



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WPC Partners Team Up to Tackle 2,000 Township Taps in Diepsloot**

**Diepsloot, Johannesburg, South Africa (June 15, 2020)** — The World Plumbing Council (WPC), in association with The International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Foundation (IWSH), is excited to support an ambitious new initiative from WASSUP Diepsloot — the Water Amenities and Sanitation Services Upgrading Program — which will target repairs to 2,000 communal taps across the township in 50 days, through June and July 2020.

“Tackle a Tap” is a nine-week program that brings together a unique group of plumbing industry partners, local and international, in the fight against COVID-19. Local community host WASSUP Diepsloot will welcome volunteer plumbers from the Institute of Plumbing, South Africa (IOPSA) and further technical support and resources from leading South African plumbing merchant Plumblink. These efforts are being further supported by fellow WPC Member organizations BPEC (British Plumbers Employment Council) and the IWSH Foundation.

“IOPSA has a passion for plumbing and firmly believes that everyone should have access to proper water and sanitation,” said IOPSA Executive Director Brendan Reynolds. “WASSUP has proven to be a very honest, reliable and hardworking organization. We have similar values and a “can do” attitude. In short it is a good match between two organizations with a common purpose — decent water and sanitation for the people of Diepsloot.”

Despite the presence of a water supply in most informal settlements across Johannesburg, local authorities are often unable to keep pace with repairing communal taps as they break quickly due to a high demand on infrastructure and a shortage of outlets. Lack of access to reliable water supply is an issue, even more so in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and the requirement for regular handwashing and cleaning to prevent infections and virus spread.

There are 642 communal taps in Extension 1 alone, which is the largest of the 13 Extensions (neighborhoods) that make up the township of Diepsloot. In some areas, 39 households share one tap between them. Starting at WASSUP headquarters — which is also based in Extension 1 — a team will branch out to conduct audits of tap conditions and prepare lists of materials that will be required to repair them. The team will then prepare material and equipment packs and transport them via hand-pulled cart or truck.

This far-reaching program has a further educational aspect, as a group of five young and aspiring plumbers will be joining with WASSUP to mark South African Youth Day, on Tuesday.

“We have identified five young people, who are from our community and appreciate what we are doing, for the upcoming program of repairing taps,” said WASSUP member Princess Zondi. “I myself was introduced to WASSUP by a youth program, Project Vuthela; I went to a plumbing school in Pretoria, and then I was brought to WASSUP to do my practical work. After some months, I became employed with them!”

“The WPC is honored to be part of such a worthwhile and ambitious effort to make sure as many households as possible have access to clean, safe water, and it’s even better that we’re involving young community members in the program,” said WPC Chair/UA Director of Plumbing Services Tom Bigley.

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**The International Water, Sanitation  
and Hygiene Foundation**

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The WPC is an international organization that promotes the vital role the plumbing industry has to play by enhancing health, environmental sustainability and economic prosperity through good quality plumbing practices, worldwide.

Sticky Situations has facilitated the inception, training and growth of the community-led cooperative WASSUP Diepsloot since Global Studio initiated the program, in collaboration with local government officials, in Johannesburg in 2007.

Accompanying images are available at <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmNMpP6T>.

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*The IWSH Foundation is the 501(c)(3) charitable arm of The IAPMO Group.  
Visit [www.iwsh.org](http://www.iwsh.org) for more information.*

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