

Hungry still being fed despite recession

By MARY-ANNE GONTSANA

THOUSANDS of hungry, needy people are still receiving relief from feeding schemes despite the negative impact of the worldwide economic recession.

The Peninsula School Feeding Association's Amelia Koeries said the number of pupils they feed daily has increased: "In June we fed a total of 831 learners and this month (September) we have fed 227 991."

Koeries said the organisation feeds pupils from 637 schools from as far afield as George.

"Schools are being added to our list all the time. We work under the National School Nutrition Programme."

Pauline Katzen, the administration officer of a small Belhar soup kitchen run by the Church of Christ, said they provide food twice a week to 100 to 150 needy people: "We haven't had a problem with feeding people since the recession. The church still provides food like vegetables, meat and bread for the soup kitchen."

Two distribution organisations that have been affected by the recession are the FoodBank and War Against Malnutrition, Tuberculosis and Hunger (Warmth).

Patrick Andries, managing director of FoodBank in Cape Town, said: "The recession has affected us badly. Because fewer people are buying good quality products, less food is being manufactured.

"At the same time the demand has increased, a lot more people are becoming dependent on feeding schemes."

Andries said the amount of food they distribute had dropped by 30 percent.

They distribute to a total of 467 agencies which include schools, educares, shelters and old-age homes feeding 115 000 people daily.

Warmth's health and nutrition manager, Angelo Timmers, said the organisation was also badly affected by the recession as it can only "buy half the supply".

"We are sourcing cheaper food products and are mainly relying on our international funders rather than our local ones because of the recession."

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