**Ford-Funded World Vision Water Project Supports Communities in Nelson Mandela Bay Impacted by Record Drought**

* World Vision South Africa has been providing water to underprivileged and under-resourced communities throughout Nelson Mandela Bay since the initiative was launched in June 2019
* More than 2 000 learners and educators at local schools, and over 2 500 beneficiaries in poor communities, have benefitted from this pioneering initiative
* The innovative water-from-air solution uses a Watergen atmospheric water generator, and has been funded by Ford Motor Company Fund, the Bill Ford Better World Challenge, and Ford Research and Advanced Engineering
* The Eastern Cape is currently in its 6th consecutive year of drought, with the poorest communities having limited access to clean and safe drinking water – a critical situation exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic

**pORT ELIZABETH,** **South Africa, 30 July 2020** – Since its inception in June 2019, the World Vision South Africa water project, which is funded by Ford Motor Company and relies on the innovative Watergen atmospheric water-from-air generator, has been providing water to under-privileged and under-resourced communities in the drought-stricken areas of Nelson Mandela Bay in the Eastern Cape.

With the metro’s supply dams now at just 18 percent of total combined capacity, and the record drought now its sixth year, many communities have little to no access to clean water – a dire predicament that has only been exacerbated during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Accordingly, the World Vision SA project team project has been working closely with the local municipality, as well as the departments of Education, Social Development and Health to identify schools, clinics and communities in desperate need of water. More than 2 000 learners and educators benefitted from the distribution of water between August and October last year alone.

World Vision SA also works closely with community representatives to identify and assist informal settlements through the provision of water, and the team expanded its distribution to more drought-affected areas within the metro, including remote and rural areas surrounding Uitenhage and KwaNobuhle with little or no water supply.

Between November 2019 and March 2020, the project provided water regularly to approximately 1 100 people in the targeted areas. World Vision also handed out 96 reusable water storage containers to households in informal settlements, along with schools, clinics, early childhood development (ECD) facilities and day care centres. These containers help ensure that the water remains clean and safe to drink for the almost 2 500 beneficiaries ultimately supported by this initiative. World Vision has also adapted and expanded its programme during the current COVID-19 crisis to donate face masks and educational materials.

The two-year World Vision SA project was made possible through grants from the Ford Motor Company Fund – the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company – and the Bill Ford Better World Challenge, valued at approximately R2.8-million. Additional funding of R1.9-million was awarded by Ford Research and Advanced Engineering.

“World Vision continues to enjoy a fruitful and impactful relationship with Ford Motor Company,” says Bruce Layzell, National Director of World Vision South Africa. “Since the official launch of the water harvesting programme in June last year, our partnership has delivered ‘water from air’ to many in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, and specifically in Uitenhage and KwaNobuhle.

“World Vision is one of the largest and oldest private humanitarian and development non-governmental organisations in the world with a 70-year history of serving the world’s most vulnerable children. We are proud of our impact and, through our programmes, every 60 seconds a family gets water, a hungry child is fed and a family receives the tools to overcome poverty.”

“Naturally we are extremely selective in who we partner with and we have undoubtedly found a kindred spirit in Ford, its leadership and operational staff,” Layzell adds. “It has been a fantastic journey of testing and refining the concept and technology through many iterative processes. The Ford team have remained close to the project and built a symbiotic relationship with our team on the ground. We look forward to many more years of this partnership and hope to continue building on the current programme and exploring other opportunities to address the needs in our beautiful country.”

The grant from Ford Motor Company Fund was used to acquire an innovative Watergen GEN-350 atmospheric water generator, which extracts clean and fresh drinking water from moisture in the air in an energy-efficient manner, and is capable of producing up to 900 litres per day. The unit is powered by a diesel generator, with the entire system mounted on a custom-built heavy-duty double-axle trailer. It is towed by a Ford Ranger 2.2 TDCi XL Double Cab that was acquired from Eastern Cape Motors Ford North End in Port Elizabeth, ensuring that the rig is fully mobile and can respond to community needs in almost any location.

“We are encouraged to see the dedication of the World Vision South Africa team to assisting desperate communities throughout Nelson Mandela Bay during this devastating drought,” says Neale Hill, MD of Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa (FMCSA). “This project demonstrates how technology and a commitment to improving the lives of others can make a meaningful difference with something as simple, but absolutely essential, as water. World Vision has also expanded its efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we applaud their ongoing work in the region.”

World Vision SA’s project coordinator for this initiative in Nelson Mandela Bay, Thulang Lecheko, says that partnerships are vital in ensuring the success of this programme. “One of World Vision’s core values is partnership, and we are delighted to have the support from Ford as our main partner. We also work closely with municipalities and stakeholders in the surrounding communities.

“We are committed and responsive to the poor, and people who require our assistance,” Lecheko adds. “The project has been enthusiastically received by the community and positively endorsed by the government, municipality, community leaders, and relevant partnerships. We will continue doing everything we can to support those in need with life-giving water during this crippling drought.”

Watch the great work done by World Vision by clicking here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmeEz-DipQ8&t=8s>

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***About World Vision***

*World Vision South Africa (WVSA) is a member of the World Vision International Partnership founded in the 1950s and today operates in more than 100 countries. World Vision impacts over 200 million vulnerable children worldwide, tackling the root causes of poverty in various communities. For more information, visit* [*www.worldvision.co.za/*](http://www.worldvision.co.za/)

***About Ford Motor Company Fund***

*As the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company, Ford Fund’s mission is to strengthen communities and help make people’s lives better. Working with dealers and nonprofit partners in 63 countries, Ford Fund provides access to opportunities and resources that help people reach their full potential. Since 1949, Ford Fund has invested more than $2 billion in programs that support education, promote safe driving, enrich community life and encourage employee volunteering. For more information, visit* [*www.fordfund.org*](http://www.fordfund.org) *or join us at @FordFund on*[*Facebook*](https://www.facebook.com/FordFund/)*and* [*Twitter*](https://twitter.com/fordfund_)*.*

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