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Food For Famine raises funds from businesses

By Langley Times

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Food for Famine Society held its second annual corporate breakfast at the Sandman Signature Hotel in Langley, with Premier Christy Clark and Education Minister Peter Fassbender as special guests.

The Langley-based society has promoted the use of Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) to help children suffering from famine, and has saved the lives of 8,000 children by the use of this special product, says founder and executive director Maria Martini.

She told the crowd about her passion for children and the unique partnership she has crafted with World Vision Canada (WVC) and MANA. WVC assists with the distribution of RUTF through its community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition programs, and MANA provides a secure and consistent supply of RUTF.

"This partnership is built on trust, and I want you all to know that 100 per cent of your donation goes to buy RUTF for the children. Our family takes care of the overhead," she said.

Next to speak was MANA founder and CEO Mark Moore.

"We are actually talking about solving something, not just putting a Band-aid on it," he said. "Ninety-five per cent of the kids given these full regimen of RUTF treatment don't ever come back."

World Vision Canada executive vice-president Michael Messenger said "World Vision promotes local self-sufficiency with long-term community plans rather than temporary fixes. We want to give them a 'hand up' rather than a 'hand out'."

Fassbender announced a donation of \$50,000 from an anonymous donor towards the society's programs, and then gave Premier Clark a glowing introduction.

"It's our calling to help these children. We are blessed to live here in B.C. To celebrate that, we are obligated to share. We can and must make a difference," said Clark.

She asked everyone to "do what Maria did. Share this message with everyone you know."

Martini said the corporate breakfast was a resounding success, and the funds raised will be used to purchase more RUTF kits for distribution in various areas where famine is an issue.

Food For Famine also organizes events in Langley and other communities around World Food Day, which was held on Oct. 16 this year.

The organization works to get the message out to children and young people about how they can help others.

Langley Secondary students were among the students taking part in awareness events last month.

For more about the organization, see its website at <http://www.foodforfamine.org>.

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