

Joy as 800 Kwale families get food aid from donors

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Base Titanium Mining Company's Community Affairs Manager, Pius Kassim (left) and Fanikisha Foundation Director Ms. Christine Mwaka, who is also wife to Kwale County Governor distribute food to Mtsunga and Kasemeni residents, Lunga-Lunga Sub-county on Tuesday March 27, 2017. Photo by Chari Bakari/KNA.

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Residents from Mtsunga and Kasemeni villages, Kwale County, wait eagerly to receive relief food donated by Base Titanium Mining Company in partnership with the county government and Fanikisha Foundation on Tuesday March 27, 2017 in Lunga Lunga Sub-County. Photo by Chari Bakari/KNA.

Over 800 famine-stricken families in Mtsunga and Kasemeni villages in Kwale County on Tuesday rejoiced after receiving relief food worth Shs.800,000 from well-wishers.

The donation made by Base Titanium Mining Company in partnership with Fanikisha Foundation, County government and Kenya Red Cross Society, included 12 tons of grains and maize flour among others.

Also donated were 356 packets of fortified porridge flour for children, 202 packets of sanitary towels and 200 panties for girls.

Speaking when handing over the food to the residents, Base Titanium's Community Relations Manager, Pius Kassim said the region which he described as the core for the company's operations is drastically affected by famine thus the need to alleviate the suffering of those affected.

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“We have come to the aid of the families that are adversely affected by drought since this county is the home of our core operations and the well-being of the community is a big concern to us,” he said.

Kassim said the firm has come up with a project to strengthen food security in the county to improve the livelihoods of small scale farmers.

“As a company, we are proud of this initiative which will ease access to food for the local community and we remain dedicated to our long term agricultural strategy in Kwale,” he added.

The beneficiaries thanked the donors for coming to their rescue and challenged the government to find a permanent solution to drought in the region.

A resident, Chigale Nyota said they were having difficulties finding food since the charcoal business they rely on is not doing well.

“The situation is getting out of control as drought intensifies. As bread winners it is embarrassing to see our families starving yet we cannot help. We would really appreciate if a lasting solution to this cycle of food scarcity is found,” he said.

This comes days after Kenya’s Metrological Services issued a forecast of depressed rainfall across most parts of the country during the March-May rain season.

This is expected to hit crop production and food security in many areas of the country pushing many more people into a food crisis.

By Chari Bakari/James Muchai