

THE HIPPO WATER ROLLER PROJECT

*Helping communities improve access to water
90 litres at a time (24 gallons)*



Introduction

The Hippo Water Roller was created in response to the needs of millions of people living in smallholder communities in developing countries where water infrastructure is either unreliable or totally non-existent. First created in 1991 and piloted in South Africa, it has since been implemented in more than 20 other countries. Once the efficiency, benefits, and ease-of-use aspects of the Hippo roller are realized, there is total acceptance of the Hippo roller and an increased demand for more.

Water Crisis

There is an urgent need for the Hippo roller because it offers an immediate solution to the relentless struggle to collect enough water for daily activities, consumption and sustenance farming and results in improvements to health and living standards. According to the United Nations, this affects approximately 1 billion people who are without adequate access to water. The statistics on access to water does not reflect the reality on the ground, where many people struggle to live a dignified life.

While the Hippo Water Roller is not a permanent water solution, it does offer an immediate and appropriate response to the issues surrounding water access and food security.



Effective & Efficient

Our innovation makes more water and time available for education, household tasks and food production as smallholder farmers can transport up to 5 x more water to their homes and food gardens. Currently, they tend to rely on traditional methods of water collection that consume excessive amounts of energy and time, which could be better spent on food production and school attendance to break free from the poverty cycle.

The Hippo roller is very user friendly for women, children and physically weak as it makes the transportation of water much less strenuous than traditional methods. It is specifically designed for rural and economically poor communities with its low to none maintenance costs and there is no need to access spare parts which is very difficult in these areas.

Environmentally Friendly

In contrast to the erosion of footpaths caused by the narrow wheels of wheelbarrows, the wide rolling surface of the Hippo roller drum helps to compact the soil and protect these pathways.

Although the plastic can be recycled, we have found that once the Hippo roller is damaged beyond its usefulness for collecting water, it has many other uses including storage bins or flower pots and when cut vertically in half, feeding or watering troughs for animals or a bath for washing clothes and small children.



Social Impact

We have found that an implementational strength of the Hippo roller is that only minimal changes in the social behaviour and practice of the end-users are needed. It was designed with an understanding of the habits of end-users daily water collection methods and routines and the fact that women and children are often responsible for water collection in rural communities. One of the positive cultural changes witnessed is that men are proud to use this technology and now help to collect water using a Hippo roller.

The benefits enjoyed by the users are experienced immediately unlike many projects that require extensive time and money before results are seen. Improved health and hygiene due to improved access to water results in higher levels of energy for increased productivity, which improves morale and personal dignity.



Proven Durability

Specifically designed for use in tough rural conditions including uneven surfaces, gravel roads and sharp stones, the resulting stresses are diffused around the entire drum which has no joints and the material has flexible properties yet is thick enough to prevent punctures giving a 5 to 7 year life span, often much longer.

Approximately 45,000 sponsored Hippo rollers have been distributed in at least 20 countries

directly benefitting at least 300,000 beneficiaries with an average of 7 per household. Assuming United Nations averages of 1 trip per day for a distance of 6km and a conservative life span of 5 years means that more than 7 billion litres of water have been rolled over a combined distance of 500 million kilometres.



Food Security

The Hippo roller is a transformative development tool, because it allows for a much greater volume of water to be collected in a single trip. The time saved can be better spent focused on activities related to food production and food processing on the smallholder farm and household level.

Hippo Utility Cap

The Hippo roller also features the irrigation cap-in-cap which drastically improves the efficiency of irrigating crops and has the potential to lead to long-term social and economic benefits.



The newly designed cap also allows users to conveniently draw water without contaminating the contents ensuring hygienic storage of clean water. The standard readily available soda bottle top used is easily replaced if damaged or lost.



Clean potable water is achieved by adding filters and other point-of-use water treatment products and disciplines. There are many 3rd party options available to choose from.

Hippo Spaza

Job creation is a priority for many corporate SED (social/small enterprise development) and other community development programmes.



Attaching a specially designed steel frame (Hippo Spaza) to the Hippo roller converts it into a simple trolley for transporting products to preferred high traffic customer market locations, and then into a stand for displaying the products to be sold.

The word "Spaza" typically refers to a small shop vendor and originates from the South African apartheid days when such shops were illegal - spaza means hidden. This format grew into a multi-billion dollar industry, a very common form of small enterprise trading today.

To encourage corporate sponsors and advertisers to get involved, we have added the option to include branding on both the Hippo roller and Hippo Spaza.





International Recognition

Nelson Mandela

"A personal appeal is made to your organization to actively support a national project which will positively change the lives of millions of our fellow South Africans."

UN-World Food Program

"The introduction of Hippo rollers in WFP supported primary schools significantly reduced the daily burden on women and children for collection of water ..."

CNN World News

"With the financial assistance of others, there's now the real possibility that a burden carried for so long can be set aside forever."

Your Support

Helping smallholder and informal communities improve access to water, food security and income generation with the Hippo Water Roller and related products is a proven way to fulfil social responsibility objectives.

Our partners and sponsors of the Hippo roller include:

- Small, medium & large NGOs & development stakeholders involved in health, water, sanitation, food security and social or small enterprise development
- Governments, local & national who use the Hippo roller as a tool for areas that lack water supply infrastructure or for disaster management emergencies
- Corporate Social Investment CSI/CSR partnerships with a focus on assisting communities neighbouring their operations and building public relations with their consumers
- Branding and advertising campaigns through the inclusion of individual colours and logos for promotions and image building
- Financial institutions for microfinancing & community saving societies for individuals to purchase directly
- Crowd funding campaigns using social media and events



Partner with us and make a difference by helping undeveloped communities improve their access to water for immediate benefits and tangible results. Whether you represent an NGO, large or small corporation or individual, you can make a difference to a family struggling to get water – which a basic human right.

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'after the Hippo rollers, our lives changed'

Clara Masinga - CNN International 1996

