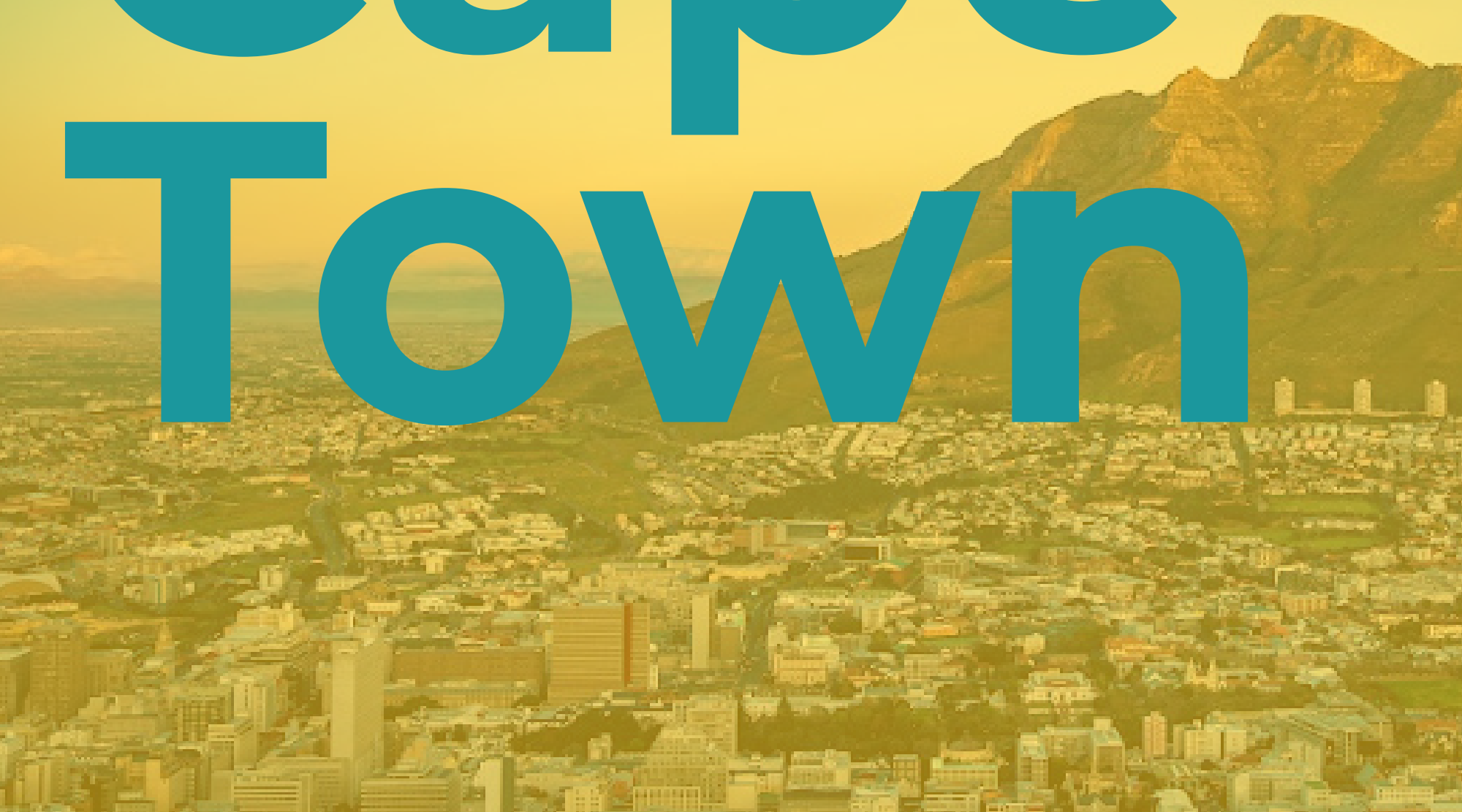




AfriFOODlinks
FOODChronicles

Cape Town



AfriFOODChronicles

Welcome to the first edition of the AfriFOODChronicles!

In this edition, we travel to Cape Town, where we learn about how a city's history of inequality continues to shape unequal access to food.

Everyone eats — but not everyone in Cape Town has the same access to food. To understand hunger, prices, and what we eat, we need to look at:

- Cape Town's history
- Governance and power
- Food security realities
- The food environments in our cities

We hope you enjoy your journey with us,
The AfriFOODChronicles Editorial Team



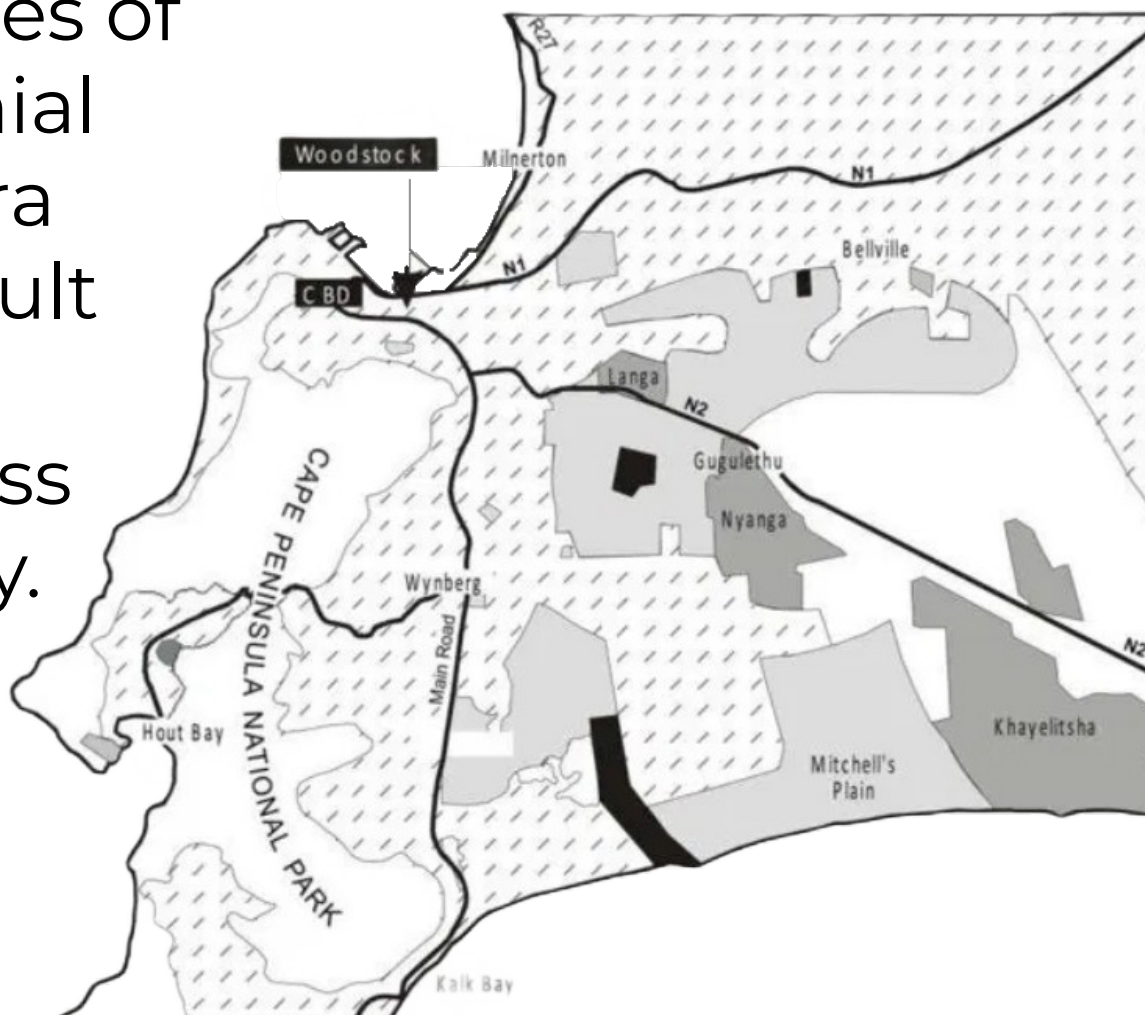
Welcome to Cape Town

At Africa's southern tip sits Cape Town – a city of contrast, complexity and creativity.

Cape Town is situated in the Western Cape province of South Africa, a region known for its fruit, wine and other agricultural products.

But Cape Town's story is about more than what is found in picturesque tourist brochures.

Cape Town is also home to one of the highest Gini coefficients in the world – making it **one of the most inequitable cities to live in**. These unequal systems did not emerge overnight, but rather it has taken decades of oppressive colonial and apartheid era legislation to result in the inequality that we see across Cape Town today.



Cape Town's food system cannot be understood without its history.

Land, power, race, and food have always been tightly intertwined in shaping the city.

The arrival of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in Cape Town in 1652 is considered the 'beginning' of Cape Town's urban history. The VOC occupied the Cape in order to use it as a refreshment station for passing ships. Food supply drove the colonial development of Cape Town.

The Dutch enforced new farming systems to sustain the refreshment station. These farms relied on enslaved people from indigenous populations in Cape Town such as the Khoi and San, as well as from other Dutch colonies in India, Southeast Asia and East Africa. These enslaved people were later referred to as the "Cape Malay" community. Many foods now seen as integral to Cape Town's flavour-scape emerged from enslaved people from different parts of the world cooking alongside each other. Foods such as samosas,



pickled fish, bobotie, bredie, roti, and koesisters are some of the dishes that have become staples of Cape Town's cuisine.

Colonial rule under the Dutch, followed by the British, resulted in the enslavement and forced removals of indigenous people. Food and grazing were used as tools of oppression during this time, and resulted in the earliest forms of segregation in Cape Town.

Over centuries, Cape Town was shaped by racial segregation and forced removals under colonial and apartheid legislations. These spatial injustices continue to shape where people live, work and are able to buy food today.



A Growing and Changing City

Cape Town is home to nearly 4.8 million people living in 1.3 million households.

Governance and Power

South Africa has three spheres of government: national, provincial, and local. The City of Cape Town is located at the local government level. Across these three spheres of government, **no single sphere has the mandate for the right to food.**

Similarly, at a local governance level, no single department “owns” or has a mandate for food.

This not only causes confusion within government, but it also makes it difficult to plan for food while also being equipped to respond to various shocks and stresses impacting on food access. In a fragmented governance context like this, shocks and stresses such as climate events, global and local conflict, and infrastructure failure can easily disrupt the food supply to a city.

But, **even though Cape Town does not have a formal food mandate, city decisions still significantly shape food access.**

Planning practices such as zoning and land use legislation

impact (intentionally or unintentionally), where, how and by whom food is produced, distributed, purchased, consumed and turned into waste in the city.

Building a more resilient urban food system requires a shared form of multistakeholder governance that places food at the forefront of the City’s agenda.

These multiple stakeholders include civil society organisations, business owners, consumers, and people working in the informal sector.

But multistakeholder engagement is about more than bringing different sectors into the same room. Without acknowledging the historical and institutional power imbalances within these engagements, the food needs of all stakeholders will not be heard.

To begin to create strong food governance in Cape Town, there needs to be a rearranging of power, deep engagement with community actors, and just city-informal trader partnerships.

Food in Cape Town

Food insecurity in Cape Town is high and persistent.

Hunger is driven mainly by poverty, high food prices, and spatial inequality, not by a shortage of food in the city.

National data shows that although South Africa produces enough food nationally, household-level food insecurity remains very high due to poverty and inequality.

Over 60% of households experience some form of food insecurity.

In Cape Town, 36% of households are severely food insecure, while only half had enough food throughout the year. This is coupled with low dietary diversity, due to the rising costs of food.

In low-income households, 70% are food insecure, adding to the already high levels of inequality in Cape Town.

These households rely significantly on the informal food system, which is often eschewed by local governments as opposed to being enabled.

Households in higher income neighbourhoods spend only 8% of their income on food, while low income households spend two thirds of their income on food.

70%

of low-income households in Cape Town are food insecure



Food Environments in the City

Cape Town's food environment is shaped by inequality. Where people live strongly determines what food they can access and afford.

In wealthier neighbourhoods there are formal high-end supermarkets. But many low-income households rely on the informal food economy – an essential provider of affordable, convenient fresh produce.

However, it is only in the past 10 years that many low-income areas have seen a rapid increase in supermarket development. This is because there is an assumption that without a supermarket, there is no food.

Unfortunately, the informal economy is under-recognised for its role in the food system, and often not considered in the City's spatial planning.



In Cape Town, food choices are shaped by more than marketing and advertising, but also by factors such as cost, convenience and infrastructure.

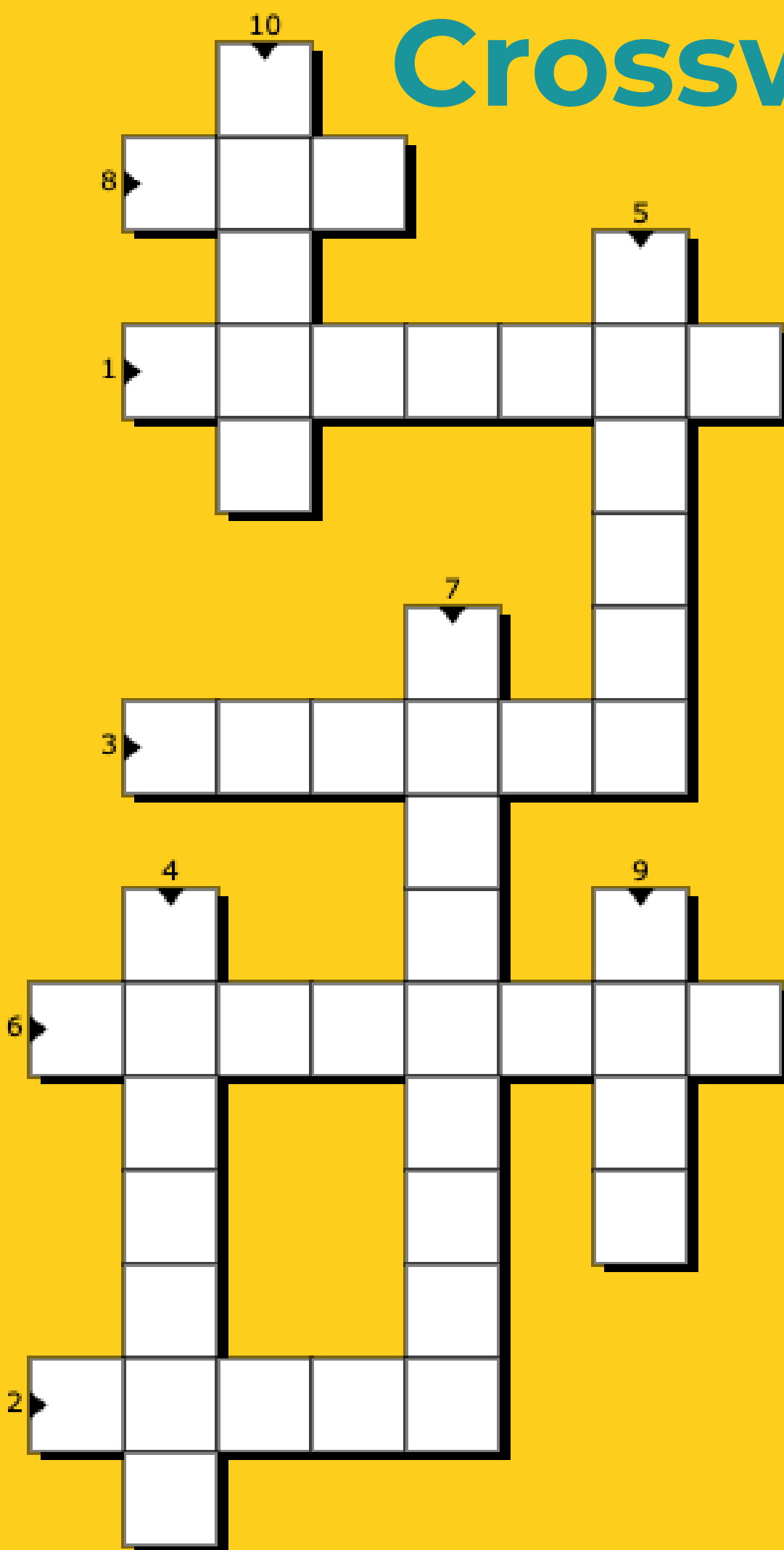
Conclusion

Cape Town's food system is shaped by history, power and inequality.

When beginning to imagine a more resilient and just food system in Cape Town, questions of governance, power, agency and spatial inequality should guide these processes.



Crossword



1. Cape Town is in the ____ Cape
2. A type of cuisine local to Cape Town known as Cape ____
3. The guide for preparing a dis
4. A word that describes Capw Town's food system
5. A local dish similar to stew
6. ____ Type of economy many low income households depend on for food access
7. A lack of dietary ____ is a problem in Cape Town's food system
8. The abbreviation for the company that arrived in Cape Town in 1652
9. The proportion of housholds that are food insecure in Cape Town
10. Cape Town's food system is shaped by history, ____ and inequality

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For more information, address:
afrifoodlinks@iclei.org and
gareth.haysom@uct.ac.za

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Author: **Alison Pulker**

Reviewer: **Anesu Makina**

Design: **Robyn Park-Ross**

Images: **Sam Reinders, Masixole Feni and Robyn Park-Ross**



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