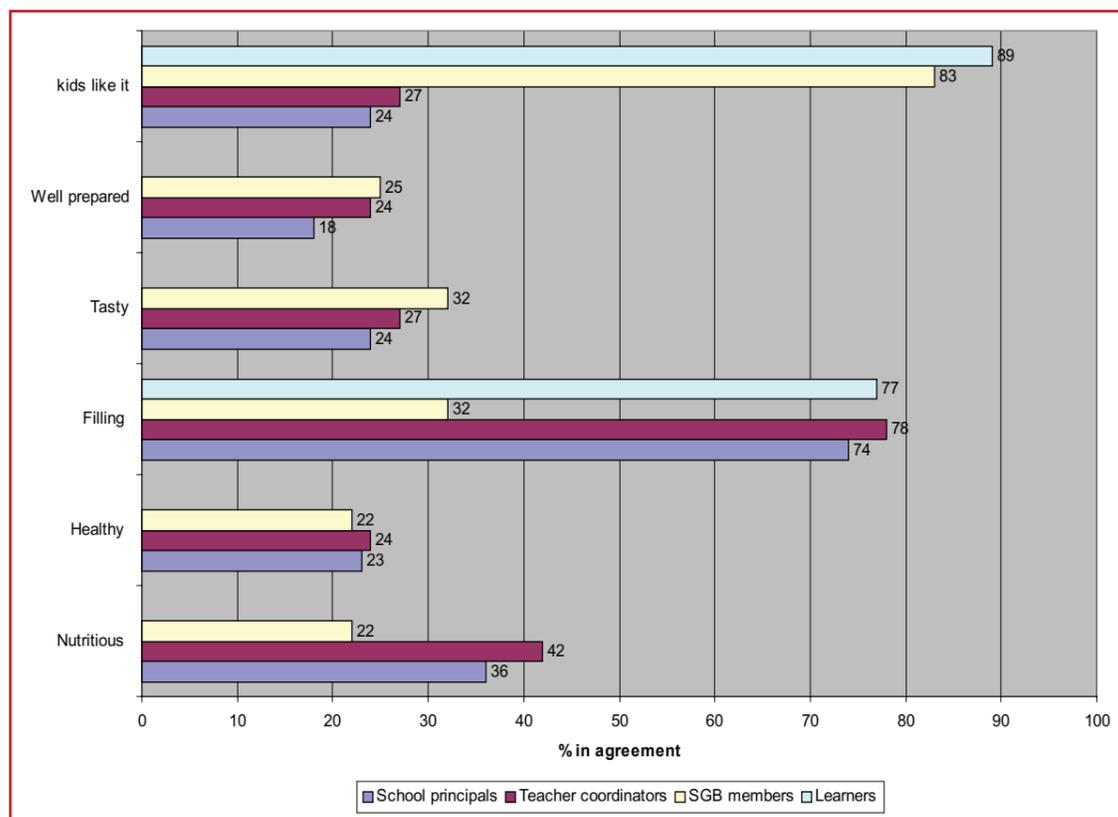
Figure 4: Compliance with the NSNP Guidelines



4.2.3.3 Level of satisfaction with NSNP food/meals varied

The study sought to determine learner satisfaction with the meals provided through the programme. The findings in **Figure 5** show that 89% of learners like the food that was provided. It was indicated that the food was filling, tasty and nutritious. The views of the learners are supported by those of the principals and teacher coordinators at 74% and 78% respectively. The findings also show that school principals (18%), teacher coordinator (24%) and learners (25%) were of the view that food was not well prepared. On the other hand, the findings also show that school principals (24%), teacher coordinators (27%) and learners (27) were of the view that the food prepared was tasty. The findings on the areas of well-prepared and tasty of food seem to complement each other.

Figure 5: Satisfaction with NSNP meals



4.2.4 Food delivered were of varying quality

Determining the quality of food supplied and the quality of service delivery was an important aspect in this study. The findings of the study in **Figure 6** show that 88% of school principals and 89% of teacher coordinators regarded the food supplied to be well packaged, and 80% of teacher coordinators and 83% of school principals felt that the food was well labelled. Furthermore, the findings show that 70% of teacher coordinators and 72% of school principals said that the food supplied was of the required quantities and 73% of teacher coordinators and 74% of school principals indicated that the food were delivered promptly. However, apart from the above-mentioned levels of satisfaction, there were serious concerns about non-delivery of food, shortages and delivery of poor quality products. The findings show that these concerns were mostly raised where there were subcontracted suppliers who often seemed to lack the capacity to meet the demand of the programme.

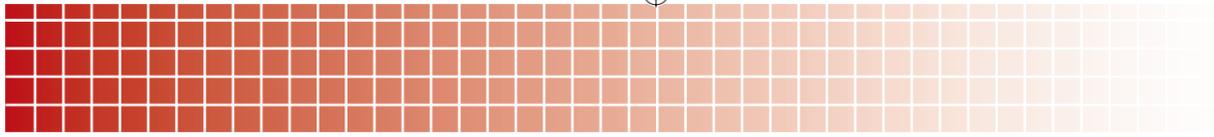
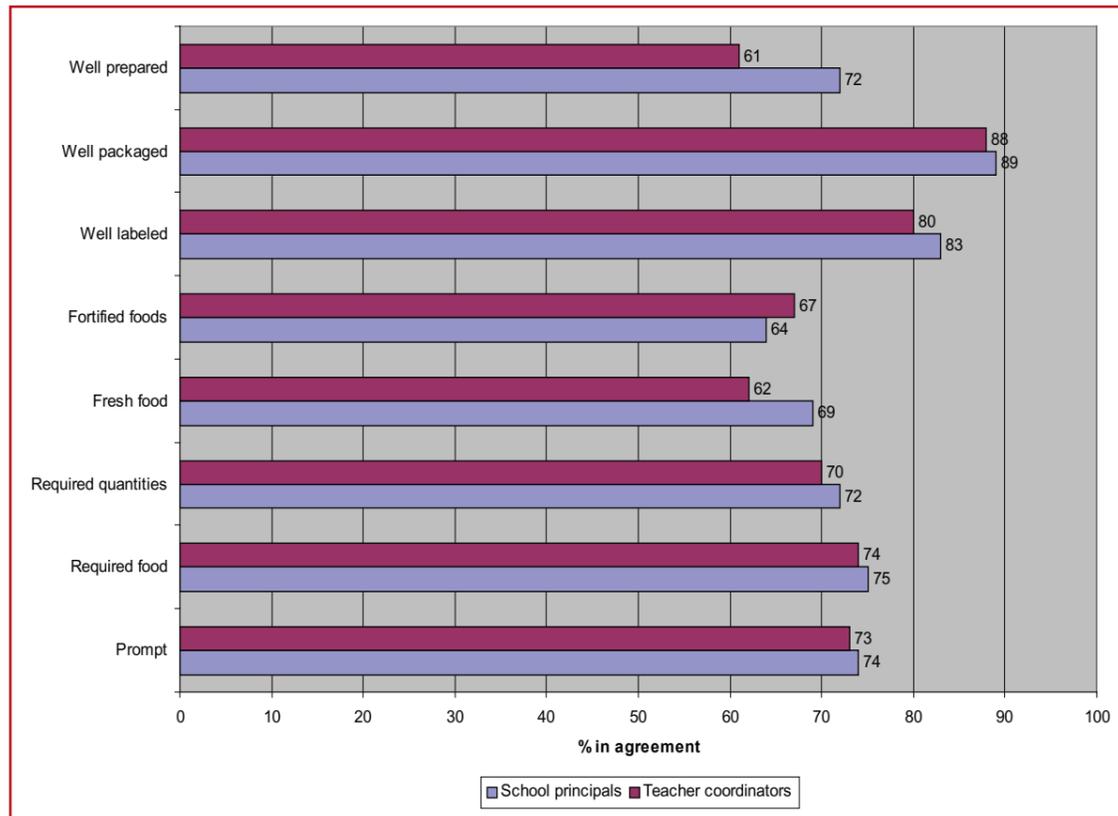


Figure 6: Satisfaction with supplier services

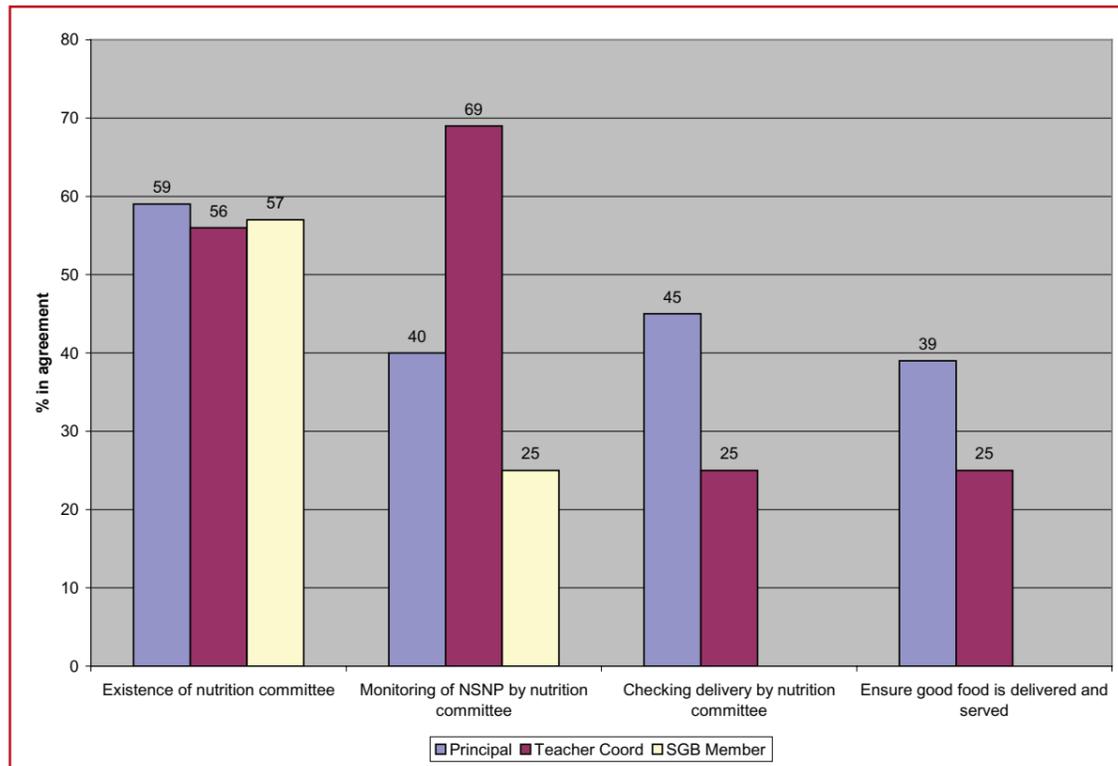


4.2.5 There is active community involvement in the Programme

Active community involvement is key and central to the success of NSNP. The study sought to establish the level and nature of community participation in the programme. The findings of the study in **Figure 7** show that 59% of principals, 57% of SGB members and 56% teacher coordinators have indicated that their schools have school nutrition committees comprising of members of local communities. The primary role of these communities is oversight over the programme. The committees are also considered to be serving as the monitoring structures of the programme at the respective schools. These committees check if food gets delivered and served to learners according to the stipulated Guidelines on the programme.

The findings also show that community involvement is ensured through active participation of parents on the School Governing Bodies which also appoints local community members as food handlers and where possible food suppliers. The findings show that in the province, as an effort to ensure participation by local people, food handlers are 100% local community members. According to the findings, some food handlers are volunteers belonging to local cooperatives. Based on the findings, it appears that there is active involvement and participation of local people in the programme. This involvement and participation might be a reflection of the buy-in the programme has from the local communities.

Figure 7: Existence of a nutrition committee and its functions



4.2.6 Infrastructure for the NSNP is not adequate

Effective implementation of the NSNP requires the provision of the necessary infrastructure and equipment at the respective schools. The study wanted to establish the availability of facilities in all schools that were implementing the NSNP. According to the findings, the majority of the key stakeholders (83%) indicated that facilities and equipments such as storage space, cooking facilities, sanitation, water and electricity were available in most of the schools participating in the programme in the province.

However, the findings in **Figure 8** also show that the infrastructure available was not adequate to enable the expected quality service delivery of the programme. For example, refrigerators were not available in the majority of schools that were participating in the programme. Most schools use classrooms for storage and as a result, perishable foods get spoiled easily. The findings of the study has already shown that more than 60% of key stakeholders have indicated that food was prepared on the school premises, perhaps these findings highlight the need for appropriate food storage facilities like refrigerators and other necessary facilities. However, because many schools in the rural areas are poorly resourced, equipment that might be regarded as primary for the implementation of the NSNP might be viewed as a luxury. In such areas, there may be more pressing challenges such as shortage of classrooms and other teaching aids. Whilst these challenges are important, attempts should still be made to create enabling conditions for the effective implementation of the NSNP.

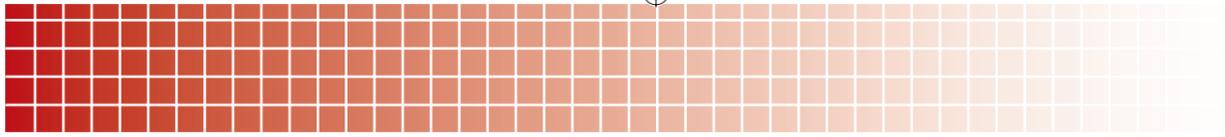
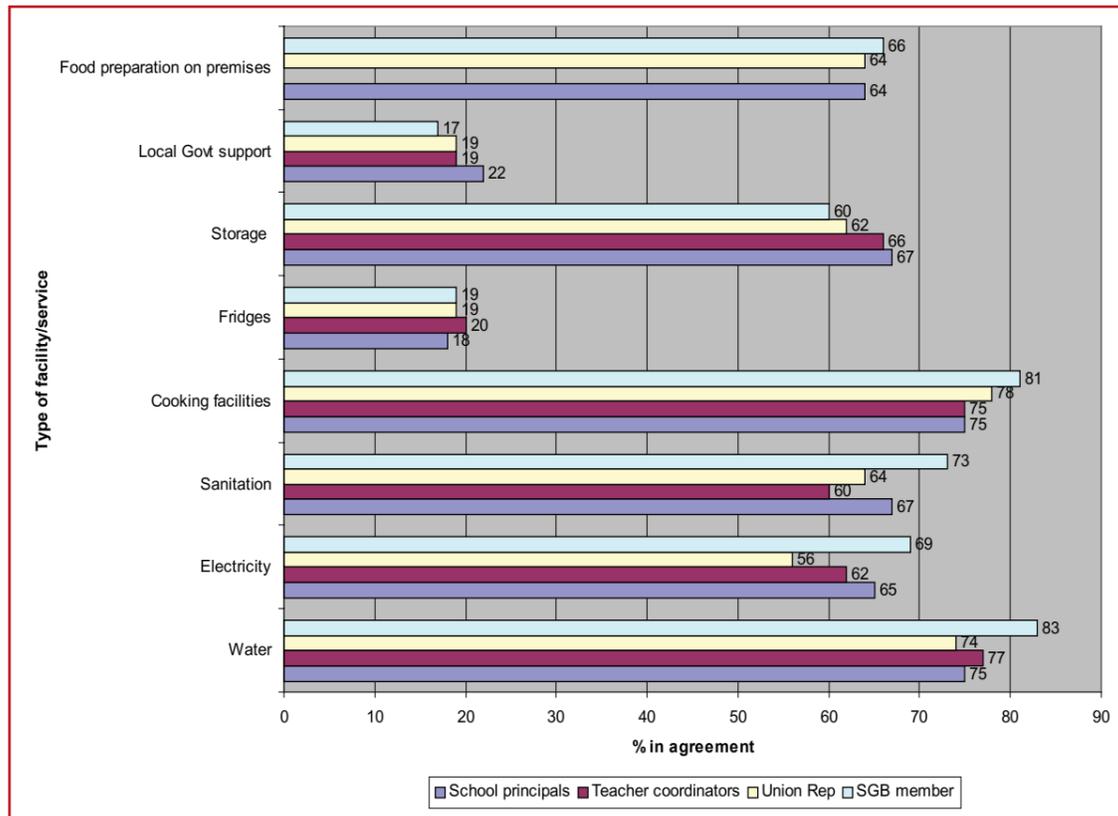


Figure 8: Available infrastructure for the NSNP in the Eastern Cape

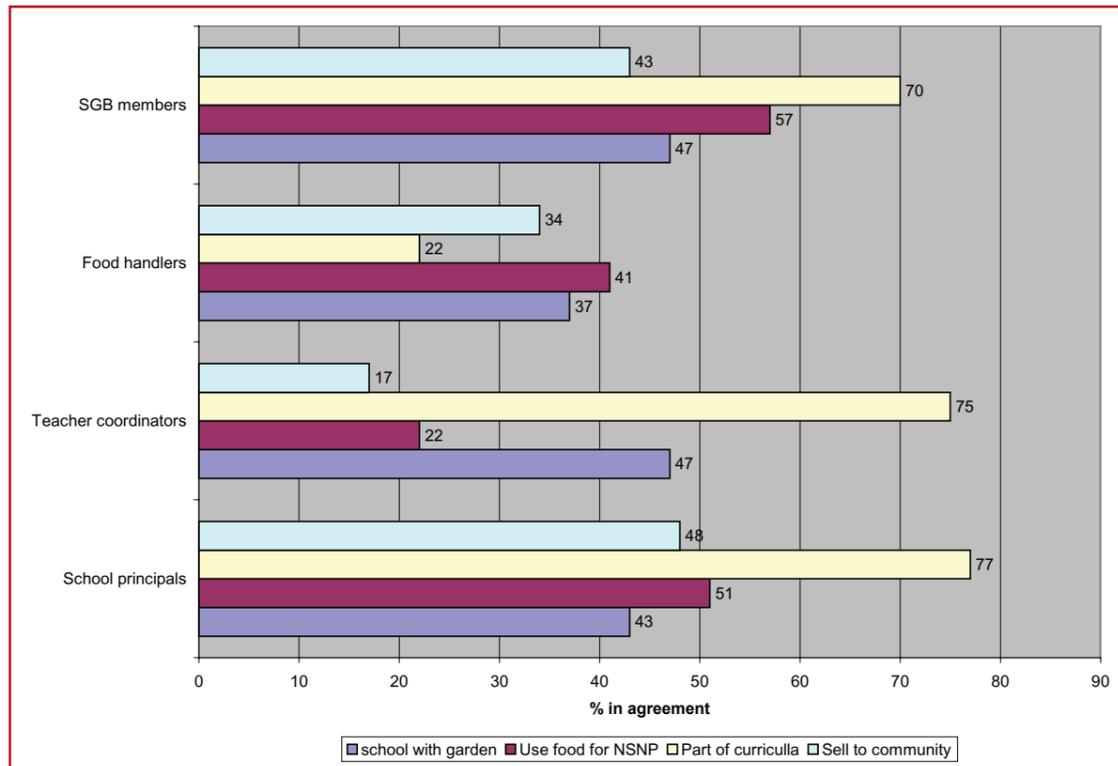


4.2.7 Programme Integration through school gardens

The study sought to establish if schools have vegetable gardens and if vegetables from these gardens were used in the school NSNP.

The findings show in **Figure 9** that less than half of the principals, teacher coordinators, members of the SGBs and union representatives indicated that their schools have vegetable gardens. However, 70% of the respondents indicated that they use the garden as part of the school curriculum where learners are taught agriculture as a subject. The vegetable gardens were not functional and the high level of drought was said to have contributed negatively to the functioning of school vegetable gardens. The dysfunctionality of school vegetable gardens in many schools make it difficult for food suppliers to source locally produced vegetables. However, due to draught, it appears as if the situation is beyond of control of the schools' management.

Figure 9: Existence of a school garden and its role in NSNP



4.2.8 Capacity to implement the NSNP varies

The study wanted to obtain information on the capacity of role players and stakeholders involved in the implementation of the programme. The key respondents were the food handlers and suppliers as they are central to the implementation of the programme in the respective schools. Twenty two percent (22%) of food handlers indicated that they received training on handling food for the purpose of the programme and they rated the training received highly. Fifty percent of the food suppliers indicated that they have received orientation and induction on the NSNP and felt adequately prepared to take part in the programme. The findings show a low percent of food handlers and suppliers who have indicated that they have received adequate training and preparation on the programme. Surely, if lack of training is not addressed this might affect the overall delivery of the programme.

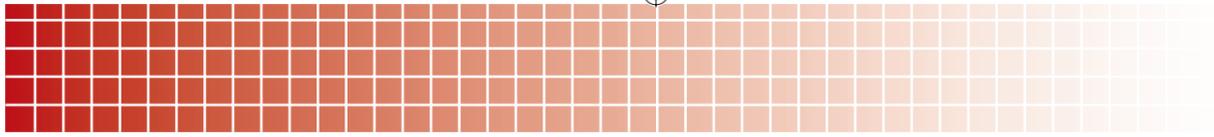
As part of ensuring active participation and involvement in the programme, contracting of local suppliers and local food handlers are key to service delivery. Therefore, there is a need for local communities to be capacitated to be active agents of the NSNP. To achieve this, local people would need to be assisted to develop capacity to supply according to the NSNP Guidelines.

4.2.9 Different systems of monitoring and evaluation are applied

The study sought to establish if there is a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system in place on the NSNP, and if the system was applied. According to the findings, the M&E reporting formats are provided in the NSNP guidelines manual. The Provincial DoE is responsible for monitoring of the NSNP in the province.

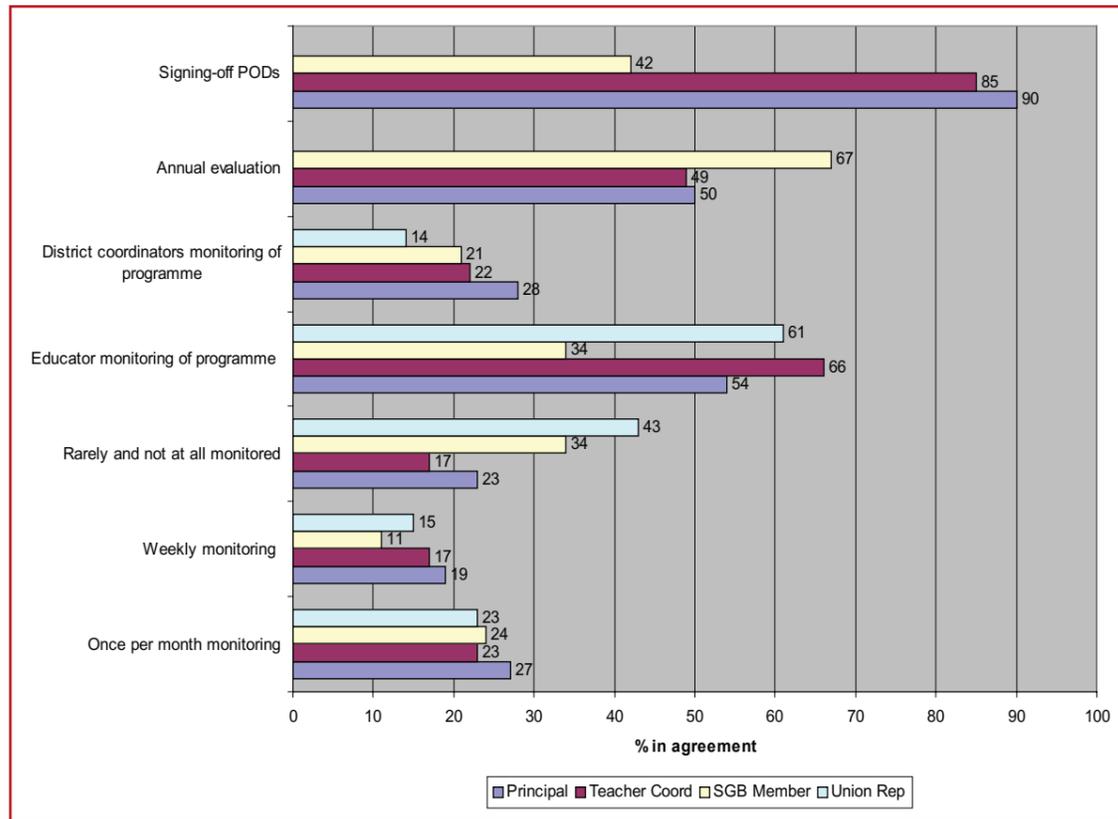
Figure 10 below shows that the principals, teacher coordinators, SGB members and Union representatives know that the M&E function must be performed according the Guidelines provided by the department. Sixty six percent of the principals, teacher coordinators and Union representatives indicated that monitoring of the programme is done on monthly basis.

However, 34% of union representatives and 43% of members of the SGB indicated that they were not pleased with the monitoring of the programme. It was indicated that monitoring is conducted less



frequently as required by the NSNP Guidelines, and as such a number of things that would be going wrong would be unnoticed and hence it would take a long time to address the. The delay in the delivery of food and shortages of food were mentioned as some of the issues which could be rectified if monitoring was conducted regularly. Figure 10 below shows the breakdown of the application of the M&E system in the NSNP in the Eastern Cape. These findings suggest that there is a need to strengthen the M&E system to ensure that the system yields the much needed impact data on the programme. The information obtained from the M&E will also contribute to the improvement in the implementation of NSNP.

Figure 10: The monitoring and evaluation of the NSNP



4.2.10 IMPACT OF THE NSNP VARIED

The study sought to establish the impact of the NSNP on the lives of the learners and the community in which schools that were implementing the programme were located. To this end, the following key areas were investigated:

- Impact on the performance of the learners, and
- Impact of the local community

The following are the key findings from the study:

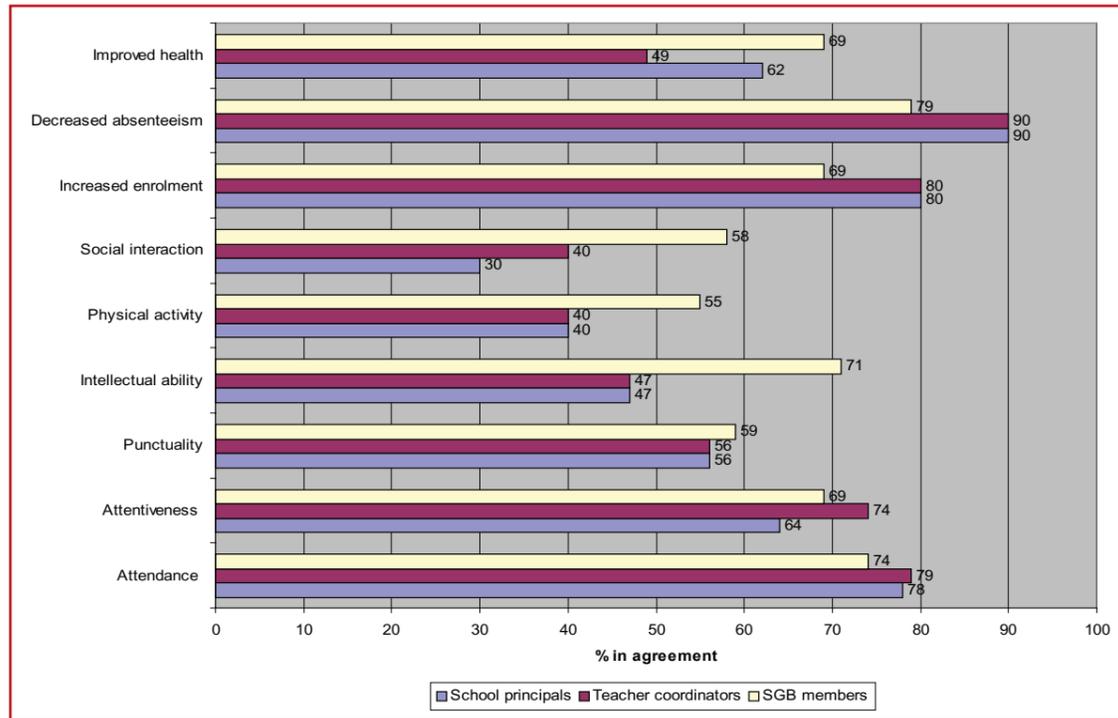
4.2.10.1 Perceived impact on the performance of learners

The findings presented in **Figure 11** below show that as a result of the impact of the programme, the following were achieved among the learners:

- Increased enrolment of learners at the school,
- Attendance of school by learners increased,
- Improved participation by learners in the classrooms,
- Encouraged social and physical participation in extra-mural activities by learners.

The above-mentioned improvements seem to suggest that learners have reasons to go to school. The NSNP has become an integral part of the motivating factors among the learners.

Figure II: Perceived impact of the NSNP on the performance of learners



4.2.10.2 Perceived impact of the NSNP on the local community

According to the respondents, the NSNP has had impact on the local communities where the schools that were participating in the programme were located. The following were the key areas in which the programme has had significant impact in the local communities:

- Job creation: Local people were appointed as food handlers and food supplier of the programme. As a result, jobs were created for people in the area;
- Poverty alleviation: The programme had created jobs which supported a number of families in the local areas and as a result poverty was alleviated. Poverty among the learners and their respective families have been addressed as a result of this programme; and
- Local economic development: The programme has contributed towards local economic development because locally produced vegetables, bread and other related items that were used to feed the learners were supplied by local people. Local people were encouraged to produce more items to avoid a situation where items could be sourced outside the communities.

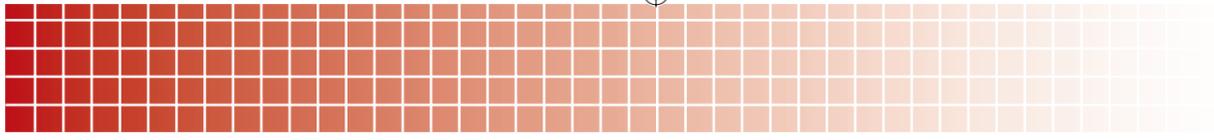
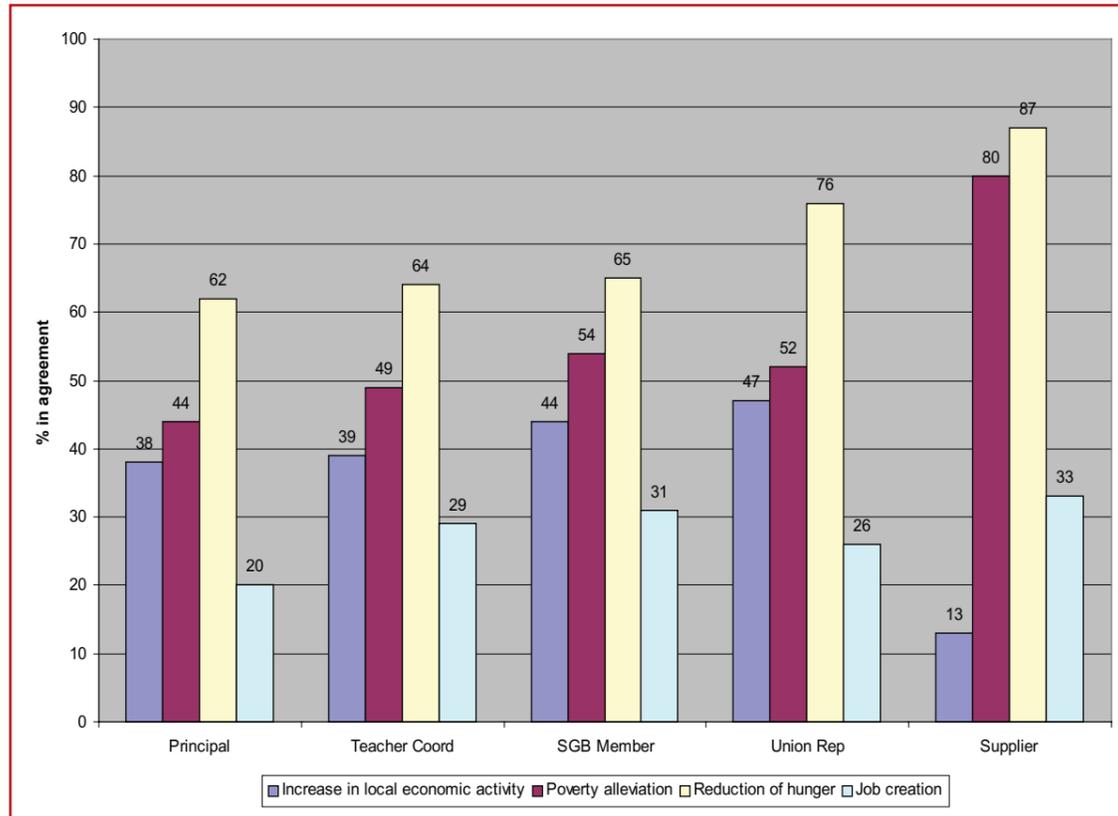


Figure 12 below shows the breakdown of the contribution of the programme in the local communities.

Figure 12: Perceive impact of the NSNP on the community



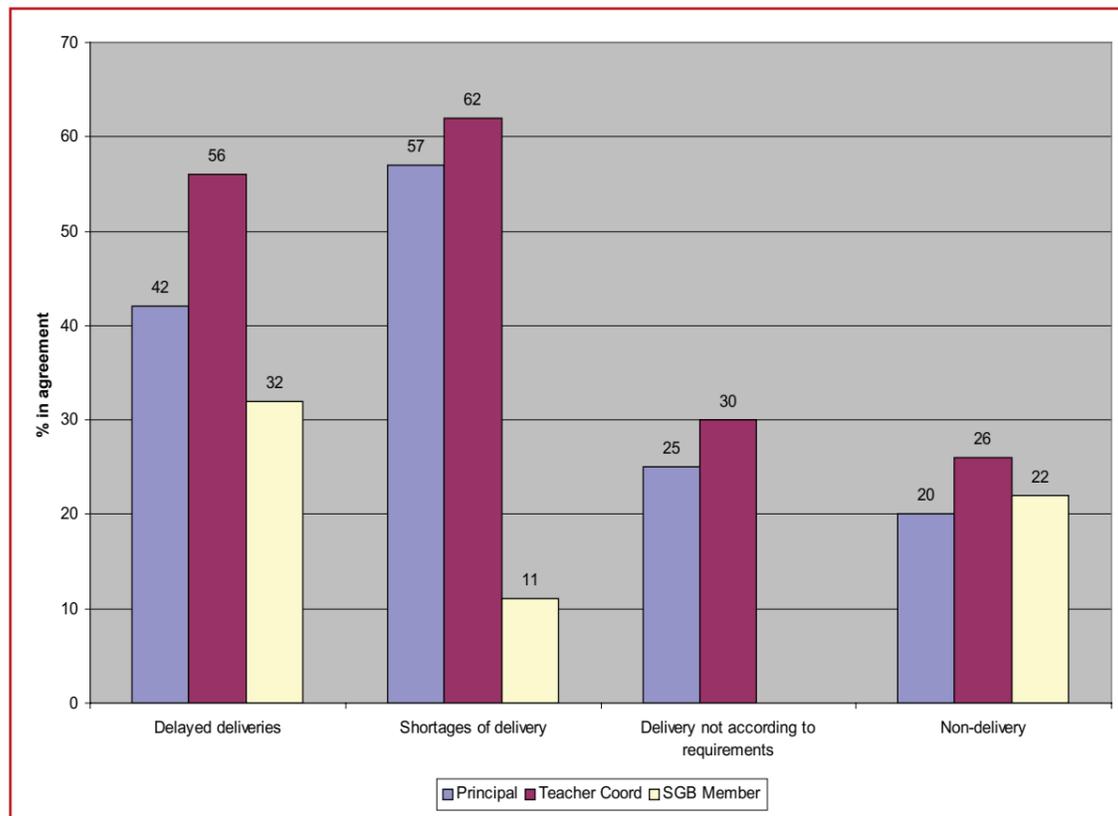
4.2.11 Different challenges were experienced during implementation of the NSNP

The study sought to establish challenges that were experienced during the implementation of the NSNP. According to the findings, the programme has had several challenges which were encountered during its implementation since its inception. The following are the key challenges that were noted by respondents in the Eastern Cape:

- Unavailability of the necessary and needed infrastructure;
- Non-delivery of food;
- Delays in the delivery of food;
- Substitution of certain food due non-delivery of the required food;
- Some stakeholders were not aware of the role they are expected to play in the implementation of the programme; and
- Centralization of the programme at the provincial level.

Figure 13 below shows the breakdown of the challenges experienced during the implementation of the programme in the Eastern Cape.

Figure 13: Challenges to NSNP implementation



4.2.12 Suggestions for the improvement of the NSNP in Eastern Cape

The study also sought to establish any suggestions from the key stakeholders and role players in the programme on how to best improve the implementation of the programme. According to the findings of the study, the following key suggestions have emerged as areas that needed attention to improve the programme:

- Feeding of all learners instead of the selected few;
- Improve the quantity and quality of food currently served to learners;
- Add animal protein like milk, meat and eggs to the menu;
- Training of the stakeholders on their respective roles in the programme;
- Provision of NSNP infrastructure at schools by providing kitchen facilities and other equipments;
- Frequent monitoring of the programme;
- More use of regular food suppliers of the programme; and
- Remunerate better the local food handlers.

The above-mentioned factors are central to the management of a programme of this nature.

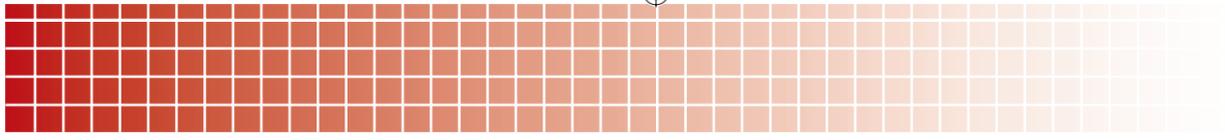
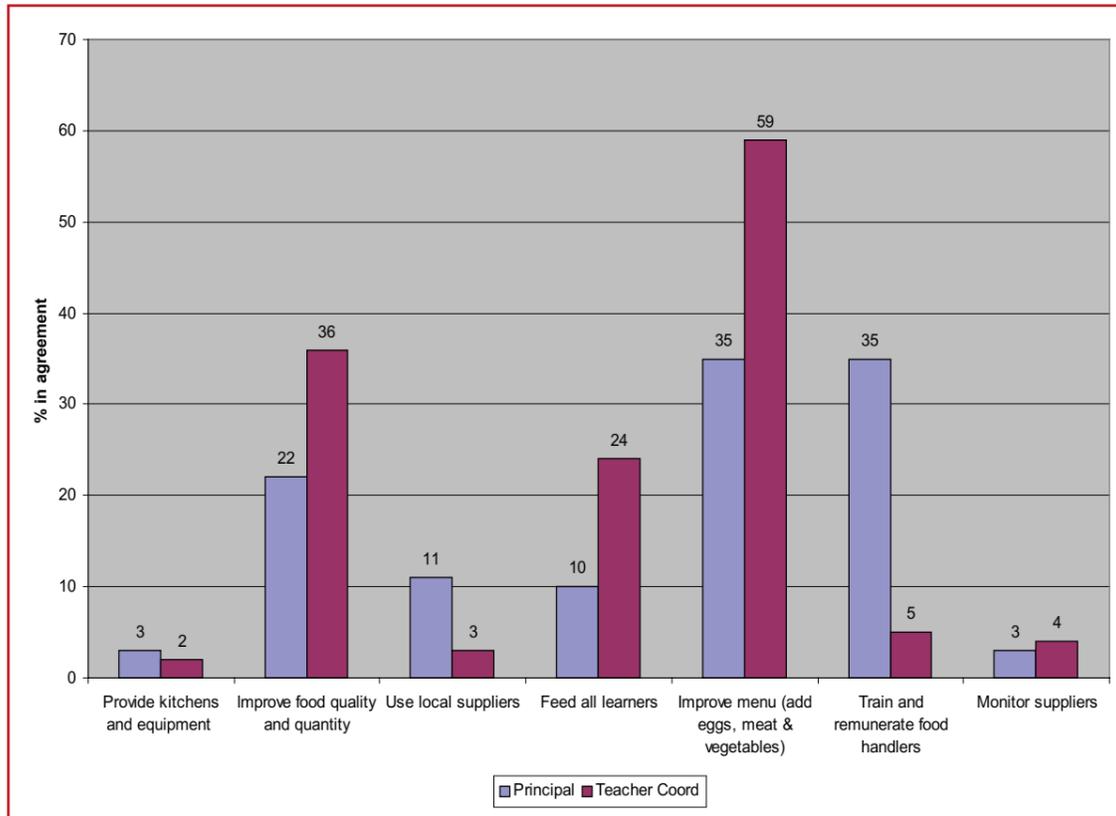


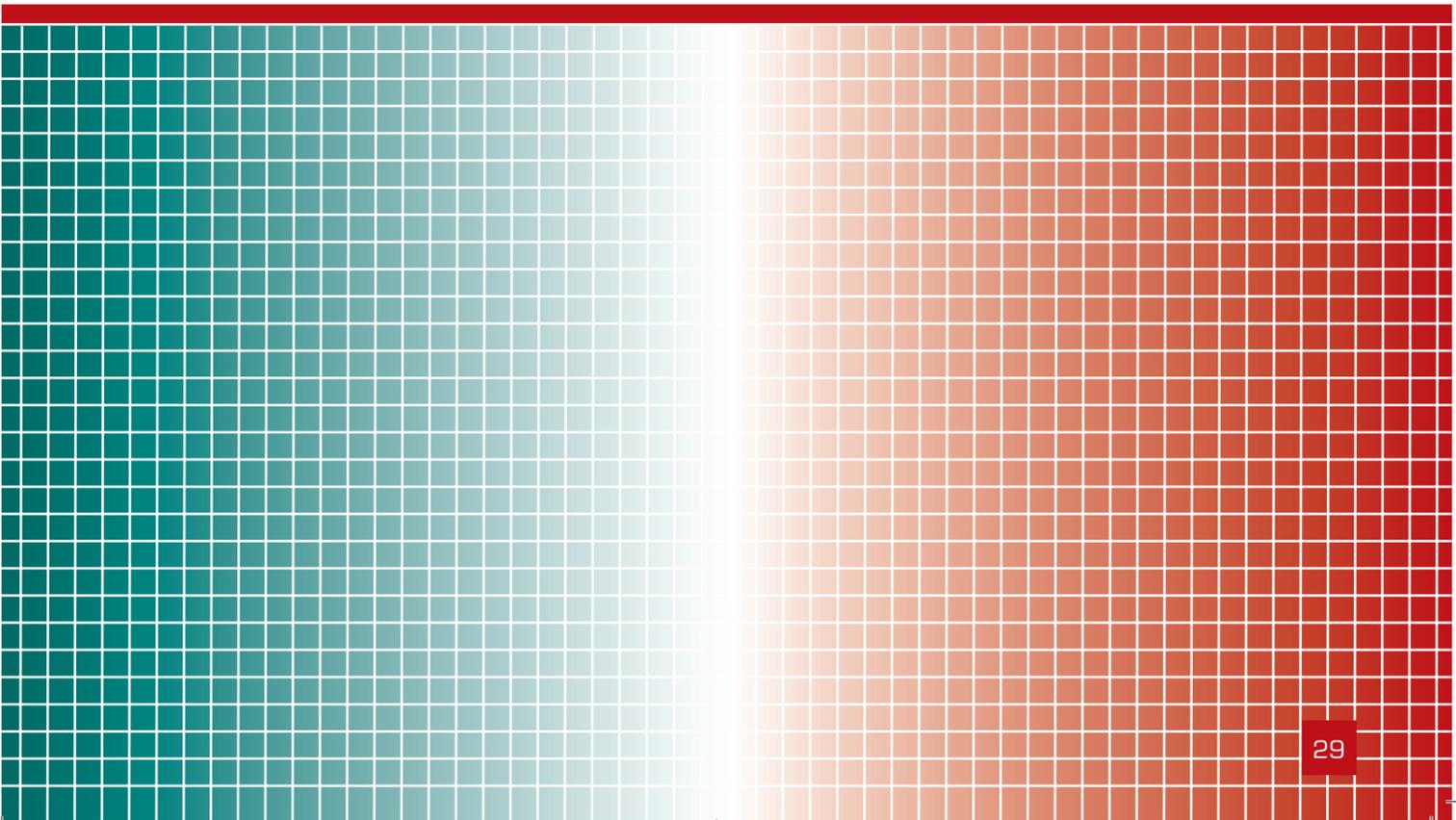
Figure 14 below shows the breakdown of the suggestions made on the improvement of the NSNP in the Eastern Cape.

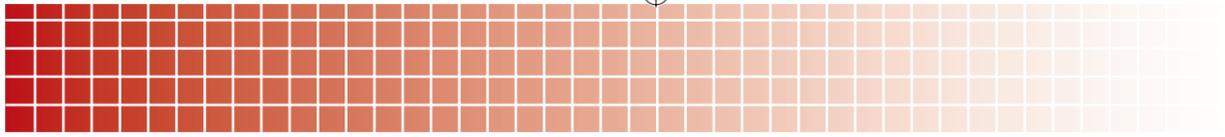
Figure 14: Suggestions for the improvement of the NSNP in Eastern Cape



Chapter Five

FINDINGS – LIMPOPO





5.1 INTRODUCTION

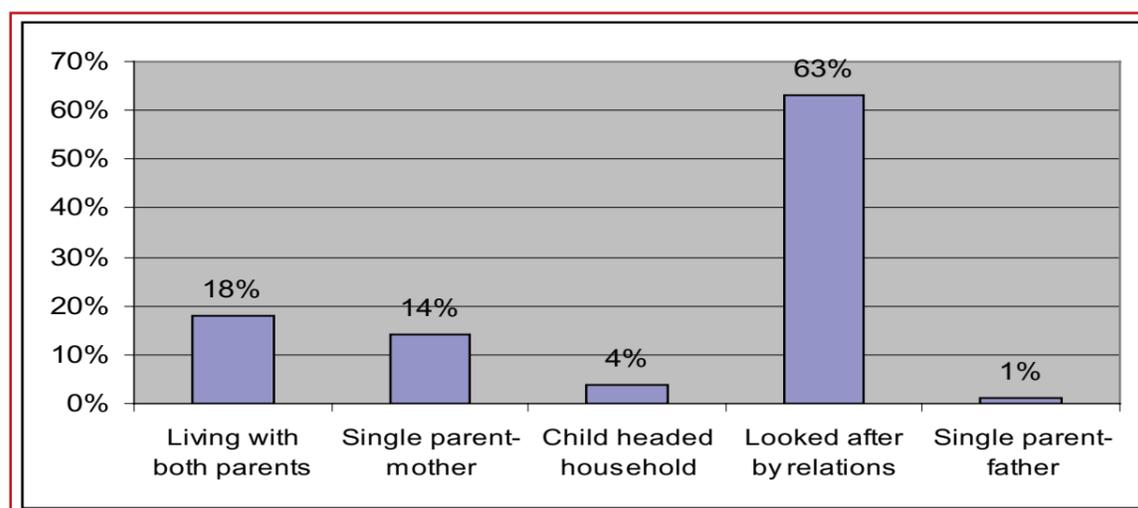
This chapter presents the findings from Limpopo. The findings are presented according to the themes derived during analysis of data. The themes are socio-economic status of the learners who are beneficiaries of the NSNP, programme organization and management, programme co-ordination and support, community involvement in NSNP, availability of infrastructure of the NSNP, programme integration initiatives, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, impact of NSNP, and challenges experienced in the implementation of the programme. Suggestions to improve the programme are also made in this chapter.

5.2 KEY FINDINGS

5.2.1 Majority of beneficiaries come from poor backgrounds

The study sought to establish the socio-economic background of families from which beneficiary learners came, and the impact of the NSNP on the lives and learning circumstances of the learners. The findings show that the average size of a household where learners who benefit from the NSNP come from is 5 persons. The findings also show that 63% of learners live with relatives (other family members) not their biological parents. Furthermore, 14% of learners live in single headed households. Four percent of the learners come from child-headed households. Learners from single-headed households, especially those headed by females and child-headed households are exposed to social vulnerabilities such as poverty and hunger. These households are likely not to have dependable and sustainable means of income, which further deepen their vulnerability. **Figure 15** below demonstrates the vulnerability of NSNP beneficiaries.

Figure 15: Status of households of learners - Limpopo

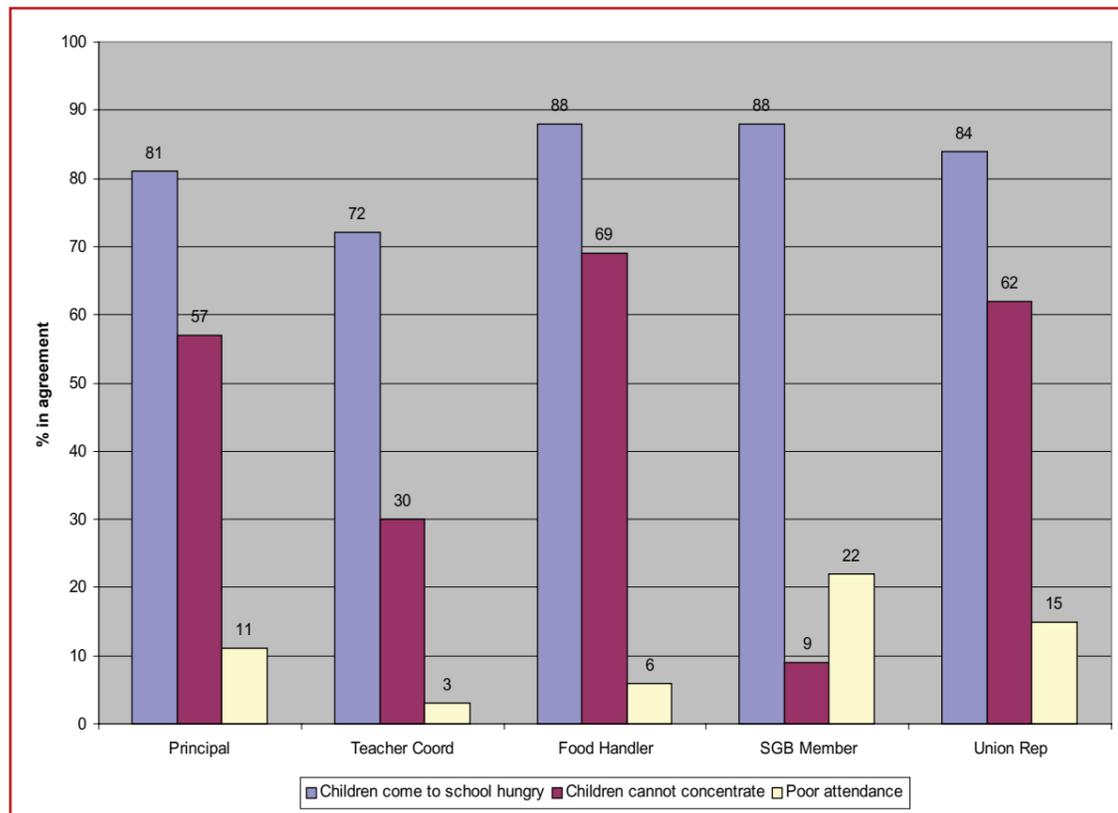


The above graph shows that the majority of learners on the NSNP programme do not have parents. The family background of the learners suggests that the NSNP is reaching beneficiaries who indeed need it.

The study also sought to establish whether hunger was prevalent among the learners and what the perceived effects of this are.

Figure 16 below shows the effect of hunger on learners as seen by key stakeholders at schools.

Figure 16: Effects of hunger among learners



According to the findings, food handlers (88%), members of the SGBs (88%), union representatives (84%), principals (81%) and teacher coordinators (72%) were of the opinion that most learners come to school hungry in the morning. All five categories of respondents also indicated that learners cannot concentrate in class because they are hungry.

The findings suggest that learners are exposed to conditions of poverty and hunger. Food handlers and SGB members, who are parents themselves and live within the community have also indicated that indeed, learners come to school hungry. Principals and educators, on the other hand, also reported that learners' behaviour in class before feeding programme was introduced at the schools show lack of concentration and learners complained of stomach ache and dizziness.

5.2.2 Learner access to food/meals varied

The prevalence of hunger among learners was further assessed in terms of the extent of access to meals. The findings show that the majority of learners (90%) eat food at the respective schools everyday. This means that in Limpopo, there is adherence to the guidelines on NSNP which stipulate that learners should have food at school everyday of the week.

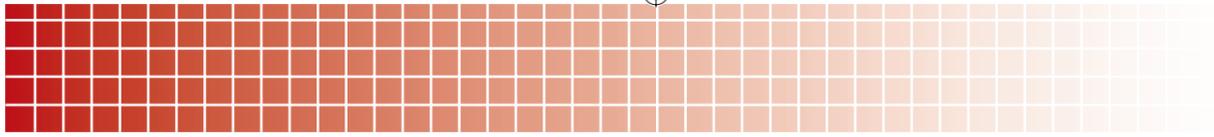
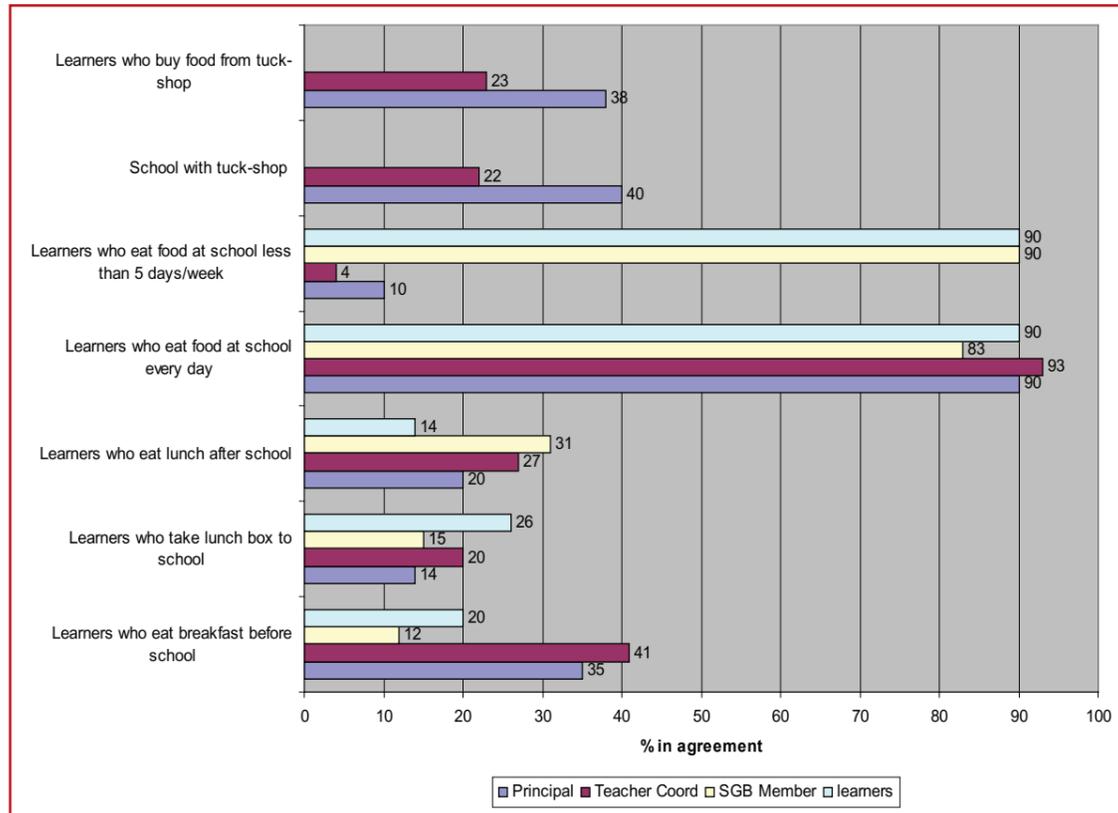


Figure 17 below shows the access to food and meals by learners at their respective schools.

Figure 17: Access to food/meals among learners



5.2.3 Role players have varying levels of awareness regarding the responsibilities

The study sought to establish the effectiveness of the management of the NSNP. To this end, it was important to investigate the following areas:

- Roles and responsibilities of the key role players,
- Compliance with the Guidelines on NSNP development by the Department of Education, and
- Satisfaction with the means/food provided through the programme.

5.2.3.1 Roles and Responsibilities of key role players

The roles and responsibilities of the SGBs, teacher coordinators and principals in the management of the NSNP are defined in the Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting Manual²¹.

The findings show that only 27% of principals and 9% of teacher coordinators indicated that they were aware that they were responsible for the overall supervision of activities of the programme such as quality control and monitoring of food provision to the learners. Only 22% of principals and 20% of teacher coordinators said they were monitoring daily deliveries of food of the NSNP at their respective schools. It was indicated that this can be a demanding exercise because there were times where it would not be predictable as when the delivery would take place. As key stakeholders in their respective communities, teacher coordinators and members of the school governing bodies in particular could be called at any given time including over the weekends and at night if there is a delivery that is to take place. Delivery of food can only be done in the presence of these stakeholders to ensure quality and accuracy of items reflected on the invoice.

²¹ Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. NSNP Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting Manual. 2004/05.

The findings also show that 10% of principals, 20% of SGBs and 21% of teacher coordinators 20% of SGBs and 10% of principals have indicated a “don't know” answer to their responsibilities. This situation could have diverse effects on the management of the NSNP in the school concern. Role players are very instrumental in the overall success of the programme. As such, the efficient and effective implementation of the NSNP is likely to be compromised in schools where key stakeholders seem not to know their roles and responsibilities. The need for more strategic training and continued provision of technical support is imperative in this case.

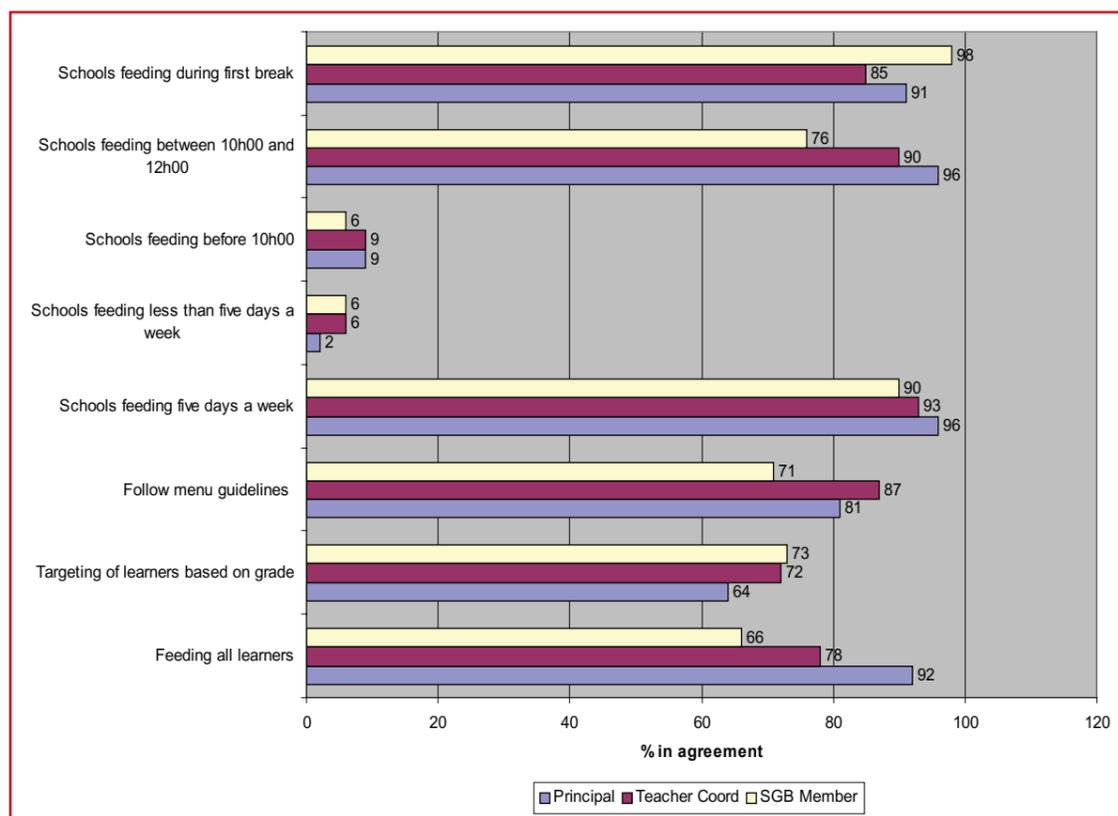
5.2.3.2 There are varied levels of compliance with Guidelines of the NSNP

Compliance of the NSNP Guidelines is essential to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency in the management of the programme. To this end, the study sought to establish the extent to which compliance with the Guidelines was adhered to.

The findings in **Figure 18** below show that a large majority of respondents such as principals (96%), teacher coordinators (93%) and members of SGBs (93%) have indicated that provision of food to the learners in their respective schools is provided five days a week and takes place between 10h00 and 12h00 which is a stipulated time according the Guidelines of the programme. The provision of food to the learners is not expected to interfere with the school teaching programme. According to the guidelines on the NSNP, feeding of the learners is supposed to be only during schools' break time. The findings also show that the prescribed menu was followed in the schools that participated in the study in the province.

However, the findings have also shown that there are cases of non-delivery of food to schools and these were usually noted in Vhembe and Sekhukhune districts. Heavy rains were given as the main reason for such non-delivery. It was indicated that roads are usually impassable during rainy seasons in these areas. However, food delivered earlier and stored is usually used during such days although the challenge is if the food items get spoiled due to lack of relevant facilities such as refrigerators. The findings seem to suggest that generally there is compliance with the Guidelines on NSNP in the province.

Figure 18: Compliance with the NSNP Guidelines



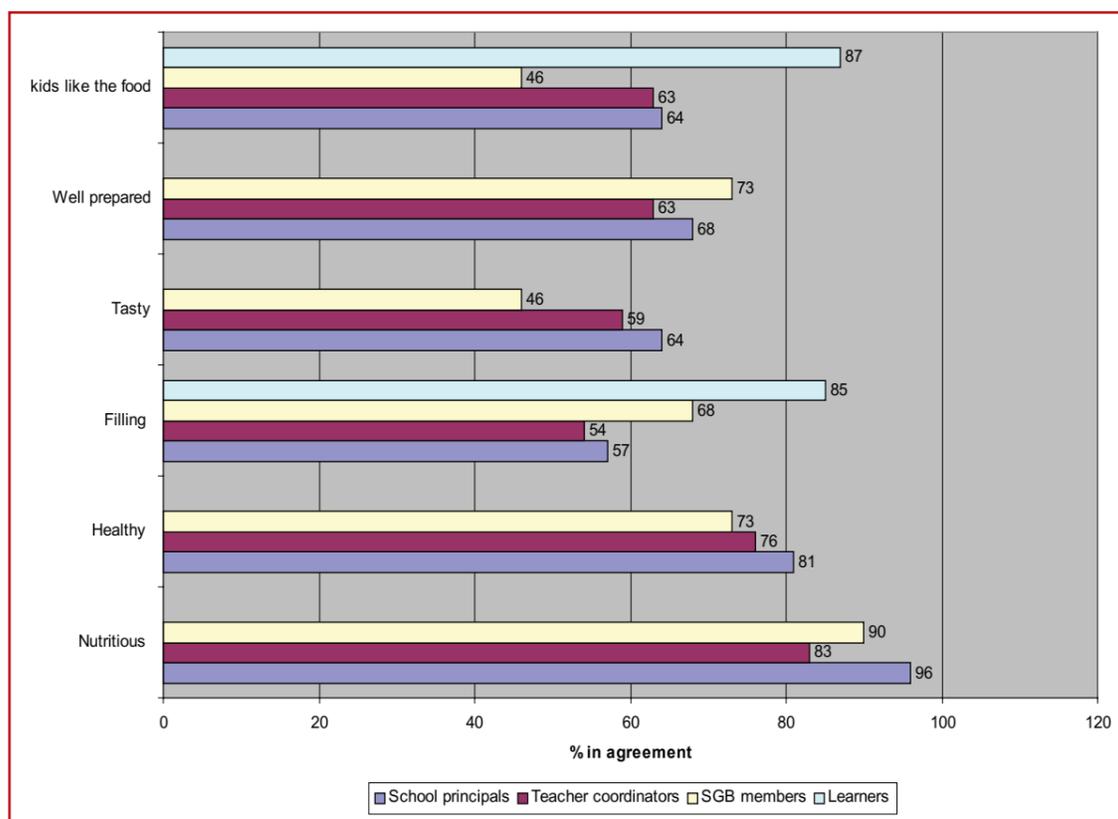
5.2.3.3 Level of satisfaction with the NSNP food/meals varied

The study sought to establish the learners satisfaction with the meals provided through the programme. The findings in **Figure 19** show that the majority of learners (87%) were satisfied with the food provided to them. These learners indicated that they like the food. Furthermore, learners (90%), principals (96%), members of the SGB (90%) and teacher coordinators (83%) said the meals were nutritious, while 81% of principals, 76% of teacher coordinators and 73% of SGBs indicated the food was healthy, and 64% of SGBs, 57% of principals, and 54% of teacher coordinators said the food was filling.

The majority of learners (85%) indicated that food they were receiving was filling although only 46% have indicated that the food was tasty. The type of food preferred by learners is samp and vegetables. However, the majority of learners (87%) also indicated that they do not like the soup that was served as it was not tasty. The learners that did not seem to like the food served at their respective schools seem to come from Vhembe and Sekhukhune districts. Perhaps the learners in these districts are not used to the menu that is served or come from able families where there are readily available food/meals.

The findings of the study also show that 20% of learners in the schools that participated in the study practice what could be referred to a 'food stockvel'. Learners in groups of five take turns in donating their daily portions of food to one learner to take home for the whole family to eat. This process would be repeated during the five days, with each learner having the opportunity of taking food home once a week. Perhaps this is an indication of hunger in the households where these learners come from, especially those who come from single parent headed households and child-headed households. The findings also show that principals and educators in these schools have already started developing a database of orphans and vulnerable children for submission to the local social workers. The aim of developing and submitting that list to the local social workers was said to be to ensure that these learners and their families are taken care of through the government's social grant programmes if they qualify.

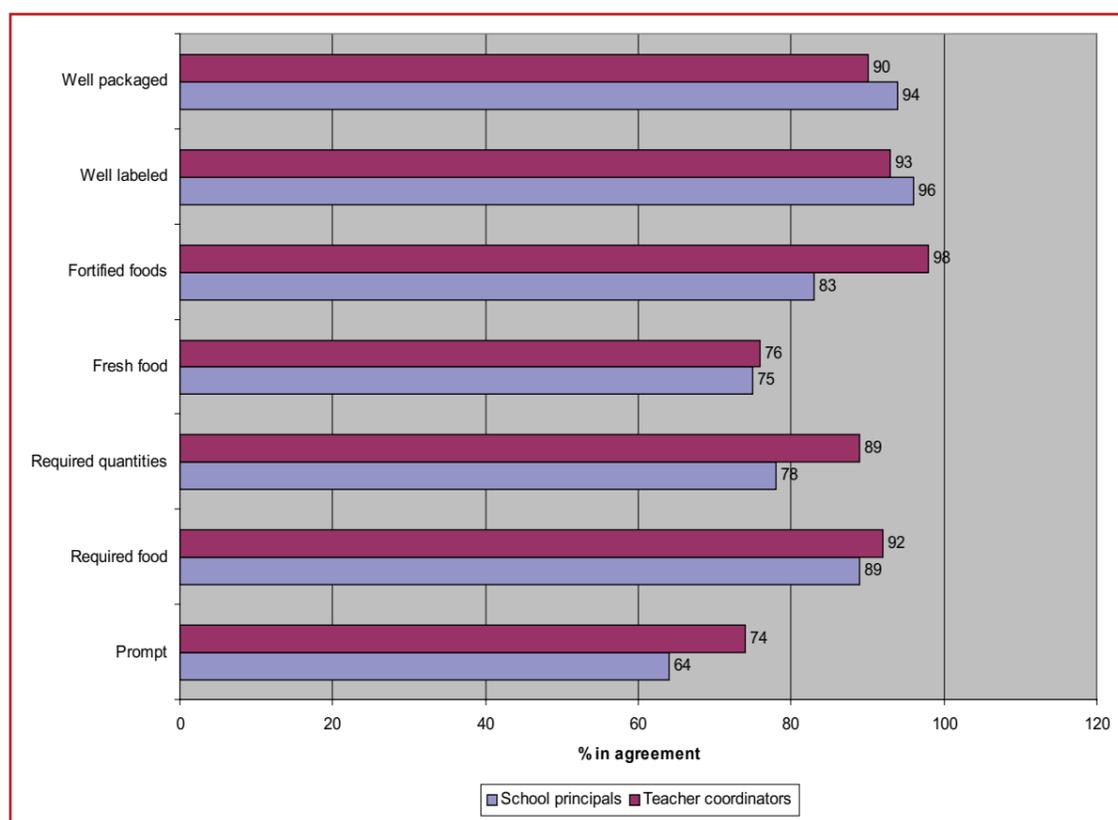
Figure 19: Satisfaction with the NSNP meals



5.2.4 Food delivered was of varying quality

Determining the quality of food supplied and the quality of service delivery was an important aspect in this study. In this regard, the study sought to establish if key stakeholders were satisfied with the quality of food and service delivery by the suppliers. According to the findings, 92% of teacher coordinators and 89% of principals indicated that the suppliers delivered the required food, and both respondents indicated that the delivered food was well packaged and fresh. Seventy four percent (74%) of teacher coordinators and 64% of principals said the food was delivered promptly. The findings also show that 93% of teacher coordinators and 96% of school principals were of the view that the food was well labelled. **Figure 20** below provides the breakdown of the findings.

Figure 20: Satisfaction with supplier services



5.2.5 Community involvement in the NSNP

Active community participation is key and central to the success of the NSNP. The study sought to establish the level and nature of community participation in the programme. According to the findings, principals (85%), members of the SGBs (76%) and teacher co-ordinators (72%) indicated that their schools have nutrition committees comprising of members of local communities and the committees' primary role was that of oversight over the programme. Monitoring of the main activities programme such as checking if food was delivered on time and the quality thereof were referred to as key functions of the committees, followed by ensuring delivery and preparation of proper food.

The findings also show that community involvement in Limpopo is further done through the participation of members of the SGBs in the selection of food handlers and food suppliers from the local communities. In most rural schools, parents collect and deliver firewood to schools as part of community contribution, while in semi-urban and township schools, parents contribute minimal amounts of money such as R10.00 a month towards the purchase of firewood. This partnership between communities and schools seems to reflect a sense of ownership and buy-in by the local people in the respective communities and schools.

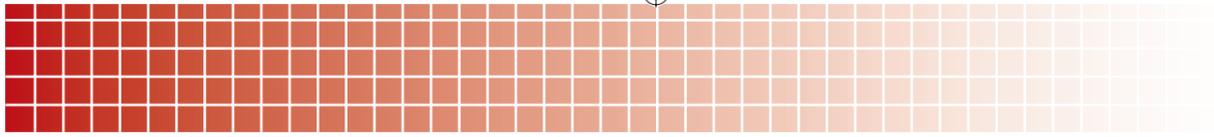
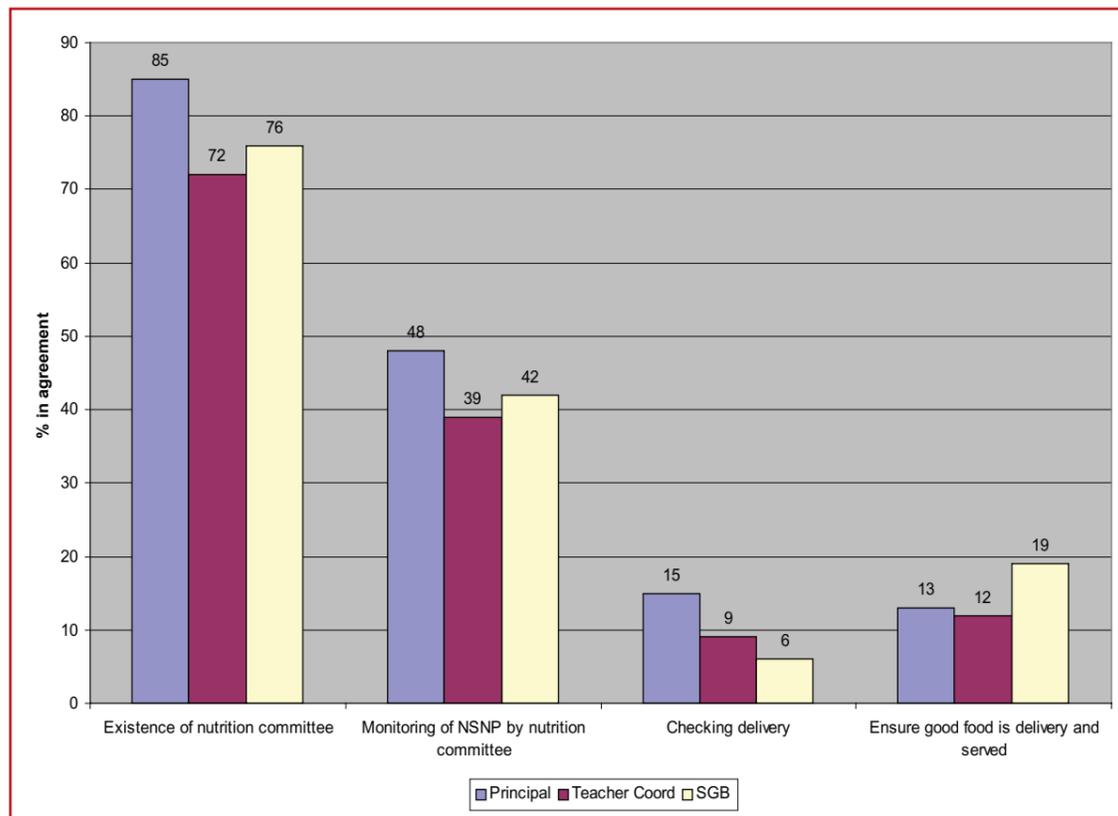


Figure 21 below shows that breakdown of the existence of a nutrition committee and its functions in the respective communities.

Figure 21: Existence of a nutrition committee and its functions



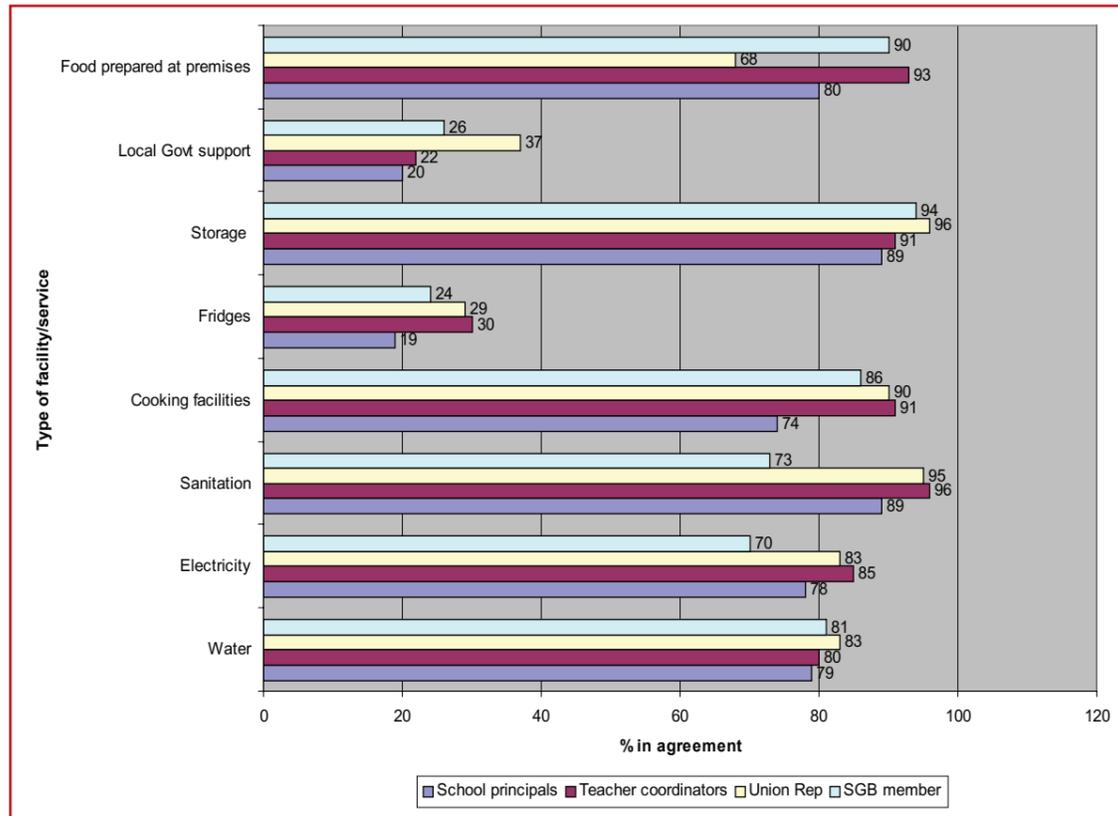
5.2.6 Infrastructure for the NSNP is not adequate

Effective implementation of the NSNP requires the provision of the necessary infrastructure and equipments at the respective schools. The study wanted to establish the availability of facilities in all that were implementing the NSNP. The findings show that infrastructure such as storage space food, cooking facilities, sanitation, water and electricity were not adequate at the majority of the schools. Furthermore, the findings show that 93% of teacher coordinators, 90% of the SGBs, 80% of principals and 68% of union representatives indicated that food is prepared on the school premises of their respective schools and complained about the inadequacy of kitchen space and cooking facilities. It appears that schools that have kitchens on their premises, those kitchens were initially built only to accommodate smaller numbers of learners before the quintile system which has bigger numbers was introduced.

The findings also show that 85% of teacher coordinators, 83% of union representatives, 78% of principals and 70% of the SGBs indicated that their schools had electricity. It was reported that due high electricity bills which were too exorbitant to pay for cooking NSNP meals; the schools changed the approach and started to use firewood which was available and affordable. The findings show that there were schools that are using gas stoves which seem to be affordable. Less than 30% of respondents indicated that their schools have refrigerators. Perhaps it is as a result of lack of such facilities such as refrigerators that majority of school reported that food get spoiled before is prepared for the learners.

Figure 22 below shows that breakdown of the availability of infrastructure for NSNP in the participating schools.

Figure 22: Available infrastructure for the NSNP



5.2.7 Programme Integration through school gardens varied

The study sought to establish the availability of school vegetable gardens and their specific contribution to the NSNP. According to the findings, 90% of schools indicated that their schools had vegetable gardens, however, in many cases these gardens were dysfunctional. The school vegetable gardens were not well-maintained and due to drought they were not producing any product that could be used to enhance the programme as it was earlier thought. The absence of functional school vegetable gardens reduces the possibility of buying locally produced vegetables in the NSNP which could contribute towards poverty alleviation in the respective areas.

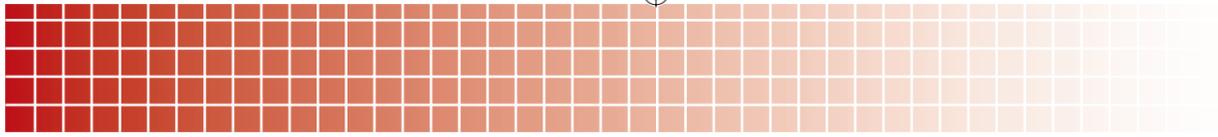
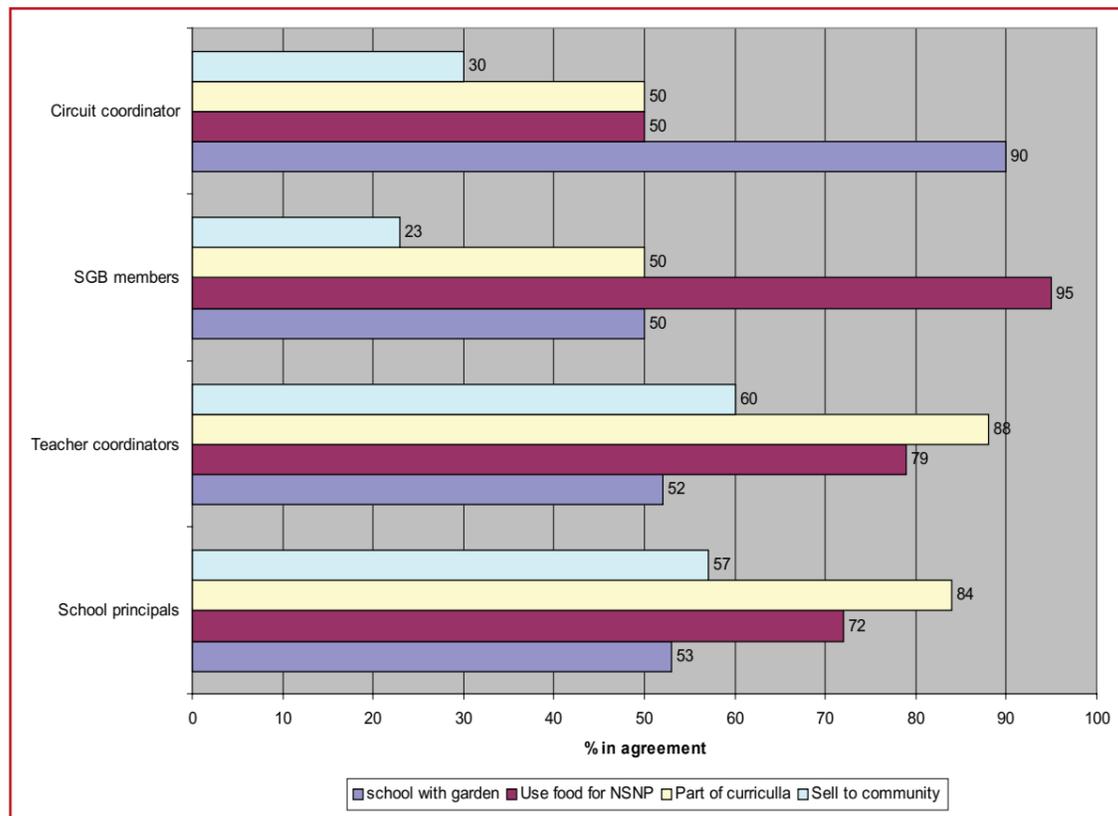


Figure 23 below shows the availability of vegetable gardens at the participating schools in the province.

Figure 23: Existence of a school garden and its role in the NSNP



5.2.8 Capacity of implement the NSNP varies

The study wanted to obtain information on the capacity of role players and stakeholders involved in the implementation of the programme. According to the findings, the main role players (principals, educators, SGBs, food handlers and suppliers) indicated that they had received training at the introduction of the NSNP. The training was provided by the provincial Department of Education. Whereas principals, educators, SGBs and suppliers received training from provincial DoE officials, food handlers indicated that they had been trained by designated teacher coordinators based in the respective schools on their roles and responsibilities in the programme. Both suppliers and food handlers greatly appreciated the training received to date. Food suppliers indicated that issues of tendering and business management had since improved their knowledge. Food handlers indicated that aspects such as nutrition values, meal quantities and qualities, labelling and packaging were some of the important things they had learned about in this programme.

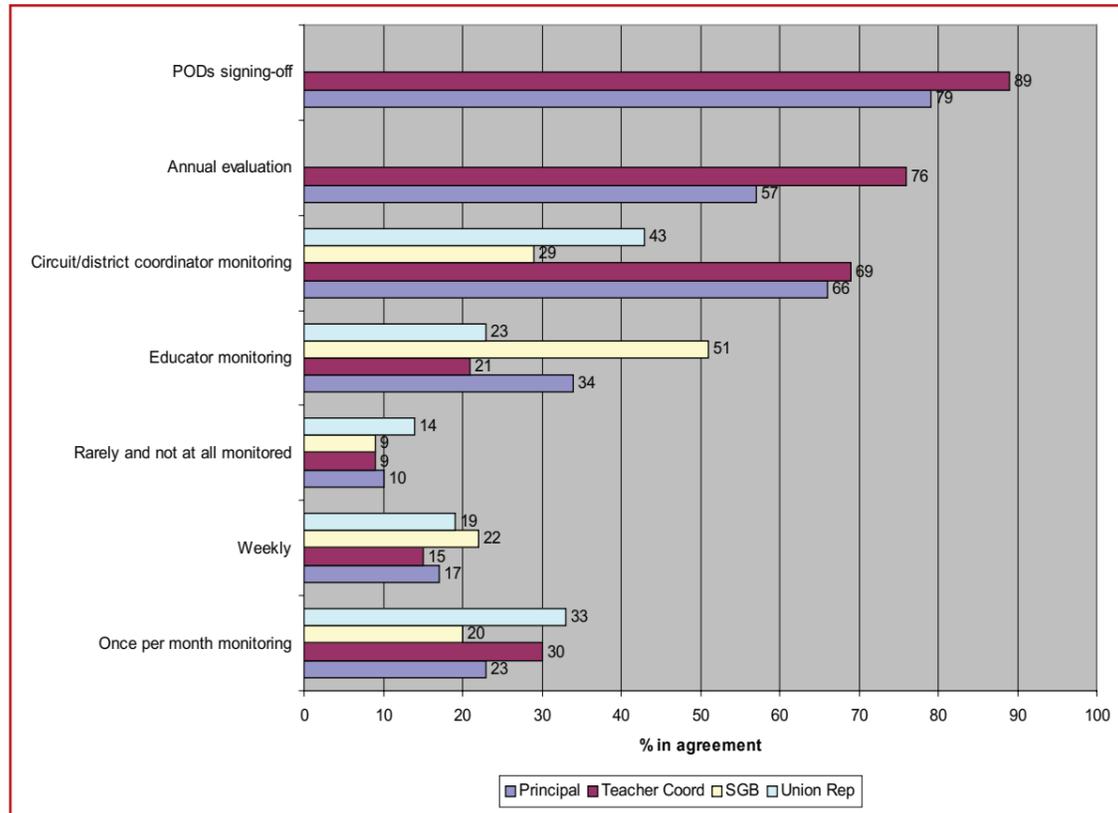
5.2.9 Different systems of monitoring and evaluation are applied

The study wanted to establish if there is a monitoring and evaluation system in place on the NSNP, and if the system was applied.

The findings show that there was monitoring and evaluation system in place for the purpose of the programme. According to the findings, 89% of teacher coordinators and 79% of principals indicated that they always sign off weekly delivery notes that came with food suppliers. It was further indicated that there is an annual evaluation of the study where new food suppliers are likely to be appointed if there were elements of dissatisfaction with the previous service providers.

Figure 24 below shows the key findings on the monitoring and evaluation of the NSNP.

Figure 24: Monitoring and evaluation of the NSNP



5.2.10 IMPACT OF THE NSNP VARIED

The study sought to establish the impact of the NSNP in the lives of the learners and the community in which schools that were implementing the programme were located. To the end, the following key areas were investigated:

- Impact on the performance of the learners, and
- Impact of the NSNP in the local community.

The following are the key findings from the study:

5.2.10.1 Perceived impact on the performance of learners

The findings show that 98% of principals, 93% of teacher coordinators and 78% of the members of the SGBs felt that the NSNP has had significant impact in the lives and the learning of the learners. The programme has considerably decreased the rate of absenteeism at the schools. This means that as a result of the programme, the attendance of the learners at schools has increased and their performance in classes has also improved.

Furthermore, the findings show that the programme has improved the general health of the learners in the respective schools. The findings show that 94% of teacher coordinators, 61% of SGBs and 46% of principals indicated that the NSNP had improved learners' health which has also contributed significantly to the performance of the learners in classrooms. Perhaps these findings suggest that healthy bodies produce healthy mind.

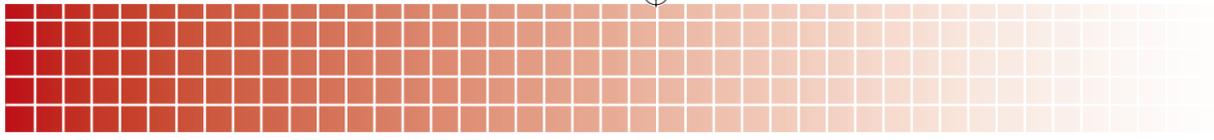
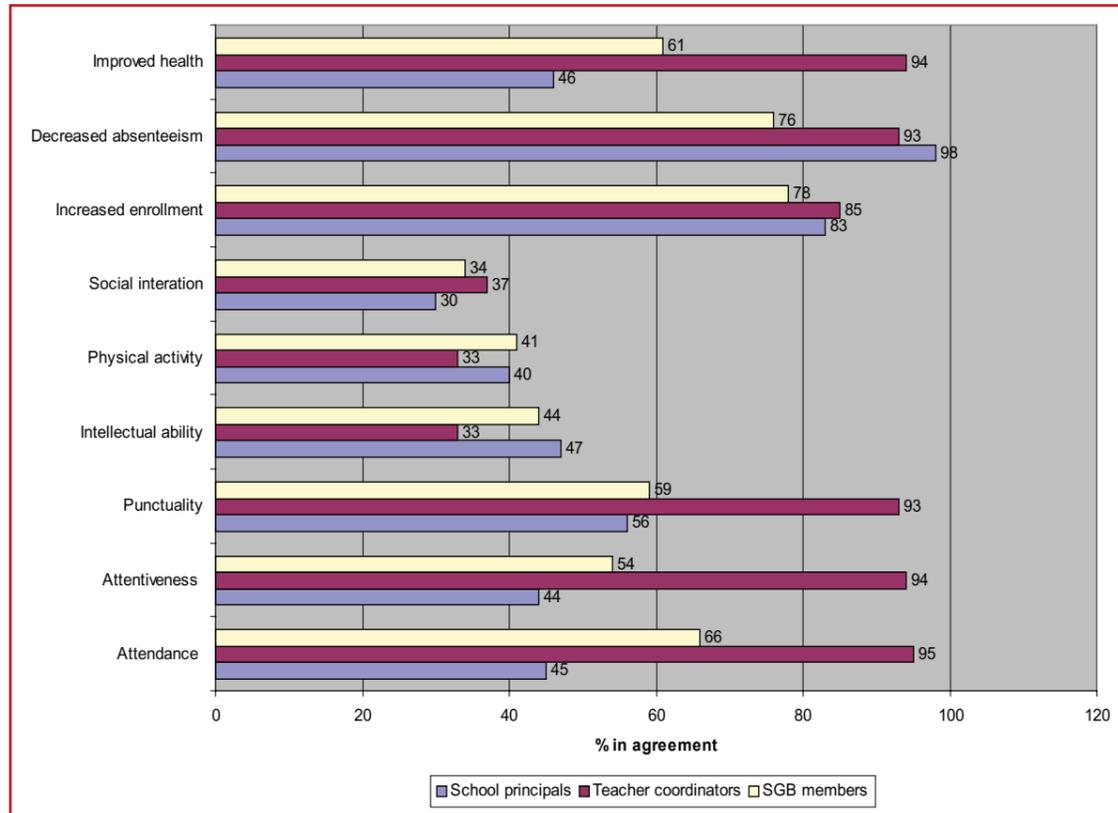


Figure 25 below shows the impact of the programme on the learners.

Figure 25: Perceived impact of the NSNP on the performance of learners



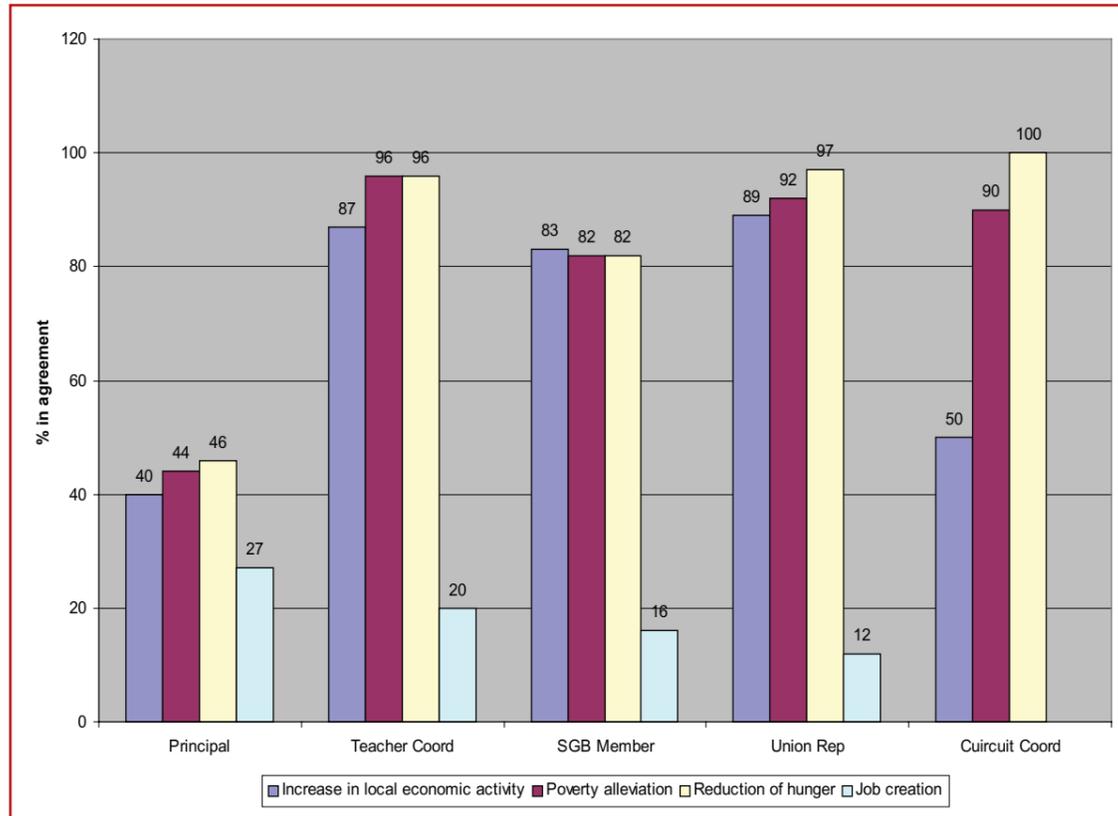
5.2.10.2 Perceived impact of the NSNP on the local community

According to the findings of the study, the NSNP has had several impact in the local communities where the schools that are participating in the programme are located. The findings show that 100% of circuit coordinators, 97% of the union representatives, 96% of teacher coordinators and 82% of SGBs indicated that the NSNP was alleviating hunger among the learners and the families that learners come from. The findings also show that programme has contributed greatly to the Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives. The following were the key areas in which the programme has had significant impact in the local communities:

- Job creation: Local people were appointed as food handlers and food supplier of the programme. As a result, jobs were created for people in the area;
- Poverty alleviation: The programme had created jobs which supported a number of families in the local areas and as a result poverty was alleviated. Poverty among the learners and their respective families have been addressed as a result of this programme; and
- Local economic development: The programme has contributed towards local economic development because locally produced vegetables, bread and other related items that were used to feed the learners were supplied by local people. Local people were encouraged to produce more items to avoid a situation where items could be sourced outside the communities. There were vegetables that were bought from the local farmers and bread bought from local bakeries which has encouraged local people to produce more products as there is a potential for a local market.

Figure 26 below shows the impact of the NSNP in the local communities.

Figure 26: Impact of the NSNP in the local community



5.2.11 Key Challenges to the implementation of the NSNP

The study sought to establish challenges experienced by various stakeholders involved in the implementation of the NSNP. The following are the key challenges that were noted by respondents in this study:

- Unavailability of the necessary and needed infrastructure;
- Non-delivery of food;
- Delayed delivery of food;
- Centralization of the programme at the provincial level; and
- Demand on human resources.

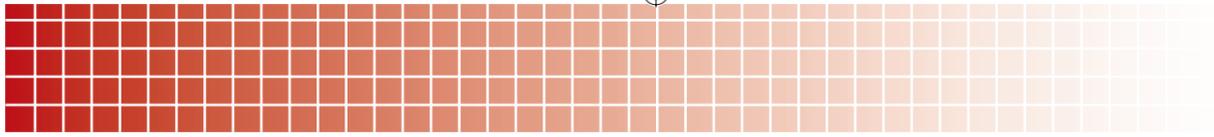
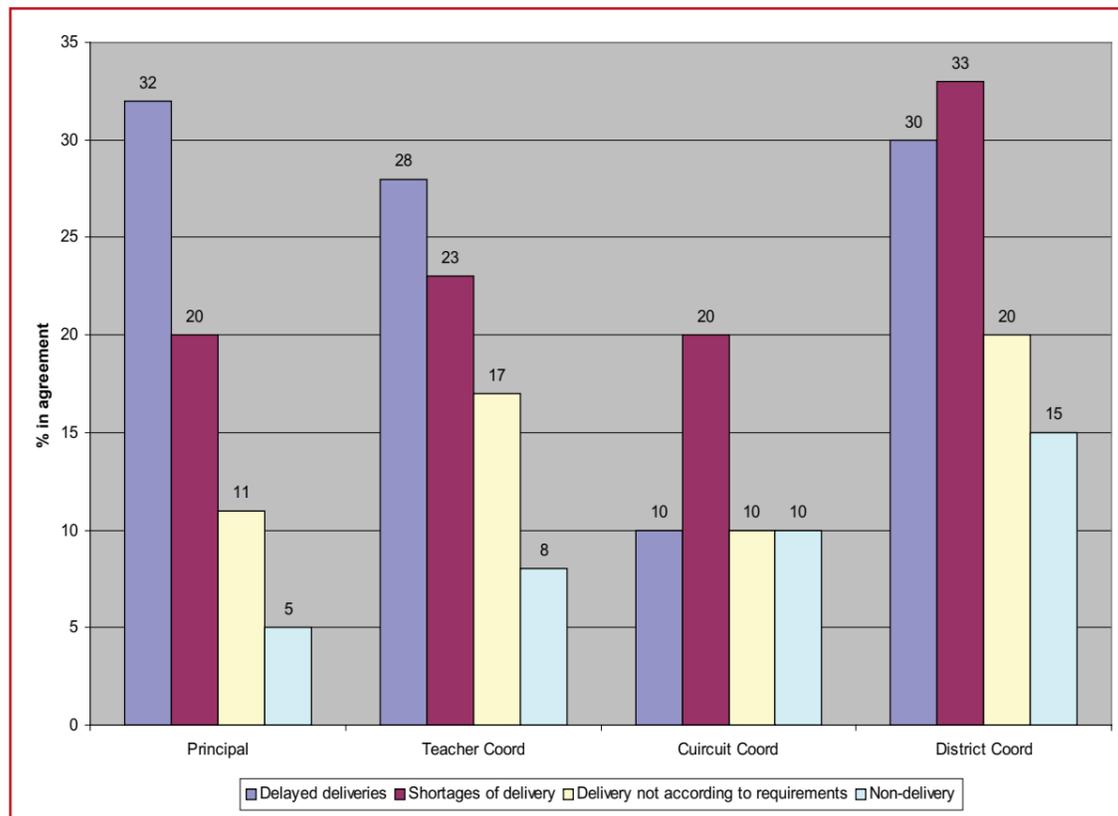


Figure 27 below shows the challenges experienced during the implementation of the programme.

Figure 27: Challenges to NSNP implementation



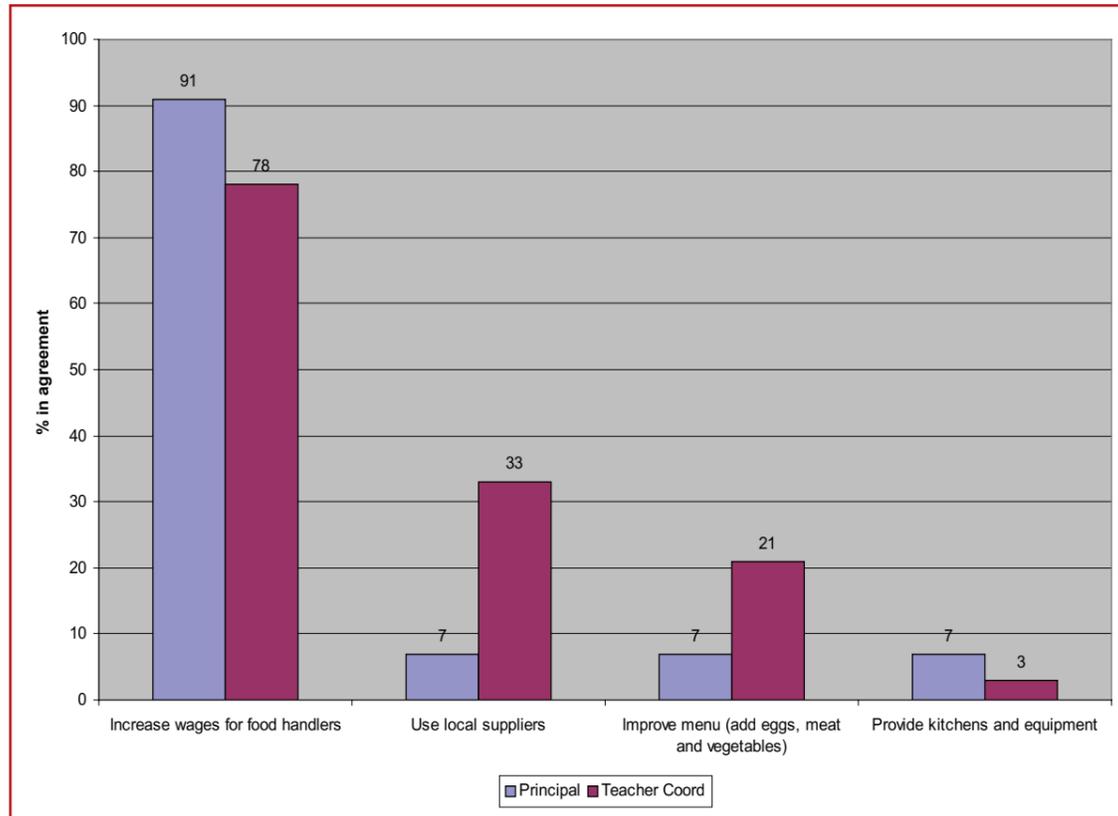
5.2.12 Suggestions for the improvement of the NSNP

The study wanted to establish views of the stakeholders as to what else can be done to improve the implementation of the programme. According to the findings, 91% of principals and 78% of teacher coordinators suggested increase of the wages of food handlers of the programme. The findings also show that 33% of teacher coordinators and 7% of principals suggested the intensification of contracting of local suppliers to ensure local economic development (LED). Furthermore, 21% of teacher coordinators and 7% of principals suggested an improvement in menu of the learners where there could be addition of eggs and meat to the current menu. There were no suggestions made on the following issues which were raised sharply in the study:

- Lack of infrastructure and facilities;
- Use of firewood;
- Transportation of some of the NSNP officers; and
- Dysfunctional school vegetable gardens.

Figure 28 below summarises the suggestions which had been put forward by various respondents.

Figure 28: Suggestions for the improvement of the NSNP



Chapter Six

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study. The recommendations are presented in line with the objectives of the study. It is hoped that if the recommendations made are successfully implemented, the NSNP could be improved and the programme can significantly contribute towards poverty reduction in the country. The conclusion and recommendations are applicable to both provinces.

6.2 CONCLUSION

Overall, the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) has had significant impact in the two provinces the study took place. The learners who benefited from the programme seemed to have their health improved, their performance in classrooms increased and their level of attendance and participation improved. Both the learners and other significant stakeholders such as principals, teacher coordinators and members of the school governing bodies (SGBs) shared a common understanding on the value of the programme and appreciation of the value add the programme has had in the lives of the communities. The NSNP has also significantly contributed to the local communities in which the participating schools are located. Local people are employed to serve as food suppliers and food handlers. This appointment of local people contributes to the local economic development (LED).

However, the programme has had challenges during its implementation. The key challenges are the following:

- Lack of adequate infrastructure to implement the programme;
- Non-delivery of the food and other related products;
- Delays in the delivery of food and other related products;
- Non-delivery of food and other related products;
- Some meals provided are regarded as not healthy and tasty; and
- Centralization of the programme at the provincial departments of Education.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

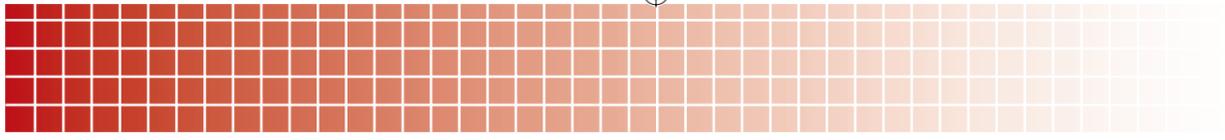
The following recommendations are made in study.

6.3.1 Create adequate infrastructure to implement the NSNP

Schools in both provinces seem not have adequate infrastructure and facilities to implement the NSNP effectively and successfully. Many schools did not have refrigerators, kitchen and cooking facilities whereas meals for learners were said to be prepared on schools premises. It is recommended that the basic infrastructure such as kitchen and refrigerator be budgeted for and provided at the respective schools. Certainly, rural schools are already poorly resourced because they lack adequate and proper classrooms and teaching facilities. The provision of the infrastructure might be regarded as of less importance in this regard. It is recommended that provincial departments of Education consider developing a plan that would result in the provisioning of such infrastructure.

6.3.2 Capacity building to implement NSNP

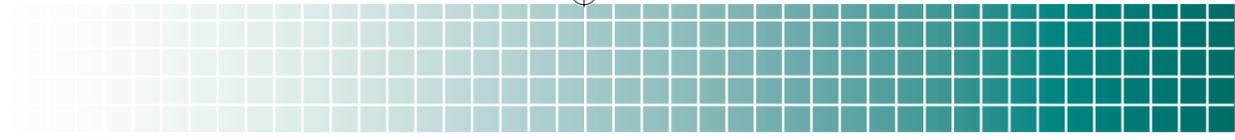
There have been concerted efforts in both provinces to actively involve local communities in the provision and supply of food at the schools that are participating in the programme. This initiative has significantly contributed to the local economic development. However, there were also concerns about the capacity of the local food suppliers. It is therefore recommended that local food handlers and suppliers be capacitated by the provincial departments of Education to carry their tasks effectively and efficiently. The provincial departments of Education are the custodians of the programme and are well informed as to how the programme should be implemented. Some of the food handlers and food suppliers have indicated that



they have received some adequate training at the beginning of the programme, but it seems as if regular training and induction is needed to deepen the quality of the programme.

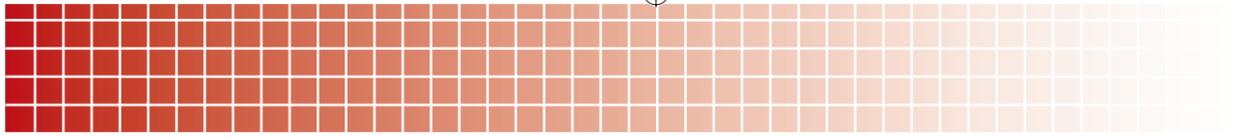
6.3.3 Supply of food to schools participating in the NSNP

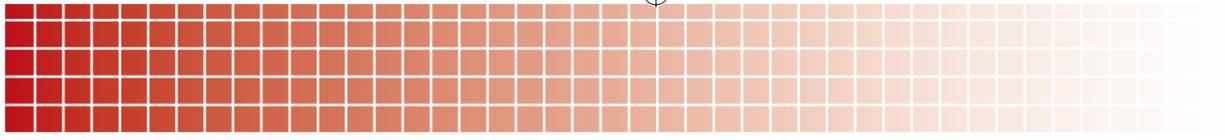
Several cases of non-delivery, delays in delivery and delivery of wrong or poor quality of food were reported in both provinces. It is important that a tight system is put in place to monitor the supply of food. Without such a system, suppliers may invoice the department as if they have supplied the required quantity and quality of food to the contracted schools. The departments of education could be paying the suppliers money for services not rendered satisfactorily. The respective departments can only know and stop unnecessary payment to the food suppliers if correct information is supplied to them. Therefore, an adequate system should be developed and put in place to ensure that there is regular quality check and control during the delivery of food at the respective areas.



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NOTES:

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