



# Sea to Sky Food Resiliency Project

## FINAL REPORT

December 2023

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**WCS** engagement  
+ planning

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# Acknowledgements

Thank you to all those who contributed their time and energy to the project on behalf of these organizations:

- Whistler Community Services Society
- Whistler Pemberton Newcomer Services
- Stewardship Pemberton
- Squamish Nation, Squamish Valley Operations, Garden Box Program
- Squamish Helping Hands Society
- Squamish Food Bank
- Squamish Climate Action Network (Squamish CAN)
- Southern Stl'at'imx Community Garden Program
- Sea to Sky Community Services Society, Pemberton Food Bank
- Rootdown Farms
- North Shore Emergency Management
- Nesters Whistler
- Lil'wat Nation Qwalimak Nlepcalten Farm
- Food Banks BC
- District of Squamish
- Resort Municipality of Whistler
- Squamish Lillooet Regional District
- Village of Pemberton
- Clarity Consults
- Upland Consulting

**WCS** engagement  
+ planning



The project was led by WCS Engagement + Planning. The Resort Municipality of Whistler sponsored the project. Project funding was provided by the BC Government's Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program, administered by the Union of BC Municipalities.

# Introduction

## What? Project and Report Overview

This Sea to Sky Food Resiliency Project aims to create more resilience in the regional social services food system that supports vulnerable populations in achieving food equity and food security. It was scoped and executed with direct input from Sea to Sky social services organizations (see the 'Who? Project Partners and Participants' section for the full list of those involved) and it builds on the strategies and actions from the [Sea to Sky Food Recovery Project](#).

### PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

Three focus areas were used to frame the project and are used to structure this document, and they address the important elements of the Sea to Sky food system as related to vulnerable populations.

#### ***Focus Area 1: Food Insecurity Root Causes***

This part of the project focused on understanding the root causes of and contributing factors to food insecurity in the region, such as disruptions to work caused by injury and illness, the roles of precarious housing, insecure work arrangements, escalating living costs, food access challenges, and the loss of lands and waters for traditional foods.

#### ***Focus Area 2: Food Supply Linkages and Infrastructure***

This focus area covered the supply linkages from regional sources of food directly to Food Distribution Organizations (FDOs) and the infrastructure (e.g., storage, processing, and transportation) needed to support these regional linkages. For this project, producers and processors were included as primary sources, and restaurants and retailers were excluded as these food recovery sources were the focus of the Food Recovery Project.

#### ***Focus Area 3: Food Equity During Emergencies***

This area focused on the need for an equitable food response during times of emergency to support people with pre-existing social vulnerabilities.

### FOCUS AREA CONTENT

Each of the three focus area sections includes the core content listed below along with additional clarification and context related to the scope for each area.

#### ***Framework***

For each focus area, a framework is used to identify the elements needed for success. The elements were then used to guide the assessment and recommendation development phases, grounding each focus area by helping to ensure nothing was missed (i.e., ensuring the information gathered and recommendations made were comprehensive, covering not only what was known, but also gaps in the 'ideal system' that might not have been known).

#### ***Assessment Key Findings***

Key findings are presented as a summary of the assessment of the current situation in the Sea to Sky that was conducted through online/secondary research and stakeholder engagement. More information about the research and engagement for each focus area is included in the section below (see "How? Project Methodology").

#### ***Recommendations***

Based on the Sea to Sky assessment, recommendations emerged for how to improve each focus area. The recommendations cover a range of initiatives from program and policy development to further research and planning.

# Why? Project Rationale

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Sea to Sky Food Recovery Project (undertaken in 2020-2021) identified strategies and actions to address food waste, recovery, and redistribution in the corridor. When the Sea to Sky FDOs were convened at the end of that project to discuss how to advance action implementation (beyond what had already been accomplished), the need to focus more upstream was identified. Through a series of conversations and iterations with them, the project's focus areas (listed above) were developed as the areas most in need of attention in the corridor when it comes to addressing food security.

## GENERAL CONTEXT

Food insecurity, defined as the lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life, is a pressing issue that affects millions of people worldwide. It is closely linked with poverty, as individuals and families with low income often struggle to afford nutritious food.

Poverty and food insecurity can have profound impacts on community wellbeing. They can lead to malnutrition, which in turn can cause a range of health problems, including developmental issues in children, weakened immune systems, and increased susceptibility to diseases. These health issues can prevent individuals from fully participating in community life, leading to social isolation and decreased quality of life. Moreover, food insecurity and poverty can create a cycle of disadvantage. Children who grow up in food-insecure households may struggle to concentrate and perform well at school, limiting their future employment prospects and perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

Addressing these issues is therefore crucial for promoting community wellbeing. By ensuring that all members of the community have access to nutritious food, we can improve health outcomes, promote social inclusion, and break the cycle of poverty. This requires a multi-faceted approach that includes increasing the availability of affordable healthy food, affordable housing, good employment opportunities, living wages, income support, and investing in education and job training programs.

Emergency situations further exacerbate food insecurity for vulnerable populations, and planning for and responding to emergencies in a way that addresses basic needs equitably is critical. This has been an area that has been lacking in provincial emergency management programs that are executed at the local level, as evidenced by the BC Ombudsperson's October 2023 report, "Fairness in a changing climate: Ensuring disaster supports are accessible, equitable and adaptable."

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

On account of the pandemic and escalating costs of food and living, demand for food bank services has been growing, and the demand increases during times of emergency.

Food insecurity impacts many people throughout the region. The root causes of food insecurity include economic factors, emergencies, and physical and contributing factors such as disruptions to work caused by injury and illness, precarious housing, insecure work arrangements, escalating living costs, the loss of lands and waters for traditional foods as well as others. Shifting the societal structures and addressing underlying issues resulting in food insecurity can seem overwhelming, however without doing so, food insecurity will persist.

While we wait for societal structures to shift, services to support vulnerable populations are needed. Fortunately, the Sea to Sky region has strong social service organizations, food banks<sup>1</sup> and regional food sources. Strengthening the resiliency of the food system that serves vulnerable populations is especially important given that the food system is always at risk due to chronic challenges such as funding and acute challenges such as emergencies, with the COVID-19 pandemic being the most recent example affecting the region.

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<sup>1</sup>Food banks (some of which are in the form of a market and referred to as food markets) are one of many types of organizations and programs that use donated food to feed hungry people, support healthier eating, build community capacity, educate and train people, or help maintain cultural eating practices. In the Sea to Sky region and when referenced in this report, FDOs are synonymous with the three food banks/markets, located in Squamish, Whistler and Pemberton.

# Who? Project Participation

The project was led by WCS Engagement + Planning with funding from the BC Government’s Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program administered by the Union of BC Municipalities. The Resort Municipality of Whistler sponsored the project and the District of Squamish, Village of Pemberton and the Squamish Lillooet Regional District supported the funding application. Upland Consulting and Clarity Community Consults assisted WCS with focus area two and three respectively.

Whistler Community Services Society and Sea to Sky Community Services helped to guide the project from start to finish, and representatives of the organizations/groups below participated in interviews and provided invaluable information related to the project focus areas.

Further, 44 FDO clients shared their experiences living with food insecurity. See Appendix C for more about this engagement.

## Thank you to everyone who gave their time and energy to the project.

*Honouraria were provided to the non-profit and Indigenous community organizations that contributed by way of staff time.*

Focus Area 1: Food Insecurity	Focus Area 2: Food Supply Linkages and Infrastructure	Focus Area 3: Emergency Food Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistler Community Services Society</li> <li>• Sea to Sky Community Services Society, Pemberton Food Bank</li> <li>• Squamish Helping Hands Society</li> <li>• Lil’wat Nation Qwalimak Nlepcalten Farm</li> <li>• Squamish Nation, Squamish Valley Operations, Garden Box Program</li> <li>• Whistler Pemberton Newcomer Services</li> <li>• Nesters Grocer - Whistler</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistler Community Services Society, Whistler Food Bank</li> <li>• Sea to Sky Community Services Society, Pemberton Food Bank</li> <li>• Squamish Food Bank</li> <li>• Lil’wat Nation Qwalimak Nlepcalten Farm</li> <li>• Rootdown Farms</li> <li>• District of Squamish</li> <li>• Southern St’atl’imx Community Garden Program</li> <li>• Stewardship Pemberton</li> <li>• Squamish Climate Action Network (Squamish CAN)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistler Community Services Society, Whistler Food Bank</li> <li>• Sea to Sky Community Services Society, Pemberton Food Bank</li> <li>• Squamish Food Bank</li> <li>• Resort Municipality of Whistler emergency management staff</li> <li>• Squamish Lillooet Regional District emergency management staff</li> <li>• Village of Pemberton emergency management staff</li> <li>• District of Squamish emergency management staff</li> <li>• North Shore Emergency Management</li> <li>• Clarity Consults</li> <li>• Food Banks BC</li> </ul>

# How? Project Methodology

## PHASE 1: DETAILED PROJECT PLANNING

The project began with detailed project planning, involving key partner organizations and the experts needed to inform project scoping and execution through phase two and three. This phase involved meetings between the project team (WCS Engagement + Planning, Upland Consulting and Clarity Consults) and with the support of the project sponsor (the RMOW) developed the detailed assessment/research plan and engagement strategy. It also included establishing frameworks to define success for each focus area. The frameworks were then used to guide the assessment and recommendation phases, grounding each focus area by helping to ensure nothing was missed (i.e., ensuring the information gathered and recommendations made were comprehensive, covering not only what was known, but also gaps in the 'ideal system' that might not have been known).

## PHASE 2: ASSESSMENT

Phase two involved research and engagement activities to understand the current situation in the Sea to Sky for each of the focus areas according to the frameworks. Stakeholder engagement was primarily in the form of interviews and the research was secondary only, conducted online. The key findings presented in the next sections are the outcome of this phase.

## PHASE 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the assessment, initial recommendations emerged for how to advance each focus area according to the elements of the framework. The recommendations were presented to the stakeholders for each focus area and their feedback was incorporated into the final version contained herein. The recommendations cover a range of initiatives from program and policy development to further research and planning.





# Focus Area 1: Food Insecurity Root Causes

## Introduction

Food insecurity generally encompasses challenges with the acquisition of enough of the right dietary foods and challenges accessing foods that meet preferences and that are socially acceptable. Food insecurity is a daily reality for many throughout the Sea to Sky (S2S) region, though trying to understand the prevalence and therefore the causes of food insecurity is challenging. Even though there are a myriad of factors contributing to food insecurity, most of the standardized time series methods for measuring the prevalence of food insecurity focus on economic causes. While economic causes are used to help set the context for the prevalence of food insecurity in the Sea to Sky region, this shortcoming is addressed throughout this section as other factors contributing to food insecurity are explored.

Based on economic factors alone, food insecurity is an issue for 1/6 of the population in Canada. In Canada (2021), 16% of the population is food insecure due to income or food costs. It is also an issue in British Columbia (BC) where food insecurity increased 57% between 2019 and 2023 ([Food Banks Canada, 2023](#)). In 2021, 17% of BC's population was food insecure due to lack of income and/or high food costs with 12% having moderate or severe food insecurity. In 2018, the total figure was 13%, with 9% falling in the moderate or severe food insecure category.<sup>2</sup>

Likewise, food insecurity on this basis, is a problem in the S2S with 7% of the population monitored by the North Shore/Coast Garibaldi (NSCG) health region reporting insecurity (2021).

In addition to these figures, local FDOs indicate that food bank use has increased significantly since 2018 with an apparent shift from acute food insecurity, (e.g., temporary loss of income and food-related access due to an injury) to more chronic/ongoing forms of food insecurity. Though the low-income rate dropped from 2016, the low-income figures from the 2021 Census suggest 1,680<sup>3</sup> or 4,200<sup>4</sup> SLRD residents (depending on the measure used) live in a low-income situation, which is likely exacerbated by escalating food costs. To illustrate this, the NSCG health region has the second highest food basket price in the province estimated at \$1,379/month for a family compared to \$1,287 in the City of Vancouver and \$1,179 in the City of Richmond (2022).

In addition to income and food costs, other factors that contribute to food insecurity that this assessment explored, include, but are not limited to, physical proximity and access to food locations, access to cultural or traditional foods, access to foods in emergency and non-emergency times, and temporary access issues. Bringing these into the assessment offers a much richer understanding of the causes of food insecurity and solutions.

<sup>2</sup>Data Source: Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) 2017-2018  
Measurement: Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM)

<sup>3</sup>In low income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after tax (LICO-AT)

<sup>4</sup>In low income based on the Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT)



# Context

An overview of the current context related to food insecurity at the national, provincial, and regional level is provided in the table below.

Extent of Food Insecurity	
Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food insecurity due to economic factors is a problem in Canada.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ One sixth of the Canadian population was food insecure in 2021.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Data on other insecurity causes is limited and FDO activity numbers while helpful, under-represent the extent of food insecurity.</li> </ul>
British Columbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food insecurity due to economic factors is a problem in BC.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Food insecurity increased between 2018 and 2021 in BC. In 2021, 17% of the population was food insecure due to low income or high food costs, 11.6% of whom were in the moderate or severe category. In 2018<sup>5</sup> the total figure was 13%, with 9% of residents experiencing moderate or severe food insecurity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Food insecurity due to the unavailability of Traditional foods is a problem in BC.<sup>6</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Traditional foods, plants and animals harvested from the land and sea around them, are vital to Indigenous peoples as they foster a reconnection to land, medicine, and culture (<a href="#">BC Government, 2023</a>). 69% of First Nations adults and 71% of First Nations children have eaten traditional foods in the past year.</li> <li>◦ 47% of First Nations adults said they had run out of traditional foods before they could replenish their supplies.</li> <li>◦ 77% First Nations adults would like to serve traditional foods more often than they are able to currently.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Data on other insecurity causes is limited and FDO activity numbers while helpful, under-represent the extent of food insecurity.</li> </ul>
Sea to Sky	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food insecurity due to economic factors exists in the North Shore/Coast Garibaldi Health (NSCG) Region, although its prevalence likely varies between communities.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ 7% are considered food insecure in the NSCG Region compared to 13% in BC (2018).<sup>7</sup></li> <li>◦ Local FDOs indicate results (based on food bank use) have increased since 2018. The type of food bank use has also shifted from acute food insecurity, (e.g., temporary loss of income and food –related access due to an injury) to more chronic forms of food instability (e.g., chronic lack of employment, or lack of wages for the cost of living).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Food insecurity is a significant challenge in the Sea to Sky.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Applying the NSCG average to the SLRD population results in 3,585 people who are food insecure to some degree.</li> <li>◦ Personal concern for food security existed with 8% of NSCG health survey participants in 2021, which translates to 4,191 people in the SLRD.</li> <li>◦ In 2022, Whistler’s FDO had 1,676 estimated unique client visits, serving a total of 4,019 individuals.</li> <li>◦ In that same year Whistler Food Bank provided roughly 350 servings a day to 1,330 students in Whistler: that’s an average of 70,000 servings each year during the past two calendar years (2021/22).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Low income is a precursor to food insecurity and is a significant challenge in the Sea to Sky.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Low-income figures from the 2021 Census indicate that there are between 1,680 or 4,200<sup>8</sup> residents (depending on the measure used) in the SLRD experiencing low income.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup>Data Source: Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) 2017-2018 Measurement: Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM)  
<sup>6</sup>The BC Provincial Results of the 2015-2017 First Nations Regional Health Survey

<sup>7</sup>Provided from BCCDC and VCH specifically for this project. BC Centre for Disease Control. (Pending publication). Priority Health Indicators for British Columbia: Household Food Insecurity Update Report. Vancouver, B.C.: BC Centre for Disease Control, Population Public Health.  
<sup>8</sup>In low income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after tax (LICO-AT) or In low income based on the Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT)

# Framework

There are three main dimensions or underpinning causes of food (in)security in the United Nations Framework for Food and Agriculture Organizations as presented below. Within each underpinning cause, there are several factors at play that are also listed below. The framework shown below provides the structure for the findings and recommendations presented in the next section.

## UNDERPINNING CAUSES OF FOOD INSECURITY

- 1. ACCESS TO FOOD:** lack income, food costs, physical access barriers
- 2. ACCEPTABILITY OF FOOD:** cultural/traditional foods, lacking nutritional foods, or inability to store/cook.
- 3. AVAILABILITY OF FOOD:** regionwide disruptions to market, traditional or FDO supply chains

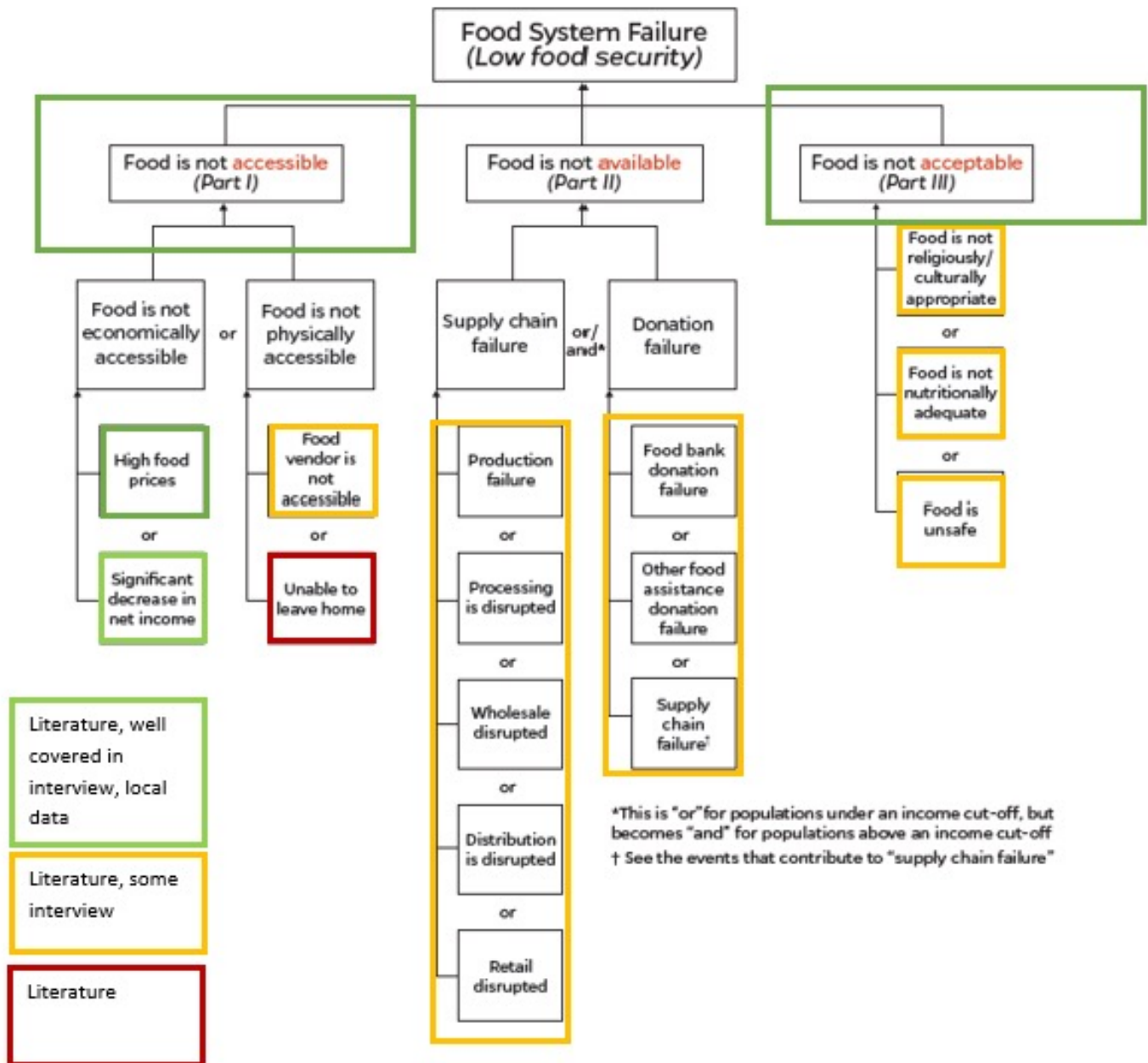
Each underpinning cause includes a temporal element where food insecurity can be:

- chronic (persistent/ongoing),
- seasonal (e.g., occurs annually), or
- occasional (i.e., may occur depending on specific circumstances (e.g., economic downturn, low snow-fall year, drought affecting food supply, road closure).

**Note:** The scope of the 'access to food' dimension used here is broader than the scope of the accessibility category used in Appendix B which includes physical accessibility only. ) than the scope used in Focus Area 1 of this document; there, food accessibility also includes the income/economic factors, which are included in the affordability category here.



The diagram below, used in the Baltimore Food System Resilience Advisory Report (2017), expands on the UN root causes/dimensions of food insecurity, and was used to inform our research. The colour-coding below refers to the research methods we used (i.e., literature review, surveys, interviews) and the degree to which each one was completed in descending order from green to yellow to red (according to the legend in the lower left corner).



# Findings and Recommendations

This section presents the findings and related recommendations related to food insecurity in the Sea to Sky according to the framework presented in the previous section.

## ACCESS TO FOOD

### **Lack of Income**

A lack of or limited income is a major cause of chronic food insecurity throughout Canada and is a more prevalent issue with households with any one or combination of the following characteristics: Indigenous households, lone parents (predominantly female), renters and recent immigrants. As the cost of housing, transportation, energy, and other necessities rises, this further squeezes the income available for food.

- The prevalence of low income or food cost related food insecurity is four times higher among Indigenous households on-reserve than among non-Indigenous Canadian households (48% vs. 12%) and greater than the prevalence amongst off-reserve Indigenous households, which is 27%. (Tarasuk et al. 2019) (2018 data)
- Lone parent (2021) food insecurity is at 37%, and 29% of lone parents fall into the moderate or severe food insecurity categories.

More than ever, employed Canadians are making use of food banks.

- Despite the unemployment rate being at 5.3 per cent, “the lowest on record” since 1976<sup>4</sup>, food bank visits are the highest they have ever been.
- Use increased from 11% to 14% between 2021 and 2022.

### CHRONIC

### Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- In the S2S region, the primary income-related causes of food insecurity are lower or intermittent wages, lack of full-time employment, ongoing injury preventing work options, high living (housing) costs (especially Whistler).
- Those living in the Sea to Sky region who possess one or more of the food insecurity risk characteristics are at higher risk of experiencing food insecurity at some point in time.
  - Seasonal residents and immigrants more precarious work arrangements, high housing costs, supporting other family members.
  - Lone parents – single wage earner, higher household costs, lack of childcare impacts ability to work.
  - First Nations individuals – proximity and limited access to employment, generational trauma impacts.
  - Renters – higher living costs than owners relative to income.
  - Living alone – higher living costs than those sharing housing costs with others.
  - Arriving on a closed work permit<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Foodbanks Canada Report 2022

<sup>10</sup>A closed or employer specific work permit is issued to a foreign worker to work in a specific position and for a specific employer that is listed on the Labour Market Impact Assessment LMIA.

- Risk factors that append the characteristics above are experienced unevenly throughout the Sea to Sky population. The Whistler population reflects higher (measurable) risk factors related to income, housing costs, part-time work than the other large municipalities<sup>11</sup>
  - 22% of families with children in the SLRD are one parent families (1,625, of which 1,180 are female led); Whistler 20%, Squamish 19%, compared to 27% for BC.
  - The prevalence of low income based on the low-income cut-offs, after tax (LICO-AT)<sup>12</sup> is 4% and pertains to 1,680 people. The provincial rate is 6% for comparison. Whistler (5%) – 625, Squamish-725 (3%), Pemberton (3%) - 100, Lillooet - 105 (4%)
  - The prevalence of relative low income based on low-income measures, after tax is 9% which pertains to 4,195 people in the region. Whistler 7%, 910; Squamish 6%, 1480; Pemberton 6%, 200; Lillooet 16%, 265.
  - 53% in the SLRD, (Low of 45% in Squamish to a high of 62% in Whistler) of those working worked part year or part time compared to the province at 50%.
  - 65% in the SLRD own homes, (low of Whistler 56% and high of Squamish 70%) compared to 67% in the province.
  - 20% (1,655) of Whistler households are spending 30% or more of income on shelter costs, 22% (4,500) SLRD and 22% for the province.
  - First Nations members comprise 10% of the SLRD population base, and where reported, the incomes of First Nations members/households are lower compared to the average incomes of the overall SLRD (2016 Census)
  - 66 positions were approved for closed work permits in the first quarter of 2023, and 172 in the last quarter of 2022<sup>13</sup>

## CHRONIC

## Recommendations

1. Advocate for a minimum income floor regardless of work income (Federal work has started on seniors/families. It is needed for those with disabilities and unattached singles as well).
2. Better understand the perspectives of local businesses and their temporary foreign workers regarding closed work permit issues that potentially make these workers vulnerable.
3. Update the RMOW living wage report and promote it broadly
4. Expand the living wage concept to a regional (by community) living wage report and model.
5. Include non-Canadian residents (including temporary foreign workers) in secure/affordable housing programs.
6. Continue housing affordability programs and add more social housing to the mix of affordable housing.
7. Ensure temporary secure housing is available for those losing housing tied to employment.
8. Continue funding local transit and identify solutions to fund regional transit.
9. Access funding from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to support financing or low-cost loans for home energy improvements/cost savings for those with lower incomes.
10. Continue to build childcare spaces and support housing for childcare workers to allow for parents/guardians to take part in the workforce and generate additional household income.

<sup>11</sup>2021 Census data

<sup>12</sup>Low-income cut-off (LICO) - An income threshold below which a family will devote a much larger share of its income than the average family on the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing - set by community size. Low-income measure (LIM) - An income threshold substantially below what is typical in society across the country.

<sup>13</sup>Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP): Positive Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) Employers List - 2023

<b>SEASONAL</b>	<b>Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings</b>
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- Seasonal work supply fluctuates especially in Whistler for those working in Whistler and living in Pemberton or Squamish and results in lack of income due to early arrival for housing but no work availability.
  - Trends toward earlier arrival without jobs to look for housing. Lack of a job increases the need for food assistance.

<b>SEASONAL</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
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11. Create job matching programs for recent arrivals so they can begin to generate an income.
12. Continue to inform new seasonal workers to be prepared with adequate accommodation and funds prior to arrival.
13. Provide short-term rental housing options for early arrivals.

<b>OCCASIONAL</b>	<b>Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings</b>
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- There are several unexpected incidents contributing to a loss of employment income over the short-term for Sea to Sky residents.
  - Short-term injuries or emergencies (e.g., major pandemic, instability in air travel system, highway closures), which can lead to unexpected loss of employment or work hours and associated income.
  - Whistler/Pemberton - slow ski hill start up due to periodic (not seasonal) weather challenges in winter or summer can lead to fewer work hours and less income.
  - Whistler - Arrival period in the community - Whistler Food Bank overly represented by those living in the community less than 1 year, due to lack of income/living cost issues.

<b>OCCASIONAL</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
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14. Create job matching programs for recent arrivals so they can begin to generate an income right away.
15. Provide short-term rental housing options for early arrivals.
16. Develop enough housing so that staff are not dependent on housing from their immediate employer.

## Food Costs

Food costs have been rising in Canada faster than other groups of goods according to Statistics Canada's Consumer Price Index data.

2022	2023
\$100 of food then	now costs \$183
\$100 of shelter then	now costs \$170
\$100 of clothing then	now costs \$98

### CHRONIC Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- Food costs are higher in the Sea to Sky region than neighbouring metro areas.
  - NSCG health region has the second highest food basket in the province at \$1,379/month for a reference family vs. \$1,287 in the City of Vancouver and \$1,179 in the City of Richmond (2022).
  - Whistler Food Basket comparisons in the past show a 10% premium for lowest cost non-sale items (2018). Comparisons are not available for other communities as they have not tracked it.
  - Distance from distributors and less buying power generates higher food costs as smaller grocers such as Xit'olacw Tsipun.
  - Staffing due to the general cost of living and housing as well as low economies of scale are some regional factors impacting prices.

### CHRONIC Recommendations

17. Establish bulk retail purchasing opportunities combined with a small premium to fund food banks/markets.

### SEASONAL Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- Food costs especially for fruits and vegetables increase in the winter months.

### SEASONAL Recommendations

18. Employer provided affordable food options

### OCCASIONAL Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- Short term inflation especially for food, has led to the cost of food has increasing faster than that of other goods.
  - In the past year, food prices in BC rose 8.3% (9.1% from grocery stores, 6.4% restaurants), especially poultry, bakery/wheat, frozen vegetables, and oils. This is after a 9.5% increase in the previous calendar year period (Dec 21-Dec 22) and 11% for grocer items.
  - Staffing costs due to the unexpected recent rise in the cost of living as well as low economies of scale due to being a smaller regional market are some regional factors impacting prices for foods.
- Unexpected and short-term emergencies which limit food supplies and push up prices e.g., pandemic, highway closures

### OCCASIONAL Recommendations

19. Employer provided more affordable food options.
20. Advocate for short-term income assistance from other levels of government
21. See recommendations related to emergency times – Focus Area 3.

## Physical Access Barriers

CHRONIC	Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a lack of full-service food stores or FDOs in proximity to all or most homes in some suburban areas, which increases the costs or time required to access food.</li><li>• There is a lack of public or active transportation routes in some neighbourhoods which makes it more expensive and less convenient for accessing food or a variety of food shopping options.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Lack of regional transportation to access more food choices and shopping around is a privilege to those with vehicles and time.</li><li>◦ FDO locations are more limited than retail grocers.</li><li>◦ FDO locations limited hours and locations requiring transit from lower cost housing.</li><li>◦ Squamish – Lack of low-cost transportation to various grocers in the community.</li><li>◦ Stigma related to using FDOs, although it is less than pre-COVID due to lived experiences.</li><li>◦ Whistler- Crowded homes and a lack of storage infrastructure and/or space/appliances to cook or eat.</li><li>◦ First Nations – Distance from market grocer foods and a lack of lower cost public transportation. Especially impacting residents toward Darcy (N’Quatqua First Nation) and Lillooet Lake (Xa’xtsa (Douglas), Samahquam, Skatin First Nations).</li></ul></li><li>• Risk factors related to physical access exist in the Sea to Sky region but vary across the Sea to Sky communities.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ 6% of the population in the SLRD is living in housing that is not suitable in size (8.6% in Whistler as the highest and 4.8% in Squamish as the lowest of the three municipalities.</li><li>◦ Only 57% in Whistler are in acceptable housing (the lowest percentage of the three larger SLRD municipalities) compared to 65% for SLRD and 67% for BC. Acceptable means that it is of a condition (not requiring major repairs), size (given the household mix), affordability (30% or less than household income) for the household.</li></ul></li></ul>
CHRONIC	Recommendations
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>22. Create more flexibility and encouragement in zoning to allow for food retail closer to where people live.</li><li>23. Continue to advocate for transportation options to and from remote communities.</li><li>24. Continue to advocate to the province for regional transit funding options.</li><li>25. Provide programs to increase food storage capacity at homes with capacity limitations (e.g., second refrigerators and free delivery from thrift stores like the Re-Build-It Centre)</li></ol>
SEASONAL	Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Winter road conditions in general and seasonal flooding on rural roads make it more challenging to travel for food or for delivery services.</li></ul>
SEASONAL	Recommendations
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>26. Continue to enhance the quality of regional roads as well as seasonal maintenance.</li></ol>



**OCCASIONAL****Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings**

- There are several unexpected short-term natural or health related incidents contributing to a loss access to food stores in the Sea to Sky.
  - Winter road conditions lead to short-term road access closures that impact the physical access to grocers.
  - Emergencies/events shut off transportation access to food within a community (e.g., transit strike).
  - Health emergencies make it difficult to access stores e.g., transmissible illness - COVID.
  - Short-term disability related to an injury.

**OCCASIONAL****Recommendations**

27. See recommendations from other focus areas.
28. Co-develop or support Indigenous communities in developing emergency plans, inclusive of food reserves and rations for communities most likely to be impacted by supply chain issues, climate disasters, etc.

## ACCEPTABILITY OF FOOD

### **Lack of Culturally Appropriate and Traditional Foods**

In general, the security of acceptable culturally appropriate or traditional foods is not captured through Canada’s HFSSM food insecurity measurement tool. This lack of measurement is a deficiency in Canada’s insecurity measurement and therefore it is not possible to provide an overview of topic at the national or provincial level.

*While the term ‘cultural’ can refer to foods important to a person’s heritage, here it is used specifically for non-Indigenous cultures, and ‘traditional foods’ is used to refer to foods of importance to Indigenous people.*

There is a study of traditional food access for First Nations and it shows that a lack of access to traditional foods is the highest in BC compared to the rest of Canada. Access is challenged by a combination of the following factors: industrial activities and pollution; recreational activities; government regulations; climate change impacts; and availability of traditional food.<sup>14</sup>

<b>CHRONIC</b>	<b>Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing culturally important food can be challenging in the Sea to Sky               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Assistance food from FDOs may not always meet cultural or all health needs.</li> <li>◦ Low-cost foods accessible from grocers are not always the healthiest.</li> <li>◦ Lack of culturally appropriate foods at markets and distance to Vancouver (e.g., halal foods)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Access to traditional foods is increasingly more limited in the Sea to Sky               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Limited access to traditional foods from many external factors (e.g., resource extraction, habitat alteration, pollution, over harvesting in other areas, etc.) and some internal (e.g., skills, time, money)</li> <li>◦ Birkenhead Salmon Report: The impacts of climate change are already apparent in freshwater and are expected to increase in future decades, while the threat from habitat alteration, geomorphic processes and rapid human population growth remains significant.</li> <li>◦ Harvest impacts are due to troll fisheries in Alaska and the First Nations fisheries in the lower Fraser and Lillooet systems.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>CHRONIC</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<p>29. Continue to enhance the FDO market delivery model which helps to understand what foods people really need and desire from FDOs.</p> <p>30. Support regional efforts in First Nations community for <a href="#">food sovereignty</a> and <a href="#">security</a>.</p>
<b>SEASONAL</b>	<b>Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
<b>OCCASIONAL</b>	<b>Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>

<sup>14</sup>[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/climate-change/adaptation/indigenous/food\\_security\\_report\\_-\\_2023.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/climate-change/adaptation/indigenous/food_security_report_-_2023.pdf)

### **Enough Nutritious Food Distributed at the Household Level**

- A significant percentage of Canadians are not having 5+ servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Those with lower household income consume less healthy food.
- Health related food diseases such as diabetes is increasing.

<b>CHRONIC</b>	<b>Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Factors such as lack of income and food costs impact the ability to purchase enough food and nutritious food. Nutritious foods also tend to be more expensive. Food may not be distributed in a manner that allows all members of the household to have adequate food.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ FDO food programs which target children/youth at schools are well subscribed.</li><li>◦ Whistler Food bank has provided an average of 70,000 servings each year during the past two calendar years (2021/2022). Roughly 350 servings a day to 1,330 students.</li><li>◦ 10% of students in Pemberton schools are accessing food programs there due to a lack of food at home or a lack of nutritious food.</li></ul></li><li>• Evidence of risk factors indicate that youth, especially on reserve youth can have either food quantity or quality access challenges.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ 7% of youth in the NSCG Region indicated that they go to bed hungry sometimes or always. These same youth were more likely to also report not having any food at home to eat for breakfast.</li><li>◦ Most First Nations members in the SLRD live on reserve and the BC Adolescent Survey in 2013 found that Aboriginal students living on-reserve were more likely to consume pop, energy drinks and fast food than those living off-reserve. Students living on-reserve were also less likely to eat vegetables.</li></ul></li></ul>

<b>CHRONIC</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>31. Establish or enhance community garden programs in all communities especially where the need to increase access to nutritious food is greatest.</li><li>32. Continue to support school food programs and advocate for provincial/national support as is available in many other countries</li></ol>

<b>SEASONAL</b>	<b>Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None</li></ul>

<b>OCCASIONAL</b>	<b>Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergencies related to food borne issues such as power outages or poor storage impacting safety of foods, or greater supply chain contamination.</li></ul>

<b>OCCASIONAL</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<p>See additional recommendations in Focus Area 3.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>33. Ensure backup power and other infrastructure redundancies that may reduce contamination</li></ol>

## AVAILABILITY OF FOOD

### **Disruptions of Market, Traditional and Donation Food Supplies**

There are very few chronic food-related supply-chain challenges in Canada, BC, and the Sea to Sky. In general, there is enough food available locally and because of importing food into the region for those with the means to purchase it.

CHRONIC	Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing food availability issues in the Sea to Sky are due to a mismatch of regional food demand and regional food growing possibilities, a loss of traditional food supply chains and a chronically under supplied food donation system.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ The agricultural area and climate in the Sea to Sky region are not conducive to providing all the food needed by the region; however, food production has been increasing, albeit slowly to become a greater part of the supply.</li><li>◦ Traditional food supply chains are diminishing due to resource extraction, habitat alternation, pollution, over harvesting etc.</li><li>◦ Donation/food assistance requires an ongoing focus for funding and donations of food.</li></ul></li></ul>
CHRONIC	Recommendations
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>34. Encourage grocers to provide a cash donation or award points donation model for food banks in addition to the food basket model.</li><li>35. Additional “donate” food/money/points campaigns between April/October to support donations for FDOs.</li><li>36. Scalable storage would allow for capturing donated food.</li><li>37. Implement the actions recommended in the Food Recovery Strategy, to rescue edible food from the waste stream and divert it to FDOs.</li></ol>
SEASONAL	Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seasonal food availability issues occur in the Sea to Sky with respect to natural foods and food donations.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Nature based food availability changes throughout the seasons and is more limited in the winter impacting the availability of food types and amounts.</li><li>◦ Donation/food assistance can be limited during key seasons such as the summer and requires an ongoing focus for funding and donations of food.</li><li>◦ Donations/food assistance can be overwhelming at times during key seasons and requires ongoing focus for storage and managing surplus.</li></ul></li></ul>
SEASONAL	Recommendations
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>38. Partner with well-known events to generate funds or food for FDOs.</li><li>39. Invest in additional seasonal storage options. (See Focus Area 2 section for more about storage infrastructure needs and recommendations.)</li></ol>

**OCCASIONAL****Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings**

- Short-term unexpected food availability issues include shipping disruptions to the region, natural disasters impacting natural food availability, and hoarding of foods.
  - Health emergencies that make it difficult to transport or deliver food to the region access stores (e.g., epidemic or pandemic).
  - Emergencies that close highway routes to the Sea to Sky region (e.g., wildfire, flooding etc.).
  - Increased demand or hoarding due to emergencies impacting food accessibility, availability, or acceptability for the vulnerable and greater population.

**OCCASIONAL****Recommendations**

40. Develop a grocer and FDO agreement for how to manage and distribute foods during times of limited availability.
  41. Educate and support community members to establish personal reserves of food and other essentials.
- See Focus Area 3 for more about food equity during emergencies and supply disruptions.



## Focus Area 2: Food Supply Linkages and Infrastructure

### Introduction

Food systems encompass a range of actors involved in producing, processing, storing, and distributing food and food related materials. Food systems are knit together through the linkages and relationships between each actor, creating food supply chains, which are critical in facilitating the movement and accessibility of food.

The following section focuses on the linkages between farmers and FDOs, between FDOs themselves, and between FDOs and their clients. Furthermore, this section touches on the infrastructure elements held by the FDOs, an inventory of which is presented in Appendix I.

# Findings and Recommendations

## FRAMEWORK:

**Financing** is diversified from various funding sources (e.g., grants, donations, generated revenues).

## Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- Sea-to-Sky FDOs receive operating funding from a variety of sources, the majority of which are grants. Other streams of revenue are received through their umbrella organizations, as well as in-kind donations of time and labour. There are no specific grants currently being used that support connections between FDOs and local farms.
- As FDOs are largely grant dependent, funding can be inconsistent, therefore annual budgets are not always guaranteed. This lack of consistency makes it challenging for FDOs to invest in relationships with local farmers. For example, a FDO may wish to develop a contract with a farmer to grow a specific food (e.g., tomatoes) but may not have the required funds available up-front to cover the costs associated with that contract (e.g., extra land clearing, seeds, labour, delivery). Inconsistent and short-term funding results in local foods being purchased more last-minute and usually after the annual crop planting plan has been developed by the farmer.
- A tax credit exists so that FDOs with charity status can issue receipts to local farmers who donate food. However, farmers may not be aware of this opportunity.

## Recommendations

1. **Develop a list of funding opportunities that provide FDOs with resources to purchase local food from local producers and/or to develop infrastructure.** For example, the Province of BC and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, and Food Banks Canada have a number of relevant opportunities that are advertised on their websites and through listservs. Current examples include the Local Food Infrastructure Fund; Food Processing Growth Fund; FeedBC, BC Food Security Emergency Planning and Preparedness Fund; BC Food Affordability and Innovation Fund; and BC Critical Food Security Infrastructure Fund. However, intake periods and funding scopes change frequently, therefore it is best to check in with the funders often. This action could be undertaken by a student or seasonal (summer) employee or a consultant.
2. **Communicate/promote the tax credit available for producers.** Despite information about the tax credit available on some FDO websites, greater communication efforts would be helpful so that farmers have a better understanding of the benefits associated with donating their local produce to FDOs. This could include developing a factsheet on the tax benefits that could be distributed throughout the Sea-to-Sky farming community.

**FRAMEWORK:**

**Access to food** is robust enough to ensure enough food, in varieties appropriate for dietary, nutritional and cultural needs, is available.

**Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings**

- Most Sea-to-Sky FDOs are not specifically tracking the source and amount of food being purchased or donated from local farms.
  - The Whistler FDO spends about \$80,000 a year on food, including fresh produce, and has estimated that 5% of that food is purchased from local producers (0% during the winter) but cannot verify this estimate with data.
  - Sea-to-Sky Community Services, which operates the Pemberton Food Bank, tracks food source data and indicates that up to 95% of the fresh produce purchased during summer months comes from local grocers and 5% from Qualimak Nlepcalten Farm. It has been indicated by the Pemberton Food Bank that this level of tracking represents additional administrative tasks that take away from more important work that needs to be done.
  - Whistler and Pemberton FDOs purchase food from Qwalimak Nlepcalten Farm when stock/produce is available.
- When food is available from local producers to be donated or sold to FDOs, some common barriers to getting food into the hands of FDOs include transportation logistics, timing of deliveries, cost, seasonality, and reliability of food quantities. For example:
- FDOs have noted that it can be challenging to form relationships with some of the larger local farms who are not able to make the time to solve some of the logistical challenges involved in coordinating donations of their produce to FDOs. Small-scale farmers seem to be more amenable/able to make efforts to donate to FDOs.
- Some FDOs are challenged in procuring or receiving donations of food from local farms due to misalignment of delivery schedules and hours of operation. For example, the Whistler Food Bank is not open on weekends due to lack of staffing, however farmers would find it convenient to drop off sales/donations on Saturdays when they are already traveling to Whistler for the farmers market. The Pemberton Food Bank is only open Thursdays, though they accept donations from farmers and community members at pre-arranged times, 7 days a week, including evenings. Coordinating drop off times requires organization and labour resources, which may not be an efficient use of the limited resources FDOs have. Some FDOs are also unable to receive donations during market hours, when all staffing/ volunteer hours are required to distribute food rather than receive food.
- Donations or purchasing of seconds/ leftovers from farmers in the area does not provide the right diversity and quantity of food required by the FDOs. The FDOs do not always receive consistent reliability of food quantities or varieties from local producers. For example, the Whistler Food Bank noted that they don't know what is going to be available from local farmers until it shows up as a donation, so they still need to make baseline food orders other sources (e.g., grocery stores in the Lower Mainland or locally) to ensure the basic needs will be met. The donations from farmers end up being "extra" or "top up" rather than reliable and consistent offerings.
- FDOs are unable to store perishable local food items over the long term or accept large amounts of seasonally available produce, as they require the ability to store and/or process the produce. Therefore, only limited amounts of food can be procured locally due to lack of adequate storage infrastructure in each community (see Infrastructure section below for more details). For example, Squamish Helping Hands Society has noticed a gap in consistency of perishable food intakes (e.g., one week may receive a large donation of eggs, another week vegetables) both from local producers and retailers, which creates challenges in planning for adequate cold and dry storage.



- Purchasing non-local food (from the Lower Mainland) often provides more value for dollar as FDOs cooperate with large organizations that intercept food waste and purchase diverse foods in bulk orders from grocery distributors. Some Sea-to-Sky FDOs receive shipments from Lower Mainland grocery or food waste distributors. These may be arranged free of charge or at low cost.
- Local opportunities exist to stimulate local food production for FDOs. Examples include:
  - Sea-to-Sky Community Services is collaborating with Stewardship Pemberton to grow food and run educational programs on a small community garden plot (the Grow it Forward Garden, 600-700 ft<sup>2</sup>). The food is grown primarily for the food bank but is also donated to other organizations based on the timing of the harvest. Efforts have been made to plant seeds strategically to ensure that harvesting is possibly bi-weekly, and the variety of food grown appeals to the clients of the food bank.
  - Sea-to-Sky Community Services provided funding to Qwalimak Nlepcalten Farms to build a greenhouse, which was completed 2 years ago. The greenhouse provides food for Lil'wat Nation and sells some food to the Pemberton Food Bank.
  - Stewardship Pemberton runs a fruit gleaning program, whereby a portion (30%) of fruit collected from residential trees is donated to the Pemberton Food Bank.
  - The Brew Creek Centre, just south of Whistler, has offered a unique model of food production and donation in the past – growing for their own restaurants' use but also donating all excess produce and undertaking the deliveries themselves. This seems to work partly because the organization is not running a for-profit governance model. While the Centre is undergoing a transition in management it offers a unique opportunity to learn how FDOs can benefit from partnering with dedicated growing or contract growing. In the case of the Brew Creek Centre, they have historically matched financial donations to Sea-to-Sky FDOs during funding drives and have conducted food donation deliveries to the FDOs.

## Recommendations

3. **Support Squamish CAN's efforts to build connections between S2S food producers and purchasers (including FDOs),** to advance the following opportunities between FDOs and producers:
  - Coordinate FDO pick-up of donations directly from farmers at the farmers markets and at the farm gate whenever possible.
  - For those who are not already doing so, begin to quantify/track local food sales and donations to FDOs. Gaining access to this data will help inform decision making and grant application / proposals to be developed that support connections between FDOs and the local farming community – particularly around storage needs for long term management of perishable foods.
  - Explore opportunities to support FDOs in arranging annual budget planning to accommodate pilot contract growing opportunities with producers in the Squamish Valley and Pemberton Valley for vegetable crops such as lettuce greens, tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, carrots, and onions. This could start with small contracts and include letters of support for farmers wishing to apply for funding for on-farm small storage units (thereby reducing the burden of storage for FDOs) to hold the harvested produce until the FDO can pick up the food or it can be delivered. Most (all) contract growing opportunities are only economically worthwhile for both parties if the volumes are large, therefore the extra storage would likely be needed. This will involve engaging in discussions with SquamishCAN on determining synergies for medium- and long-term contract growing planning.
  - If the pilot is successful, consider expanding the contract growing to include poultry and meat products.

- 4. Develop a business plan for a shared regional FDO food distribution truck.** For example, LUSH Valley based in Comox operates a van and trailer that collects and delivers food from local farms to FDOs and to their own kitchen through the Harvest Share program. This model could be replicated in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor and would involve identifying a particular organization or business who may be interested in expanding their capacity to take on this role. The Whistler FDO, who is currently operating without a dedicated vehicle, could seek out grant funding to purchase a refrigerated truck or a van and trailer.
- 5. Expand existing successful food growing and gleaning programs as follows:**
  - Develop Stewardship Pemberton's Grow It Forward Garden into a small farm operation operating under a social enterprise model with the main objective of growing food for Sea-to-Sky FDOs.
  - Elevate Stewardship Pemberton's Gleaning Program from focusing on residential properties to include gleaning from farms. Stewardship Pemberton has indicated interest in this approach but would need commitment from FDOs that the food could be accepted, and that storage would be available.
  - Meet with the operators of the Brew Creek Centre to further investigate how their organization can continue to benefit FDOs with local food. The Brew Creek Centre now has online sales, which may help to facilitate linkages between FDOs and local food access.
- 6. Develop a lease arrangement to bring the land identified in the Pemberton Agricultural Parks Plan (2016) into food production.** A portion of this food could then be donated to local FDOs in exchange for a low lease rate. One of the three parcels is already being developed for residential purposes, but two others remain viable for food production. The food production on these parcels could be managed and operated by Stewardship Pemberton in collaboration with the Pemberton Creek Community Garden Society. This should involve meeting with SquamishCAN to learn from their experiences in the challenges and benefits of developing a lease-based community farming approach, and to help create a functional agreement which benefits all parties.

## FRAMEWORK:

**Infrastructure** which supports localized and resilient food systems is broadly available.

### Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- There is limited dry and cold storage throughout the region, which means that FDOs can only store small amounts of food at a time. For example, the available storage is somewhat sufficient for weekly turn-around but not for long term storage, emergency situations, or bulk seasonal purchases. In particular:
  - The Pemberton Food Bank just recently moved to a slightly larger location with multiple large freezers (but no walk-ins). There is a limited amount of dry storage and a small, refrigerated van for deliveries.
  - The Whistler FDO needs ground-level space to facilitate loading, sorting, and storing of food in dry and refrigerated areas. They are particularly limited in dry storage to accommodate local food.
  - The Squamish Helping Hands Society anticipates needing to double food storage capacity within the next 1-2 years.
- The District of Squamish is in the early stages of developing a food hub feasibility assessment in partnership with the Squamish Food Policy Council. The scope of the food hub assessment includes determining the type of equipment and services required by the local agriculture and agri-food sector. Once developed, a food hub may spur on business initiatives for creating more locally-based food products and may provide food storage opportunities – both of which could benefit FDOs.
- There are warehouses and other buildings that could accommodate expansion of local food storage facilities in the region, but these seem to be concentrated in Squamish and Pemberton (see inventory list in the Appendix). The monthly rental costs range from \$16-\$23/ft<sup>2</sup> per year (\$2,300-\$4,300 a month) which may be unaffordable for most FDOs to run independently.
- Over the last year there was a shortage of canning equipment in the entire region, which limited the ability of the farming community to transform perishable food items into shelf stable and storable food items that could be distributed to FDOs over a longer period.
- The region lacks meat processing infrastructure such as abattoirs and cut and wrap facilities which could keep animal proteins in the region and make them more accessible to FDOs. A farmer in Pemberton is embarking on the process of starting an abattoir but it may take a couple of years to be fully developed; and there is a butcher (i.e., cut and wrap facility) being developed at Spray Creek Ranch in Lillooet.

### Recommendations

7. **Work with SquamishCAN (following the completion of the food hub feasibility assessment) to explore the potential for additional food storage facilities or a distribution network for FDOs in all three communities.** A single storage facility in one part of the corridor would likely be insufficient, as the three main communities are located over 25 km from one another, and road closures can threaten supply chain connectivity.

**8. Seek funding and/or in-kind support to secure the following food storage assets:**

- In Pemberton: Sea-to-Sky Community Services should work with other organizations, such as Stewardship Pemberton, to combine dry food storage and aggregation needs and rent out shared space in Pemberton's Industrial Park. This may require additional funding from various government initiatives.
- In Whistler: As locally available industrial space is limited, increasing storage could be accomplished by renting refrigerated shipping containers (e.g., Cool Bot systems) on a seasonal basis, as was done during the COVID pandemic (see Appendix for examples of companies providing this service to Whistler). Each container provides approximately 140 ft<sup>2</sup> of storage. To start, it is recommended that one unit be rented by the Whistler Food Bank during the "high season" to store local food produce (e.g., June to October) and to accommodate larger donation volumes from local producers. Storage units should be secure but should allow ongoing/24-7 access by farmers and/or delivery service agents to drop off food orders.
- In Squamish: Explore the opportunity to use unused school portables or a rented warehouse in one of the more commercial/industrial areas of Squamish (see examples in the Appendix).
- Communicate current FDO storage needs to SquamishCAN's food hub feasibility assessment and consider being an anchor tenant to a new or dedicated food hub centre.
- Advocate in neighbourhood plans or future developments for storage spaces to be donated through community contribution agreements.

**9. Enhance the Squamish Lillooet Food Asset Map** by ensuring that FDOs attend SquamishCAN's annual Good Food Gathering (which includes social network mapping) and by using the results from food hub feasibility assessment to identify additional food system infrastructure assets by:

- Location of existing cold and dry food storage facilities.
- Food processing facilities (such as abattoirs) as and when the infrastructure is available.

**10. Explore the feasibility of expanding the Squamish Public Library's Library of Things to include resources and tools necessary for food processing.** This will involve facilitating meetings between SquamishCAN, FDOs, and the Squamish Public Library.

**11. Ensure that SquamishCAN's food hub feasibility assessments includes engagement with and considers the needs of local FDOs,**

**FRAMEWORK:**

**Cooperate and collaborate** with communities, other organizations, and those who are working towards the same goals through sharing of resources and support.

**Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings**

- A regional coalition of FDOs meets informally monthly to identify priorities and areas of need and opportunities to work together, presenting an opportunity for more formal collaboration.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, local volunteer organizations and businesses in Squamish helped the Squamish FDO with food deliveries. While the COVID emergency is now largely over, the collaborative effort created a model that could be replicated and/or amplified for connecting volunteers to food deliveries between local farms and FDOs, particularly during the busy harvest season (June to October) when there is the most opportunity for large donations/sales of perishable produce to FDOs.

**Recommendations**

- 12. Enhance the informal coalition of FDOs in the Sea-to-Sky region (it currently meets monthly) to continually look at issues, maximize local food intake, and collaborate with farmers on funding opportunities.** The coalition could be enhanced by:
  - Applying for funding for a part-time administrative assistant to help the coalition of FDOs with submitting grant applications and implementing storage solutions identified in recommendation 'H'.
  - Delivering presentations to municipal and regional government councils, Pemberton Farmers Institute, Squamish Food Policy Council, and other organizations to communicate interest and desire to offer local foods through FDOs.
- 13. As greater connections between local producers and FDOs emerge over time and the need for deliveries grows, host meetings between the coalition of FDOs, local volunteer organizations (e.g., Rotary Club, Lions Club), and small businesses** to explore the capacity of volunteers to assist with coordinating local food pick-up and deliveries between farms and FDOs, particularly during the high season of harvest (e.g., June to October).



## Focus Area 3: Food Equity During Emergencies

### Introduction

This section focuses on the emergency response capacity in the Sea to Sky related to delivering an equitable response to meeting the food needs of vulnerable populations.

During local, regional, provincial, and even national emergencies, there are well defined systems and structures for addressing overall community needs through the emergency management programs coordinated through local governments. When an emergency is declared, Emergency Operating Centres (EOCs) are established under the BC Emergency Act. These are critical for restoring function to the community, coordinating with other levels of government, mobilizing resources, and providing oversight to the situation.

Emergency Support Services (ESS) Emergency Support Services (ESS) is one of the core provincial programs available to assist people who have been displaced because of an emergency. ESS arises from the Emergency Program Act (EPA), under which local authorities (municipalities and regional districts) are responsible, as part of their emergency management duties, for having a program that coordinates the provision of food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and medical services for those affected by emergencies and disasters.

However, the provincial ESS program was found to be lacking when it comes to serving vulnerable populations according to the BC Ombudsperson in their October 2023 report “Fairness in a changing climate: Ensuring disaster supports are accessible, equitable and adaptable.”

*The way in which Emergency Support Services were delivered in response to wildfires and the atmospheric river in 2021 was an unfair procedure under section 23(1)(a)(v) of the Ombudsperson Act because the program did not adequately account for existing vulnerabilities among people who were trying to access the services. As a result, people experienced inequitable access and outcomes based on factors including Indigeneity, physical ability, health, age, family status and income. -- BC Ombudsperson, October 2023, “Fairness in a changing climate: Ensuring disaster supports are accessible, equitable and adaptable.”*

When it comes to vulnerable populations, what typically happens during emergencies is that ad hoc networks of social service organizations (with prior relationships with vulnerable populations) convene to identify and support those in most need. Collectively, these networks have invaluable information about the impacts of the emergency and the needs of their stakeholders – and they are well positioned to deploy coordinated strategies that support vulnerable populations during an emergency and share resources (e.g., kitchens, meal preparation, volunteer management, distribution mechanisms).

The work undertaken in this focus area aimed to understand the current situation in the Sea to Sky related to emergency situations and the corresponding food response using an equity lens, and then identify recommendations for improvements.

## Framework

The framework used to structure the findings and recommendations in the next section is comprised of these elements, which are used to define what success looks like (i.e., what is required to support more equitable access to food during emergencies):

- **Networks, collaboration structures, line of communications** exist, are clear to everyone involved, are maintained over time, and can be quickly deployed during an emergency.
- **Vulnerable populations are known** and ways to contact/connect with them are identified.
- **Assets<sup>15</sup> are documented**, updated, and can be quickly deployed.
- **Facilities, infrastructure, and food reserves** are in place to support the response – they are flexible and adequate.
- **Policies, plans, programs, procedures, processes** are established based on broad types of emergencies and vulnerable populations so they can be quickly and flexibly deployed; they are reviewed and updated regularly; and they employ principles of equity, dignity, trauma-awareness, cultural appropriateness.
- **Human resources and leadership are prepared, scalable and flexible** to meet increased needs and move between organizations and communities as needed.
- **Funding sources and reserves** are adequate and flexible to meet increased and changing need.

The framework above was informed by these resources:

- **Growing Resilience and Equity: A Food Policy Action Plan in the Context of Covid-19;** May 2020, Food Secure Canada
- **Preparing for food security after COVID-19: Strengthening equity and resilience in future emergency response in Toronto.** Regnier-Davies, J., Yu, M. H. M., and Edge, S. (2022). Centre for Studies in Food Security. Toronto, ON, Canada. [www. https://www.torontomu.ca/foodsecurity/projects/activity\\_covid/](https://www.torontomu.ca/foodsecurity/projects/activity_covid/)
- **Emergency Food Response: Developing a Framework for Action.** Webinar hosted by PlanH with guest speaker Claire Gram, April 28, 2022

<sup>15</sup>Assets include but are not limited to policies, processes, programs, facilities, infrastructure, human resources (staff, volunteers), and funding sources. Specific information to consider: locations, names, numbers, emails, etc.

# Key Findings and Recommendations

The work undertaken in this focus area aimed to understand the current situation in the Sea to Sky related to emergency situations and the corresponding food response using an equity lens, and then identify recommendations for improvements.

## FRAMEWORK:

**Networks, collaboration structures, line of communications** exist, are clear to everyone involved, are maintained over time, and can be quickly deployed during an emergency.

## Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- ESS arises from the Emergency Program Act (EPA), under which local authorities (municipalities and regional districts) are responsible, as part of their emergency management duties, for having a program that coordinates the provision of food, clothing, shelter, transportation and medical services for those affected by emergencies and disasters.
- Provincial ESS guidance puts the responsibility for food response on local community groups before ESS.
- The BC Ombudsperson identified several weaknesses in the provincial ESS program related to their equitable access for vulnerable populations in their October 2023 report.<sup>16</sup>
- Municipal Emergency Support Services (ESS) teams meet monthly. Regional teams meet quarterly. Neither includes community social service agencies or FDO representatives.
- FDOs are not clear on their role and responsibilities during emergencies.
- S2S FDOs are well connected and meet monthly.
- Generally (and anecdotally), S2S local government and community social service agencies are well connected.
- Emergency response guidance mandates/recommends that ESS leads/teams maintain awareness of and connections to community social service agencies. This is done by Squamish for example.
- EOC composition is determined as needed based on the type of emergency underway and may include FDO reps but not necessarily.
- Integrated Disaster Council of BC (IDCBC) is a network of government and NGOs that work together to provide humanitarian aid to support local authority and First Nations' emergency management following a disaster. The purpose of the IDCBC is to increase coordination of member agencies by creating a forum for communication and information sharing. Food Banks BC sits on the Council.

## Recommendations

1. **Establish emergency food equity response structures** and clear terms of reference, including the scope, membership, member roles/responsibilities, leadership, linkages to EOCs, and linkages to regional and provincial networks. Information and contact lists should be kept online for access anywhere/anytime.

NOTE: A draft document that provides a starting point for the recommendation above is presented in Appendix B.

<sup>16</sup>Fairness in a changing climate: Ensuring disaster supports are accessible, equitable and adaptable, BC Ombudsperson, October 2023.



**FRAMEWORK:**

**Vulnerable populations are known** and ways to contact/connect with them are identified.

**Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings**

- Vulnerable populations are not currently “mapped” in the S2S, though Whistler and Squamish have funding to develop mapping based on vulnerability to extreme heat events. Hazard risks are mapped; Census data could be overlaid. Further, Squamish has conducted a count of people experiencing homelessness.
- Detailed mapping according to each potential disaster/emergency is not required; having a sense of the vulnerable populations and which community organizations are connected to them is what is needed and can be tapped into accordingly during an emergency.

**Recommendations**

2. **Develop general/high-level map of vulnerable populations.** This should include who they are and who is connected to them based on two broad types of emergencies – 1) those that affect/exacerbate affordability barriers and 2) those that affect/exacerbate physical accessibility barriers.
3. **Develop detailed/specific maps of vulnerable populations as possible** with available funding based on most likely risks (e.g., extreme heat as Whistler is planning to do).

**FRAMEWORK:**

**Assets<sup>17</sup> are documented**, updated, and can be quickly deployed.

**Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings**

- ESS assets are documented (e.g., sites/schools, cots, generators, etc.) in Business Continuity Plans or in annexes to emergency plans.
- It is challenging to anticipate all asset needs, asset lists change fast, and they are time consuming to keep current.
- FDO asset documentation – specifics unknown; FDO emergency business plans and risk management plans likely have some assets listed.

**Recommendations**

4. **Minimize time spent on asset inventories by focusing their development** as follows: 1) If the emergency affects food availability, then what are assets needed? 2) If food affordability is the challenge, then what are assets needed? Without this approach, the tendency is to map the entire system, which is not a good use of resources. See Appendix B for frameworks that can be used to support this process.

<sup>17</sup>Assets include but are not limited to policies, processes, programs, facilities, infrastructure, human resources (staff, volunteers), and funding sources. Specific information to consider: locations, names, numbers, emails, etc.

**FRAMEWORK:**

**Facilities, infrastructure, and food reserves are in place** to support the response – they are flexible and adequate.

**Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings**

- Establishing community-wide food reserves is not feasible due to high cost of space, management, and the food itself. If not well managed, would result in a high volume of food waste.
- Food reserves are not the responsibility of FDOs.
- As much as possible, food reserves should occur at the individual level, by those who have the financial resources and storage space; they can lessen the burden on community resources so priority allocation can go toward more vulnerable populations.
- Vulnerable populations are less likely to be able to maintain food reserves due to affordability, storage space or other barriers. S2S food banks have started discussing the need for food reserves, but storage is also a barrier for them and even with storage, ongoing management costs will be a challenge.
- Current practice is to promote that households be self-sufficient for 72 hours; however, there is new research out of Washington and Oregon suggesting that a major disaster (most likely an earthquake) in the Pacific Northwest could disrupt the food chain for up to two weeks.

**Recommendations**

- 5. Support vulnerable populations to increase their resiliency to emergencies.** This should include education about and support to establish personal reserves of food and other essentials and could also include the importance of overall emergency preparedness.
- 6. Explore the need for and feasibility of FDO food reserves,** how to prioritize their allocation, and coordinate their distribution if food supply to a community or to the region is cut off.

## FRAMEWORK:

**Policies, plans, programs, procedures, processes are established** based on broad types of emergencies and vulnerable populations so they can be quickly and flexibly deployed; they are reviewed and updated regularly; and they employ principles of equity, dignity, trauma-awareness, cultural appropriateness.

## Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- Emergency food response planning (and applying an equity lens) has not been a focus to date for any level of government, including those in the S2S.
- There are no S2S ESS food response plans in place and therefore no equity lens applied. Further, S2S ESS teams haven't played out the scenario of being cut off from food (i.e., a non-evacuation scenario).
- Emergency Support Services planning tends to focus on evacuation to safety where shelter, food and clothing is available. Since planning doesn't tend to focus on 'shelter in place' situations, scenario planning for food coordination/distribution and allocation (including with an equity lens/according to vulnerability) is not typically done.
- During a state of emergency, the EOC is "at all times responsible for the direction and control of the local authority's emergency response" under the BC Emergency Program Act. They are responsible for ensuring food gets into the community (food availability) with support as needed from the Province and Federal Government – either by ensuring transportation routes are open or by requesting special shipments (e.g., by air).
- ESS role/responsibility is to ensure people have shelter, food, and clothing. Food response would integrate FDO reps as needed to ensure food is reaching those in need.
- Community organizations have existing links to vulnerable populations and are well positioned to respond during emergencies to support a more equitable response. Thus, local governments/ESS don't have to feel entirely responsible for the equity element; they can rely on community organizations for assistance.
- Unfortunately, this equity responsibility isn't well articulated and assigned; responsibilities aren't well known between FDOs and local government.
- S2S FDOs have not developed emergency response plans to date, and this type of planning takes a lot of resources that FDOs don't have.
- States of emergency enable local governments to assume extraordinary powers to help manage the situation. This can include limiting prices and quantities of food purchased.

## Recommendations

- 7. Develop general/flexible strategies for meeting the food needs for vulnerable populations** – those that will be most at risk to the two broad types of emergencies – 1) those that affect/exacerbate affordability barriers and 2) those that affect/exacerbate physical accessibility barriers.  
NOTE: A draft document that includes a framework for the recommendation above is presented in Appendix B.
- 8. Translate emergency food response material** that can be drawn on during emergencies to address language barriers prevalent amongst many food insecure groups in our communities.
- 9. Prevent panic buying of food and other essential supplies** during times of emergency by establishing policies and procedures that account for exceptions and ensure dignity. It will be especially important to consider people from remote communities to understand exceptions they may need for larger purchase volumes.
- 10. Integrate equity generally and food equity specifically into future community and regional emergency response planning.** The provincial ESS program was found to be lacking when it comes to serving vulnerable populations according to the BC Ombudsperson in their October 2023 report, "Fairness in a changing climate: Ensuring disaster supports are accessible, equitable and adaptable."

**FRAMEWORK:** Human resources and leadership are prepared, scalable and flexible to meet increased needs and move between organizations and communities as needed.

#### Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- For EOCs/ESS, contracts with Red Cross and agreements with neighbouring communities exist to provide support staff to each other during emergencies.
- Volunteers needed during some emergencies (to meet increased needs, including vulnerable populations) will increase and so will the resources to recruit, vet and manage volunteers.
- FDOs have variations of emergency plans in place; some may benefit from updated that include planning for critical staffing, volunteer recruitment and management, funding, and infrastructure. For example, Whistler Community Services Society currently has a business plan, risk management plan and risk analysis chart for the organization that is updated annually but the need for a more comprehensive framework for WCSS food bank has been identified.

#### Recommendations

- 11. Develop or update FDO emergency/business continuity plans** to scale up and meet needs during emergencies, including critical staff, volunteers, funding, and infrastructure that will be needed. How to develop a Food Bank Emergency Response Plan is outlined in this Resource Guide and summarized in this snapshot reference document.
- 12. Train FDO staff and key volunteers** on the emergency/business continuity plans.
- 13. Fund FDO emergency/business continuity** planning and related staff training in the region.

**FRAMEWORK:** Funding sources and reserves are adequate and flexible to meet increased and changing need.

#### Sea to Sky Current Situation – Key Findings

- Sea-to-Sky FDOs receive operating funding from a variety of sources, many of which are grants that are not guaranteed/reliable sources.
- Prolonged emergencies will trigger Provincial or Federal funding. This occurred during COVID and provided operational funding to FDOs.
- The extent to which FDO emergency plans include guidance and procedures for making proactive decisions about financial arrangements was not determined.

#### Recommendations

- 14. Explore and establish flexible funding mechanisms** to fund FDOs during emergencies.

# Glossary

**Cultural foods:** While cultural can refer to foods important to a person's heritage, in this document it is used specifically for non-Indigenous cultures. (Traditional foods is used to refer to food of importance to Indigenous people.)

**Disaster:** According to the RMOW Emergency Measures Bylaw no.1593, a disaster means a calamity that: (a) is caused by accident, fire, explosion, or technical failure or by the forces of nature; and (b) has resulted in serious harm to the health, safety or welfare of people, or in widespread damage to property.

**Emergency:** Use of the term emergency throughout this report refers to 'major emergencies and disasters' rather than incidents that local agencies routinely respond to on an ongoing, day-to-day basis (e.g., house fire, motor vehicle accident). 'Major emergencies and disasters' occur when normal deployment of local first responder resources require substantial assistance to adequately cope with the size and severity of the situation. The need therefore exists for central coordination of response and recovery activity and executive decision making for obtaining whatever additional support is required. The nature and magnitude of the emergency event will determine the nature and scale of the response and/or whether a declaration of a state of local emergency is required.

**Food distribution organization (FDO):** The most widely known FDOs are food banks, but there are a range of organizations and programs that use donated food to feed hungry people, support healthier eating, build community capacity, educate and train people, or help maintain cultural eating practices. In the Sea to Sky region and when referenced in this report, FDOs are synonymous with the three food banks, located in Squamish, Whistler and Pemberton.

**Food insecurity:** This is the inability to acquire or consume an adequate diet-quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so. (Government of Canada, 2020)

**Food security:** This exists when all people always 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. (World Food Summit, 1996)

**Traditional foods:** This refers to foods of importance to Indigenous people.

**Vulnerable Populations:** Those who are more likely to be excluded from regular programs and services and suffer disproportionately during an emergency because of their pre-existing social factors such as those associated with income, age, gender, race, medical illness, disability/impairment (including physical, mental, intellectual, neurocognitive, neurodivergent, and sensory), literacy/language, and social isolation.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup>This definition was adapted from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction definition of 'social vulnerability.'

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Inventory of existing and potential food system infrastructure in the Sea-to-Sky

### EXISTING

The following table presents a list of existing infrastructure that is available in the Sea-to-Sky corridor. It does not include small/micro storage infrastructure that is typically found on farms. The sources of information used to populate this table includes interviews with FDOs, the Squamish Lillooet Food Asset Map, and online search engines such as Google. The information is accurate as of July 2023.

Existing Food Storage	Number	Size	Organization/ Location	Notes
Storage - Dry	1	Limited space (approx. 30 ft <sup>3</sup> )	Squamish Food Bank	Shared with Helping Hands
Storage - Dry	1	1,200 ft <sup>3</sup>	Pemberton Food Bank	Shared with partners
Storage - Dry	1	Limited space (approx. 50 ft <sup>3</sup> )	Whistler Food Bank	
Storage - Refrigeration	2	Walk in refrigerators x 2 (approx. 100 ft <sup>3</sup> )	Squamish Food Bank	Shared with Helping Hands
Storage - Refrigeration	1	Walk in refrigerator (approx. 50 ft <sup>3</sup> )	Lil'wat Nation	
Storage - Refrigeration	2	Walk in refrigerator (approx. 50 ft <sup>3</sup> )	Whistler Food Bank	
Storage - Freezer	1	Walk in freezer (approx. 50 ft <sup>3</sup> )	Squamish Food Bank	Shared with Helping Hands
Storage - Freezer	4	Double door freezers (approx. 100 ft <sup>3</sup> )	Pemberton Food Bank	
Storage - Freezer	2	Walk in freezer (approx. 50 ft <sup>3</sup> )	Whistler Food Bank	
Garden space	1	Community Garden	Lil'wat Nation	
Kitchen	1	Industrial kitchen (approx. 300 ft <sup>2</sup> )	Squamish Food Bank	
Kitchen	1	Commercial kitchen (approx. 200 ft <sup>2</sup> )	T'szil Learning Centre, Mt Currie	Generally, not open to the public
Kitchen	1	Community kitchen (size unknown)	Pemberton Community Kitchen	At the Pemberton and District Community Centre
Kitchen	1	Community commercial kitchen (size unknown)	Brennan Park Community Kitchen	At the Brennan Park Recreation Centre – open to public
Kitchen	1	Commissary kitchen (1,200 ft <sup>2</sup> )	Lucky Kid Kitchen	Membership/fee-based
Vehicle	1	Ford Transit Van	Squamish Food Bank	Shared with Helping Hands
Vehicle	1	Ford Transit Van	Pemberton Food Bank	

## POTENTIAL

The following is a list of buildings and/or portable storage units available in the Sea-to-Sky corridor that could be available to FDOs for a fee. The sources of information used to develop this list include interviews with FDOs, online real estate listing search engines (e.g., Realtor.ca), and company websites of businesses renting refrigerated storage units.

## PEMBERTON

- Sea-to-Sky Community Services are developing an affordable housing building in Pemberton and there may be an opportunity to use the main floor for food storage and commercial kitchen/processing.
- The Pemberton Agricultural Parks plan identified three parcels of land that could be used for food production on public lands: one parcel adjacent to Signal Hill Elementary School (3 acres) (currently being developed for residential purposes); one parcel along Harrow Rd (14 acres); and the third parcel adjacent to the small Pemberton Airport (49 acres). A low-rent or no-rent option could be discussed with the Village of Pemberton and SLRD to get these lands into production.
- The Pemberton Industrial Park has warehouse buildings and/or lots for rent. These buildings/lots are fully serviced and outside of the Agricultural Land Reserve. Current listings include:
  - 1,677 ft<sup>2</sup> industrial space on Industrial Way for \$31,863/year (\$19/ft<sup>2</sup> or \$2,655/month)
  - 1,450 ft<sup>2</sup> industrial space on Stone Cutter Place for \$27,550/year (\$19/ft<sup>2</sup> or \$2,295/month)

## WHISTLER

- The inventory for food storage warehouse space in Whistler is challenged by high rental costs for vacant spaces and general lack of availability.
- Portable refrigerated storage units may be a viable option for the Whistler Food Bank. These units are modified shipping containers that can be rented for a monthly fee, typically ranging from \$150 - \$400 per month. Examples of businesses that service the Whistler community include:
  - [Insta-space Storage](#)
  - [Big Steel Box](#)
  - [ContainerWest](#)

## SQUAMISH

- The 55 Activity Centre on Village Green Way has an onsite industrial kitchen that has been offered to FDOs to use.
- Brennan Park Recreation Centre has a rentable commercial kitchen.
- There is vacant oceanfront land in downtown Squamish that is not being built on for the next 20 years. SquamishCAN has been in contact with the District of Squamish about how best to use this land to support various needs in the community.
- Examples of market commercial space currently available in Squamish include:
  - 1,869 ft<sup>2</sup> warehouse on Progress Way for \$29,904 a year (\$16/ft<sup>2</sup>, \$2,492/month)
  - 2,238 ft<sup>2</sup> warehouse on Queens Way for \$51,474 a year (\$23/ft<sup>2</sup>, \$4,290/month)
  - New industrial spaces on Pioneer Way ranging from 1,209 – 5,628 ft<sup>2</sup> at \$20/ft<sup>2</sup>.

# Appendix B: Reference Guide for a Whistler Emergency Equity Response Network

## INITIAL DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION

This DRAFT Guide is intended as a starting point; it should evolve and be adapted to fit the changing landscape of organizations in the community, to changing emergency food response approaches by government, and to suit specific circumstance of each state of emergency, as each is unique in scale, type, duration, and who is most impacted.

## INTRODUCTION

### **Background**

This DRAFT Guide is an outcome of the Sea to Sky Food Resiliency Project. One of the key findings of the project was that the response to emergencies that affect food accessibility or affordability for vulnerable populations could be better coordinated, which led to the development of this document. The Sea to Sky Food Resiliency Project was sponsored by the Resort Municipality of Whistler and led by WCS Engagement + Planning with contributions from Clarity Community Consults and Upland Consulting. The project was funded by the BC Government's Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program administered by the Union of BC Municipalities. Project partners included the following key community organizations: Whistler Community Services Society, Sea to Sky Community Services, Squamish Food Bank, and Squamish Helping Hands Society.

### **General Context**

During local, regional, provincial, and even national emergencies, there are well defined structures for addressing overall community needs through the emergency management programs coordinated through local governments. When an emergency is declared, Emergency Operating Centres (EOCs) are established under the BC Emergency Act. These are critical for restoring function to the community, coordinating with other levels of government, mobilizing resources, and providing oversight to the situation. In some cases, once the emergency is declared over, a Recovery Operation Centre may be established to support the recovery phase of the emergency.

What is often missing from these formal structures is a method for specifically identifying and addressing the needs of populations with pre-existing vulnerabilities (see below for definition), who experience the greatest harms during an emergency according to the research. In many cases, depending on the duration and type of emergency, ad hoc networks of social service organizations that have prior relationships with vulnerable populations, convene to identify and support those in most need. Collectively, these networks have invaluable information about the impacts of the emergency and the needs of the community. Working together, they can deploy coordinated strategies that support vulnerable populations during an emergency and share resources (e.g., kitchens, meal preparation, volunteer management, distribution mechanisms).



## **Intent**

This Guide is intended to help make the work that these organizations already do during emergencies clearer, more easily coordinated, visible, and systemic thereby more effectively supporting vulnerable populations in getting the food they need and reducing serious harms caused to them during states of emergency. It is not intended to add either additional responsibilities or liabilities to community organizations. This Guide aims to:

1. Provide guidance for the coordination of a network of community agencies during an emergency to serve vulnerable populations more quickly and effectively.
2. Provide the EOC with a clear point of contact to the Network (one member for example) in cases when emergencies impact vulnerable populations and provide the EOC with information as requested.
3. Provide a framework for communication, both horizontally with other community agencies and vertically with agencies doing similar work regionally and provincially.
4. Provide a method for emergency planning – both in advance of and as the emergency is declared - to address food-related challenges that arise.
5. Help clarify and improve the visibility of the vital work undertaken by the community sector in addressing the food needs of vulnerable populations during states of emergency.

## **EMERGENCY FOOD RESPONSE CATEGORIES**

Not all emergencies require a food response with a focus on vulnerable populations and therefore this Guide would only be enacted on an as needed basis. Emergencies that do involve a food response will tend to impact food reaching vulnerable populations in one or more of these ways:

1. **Food availability:** When there is no food in the region usually due to transportation or other supply chain issues.
2. **Food accessibility:** When there is food in the region, but people cannot get to it due to mobility constraints such as physical disability, a need to quarantine and/or a lack of transportation.
3. **Food affordability:** When there is food in the region, but there has been a significant change in the cost of food, income levels, or a reduction in services providing more affordable food (e.g., food bank services).

When food *availability* is the challenge, this is primarily addressed by EOCs (and other levels of government as needed) by restoring food delivery routes or supply chains.<sup>19</sup>

When food *accessibility* and/or food *affordability* are the challenges presented by an emergency (both can occur simultaneously), these are typically addressed by social service organizations (although this is not a legal mandate) and responding to these situations is the focus of this guide.

<sup>19</sup>When restoring food supply, consideration should be given to cultural preferences and dietary restrictions.

## **Network Purpose, Scope, and Roles**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Network is to facilitate more equitable access to food<sup>20</sup> for vulnerable populations during emergencies that involve a food response.

### **SCOPE (DEFINITION OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS)**

During emergencies, the entire community could be considered 'vulnerable,' including all residents and even visitors; therefore, to limit the Network's scope, 'vulnerable populations' is defined as those who are more likely to suffer disproportionately during an emergency because of their pre-existing/pre-emergency social factors such as those associated with income, age, gender, race, medical illness, disability/impairment (including physical, mental, intellectual, neurocognitive, neurodivergent, and sensory), literacy/language, and social isolation. The pre-existing social factors create a lack of capacity or capability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.<sup>21</sup>

### **ROLE**

When convened during an emergency and potentially into the recovery phase,<sup>22</sup> the Network's role will be to:

- Share information on the impacts of the emergency on and the food needs of vulnerable groups.
- Facilitate improved coordination and sharing of resources.
- Coordinate response activities to support vulnerable populations gaining equitable access to food and other essential groceries (e.g., toilet paper).
- Advocate for the specific needs of vulnerable populations.
- Communicate with other agencies and organizations, including the EOC as needed.
- Act as a clear and coordinated point of contact for the EOC in cases when emergencies impact vulnerable populations.

#### **Exclusions and limitations:**

- During a state of emergency, the EOC is "at all times responsible for the direction and control of the local authority's emergency response" under the BC Emergency Program Act. It will be up to the discretion of the of the EOC, whether and how they communicate with or participate in the Network.
- The Network has no formal responsibilities according to the Emergency Act but can act as an informal liaison to or as a support for the local EOC. Of particular value might be a two-way information exchange related to needs and resources.
- This Network is not a formal committee of any local government or other organization. It is an informal group with no legal obligations or affiliations to any of the members or other community organization.

<sup>20</sup>This might also include other essential items found in grocery stores such as toilet paper.

<sup>21</sup>This definition was adapted from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction definition of 'social vulnerability.'

<sup>22</sup>The Network's role may extend through the recovery phase given that recovery for populations with pre-existing vulnerabilities typically takes longer than for the general population. The Network itself will decide how long it needs to operate and when to return to normal collaboration formats.

### **Network Members, Roles, and Contact Information**

The table below presents the Network’s most likely core member organizations, the position within them that is most needed to be part of the group, their role on the Network, and (it will eventually contain) the contact person and information for each member. Membership may vary according to the different emergency types and stages.

**NOTE:** Participation of an EOC representative may occur and will be at the discretion of the EOC.

Member	Position	Role	Contact	Email	Phone
Whistler Community Services Society	Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network Lead</li> <li>• Brings understanding of vulnerable populations and WCSS's capacity to deliver services during emergency situations.</li> </ul>			
	Director of Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network Lead (alternate)</li> <li>• Brings specific information and experience related to the supply and distribution of food.</li> </ul>			
Sea to Sky Community Services		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brings understanding of vulnerable populations and organizational capacity to deliver services during emergency situations.</li> </ul>			
Howe Sound Women’s Centre		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above</li> </ul>			
Whistler Mature Action Community	Chair or alternate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison to seniors</li> </ul>			
Whistler Multicultural Society	ED or Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison to immigrant and non-English speaking population</li> </ul>			
Whistler Adaptive	ED or Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison to people with disabilities</li> </ul>			
School District 48	Community food program coordinator or equivalent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison to children, youth, and families</li> </ul>			
Grocery store representatives	Manager				
RAW (Restaurant Association)	RAW Chair				

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

When a state of emergency is declared and if it involves a food response:

1. Communicate with the Network members and coordinate the initial meeting. (This first task is done by the Network lead or convener.)
2. Request an emergency update from the EOC so this can be presented as accurately as possible at meeting.
3. Confirm the need for and possibility of a communication connection with the EOC based on EOC capacity and the nature of the emergency.

**Initial Network meeting(s):**

4. Receive an update on the emergency, ideally from an EOC representative or second hand from the Network lead.
5. Determine whether the emergency is one affecting food accessibility or food affordability, or both.
6. Identify which vulnerable populations are most likely to be affected and which organizations are most closely connected to them. (Refer to the list in Appendix I.)
7. Review the Network members and determine whether organizations or individuals should be added based on the emergency, vulnerable populations impacted, and resources needed. (Membership may change over the course of the emergency.) Consider important partner organizations for membership or regular communication. Refer to Appendix II for some ideas.
8. Review the baseline information (Appendix I) and determine what strategies should be deployed and by whom.
9. Decide how frequently to meet and set up regular meeting appointments and locations accordingly. (The frequency of meetings will likely change over the course of the emergency if the situation worsens or as it stabilizes.)
10. Keep a list of action items from the meeting with clear assignment of who is responsible for each! !

**Subsequent Network meetings:**

11. Update on the overall emergency and response status, ideally presented by someone from the EOC if they have capacity.
12. Update on the status of each organization, services they are providing, and to which vulnerable populations.
13. Identify any vulnerable populations that might be missed!
14. Report back on action items from last meeting.
15. Identify opportunities to share and coordinate the deployment of existing resources.
16. Identify additional resources needed to serve vulnerable populations being affected and the best ways to secure them.
17. Identify communication tasks (i.e., which organizations/individuals need to be informed of meeting information and/or actions, and who will lead on each communication). Consider these important partners (and refer to the longer list provided in Appendix II):
  - RMOW EOC
  - Provincial agencies
  - First Nation communities
  - S2S municipalities and the SLRD

## NON-EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

During non-emergency times at regular intervals (annually or every other year), the following should be undertaken to ensure the group is current and connected. This should ideally be done through a Network meeting or could be done virtually by sharing the GUIDE document and requesting updates.

- Annual update of the contact information at minimum.
- Annual review of the GUIDE and other updates as needed.
- Debrief emergency responses and integrate lessons learned into the GUIDE and other systems for future emergencies.
- Re-introduce RMOW Council, SLRD Board, emergency management program staff, and community partners to the importance of an equity approach to food response and the Network purpose and role to ensure familiarity and support when emergencies arise. This could be done through council/board presentations, open webinar sessions, and individual meetings.

## Appendix I: Developing Emergency Food Response Strategies

The tables in the two sections below each provide a framework for emergency planning and response that can be used by the Network to gather baseline information and identify solutions/strategies for addressing emergency situations. They are presented according to whether the emergency is affecting food accessibility or affordability for vulnerable populations, though there may be situations where an emergency affects both types of food-related challenges. These frameworks are presented as a starting point; they should be reviewed and adapted based on the specifics of the emergency, the vulnerable populations most likely to be affected, and the resources available to support response and recovery.

Although each emergency is different, food-related challenges tend to fall into three main categories:

1. **Food availability:** When there is no food in the region usually due to transportation or other supply chain issues. .
2. **Food accessibility:** When there is food in the region, but people cannot get to it due to mobility constraints such as physical disability, a need to quarantine and/or a lack of transportation.
3. **Food affordability:** When there is food in the region, but there has been a significant change in the cost of food, income levels, or a reduction in services providing more affordable food (e.g., food bank services).

When food availability is the challenge, this is primarily addressed by EOCs (and other levels of government as needed) by restoring food delivery routes or supply chains.<sup>23</sup>

When food accessibility and/or food affordability are the challenges presented by an emergency (both can occur simultaneously), these are typically addressed by social service organizations (although this is not a legal mandate) and responding to these situations is the focus of this guide.

### FOOD ACCESSIBILITY RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

This framework addresses food delivery to households for vulnerable populations experiencing accessibility challenges. In this case, they will either need prepared meals or groceries (including other non-food essentials such as toilet paper and medications). Some groups who may be experiencing accessibility challenges are able to afford food at market prices, in which case they will simply need information on how and where to order food for delivery. For those who also have pre-existing challenges related to income, they will need subsidized/free meals or groceries delivered.

The number of people in each category will depend on the type of emergency but having a sense of how many seniors/elders, for example, are currently receiving food deliveries and what agencies they may be connected to facilitates the needs assessment and strategy development process once an emergency occurs.

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#### **Baseline Information for Emergency Food Response Strategy Development**

This table should be completed and updated regularly with as much information as can reasonably be gathered. Having it compiled before an emergency occurs will assist the development of response activities/strategies once the emergency is declared.

Grocery stores that deliver	Delivery area	Delivery cost	Contact
E.g., Nesters			

<sup>23</sup>When restoring food supply, consideration should be given to cultural preferences and dietary restrictions

Other businesses that deliver	Delivery area	Delivery cost	Contact
E.g., Slope Side Supply			

**Approximate # of people using home delivery services (pre-emergency)  
Include who delivers and how.**

Populations Potentially in Need of Food Deliveries	Community Organization Connection(s)	Meals free/low cost	Groceries free/Low cost	Groceries at cost	Meals at cost	Notes
Seniors/Elders						
People who are mobility impaired						
Lower income families with young children						
Those living outside municipal boundaries.						
Street involved						
Immigrant/cultural populations						
People in quarantine						
Women fleeing violence						
Others?						

**Response activities/strategies**

	Consider these options:	Meals free/low cost	Groceries free/Low cost	Groceries at cost	Meals at cost	Notes
Seniors/Elders						
People who are mobility impaired						
Lower income families with young children						
Those living outside municipal boundaries.						
Street involved						
Immigrant/cultural populations						
People in quarantine						
Others?						

## FOOD AFFORDABILITY RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

When there is a disruption to either income, social support programs (e.g., school food programs), or a significant increase in food prices, there will be substantially more people needing access to free or low-cost food in the form of either groceries or prepared meals. Typically, the response to the need for groceries relies on food banks, which are a critical part of the food system, but at times they may not be the most efficient way to meeting people’s needs, particularly when the transportation and distribution of groceries requires additional refrigeration and storage. It can be helpful to consider a range of solutions, starting with income supports (e.g., CERB) and grocery gift cards before moving to prepared meals and food bank support.

	Financial Assistance (i.e., CERB)	Grocery Gift Cards	Emergency Food Vouchers	Free Groceries	Free Meals, School Lunches
Benefits					
Limitations					
Key contacts					

Quantify or qualify pre-emergency use of the potential food affordability **solutions** as much as possible.

Populations Potentially in Need	Community Agency Connections	Financial Assistance (i.e., CERB)	Grocery Gift Cards	Emergency Food Vouchers	Free Groceries	Free Meals, School Lunches	Notes
Elders/Seniors		N/A					
Children and families		N/A					
Street involved		N/A					
Immigrant/ cultural populations		N/A					
Social assistance clients							
Others							



## Appendix II: Key Partners and Contact Information

Below is a list of partners from neighbouring communities as well as regional supports. NOTE: During emergencies, people may be redeployed to new positions so the contacts and contact information may change.

Organization	Position	Contact	Email	Phone
<b>RMOW</b>	Emergency management program staff			
<b>Pemberton Food Bank</b> (part of Sea to Sky Community Services Society)	Program manager			
<b>Squamish Food Bank</b>	Program manager			
<b>Squamish Helping Hands Society</b>	Executive Director			
<b>Squamish Lillooet Regional District</b>	Emergency management program staff			
<b>Village of Pemberton</b>	Emergency management program staff			
<b>District of Squamish</b>	Emergency management program staff			
<b>Lil'wat Nation</b>	Emergency management program staff			
<b>Squamish Nation</b>	Emergency management program staff			
<b>Southern Stl'at'Imx Nation</b>	Southern Stl'at'Imx Health Society			
<b>SLCC</b>	Executive Director			
<b>Vancouver Coastal Health</b>	Senior Policy Strategist, Population Health (Liaison to regional and provincial emergency response networks) Environmental Health Officer (re food safety) Sea to Sky Public Health Dietitian			
<b>Food Banks BC</b>	Executive Director			
<b>Red Cross</b>				
<b>United Way</b> (funders of food programs and food emergency response)				
<b>Vantage Point</b> (provided NGO coordination, advocacy and standardized surveys during the Pandemic)				

# Appendix C: Engaging People with Lived Experience

Engaging Sea to Sky residents living with food insecurity was undertaken to achieve these objectives:

1. Gather lived experiences to:

- Breathe some life into the project findings so there is a clear connection to people rather than just data and information.
- Grow awareness, understanding, and empathy within the region.
- Reduce the stigma associated with food insecurity and food bank use; and
- Provide value to social service agencies beyond the project by increasing FDO support and donations.

2. Ground-truth some of the Food Resiliency Project findings.

A questionnaire was developed and available online and on paper in English, French, Spanish and Ukrainian, which are the most widely used languages by the clients of the Sea to Sky FDOs. A flyer/handout in the same languages was also developed to explain the engagement opportunity, and \$100 grocery store gift cards were used to compensate participants for their time to complete the questionnaire. FDO staff communicated the engagement opportunity (targeting the participant groups below) using the flyer at their food banks/markets, and 44 submissions were received. Once the submissions were reviewed, FDOs purchased and distributed the grocery store gift cards.

## SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE BY SEPT. 25 & GET A \$100 GIFT CARD

Vous parlez français? Vous trouverez au verso des informations dans cette langue.  
¿Habla español? Consulte el reverso para obtener información en ese idioma.  
Розмовляєте українською? Інформацію цієї новою дивіться на звороті.

We are undertaking a project to raise awareness of the importance of dignified food access for everyone, and we are asking those who are experiencing situations of food insecurity to share their experience. Those who do will receive a \$100 gift card to a local grocery store.



**Your privacy:** We will not share any personal details and will combine experiences or only share parts of stories so that others cannot connect the information back to any one person. You will need to share your name and email so we can confirm what you have submitted and issue you the \$100 gift card, but we promise to keep this personal information private.

We know there are many unforeseen and unavoidable reasons that can lead to not being able to make ends meet. We believe that helping others understand this too will:

- Encourage more people who need assistance to seek it by reducing the stigma associated with getting help when times are tough.
- Encourage more people to contribute time or money to support local food initiatives.

Want to participate? Share your experience one of three ways:

1. **Online** at [bit.ly/S2Sfood](http://bit.ly/S2Sfood) or scan the QR code with your phone
2. **On paper** by asking a staff member for a copy
3. **By phone** - email [sgordon@whistlercentre.ca](mailto:sgordon@whistlercentre.ca) to arrange




## PARTAGEZ VOTRE EXPÉRIENCE AVANT DE SEPT. 25 ET RECEVEZ UNE CARTE-CADEAU DE 100\$

Nous entreprenons un projet de sensibilisation à l'importance d'un accès à une alimentation digne pour tous, et nous demandons à ceux qui vivent des situations d'insécurité alimentaire de partager leur expérience. Ceux qui le feront recevront une carte-cadeau de 100 dollars dans une épicerie locale.

**Votre vie privée:** Nous ne partagerons aucun détail personnel et nous combinerons les histoires ou n'en partagerons que des parties afin que d'autres ne puissent pas relier l'information à une personne en particulier. Vous devez nous communiquer votre nom et votre adresse électronique afin que nous puissions confirmer ce que vous avez envoyé et vous remettre la carte-cadeau de 100 dollars, mais nous nous engageons à ne pas divulguer ces informations personnelles.

Si vous souhaitez participer, vous pouvez le faire de trois façons:

1. Visitez [bit.ly/S2Sfood](http://bit.ly/S2Sfood) ou scannez ce code avec votre smartphone;
2. Demandez de l'aide à un membre du personnel si vous préférez remplir un questionnaire sur papier.
3. Envoyez un courriel à [sgordon@whistlercentre.ca](mailto:sgordon@whistlercentre.ca) pour demander à fournir votre histoire par téléphone.




## COMPARTA SU EXPERIENCIA ANTES DE SEPT. 25 Y RECIBA UNA TARJETA REGALO DE 100\$

Estamos emprendiendo un proyecto para concienciar sobre la importancia de un acceso digno a los alimentos para todos, y pedimos a quienes viven situaciones de inseguridad alimentaria que compartan su experiencia. Quienes lo hagan, recibirán una tarjeta regalo de 100 dólares para un supermercado local.

**Tu privacidad:** No compartiremos ningún detalle personal y combinaremos historias o sólo compartiremos partes de historias para que otros no puedan relacionar la información con ninguna persona. Tendrás que darnos tu nombre y tu dirección de correo electrónico para que podamos confirmar lo que has enviado y entregarte la tarjeta regalo de 100 \$, pero nos comprometemos a mantener la privacidad de esta información personal.

Si desea participar, puede hacerlo de tres maneras:

1. Visita [bit.ly/S2Sfood](http://bit.ly/S2Sfood) o escanea este código con tu smartphone;
2. Píde ayuda a un miembro del personal si prefiere rellenar una encuesta en papel.
3. Envíe un correo electrónico a [sgordon@whistlercentre.ca](mailto:sgordon@whistlercentre.ca) para solicitar proporcionar su historia por teléfono.




## ПОДІЛІТЬСЯ СВОЇМ ДОСВІДОМ ТА ОТРИМАЙТЕ (ДО 25 ВЕРЕСНЯ) ПОДАРУНКОВУ КАРТКУ НА \$100

Ми реалізуємо проєкт, спрямований на підвищення обізнаності про важливість гідного доступу до їжі для всіх, і просимо тих, хто стикається з ситуаціями продовольчої незахищеності, поділитися своїм досвідом. Ті, хто це зробить, отримають подарункову картку на \$100 в місцевий продуктовий магазин.

**Ваша конфіденційність:** Ми не будемо ділитися ніякими особистими даними і будемо об'єднувати історії або ділитися тільки частинами історій, щоб інші не могли пов'язати інформацію з конкретною людиною. Вам потрібно буде вказати своє ім'я та адресу електронної пошти, щоб ми могли підтвердити надіслану вами інформацію та видати вам подарункову картку номіналом \$100, але ми об'єцяємо зберігати цю особисту інформацію в таємниці.

Якщо ви хочете взяти участь, ви можете зробити це одним з трьох способів:

1. Відвідайте [bit.ly/S2Sfood](http://bit.ly/S2Sfood) або відскануйте цей код своїм смартфоном;
2. Попросіть співробітника про допомогу, якщо ви бажаєте заповнити опитування на папері;
3. Написати на електронну адресу [sgordon@whistlercentre.ca](mailto:sgordon@whistlercentre.ca) з проханням розповісти свою історію по телефону.



Flyer front page – English content

Flyer back page – French, Spanish and Ukrainian content

## PARTICIPANT GROUPS

FDO staff were asked to encourage a diversity of their clients to complete the questionnaire, with the aim of covering these groups and more: single parents, people with disabilities and/or injuries, seniors, immigrants, and those experiencing homelessness and/or addiction.

## QUESTIONNAIRE CONTENT

The content below was included online and on paper, and translated into French, Spanish, and Ukrainian.

### **Introduction**

Thank you for taking the time to share the challenges and experiences you face. The information you share will NOT be connected to you individually. We will mix your experience with other people's experiences, generalize the content, and remove details that might be connected to you specifically.

### **Please answer these questions to help us understand your experience:**

1. Tell us about yourself, your background, and your connection to the Sea to Sky Corridor. Where did you come from? What brought you here? What do you love? What is most challenging about this place?
2. What challenges have you encountered along the way that have made it hard for you financially?
3. Please describe the impacts of your current financial situation. How does it impact you and your family in terms of quality of life, purchasing decisions, health, etc.? What does it mean for daily/weekly life, and for the longer term?
4. Did your experience during COVID make your situation worse, the same, or better than normal for you? Please explain:
5. How is the increasing cost of living impacting you? What changes (if any) are you being forced to make?

### **A few other questions for you:**

Aside from the challenges of the high cost of food...

1. Do you face barriers where you live to being able to store food or prepare healthy and affordable meals?  
Y / N
2. If yes, what makes it hard to store and/or prepare food where you live?
3. Are you able to access and store enough food at home to last for 3-4 days in case of emergency? Y / N
4. If no, please explain:

### **Contact information**

**Your privacy:** We will not share your name or email with anyone and will combine stories or only share parts of stories so that others cannot connect the information back to any one person. We are requesting your name and email here so we can confirm what you have submitted and issue you the \$100 gift card, but we promise to keep this personal information private.

1. Name
2. Email

Do you want to review the story/experience we write before it is released? Y / N

## LIVED EXPERIENCE NARRATIVES

The lived experience narratives will be released through other communications channels once they have been reviewed and approved by the individuals who provided the input to develop them. .

**WCS** engagement  
+ planning