



## Households in Kenya receive Food Relief as Hunger continues to bite

**NAIROBI, Kenya** – Over 141 households in Meru, Kenya, received food relief in November and December 2022. The Montfort Scholasticate community, Mulot community and Lay Associates in Kenya are carrying out hunger relief intervention activities with support from partners through the German SMM Procure.

For three consecutive years, Kenya is experiencing drought which has impacted on the country's food security due to poor crop and livestock production. According to the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) Assessment of October 2022, there are over 600,000 households (3.1 million people) that are food insecure in pastoral and marginal agricultural areas of Kajiado, the Rift Valley and parts of the Mount Kenya region.

According to the Red Cross Meru Coordinator reports that, the people mostly affected by hunger in Meru are the elderly, people living with disability, orphans and those battling chronic illnesses.

The Montfort missionaries in Nairobi, Kenya involved Esther Wagura, a Montfort Lay Associate to implement the hunger relief intervention in the worst hit area.

*“Our initial targeted households were 235 households in Meru County where over 200,000, the elderly, people living with disability and those battling chronic illness are the worst hit. Due to lack of enough financial resources, we have so far managed to distribute to a total of 142 households out of the 235 targeted households which we have done in 2 phases (29th & 30th November 2022 and 23rd and 24th December 2022). In phase 1 we distributed to a total of 71 households and in phase 2 we distributed to a total of 70 households.”* She said with a detailed report during an interview with the Montfort Communications.

Esther who was earlier using her own resources worked with parish priests in three Catholic parishes, namely, **St. Anne Parish** - Kariene their central point of distribution, North Imenti which the central point has been **St. Joseph Cathedral** parish and Limbine which is in Tigania West and worked through **Mary Immaculate Parish** - Limbine. However, other areas are also equally extremely very needy too. From these 3 areas they selected the very Needy of Needy totaling to 235 Households.

Esther elaborated succinctly that each household received 5kgs of rice, 6kgs of Unga ugali (Maize Flour), 4kgs of Unga uji (Porridge Flour), 5kgs of Ndengus (Legumes) and 5kgs of beans (Legumes) totaling to 20kgs of food in each household.

Purity, a 33-year-old girl and very smiling girl, born with a disability is one of the beneficiaries. She was leaving and being taken care of at Cotolengo Sisters Home for the disabled. 6 years ago, she was discharged to go and stay at home due to the over-crowding of the disabled home. She has since then been leaving with her mother as her caregiver, who are grateful for this Christmas food.

Based on the experiences from Esther and the 3 parish priests, in the 3 selected areas, there is dire need for support on food to the people as a mitigation measure especially the elderly, the persons living with disability and the persons suffering with chronic illnesses and especially this period up until April 2023 where crop harvesting is expected if the rains in the areas are favourable.

*“It is my greatest humble prayer and wish that if we can get support in terms of funding to be able to support 235 identified households with food for the next up until March 2023 as the country areas awaits crop harvest in April 2023, we will be making a great difference in this people’s lives,”* said Esther who is grateful to the benefactors for the donation which is bringing hope to the hopeless.

Fr. Andrew KAUFMA SMM, who engaged the confreres from Germany entity and coordinates the hunger relief intervention with the Scholasticate Community and the Montfort Associates in Kenya, expressed gratitude for the donation, and for the noble dedication of the Montfort Fathers of the Nairobi Scholasticate and Mulot community in Ngong Diocese, and the commitment of Ms. Esther Wagura who is ensuring that the donation reaches to the intended beneficiaries in the hard-to-reach areas of Meru Diocese.

*“According to the current situation in Kenya, there is need to sustain these activities until at least March 2023. The hunger situation here is tough. Furthermore, schools are reopening in the next two weeks and it is clear that food will be a priority than school fees for most of these affected households,”* appealed Fr. Andrew.

As the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) assessment report indicates, most Kenyans in the rural areas are going with a single meal or none at all, and the number is likely to go up as the rain this season is also not reliable.

*Montfort Communications*