

# Measuring Food Insecurity in Scotland

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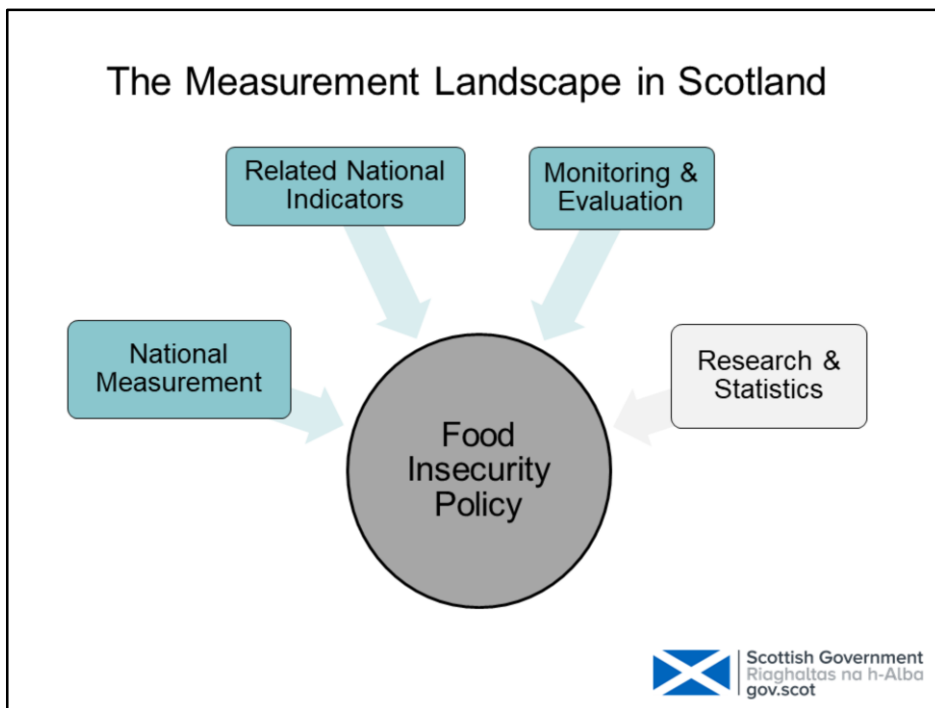
## **FOOD INSECURITY:**

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

Dowler E. 'Food and Poverty in Britain' in: Dowler E & Jones Finer C (Eds), Welfare of Food: Rights and Responsibilities in a Changing World. 2003.



- When we refer to food insecurity we often refer to the widely accepted definition of food insecurity, presented on the screen...



- Food insecurity policy within the Scottish Government is evidence-based.
- So we make use of various sources of data inform policy actions to tackle food insecurity. Broadly, these can be grouped into four types:
  - National food insecurity measurement
  - Related national measurement indicators
  - Monitoring and evaluation of funded programmes, activities and initiatives
  - Commissioned and external research and statistics

## National Food Insecurity Measurement

- Three questions have been included in the Scottish Health Survey for the past two years.
- The Scottish Health Survey is a nationally-representative survey, with 4,000 to 5,000 adults providing food insecurity data each year.



During the past 12 months, was there a time when:

- 1) **You were worried you would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?**
- 2) **You ate less than you thought you should because of a lack of money or other resources?**
- 3) **Your household ran out of food because of lack of money or other resources?**

Questions taken from the eight-item UN Food Insecurity Experience Scale.

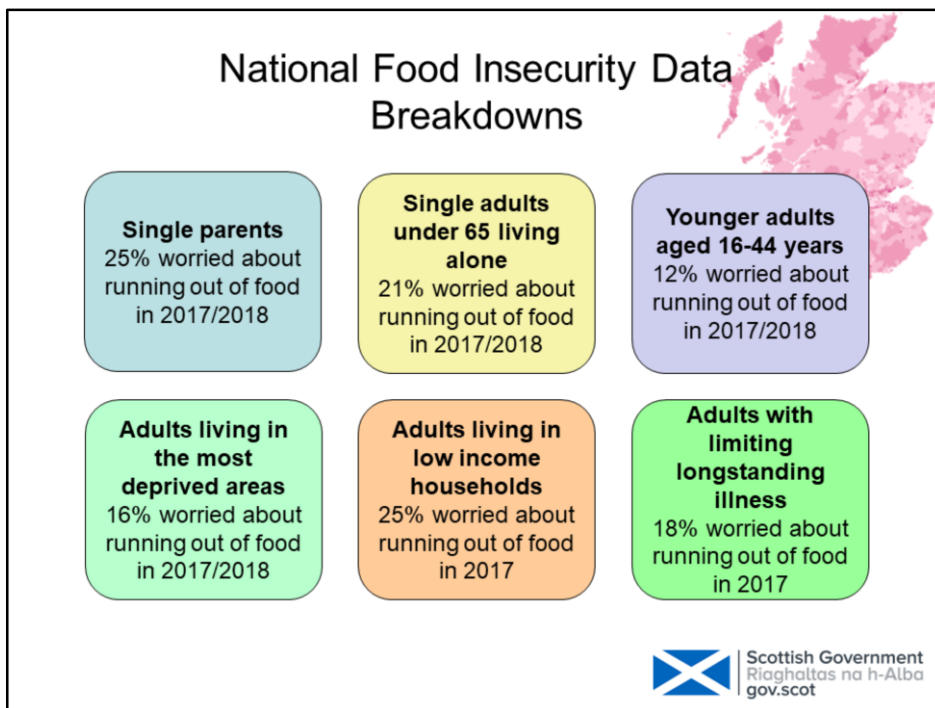


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- Following recommendations from an independent working group in 2016, the Scottish Government has been measuring national household food insecurity for the past two years.
- Three priority questions have been included in the Scottish Health Survey – selected to capture household food insecurity experience on a scale between worrying about running out of food – which is our primary measure – to eating less than you should to running out of food due to lack of money or other resources.
- These questions are taken from the eight-item UN Food Insecurity Experience Scale.
- The Scottish Health Survey is a nationally representative survey of both adults and children. Only the adults are asked the food insecurity questions. There were around 3,700 adults who completed the 2017 Scottish Health Survey and 4,800 adults in the most recent 2018 Scottish Health Survey.



- The most recent Scottish Health Survey data was published in September this year.
- This showed that 9% adults in Scotland worried that they would run out of food due to lack of money or other resources.
- 6% of adults said they ate less than they should, and 3% said that had run out of food due to lack of money or other resources.
- These figures are not statistically different from the previous year's data provided by the 2017 Scottish Health Survey – but I'll talk some more about the data trend and how we're monitoring these later on.



- The national food insecurity data also shows that food insecurity is much more prevalent among certain groups in Scotland.
- Worrying about running out of food is more prevalent among:
  - Single parents
  - Single adults under 65 living alone
  - Adults living in the most deprived areas
  - Younger adults aged 16-44 years
  - Adults living in low income households
  - Adults with limiting longstanding illness

The percentages presented on the slide are based on the worrying about running of food question – but there is a similar picture for the other two questions.

Some of these analyses are based on combined 2017 and 2018 data in order to increase sample size and so the robustness of these breakdowns. We haven't yet looked at breakdowns by income and limiting longstanding illness based on the 2018 data but expect to see a very similar pattern to the 2017 breakdowns.

## Linking National Food Insecurity and Health



**Mental wellbeing was substantially lower** for adults who experienced food insecurity (42.2 vs 50.3 on the WEMWBS scale).



The number of **portions of fruit and vegetable consumed was lower** for adults who experienced food insecurity than for the rest of the adult population (2.9 vs 3.3 portions).



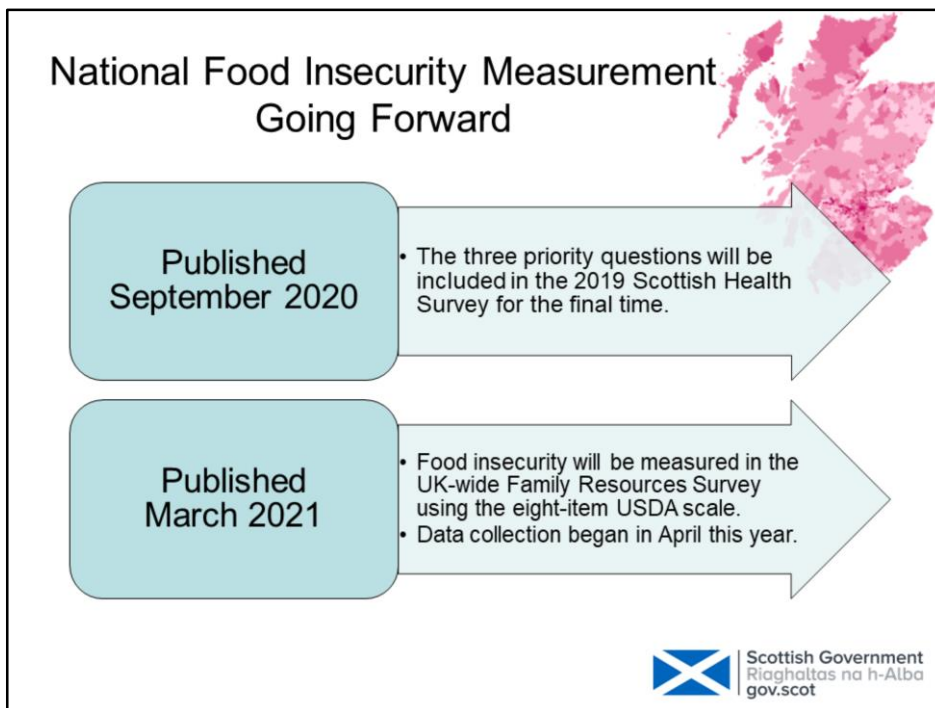
The **proportion of adults who ate no fruit of vegetables on a given day was significantly higher** among adults who experienced food insecurity than the rest of the adult population (17% vs 9%).

Analyses based on combined 2017 & 2018 data



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- Now that we have two years of food insecurity data from the Scottish Health Survey, we have been able to conduct some initial analyses linking food with diet and mental wellbeing.
- These analyses largely confirm findings from other research and data from Canada.
- We plan to conduct further analyses linking the food insecurity data to physical health outcomes.
- The analyses that have been conducted show that mental wellbeing is substantially lower among adults who experienced food insecurity – whether it was worrying about running out of food through to running out.
- In relation to diet, the average portions of fruit and vegetables consumed by adults who experienced food insecurity was slightly lower than the rest of the adult population. Furthermore, the proportion of adults who ate no portions of fruit and vegetables on a given day was significantly higher among adults who experienced food insecurity compared to the rest of the adult population.



- In terms of ongoing measurement of national food insecurity in Scotland, we have one remaining year of food insecurity measurement in the Scottish Health Survey using our three priority questions.
- The next food insecurity data from the Scottish Health Survey will be published in September 2020.
- The third year of measurement data from the Scottish Health Survey will allow for more in-depth analyses relating to health outcomes and should allow for breakdowns by local authority. We will allow be able to draw more robust conclusions in respect to trends in household food insecurity prevalence.
- Earlier this year, it was announced that food insecurity would be measured in the UK-wide Family Resources Survey. This was following requests for inclusion of this measurement from both the Scottish Government and UK Government.
- Measurement of food insecurity will be via the eight-item USDA scale – the questions asked in this scale are broadly similar to questions from the food insecurity experience scale currently used in the Scottish Health Survey but will ask about experience of food insecurity in the past 30 days rather than the past 12 months.
- Food insecurity data collection in the FRS began in April this year and will be published in March 2021.
- Expecting annual measurement in the FRS thereafter.



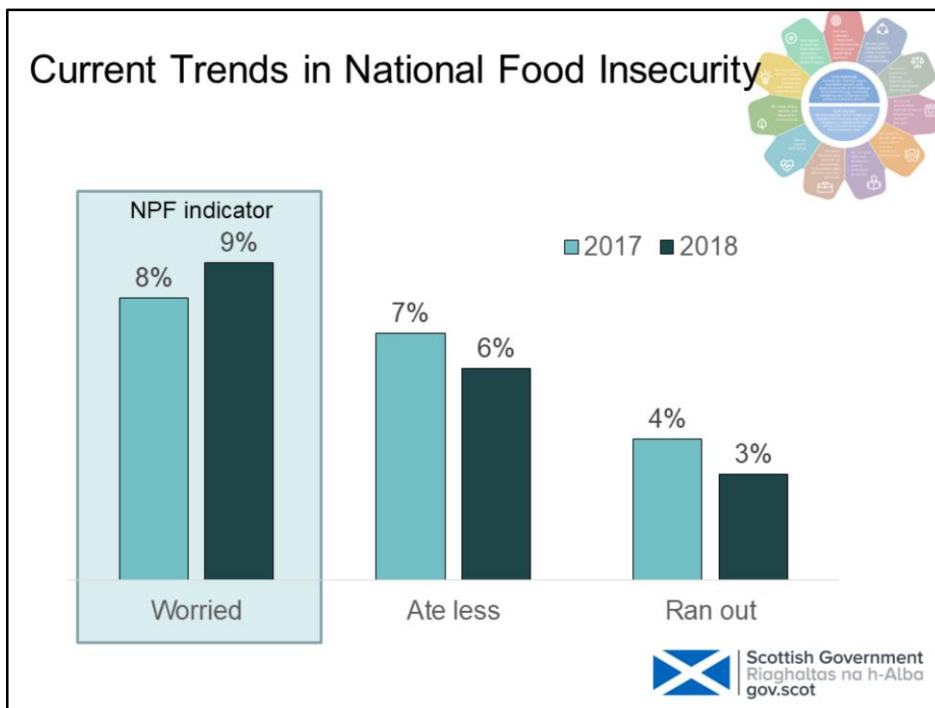
## Using National Food Insecurity Data to Monitor Progress

- **SDG 2 is to End Hunger:** a measure of this included in the Scottish National Performance Framework using our national data to monitor progress.
- The Food Insecurity NPF indicator is linked to poverty & human rights outcomes.
- Progress in the NPF is updated annually – the most recent Scottish Health Survey data will be added in the next few weeks.

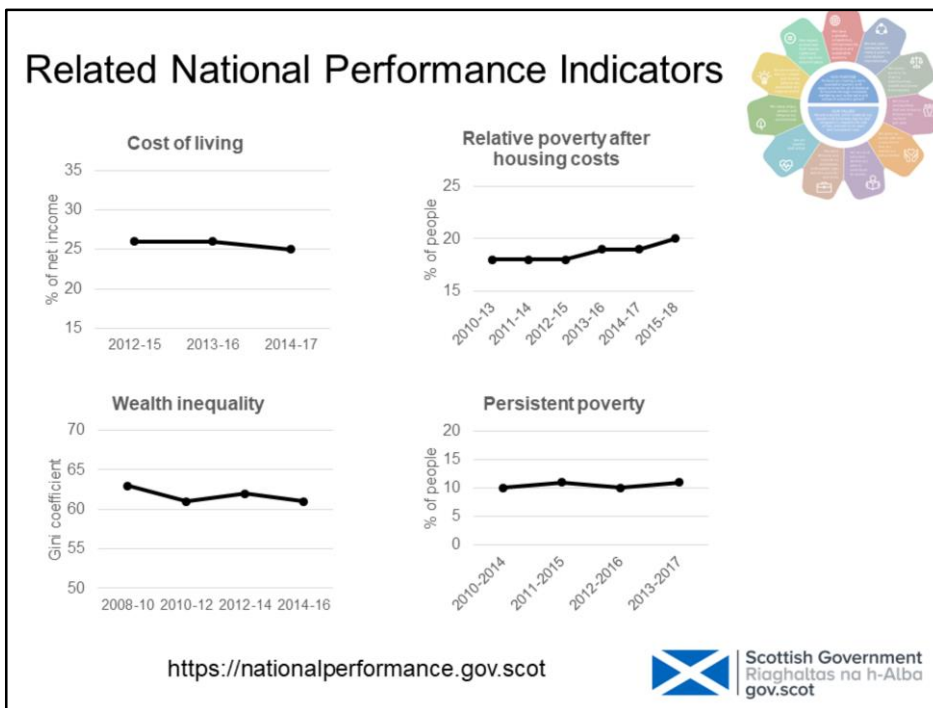



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- In July 2018, the Scottish Government launched a revised National Performance Framework developed together with the public, practitioners and experts to reflect the values and aspirations held for the future of people living in Scotland.
- The core purpose guiding the NPF is ‘to focus on creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing, and sustainable and inclusive economic growth’.
- The National Performance has been designed to link to a number of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals.
- In the case of food insecurity, Sustainable Development Goal 2 – Zero Hunger – is embedded within the National Performance and is linked to both poverty & human rights outcomes.
- The national food insecurity data from the Scottish Health Survey is used to monitor progress annually.
- The 2018 Scottish Health Survey data will be added in the next few weeks.



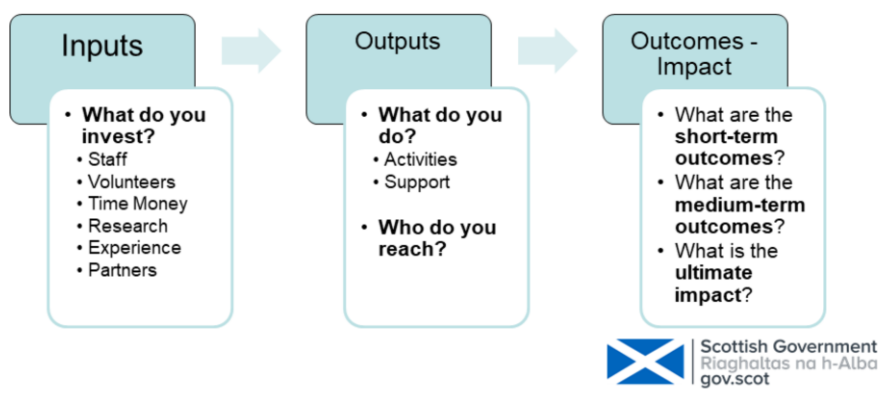
- Now that we have two years of national food insecurity we can start to look at trends in the data.
- The first of our three priority questions – worrying about running out of food – is used to inform the food insecurity indicator within the National Performance Framework.
- As you can see, the data from our two years of measurement – 2017 & 2018 – are very similar.
- There was no statistically significant change from 2017 to 2018 in the prevalence of food insecurity based on our three questions.
- However, you can see that there was a numerical increase from 8% to 9% in the percentage of adults worrying about running out of food.
- We're still working on finalising the criteria for change for the food insecurity NPF indicator – which will tell us whether performance is improving, worsening or staying the same with respect to this indicator.



- There are currently 81 national indicators measured within the National Performance Framework covering a range of outcomes.
- Several of these indicators are related to food insecurity and so inform our understanding our national food insecurity data and the wider trends in terms of poverty and inequality.
- I've presented four of the most relevant indicators on the screen –
  - **Cost of living** which is the median percentage of income spent on housing, fuel and food
  - **Wealth inequality** which is measured on a scale between 0 perfect equality and 100 maximal inequality,
  - **The percentage of people in relative poverty after housing costs** - The proportion of individuals living in private households with an equivalised income of less than 60% of the UK median after housing costs.
  - **The percentage of people in persistent poverty** meaning that they have been living in relative poverty after housing costs for three out of the last four years.
- You can view all 81 indicators and a summary of their progress on the National Performance Framework website.

## Monitoring & Evaluation

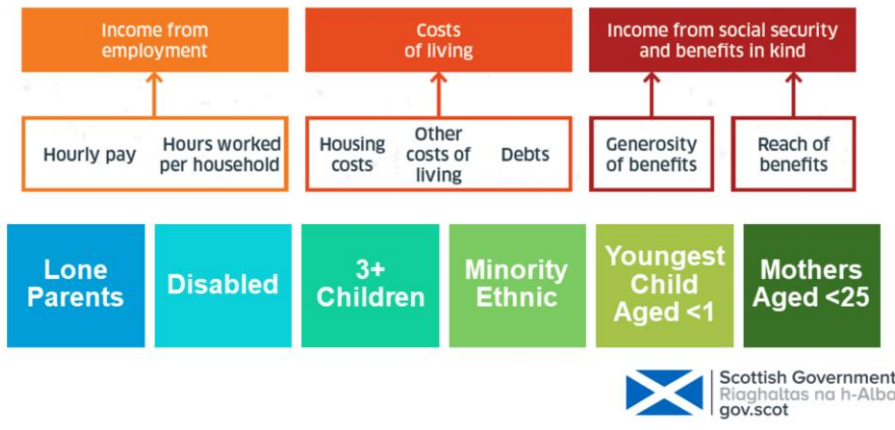
- Organisations receiving Scottish Government Funding are required to monitor the reach and outcomes of their activities.
- Going forward, we plan to embed consistent measurement of food insecurity impact.
- Alongside working with organisations to measure other project-specific outcomes and how these are achieved.



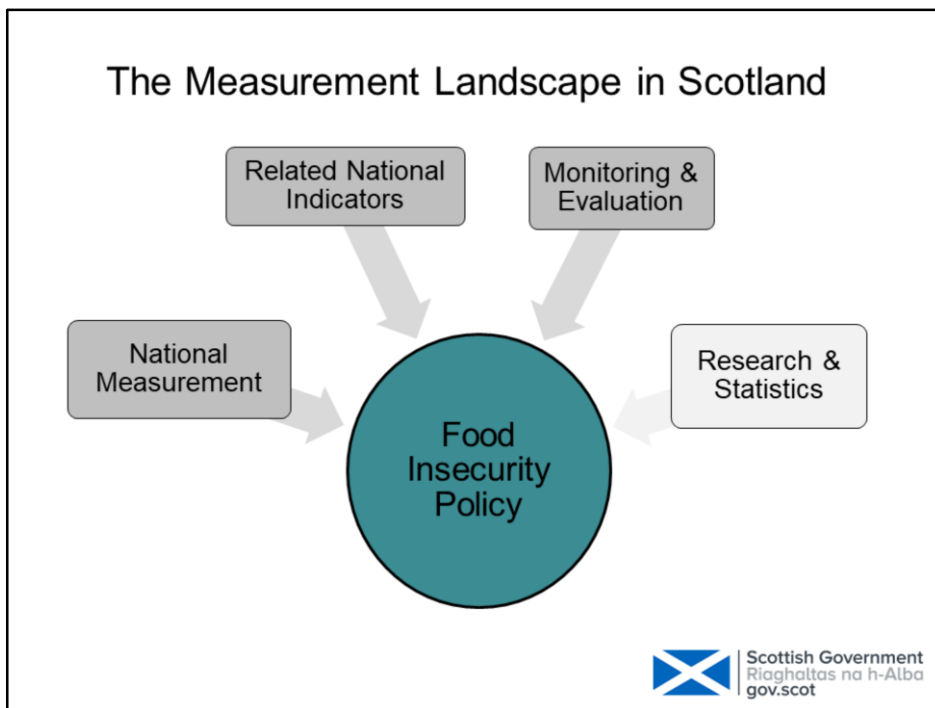
- Alongside national measurement of food insecurity and related indicators, it is also important to consider how we are measuring food insecurity through monitoring and evaluation of organisations who receive Scottish Government funding for activities and initiatives to tackle food insecurity.
- Whilst our monitoring had consistently asked about reach, it is our aim to begin to embed measurement of impact of food insecurity within our monitoring and evaluation activity.
- But it is important to us that we also consider how we are measuring project-specific outcomes.
- Various activities tackling food insecurity may have all impact on food insecurity but may differ in wider impacts and how they achieve these.
- We've begun to work with organisations to develop detailed logic or theory of change models, setting out their what is invested into the running of their activity or work, what they provide and who is reached, and the impacts they are anticipating on the short, medium and long-term.
- This information is essential to ensure we not only measure food insecurity but also understand how any positive impacts on food insecurity and related outcomes are achieved.

## Linking Food Insecurity to Existing Measurement Frameworks

*An example:* Monitoring and evaluation of activities tackling food insecurity during the school holidays is linked to the Tackling Child Poverty Measurement Framework.



- In order to inform our monitoring and evaluation, we have also been seeking to link with established measurement frameworks where relevant.
- One clear example of this is in relation to monitoring and evaluation of activities to tackle food insecurity in the school holidays and the link to the Tackling Child Poverty Measurement Framework.
- The TCP measurement framework sets out three key drivers of child poverty – income from employment, the costs of living and income from social security and benefits in kind.
- It also sets out six priority groups based on data on the prevalence of child poverty –
  - lone parent families
  - families with a disabled adult or child
  - larger families with 3 or more children
  - minority ethnic families
  - Families with a young child under the age of 1
  - Families with a young mother aged under 25



- I've discussed our national food insecurity measurement in Scotland and how we measure progress, related national indicators within the national performance indicator, and a brief note on our approach to monitoring and evaluation informed by project-specific learning and wider measurement frameworks.
- Now hand over to Elli who will talk about policy actions to tackle food insecurity.

# Tackling Food Insecurity – Policy Overview

Policy objective:  
**SDG Goal 2 – End Hunger**

Approach:

- Tackling the cause
- Ensuring the responses are dignified

# Policy Landscape

National Performance Framework  
*National Outcomes on Poverty and Human Rights*

Dignity: Ending Hunger Together – Report of the  
Independent Working Group on Food Poverty (2016)

- 19 recommendations: understand, prevent, respond, invest
- Dignity Principles:

Involve in decision making people with direct experience  
Recognise the social value of food  
Provide people with opportunities to contribute  
Leave people with the power to choose



**Recommendation 2 and 16 (funding):** Scottish Government has integrated the Group's Dignity Principles within the criteria of the Fair Food Transformation Fund. 34 community projects (including 13 food banks) have been granted funding in 2017-19 to promote dignity and help transition away from emergency food aid as a primary response. Now ICF.

**Recommendation 3 (right to food):** A rights-based approach to preventing household food insecurity has been promoted by challenging and mitigating UK Government welfare reforms. National Task Force which will be asked to consider all internationally-recognised human rights

**Recommendation 4 (monitoring):** Scottish Government has integrated UN Food Insecurity Experience Scale questions in Scottish Health Survey.

**Recommendation 10 (social security system):** Scottish Government has ensured that people with lived experience of social security are involved in design and delivery of Scotland's new social security system.

**Recommendation 13 (holiday provision):** Scottish Government has focused £2 million of Fair Food Fund in 2019-20 on holiday provision.



# Policy Landscape

## Fairer Scotland Action Plan 2016

*50 actions to tackle poverty & inequality – see action 20*

## Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2016

*Statutory targets, duty to prepare and report on plans, established Poverty & Inequality Commission*

## Good Food Nation ambition

*'ensuring that everyone in Scotland has ready access to the healthy food they need'. Programme for Government commitment to introduce legislation.*



FSAP –

Over the term of this parliament, we will work to make Scotland a Good Food Nation by enabling more people to have access to affordable, healthy, nutritious food, in a dignified way. As a first step we will offer a range of alternatives to emergency food aid through our recently established £1 million a year Fair Food Fund which supports projects that offer a dignified response to food poverty. These projects will provide new opportunities for people on low incomes to access fresh and healthy food, share a meal and develop new skills.

CPSA: less than 10% should be living in relative poverty (how many families are on low incomes compared with middle income households)

less than 5% should be living in absolute poverty (how many low income families are not seeing their living standards improving over time)

less than 5% should be living with combined low income and material deprivation (how many lower income families cannot afford basic necessities)

less than 5% should be living in persistent poverty (how many families live on low incomes three years out of four)

# Delivery

**Prevent:**

Living Wage, Scottish social security system

**Respond:**

£1.4 billion in 2019-20 to support low income households, including £100 million to mitigate welfare reform. Includes £6 million food spend through Scottish Welfare Fund

**Invest:**

£3.5 million Fair Food Fund, £11.5 million Investing in Communities Fund



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Thanks for your attention

Any questions/clarifications?



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## 3 questions from the FIES

During the last 12 months, was there a time when:

- 1) **You were worried you would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?**
- 2) ...you were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food because of a lack of money or other resources?
- 3) ...you ate only a few kinds of foods because of a lack of money or other resources?
- 4) ...you had to skip a meal because there was not enough money or other resources to get food?
- 5) **You ate less that you thought you should because of a lack of money or other resources?**
- 6) **Your household ran out of food because of lack of money of other resources**
- 7) ...you were hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money or other resources for food?
- 8) ...you went without eating for a whole day because of a lack of money or other resources?