



SF FLOODS RESPONSE: SA HARVEST, FOOD RELIEF

Impact Report

BENEFICIARY	FUNDING ALLOCATED	FUNDING DISBURSED
SA Harvest	R5 261 714	R5 261 714

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SOLIDARITY FUND FLOOD RESPONSE MANDATE

The Solidarity Fund brings together government, business, and civil society to help South Africa respond to the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Following a resolution from its Board of Directors, the Fund expanded its mandate to include disaster relief response.

After severe flooding devastated large swathes of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and the Eastern Cape in April 2022, the Solidarity Fund responded to the government's request to assist with the flood response efforts and set up the Solidarity Fund Flood Response. The mandate of the Solidarity Fund was extended to include the provision of humanitarian relief, including food, water and sanitation, emergency health care services, shelter and other support services for the benefit of all victims of any disaster in South Africa, where such relief may be required.

The impact of the floods has been profound. Approximately 444 deaths, 40 000 displaced people and 13 790 totally or partially destroyed homes were recorded in KZN. While the crisis in Eastern Cape is on a smaller scale, the impact on these mostly rural, socio-economically deprived communities is no less devastating. Over 3 000 families, 1 943 homes, and countless livestock, crops, and farming equipment and infrastructure were destroyed as a result of the floods. Across both provinces, access to health, education, food, transportation, and water and sanitation services have been interrupted due to the extensive damage to infrastructure and supply chains.

As part of its flood response, the Fund, following a board resolution and support from relevant donors, redirected some of its resources and raised additional funds to fund seven projects. These projects focused on supporting those displaced by the flooding by providing food and essential products, integrated shelter services, and psychosocial support.

PROVIDING FOOD RELIEF

Under the Floods Response food relief initiatives, the Fund supported **SA Harvest to procure and deliver 4 764 food parcels to displaced families across four areas in KZN** - rural north KZN (around Richards Bay), Ethekekwini District, Ugu District, and Umzumbe municipality.

SA Harvest is a public benefit organisation that believes that every South African has the right to sufficient, nutritious food – a foundation for living a dignified life. The right to food requires that food be available, accessible, and adequate for everyone without discrimination.

This project aimed to support the most vulnerable beneficiaries, focusing on the elderly and child-headed households. The food parcels included essential ingredients that allowed beneficiaries to make healthy, balanced meals while getting back on their feet. The food parcels comprised:

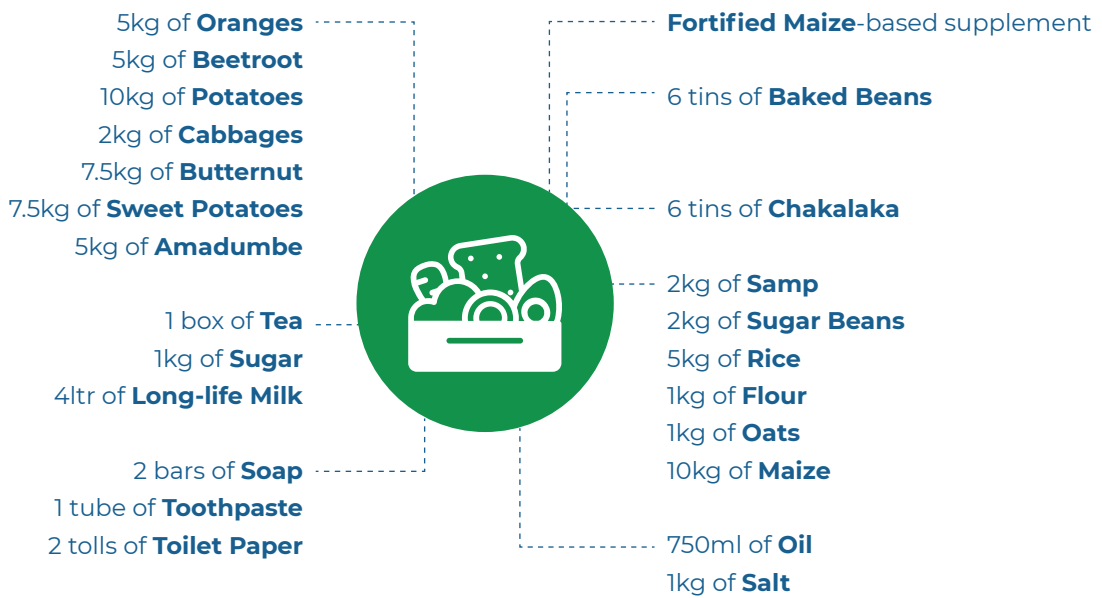


Figure 1: Food parcel contents

Partnerships

SA Harvest partnered with the following organisations to support various aspects of the project implementation:

African Solidarity

African Solidarity is a registered non-profit organisation that SA Harvest has been working with since the civil unrest in KZN in 2021. They conduct community dialogues and capacity-building initiatives to provide South African nationals and non-nationals with peaceful conflict resolution skills and income generation skills such as entrepreneurship and business skills. Their great network in the northern rural parts of KZN and expertise in working with local South Africans, migrants, and refugees, was invaluable to this project.

Ignite Revolution

Ignite Revolution is a community outreach-driven initiative. They have a holistic approach to building communities. They provide food aid, counselling, sports, youth empowerment programmes, training, and employment initiatives. SA Harvest has been working with them since the civil unrest in KZN as they bring an in-depth knowledge of the most vulnerable communities along the south coast of KZN.

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IMPLEMENTATION

A detailed roll-out plan was designed and shared with all stakeholders using the Trello App. This supported smooth project management and implementation. Parcels were provided by Boxer stores and collected from three main stores closest to SA Harvest's central hubs in Richards Bay, Port Shepstone, and Berea.

Fresh produce was sourced through the One Farm Share programme, through their network of small-scale farmers, and delivered to SA Harvests' main warehouse. Produce was delivered according to a detailed roll-out plan to achieve maximum freshness.

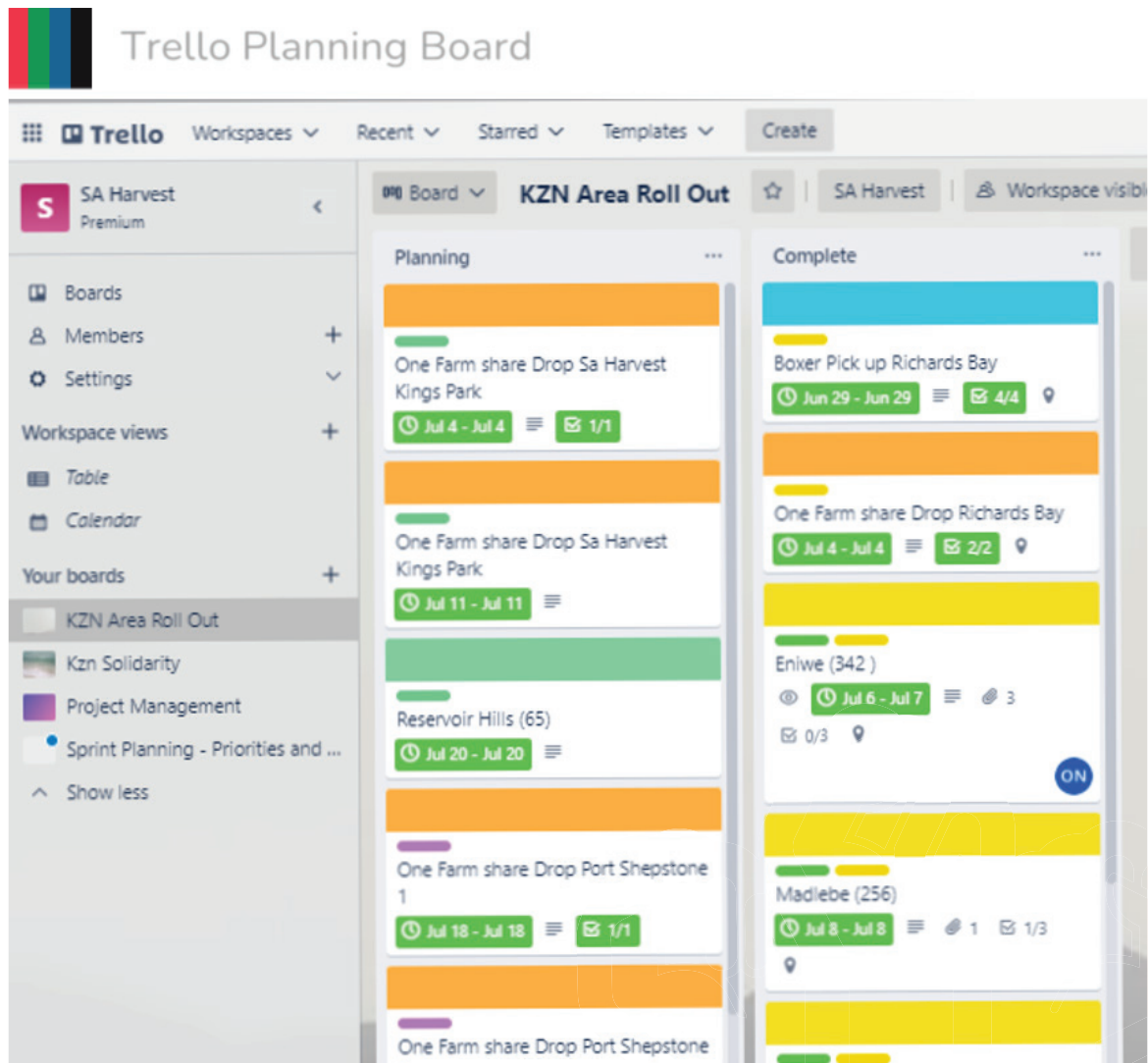


Figure 2: Use of the Trello App for project management

SA Harvest gathered lists of the most vulnerable communities in the project's focus areas through their partner organisations on the ground who work with community leaders and Mduna's in the rural areas. These lists were vetted and added to their database and used to plan the delivery of the food parcels according to the roll-out plan.

SA Harvest used its data collection app to capture proof of delivery, signatures, and copies of identification of those receiving the food parcels. The app captures additional data, including distribution area, count of family members, and nationality.

Project budget

The funding for the project was used to cover the expenses, as shown below. Per the Fund's guiding principles, the focus was on cost-effective project implementation, while maintaining quality and standards ensuring accountability in using resources, and working through local businesses.

KZN flood relief budget	Total budget allocated	Total expenditure to date
Family meal pack @ R650 per pack	R3 096 600	R3 089 751,96
Fresh produce @ R189 per 42kg	R900 396	R935 000,01
Month supply of fortified meal	R989 718	R989 743,68
Logistics	R185 000	R213 278,63
Extra casual labour / data collection	R90 000	R102 590,00
Travelling and accommodation	-	R71 620,87
Total	R5 261 714	R5 401 985,15*

*Additional spend covered by SA Harvest.

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IMPACT

Under this project, SA Harvest **distributed 4 764 food parcels to vulnerable families** in KZN displaced and affected by the floods.

The majority of parcels were distributed in northern rural KZN (around Richards Bay), followed by Ethekwini, Ugu, and then Umzumbe (Figure 3).

Food parcel distribution per area

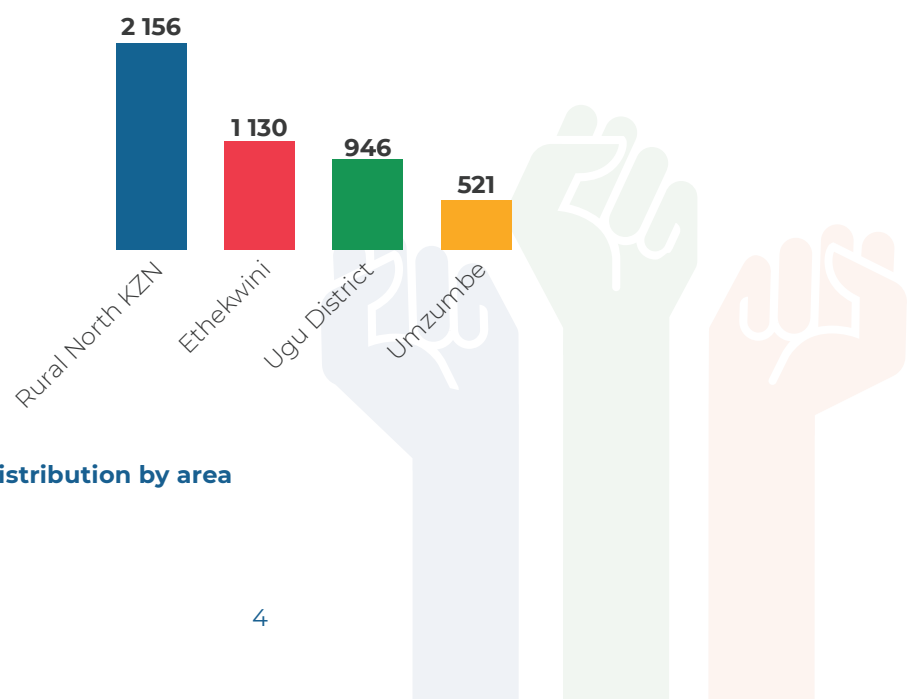


Figure 3: Food parcel distribution by area

Figure 4 below shows the distribution of parcels per area as a percentage.

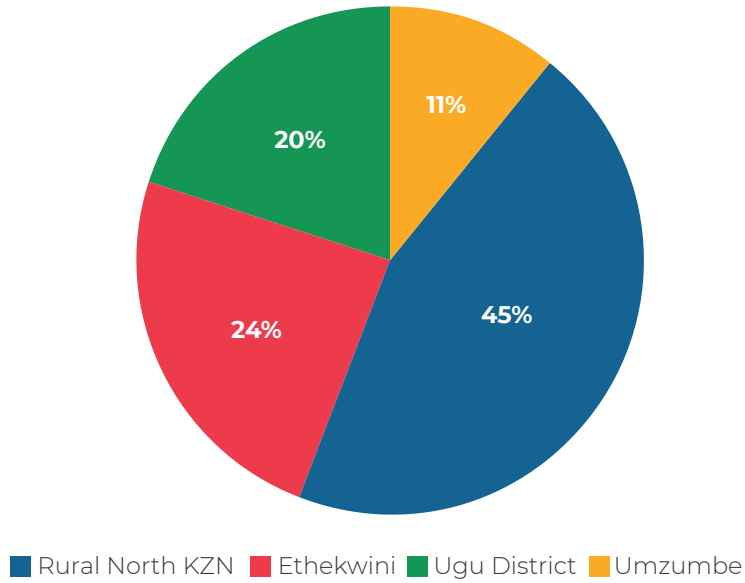


Figure 4: Food parcel distribution by area as a percentage

SA Harvest delivered over 343 000 kg of food. With each food parcel made to feed a family of six, these food parcels provided 28 524 people with food for two months.

Weight delivered per region and equivalent in meals

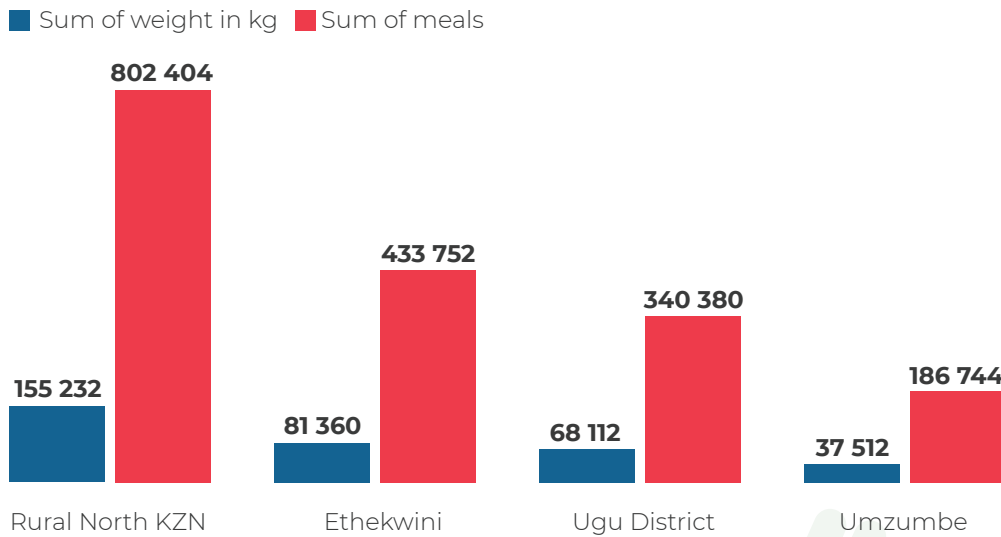


Figure 5: Food parcel weight per area and equivalent in meals

Northern rural KZN (Richards Bay area)

In the Richards Bay area, SA Harvest worked mostly with Tribal Mduna's and some local counsellors. These rural areas were by far the most difficult to reach. Because of this, beneficiaries were extremely grateful as they had not received much support in the past. Focusing on these rural areas is a core mandate of the Solidarity Fund's relief efforts.

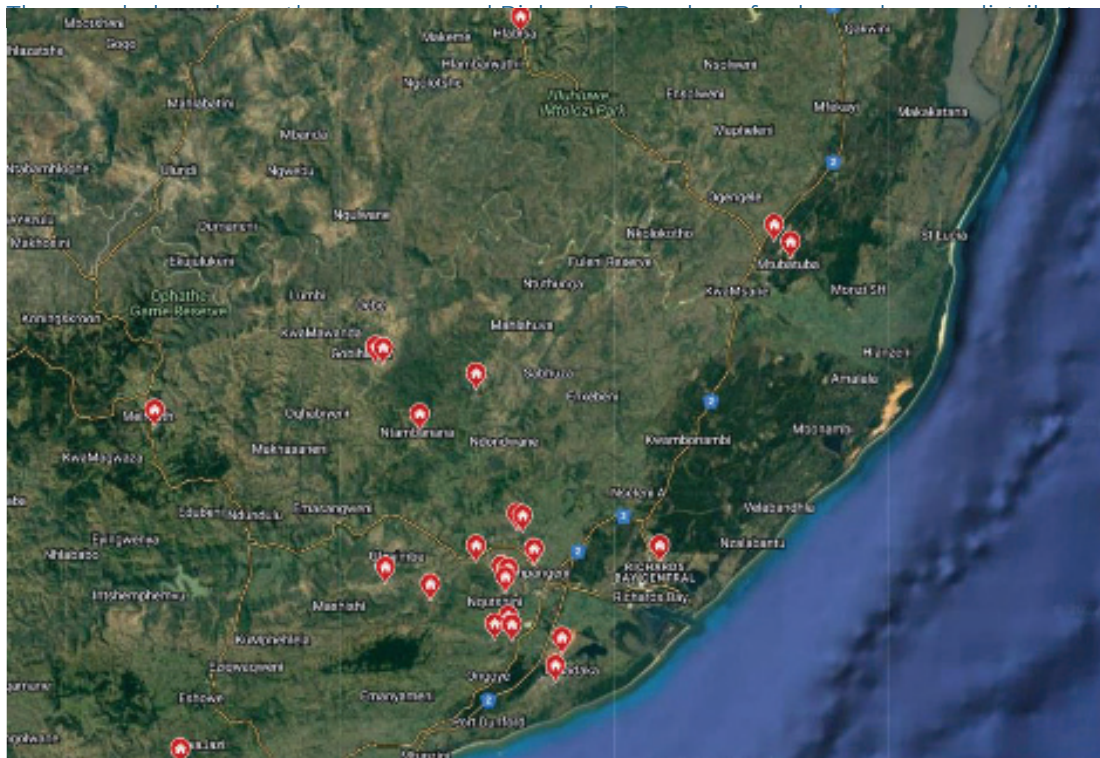


Figure 6: Food parcel distribution around Richards Bay

Ethekwini District

The Ethekwini District has the most flood victims and the situation is still dire in most areas. Because of this great need, the project experienced some security challenges in the district. This necessitated the hiring of armed guards to escort the food parcel distribution to some beneficiaries.

The map below shows the areas in Ethekwini where food parcels were distributed.

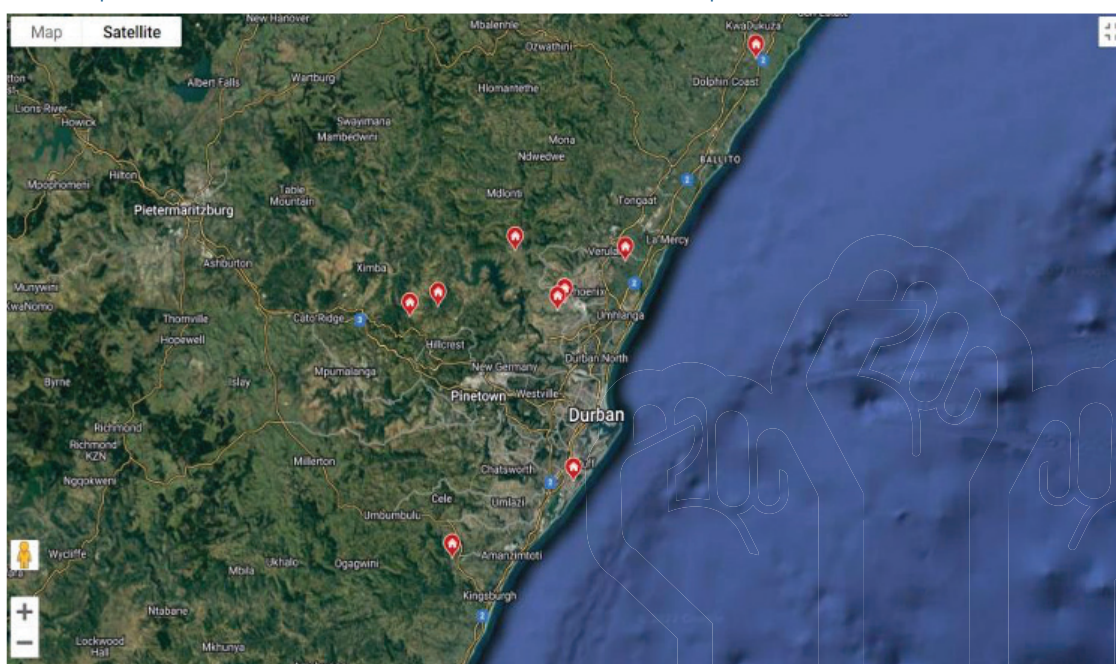


Figure 7: Food parcel distribution in Ethekwini

Ugu District including Umzumbe

Ugu District (South Coast area) has been severely affected by the floods and will require considerable support from the government to recover. Ignite Revolution had excellent data on the most affected and vulnerable community members in this area which were used to identify food parcel beneficiaries. Because of the level of need and desperation in the area, the project experienced some security concerns. On more than one occasion SA Harvest had to postpone food parcel delivery for safety reasons. However, all deliveries were made to the identified beneficiaries.

The map below shows the areas in Ugu District where food parcels were distributed.

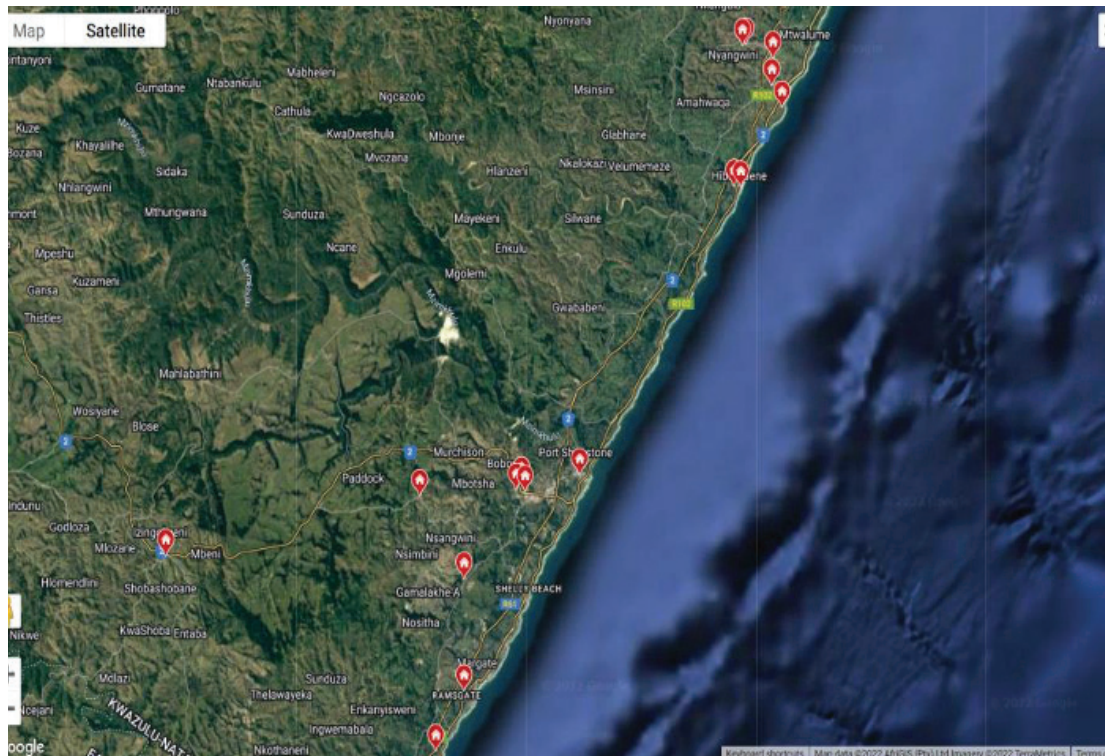


Figure 8: Food parcel distribution in Ugu District

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FOOD PARCEL DISTRIBUTION IN PICTURES





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CHALLENGES AND MITIGATING ACTIONS

Mobile network connectivity challenges in most areas affected data collection. To mitigate this, the data collection app was designed to work offline and then synchronise the data when back online. The app is also being upgraded to send SMSs to the recipients that the parcels are ready for collection. Once parcels are accepted, the app will geolocate the recipient and push data directly to the database. This will streamline and strengthen the monitoring of parcel distribution.

Approximately three per cent (3%) of data on deliveries was lost due to initial technical challenges. This happened with the first two deliveries of the project and was rectified immediately as the system was upgraded.

Due to the vast need within communities, on many deliveries, more people arrived hoping to get a food parcel on the day of delivery than planned. SA Harvest sent ambassadors before arriving to assess the situation and manage expectations. The main priority of their role was to be compassionate and inform the public that this is a pilot project aimed at the elderly and child-headed households. Once this project is completed and data is compiled, SA Harvest will be in a better position to assist in more relief efforts.

Some elderly and disabled recipients could not reach the central collection point. Also, some recipients don't have kitchens to cook their meals. Instead of providing this group with parcels, SA Harvest used their network of beneficiary organisations that provide cooked meals to these recipients daily and recommend a percentage split between made-up parcels and raw ingredients being sent to soup kitchens, early childhood development centres, and nursing homes.

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LESSONS LEARNED

- Support from local Mdunas, counsellors and community leaders is vital for this kind of initiative to succeed.
- Gathering clean data from tribal leaders take time due to the need for consistent engagements with them.
- Existing relationships are important to leverage insight and knowledge of these areas and communities. By supporting these partners, we have contributed to their credibility and footprint, and in turn, they have provided us with invaluable data and complete transparency in this process.
- Fresh produce, although vital to nutrition, has its challenges when supporting small-scale farmers, especially within this region and under the current conditions. Mother Nature doesn't follow the SA Harvest Gantt Chart, and vegetables can't just be harvested when needed.

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CONCLUSION

KwaZulu-Natal was devastated by the recent flooding, resulting in over four hundred fatalities, and leaving thousands displaced and unable to access food and water. Over 36 days, SA Harvest delivered 4 764 food parcels to the most vulnerable households, delivering 343 000kg of food to the flood-ravaged areas of rural northern KZN, eThekweni and the South Coast. Made to feed a family of six, these food parcels provided 28 524 people with food for two months.

This has significantly impacted these affected communities in their desperate time of need. The project has helped them to survive while the government and local disaster relief starts rebuilding.