



FLOODS RESPONSE: FoodForward SA – FOOD RELIEF

Impact Report

PROJECT	FUNDING ALLOCATED (EXCL. VAT)	FUNDING SPENT (EXCL. VAT)
Food relief	R5 000 000	R5 000 000

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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 to benefit all victims of any disaster in South Africa where such relief may be required. This response includes the provision of humanitarian relief, including food, water and sanitation, emergency health care services, shelter, and other support services.

After severe flooding devastated large swathes of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and the Eastern Cape in April 2022, the Fund responded to the government's request to assist with the flood response efforts and set up the Solidarity Fund Flood Response.

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 are no less devastating. Over 3 000 families, 1 943 homes, and countless livestock, crops, farming equipment and infrastructure were destroyed due to 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

A critical need that arose directly from the flooding and the resultant damage to infrastructure was to ensure that those displaced and living in temporary accommodation could access food, water, and hygiene and sanitation products.

To help meet this need, the Solidarity Fund, partnered with FoodForward SA (FFSA) to respond swiftly. FFSA sent a team to the hardest hit area of eThekweni District to assess the situation and liaise with Disaster Management stakeholders. This assessment determined that there was an immediate need for regular and nutritious food for survivors living in over thirty community halls in 14 suburbs in eThekweni.

FFSA has a strong network of partners and a broad regional footprint, making them ideally positioned to provide support. Through the Solidarity Fund's support, FFSA leveraged this network of beneficiary organisations (BO), procuring and distributing raw produce, which was then prepared into hot, balanced meals and served at identified community halls.

Between 1 June and 16 September 2022, FFSA provided food items on a weekly basis to up to 13 beneficiary organisations that cooked and served one warm meal and a fruit every day to more than 5 000 people placed at up to 31 community halls. FoodForward SA worked with Zamani, a third-party logistics company, to support delivery logistics and security.

Due to the evolving situation, including the movement of people between community halls, the rebuilding of homes, and/or people finding alternative accommodation, the number of halls supported was reduced from 31 to 27 as the project progressed.

The table below shows the entire list of community halls where warm meals were served daily:

KWAZULU-NATAL FLOOD RELIEF			
BO PARTNERS / COMMUNITY HALLS			
BO PARTNER PREPARING MEALS	COMMUNITY HALL	AREA	NO OF PEOPLE
Phoenix Tenants and Residents Assoc.	Mont View Civic	Phoenix	150
	Canelands Training Centre	Canelands	150
	Tongaat TownHall	Tongaat	120
Gugu Dlamini Memorial Centre Fdn	Bester Hall	Ntuzuma	50
	Nhlungwane Hall	Ntuzuma	50
	Ntuzuma B	Ntuzuma	50
	Ntuzuma F	Ntuzuma	200
	SASSA Hall	Newtown	100
	Chibini Church	Ntuzuma	50
	Masisizane Service Centre	Emachobeni Hall	Iqadi
Zwelitsha Hall		Inanda	250
Rabia Basri Dawah	Ntuzuma Hall	Ntuzuma	150
Nokukhanya Organization	Ntuzuma H Hall	Ntuzuma	100
Uluthando Crisis Centre	Umlazi V Section	Umlazi	100
	Tehuis	Umlazi	300

Molweni Zimele Centre	Tshelimnyama C Hall (White City)	Pinetown	100
	Mpola Hall	Pinetown	400
	Motala Hall	Pinetown	100
	Molweni Hall	Pinetown	100
	Ndlovu Church	Pinetown	120
	Marianridge	Pinetown	100
	Mausi Hall	Pinetown	100
Nurse at ago	L Section Community Hall	Umlazi	250
	Umlazi G section	Umlazi	190
	KwaNdengezi Community Hall	KwaNdengezi	100
Inkanyeziyokusa	Redcliffe Vallyview Hall	Redcliffe	500
	Waterloo Hall	Waterloo	100
SA Red Cross KZN	Amaoti Hall	Phoenix	280
	Isiphingo Beach school	Isiphingo	450
	Khanyanjalo Primary School	Inanda	150
	Ziphembeleni Secondary School	Inanda	120
Total			5 130

Beneficiary organisations were provided with a menu guide to prepare their daily meals. Zamani would collect the warm cooked meal from the beneficiary organisations and transport the food and a representative from the organisation to the assigned community hall to serve the meal of the day. An example of the menu for several days is shown below.

KwaZulu-Natal flood relief menu guide

		
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rice/Pap/Phuthu, Fish, Veggies and a Fruit 2. Pap/Noodles, Fish Curry, Veggies and a Fruit 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pasta/Rice/Pap, Sugar Beans, Fish, Veggies and a Fruit 2. Pap/Steam Bread, Mince, Fish, Veggies and a Fruit 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Samp/Dumpling, Baked Beans and Curry and a Fruit 2. Phuthu/Dumpling/ Pap, Fish, Chicken Feet, Veggies and a Fruit

Figure 1: Example of recommended daily menu

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IMPACT

Over the 15 weeks of the project, FFSA food relief support had the following impact:

- **323 830 meals** served from 2 July to 16 September 2022
- **Up to 13 beneficiary** organisations supported
- **Up to 5 130 beneficiaries** received warm meals daily at approximately 30 community halls

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BENEFICIARY STORIES AND INSIGHTS

Beneficiary organisation coordinators and beneficiary organisations expressed their gratitude for being able to assist their communities in their time of need.

"The impact that FoodForward SA has brought to the people that stay at the halls is quite huge. To think that the only cooked meal the halls are receiving daily is from FFSA through our BO's accompanied by Zamani Security is quite impressive, and to see the faces of the people/families receiving the food with warmth made me feel sad and happy at the same time. The children running to the Zamani bakkie was cute and heart breaking to me.

I have learned to appreciate the little I have, and my job title has more meaning to me. To sleep with the satisfaction that someone has slept with food in their stomach is a wonderful feeling, it just makes you to feel rich inside.

Is very impressive that FoodForward SA does not only support the halls they also support two schools and that touched me even more. I also got a chance to talk to the school principal Mrs. Thembi Ndlovu and seeing the smile on her face said it all".

Lebogang Mshilo – BO coordinator

"It was not easy to coordinate, and it was not easy for the organizations to do this task. We prevailed and made sure everyone who is placed at the halls got a meal and did not go to bed without eating anything the whole day. Thank you to all the organisations that were involved."

Bukhosi Kontsiwe – BO coordinator

"Although groceries are slowly becoming scarce, SA Red Cross (SARCS) appreciates the support provided by FoodForward SA and we believe your company is one of the companies that made it possible for SARCS to continue with its work of serving humanity as it depends on donations".

FFSA beneficiary organisation

"We appreciate the significant support from our donors and generous contribution from the community members. We wish to send our greatest appreciation for walking and holding hands with us from the beginning of this journey till now and for making it all possible for the victims affected by the floods".

Gugu Dlamini Memorial Centre Foundation

CHALLENGES AND MITIGATION

For the first time, FoodForward SA responded to a disaster by providing hot meals instead of food parcels. The daily serving of meals came with some challenges, including:

CHALLENGE	MITIGATION
Signed registers were required from beneficiaries as meals were received. This proved to be a problem as beneficiaries refused to sign for their food as they felt this was inhumane.	BOs consistently communicated with beneficiaries to explain the reasons for monitoring the food deliveries for accountability; why they could only provide one meal a day; and that they were not politically affiliated.
Some beneficiaries expected to receive three meals daily when only one meal could be provided.	
Beneficiaries believed the beneficiary organisations were politically affiliated and receiving some form of payment for their services and were therefore reluctant to share information.	
Beneficiary organisations did not always have sufficient resources to keep up with the demand in terms of gas, transport, and staff.	The project continuously tried to find ways to mitigate and support beneficiary organisations with these costs.
The increase in petrol prices over the months also led to increases in transport costs.	
The number of people at the sites kept increasing as people from outside the halls and in the community came into the halls to receive meals too. There was no control as to who should be receiving a meal and who shouldn't.	Beneficiary organisation coordinators and project team members attempted to address this but noted the need to build in contingency measure for this in future projects.
At the time of feeding, not all people currently living in the halls were necessarily present, people leave for various reasons such as work or school during the day and only return after the beneficiary organisation had already left.	
It was brought to our attention that one of the beneficiary organisations - Red Cross Society stopped feeding at their allocated halls.	The BO coordinator took immediate action and reassigned the affected halls to BOs who had the capacity to assist with cooking or approached existing BOs from the organisation to assist.

LESSONS

The Fund and its implementing partners have taken several key lessons from this project that will be used to better inform future projects of this nature. Some of these critical lessons include:

- The response to the immediate need for their assistance was admirable, but the need remains. FFSA will continue to provide meals for those displaced until provision has been made for housing.
- Working in partnership with beneficiary organisations already in operation in the area was critical to the project's success.
- Until this project, FFSA responded to the disaster by providing food parcels. This new approach of working with our beneficiary organisation to cook and serve meals ensured that each person received a meal, and that food parcels or food was not stolen.

- While daily monitoring and evaluation are essential, expecting people to sign for their meals is inhumane. Better practices should be implemented to ensure meals are received, and expectations should be better managed.
- Transport and security are of concern. Beneficiary organisations could not always transport meals to and from the halls daily, and they were at risk as community members from outside the halls also demanded food. Enlisting the services of a third party to assist with transport and security was vital to the project's success.



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CONCLUSION

Through the support of the Solidarity Fund, FFSA and its partners could provide up to 5 130 displaced people with a warm and nutritious meal every day over a period of 15 weeks. This helped those already so traumatised and endangered by the flooding to have one less thing to worry about as they worked towards rebuilding their shattered lives.

