

Functionality Assessment Report: 4 DFNSC's in Zimbabwe

2021



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Executive Summary

The Food and Nutrition Council with support from REACH coordinated inter-district learning from the 18-22 January 2021 in order to enhance knowledge sharing between the districts that are implementing the Multi-sectoral Community Based Model (MCBM) Approach towards stunting reduction. A standardization workshop was held to familiarize districts with the functionality assessment tool so that they prepare the necessary documentation. The table below summarizes the scores:

Core Function	Tsholotsho	Gwanda	Shamva	Mt Darwin	Average Score
1	93	40	33	100	66.5
2	100	87	100	100	96.8
3	93	67	67	100	81.8
4	80	100	80	80	85.0
5	100	70	80	80	82.5
6	70	80	90	100	85.0
7	50	80	30	90	62.5
8	100	50	100	80	82.5
Innovativeness	70	0	60	100	57.5

The major recommendation from this process was strengthening coordination through facilitation of virtual interaction for meetings, reports and messaging. The support required includes airtime, bundles, software and hardware. Furthermore, intra-district integration and collaboration was noted as a key to resource mobilization. The PFNSC needs to support DFNSCs through continuous supervision and capacity building initiatives in collaboration with mentors from the NFNSC.

1. Introduction

Conducting this learning activity was intended to facilitate mutual exchanges amongst the weak and strong functional committees. The four districts that participated in the functionality assessment were selected based on the number of years that they have been implementing the MCBM approach as well as the functional capacity of the team. Mt Darwin and Tsholotsho are amongst the 15 scale-up districts established in 2017 and are thus at a higher functional level than Shamva and Gwanda which were established in 2019. The Mt Darwin and Tsholotsho teams have been very cohesive in terms of multi-sector teamwork, have WFNSCs in place in some wards and are model teams from which the Gwanda and Shamva DFNSC can learn from.

The four-district team attended a one-day virtual workshop convened by the National Food and Nutrition Security Committee, on 14 January 2021, where the functionality tool was discussed and standardized. The virtual functionality assessments were then conducted by District Food and Nutrition Security Committees (DFNSCs) on 19-20 January 2020. Summary reports from the districts indicate that the common gaps identified across the four districts were low advocacy initiative, poor documentation and lack of writing skills.

The benefit from this activity was the facilitation of learning and sharing of best practices that enhance the functionality of teams in their work. The participants who attended the virtual meetings comprised a team of six officers from each district and three Provincial Food and Nutrition Security Members.

District Food and Nutrition Security Committee Functionality Assessment Standardization Meeting

A week before the DFNSC Functionality assessment, a team comprising of NFNSC TWG members committed a day to meet virtually with two members from each of the four districts. The primary intention was to orient committees to the approach and tools that they were going to use during functionality assessment. The standardization meetings were necessary to also ensure a uniform approach to the virtual assessments. The four districts were paired interchangeably as shown in the table below. Each district was allowed to assess its partner district.

Table 1 DFNSC Pairs for Functionality Assessment

Host District	Partner District
Mt Darwin	Shamva
Tsholotsho	Gwanda

To maintain the assessment objective, all DFNSCs were requested not to share functionality scores. The NFNSC undertook upon itself to share the assessment scores through a consolidated feedback report. Assessing DFNSCs was also requested to provide detailed comments and justification for the scores. An automated National DFNSC Functionality tool was used to assess teams.

2. Summary of Assessment of DFNSC Functionality

The teams comprising of six DFNSC members administered the Functionality Assessment tool virtually to evaluate how the other committee was functioning in terms of the eight-core functions outlined in the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy. Although teams used their discretion to score functionality, they needed to provide evidence to support the scores given. The four teams posted through email supporting documents as proof that they were abiding by the key result areas. This, therefore, means that committees that scored high in certain subkey functionality areas had supporting documents/evidence available.

The teams led by either the committee chair or secretariat and supported by their PFNSC members administered the national DFNSC Functionality Assessment tool to evaluate how the other district was performing in terms of the eight-core functions outlined in the FNSP. Below are brief reports summarizing how each FNSC is performing in terms of the eight-core functions.

3.1 Core Function 1: Coordination of food and nutrition security stakeholders at all levels

This core function measured the level of sector representation, ability to mobilize resources for coordination meetings, ability to influence convergence of efforts at ward level, and lastly existence of PPP nurtured by the committee. The Tsholotsho and Mt Darwin DFNSCs scored well on this core function which carries more weight than other Key Result Areas (Figure 1). The only area of weakness was the fact that the Tsholotsho committee did not have the representation of the environmental health department. There was evidence that was indicative of the convergence of efforts in the two districts with Tsholotsho having reported a very successful and effective model village concept, Gwanda and Shamva DFNSC scored below 50% in this key result area. The two districts scored low because in terms of resource mobilization, holding coordination meetings the districts have not made any effort to advocate for support from local stakeholders. There is no evidence that the committee is also influencing and directing who is doing what and where in the district. In the two years they have implemented the MCBM approach they have not managed to foster a Public-Private partnership for FNS. Representation of stakeholders in the FNSC has still not reached the stipulated number as per the FNSC operational manual.

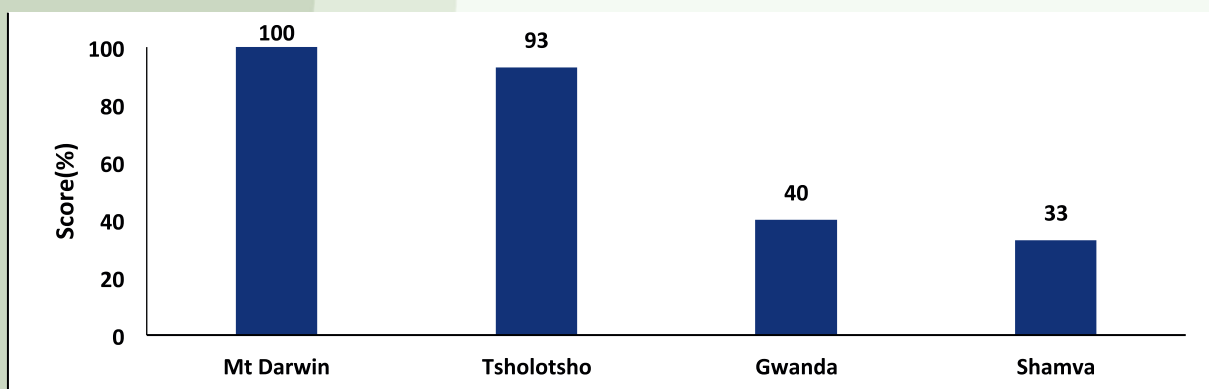


Figure 1 DFNSC Scores on Coordination of food and nutrition security stakeholders at all levels

3.2 Core Function 2: Liaise with sub-national development committees and national level structures on food and nutrition security

All the four DFNSC performed well on this core function. Progress reports and work plans for the period the teams started implementing the MCBM approach were availed and the four districts reported that they were being shared at all levels. In terms of submission of reports from ward level, Gwanda district indicated that the ward food and nutrition committees are not yet functional hence the reason they were scored low.

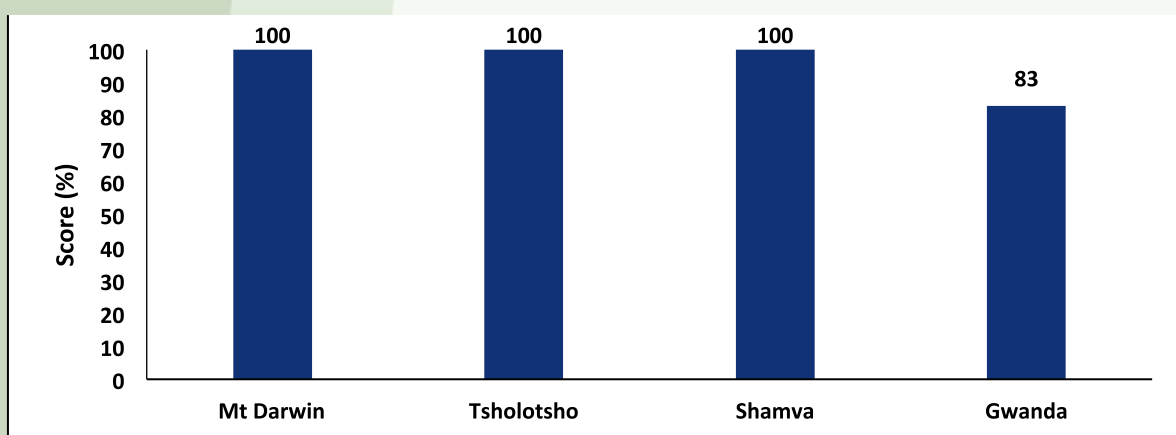


Figure 2 Core Function 2: Liaise with sub-national development committees and national level structures on food and nutrition security

3.3 Core Function 3: Facilitate Prioritization and Planning of Programmes

This core function assesses the link between current DFNSC work plans and progress reports to the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (NFNSP) and other policy documents. It also assesses the capacity to document best practices and how the committee uses evidence from assessments in programming. All the four DFNSCs reported having all the reference material that including the FNSP and other sector-specific policies. Furthermore, their plans were derived from these reference documents. Mt Darwin District and Tsholotsho were scored high because there was evidence of documentation of best practices. All DFNSCs could not avail evidence of current assessments that were initiated by the committee of which findings were used to inform programming in the district. However, results from national assessments such as the ZimVAC Rural Livelihoods assessment results are being utilized to inform programming. There was evidence that the DFNSCs participated in these national assessments.

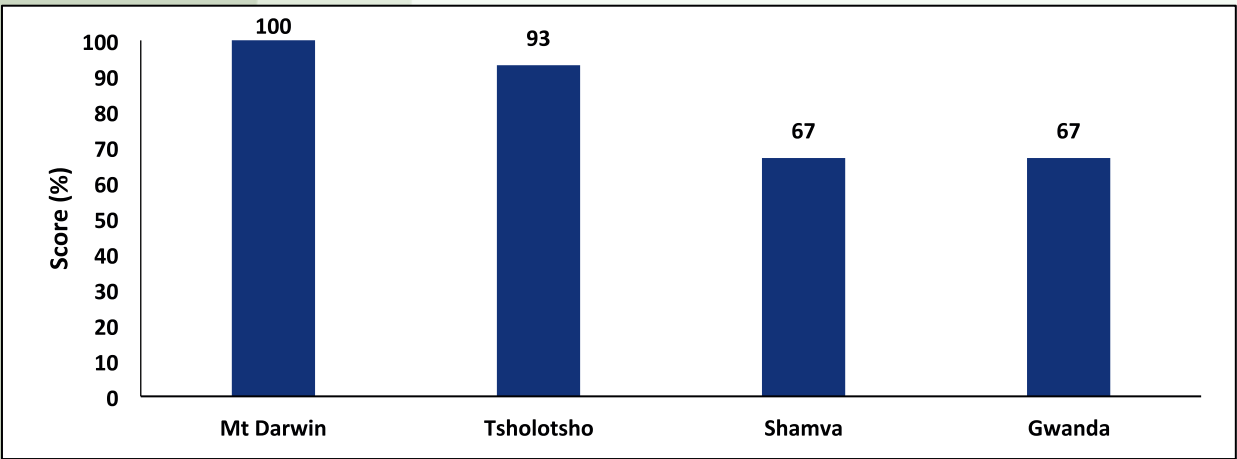


Figure 3 Core Function 3: Facilitate prioritization and planning of programmes

3.4 Core Function 4: Advocate and Communicate

Advocacy and Communication is a cross-cutting issue that is critical for effective uptake and roll-out of any programme. This core function assesses the capacity of DFNSCs to use their advocacy and communication skills to lobby for food and nutrition work visibility and uptake. Tsholotsho district reported having advocated for support towards Food and Nutrition activities from its partners in the district and receiving relevant support to meet the required needs. Through the influence of the committee, the solarization of boreholes was done in some wards in the district. Tsholotsho district extension workers are using social media platforms to communicate about food and nutrition in the district. However, there was no evidence to

support these reports. Shamva scored 80% as it is still very dormant in terms of advocating for FNSC resources from stakeholders. Gwanda is doing very well in this key result area

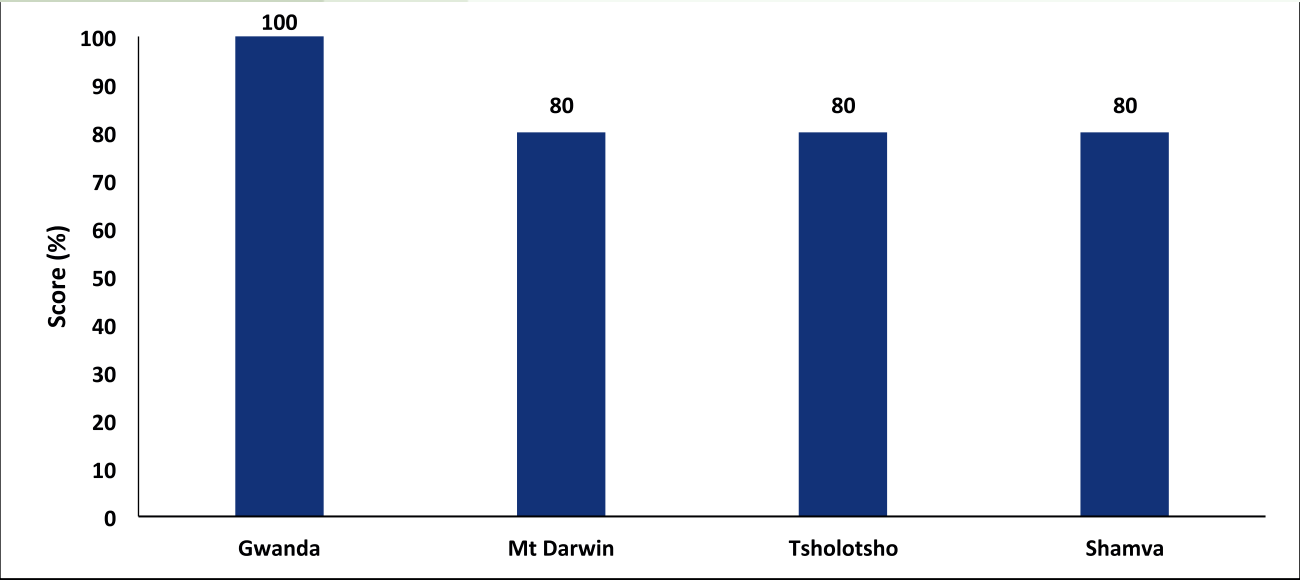


Figure 4 DFNSC Scores on Core Function 4: Advocate & Communication

3.5 Core Function 5: Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programme interventions

The active participation of the DFNSC in the dissemination of findings from all relevant food and nutrition security monitoring and evaluation activities is a critical step towards evidence-based programming. For all the four DFNSCs, there was evidence of information dissemination through reports as well response plans. Tsholotsho district scored well in this key result area as they provide regular reports on food and nutrition security at all levels detailing what each key stakeholder is doing (profile of who is doing what, where, outputs, and impact of activities).

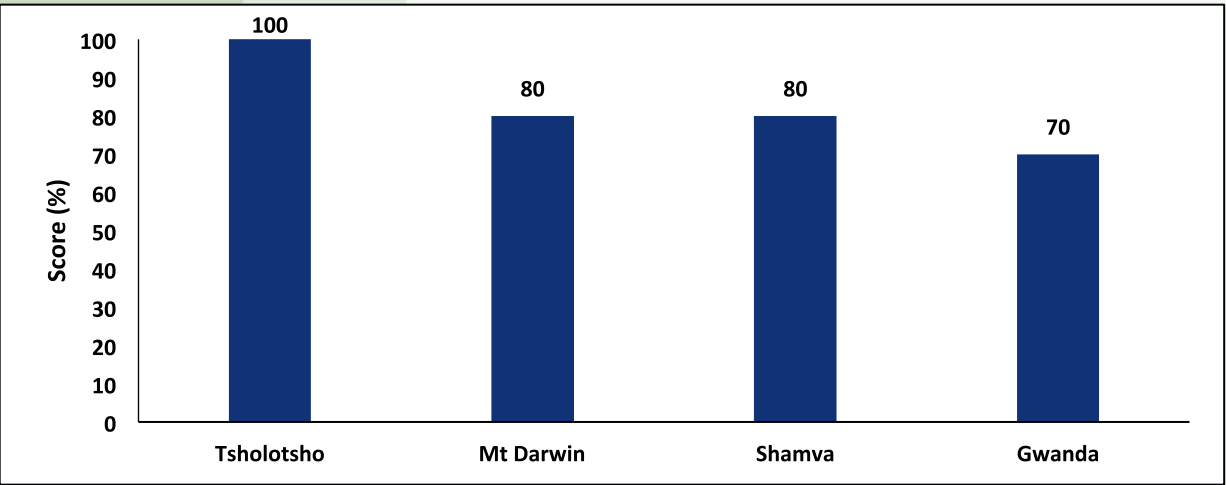


Figure 5 DFNSC Scores on Core Function 5: Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programme interventions

3.6 Core Function 6: Facilitate and participate in food and nutrition security assessments, surveillance, and early warning activities

The four DFNSCs' members participate in data collection and through response action plans shared, there is evidence that the teams are using food and nutrition information from the assessments. It is expected that each district should have an active Civil Protection Unit (CPU) and that the DFNSC should be members of committees such as District Disaster Reduction Committees. All four districts have a COVID-19 Response Team in which the DFNSC sits as well. All four districts reported having these structures actively participating in emergency preparedness activities. There is available evidence of bi-directional feedback communication at all levels across the districts except in Gwanda. There is no sharing of assessment findings between stakeholders, within and or outside Gwanda district. This has restricted appropriate action to be taken by the multisectoral team.

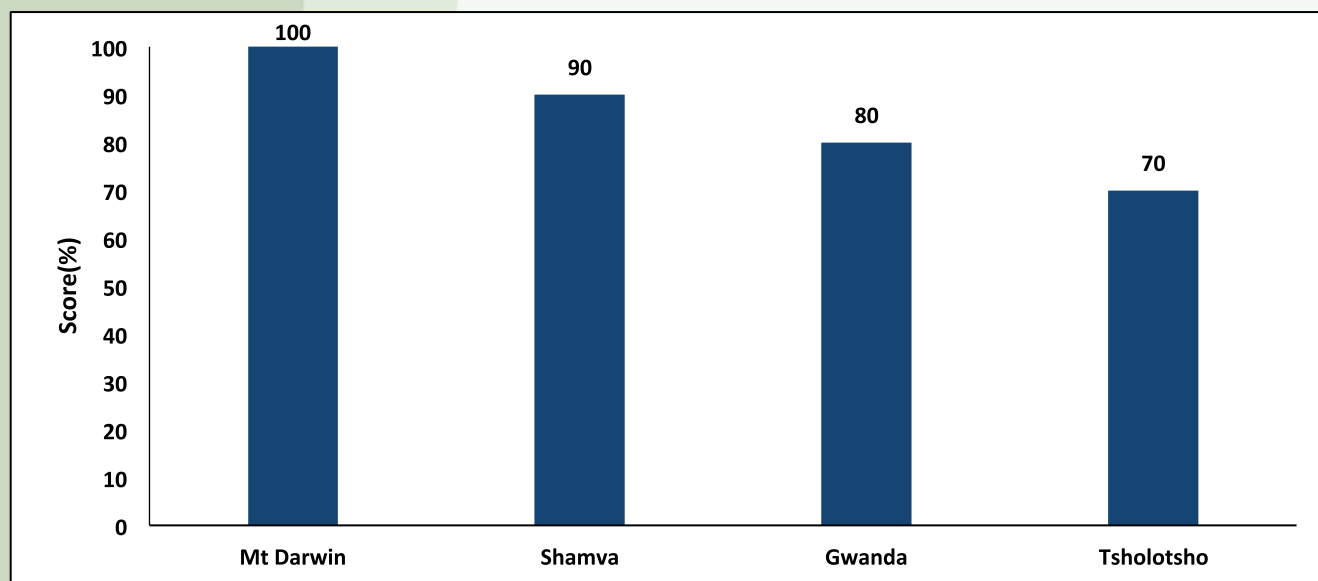


Figure 6 DFNSC Scores on Core Function 6: Facilitate and participate in food and nutrition security assessments, surveillance, and early warning activities

3.7 Core Function 7: Facilitate learning and capacity development

DFNSCs are expected to identify best practices for multi-sectoral action and ensure that these lessons learned are shared and used. In light of the scores attained by DFNSCs in this key result

area, it is evident that capacity gaps exist in terms of documentation of best practices and lessons learned. However, the Mt Darwin DFNSC has managed to share success stories that were published in the first edition of the MCBM Magazine. With support from the NFNSC the district created a documentary that was flighted on national television. They have a social media group that has members from the 10 learning wards. The district uses this platform to facilitate learning across the implementing wards. All the districts are not ensuring sustained capacity development in technical and managerial competencies. They rely mostly on the NFNSC to roll out food and nutrition-related capacity-building.

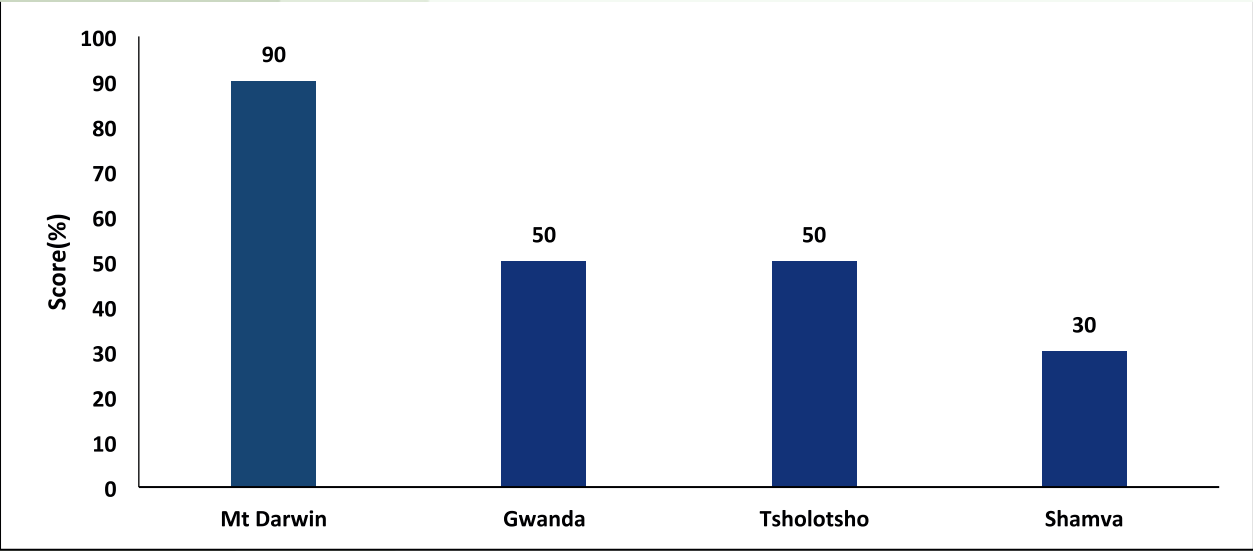


Figure 7 DFNSC Scores on Core Function 7: Facilitate learning and capacity development

3.8 Core Function 8: Ensure that important cross-cutting issues are monitored and integrated into food and nutrition security analysis and programming

The ability to recognize and prioritize cross-cutting topical issues contributes to the creation of an enabling work environment for DFNSCs. Committees are assessed on their role to include how they involve local authorities particularly traditional leaders in food and nutrition activities. All the four districts have made efforts to involve councilors and chiefs in food and nutrition activities. The Social Services department has included partners working in HIV to be part of the committee. Programmes like social cash transfers are HIV/AIDS sensitive. Recognizing that HIV and AIDS is a significant potential driver of vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity is also fundamental to the work of DFNSCs. All the districts are recognizing that women should be the frontline runners in all food and nutrition activities. Gwanda District scored low because they have not incorporated HIV and AIDS as a significant potential driver of vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity in their activities.

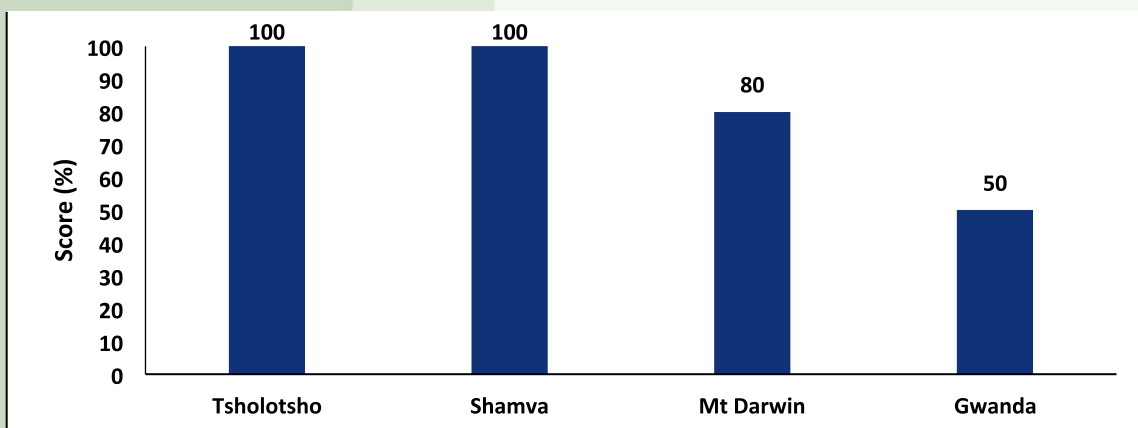
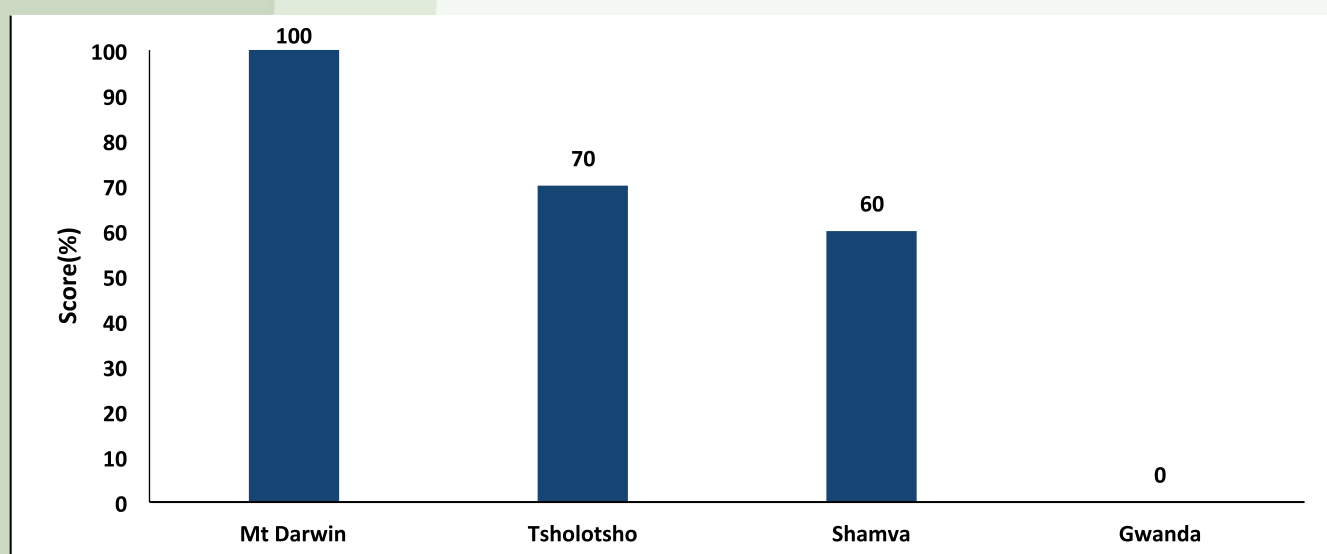


Figure 8 DFNSC Scores on Core Function 8: Ensure that important cross-cutting issues are monitored and integrated into food and nutrition security analysis and programming

3.9 FNSC Innovativeness

The ability of the FNSC to initiate activities around food and nutrition with minimum guidance from other higher structures was used as an indicator of innovativeness. The scores attained are not included in scoring functionality. Mt Darwin reported employing innovative strategies to gain support from local partners and stakeholders. Several positive community projects are being implemented as a result of the DFNSC advocacy and communication initiatives.



3. Best Performing District by Core Function

Results of the functionality assessment were used to identify best-performing districts as well as those that may need support. Below is a table highlighting the best-performing districts by core function. The list will be used to help DFNSCs pick districts where they can learn from.

Table 2: Best Performing Districts

FNSC Core Function	Best Performing District	DFNSC That might need Support
Coordination of Food and Nutrition Stakeholders at all levels	Mt Darwin	Shamva
Liaise with sub-national development committees and national level structures on food and nutrition security	All Districts	
Facilitate prioritization and planning of programmes	Mt Darwin	Shamva, Gwanda
Advocate and Communicate	All Districts	
Monitor and Evaluate effectiveness of programme interventions	Tsholotsho	Gwanda
Facilitate and participate in food and nutrition security assessments, surveillance and early warning activities		
Facilitate learning and capacity Development	Mt Darwin	Gwanda, Tsholotsho, Shamva
Ensure that important cross cutting issues are monitored and integrated into food and nutrition security analysis and programming	Tsholotsho	Gwanda
DFNSC Innovatiness	Mt Darwin	Tsholotsho, Gwanda, Shamva

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Figure 9 and Figure 10 show than Mt Darwin & Tsholotsho performed better than Shamva and Gwanda. Gwanda DFNSC had more weaknesses than Shamva.



Figure 9 Comparison of DFNSCs established in 2017

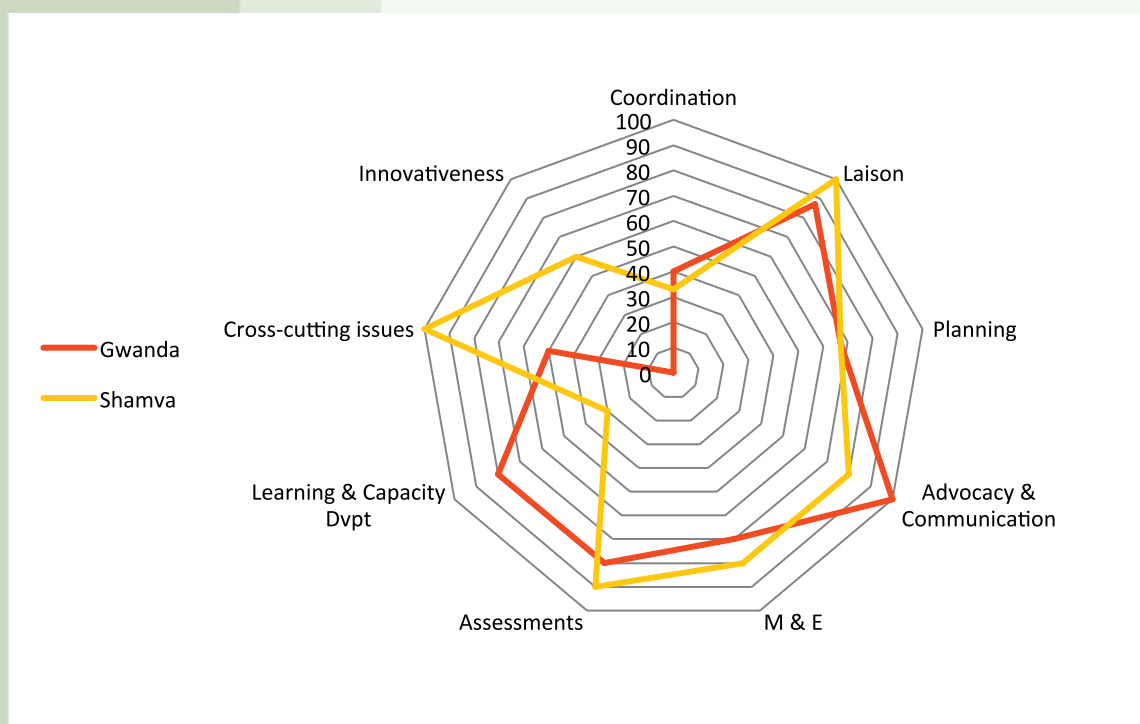


Figure 10 Comparison of DFNSCs established in 2019

5.1 Learning Opportunities in Nutrition-Sensitive Interventions

Based on the presentations and discussions on achievements, districts identified opportunities to learn from each other:

1. Gwanda DFNSC team indicated that they would like to learn more about coordinating WFNSCs from Tsholotsho & Mt Darwin. Furthermore, how to establish model villages as described by Tsholotsho District.
2. Shamva and Gwanda indicated the need to learn about the care group model from Mt Darwin.
3. Mt Darwin indicated that they would like to learn about Non-Timber Forest Products from Tsholotsho.

5.2 Ways of Enhancing Functionality

The DFNSCs identified the following issues as ways of improving functionality:

1. There is need to train personnel and to use appropriate equipment and software for virtual meetings. Furthermore, provide airtime and bundles for meetings
2. There is need for FNC to create a bulk SMS platform for interaction among PFNSCs, DFNSCs and WFNSCs to enhance communication of activities and requests for reports and extension of messages.
3. There is need for an online reporting system (similar to NRTM).
4. DFNSCs need to improve integration of activities with partners in order for efficient use of resources.
5. Hold regular FNSC meetings.
6. There is need for resources for mobility, monitoring and evaluation of projects and activities. Furthermore, there is need to mobilize resources for nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions.

5.3 Support Required from PFNSC by DFNSCs

The DFNSCs noted that they would need the following support from the PFNSC:

1. PFNSC to support resource mobilization effort by DFNSC for constraint removal resources, as well as provision of laptops and stationery.
2. PFNSC to second members to periodically attend DFNSC meetings for support and supervision.
3. PFNSC should conduct refresher trainings for DFNSC members together with mentors.

5.4 Opportunities of resource mobilization at District Level

The DFNSCs identified the following strategies to increase chances of resources mobilization:

1. Having clear, coordinated and costed plans in order to enhance integration, collaboration and joint implementation of related activities. This needs to be supported through engagement of all district stakeholders and drawing up a budget for activities to be cascaded horizontally and vertically.
2. DFNSCs need to be trained on proposal writing and resource mobilization.
3. Increase community and private sector involvement in food and nutrition activities.

6. Participants' Evaluation of the Virtual Functionality Assessment

On a scale of 1-5 the participants rated the process in terms of connectivity, meeting objectives and future ability to conduct a virtual assessment using Mentimeter® tool. Figure 11 shows the results.

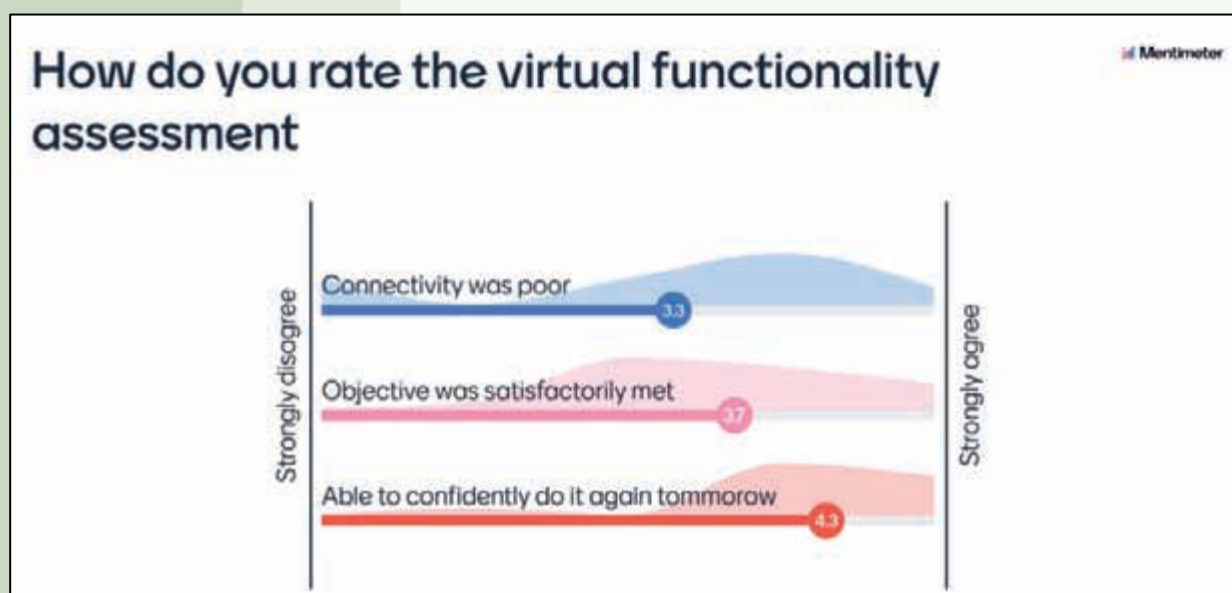


Figure 11 Results from evaluation

The participants were asked to describe their overall experience with the virtual assessment. The results are shown in Figure 12 below.

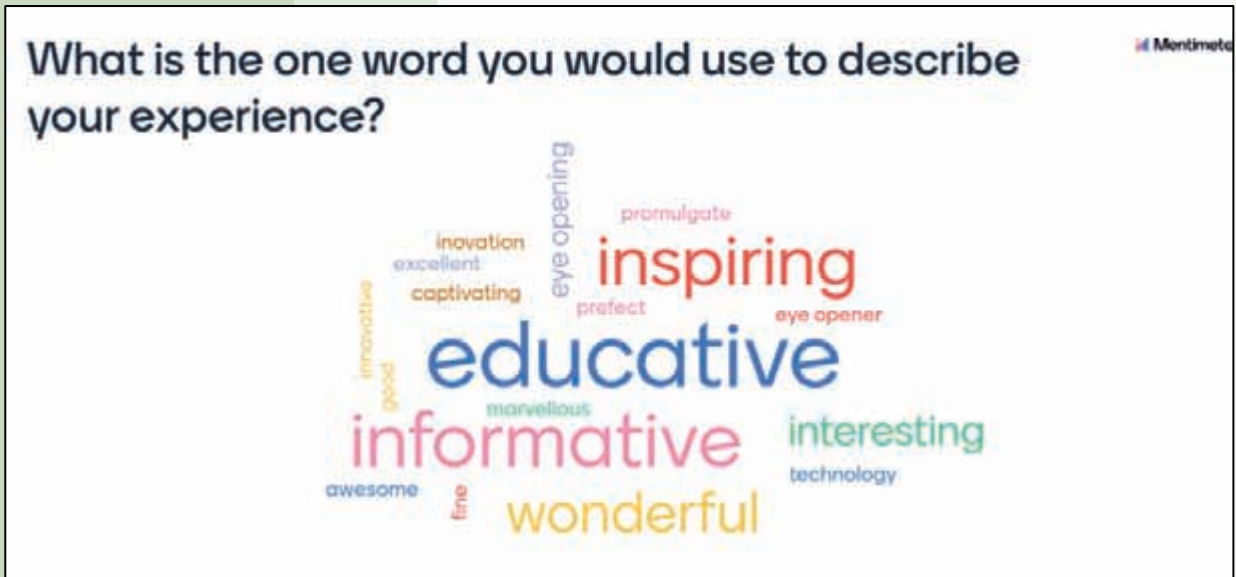


Figure 12 Overall experience of Participants

Annex 1: List of Participants

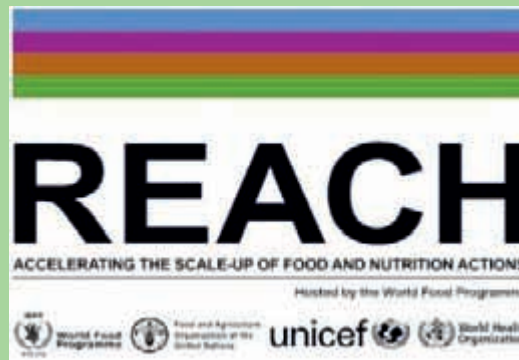
District	Ministry/Sector/Organisation	First Name	Last Name	Cell Number	Email
Gwanda	Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare	Alex	Ushendibaba	263775352550	alexushendibabab@gmail.com
Gwanda	Forestry Commission	Fortunes Felix	Matutu	713886195	matutufelix@gmail.com
Gwanda	Agritex	Geoffrey	Hove	779024408	geofreyjoe@yahoo.com
Gwanda	Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare	Golden Mugove	Mapanga	772245176	gmmapanga@gmail.com
Gwanda	Ministry of Health and Child Care	Jubilent	Jacha	775816616	ndukwanajubie@gmail.com
Gwanda	Women Affairs, Community Small and Medium Enterprise Development	Sipho	Maposa	773638008	siemapho@gmail.com
Mount Darwin	Forestry Commission	Chrispen	Nyangombe	774042431	chrisnyyangombe@gmail.com
Mount Darwin	Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare	Karison	Kambumbu	774110469	kkambumbu@gmail.com
Mount Darwin	Youth Sport Arts and Recreation	Linia	Matare	775347031	liniamatare@gmail.com
Mount Darwin	Ministry of Health and Child Care	Munashe	Kapasura	771694312	munashekapasura@gmail.com
Mount Darwin	Women Affairs Community Small and Medium Enterprises Development	Oscar Jonathan	Manyepwa	773043229	oscarmanyepwa@gmail.com
Mount Darwin	Local Government	Sashar	Zvomuya	772725569	sasharzvomus@gmail.com
Mat North	Local Government	Dhasai	Parenda	774670859	dparenda055@gmail.com
Mat North	Health and Child Care	Elizabeth	Katuruza	779071868	ekaturuza@gmail.com
Mat South	Health and Child Care	Innocent	mazarura	772600880	imazarura@gmail.com
Mat South	Local Government	Nomathemba	Ndlovu	784407793	mdunoma77@gmail.com
Mash Central	Health and Child Care	Shingirai	Mikiri	772580805	mikirishingirai@gmail.com
Mat North	Agritex	Mapira	Charity	772319763	chamapira@gmail.com
Shamva	Agritex	Darlington	Tungwana	774052869	tungwanadarlington@gmail.com
Shamva	Local Government	Gladys	Mapfumo	774273888	mapfumogladys9@gmail.com
Shamva	Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare	Grenia	Chaomba	0713019282 /0774654688	grenchaomba@gmail.com
Shamva	Health and Child Care	Margaret	Mhlanga	774025651	margaretmhlanga@gmail.com

District	Ministry/Sector/Organisation	First Name	Last Name	Cell Number	Email
Shamva	Ministry of women affairs, community, small and medium enterprise development	Simbisai	Ndige	772855252	simbisaindige8@gmail.com
Shamva	Primary and secondary Education	Victor	Mugiya	773434942	mugiyav@gmail.com
Tsholotsho	Tsholotsho RDC	Linnet	Banda	772319962	linnetdebby47@gmail.com
Tsholotsho	Ministry of Health and Child Care	Mbonisi	Ncube	773494888	mbonisijason084@gmail.com
Tsholotsho	Agriculture	Rachel	Sibanda	772387813	rachiesn@yahoo.com
Tsholotsho	Local Government	Aaron	Gono	774011392	gonoaaron69@gmail.com
Tsholotsho	Health and Child Care	Nomsa Lee	Tauya	775041207	leetauya@gmail.com
Tsholotsho	Department of Social Development	Varaidzo	Mahachi	777670396	mahacheev@gmail.com
National	Food and Nutrition Council	Alfa	Ndlovu	773700866	ndlovualfah@gmail.com
National	FNC	Eulita	Tivafukidze	0772 850980	eulitativa@gmail.com
National	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare	Mary	Takangovada	773385346	
National	Min of Agric	Nester	Gumbo	0772 728 717	gumbonester@gmail.com
National	FNC	Rangarirai	Mureya	779622600	rmureya@gmail.com
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