

Taking a systems view of food security

Professor Louise Signal & Colleagues, 8 July 2021



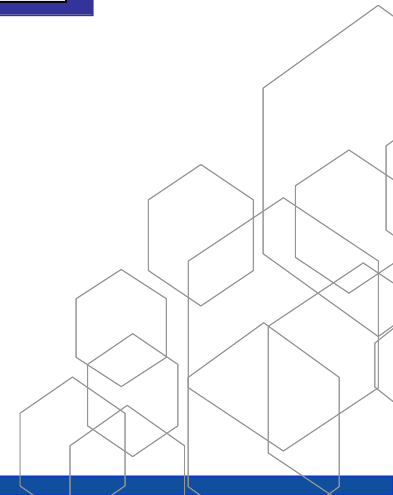
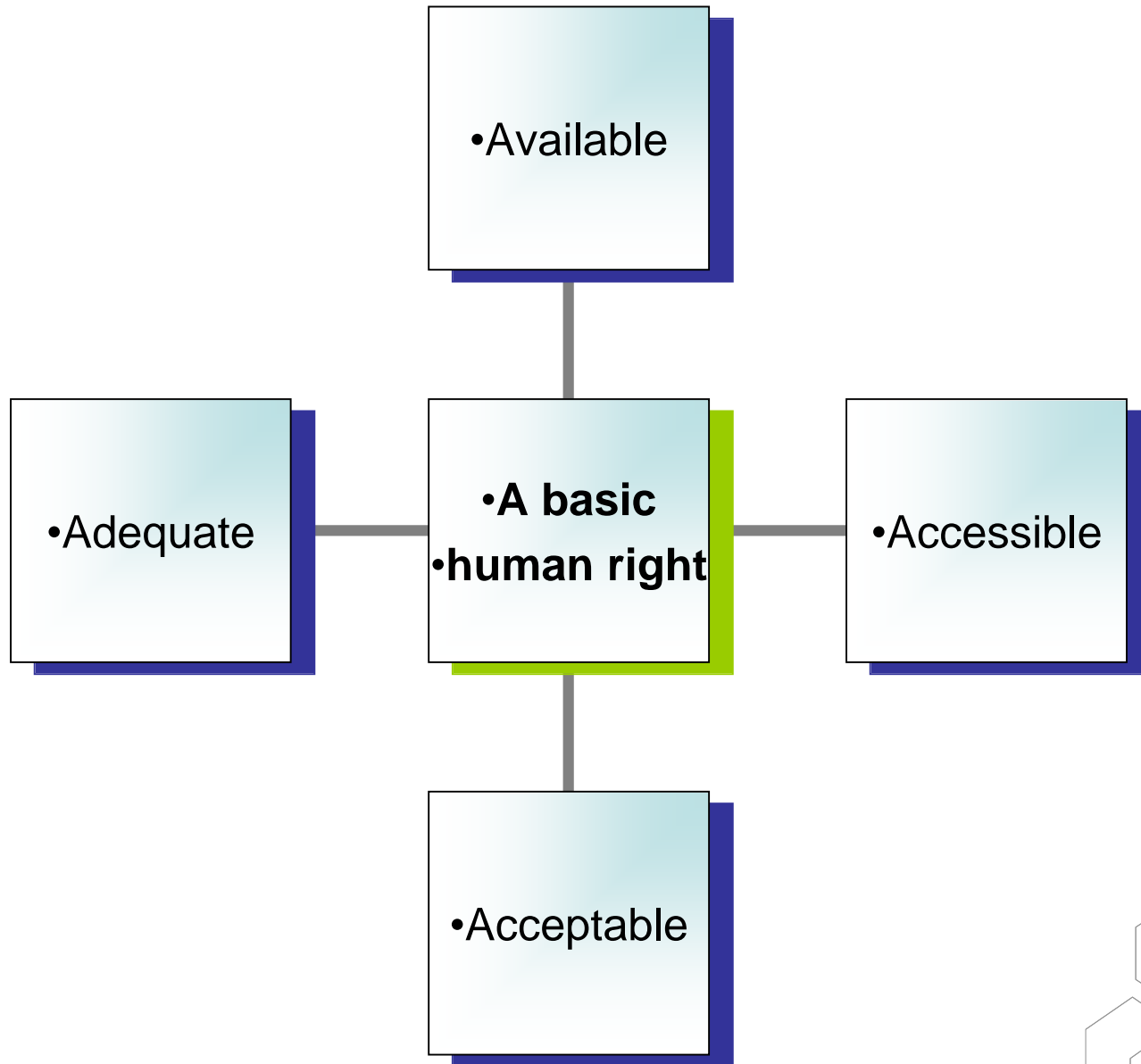
ENHANCE Research Aim

To explore the environmental influences on, and interventions to enhance, food security and physical activity for Māori, Pacific and low-income households

Funded by New Zealand Ministry of Health and Health Research Council



Food security defined



Methods

- Literature review to identify environmental influences
- 9 focus groups - 3 Māori, 3 Pacific & 3 low-income people
 - in absence of robust local data
- Intervention points
- Identified interventions in 3 workshops with 56 key stakeholders from Māori, Pacific & low-income communities; policy-makers; non-governmental organisations; & academics
- Evaluation of potential interventions (literature reviews & key informants)
- Portfolio of policies, programmes & actions
 - i.e. A Comprehensive Systems Approach



Task:

List all the causes of food insecurity



Results: literature review - influences

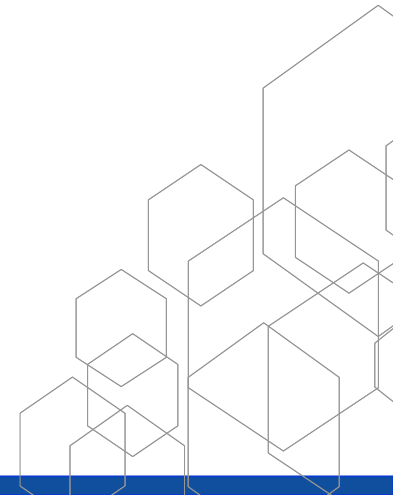
<p><i>Economic:</i> income, employment, expenses & debt, welfare system, housing</p>	<p><i>Physical:</i> health, household facilities, transport, gardens, rural/urban location</p>
<p><i>Social & cultural:</i> skills & time, family, cultural expectations, community, pride/stigma, immigration, food advertising</p>	<p><i>Political:</i> taxation, welfare, policy</p>



Results: focus groups

“It’s all just too hard”

- Desire for better access to healthy food
- Barriers: money, knowledge & skills, habit, time, availability, culture
- Supports: ↑money, ↓cost healthy food, ↑skills & knowledge, gardens
- Solutions needed at multiple levels



Where to intervene?

- Triangulation of literature review & focus group research
- Take a systems approach
- Identify key places (control parameters) for intervention in order to create system-wide change.



Tackling ‘wicked’ health promotion problems: a New Zealand case study

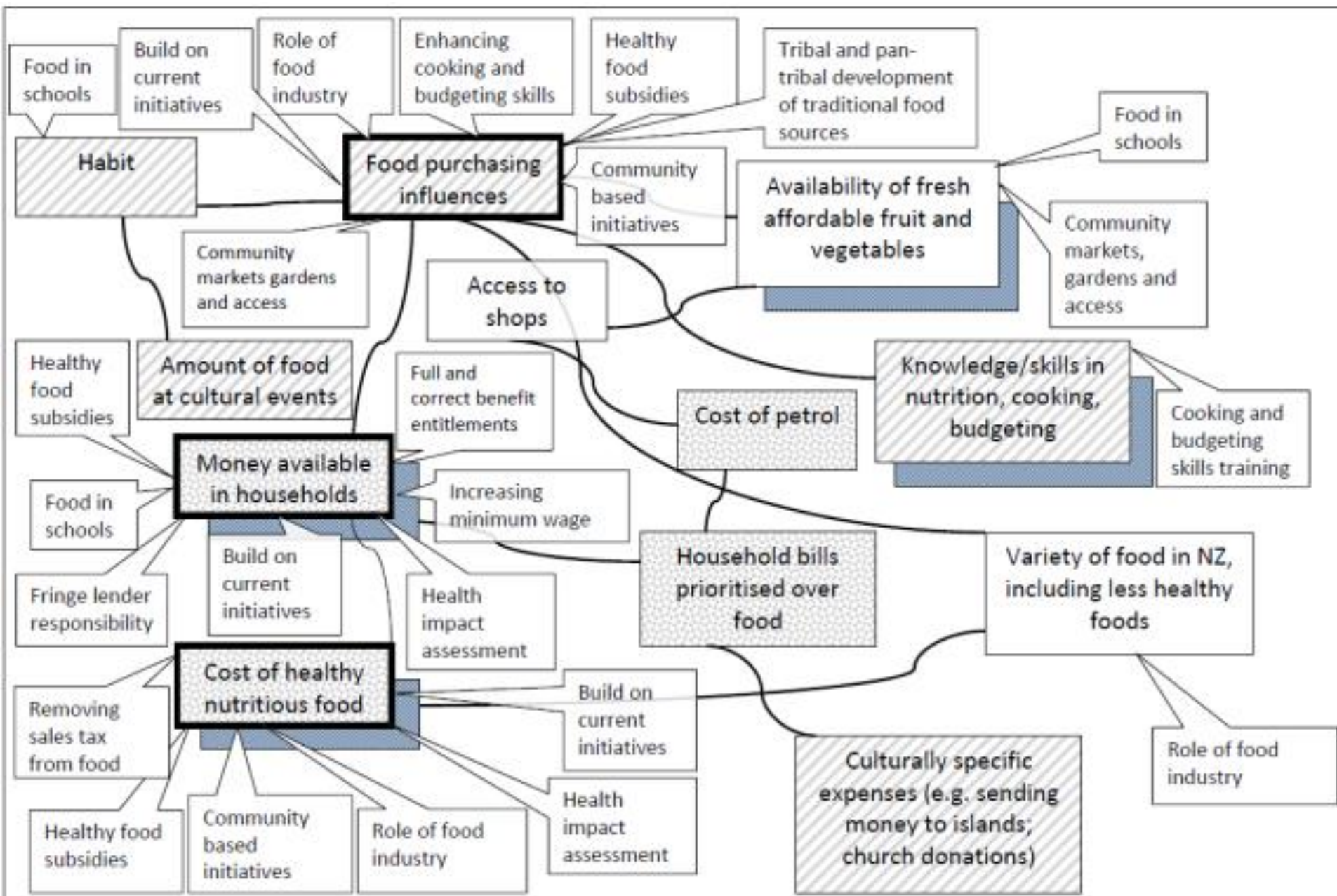
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Food Security System



Three areas identified

- Money available in households
- Cost of healthy, nutritious foods
- Food purchasing influences



Policy paper methods & topics

Methods – literature review & key informant interviews

Topics

- **Money available in households**
 - Fringe lender responsibility
 - Economic instruments
 - Full benefit entitlements
 - Provision of food in schools
- **Food purchasing influences**
 - Iwi development
 - Cooking skills
 - Community markets, gardens, transport and access
- **Cost of healthy nutritious food**
 - Community-based initiatives
 - Role of the food industry

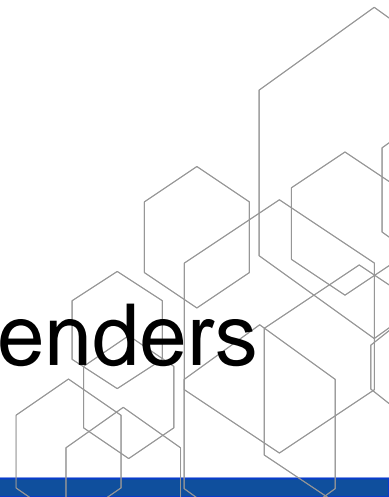


Fringe lender responsibility

- Increase in fringe lenders, e.g. mobile trucks in low-income areas & pay-day lenders, who lend to low-income customers at very high interest rates
- People are borrowing for everyday needs
- Can result in accumulated debt, a culture of debt dependency & increased stress

Recommendations

- Regulation of fringe lenders
- Access to affordable credit
- Financial literacy for users of fringe lenders

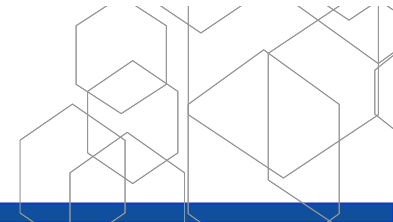


Punching loan sharks on the nose: effective interventions to reduce financial hardship in New Zealand

[Louise Signal](#), [Tolotea Lanumata](#), [Sharron Bowers](#)

2012: 23; 108-111

<https://doi.org/10.1071/HE12108>



Iwi development and food security

- **Māori experience higher rates of food insecurity than non Māori, influenced by higher unemployment rates, low educational attainment and low-incomes**
- **Workshop participants suggested ‘increasing Iwi and other pan-tribal economic development in traditional Māori food sources as possible intervention.**
- **Economic Development can potentially impact in two ways:**
 - **Increase food supply e.g Mataitai reserves, community gardens**
 - **Creation of jobs: e.g land based polyculture, horticulture of taewa/riwai**
- **Area for future consideration and research as it offers some potential for culturally specific interventions.**



Original Article

Enhancing Māori food security using traditional *kai*

Christina McKerchar¹, Sharron Bowers², Craig Heta³,
Louise Signal² and Leonie Matoe⁴

Global Health Promotion 1757-9759; Vol 22(3): 15–24;



Conclusions

Urgent action to ensure food security is required:

- Just as there is no one cause to such wicked problems; likewise, there is no one solution.
- multiple interventions designed to impact across the social system from which food security emerges
- across a range of physical, economic, political and socio-cultural factors
- across government, iwi, pan tribal organisations, community and the food industry
- need strong government leadership to ensure that the rights of all New Zealanders are enacted enabling them to be food secure & live long productive lives in good health.
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