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Analysis of food security newspaper coverage through a disability studies lens

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Introduction

- ❖ Food security is an issue of global concern recognized by numerous international and national agencies. It is recognized as an essential human security by the World Health Organization Commission for Human Security and as a social determinant of health. Disabled people are part of the public and disabled people are one group experiencing over proportional levels of food insecurity.

Objective

- ❖ To generate quantitative data on the visibility of disabled people and other groups in the food security discourse as well as what food security issues were reported

Methods

- ❖ Analytical framework: Disability Studies
- ❖ Data Source: The Globe and Mail (Canada), National Post (Canada), Calgary Herald (Canada), New York Times (USA), The Guardian (UK), The Times (UK), and the Canadian Newsstand, a collection of 300 Canadian newspapers.
- ❖ Inclusion criteria: food security in the document
- ❖ Coding: deductive and inductive content analysis using Atlas.ti[©] software

Results and Discussion

- ❖ A Guardian article with the title *Put disability on the food security agenda* [1] concluded, “[f]ood security for all: The food security agenda post-2015 should be about equity, human rights, sustainable and inclusive development and sustainable and inclusive growth. Beneficiaries should be included in the design, implementation and monitoring of

Table 1: mentioning of social groups in Canadian media articles containing the phrase “food security” or “food insecurity”

	Canadian Newsstand (n=300 newspapers)	Globe and Mail	National Post	Calgary Herald	New York Times	The Guardian (The UK)	The Times (UK)
Food security	10315	376	186	184	313	11300	281
Food security and “people with disabilities”	59	1	0	1	0	29	0
Food security and “disabled people”	13	0	0	1	0	81	2
Food security and Women	1403	40	19	24	45	2830	30
Immigrants	238	6	3	2	7	576	17
Children	2815	87	40	37	66	3480	56
“the poor”	413	35	14	9	28	815	22
Indigenous people	23	2	0	2	2	204	0
Aboriginal people	60	1	0	1	0	3	0
First nations	168	1	3	1	0	5	0
Farmer/s	3687	164	72	71	174	4920	120
Food insecurity	1052	34	38	128	63	926	35
Food insecurity and “people with disabilities”	13	1	0	0	0	9	0
Food insecurity and “disabled people”	0	0	0	0	0	25	0
Food insecurity and Women	204	6	10	5	13	435	4
Immigrants	15	0	0	1	5	85	3
Children	465	14	0	15	31	499	13
“the poor”	79	6	4	0	7	151	3
Indigenous people	9	1	0	1	1	29	0

- ❖ programmes, which make programmes more likely to succeed. Ask yourself, are disabled people involved in all stages of the project cycle in your organisation – project identification, project design, implementation and monitoring, and project evaluation?”

- ❖ Our data clearly shows that the reader of any of the newspapers covered would never gain the impetus to ask themselves the question of whether disabled people are involved in food security actions.
- ❖ Our data also shows that the reader never obtains the thought of whether immigrants or indigenous people are involved and how useful food security actions are for them.

Conclusion

- ❖ We posit media strategies that take out the middle person may be more useful. Disabled people and other socially disadvantaged groups could be part of food security covering facebook sites of organizations and initiatives (of which quite a few exist) and influence the discourse through these facebook pages.
- ❖ However this by itself is not enough as many disabled people lack access to the internet and for many disabled people web content is not readable due to lack of compliance with the W3C web design accessibility guidance which is another hurdle for many to overcome besides having access to the internet in the first place. For them local face to face organizing is important which however for many disabled people only will work if the local organizing is intellectual and physical accessible.

REFERENCES

[1] Edge, J., Put disability on the food security agenda. *The Guardian*, UK March, 27, 2013.