

Understanding, Responding to and Preventing Food Insecurity in Scotland

Mary Anne MacLeod
Social Justice Delivery Unit

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Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Definition

1996 - the UN FAO World Food Summit defined **food security** as follows:

‘Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life’



Definition

UK academics in 2003 / Food Standards Agency in 2007 included 'socially acceptable' in definitions of **food insecurity**

'the inability to acquire or consume an adequate quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so'



Measurement

- UN FAO measures food insecurity using its **Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)**
 - **Worried about running out of money for food**
 - **Eating less, e.g. skipping meals**
 - **Running out of food: going hungry**



Measurement (Scotland)

UN FIES questions included in the Scottish Health Survey 2017 and 2018:

- **9% of adults in Scotland experienced food insecurity in 2018**, defined as being worried they would run out of food due to lack of money or other resources.
- 6% of adults said they ate less than they should
- 3% said they ran out of food



Measurement (Scotland)

Worrying about running out of food

- lone parents (25%);
- lone adult households (21%);
- adults in the most deprived areas (16%)

Food insecurity measures included in National Performance Framework outcomes on poverty and human rights.



Other indications that food insecurity is rising

- **Growing levels of child poverty:**

Child poverty in Scotland in 2019: 24%

2030 projections: 38%

- **Increase in food bank use:**

823,145 parcels Apr to Sep 2019 distributed by the Trussell Trust across UK - just over a third of parcels going to children – a 25% increase on 2018



Independent Working Group on Food Poverty

- 19 recommendations
- Tackling the causes: insecure work, low pay, failures of social security system
- Dignified responses: 4 Dignity Principles

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/dignity-ending-hunger-together-scotland-report-independent-working-group-food/>



Dignity Principles

- Involve in decision making people with lived experience
- Recognise the social value of food
- Provide opportunities to contribute
- Leave people with the power to choose
- Dignity in Practice tools and resources:
<http://www.nourishscotland.org/projects/dignity/>



Scottish Government's Policy Response

- **No one should be left hungry and have to rely on charitable food**
- **Measures to increase incomes:**
 - Promoting the real Living Wage
 - £100m Mitigating Welfare Reforms
 - Introducing the Scottish Child Payment
 - Rights-based approach to Social Security Scotland



Scottish Government's Policy Response

- **Measures to coordinate action on food policy:** Good Food Nation Bill

Commitment to Sustainable Development

Goals: Goal 2: End Hunger

- **Measures to improve responses to food insecurity:**

£3.5 million Fair Food Fund, including
£2 million for holiday provision



Food insecurity during school holidays

- Programme for Government 2019-20

We will step up our work to tackle food insecurity among children by providing an additional £2 million of funding to help accelerate action. We will work with COSLA, local authorities, the third sector and other stakeholders to build momentum, trial new approaches and develop a clear plan of action for the future to eradicate holiday hunger.

- Child Poverty Scotland Act 2017/
Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan
- £750 Attainment Challenge Fund



Poverty & Inequality Commission Recommendations

- Strategic and coordinated approach
- Financial support during holidays
- Holiday and childcare provision

<https://povertyinequality.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Poverty-and-Inequality-Commission-advice-on-poverty-in-school-holidays.pdf>



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Case Study: Milton Holiday Hub

- Pilot holiday hub partnership project in rural community
- Highland Council; Highlife Highland; Action for Children; Mercat Community Centre; Money+; NHS Highland
- Child care; activities; healthy meals; community events; volunteering and training opportunities
- Wide range of impacts: food insecurity; family incomes; parental engagement; social inclusion



Questions

- What have been the successes and challenges in meeting families' needs during school holidays where you are?
- How can we better share best practice in responding to food insecurity?