

A photograph of two young children sitting at a table, eating. The child on the left is holding a green vegetable stick to their mouth. The child on the right is reaching into a white bowl filled with green peas. There is another empty white bowl and a glass of water on the table. The background is dark and out of focus.

# Project evaluation

2022 Partner Information  
Package

# Our journey to shared outcomes and measures

## We are interested in:

1. Better understanding and aligning on intended project outcomes and objectives
2. Capturing the impact of partners on the barriers to food security and food insecurity
3. Supporting identification of interventions that can be scaled
4. Informing our understanding of food security, insecurity and our Theory of Change!

## Our process:

To develop this framework, we collaborated with six Partners leading diverse learning and project grants in the summer/fall of 2020.

We tested ideas and drafts with Partners for usability and learning.

We anticipate this process will shift and iterate over time.

## Our design principles:

1. The rigour of the evaluation should be proportional to the size of the project
2. Be agile and flexible in our approach to evaluation
3. Evaluation should build our sense-making skills and those of and our partners
4. Be aware of and monitor evaluation constraints and challenges

# The definitions we go by

At the Centre, we are interested in learning about the impact of the projects we fund on both food insecurity and food security.

## **Food insecurity:**

Food insecurity refers to the inability to access a sufficient quantity or variety of food because of financial constraints <sup>1</sup>

People who are food insecure worry about running out of food, compromise on food quality or skip meals because of lack of access and money for food.

## **Food security:**

Food security is a broader concept than food insecurity. It refers to the ability to access enough food for an active, healthy life <sup>1</sup>.

People are food secure when they have stable access to affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food.

# What we know: Barriers to food security

## Most critical



### Economic

**Income is insufficient** to cover basic costs of living:

- **Income is too low**; rely on minimum wage, precarious work or social assistance

**Nutritious food costs too much**

- Expensive relative to unhealthy options

**Non-food costs are too high;**

- High housing, childcare, medication costs

**Financial instability**

- Income and cost-of-living fluctuate, inability to withstand shocks

## Other barriers



### Geographic

**Nutritious food is not consistently available** due to:

- **Geographic location**; e.g. North, remote, food swamps

Healthy or nutritious food is **not accessible** due to:

- Lack of **access to land** for growing, harvesting, or hunting
- Non-existent, costly, unreliable, or inconvenient **transportation**



### Social

**Nutritious food is available and accessible**, but not consumed due to:

- **Time required** to shop and cook
- **Social stigma** around turning to food assistance
- Foods are not available that **fit cultural needs**
- **Social isolation** due to a lack of social support or community connection



### Health

**Nutritious food is available**, but not consumed due to:

- **Physical disability** that inhibits physical accessibility

Deep-rooted issues that impact access to food:

- **Mental health** conditions
- **Addiction**



### Knowledge

Lack of awareness of **support programs** available:

- **Food assistance programs** and other social/economic programs
- **Government financial benefits**; e.g. tax credits

**Knowledge** to help resources go further

- **Food knowledge** or cooking skills that help cultivate a healthy relationship with food
- **Financial capability** and the ability to influence financial wellbeing

We recognize that structural racism impacts how barriers are experienced and must also be addressed.



# What we're hoping to learn from Project Grants

# Learning and evaluation in project grants

**Project Grants go beyond emergency food relief to provide programs or interventions that reduce barriers to food security for food-insecure individuals and households.**

**The Centre looks for Project Grantees to track progress towards outcomes in the following two areas:**

1. Changes in household or individual food insecurity (see slide 7)
2. Changes in the barriers to food security for individuals and households (see slide 8)



# 1. Changes in household food insecurity

- We recommend the 6-item short-form of the Household Food Security Survey Module to track changes in food insecurity.
- You are welcome to modify the timeframe referenced in the tool as needed for your program/project, and the tool can be included in a larger evaluation plan that explores other outcomes or evaluation questions
- If there is a different tool and/or method you'd rather use to assess food insecurity, please discuss with us! We are looking to understand change over time in access to money or resources for food, and between levels of severity.

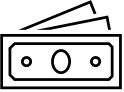




***I'm going to read you several statements that people have made about their food situation. For these statements, please tell me whether the statement was often true, sometimes true, or never true for (you/your household) in the last (time frame)—that is, since last (name of current month)?***

1. The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more.
2. (I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals.
3. In the last 12 months, since last (name of current month), did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?
4. [IF YES ABOVE, ASK] How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?
5. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?
6. In the last 12 months, were you every hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?

## 2. Changes in barriers to food security

There so are many positive outcomes resulting from the work you do.

There are certain food security-related outcomes that we are particularly interested in, and anticipate that projects we support will seek to track progress on some of the following:

Barrier	Anticipated Outcomes
 Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Increased affordability of nutritious foods</li><li>▪ Increased access to financial benefits</li></ul>
 Geographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Consistent availability of nutritious foods</li><li>▪ Increased physical access to nutritious foods</li></ul>
 Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Increased dignity associated with food assistance</li><li>▪ Increased social support and/or community connection</li></ul>
 Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Improved mental health and wellbeing</li><li>▪ Improved physical health and wellbeing</li></ul>
 Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Increased food and nutritional knowledge</li><li>▪ Increased financial capability and financial wellbeing</li></ul>





# What we're hoping to learn from Learning Grants

# Learning and evaluation in learning grants

**Learning grants focus on the generation and sharing of knowledge through partnerships, collaboratives, or networks to address individual and/or structural barriers to food security.**

**As a result, the Centre looks for Learning Grantees to track progress towards outcomes in the following two areas:**

1. Changes in knowledge, skills, and behavior of collaborative/network members (see slide 11)
2. Changes in the barriers to food security at the individual, household, or structural level (see slide 8)

# 1. Changes in knowledge, skills, and/or behavior of participants

The type of impact that **partnerships, collaboratives, or networks have on participants** will depend on the project goals and timeline.

**We anticipate that learning projects we support will seek to track progress or changes on some of the following:**

- Participant attitudes and/or perceptions of an issue
- Participant knowledge and/or competence of an issue
- Participant skills, abilities, and/or capacities
- Participant behaviours and/or actions on an issue



**To get you  
started:  
Example  
indicators**

# A few notes about indicators

The indicators included in the following slide capture impact on outcomes of interest to the Centre and are offered as examples and inspiration to support evaluation planning. Indicators are categorized into two levels, **individual and structural**:

- **Individual indicators:** to be used when projects provide services, programs, or interventions that directly “reach” food-insecure individuals and households
- **Structural indicators:** to be used when a project is focused on addressing structural or systemic barriers to food security – such as changes in values, culture, relationships/networks, service delivery, practices, resource use or generation, policies, and regulations.

You are welcome to use indicators from the list that are appropriate for the outcomes your project is working towards. Alternatively, **use any indicators that are relevant and meaningful for your work** – but please let us know what indicators you plan to use before starting data collection so we can learn from you!

## Quantitative vs. Qualitative Indicators

While most indicators we’ve shared are quantitative, qualitative methods are also useful and important to learn about project impact. Projects that combine multiple methods – such as surveys with interviews, focus groups, community forums, visual art and multi-media, and a range of testimonial feedback – often provide the richest information. We welcome qualitative indicators and methods alongside quantitative measures, so please share and discuss with us!

# Example indicators list

Barriers	Expected Outcomes	Individual Indicators
Economic	Increased affordability of nutritious foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people who report that food is more affordable for them</li> <li>• Reduced cost of food items</li> </ul>
	Increased access to financial benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people who receive support with tax filing/benefits applications</li> <li>• Per person and total amount of tax-related benefits claimed</li> </ul>
Geographic	Increased physical access to nutritious foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people with improved physical access to nutritious foods</li> <li>• Change in amount of time taken to travel to buy food</li> </ul>
	Consistent availability of nutritious foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people reporting the foods they want are available to them, including cultural foods</li> <li>• Improvements in the variety, diversity, or quality of foods available</li> </ul>
Social	Increased dignity associated with food assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people who feel respected when accessing programs/services</li> </ul>
	Increased social support and/or community connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people who have increased social connections and supports in their community, including with service providers, family, and friends</li> <li>• #/% of people who feel a greater sense of belonging in their community</li> </ul>
Health	Improved mental health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people who feel there have been improvements to their mental health</li> </ul>
	Improved physical health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people who feel there have been improvements to their physical health</li> </ul>
Knowledge	Increased food and nutritional knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people with increased knowledge, capability, or confidence shopping for and preparing nutritious foods</li> </ul>
	Increased financial literacy and well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of people reporting increased knowledge, capability, or confidence managing their finances</li> <li>• Changes in peoples' feelings of financial stress</li> </ul>
<b>Structural Indicators</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in stakeholder perceptions of food insecurity/barriers to food security</li> <li>• # and type of new or different services or programs</li> <li>• # and type of new partnerships or relationships</li> <li>• Amount of new funding available for food security/insecurity initiatives</li> <li>• # and type of food security/insecurity-related policies or regulations drafted and/or adopted</li> </ul>		

# Summary

Grant	Outcomes of Interest	Indicators	Suggested Methods
Project	Changes in food insecurity status	<u>6-item short-form</u> of the Household Food Security Survey Module (slide 7), or an acceptable alternative. Contact the Centre to discuss.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pre-post intervention survey</b> (preferred where feasible)</li> <li><b>Post (retrospective) intervention survey</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Complementary qualitative methods, like interviews, focus groups, etc. are encouraged alongside quantitative methods.</b></p>
	Changes in the barriers to food security	<p>See 'Example Indicators List' (slide 14)</p> <p>Partners are welcome to choose from these indicators or use others that make sense for their project.</p>	
Learning	Changes in knowledge, skills, and/or behavior of participants	<p>Project-specific indicators that track changes in the following for participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitudes and/or perceptions of an issue</li> <li>• Knowledge and/or competence of an issue</li> <li>• Skills, abilities, and/or capacities</li> <li>• Behaviors and/or actions on an issue</li> </ul> <p>Partners are welcome to choose indicators that make sense for their project.</p>	
	Changes in the barriers to food security	<p>See 'Example Indicators List' (slide 14)</p> <p>Partners are welcome to choose from these indicators or use others that make sense for their project.</p>	