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IWSH, Rwanda Plumbers Organization Promote Hand Washing in Local Schools

Musanze, Rwanda (June 18, 2020) — The World Plumbing Council (WPC) has facilitated a partnership between The International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Foundation (IWSH) and the Rwanda Plumbers Organization (RPO) to support community hand washing and public health awareness activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In recognition of World Plumbing Day — a date established by the WPC and celebrated across the globe every March 11 — an RPO team recently designed and donated a mobile hand-washing station via a plumbing workshop hosted at the Integrated Polytechnic Regional College (IPRC) in the Huye district, an activity also intended to remind plumbers-in-training of their essential responsibility in protecting public health. Due to the positive impact of the new facility at IPRC Huye during the COVID-19 pandemic, the RPO has been inspired to extend the project to schools in the Musanze district.

In Musanze, the RPO will now provide mobile hand-washing stations to three primary schools, two high schools and five vulnerable households in the sectors of Muhoza, Muko and Cyuve. The project was launched today under the banner of “Plumbing For Health” at the Nkotsi sector office by Nkotsi Sector Executive Secretary Theoneste Hanyurwabake, who was representing Musanze District Mayor Jeannine Nuwumuremyi.

“Our hand-washing station facility has been designed and built to meet sanitation and hygienic standards, and is a response to prevent not only the spread of COVID-19 infection but also the transmission of other viral illness and pathogenic diseases, as well as increasing awareness of good hygienic practice in the community,” said RPO Founder Jean Claude Twagirimana, who is also a plumbing instructor with IPRC Musanze.

“As a newly created plumbing organization in our country — the first plumbing organization of this kind — this project will demonstrate the role that plumbers must play to protect the health of the Rwandan community, increase awareness of professionalism for RPO members and bring in mind of all Rwandans that the RPO is there for them,” Twagirimana added.

In 2018, Twagirimana was the recipient of the inaugural Instructor Training Program Scholarship for Trainers from Developing Countries, presented by the WPC and United Association (UA). Taking what he learned from his overseas research visits and further studies, he helped establish the RPO on his return to Rwanda.

“I had the honor of showing Jean Claude around when he came to the United States as part of the Instructor Training Program and quickly learned how passionate he is about using his skills as a plumber to help back home,” said WPC Chair/UA Director of Plumbing Services Thomas Bigley.

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.

“The WPC is proud to have played a role in bringing together IWSH and the newly formed Rwanda Plumbers Organization to help deliver sanitation and promote public health awareness, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said IAPMO COO and WPC Deputy Chair Dave Viola.

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The IWSH Foundation is the 501(c)(3) charitable arm of The IAPMO Group. Visit www.iwsh.org for more information.

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