

## Media release from Business for South Africa (B4SA) Health Workgroup

23 June 2020

### South Africa donates over 1.4 million PPEs to frontline health care workers

- *B4SA issues a further call for PPE donations*

*Johannesburg, South Africa, 23 June 2020* -- Individual South African companies and the public have donated over 1.4 million pieces of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), valued at R13.2 million through the B4SA PPE portal. The PPE has been donated to public sector doctors, nurses and community health care workers at the frontlines of the country's fight against the pandemic.

Donated products include 945 000 pairs of examination gloves, 233 000 surgical masks, 130 000 N95 respirators, 135 000 face shields, 9100 litres of sanitiser, 1100 coveralls and 1100 surgical aprons.

In March, B4SA's Health Workgroup launched a national PPE donations drive called 'Business Mzansi, we need you', which called on companies, especially those in lockdown, to donate medical grade PPE in the national interest.

These donations are in addition to the almost 70 million pieces of PPE procured and donated to the public sector, underpinned by support from the Solidarity Fund, as well as the Motsepe Foundation, FirstRand's SPIRE Fund and Naspers.

B4SA Health Workgroup's Chair, Stavros Nicolaou, says that the solidarity shown by South Africans towards frontline health workers is extraordinary. "It has been exceptionally heartwarming to witness South Africans come together to ensure our frontline health workers have access to the PPE required to keep them safe, as they work tirelessly to keep us safe. These donations came at a time when the entire world was holding tightly onto PPE stocks, and demonstrates South Africans' generosity and willingness to place the needs of health workers ahead of their own."

Nicolaou says the pandemic will be with South Africa for a long time to come, and so too will the need for PPE. Consequently, B4SA is calling on businesses and the public to continue donating critical medical grade PPE. This can be done via B4SA's PPE procurement portal - <https://covid19manager.co.za>

The role of donations was especially critical at the onset of the pandemic in March, as the country faced a severe shortage of PPE and, like the rest of the world, had to urgently fill a gap while it procured emergency products from a highly constrained global market.

B4SA's Health Workgroup has since pivoted its procurement sourcing strategy from the global market, which remains volatile, to capacitating and supporting local manufacturers, Black-owned companies and domestic SMEs. In the current round of B4SA's PPE procurement drive, it is sourcing 97% of products from local manufacturers, and, or Black-owned companies.

“While the pandemic is one of the worst events to happen to our country, it has also shown us that it brings out the very best of humanity, not only in donating much needed PPE at a critical time in the pandemic, but it also shows us that we are a resilient, inventive and industrious nation that will rise to the challenges presented to us,” says Nicolou.

Nicolou is talking about the many companies that have reinvented themselves to meet the country’s need for PPE. “From beauty product and alcohol manufacturers supplying hand sanitisers, to car manufacturers pivoting to produce face shields, to diaper manufacturers producing medical grade masks, to clothing manufacturers turning into cloth mask makers.

“This crisis has given us the opportunity to create value in the local manufacturing industry. This will not only provide opportunities for domestic manufacturing, but will also contribute to the country’s economic recovery plan and the preservation of jobs.

On behalf of every doctor, nurse, paramedic, pharmacist and community health care worker, I would like to thank all the companies and individuals that heeded our national call for PPE donations thus far, and those who will continue to do so,” concludes Nicolou.

B4SA’s priority is to source quality medical grade PPE, at the best price. Its PPE portal is underpinned by robust quality assurance and standards, designed by the National Department of Health’s Quality Assessment and Health Technical Assurance Unit, to ensure that the products donated and procured comply with the highest standards defined by regulators. B4SA is one of the entities procuring PPE on behalf of the country.

Ends

**Important resources:**

B4SA’s procurement portal: <https://covid19manager.co.za>

Requests for medical PPE email to: [Covid19requests@businessresponsecovid19.co.za](mailto:Covid19requests@businessresponsecovid19.co.za)

ProudlySA’s cloth mask marketplace: [https://www.proudlysa.co.za/covid\\_19/covid\\_19.php#](https://www.proudlysa.co.za/covid_19/covid_19.php#)

Business for South Africa (B4SA) website: <https://www.businessforsa.org>

Tools and guidelines to expedite a safe return to work: <https://www.return2work.co.za>

Government Covid-19 resource portal: <https://sacoronavirus.co.za>

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