Mapping obesogenic food environments

**State of Disease Transdisciplinary Workshop,
27 March 2019**

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UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

FROM HOPE TO ACTION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE.

Overview

Urban food insecurity, obesity and NCDs

Knowledge and Discourse in Governance

Changing frames: Food Systems to Food Environments

Making local food environments legible - the ROFE project

Participatory visual methodologies

Towards knowledge co-generation - Communities of Practice in WC and GCR

Urban food insecurity, obesity and NCD

Food insecurity is **increasingly** an **urban** problem, affecting millions

Poverty and food insecurity encourage people to **reduce** dietary **diversity** and consume cheap, energy dense foods

Big Food is making **ultra-processed foods** increasingly available, affordable and accessible

Informal food retail and supermarkets are extending the reach of Big Food

City of Johannesburg 2017 Food Security Survey - HFIAP Percentages
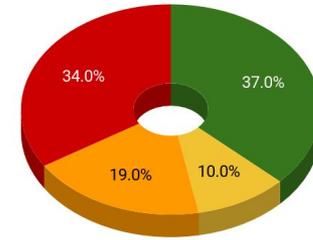
- ● Food Secure   ● Mildly Food Insecure   ● Moderately Food Insecure
- ● Severely Food Insecure

City of Johannesburg Food Security Survey 2017 - HFIAP by Area
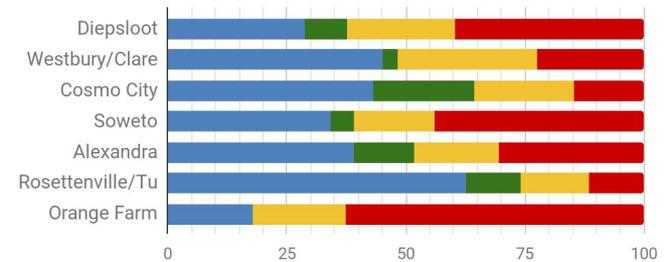
- ■ Food Secure   ■ Mildly Food Insecure   ■ Moderately Food Insecure
- ■ Severy Food Insecure

Poverty, Food Insecurity and Malnutrition

Key statistics for South Africa

Food insecurity: 54%, 68% urban informal (SANHANES 2013)

Obesity: 31% men 68% women

Hypertension: 33.7% men; 45% women

Stunting: 27% (SADHS 2016)

Obesity is stigmatised as a personal, individual failing, but it is a bodily manifestation of the structural violence of late-stage capitalism.

Obesogenic Foods in South Africa

Intersection Right to Food - Right to Safe Environment

- Constitutional mandates:
  - Adequate food (27.1.b)
  - Safe, protected environments (24)

Local government has clear mandates to enable the realisation of these rights

However:
- Local food mandates, institutional structures are fragmented
- Lacking awareness of the issues
- Competing rationalities

Consequently, the state response has been incoherent and ineffective

Knowledge and Discourse in Governance

Governmentalities in food governance:

State responses are hierarchical and based on a rural, agricultural paradigm of food security

Urban agriculture, feeding schemes, and food safety and hygiene dominate locally

Neoliberal rationalities dominate the governance of systems of food provision

Current state response is therefore ineffectual, and a radical change of perspective and rationality is necessary

The Will to Transform

The need for a discursive struggle to develop strategic intentionality - "the will to improve" & "the will to transform" (Li 2007; Akinwumi 2013)

- Visibility and legibility of the issue
  - *Litigation*?
- Deliberations, mobilisation and coalitions
- Framing objects of governance
- Development of technologies of power (institutions, legislation, narratives etc)

Changing frames: Food Systems to Food Environments

Research has framed this as an issue of food systems governance

Is this useful from the local state perspective?

- **What is a food system?** Complex systems language confounds governance
- **Where does it begin and end?** Cross-scale effects, complexity, boundaries
- **What leverage does the local state have?** Scale mismatch in local state mandate and technologies to engage with global economic system
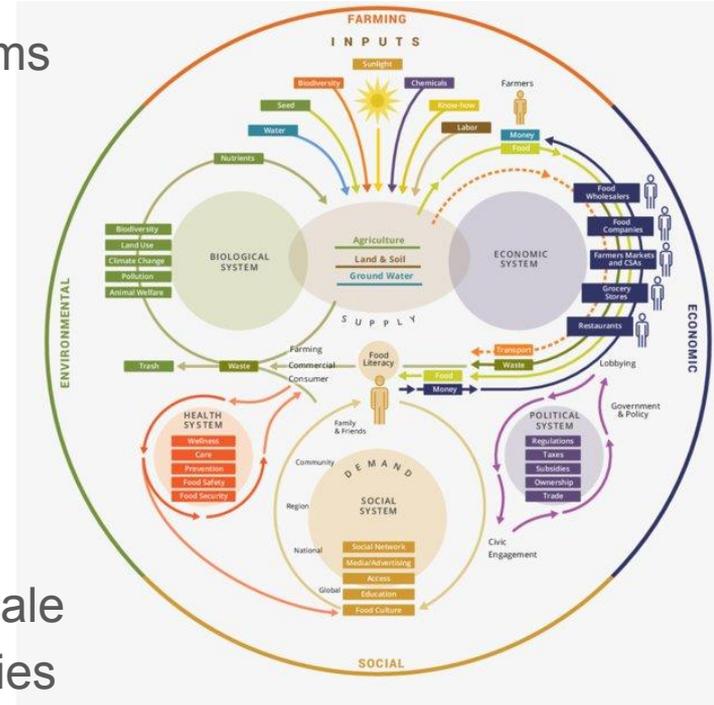
Are we barking up the wrong tree?

Image: Zhang & Sangha 2018

Framing food environments as objects of governance

FEs as *intermediate scale of analysis* - an interface between households/individuals and food systems

FEs act to **enable and constrain** particular food choices in particular spaces

FEs *territorialise and localise* effects of food systems transitions

FEs are more **accessible to local state** technologies of power, eg instruments of planning, zoning, licensing, EIAs etc

<u>But</u>: FEs are poorly understood and not visible in local governance discourse
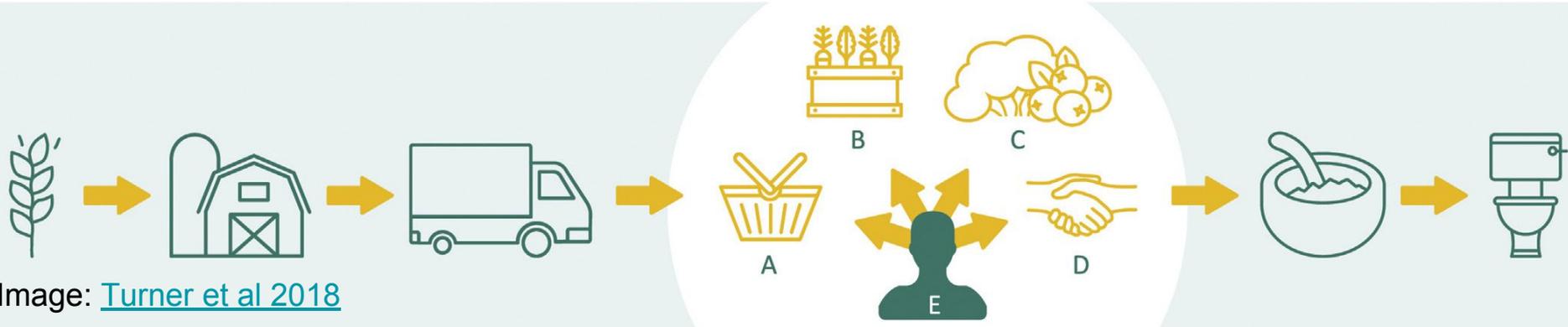
Image: Turner et al 2018

Making local food environments legible - the ROFE project

Maps and statistics as **technologies of power**

3-phase research project in 2 sites each in SA and Ghana

Phase 1: Survey of household and neighbourhood food environments

Phase 2: Political economy of key food value chains

Phase 3: Policy options and dialogue

Consumption of high obesity risk foods above threshold
ROFE 2017 Ahodwo and Khayelisha

■ % Khayelitsha N=326   ■ % Ahodwo N=234

Processed Meat
Instant Noodles
Salty snacks
Sugary Drinks
Ready to eat foods
Fast food
Fried potatoes / hot chips
Processed Dairy
Breakfast cereals
Sweets
Confectionery
Sugar
Vetkoek / Dumpling
Bread - White
Commercial bread - brown

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%
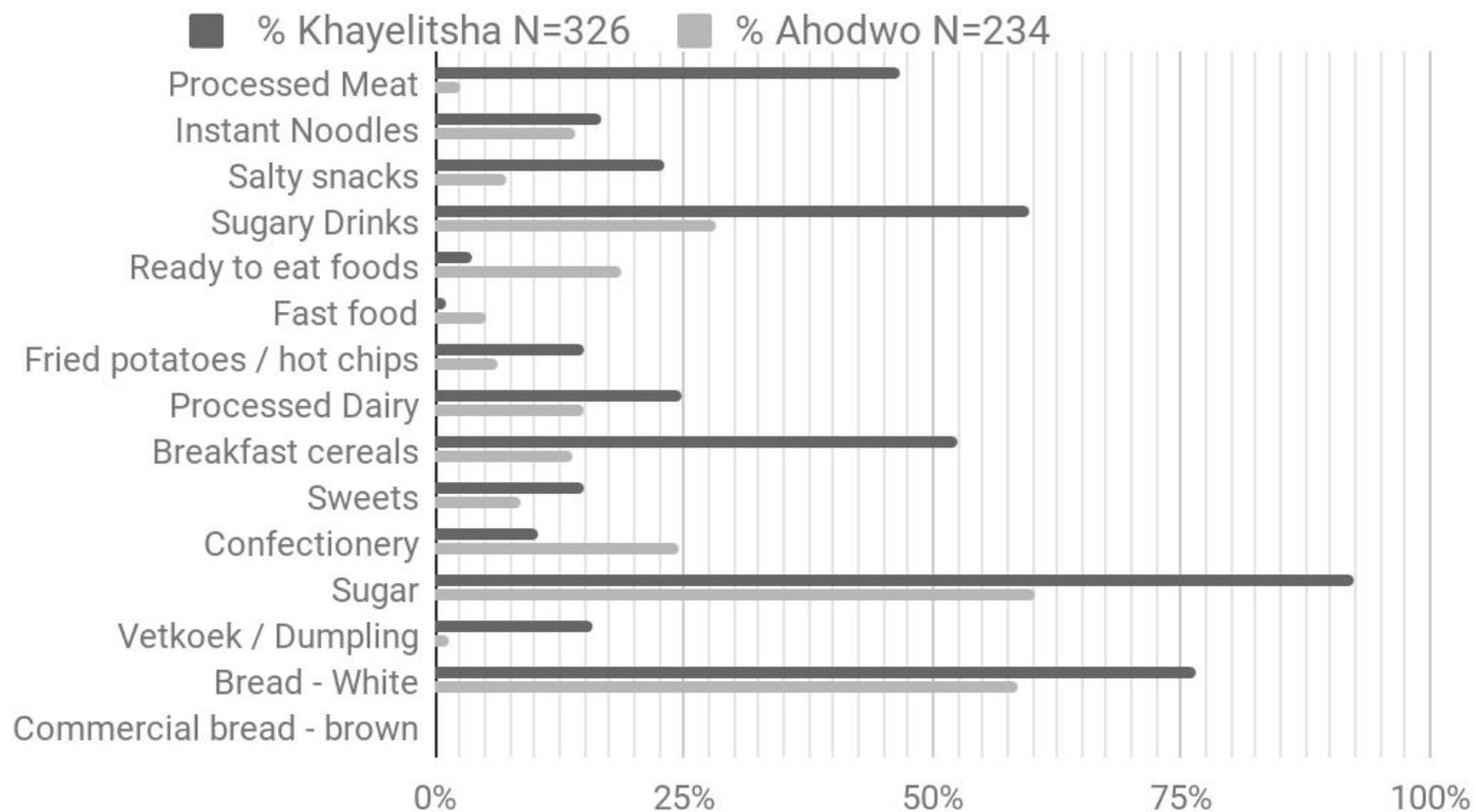
# Household consumption of health-promoting foods above threshold

ROFE 2017 - Ahodwo and Khayelitsha

■ % Khayelitsha N=326   ■ % Ahodwo N=234

Food	% Khayelitsha N=326	% Ahodwo N=234
Vegetables - fresh	~14%	~23%
Fruit	~35%	~37%
Legumes	~2%	~6%
Bread - wholewheat	~0%	~0.5%
Fish	~1%	~38%
Vegetables - cooked	~28%	~28%
Vegetables (fried / stir fry)	~2.5%	~6%

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%
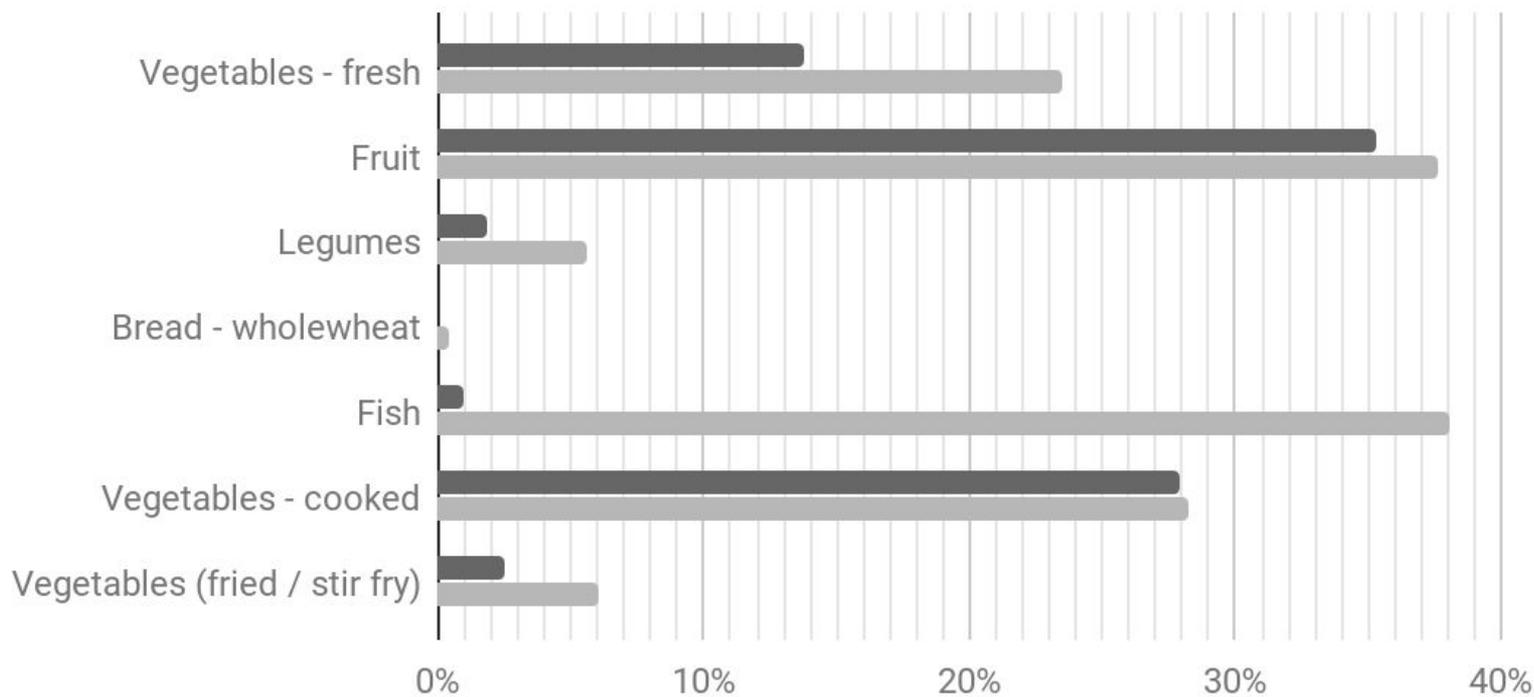
Key Food Sources - Khayelitsha

Type		
Bread (commercial)		302
Highly processed meat		230
Soft drink - regular		259
Sugar		311
Vegetables (cooked)		220
Fruit		304
Vegetables (fresh / raw)		179
Legumes		172

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

Legend:
- Formal Retailer
- Informal Shop
- Stall
- Mobile trader / truck / trailer
- Food service
- Other
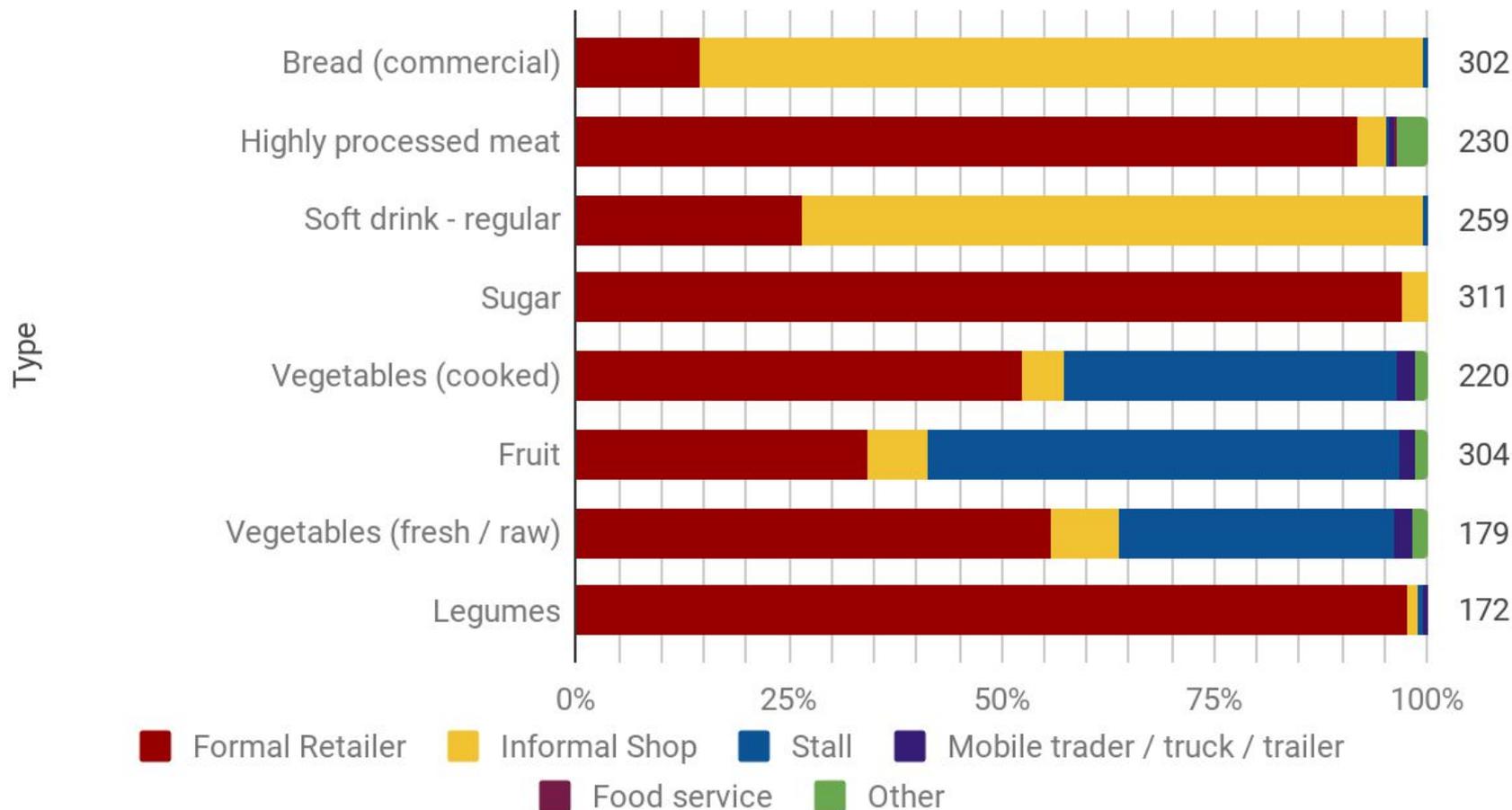
Khayelitsha Dietary Obesity Risk and Diversity Index

ROFE 2017 - N=326

Low risk, protective
3.1%

Low risk, vulnerable
26.4%

High risk, protective
13.5%

High risk, vulnerable
57.1%
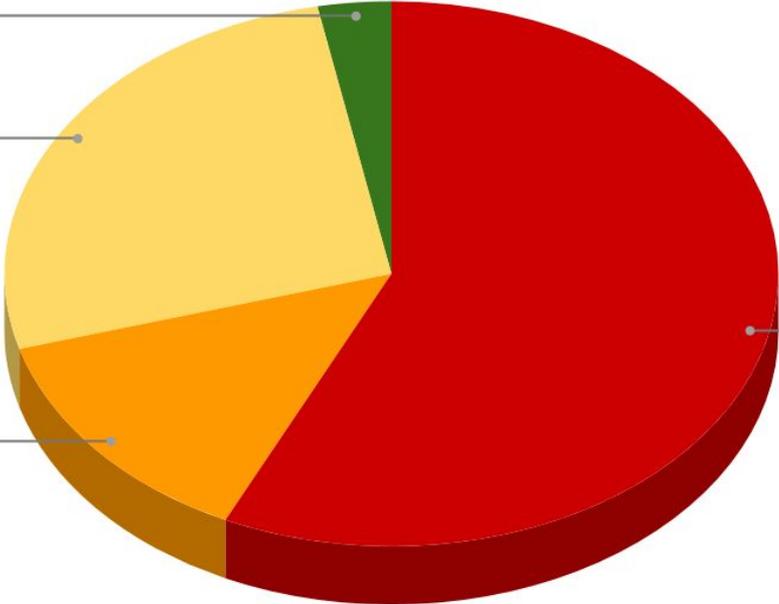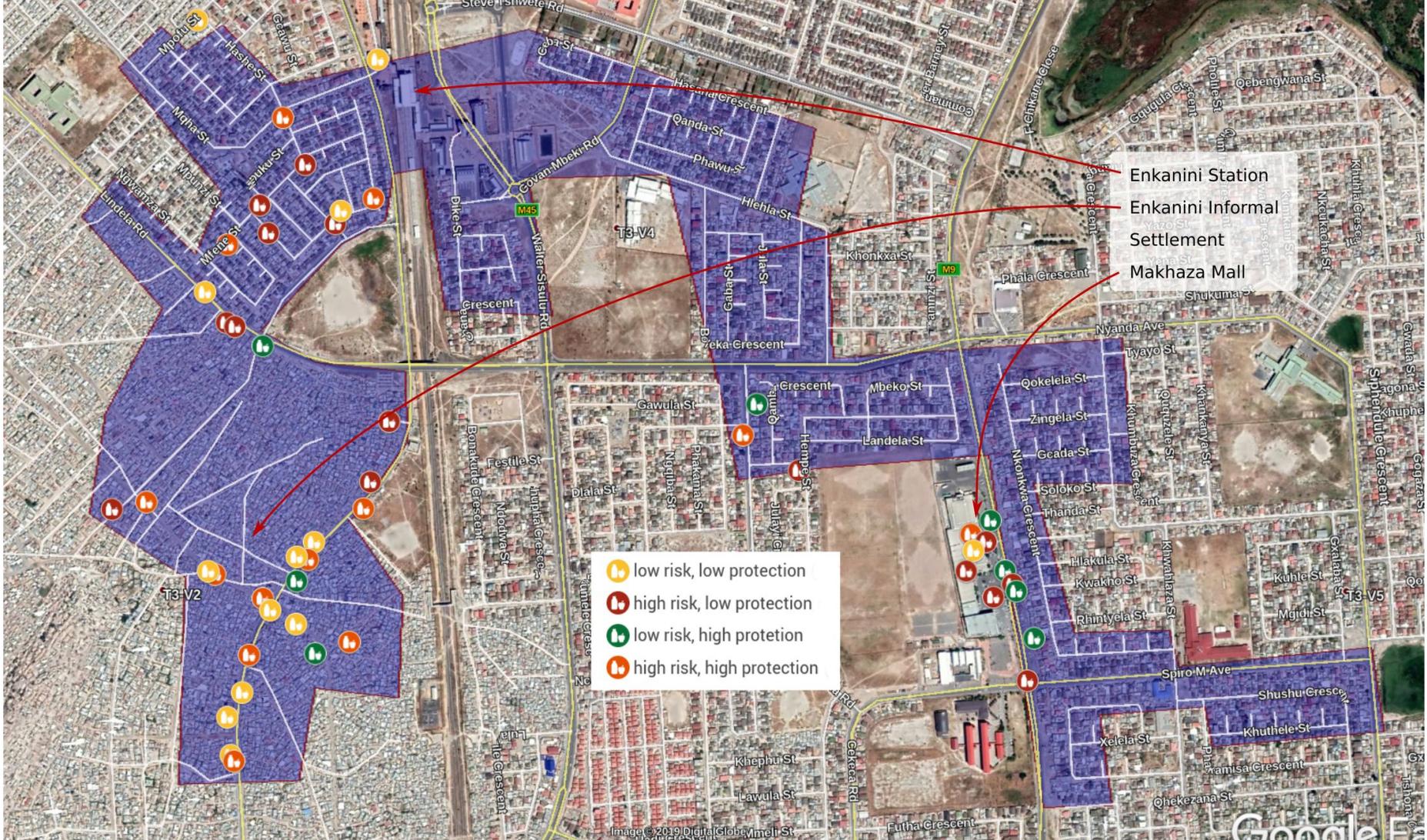
Enkanini Station

Enkanini Informal Settlement

Makhaza Mall

low risk, low protection

high risk, low protection

low risk, high protection

high risk, high protection

But what does it mean?

Next steps:

Participatory visual methodologies to explore perceptions and meaning-making with Khayelitsha residents

- Rationalities and meanings of food purchase and consumption patterns
- Obesity, body-image and gender: bodymapping and storytelling
- Digital video documentaries of neighbourhood food environments

Towards knowledge co-generation: from product to process

Network approaches to governance emphasise participatory forums

Importance of "safe spaces" for deliberation and sense-making

Knowledge co-generation - mismatches and gaps between academic, CSO and state discourses

- Shift frames and promote reflexivity
- Find common language
- Ask better questions
- Develop networks of trust

Communities of Practice in WC and GCR

Communities of Practice - Spaces for Transdisciplinary Governance

Several sessions have dealt with important issues and questions

Learning journeys - immersive experiences of food environments

Networks of academics, activists and state officials are developing

Tensions and faultlines have emerged in dialogue

Valuable knowledge products are emerging as novel technologies of power:

- Food sensitive planning brief
- Food declaration
- Provocation posters
- Working paper on multi-level governance

Join us at the Next CoPs!

5 April - WC CoP on Food Governance

17 April - GCR CoP on Food Governance

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