

Entrepreneurs challenge transferable human disease with innovative water and sanitation solution

By [Godfrey Sono](#)

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The water crisis is one that directly affects South Africa's socio-economic development. In the absence of water, our economy and its major industries would not survive and would lead to a state of economic depression.



Image Source: [mo-Wash](#)

The recent water crisis and declarations of a disaster zone in the Western Cape has sparked some increased attention. More than 80% of the water reserves are depleted, with society having to grapple with unique solutions to deal with the water crisis. Whilst there is a severe drought in the Western Cape, the World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that about 2.2m children under the age of five die each year from diarrheal diseases and pneumonia, the top two killers of young children around the world.

Educating the public

When one considers the fact that cholera is endemic in most African countries and estimated that about 100,000 deaths are reported each year, an equivalent of 274 people dying every day, human intervention becomes the only possible solution to circumvent the current death rates. Cholera is an

avoidable human disease and one that can be prevented through public education via multiple mediums.

Initiatives such as educating the public about the effects of drinking clean water could go far in preventing diseases such as diarrhoea and prevent outbreaks. Basic knowledge such as boiling water, avoiding tap water, washing and cleaning fruits and vegetables properly when dealing with contaminated water could aid in the prevention of illness. When a society is faced with such dire circumstances, innovation and social interventions are the most practical solutions to resolve these problems.

mo-Wash - an innovative solution to water and sanitation issues

Two entrepreneurs took it upon themselves to find an innovative solution to deal with a deprived human need - water and sanitation. Godfrey Sono together with his partner Sibusiso Vilakazi created a solution to prevent transferable human diseases by implementing a mobile hand wash called mo-Wash. Unsanitary environments are synonymous with transferable human disease and infections, which the pair sought to challenge with their innovation. They have been able to aid the prevention and the spread of disease like respiratory illnesses, colds, and flu in various communities.

mo-Wash is a fully automatic, portable and eco-friendly handwashing unit developed in South Africa by Sono and Vilakazi. It utilises off-grid sources of energy to dispense water and soap, often utilised at public places such as schools, clinics, weddings, funerals, etc.



Image Source: [mo-Wash](https://www.mo-wash.co.za/)

Creative innovations such as mo-Wash continually support alternative efforts such as those at the City of Cape Town, which is currently exploring water desalination as an alternative while at the Water Research Council and some of their scientists are experimenting with toilets that need little or no water. All these efforts seek to find ways to preserve water and aid better sanitation which includes proper waste disposal and adequate sewerage system management.

It is no doubt that the possible impact of the drought in the Western Cape will have snowball effects like a hike on food prices and strain on water infrastructure. Water consumption and management will certainly become an integral component of our daily lives. Alternatives such as water recycling sanitation systems present feasible alternatives, especially in public areas. Lastly, for a sustainable future for our children, we ought to change the way in which water resources are utilised.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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