



Evaluating the effects of Voluntary Food Handler training

Independent research commissioned by
the Tiger Brands Foundation and conducted
by Resilience Analysis Consulting



The in-school nutrition programme is undertaken by the Tiger Brands Foundation (TBF) in public-private partnerships with the Department of Basic Education and supporting private sector clients of the TBF across South Africa.

This research summary is published by the TBF in the interests of best practice knowledge-sharing and with an understanding of the importance of fact-based research in the furtherance of effective in-school nutrition strategies.

The original full report, which includes detailed methodology, study participant breakdowns, individual case studies, and detailed recommendations, can be downloaded below.



Growing Together

The Tiger Brands Foundation (TBF) has developed and undertaken a complex in-school nutrition programme at selected sites across our country since 2011. This has seen more than 164 million meals served at under-resourced schools.

The TBF's work is undertaken in close collaboration with the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) of the Department of Basic Education and involves communities, emerging suppliers, schools, social investors, and parents in 96 locales.

It is thus a project of many moving parts, one of the most important of which is the programme's necessary reliance on the dedication, professionalism, care and effectiveness of Voluntary Food Handlers (VFH) drawn from local communities.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of TBF work allows us to track the programme's performance and influence, from food procurement, distribution and storage, to preparation and hygiene. This includes independent studies commissioned from time-to-time by the TBF and that are shared publicly on our website, in both long and short forms, in a spirit of accountability and cross-societal collaboration.

This publication gives a brief overview of a study into the impact of training provided to VFHs, both as it affects their personal lives and broader society. This training started in 2017 and included 448 trainees by 2019. The study was undertaken by Resilience Analysis Consulting.

We trust that its insights, findings and recommendations will assist us and others to greater achievements in nourishing young growing minds.

Eugene Absolom

Director: Tiger Brands Foundation



Voluntary Food Handler training

An essential part of the TBF's in-school nutritional programme is the SA Qualifications Authority accredited training of VFHs. Undertaken on behalf of the TBF by Eliopax Development Services since 2017, this upskilling aims "to capacitate VFHs with skills to carry out their immediate responsibilities of ensuring that learners are fed nutritious meals that have been prepared according to prescribed safety and hygiene standards".

The training also works to ensure uniformity in VFH efficiencies and effectiveness. Lastly, this training aims to increase the overall employability (including through a transfer of entrepreneurial skills) to VFHs over the longer term.



Key Findings

- The training's components and approach were found to be relevant to the needs of the NSNP, schools, the TBF and VFHs themselves, with its effectiveness lasting for more than five years. It was also sensitive to local political and socio-economic realities of differing training sites.
- The programme is coherent in its support of in-school nutrition effectiveness and synergised with supporting better learning opportunities and outcomes.
- The training was delivered on time and was cost-effective when its positive outcomes are considered. Scaling this training would likely lead to significant gains in economic efficiencies.

A significant proportion of stakeholders reported positive behavioural benefits associated with the training. These included:

- Improved understanding of nutrition, food groups and how different foods affect health
- Appreciation of hygiene and safety protocols
- Understanding of nutritionally most advantageous ways of food preparation
- Improved food presentation, the need for tastiness, preparation of meals at the correct temperature and on time
- Greater knowledge of stock management
- Improvements in personal budgeting and planning
- The need for inter-personal ethical practices when working with colleagues
- How best to guide children during mealtimes; and
- How to identify strength, assets and opportunities across individuals, groups, the environment and in the broader community.

Next step options

The research teases out ways forward that could be considered to enhance current VFH training. These could include:

- Enhancing knowledge of income-generating and individual and group business skills – things highly valued by trainees
- Deepening training in counselling skills for VFHs in their interactions with children
- Undertaking repeat training of VFHs, perhaps annually
- Moving more of the training to being on-site at schools
- Expanding the training’s stakeholder universe to better anchor an already much-improved teacher appreciation of the educational importance of properly managed in-school nutritional programmes
- Continuing and extending the TBF’s practice of commissioning and sharing independent research and relevant best-practice learnings across relevant stakeholders
- Exploring practical ways to encourage a significant scaling of VFH training across SA schools. This could include “train the trainer” approaches; and
- Investigating training and related certification that assist VFHs to access employment options on completion of their standard two-year VFH duties that are part of the broader NSNP.



From Voluntary Food Handler to business owner

My name is Nomakhosi Damana. During my five years as Voluntary Food Handler and cook in a Western Cape school, I received VFH training from the Tiger Brands Foundation.

This training changed my relationship with food preparation. First and foremost was the knowledge I gained in practices of safety, hygiene, and how ensure that meals are nutritional as well as tasty.

The TBF training certification helped me to get a job as a cook at Spar and later to start my own business. This business sells cooked meals and fat cakes to school teachers and learners and also to municipal workers and other community members.

Our main meals mostly consist of steamed bread, rice, chicken, and vegetables while our fat cakes have fillings of liver, burger patties or mince.

My daughter has joined me in my business and has also benefitted from the training I received from the TBF. Our business has been going from strength to strength!



Martin's passion for nutrition

My name is Martin Dlamini, and this is the story of in-school nutrition training that ultimately led to me becoming the TBF's Regional Coordinator for Limpopo province.

My journey started a decade ago when I began work as a school data capturer and later principal's personal assistant. I was interested in nutrition from the start and was appointed by the school to administer their feeding programme in an unpaid capacity. I had to ensure that learners were eating well, that the cooks were managing, and that personal protection equipment was being properly used.

In 2016 I met with the TBF and observed them implementing their School Breakfast Programme. Later I received formal training through the TBF and was also contracted by the Department of Basic Education to be an in-school nutrition monitor.

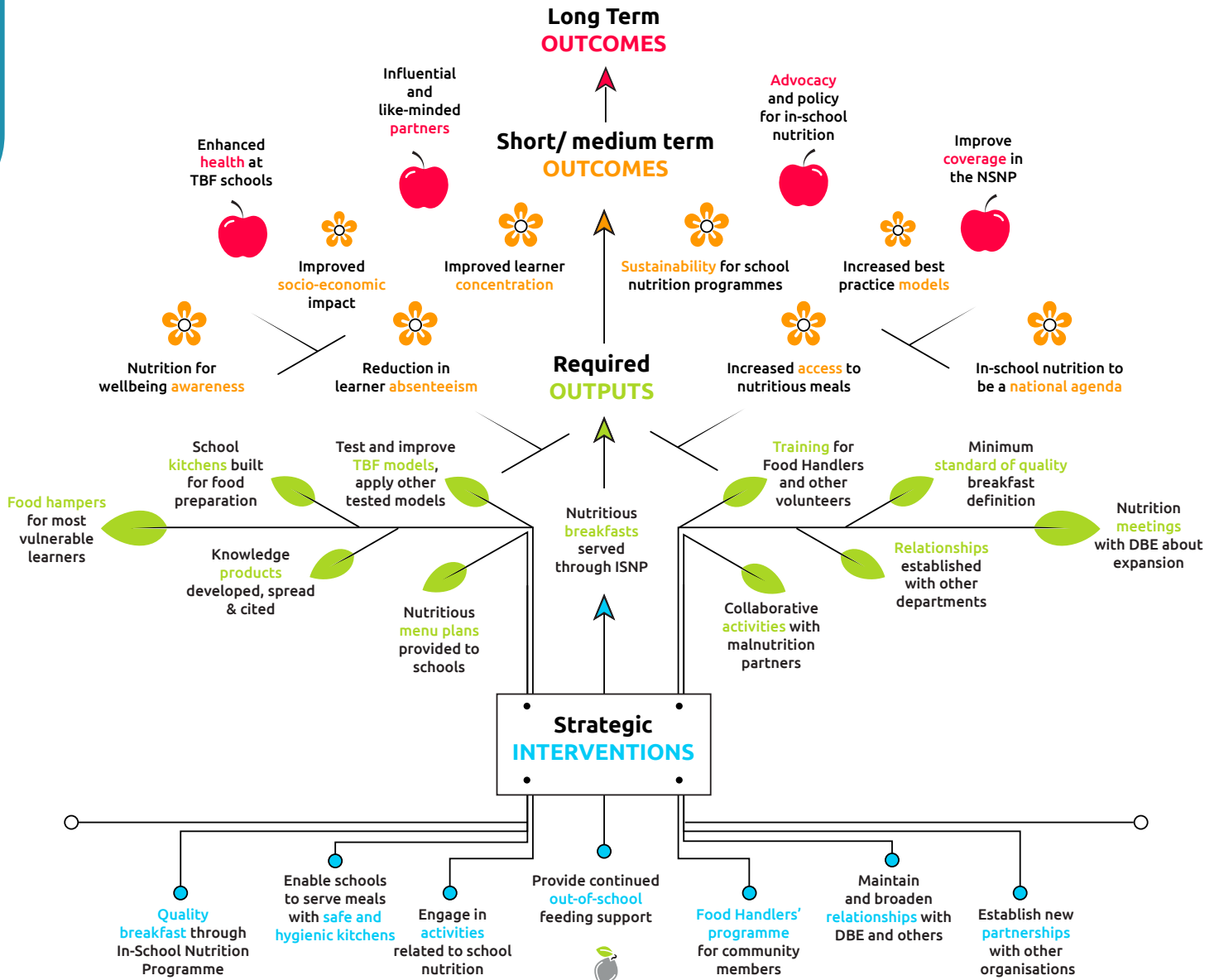
Again, I was checking for the correct use of equipment, seeing that food handlers signed registers on time, managed stock properly, had high standards of hygiene practice, that food preparation areas were clean, and that meals prepared were of a high quality.

Thanks to my experience gained through the TBF training and in working for years in school nutrition programmes, I was delighted to formally join the TBF in 2020 with responsibility for coordinating its projects in Limpopo.

It had all really kicked off with their training and certificate. Looking back, I had no idea what doors that would open for me. It wasn't just training but a "changing life experience". It has an ongoing positive impact on new Voluntary Food Handlers.



Tiger Brands Foundation Theory of Change



THE GOAL:

Improved nutrition, education, and well-being of vulnerable learners and communities



The long term outcome is to bear

FRUIT



Short term outcomes show as the

FLOWERS



The required outputs are the ever present

LEAVES



The strategic interventions embody the programme's

ROOTS



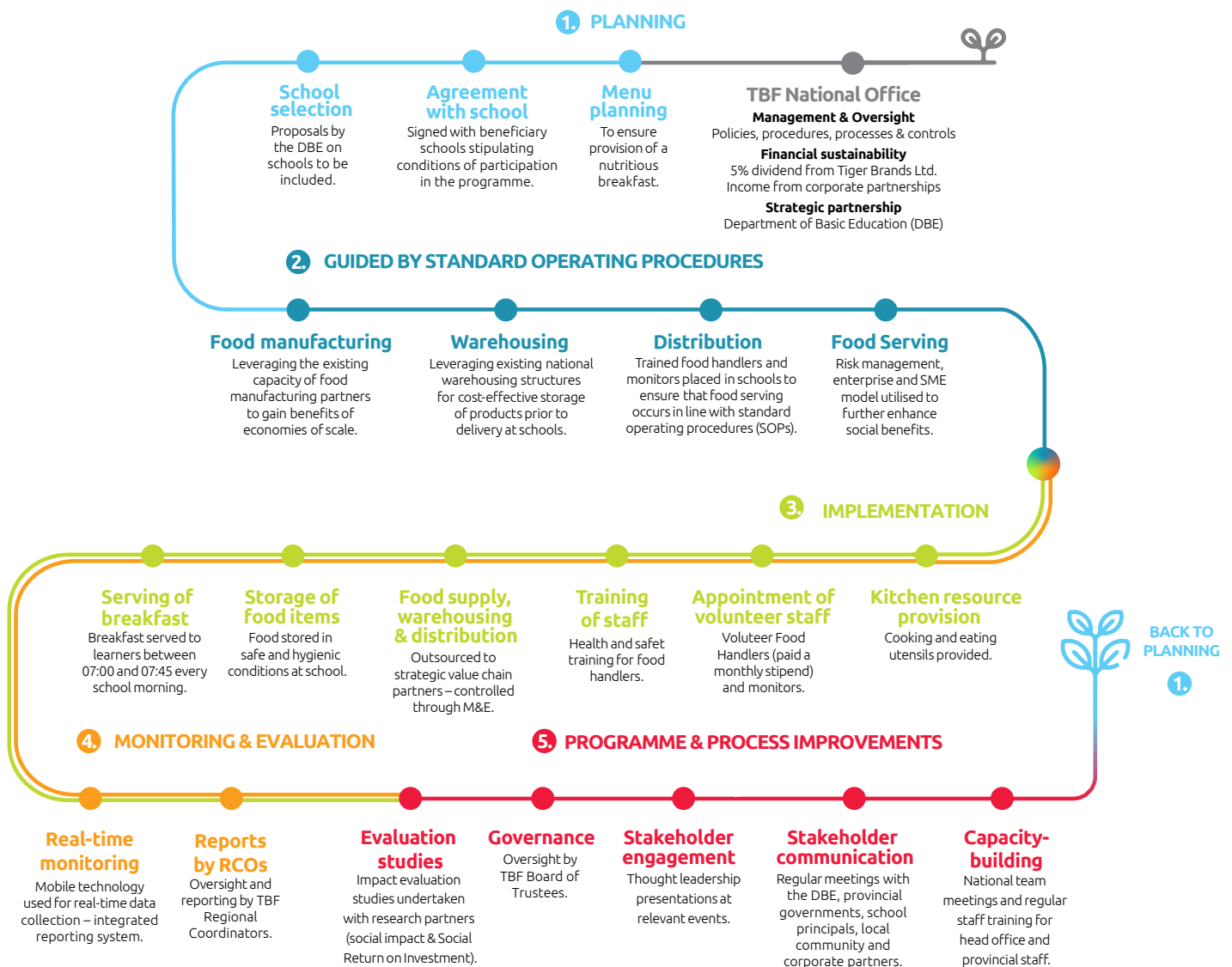
The goal produces SEEDS that start the process of more

TREES

Tiger Brands Foundation Operating Model

Policies and planning are carefully managed by the Foundation

Our multi-partner development model for implementation involves partners across the public and private sectors, including funders, suppliers, schools, and communities at 90+ sites in all provinces.



The full Resilience Analysis Consulting report is a free download

The TBF can also be contacted on foundation@tigerbrands.com