

University of the Free State

The No Student Hungry programme



*Inspiring excellence, transforming lives
through quality, impact, and care.*



UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA
FREISTATA



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Hunger is not a problem. It is an obscenity. How wonderful it is that nobody needs to wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.” – Anne Frank

Goal

The purpose of the No Student Hungry (NSH) programme at the University of the Free State (UFS) is to ensure that the most vulnerable students who have an excellent academic record, but who are food insecure, are provided with healthy food options so that they can successfully complete their studies.

Institutional context

Contributing to the [UFS Strategic Plan, Strategic Goal 1](#) (to improve student success and well-being), the university has compiled a Food Environment Strategy to develop and implement a health-promoting food environment, where students are informed and empowered to take appropriate action regarding their food and nutrition situation. The NSH food bursary programme is one of the key components of this strategy.

Background and rationale

The problem of inadequate food environments on university campuses has been noted globally over the past decade. As many as 59% of our students do not know where their next meal will come from (*Food Environment programme registered with the Department of Higher Education as a Tertiary Institution*).

Being situated in one of the poorest provinces in South Africa, a great number of our students are from economically disadvantaged homes and do not have the means to support themselves while studying.

The COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the unemployment rate of 34,9% (*November 2021 Quarterly Labour Force Survey*), adding to the likelihood of our students being affected even more by food insecurity. Another factor that increases the need for food assistance is a delay in the delivery of bursary funds.

Inadequate funding for living expenses, accompanied by a lack of knowledge and skills to plan, procure, and prepare healthy meals on the budget available, contributes to the hunger situation on our campuses. Students who are food insecure also suffer from mental-health issues and are less likely to focus on their studies.



"Inadequate funding for living expenses, accompanied by a lack of knowledge and skills to plan, procure, and prepare healthy meals on the budget available, contributes to hunger situation on our campuses."

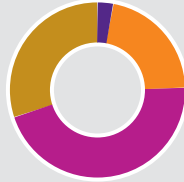
The inability to provide for themselves, together with the added stress caused by their financial struggles, has more than once resulted in some of our most talented students dropping out of university and taking up a job to augment their meagre financial resources. The effects of students dropping out of university are felt at economic and societal level. This loss of learning could waste untold human potential and undermine decades of work to get our students to university where they can build a better tomorrow for them and their families.



National research

In the past year, have there been times that you ran out of food and could not afford to buy more?

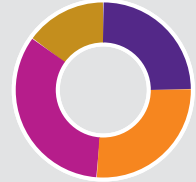
30% Never 22% Most days
46% Sometimes 2% Every day



Less than a third of students indicated that they had never run out of food and not being able to buy more. This means that 70% of students have at some stage in the relevant year been hungry. For 24% of the sample, this happened most days or every day.

How often do you worry about having enough money for day-to-day necessities?

15% Never 26% Most days
34% Sometimes 25% Every day



Except for tuition fees, 85% of students are worried about having enough money for day-to-day necessities, with 25% of students saying that they are worried about this on a daily basis.

Data collected through the South African Survey of Student Engagement Annual Report of 2018 shows that 70% of students cannot afford to buy food at some point during the academic year. It also indicates that more than 20% of students in South Africa are persistently hungry. Twenty-four percent of students named food insecurity as a reason for dropping out of university (and 30% of students named living cost as a reason).



Philosophical context

Food security exists when all people – at all times – have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

According to the 2020 UFS Food Security Survey, 74,8% of students were classified as food insecure, indicating a decrease in food-secure students (40% decreasing to 25%). By not paying attention to students' campus food environments, vulnerable students will be pushed further along the continuum of food insecurity towards hunger; making it even more difficult for them to feed themselves

adequately with what is available. The university is now approaching the problem from a broader perspective. The entire food environment and the entire student population have been considered in the planning of a strategy to develop and implement a health-promoting food environment programme.

This UFS Food Environment programme, believed to be a first in South Africa, offers students an opportunity for a healthy food environment, empowering them with knowledge and skills to take informed and responsible actions regarding their nutrition and food choices in order to promote their well-being and success.

Establishing good health and well-being: One bite at a time

In line with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** to eradicate hunger and establish good health and well-being, the Food Environment Office in the UFS Division of Student Affairs is providing students with healthy food choices through a number of initiatives:

- Financial support is offered to vulnerable students through subsidised meals on campus. Students who are allowed to come to campus for class are obliged to buy a meal-of-the-day from a UFS dining hall, ensuring that they are receiving nutritious meals at reasonable prices. Students who are not allowed to

return to campus due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions receive their meal allowances as a monthly stipend paid into their bank accounts.

- Food parcels received as a supplementary source of nutritious meals from Tiger Brands and Gift of the Givers are distributed to identified students twice a month.
- The Food Environment Office collaborates with Kovsie ACT and the Department of Sustainable Food Systems and Development; vegetable tunnels have been erected on both the Bloemfontein and South Campuses. The fresh vegetables produced are distributed to students in the NSH programme, contributing to the fight against hunger and malnutrition. Watch the video [here](#).





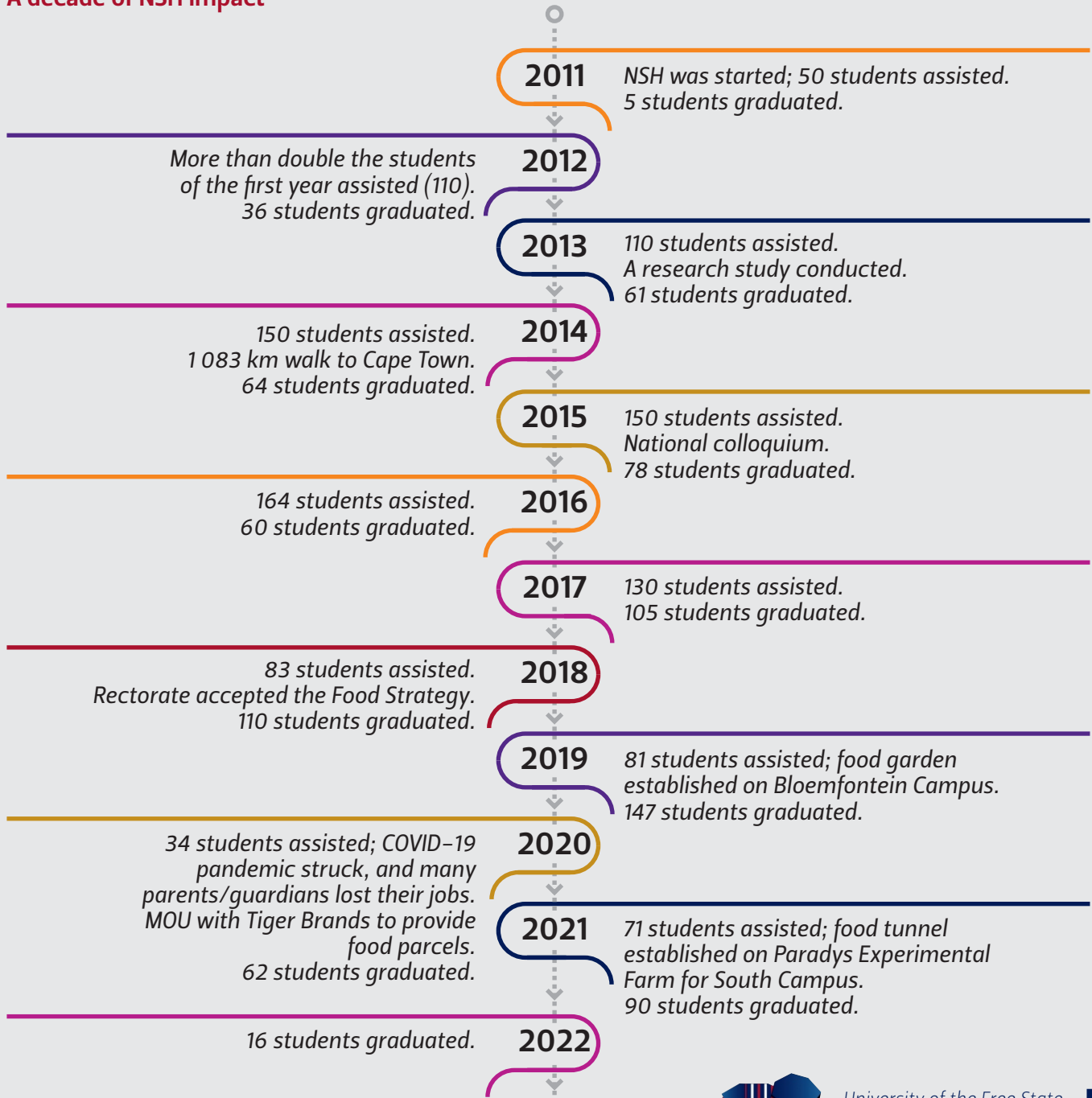
- The Food Environment Office has also partnered with the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, which provides information and support on healthy food and meal choices through its Eat to Succeed programme, as well as practical cooking sessions, both online and face to face.

With the significant change in the student profile over the past decade, the university has reconfigured the NSH programme from a data-driven perspective – the most vulnerable students are identified to receive support. The criteria for admitting students to the NSH programme have also changed. Now, students are only selected if they are currently enrolled, a first-generation student, and whose annual family income is below R200 000. Moreover, these students from households where a parent or guardian is unemployed, must have a successful study record and not receive any other bursary allowance. Individual circumstances will, however, be considered.

The programme is supporting 69 students. This number is expected to increase in 2022, with an estimated growth of 200 students on all three UFS campuses.



A decade of NSH impact



Leadership and administration

The NSH programme is one of the key components of the UFS Food Environment Strategy and receives support from the Institutional Advancement Office as well as the Division of Student Affairs.

Information

Read more about the NSH programme on the [web](#).

Indicative budget

There are minimal costs associated with the NSH programme. The estimated annual indicative budget (ZAR) is based on a daily budget of R45 per student for 210 on-campus days per year:

<i>1 student</i>	<i>10 students</i>	<i>100 students</i>	<i>1 000 students</i>	<i>10 000 students</i>
<i>R9 450</i>	<i>R94 500</i>	<i>R945 000</i>	<i>R9 450 000</i>	<i>R94 500 000</i>

Support needed

The NSH programme requires annual funding, and our capacity to reach the thousands of students studying on empty stomachs depends on recurrent funding on an annual basis. Bona fide donations are tax deductible, and Section 18A certificates are issued in this regard. Both businesses and individuals receive Section 18A certificates for their donations.

Strides towards sustainability

For the NSH programme to be sustainable, the following actions will be pursued:

- Securing multi-year funding system (three years) from donors
- Continuing to involve UFS staff members, encouraging them to make long-term debit order commitments
- Encouraging graduates of the NSH programme to contribute to the programme once they are employed
- Finding a larger pool of donors
- Locating a broader spectrum of donors, beyond those providing financial support
- Identifying NSH ambassadors nationally and internationally



Our supporters

- Absa Bank Ltd (UFS Student Bureau)
- Actuarial Society of South Africa
- Adcock Ingram Healthcare (Pty) Ltd
- African Infrastructure Investment Managers
- Allan Gray
- Archbishop TC Makgoba Development Trust
- BlackBark Productions
- Bowman Gilfillan
- Canon Collins Educational and Legal Assistance Trust
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- Capitalworks Investment Partners (Pty) Ltd
- Cell C (Pty) Ltd
- Central Applications Office NP
- Coca-Cola Fortune (Pty) Ltd
- Community Chest of the Western Cape
- Coronation Asset Management
- Deloitte and Touche Finance Company (Pty) Ltd
- Denel Group
- Drs Kritzingner, Spershott and Joubert
- E'tsho Civils (Pty) Ltd
- Empact Group (Pty) Ltd (Compass Group Southern Africa)
- Exxaro Chairman's Fund
- Famous Faces
- FARMOVS (Pty) Ltd
- FS SA Neurodevelopmental Therapy Association
- Industrial Development Corporation
- International Pre-University College
- Investec Bank Ltd
- IQbusiness (Pty) Ltd
- Prof Jonathan Jansen
- Lorenzo and Stella Chiappini Trust
- Master Builders SA
- Moshal Scholarship programme
- MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet
- Nature and Business Alliance Africa (Pty) Ltd
- Nedbank Bloemfontein
- Norton Rose Fulbright



- PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc (Bloemfontein)
- Public Servants Association (PSA) – Free State
- RB Hagart Trust
- Roche Products (Pty) Ltd
- Rootstock Investment Management
- Sanlam Investment Management (Pty) Ltd
- Kloppers
- Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychology of SA
- South African Graduate Employers Association
- South African Property Owners Association
- Southern African Venture Capital and Private Equity Association
- Standard Bank of South Africa Ltd
- Sue Celken Family Trust
- The Carl and Emily Fuchs Foundation
- The Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation
- The Stella and Paul Loewenstein Charitable Trust
- Carin Thirion
- Tiger Brands Ltd
- Vodacom (Pty) Ltd
- Volkswagen of South Africa (Pty) Ltd
- Wartenweiler Trust c/o Nedbank Private Wealth
- Witherow Trust
- Yad Mordechai Charitable Trust
- UFS staff and students

Banking details

ABSA

SWIFT Code: **ABSAZAJJ** Account holder: **UFS**
 Branch code: **632005** Account no: **1570850721**

Ref: **NSH and Surname / Company name**

Please provide your transaction details so that we can keep in touch and ensure that you receive your Section 18A certificate:

E: visagiea@ufs.ac.za | E: KlaasDN@ufs.ac.za

The success of the programme

Testimonies of some of our NSH programme food beneficiaries.

Kananelo Motaung



“I am a first-year student, busy with the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery. The monthly food allowance that I received from the NSH programme helped me a great deal.”

“Although I applied for several bursaries, all my applications were unsuccessful. When the year started, I had no form of financial aid. Fortunately, I started receiving assistance from the NSH programme, and I was able to concentrate on my studies, not having to worry about finances.”

“One day when I am a qualified medical doctor, specialising in cardiothoracic surgery, I would like to pay it forward and return the help that I received through the NSH programme to students who are in the same situation as me. They can then pursue their dreams without being troubled about financial problems.”



Zanele Dhlamini



“Growing up in a Third World country means that it is impossible for one to be blind to the harsh realities of life. Having a first-hand perspective of poverty and disease existing as co-dependents led me to create my own destiny, one where I am studying to practise medicine.”

“I chose this path, studying the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, to help others to access quality medical care.

“I imagine a career that will not only allow me to advance in this field, but where I will be working to improve the lives of others. I hope to become the ‘hero I wish I had’ in the lives of others.”

“Assistance from the NSH programmes came at just the right time. Financing my own studies, I needed to choose between paying my tuition fees or leaving my studies altogether to meet my basic needs.”

“Besides not having to be concerned about finances for food, the assistance that I received from the programme contributed to my mental and emotional health, as I did not have to stress about my next meal.”



Nomahlubi Mabija



“Nutrition is a critical part of our health and development. I believe that it has an indirect effect on our academic achievement. The lack of proper nutrition can make us ill over time, causing us to miss class.”

“Doing my final year in Sign Language and Linguistics, it was important for me to not only attend class, but to also excel academically. Being a food beneficiary of the NSH programme has made this possible.”

“My vision for the future? You are definitely looking at the future Doctor Nomahlubi Mabija. I’m planning to continue with my postgraduate studies, working towards being a speech language pathologist and a disabilities specialist.”

“As a human rights activist, I am also very passionate about improving the standard of living of people, especially deaf and disabled persons. I would like to change the way that they are excluded and devalued in South Africa.”





Contact us

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