



Research

Rural Poverty: The Impact of rurality on consumers' access to food, financial and digital services using a food poverty risk index

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Research Overview

- The working aim – is an investigation to map and identify at risk areas that would benefit from food poverty/food access intervention.
- It will use an innovative methodology of combining food poverty indicators with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping to create an 'at risk of food poverty index'. The Food Poverty Risk Index will identify small scale areas within Northern Ireland that would benefit from poverty/food access intervention. In doing so, it will provide a solid foundation for targeting intervention programmes, where suitable, to improve the lives of rural dwellers, rural communities and rural businesses.
- No other rural food poverty studies have investigated rural geographic access to food with structural poverty causation factors in this level of detail.

Research Objectives

1. To identify and map consumers' access to food stores and emergency food aid services;
2. To identify and map consumers' access to financial services;
3. To identify indicators/variables associated with food poverty to create a '**food poverty risk index**' and to map the food poverty risk index across Northern Ireland to identify under-served areas in respect of food access;
4. To determine if rurality contributes to consumers' sense of social exclusion;
5. To devise evidence-informed recommendations to support rural policymaking.

Background to the research

- Emergence from recessionary times.
- NI consumers fare worse than GB counterparts.
- Rural sparsity - that is second only to Scotland;
 - Rural dispersed population
 - 37% of the NI citizens live in rural populations
- Relative and absolute poverty rates are slightly higher in rural areas than urban areas.
- Welfare Reform.
- Brexit.

Research Fit

Policy

- Draft Programme for Government Consultation Document (2016)
- NI Rural Development Programme (2014-2020)
- Northern Ireland Economic Strategy (2012 and pending)
- Going for Growth Agri-Food Strategy (2013)
- Europe (2020)
- Fitter Future for All (2012-2022)
- Making Lives Better (2013-2023)

Research Design

Stage 1 – Literature review/desk research

- Review existing body of literature.
- Identify key characteristics of food poverty in NI.
- Investigate the current actions/programmes/interventions being taken to tackle the issue of the food poverty.
- Highlight differences in approach.
- Interview key stakeholders.

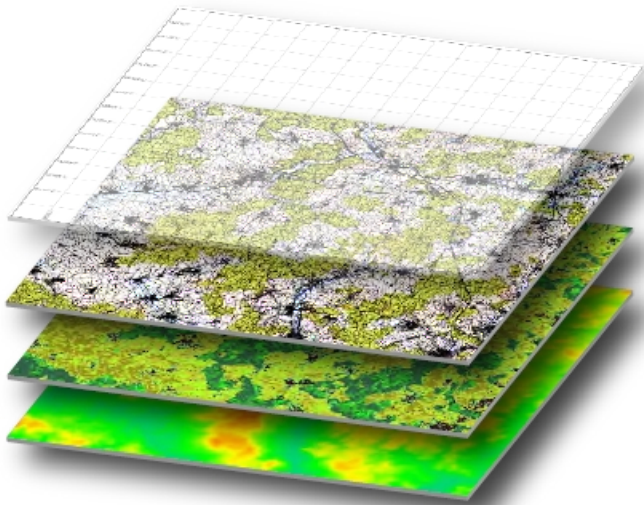
Research Design

Stage 2 – Mapping with Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

- GIS is a computer based programme that enables a wide range of geographic data to be integrated into a common framework.
- The research will propose a range of indicators/variables relevant to food poverty for the creation of a 'food poverty risk index'.
- These variables will be weighted and combined into a final risk score for each Small Area across NI.
- GIS will be used to create a risk index of food poverty at Census Small Areas.
- Small Areas consist of an average of 400 people and 155 households.

Research Design

Stage 2 – Mapping with Geographic Information Systems (GIS)



➤ GIS Framework

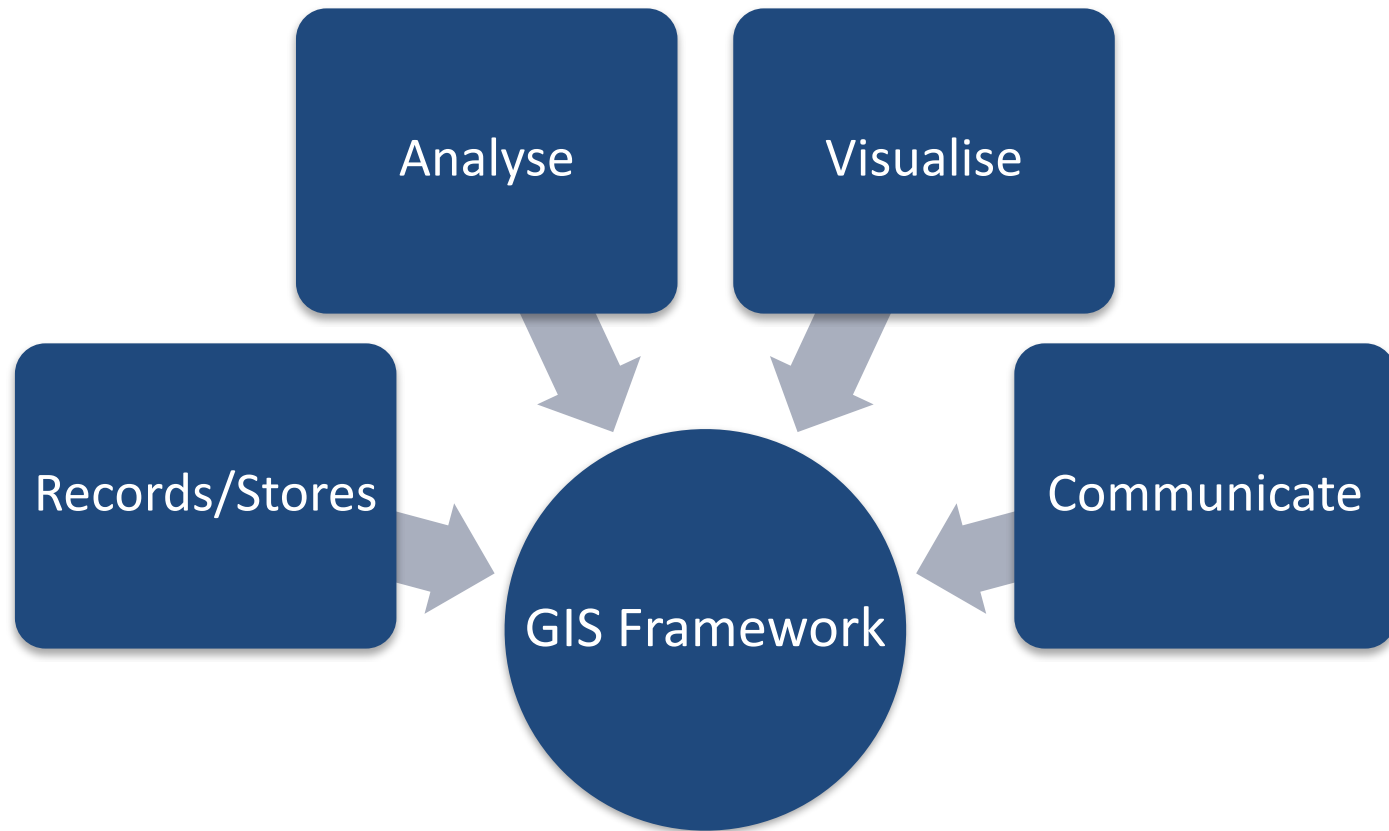
- Arranges layers of data to identify and interpret spatial relationships.

➤ Relevant variables to food poverty

- Food Retailer Access
- Food Costs
- Food Aid
- Financial Access
- Digital Access
- Socio-economic status
- Household type

Research Design

Stage 2 – Mapping with Geographic Information Systems (GIS)



Houses within walking time from store



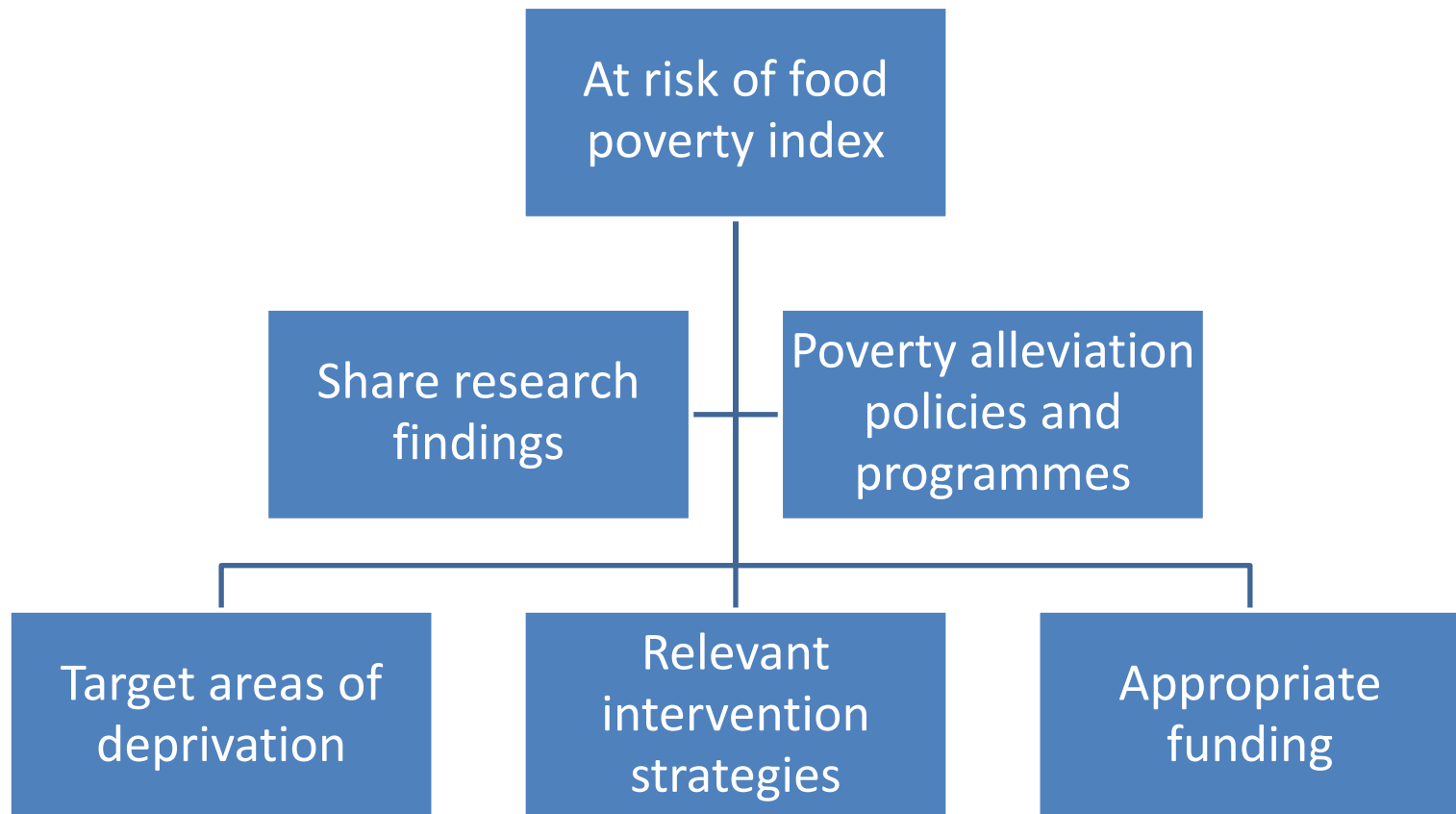
Research Design

Stage 3 – Dissemination of results to key stakeholders

- Results will be targeted to key stakeholders.
 - Support organisations (CiNI, Trussell Trust, FareShare)
 - Food retailers and other resource providers
 - Public health
 - Government policy officials (Food Standards Agency)
 - Academics within the field
- Share potential pilot sites for targeted interventions.
- Gain additional insights for the practical implications of the emerging recommendations.

Research Findings

At risk of food poverty index



Research Outcomes

At risk food poverty index

Measurable evaluation



Allow progress monitoring



High impact policies



Reduce intergenerational poverty transmission



Positive economic and social progressions



THANK YOU

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