



28 MAY COMMUNITY CHEST LAUNCHES WORLD HUNGER DAY PUBLICATION

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In commemoration of International World Hunger Day on 28 May 2020, Community Chest, in partnership with The Southern Africa Food Lab, has launched a publication entitled [*“Challenging False Narratives in a Global Crisis: Reflections on Human Rights, Inequality and Securing Food Systems”*](#).



The compilation of papers, reflecting on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on hunger and food security, were written by academic, business and community experts on food systems and security from South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana and the United States. They reflect on human rights, equality and securing food systems. The contributions offer fresh insights and recommendations including how we build new food systems and provide a sense of what it will take to build it.

It is co-edited by The Southern African Food Lab's director, Professor Scott Drimie and Community Chest's Head of the Sediba: Global Partnership Office, Zenariah Barends.

Community Chest CEO, Lorenzo Davids explains, "In a time of the pandemic crisis and with the President's Freedom Day call to South Africans to invest in a new society, a new consciousness and a new economy, we should now begin to ask ourselves a series of deep questions about our developmental trajectory."

Davids continues, "Have we been wrong about our strategies about poverty eradication, poverty elimination and poverty reduction? Have we been asking the right questions about how to engage the poorest 31 million citizens about a more food, health and education secure future?"

Professor Drimie declares, "The collaboration with Community Chest to make sense of the disruption of the food system during COVID-19 has exposed the structural inequalities and fault lines of our society. There is clearly an immense need to respond immediately to hunger, to facilitate connections across our joint network and to catalyse action that supports sustained access to good nutrition in vulnerable communities beyond the pandemic".

“A major reason for vulnerabilities in our food system is the lack of collaboration and cooperation between different actors within government, the market, and civil society. It is time to activate the long discussed intersectoral approach and we need to integrate nutrition more explicitly in our development discourse. The critical role played by civil society in the current relief response shows again that they must be involved in such co-ordination efforts towards a more just and inclusive food system”, Drimie concludes.

Co-editor, Zenariah Barends, concurs. “While COVID-19 has not been the reason, it has exacerbated and starkly illuminated the food security crisis South Africa and the world already faced. This publication is therefore timeous and the contributions reflect thought leadership on the issue of hunger and food systems, adding to the national dialogue, which should be prioritised”.

The publication contains contributions from academics across South African universities, as well as from Ghana, Nigeria and the United States, in fields ranging from nutrition, biodiversity loss, food insecurity amongst youth, food systems governance, the role of civil society networks and early childhood development.

Civil society is represented by leading organisations such as publishing partners Community Chest and The Southern Africa Food Lab, as well as The Worldwide Fund for Nature and the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice and Dignity Group.

Business views are shared by agricultural and social entrepreneurs such as the Umgibe Farming Organics and Training Institute in KZN, community voices are reflected through small-scale and rural farmers and government is represented by the Western Cape Economic Development Partnership, a support NPC geared to enable cross-sector and cross-boundary collaboration. Common findings in the papers include, among others, that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the inadequacy of existing governance processes and structures; the right to food – as enshrined in the Constitution – is a fallacy; geographic location and income are directly linked to food sources; there is a need for better communication and collaboration between government, civil society and the people; and that there must be a reinvention of food security in a post COVID-19 South Africa.

View the full publication [here](#).