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SOUTH AFRICAN FOOD LOSS & WASTE INITIATIVE

CASE STUDY

Surplus Food Donation: A Shoprite Group Case Study to Reduce Food Waste and Strengthen Food Security.

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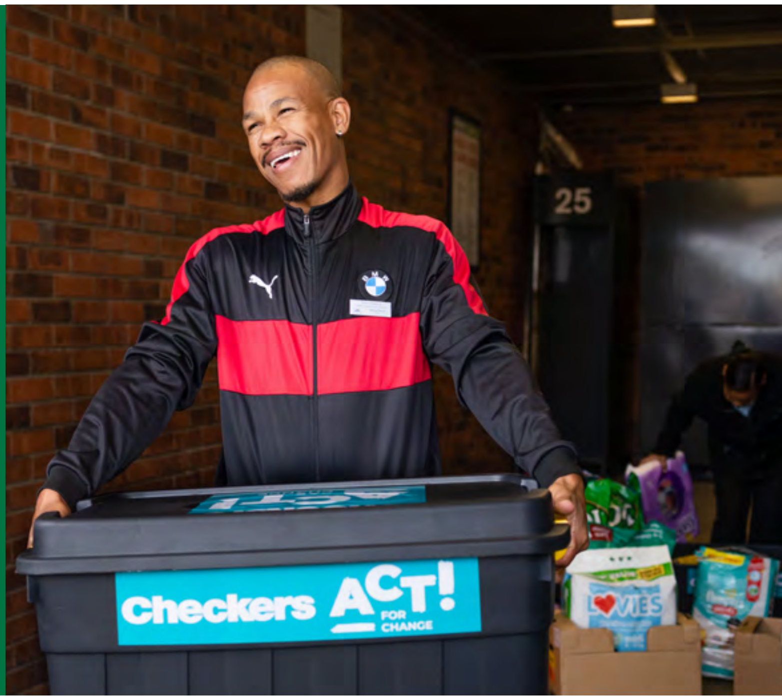


About the Shoprite Group

SHOPRITE group of companies

The Shoprite Group is one of the inaugural signatories of the South African Food Loss and Waste Initiative (SA FLWI) offering support from early stakeholder dialogues through to the initiative's official launch in 2020. The Group maintains a consistent commitment to the SA FLWI through its participation on the Advisory Committee and its involvement in the Food Donation Working Group.

The retailer is committed to sustainable business practices that reduce environmental impact, create economic opportunities, and uplift the communities it serves. Through its Act For Change programmes, the Group supports hunger relief, food security and community development efforts in partnership with local public beneficiary organisations.

Sector:	Retail (Supermarket and Wholesale)
Industry:	Food Retail & Grocery
Company Size:	Africa's largest retailer, with more than 3 655 stores and over 170 000 employees.
Mission Statement:	The Group's purpose is to uplift lives every day by pioneering access to the most affordable goods and services, creating economic opportunity and protecting our planet.

> "Our surplus food donation programme reflects a practical commitment to doing business responsibly. By redirecting food to communities that need it most, we are not only reducing waste but also protecting valuable resources and strengthening food security. It's about using what we already have more wisely – for people, for communities and for the environment."
>
> —Sanjeev Raghubir, Chief Sustainability Officer at the Shoprite Group

Executive Summary

The Shoprite Group operates a structured surplus food donation programme to address edible food surplus generated across its retail operations while simultaneously supporting food-insecure communities. The programme responds to the ongoing challenge of managing unavoidable surplus food in a manner that minimises disposal, safeguards food safety and delivers meaningful social impact at scale. Through established operational processes, strong partnerships with verified beneficiary organisations and close collaboration between store operations, logistics and sustainability teams, surplus food that remains safe for human consumption is redistributed to communities in need.

The programme aligns with the good-practice principles formalised in the SA FLWI Food Donation Best Practice Guidelines, including prioritising food recovery for human consumption, ensuring food safety, and working with vetted partners.

A key component of the retailer's broader sustainability and social impact strategy, the programme supports both environmental responsibility and inclusive socio-economic development across the communities in which the Group operates.

In the 2025 financial year, the Group donated surplus food and goods valued at approximately R257.6 million to over 500 beneficiary organisations across Africa. In so doing the retailer strengthened community partnerships and is contributing to improved food security and reduced pressure on waste streams.

The Challenge

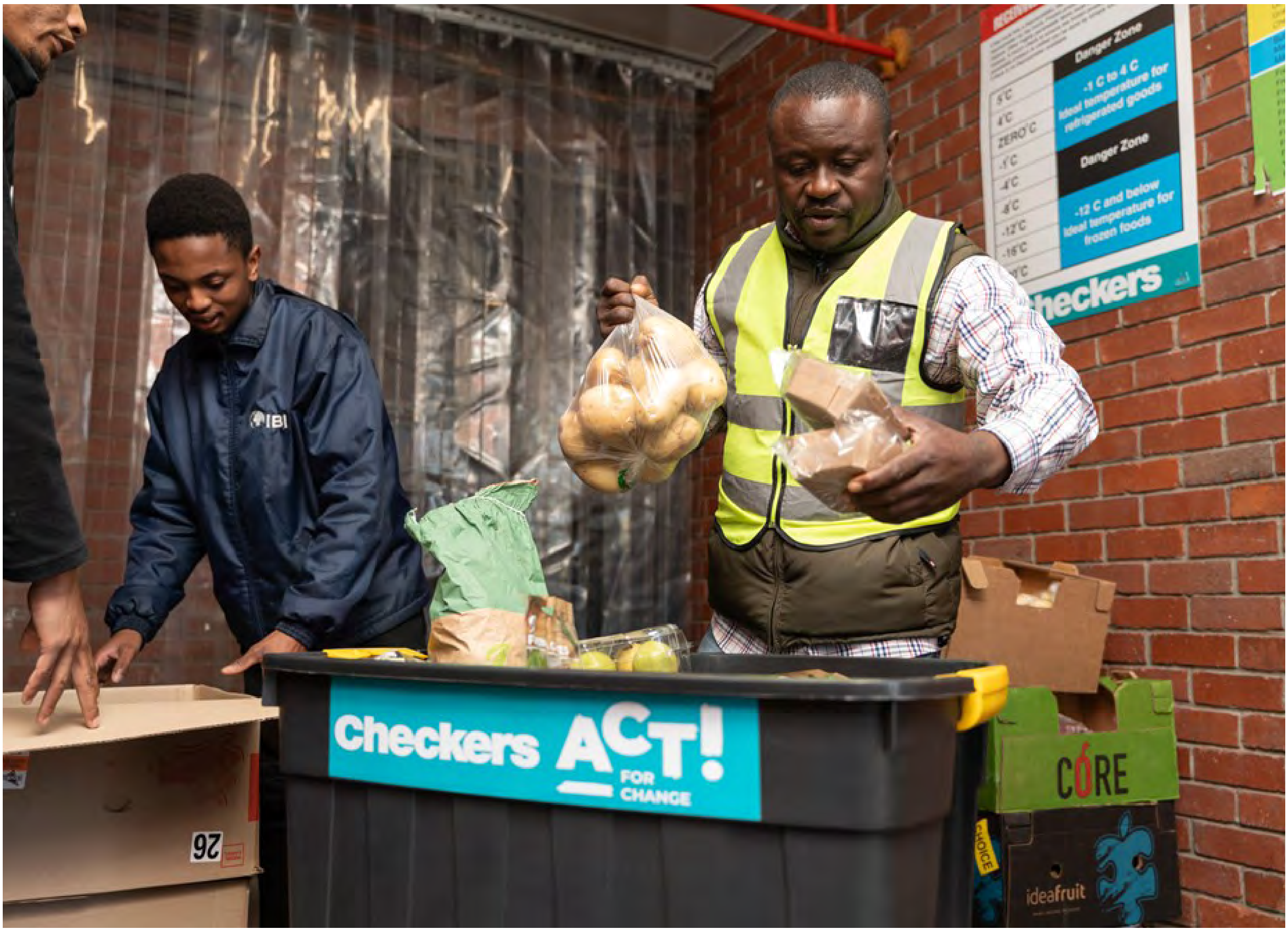
Prior to implementing a structured approach to surplus food redistribution, the Shoprite Group faced the industry-wide challenge of managing food that was still suitable for consumption but no longer met store requirements. Without a formalised system, surplus food was either discarded or underutilised, contributing to concerns of food insecurity and avoidable environmental impact.

Factors such as demand variability, inventory turnover schedules and distribution timing often resulted in edible food being at risk of entering waste streams. This challenge extended beyond social concerns of food insecurity. Food waste represents the loss of valuable resources including water, energy, land and labour, and when disposed of in landfills, contributes to greenhouse gas emissions.

This situation raised two critical questions for the retailer:

- How could surplus edible food be safely and efficiently redirected to benefit vulnerable communities?
- How could this process be scaled across the Group's extensive retail network to ensure maximum impact?

Finding solutions to these challenges aligned with the Group's broader sustainability objective of sending zero food waste to landfill through a hierarchy of prevention, redistribution and recovery.



The Solution

The Shoprite Group implemented a structured surplus food redistribution programme to form part of its broader food waste management strategy spanning prevention, recovery and circular repurposing. The programme forms part of the Group's Act For Change corporate social investment agenda, linking sustainability with socio-economic impact.

Before the formalisation of the SA FLWI's Food Donation Best Practice Guidelines, the Group's programme had already, in alignment with national and international best practice principles, prioritised the safe redistribution of surplus food fit for human consumption.

Actions Taken

- Established partnerships with verified beneficiary organisations that serve vulnerable communities, including food gardens, shelters and hunger relief programmes.
- Included the surplus donation process into the Group's Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing - Enterprise Resource Planning (SAP ERP) system.

This has seamlessly integrated surplus donations into its operations and all edible surplus food is now identified, documented and redirected in line with the food waste hierarchy. Food no longer fit for human consumption is repurposed for animal feed or composting. The programme successfully addresses surplus edible food and reduces operational food waste.

Operational Integration

Supported by the Group's broader food waste reduction systems, the use of data analytics and technology helped identify areas prone to food waste and improved stock management. In the 2025 financial year, the Luminate replenishment system (an AI-enabled demand forecasting and automated stock planning tool that aligns supply with real-time demand) was expanded to the Group's fruit and vegetable procurement arm, Freshmark.

Implementation

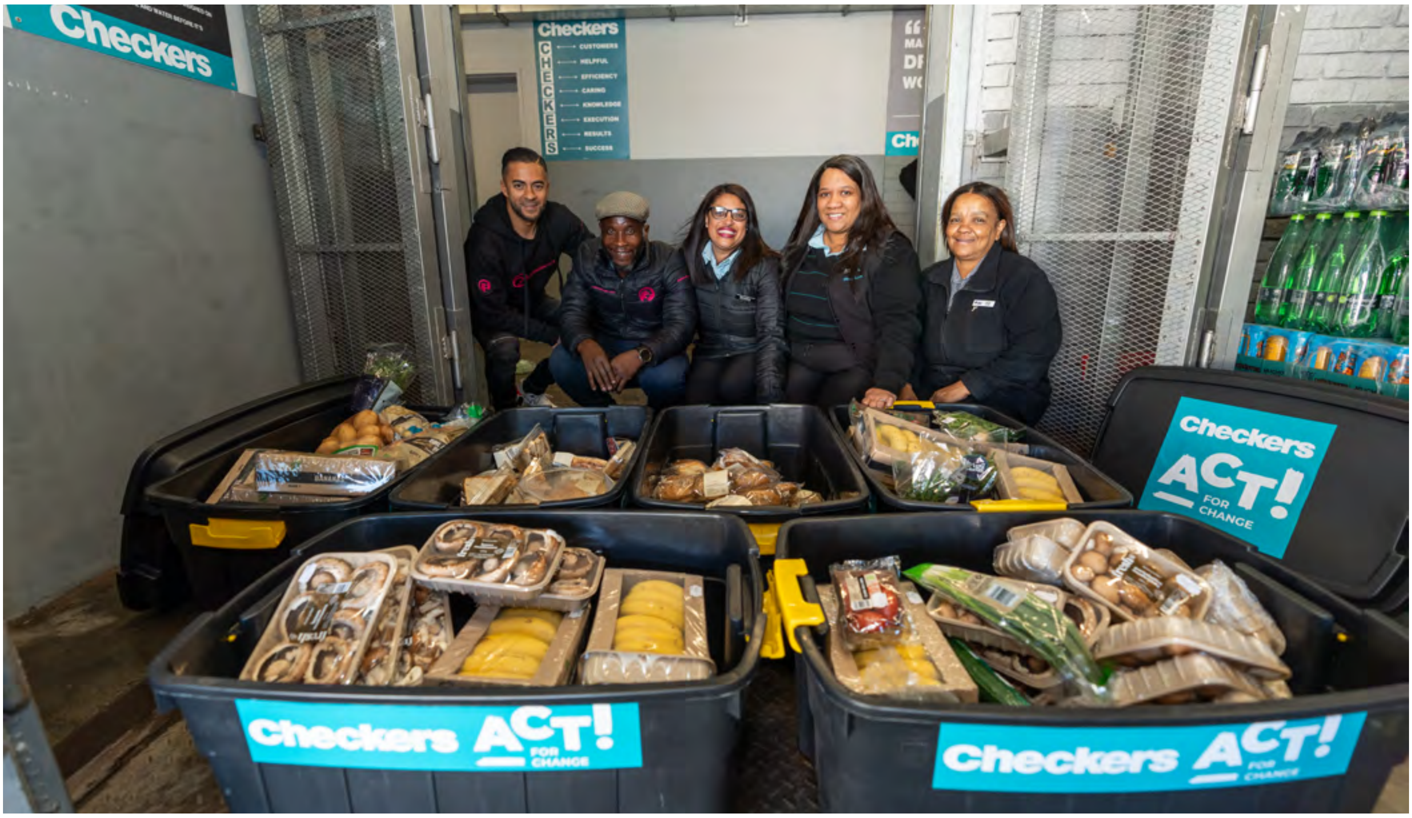
Identification and packaging: Surplus edible food items (close-to-expiry but safe to consume) are identified at store and distribution centre levels by trained employees.

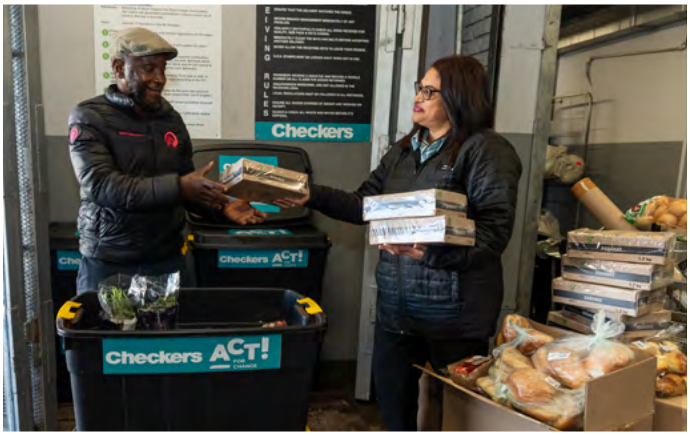
Verification of beneficiaries: Organisations receiving surplus food are vetted to ensure they adhere to food-safety standards and can manage the surplus food responsibly.

Coordination: Dedicated, trained employees coordinate distribution to ensure food reaches beneficiaries timeously.

Internal collaboration: Sustainability, store operations, logistics and inventory teams work closely to operationalise the programme efficiently.

Employee training: In the 2025 financial year, a total of 3 432 employees completed surplus food donation awareness training, strengthening internal capacity to implement safe, compliant and efficient food redistribution practices.





Lessons Learnt & Future Outlook

It is clear that surplus food redistribution works best when it is embedded within a broader food waste strategy that prioritises prevention first, then reallocation, and finally responsible recovery.

Ongoing employee training and improved forecasting have played an important role in preventing waste before it occurs. Aligning the programme with national food loss and waste frameworks has strengthened consistency, measurement and accountability, while close collaboration between operational teams and community partners has proven essential to maintaining safe and scalable implementation.

Looking ahead, the Group will focus on deepening its measurement of environmental impact, strengthening alignment with SA FLWI reporting, and expanding prevention efforts through improved forecasting and replenishment practices. Continued growth of beneficiary partnerships and investment in employee capability will further extend the reach and impact of surplus food redistribution.

The Results

In the 2025 financial year the Group's programme had the following impacts:

Social Impact

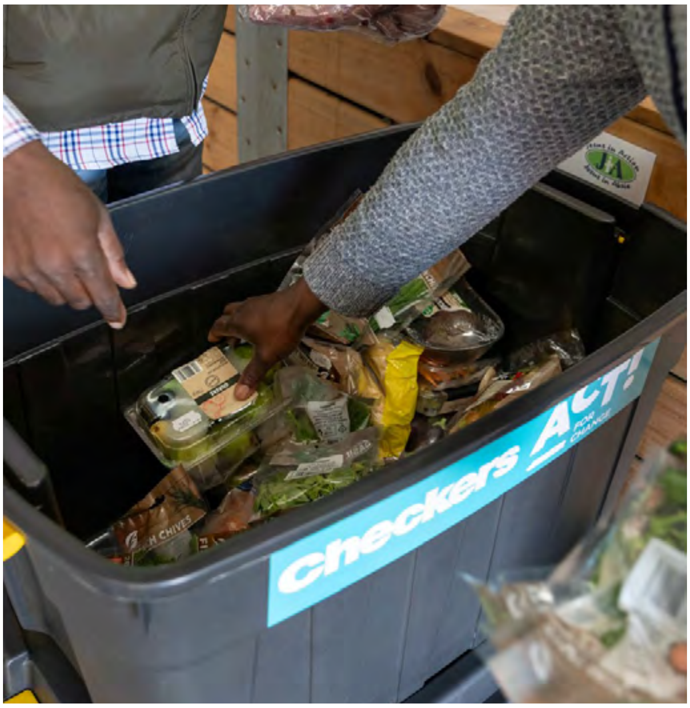
46 616 977 meals' worth of surplus food was donated, strengthening food security for over 500 beneficiary organisations across Africa.

Environmental

4 420 tonnes of food diverted from landfill. A further 1 911 tonnes of surplus food unfit for human consumption was converted into animal feed.

Economic

R257.6 million surplus food donations reflect a significant redirection of resources from disposal towards meaningful social benefit. Through improved stock forecasting, replenishment optimisation and enhanced waste-recovery processes, the Group continues to reduce disposal costs, minimise product losses and strengthen operational efficiency across the value chain.



Shoprite Impact

Environmental impact measure	Based on 4,420 tonnes surplus food donated and diverted from landfill	
Avoided GHG emissions from diversion away from landfill	11 050	tonnes CO_2e
Methane emissions (CH_4) if FLW is sent to landfill	150	tonnes CH4
Embedded water loss	5 702	million litres of water

Environmental impact measure	Based on 1,911 tonnes surplus food unfit for human consumption sent for animal feed and diverted from landfill	
Avoided GHG emissions from diversion away from landfill	4 778	tonnes CO_2e
Methane emissions (CH_4) if FLW is sent to landfill	65	tonnes CH4
Embedded water loss	2 465	million litres of water

About The Consumer Goods Council of South Africa

The Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA) represents the large Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, which is one of the largest employers and contributes over 20% of the country's GDP. The CGCSA provides regulatory guidance via its Food Safety & Sustainability Initiative (FSSI). It also manages the South African Food Loss and Waste Initiative, which targets a 50% reduction in food waste by 2030.

To find out more visit https://www.cgcsa.co.za/

About the South African Food Loss & Waste Initiative

The South African Food Loss and Waste Initiative is an initiative of the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa which aims to prevent and reduce food loss and waste by half by 2030; through the adoption of food utilisation hierarchy which prioritises improved food utilisation and food loss and waste reduction in the first instance; and secondly redistribution of edible, nutritious food for human consumption, and to enable secondary markets for surplus food; and identifying food surplus and waste management solutions that respond to a circular economy and sustainable food systems agenda. The purpose of the initiative is to respond to the current food loss and waste, and food security dilemma in South Africa.

Strategic Partnership and Funding

The SA FLWI is supported by WRAP, an international climate action NGO that works to reduce food waste across supply chains and in the home.

Rainier Climate has provided catalytic funding to support WRAP and its partners in tackling food loss and waste through existing voluntary agreements in Australia, Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa and through the creation of a new voluntary food waste agreement in Brazil.

The funding covers ongoing work with money allocated to each nation to increase the systemic Target-Measure-Act approach to prevent and reduce food waste.

Globally, food waste is responsible for around 10% of all Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Reducing food waste reduces GHG emissions.

Disclaimer

The South African Food Loss and Waste Initiative (SA FLWI) is an industry-led initiative supported by the Government and other key stakeholders. It is led by the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA), which also serves as the initiative's secretariat.

The information and guidance provided by SA FLWI, including content related to food safety, food waste reduction, and food donation are intended solely for educational and informational purposes. The initiative seeks to raise awareness and promote best practices in line with national priorities and international commitments to reducing food loss and waste.