

Media release
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Churches put might behind famine relief in Nelson Mandela Bay

Food relief is being rolled out to Nelson Mandela Bay residents across nearly 50 of the 60 wards through an initiative of the Church Leaders Network.

According to Transformation Christian Network (TCN) founder Trevor Jennings there are already more than 70 anchor churches which, in partnership with FoodForward South Africa, will be coordinating the distribution of food to the needy in 47 of the poorest wards.

TCN is helping to coordinate the initiative.

Research by FoodForward has found that South Africa produces enough food to ensure that no-one has to go to bed hungry.

However, some 50% of agricultural produce and 30% of all food produced is wasted, leaving 14 million people hungry.

Founded in 2009, the organisation sources, collects, stores and distributes food from the whole supply chain, including commercial farmers, retailers and wholesalers.

It has been active in Port Elizabeth, and has already been distributing food through some churches.

With additional churches joining the network through the partnership, even more food will be distributed directly to the poor, according to Jennings.

“The churches are closest to the communities they serve, and they know where the needs are,” he says.

There are strict conditions controlling the storage and distribution of the food aid.

All “anchor” churches participating in the food distribution partnership have to be registered as a non-profit or public benefit organisation.

They also need to comply with Covid-19 regulation, and must have certified storage facilities, as well as authorisation to travel to distribute food.

All staff and volunteers working with the food are required to complete training organised by Pastors Neville Goldman and Russell Viljoen of the Church Leaders network.

Training manuals in English and isiXhosa are available for downloading off the TCN website (TCN.org.za).

Representatives from “sister” churches collect food by prior arrangement in order to ensure that as many of the poor as possible are fed.

“The metro has over 126 informal settlements, which means that we have to use every resource available in order to reach the poor and hungry,” says Jennings.

Ends

Release on behalf of the Nelson Mandela Bay Church Leader Network.

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