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## Innovative Water Solutions: The PepsiCo Foundation is making a difference this World Water Day

This year the theme for World Water Day (22 March 2021) is **valuing water**. While it is accepted that water means different things to different people, in the context of the continuing coronavirus pandemic, water is now further recognised as the first line of defense against the virus.

Unfortunately, across South Africa access to clean water and sanitation is not uniform. The Department of Water and Sanitation's (DWS) National Water and Sanitation Master Plan estimates that over 3 million people do not have access to a basic water supply.

To curb the spread of COVID-19, increasing the number of safe, communal water taps and communal hand-washing facilities is essential. These facilities should also ideally be foot-operated to prevent the spread of infection.

Thanks to the generous funding of food and beverage giant, **PepsiCo**, approximately 50 foot-operated communal standpipes and hand-washing stations will be installed in hotspot areas across the Eastern Cape, in locations such as informal settlements and clinics in rural areas. The tamper, vandalism and theft-proof stations are connected to a raised water tank or municipal water supply, supporting safe water access for communities and assisting in conserving water.

The stations were designed by a retired engineer, through the **National Business Initiative's (NBI) Technical Assistance, Mentoring and Development (TAMDEV) programme** and will be rolled out as part of a partnership between the **NBI** and **PepsiCo Foundation**, the philanthropic branch of the Company.

This initiative forms part of The PepsiCo Foundation's safe water access work, which focuses on Sustainable Development Goal #6: ensuring sustainable management and thus availability of clean water and sanitation for all.

Understanding how water benefits lives is the key first step in valuing it and therefore effectively conserving it, so that access to clean water and sanitation becomes a reality. This World Water Day is a key opportunity to focus on stories of hope, by showing how partnerships like this one can make a difference.

**For more information on this collaboration and the National Business Initiative's (NBI) water-related work, please contact Alex McNamara (NBI: Water Lead): [AlexM@nbi.org.za](mailto:AlexM@nbi.org.za)**



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The National Business Initiative (NBI) is an independent and voluntary coalition of South African and multinational businesses launched in 1995 by the then President, Nelson Mandela.

**NBI Website: [www.nbi.org.za](http://www.nbi.org.za)**

**Email: [info@nbi.org.za](mailto:info@nbi.org.za)**

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