

FoodForward SA shows huge surge in impact, as SA food crisis deepens

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[FoodForward SA](#) (FFSA) reports significant growth in its latest annual results, reflecting the success of its foodbanking model of recovering quality, edible, surplus food from the supply chain and redistributing it to verified organisations that serve the poor.



During its annual stakeholder breakfast, hosted at the Century City Conference Centre on 16 March 2022, FFSA reported an increase of 83,1% in the tonnage of surplus food recovered from, among others, farmers, manufacturers and retailers. The food distribution organisation provides good quality surplus food each month to 2,750 beneficiary organisations (BOs) that reached 985 000 vulnerable people daily between 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2023 and distributed 22,000 tonnes of food – the equivalent of 88 million meals, at an impressive cost per meal of just 57c.

“We are an intermediary between surplus and need,” says FFSA managing director Andy Du Plessis. “We focus on making it easier for food value chain partners to donate their quality surplus food timeously so that we can use this food to build stronger, more resilient communities. Our results show that we are making an impact, but there remains so much more to be done.”

FFSA is the largest food distribution organisation in South Africa, with operations in each of the nine provinces in the country, including 35 rural communities through its Mobile Rural Depots programme.

The latest FFSA metrics show the organisation has engaged 23,6% more beneficiary organisations compared to the 2021/22 financial year, reached 12,5% more vulnerable people, and increased the amount of food distributed by an enormous 83,1%.

The rapid growth of FFSA happens amidst an exploding economic crisis in the country, with unemployment at 32,7%, crippling loadshedding and negative GDP growth.

Food inflation to the end of February 2023 is at 13,6%, making it virtually impossible for poor people to afford basic food groceries, resulting in around 30 million people that experience food insecurity every month. The organisation further quotes concerning statistics:

- 27% of children under five are stunted (short for their age) due to inadequate nutrition in early life.
- 15% of infants are born with low birth weight.
- 33% of children under five are not reaching basic milestones in cognitive or social-emotional development.

As part of its ongoing interventions to “repurpose the surplus”, reduce food loss and waste and address food insecurity at scale, FFSA launched a Food Donations Policy petition to encourage national government to introduce laws that will enable more surplus food donations.

“We need a food donations policy that will set guidelines for safe food donations, protect food donors against liability and clearly label donated food that is safe to eat,” says Du Plessis.

Of FFSA’s 2,750 beneficiary organisations, 75% focus on developmental work, such as early-childhood development, care for vulnerable women and children, as well as health and skills development.

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