Exploring the experiences of food insecurity among urban poor households in Maseru: A case study of Thibella settlement

by

Relebohile Molapo

Thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Sustainable Development in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at Stellenbosch University

April 2022

Supervisor: Candice Kelly

Co-Supervisor: Angela Coetzee

Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: April 2022

Abstract

Lesotho is faced with pressing food insecurity challenges. The challenges are addressed with geographical bias, responses to food insecurity are directed to rural communities. This is fostered by the misconception that poverty and food insecurity are rural challenges. Evidence suggests that this is not true since there is a widened food gap also observed among urban poor households and not much is done by the government to address the challenges. Urban food insecurity in Lesotho, especially in the city of Maseru has been fostered by escalating rural-urban migration. Rural dwellers generally migrate to the city with the hope for greater economic opportunities, social change and therefore a better life. The opposite is, however, often true. Most migrants have low levels of education and are not appropriately skilled to secure decent employment. They are then forced into casual and odd jobs that do not provide consistent or enough income to live a decent and dignified life. Income insecurity results in other socio-economic challenges such as inequality, lack of access to proper housing and basic services. Urban poverty trials and the resultant food insecurity challenges in Lesotho are under-researched and therefore inadequately addressed in policy and planning by relevant authorities.

The main objective of this study is to explore the experiences of food insecurity among poor urban households in Maseru. It aims to also understand how the urban poor access food and what the determinants of their food choices are. This qualitative, case study, approached via a social constructivist paradigm, uses focus groups and semi-structured interviews through the purposive sampling of households to collect primary data to explore and understand food insecurity experiences. In order to frame and understand food insecurity experiences, The study focuses on the four dimensions of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) food security indicators: i) food availability, ii) food access, iii) food utilisation, and iv) food stability. According to the FAO, in order for households to be food secure, all the four dimensions should be met simultaneously. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data and the following five themes emerged: i) no food and we starve, ii) limited access to money prohibits access to food, iii) unhealthy food choices, iv) inconsistent income and work in urban areas means we eat and survive on day to day basis and v) government does not care for our needs. The study established that all sampled households were severely food insecure because they failed to meet the four aspects

of security. Based on the study findings, there is still a lot of research that needs to be done to come up with more action-based solutions to escalating food insecurity among urban poor households in Maseru. I want to challenge future researchers to research deeper on urban food insecurity in Maseru. I plead with the government of Lesotho and relevant authorities to pay significant attention to the findings of this study in order to address food insecurity in Maseru.

Opsomming

Lesotho word gekonfronteer deur aansienlike uitdagings wat voedselonsekerheid betref. Hierdie uitdagings word via geografiese vooroordeel aangespreek en die reaksies op voedselonsekerheid word dus veral op plattelandse gemeenskappe gemik. Dit word aangevoer deur die wanopvatting dat armoede en voedselonsekerheid uitdagings in die landelike gebiede is. Bewyse dui daarop dat dit egter nie waar is nie, aangesien voedselgapings ook toenemend onder stedelike arm huishoudings te sien is, en die regering nie veel doen om die uitdagings die hoof te bied nie. Stedelike voedselonsekerheid in Lesotho, veral in die stad Maseru, is aangebring deur groter landelik-stedelike migrasie. Landelike inwoners migreer oor die algemeen na die stad met die hoop op groter ekonomiese geleenthede, sosiale verandering, en 'n gepaardgaande beter lewe. Die teenoorgestelde is egter dikwels waar. Die meeste migrante het 'n lae opvoedingsvlak en is nie geskik om 'n behoorlike werk te bekom nie. Hulle word dan gedwing om informele en los werk te verrig wat nie vaste of voldoende inkomste bied om 'n behoorlike en waardige lewe te lei nie. Inkomste-onveiligheid lei tot ander sosio-ekonomiese uitdagings soos ongelykheid en gebrekkige toegang tot behoorlike behuising en basiese dienste. Opnames oor stedelike armoede en die geïdentifiseerde uitdagings wat voedselonsekerheid in Lesotho betref word onvoldoende nagevors en daarom onvoldoende in beleid en beplanning deur die betrokke owerhede aangespreek.

Die hoofdoel van hierdie studie is om die ervarings van voedselonsekerheid onder arm stedelike huishoudings in Maseru te ondersoek. Dit het ook ten doel om insig te bekom in hoe stedelike armes toegang tot voedsel bekom en wat die bepalende faktore vir hul voedselkeuses is. Hierdie kwalitatiewe gevallestudie, wat uit 'n sosiaal-konstruktivistiese paradigma benader word, gebruik fokusgroepe en semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude deur doelgerigte steekproefneming onder huishoudings om primêre data te versamel sodat voedselonsekerheidservarings ondersoek en begryp kan word. Om voedselonsekerheidservarings binne 'n raamwerk te plaas en dit te kan verstaan, fokus die studie hoofsaaklik op die vier voedselsekerheidsaanwysers van die Verenigde Nasies (VN) se voedsel-en-landbou-organisasie (FAO): naamlik i) voedselbeskikbaarheid, ii) toegang tot voedsel, iii) voedselbenutting en iv) voedselstabiliteit. Volgens die FAO moet al vier aanwysers gelyktydig nagekom word om te verseker dat huishoudings voedselveilig is. 'n Tematiese ontleding word

gebruik om die data te ontleed, terwyl die volgende vyf temas daarvolgens na vore gekom het: i) geen voedsel ons ly honger, ii) beperkte of geen toegang tot geld verbied toegang tot voedsel, iii) ongesonde voedsel keuses, iv) onstandvastige inkomste en werk in die stedelike gebiede beteken mense eet en oorleef dag tot dag en v) die regering gee nie om na ons behoeftes nie. Deur die studie is daar vasgestel dat alle huishoudings in die opname erg voedselonseker is deurdat hulle nie in die toets betreffende die voedselsekerheidsaanwysers slaag nie. Op grond van die studiebevindings is daar nog heelwat navorsing wat gedoen moet word om met meer aksiegebaseerde oplossings vir die toenemende voedselonsekerheid onder stedelike arm huishoudings in Maseru na vore te kan kom. Toekomstige navorsers word uitdaag om dieper te delf wat stedelike voedselonsekerheid in Maseru betref. Verder doen die studie 'n beroep op die regering van Lesotho, sowel as die betrokke owerhede, om die navorsingsbevindings in gedagte te hou by die aanspreek van voedselonsekerheid in Maseru.

Acknowledgements

My sincere gratitude goes to the almighty God who sustained my life during this learning journey that was challenged with the existence of the COVID-19 pandemic. I lost many lives I loved to COVID-19 but the Lord sustained my life from the beginning to the completion of this research.

Angela and Candice, my supervisors, thank you very much for your devoted efforts, guidance and support throughout the life of this research. There were moments when I could not figure out a direction and felt like giving up. Thank you Angela for always putting me at ease and helping me face my fears and challenges. Today, I am proud that I came to the finish line successfully through my supervisors' joint efforts.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to Thandiwe Maretlane, a master's student in the Law Faculty at Stellenbosch University. You and I experienced similar challenges during the research journey and in moments when I felt weary, you tirelessly lifted me and told me never to give up and forget my ultimate goal. Thandiwe, words cannot explain the important part you have contributed to the success of this research.

I run out of words to express the significant part that my family played and I want to pass my countless votes of thanks to them. To my children, I want to thank you very much for sparing me some time off from motherhood roles and focus on my studies. I know the gap that this has created between us and I promise to make it up to you. Thanks again for bearing with me when the learning pressure was too much to comprehend because you kept on sparing me time and encouraged me to push harder.

Finally, my special thanks go to the chief of reserve in Maseru, chief Makhaola and chief Ts'iu Setho of Thibella settlement for allowing me to conduct my study in their territory. Devotedly, I want to thank Thibella settlers that participated in this study because without their contributions this study could have not been possible and successful.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Photos

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFSUN	African Food Security Urban Network
AHIB	African Cooperative for Hawkers and Informal Businesses
ANC	African National Congress
BOS	Bureau of Statistics
CPIF	Cost-Plus-Incentive Fee
CPWA	Children's Protection and Welfare Act
DFID	Department of International Development
DoA	Department of Agriculture
DoH	Department of Health
EC	European Commission
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FMU	Food Management Unit
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOL	Government of Lesotho
GP1	Group 1
GP2	Group 2
GP3	Group 3
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
HFIAPI	Household Food Insecurity Access Prevalence Indicator
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IME	Institute for Mechanical Engineers
LRCS	Lesotho Red Cross Society

LVAC	Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NCDs	Non Communicable Diseases
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NISSA	National Information System for Social Assistance
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNCDP	United Nations Committee for Development Policy
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlement
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Populations Activities
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WFS	World Food Summit
WHO	World Health Organisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Food security is seen as a major development problem affecting Africa in the 21st century (Crush & Frayne, 2010). The seriousness of food security, as a challenge, is evidenced by international development commitments to eradicate hunger and poverty as first stated as a Millennium Development Goal (MDG) and more recently stipulated as an (SDG) Sustainable Development Goal (Swanepoel, Van Niekerk & D' Haese, 2017). The term food security is defined in many ways on different sources. Therefore, Mutiah and Istiqomah (2017:104) indicate that according to Indonesian Act No.18/2012, food security is defined as a "fulfilled condition of food for the country up to the individuals, which is reflected in the availability of adequate food, both in quantity and quality, safe, diverse, nutritious, equitable, and affordable and does not conflict with religion, beliefs, and culture, to be able to live healthy, active, and productive life in a sustainable manner". However, the study lies with the definition of food security by the United Nations' FAO that derived from the World Food Summit (WFS) in 1996 which defines food security as a "situation that exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO, 2009:08). Food is regarded as a basic need and a requirement for all human beings in order to survive and it must be met satisfactorily at all times (Mutiah & Istiqomah, 2017). The declaration of Rome (1996) suggested that the need to acquire food is one of the human rights. On the other hand, Mutiah and Istiqomah (2017) assert that food is an important aspect of the life of any nation because if the availability of food is less than the actual need, this is bound to create economic and political instability.

Arifin (2004) notes that the household level of food security is a very crucial precondition in determining and calculating the food security of any area, either at the national or regional level. Food security, at the household level, is considered as "the ability of the household and its members to obtain sufficient food for healthy and active living" (Mutiah & Istiqomah, 2017:106). The household level of food security is important because even though a particular area can be categorised as food secure,

this does not imply that food security reaches down to the household level (Widayaningsh & Barokatuminalloh, 2016). Hence, the study deems it is important to explore experiences of food insecurity among the urban poor households, in other words, looking at household level lenses. Thus, January (2014) argues that there is a correlation between food security and poverty. According to January (2014), poverty is seen as a condition whereby individuals or groups of people are not capable to fulfil their basic rights and have a dignified life. Additionally, Sukandar (2006) regards the age of a household head, household head income and size of the household as major determinants of food security in an urban setting. Equally, Gebre (2012) marked that household head level of education plays a significant role in food security among the urban settlers. It is further indicated that the higher the household level of education, the easier it is for a household to have adequate food and vice versa (Widayaningsh & Barokatuminalloh, 2016). Regardless of several factors surrounding urban poor households, the study emphasis is on four dimensions of food security, and those are: food availability, access, utilisation and stability.

Moreover, Mutiah and Istiqomah (2017) state that food insecurity is not only a challenge that affects people in the countryside but it also affects those in urban areas as well. They mention that the majority of people migrate from the countryside to urban areas hoping to get improved welfare because they tend to believe that cities have greater opportunities, however, the opposite is true (Mutiah & Istiqomah, 2017). Haysom (2015) notes that the situation of urban food insecurity in developing countries is a persistent challenge but it is poorly understood. Interventions towards food security have mainly focused on enhancing the availability of food through responses that are production oriented, while other dimensions of food security like access, utilisation and stability are less prioritised. Consequently, these responses and initiatives are mostly directed to rural food security (Haysom, 2015). Furthermore, according to Crush, Frayne and McCordic (2017), the existing rural bias on food security is increasing the condition of hunger among the urban poor. Despite the evidence of growing urbanisation and escalating poverty among the urban poor, the issue of food insecurity is still to a large extent being marginalised. Frayne, Battersby, Fincham and Haysom (2009) mention that though food poverty has always been linked with rural areas, with the high rate of urbanisation, food poverty has become a

challenge affecting the urban poor and a widened food gap among the urban poor is observed.

Drawing down to the situation of Lesotho, Leduka, Crush, Frayne, McCordic, *et al.* (2015) reflect that Lesotho is in the international and African media as one of the countries that are currently affected by drought, food insecurity and hunger. The World Food Programme (LVAC WFP, 2008) indicates that the food security challenge is an endemic problem affecting Lesotho. In 2012, then Prime Minister of Lesotho, Motsoahae Thomas Thabane, declared food security a state of emergency. This called for food security interventions and emergency responses that fostered the formulation of the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2012/2013 – 2016/2017 to prioritise agriculture as a key strategy for food security. Another intervention became the improvement of agricultural production and food security by ensuring maximisation of use of arable land, subsidising agricultural inputs and promoting crops that are drought resistant. Conservation farming and homestead gardening were also encouraged and were scaled up. However, since the issues of food security responses and planning are the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, it is sad to mention that even in this regard, food security is still conceived as a rural challenge as opposed to urban and the responses mentioned only focused on rural food security and development (see Declaration of an Emergency on Food Security in Lesotho, 2012).

Few studies on food security in Lesotho focus on the status and food (in)security on urban areas (Crush & Frayne 2010,2011; Leduka *et al.* 2015; McCordic, Crush Frayne 2018) while others focus on food (in)security issues with particular focus on rural areas (Notsi 2012, Rants'o 2016; Stevens & Ntai 2011; Tsepa 2008). To a large extent, these studies are more concerned with national level food security while ignoring people's lived experiences and impacts on individuals and household levels. The study focuses on Thibella urban settlement in the city of Maseru. This location is chosen because the study seeks to explore and understand urban food insecurity based on the lived experiences at household level among poor urban dwellers. Crush and Frayne (2010) argue that for governmental and non-governmental bodies to come up

with relevant and successful strategies on food security, it is vital that the needs and realities of the poor individuals be clearly understood. Again, it is very essential to understand and determine whether the food distribution and the food insecurity level among the households vary across locales (rural and urban). This is important in that solutions for food (in)security in both locales require different approaches (Crush & Frayne, 2010).

1.2 Background
1.2.1 Food security overview

The right to food is one of the most frequently mentioned rights in the international human rights documents, but it is also one of the rights that are mostly violated (Maxwell, 2000). The food crisis that happened in the mid-1970 has generated high concerns and has led leaders of the international community to agree on a common goal and responsibility, which is to eradicate malnutrition and hunger (Clover, 2003). Nevertheless, it is stated that between 1980 and 1998, there has been a decline in capita food consumption that was observed in almost 48 least developed countries while there was an improvement in developing countries (FAO, 1999). According to Clover (2003), there are alarming trends worldwide as hunger reduction progress has slowed and the number of undernourished people has escalated, even though there is growth in world food production that is faster than the world population. Statistics reveal that in 1998-2000, 840 million people experienced undernourishment when these figures are broken down; 11 million is for industrialised countries while 30 million is for countries going through transitions and 799 million is for developing countries (FAO, 2002).

The WFS that was held in 1996 set a target of reducing the number of world hungry people by at least 20 million annually between 2000 and 2015. Over the past two decades, there are some regions whose progress is impressive; this is through the demonstration that hunger is not a problem without solutions (Rajalakshmi, 2002). According to FAO (2002), the worldwide numbers of undernourished people reveal that after the WFS of 1996, there was an annual decrease of 2.5 million which was far

4

below the required target of reducing the number of hungry people by 20 million every year by 2015. Consequently, it is anticipated that for the target to be reached, the current progress should be accelerated to 24 million annually and this is almost 10 times the prevailing pace. WFS news (2002) shows that worldwide hunger consequences are only now being appreciated as the WFS chairperson in 2002 stated that hunger is one of the common challenges that the international community is faced with. It is further indicated that chronic food insecurity is affecting 28% of the global population, and this reveals that there are almost 200 million people who are affected by hunger and are suffering from malnutrition. Clover (2003) points out that in 2003, acute food insecurity affected 38 million people in Africa, these people were facing famine, with 24 000 people succumbing to hunger every day. Famines are considered as the extreme reflection of acute food insecurity, and among the 39 worldwide countries that were challenged with food insecurity and were in need of emergency response at the beginning of 2003, African countries totaled 25 (Clover, 2003). The continent of Africa is the recipient of the most food aid, where about 30 million people require emergency food aid in a year and this is evidenced by the reality that 60% of World Food Programme (WFP) work is taking place in Africa (Morris, 2002).

Hunger abject and widespread poverty are worsening in Africa while improvement is observed everywhere else. About half of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa is living below the poverty line more than other countries. The high prevalence of hunger and undernourishment are noticed mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa and in the past 30 years, a little progress is demonstrated (Clover, 2003). An indication made by Maxwell (2000) is that hunger and undernourishment are a central indication of poverty because the more poverty worsens, the more food becomes an important requirement than ever before. Scarcity and lack of food strike other elements of poverty like reducing the individual's ability to work and resistance to several diseases. It also affects the development of children's mental health as well as education achievements (Clover, 2003). There is a correlation between food security, hunger, poverty and an individual's inability to purchase food, therefore, hunger cannot be fought by the production of more food because famines still occur even amid enough food available. It is important to be mindful about the fact that most

people purchase food than produce it (Maxwell, 2000). It is further stated that this is evident in the Southern African region where harvests are failing and people are resorting to selling their livestock and other assets in order to have money to purchase food while at the same time food prices are hiking and there is a fall in livestock prices, hence, the poor suffer most (Godfray, Beddington, Crute, Haddad, Lawrence & Muir, 2010).

The FAO definition of food security that the study relies on comprises of four dimensions that have to be met simultaneously to conclude that the household is food secure, these dimensions are; food availability, access and utilisation (FAO, 2009). In food security literature, food availability refers to the physical presence of food. This relates to the potential of agricultural systems to complement and meet the demand for food. Pasture's production and agro-climatic fundamentals of crops also partake in the agricultural systems as determinants of how farmers and individuals perform and their responses to the markets (Tubiello, Soussana & Howden, 2007). According to Schmidhuber and Shetty (2005), food access dimension relates to an individual's ability to entitlements of adequate resources that are essential in meeting a nutritious and healthy diet. In this context, entitlements are defined as "the set of all those commodity bundles over which a person can establish command given the legal, political, economic and social arrangements of the community of which one is a member" (Schmidhuber & Tubiello, 2007:19703). They further allude that the access dimension simply entails the purchasing power of an individual. On the other hand, food utilisation covers factors of food safety and nutrition. It involves sub-dimensions like health, sanitation and waste management (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007). Finally, Schmidhuber & Tubiello (2007) refer to food stability as relating to those individuals who are somehow at risk of loss of access to resources that are needed for adequate food consumption, this can be because they cannot cope with income shocks or they lack adequate reserves to smooth consumption.

6

1.2.2 Food security in Lesotho

The food security situation in Lesotho can be better understood through a brief look at the country's historical background, History tells that Lesotho was an agrarian society while occasional wages through employment is a contemporary means of survival (Quilan 1996; Trollope 1978 in Turner 2009). According to Crush and Frayne (2010) and Turner (2009), other external interventions for development in Lesotho were rooted on the assumption and general perception that Lesotho's economy could be improved based on farming and that food security can be addressed through agricultural sector by enhancing adequate food production (Turner, 2009). The Economic and Social Research Council/Department for International Development ESRC/DFID (2008) reports that in historical days, Lesotho was able to meet 50-60% of its food requirements and also meet its own domestic demands, while at the same time exported surpluses to the neighbouring countries. The country's main crops are sorghum, wheat and maize, with maize being the staple food. According to FAO (2014), history also shows that way back, Lesotho was the net exporter of grains to South Africa. Tuner (2009) indicates that from 1920, the country's agricultural prosperity began to deteriorate and Lesotho stopped being the net exporter of grains. In the 1970s, the national agricultural food production continued to drop drastically with a decline of more than two-thirds of farm yields (Clover, 2003). During 1984, drastic decline in agricultural production worsened, and this forced Lesotho to produce only 40% of its own food. Evidence suggests that at the beginning of the 1990s, the country managed to produce only one-third of the needed food annually (ESRC/DFID, 2008). Agricultural production made a huge contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the downturn of the agricultural sector led the GDP from 45% in 1966 when Lesotho got its independence from the British colony to 25% in the 1980s (Maile 2000; WFP 2012). The Lesotho BOS (2015) marks that in recent years, the agricultural contribution to GDP declined to 10% and below, as in 2014 only 6.9% share was recorded (see figure below).
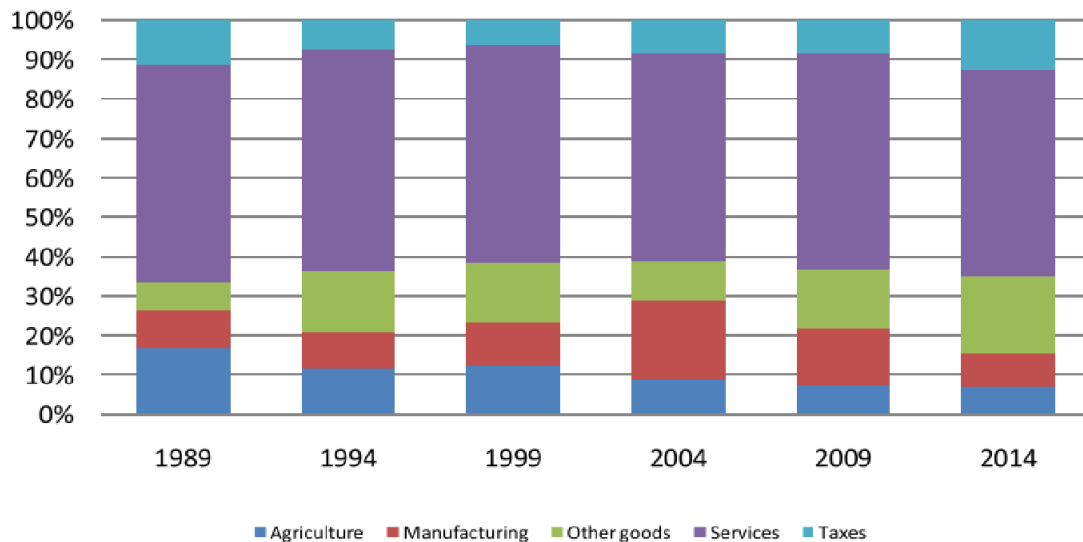
Figure 1: Lesotho agricultural total GDP share over time (adapted from Lesotho BOS, 2015)

The drastic decline in the agricultural sector since the 1920s led Lesotho to experience an acute food crisis. This called for emergency food response from the 1990s to the 2000s, where the country faced severe drought (El Nino) in 2015 and the Prime Minister declared food insecurity as the state of emergency (LVAC, 2017). The Basotho rural population that depended on agriculture for livelihoods were forced to find other sources of income in urban areas while others went to South Africa in search of employment (FAO 2016). Rural-urban migration occurred in great numbers as the rural population hoped that cities have opportunities for a better life. Crush and Frayne (2011) made an indication that the country's rural-urban migration encourages the rapid growth of urbanisation, it is projected that by 2030 urban population will rise to 42.5% from 14% that was noted in 1990. Swelling and Anneke (2012) mark that though urban centres are linked to better living conditions and an indicator of progress, the presumption does not hold anymore. Cohen and Garett (2010) remarked that the pace of urbanisation has pulled developing countries' poverty into cities. The drastically looming urbanisation has thus put a strain on local government systems because they often fail to cope with this rapid change (Watson, 2009). Evidence suggests that in 2014, there were about 57.7% of Basotho living below the poverty line (LVAC, 2016). Urban poverty, as a result of rural-urban migration, has created severe inequality among the country's urban dwellers (UNICEF, 2017). Additionally, poor urban dwellers are confronted with the challenge of access and affordability

despite the presence of supermarkets out-let that sprung in the city of Maseru (Leduka *et al.* 2015).

LVAC (2017) figures reveal that in 2016, 534 502 people in Lesotho were challenged with food insecurity, thus figures increased by 15.2% from 2015 and further deterioration was expected in June 2016 because poor harvests were anticipated due to dry weather challenges that the country faced during the planting season in 2016. The situation was anticipated to affect 80% of the people who depend solemnly on agricultural production (Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee [LVAC], 2016). According to FAO (2016), the country experienced a hike in food prices that were purchased from South Africa, as Lesotho depends on South Africa for food imports. It is also indicated that 33% of the country's children suffered chronic malnutrition, and anaemia affected more than 50% of the children. In 2017, the number of food insecure people in Lesotho dropped to 306 924 people, of which 82 278 were urban dwellers while 224 664 constituted rural population (LVAC, 2017). The improved figures were due to agricultural production that increased compared to the previous years. Nonetheless, though the food security situation improved as per figures, this did not mean that the country's overall production was sufficient to meet the country's food requirements; as a result, Lesotho still relied on food imports (LVAC, 2017). It is mentioned that about 70% of the food imported annually is from South Africa (LVAC 2016; Lesotho Red Cross Society [LRCS] 2009).

Political instability in Lesotho in the 1970s led to the decline in the economy and this manifested in food insecurity and Lesotho began to depend on food imports from South Africa. The country also started to rely on food aid and donor funded projects that intended to increase agricultural productivity (Mots'oene, 2014). The state became more focused on maintaining its political power than investing in agriculture and this led to the fall in food production while many donor funded projects collapsed. Lesotho continued to experience a downturn in agricultural production coupled with long droughts and became more dependent on food aid and imports (Shaw & Clay, 1993). Most of the food aid work (around 60%) was through WFP

and the European Community (EC) (Pule, 2002). Food aid became more effective in containing rural poverty due to the declined agricultural production while not much focus was directed to the urban setting (Matlosa, 1999). Sadly, Khaketla (1978) reports that most of the food aid was misused by the political elites to gain political recognition in their constituencies. Despite the food aid and other humanitarian assistance that the country received, Ambrose (1993) reflected that poverty in Lesotho was unlikely to reduce as a result of inadequate social services critical for survival.

The impacts of HIV/AIDS also played a huge role in Lesotho's food security state. The FAO/WFP (2005) noted that in 2004, the country's HIV prevalence was 28.9% and was among the highest in the world. Cobbe (2004) argues that the HIV prevalence in Lesotho was due to the fact that South African mines were the main employer for Basotho men; they lived in single-sex hostels and were easily able to access sex workers. The impacts of the HIV/AIDS pandemic have increased vulnerability in the households as children are left as orphans while some have to care for their younger siblings. UNAIDS (2012) indicates that about 60% of the country's population live below the poverty line of M149.00. According to the AFSUN survey report, the level of food insecurity in Maseru is among the worst in the southern African region, with 90% of poor households experiencing food insecurity. The food security severity was also confirmed by the Household Food Insecurity Access Prevalence Indicator (HFIAPI) that divided households into four categories of food security and the proportion of the food secure households in Maseru was only 5%. The Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) also shows that Maseru has limited dietary diversity as the households show high reliance on staple foods (Thabane, Honu & Paramiah, 2014).

1.3 Problem Statement

Historically, food poverty or food insecurity has been linked with rural areas. With growing numbers of the rural poor moving to cities for perceived opportunities, informal settlements in urban areas are on the rise and lead to growth in food poverty, thus shifting the extent of food insecurity from rural communities to urban areas. The

factors determining food insecurity vary from the availability (production) of food, the ability to access food (economics), the utilisation of food (nutrition) and the stability of food at a household level. Few studies explore urban food insecurity, particularly the experience of food insecurity, leading to ineffective or non-existent strategies related to urban food security.

1.4 Research objectives

The research aims to explore the experiences of food insecurity among urban poor households in Maseru, Lesotho. This includes understanding how they access food and the determinants of their food choices. The experience of food insecurity is guided by understanding FAO dimensions of food security that are: food availability, access, utilisation and stability.

1.5 Rationale for the study

Food insecurity is exacerbating globally and its impacts are felt worldwide, Lesotho is no exemption. In my work with vulnerable communities as a social worker, I have realised that urban food insecurity is on the rise and affecting households in many ways. The Lesotho National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) which is a database with background information about the standards of living for all households in Lesotho only has household socio-economic background/(in) security in rural communities. NISSA is a database designed and implemented by the Ministry of Social Development to be used for households' classifications into four main categories, namely: better-off households, average households, ultra-poor households and poor households. This data is meant to be used by government ministries and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that intend to improve the lives of the households that are ultra-poor and poor through social assistance and social safety nets programmes. At present, however, NISSA has not captured urban households' living conditions and there is not yet any strategy in place that conceptualises urban poverty in Lesotho. As a result, urban poor households are not beneficiaries of most of the social protection and safety nets programmes while rural poor households receive greater attention. LVAC (2008) revealed that urban and peri-urban households have the highest level of food insecurity. The Vulnerability and Food Insecurity in

Urban Areas of Lesotho Report (2008) also indicated that there is very limited information available relating to food security in urban areas of Lesotho (LVAC/WFP, 2008).

The rationale of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the reality of urban food insecurity among low-income urban households in Lesotho. The outcomes of this study could assist in understanding urban food insecurity and the realities of the urban poor in Lesotho. The outcomes could further help inform authorities and policymakers about the urban food insecurity phenomenon and later advocate for policy action or relevant intervention strategies and programmes. It finally could assist future researchers as a background on urban food insecurity, particularly among urban low-income households. The research findings could also contribute to the research area through providing literature for other researchers within the food security interest space.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study focuses on the low-income urban settlers in the city of Maseru, using the Thibella settlement as a case study. The settlement is located just in the city centre, and is a walking distance for dwellers to access most of the services provided by the city and the municipality. The Thibella settlement has been selected out of other urban settlements in the city of Maseru because it is one of the settlements where the impacts and effects of social and economic inequalities are most evident, based on Mots'oene (2014) comparative study of urbanisation and poverty in Sekamaneng, Motimposo and Thibella. The settlement also has a high population concentration; people settled here in numbers because it was close to the South African mine's recruiting agencies (Thabane, 2002). This poverty-stricken settlement adopted several livelihood strategies like home brewing and street vending that dated back to the colonial era (Kimble, 1978).

The study involves participants from all ages, except children under the age of 18 years, and across genders. This allows for understanding the links between potential

social and cultural factors. This exploratory case study, a qualitative study, deals with human experiences and feelings which cannot be revealed in a quantitative approach. Sampled individuals and groups from households within Thibella are used to gather relevant data for this study. Existing bodies of literature in food security, international, regional and local literature, helps to frame urban food insecurity for low-income households in Maseru in the context of relevant trends of urban food security.

1.7 Research methodology and design

The research approach or worldview used, which according to Bryman (2012) are the set of philosophical assumptions about how the world is viewed (ontology) and how the world is understood (epistemology), is a social constructivist approach. The social constructivist approach is suitable for qualitative studies and allows for human behaviour and experiences to be explored within a social phenomenon. It uses research questions rather than theory to narrow the scope of the study (Bryman, 2012), thus, a researcher starts a study without any preconceived ideas, he/she has his/her mind as accommodative and broad as possible because the intention is for the research findings to potentially feedback into a body of literature and/or theory (Creswell, 2014).

The qualitative research methodology is useful in the sense that it provides rich details of people and their interaction in the world (Stake, 1995). A case study design is used for this study as it provides an opportunity to collect data and do an in-depth analysis of the subject, specifically since this study is focused on people, their behaviour, interactions and the relationship they have with food (Bryman 2012).

The following research methods are used to collect data; focus groups and semi-structured interviews.

Kitzinger (1995) and Morgan (1996) consider focus groups as an effective method to capture elements of cultural values and norms of a community/group being studied. This is a relevant method because the study aims to acquire information that is shared collectively among people who share the same location, experiences and challenges.

Therefore, Kitzinger (1995) mentions that the group discussion processes allow participants to explore and freely talk about their views.

In addition, semi-structured interviews, the second method for primary data collection, are appropriate in this case whereby the researcher has little or no information about the case study and considers getting information from the participants themselves (Gill & Stewart, 2008). This study gathers sensitive information from participants; hence Pontin (2000) considers interviews as an effective technique in data collection when 'depth' is required. Semi-structured interviews are relevant because the information that cannot be disclosed in a group setting can be attained in semi-structured interviews.

1.8 Chapters outline

The chapters that follow this introductory chapter are as follow:

Chapter 2. Literature review: This chapter focuses on the review of background literature on food security and urban poverty internationally and in sub-Saharan Africa. It unpacks the four dimensions of food security; the physical availability of food, economic and physical access to food, food utilisation and food stability that must happen simultaneously in order to be able to label a household as food secure.

Chapter 3. Research methodology: This chapter introduces the research methodology, qualitative, and the research approach, social constructivism, and it unpacks the design, an exploratory case study. Methods of data collection suitable to the study, focus groups and semi-structured interviews, and how the analysis was conducted, thematic analysis, are also detailed.

Chapter 4. Results: The chapter provides results of data collection and analysis on experiences of urban food insecurity among low-income urban households in the city of Maseru. The results are framed according to the five themes and aim to speak to the research objectives.

Chapter 5. Discussions: This chapter interprets and discusses the key findings on the experiences of food security among low-income urban households in the Thibella settlement in the city of Maseru.

Chapter 6. Conclusion: This is a closing chapter that provides recommendations for future research and/or to the relevant non-profit/development organisations and/or authorities that work in the food (in) security space. This closing chapter also serves to provide concluding remarks about the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1   Introduction

This chapter explores the broader background of food security in cities and urban areas. It establishes the significance and meaning of food beyond bodily needs and filling the stomach, to understanding the social and cultural impacts of food on society. It also focuses on exploring the four dimensions of food security that set the base of food security. The four dimensions of food security are: i) physical food availability, ii) economic access to food, iii) food utilisation and iv) food stability. The dimensions will help the research to focus on broad lenses of experiences of food insecurity, as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO, 2009) indicates that for food security objectives to be achieved, all these four dimensions of food security should be fulfilled simultaneously. For the food availability dimension, emphasis is placed on food production and the physical availability of food. Thus, urban agriculture has been identified as one of the strategies to alleviate food poverty among the urban poor households and is recently gaining greater attention (Ellis & Sumberg 1998; Mougeot 2011). This is because food production is considered an important aspect of food availability; hence it is detrimental for urban low-income households to grow their own food.

Food access, as a fundamental factor to the fulfilment of human food security, will be explored and be related to the urban poor setting. Food access specifically determines the capacity of low-income households to purchase food to meet their food security needs (Crush & Frayne, 2010). Food access encompasses the exploration of affordability, food choices and preferences and the role played by formal and informal food markets such as: supermarkets, social networks, street vendors and spaza shops on urban poor households' food choices. The households' food availability status and income level become the determinants of food utilisation as the kind and quality of food consumed manifests in the nutrition and health status of the consumer. Further, the food availability and access also dictates the potential of the household to have food over time or even in periods of unforeseen circumstances. The study explores urban food insecurity literature globally and draws down to the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

2.2 Beyond eating and nourishment: Understanding foodways

According to Mintz and Du Bois (2002:102) "next to breathing, eating is perhaps the most essential of all human activities and one with which much of social life is entwined". This implies that the embeddedness of food and eating for humanity is not just for nourishment but beyond. Thus, Gumerman (2012) shows that beyond nutrition, food performs social functioning and fulfilment. For some communities, food is a language that portrays and expresses one's status and identity, it also expresses shared social values across different regions of the world (Long, 2001). Equally, Chavas (2017) acknowledges food for its significance in contributing towards organising the principles that build the nation's economic and social structures. Williams-Forson (2016) and Gumerman (2012) emphasise that food plays a significant role in cultural sustainability, it is also used to perfume cultural and spiritual rituals following different regions. Food reinforces societal norms and sets boundaries between what is consumable and non-consumable (Gumerman, 2012). Thus, the societal beliefs and norms that are food-related conceptualise how one should behave and wear (Long, 2001). According to Camp (1982), food is a useful foundation that directs cultural continuity and change, food choices and preferences. Moreover, Visser (1999) suggests that influencing a change in one's diet, eating patterns and food choices is the same as enforcing change in one's culture.

Gumerman (2012) and Visser (1999) assert that it is important to understand foodways because it helps humanity to acknowledge that food is not just meant to satisfy bodily needs and appetite but plays a huge role in meeting the needs of society. Foodways help to capture various meanings of food and the role they play in society. According to Alkon, Block, Moore, Gills and Di Nuccio (2013), the concept of foodways is regarded as the societal practises and norms that influence consumption of food. This involves the choices people make about what they eat, factors that influence their preference, where they purchase food and how they purchase food (Byrd & Byrd 2017; Alkon *et al.* 2013). As children are moulded in different stages of development, they learn and are exposed to food that is culturally and socially preferred (Kashay, 2009). Camp (1982) indicates that foodways entail various activities and rules, production practises, harvesting patterns, food processing, food serving and consumption in different societies. Foodways differ across regions, Cohen and Garett (2010) indicate that foodways and livelihoods in cities are less influenced by natural resources but by employment.

Therefore, they rely on integrated food markets for food choices and eating patterns. Conversely, OECD, FAO & UNICEF (2016) reflect that rural regions are characterised by weak markets, poor infrastructures and transportation, thus, are considered as net food producers. Therefore, Cohen and Garett (2010) point out that foodways in rural regions are shaped by growing their own food and livestock ownership. Having a clear picture of foodways implications on society across regions will help understand individuals' experiences with food security broadly.

2.3 Food security in cities and urban areas

The symbiotic relationship between food and cities has always existed as food has always been a factor that influences location, economics, design and the politics of the city (Haysom, 2015). According to Steel (2008), for most cities, the ability to ensure and maintain the availability of food has determined their stature. In recent years, however, this relationship is increasingly becoming opaque. Haysom (2015) argues that this is due to industrialisation and globalisation that has resulted in an increase in distance from cities to the production of food and thereby changing the relationship between food and cities. Apart from the impacts of industrialisation and globalisation on food security in cities, Lyons, Richards, Desfours and Amati (2013) consider urban planning systems also as responsible for distancing cities from food production and creating escalating urban food security challenges. Steel (2008) asserts that urban planners of the twentieth century did not consider urban food production an integral part of planning as opposed to pre-twentieth century urban planners who carefully made clear plans for spaces and avenues for urban food production. Recently, food production in cities is rarely directly invoked as an issue for consideration in urban planning systems (Lyons *et al.* 2013). They further allude that today's planners' vision of cities do not take into consideration urban food production as a response to challenges of food insecurity facing cities. Therefore, the twentieth century planners ignored the intersection between urban planning and urban food production yet it holds answers to urban food security challenges (Crouch & Ward, 1998).

Although food security is regarded as a development problem in Africa, it is quite often misleadingly regarded as a challenge that exists mostly among the rural population and this has led to limited inventions in addressing urban food poverty (Haysom, 2015). This is observed in

several interventions of development initiatives that are directed on rural food security and the plight of rural poor (Crush & Frayne, 2010). They further indicate that the ongoing international calls and programmes for the green revolution in Africa are directed at rural development and at measures to increase and improve food production aimed for subsistence and commercial purposes among African small farmers in rural areas. On the other hand, Battersby (2012) and Frayne, Battersby, Fincham, and Haysom (2009) indicate that the world population has become predominantly urban and urban food poverty is not being addressed in balance with the growing urban poor population. They also argue that the attention and interventions that are directed towards addressing rural food security should be shifted to urban areas as well. Addressing urban food security is very important, as UN-Habitat (2009) states that there is rapid urbanisation observed in sub-Saharan Africa. Urbanisation has posed high levels of inequality, Ravallion (2002) noted that the proportion of the world's poor people that live in urban areas is rising but not simply because the poor urbanise faster than those that are not poor but Mehta (2000) shows that this is because there are many conditions in urban areas that drag the existing and new urban settlers into poverty. Furthermore, Lagi, Bertrand, and Bar-Yam (2011) remark that as people shift from rural to urban areas, the shift affects their socio-economic status and increases development challenges like food insecurity among the urban poor households.

The population of people residing in urban areas is increasing dramatically as there are more urban settlers than rural settlers globally (UNFPA, 2007). It is projected that by 2030, the population of urban dwellers would be around 5 million, to which 92 % would be urban dwellers in developing countries UNICEF (2009), and greater growth is attributed to rural-urban migration (Diehl, Oviatt, Chandra & Harpreet-Kaur 2019). With the growing rate of urbanism, food insecurity challenges will continue to persist in urban areas. One would wonder why food insecurity is a challenge among the urban poor households and yet there is still a growing rate of urbanisation observed. There are several sources of the rapid growth of urbanisation that have been identified, McGranohan and Satterwaite (2014) noted that rural-urban migration, the natural increase in numbers of urban populations and the urbanisation of peri-urban and rural locations are seen as major factors that make a huge contribution to the growing rate of urbanisation.

Henderson (2002) remarked that urbanisation is fostered by the perceived views migrants have regarding economic and social advantages that the urban areas or cities have. Migrants tend to believe that cities and urban areas have opportunities for various employment and that cities offer better services as they are considered to be innovation centres and forces towards social change (Cohen, 2006). Carter and Rohwerder (2016) assert that several challenges that confront cities are a result of urbanisation. Additionally, Bell *et al.* (2010) indicate that social injustice, inequality and poverty are challenges that have been triggered by urbanisation. Moreover, as a result of socio-economic inequality, several rural-urban migrants' perceptions about better life and opportunities attached to the city do not come true (Mutiah & Istiqomah 2017). As they get into cities and urban areas, due to socio-economic inequality, as Cohen (2006) noted, they are forced to settle and cluster in informal settlements. Diehl, Oviatt, Chandra, Harpreet and Kaur (2019) indicate that finding decent jobs and having access to healthy and nutritious food become a challenge, hence, they are forced to rely on informal food systems like fast foods and processed food. Barakatuminalloh and Widayaningsh (2011) assert that urban areas have more complex problems, especially for settlers that have no skills and education needed for decent employment or jobs. They state that the mentioned challenges lead to an influx of informal settlements because the urban poor settlers, who mostly migrated from the countryside, cluster into informal settlements due to the inability of income to secure proper housing (Barakatuminalloh and Widayaningsh, 2011). Thus, the condition itself leads to food insecurity because food insecurity is associated with poverty (Mutiah & Istiqomah, 2017). Observing the rate at which urbanisation occurs, it also exceeds the capacity of the city governments to address and meet the urban needs, this puts a strain on the provision of basic needs, services and infrastructure (Cohen 2006; UN 2015).

Relating to the situation of Lesotho, Mots'oene (2014) shows that the growth of the city of Maseru has resulted in unplanned settlements that sprang up without the approval of the local government and the municipality for planning and development control requirements. Such settlements are not recognised by authorities as they are described as illegal. Therefore, the municipal authorities have ignored them in terms of providing basic services like water, sewage disposal, waste management and electricity (Mots'oene, 2014). The United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (UNCHS) and United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) [1997] show that when such settlements are considered illegal and are not provided with stable and decent structures, water and sanitation, waste disposal facilities, security of tenure and

electricity supply, all the factors are bound to create social problems and unhealthy living conditions.

2.4 Food Security Dimension 1: Physical availability of food

The food security agenda believed on a common assumption or tendency that food should originate from farms or be agriculturally produced. Consequently, the focus on increasing food production has been and remains one of the key strategies in addressing food security worldwide (Capone, Bilali, Debs, Gianluigi & Noureddin 2014; Igram, 2011). The food security agenda and research focuses on upstream production and on the effort to strengthen the role of crop science and farming systems (Adam & Gollin, 2015). According to Adam and Gollin (2015), this approach sees the physical availability of food and the production of food as vital in addressing hunger and achieving sustainable food security. The success of the implementation of this strategy is evidenced by the large volumes of farming and food supplies globally. The Institute for Mechanical Engineers (IME, 2015) reveals that there are approximately 4 billion tonnes of food annually worldwide. Recently, the global food system can produce sufficient volumes per capita to feed the global population and this has not been the case in the 1960s (Gordon, Bignet, Crona, Henriksson & Holt, 2017). Even though the world population continues to increase and there are spikes in food prices and agricultural commodities observed, Adam and Gollin (2015) mention that the agricultural productivity growth still outstrips demand pressures. Evidently, however, Gordon *et al.* (2017) stipulate that food production growing aggregate matches with the negative outcomes of food systems changes, for example, estimates show that about 30-50% (which is equivalent to 1.2-2 million tonnes) of produced food never gets to reach the human stomach (Capone *et al.* 2014; IME, 2015). This is linked to poor applications along the food chain, poor harvesting practises, transportation and food storage (IME, 2015).

Food availability relates to the supply of food, which is often determined by levels of food production, stock levels as well as net trade (Tacoli, Bukhari, & Fisher, 2013). It is also noted that food availability in urban areas is the determinant of the effectiveness of food systems. Mutiah and Istiqomah (2017) show that according to the Indonesian Council of National Food Security (2009) availability of food is defined as the physical presence of food in a particular place or area, that can be obtained either through agricultural produce, domestic production and

food aid. Among the existing modes of food availability, the study focuses on food availability through urban agriculture or the production of own food. Urban agriculture is globally viewed as a possible solution for exacerbating challenges of urban food insecurity affecting African cities (Lee-Smith 2013; Lee-Smith 2014; Padgham *et al.* 2015; Redwood 2009; Warren *et al.* 2015). Furthermore, the idea that urban poor settlers could fight food insecurity challenges through growing their own food has received greater attention in the early 1990s; thus, this idea seems to resurface recently in policy debates (Crush, Frayne & McCordic, 2017). Urban agriculture is to a large extent advocated to address the escalating poverty, vulnerability, continuing food insecurity, gender inequality and the decline in opportunities for livelihoods in the urban economy (Crush, Hovorka, & Tevera, 2011). Currently, much attention is on food availability, especially production, however, with the implications of climate change on livelihoods and income, food availability in cities is under threat for low-income households as they often purchase food than produce it. Ziervogel and Frayne (2011) and Kennedy (2003) relate that food that is consumed in cities is normally sourced or imported from rural areas because most urban settlers do not produce food. Though urban food production through urban agriculture is another way to make food available in urban areas, Cambell *et al.* (2017) assert that climate change hinders humanity from achieving sustainable food production and this factor has impacted food security negatively as humanity lives from farm to plate. They further allude that there is a decline in production while demand for food continues to rise, however, Crush and Frayne (2010) argue that food availability is not a greater challenge in food security but a greater challenge is with the affordability of food.

Adam and Gollin (2015) and Lang and Barling (2012) view population growth as one other aspect that poses challenges towards achieving sustainable food production. As people move to urban areas, settlements become overpopulated and inhabitants have little or no access to spaces for food production. Therefore, where urban agriculture is practised, this is often on land that is not owned by the user and so the user's rights and secure tenure are very limited. When the factor of land is taken into consideration along with urban poverty, low production or zero production is a possible outcome (RUAF Foundation, 2010). In the case of Lesotho, Basotho used to practise agriculture on the slopes of the sandstone hills and the flat spaces were reserved for grazing (Leduka *et al.* 2015). However, as the city of Maseru expanded through the natural population increase and rural-urban migration, from 1989 to 2000, the arable space

declined from 31% to 7% (Tanga, 2009). Leduka *et al.* (2015) and Crush *et al.* (2017) further note that the arable land in Maseru has turned to residential spaces.

It is worth noting the importance of food production among the urban poor households and as Hampwaye (2008) stipulates that though urban settlers can be cultivators, the lowest socio-economic urban settlers grow their food due to the absolute need for food. Onyango (2010), in a case study carried out in Orange Farm settlement in South Africa, found that most households that were engaged in urban farming had no household members who were in formal employment. Although the settlement is poverty dominated, urban agriculture is not commonly practised as only 16% of the households obtain their food from urban agriculture or urban food production (Rudolph *et al.* 2009). Looking at urban areas like Lilongwe and Blantyre in Malawi, a different scenario is observed, as urban food production is mostly practised by households with higher income because they can afford land and access agro-inputs (Mkwambisi, 2009). Leduka *et al.* (2015) found that low income households in the city of Maseru source their food from several sources. Almost half of the households (47%) get their food from practising urban agriculture. However, it is only 21% that practise urban agriculture on a regular basis, (at least once a week). The most and commonly practised urban agriculture activities in Maseru include home gardens (most common among poor and low income households), piggeries, poultry and crop farming (Leduka *et al.* 2015). There has been a general concern or question whether urban agriculture is practised by the poorest and food insecure households or the better-off (Obioha, 2010). In the case of Maseru, only a small proportion of the poor and food insecure households practise urban agriculture (Leduka *et al.* 2015).

Battersby (2012) stipulates that urban food availability has been addressed through policy and programme responses by advocating for urban agriculture. Thornton (2008) marked that in South Africa, at the national level, urban food production through agriculture is pointed out in the 'White Paper on Agriculture (1995)', mentioned also in the 'White Paper on National Water Policy for South Africa (1988)' as well as on the 'White Paper on Spatial Policy and Land Use Management (2001)'. Burger *et al.* (2009) allude that the current interest in urban food production through urban agriculture by governments marks a transition from the past

repression of most cities in the region. This promises that there is increasing recognition of urban food insecurity and poverty as this also has drawn on an extensive literature that advocates for the most relevant and appropriate strategies to solve food insecurity and poverty in cities (Rogerson 2010; Binns, 2008). There is a hope that urban agriculture has the potential to reduce food poverty through food expenditure subsidies, income generation through farming and job provision in farms for poor urban households (Kirkland 2008; Mitchell & Leturque, 2010). According to Crush and Frayne (2010), the African Food Security Urban Network (AFSUN) survey on the poor areas was conducted in 11 cities in Southern Africa, among surveyed households, only 22% revealed that they rely on food production to feed their families. Battersby (2012) stated that acquiring food through urban agriculture is still a challenge in the city of Cape Town, South Africa, because supermarkets are increasingly becoming the source of food for most urban residents in South Africa.

Crush *et al.* (2017) indicate that in Lesotho, urban agriculture policy interest and enthusiasm gained attention in the 1990s. However, the national data that was collected by the Bureau of Statistics on the types and extent of urban agriculture indicates that there has not been a systematic or fixed policy uptake up to date (BOS 2013; BOS 2015). According to GOL (2005), GOL (2006) GOL (2015) and Gwimbi (2015), it is stated that among the Lesotho development strategies and food security measures, nothing explicitly identifies the programme focus relating to urban food security and urban agriculture. Turner (2009) states that the reason for omitting urban food security and urban agriculture on development strategies is grounded on the misconception that Lesotho is a rural country and that, majority of the population depend on subsistence agriculture. This perception fosters the challenge of food insecurity to be viewed as a rural problem that requires smallholder production and productivity (Crush *et al.* 2017). According to Turner (2009), one factor is that Lesotho's food security strategies and action plans lie with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, hence, this reinforces the perception(s) that food security is a fundamental rural agriculture problem. This is proved by the fact that rural development strategies and interventions were aligned with rehabilitating smallholder farming relating back to the colonial regime (Turner, 2009).

Though much literature is enthusiastic about the promise of practising urban agriculture, there are still critical perspectives that are rising (Warren, Hawkesworth & Knai 2015; Badami & Ramankutty 2015; Crush *et al.* 2011; Frayne *et al.* 2014). One of the critiques that have emerged as stipulated by Crush *et al.* (2017) is that urban agriculture advocates believe that the fundamental challenge and solution for urban food security lies solemnly with a focus on production and availability. They further note that urban agriculture advocates do not take into account other food security dimensions that are well documented, which are: food access, food stability and food utilisation. Regardless of the available literature, Badimi and Ramankutty (2015) claim that there is no availability of data related to urban agriculture, except for data by Maxwell, Levin, and Csete (1998) which indicates participating figures that vary worldwide. The unavailability of data problems is increased by the definitional and methodological inconsistency of urban agriculture (Badimi & Ramankutty, 2015). However, UNDP (1996) indicated that the number of urban settlers that engage in agriculture to be at 800 million globally. Zezza and Tasciotti (2010) argue that these are only estimates by the Urban Agriculture Network that are intended to give a picture or skeleton of the status of urban agriculture. According to FAO (1999), there is a large variation in the participation of claimed rates, as noted in the UNDP (1996) document that about 100 million people or households were estimated to be earning income from practising urban agriculture.

Further, urban agriculture literature is motivated by an advocacy agenda as opposed to analytical rigour (Ellis & Sumberg 1998; Zezza & Tasciotti 2010). To a large extent, urban agriculture is practised by low-income households more than the very poorest households that do have access to land, hence, this is a critical factor for urban agriculture (Lee-Smith 2010; Zezza & Tasciotti 2010). Based on the analysis of household surveys conducted in Africa, it is evident that urban agriculture is more like a livelihood response that is encouraged and made possible by institutional and socio-economic factors that might be specific and relevant to a particular region (Zezza & Tasciotti, 2010).

2.5 Food Security Dimension 2: Economic food access

According to Crush and Frayne (2010), the main driver of food insecurity in urban areas does not lie mostly on food production but rather on food access. Food access is defined as "the

ability of an individual or household to obtain enough food, either from its own production, barter systems, gifts, loans or food aid" (Mutiah & Istiqomah 2017:106). They indicate that urban access to food is divided into two parts, these are: access and choice, and access and food patterns. Additionally, Mutiah and Istiqomah (2017) assert that with access and choice, the urban settlers' food access is basically dependent on the ability of a household to purchase food. On the other hand, Kennedy (2003) noted that access and food patterns are determined by the distance between home and food location.

Equally, purchasing food parcels for an individual household depends on an individual household income, food prices and food outlet location (Kennedy, Berardo, Papavero, Horjus, Ballard, Delbaere & Brouwer 2010). In some urban circumstances, food can be affordable or economically accessible but the location of the food outlet may be too far and this binds urban settlers to opt for available food but not necessarily food of their choice (Ruel & Garrett, 1999). The opposite scenario is also observed, where food locations are closer, the urban poor do not afford to purchase food on the shelves and here the factor of food choice is compromised as one has to choose affordable food patterns (Kennedy *et al*. 2010). The two factors of food access, access and choice and access and food patterns interplay. Kennedy (2003) indicates that most urban women, who are working and living urban fast-paced lifestyles, who have little time to prepare food and are experiencing a challenge of the distance between home and food store locations usually choose to rely on the quickest method of food consumption, and that is fast foods. This is evidence that they can afford to purchase food of their choice but due to time and distance, their food patterns are affected as they are forced to choose available food.

Crush and Frayne (2010) argue that food access among the urban poor settlers has become a problem in African cities, thereby leading urban food challenges to receive greater attention across the southern region. In response to the food security challenge, the Southern African region is regarded as a 'food desert'. Battersby and Crush (2015) explained that 'food deserts' are characterised as economically vulnerable communities where poor access to affordable and healthy food exists due to the absence or scarcity of modern retail outlets like supermarkets. It is stated that this approach is for food retailing in urban poor households. Wrigley (2002:2032) defined 'food desert' as "a metaphor for the complex nexus of interlinkages between increasing

health inequalities, retail development-induced differential access to food retail provision, compromised diets, undernutrition and social explosion". Although Shaw (2006) alludes that there are recently various definitions of the concept, debates have grown over the utility of food desert for understanding the real determinant of urban food diet (Shannon, 2013). Though supermarkets have spread all over the urban areas through the 'food desert' concept, the challenge of unreliable and unsustainable income hinders the urban poor to access food in Southern Africa (Crush & Frayne, 2011). Another remark made by Mougeot (1999) is that incomes among the urban poor are very low and often unreliable and inconsistent, thus hindering access to quality food and makes it difficult for urban poor households to attain their food desires and fulfilment. Crush and Frayne (2011) assert that historically, supermarkets and retail stores were considered to be the preserve of the upper and middle class household consumers, hence, they were serving a smaller urban elite group. With rapid urbanisation and growing markets, they are currently targeting all urban consumers. The presence of supermarkets in urban areas and townships has led to two forms of food economies or markets, the informal and formal food economies or markets. Kennedy *et al.* (2014) state that regardless of the existence of both markets, the informal food markets seem to play an important role by making food available and accessible to the urban poor. Kessides (2005) alludes that 'informality is the name of the game in town'. It is indicated that speaking of informal markets or economies relates to the informal shops (spaza shops), street vendors and traders and social networks (Turner, 2005).

Although supermarkets have sprang in African cities and townships (Battersby, Marshak & Mngqibisa, 2016), the informal economy, though often disregarded and penalised by authorities and governments have become a direct response in addressing the needs of urban poor people (Hitimana, Allen & Heinrigs, 2011). Several studies validate the importance of informality in fulfilling the habits and livelihoods of people living in low-income settlements (Crush *et al.* 2017). Equally, it has become the majority employer for the poor urban settlers (Fraser, Moonga & Wilkes, 2014). According to Crush *et al.* (2017), it also serves as the most reliable source of food in most cities in the Global South. Turner (2005) asserts that the informal economy and social networks play a very significant role in addressing poor urban settlers' access to food. The social networks encompass the process and practice of receiving informal assistance from neighbours, friends and relatives as well as sharing and borrowing

from one another and buying goods on credit (Turner, 2005). Among Basotho culture and tradition, sharing, borrowing and receiving items from others in a form of a gift has been a common practice (Mofuoa, 2015). Turner, Calder, Gay, Hall, Iredale, Mbizule and Mohatla (2001) argued that the Basotho culture has, however, lately taken an urban character, the structures and norms of social support, cultural and social frameworks are lessening in urban areas. A proportion of 49% of households in the city of Maseru source their food from the informal economy and 11% of them on a daily basis. The majority (84%) of the settlers source their household food from the supermarkets. There is also heavy reliance on fast foods (Leduka *et al.* 2015). Other strategies to food access in Maseru are through income from casual jobs, alcohol brewing, laundry, sales of vegetables, baby-sitting, buying on credit and borrowing from others and attending feasts and funerals ceremonies in order to have meals (Olivier, 2013).

Crush and Frayne (2011) state that the informal market plays an essential role because low-income households engage in such markets for their income. Informal markets also provide affordable food staff for urban poor households. Kennedy *et al.* (2014) emphasise that there is, however, an intersection between the informal and formal food markets, the informal food sector, normally spaza shops and street vendors purchase food stuff from the formal food sectors in bulk. The food bought in bulk is sold in smaller packages that urban poor households can afford to purchase because supermarkets and other formal food retailers do not sell food in smaller packages like street vendors and spaza shops do. Crush and Frayne (2011) further indicate that though supermarkets are available and cheaper, the urban poor still prefer the informal food economy, this may be the choice the urban poor make due to geographical access and convenience as Ruel and Garrett (1999) mentioned that convenience is also another factor that goes with access and choice. Crush *et al.* (2011) show that proximity and physical access to consumers are not in any way equal to actual accessibility, taking into account the challenge of unemployment, inflation, cost of transport and provision of electricity that is inconsistent. Ruel and Garrett (1999) allude that the cost of traditional staple food is higher in costs in urban areas than the cost of fast and processed foods.

Cohen and Garrett (2010) and Martin-Prevel, Becquey, and Tapsoba (2012) have presented thoroughly some of the processes that lead to food insecurity among the urban poor relating to lenses of the 2008 food price crisis. They show that the urban poor are the net buyers and are mostly affected by the food crisis, they even have less flexibility as opposed to rural dwellers to shift or opt for other staple food as prices rise (Cohen & Garrett, 2010; Martin-Prevel, Becquey, & Tapsoba, 2012). Though supermarkets arrived in low-income households of South African cities and being located in townships in around the early 2000s (Weatherspoon and Reardon 2003), they are focused mostly on profit maximisation, not community needs, therefore, they are somewhat not economically accessible for the urban poor (Battersby, 2011). Supermarkets and retail outlets are operating as private entities, hence, they cannot provide food parcels on credit to the urban poor like the informal food markets do (Ligththelm, 2005). There are concerns that supermarkets will not respond to the food security needs of the urban poor, and so it is anticipated that the increasing number of supermarkets would rather undermine urban poor food security. This is because the presence of formal retailers in townships is bound to put the informal food markets out of business, for which the urban poor rely on for food access and household income (Battersby, 2011).

Besseker (2006) remarked that the African Cooperative for Hawkers and Informal Businesses (AHIB) has revealed that about 150 informal stores in the township of Soweto had to shut down due to the presence of large formal retailers in the township. McGaffin (2010) reflects that other findings from a Demacon survey on the impacts of Jabulani Mall in Soweto reveal that about 76 per cent of informal traders profits went down due to being outcompeted by the formal retailers. Reardon, Timmer, Barret, and Berdegue (2003), who argue in favour of the informal food markets, maintain that they remain the major drivers of food access for urban poor households. They further note that when a household is more food insecure, the greater the chances for a household to depend on informal food economy and other sources like social safety nets and the state social protection measures. According to Sets'abi (2015), Lesotho has tried to build a social protection floor for most citizens, especially the vulnerable groups. This has been through offering social assistance programmes like old age pension, free primary education, child grants, primary health care and food security measures. However, most programmes tend to focus on the rural population as Leduka *et al*. (2015) show that 97% of Maseru households reported that they have never received social grants and food aid.

Tacoli (2017) mentioned that in Nigeria, half of the income of the urban poor is spent on food, especially processed food. The same is the case in the city of Johannesburg, in South Africa, where most low-income households depend on fast and processed foods. It is further noted that the use of fast foods and processed food by the urban poor households has escalated because of the rise in the price of food purchase and fuel. Battersby (2011) remarked that the high levels of food insecurity in the city of Cape Town and dependency on social safety nets like borrowing money from neighbours implicate an absolute market failure in the urban food systems and this failure is considered to be a product of both the formal and informal food economies. Battersby (2011) also suggests that if urban food security must be improved, there should be recognition of the role the informal market plays in sourcing and creating food access for the urban poor households. It is also essential to understand the connections between the formal and informal food markets to come up with strategies to improve both sectors independently and also as a holistic food system (Battersby, 2011).

Although the informal food economy is regarded as the main food security source that is reliable for low-income and poor urban households, the informal economy is largely neglected in officiated documents that are aiming in ensuring food security in urban poor and low-income households in Southern African cities (Battersby, 2011). The Integrated Food Security Strategy for South Africa (2015) says nothing about the informal food markets. Reduction of vulnerability to market fluctuations and empowering market systems are the only factors that are mentioned, there is no emphasis that the informal economy is considered to be part of these markets (DoA, 2002). Similarly, the election manifesto for African National Congress (ANC) in 2009 mentioned food security as one of their top preferences, yet they have not shown any concern for the informal sector. There was only a concern reflected with regards to food prices but the reference was with the formal markets (ANC, 2009). As Vink and Kristen (2009) highlighted, calculations by the Cost-Plus-Incentive Fee (CPIF) also to a large extent neglected informal food price changes. Moreover, the department of health on the Integrated Nutrition Programme has neglected the informal (DoH, 2002).

2.6 Food Dimension 3: Food Utilisation

Utilisation is regarded as the way the body uses the food consumed, relating mostly to the nutritional content and diet diversity of the food. Individual sufficient nutrient and energy intake reflects good feeding practises, the way food is prepared, diet diversity and intra-household distribution of food (Tacoli *et al.* 2013). According to Battersby (2016), rural food insecurity is a result of lack of food (scarcity), which manifested in undernutrition, on the other hand, in the urban setting the results of food insecurity are due to poor food quality that leads to malnutrition and deficiency in micronutrients. Beaulac, Kristjansson, and Cummins (2009) and Larson (2009) indicate that in urban areas and cities, food that is considered fresh and nutritious are usually higher in prices and their prices hinder the urban poor dwellers to purchase them. Kader (2005) claims that urban poor households opt for fruits and vegetables that are perishable, that usually come from rural areas or are imported from other places, however, they take time to reach them and end up losing freshness along the way which impacts on the nutritional value, as it lowers. When these perishable foods are consumed, they impact negatively on the urban poor households' health.

Battersby and Peyton (2014) assert that developing countries are going through a nutrition transition that is characterised by a shift to diets that have high fat and are low in fibre. This transition began to show up in the 1990s and mostly among the urban people (Popkin, 2003). Batersby and Peyton (2014) indicate that the nutrition transition is also observed in South African urban areas and townships. A study that compared dietary data among the black South Africans in urban areas of South Africa from 1940 and the other study of the same group in 1990 revealed that there was an 11% reduction in consumption of carbohydrates while there was a 59% increase in the intake of fat (Bourne, 2002). The drastic shift in diet is still observed in South Africa even in recent years. The transition is seen with the sales of readily available food and the consumption of processed food (Igumbor *et al.* 2012). According to Battersby and Peyton (2014), the nutrition transition is associated with factors like higher income among the urban people, however, Altman, Hart, and Jacobs (2009) argue that change in diet(s) cannot be linked to higher income because even urban low-income households still consume processed food that suit their income level. Popkin (2003) indicated that the nutrition transition became more severe with the expansion of supermarkets in developing countries. Lang and Barling

(2012) also blame the expansion of supermarkets, relating to the confluence of 'Big Food' and nutrition transition.

In food security literature, urban agriculture has been shown in some cases to meet almost the four dimensions of food security, and food utilisation is one (Diehl *et al.* 2019). Zezza and Tasciotti (2010) argue that urban agriculture not only provides food availability but also increases dietary quality and quantity of food and gives urban poor dwellers a variety of food choices. It is mentioned that urban poor settlers that engage in agriculture have a chance to better food quantities and qualities, they have a potential to consume vegetables and fruits and attain a diverse diet (Litt 2011; Alaimo 2009; Carrion & Vasconez 2003; Argenti, 2000). However, the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) shows that Maseru has limited dietary diversity as the households show high reliance on staple foods (Thabane, Honu & Paramiah, 2014). Through urban agriculture, there is evidence that when urban poor dwellers are educated on crop selection, cases of malnutrition and undernutrition can be improved (Zezza & Tasciotti 2010; Maxwell *et al.* 1998). Looking closely at how access affects food utilisation, cash-based economies are characteristics of urban centres, even the low-income house access their needs through these markets. Households' access to income is fundamental for a household to secure nutritious and healthy food (Kimani-Murage *et al.* 2014). It is reflected that in urban poor settlements, urban poor households live on less than US$1 daily, of which half of it is spent on food. Most of the poor urban dwellers depend on employment in cheap labour, casual jobs in industries and construction sites; while most women work as domestic workers (Ahmed, Hill, Smith, Wiesmann, & Frankenberger 2007; Amendah, Buigut, & Mohamed, 2010). According to Garrett (2004) and Amendah *et al.* (2010), the reliance on low income fosters them to access cheaper food that is less nutritious and often has a deficiency in micronutrients. It is noted that poverty and malnutrition concentration has shifted from rural areas to urban centres. This is observed from the results of data collected in the 1970s to 1990s in developing countries, among eight countries where the main focus was on poverty and other fourteen countries where their focus was on malnutrition. Thus, findings revealed that the number of poor and malnourished individuals have increased among the urban dwellers, of which great numbers are from low-income households (Haddad, Ruel, & Garrett, 1999).

While there is success on production oriented interventions in providing sufficient food supplies through interventions mentioned earlier on food availability discussions, the approach seems to undermine other food security dimensions. According to Gordon *et al.* (2017), the overall food volumes per capita have increased at the cost of compromising the food nutritional content with a huge impact on the safety of food. Gordon *et al.* (2017) assert that the reduction in the nutritional content of food contributes to the deficiencies in the nutrients and required energy supplies for fulfilling human health. FAO (2017) shows that the condition of malnutrition can range from severe undernourishment and obesity, this encompasses all non-communicable diseases (NCDs) that are food-related and the effects of hunger that affect the global population throughout the lifetime due to micronutrients deficiencies. The evidence of the co-existence of overconsumption, undernourishment and deficiencies says a lot about the complexities around achieving sustainable food security. Adam and Gollin (2015) marked that the prevalence of obesity and modality that is observed today should become an important consideration in addressing the current food and nutrition state. According to OECD, FAO and UNCDP (2016), the production oriented food security measures have produced only modest results in globally addressing food security. This was through focusing on temporary agricultural production and relief interventions. Therefore, there was a decline in prolonged hunger that equally halved malnutrition (Gordon *et al.* 2017), and nonetheless, FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2017) reveal that the levels of global hunger and malnutrition are once again on the rise.

Clover (2003) indicated that rising food production has not met the World Food Summit (WFS) 1996 target to reduce hunger. Lying with the figures illustrated by FAO *et al.* (2017), the global undernourished population has increased from 777 million people in 2015 and increased to 815 million people in 2016. Equally, the changes in food systems have exacerbated the emergence of obesity and diseases related to overconsumption (Adam & Gollin, 2015). The global figures of obese and overweight people have doubled in recent years (WHO, 2014), figures arising from 921 million in 1980 to 2.1 billion in 2003 (Ng, Fleming, Robinson, Thompson & Graetz, 2014). When these figures are broken down, among adults, there is an increase of 27.5% of which 15% are women and 11% are men (WHO, 2014). Similarly, Ng *et al.* (2014) illustrate that between 1980 and 2013, overweight and obesity prevalence among children increased by 47.1%, which resulted in 42 million obese children globally (WHO, 2014). Cohen and Garett

(2010) explained that the growth in the agri-food sector in cities gives consumers a wide food choice and diets. Though this might be positive in some respect, it however, increases imbalances in food intake energy levels and hotspots chronic diseases (FAO *et al.* 2017).

Kimani-Murage *et al.* (2014) indicate that food insecurity is the main attribute of several crises and a sudden downfall in the population's food security and this leads to escalating morbidity and mortality. Ruel *et al.* (2008) used the UNICEF conceptual framework on malnutrition causes as a guide to describing issues that surround food and nutrition security in urban centres. They argue that food markets are not well located to address the volume(s) of food that pass through them. They further show that the retail outlets in urban areas are small and scattered and this enables the urban poor an easy access but makes gains that are minimal from economies of scale (Ruel *et al.,* 2008). Furthermore, it is stated that urban poor consumers struggle to buy in large quantities as they are bound to pay higher prices for units purchased because they buy this food on a daily basis. Moreover, this pattern of purchase encourages high reliance on fast and processed food due to low income and factors related to cooking arrangements and patterns. The reliance on street food consumption impacts negatively on consumers because of the nutritional content of fast foods and processed food.

There has also been an ongoing critique relating to informal food economy, particularly food accessed from the street vending and fast foods because they are regarded to be lacking nutritional values. The systematic review that intended to determine the nutritional contribution that street food has on the diet of urban poor households revealed that they provide a high content of protein in every day intake. There are also concerns that street foods are high in carbohydrates, sugar and fat content (Tacoli, 2017). According to Theron and Kruger (2014), low-income urban households struggle to attain a diverse and nutritious diet because they can only afford to attain a typically monotonous diet. They indicate that urban poor households' diet has high starch content but has a deficiency in fruits, vegetables, animal products and dairy intake, and this has resulted in diverse nutritional deficiencies. Theron and Kruger (2014) further indicated that urban low-income households can hardly attain adequate food nutrients as long as they regularly consume the same staple food because this is likely to lead to several micronutrients deficiency. They revealed that in a study that was carried out in Vaal, South

Africa, most urban settlers indicated that food they consume is purchased from a local tuck-shop and that they can have three meals per day, though dietary intake has a deficiency in most contents except for carbohydrates (Theron & Kruger, 2014).

Feeley, Pettifor, and Norris (2009) made an indication that South Africa is confronted with the global challenge of obesity and chronic illness that come as a result of poor nutrition and bad eating patterns. Feeley *et al.* (2009) also mentioned that it is very essential for urban low-income households to be cognisant of eating habits and to monitor their eating patterns. Reduction of fast foods and processed food must be taken into consideration as they are regarded as the western unhealthy patterns of eating that African countries have copied. Feeley *et al.* (2009) argue that fast foods have high carbohydrate and fat content and are poor in fibre. Literature has argued about the role of informal food economy among the urban low-income households and populations, however, the critiques that surround the informal food economy about food security must not be rejected because to say an urban poor household is food secure, all four dimensions of food security must be met simultaneously (Tacoli *et al.* 2013).

2.7 Dimension 4: Food Stability

Food stability is dependent on the ability of individual households, even in times of unforeseen crisis, to be able to procure production and food supplies continually (Armar-Klemesu, 2000). Urban dwellers in developing countries have limited purchasing power as they are engaged in jobs that pay less or are employed in the informal sector, thereby having to have food for the present moment (Crush *et al.* 2017). According to Tacoli *et al.* (2013), stability of food availability, access and utilisation should be present overtime to conclude that a household is food secure. They emphasise that even if a household can have adequate food intake today, they are considered food insecure when they cannot afford to have adequate food access periodically (Tacoli *et al.* 2013). Battersby (2011) remarked that food instability may be a factor of a hike in food prices, unemployment, climate change and political instability, making the urban poor more vulnerable to food insecurity. According to Ruel *et al.* (2010), the world has adequate resources for food production for its population to cover up for the next few decades, even though supplies are anticipated to increase at a higher rate than population growth among developed countries with higher income, for developing countries with lower

income, a great majority of poor people will continue to be food insecure. Moreover, it is stated that the majority of people who struggle in attaining nutritional needs and food stability will be poor urban dwellers (Ruel *et al.* 2010).

2.8 Conclusion

The chapter provided a discussion of food security beyond diet and nutrition. The literature on food insecurity and four dimensions of food security was explored, being physical food availability, physical and economic access, food utilisation and food stability. Urban agriculture seemed to attain greater policy enthusiasm and is considered promising in meeting urban food insecurity among low-income households. However, issues of land persist to be a problem that hinders urban poor households from producing or growing their own food. They do not have enough land or rights of ownership to the little land that may be available to grow food. Food availability, through urban agriculture, has been criticised because its advocates seem to neglect other aspects of food security as they claim that urban agriculture is a holistic approach to meeting urban poor households' food needs. Food access is seen as a major factor hindering food security among the urban poor as they depend mostly on income to meet their food security needs. Literature has indicated that food is available in abundance to feed the global population but the most challenge is with access as urban poor individuals do not have access to decent jobs that pay well but rely on casual and/ or less paying jobs. This situation has fostered the urban low-income households to rely mostly on informal food markets.

The informal food markets have, however, been criticised for providing food that often lacks micronutrients and leads to ill-health. Nonetheless, the urban poor households are compelled to consume food like fast foods and processed food as they can only afford such. The presence of supermarkets in the urban areas and cities through the food desert concept does not meet food security needs for urban poor households because they cannot afford to buy food in bulk. The informal economy, though criticised for its inability to provide nutritious food however, it sells food in units that the low-income households can afford and also provides food packages on credit, unlike the informal food markets. It has been observed that as long as food availability and food access persist to be a food security challenge among the urban poor, it is going to be hard for the urban poor to attain a nutritious diet, good health and food stability.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides insights into the research approach, discussing the research methodology and data collection methods deployed, including its relevance to the study. This chapter also describes the data analysis approach used and the ethical considerations, a vital component that helped to determine the research strategies used. This included ensuring that no harm was done to any participants and/or actions that could compromise the data collected and ultimately the quality of the outcome of the study. It further provides the hardships that the study encountered that could have impacted on data.

3.2 Research approach: Social constructivist

According to Creswell (2012), research is guided by the researcher's stance or belief about the nature of social reality and also about what can be known (ontology), the nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired (epistemology). Bryman (2012) on the other hand, asserts that a research approach is built on assumptions about how the world is understood and viewed; and worldviews are therefore informed either through an ontological and/or epistemological understanding. This study has adopted a social constructivist approach. Social constructivism is useful in qualitative studies that aim to understand how people interact with, and understand or perceive the world (McKinley 2015; Creswell, 2014). Equally, Bryman (2012) describes social constructivism as an approach that aims to understand social phenomena and the continuous meaning assigned by social actors. Social reality is therefore not constant but it keeps evolving, hence it views knowledge as indeterminate.

This study sought to explore a social phenomenon of the experiences of food insecurity among low-income urban households based in informal settlements. A social constructivist approach is therefore well suited since all data was gathered using methods that elicit people's interpretations of their experiences. Both focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were conducted in the participants' own real world settings allowing participants to feel more comfortable to share their personal views and experiences. Guided by the social constructivist research approach, the focus group and semi-structured interview questions helped me to thoroughly understand that the participants' food insecurity experiences are not constant and that their experiences change over time.

37

3.3 Research methodology: Qualitative research

The study used a qualitative research methodology, and according to Fossey, Harvey, Mcdemott and Davidson (2002), this methodology originates within disciplines such as anthropology, sociology and psychology. This approach is a form of social action in that it focuses on how people interpret and make logic and coherence of their experiences in order to understand social reality. Qualitative research is inductive in nature and the researcher usually explores insights and meanings in a particular situation (Strauss & Corbin 2008; Levitt, Motulsky, Wertz, Morrow & Ponterotto 2017). Dudwick, Kuehnast, Jones and Woolcock (2006) and Gopaldas (2016) remark that the qualitative research involves engaging purposive sampling as a guide for data collection, often by means of interviews. It can also include observations, immersions, diaries, journals and interviews (Zohrabi, 2013). A qualitative research approach is trusted for its ability to successfully understand and investigate social problems either involving individuals or groups (Creswell, 2014). According to Fossey *et al.* (2002), it also allows for descriptions of social contexts and interpretation of and/or giving meaning to actions and situations. For both data collection and analysis, it uses narrations rather than quantification (Walia, 2015). This methodology is exploratory in nature because it usually seeks to explain 'how and why' a certain social phenomenon operates as it does. It further seeks to enable understanding of the social world and why things happen the way they do (Polkinghorne, 2005).

For the fact that the study focused on human experiences and social phenomena, a qualitative research approach was most relevant as it helped me to be natural in the process of understanding social reality. Bryman (2012) sees naturalism as involving the need for a researcher to be true and real about the nature of the phenomenon that is being investigated. According to Matza (1969:5), naturalism is viewed as "the philosophical view that strives to remain true to the nature of the phenomenon under study and claims fidelity to the natural world". Naturalism in social research also seeks to minimise the intrusion of artificial data collection (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019). The qualitative research approach also helped me to establish how participants individually and as a group share similar and different food insecurity experiences. Through the participants shared stories and reflected emotions I was able to get the intensity of food insecurity among the participants and this was significant data that the study needed for analysis as the study was purely narrative.

3.4 Research design: Case study

This study used a case study design and Thibella settlement was used as a case study. The case selected is a very vulnerable settlement in the city of Maseru and studying this settlement gave the settlers a voice to say what they experience and share what they think could be done by different parties to make their lives easier and better. Case studies are studies about a particular case allowing for an intensive investigation that also understands the complexity and distinctive nature of the case (Stake 1996). A case study is an ideal approach in social research where an in-depth and holistic investigation is required (Feagin, Orum & Sjoberg, 1991). According to Yin (2003:13), a case study is defined "as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used". Case studies are used in a variety of investigations or research but are most common in social studies (Tellis, 1997). Case studies are also relevant when the researcher intends to attain details from the viewpoint of a group being studied within a bounded setting and context (Mohajan, 2018). Feagin *et al.* (1991) consider case studies as a useful tool as it acts as a voice for the voiceless and gives power to the powerless. Bryman (2012) asserts that case studies favour qualitative studies especially when participant observation and interviews are deployed as methods of data collection. He further states that case study suggests that fieldwork was done in a single or particular location.

Yin (1993) has identified different but specific types of case studies, namely; exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. This study aligned with the exploratory case study approach which Yin (1993) states that it is most relevant in social research. According to Zaida (2003), an exploratory case study involves examining data, scenario or case closely at the surface level and deep level in order to better understand the phenomenon under investigation. Thomas (2011) and Gustafsson (2017) show that a single case design refers to studying a singular case while multiple case design refers to studying multiple cases. This case study focuses on a single case bounded in a geographical space and socioeconomic conditions that determine the way people live and eat.

The exploratory case study design allowed for a closer investigation into low income households and individuals' interactions and daily experiences in order to clearly understand

their feelings and perceptions of their food realities in the Thibella settlement. This particular study, a single case study, bounded within Thibella informal settlement, explored food insecure participants' experiences, purposively sampled, and investigated through focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. The chosen data collection methods, facilitated through the case study design, allowed for exploration and deeper understanding of food insecurity experiences among the urban poor household.

A case study approach was relevant because it allowed for understanding 'how' food insecurity realities are experienced based on the viewpoint of the Thibella settlers. The information and data gathered in this study was purely based on the voices and experiences of the individuals and groups studied. Tellis (1997) emphasises that case studies provide relevant, often unheard, voices to be heard; voices of people who tend to be under-valued and therefore access to these voices and their experiences tend to provide previously unknown insights on the problem under investigation. The case study approach was also useful because I studied the participants within their own environment and home life settings where they were at a natural state and I was able to explore and understand the complexities surrounding their real-life situations; strengths of a case study approach as highlighted by Zaida (2003).

3.5 Data collection

3.5.1 Overview

It is very important for a researcher who has chosen a qualitative research methodology to clearly choose the correct research methods for data collection in order to meet the research objectives (and that speaks to the study approach and design). Bryman (2012) asserts that the research method that a researcher decides on is a guiding framework that helps address the research objectives and answer research questions. As the first step for data collection, the participants for the study were selected through purposive sampling. Primary data was then collected by means of focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. Observations, as another method of data collection, was considered but due to time constraints, I had to drop it because it required more time on the field with participants and with COVD-19 restrictions this was not possible as COVID-19 wave 3 was starting to threaten the country. However, the two methods of data collection used still yielded satisfactory and insightful data for this study. In order to gain rich data, I conducted three focus group discussions and six semi-structured

interviews which allowed for rich data collection. I intended to conduct semi-structured interviews with twenty households but again due to the existence of COVID-19 pandemic and its implications, I had to cut down my intended sample and interview six households. For a qualitative study, the six interviews provided rich and in-depth data that the study needed.

3.5.2 Sampling: Purposive

Sample selection in qualitative research has critical effects on the outcomes of the research (Coyne, 1997). Most researchers are criticised for their inability to describe their sampling strategies sufficiently and this leads to difficulty in the interpretation of findings, and as a result the replication of the study also becomes affected (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim 2016). This study used purposive sampling. Patton (1990) indicates that the logic and strength of purposive sampling is that it is information-rich and provides in-depth data assuming the correct data collection methods are used in combination with the sampling approach. Dornyei (2007) asserts that in any study, researchers seek samples of groups that they strongly believe will provide maximisation and possibility of data that respond to research questions and address research objectives. It is further stated that purposive sampling involves the engagement of knowledgeable people (or people with relevant experiences) to attain a rich data supply. Collingridge and Gantt (2008) show that the selection of participants should have a clear rationale and must meet a specific purpose that relates to research questions or objectives, hence commonly described as 'purposive'. According to Sobal (2001), the selection of participants depends on what the researcher wants to know, inquiry purpose and its usefulness. It is also stated that the participants are selected due to their personal experience and knowledge of the topic being studied (Dornyei, 2007).

Guided by purposive sampling insights and techniques, thirty Thibella urban households who were classified as poor and poorest were selected as participants (criterion is detailed further down in this section). In this case, though the settlement is dominated by people who experience extreme poverty and socio-economic inequality, some were lacking a few basic needs because they had dignified housing and better income and were classified as average, while others were lacking most of the basic needs if not all, and some were classified as poor while others as poorest. The chief revealed that the selected participants could be knowledgeable about the urban food insecurity challenge because they live in a very vulnerable

urban settlement where poverty and inequality are most evident. Based on their day to day food insecurity experiences, they were the most relevant group that could meet the purpose of the study and respond to the research objectives. The sampled households were rural-urban migrants except for one participant who is an urban resident though her grandparents were migrants but managed to get permanent residence. Initially, the study intended to have participants that are beneficiaries of social assistance programmes and those that have applied for them but are not yet beneficiaries. Therefore, the selection of such people would be facilitated by the local chief because with the authority he is granted, he is the only person who is allowed to refer individuals for social assistance services through a written and stamped letter. The chief was in a position to know some of his people who are beneficiaries and other beneficiaries would remind him of others. Unfortunately, for this particular settlement, there were no social assistance beneficiaries and settlers that applied for social assistance grants. There were no social assistance beneficiaries because the settlement is dominated by rural-urban migrants who do not qualify to receive urban benefits because they do not have permanent residence in the city. If they are to apply for them, they will have to go back to their rural communities where they have permanent residence.

The chief had his own lists where he had categorised his settlers according to their needs (the list had the average, poor and the poorest households. He packed those lists ready in his office for convenience purposes, if there could be any forms of assistance or humanitarian acts from the government or NGOs as they usually provide humanitarian assistance to the settlers. He was then able to assist me in selecting households for the study from the lists and those who consented were engaged for sampling. As stated in chapter one on the rationale of the study, unlike in rural communities, there is no national database in Lesotho that categorises households in urban settlements which would have made categorisation of households and selection easier. The chief listing and categorisation of the household was facilitated by the WFP through the Food Management Unit (FMU) staff as they usually give humanitarian assistance to the urban settlements; this settlement studied was no exemption. In order to avoid settlers having to fight for humanitarian assistance and relief programmes from WFP, the FMU staff and Lesotho Red Cross Society together facilitated a training to urban settlers on how to categorise themselves as urban households according to their needs when FMU and Lesotho Red Cross Society provided assistance, the training was called 'targeting' (LRCS, 2009). The

chief used the same categorisation and these lists are constantly updated since there are several non-profit organisations that provide assistance in the form of food, clothes and sometimes even temporary jobs such as cleaning the city; the latter are often campaigns facilitated by the municipality.

As a trained social worker, I was able to engage with the low-level socioeconomic group. Owing to the sensitive nature of the study, my background helped me to overcome the emotional reflections of the sampled participants which were beyond doubt inevitable. My professional language also guided the selection to be easier in that though the food insecurity topic is sensitive, I was able to present the purpose of the study in a simple language that did not belittle participants or make them feel vulnerable. Moreover, the sample selection was made easier because I am a Lesotho national and clearly understand the cultural and social barriers that could be attached to the topic. Clearly knowing the sample that the study needed and guided by the research objectives and professional background made the sampling process less hectic.

3.5.3 Collection method 1: Focus groups discussions

Focus group discussions are considered an integral part in social studies. Silverman (2000) relates that the purpose of focus groups in a research is to help the researcher to explore the beliefs, views and experiences of the participants of the study. It is a data collection method that uses group discussions to address the research questions and objectives for a particular study through the guidance of a researcher, moderator or facilitator (Kitzinger 1994; Morgan 1998; Bryman 2012). In order to ensure quality discussions, the researcher must be mindful of the composition of the focus group (Gill & Stewart, 2008). The study engaged in three focus group discussions that constituted eight participants in each group. This size of the group was selected as it would allow a good flow of discussion and make the participants feel that they were part of a group and not focused on each individual; essentially this was intended to make participants feel more comfortable. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) consider the size of a group for a focus group very important. They suggest that a researcher is better off with over-recruiting slightly and managing a larger focus group than to under-recruit and having to deal with risks like participants drop-outs or having unsatisfactory discussions. They further advised that, since in any group participants can drop out, it is best to have a bigger group. This, then,

also prompts the choice to recruit 8 people per group. Bloor, Frankland, Thomas and Robson (2001) show that when the focus groups are over recruited they can be chaotic and frustrating if not well managed. They remark that small groups often have the possibility of limited discussion and information. Though large groups are chaotic, unmanageable and frustrating, they provide quality [open] discussions when well managed (Bloor *et al.* 2001).

The focus groups constituted of both females and males and mixed ages except for persons less than 18 years because they are categorised as children according to the Lesotho Children's Protection Act [CPWA] (2011). Designing the groups in this way was made possible by selecting mixed gender and ages from the lists provided by the chief for sampling. I considered engaging mixed ages and genders to observe how participants argue, interact and reach consensus eventually if needed. Mixing groups was considered to also allow for taking note of different opinions that participants might have and how they perceive their levels of food insecurity and experience thereof differently. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) however, argue that an excellent solution to group compilation does not exist as mixed groups are always bound to have an impact on the data, depending on the factors such as the participants' age, gender and social status, and specifically how this plays out in different cultures. What is important is for the researcher to understand the implications of a mixed group and then to be able to facilitate and coordinate the focus group discussions proceedings so that they all have an opportunity to equally and freely participate. Gill and Stewart (2009) stated that the success of a focus group depends on the interaction among the participants themselves. Just like in any research interview, the interview guide for focus groups should be less structured but it should also not be a loose guide of topics that are going to be discussed (Gill & Stewart, 2008). In the preparation of interview guide for focus groups, Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) suggest the following general principles are to be followed:

i.   Questions should not be general but should be more specific and
ii.   Questions should be ordered according to the importance of the research agenda.

Focus group discussions were selected to gain an understanding of the experiences of food insecurity among urban poor households where experiences are shared collectively among people who are confronted by a similar situation; focus groups are helpful to achieve this (Reid & Reid, 2005). During the discussions, I discovered that there were a lot of dynamics where other participants were more vocal than others and some felt comfortable to share their

experiences only when one particular participant opened up about the same issue discussed and this was the most outstanding strength of the focus groups method of data collection. The discussions were meant to be interactive so regularly probing questions were asked so that those who might have had hidden their experiences behind others' were drawn out to speak up and share.

Owing to the sensitive nature of the topic, there were points where the discussions heated up with disagreements and emotions and this was chaotic and frustrating to manage. My professional background, as a social worker, helped me to navigate this phase and balance their arguments while not influencing changes in their different opinions. The strength and success of the focus group discussions was grounded on the fact that the sessions were conducted in the participants' native language (Sesotho). Again, though there were questions that were used as a guide for the discussions, each data collection day was made up of written field notes and audio recordings with participant consent. The notes and recordings were later transcribed and translated into English. Bryman *et al.* (2014) indicated that there are two ways to write field notes, jotting notes on site and journaling. I jotted field notes and later had a reflection of all the day's events in a journal. To avoid disrupting the flow of the discussions, field notes were jotted briefly as they included only key pointers that I further reflected on later. Bryman *et al.* (2014) remarked that the small amounts of field notes can be reflected into a journal later, so was with this study. The audio recordings were very useful as I had to pay close attention to the discussions and not miss any important detail/data. Davis (2017) supports the use of audio recordings in social research as it enables to cover details of lengthy conversations and stories.

[Focus groups' discussion guide – see Appendix A]

3.5.4 Collection method 2: Semi-structured interviews

The sensitive nature of this study, specifically questions that could not be discussed in a group setting were covered in the individual semi-structured interviews. This allowed participants to individually talk openly about their food insecurity experiences even those that are unpleasant, those that were not revealed by the participants in focus group discussions. These were the questions that investigated whether the household had enough food and where they had to express moments when they experienced hunger. The focus groups and semi-structured

questions shared similarities, the only difference was that the questions were discussed in-depth in semi-structured interviews because the space allowed the participants to express their experiences openly, those that they considered private. The other difference is that in focus group discussions questions were directed to a particular individual but were discussed collectively.

In-depth interviews are considered an integral part of social studies. Silverman (2000) relates that the purpose of an in-depth interview in a research is to help the researcher to explore the beliefs, views and experiences of the participants of the study. In every data collection through interviews, the place where the interview is conducted is integral because it determines the quality of feedback or responses. Therefore, in-depth interviews were conducted in six households and were conducted in the comfort of their homes. Kvale (1996) indicated that interviews are most effective when conducted at a place free from distraction and at locations that most suit participants. Conducting interviews at the participants' households did not just give participants comfort but it also allowed me to see the household situations because it provided significant data about the households' socio-economic status.

I interviewed only the households' heads, however, there were households where children and other family members were present during the time scheduled for the interview. The participants and I navigated a private space [outdoors] where we conducted our interviews. I decided to conduct the interviews outdoors in order to allow appropriate social distance with the participants due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and regulations. For some households, privacy was not a challenge because there were no other individuals at home but for some, it was a great challenge. Where privacy was a challenge, we navigated a space where no one could see or hear what was discussed, to allow participants to speak freely and express their emotions. I decided or chose to engage in in-depth interviews because I wanted to gain a deeper sense of understanding of experiences of food insecurity among urban poor households from an individual's own perspective, experience and point of view. Gill and Stewart (2008) mentioned that interviews are appropriate when there is little information known about the phenomenon under study but the researcher requires getting detailed insights from individual participants. Thus, since the study explored urban food insecurity experiences among low-

income households, some of the experiences were bound to be sensitive and emotional. Semi-structured interview questions were drafted and used for interview sessions. A semi-structured interview guide has various key questions that assist a researcher to clearly define areas that need to be explored, while it also allows a researcher and participants to diverge in order to pursue an idea or give a more detailed response (Britten, 1999). The semi-structured interview questions are more significant when 'depth' is required, Gill and Stewart (1999) as with this study.

Pontin (2000) suggests that for any interview that requires 'depth' on the social phenomenon, questions should be open-ended, neutral and understandable, starting with questions that the participants can easily respond to is encouraged, this builds confidence and puts participants at ease. Moreover, it builds rapport and a researcher is more likely to get rich data. Though the interview guide started with questions that the participants could easily respond to, some participants' emotions were triggered even by simple questions. To navigate this challenge, guided by my social work profession, I immediately swapped the order of the question in order to balance the participants' emotional state. As with focus group discussions, field notes, journaling and audio recordings were also engaged with the consent of the participants. The study also used digital photography to capture data that would portray a bigger meaning in pictures than in words. With the participants' permission, pictures were captured outside their houses and the neighbouring areas. Wills, Meah, Dickinson and Short (2013) suggested that digital photography is a way to capture data that could not otherwise be captured in words.

 [Semi-structured interview guide – see Appendix B]

3.6 Data analysis: Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is a flexible approach for analysing qualitative data. It identifies, analyses and reports data through themes and patterns relating to research questions and data collection findings, taking the ontological or epistemological position (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Boyatzis (1998), this approach seeks to organise and describe data in rich detail. Although thematic analysis is widely used as an ideal data analysis approach for qualitative research, it is, however, rarely acknowledged compared to other data analysis methods (Roulston, 2001). Unlike other data analysis methods, thematic analysis is not associated with any theoretical

framework that pre-exists, hence, it can be applied within various theoretical frameworks (Clarke & Braun, 2013). It can be relevant for essentialist and realist methods in that they report participants' experiences and give meaning to their reality. It can again work well with the constructionist method as it explores patterns in which realities, meanings, events and experiences are affected in a range of phenomena within society (Braune & Clarke, 2014).

With this approach, a researcher should be clear about what a theme is and be able to define it and report with significant relevance. Braune and Clarke (2006) assert that a theme should capture significant data that relate to research questions. It should be a representation of well-patterned responses and meanings that share common significance. Therefore, it is important to note that a theme does not rely on quantification or the number of occurrences but mostly on capturing important aspects of data in relation to research questions (Clarke & Kitzinger, 2004). Boyatzis (1998) remarks that themes are identified basically focusing on the explicit meanings of data, this means that a researcher does not have to look or go beyond what the participants have provided.

Thematic analysis was relevant for this study as it was purely qualitative in nature and had unstructured data presented textually and transcribed data that could be complex and time intensive to analyse. Thematic analysis was helpful in that, as soon as I collected data, I started putting together aspects of data that had similar significance as the first process for the data analysis phase. To have relevant themes, I observed the patterns of data and the occurrences. By observing patterns and creating themes I did not, in any way, try to condense data and end up losing important one but it was meant to put together pieces of data that have similarities and occurrences together so that I can be able to familiarise myself with every important aspect of data. Assigning and creating themes in order that I become familiar with data did not come easily because the qualitative approach often has too much data that is presented textually. I had to immerse myself deeply in the data at hand by reading textual data from the field and one that has been transcribed over and over to an extent where I was familiar with every significant data. The immersion was made possible in that I repeatedly read data in order to search for meanings and patterns. This was hectic and time consuming because I had a big sample size that provided a lot of data that I all had to put together to identify relevant patterns.

3.7 Ethical consideration

I went through a lengthy ethics application process because the research was only possible through physical interaction with the participants. There were strict ethics application process guidelines that the study had to lie with due to COVID-19 pandemic. The study was planned to be conducted over one year (2020) but due to prolonged lockdown, data collection was not possible. The ethics approval for the study was received from Research Ethics Committee-Humanities, Stellenbosch University on the 15th July 2021 from September 2020 – July 2021. Due to the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic and the sensitivity of the study, the research had to lie with the ethical considerations below:

3.7.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation

In a research that engages human participation, a researcher is bound by ethics to clearly explain to participants what the study entails so that on their own right can decide to voluntarily be participants of the study or refuse. Before data collection starts, it is very important for a researcher to get informed consent or willingness from participants (Jelsma & Clow, 2005). According to Ensign (2003), the researcher must maintain compliance with research expectations that were stipulated when the researcher introduced the study to the participants. This means that data collection should only cover the factors that the participants consented to, nothing less or more. I explained the research objectives and expectations of the study to the participants who volunteered to participate. The informed consent and voluntary participation helped the data collection process to go very well because participants were clear of the research objectives and what is expected of them. The informed consent and voluntary participation helped to carry the research successfully amidst the COVID-19 pandemic as the participants were clear on how to comply with the Lesotho COVID-19 guidelines and regulations.

3.7.2 Integrity

In the research process, it is very vital for a researcher to be mindful of the primary and secondary data collected and the presentation of the findings. In the field of research, integrity is understood as the sum of responsibilities for the research environment, on one hand, it also relates to reassurance to the community that data was captured and presented as it really is (Ensign, 2003). Integrity binds the researcher to have honesty, accuracy and efficiency when reporting data that was collected from the participants (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001).

They further reflect that integrity restricts a researcher's personal bias in influencing findings but rather encourages credibility on quality and results reproducibility. I was therefore bound by integrity as per ethics requirements to collect data and present findings with all honesty and respect as possible. While I was collecting data, integrity as an ethical principle guided me to be sensitive and not influence data to meet my own expectations.

3.7.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality is an essential ethics consideration in social research, especially in the setting where the study engages vulnerable groups. Hurst (2008) mentioned that there are varying definitions of vulnerability in terms of research involving humans, among the definitions, vulnerable people are considered to be people who need special protection against harm and exploitation through maintaining confidentiality. Arifin (2008) sees confidentiality and anonymity as a reassurance that the researcher gives to the participants by not letting their personal information be revealed in the study. In this study, data that was collected was only used for the purpose of the study not beyond. It was not accessible to anyone except the researcher. Data was stored confidentially and safely to prevent data loss and corruption. To affirm confidentiality and anonymity, where I requested participants' personal details such as names, they were provided with new names that were used to identify participants and codes (GP1, GP2 and GP3) are used to identify participants' in focus group discussions.

3.7.4 No harm to participants

The researcher is bound by ethics to create an environment that is free from harm, danger and exploitation for the participants. Burns and Grove (2005) emphasise that this ethical principle relates to reassurance that the researcher makes, not to expose participants to physical, social, economic and emotional harm and danger either internally or externally. Treece and Treece (1982) noted that it is the researcher's responsibility to ask questions that do not embarrass or dehumanise participants or expose them to any form of harm or danger. They further indicate that a researcher should avoid asking questions that require information that can make participants anxious. For this study, I made an assurance that the study did not expose the participants to any risk, harm and/or danger; this was also well clarified in the participant's consent form. As much as the study is sensitive in nature because it engages the participation of a disadvantaged group, I made sure that the questions asked were designed in a way that the participants did not feel vulnerable or exposed. Furthermore, data was collected in the time

when people were afraid of being in contact with COVID-19, thus, I made sure that the participants were not exposed to any danger of contacting the virus. This was made possible by complying with COVID-19 rules and regulations, wearing face masks, sanitising regularly and keeping social and physical distance.

3.8 Limitations of the study

This section provides some of the factors that arose in the data collection process(es) and could have limited the outcomes of the study.

- Having chosen a qualitative research study, the purpose was to attain rich and in-depth data as the focus was on human experiences that may reflect in the form of beliefs, feelings and emotions, the data collection sessions were emotionally draining. Sessions took a longer time than expected especially for focus groups where participants would argue in opinion. Due to the mentioned factors, I experienced burnouts several times in the process of data collection and this might have limited the study.

- Due to the aspiration to acquire in-depth data and to cater for dropouts, the focus groups were slightly over recruited and were hectic to manage so I experienced burnout and fatigue.

- Due to the aspiration for qualitative in-depth data, the researcher opted for larger sample size but the fear of contacting COVID-19 led some participants sampled for semi-structured interviews to drop out.

- Apart from the participants who dropped out because of the fear of COVID-19 as data collection was conducted when wave 3 started to show up. I also had to cut down my sample size to minimise risks and the country initiated a lockdown, however, the remaining sample size was still enough for a qualitative study.

- Conducting the study during the COVID-19 pandemic was stressful and straining because the study became distracted by several lockdowns.

- Undertaking the research during the COVID-19 pandemic was quite draining mentally and emotionally so I lived under fear.

- There are several studies that take place in urban communities, though not related to this researcher; as a result, people were reluctant to volunteer to participate.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter reflected the social constructivism paradigm that became the researcher's stance in approaching this study that is exploratory in nature. The researcher was guided by the characteristics of a qualitative study to choose appropriate approaches and methods to tackle the study. Since this qualitative study had a particular focus on experiences of food insecurity among the urban poor household of Thibella settlement, it was bound to choose the case study approach as the suitable approach to guide the study towards achieving its objectives. When I was clear on the research grounds and approaches guiding the study, data was collected using research methods that were identified as specific for taking the study through meeting its research objectives. It is worth noting that choosing appropriate research methods did not come easy as I initially had different methods in mind but later on the methods had to be dropped as they were not going to help the study attain its objectives. The chapter proceedings could not have been possible without me having to be guided and abide by the ethical principles of conducting social research. Finally, it showed the hardship that the study encountered that could otherwise have affected or limited the study.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the results of the study that were derived from a qualitative approach that provided insights into the experiences of the urban poor households in Thibella settlement, in Maseru as the study was purely qualitative. As per the ethics requirement(s) that protects participants' confidentiality, anonymity and identity, the names of the participating households have been changed. The study uses the changed names to refer to the participating households who were sampled for semi-structured interviews and codes to identify each focus group. The qualitative results are presented through themes that the study established during data analysis in order to capture data that has similar significance together. The analysis was based on lived food insecurity experiences of the participating households, not basically on the four dimensions of food security that the study used in order to get a broader understanding of food security.

4.2 Background of households sampled for semi-structured interviews

4.2.1 Overview

This section provides a little background on the households interviewed. In addition to the themes, it is important to provide some context on each household in order to enable deeper understanding and bring to life the different realities lived by the participants.

4.2.1.1 Household one

The household's main source of income is through casual jobs done by Mathabo and her partner. There are five members in the household, Mathabo, her partner and three children, two girls and a boy, ages ranging between 9 and 18 years. The family rents a single room shack for M200.00 per month that is dilapidated and has little privacy for the household members because it is not spacious enough. They battle to cover their basic needs and honour their rent commitments with their inconsistent and low income. All the children attend government schools where primary education is free. The 18-year-old is still in primary school since he has failed several classes due to his parents' socio-economic status. For example, sometimes he would bunk school because he lacked proper school uniform and did not feel comfortable in the company of other children.

4.2.1.2   Household two

The second household is headed by Marorisang, who looks after her two grandchildren, a girl aged 14 and a boy aged 17, she relies on an old-age pension as her main source of income. The Lesotho old-age pension is defined as "a non-contributory, unconditional cash transfer paid to all Basotho over the age of 70 who are not getting any other pension from the government" (World Bank, 2016: 50). Although the household's main source of income is through old-age pension, it is not enough to cater for the household's needs and thus, Marorisang brews and sells alcohol to complement her income. Her grandchildren are at the high school level and she struggles to pay for their fees as secondary education is not free. Household two lives in a rented house with broken windows where they pay M300.00 for rent. Despite feeling that the house is undignified due to poor maintenance, the household's head claims that it is spacious enough and moving to another house might be expensive and potentially smaller.

4.2.1.3   Household three

Tumelo is aged 58 and represents a household of five members – himself, his wife aged 54, twin girls aged 12 and a boy aged 17. The household's livelihood is secured through casual jobs done by the wife since Tumelo is handicapped and cannot work to provide for his family. The twins attend a free primary school while the boy is in secondary school, which the parents struggle to pay for. They have rented a shack damaged during heavy rains and thunderstorms, severely exposing them to bad weather. They pay M300.00 rent a month, which they struggle to honour consistently.

4.2.1.4   Household four

Household four is headed up by Marebokile who lives with her 22 years old disabled son. She is 54 years old and survives on odd jobs, an unreliable source of income, as her son's illness demands continuous care. Marebokile wishes she was able to work in order to provide for her family but she relies on planting crops to survive food challenges. She believes that if it was not for her son's condition, she would do casual jobs regularly unlike when she does them only when relatives or friends have agreed to look after her son.

4.2.1.5   Household five

 The fifth household is headed up by Maliteboho, who is aged 48 and is unemployed. She used to work at a local preschool but was retrenched due to the economic effects of COVID-19. She

is a mother to three children, two girls aged 13 and 9 and a boy aged 7. After she lost her job that provided her with a basic salary, her life changed drastically. Maliteboho does casual work to provide for the family. The children are all in primary school, a free education scheme. The household rents a single room house that has electricity. The rent commitment is M500.00 a month, which she struggles to pay since she has lost her job.

4.2.1.6   Household six

Household six is represented by Mats'epo, an old age pension recipient aged 75 who stays with her 35-year-old daughter who also lost a job due to COVID-19. She has been staying in the settlement from age 32 and used to work as a cleaner in government offices in her active life until now, though she can no longer work because she is old.

4.3   Qualitative results

4.3.1   Overview

The results of the study are purely based on a qualitative approach and thematic analysis, where key themes and sub-categories emerged revealing experiences of household food insecurity, these five themes are: i) no food and we starve, ii) limited or no access to money prohibits access to food, iii) unhealthy food choices, iv) inconsistent income and work in urban areas means we eat and survive on a day to day basis and v) government does not care for our needs. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, written field notes, and reflective journaling. The focus groups and semi-structured interview questions were open-ended and where additional information was provided, it was captured through notes and that information will also be provided in this section. Additionally, to bring the research findings to life, photographs captured during interviews are used.

4.3.2   Theme 1: No food and we starve

It is a requirement for a human being to eat in order to live and this section presents the participants' experiences of battling with making food available in order to have daily meals. The participants reflected sad and emotional experiences but they have not given up on trying to avail themselves food, as the research established that they have adopted several strategies to meet their food needs. The section will narrate the sampled household experiences, the kind of

food they manage to eat and then show the strategies they have adopted to make food available. The participants reflected that they do not have food in their households. Food is not available in the physical form to allow them to access any time they need to cook or eat. They have to buy food every time for it to be available. This was evidenced by the stories reflected in semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions as the participants expressed that they often struggle to have three meals of the day. They shared that there are days when they afford two meals while others said they sometimes afford a single meal daily. Other participants reflected that there are days when they do not have food at all in their homes and they experience hunger. A member in GP2 discussions revealed an emotional experience, he explained;

"ka nako eo ke sitoang ho etsa hore lijo li be teng ebe rea lapa le bana ba ka, ke ipotsa mehlaena ebe ba tlo utloa ke bile ntate a joang bophelong ba bona ha ba hola (when I cannot provide food for my family and we experience hunger, I normally ask myself what my children are going to say about as their father when they grow up)".

The focus groups discussions revealed that the participants are food insecure because they claimed they experience lack of food and hunger sometimes while others experience it often. In GP3 discussions, the participants indicated that sometimes they allow themselves to starve or fast a meal or two so that food can last for a longer period because if they eat three meals the food finishes quickly. One member expressed that she has decided to skip meals as a household head because she spares it for children, she said;

"Nna ke e khethe hore e mpe ebe nna ea sa jeng ka nako enngoe kapa ke je ha nngoe fela ebe lijo ke li bolokela bana (I opt to skip meals or at least have a single meal and save the rest of the food for children)".

The participants indicated that in 2020 and 2021 they experienced lack of food and hunger more than any other years due to the existence of COVID-19 pandemic. They expressed that lack of food and hunger was more felt especially among children because schools had closed for a long time and most children usually eat properly at government schools because there is a free feeding scheme. Through the discussions, the study established that a free feeding scheme in schools plays a significant role in making food available so to survive starvation and hunger. A participant in GP1 explained that as much as she tries to make food available for her household, the food is never enough and she has taught her children to save food, she explained;

"Ha bana ba ba ea sekolong ha li butsoe, ba ja lijo tsa hoseng le tsa mantsiboea fela hae ebe tsa mots'eare ba li ja sekolong, empa nako ena eo likolo li lulang li buloa li koaloa ka lebaka la COVID-19 ke ba rutile hore ba ithute ho ja habeli. Ba lieha ho ja lijo tsa hoseng ebe ka nako eo ba li jang ese ele hammamorao ebe ba ea papaling. Ha ba khula papaling ese ele mantsibea mme base ba jella ho robala (when my children go to school during the time the schools are open, they eat breakfast and dinner only at home because lunch is provided at school. Now when the schools are closed due to COVID-19, I have taught them to save food and eat only two meals. They have late breakfast and go to play with other children and when they come back it is already late so I serve them dinner".

The households sampled for semi-structured interviews also expressed that they experience starvation and hunger. Mathabo explained that her household experiences starvation and hunger most of the time because they hardly ever have food in their household. For every day's needs, the family relies on Mathabo and her partner's income, however, there are days when they are not able to find casual jobs and on such days, they starve. Mathabo and her partner have learned to cope with starving and thus, supplement the starvantion with water, but she expressed that she gets so emotional every moment her children ask for food and she fails to provide them with food, she said;

"O tla fumane ha bana ba re ba lapile ebe ntse ke re ke tlo ba ngoathela feela ke tseba hantle hore ha hona letho ka tlung. Ka nako e nngoe ke tsoa ka tlung ke ikele seterateng ka khopolo ea hore ke tla kopana le motho eo ke motsebang a ka mphang le ha ele M5.00 ke mpe ke ba rekele makoenya. Ba na ba banyane ba be ba lle ha ba batla lijo (When my children ask for food, I tell them that I will dish up for them yet I know very well that there is no food at all in the house, sometimes I leave the house and go to the street hoping I will meet someone I know and ask for M5.00 so that I buy them fat cakes. The younger ones even cry when they want food)".

Mathabo expressed that there is nothing that hurts more than watching her children cry and beg for food that she cannot even provide for. She further explained that when she does not have food she used to ask from the neighbours but she rarely did it. Now with COVID-19 implications and effects, she struggles to provide the household with food most times. However, this time around she hardly asks from the neighbours because she gets ashamed as she thinks she has over done it.

Maliteboho is saddened by the fact that she once worked and was able to provide her household with food. She expressed that she is challenged with food needs because she lost her job due to COVID-19 effects. She explained that when she worked, she was able to buy groceries and/or food items that would last for a month, but now the experience is different because she gets overly stressed and overwhelmed because she has to worry about what her children will eat. Maliteboho indicated that some days are worse than others, especially when she completely runs out of options, she explained;

"Ho bohloko hoo ha bophelo bo fihlela moo motho o bo hloke ntho eo o e jang. Ka nako e nngoe ke e re ebile ho betere ha ke ne ke se na bana ho na le ha ba nchebile ka mohau haholo ha ebile ba sa tloaela ho lapa (It is so hurting when life changes to an extent where you lack food. Sometimes I say, it would be better if I didn't have children unlike when they hopefully expert to provide them with food because they are not used to hunger)".

Maliteboho further expressed that she sometimes locks her children in the house to avoid the humiliation of going to play with other kids or watch them eat while they have nothing to eat. Just like Mathabo who asks for food from the neighbours, Maliteboho indicated that when she did not have food she used to go to the local preschool where she used to work and ask for food. However, she does not do that anymore because she is ashamed. Marebokile showed that though she does not work or do casual jobs often in order to secure her food needs, she has never experienced extreme hunger but this does not indicate any affordability to have food every day out of her own initiatives or means. Her household manages to get food from the neighbours through handouts and gifts. The food comes from the neighbours who like and pity her disabled son. Marebokile indicated that the fact that she does not have food frustrates her so much because she believes that if it was not for her son's condition she would be able to feed her household. She mentioned that she hates being pitied but she accepts handouts because if she does not, her household will starve. Similarly, Tumelo shared that food is available in his household through handouts and gifts because of his condition. He explained that though he accepts the food parcels, as a man, he feels so embarrassed that she cannot make food available for his household and this challenge makes him feel less of a man, he alluded;

"kena le ho utloa bohloko ha re lapa le lelapa la ka hoba ke nna hlooho ea lelapa mme ene tlameha ebe ke nna a etsang hore lijo li be teng. Joale ho bona mosali oa ka a ea holimo le tlase a re sokolela lijo ho mpolaea ho feta (I feel pained when my family starves or experiences

hunger because as a head of the family, I am responsible to make food available for the family. The pain gets worse when I see my wife going up and down to make efforts that we have food)".

Though the study established that the participants' experience food shortage, they expressed that the food they are able to eat is the staple food papa (starch prepared by mixing maize meal with water) and moroho (green leaves vegetables/cabbage). They indicated that *papa* and *moroho* is their common meal in the settlement. Unlike all other participants who rely on *papa* and *moroho*, Matsepo explained that she can have milk and beans in exchange for *papa* and *moroho* because her working son and daughter buy her groceries or give her money. Marorisang explained that to say her household typically eats *papa* and *moroho* does not mean that they are always available for preparation;

"le ha re itlama hore re ja papa le moroho, hona ha ho bolele hore re lula re na le tsona ho ba ka nako e nngoe re robala re itsosa hobane ho le ho putsoa, ntja li nyeka maloala (though we claim that we typically eat 'papa' and 'moroho', this does not mean that they are always available because sometimes we experience days where we do not have food at all)".

During the GP1, GP2, and GP3 discussions, the participants explained that *papa* and *moroho* are available or easy to have because they do not have a good taste like other food does, hence, even when one has *papa* only, he/she can easily get *moroho*. This could be through assistance from others who have it in their gardens or through purchase because it is available at lower prices. They further indicated that having *papa* is more meaningful because it can be consumed raw. One member said;

"*ha fela papa e le teng nna ke e utloe ke khotsofetse hobane e le eona mphothe kea itjella kapa ka letsoai kapa metsi (as long as I have 'papa', I am satisfied because I can eat it raw, with salt or water rather than starve)".*

Papa and *moroho* seemed to be a meal that is commonly served for the sampled households and photo 1 below shows a dish of *papa* and *moroho*.

Photo 1: A typical meal of *papa* and *moroho* (adapted from Mofuoa, 2015)

As explained earlier, the participants have adopted strategies in order to make food available for their households. In all three focus groups discussions, the households indicated that they believe that growing their own food is a response to their lack of food. They explained that in order to have daily meals, they grow their own food, especially vegetables as they indicated that they eat *papa* and *moroho* most of the time. They expressed that though they believe in growing their own food and practise exactly that, it does not mean that the strategy is completely responding to their food needs. The discussion from the GP2 and GP3 revealed that in response to lack of food needs, participants plant crops. However, they expressed that there are several challenges they face towards growing their own food as urban settlers. They explained that the most challenge they are faced with is access to space(s), in other words, gardens for crop production. Mathabo also expressed the same challenge, she has rented a small shack where there is no space for production. Despite this challenge, she has decided to plant a few vegetables by the wall of her shack and yard. During the interview, she said;

"ha fela molimo a ntse a mphile matsoho le kelello ke tla li sebelisa ka hohle, ha re robala ka tlala ke ho ba ke lekile sohle empa ke hlotsoe (as long as I am still physically and mentally able I will make sure I make food available for my family and if we go to bed without food is because I tried all but failed)". Photo 2 below shows Mathabo's engagement in crop production regardless of the limited space she has.

Photo 2: Mathabo's garden by the fence of the yard in Thibella, Maseru (26 July 2021)

Maliteboho showed that though she has a small space for production, she gets discouraged even to use the available land because her rented place does not have security so passersby and animals destroy her crops. Tumelo revealed that he is fortunate to have rented a small shack but in a spacious yard, however, he does not enjoy the space because the landlord denies him to use the land for crop production. He mentioned that the landlord implies that he has rented the accommodation space, not the whole yard; as a result, the whole space is used by the landlord to produce his own crops.

Similarly, GP1 and GP3 indicated that having no rights to the spaces they have rented for accommodation hinders them from growing their own food. They further explained that their location is undignified, as a result, people disrespect them because of the housing condition and yards that are not fenced. This allows for shepherds and herd boys to trespass and feed their crops to their flock. Photo 3 below gives a snapshot of the unfenced houses in the participants' settlement.

Photo 3: Unfenced houses in Thibella, Maseru (28 July 2021)

On contrary, Mats'epo said;

"nna Molimo o nhlohonolofalitse ka motho ea se nang matene, oa bona ha re le tje kaofela moo, e mong le emong o lumelletsoe ho lema meroho ea hae (I am blessed with a landlord who does not bother me, all the tenants here are allowed to plough their own crops)".

She mentioned that she has stayed in the settlement from the age of 32 and now she is an old age pensioner. Mats'epo further stated that due to her loyalty and long stay, she had arrangements with her landlord to not pay rent and one of her responsibilities is to collect rent from other tenants and send it to the landlord. Mats'epo continued to show that she would rather say she is challenged with money to buy strong seeds that are resilient to climate and seasonal changes. Her other challenge is the lack of agro-inputs, she has a large gardening space but cannot afford to tenure the land herself because of old age and her income cannot secure her much food, and again pay someone who takes care of the garden. The study was undertaken in the winter season and Mats'epo had winter produce, though she claimed that the production was not as good as the past years due to lack of agro-inputs. Photo 4 below shows Mats'epo's maize garden with very good looking produce though she claims it is not satisfactory when compared to the past years produce.

Photo 4: Mats'epo's maize ready for harvest found in Thibella, Maseru (30 July 2021)

Marebokile showed that though she does not have enough space for production, she uses the available plot maximally. She indicated that she had been part of a training that equipped her with skills to have various crops on a limited space all year through. This is her response;

"*Mme oa le bona lentloane le, ke tipela metsi a lijana le a hlatsoang ho lona ka nako eohle mme mobu oa teng o lula o shahlile (this plot that you see, every time after washing the dishes and clothes, I dispense water on it and this keeps the soil moist and nourished)*".

4.3.3   Theme 2: Limited or no access to money prohibits access to food

Money is the determinant for food security in an urban setting. It allows settlers to have enough food and buy food of their preferences and choices. This theme relates to how participants explained their experiences with lack of money and their ways of coping with or without money. The sampled households indicated that they do not have enough money to make ends meet and that hinders their households to have enough food. Mathabo explained that she does not have enough food because her household sometimes goes to bed without food. The last time she experienced hunger was in January 2021 when the country was on the second total lockdown due to COVID-19 (wave 2). She mentioned that to have daily meals she would have to do casual jobs, like laundry while her partner does gardening casual jobs. She further indicated that due to COVID-19, her income has declined because most people also have lost

jobs and do not hire people any longer to do casual jobs, they simply cannot afford their services. She claimed that before COVID-19 she was able to make M250.00 per week.

Marorisang also indicated that she struggles to have enough food for her household. She does not have enough money to cover most of her food needs. At her old age, she brews alcohol to make money to add to her old age pension. She claimed that the pension is not enough to provide for the food needs because she uses it also to pay school fees for the orphans she stays with. The interviews were conducted during school winter holidays but Marorisang explained that her grandchildren did not write their mid-term exams as they owed school fees. When I paid them a visit for the interview, the household was packed with people in the yard who came to buy home-brewed alcohol. Marorisang added that she can have M200.00 per week out of the alcohol she brews and sells, however, the money is still not enough for the households food needs and school fees. Again, she had no idea about the existing unconditional school bursary for orphaned children that her grandchildren qualify for.

Responses and discussions from the focus group discussions revealed that most households struggle with having enough food because the participants claimed that the city life is cash oriented and they do not have decent and permanent jobs, so they cannot afford their food needs. Discussions in GP1 showed that to access food, Thibella settlers also resort to going to the dumping site in their settlement to access food as a strategy to have more food also as a strategy to have money because they sell the food from the dumping site to other settlers.

The study established that the participants' food needs are not only based on money but also on choices, preferences, locations and relationships. During the focus groups discussions, participants explained that what they choose to eat is based on their income. They showed that as much as they are in the city centre, where all different food markets are within their reach, some settlers have never even set foot in most of the shops. The reason is that they never bother because they cannot afford prices in such shops yet the food they need is available in those shops. To support this argument, a member from GP1 discussions said;

"mabenkele a mang o le motho ha o icheba o utloa o se na le tokelo ea ho kena ho ona ho latela chebahalo ea hao. O tla fumana le bo matjekelane ho tloha ha o kena fela se ntse ba o tonetse mahlo ebile ba o sala morao ka khopolo ea hore o tlo seba (due to my appearance, I

don't feel worthy to make my way into certain food markets or shops, even when I have decided to, the security guards would give you a terrible look upon entrance and also follow you as you go through thinking you are going to steal)".

Participants indicated that though they are privileged to go to food stores without having to pay for transport, they do not enjoy the privilege because they would rather choose to buy food at the local spaza (tuck) shops and street vendors. They explained that they make this choice because most of the food stores are owned by foreigners and have strict operational rules and regulations while tuck-shops owners and street vendors are Basotho and are flexible to negotiate their food needs with. They further explained that tuck-shops and street vendors allow them to have food on credit, with the promise that they will pay as soon as they have means of money. Some relationships have been established between themselves and sellers while it is not the same with supermarkets and other food stores, one participant alluded;

"ho bua nnete, lijo tsena tsa mabenkele a mang re ntse re li khalla empa e le hore ha re khone ho li reka, joale re khetha ho nyolla baitsókoli ha re na le chelate e le hore le ha re se na letho re khone ho kolota (to be honest, we still crave and even wish to eat food sold at other food stores but we cannot afford, so we decide to buy from local tuck shops and street vendors when we have money so that they can give us food on credit when we do not have money)".

The interview session with Marorisang revealed that her food choices are based on affordability and convenience. She mentioned that though she purchases food that she can only afford, sometimes when she made more money from selling home-brewed alcohol, she usually wishes to buy 'nice'/ tasty food for her household but suddenly her gut would say 'no'. She would then start to wonder what would happen if she buys tasty food and then in the coming days she would not have money or make enough to cover the food needs for those days. Again, Marorisang revealed that it works at her convenience and to her advantage to buy in the neighbourhood tuck-shops because even when she has no money for food and brewing ingredients, she can get them on credit at local tuck-shops. She further mentioned that when her actual food need for a particular day is not available at the tuck-shop, she opts for any food that is available rather than having to go and buy elsewhere because she wants to keep her [customer] loyalty. Similarly, Tumelo's experience is that due to lack of money, his household eats whatever is available at a given time;

"mme rona kannete re itjella fela sejo se teng hoba ho khetha ntsi ke ho khora (with all honesty, ee eat whatever is available because being able to choose means you have in abundance)".

Tumelo stated that due to his physical disability that does not allow him to work and provide for his family, he normally receives handouts from people that come in a form of anything. He said he is bound to eat that food even if it is not his favourite, this is because he cannot provide for himself and the whole family. A different experience is observed with Mats'epo as she said;

"le ha ele hore lijo tse teng hangata ka haka ke papa, moroho, linaoa le lebese, ke khetha ho ja linaoa le lebese hangata hoba kea li rata le ha le ele hore kena le ho sokola parafini ea ho li pheha (though most available food is papa, moroho, milk and beans, I choose to eat milk and beans a lot because I like them although I struggle to buy paraffin for cooking them)".

Mats'epo buys food at Shoprite Usave store because the distance is convenient, and her argument is that it offers food at cheaper prices as compared to other stores. She also stated that though she is poor, she is obsessed with health and hygiene due to her [several] chronic illnesses. Mats'epo explained that she has seen that the food she buys at Shoprite Usave is fresh and that vegetables do not perish quickly.

Mathabo, Marebokile and Maliteboho shared similar opinions and experiences. They shared that their food choices are based on affordability more than any other reasons. Mathabo indicated that her family income forces her to choose to eat only *papa* and vegetables not because it is their best or preferred meals but rather a filling meal. Therefore, she decides to buy maize meal from the local tuck-shop not because it is cheaper but because she can get food on credit. She further indicated that she prefers vegetables from street vendors because they are packed in small packages that she can easily afford. She made an example of a head of cabbage and pumpkins that are sold in halves or quarters;

"molemo oa ho reka ho bahoebi ba baits'okoli ke hore re khona ho fumana lintho ka bonyane ho latela tlhoko le chelete ea hao, kea tseba hq kena le M30.00 nka reka halofo ea k'habeche, phoofo e ngoathoang le halofo ea litha ea parafini (the significance of buying at the street vendors and tuck-shops is that we can get food needs in small packages that we can afford, I

know that if I have M30.00, I can buy a halved head of cabbage, small packaged maize meal and a half litre of paraffin)".

Most participants indicated that they choose to buy their food needs from street vendors and tuck-shpos except for Mats'epo who prefers buying at any Shoprite Usave store. Photo 5 gives a snapshot of street vendors around the city but close to the settlement while photo 6 shows the location of the Usave store.

Photo 5: Street vendors around Thibella in Maseru (23 July 2021)

Photo 6: Shoprite Usave store around Thibella in Maseru (23 July 2021)

The study established that participants do not only need money to secure their food needs but they also need money for fuel in order to prepare or cook the food. During the focus group discussions, some households shared that they use paraffin for cooking while others use firewood often because they do not always have paraffin or money to buy it. On the other hand, a few households explained that they use gas and electricity. One participant in GP3 discussions explained;

"nna ke pheha ka parafini hangata hoba ha ke fumane likoropo ke khona ho reka litha kapa halofo ea teng, empa hona le matsatsi ao parafini ebang sieo tuu, kannete ha hole joalo, ke itheohella morung mono ke roalle patsi ke tsebe hotla pheha (I use paraffin regularly because when I got money from casual jobs I manage to buy a litre of paraffin or a half, however, there are days where I run out of paraffin completely. On such days, I walk down the forest to collect firewood to be able to cook)".

Other members from GP1 emphasised that they use firewood often. They hardly spare money for paraffin because they consider buying food more important than fuel. As the discussion heated, some members shared that they sometimes consider buying and eating fast foods as they are cheaper and do not require fuel to prepare, one member alluded;

"ka nako e nngoe ha ke bona hore ke hloka ho reka lintho tse mmaloa hammoho le lisebelisoa ebe chelete e nyane, ke khetha ho reka makoenya ebe re robala re jele le bana baka (for me, when my money does not equal my food needs, I normally buy fat cakes and eat with my family. Fat cakes are cheaper to buy and no fuel is required)".

Conversely, one member indicated that he would rather spare money to buy raw food that needs preparation or cooked beforehand as they are too filling and they sustain the person throughout the day, compared to fast food and also they can be served on different accounts of meal time than fast food (that are used once-off). He explained;

"nna makoenya ana a lona ha ke a khore, bonyane ha ke pheile lijo tseno ke khona ho li ja hangata ho na le makoenya ao ke a jang a fela (My stomach does not get filled by fat cakes, at least when I cooked, I eat the food several times)".

Among the households sampled for semi-structured interviews, the most shared and common experience was of households that use paraffin and firewood for cooking, only Maliteboho and Mats'epo stated that they use different sources and that is paraffin, gas and electricity. Mats'epo mentioned that she does not have experience of using firewood since her stay in the settlement. Maliteboho explained that she bought a gas stove way back when she still had a job at a local preschool. She also mentioned that her reliable fuel for preparing food is paraffin, though she says she sometimes uses gas. The last time she was able to use gas was in October 2020 because she could not afford to buy it anymore. During the interview, she emotionally mentioned that she has never used firewood for cooking, however, she is at the point where she must admit that she has to walk far down the forest to collect firewood, as she would sometimes have food but lack fuel for preparing a meal and their household would starve. She explains;

"ha ole motho a kile a its'oarela ka matsoho o khona ho fihlela litlhoko tsohle tsa hao, ho ba boima ha maemo a fetoha ka tsela e tjena (when you were once working and able to meet all your needs, it is not easy to accept and adapt to change especially when is a change that makes your life worse rather than better)".

She further explained that having to use firewood to cook is so degrading and shaming when one is not used to it but she is at the point where she is about to be mindless about what people would say, but focus on what is a problem at hand and on her life that is hardening every day.

The sampled households mentioned that though they do not have sufficient and consistent income to secure their food needs, there are better days when they have extra money or when the food/groceries are on sale. They expressed that in such times they feel like they could buy more food items that would last them for longer days, however, they cannot do that due to the unavailability of refrigerators. The focus groups discussions showed that only a few households have access to electricity. They explained that even if they had electricity, they could not afford to buy refrigerators. Some members expressed that their food gets rotten during the hot seasons. They indicated that even when food is on sale and wish to buy more, they cannot because the food will rot. Though they stated that they cannot buy food in bulk due to affordability, however, they mentioned that when such food items are on sale, that brings better days, therefore, they can then afford them but are hindered by the fact that food will later go to waste. Some participants have developed strategies in order to avoid food getting bad. Mathabo

mentioned that to avoid food waste, she preserves food through canning, this is with fruits and vegetables mostly. She also uses the traditional way of drying the food, this is also possible with fruits, vegetables and meat. Similarly, Marebokile is challenged with food that rots and goes to waste during hot seasons. To fight this challenge, she mentioned that she puts food on the cemented floor overnight because she assumes the cemented floors are cooler. She explained that the solution lasts only for a day or two. Marebokile makes sure that she cooks small amounts so that they get to finish the food, though this consumes more fuel because she gets to cook a lot of times. Maliteboho and Marorisang shared the same experiences too. However, a different response is observed from Mats'epo, as she provides a different scenario that she owns a refrigerator, thus, she is not challenged with rotting food. She explained that she is rather challenged with the cost of electricity units that increases each year. Mats'epo also shared that she assists other neighbours to store their food in her refrigerator. Photo 7 and 8 below show ways the food is preserved, and it is practised in the settlement to avoid food going bad.

Photo 7: Dried meat (adapted from Turner, 2005)

Photo 8: Preserved tomatoes (adapted from Turner, 2005)

4.3.4   Theme 3: Unhealthy food choices

This theme was derived from the discussions held in focus groups and semi-structured interviews when the participants indicated what safe and healthy food means to them according to their day to day experiences and interactions with food. It relates to the kind of food participants claimed they eat and their implications to the participants' health. Various explanations arose among the participants. The sampled households in focus groups discussions had different meanings and understanding of safe and healthy food. In the discussions in GP2, safe food for most participants was food that is free from any form of contamination or infections, thus, food that is handled hygienically, while some regarded safe food as food consumed fresh or before the expiry date. Based on the discussions held in GP3, safe and healthy food was regarded as food that comes straight from the garden for consumption and preparation. One member explained safe food as;

 "ho ea ka li tlaoelo tsa, nna ke lijo tseo motho a itemelang tsona masimong kapa jareteng, tse sa tsamaeang leeto le le telele pepe lika pheuoa kapa tsa jooa, nka etsa mohlala ka litholoana tse latuoeng linaheng tse ling ho ba li fihla ho rona mona li se li se na matla a boleng (according to my experiences, it is the food that is consumed or prepared coming right away from the farm or garden, food that does not have to travel a long distance before it reaches the consumer, the example is, fruits and vegetables that are imported because when they reach the consumer they have lost the freshness and nutritional content)".

Participants expressed that they do not eat healthy food because they eat the staple foods, *papa* and *moroho* regularly, except for Mats'epo who reflected that she is able to eat beans and milk regularly as well. The sampled households indicated that due to lack of money, they are unable to eat various foods. They expressed that the only time they are able to eat different food is when they have accessed food from the dumping site. Mathabo during the home visit for the interview explained that the only time she can change food is when she was able to get food from the dumping site. She mentioned that the food is not fresh but she eats the food with her family because they have no other choice, she indicated;

"kannete ke mohau oa Molimo hore ebe ha reso kule le bana ba ka ho latela libolu tseo re li jang (it is honestly by God's grace that we have never fallen ill because we eat rotten food we access from the dumping site)".

Similarly, Tumelo shared that for a change of a meal he relies on the dumping site. He explained that his children usually follow vehicles to the dumping site and they often get lucky to bring home some food items. Among the food they bring home are vegetables and meat. Meat is the food that people enjoy very much and it is by luck that they do not get into any altercations at the dumping site, however, the meat would have lost the freshness. Mr Tumelo further showed that the meat smells so bad during preparation or when it is cooked. He explained that his wife boils the meat several times, and every time it boils she dispenses the water, washes the meat and cooks it again. Tumelo indicated that there was a time when they all had diarrhea as a household. They went to a local clinic for help and the health professionals indicated that they had food poisoning.

"ke lumela le bokuli bono ba rona bo ne bo bakuoe ke libolu tsena tseo re li jang empa re leboha Molimo hore re ile ra phela le ha ele mona re ntse re so bake (I believe we got infected from the rotten food that we eat but we thank God that we survived, even though we have not stopped consuming food from the dumping side)", said Tumelo in an emotional voice.

Responses and discussions from the focus group discussions revealed that most households struggle with accessing and eating various foods. Discussions in GP1 showed that for food access, Thibella settlers also resort to going to the dumping site in their settlement to access food. The settlement is in the city centre so the supermarkets and other food markets dump expired and rotten food in the area. The settlers pick the dumped food staff and prepare them for their household meals. Some claimed that they pick vegetables that are still in good condition, wash them and sell them to other settlers who do not manage or afford to gain some food from the dumping site when they were dropped. They indicated that as soon as the vehicles drive towards the dumping site, the settlers ran after it in great numbers, hence, not every individual who goes to the dumping site comes back with food.

As much as the participants expressed what safe and healthy food is based on their experiences, they claimed that the food they eat is not safe and healthy. They reflected that they still long to eat different (fresh) food though they cannot afford it. They expressed that they have accepted that they are below average, in regards to their state of affordability, thus, that does not upset them, when they cannot eat safe and healthy but they are happy and fulfilled when they manage to eat every meal of the day. They expressed that even at times when they have accessed unsafe

and unhealthy food from the dumping site, they are never worried or wonder about the safety of the food. They expressed that they get excited because they know their children are going to rejoice to have a different dish, not *papa* and *moroho* or otherwise eating *papa* raw. One participant explained;

"oa tseba keng, o tsebe rea tseba hore ha re je lijo tse hantle bakeng sa mmele ea rona empa ha re na taba re re ha fela ntse re ja ho ba ha re so utloe motho a kile a shoa. Esale re phela tjena lilemo lemo mme mohlong re ka ts'oha kapa re bake ke haeba re ka utloa hothoe hona le motho a shoeleng (you know what, we know that food that we eat is not safe for our health but we don't care, as long we are able to eat we are ok, especially when we have not heard of everyone who died because of the food we eat. We have lived this way for years and maybe we will stop if some can die)".

4.3.5   Theme 4: Inconsistent income and work in urban areas means we eat and survive on day to day basis

This theme emerged from the responses and discussions when the participants explained that they are rural-urban migrants and do not have consistent work due to lack of skills needed for good employment opportunities. It also emerged from the participants' experiences of how they survive day to day food needs challenges, this involves their everyday experiences to make money available for their food needs and the strategies they have adopted to address their day to day food insecurity experiences. The study established that the sampled households' food insecurity experiences are basically founded on that they are mostly not Thibella settlers by birth. The participants indicated that they migrated from rural areas to urban areas in search of better life, except for one household that indicated that they are born in the city, although their great grandparents migrated to the city many years ago thus, managed to get permanent residence and build a house. They expressed that little did they know that they would struggle with meeting their food needs in the city. The participants explained that they migrated to the city because they were no longer coping with meeting their basic needs in rural areas. Maliteboho indicated that she moved to the city when her husband got retrenched from the mines in South Africa and was no longer able to cover the household's needs. She expressed that she believed she would get employed in the textile industry and get a decent job with a basic salary and manage to secure her food needs and all things she aspired for. Her experience became the opposite of what she expected because she failed to get a job in the textile industry

due to her low level of education and meeting her food needs is a challenge. She explained that since her stay in the city, she has only managed to work as a domestic worker and also did casual jobs;

"ha ke ne ke tla Maseru ke ne ke na le litoro tse kholo tsa hore ke tla fumana mosebetsi o nkang hantle ke be ke fumane sets'a ke haele bana baka empa joale ke nna enoa ke mofutsana a lulang serutheng seo ke se patalang khoeli le khoeli (When I moved to Maseru, I had high expectations that I will get a good-paying job and be able to build a dignified house for my family but now here I am, I stay in a dilapidated shack that I pay rent for every month)".

The focus group discussions also established that the participants moved to the city because they wanted a better life but they are stuck in poverty because they could not secure decent jobs. The focus groups consisted mostly of men, and most indicated that they work as gardeners while others help carry people's shopping bags and they get paid for the services. They showed that their daily income only allows them to survive for a day, thus, every cent they work for daily is spent on their needs. The next day they have to work again for survival, however, they mentioned that there are better days when they earn more money and days when they fail to get casual jobs at all and thus cannot meet their food needs. Women who participated in both focus groups and semi-structured interviews met their daily food needs through casual jobs and doing laundry for households that can afford to pay them was the main source of income. The women participants shared that they survive on a day to day basis because every cent they work for is spent on food. Mathabo indicated that she charges M70.00 for one basket of clothes. She expressed that if she managed to do laundry for one household, the money is spent on the daily food needs and other household's essentials and nothing remains for the next day. She mentioned that normally during the nights she does not sleep well because she gets worried about what tomorrow is going to bring as she survives on a day to day basis. With deep emotions, Mathabo expressed that it is mentally and emotionally draining to think about each day's food needs.

Maliteboho indicated that she is a very emotional person because if she did not manage to secure a casual job for a day, she becomes deeply stressed that she cannot hold out her tears. She said she knows very well that as a parent, it is her responsibility to make food available for her households daily. She goes house to house to look for casual jobs, and sometimes she gets

negative responses that make her feel humiliated and vulnerable because doing casual jobs is a new experience as she used to work before. Maliteboho explained that she usually locks herself in her house and cries after feeling humiliated. She explained that she would spend a day or two without going to look for piece jobs in order to gain strength and courage. Marorisang expressed that at her age, she feels that she has no more strength to be brewing alcohol because she has to carry around heavy pots, again selling keeps her busy every day, thus, she becomes exhausted. She mentioned that the income made out of brewing alcohol enables her to secure every day's needs as aforementioned that her pension money is spent on her grandchildren's school fees. She further explained that she becomes stressed on rainy days because she is unable to brew alcohol. Marorisang uses firewood to brew the alcohol so if it is raining it means making fire would not be possible.

The participants alluded that despite the challenges they encounter in the city, they still maintain that life would have been much worse and harder had they lived in their rural communities. They stated that there are no means of employment and casual jobs in the rural communities. Marorisang explained;

"mahaeng koana batho ba iketsetsa ka matsoho a bona ha ba hiri batho ba ba thusang empa toropong mona batho ba phathahangoa ke mabaka le mesebetsi ka ho fapana ebe ha ba khone ho iketsetsa li oashene joale re khona ho ba thusa ebe re fumana sentjana (in rural communities people are hands-on and do not hire other people to help with chores unlike in the city where people are busy with their different jobs and are providing us with casual jobs like doing their laundry)".

Tumelo added that as much as his expectations about life in the city are not at all fruitful, he does not regret the decision he made because he assumes that he would have died of hunger had he still lived in the rural areas. He even mentioned that he does not want to compare rural life with city life because even if he would want to return to his place, the houses have fallen because they were not maintained.

The participants shared the strategies and living practises they have adopted in order to survive and have their day to day food needs even when they do not have money and food in a physical form. During the focus groups discussions, the households indicated that they still practise the

traditional ways like sharing and borrowing from the neighbours. Some participants explained that the practice does not work because most people have less food; hence, it is not even possible to share food. They conclude that sometimes when one shares food with another household, they are left with no food. This issue had lengthy discussions as some participants claimed that borrowing from others works for them though it sometimes ruins relationships especially when one borrowed an item and promised to return it on a particular day but fails. Discussions revealed that the tradition of borrowing and sharing happens with people who have close relations. The study established that for people who do not share, it is not because they don't want to but because they have less. Maliteboho indicated that she is often scared to ask from neighbours because she does not have close relations with them so they might judge her. She further explained that most people around her also struggle with food so they hardly assist each other.

4.3.6   Theme 5: Government does not care for our needs

This last theme derived from the participants' experiences with the government towards their food needs and their living conditions as poor urban settlers. The participants expressed a lot of anger and resentment towards their government. The households revealed that there are no initiatives directly from the government that address their food needs. They expressed that the government is aware that due to COVID-19 and prolonged lockdown, most people have lost their jobs while others' income has dropped drastically. They expressed that continuous lockdown, due to COVID-19 pandemic, has affected them and thus, thought that the government will come to their rescue and be remorseful. However, they indicated that the COVID-19 relief fund from the government only benefited a few and they still wonder how those few were selected in their settlement as they are all poor.

Among the sampled households, only two participants were recipients of old-age pension. The two households claim that M800.00 is not enough to secure their needs, especially now that the food prices have escalated due to COVID-19 pandemic. They expressed that there is more they expect from their government but they are very hopeless because they have developed a deep resentment and distrust towards their government. Mats'epo expressed that the government has not served her fairly because she once worked at government offices as a cleaner for many

years but the system then did not qualify her as a civil servant pensioner, which would be more than the old age pension. She believes if she had had that pension, she would not be complaining about the government because she would be able to secure her food needs. During the focus groups discussions, eight participants stated that they received M820.00 as COVID-19 relief fund. The relief was funded by WFP and was facilitated by the Ministry of Social Development. The relief specifically benefited households that are poor and are between the ages of 60-69 and only lasted for six months (July-December 2020).

The rest of the participants indicated that they have not become beneficiaries of any social assistance programme. In the focus groups discussions, participants indicated that a lot of households in their rural communities [who are as poor as them] are beneficiaries of child's grant programme while those in the city do not get any grant. They alluded and assume that maybe they are not assisted because they are being punished for the effort they took to seek jobs while people who live in the rural communities and do absolutely nothing are provided grants. They further explained that even when they apply for grants in the city they are told that they are not legal residents and should apply from their rural communities where they are also rejected because they spent most of their life in the city. The participants were very emotional as they explained that it seems they belong nowhere because of the rejection from both areas. Other participants claimed that they are not even aware that there are grants that the government offers that they can apply for. Marorisang's grandchildren failed to write their mid-term examinations because she was not aware that children she raises do qualify for a government bursary grant. The sampled households blamed the government for neglecting them as poor urban settlers. They explained that they do not have access to electricity, water and dignified housing. They also cried out that the government is silent about the high amounts they are charged for rent by the landlords yet the housing conditions are not even dignified. The study established that the little money they manage to work for is spent on food and rent. Marorisang mentioned that she was not able to pay rent for the last three months and the landlord promised to kick her out. The photos below (9 and 10) show the housing conditions that the Thibella households live in and of which huge amounts of rent are expected.

Photo 9: Sampled households housing conditions in Thibella (27 July 2021)

Photo 10: A sampled household housing condition in Thibella, Maseru (27 July 2021)

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter reported the findings of the data collection phase that were attained comprehensively through a qualitative process to capture experiences of food insecurity among poor urban households. The study used focus groups discussions, semi-structured interviews, audio recordings, field notes and journaling to gather data. The findings were presented through five themes that emerged through content analysis. These themes helped to capture significant participants' experiences of food insecurity. The integration of the various themes unveiled and gave different meanings to the experiences of food insecurity among the urban poor households.

Chapter 5: Discussions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the discussions of the key results of the study. The summary is related to the significant findings that were presented through themes in the previous chapter. At this stage, the findings are discussed based on the research objectives of the study. They are also linked and compared with the literature that was reviewed. This is done to determine whether the study has responded to the research objectives.

5.2 Main findings

5.2.1   State of households food security

The results of the study revealed that, as defined by WFS 1996, the state of food security in the city of Maseru requires a very significant attention. All sampled households expressed that they lacked food, though inevitably some lack food more than the others. Drawing into food security dimensions as illustrated by FAO (2009) and WFS (1996), the participants severely experience hunger and starvation as they lack sufficient food quantities in their households, safe, healthy and nutritious food and money to secure their daily food needs. This makes them experience stress, frustration, embarrassment and vulnerability. This was observed during the focus group discussions when the participants expressed that they sometimes go to bed without food due to a food shortage, and the kind of food they eat most of the time (*papa* and *moroho*). That is the only food that is available for all sampled households except for Mats'epo who is able to eat other food such as beans and milk. This does not make her food secure but it is a reflection of better living compared to others around, however, she still struggles with securing her food needs. The state of food insecurity was also observed during the semi-structured interviews as one on one encounters revealed more on individuals' experiences.

The stories, expressions, emotions and physical appearance gave a lot of insights about the intensity of one's food insecurity state. The situation was evident in Mathabo and Maliteboho who shared the same experiences. Both households shared that they experience days where they lack food and their emotions expressed the severity of their needs. The study established that food insecurity was most severe among participants/households that had children and a

household of more than two members. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with households with children, such households were bigger in size as members ranged 3-5. The food insecurity experiences that each household head shared [in such households] were intense and emotional than in households consisting of 1-2 individuals. This aligns with Sukandar (2006) who declares that the size of the household is a major food security determinant in an urban setting. The findings also revealed that the food insecurity experiences and coping strategies differ across ages. The individuals sampled for focus groups had mixed ages (21-68), the participants who were young did not show much emotions in their food insecurity experiences and they expressed that they do different casual jobs to meet their food security needs. A different scenario was observed with households sampled for semi-structured interviews whose ages ranged 47-79. Their food insecurity experiences were so intense and emotional. This also supports the idea that the age of the household head is a significant food security determinant (Sukandar, 2006).

Severe food insecurity is observed in all households sampled for focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Also, both focus groups and semi-structured participants had emotional and intense experiences, however, the focus groups discussions had moments of fun, giggles and laughter despite their severe food insecurity experiences. This confirmed the findings that were reported by Leduka et al. (2015) and Frayne *et al.* (2014) about the prevalence of food insecurity in Maseru. Their findings on AFSUN studies reported that Maseru state of food insecurity is among the worst in Southern Africa, as it is stated that 90% of poor households are severely food insecure. The food security severity was also confirmed by HFIAPI that divided households into four categories of food security and the proportion of the food secure households in Maseru was only 5%. The households are food insecure because they are unable to acquire food security needs that relate to the food dimensions illustrated by FAO (2009) because to say a household is food secure, all the indicators must be met simultaneously (Tacali *et al.* 2013). From the discussions held and interviews conducted, there is no hope or evidence that shows that the sampled households' state of insecurity will change anytime soon.

5.2.2   Perceived urban opportunities versus the lived experiences

The sampled households migrated to the city in the hope of getting a better life and decent jobs that would allow them to live dignified lives. Maliteboho mentioned that she had high hopes that her life would change for the better, she explained;

"ha ke ne ke tla Maseru ke ne ke na le litoro tse kholo tsa hore ke tla fumana mosebetsi o nkang hantle ke be ke fumane sets'a ke haele bana baka empa joale ke nna enoa ke mofutsana a lulang serutheng seo ke patalang khoeli le khoeli (When I moved to Maseru, I had high expectations that I will get a good-paying job and be able to build a dignified house for my family but now here I am, I stay in a dilapidated shark that I pay rent for every month)".

Since her stay in the city, she has only worked as a domestic worker and does casual jobs for a living, which is the opposite of what she expected. Meeting her food needs has never been easy. The perceptions about city life confirms the literature that migrants tend to believe that cities and urban areas have better opportunities for various employment and that cities offer better services because they are regarded as innovation centres and forces towards social change (Cohen, 2006; Henderson, 2002). Maliteboho and other participants expressed that their expectations about city life are not fruitful. Maliteboho explained that she stays in a shack that is not dignified, Bell *et al.* (2010) and Barakatuminalloh and Widayaningsh (2011) remark the urban poor households are challenged with social injustice, inequality and poverty that forces them to cluster in informal settlements and live undignified lives. The migrants' experiences about city life lie with Cohen's (2001) idea that urban migrants are forced to settle and cluster in informal settlements as the participants expressed their housing condition and the settlement they live in is not dignified. This is the case because they are not able to have good jobs with appealing income so they have to settle for less (Diehl *et al.* 2019). The sampled households housing and living condition lie with Mots'oene (2014) that the growth of the city of Maseru has resulted in unplanned settlements that sprang without the local government approval and such settlements are ignored by the authorities in that they are denied basic services like water, electricity, waste management and sewage disposal. The participants mentioned that despite the challenges and the government not responding to their basic needs, they are in the city to stay. This supports the literature that failure of the authorities to effectively respond to the needs of the informal settlers and low income due to policy complications like land and housing regulations does not stop citizens from finding housing through informal means (Leduka, 2000).

The participants shared a common response why they fail to secure decent jobs in the city and thus, fail to secure their food security needs. They explained that their level of education is low while others are illiterate and to secure a decent job in the city, one must be literate or at least have basic education. Barakatuminalloh and Widayaningsh (2011) indicated that urban settlers have complex problems because poor settlers have no skills and education needed for employment and jobs. This is evidenced by the fact that among all the sampled households no one was or had a member that is engaged in formal employment as they all relied on casual jobs. Though the participants claim that city life is challenging and hardening for them, they do not consider moving back to their rural communities a solution. They explained that although they struggle to attain their adequate food needs in the city, they believe that their situation would be worse in their rural communities because there is no means of employment and casual jobs. They indicated they have no regrets about moving to the city. They further explained that the means of living in rural communities is through agriculture which was no longer serving them because they did not have land for production while those who had land explained that they were failing to tenure it because they lacked agricultural inputs.

5.2.3 Households food availability experiences and adopted strategies for survival

The households do not have food available in their households for consumption any time they need to eat or food they can readily access anytime they need to cook. They need to have money to buy food but they still cannot afford food that can last for days but can only have food for the day while they sometimes also experience hunger completely. All sampled households struggled with having food in the physical because they do not have enough food supplies. According to Tacoli *et al.* (2013) and Fisher (2013), availability of food is determined by stock levels and supplies of food. The study engaged with the urban poor households and it established that there is a correlation between poverty and food security. Earlier, the chapter stated that the sampled households are food insecure and experience hunger because they do not have the capacity to make food available. January (2014) defines poverty as a condition that denies one an opportunity to make food available and leads people to live undignified lives. Maxwell (2000) also asserts that hunger is an indication of poverty because the more poverty worsens, the more food becomes a requirement. This is seen by the unpleasant experiences that the participants expressed when they are unable to provide food for their households. The experiences included feelings of frustration, stress, anger, self-guilt, blame and

vulnerability. The statements below reflect the mixed emotions and feelings the participants' expressed when they cannot have food;

"Ho bohloko hoo ha bophelo bo fihlela moo motho o bo hloke ntho eo o e jang. Ka nako e nngoe ke e re ebile ho betere ha ke ne ke se na bana ho na le ha ba nchebile ka mohau haholo ha ebile ba sa tloaela ho lapa (It is so hurting when life changes to an extent where you lack food. Sometimes I say, it would be better if I didn't have children unlike when they hopefully expert to provide them with food because they are not used to hunger)".

"ka nako eo ke sitoang ho etsa hore lijo li be teng ebe rea lapa le bana ba ka, ke ipotsa mehlaena ebe ba tlo utloa ke bile ntate a joang bophelong ba bona ha ba hola (when I cannot provide food for my family and we experience hunger, I normally ask myself what my children are going to say about as their father when they grow up)".

"O tla fumane ha bana ba re ba lapile ebe ntse ke re ke tlo ba ngoathela feela ke tseba hantle hore ha hona letho ka tlung. Ka nako e nngoe ke tsoa ka tlung ke ikele seterateng ka khopolo ea hore ke tla kopana le motho eo ke motsebang a ka mphang le ha ele M5.00 ke mpe ke ba rekele makoenya. Ba na ba banyane ba be ba lle ha ba batla lijo (When my children ask for food, I tell them that I will dish up for them yet I know very well that there is no food at all in the house, sometimes I leave the house and go to the street hoping I will meet someone I know and ask for M5.00 so that I buy them fat cakes. The younger ones even cry when they want food)".

Though participants claim that they are not able to have food in physical form, so to allow access to food at any given time, they need to eat or cook because of lack of money. They expressed that they believe growing their food is a response to their food needs that do not necessarily depend on money as the food security agenda assumes that food should come from the farms and be agriculturally produced (Capone *et al*. 2014; Igram, 2011). The sampled households believe that growing their own food is a solution to the food unavailability challenge because they once practised subsistence agriculture back in their rural communities. They are, however, challenged with several factors that hinder them from growing their own

food. The most challenging factor in growing their food is the unavailability of space for production. Mathabo expressed that she has rented a small shack and the space limits her to produce crops. She also explained that despite little or no space for crops production, she has found a way to produce little crops for her household, she explained;

"ha fela molimo a ntse a mphile matsoho le kelello nke be ka robala ke sa ja (as long as I am still physically and mentally able, I will make sure I make food available for my family)".

This was evidenced by the presence of crops that are planted across the fence of her yard. To support that the households believed in growing their own food to meet their food security needs, Maliteboho reflected that she is challenged with limited space and that she lives in a yard that is unfenced so passersby destroy her crops, as little as they are, and this discourages her to continue with producing crops but she never stops because if she was to do so, she will starve. The same challenge is expressed by Tumelo, as he explained that he has no right to tenure the land because the land belongs to the landlord and it is used by him alone. This goes with the literature that urban agriculture is globally considered as a possible solution to food security challenges affecting urban dwellers (Lee-Smith 2013; Lee-Smith 2014; Padgham *et al*. 2015; Readwood 2009 & Warren *et al.* 2015). According to Crush *et al.* (2017), urban agriculture is advocated to address poverty in urban areas, the sampled households still believe in producing their own food despite the challenges they are faced with. The participants' practise of planting crops in order to meet their food needs aligns with Leduka *et al*. (2015); the AFSUN study revealed that urban agriculture is one means of food sources among the urban poor households in Maseru as 47% get their food from practising urban agriculture. They further show that crop farming and home gardening are the commonly practised activities among several urban agriculture activities in Maseru.

The sampled households' challenge towards spaces or land for production is confirmed by Adam and Gollin (2015) and Lang and Barling (2012) when they show that as people move to urban areas, settlements become overpopulated and inhabitants have little or no spaces for production. Where agriculture is practised, it is often on the land that is not owned by the user so the rights and secure tenure are limited (RUAF Foundation, 2010). Though all sampled households are challenged with spaces for production, Mats'epo has a spacious yard and a big space for production; she is, however, challenged with securing agro-inputs and seeds that can

stand amidst the climate change effects. Mats'epo remarked that her winter crops and harvest were not much impressive compared to the past years. This was due to the unavailability of sufficient agro-inputs and the scarcity of rain in the summer season. This relates with Cambell *et al.* (2017), as they indicated that climate change hinders humanity from achieving sustainable food production and this impacts food security negatively because humanity lives from farm to plate.

During the focus groups discussions, participants expressed that they are challenged with food production because they stay in a congested township, where places and avenues for production are not available. The experience keeps up with the literature that when urban areas expand, the expansion affects the availability of the land that could otherwise be used for crop production (Cohen & Garett, 2010). Similarly, Leduka *et al.* (2015) and Crush *et al.* (2017) allude that land in Maseru has turned into dwelling places, the expansion of the dwelling places have posed food production challenges in the city of Maseru. As much as there is hope that urban agriculture will potentially reduce food poverty (Kirkland 2008; Mitchell & Leturque 2010), the arable land that has been used for dwellings in Maseru confirms the literature that urbanisation has resulted in an increased distance from cities to food production places (Haysom, 2015). Lyons *et al.* (2013) relate that the urban planning systems are responsible for distancing cities from places and this has created escalating urban food security challenges. The challenges have presented because the urban planners of the twentieth century did not view food production as an integral part like planners of the pre-twentieth century did (Steel, 2008). The food security agenda in cities is not addressed in balance with the developments and the intersection between urban planning and urban food production is ignored, yet it holds answers to the urban food security challenge (Crouch & Ward, 1998).

Marebokile and Mathabo show high reliance on crop production for daily meals. They expressed that if they do not use their own hands to make food available, they will surely starve. Growing their own food is done out of absolute need. This is in line with Hampwaye (2008) as it is remarked that though the urban settlers can be cultivators, the lowest socio-economic urban settlers grow their own food due to absolute need. Mats'epo is also enthusiastic about growing her own food while other participants still believe in growing their own food but

their efforts do not equal those of Mathabo, Marebokile and Mats'epo. Engagement of these households in livelihoods through crop production confirms the findings of the study undertaken by Onyango (2010) in Orange Farm, South Africa that the households that engage in urban farming are mostly households that have no member that is engaged in formal employment as is the case with the participants. Leduka *et al.* (2015) indicate that almost half of poor and low income households in Maseru practise urban agriculture. Conversely, Mkwambisi (2009) noted that crop production in Lilongwe and Blantyre in Malawi is practised by households with higher income because they can afford land and access agro-inputs. The poor urban settlers in Thibella try so much to produce their own food despite the challenges they face.

Crush *et al.* (2017) stated that the enthusiasm and urban agriculture policy interest gained recognition in Lesotho in the 1990s. The participants practise urban agriculture as a livelihood and due to absolute need because they have to make food available for their families. During the focus groups discussions, the participants emphasised that the government is silent about their places for food production and does not provide them with land that would give them permanent residence in the city so that they can produce within their capacity and beyond. They further expressed that they have not received even a single training on livelihoods except for Marebokile who was fortunate to attend training on how to produce crops successfully on a small piece of land, and this was when she visited her rural community. She uses the same skills she acquired on her small plot in the urban setting. It is evident that, though Lesotho is enthusiastic about urban agriculture, there is still no fixed policy uptake to date (BOS 2013; BOS 2015). Turner (2009) remarked that this challenge in Lesotho exists because of the misconception that Lesotho is a rural community and people in rural areas rely on subsistence agriculture as opposed to urban settlers. This agrees with Crush *et al.* (2017) that food insecurity is regarded as a rural challenge.

5.2.4 Food (limited) access and survival strategies

The households' experiences relate that they are unable to have enough food and eat their preferred food choices due to inconsistent work and income in the urban settlement. They struggle to manage and cope with food access. The sampled households expressed that they

typically eat *papa* and *moroho* because they are cheaper to buy and easy to get. Mathabo, Marebokile and Maliteboho show that their choice to eat *papa* and *moroho* is not based on preference but affordability because they cannot afford the cost of other food. This supports Kennedy *et al*. (2010) idea that affordability is a factor that determines food choice. The participants indicated that to have a meal for the day, they should have money for their food needs and Crush and Frayne (2010) assert that access has become a problem in African cities. All sampled households do not have decent jobs, they rely on casual jobs for a living and their income does not sustain their food needs. Crush and Frayne (2011) remarked that unreliable and unsustainable income hinders urban poor households to access food. Similarly, Mougeot (1999) indicates that income among the urban poor households is incontinence and, thus, hinders them from acquiring their food desires. The male participants from group discussions mostly work as gardeners and also help people around town with carrying their luggage and shopping bags to their destinations. They explained that every cent they manage to work for is spent on food needs. Women showed that the money they manage to have out of the daily casual jobs is spent on daily needs and they are unable to save for the next day. Their needs also include fuel purchase in order to cook and Crush *et al.* (2011) pointed out that poor urban settlers' income is spent on food and fuel. Most households complained about the escalated food prices and this made life harder for them because they all confirmed that urban life is cash-based and one cannot survive without an income. Cohen and Garett (2010) and Martin-Prevel *et al.* (2012) alluded that poor urban settlers rely on affordability in order to secure their food needs.

Due to the challenge of unreliable income, the sampled households mentioned that they choose to buy their food needs from the street vendors and local tuck-shops. They explained that their choice is influenced by the fact that food is packaged in small packages that they can afford, unlike in supermarkets where most items are in bigger packages. The focus groups discussions revealed that though the participants are privileged that it is only a walking distance to get to the food markets, they explained that they never bother to set their feet in other supermarkets even if their food needs are there. The reason for this is because they cannot afford the food due to high prices. Again, due to their socio-economic status, they feel like they are not worthy to go to other supermarkets. One member from GP1 discussions said;

"ho bua nnete, lijo tsena tsa mabenkele a mang re ntse re li khalla empa e le hore ha re khone ho li reka, joale re khetha ho nyolla baitsókoli ha re na le chelate e le hore le ha re se na letho re khone ho kolota (to be honest, we still crave and even wish to eat food sold at other food stores but we cannot afford, so we decide to buy from local tuck shops and street vendors when we have money so that they can give us food on credit when we do not have money)".

The evidence that the participants do not feel comfortable entering certain supermarkets proves the reality that historically supermarkets and retail outlets were considered to be the preserve of the upper and middle class and were serving a smaller urban elite group (Crush & Frayne, 2011). In the literature reviewed, Crush and Frayne (2011) showed that the informal economy provides affordable food staff for urban poor households. Kennedy *et al.* (2014) also indicated that the informal economy sells food in small packages that the settlers can afford. Mathabo expressed that buying from street vendors allows her to buy every item that she needs for the day in small quantities, she explained;

"molemo oa ho reka ho bahoebi ba baits'okoli ke hore re khona ho fumana lintho ka bonyane ho latela tlhoko le chelete ea hao, kea tseba hq kena le M30.00 nka reka halofo ea k'habeche, phoofo e ngoathoang le halofo ea litha ea parafini (the significance of buying at the street vendors and tuck-shops is that we can get food needs in small packages that we can afford, I know that if I have M30.00, I can buy a halved head of cabbage, small packaged maize meal and a half litre of paraffin)".

On the contrary, Mats'epo buys her food at Shoprite Usave store and she mentioned that she makes this choice because Shoprite Usave store is closer to her house and that she prefers vegetables bought at Usave because of their freshness. Kennedy (2003) noted that access and food patterns are determined by the distance between home and food location. These experiences relate to the idea of Ruel and Garett (1999) that convenience goes with access and choice. Though the supermarkets have sprung in African cities (Crush & Frayne 2011; Battersby *et al.* 2016), participants choice to buy from the informal economy supports the literature that the informal economy is the most reliable source of food in the Global South (Crush *et al.* 2017; Turner 2009; Kessides 2005). According to Leduka *et al.* (2015), a proportion of 49% of households in the city of Maseru source their food from the informal economy; 11% of them on a daily basis.

Apart from buying food items that need to be cooked from street vendors and tuck-shops, participants mentioned that in times when they struggle with fuel or their income does not equal their food needs, they choose to eat fast foods from the informal economy and the most reliable food source for daily living and weekly basis in Maseru are fast foods (Leduka *et al.* 2015). Tacoli (2017) indicate that due to the rise in food prices and purchase of fuel, fast foods and processed food usage has escalated. The participants in focus groups discussions mentioned that they secure money for food needs and fuel, however, one participant emphasised that he would rather choose to spare money for fast foods because they are cheaper and need no fuel, he explained;

"ka nako e nngoe ha ke bona hore ke hloka ho reka lintho tse mmaloa hammoho le lisebelisoa ebe chelete e nyane, ke khetha ho reka makoenya ebe re robala re jele le bana baka (for me, when my money does not equal my food needs, I normally buy fat cakes and eat with my family. Fat cakes are cheaper to buy and no fuel is required)".

The participants reflected that they opt for the informal economy because they can get their food needs on credit as buying on credit is considered a survival strategy among low-income households (Olivier, 2013). They expressed that they have established relationships with sellers and even when they have money they still spend it in the informal economy because they want to keep good relations and loyalty. All households revealed that they buy food on credit most of the time, this lies with Ligthelm (2005) on the emphasis that supermarkets and retail outlets operate as private entities and cannot provide food needs on credit like the informal economy does. Weatherspoon and Reardon (2003) show that supermarkets are basically driven by an aspiration to acquire maximum profits not to address the needs of the poor, thus, they will not solve urban poor food needs.

In an effort to cope with food access, participants mentioned that they practise the traditional style of sharing and borrowing from each other. The focus groups members expressed that, since they often lack food needs, it is common for them to ask from a neighbour, however, some members indicated that the practise is not too evident because they would have less; and it is not possible to share. Tumelo and Marebokile assert that they always receive food parcels from neighbours. Maliteboho expressed that she gets ashamed to ask from a neighbour because she hates being judged. Turner (2005) marked that the process of sharing and borrowing from

each other is another form of engagement in the informal economy through social networking. This practice of sharing and borrowing from each other is common among the Basotho (Olivier 2013; Mofuoa 2015). Consequently, Turner *et al.* (2001) allude that the practice is, however, dying in the urban areas and the structures and norms of social support, cultural and social frameworks are lessening in urban centres.

5.2.5 Health and food safety

The findings revealed that the households are unable to eat healthy food. This was observed by the reliance on *papa* and *moroho* except for Mats'epo who is able to eat milk and beans at times. It is established that among the Basotho nation, *papa* and *moroho* is a staple diet for households that are very poor (Turner *et al.* 2001). The study established that the sampled households' reliance on *papa* and *moroho* categorises the households' nutrition and diet very poor. The households inability to have a diverse diet establishes that the households are not able to acquire sufficient energy supplies and the nutritional content that the body needs for well-functioning. The reason why the households struggle to attain a diverse and nutritious diet is that they can only afford a typical diet and that is their staple food (Tacoli, 2017). The HDDS shows that Maseru has limited dietary diversity as the households show high reliance on staple foods (Thabane, Honu & Paramiah, 2014). This indicates that their diet has a deficiency in several nutrients needed by the body. Theron and Kruger (2014) assert that the urban poor households can hardly attain adequate food nutrients as long as they consume the same staple food regularly because this is likely to lead to several macronutrients deficiencies.

As much as the households rely on monotonous staple foods, in moments when they lack cooking essentials, they opt for fast foods while others highly rely on them daily. Fast foods are considered as the Western unhealthy eating patterns that the African countries have copied (Feelay *et al.* 2009). Looking closely at the eating practises, the way food is prepared and the diet diversity of the sampled households, they are struggling to attain food utilisation. The households just eat to fill their stomachs without even being considerate of the implications of the food they eat to their health. From the discussions held, the participants had different meanings and understanding of safe and healthy food and also acknowledged that they do not eat safely, and the kind of food they eat never seemed to bother them. The study established

that they truly eat to fill their stomach without considering the implications and safety of the food they eat. Relating to WFS (1996) definitions of food security as stipulated by FAO (2009), the households are far from being food secure.

The evidence that the sampled households often access food from the dumping site compromises the safety and nutrition of the food they eat. Tumelo and Mathabo emphasised that they rely on the dumping site for a change of a meal and Tumelo showed that the meat they get from the dumping site most of the time, if not all the time, has lost all freshness. The participants' practice of eating from the dumping site seems to be a normal coping strategy among the settlers. From the participants' expressions on how they access food from the dumping site and also how excited they become when they get meat, this suggests that for them it is a normal practice that even fulfils them. To these participants, safety and nutritional content are the least of their worries. Mathabo mentioned that they get vegetables that have perished at the dumping site and there is no doubt that they have lost the original nutritional content. This keeps up with Kader (2005) that perishable fruits and vegetables that the urban poor rely on have lost nutritional value when consumed, which impacts negatively on the health of the consumers. As mentioned that the issue of eating from the dumping site seems so normal, the study established a clear understanding of foodways and how each region regards food that is consumable and food that is not (Alkon *et al.* 2013). For some regions, eating from the dumping site is considered shaming and degrading but with the participants, it is not so because they show great excitement when they state that they always run after trucks as they drive to the site. To them, it feels like a different day or a better day, probably a Christmas day because they get to eat meat. This supports the foodways literature that eating is beyond nutrition and nourishment but brings greater fulfilment when one has eaten food that is desirable or socially preferred (Camp, 1982).

Based on the research insights from discussions and interviews, though under-developed and developing countries are going through a nutritional transition that is characterised by a shift to diets which are high in fat and have created food related illnesses (Battersby & Peyton, 2014), the sampled households claimed and believe they are healthy . As stated that the nutrition transitions has resulted in overweight and other diseases related to overconsumption (Clover,

2003), no household reported an incidence where they got ill and their illness was related to the food they consume, except Tumelo and his household, who got ill from food poisoning at some point which they believe it was because of the meat they consumed from the dumping site. Among sample households for both the focus groups and in-depth interviews neither participant felt they are overweight or underweight.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the key findings of the study that were captured through themes derived from the data collection processes. The reported key findings were discussed based on the study's objectives and were further related to the literature that the study reviewed. This allowed the study to establish that all the sampled households are food insecure.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This is a closing chapter that provides general concluding remarks of the study. It provides recommendations based on the key findings. The recommendations are for future researchers and are based on how the sampled participants think could be done in order to make their lives better.

6.2 Concluding remarks

The study intended to explore the experiences of food insecurity among the urban poor households in Maseru and Thibella settlement was used as a case. Severe food insecurity exists in the city of Maseru and much is not done by relevant authorities to address this urban food poverty challenge. The study revealed that all the sampled households are severely food insecure though inevitably some households' experiences of food insecurity are worse than others. Food insecurity in Maseru is shown through participants' experiences that reflect that they struggle with securing food for their households; as Tacoli *et al.* (2013) indicated that to say one is food secure, the dimensions of food security must be met simultaneously. The households do not have food in the physical form and in stock levels but have to make sure they provide their families with food for each day as it comes. This leads participants to experience hunger and various emotions which trigger the following: frustration, stress, humiliation, self-guilt and blame and vulnerability. To fight food availability challenges and struggles, the households depend on producing their own food, however, they are challenged with spaces for production as the congested settlement they live in does not have production spaces. Guided by the Basotho tradition of sharing, the households who have planted enough crops like vegetables share with those that do not have.

The study established that affordability and convenience play a significant part in the urban economy. The households depend so much on income to procure their daily meals, however, their income is not sufficient to cover their food needs or allow them to eat the food of their choice or that they aspire for. This forces them to eat the monotonous staple foods (*papa* and *moroho*) because they are cheaper to buy and get. Although the participants live in the city

centre and can buy food at different supermarkets and/or other food markets, they do not purchase their food essentials from the supermarkets but prefer to buy from street vendors and local tuck-shops due to convenience and affordability. They are able to get food on credit from local tuck-shops and street vendors unlike with the supermarkets. This revealed that the presence of supermarkets in the city of Maseru does not respond to the food needs of the urban poor households. The study established that the location of food markets does not play a significant role like with convenience because the participants find it convenient to buy their food needs from the street vendors and local tuck-shops because they sell food in small packages that the poor households can afford.

Due to lack of food in the physical form and lack of money to purchase their food needs, the households do not have diverse diets and they rely on the staple foods that lack sufficient nutrients that the body needs for well-functioning, safe and healthy lives. In efforts to strive to eat different foods, the participants consume food that has lost freshness while others consume rotten food that is accessed from the dumping site. The study established that the food has the possibility to negatively impact the health of the participants, though they claimed that they have not gotten ill as a result of eating perished food except for a household that had a stomach bug after eating meat from the dumping site. All sampled households' nutrition is compromised relating to the way they eat or access food.

Finally, the sampled households were rural-urban migrants who migrated to the city in search of opportunities attached to the city except for one household that was a resident by birth. The study revealed that as much as the migrants came to the city with great expectations, their dreams have not come fruitful. They are stuck in poverty and impacts of social inequality and this forced them to locate in an undignified urban township. The circumstances they live in are heartbreaking and their experiences of food insecurity are so emotional. Despite their hardships, they have established coping mechanisms, strategies, and practises such as sharing, though this is not evident for all households. The study established that the participants have so much they expect from their government that they think will make their lives better.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, urban food insecurity in the city of Maseru among poor urban households is a serious challenge. The sampled households' way of living is heartbreaking and this calls for action based solutions in order to respond to the problems they are facing and make their lives better and dignified. To start with, the Thibella settlement is located in the city centre and the houses are just across the road. When the residents get out of their house they step into main roads. The settlement is exposed to several hazards that are associated with the city and food insecure settlers can engage in several activities to have food, even activities that are in conflict with the law. The calibre of the settlers is all the same because the settlement is dominated by individuals that are poor and are victims of socio-economic inequality that has led them to settle in this congested and undignified location. On top of several recommendations that the study would suggest, I recommend that the settlers should or can be relocated to decent locations where they will be able to live dignified lives while they continue with the jobs they do to meet their food needs, and this will allow for town planners to restructure the town completely and thus, demolish informal settlements in the city centre as Mots'oene (2014) shows that the growth of the city of Maseru has resulted in unplanned settlements that sprang up without the approval of the local government and the municipality for planning and development control requirements, such settlements are not recognised by authorities as they are described illegal (Mots'oene, 2014).

The participants expressed that they are sidelined in provision of basic needs because they are informal or illegal settlers. The UNCHS and UNEP (1997) show that when such settlements are considered illegal and are not provided with stable and decent structures, water and sanitation, waste disposal facilities, security of tenure and electricity supply, all the factors are bound to create social problems and unhealthy living conditions. This is evident with the experiences of the participants because their lives are hardening each day yet the government is silent because they are regarded as illegal settlers. I recommend the government of Lesotho to consider policy revision and intervention as the settlers are still Lesotho citizens with human rights that need to be respected despite the complications in laws and regulations pertaining to housing and land. The government should also consider the regulations and policies that relate to informal settlements because regardless of the existing policies, this does not stop citizens from finding the way of housing through informal placement (Leduka, 2000). I also challenge

future researchers to investigate this issue closely in order to come up with more recommendations in this regard.

The study established that participants engage in casual jobs that do not pay well because they lack the skills needed for decent employment due to illiteracy while others have a low level of education. The participants have not given up on life because they do everything and anything to provide their families with food needs. If the government can provide better houses in a space where they can be able to plant crops their struggles would ease up. Due to the enthusiasm that the participants reflected on growing their own food, I am highly hopeful that if given a chance, the four dimensions of food security (availability, access, utilisation and food stability) may be met simultaneously. When they have spaces for production accompanied by education on sustainable crop production, this would enhance the success in urban agriculture practice. From the food they produce, they will make food available for their individual households and also sell to others in order to secure other households' food needs, thus improving access with regards to affordability. When they produce in abundance they will also produce different crops and be able to eat various foods that are safe and healthy and this will respond to the aspects of food utilisation. Equally, they will never lack food as they will be in a position to plant crops seasonally and be able to enjoy food, make money and eat safe and healthy foods, thus the food stability aspect will be addressed. Most importantly, this would encourage consumption of locally produced food and empower the local and national economy. Furthermore, the participants will also enjoy the essence of living because they will be happier and more fulfilled when they are able to cover their basic needs.

Crush *et al.* (2017) stated that Lesotho gained interest in urban agriculture in the 1990s. However, there are still not yet any development strategies and food security measures that explicitly identify the programme focus that relates to urban agriculture and urban food security (Gwinbi, 2015). I challenge the government to come up with explicit policies that encourage and support urban agriculture as there is still no policy uptake (BOS 2013; BOS 2015). This can be easily achieved if the country can do away with the misconception that food insecurity is a rural challenge as Crush *et al.* (2017) stipulated. This can also be achieved if all stakeholders responsible for human welfare and well-being can jointly and collaboratively

partake in food security matters, unlike now when food security measures, strategies and action plans are wholly a responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (Turner, 20009). The collaboration would work well to address food insecurity in Lesotho as all the stakeholders would expand their vision and scope in addressing food security and also dedicate more of their budgets to food security matters.

The participants cried out that the government has neglected them as they do not qualify for social assistance grants and they are suffering. They pleaded for grants because they stated that other citizens in rural communities get grants while they, as rural-urban migrants, are sidelined. The participants pleaded with the government to also reconsider the arrangement that qualifies one to enroll into social assistance grants because as urban poor rural-urban migrants are denied opportunity in both locales (rural and urban). They claimed that the money they work for is spent on food and rent and social assistance grants will complement their limited income. According to Sets'abi (2015), Lesotho has tried to provide a social protection floor to most citizens, especially the vulnerable groups. This has been through offering social assistance programmes like old age pension, free primary education, child grants, primary health care and food security measures. However, most programmes tend to focus on the rural population as Leduka *et al.* (2015) show that 97% of Maseru households reported that they have never received social grants and food aid. Same with this study, all participants showed that they are not beneficiaries of any social assistance programmes or grants except for two participants that are on old age pension. They claimed that they are not enrolled because they are regarded as rural settlers by nature and do not qualify for urban benefits. When they apply from their communities, they are told their households are counted as not existing because they spent most of their time in the city. This regulation or policy should be revised. I encourage the government to allow the participants to apply for grants in their communities and at least transfer them to the city when they are enrolled and are beneficiaries. This would stop the feeling that participants have as they expressed that they feel they belong nowhere.

The participants claimed that they pay high amounts of rent that do not equal the housing conditions and they plead to the government that if it is too hard to provide them with housing, to at least have a regulatory body that regulates the amount of rent that they should pay as per

the housing condition. The housing conditions of the sampled households are heart wrenching. It can not be denied that rural people migrate to the city in order to get better lives through job seeking and casual jobs and due to their limited and inconsistent income, they can never secure proper housing because they can not afford to pay for it. The participants mentioned that most of their income is spent on rent, landlords charge very high rentals because they know that the settlers can not report them anywhere. If informal settling is totally considered illegal, it is evident that the settlers will continue to suffer and become victims of landlords and other life circumstances. I still maintain that even though the housing and land regulations disregard the urban informal settlers, they still need to be protected as citizens with human rights. Therefore, I recommend a policy that would closely address the sufferings of the urban informal settlers despite them being illegal occupants. When the policy is formulated, in the process, it should include the engagement of the informal settlers themselves in order to clearly understand their lived experiences and sufferings.

References

Adam, C., & Gollin, D., 2015. Editors Introduction: The economics of the global food and agriculture system. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 1 (31): pp. 1-7.

Argenti, O., 2000. Food for the cities: Food supply and distribution policies to reduce urban food insecurity. A briefing guide for mayors, city executives and urban planners in developing countries and countries in transition. Food into Cities.

Arifin, B., 2004. Indonesian agricultural economic analysis. Kompas. Jakarta.

Ahmed ,A.U., Hill, R.V., Smith L.C.,Wiesmann, D.M., & Frankenberger, T., 2007. The world's most deprived: characteristics and causes of extreme poverty and hunger. Intl Food Policy Res Inst.

Alkon, A.H., Block, D., Moore, K., Gillis, C. & DiNuccio, N. 2013. *Foodways of the Urban Poor. Geoforum.* 48: pp. 126–135.

Alaimo, K., 2008. Fruit and vegetable intake among urban community gardeners. *J. Nutr. Edu. Behav*, 40, pp. 94–101.

Altman, M., Hart, T., & Jacobs, P., 2009. Food security in South Africa. Paper for HSRC food security. Pretoria: Project.

Armar-Klemesu, M., 2000. Urban agriculture and food security, nutrition and health. Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research. Germany.

Ambrose, D., 1993. Maseru: An illustrated history. Morija: Morija Museum and Archives.

Amendah, D., Buigut, S., & Mohamed, S., 2010. Coping strategies among urban poor: evidence from Nairobi, Kenya. PLoS One In press.

Arifin, S.R.B.M., 2008. Ethical considerations in qualitative study. *International Journal of Care Scholars*, 1(2): pp. 30-33.

Argenti, O., 2000. Food for the cities: Food supply and distribution policies to reduce urban food insecurity. A briefing guide for mayors, city executives and urban planners in developing countries and countries in transition. Food into Cities.

ANC, 2009. 'Election manifesto 2009', African National Congress [online document]. URL http://www.anc.org.za/elections/2009/manifesto/manifesto.html [accessed 10 January 2012].

Badami, M., & Ramankutty, M., 2015. Urban agriculture and food security: A critique based on an assessment of urban land constraints. *Global Food Security*, 4. pp. 8-15.

Barokatuminalloh, D., & Widayaningsih, N., 2011. Analysis of urban household food security in Purwokerto city, Banyumas Regendy. Jenderal Soedirman University. Purwokerto.

Battersby, J., 2012. Beyond the food desert: finding ways to speak about urban food security in South Africa. Geografiska Annaler: *Series B, Human Geography*, 94 (2): pp. 141–159.

Battersby, J., Marshak, M. & Mngqibisa, N. 2016. Mapping the Invisible: The Informal Food Economy of Cape Town, South Africa. (24). Cape Town.

Battersby, J., & Crush,J., 2014. Africa's food desserts. Springer Science+Media Dordrecht.

Battersby, J., 2012. Beyond the food desert: finding ways to speak about urban food security in South Africa. Geografiska Annaler: *Series B, Human Geography*, 94 (2): pp. 141–159.

Battersby, J., & Peyton, S., 2014. The geography of supermarkets in Cape Town: Supermarkets expansion and food access. *Urban forum*, 25(153): pp. 153-164.

Battersby, J., 2016. MDGs to SDGs—New goals, same gaps: The continued absence of urban food security in the post-2015 global development agenda. *Afr. Geogr. Rev*, 36. pp. 115–129.

Bazeley, P., 2009. Analysing qualitative data: More than identifying themes. *The Malaysian Journal of Qualitative Research*, 2(2). pp. 1-12.

Beaulac, J., Kristjansson, E., & Cummins, S., 2009. A systematic review of food deserts, 1966–2007. Prev. Chronic Dis, 6, A105.

Bloor, M., Frankland, J., Thomas, M., & Robson, K., 2001. Focus groups in social research.London: Sage Publications.

Bourne, L., Lambert, E., & Steyn, K., 2002. Where does the black population of South Africa stand on the nutrition transition? *Public Health Nutrition*. 5, pp. 157–162.

Boyatzis, R.E., 1998: Transforming qualitative information: thematic analysis and code development. Sage publications.

Bisseker, C., 2006. Retailers' drive into the township market threatens spaza shops', Financial Mail 28 September [onlineedition].URLhttp://www.eprop.co.za/news/article. aspx?idArticle=7908 [accessed 10 January 2012].

BOS, 2013. Lesotho urban agricultural report 2013/2014 (Statistical Report No.11), Bureau of Statistics, Maseru.

 BOS, 2015. Lesotho urban agricultural report 2013/2014 (Statistical Report No.7), Bureau of Statistics, Maseru.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V., 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2): pp. 77-101.

Braun, V., & Clarke., 2014 What can "thematic analysis" offer health and wellbeing researchers? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Wellbeing*, 9(1): pp. 26152.

Britten, N., 1999. Qualitative interviews in healthcare*: princi-In Pope C, Mays N (eds) Qualitative research in health care. BMJ Books. London.

Byrd, K.M. & Byrd, W.C. 2017. We Eat to Live, We Live to Eat: Thoughts on the Sociological Study of Food, Culture, and Inequality. *Humanity & Society*. 41(4): pp. 419– 426.

Bryman, A., 2012. Social research methods. Oxford University Press: New York.

Bryman, A., Bell, E., Hirschsohn, P., Dos Santos, A., Du Toit, J., Masenge, A., Van Aardt, I. & Wagner, C. 2014. *Research Methodology: Business and Management Contexts*. 1st edition. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Burns, N., & Grove, S.K., 2005. The practice of nursing research: Conduct critique and utilization, 5th ed, St. Louis, MO, Elsevier/Saunders.

Cater, B., & Rohwerder, B., 2016. Rapid fragility and migration assessment for Ethopia: Rapid literature review. Birmigham, UK: GSDRC, University of Bermingham.

Cambell, B.M., Beare, E. M., Bennet, J.M., Hall-Spencer, J.S.I., Ingram, F., Jaramillo, R., Ortiz, N., Ramankutty, J. A., Sayer, J. A., & Shindell, D., 2017. Agricultural production as a major driver of the earth system exceeding planetary boundaries. *Ecolology and Society,* 22(4).https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-09595-220408

Camp, C. 1982. Foodways in Everyday Life. *American Quarterly*. 34(3): pp. 278–289.

Carrion, D., & Vásconez, J., 2003. Understanding slums: Case studies for the Global Report on Human Settlements; United Nations Habitat: Quito, Ecuador.

Capone, R., Bilali, H. El, Debs, P., Gianluigi, C. & Noureddin, D. 2014. Food System Sustainability and Food Security: Connecting the Dots. *Journal of Food Security*. 2(1): pp. 13–22.

Cohen, M.J., & Garrett, J.L., 2010. The food price crisis and urban food (in) security. *Environ Urban*, 22(2): pp. 467–482.

Collingridge D.S., & Gantt E., 2008. The quality of qualitative research. *American Journal of Medical Quality*, 23(5). pp. 389–395.

Coyne, I.T, 1997. Sampling in qualitative research. Purposeful and theoretical sampling; merging or clear boundaries? *Journal of Advance Nursing*. No. 26. pp. 623-630.

Charmaz, K., 1997. Identity Dilemmas of Chronically Ill Men, in A. Strauss and J. M. Corbin (eds), Grounded Theory in Practice. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Chavas, J.P. 2017. On Food Security and the Economic Valuation of Food. *Food Policy*. 69: pp. 58–67.

Children's Protection Act (CPWA), 2011.

Clarke, V., & Braun, V., 2013. Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26 (2): pp. 120-123.

Clarke, V., & Kitzinger, C., 2004. Lesbian and gay parents on talk shows: resistance or collusion in heterosexism. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, no. 1. pp. 195-217.

Clover, J. 2003. Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa. *African Security Review*. 12(1):5–1.

Creswell, J.W. 2012. Philosophical, Paradigm, and Interpretive Frameworks. Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J., 2014. Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Crouch, D., & C. Ward, C., 1988. The Allotment. London: Faber and Faber.

Crush J., & Frayne, B., 2010. The Invisible Crisis: Urban Food Security in Southern Africa. Kingston, ON and Cape Town: African Food Security Urban Network. *Urban Food Security Series* No. 1, pp. 1-48.

Crush, J., Hovorka, A., & Tevera, D., 2011. Food Security in Southern African cities: The place for urban agriculture. *Progress in Development Studies*, 11 (4): pp. 285-305.

Crush, J., Frayne, B. & Mclachlan, M. 2011. Rapid Urbanization and the Nutrition Transition in Southern Africa. Urban Food Security Series No. 7. Kingston and Cape Town: Queen's University and AFSUN.

Crush, J.S., & Frayne, G.B., 2011. Urban Food Insecurity and the New International Food Security Agenda. *Development Southern Africa*. 28(4):527–544

Crush, J., Frayne, B., & McCordic C., 2017. Urban agriculture and urban food insecurity in Maseru, Lesotho. *Journal of Food Security*, 5(2): pp. 33-42.

Davis, A. 2017. Finding Ways to Increase Access to Nutritious Food in an Urban Township Through the Informal Economy. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. Stellenbosch: Sustainability Institute.

"Declaration of an Emergency on Food Security in Lesotho, August 2012" athttp://www.gov.ls/documents/speeches/declaration%20food%20insecurity%2020122013[1].pdf

Diehl, J.A., Oviatt, K., Chandra, A.J., Harpreet Kaur, H., 2019. Household food consumption patterns and food security among low-income migrant urban farmers in Delhi, Jakarta, and Quito. *Sustainability journal*, 11 (1378): pp. 2-18.

Dornyei, Z., 2007. Research methods in applied linguistics. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dudwick, N., Kuehnast, K., Jones, V. N., & Woolcock, M., 2006. Analyzing Social Capital in Context: A Guide to Using Qualitative Methods and Data, World Bank Institute, Washington.

Ellis, F., Sumberg, J., 998. Food production, urban areas and policy responses. *World Dev*, 26. pp. 213–225.

Ensign, J. 2003. "Ethical issues in qualitative research with homeless youths." *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 43(1): pp. 43-50.

Etikan, I., Musa, A., & Alkassin, R.S, 2016. Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(01): pp. 1-4.

ESRC/DFID. 2008. Averting 'New Variant Famine': Building Food Secure Rural Livelihoods. Briefing Notes No.4. Centre for Human Geography: Brunel University.

FAO, 1999. Spotlight: Issues in Urban agriculture. Food and Agricultural Organization, Rome.

FAO, 2009. World Food Summit on Food Security. United Nations Food and Agricultural organization. Rome.

FAO, 2014. Qualitative research and analyses of the economic impacts of cash transfer programmes in sub-Saharan Africa. Lesotho Country Case Study Report. Rome: FAO [Online], Available:http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3616e.pdf.

FAO, 2016. Lesotho: El Niño-induced Drought Briefing. Maseru: FAO-Lesotho.

FAO. 2017. The future of food and agriculture: Trends and challenges. Rome: FAO.

FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO. 2017. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World: Building resilience for peace and food security. Rome: FAO.

Feagin, J., Orum, A., & Sjoberg, G., (Eds.). 1991. *A case for case study*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Feeley, A., Pettifor, J.M., & Norris, SA. 2009. Fast food consumption among 17 year-olds in the Birth to Twenty Cohort. Birth to Twenty Research, University of Witwatersrand.

Fossey, E., Harvey, C., Mcdermott, F. & Davidson, L. 2002. Understanding and Evaluating Qualitative Research. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*. 36: pp. 717–732.

Fraser, E., Moonga, M. & Wilkes, J. 2014. The Role of the Informal Economy in Addressing Urban Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa. CIGI Junior Fellows Policy Brief Series No. 14. Waterloo ON: Centre for International Governance Innovation.

Frayne, B., BattersbyLennard, J., Fincham, R., Haysom, G., 2009.Urban food security in South Africa: Case study of Cape Town, Msunduzi and Johannesburg. Development Planning Division Working.

Frayne, B., Crush, J., & Mclachlan, M., 2014. Urbanization, Nutrition and Development in Southern African cities. Food Security. 6:101–112.

Frayne, B., McCordic, C., & Shilomboleni., H., 2014. Assessing contributions of urban agriculture to household food security in Southern African cities. *Urban Forum*, 25(2): pp. 177-189.

Garrett, J., 2004. Living life: overlooked aspects of urban employment. FCND Discussion paper 171. URL: http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/fcndp171.pdf. Accessed August 2014.

Gebre, G., 2012. Determinants of Food Insecurity Among Households In Addis Ababa City, Ethiopia. *Interdisciplinary Description of Complex Systems,* 10(2): pp. 159-173.

Gill, P., & Stewart, K.F., 2008. Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups. *Btitish Dental Journal*, 204(6): pp. 291-295.

GOL, 2005. Lesotho food security policy and strategic guidelines, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Maseru.

GOL, 2006. National action plan for food security (NAPFS), Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Maseru.

GOL, 2012. National strategic development plan (NSDP) 2012/13-2016/17: Growth and development strategic framework (Maseru), Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Maseru.

Godfray, H.C.J., Beddington, J.R., Crute, I.R., Haddad, L., Lawrence, D., & Muir, J.F., 2010. Food security: The challenge of feeding 9 billion people. *Science*, 327(5967): pp. 812-818.

Gordon, L.J., Bignet, V., Crona, B., Henriksson, P.J.G. & Holt, T. Van. 2017. Rewiring food systems to enhance human health and biosphere stewardship. *Environmental Research Letters.* 12. 1-12.Paper Series No.15, DBSA: Midrand.

Gopaldas, A., 2016. A Front-to-back Guide to Writing a Qualitative Research Article, Qualitative Market Research: *An International Journal*, 19(1): pp. 115–121.

Gumerman, G. 2012. Food and Complex Societies. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*. 4(2): pp. 105–139.

Gustafsson, J., 2017. Single Case Studies vs. Multiple Case Studies: A Comparative Study. Academy of Business, Engineering and Science, Halmstad University, Halmstad, Sweden.

Gwimbi, P., Likoetla, P., Thabane, K., & Matebesi, P., 2014. A Comprehensive scoping and assessment study of climate smart agriculture (CSA) Policies in Lesotho, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network.

Haddad, L., Ruel., M.T., & Garrett, J.L., 1999. Are urban poverty and undernutrition growing? Some newly assembled evidence. *World Dev*. 27(11): pp. 1891–1904.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P., 2019. Ethnography principles in practice. New York.Tavistock publications.

Hampwaye, G., 2008. Decentralisation, local economic development and urban agriculture in Zambia. Ph.D. University of Witwatersrand.

Haysom, G., 2015. Food and the city: Urban scale food system governance. *Springer Science+Media Dordrecht*; vol. 2, pp. 263-281.

Henderson, V., 2002. Urbanisation in developing countries. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 17(1): pp. 89-112.

Hitimana, L., Allen, T. & Heinrigs, P. 2011. Informal Economy and Food Security. West African Futures (WAF) No. 06. Paris: Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD).

Hurst, A., 2008. Vulnerability in research and health care: Describing the elephant in the room? *Bioethics*, *22*(4): pp. 191-202.

Igumbor, E., Sanders, D., Puoane, T., Tsolekile, L., Schwarz, C., Purdy, C., et al. 2012. 'Big Food', the consumer food environment, health and the policy response in South Africa. *PLoS Medicine.* 9, pp. 1–7.

Ingram, J. 2011. A Food Systems Approach to Researching Food Security and its Interactions with Global Environmental Change. *Food Security*. 3(4): pp. 417–431.

Institute for Mechanical Engineers (IMECHE). 2013. Global Food, Waste Not, Want Not. A Report Produced in the Context of the Institution's Vision on Improving the World Through Engineering. London: IMECHE.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007. Climate Change: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability, contribution of working group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change(Cambridge Univ Press, Cambridge, UK), in press.

January, I., 2014. Level of farmer household food security and effects of raskin policy. *journal of development economics*, Vol.15 (2): pp. 109-116.

Jelsma,J., & Clow, S., 2005. Ethical issues relating to qualitative research. *SA Journal of physiotherapy*, 61(01): pp. 3-6.

Kader, A., 2005. Increasing Food availability by reducing post harvest losses of fresh produce; Acta Hort: Verona, Italy.

Kashay, J.F. 2009. Missionaries and Foodways in Early 19th-century Hawai'i. Food and Foodways. 17(3): pp. 159–180.

Khaketla, M., 1978. Lesotho 1970: An African coup under the microscope. Berkeley: California University Press.

Kessides, L.N., 2005. Infrastructure privatization and regulations: Promises and perils. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 20(1): pp. 81-108.

Kirkland, D. E., 2008. Harvest of hope. A case study: the sustainable development of urban agriculture projects in Cape Town, South Africa. Unpublished MPhil Thesis, Department of Environmental and Geographical Science, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Kimani-Murage, E.W., Schofield, L., Wekesah, F., Mohamed, S., Mberu, B., Ettarh, R., Egondi, T., Kyobutungi, C., & Ezeh, A., 2014. Vulnerability to food insecurity in urban slums: Experiences from Nairobi, Kenya. *Journal of Urban Health*.

Kitzinger, J., 1994. The methodology of focus groups: The importance of interaction between participants. *Sociol Health IIn*, 16: pp. 103-121.

Kitzinger, J., 1995. Qualitative Research: Introducing focus groups. *Bmj*. 311(7000): pp. 299.

Kennedy, G., 2003. Food Security in the context of urban sub-Saharan Africa. *Food Africa Internet Forum*,31.

Kennedy, G., Berardo, A., Papavero, C., Horjus, D., Ballard, T., Dop, M., Delbaere, J., & Brouwer, I.D., 2010. Proxy Measures of household food consumption for food security assessment and surviellence: Consumption of hh dietary diversity and food consumption scores. *Public Health Nutrition*, 13(12): pp. 2010-2018.

Kennedy, G., Berger, S.L., Brunet, Campisi, J., Cuervo, A.M., & Epel, E., 2014. Geroscience: linking aging to chronic diseases. *Cell*, 159(4): pp. 709-713.

Kvale, S., 1996. Interviews.Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Lagi, M., Bertrand, K., & Bar-Yam, Y., 2011. The food crises and political instability in North Africa and the middle east. Cambridge: New England Complex Systems Institute.

Lang, T., & Barling, D., 2012. Food security and food sustainability: Reformulating the Debate. *The geographical journal*, 4 (178): pp. 313-326.

Larson, N.I., Story, M.T., & Nelson, M.C., 2009. Neighborhood environments: Disparities in access to healthy foods in the U.S. *Am. J. Prev. Med.*, 36, pp. 74–81.

Leduka, R., Crush, J., Frayne, B., McCordic, C., Matobo, T., Letsie, M. 2015. The State of Poverty and Food Insecurity in Maseru, Lesotho. Urban Food Security Series No. 21. Cape Town: AFSUN. [Online], Available:http://www.afsun.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/AFSUN21.pdf.

Lee-Smith, D., 2010. Cities feeding people: an update on urban agriculture in equatorial Africa. *Environ.Urban*. 22,483–499.

Lee-Smith, D., 2013.Which way for UPA in Africa, *Cities Journal of Food Security*, (17)42: pp. 69-84.

Lee-Smith, D., 2014. The dynamics of urban and peri-urban agriculture. In A. Akinyoade, W., Klaver, S., Soeters & D. Foeken, (eds.), Digging deeper: Inside Africa's agricultural, food and nutrition dynamics, Brill, Leiden.

Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS). 2009. Lesotho: Sustainable food security practices. Geneva: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. [Online], Available:www.ifrc.org.

Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC). 2016. Market Assessment Report. Maseru: Lesotho Government and LVAC.

Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC). 2017. *Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis Report*. Lesotho Government and LVAC.

Levitt, H. M., Motulsky, S. L., Wertz, F. J., Morrow, S. L., & Ponterotto, J. G., 2017. Recommendations for Designing and Reviewing Qualitative Research in Psychology: Promoting Methodological Integrity. *Qualitative Psychology*, 4(1): pp. 2–22.

Ligthelm, A. A., 2005. Informal retailing through home-based micro-enterprises: the role of spaza shops. *Development Southern Africa, 22* (2): pp. 199–214.

Long, L.M. 2001. Nourishing the Academic Imagination: The Use of Food in Teaching Concepts of Culture. Food and Foodways: *Explorations in the History and Culture of Human Nourishment*. 9 (3-4): pp. 235–62.

Litt, J.S., 2011. The influence of social involvement, neighbourhood aesthetics, and community garden participation on fruit and vegetable consumption. *Am. J. Public Health*, 101, 1466–1473.

Lyons, K., Richards, C., Desfours, L., & Amati, M., 2013. Food in the city: urban food movements and the (re)- imagining of urban spaces, *Australian Planner*, 50(2): pp. 157-163.

Maile, N., 2001. Forestry Outlook Studies in Africa (FOSA): Lesotho. Rome: FOSA.

Martin-Prevel, Y., Becquey, E., & Tapsoba , S., 2012. The 2008 food price crisis negatively affected household food security and dietary diversity in urban Burkina Faso. *J Nutr,* 142(9): pp. 1748–1755.

Matlosa, K., 1999. Aid, development and democracy in Lesotho, 1966-1996. Paper presented to a workshop organised by the Centre for Southern African Studies on "Aid, Development and Democracy in Southern Africa",21-22 November 1999. Cape Town: University of the Western Cape.

Matza, D., 1969. Becoming Deviant. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Maxwell, D., Levin,C., & Csete,J.,1998. Does urban agriculture help prevent malnutrition? Evidence from Kampala. *Food Policy*, 23. pp. 411–424.

Maxwell, S., 2000. The evolution of thinking about food security, in Devereux, S & Maxwell, S., (eds.) *Food security in sub-Saharan Africa*: pp. 17.

McGaffin, R., 2010. Shopping centres in township areas: Blessing curse? Report for urban landmark, Pretoria.

McGranahan, G., & Satterwaite, D., 2014. Urbanisation concepts and trends. International Institute for Environment and Development, working paper.

McKinley, J., 2015. Critical argument and writer identity: Social constructivism as a theoretical framework for EFL academic writing. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 12(3): pp. 184-207.

Mehta, D., 2000. The urbanization of poverty. *Habitat Debate* 6 (4): pp. 3–5.

Mitchell, J., & Leturque, H., 2010. Using value chain analysis to increase the impact of urban farming. *Urban Agriculture Magazine* 24: pp. 21–23.

Mintz, S.W., & Du Bois, C.M., 2002. The Anthropology of Food and Eating. *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 31(1): pp. 99–119.

Mofuoa, K. 2015. Social Embeddedness of Agriculture for Human Progress in the Nineteenth Century Southern Africa: Evidence and lessons from Lesotho. *International Journal of Development Research*. 5(12): pp. 6369–6379.

Morgan, D.L., 1998. The focus group guide book.London: Sage Publications.

Morris, J., 2002. Executive director of the World Food Programme, briefing the UN Security Council.

Mots'oene, K,A., 2014. Urbanization and poverty in Maseru: A comparative study of Sekamaneng, Motimposo and Thibella. A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Development Studies School of Social Sciences University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg, South Africa.

Mougeot, L.J.A., 2011. International Support to Research and Policy on Urban Agriculture (1996–2010): achievements and challenges. International Development Research Centre, Ottawa.

Mutiah, S., & Istiqomah, I., 2017. Determinants of households food security in urban areas. JEJAK: Journal of economic and policy, 10(10): pp.103-120.

Mkwambisi, D., 2009: Urban agriculture and food security in Lilongwe and Blantyre, Malawi. In Redwood, M., editor, Agriculture in urban planning: Generating livelihoods and food security. Earth scan and IDRC.

Ng, M., Fleming, T., Robinson, M., Thomson, B. & Graetz, N. 2014. Global, Regional and National Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in Children and Adults 1980-2013: A Systematic Analysis. *Lancet*. 384(9945): pp. 766–781.

Obioha, E., 2010. Climate variability and food production nexusin Lesotho, 2001-2007. *Journal of Human Ecology,* 32: pp. 149-60.Olivier, M., 2013. Social protection in Lesotho: Innovations and reform challenges. *Development Southern Africa.* 30: pp. 98-110.

OECD, FAO & UNCDF. 2016. Adopting a Territorial Approach to Food Security and Nutrition Policy. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Onyango, C., 2010. Urban and peri-urban agriculture as a poverty alleviation strategy among low-income households: The case of Orange Farm, South Johannesburg. M.A. University of South Africa.

Orb A., Eisenhauer, L., & Wynaden D., 2001. Ethics in qualitative research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 33(1): pp. 93-96.

Padgham, J., Jabbour, J., & Dietrich, K., 2015. Managing change and building resilience: A multi-stressor analysis of urban and peri-urban agriculture in Africa and Asia. *Urban Climate*, 12 (183): pp. 204-230.

Patton, M.Q., 1999. Enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis. *Health Sciences Research, 34,* pp. 1189–1208.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (2005). Language and Meaning: Data Collection in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. 52: pp.137–145.

Pontin, D., 2000. Interviews, In Cormack D F S (ed) The research process in nursing. 4th ed. Blackwell Science Oxford.

Popkin, B., 2003. The nutrition transition in the developing world. *Development Policy Review*. 21, pp. 581–597.

Pule, N, W., 2002. In Pule, N,W. & Thabane, M., eds. 2002. Essays on aspects of the political economy of Lesotho 1500 – 2000. Morija: Morija Printing Works. Quinlan, T., 1994. „Marena a Lesotho: Chiefs, politics and culture in Lesotho", University of Cape Town: Department of Social Anthropology.

Rajalakshmi, T.K., 2002. Hunger amidst plenty, *Frontline* 1(19): pp. 5-18.

Ravallion, M., 2002. On the urbanization of poverty. *Journal of Development Economics,* 68 (2): pp. 435–442.

Reardon, T., Timmer, C.P., Barret, C.B., & Berdegue, J., 2003. The rise of supermarkets in Africa, Asia and Latin America. *Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 85 (5): pp. 1140-1146.

Reid, D. J., & Reid, F. J. M., 2005. Online Focus Groups: An In-Depth Comparison of Computer-Mediated and Conventional Focus Group Discussions, *International Journal of Market Research,* 47: pp. 131– 62.

Redwood, M., 2009. Agriculture in urban planning: Generating livelihoods and food security,Routledge, London.

Rogerson, C. M., 2010. Resetting the policy agenda for urban agriculture in South Africa. *Journal of Public Administration,* 45 (2): pp. 373–383.

RUAF Foundation. 2010: RUAF-FSST programme,http://www.ruaf.org/node/1970

Rudolph, M. et al., 2009: Food, poverty and health in three study areas of Johannesburg. Report for African Food Security Urban Network (AFSUN).

Sets'abi, S., 2015. The challenges of meeting the inclusive cities agenda in Lesotho: The case of Street Vending in Maseru. A paper presented at the Gruphel IV International Conference on Speaking Across Boundaries: Gender Generations and Social Justice in an urbanizing world, Maseru November 22 – 25.National University of Lesotho: ISAS Papers.

Silverman, D., 2000. Doing qualitative research. London: Sage Publications.

Sobal J., 2001. Sample Extensiveness in Qualitative Nutrition Education Research. *Journal of Nutrition Education*, 33(4): pp. 184–192.

Schmidhuber, J,. & Shetty, P.,2005. Nutrition transition to 2030. Why developing countries are likely to bear the major burden. *Acta Agri Scand* 2/3(4): pp.150–166.

Schmidhuber, J., & Tubiello, F.N., 2007. Global food security under climate change. PNAS, 104(50): pp. 19703-19708.

Shannon, J., 2013. Food deserts: governing obesity in the neoliberal city. Progress in Human Geography (forthcoming).

Shaw, J. and Clay, E., 1993 (eds).World food aid: Experiences of recipients and donors. London: Villiers Publications.

Shaw, H., 2006. Food deserts: towards the development of a classification. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B*, 88(2): pp. 231–247.

Sukandar, D., Ali K., Hadi R, Faisal A., & Eddy S. 2006. Analysis of urban household food security in Purwokerto city. Banyumas Regency. Jenderal Soerdirman University. Purwokerto.Vol. 29(1): pp. 22-32.

Stake, R.E., 1995. The art of case studies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Steele, C., 2008. Hungry City. London: Chatto and Windus.

Stewart, D.W., & Shamdasani, P.M., 1990. Focus groups. Theory and practice.London: Sage Publications.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J., 2008. Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Swanepoel, J.W., Van Niekerk, J.A., & D' Haese, L., 2017. The socio-economic profile of urban farming and non-farming households in the informal settlement area of Cape Town Metropole in South Africa. S. Afr. J. Agric Ext. 45(01): pp. 131-140.

Swilling, M., & Annecke., 2012. What is so unsustainable? *Just Transitions: Explorations of sustainability in an unfair world*. Cape Town: In UCT Press.

Tacoli, C., 2017. Food (in) security in rapidly urbanising, low income context. *International Journal of environmental research and public health*, 14(12): pp. 1554-2017.

Tacoli, C., Bukhari, B., & Fisher, S., 2013. Urban poverty, food security and climate change: In Tellis, W. M., 1997. Application of a Case Study Methodology .*The Qualitative Report*, *3*(3): pp. 1-19. Retrieved fromhttp://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol3/iss3/1

Tellis, W. M., 1997. Application of a Case Study Methodology .*The Qualitative Report*, *3*(3): pp.1-19. Retrieved fromhttp://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol3/iss3/1.

Tubiello, F.N,. Soussana J.F, & Howden S.M,. 2007. Crop and pasture response to climate change. *Proc Natl Acad* Sci, 104(50): pp. 19686–19690.

Turner, S.D. 2005. Livelihoods and sharing: Trends in a Lesotho village, 1976 – 2004 Livelihoods and sharing: Trends in a Lesotho village, 1976 – 2004. Research Report No. 22. Cape Town: CARE & Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS).

Turner, S.D., 2009. Promoting Food Security in Lesotho: Issues and Options. Priority Support Programme, 2006-2009. Maseru.

Turner, S., Calder, R., Gay, J., Hall, D., Iredale, J., Mbizule, C. & Mohatla, M. 2001. Livelihoods in Lesotho. CARE.

The integrated food security strategy for South Africa (DoA) 2015. Pretoria.

Thabane, M., 2002. Motives for colonisation. In Pule, N,W., & Thabane, M., eds. Essays on aspects of the political economy of Lesotho 1500 – 2000. Morija: Morija Printing Works.

Thabane, K., Honu, B., & Paramiah, C., 2014. Determinants of household-level vulnerability to poverty in Mohale's Hoek District, Lesotho. *International NGO Journal*, 9: pp. 17-25.

Theron, W.H.O., & Kruger, R., 2014. Socio-economic variables and nutrient adequacy of women in the Vaal region of South Africa. *Ecology of food and nutrition*, 53(5): pp. 514-527.

Thomas, G., 2011. A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse and Structure. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6): pp. 511–521.

Thornton, A., 2008. Beyond the metropolis: Small town case of studies of urban and peri-urban agriculture in South Africa, *Urban Forum* 19 (3): pp. 243–262.

UNAIDS, 2012. Lesotho. Accessed at http://www.aidsinfo.unaids.org

UN-HABITAT (2009): Planning Sustainable Cities: Global Report on Human Settlements 2009. United Nations Human Settlements Programme, Nairobi.

UNDP. 1996. Urban Agriculture: Food, jobs, and sustainable Cities. *UNDP Publication Series for Habitat* II, vol. 1. United Nations Development Programme, New York.

UNFPA. 2007. State of the world population. Available online: http://www.unfpa.org/public/ (accessed on 9 May 2016).

UNICEF. 2009. Population growth and rapid urbanization: Food insecurity on the rise in urban settings. Proceedings of the joint meeting of the executive boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP, New York, NY, USA, 23–26 January 2009.

UNICEF. 2017. Lesotho: UNICEF Annual Report. Maseru. UNICEF.

United Nations. 2015. Lesotho: Summary on progress towards LUNDAP outcomes in support to the national development priorities from Result Groups and Non-Resident Agencies. Annual UN Country Results Report.

Vink, N., & Kristen, T., 2009. Pricing behaviour in South African food and agricultural sector. A report to the national treasury.

Visser, M., 1999. Food and culture: Interconnections. *Social Research*. 66(1): pp. 117–130.

Walia, R., 2015. A Saga of Qualitative Research. *Social Crimonol*, 5(2): pp. 124.

Warren, E., Hawkesworth, S., & Knai, C., 2015. Investigating the association between urban agriculture and food security, dietary diversity, and nutritional status: A systematic literature review. *Food Policy*, 53, pp. 54-66.

Watson, V., 2009. 'The Planned City Sweeps the Poor Away: Urban Planning and 21st Century Urbanisation. *Progress in Planning*. (72): pp. 151–193.

Weatherspoon, D., & Reardon, T., 2003. The rise of supermarkets in Africa: implications for agri-food systems and the rural poor. *Development Policy Review*, 21, pp. 333–355.

Williams-Forson, P. 2016. "I Haven't Eaten If I Don't Have My Soup and Fufu": Cultural Preservation through Food and Foodways among Ghanaian Migrants in the United States. *Africa Today*. 61(1): pp. 69–87.

Wills, W., Meah, A., Dickinson, A. & Short, F. 2013. Domestic kitchen practices: findings from the 'kitchen life' study. University of Hertfordshire report for the Food Standards Agency-Unit Report No. 24. United Kingdom: Social Science Research Unit and Food Standards Agency.

World Bank Group. 2016. 2016 World Development Indicators - Highlights: Featuring the Sustainable Development Goals. Extracted from the full version of WDI 2016. Washington DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

World Bank Group. 2016. 2016 World Development Indicators - Highlights: Featuring the Sustainable Development Goals. Extracted from the full version of WDI 2016. Washington DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

World Food Summit news, Five years later, 10-13 June 2002.

WHO. 2014. Global Status Report on Noncommunicable Diseases: "Attaining the Nine Global Noncommunicable Diseases Targets; A Shared Responsibility". Geneva: WHO

Wrigley, N., 2002. Food deserts in British cities: policy context and research priorities. *Urban Studies*, 39(11): pp. 2029–2040.

Yin, R., 1993. Applications of case study research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publishing.

Yin, R., 2002. Case study research: Design and methods. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Zaida, Z., 2003. An investigation into the effects of descipline specific knowledge, proficiency and genre on reading comprehension and strategies of Malaysia ESP students. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. University of Reading.

Zaida, Z., 2007. Case study as a research Method. *Journal of Kemanussian*, 9: pp. 1-6

Zaida, Z., 2003. An investigation into the effects of descipline specific knowledge, proficiency and genre on reading comprehension and strategies of Malaysia ESP students. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. University of Reading.

Zaida, Z., 2007. Case study as a research Method. *Journal of Kemanussian*, 9: pp. 1-6.

Zezza, A., Tasciotti, L., 2010.Urban agriculture, poverty and food security: Empirical evidence from a sample of developing countries. *food policy*, 35. Pp. 265–273.

Ziervogel, G., & Frayne, B., 2011. Climate Change and Food Security in Southern African Cities. Urban Food Security Series No. 8. Queen's University and AFSUN, Kingston and Cape Town.

Zohrabi, M., 2013. Mixed Method Research: Instruments, Validity, Reliability and Reporting Findings. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. 3(2): pp. 254–262.

Appendix A: Focus Groups Discussions Guide

Research Topic: Exploring the experiences of food insecurity among the urban poor households in Maseru, a case study of Thibella urban settlement.

- Are you born in the city or are you a rural-urban migrant?
- If rural-urban migrant, what beliefs/hopes did you have about city life towards better opportunities and better access to food? (Did your perception towards city life come true)?
- What does your household eat daily in a week?
- Why do you make these food choices? Explain what it is that influences the decision about the food you choose to eat. (Is it about eating what is available and affordable or what you consider healthy)?
- Do you experience any challenge towards storing food you bought and that you have already prepared? How do you survive the challenges? (Do you have refrigerators? How do you avoid or manage food waste)?
- How do you prepare your food? (Cooking arrangements or other ways to have daily meals, whether you cook or buy readymade food).
- Do you think your household has enough food? What do you consider as enough food?
- Has your household ever experienced hunger? Describe a time when this happened. What do you do in times of hunger? (Explain)
- What is your understanding of the availability of food?
- Are you able to grow your own food? If not, what are the challenges regarding growing your own food and what are the alternatives? (The question investigates spaces for home gardens, seeds availability and safety of crops).
- How reliable are your ways of preparing food? (If the food preparation ways are not reliable, what are other alternatives that you resort to in order to have daily meals amid unreliable food preparation ways challenges)? This question relates to fuel/electricity access that the households need in order to cook or prepare their food.
- Do you ever go to the shops in your area and there is no food/or you can't get the food that you need to feed your family? If so, give an example. (Does your location allow you to buy what you need and what you can afford?).

Are you able to eat different or various foods? If not, what are the challenges towards getting different food?

- Are you and your household members able to eat nutritious, healthy and safe food regularly? (Has any household member got ill due the household eating practises or patterns)?

- What do you regard as safe, nutritious and socially preferred food?

- What is your opinion on household income and how a household gets food in the city? (Can you say urban life is a cash-based life or a household can still survive without an income)?

- With your experience on how households source and make food available in both rural and urban areas, do you consider urban centres to have more opportunities in sourcing food?

- Traditionally, Basotho communities are used to sharing food parcels and items with those in need. How is the experience in the city?

- Do you feel free to ask for food items from other households? (If it is something that is normally practised, how does it happen? Do you give back food to the household that assisted or it is just an assistance/arrangement without strings attached to it?)

- Are there any initiatives from the government and NGOs that help the community members to receive food? Do you get food from any of these initiatives? And do you think the help is enough to meet your household's needs?

- What do you think your government should do to help communities that don't have enough food and are suffering from hunger?

Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Research Topic: Exploring the experiences of food insecurity among the urban poor households in Maseru, a case study of Thibella urban settlement.

- How many people live in your household?
- How many adults (over 18), and how many children (under 18)? [List ages of all members of household]
- Are you an urban settler by birth or through rural-urban migration?
- If you are a rural-urban migrant, what caused you to migrate from rural to urban?
- How many of the adults have an income?
- Does your household benefit from any social assistance programmes? (Is the assistance enough for your household's food needs)?
- What does your household typically eat daily within a week?
- What do you understand by food availability?
- How do you make food available?
- How do you store food? (Are there times when your food gets rotten due to the unavailability of a refrigerator? Do you have another alternative to storage in order to avoid food waste)?
- How do you prepare your food? (Cooking arrangements or other ways to have daily meals, whether you cook or buy readymade food).
- What influences decisions about the food you eat (eating what is available, eating what you can afford or eat what you consider healthy)?
- Looking at your food choices, do you consider your household having enough food? What do you consider as enough?
- Does your household ever go hungry (what causes hunger, how frequently does it happen, when was the last time it happened and what do you normally do in times of hunger?)
- Does the city life situation allow you to grow your own food? What are the challenges that you experience in terms of growing your own food)?

- If you always have to cook in order to have a meal, in times when you do not have fuel/power, how do you manage to have a meal?

- Do you ever go to the shops in your area and there is no food/or you can't get the food that you need to feed your family? If so, give an example. (Does your location allow you to buy what you need and what you can afford)?

- Are you able to eat different or various foods? If not, what are the challenges towards getting different food?

- Can your household manage to get food even when there is no family income? (Can you say an urban life is a cash-based life)?

- People hold perceptions that urban centres provide greater opportunities (employment and a better life) than rural areas, do you support this statement or perception? Give reasons for your answer.

- When you look at the way your household and other members in the settlement manage to get or source food, can you consider urban centres as having more opportunities to sourcing food?

- What are ways of sourcing food and making food available that exist in rural areas that you think can be adopted in urban areas?

- Basotho tradition in rural communities involves sharing food with those that do not have food, how is the experience in the city?

- In times that you are in a dire food crisis, what do you do? Do you ever ask for food from a neighbour or a friend who has food?

- Are you and your household members able to eat nutritious, healthy and safe food regularly? (Has any household member got ill due the household eating practises or patterns)?

- What do you regard as safe, nutritious and socially preferred food?

- Do you think urban food poverty is gaining enough recognition from government and local authorities? (What do you suggest can be done to respond to urban food poverty)?