

Governance of agricultural programmes in South Africa - potentials and constraints for local food systems adopting a right to food lens

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Abstract

In South Africa, centralised food systems not only shape unhealthy food environments but also contribute to decreased economic activities and employment in rural areas. In contrast, local food systems (LFS) can promote more equitable, empowered and resilient local communities. This study explores the governance of programmes supporting local food production and distribution. National food security, nutrition and agriculture policies and programmes were analysed and implementation of three government-supported projects investigated, conducting focus groups and interviews with different actors. A right to food lens was adopted, focusing on the commitment of programmes to the human rights principles Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Transparency, Human dignity, Empowerment, and Rule of law (PANTHER). While the legal framework in South Africa is supportive towards LFS, various challenges are being experienced with regard to implementation of programmes, such as lack of transparency and accountability of projects, and limited participation and empowerment of beneficiaries. The focus is on food production while important aspects of LFS such as healthy nutrition and environmentally sustainable production and consumption are neglected. The projects observed have the potential to empower farmers and the wider rural community and therefore to promote LFS if training, infrastructure, tools and production inputs reach beneficiaries. We conclude that adopting a right to food lens enables to perceive people as rights holders instead of beneficiaries, who actively participate in programmes that promote LFS and enhance rural livelihoods. The PANTHER principles can serve as a guideline to assess and monitor projects in order to reveal potentials and constraints of LFS.

Keywords: governance, local food systems, sustainable development, right to food, PANTHER principles, South Africa

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and objectives

The South African government aims at eliminating poverty and reducing inequality by 2030. Agriculture was identified to be a priority area in achieving this goal (National Planning Commission (NPC), 2012). Despite growing per capita income (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2013) and being nearly self-sufficient in agricultural production (United Nations Environment Programme, 2015) South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies in the world (NPC, 2015). As the South African National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (Shisana et al., 2013) showed, more than a quarter (26%) of the population –

especially rural households - are food insecure. Yet, South Africa has a high rate of obesity, especially among women (42% with BMI \geq 30 Kg/ m²) related to unhealthy eating patterns. According to the former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food (De Schutter, 2012) current centralised and highly commercialised food systems in South Africa favour these unhealthy eating patterns and hinder sustainable rural development.

Based on the history of racial discrimination and inequality, South Africa is characterised by highly unequal farming systems, namely the commercial farming sector and the emerging smallholder sector. Bridging this gap poses the main challenge to South Africa, with strengthening Local Food Systems (LFS) being one of the suggested solutions, wherein strong governance structures are considered crucial (De Schutter, 2012).

The aim of this study was to assess South African policies and programmes that promote sustainable rural development, with a focus on LFS. Existing policies were analysed (macro level) and the implementation of selected programmes examined in Vaalharts (meso and micro-level). Emphasis was further laid on determinants for success and failure of these programmes with regard to their commitment towards the human rights (PANTHER) principles: Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Transparency, Human dignity, Empowerment and Rule of law (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), 2014), thus their contribution to the realisation of the right to food.

1.2 Local Food Systems

LFS are regarded as a crucial measure to counteract some of the detrimental effects of global food crises and modern food systems by creating more equitable, empowered, and resilient local communities, particularly in rural areas (McKibben, 2007). To date, there is no generally agreed definition for the concept of LFS. Drawing on different international classifications and the geography of the research area, this study considers products being local when they are produced and consumed within a radius of 50km. Kelly and Schulschenk (2011: 563-564) describe local food economies as “[t]he flow of resources (financial, human, social, environmental and others) within a network of community based enterprises that produce and distribute food at the local scale for local consumption.” There is a direct and immediate link between actors within this network based on personal interaction of farmers and consumers (Hinrichs, 2000). Lemke and Bellows (2016) refer to the inherent characteristics of LFS in which civil society plays a crucial role and wherein an integrated public-private-civil society approach strives for healthy, just, and sustainable local food economies. They further argue that the human right to food provides a useful framework to promote participatory LFS.

1.3 Right to Food

In South Africa the right to have access to sufficient food and water is embedded in section 27(1)(b) of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996). It guarantees every citizen the justiciable right to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access to adequate and sufficient food. The human right to food was first mentioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 (FAO, 2014). Building upon this declaration, the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) was adopted and entered into force in 1976 as the “(...) most important binding guarantee of the right to food (...)” (Söllner, 2007:293). State parties recognise “the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food” (Article 11.1) and “the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger” (Article 11.2). In the context of human rights, people are regarded as rights holders and states as duty bearers that have obligations towards rights holders. In order to clarify states’

obligations regarding the right to food in international human rights law General Comment (GC) 12 on 'The Right to Adequate Food' describes what is understood as adequacy and sustainability of food availability, stability and accessibility, and further highlights states' obligations to progressively fulfil the right to food, imposing three types of obligations: to respect, protect and fulfil (facilitate and provide) the right to food (FAO, 2014). According to the Right to Food Guidelines (FAO, 2005:9) "*States should (...) promote good governance as an essential factor for sustained economic growth, sustainable development, poverty and hunger eradication and for the realisation of all human rights including the progressive realisation of the right to adequate food*". Progressive realisation of the right to food implies that the state continuously and proactively takes appropriate legal, administrative and operational measures towards the full realisation of economic, social and cultural rights, even when resources are scarce. The state has to tailor measures and programmes for the most disadvantaged groups in society. In South Africa, this refers especially to the groups affected in the past by racial discrimination (McLaren et al., 2015). In order to make the right to adequate food internationally justiciable, the Optional Protocol to the ICESCR was adopted by the UN General Assembly (2008). Policy formulation and laws should be guided by the seven human rights (PANTHER) principles (FAO, 2014).

2. Methods

This study is part of a project funded by the Programme to Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD2) of the South African Department for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, in partnership with the EU. The project is situated at the African Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUTHeR), North-West University, South Africa and investigates the potential of LFS for rural sustainable development in the Vaalharts region. Situated in the Northern Cape and North West provinces, this region comprises the largest irrigation scheme in South Africa. The relevance for this project emerged from ongoing research on "Sustainable diets in rural South Africa – Linking nutrition, food systems and the environment at local level" carried out since 2013 (Claasen et al., 2015), highlighting that rural households encounter unhealthy and unsustainable diets, with LFS not being fully utilised. Thus, the potential role of LFS in contributing to economic activities, livelihood diversification, and enhanced food security and nutrition required further investigation.

A conceptual framework (see Figure 1) was developed guiding data collection and analysis. In the centre of the framework are the six sustainability dimensions of LFS derived from the Sustainable Development Commission (2011) as applied in the larger project, with several sub-studies investigating these dimensions: economics, environment, food quality, socio-cultural aspects, nutrition and health, and governance. The present study focuses on governance aspects of the agricultural programmes investigated here, and integrates a right to food lens by applying the human rights PANTHER principles to assess how these programmes perform regarding governance, and whether they are supportive towards LFS and sustainable development. From a rights-based perspective the state is considered as a duty bearer towards rights holders (FAO, 2014) such as smallholder farmers and consumers, and therefore has an obligation to design policies and programmes that contribute to the realisation of the right to food.

This study followed a qualitative research design. National programmes that shape various agricultural projects in Vaalharts were analysed and their implementation was investigated in three ongoing projects: a female farmers group rearing broilers, a school garden initiative, and a local farmers' market initiative. Various actors are involved in production, distribution and

consumption of local food, such as local government officials, distributors, schools, and NGOs, as illustrated in Figure 1. Relevant questions are: do rights holders (e.g. smallholder farmers) participate in programme implementation?; are duty bearers (e.g. local government representatives) held accountable regarding their performance?; is information shared appropriately among all actors involved? A focus was further laid on identifying communication and resource flows among actors, as these are essential for identifying specific characteristics of the LFS.

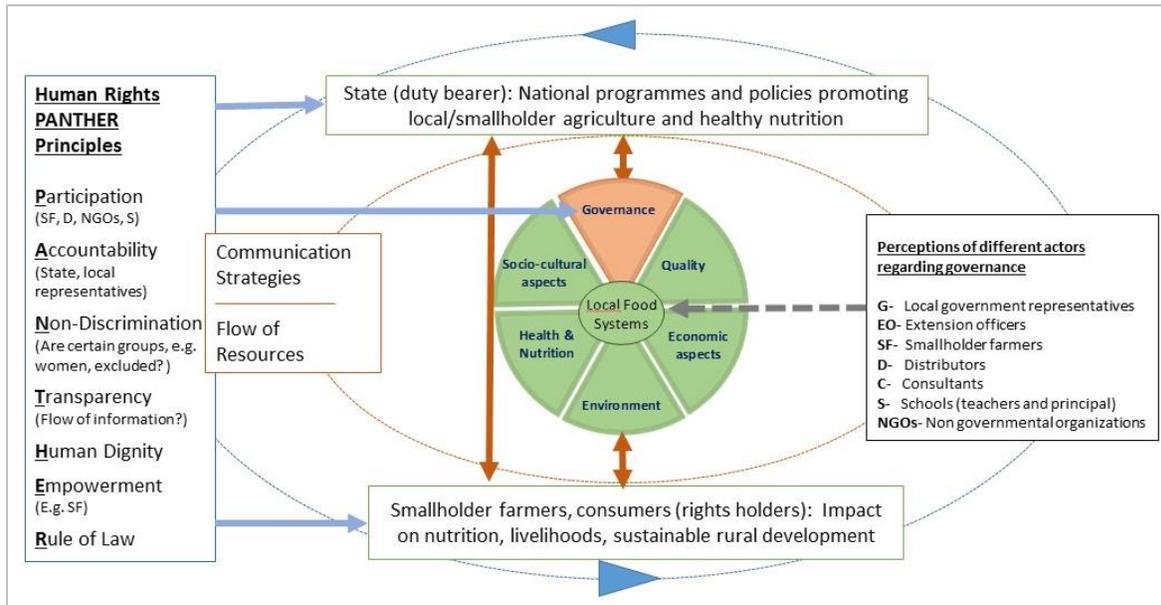


Figure 1: Conceptual framework adopting a right to food lens to explore local food systems and actors involved (partly based on Sustainable Development Commission, 2011; Claasen et al., 2015)

Semi-structured interviews and informal conversations were conducted with different actors involved in the selected programmes, exploring their perceptions specifically regarding governance. This included interviews with representatives from local and provincial governments (duty bearers): municipality (n=2), local Department of Agriculture (n=3) and provincial Department of Education (n=1). In most cases, government representatives were able to provide information on several of the projects investigated, as the boundaries with regard to funding streams and responsibilities of the various programmes was not always clearly differentiated. Interviews were further conducted with rights holders such as programme beneficiaries (n=5) and food system actors in the retail sector (n=2), customers (n=3) as well as with key-informants such as business consultants (n=1) and local NGOs (n=2). In addition two focus group discussions (FG), one with 8 farmers who were beneficiaries of implemented programmes, and the other one with 5 members of a farmer's cooperative were employed. Further, non-participant observations were carried out and recorded in a field book. At least two beneficiaries and one other food system actor per project were interviewed in order to gain a balanced perspective.

All data resulting from observations and interviews were transcribed and then processed using the computer-based analysis software ATLAS.ti. Content analysis was conducted to single out

local actors within the food system, their role as well as their communication strategies. Moreover, potentials and constraints of programmes' contribution to LFS as well as their contribution towards the realisation of the right to food were analysed.

3. Results

3.1 Overview of policies and programmes

Several agricultural policies and programmes in South Africa explicitly address national and local agriculture and nutrition objectives. At the macro-level, the National Development Plan (NDP) guides all political actions to eliminate poverty and inequality by 2030. In line with broader framework documents, various programmes were implemented to clearly support rural development.

Analysis of previous research and insights gained during the community entry phase revealed four government programmes that shape various agricultural projects in Vaalharts:

Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP)

CASP focuses on post-settlement support. Emerging farmers, including women in rural areas, are specifically targeted. Today 70% of CASP funds are directed towards the Fetsa Tlala (seTswana for "End Hunger") production initiative that aims at taking 1 million hectares of land under production by the 2018/19 production season (McLaren et al., 2015).

Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Programme (IFSNP)

The IFSNP provides agricultural production packages to households (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), no date). At a provincial IFSNP-platform all social cluster departments meet on a quarterly basis to discuss their actions regarding food security.

Ilima/Letsema Programme (Meaning "Working together to liberate ourselves from the oppression of poverty and to build this nation" in seTswana/Zulu)

This programme is implemented by DAFF to increase food production through provision of production inputs and to rehabilitate irrigation schemes and other value adding projects (Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG), 2012).

National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)

The NSNP aims at improving attendance and performance in school of South African learners in lower income areas by providing a nutritious daily meal. Furthermore, the programme encourages the establishment of school gardens and other production initiatives and promotes healthy lifestyles and nutrition education (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2009).

The following section provides insights into the local implementation of the above mentioned four programmes in three projects in the Vaalharts region and their direct and indirect impact on different actors in local communities.

3.2 Three case studies of project implementation in Vaalharts

3.2.1 Chicken meat production (*CASP and Ilima/Letsema Programme*)

Background and origins

According to one of the farm managers rearing broilers in barns, they previously experienced serious cash flow problems until the farm was about to be auctioned. A national government

official who grew up in this village initiated a comprehensive support strategy. A steering committee consisting of farmer group delegates, extension officers, the director of the district Department of Agriculture as a mentor and consultants, was formed in order to provide guidance, training and to monitor progress.

As stated by the female farm manager and the mentor, the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) and Ilima/Letsema programme were implemented. The mentor clarifies that CASP funds were spent on infrastructure development such as renovation of chicken houses and the abattoir. Ilima/Letsema funds were directed towards machinery and production inputs, i.e. chicks and feed.

Specific characteristics of Local Food Systems

The chicken project depicts several of the previously described LFS characteristics. The farm manager remarks that the departmental support contributed to an improved performance of the farm. The programme support initiated a flow of financial and human resources within the LFS. The farm is today capable of permanently employing 56 workers from the local community, who buy meat at this farm. The farmers, the mentor and the consultants explain that meat is mainly marketed directly from the farm. This is why it can be offered at a comparatively low price and constitutes a quality source of protein affordable and accessible to the local poor.

A local NGO and a retailer mention that low prices, good quality and proximity are the reasons why they purchase at the farm, as do schools, crèches, hospitals, and a prison. Moreover, local retailers (supermarkets, spaza shops and tuck shops) are purchasing chicken in bulks and distribute them to the wider community. There are no contracts between distributors and the farm because the business is based on immediate, personal contact between the farm and its customers. Nevertheless it is important to foster contracts with other government departments and institutions in order to find reliable customers when using the full production capacity in future.

However, the mentor and the farm manager point out that production inputs such as feed and chicks are purchased from a distance of 300 km, contributing to high costs and resulting in the project not yet being sustainable.

Compliance with PANTHER principles

Strong participation of beneficiaries in the implementation process of the programmes can be identified. Accompanied by the steering committee of experts the farmers were involved in project planning and development. Due to their intensive collaboration over a period of four years, the close relationship to the Department of Agriculture contributes to a sense of accountability on both sides. Farmers state that an extension officer and their mentor are always available for advice. Beneficiaries don't perceive any discrimination in terms of gender or ethnicity, stating that the project provides dignity and empowers them. They share their knowledge with young people and other farmers, contributing to improved communication and enhancing broader participation and transparency.

3.2.2 Vegetable garden in a Secondary School (NSNP and IFSNP)

Background and origins

The garden was initiated in 2008. According to the DAFF district director it was benefiting from the IFSNP that provides seeds, fertiliser, cover nets, water tanks, tools, basic training and extension services. The Department of Agriculture visits the site occasionally to monitor the project. The garden workers who are all women state that farmland, water and electricity are provided by the school, while they contribute some of their harvest to school meals as part of the NSNP. The women already won two competitions related to female farmers and school gardens, but complain that the school governing body claimed the prize money although the school did not contribute to the garden work. This resulted in a conflict.

Specific characteristics of Local Food Systems

The workers and the agriculture teacher feel that the project is well integrated in the local community and is providing affordable, healthy food to the local community. They regularly sell to a crèche, a disability organisation, pensioners and households, especially for functions, as illustrated by the following quote:

“The community, they give us support [...] they phone me and then “Oma, I want ten bundles of spinach I’ve got a party, I’ve got a tombstone, I’ve got a funeral, I’ve got this” – I must [...] feed the community. Without community we shall never have the money.”
(Female garden worker, 15th of December, 2015)

The school does not offer any nutrition education, which is supposedly part of the NSNP. On the contrary, NSNP and IFSNP do not utilise the potential to create synergies. A provincial government official reveals that there is no coherent strategy on how to implement and fund food production which would require cooperation with the DAFF. Communication between the DBE and the DAFF is stated to be difficult and political will – even within the DBE- seems to be missing.

“Their [DAFF] own district officials used to sit with us and then we would plan. And then give them a list of schools. But at the moment they are not really doing it.”
(NSNP manager at provincial level, male, 28th of November, 2015)

This lack of communication at provincial level negatively affects local implementation. As stated by one worker, face-to-face interactions and trust exist between the vegetable farmers and their local customers, but not towards the school. Workers share their knowledge with young people who perceive the garden as a way out of unemployment, contributing to the sustainability of the project.

Compliance with PANTHER principles

According to the workers the IFSNP was implemented in a participatory manner. Beneficiaries were asked what they would require to improve the garden. Assistance was provided once and occasionally the extension officer is visiting the project, contributing to accountability. Referring to the DBE the NSNP is currently only providing a budget for the school feeding scheme, which is neither implemented in a participatory manner nor can clear accountability mechanism be made out. However, the DBE claims that it contributes to the accessibility of nutritious food to learners and that the Department is currently developing a monitoring tool.

The conflict about the prize money between workers and school is pointing to a lack of communication, transparency and accountability mechanisms at different levels in several programmes. Even at provincial level the DBE admits that communication is missing and responsibilities are not clearly assigned. This violates the human rights principles of transparency and accountability.

Nevertheless, the workers feel empowered and gained dignity through the programme. The women can manage the garden without support and have a source of income.

3.2.3 Smallholder farmers' market (CASP)

Background and origins

The CASP-funded project was initiated in 2010 by the Department of Agriculture and a group of farmers. An extension officer states that the market is a trial for an Agro-Hub that is currently built as part of the national Agri-Park programme. The Hub is supposed to provide storage and processing facilities for smallholder farmers' produce, to provide bigger bulks of produce to customers and to make fresh produce available to the local community. Further, the market will be the outlet of the Hub once it is finalised. The market involves 14 CASP-funded small scale farmer projects selling vegetables, meat and fish on a fortnightly basis.

Specific characteristics of Local Food Systems

The farmers in the market committee highlight that the vegetable projects do not only provide employment to local people, they also make healthy food available and affordable. The extension officer in the organising committee points out that through direct marketing and transport costs covered by the DAFF, food prices can be kept low compared to big retail outlets in town. As indicated by the market manager of a local supermarket it is attractive for him to cooperate with local farmers:

"I think local it's fine because it's cheaper. You can check everything that you buy from local farmers, very, very cheap [...] you get fresh stuff from there."

(Male market manager of a local supermarket, 14th of December 2015)

Still, local produce accounts for only 3% of his supermarkets' assortment. An essential element highlighted by the market committee is the personal, immediate relationship between smallholder producers, consumers and the DAFF.

Compliance with PANTHER principles

The market committee and the director of the district Department of Agriculture report that the market was initiated by farmers and is now jointly managed by the elected committee and extension officers. Extension officers organise the transport of all farmers. This allows a broad participation in the project and integrates farmers who otherwise could not afford transport. If there are any concerns or complaints, farmers can directly get in touch with the market committee. However, when looking at on-farm support provided by the Department in the villages, all participants highlight the missing availability of extension officers, which is mostly due to limited staff capacity, resulting in a lack of accountability, transparency and empowerment. Although farmers can sell some of their produce through the market, actual production support is neglected.

Many farmers state that they therefore look for other support and sometimes benefit from funding opportunities such as the national lottery, the British High Commission or the Independent Development Trust.

They claim a general lack of skills and training and call for stronger support in this regard. According to the CASP design, training and knowledge management would be an integral part of the programmes. However, actual implementation is limited to the provision of inputs, equipment and improved market access. This results in dependency on the department, and thus in a lack of participation and empowerment.

4. Discussion

Findings demonstrate that there is a wide range of support programmes and a policy framework supportive towards more localised food systems and towards progressively realising the right to food in South Africa. However, projects often seem to have a local orientation rather by default. At local level, distribution of food is found mainly in close vicinity of the investigated projects, however in a rather unorganised manner. Recent efforts to combine smallholder food production with an organised local distribution infrastructure in form of a local market as promoted by the Agri-Park initiatives are promising and encouraging. Whether these initiatives will be successful and sustainable requires further investigation. The former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food (De Schutter, 2012) points out that coherence and practical implementation of programmes face various challenges in South Africa. Cresswell Riol (forthcoming) who investigated the implementation of the right to food among emerging economies, also known as the BRICS states stresses that implementing policies effectively at community level poses a major challenge to South Africa because coordination between the state and civil society is missing.

Smallholder farmers worldwide face multiple barriers with regard to accessing local food markets, such as capacity constraints, lack of distribution systems, limited education and training, or uncertainties regarding regulatory processes (Martinez et al., 2010). Our findings show that governmental programmes in South Africa assist emerging and smallholder farmers mainly with financial incentives to increase production of food, supplying infrastructure and production inputs. The Fetsa Tlala initiative that aims at large-scale production of staple food is currently the government's new flagship food security programme (McLaren et al., 2015). If implemented without accompanying programmes that offer training how to use those inputs and how to manage and market the produce, the impact of Fetsa Tlala might however be limited. It is further unlikely that the focus on staple food production for national and international markets will serve to support LFS and to realise access to local, affordable, healthy and diverse diets, aspects that are urgently needed in light of the ongoing challenge of malnutrition and unhealthy diets. Binswanger-Mkhize (2014) argues that governmental agricultural programmes do not have a significant impact on production, food security, employment and market access because approaches that target the whole farm as a business are neglected. Additionally, investments are often not matching the needs of beneficiaries, inputs arrive too late and marketing support is lacking (Business Enterprises 2014 as cited in Binswanger-Mkhize, 2014: 261).

Findings further reveal that extensive support by DAFF seems to be aimed at larger projects such as the chicken farm and the farmers' market in our study. This could be explained by the lack of extension officers and therefore the need to concentrate on selected projects. McLaren et al. (2015) point out that extension services geared at small-scale farmers are expensive and labour intensive and do not fit actual financial, administrative and human resources allocated to CASP. This trend may adversely affect the support given to smallholders. As Hall and Aliber (2010) point out, while the budget of CASP is constantly rising, fewer small-scale farmers are benefiting from it.

The case of the chicken farm in this study demonstrates that individual commitment and participatory programme implementation are important factors contributing to success. This is in line with Binswanger-Mkhize (2014) who found that intensive participation of beneficiaries is crucial throughout the project cycle, including the identification phase, planning, and implementation as well as with regard to financial management. Giving more responsibility to beneficiaries would further allow government officials to focus more on land acquisition, investment plans, supervision of financial management and implementation of projects.

It further becomes obvious that certain aspects of the holistic concept of LFS do not receive adequate attention yet, such as consumers' health, environmental and economic aspects. In the example of the chicken farm, inputs such as feed are sourced from long distances, with negative implications in terms of financial resources and the environment. Alternative considerations towards more sustainable production practices should be subject of further investigation, but were beyond the scope of this study. With regard to integrating aspects such as nutritional adequacy, sustainable farming practices and respective training, the NSNP is a promising programme implemented in schools. The school garden observed in this study shows potential to not only provide nutritious food to students, but also to have an impact on nutrition and agricultural education with an ecological orientation. However, the lack of staff and financial resources as well as tensions among actors involved seem to be main obstacles for a successful implementation. This is confirmed by the Financial and Fiscal Commission (2014:84) stating that "the budget allocated does not match the poverty profile" of the schools, staff capacities are limited, and centralised organisation cannot meet local implementation and monitoring. In addition, Nguyen et al. (2015) stress that not only school curricula should be strengthened with regard to nutrition education, but also school principals, management staff and school governing bodies have a decisive role to play for creating a healthier school environment.

Lack of broader participation remains a core challenge in practical implementation of programmes observed here. This is in line with De Schutter (2012) who, following his country mission to South Africa, acknowledges the South African governments' efforts with regard to improving food security but calls for better translation into concrete action. We share his view that a way to achieve this is to adopt a rights-based approach. This would enable marginalised groups to be integrated in programme design and to be regarded as rights holders who can claim certain services from their government as a duty bearer.

Globally, 164 states have ratified the ICESCR that translates the PANTHER principles into legally binding obligations (McLaren et al. 2015). However, most states struggle to meet their obligations. A case in point is Brazil that has some of the most progressive policies and programmes with regard to the right to food, but faces huge challenges in implementing them appropriately.

Further research could investigate how the ICESCR-ratification in South Africa in 2015 actually effects policy formulation and the realisation of the right to food. It could also be assessed how to facilitate broader participation in policy processes and how to develop appropriate communication tools and an inclusive language for duty bearers and rights holders. Research could additionally look deeper into possibilities on how civil society could play a stronger role in supporting governmental efforts to promote LFS.

5. Conclusion

Although not referring explicitly to the concept of LFS, South African agricultural policies and programmes do support local rural development and have the potential to contribute to improved livelihoods in rural areas through various measures. Overall the investigated programmes support

beneficiaries' enhanced participation and empowerment and lead to visible benefits for them and other actors they are linked to, thereby contributing to the realisation of the right to food. However, most programme beneficiaries do not manage to keep up their performance when government departments withdraw from the project. A lack of staff capacity and lack of communication lead to projects not fully being utilised, thus reducing participation, transparency and accountability for the majority of rights holders. To date the programmes miss to actively link LFS actors with each other and to integrate environmental aspects, health and justice. In order to fulfil the states' obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the right to adequate food, it is a requirement to consider these aspects in a comprehensive manner, to harmonise governmental support structures, to clearly assign responsibilities and to progressively improve communication. For rights holders better access to information is essential for realising their right to food and for holding the state as duty bearer accountable to comply with human rights principles. The PANTHER principles represent a useful tool for shedding light on the governance of LFS and whether aspects such as participation, accountability, and empowerment, are adhered to, applying both to the Global South and Global North.

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