

National Water Week

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P&G marks Human Rights Month and National Water Week by highlighting the right to access clean water



As South Africa marks Human Rights Month, global brand P&G recognises that one of the fundamental basic human rights is access to clean water. Between 20 and 26 March is National Water Week in the country, with Tuesday 22 March being World Water Day. The day focuses on achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 6: Water and Sanitation for all by 2030. Around the world, 2.2 billion people are living without access to safe water. P&G acknowledges this challenge and is taking meaningful action to tackle the global water crisis, including in South Africa. To date, the company has donated over a billion litres of clean and safe water to South Africans.

In 2004, P&G launched the Children's Safe Drinking Water Programme, a non-profit initiative. Through a diverse network of more than 150 partners, P&G has provided more than 19-billion litres of clean water to people in 93 countries. The programme uses innovation to make an impact with an easy-to-use water purification packet invented by P&G scientists, that can clean 10 litres of water in just 30 minutes. The company has also been drilling boreholes in search of more accessible water sources for communities around the world.

Providing clean, drinkable water can help reduce the risk of disease and death by almost half. Diarrhoea, caused by drinking contaminated water, is still a leading cause of illness and death among infants and children in the developing world. A lack of clean drinking water results in more deaths than HIV/AIDS and malaria combined.

It also contributes to many problems within communities. Children are frequently absent from school, while their parents stay away from work as a result of waterborne illnesses. Women and girls are especially affected as they

disproportionately bear the burden of managing household water needs. Many walk long distances each day to collect contaminated water and are often also responsible for taking care of sick family members. This keeps many girls out of school, denying them an uninterrupted education that could secure their future. P&G firmly believes that touching these individual lives through its Children's Safe Drinking Water Programme is part of its social responsibility.

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