



Fresh  
offerings

*Poems on food, agency and  
urgency*



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Vuyokazi Ngemntu  
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Maluviwe Aviiwe Dibela  
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Luleka Zepe

in collaboration with



poetry is medicine



## Introduction

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Straddling ways of knowing  
we step into the battle,  
the dance, the act.

Wooden spoons in hand, we  
approach the podium.

Laptops in tow, we enter the  
kitchen.

One thing we're all sure of:  
We cannot do this alone.

So, that said,

This collection of offerings  
from poets, praise singers,  
feelers, storytellers and  
humxns of the Cape  
represents a small step in a  
process of engagement

between research and  
reality, statistics and the  
soul.

Nothing grand.  
Just the outcomes of three  
days spent together, as  
regular people, trying to  
unpack a 163 page report  
detailing our own lived  
realities with food, hunger  
and community.

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## THE FACTS

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Dylan McXabe

**M**atriarchal bonds on scorched land.  
Repossessed houses  
on dispossessed land  
Landless Farmers  
Nutrient-deficient food  
A lived experience of dichotomy  
These are the facts  
Presented by F.A.C.T

## A HOME WITHOUT A DINNER TABLE

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Bonang Libuke

**A**n onion and tomato from  
Ma Dlamini next door.  
I know Mother had to cut through her  
pride to ask for it.

Two blocks of stock cubes from  
uMy Friend.  
The last of Father's earnings.

Maize meal from uMzala in a  
lunchbox.  
The same lunchbox contains the sore  
heart uMzala handed me the lunchbox  
with, because she would have to carry  
her lunchbox to another home in the  
days to come.

After a few aromas bouncing in  
the air, mother calls to hand us a  
noble plate of food.  
We eat from our laps.

Those with homes without dinner tables  
do not eat for joy,  
or to become healthier.

They eat to survive.  
With raging appetite  
and numb taste buds,  
they swallow chunks of food  
along with their humanity.



MAAGIES VOL OEGIES  
TOE...

---

Amy Brown Hendrickse

**K**innes moet nie KOS Mors nie.  
Daar is kinnes wat nie KOS he nie  
Papa sê hy werk hard vir ons Kos  
Daar is papa's wat nie werk het nie

Ek verstaan die misverstand  
Dit het begin gister man  
Toe die Ander mister van 'n different  
land  
hier beland. En hier beplan  
My mag kreen se lied wag reën  
Die note is 'n mondvoll,

Kinnes moet nie KOS Mors nie.  
Daar is kinnes wat nie KOS he nie

Papa sê hy werk hard vir ons Kos  
Daar is papa's wat nie werk het nie

—  
Ek verstaan die social distance man  
Kneeval vir afhaal in a different tongue.  
Vra Ancients vir 'n vleistuk oppie  
Krismis lunch.  
Die kortjies is raasende Maggie's.

Kinnes moet nie KOS Mors nie.  
Daar is kinnes wat nie KOS he nie  
Papa sê hy werk hard vir ons Kos  
Daar is papa's wat nie werk he

—  
Kinnes moet nie KOS Mors nie.  
Daar is kinnes wat nie KOS he nie  
Papa sê hy werk hard vir ons Kos  
Daar is papa's wat nie werk het nie

—  
Ek verstaanie die shit nie man  
Wats statistics vir 'n illiterate man  
5 bop chips 'n pakkie biscuits man  
Laaities sing liedtjies van gee 'n stukkie

Kinnes moet nie KOS Mors nie.

Daar is kinnes wat nie KOS he nie  
Papa sê hy werk hard vir ons Kos  
Daar is papa's wat nie werk het nie

Ek verstaan net hoe om niks te plant  
Sal my misgis om my te risk op hierdie  
system, son.  
San-Khoi se tjind het lanklaas vis  
gevang

Kinnes moet nie KOS Mors nie.  
Daar is kinnes wat nie KOS he nie  
Papa sê hy werk hard vir ons Kos  
Daar is papa's wat nie werk het nie



## WHO CARRIES THE BURDEN?

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Khuthala Bokolo

**N**di busy ndenza was goed  
yamalweyile.

Ndomelwe ngumqa ngokungazi uba  
ndizodibanisa ntoni phi njani kwimbiza  
yangokuhlwa.

Ngalentseni bendiqongqotha ipheyile  
lomilimili.

Kanti dololo kwaswekile leyo  
ebendithembe uvubisa ngayo kwipapa.

Ngapha zizikhalazo ngoo 'Mama  
ndilambile ndiyagodola ndipepeke  
ulikuwe undinyathele.

## HUNGER STRIKES

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Jerome Coetzee

**H**unger strikes not as a number  
but as organs folding into each other

Intestines removing spaces  
Hugging each other

Acknowledging that I survive  
with my neighbour

You speak of hunger  
We talk about feeling, embracing,  
surviving, overcoming, hunger.

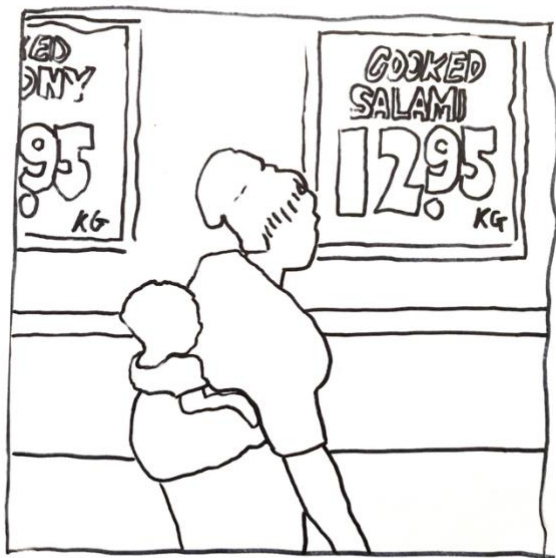
## ENDLALENI

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Vuyokazi Ngemntu

**M**ama

Lendlala iyalumeza  
A screeching silence  
fills the big pot  
My dignity feels naked  
Has the land forsaken us?  
Home is synonymous with drought.  
A growling belly symphony  
Khanivuseni ikat' eziko  
Tata, kwawubuye  
Netyetyisiweyo.



ROASTED  
ONION

95

KG

COOKED  
SALAMI

1295

KG

## INTERVIEWING STATISTICS

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Sanelisiwe Nyaba

**Q:**

So, what would you say to them?

**A:**

I would tell them that I am angry. That I am confused. And it does not help that I am hungry and that things are bad, things have always been bad. For someone like me, for people like me.

**Q:**

Oh, I am so sorry.

**A:**

You are sorry?

What are you sorry for?

Don't you dare feel sorry for me

I don't want to be felt sorry for.

Do not reduce me

with your pity

That is the shame

that is you shaming me into crumpled  
piece of paper

I am nothing like you think

I am not my hunger

and yet I have no choice

I am stuck in this sand filled box

the sand is made out of your pity

and it drowns me

for supper tonight I will have the sand  
in my mouth

**Q:**

Slow down, what do you want? Why  
are you shouting? Why are you so  
angry?

**A:**

I am not angry dammit  
I am hungry for more  
more for myself  
more for my people  
don't you see?  
don't you see the hunger in my eyes?  
in the way I breath  
in the way I talk  
I am consumed  
sometimes I do not know who I am  
sometimes I wish I was someone else  
someone better  
someone freer  
someone who can get up and say,  
let's go somewhere  
anywhere, that is far away from here  
without thinking about money  
and where my next meal will come  
from  
I cannot breath



can you not see?  
I am barely breathing  
do you care?  
do you really care?

## FACTPOLICY SHEETBRIEF

---

Luke Metelerkamp

**A**ccess to  
want to see Ward 41

1, 2, 3

Want to see  
access to percentage of community  
soup kitchens

Early childhood headed mothers

During Covid-19  
lockdown rates increased  
disproportionately to the gender-  
sensitive, feminist, livelihood coping  
strategies.

To put food on the table  
on average  
improvement in  
markets for land and urban food  
production.

Food related environments challenge  
their community centered networks.

Depression sets in:  
Forget the risks of crime and  
malnutrition *my own hand* has a  
deadly vision for food-policy reform.

Thankfully,  
however,  
food-sensitive mapping related  
challenges concentrated around the  
shopping mall.

While mall-sensitive planning centralized around food sensitive depression, anxiety and hunger.

Recommendations for better food safety intergovernmental panel on integrated development foundations highlighted the need to take the situation seriously.

Moving from one crisis to another fortunately the protracted pandemic polycrisis protected multi-lateral livelihoods.

Informal traders were participants, 435% of whom were marginalized, disembodied results.

Providing, in their absence, a summarized snapshot of the significant situation

## PANDEMIC OF HUNGER

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Luxolo Witvoet

**T**he pandemic of hunger  
Hunger is bigger than the virus  
Violence searches for food  
Struggles, heartbreaking  
Women give their bodies for food  
1994 the end of the poor and landless  
black farmers?  
Production  
Processing  
Distribution  
Preparation  
Consumption

Food and food systems  
Structural inequalities  
Uneven power relations  
Power  
Race  
Class  
Gender, collective traumas  
Pre-existing food injustices  
Shaping food governance

The people want food reimagined  
systems  
Mfuleni, Khayelitsha, Mitchell's Plain,  
Gugulethu, St Helena Bay  
When will the wind blow sand in-  
between your shrubs

## PART OF THE BODY

---

Jerome Coetzee

**W**e do not plant flowers  
We plough the streets that have been  
made poor

On the right side of the land  
hands that shape the soil with beauty

On the left side of the land  
bodies that merge on the streets in  
struggle and hope

Part of the body  
Part of the land

## MR CORPORATION

---

Vuyokazi Ngemntu

**M**<sub>r</sub> corporation?

Why does my hunger feed your greed?

Why make of my body fertile ground  
for your sterile seed?

My perpetually aching belly  
always empty

You muffle my cries  
with your gestures and lies

My emaciated limbs

It's the little things  
like structural inequality

and life quality

The indignity of our indigence



The cause and the consequence  
The effects ripple  
While we the people  
succumb to despair.  
You don't even care,  
Mr corporation.

## DANCE FOR OURS

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Ayabulela Zonke

Let us dance for ours

let it speak its mind  
colour its thought

let it channel its path  
in the purist form

let it shower its growth  
away from its norm

let it soil its feast

with eternal applaud

let it forever its touch  
as we plough its greed

unveil its mourning;  
through mystical chambers  
a sign of peace;  
for once I feel;  
rather alive and well

as we dance for ours

## SING THE SONG

---

Thimna Matika

**L**ittle one

You always have a song  
in your heart

Sing that song,  
like the art of you heart  
which it is

Sing from your heart  
that the rain is silky  
wet and slippery

On cold days we lament  
its icy command  
We gather fire and around it

We gather  
At war with the weather

How graceful the rain  
that everything it touches  
Rain comes singing from the heavens  
When it touches the soil  
Breaks into song  
The earth breathes life  
and gives life  
To a varying variety vegetation,  
fruit and flowers  
Rain nourishes as soul as it fills the  
rivers and flow into ocean  
The earth sings the glorious song  
of grace and growth

Its magical  
how we receive  
magical blessings  
for new life  
for fruition and growth  
Break into song when the cold rain  
touches your skin  
Feel the magic

It's happening  
around you

HUNGER I'M NOT YOUR  
VICTIM!

---

Maluviwe Aviiwe Dibela

**M**y tummy never smiled  
Since birth it never laughed  
How can I ever love  
When death is the only thing I love  
It's been my mind's friend  
The cure of this pain  
Oh yes it's a pain  
Tears are my friend  
Tears are my friend  
Oh it's no longer the same  
Since my father's death

All I experience is pain  
Not because of his death  
But because of the fear of dying  
Dying from starving  
Yes hunger has been striking

My tummy never smiled  
Oh my heart has been swimming in  
blood  
Sinking in pain  
My efforts in vain  
How do I get over this pain?  
Hungry stomach  
Empty pocket  
The empty buckets  
Empty cupboards  
You'd swear I'm a robot  
No food, no drink  
Just a pain and pills  
I don't even know what's a bill  
Imeko imaxongo  
Kunini inyembezi ndizixhaphile  
Emphufumlweni sele ndixhalabile  
I mean how many people have died?  
How many people are depressed?  
This pain is real



Hunger, we're not your victims

Even though you've dug a grave in my  
stomach

Deep as my father's grave  
You leave trails on my stomach  
There's a pain on my tummy  
Hunger you leave tracks

I picture death

Yes death

Khawundiyeke

Kngcono ndizifele

You're never gonna kill me

I'm not your victim

Don't you dare victimize me

If this is a war then bring it on

Bring it on I'm not a spoilt brat

I know the hardships of life

So Imma face you heads on

Hands off

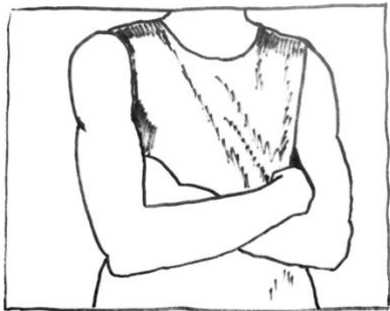
This is not a physical fight

Rather call it an emotional one

Coz emotionally you've been attacking

You've been striking

Leaving my heart bleeding  
My tummy groaning  
In pain sinking  
Hunger I'm not your victims I rather be  
a victim of death  
Kaloku Sele ndiyintlekisa ekuhlaleni  
Kantt thixo wawundisaphi emhlabeni ?  
Kungoku komile emqaleni



## FIGHT!

---

Yolanda Magazi

**F**ight!

Food injustice

Droughts hit tables

Fight food insecurity

Time waits for no man, fight

Fight!

Retain power

Fight injustice, hunger

Time for agency

Fight

Raise your voice let it scream.

I see resilience, imagine

Fight food injustice

Fight for unemployment  
Raise your voice make it count .

Fight!  
Stand up  
Food insecurity exists  
Unemployment exists, whats done?  
Lack of nutrition exists, Wake up!  
Lord intervene !  
These battles are beyond us

Fight!  
Food categories  
For different people  
Food injustice is a battle  
Fight for what you deserve  
The fight goes on it's only the start  
Fight ! Fight  
Fight

## WHAT WENT WRONG?

---

Luleka Zepe

**W**e're coming from Africa  
We are in Africa  
Greetings my brothers and sisters  
When I saw you  
My tears ran down my cheeks  
I wanted to cry  
But was ashamed  
When I saw you  
So hopeless and helpless!  
Where are we gonna go  
Our forefathers land is abandoned

and dry  
Their fields are dry and dead!  
While our families are dying of hunger!  
What went wrong?  
Where did we go wrong?  
Where did we lose it?  
Let's go back to our roots  
( Masibuyel' Embo)  
There were rains!  
People were happy  
They ate from their harvesting!  
Eating their watermelons!  
Helping each other

Today we are crying

Is it a Xhosa lament?  
No its not a Xhosa lament  
Its a whole Nation  
We all crying for the same thing  
We are dying of hunger  
We have been crying  
We fought so many battles and won  
We defeated our enemies  
This fight of hunger  
Why don't we fight it?

Lets all stand and fight together!  
Why did we neglect our rivers?  
Why did we neglect our land?  
Why did we neglect our Nature?  
Why did we neglect our Nature, our  
mother?  
Oh Mother Nature  
Why did you let us ignore you  
Oh Mother Nature  
Why my people ?  
Why did we flow with the flow of the  
Western road?  
Why did we neglected our Nature?  
Why did we neglected our rivers?

Let's get together and  
recreate that which we lost and  
Protect the little we have!

Can we wait for government ?  
That will be forever

Can I do it alone  
That will not be enough

Can we do it together?  
That will be enough for all of us!





## WE ARE NOT HUNGRY

---

Thimna Matika

Famine

Oh Africa laments on  
Scarcity of food  
The fruits of the earth

Deprived  
Not equally shared  
How we've come to this disaster  
We have not anticipated

From hand to mouth  
Never enough for the whole house  
The beauty and gifts of the earth  
are not ours

Soldiers in aprons  
and big spoons  
Steering large pots  
for communities

Mothers  
at the forefront of the warfare  
Before the world realises  
that this is war

Spear on  
community kitchens  
Spear on  
the hunger

We are not hungry  
A wave of hunger engulfed  
African nations long along  
We are faint from hunger

For knowledge of ourselves  
We are hungry  
From deprivation  
From elimination from world history

For knowledge of our spiritual ways  
We are hungry  
From decolorisation  
We are lost with no history and  
direction

## Ndiphaka Nje

---

Thimna Matika

**N**diphaka nje

iSizwe silambile

Sizwe esi sisinike olu phangaleleyo

uThando ezi Qhamo

Qhama nawe apho ukhoyo

uQhamise umzi ka bawo

# D.I.S.T.R.A.C.T.I.O.N

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Dylan McXabe

I  
am distracted.  
If only, I  
wasn't hungry. Then I  
might be able to dream.  
I dare to dream,  
Hungry and Distracted.  
I still  
Dream

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