

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE 'FETŠA TLALA' INITIATIVE IN IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY
OF WOMEN SMALLHOLDER FARMERS: A CASE OF SEMANENG VILLAGE, POLOKWANE
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

by

KGABO MAUREEN TEFU

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SUPERVISOR: Prof C.B. Burman

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof T. Moyo

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DECLARATION

I declare that “*The effectiveness of the ‘Fetša Tlala’ Initiative in improving food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers: A case of Semaneng village, Polokwane Local Municipality*” (mini-dissertation) hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the degree of Master of Development in Planning and Management has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Surname, Initials (title)

Date

DEDICATION

An extended, special dedication to my husband, Tlou Tefu and our children, Puseletso, Kgagelo and Reatlegile for their continued understanding and support throughout my academic venture.

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The successful completion of this study depended greatly on the efforts and assistance of individuals to whom I wish to acknowledge my gratitude.

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To the respondents who participated in the study, all the women beneficiaries of the Fetša Tlala Initiative.

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To my family and friends for their continuous and inspirational support, thank you!

To the Almighty God for the strength and letting me see hope when I felt like giving up, thank you for the blessings.

ABSTRACT

Development projects, including the Fetša Tlala Initiative, were designed to contribute to the National Development Plan, 2030. The objectives of this research assessed how effective the Fetša Tlala project was in improving food and nutrition security of women farmers and the degree of empowerment the project afforded them. A semi-structured interview guide was applied to 16 purposefully selected respondents during face-to-face interviews as the data collection method. The findings indicated that physical resources provided to beneficiaries contributed to the effectiveness of the project. However, the inconsistent institutional support provided by the project initiators were considered to detract from the effectiveness. The findings also revealed that the beneficiaries were empowered by the opportunities afforded through the initiative, but were further empowered by their own resilience in the face of adversity. The study concludes by recommending the continuation of the project with improved institutional support.

Keywords: Community-organised resilience; Empowerment; Household security; Poverty reduction; Resource constraints; Rural development.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ARDRI	Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute
CASP	Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FRHDC	Faculty Research/ Higher Degrees Committee
GCIS	Government Communication and Information System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IFSPI	Integrated Food Security Production Initiative
IFSS	Integrated Food Security Strategy
NDP	National Development Plan
NPC	National Planning Commission
PLAS	Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy
POPIA	Protection of Personal Information Act
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TREC	Turfloop Research Ethics Committee
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In response to the ongoing national focus on household food security and agricultural productivity within the smallholder sector, the South African Cabinet officially agreed on the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security alongside the 'Fetša Tlala' Food Production Initiative in 2013 (Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries (DAFF) 2013). The 'Fetša Tlala' Production Plan is a blended government framework that pursues the promotion of food and nutrition security. It addresses the housing market, the economy's overall structure, trends in unemployment and poverty, extensive social programs towards food insecurity that continue to prolong inequalities in smallholder farming (DAFF 2013).

The 'Fetša Tlala' Production Plan follows the initial Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) vision of focusing on "vulnerable members of the family, namely children and women" (2002:29). Like the IFSS, the overarching goal of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative was to expand food security by contributing to the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030's goal of ending hunger (Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) 2013:2). The intervention of the Fetša Tlala Project was resting on five pillars, namely the land capability; mechanisation support services; production inputs and infrastructure; agro-processing and market development; and capacity building (Agricultural Policy Action Plan (2015-2019). These land and agricultural reform projects are aimed to empower smallholder farmers and grant them opportunities throughout the value chain (Mmbengwa, Nyambe, Madzivhandila, Kambanje & Rambau 2020:15436).

According to the Fetša Tlala Standard Operating Procedure (2017), the Fetša Tlala Initiative is a multi-disciplinary approach by the government to attend to the country's problems of food insecurity. This initiative is rooted in various legislative frameworks such as the South African Constitution and the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security. Fetša Tlala is also referred to the Integrated Food Security Production Initiative (IFSPI)

advocated by DAFF. The government was intending to help subsistence and smallholder farmers by putting at least 1 million hectares of cultivatable land under production by 2019 across the country in line with the National Development Plan target (DARD 2017: 2).

Likewise, the DAFF's vision dovetails with South Africa's IFSS, which originated in 2002. The IFSS's (2002:13) vision is "to attain universal physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food for all South Africans to meet their dietary and food preferences for an active and healthy life". It also aims to improve access to food production and food processing technologies for food insecure households, placing emphasis on the importance of including women in these processes (IFSS 2002:29). Notwithstanding the development of the IFSS to streamline, harmonize and integrate the variety of household food security programmes, food insecurity is still a challenge in South Africa (Palacios-Lopez, Christiaensen & Kilic 2015). Furthermore, the marginalisation of many South African women in formal and informal institutions in the country has previously left them more prone to food insecurity than men (Misslehorn & Hendricks 2017:17).

According to the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security, South Africa still has challenges on food security (DAFF 2014). The policy indicates that there are inadequate safety nets and food emergency management systems to provide for all the people who are unable to meet their immediate food needs. Citizens have inadequate access to knowledge and resources to make optimal choices for nutritious and safe diets. In cases where productive land is available, like the selected study area, it is not always optimally utilised for food production because of lack of skills and resources.

Goal 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasizes ending starvation, achieving food security and enhanced nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture (Food & Agriculture Organization 2015). Goal 2 is aligned with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) which outlines the right to access of sufficient food and water for everyone. Goal 2 of the SDGs also indicates that the agricultural capacity and incomes of small-scale farmers should be doubled by 2030. This Goal emphasizes the importance of empowering women, indigenous people, family farmers, pastoralists, fishers and smallholder agriculturalists in order to achieve this goal equitably (Joshi, Hughes & Sisk 2015:35).

In line with the Goal 2 of the SDGs, the primary objectives of implementing the Fetša Tlala Initiative were to provide mechanisation services to support farming communities, reduce crop production challenges, encourage farming communities to go back to tilling the lands for food production, ensure food security at household level and promote maximum use of uncultivated land for food production (DARD 2017).

According to Government Communication and Information Systems' (GCIS) Vukuzensele report of December 2013, the then South African President put emphasis on encouraging people to go back to farming. He further indicated that it is ideal for every household to establish a food garden. Emphasis was also on seeing women's cooperatives and community groupings focusing on vegetable production, livestock or chickens to earn a living and fight hunger and poverty (GCIS 2013). Smallholder farmers at Semaneng village became involved in this project; with at least 24 women becoming enrolled in the project.

Women smallholder farmers are a significant contributor to the agricultural sector in Africa (Palacios-Lopez *et al.* 2015). In South Africa, the agricultural sector including smallholder agriculture is an important pillar of the country's economy on the basis of its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment, as well as food and nutrition security (Kirsten, Chaminuka & Thirtlec 2019:1). Achandi, Kidane, Hepelwa and Mujawamariya (2019:325) note that women's productivity within the smallholder sector remains low due to gender related issues, women smallholder farmers tend to have less productive outputs than their male counterparts.

Co-factors that explain the low productivity include the marginalisation of women from extension services and decision-making power (Achandi *et al.* 2019:325); differences in quantity and quality of land cultivated; access to agricultural inputs and household characteristics (Mukasa & Salami 2016:6). DAFF (2012:1) also attributed the low productivity of women smallholder farmers to outdated technologies and high seasonal labour fluctuations.

In order to counter the relatively low levels of productivity and associated household food insecurity within the smallholder agricultural sector, the DAFF (2012:2) argue that it is

necessary to encourage the escalation of sustainable production by smallholder farmers through improved agricultural inputs. This approach dovetails with the NDP Vision 2030, which indicates that by 2030 South Africa's rural communities should have better opportunities to be involved fully in the economic, social and political life of the country (National Planning Commission (NPC) 2013:9).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The 'Fetša Tlala' Integrated Food Production Initiative aimed at contributing towards the national commitment to food security and nutrition for all. Nationally, both women and men participated as beneficiaries in the initiative that aimed to enhance agricultural productivity, food security and nutritional levels in marginalised households. The overall ambition of the 'Fetša Tlala' Integrated Food Production Initiative was to place 1 million hectares of land under production by 2019 countrywide (DARD 2017). According to the community representative at Semaneng village, the initiative was implemented during late 2013 and early 2014. Among the 40 community members who participated, 24 women formed part of the initiative. The beneficiaries were supplied with treated maize seeds and tractors with drivers for planting (DAFF 2013).

According to DAFF (2014:7), the 'Fetša Tlala' Integrated Food Initiative highlighted challenges of dysfunctional tractors which severely affected the planting season in Limpopo province. The mechanisation challenges resulted in late planting and in some cases, cultivation activities ceased entirely. The Democratic Alliance MPL Assistance Network (2015) also reported that there was a public outcry by farmers over the notable waste that has been sustained as agricultural officers administered seed and fertilizer late during the planting seasons. Tractors and other necessary machinery to plough were never sent to the smallholder farmers.

Personal conversations by the researcher with smallholder women farmers in Semaneng village corroborated the above findings. It was revealed that women beneficiaries became demoralised and discouraged to continue with the cultivation after the initiative was stalled in the second year due to delays in receiving essential inputs. Hence the study focused on the factors that contributed to these events, and proposed strategies to address them.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to assess the effectiveness of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative in improving food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers at Semaneng village, Polokwane Municipality.

1.3.2 Objectives of the study

In order to achieve the aim of the study, the following objectives were used to:

- a) Analyse the effectiveness of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative on the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers;
- b) Assess the factors that influenced the success/failure of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative from the perspective of women smallholder farmers; and
- c) Identify ways of empowering women smallholder farmers.

1.3.3 Research questions

The research questions that were addressed include:

- a) How effective was the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative in improving the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers?
- b) Which factors influenced the success/ failure of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative from the perspective of women smallholder farmers?
- c) What can be done to empower women smallholder farmers?

1.4 MOTIVATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Many studies have focused on the empowerment of women in rural areas but the issue of empowerment in the context of food and nutrition security has not been investigated in Semaneng Village in the Polokwane Local Municipality, Capricorn District, Limpopo Province. Furthermore, there has been no research into the empowerment of women in the context of the 'Fetša Tlala' Production Plan Initiative in the study site.

The results of this study contributed to developing strategies that can lead to the empowerment of rural women in the study site. In addition, the study contributed towards an improved understanding of the how to improve development planning and management of similar projects from the perspective of empowering women smallholder farmers. The combination of the learning indirectly, contributed to advancing the vision of the NDP.

1.5 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.5.1 Smallholder farmers

Smallholder farmers are people that depend on agriculture for their food security and income. Typically, smallholder farmers cultivate areas less than 10 hectares in size and family members serve as the main source of labour (Donatti, Harvey, Martinez-Rodriguez, Vignola & Rodriguez 2019:265). It is also argued that smallholder farmers who cultivate less than two hectares are central to conserving crop diversity; are more productive per hectare than larger farms —and yet the families of smallholder farmers are largely food insecure (Ricciardi, Ramankutty, Mehrabi, Jarvis & Chookolingo 2018:64).

1.5.2 Food in/security

Food security is the availability of sufficient supplies of basic foodstuffs such as fruits and grains at all times so as to avoid severe food shortages in the occurrence of widespread crop failure, natural or other disasters such as drought (Pahl-Wostl 2019:358). In a similar vein, Abdullah, Tariq, Sajjad, Waqar, Izhar and Aasir (2019:201) argue that food security refers to consistent, reliable access to enough food for active, robust living. In contrast, food insecurity refers to the distress associated with lack of sufficient calories to provide the expected amount of dietary energy that individuals need to live a healthy and productive life (Grebmer, Bernstein, Brown, Prasai & Yohannes 2017:7).

1.5.3 Nutrition

The expression ‘nutrition’ that is applied in this study is aligned with the definition agreed by the United Nations at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) held in November 2014 (FAO & WHO, 2014:1). The recommendations which were later included in its Framework for Action include a commitment to developing sustainable, adaptable food systems for healthy diets; aligned health systems that provide across the board

coverage of the necessary nutrition actions; social protection and nutrition education; trade and investment for improved nutrition; safe and conducive environments for nutrition at all ages and strengthened governance and accountability for nutrition (FAO, 2014:5).

1.5.4 Poverty

Poverty refers to lack of sufficient resources to provide the basic needs of life which include food, clean water, shelter and clothing. The definition is typically expanded to comprise access to health care, education and transportation (World Vision 2019:8). It is also referred to a condition of not having enough material possessions or income for a person's needs. Poverty may include social, economic, and political elements. Absolute poverty is the complete lack of the means necessary to meet basic personal needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Poverty can also be defined as an occurring when a person cannot meet a minimum level of living standards, compared to others in the same time and place (Ezirim & Ezirim 2020:122).

1.5.5 Women empowerment

In a normative sense, empowerment refers to the granting of power, authority or a right to undertake a procedure or action. Women empowerment refers specifically to addressing both the immediate factors that influence power relations between men and women as well as the structural factors that influence the same. Women empowerment is both individual and social (Tandon 2016:6). Empowering women involves processes that seek to create the conditions that increase opportunities for women. This may require challenging existing structural issues such as laws, customs and norms of a particular social group so that women become decision makers in the process of crafting new social norms (Kabeer 2019:210).

1.6 OUTLINE OF RESEARCH REPORT

The study is organized into five chapters as indicated below.

Chapter 1 is a background to the study. It describes the origin of the Fetša Tlala Initiative. It also indicates the motive of DAFF for food security project. This chapter also outlines the problem statement, aim and objectives of the study, research questions and motivation for undertaking the study.

Chapter 2 provides an empirical and conceptual review of issues related to women smallholder farmers. The history of women's subordination in the past is discussed. An outline of how patriarchy led to gender bias is given in this chapter. Chapter 2 also presents information on women's access to resources. The empowerment of the women in rural areas and their food security is also discussed.

Chapter 3 presents the research methodology that was employed in the study, including a description of the study area, data collection methods and analytical techniques that were applied.

Chapter 4 provides a report on the study's main thematic findings.

Chapter 5 presents the overview of the study, summary of the findings in the context of the study's research objectives and questions. The chapter outlines the recommendations followed by conclusions.

1.7 CONCLUSION

The background of the Fetša Tlala project was outlined by highlighting its motive towards food and nutrition security, focusing on women smallholder farmers. A brief literature review was undertaken to identify the research gap. Furthermore, the aims and objectives of the study were outlined on how the research problem will be addressed. This chapter also discussed the significance of the study by justifying its relevance to the literature on the identified project and women smallholder farmers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the introduction, background and motivation for the study. Fink (2020:6) defines a research literature review as a systematic, clear, detailed and repeatable method. A literature review is designed to identify, evaluate and reflect on the existing body of typically peer reviewed work that is relevant to the study at hand.

In this chapter, an overview of the conceptual framework that serves as a lens for this study is presented. A conceptual framework is the total, logical orientation and associations of anything and everything that forms the underlying thinking, structures, plans and practices and implementation of the entire research project. It comprises the thoughts on identification of the research topic and the problem under investigation (Kivunja 2018:47). In line with the study objectives, attention is focused on the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers from a global to local context and their role and influence within the Fetša Tlala agricultural project.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework for this qualitative study is based on the research problem and the objectives of the study, as advised by Afribary (2020). The concept adapted in this study is based on food security of women smallholder farmers, with the focus on the Fetša Tlala project as a development strategy. The conceptual framework further explains the contribution of the Fetša Tlala project towards women smallholder farmers' participation in decision making processes that may contribute to their own empowerment. Figure 2.1 presents the visual summary of the conceptual framework for the study.

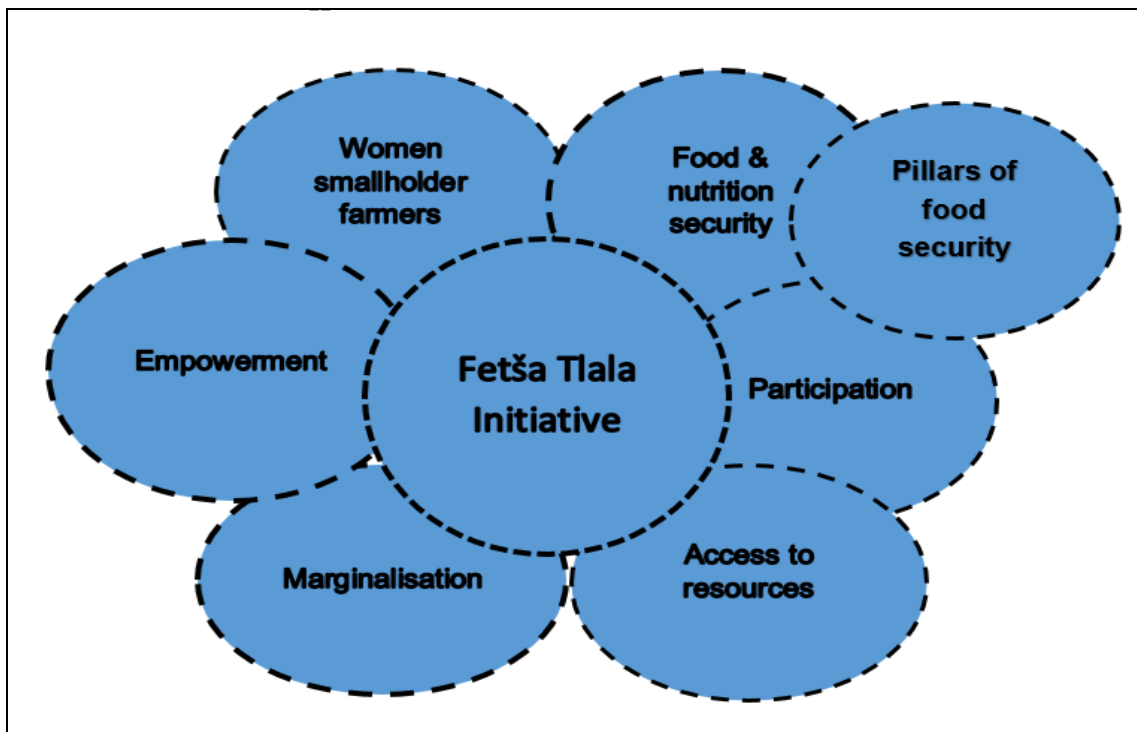


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

Source: Researcher's contribution and Adopted from Applied Doctoral Centre

Community development projects such as the Fetša Tlala Project are aimed at putting the underutilised agricultural land into a more productive state. According to the Fetša Tlala Integrated Food Production Report (2013/14: VII), is a significant milestone towards achieving the NDP's Vision 2030, which is "increasing food production to increase food security" (National Planning Commission 2011).

Maziya, Mudhara and Chitja (2017:40) allude that most South African farmers who engage in agriculture to produce an extra source of food is women in rural areas. Women smallholder farmers contribute much towards household consumption and saved income for purchasing nutritious foods that cannot be produced by the household. As a result, women play a major role towards food security. IFSS (2002:19) indicates that South Africa has largely been food secure at national level but not at household level. It is for this reason that the government adopted the IFSS that serves as a guide for the Fetša Tlala Production Plan to eradicate hunger and malnutrition among poor households.

Women's participation is of great importance in the agricultural sector but they still face structural challenges that affect their equitable inclusion in the sector (Jili & Masuku 2017:548). For example, feminist scholars contend that women smallholder farmers have limited access to and control over physical agricultural resources that are more important to food production such as land (Dery 2015:32). Furthermore, Choudhury and Castllanos (2020:252) indicate that despite rural women's labour participation in agriculture, they continue to be marginalized through disparities in access to and control over resources, including technical production knowledge.

In South Africa, the historical position of women smallholder farmers in formal and informal establishments resulted in their vulnerability to food insecurity more than their male counterparts. Their particular powerlessness and vulnerability was broadly investigated and reported on (Misselhorn & Hendriks 2017:17). In order to redress these imbalances, Okunlola *et al.* (2016:47) allude that women require access to physical resources, skills training and mentoring in order to empower them and increase both productivity and food security.

Fanadzo and Ncube (2018:436) allude that capacity building is one of the missing links in smallholder development because there is lack of sufficient training of farmers and extension staff. For successful development and management of smallholder farming in South Africa, training is one of the most important requirements. Agricultural extension, which is the process of development of agricultural knowledge and skills amongst farmers, with the aim of increasing their productivity and realising other desirable changes must be taken into consideration for sustainable smallholder farming (Raidimi & Kabit 2019:122). Agricultural extension's goals of transferring knowledge from global, national, and local researchers to farmers, helping them clarify their own goals and assessing their opportunities, educating them about decision-making processes, and promoting desirable agricultural development (Raidimi & Kabit 2019:122).

Women's empowerment is considered to be a prerequisite to achieving food security globally (Akter, Rutsaert, Luis, Htwe, San, Raharjo & Pustika 2017:270). Women's empowerment has a direct influence on agricultural productivity and household food security. The Gender and Agriculture Research Network of the Consultative Group of

International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) proposes two indicators that can be used to evaluate and track empowerment: access to resources and decision-making. Access to resources includes both access and control over productive resources such as land, water, seeds, livestock, forests, fertilizers and machinery. Decision-making refers to women's decision-making power over time-use and income, and their decision making power in groups and collective organisations (Akter et al. 2017:271).

According to Schleifer and Sun (2020:2), food availability is the first pillar of food security that refers to the extent to which food is actually or potentially physically present, including aspects of production, reserves, markets and transportation, and wild foods. The second pillar is food access which points out to when food is actually or potentially present and whether or not households and individuals have sufficient access, namely whether they have adequate resources or entitlements to acquire appropriate food for a nutritional diet. Food utilization refers to whether or not households are maximizing the consumption of adequate nutrition and energy. The third pillar is food stability, which refers to a state in which a population, household, or individual is food secure at all times. Lastly, food instability means that people experience insufficient access to food on a periodic basis, with negative impacts on their nutritional status (Schleifer & Sun 2020:2). From this perspective, adverse weather conditions, political instability, or economic factors such as unemployment and rising food prices, can all be a source of food instability (Schleifer & Sun 2020:2).

Development specialists generally agree that investing in agriculture is an effective strategy for reducing poverty, inequality and hunger (Lowder, Scoet & Raney 2016:16). To accelerate progress towards ending hunger and achieving food security and improved nutrition, as required by the Sustainable Development Goal 2, it is important to fully grasp the connections between food insecurity and malnutrition, and the drivers underlying both.

A better understanding of these links can lead to more effective policies aimed at addressing the specific challenges faced by countries and the international community (World Health Organization 2019:102). Nutrition constitutes an integral component of food security and therefore occupies a central position in addressing the food security challenges. Food security cannot be achieved without adequate nutrition. Hence, nutrition

warrants important consideration across all four pillars of food security, being availability, stability, access and utilisation (Bahn, Hwalla & El Labban 2021:1).

2.3 SMALLHOLDER FARMING AS A GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY

Bisht, Rana and Ahlawat (2020:2) indicate that most of the world's poor people live in rural areas and they utilise agriculture as a household security strategy which is inclusive of subsistence farming and selling any surplus harvest for cash income. Notwithstanding this, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2014) reported that smallholder farmers, which are defined generally as 2 ha, produce 70–80% of the world's food and are central to conserving crop diversity. In 2014, the 'International Year of the Family Farm', the United Nations (UN) and other food security agencies reiterated these arguments to garner increased support for family farmers, who are predominantly smallholders (FAO 2014). More recently, the FAO went on to argue that smallholder farmers produce around a third of the world's food.

Within this broader global context, there is empirical evidence that women have a decisive role in ensuring food security and preserving local agro-biodiversity (Bisht *et al.* 2020:2). For example, the economic survey in India points out that measures such as earmarking at least 30% of the budget allocation for women beneficiaries in agricultural development activities have been taken to ensure mainstreaming of women in the sector because of the influence they have on agricultural productivity (Bisht *et al.* 2020:2).

Lowder, Sánchez and Bertini (2021:8) problematize these arguments by highlighting that despite the actual share of food production by smallholder farms, there is confidence that smallholders are responsible for a small share of the world's food production and family farms are responsible for much of the world's food production because the majority of land is operated by family farms of all sizes and a minority of agricultural land is operated by small farms. Therefore, the current understanding of how much food smallholders produce, what kinds of food they produce, where their food is destined in the food system, and how much nutrition it contains, are all key knowledge gaps in global Agricultural research (Ricciardi, Ramankutty, Mehrabi, Jarvis & Chookolingo 2018:64).

2.4 SMALLHOLDER FARMING IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Research has confirmed that smallholder farmers play an important role in food security in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (Hlophe- Ginindza & Mpandeli 2020:6). However, current trends in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) indicate that higher food demands, climate change and reduced agricultural productivity adversely affect food security across the continent. It is also evident that smallholder farmers are vulnerable groups to climate change and food insecurity because they typically depend directly on agriculture for their livelihoods. Smallholder farmers have limited coping capacities against shocks; thus any reduction or variability of agricultural productivity can threaten their food security, nutrition and well-being (Stuch, Alcamo & Schaldach 2021:268).

Nevertheless, the ambition of increasing food security offers immense opportunities for smallholder farmers across the continent irrespective of gender. Inclusion of smallholder farmer participation provides an opportunity for all stakeholders including women smallholder farmers to be actively involved as decision makers and producers. Despite these ambitions to include women within these plans, many women smallholder farmers remain structurally marginalised (Kamara, Conteh, Rhodes & Cooke 2019:14049). In order to redress these structural inequalities and ensure equitable growth within the agricultural sector in SSA, it is essential to understand and build on the dynamics that affect female smallholder farmers within their localised socio-economic contexts (Jili & Masuku 2017:554).

2.5 SMALLHOLDER FARMING IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to the National Development Plan 2030, by 2030, South Africa's rural communities must have better opportunities to participate fully in the economic, social and political life of the country. Rural areas are, however, still characterised by high levels of poverty and inequality despite the redistribution and restitution of about 7.2 million hectares of agricultural land since 1994 (National Development Plan-2030 2013:218). Irrigated agriculture and dry-land production should be expanded. This will help to achieve agricultural development for smallholder farmers. The expansion may result in successful land reform and employment creation of close to 1 million new jobs by 2030 (NDP-2030 2013:219).

According to Aliber (2018:1), the agricultural sector has been regarded as a contributor towards the creation of employment and as a stimulant to rural development. However, it is significant that much of this extensive potential remains unrealised. Most smallholder farmers are below the poverty line; many subsistence producers are food insecure and swathes of arable land in the former homelands around the country remain under-utilised (Aliber 2018:1). The lack of interest in farming among young rural people is also a risk to consider when it comes to South Africa's smallholder agricultural sector (Fanadzo & Ncube 2018:440).

There is a reported shift in global poverty distribution and the economic growth in developing countries like South Africa that have generated emerging economies with dualistic agricultural sectors. Evidence suggests that the persistence of the dualist agricultural system, which comprises a large number of very small farms, could be due to large group projects. Fernandez, Blanco, Ponce, Vasquez-Lavin and Roco (2019:90) refer to dualist agriculture as a system where subsistence farms co-exist with commercial farms. This type of projects are an initiative of the democratic government, which is developmental in nature. Projects such as Phakhisa, AgriParks, Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program (CASP), Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS), Fetša Tlala, Ditalawa Appel Project and the Maluti Dairy Projects were designed and implemented for poor rural farmers. This implementation was through the sponsorship of the land and agrarian reform with a conscious bias to the historically disadvantaged social groups such as women and black people in general (Mmbengwa, Nyambe, Madzhivhandila, Kambanje & Rambau 2020:15436).

One of the major problems that has led to the failure of smallholder farmer projects in South Africa is the exclusion of the farmers in the planning stages of projects. The extent to which the concerned communities or groups are included in the planning or decision-making processes is questionable, considering that these projects are directly meant to improve their livelihoods. Participation and needs analysis are therefore key in determining and evaluating priorities for communities (Fanadzo & Ncube 2018:443). Human capacity building, financial assistance, establishing institutions, and any other commitment should

be taken into consideration prior to implementing interventions for the projects (Fanadzo & Ncube 2018:443).

2.6 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE

According to the World Bank (2022), development projects aim to reduce rural poverty by improving and increasing agricultural production through community-based approach. This improvement can be achieved by designing and implementing initiatives like the Fetša Tlala Initiative, which directly impacts the lives of the poor.

2.6.1 Sustainable smallholder agriculture

Sustainable agriculture is inclusive of three main goals: environmental health, economic profitability and social equity. It aims at meeting the needs of the present without compromising future generations' ability to meet their own needs (Callari 2020: 9). Sustainable agriculture provides “spaces of empowerment for women farmers” (Fremstad & Paul 2020:128). Bisht *et al.* (2020:2) allude that sustainability in farming is guided by three interconnected principles of being (i) economically viable for farmers; (ii) socially fair to communities and (iii) environmentally-friendly. These are the pillars of healthy development that should sustain the growing population in years to come.

Rist *et al.* (2016:17) developed an operational concept of food sustainability. It classifies food systems as sustainable if they are able to strike a positive balance between five fundamental aspects: (1) the capacity to ensure food security; (2) to fulfil people's right to food; (3) to reduce poverty and inequality; (4) to exhibit a high environmental performance; and (5) to exhibit high levels of social-ecological resilience. From this concept of food sustainability, Rist *et al.* (2016:17) derived the need for improving food systems' resilience and, by extension, their sustainability so as to ensure human well-being and ecological functioning.

In terms of food security, sustainable agriculture, rural employment, and environmentally sustainable technologies such as soil conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and biodiversity protection are necessary for integrated rural development. Sustainable agriculture is a type of agriculture that is mainly based on producing long-term crops and livestock with limited consequences on the environment. This type of agriculture

attempts to find a good balance between the need for food production and preservation, or regeneration of ecological system. Sustainable agriculture also focuses on maintaining the economic stability of farms and helping farmers improve their techniques and quality of life (Singh & Deewan 2019:395).

2.6.2 Gendered decision making in smallholder agriculture

Legal laws advocate for women's rights to agricultural land while on the other hand customary laws accept men as the primary owners. It is noticeable that land inheritance is guided by patriarchal principles (Tsige, Synnevag & Aune 2020:2). Sachs (2018:6) indicates that women still carry out work in agriculture at the global level and yet most men still own the land, control women's labour and make agricultural decisions in patriarchal systems. Patriarchal family structures and cultural traditions tend to limit women in rural areas and as a result, they become powerless. Structural changes in agricultural production globally compromise the viability of many family farms and alter gender divisions of labour in families, thus, setting the platform for shifts in the form of patriarchal control over women's lives (Sachs 2018:6).

Sachs (2018:7) states that some regions of the world focus on the importance and intersection of women's productive and reproductive labour as women still perform a number of activities to satisfy the subsistence needs of their families. There are strategies put forward as a result of these studies which include providing women with credit, increasing their access to land and educating them in agriculture. There are situations where women are actual farmers but title deeds are still in the names of men and this may also be creating disincentives to farming (Sachs 2018:7).

2.6.3 Gendered access to resources in smallholder agriculture

Public extension service has been declining over the past years in terms of both quality and quantity of the extension officers in South Africa. The extension officers that are in the system are poorly trained, and still provide services based on the top-down approach. It is anticipated that the share of smallholder farming households receiving attention from extension staff is not very different today (Fanadzo & Ncube 2018:436).

In a study conducted by the Nkonkobe Farmers Association and the Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute (ARDRI) (2015), of the University of Fort Hare, the Fetša Tlala Project was poorly planned. This is evident as the respondents of the study acknowledged that the project improved production as compared to what they had before, but still felt that its planning was poor. The main concern was that they were not consulted when the project was planned. This could have helped in determining what the project members specifically wanted and that could have contributed to the success of the project. There was a lack of information which made the farmers unsure about the decisions taken on their behalf, although they were not necessarily in disagreement with these decisions.

In order to obtain a positive impact for women smallholder farmers, the beneficiaries of the project should be involved in the initial planning stages and decision making processes. They should be consulted when the project is planned as this would help to determine what the project beneficiaries want specifically and can contribute towards the success of the project. The notion of community participation in project planning is therefore of high importance. According to Setokoe, Ramukumba and Ferreira (2019: 2), the reason behind community participation permits the promotion of improved efficiency, more accountability and transparency, enhanced ownership and eventually the empowerment of the community. This emphasizes that the community is granted an opportunity to play a meaningful role in the sustainability of their own development. Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation can be employed to facilitate the process of participation (Arnstein 1969: 217).

Agricultural productivity is low in many developing countries for a number of reasons such as the lack of appropriate technologies, inputs, credit, access to markets and rural infrastructure, and gaps in agricultural skills and knowledge. These gaps prevent rural agricultural producers from adopting technologies and using them effectively for increased production (Maziya *et al.* 2017: 41). According to the World Bank (2018), women have been forsaken when it comes to the different forms of support such as functional literacy, financial knowledge and technology. For the gender gap to close structural and cultural issues within agriculture must change. This is as a result of the outdated norms which have been dictating the social structure of rural communities for generations. Women farmers are often degraded to unpaid farm work and household tasks while men are in a

position to receive training, resources and land. It is said that it is the tradition to pass a farm down to the son and this means that males continue to have more effect and power in agriculture (World Bank 2018).

2.7 POLICIES TOWARDS FOOD SECURITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

The move towards food security in South Africa has been a priority in the following policies as outlined below: IFSS and the DAFF Strategic Plan (DAFF-SP).

2.7.1 The Integrated Food Security Strategy

The vision of the IFSS is to achieve universal physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food by all South Africans to meet their dietary and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Its goal was to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity by 2015. The IFSS's objectives are, among others, to increase household food production and trading; improve income generation and job creation opportunities; improve nutrition and food safety and provide capacity building (Department of Agriculture 2002: 6).

The IFSS is a development approach that advocates for public-private civil society partnerships and focuses on household food security without overlooking national food security. It operates based on food security interventions to ensure that the target food insecure population gains access to productive resources. It recommends that food security interventions should ensure that the target food insecure population is empowered to have nutritious and safe food, that food security interventions should proceed from an analysis that is based on correct information and the impact of which in eradicating hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity is constantly monitored and evaluated (Department of Agriculture 2002: 6).

2.7.2 The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Strategic Plan (DAFF-SP)

The Food Security Production Programme seeks to link subsistence producers and smallholder producers to government institutions such as government schools through the food produced by smallholder farmers to meet the nutritional needs of low-income individuals and households in communities at large. The Food Security Production

Programme therefore seeks to provide a boost to existing smallholder producers in their own right. The Strategic Plan for Supporting Smallholder Producers is a broader initiative that seeks to improve coordination of support to smallholder producers to improve the success and number of smallholder producers. It seeks to do this by means of better aligning and where necessary adjusting what are in effect a large number of distinct functions of support, e.g., extension, cooperatives development, marketing, mechanisation, financial services and spatial planning (DAFF 2013:3).

2.8 THE GENDER GAP: WOMEN FARMERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Women make up a large percentage of the poor, particularly in rural areas and as a result, it takes gender and geographic location into account. It proposes a range of measures to advance women's equality. It also recommends that the transformation of the economy should involve the active participation and empowerment of women and that security of ownership be created for communal farmers, especially women (NPC 2013:33).

Empowerment refers to the processes by which those who have previously been denied the capacity for choice gain this capacity (Kabeer 2017: 650). It specifically relates to processes of change. Empowerment then points out to the capacity to make strategic and meaningful choices by those who have previously been marginalised. The South African Department of Energy (2016:4) posits that the empowerment of women is an important process in the transformation of gender relations because it addresses the structural and underlying causes of subordination and discrimination. It touches on their ability to participate on equal terms with men, towards reshaping of their societies in ways that expand the options available to all women and that contribute to a more democratic distribution of power and possibilities (Kabeer 2017: 651).

Women's empowerment is considered to be a prerequisite to achieving food security globally (Akter *et al.* 2017:2). Women's empowerment has a direct influence on agricultural productivity and household food security. The second indicator focuses on women's decision-making power over time-use and income, and their decision making power in groups and collective organisations (Akter *et al.* 2017: 5). Women empowerment

in the agriculture sector has been a serious challenge for the whole world (Sachs 2018: 5).

It has been demonstrated that increasing women's participation in organizations, communities, and economies can lead to household empowerment and household empowerment enhances women's ability to participate at these broader levels. Kabeer (2020:6) argues that women's empowerment contributes to development progress, which includes women's preferences within the family, community and productivity gains for strengthening women's economic rights. Therefore, the recognition of women in agriculture means recognizing how current structures and systems whether formal or informal continue to disadvantage women in agriculture as compared to men. Positive change for women in agriculture means acknowledging women's agency to create this change (Fletcher 2016:3).

It is crucial to enhance women's control over agricultural production and their access to the necessary inputs for agriculture (Fletcher 2016:4). Women's representation and voice and, better yet, transformative feminist representation and voice is essential to positively transform the political, economic, and ecological conditions of agriculture. According to Okoli (2021:127), transformative feminism struggles against patriarchy, which refers to all forms of male dominance/supremacy; class exploitation on the basis of capitalism, the dominant economic structure today and oppression on the basis of race/ethnic differences.

At the same time, however, it is also important to recognise the power of women's every day contributions. These contributions are less likely to be instantly recognised as "agricultural", even though they are crucial to food and agricultural systems (Fletcher 2016:4). Positive change in agriculture may occur most easily when change strategies align with familiar social structures, while simultaneously challenging negative ones. In other words, if concrete strategies for empowering women in agriculture correspond with existing social ideologies, routines, and norms that are not problematic from the equality or sustainability perspective, these strategies may be sufficiently accepted to move forward and challenge ones that are problematic (Fletcher 2016:7).

Men can participate in the empowerment of women in agriculture which can enhance the power to transform gender relations over the longer term. Increased visibility and recognition of women's contributions to agriculture, including their contributions to agricultural households and social capital in agricultural communities, is crucial to build more effective, gender-aware, solutions. This is due to the growing rural to urban migration by men. There is "feminisation of the agriculture sector", with an increasing number of women in multiple roles as cultivators, entrepreneurs, and labourers. Effective solutions require recognition of both the diversity and agency of women in agriculture. It can be ensured that food production is healthy, sustainable and available to all by ensuring that there is integration of knowledge of women farmers around the world (Fletcher 2016:17).

2.9 THE FETŠA TLALA PROJECT TOWARDS FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Section 27:1(b) indicates that it is every citizen's right to have access to sufficient food and water. It further states that the State must, within its available resources, take reasonable legislative and other measures to achieve the continuous or increasing realisation of each of these rights (The Republic of South Africa 1996:11). Despite these commitments, food insecurity in South Africa originates from poverty. Poverty developed as a result of low wages and high rates of unemployment and for this reason, initiatives have focused much on job creation.

The NDP proposed to create one million jobs by the end of 2030 by adopting initiatives such as labour-intensive agriculture for low and unskilled individuals as farmworkers and workers in the agro-processing sector (Boatema, Drimie & Pereira 2018:272).

The Ilima/Letsema and Fetša Tlala food security initiatives are based on production inputs. Fetša Tlala was developed to promote staple food production on fallow lands where there is potential for agricultural production (Nkonkobe Farmers Association & the ARDRI 2015:1). Farmers were gathered to plant yellow maize and dry beans for the market. The production of yellow maize was for sale with the hope that the generated income will be used for households' food purchases (Boatema, Drimie & Pereira 2018:270). The Fetša Tlala Initiative was also aimed at being a contributory factor towards food security as it is

one of the most important basic needs of life and it is considered a fundamental human right (Dzanku 2019: 26).

According to the South African Government, the first maize produce from Fetša Tlala transported to Lesotho for humanitarian aid relief. Maize from the Zivuseni agricultural co-operative and the Ziyibane Farming project in Ekangala, Gauteng Province was milled in Nigel and then packaged into bags as maize meal. The producers were beneficiaries of the Fetša Tlala Integrated Food Production Initiative. The Fetša Tlala Initiative brought nations together as the internationally recognised agency, the World Food Programme was coordinating the distribution of maize meal to the school programme, nutrition and health activities in Lesotho (South African Government 2013).

2.10 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reveals that women's food security may be achieved through development initiatives such as the Fetša Tlala Initiative, although there are still existing hiccups such as gender issues, which may delay women's relative control of income and other economic resources. Food security in South Africa is still a challenge due to the lack of information on how people can make a living or the limited access to productive resources. Smallholder women's development can only be sustainable if it is open to all sectors of the population; where men and women are not limited by socio-political, cultural and religious opinions. It will take sound public policies, a holistic approach and long-term commitment from all development actors to achieve sustainability in food security.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the strategy that the researcher used to identify, select, process and analyse information about the topic. It provides an overview of the research methods followed to address the objectives of the study. The chapter also provides details about the participants; the criteria by which they were selected and subsequently included in the study, the respondents who participated and how sampling was done. It then details the adopted procedures the data collection and analysis process.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODS

The University of Pretoria's Research Guide (2022) describes research methods as the tools that are used to conduct research. Research methods can be qualitative, quantitative or mixed. This study adopted the qualitative approach with all the processes outlined below.

3.2.1 Research paradigm

According to Neuman (2007:86), a research paradigm is a broad organizing structure that represents the theory that guides a research study. It is inclusive of the fundamental assumptions, key points, designs and procedures for seeking answers to a research question. A research paradigm represents the initial, or foundational, orientational framework for research which includes simplistic, descriptive considerations such as whether a quantitative or qualitative design is required to more sophisticated considerations such as the method required to evaluate abstract constructs such as knowledge and/or lived experience. In this study, the interpretive phenomenology was applied because the researcher aimed to interpret the lived experiences of women who were the intended beneficiaries of the Fetša Tlala Project in 2013/ 2014.

Interpretive researchers study meaningful social action, not merely the external, observable descriptors of people's behaviours (Neuman 2007:88). Frechette, Bitzas, Aubry, Kilpatrick and Lavoie-Treblay (2020:4) indicate that an interpretive research paradigm aims to explore the lived experience of a phenomenon. It represents an

individual's level of analysis with an understanding that social contexts are embedded within them, with a goal of uncovering a new understanding of the phenomenon (Frechette *et al.* 2020:5).

3.2.2 Research approach applied in this study

A qualitative research approach was employed for the study using a phenomenological technique. According to Silverman (2020:3), qualitative research is the type of research that finds out about people's experiences. Ezer and Aksut (2021:16) allude that the main objective of qualitative research is to study and investigate social life. In line with Silverman's definition of qualitative research, Ezer and Aksut (2021:16) emphasize that the qualitative process is therefore followed to understand the perception and experiences of individuals or societies about a particular subject.

Ezer and Aksut (2021:16) further indicate that in qualitative research, certain cases and events are examined in depth in their natural environments by using qualitative data collection tools. It also involves collecting and analysing non-numerical data which is presented in a text form (Bhandari 2020). This study applied thematic data analysis. According to Qutoshi (2018:220), reporting of the findings in phenomenological studies must be focused on detailed description of the phenomena. This must be done before the researcher reaches the interpretations of the description or the interpretation of the respondents.

Phenomenology is an approach initiated by Edmund Husserl and later developed by Martin Heidegger. It seeks to study the lived human experiences and the way things are perceived and appear to the consciousness (Tuffour 2017:2). Tuohy, Cooney, Dowling & Murphy 2013:18) concur that phenomenology is the study of people's lived experiences. It is seen as a way of returning to and exploring the reality of life and living. The aim of 'interpretive phenomenology', also referred to as 'hermeneutics', is to describe, understand and interpret participants' experiences (Tuohy *et al.* 2013:18). Hermeneutics is defined as the "practice or art of interpretation" and involves "the restoration of meaning". Interpretations are therefore confined by both the respondent's capacity to articulate their experiences, and the investigator's ability to examine them (Noon & Hallam 2018:75).

Qutoshi (2018:215) argues that phenomenology is both a philosophical perspective, as well as a research approach. From a philosophical perspective, phenomenology is not limited to an approach to knowing but rather an intellectual engagement of interpretations and meaning-making within a particular context. Phenomenological research is a method of inquiry used to understand the lived world of human beings at a conscious level (Qutoshi 2018:215). Schreier (2017:94) also shares the same sentiment that phenomenology has the aim of identifying the “essence” of the human experience of a phenomenon.

Phenomenological inquiry thus aims to analytically describe the common characteristics of experiences associated with the phenomenon being researched (Schreier 2017:94). Research objectives in phenomenological studies qualify “whose” and “what” lived experience that are being investigated (Qutoshi 2018:215). In summary, the referential axis of phenomenological research refers to lived experiences, rather than knowledge, per se. A phenomenological research is therefore relevant to this study because it seeks to investigate the experiences of women who participated in the Fetša Tlala Initiative.

3.2.3 Research design

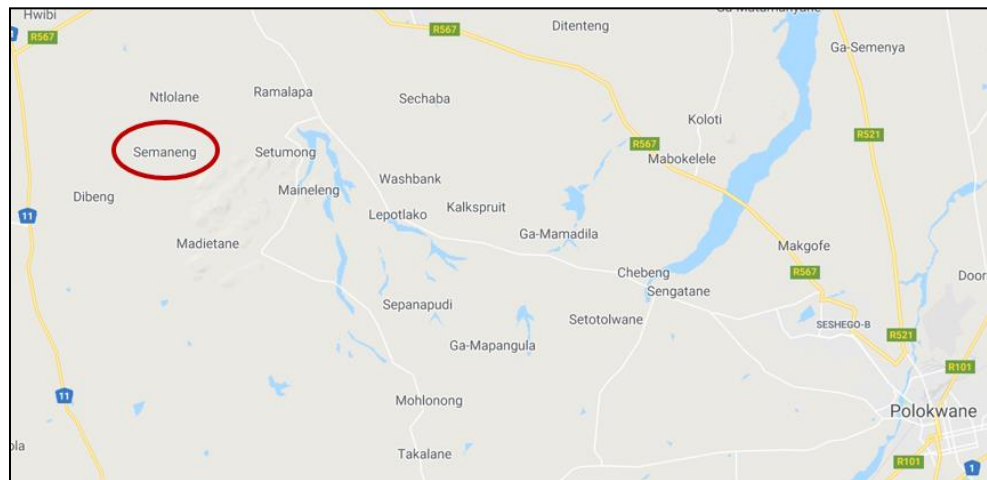
The research design is a plan, arrangement and strategy of inquiry that is aimed at obtaining answers to the research questions or problems being addressed (Kumar 2014:122). Typically, a research design is comprised of two layers. The first layer describes the over-arching approach required to achieve the research aims and objectives. In this instance, the over-arching approach was interpretive phenomenology which was applied to gain insights into the research questions. The second layer tends to focus on the ‘how to’ component of the research process and includes different techniques employed to actually collect or frame the required data. In this instance, a case study design was applied.

The case study design is advantageous in the sense that the research can be more comprehensive than would be possible if one is studying a large sample. A case may be represented by an individual, a group or a community (Kumar 2014:155). Creswell and Poth (2018:96) define case study design as a qualitative approach in which the researcher investigates real-life. Case studies are based on knowledge and experience; hence, the study focuses on women beneficiaries of the Fetša Tlala project. To accomplish the

rationale of the case study design, the researcher used detailed, in-depth method of data collection involving face-to-face interviews. The researcher employed an intrinsic case study design because the focus of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative at Semaneng village from the perspective of women smallholder farmers. In order to uncover and have a detailed understanding of the Fetša Tlala Initiative, an intrinsic case study was undertaken with issues or problems that are of interest to the researcher (Kekeya 2021:36).

3.3 STUDY AREA

The study was carried out at Semaneng village which falls under the Bakone Tribal Authority. The selected village was prioritized because it is among the villages where the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative was running during the year 2013/2014 in the Limpopo Province. The village is in ward 43 of Polokwane Local Municipality, with Sepedi being the most dominant language for the residents. It is situated 58 kilometres from Polokwane on the R567. The Bakone Tribal Authority is under Polokwane Local Municipality which is located in the Capricorn District Municipality, Figure 3.1 below.



<https://www.google.com/maps/@-23.7913703,29.1852432,11z>

Figure 3.1 Map of Semaneng village

3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.4.1 Study population

The study population represents the entire population from which information required to undertake the research was obtained (Kumar 2014:74). For this study, an employee from the Department of Agriculture (DoA) who was coordinating the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative in the Semaneng village was consulted for provision of the list of community members who were the intended beneficiaries from the project. The DoA employee and the records indicated that forty (40) community members of Semaneng Village were intended beneficiaries of this project in the period 2013/2014. In line with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) 4 of 2013, permission to access the list of the intended beneficiaries was granted from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture (See Appendix D).

3.4.2 Sampling

Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the non-probability sampling method was employed to choose participants for the study. Non-probability sampling is a sampling procedure that does not offer a basis for any opinion of probability that every element will have a chance to be selected as a study sample (Etikan & Bala 2017:2). It is used to gain a better understanding of the experiences of the Fetša Tlala intended beneficiaries. This sampling method includes quota sampling, accidental sampling, purposive sampling, expert sampling, snowball sampling and heterogeneity sampling (Etikan & Bala 2017:2).

Purposive, or judgemental, sampling is a form of sampling that is based on the purposive judgement of the researcher to identify the criteria required of participants. The researcher applied purposive sampling in this study because the researcher was specifically aiming at undertaking research through a feminist point of view in order to interrogate the experiences of the women intended beneficiaries. The inclusion criteria for this study is intended women beneficiaries of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative from 2013/2014 in Semaneng Village. The inclusion criteria involve the main characteristics of the population of interest. A potential research participant had to fulfil all criteria in order to participate in the study (Majid 2018:3). Male beneficiaries and other members of the community were excluded from the sample because the study focuses on women smallholder farmers.

Frechette et al. (2020:6) further indicate that a purposive sampling strategy is used to select participants who have rich knowledge of the phenomenon. It is for this reason that the intended women beneficiaries of the Fetša Tlala Initiative were selected. The sample sizes in interpretive phenomenology are smaller (about $n=10$ is common). Alase (2017:13) posits that the size of the respondents can be between 2 and 25 in a phenomenological research tradition. The selection of these respondents should reflect and represent the homogeneity that exists among them. This small sample size is not a limitation in phenomenological studies. The primary objective is not to generalise, but to spell out the lived experience and context in as much depth as possible. In-depth interviews are usually the primary data collection method in phenomenological research (Frechette *et al.* 2020:6).

3.4.3 Study sample

A sample is made up of elements that comprise the characteristics and qualities of the population that serve the motive of the study best (De Vos, Delpont, Fouché & Strydom 2011:392). De Vos *et al.* (2011:223) also indicate that a sample contains features or a subset of the population that is taken into consideration for actual inclusion in the study. In this instance, women who were intended beneficiaries in the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative were considered as the sample. The researcher took into consideration the eligibility criteria when recruiting a sample from the population. The eligibility criteria determines whether or not an individual is qualified to be a participant in a research study (Majid 2018:3). This criterion was determined before the researcher submitted an application for ethical clearance and the start of data collection.

The project was effective for the 2013 and 2014 planting season and 40 people (24 women and 16 men) within the community were intended beneficiaries of the program. The researcher started with a small sample of 15 women smallholder farmers. The final sample size was determined by data saturation and so the sample size increased. Four (4) female intended beneficiaries have passed on while 4 were ill and could not participate in the study, therefore, out of the total number of 24 female intended beneficiaries, 16 were available. The researcher interviewed all 16 available respondents.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is the process of gathering information from the selected sample of the study, using the data collection methods outlined in this section.

3.5.1 Data collection process and methods

Prior to data collection, the researcher visited Bakone Tribal Authority in order to request permission to conduct the study at Semaneng village (Appendix C). The researcher explained and informed the Tribal Authority about the purpose of the research. The Tribal Authority was given an opportunity to raise questions and seek clarifications about the study. The researcher scheduled appointments with the respondents, based on their availability. The appointments were adhered to and the individual interviews lasted for approximately 45 minutes each. Respondents were given an opportunity to ask for clarity of what they did not understand so that they could give accurate responses.

Qualitative face-to-face interviews were used to collect data. The use of face-to-face interviews enabled the researcher to communicate directly with the respondents as well as to seek clarifications to any ambiguous responses. The researcher observed that during the interviews, other respondents were hesitant to answer some of the questions through their body language. All face-to-face interviews were undertaken in the respondents' homes, which they considered to be a secure so that sensitive issues could be discussed in confidence. The researcher recorded the interviews for further reference with the respondents' consent.

The researcher used a semi-structured interview guide in order to be afforded the opportunity to probe, based on the discussions with the respondents. Probing is defined as a technique used where the interview is administered by an interviewer, through face-to-face interviews in this study. The interviewer prompted the respondents for more information to the questions (Displayr 2022). The semi-structured interview guide was designed so that the opinions and experiences of the women smallholder farmers sample may emerge. Following De Vos *et al.* (2011:351), the emphasis of the interviews was to attempt to understand the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative from the women respondent's point of view and how they had ascribed meaning to that lived experience.

3.5.2 Ethical considerations related to data collection

The protocols that this research intended to adhere prior to beginning data collection are outlined in the sections below. All of these protocols contributed to ensuring that the participating respondents and their communities were treated with respect, dignity and a high standard of care throughout the research process. The first section refers to ethical protocols that were to be adhered to prior to beginning data collection, the second section to ethical protocols during the data collection and the third section refers to post-data collection protocols.

- *Ethical Clearance*

This study did not involve vulnerable groups such as minors. However, in order to maintain an ethical position from the outset, the researcher submitted an application to the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) for an ethical clearance certificate prior to data collection (Appendix A). According to De Vos *et al.* (2011:26), Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have ethics committees which review research proposals to ensure that researchers plan and agree to adhere to strict ethical protocols prior to their beginning research in the field.

- *Permission from Bakone Tribal Authority*

Before embarking on the stage of collecting data, the researcher formally met with Bakone Tribal Authority representatives on 04 September 2021. The purpose of the meeting was to ask for permission and approval to gain entry to Semaneng village with the intention of collecting data for the study by interviewing participating respondents from that community. The researcher explained and informed the authorities (the Chief and her heads of villages) about the purpose of the research. They were given an opportunity to ask questions and be clarified about the study as required and permission was granted (see Appendix C).

- *Anonymity and confidentiality*

Following Creswell and Poth (2018:55), confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were adhered to so that the research process remained ethical throughout. Specifically,

the respondents' names were not mentioned and the data was kept confidential. Furthermore, Kumar (2014:286) indicates that disclosing the identity of respondents with others for motives other than the research is unethical. The researcher made sure that after the collection of data, the sources cannot be identified.

- *Informed Consent*

The researcher complied with the TREC regulations in order to ensure that the respondents participate freely in the study. The researcher requested that the respondents sign an informed consent form (Appendix B) to indicate that they voluntarily participate in the study. Prior to requesting a signature from the respondents, the following steps were taken with each respondent:

- The nature of the research was described to the respondents in the language they are most comfortable with (which is Sepedi in this case);
- The reason why that particular respondent was asked to participate in the data collection process was explained, and
- That the respondents were free to terminate the interview, or withdraw completely from the study, at any point.

After these steps, the informed consent form was then presented to the respondents and the respondents were given the opportunity to read it thoroughly before appending their signatures. The respondents signed 2 copies of the consent form and one was given to them and one copy was retained by the researcher.

- *Harm*

De Vos *et al.* (2011:115) emphasise that the fundamental ethical rule of social research is that it must bring no harm to participants. They indicate that participants can be harmed in a physical and/or emotional manner. The researcher was practicing respect for participants and that resulted in the avoidance of harm, requiring both that the autonomy of persons is respected and that individuals with diminished autonomy are protected (Vanclay, Baines & Taylor 2013:244).

- *Covid-19 regulations*

Data was collected during the Covid-19 pandemic, in September 2021 under the 'Adjusted alert level 2' where strict adherence with health protocols and social distancing measures were in place. The researcher made sure that the regulations were adhered to by wearing face masks, sanitizing hands and keeping the specified 1.5 meter distance from the respondents (South African Government 2021). The researcher followed the screening process as outlined by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

The researcher was not ill and displayed no symptoms of COVID-19 during the period of data collection. The researcher was conducting daily self-monitoring for symptoms by using the COVID-19 self-assessment tool which included the 40-60 washing of hands, the regular use of a 70% alcohol-based hand sanitiser and wore a face mask throughout (DHET 2021:15). The researcher also adopted the COVID-19 Toolkit for fieldwork by using A4 plastic envelopes to store the completed informed consent forms and the interview guides (DHET 2021:6).

- *Record keeping*

The researcher ensured that the data (field notes and recordings) was stored in a secure location in order to protect the confidential and anonymous information gathered from the respondents. The researcher also made sure that data shared by the respondents was neither judged nor shared in any way, which may potentially endanger the respondents' safety.

By adhering to the above ethical protocols, the researcher was able to minimise risks or unintended consequences that could have emerged from the research process. The risks were further minimised by the researcher being mindful of the relevance of ethics in research throughout. Below is the summarised presentation of the University of Limpopo's Turfloop Research Ethics Committee.

Table 3.1. TREC requirements summarised

Phases	Ethical protocol	Comments
Pre-data collection	Permission from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Bakone Tribal Authority and TREC	See appendix D, C & A
	Informed consent from respondents in English and Sepedi approved by the Faculty Research/ Higher Degrees Committee (FRHDC) and TREC	See appendix B
During data collection	Harm	In-text commitment that the researcher signed off in the TREC documentation
	Confidentiality	
	Anonymity	
Post-data collection	After care of participants	
	Protection of collected data	
	Confidentiality	
	Anonymity	
Throughout	Respect, dignity and standard of care	

Researcher's contribution

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis presents a summary of the collected data. The outline involves the interpretation of data collected through the use of analytical and logical reasoning to determine patterns, relationships or trends (University of Pretoria 2022).

3.6.1 Data coding

According to Elliott (2018:2850), coding is an underlying aspect of the process of data analysis. It is a guideline in which researchers break down the collected data to make something new. It focuses on analysing qualitative text data by taking them apart to see what they yield before putting the data back together in a meaningful way (Elliott 2018:2850). Codes with common points of reference, a high degree of transferability, and through which ideas can be united throughout the study phenomenon can be transformed into a theme (Vaismoradi & Snelgrove 2019:2). Coding reduces quantities of data into small chunks of meaning (Maguire & Delahunt 2017:3355). An advantage of coding is that the coding process creates an archive of the data, which enables the researcher to do the following:

- Acquire deep, comprehensive and thorough insights into the data;
- Make the data easily accessible and retrievable;
- Sort and structure the data;
- Ensure transparency;
- Ensure validity; and
- Give a voice to one's participants (Linniberg & Korsgaard 2019:261).

3.6.2 Thematic data analysis

Data was analysed through the identification of the main themes that arise from the field notes of the in-depth interviews (Kumar 2014:317). Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data (Maguire & Delahunt 2017:3352). According to Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen and Snelgrove (2016:101), themes are key concepts, activities and/or events that are described and/or problematized repeatedly during the face-to-face interviews. They are described as the final products of data analysis in the thematic analysis approach. Identifying themes and their associated characteristics require a systematic, process of coding and concomitant interrogation of the meaning ascribed to the themes by the respondents (Vaismoradi *et al.* 2016:100).

A deductive approach to thematic analysis was adopted for this study. A deductive approach uses pre-existing theories, framework, or preconceived themes that the researcher was expecting to find reflected in the data, based on theory or existing knowledge (Kiger & Varpio 2020:848). The identified themes were coded using numbers. The analysed themes, as well as their associated meanings and characteristics from the face-to-face interviews were then integrated into the text of the report, augmented with verbatim quotations cited by the respondents. The researcher followed the recommendations by Braun and Clarke (2006:87) to identify the main themes by analytically interrogating the respondents' descriptive responses as outlined on figure 3.2 below:

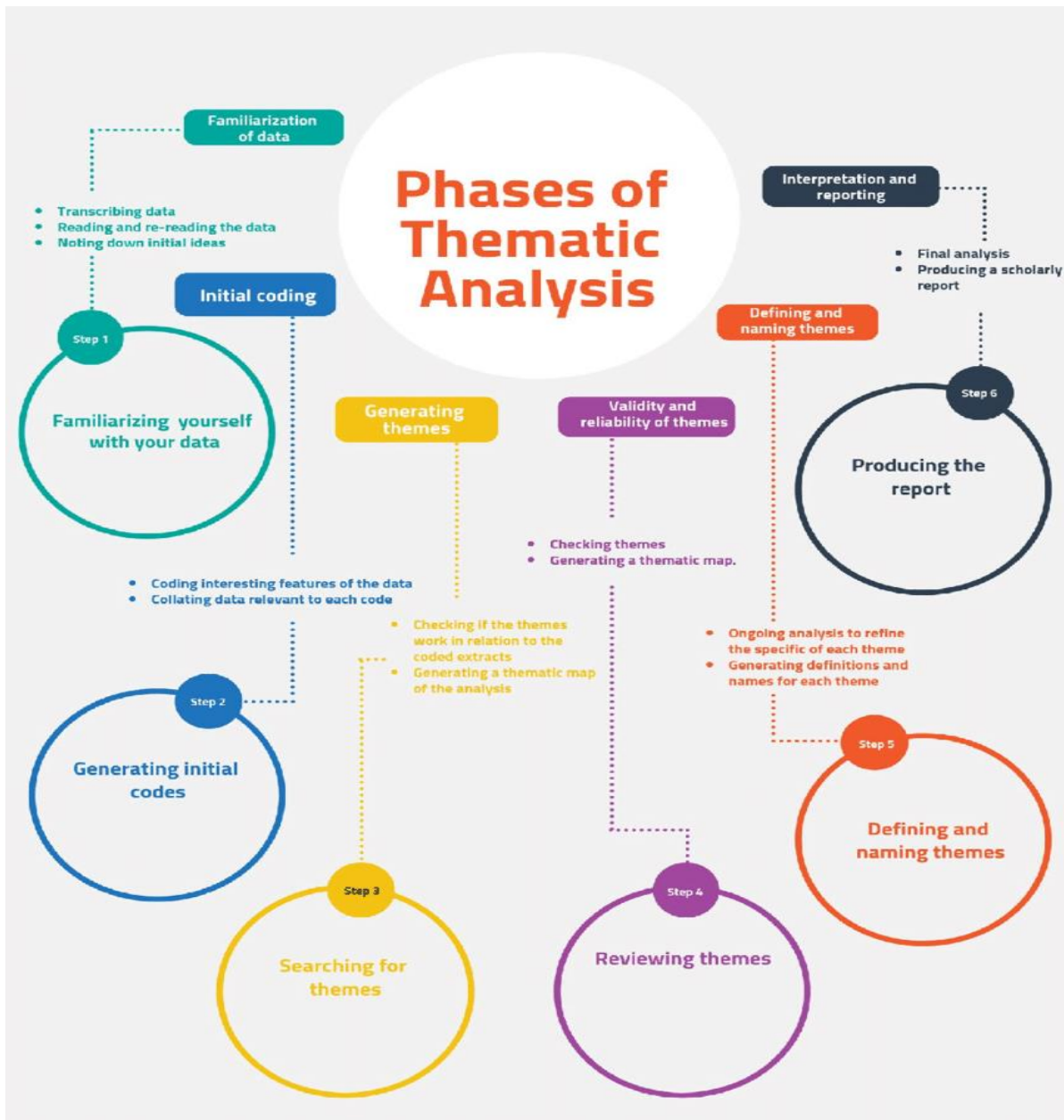


Figure 3.2. Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis approach for developing themes from qualitative data (adapted from Braun & Clarke, 2006: 87).

3.7 QUALITY CRITERIA

According to Hayishi Jr, Abib and Hoppen (2019:99), reliability assesses the consistency of the study results where the phenomenon yields the same outcomes over several attempts. Reliability contains a particular embedded notion of stability of the results found. Validity is described as the confidence with which conclusions can be drawn from an analysis. These authors emphasise that the researcher must not misrepresent the information, situations and facts reported by the respondents. Neuman (2011:194)

indicates that most qualitative researchers accept the basic principles of reliability and validity but rarely use the terms because of their association with quantitative research.

Qualitative researchers therefore focus on trustworthiness, which simply poses the question of whether the findings can be trusted (Korstjens & Moser 2018:121). The study adopted the following criteria for the concept of trustworthiness in qualitative research by Lincoln and Guba (1985:23).

- Credibility, which is the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. Credibility establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants' original views. The motive is mainly to establish confidence that the results (from the perspective of the participants) are true, credible and believable.
- Transferability is the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents. The researcher facilitates the transferability judgment by a potential user through thick description.
- Dependability involves the stability of findings over time. Its focus is on ensuring that the findings of this qualitative study are repeatable if the inquiry occurred within the same cohort of participants, coders and context.
- Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings of the research study could be confirmed by other researchers. Confirmability is concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not the researcher's imagination, but clearly derived from the data. Confirmability aims at extending the confidence that the results would be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research paradigm, approach, methods and techniques employed in collecting data for the study were discussed. The population of the study and sampling methods used were also outlined, and the choice of research design and its applicability to the area of the study was discussed. The researcher used face-to-face interviews as the technique to collect data from the participants in Semaneng village. The next chapter focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. The applicability and relevance of the data collected in the study to determine the effectiveness of the Fetša

Tlala project from the perspective of the intended female beneficiaries is examined in detail.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the qualitative findings that emerged from the analysis of the collected data from respondents in Semaneng village. The study consists of three objectives that unpack the aim of the study which is to assess the effectiveness of the Fetša Tlala Initiative in improving the food security of women smallholder farmers in Semaneng village, Polokwane Municipality. The presentation of the findings is within the framework of the objectives of the study which are summarised below in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Objectives of the study

Item	Research objective	Corresponding research question
1	To analyse the effectiveness of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative on the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers	How effective was the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative in improving the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers?
2	To assess the factors that influenced the success/failure of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative from the perspective of women smallholder farmers	Which factors influenced the success/ failure of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative from the perspective of women smallholder farmers?
3	To identify ways of empowering women smallholder farmers	What can be done to empower women smallholder farmers?

Researcher's contribution

The contents of this chapter include the process of data analysis; the biographical information of the respondents, as well as the presentation, interpretation and discussion of the findings.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

Data was collected from the respondents using semi-structured, face-to-face interviews. It was thereafter coded and analysed into themes. As highlighted in Chapter 3, the following phases of thematic analysis were adopted as guided by Vaismoradi & Snelgrove (2019:2).

4.2.1 Familiarisation of data

Once the raw data had been transcribed, the researcher began the process of reading the text multiple times and during that process identified patterns which were complementary in nature or were conveying a similar message. The purpose of this process was for the researcher to familiarise herself with the text whilst simultaneously identifying patterns within the data as a precursor to beginning the coding process from which the themes were subsequently identified. This enabled the researcher to:

1. Reduce the amount of text required for the next phases of the analysis without completely discarding the non-patterned text which could be re-visited later in the analysis for verification process, and
2. Identify patterns within the narrative data that could potentially be developed into codes.

As such, the initial step described above represented the beginning of the iterative thematic analysis of the respondents' raw narrative data.

4.2.2 Data coding

The researcher identified and clustered text with seemingly corresponding meaning. Patterns of narrative data were then coded and grouped into categories which were labelled with numbers. Coding was achieved by noting down clusters of data that related to the research aim and objectives of the study. After reading the transcribed data several times, it became noticeable that different respondents shared similar opinions on the effectiveness of the project. The initial codes were therefore generated from these similarities as indicated below in Table 4.2. From the codes that were identified, the process of theme generation began.

4.2.3 Development of themes

Themes are actively constructed patterns of shared meanings derived from a data set that answer a research question, as opposed to mere summaries or categorizations of codes

(Kiger & Varpio 2020:846). The researcher employed a deductive approach whilst identifying themes that emerged from the analysis. Table 4.2 outlines the themes that emerged, namely access to infrastructure, frustration, independence and training. Each theme is matched to the individual research question in the table. The codes from which the themes are derived, are also included.

Table 4.2 Research questions, themes and codes

Research questions	Themes	Codes
How effective was the Fetša Tlala Initiative in improving the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers?	Theme 1: Access to infrastructure	Milling Storage Tractor Seeds Manure
	Theme 2: Frustration	Lack of an irrigation system Withdrawal by members
Which factors influenced the success/ failure of the Fetša Tlala Initiative?	Theme 2: Frustration	Poor attendance of meetings Timely servicing of the tractor Time management Distribution of resources
	Theme 3: Resilience	Extension services Fighting starvation
What can be done to empower women smallholder farmers?	Theme 4: Training	Knowledge Skills

Researcher's contribution

4.2.4 Producing the study report

This phase entails the writing up of the study findings. It is the concluding segments of the research study. The study findings of the research are presented in relation to the study objectives.

4.3 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

All respondents are female and reside at the selected study area - Semaneng village in Ga-Matlala. The respondents in the study all speak Sepedi as their mother tongue. As a result, the researcher used the Sepedi version of the interview guide to communicate with the majority while 3 of the respondents preferred to use the English one. The personal profile of respondents including age, gender, marital status, highest level of education and employment status are presented below.

4.3.1 Age distribution of respondents

Table 4.3 illustrates the age of respondents for the study.

Table 4.3: Frequency distribution of the age of respondents: N=16

Age group	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
40-49	02	12.5
50+	14	87.5
Total	16	100

Researcher's contribution

The majority of respondents (87.5%) were above 50 years old and 12.5% between 40 and 49 years.

4.3.2 Gender of the respondents

All the respondents for study were female as indicated in Figure 4.1 below.

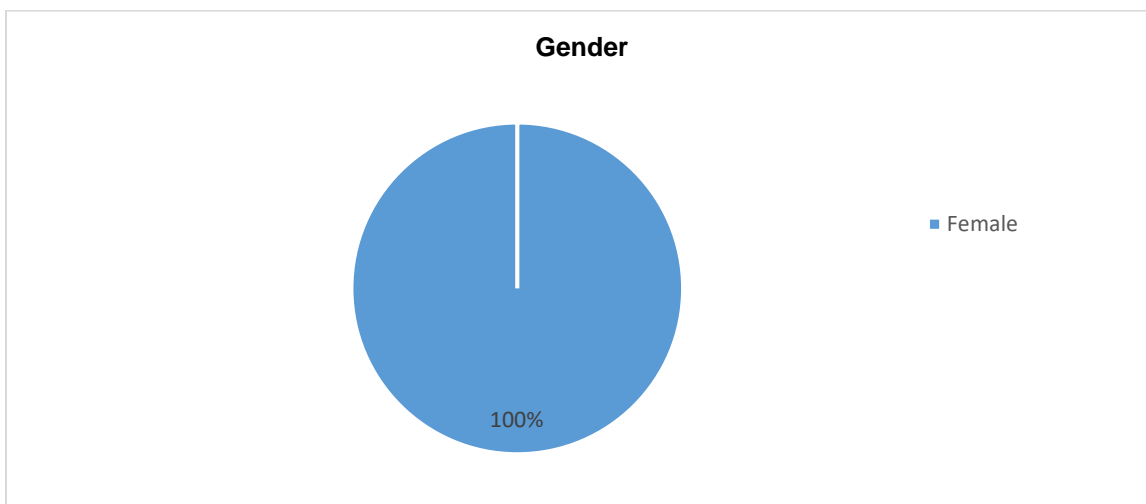


Figure 4.1 Respondents' gender (Researcher's contribution)

The respondents were all female because the study is focusing on women smallholder farmers at Semaneng village.

4.3.3 Marital status of the respondents

Table 4.4. indicates the marital status of the respondents with regards to whether they were married, widowed or never married when they were participating in the project.

Table 4.4: Marital status

Marital status	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Married	07	43.75
Widowed	05	31.25
Never married	04	25
Total	16	100

Researcher's contribution

Married women (43.75%) dominated the marital status of the respondents. Widowed women constituted 31.25% of the respondents and 25% of them were never married.

4.3.4 Level of education

In terms of the level of education, the findings indicated that the majority of respondents (62.5%) went to school up to standard 4 (Grade 6) and standard 6 (Grade 8), while 12.5% never went to school and at least 25% are in possession of a National Diploma qualification.

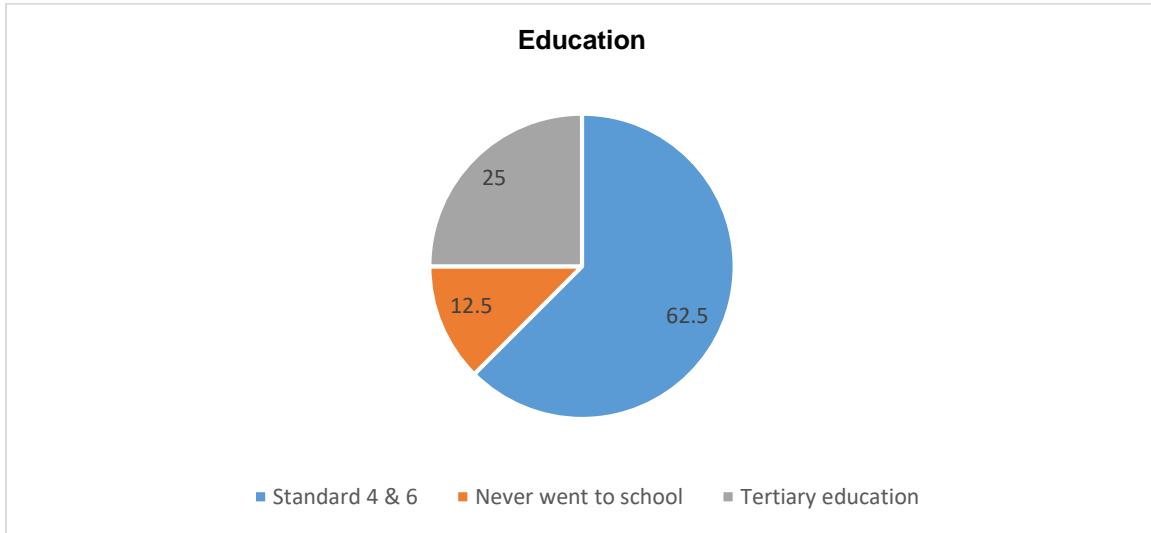


Figure 4.2 Respondents' education (Researcher's contribution)

Figure 4.4. indicates that the majority for the respondents had educational experiences at school, followed by those who have not been to school at all.

4.3.5 Employment status

Table 4.5 provides a summary of the employment statuses of the respondents.

Table 4.5: Employment status

Employment status	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Unemployed	07	43.75
Self-employed	05	31.25
Employed	03	18.75
Retired	01	6.25
Total	16	100

Researcher's contribution

Unemployed women (43.75) were involved in the project. 31.25% of the respondents were self-employed and most of them were selling vegetables for a living. At least 18.75% of the respondents were employed during the project while 6.25% was made of retired women as indicated in Figure 4.5 above.

4.4 PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings section reports on the following identified themes based on the research objectives of the study:

- Theme 1: Access to infrastructure
- Theme 2: Frustration
- Theme 3: Resilience
- Theme 4: Training

In this section, the themes relating to each research question are presented in relation to each research question.

4.4.1 Research question 1

The objective of research question 1 is to analyse the effectiveness of the 'Fetša Tlala' Initiative on the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers. The theme seeks to discuss the factors that respondents deemed to be important towards the desired results of the Fetša Tlala Initiative.

Theme 1: Access to infrastructure

Sub-theme 1: Access to resources

As per Table 4.2. above, research question 1 saw one theme emerging, namely access to infrastructure. In this regard, the respondents applauded DAFF for providing them with some of the things that they could not afford, mainly referring to the tractor as it is expensive to hire one to cultivate for them. One tractor, manure and seeds were provided for cultivation. The respondents expressed their view on resources and this is summed up in the excerpt below:

“I received a bag of maize seeds (10kg), 50kg of manure and the tractor came to cultivate for me. [Respondent 7]

The respondents alluded that they appreciated that they did not have to pay in order to be assisted with the provided resources. One of them went to the extent of saying:

“I could not say not miss a free opportunity. I was happy that they were providing the tractor, seeds and manure to us.” [Respondent 15]

Sub-theme 2: Access to land

The respondents further indicated that since the inception of the project, they were able to plant maize on bigger pieces of land. They emphasized that they were able to harvest a maximum of twenty-five (25) bags (50 kilograms) of maize each. They were therefore able to take them to a milling company where they would pay a reasonable amount of money for storage and grinding. The respondents explained the process as follows:

“We would first remove the corn from the cobs; package them into the size of bags per family or individual preference. They would then be transported to a milling company for processing. When the packages get there, they would be weighed and it would be recorded that I have, for example, 1200kgs of maize”. [Respondent 8]

“Every time I want maize meal, I would go and buy with little money and they would subtract the kilograms I would be taking from what have. For example, if I buy a 50 kg bag, I would be left with 1150kgs of corn. These would last us up to the next planting season and beyond.”

[Respondent 4]

The statements above indicate that the Fetša Tlala Initiative increased the majority of the beneficiaries' agricultural output. The findings highlight that the beneficiaries of the project were able to change the food supply for their households. As indicated earlier in Chapter 2, the NDP advocates for rural communities' improved opportunities to participate fully in the economy of South Africa by 2030. The beneficiaries of the Fetša Tlala Initiative indicated that through such projects, the NDP is moving towards the achievement of its mandate.

Theme 2: Frustration

Sub-theme 1: Availability of resources

The respondents were promised an irrigation system which was not provided. As a consequence, the beneficiaries had to rely on the rain which was not guaranteed for the survival of crops. This is supported in the excerpts below:

“I was hoping that the department would provide us with the irrigation system as it was counted among the things that were promised to us. It would have saved our emotions to worry about whether it rains or not.” [Respondent 4]

“The department did not bring an irrigation system for us. We had to be hopeful that the rain would be of good service to us in that planting season.” [Respondent 10]

Sub-theme 2: Withdrawal from the project

The respondents further indicated that some of the community members who had registered to participate in the Fetša Tlala Initiative withdrew from the project. This was due to the reasons indicated below by the respondents.

“Due to the delays in planting, other community members withdrew from the project. They became hopeless because the planting season was almost over and they had not yet planted.”
[Respondent 3]

“Other people who had registered to participate in the project withdrew because they were discouraged by the delays in planting.” [Respondent 1]

The excerpts above indicate that there were delays in the implementation and running of the project. The delays were as a result of factors such as the distribution of resources because only one tractor was used to plant for all the registered members. This led to other members withdrawing from the project and the total number of 40 men and women remained.

4.4.2 Research question 2

Research question 2 sought to discover the factors that influenced the success/ failure of the Fetša Tlala Initiative. This research question revealed theme 2- frustration and theme 3-resilience emerging and presented below.

Theme 2: Frustration

Sub-theme 1: Poor attendance of meetings

It was emphasised that the message about the upcoming of the Fetša Tlala project was spreading across the village. The coordinator (extension officer) therefore arranged for a meeting with community members but the attendance was very poor, hence 40 community members (men and women as indicated in Chapter 3) took part in the meeting and enrolled for the project. The excerpt below supports this.

“The attendance of the first meeting about the project with the coordinator was very poor and discouraging.” [Respondent 5]

Sub-theme 2: Distribution of resources

The respondents showed frustration in the manner in which the resources were distributed. They emphasised that the timing of distribution affected the planting season as other beneficiaries cultivated late. This, according to the respondents was `because manure and maize seeds reached other beneficiaries late.

Again, the DAFF provided only one tractor, which would break while cultivating. The respondents indicated that it could take days for them to get a replacement or for it to be repaired or serviced as supported by the excerpt below.

“The Fetša Tlala project taught me to be patient because there was only one tractor for all the beneficiaries. We would wait with hope and the tractor would sometimes break. We would go for days without any progress with cultivation while waiting for the servicing of the tractor.”

[Respondent 13]

Sub-theme 3: Delayed planting season

The breaking of the tractor and subsequent delay in servicing it frustrated the beneficiaries who were forced to cultivate late in the planting season, thereby reducing their crop yield as indicated below.

“It was unfair and discouraging to cultivate while other beneficiaries’ maize plants had already grown a bit and they were removing weeds between the plants. That affected the plants that only came out of the soil towards the end of January of the following year (2014).” **[Respondent 16]**

“It would have been fair for DAFF to provide at least more than one tractor. This would help in managing the time for the entire planting season, bearing in mind that once you cultivate two months later than the actual cultivation time, then the whole process becomes affected.”

[Respondent 7]

The findings indicate there was poor attendance of meetings by community members. In line with excerpts, it is evident that the delayed distribution of resources was frustrating the beneficiaries and affecting the planting season. The respondents also indicated that using one tractor to plough for all 40 enrolled beneficiaries was affecting cultivation. This was in return affecting crop production.

Theme 3: Resilience

Sub-theme 1: Control

DAFF allocated one extension officer who served as a coordinator for the project in Semaneng village. One of the roles of the coordinator for the Fetša Tlala Initiative was to monitor and evaluate the day-to-day operations of the project. The purpose of the monitoring and evaluation was to ensure that the project yielded planned outcomes including timeous completion of the project. Following this, the respondents indicated that they had a meeting with the coordinator once before the project started and that was it. There was no follow up meetings with the coordinator after the resources were distributed.

The respondents also indicated that they consequently had to take a lead in order to organise the planting process.

“We had a meeting with the coordinator when the seeds and manure were distributed and after that we never had any further meeting. [Respondent 4]

The coordinator subsequently came back when the beneficiaries were harvesting the maize as indicated by the respondents below:

The coordinator only came back to field when we were supposed to take the bags of maize to the milling company in Polokwane.” [Respondent 7]

“As a group, we had selected representatives who would oversee the implementation of the project when we noticed that the coordinator was not showing up. There was no one from DAFF to make sure that things are going accordingly. It would have been better to have guidance from a representative from the department with agricultural expertise or background. We were just appreciating that there was progress on cultivation although it was very slow.” [Respondent 10]

“I was looking forward to the extension services such as agricultural support from the coordinator but there was no such as allocated person was not around. We had to do things as we saw them fit.” [Respondent 2]

Sub-theme 2: Coping skills

Due to the increasing prices of food, it was difficult for some of the respondents to afford maize meal which they considered to be a basic food requirement. They had to plough beans and the Bambara groundnuts, dry them and preserve them to be used as a substitute for maize meal until they received grant money. Instead of having maize porridge, they would have the substitutes as the main meal for the day. The excerpts below support these statements:

“We suffered as it was difficult to buy food because the prices were too high. The Fetša Tlala Initiative came as a breakthrough because we were then able to fight starvation in our families. The state of food security in our families improved.” [Respondent 1]

“Things were better because I was employed on a part time basis and I was able to provide for my family as a young, single parent.” [Respondent 5]

Sub-theme 3: Reflective ability

Towards the end of every project, there should be a proper exit plan. The respondents of the study indicated that with regard to the Fetša Tlala project, they were not informed about anything. They waited until they came to the realisation that the project is no longer continuing in 2015. Furthermore, the respondents indicated that there was no longer any communication to them by the project coordinator for Semaneng village as mentioned in the excerpt below:

“We waited for the coordinator to come back, as she did at the beginning of the planting season for the second year of the project (2014) when she came to inform us that things were to continue as in the first year (2013). The coordinator did not come back and we were all assuming that she will come back or it was the end. Unfortunately she never showed up and that was the end of the Fetša Tlala at Semaneng village.” [Respondent 10]

The findings indicated that the DAFF official assigned to oversee the project was largely absent. As a consequence, the beneficiaries developed and applied their own, collective project management techniques to compensate for this absence. The findings also indicated that the high food prices made the preferred staple- maize porridge unaffordable for some. Once again, the beneficiaries designed a contextually appropriate technique to creatively adapt to that situation by using more available food substitutes. Both of the examples suggest that the beneficiaries preferred response to an unexpected challenge was to develop contextualised resilience strategies that both made sense and were functional to them, rather than being victims of the challenge.

4.4.3 Research question 3

Research question 3 focused on what can be done to empower women smallholder farmers. In order to address the objective, theme 4, training, emerged as a factor that contributed towards empowerment.

Theme 4: Training

Sub-theme 1: Team work

Theme 4 was developed to try to address objective 3 of the study which is to identify ways of empowering women smallholder farmers. The research question was; “What can be done to empower women smallholder farmers?” The respondents indicated that working as a group was most important. This was because everyone shared his or her skills and what they knew about agriculture. The respondents applied knowledge sharing towards the successful completion of the two planting seasons in 2013 and 2014. According to the respondents, DAFF did not offer any workshops or training. The excerpts below provide more detail.

“We were learning from one another on how certain things such as how to disperse the seeds and the period during which we should start to remove the weeds at the field.” [Respondent 4]

“I would appreciate if the Department considered a training session for us, particularly on soil tilling, how to scatter the seeds and handling of the product.” [Respondent 11]

“The Department should have considered to get us an agricultural expert to train us so that we knew exactly what we were doing. We were just doing things as we saw it fit.” [Respondent 6]

Sub-theme 2: Capacity building

The respondents indicated how they appreciated the project because it revealed their capabilities as women. They mentioned that they were able to leave their homes for the maize fields in order to provide for their households. They indicated that the project brought out the best in them because they were able to realise their potential. One of the respondents went on to point out to socialisation on how things were done previously:

“Growing up we were taught that men must go and work for their families while the women stay at home and nurture the children. This was actually closing up our capabilities. I am thankful for this project” [Respondent 9]

The findings indicated that the beneficiaries of the Fetša Tlala Initiative required capacity-building activities, such as training, to teach them additional skills in agriculture. Despite

the absence of training which the beneficiaries indicated they wanted—they did learn skills from one another during the project. Once again, the beneficiaries demonstrated resilience to the challenge being experienced; but, this example also highlights the importance the women placed on skills training that could have positively increased the impact on the overall project outcomes.

4.5 Positioning the findings within the broader literature reviewed

The theoretical framework that was constructed for this study was framed within the broader context of food security using the three-pillar model that was developed by Schleifer and Sun (2020:2). The three-pillar model includes the extent to which food is actually present; access points for food access and food security in the longer term with sustainable household nutritional security being the rationale for the model. Sub-themes that influence each pillar represent cross-cutting themes that are inclusive of technical factors such as transportation, infrastructure and processing / storage facilities and softer factors such as knowledge and decision making within the household.

It is within this context that the theoretical framework was presented. The theoretical framework was presented as being inclusive of:

- The NDP’s Vision 2030, which is “Increasing food production to increase food security” (National Planning Commission 2011);
- The Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) vision of focusing on “vulnerable members of the family, namely children and women” (2002:29).
- Agricultural extension that facilitates increased levels of agricultural knowledge and skills amongst farmers in order to increase sustainable productivity among smallholder farmers (Raidimi & Kabitani 2019:122), and
- Women’s empowerment being considered a prerequisite to achieving food security globally (Akter *et al.* 2017:270).

Based on the above, it is evident that the Fetša Tlala Initiative in Semaneng village has parallels with the broader theoretical field relating to smallholder farmer productivity. In the case material presented above, the focus on increased productivity for marginalised households was a focal point and the women reported increased food security. The importance of access to infrastructure such as a tractor—and training were also described.

The respondents also reported increased empowerment in that they were able to perform the agricultural work that they described as typically being the domain of their male counterparts.

One partial deviation from the reviewed literature was theme 3 – Resilience which is underscored by theme 2 - Frustration. From the literature reviewed, it was noted that Rist *et al.* (2016:17) identified five fundamental issues that contribute towards sustainable food systems. The fifth component includes smallholder farmers exhibiting high levels of “social-ecological resilience”. Two issues are pertinent. On the one hand, the respondents were unable to build resilience to delays in ploughing caused by the tractor being in a state of disrepair and the lack of irrigation equipment that they believed they would receive. On the other hand, they were able to build resilience to the absence of training that they attributed to DAFF not being present during the project implementation phases.

The resilience they displayed with regard to training was a community-organised type of skills sharing that reflected local knowledge which was applied as a substitute for training by experts. The combination of the above demonstrates that the Fetša Tlala Initiative in Semaneng village dovetails with much of the literature reviewed, but there are partial deviations.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The sample was composed of sixteen (16) respondents aged 40 years and above, who were Sepedi-speaking women smallholder farmers residing at Semaneng village in Limpopo Province. Based on the semi-structured interviews and subsequent analysis, the following themes were identified: access to infrastructure, frustration, resilience and training. These themes indicated that the respondents share the same sentiment about the overall administration of the project as they shared both the negative factors that they experienced during the project. The finding of the study indicates that the respondents agree that, besides the problems and challenges encountered, they appreciated the Fetša Tlala Initiative. They are, however, grateful for the opportunity and would prefer that the DAFF considers the continuation of the project at Semaneng village.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents an overview of the study, which focused on assessing the effectiveness of the Fetša Tlala Initiative towards food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers at Semaneng village, Polokwane Municipality. The chapter concludes by reflecting on both the findings and limitations of the study before providing recommendations that emerged through the research process.

The study focused on the effectiveness of the Fetša Tlala Initiative in improving the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers. It was a case undertaken in Semaneng village, Polokwane Local Municipality. The rationale for focusing on the effectiveness of the programme was to gain an improved understanding of the lessons learnt during the project and how those lessons might contribute to improving similar development planning and management projects. Whilst the notion of empowerment informed the theoretical framework, the expression 'effectiveness' was applied as a metric due to the real-world focus on improving food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers. Effectiveness was measured by using indicators including both physical resources and facilitating resources.

The case study was inclusive of a qualitative research design relating to the lived experiences of a sample of the beneficiaries of the Fetša Tlala Initiative at Semaneng village. The study area was selected because Semaneng village falls under the villages where the Fetša Tlala Initiative was implemented in the years 2013/2014 in Polokwane Local Municipality. Furthermore, food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers in this area has not been investigated before.

The objectives of the study were to analyse the effectiveness of the Fetša Tlala Initiative on the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers; assess the factors that influenced the success/failure of the Fetša Tlala from the perspective of women smallholder farmers and to identify ways of empowering women smallholder farmers. Thus, the study sought to provide insights into the questions about the effectiveness of the

Fetša Tlala Initiative in improving the food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers; which factors influenced the success/ failure of the Fetša Tlala Initiative from the perspective of women smallholder farmers and what can be done to empower women smallholder farmers?

Data was collected through face-to-face interviews. A semi-structured interview guide was employed for data collection. Data was thereafter analysed by adopting a deductive approach that was applied to a thematic analysis. The deductive approach was decided upon because both existing peer reviewed literature and researcher's personal experiences of the project dovetailed into preconceived themes that the researcher was expecting to find in the data shared by the respondents. The subsequent themes that emerged from the coding process from the perspective of the women smallholder beneficiaries included access to infrastructure, frustration, resilience and training.

5.2 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The biographical information which included the age, gender, marital status, level of education and the employment status of the respondents were presented. The biographical information indicated that the respondents of the study were women, 40 years of age and above, married, widowed, and some were never married. The findings revealed that the respondents had an educational background ranging from Standard 4 (Grade 6) up to tertiary level, while there are those who were not exposed to formal education before. The findings of the study are summarised under the three objectives of the study.

5.2.1 Research objective 1: Food and nutrition security of women smallholder farmers

The findings of the study revealed that the beneficiaries of the Fetša Tlala Initiative had access to infrastructure, which included resources such as maize seeds, manure, one tractor and milling and storage facilities. The study area was allocated an extension officer by DAFF. The findings also indicated that the infrastructure that was expected from DAFF were problematic which was a source of frustration to the beneficiaries. The frustrations were because of the distribution of resources. For example, beneficiaries received the manure and seeds late in the ploughing season. The findings also indicated that there were technical issues with the tractor and its service was delayed. This resulted in delays

in cultivation, hence reduced yields. The findings also indicated that the irrigation system was not delivered as promised by DAFF and the beneficiaries had to rely on rain which was sub-optimal for the beneficiaries. This combination of frustrations, described above, led to beneficiaries' partial satisfaction with the project.

The findings that emerged from research question 1 provide insights into the ways in which the Fetša Tlala Initiative affected the household food security of the beneficiaries. Despite the frustrations, the beneficiaries were able to cultivate and harvest maize, which was subsequently stored at the mill in Polokwane. The findings of the study therefore show that the Fetša Tlala Initiative had a positive impact on the household food and nutrition security of the women smallholder farmers of Semaneng village despite the reported frustrations.

Despite the challenges encountered, the beneficiaries had a positive notion about the Fetša Tlala Initiative. The findings indicated that the beneficiaries wish for the continuation of the project. The beneficiaries were motivated both during the project and for a continuation thereof. They were able to save money for buying maize meal and maize seeds. They harvested maize that sustained their families for approximately two years after the project was stopped.

5.2.2 Research objective 2: Success/ failure of the Fetša Tlala Initiative

The findings indicated that frustration was experienced throughout the project. Aside from the frustrations described above, the beneficiaries were frustrated because there was only one meeting with the allocated extension officer from DAFF since the inception of the project. This, in turn, provides evidence that the project was not monitored and the set objectives of the project were subsequently compromised. The findings also showed that the beneficiaries elected a committee among themselves to monitor the daily activities of the project. Whilst the emergence of this type of self-organising resilience to the challenge presented is notable, respondents indicated that they would have preferred the guidance of experts to facilitate the monitoring process.

In turn, the absence of support from DAFF contributed to delays in the distribution of resources and the servicing of the tractor which subsequently negatively impacted on crop yields. The findings further alluded that the Fetša Tlala Initiative introduced the concept of

sustainable food systems as developed by Rist *et al.* (2016:17). The systems applicable to this study include the project's capacity to ensure food security, to satisfy people's right to food and to reveal improved social-ecological resilience.

Based on the above summary, there is sufficient evidence to state that the project was partially successful and that the 'partiality' was primarily a consequence of the absence of the support DAFF had agreed upon prior to the initiation of the project.

5.2.3 Research objective 3: Empowerment of women smallholder farmers

The findings of the study indicate that DAFF did not offer any form of training. As mentioned in Chapter 2, women require access to physical resources, skills training and mentoring as mechanisms towards empowerment in their efforts to increase both productivity and food security (Okunlola *et al.* 2016:47). The findings of the study indicated that there are still gaps to be filled in order to achieve this type of empowerment of women in the Semaneng context. The findings also suggest that projects like the Fetša Tlala Initiative can be used as a positive contribution towards the empowerment of women smallholder farmers.

5.2.4 Holistic summary of the three research questions

By considering the three research questions holistically, it is suggested that access to resources, some external support and localised resilience in the face of adversity represent factors that contributed to the outcomes of the Fetša Tlala project in Semaneng village, 2013-2014. The physical resources that contributed towards the outcomes of the project included the availability of, and access, to resources such as the tractor, manure, seeds, the storage facility and shared transport. The facilitating resources included support by the DAFF extension officer, thus, by default institutionalised support from DAFF, during the project such as training opportunities afforded to the beneficiaries as well as the resilience demonstrated by the beneficiaries in the face of diversity (i.e., the absence of the DAFF extension officer, delays in servicing the tractor and training of the beneficiaries). In this particular context, empowerment was mediated by these factors and the 'partiality' of the empowerment process could have been improved if there was institutional consistency by DAFF throughout the initiative.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The respondents of the study appreciated the Fetša Tlala Initiative and therefore the study encourages DAFF to continue with the project in Semaneng village. Furthermore, the study recommends that DAFF should prioritise training of the beneficiaries of development projects while focusing on achieving food and nutrition security. Monitoring and evaluation of the projects is essential to DAFF's extension officers to minimise the risk of project failure and reporting about the performance of the project.

5.4 AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Resilience is a relevant developmental theme, thus further research could be useful to better understand the notion of resilience in the context of DAFF / Limpopo province. The Fetša Tlala Integrated Food Production Report of 2013/2014 does not provide detailed information about the Fetša Tlala Initiative in Capricorn District, Limpopo Province. The study therefore recommends further research about the project in the district, and/or Province, in order to capture more nuanced information about the Fetša Tlala Initiative in the Capricorn District Municipality.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study include that the sample could not be covered in full as anticipated due to ill health, death of and relocation of the beneficiaries. Data was collected in September 2021, during 'Alert level 2' of the COVID-19 lockdown regulations. The researcher followed all the requirements of the National State of Emergency Act. Despite compliance with the requirements, some respondents were reticent about face-to-face interviews.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter has outlined an overview of the study, the summary of key findings, the recommendations and limitations of the study. The rationale for the Fetša Tlala Initiative was to reduce hunger and starvation. The findings of the study indicate that the mandate of the project was promising and contributed towards increased food security for the committed beneficiaries. DAFF is encouraged to continue with development projects such as the Fetša Tlala Initiative towards the accomplishment of Goal 2 of the SDGs of 2030.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethical clearance certificate



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3766, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email:makoetja.ramusi@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 18 November 2020

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/371/2020: PG

PROJECT:

Title: The effectiveness of the 'fetša tlala' initiative in improving food security of women smallholder farmers: a case of Semaneng Village, Polokwane Local Municipality

Researcher: KM Tefu

Supervisor: Dr C Burman

Co-Supervisor/s: Prof T Moyo

School: Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership

Degree: Master of Development Studies in Planning & Management

PROF P MASOKO

CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa

Appendix B: Informed consent- English and Sepedi versions



University of Limpopo
Faculty of Management and Law
Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership

REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

Dear respondent

I am a student in Development Planning and Management at the University of Limpopo, Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership. You are invited to participate in a research study which forms part of my Master of Development in Planning and Management titled: ***The effectiveness of the 'Fetša Tlala' initiative in improving food security of women smallholder farmers: a case of Semaneng village, Polokwane Local Municipality.***

The interview session will take approximately 45 minutes. You are requested to provide honest responses to the questions asked in the interview guide. You are also requested to read and sign the informed consent provided to you.

Please consider this information carefully before deciding whether to participate in this research.

Purpose of the research: To assess the effectiveness that the Department of Agriculture's 'Fetša Tlala' initiative had on women smallholder farmers at Semaneng village, Polokwane Municipality.

What you will do in this research: If you decide to volunteer, you will be asked to participate in one interview. You will be asked several questions about the 'Fetša Tlala' project. With your permission, I will record the interviews and take notes. You will not be asked to state your name on the recording.

Time required: The interview will take approximately 45 minutes.

Risks: No risks are anticipated.

Benefits: This is a chance for you to tell your story about your experiences concerning the 'Fetša Tlala' project.

Confidentiality: Your responses to interview questions will be kept confidential. At no time will your actual identity be revealed. You will be assigned a random numerical code. Anyone who helps me transcribe responses will only know you by this code. The recording will be deleted as soon as my dissertation has been accepted. The transcript, without your name, will be kept until the research is complete.

The data you give me will be used for the mini-dissertation I am currently writing and may be used as the basis for peer reviewed academic articles or presentations in the future. I will not use your name or information that would identify you in any publications or presentations. A copy of the final report will be made available to Bakone Tribal Authority on completion.

Participation and withdrawal: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study without penalty. You may withdraw by informing the researcher that you no longer wish to participate (no questions will be asked).

To contact the researcher: If you have questions or concerns about this research, please contact Kgabo Maureen Tefu at 081 748 2444 or selolokgabomaureen@gmail.com. You may also contact the Faculty member supervising this work at: Prof CJ Burman, 015 268 3673.

Agreement:

The nature and purpose of this research have been sufficiently explained and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without incurring any penalty.

Signature of respondent: _____ Date: _____

Name of respondent (print): _____

Signature of researcher: _____ Date: _____

Name of researcher (print): _____ Date: _____



University of Limpopo
Faculty of Management and Law
Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership

KGPELO YA GO TŠEA KARALO NYAKIŠIŠONG

Thobela motšearolo

Ke moithuti wa Unibesithi wa Limpopo lefapheng la Development, Planning and management. O mengwa go tšea karolo nyakišišong ya lengwalo la Mastase le leo le bitšwago “***The effectiveness of the ‘Fetša Tlala’ initiative in improving food security of women smallholder farmers: a case of Semaneng village, Polokwane Local Municipality***”.

O tlo araba dipotšišo tše mmalwa tekano ya metsotso ye 45. O kgopela go araba ka nnete ye e feleletšego. O kgopelwa le gore o bale o be o saene lengwalo la kgopelo ya go tšea karolo nyakišišong. O tla fiwa lengwalo leo.

Ka kgopelo, ela hloko dinhla tšeo di latelago pele o ka tšea karolo nyakišišong ye:

Maikemišetšo magolo a nyakišišo: Go lekodišiša katlego goba mohola woo projeke ya Lefapha la tša Temo ya ‘Fetša Tlala’ baleming ba basadi ba motseng wa Semaneng, Mmasepaleng wa Polokwane.

Seo o tlogo se dira: Ge o tša sephetho sa gore o tlo tšea karolo nyakišišong ye, o tlo botšišwa dipotšišo tšeo o tlo go swanela le go araba. Dipotšišo tšeo di tla ba mabapi le porojeke ya ‘Fetša Tlala’. Ge o ntumelela ke tlo gatiša poledišino ya arena le fela ke ngwala dinhla fase. Ga go yo a tlogo go o botšiša goba go o kgopela go tseba leina la la gago kgatišong yeo.

Nako: Poledišo e tla tša metsotso ye e ka bago 45.

Mohola: Se ke sabaka sa gore o re nyetlele maitemogelo a gago ka porojeke ya 'Fetša Tlala'.

Sephiri: Dikarabo tša gago mo poledišanong ya rena ke sephiri magareng ga rena. Ga go la tsela yeo lein la gago le ka tsabagatšwago ka gona. O tlo tsebišwa go ya le ka palo yeo o tlo fiwa. Motho wo a tloga nthuxa go ngwalolla seo se tla be se gatišitšwe, o tlo go tseba goya ke la palo yeo o tla be o filwe. Kgatišo yeo e tlo . Kgatišo e tlo lahlwa morago ga ge dithuto tšaka tša Mastase di fihlile mafelellong.

Ditaba tšeo re di bolelago di tlo šomišwa fela mabakeng ka moka a o a tswalano le dithuto tša tšaka tša Mastase. Puku ya nyakišišo ye e tla ba gona ko Bakone Tribal Authority g eke feditše ka nyakišišo ye.

Go tšea karolo le go tlogela: Go tšea karolo ga gao nyakišišong ye ke boikgethelo, gomme o ka tlogela nako efe goba efe ge eba a o sa na kgahlego ya go tšwela pele.

Ge e ba o na le dipotšišo mabapi le nyakišišo ye o ka humana Kgabo Maureen Tefu (monyakišiši) mo go 081 748 2444 goba selolokgabomaureen@gmail.com. O ka letšetša gape Prof CJ Burman (mohlhali) mo go 015 268 3673.

Tumelano:

Ke hlaloseditšwe go tlaa seatla ka ga maikemišetšo magolo a nyakišišo ye, gomme ke dumela go tšea karolo. Ke a kwešiša gore go tšea karolo gaka ke maithaopo a ka, gomme nka tlogela g eke sa sa nyaka go tšwela pele nako efe goba efe.

Signature of respondent: _____ Date: _____

Name of respondent (print): _____

Signature of researcher: _____ Date: _____

Name of researcher (print): _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Letter of permission- Bakone Tribal Authority

Appendix C: Permission Letter to Bakone Tribal Authorities

Box 22093
Bakone
0746

Kgošigadi Matlala
Bakone Tribal Authority

Dear Kgošigadi

Letter for permission

I Kgabo Maureen Tefu requests permission to conduct my research in Semaneng Village, Ga-Matlala. I am a student at the University of Limpopo, enrolled for Master of Development in Planning and Management. The title of my study is: *The effectiveness of the 'Fetša Tlala' initiative in improving food security of women smallholder farmers: a case of Semaneng Village, Polokwane Local Municipality.*

The research will involve the following:

- Visiting women who participated in the Fetša Tlala Programme in 2013/ 2014,
- The researcher will require 45 minutes with each respondent to complete the interviews

Necessary arrangements will be made with the respondents prior the actual date/s of the interviews.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours sincerely
Kgabo Tefu



Appendix D: Letter of permission- DAFF

Appendix D: Permission Letter to Department of Agriculture

PO Box 22093
Bakone
0746

The Extension Officer
Limpopo Department of
Agriculture

Dear Sir/Madam

Letter for permission to the list of beneficiaries

I Kgabo Maureen Tefu requests permission to have access to the list of the beneficiaries of the Fetsa Tlala Project that was in place in 2013/2014 at Semaneng Village, Ga-Mat'ala in line with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA). I am a student at the University of Limpopo, enrolled for Master of Development in Planning and Management.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours sincerely
Kgabo Tefu



Permission GRANTED.

Kelleanego

Appendix E: Interview guide

English Version

1. Biographical information of respondents (during the project)

Age in years	18-29		30-39		40-49		50+	
Marital status								
Highest level of education								
Employment status								

2. Background of the project

Thank you once again for agreeing to participate in these interviews that are designed to be the basis for research about the 'Fetša Tlala' Project. Before we get started with the main questions, please could you give me some background information about how you became involved in the project.

2.1. Briefly explain what your food needs are per month.

2.2.1 In terms of agriculture, what kinds of crops would you need to grow in order to meet your food needs?

2.2.2 What quantities of these crops would you need to grow in order to meet your food needs?

2.2. Prior to your participation in the project, describe your food situation?

3. Nature of support received

3.1. What was your understanding of the type of support that was going to be provided?

3.2. What are the actual types of support that were provided to participating members.

3.3. For each type of support, give some details of the activities involved.

3.4. As a female farmer, how do you feel about the support that you received?

4. Effectiveness of the 'Fetša Tlala' initiative

4.1. What resources did you receive in this project?

4.2. How did you use the resources that you received under this project?

4.3. After participating in the project, how has your food situation changed?

4.4. How you did you respond to any challenges related to the resources you received.

4.5. What difference has this project made to you in terms of being food secure?

4.6. Explain in detail how each type of support has improved you with access to adequate food supply.

4.7. What difference has this project made in terms of:

4.7.1. Monthly or annual income_____

4.7.2. Ability to sell any products_____

4.7.3. Knowledge and skills about farming_____

5. Success/ failure of the project

5.1. According to your observation, which factors would you say influenced the success/ failure of the 'Fetša Tlala' initiative from the perspective of women smallholder farmers?

5.2. Would you recommend this project to women in other parts of the country? Explain your answer.

6. Empowerment of women smallholder farmers

6.1. As a woman, comment on how the project has been particularly tailored to assist you to achieve food security based on the following:

6.1.1. As a woman, what role do you play in your home?

6.1.2. What is the size of your household?

6.1.3. Who makes decisions in your household?

6.1.4. What knowledge and skills did you have before embarking on the project you think are needed to achieve food security?

6.2. From what you have learnt in the project, comment on how you are able to produce enough food for your household needs.

6.3. As a woman, how did you feel about the way the project was implemented?

6.4. What concerns did you have about the implementation of the project?

6.4.1. What were the outcomes [if any] of the concerns?

6.5. Who was monitoring the daily operations of the project?

6.6. How many women formed part of the monitoring team?

7. Participants' overall perceptions of the project

7.1. Would you recommend the continuation of this project by the Department of Agriculture?

7.2. If you were to recommend improvements to the project, explain what these would be.

Sepedi version

1. Taodišophelo ya batšeakarolo (Nakong ya projeke)

Mengwaga	18-29		30-39		40-49		50+	
Seemo sa dikamano								
Seemo sa godimo sa dithuto								
Seemo sa mmereko								

2. Setlogo sa projeke

Kea go leboga ge o dumetše go tšea karolo mo dinyakišišong tše ka ga Projeke ya 'Fetša Tlala'. Pele re ka thoma ka ga dipotšišo-kgwegwe, ke kgopela gore o nhlatholle ka moo o felledišego o tšea karolo mo projekeng ye.

2.1. Ka boripana, hlalosa dinyakwa tša gago tša dijo ka kgwedi.

2.2.1. Ge re etla go tša temo, ke dibjalwa tše dife tšeo di nyakagalago gore o fihlelle dinyakwa tša gago tša dijo?

2.2.2. Hlalosa seemo sa gago sa dijo pele o tšea karolo projekeng ye.

3. Hlago ya thekgo yeo e humanwego

3.1. O be o kwešiša eng ka ga thekgo yeo o bego o swanetse go e fiwa?

3.2. Ke mekgwa ye me fe ya thekgo yeo o e filwego.

3.3. Go thekgo yengwe le ye nngwe, hlalosa ka go tsenella gore go be go diragala eng.

3.4. Jwale ka molemi wa mosadi, o ikwa jwang ka ga thekgo ye o ilego wa e fiwa?

4. Mohola wa projeke ya 'Fetša Tlala'

4.1. O filwe didirišwa tša mohuta mang?

4.2. O šomišitše jwang didirišwa tšeo o di filwego ka fase ga projeke ye?

4.3. O ile wa iphetolela jwang go dihlotlo tseo di be go di etla le didiriswa tseo o di filwego?

4.4. Naa ke phapano efe yeo projeke ye e e tlišitšego mabapi le seemo sa gago sa dijo?

5. Katlego/ go se atlege ga projeke

5.1. Go ya le ka moo o bonago ka gona, ke dilo dife tšeo di hlohloeditšego katlego/ go se atlege ga projeke ya 'Fetša Tlala' go tšwa maikutlong a gago jwale ka molemi wa mosadi?

5.2. Naa o ka eletša gore basadi ba bangwe mo nageng ba tsenele projeke ya mohuta wo? Hlalosa karabo ya gago.

6. Matlafatšo ya balemi ba basadi

6.1. Jwale ka mosadi, re botše ka moo projeke ye e bego e beakantšhitšwe gore o tle o kgone go fihlella dinyakwa tsa gago tsa dijo.

6.2. Go tšwa go tšeo o ithutileng mo projekeng ye, re botše ka moo o kgonago go tšwela pele ka go tšweletša dijo tša go lekana ba lapa la gago.

6.3. Ke dingongorego dife tšeo o bilego le tšona ka mokgwa oo projeke e bego e sepidišwa ka gona?

6.3.1. Di ile tša rarollwa jwang?

6.4. Ke mang wo a bego a hlokometše tshepidišo ya projeke ya tšatši ka tšatši?

6.5. Ke basadi ba bakae bao ba bego ba le mo sehlopheng sa go hlokomela tshepidišo ya projeke?

7. Mmono wa batšea-karolo ka projeke ka kakaretšo

7.1. O ka hlohloletša lefapha la tša temo gore le tšwele pele ka projeke ye? Hlalosa

7.2. Ge o be o ka akanya diphetogo tsa go kaonafatša projeke, e be e ka ba dife?
