

Food insecurity is a multifaceted issue that requires further attention in Nova Scotia and throughout the world. Capacity building is considered to be a strategy for improving food security and is suggested to be a benefit of participatory processes. The purpose of the present study was to explore the individual capacity building processes and outcomes of medium-term involvement, defined as greater than four years, in Participatory Food Costing. Seven participants of the Nova Scotia Participatory Food Costing Project who had been involved for at least four years were recruited for this study. All participants were Nova Scotian women and most were affiliated with their local Family Resource Centres. Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with each participant and the questions followed the adult learning model. The data were collected, transcribed and coded using the phenomenology approach of qualitative research. Nine main themes emerged through analysis of the interviews: awareness, personal development, participation, readiness to change, influence on others, political impact, self-esteem, project continuity and project growth. These themes were consistent with the dimensions of capacity building that have been outlined in the published literature, indicating evidence for capacity building. The findings of this study demonstrate that capacity building processes and outcomes of those involved in Participatory Food Costing can contribute to solving food security related issues.