



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **IWSH, RPO to Collaborate for Enhanced WASH Services in Rwanda**

**Washington, D.C. (March 10, 2021)** —The International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Foundation (IWSH) and the Rwanda Plumbers Organization (RPO) today announced a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that will provide a framework for collaboration between the two parties. The signing of the two-year MOU is timed to coincide with World Plumbing Day 2021, an occasion that recognizes the vital impact the plumbing industry has on public health, environmental sustainability and economic prosperity across the globe.

Under the new MOU, IWSH and the RPO intend to cooperate on providing water, sanitation and hygiene services to underserved populations and communities in Rwanda. The organizations will also work together on the development of codes and standards, professional licensing programs, and vocational education and training programs, as well as regional public health awareness activities.

“This memorandum of understanding between the RPO and IWSH means a lot to the plumbing industry here, and the RPO in general, in terms of national and international awareness,” RPO Coordinator Jean Claude Twagirimana said. “It is a wonderful opportunity for the RPO to accomplish its mission, for Rwandan plumbers to develop their skills and the Rwandan community to get improved WASH services. Its implementation will improve plumbing workmanship, bring mutual understanding about plumbing projects to all Rwandan plumbers, and raise international awareness of RPO members.”

Over the past 12 months, the RPO has expanded its community awareness and collaborative development in public institutions such as the Ministry of Education, Rwanda Standards Board (RSB), Rwanda Utility Regulatory Authority (RURA) and Rwanda Polytechnique (RP). Membership requests have increased from 32 to 95 members, and Twagirimana said they are exploring ways to bring more women into the organization.

“We hope to continue developing our industry across the country and Africa as a whole,” he continued. “Rwanda promotes vocational and educational training, including plumbing, so by developing codes and standards, as well as a thorough curriculum and new partnerships for different programs that will be developed, we expect to have 5,000 certified, licensed plumbers within the next five years. We expect to have a well-equipped plumbing innovation and training laboratory for all categories of plumbers within 10 years.”

Last year, the World Plumbing Council (WPC) facilitated a pilot partnership between IWSH and the RPO to support community hand-washing and public health awareness activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. An RPO team designed and donated a mobile hand-washing station via a plumbing workshop hosted at the Integrated Polytechnic Regional College in Huye district, in Rwanda’s Southern Province, approximately 80 miles from the nation’s capital, Kigali. With IWSH support, the RPO provided additional mobile hand-washing stations to three primary schools, two high schools and five vulnerable households in the Musanze district sectors of Muhoza, Muko and Cyuve.

“Our fellow World Plumbing Council partners at RPO have shared ambitious plans for plumbing industry development in Rwanda in the years ahead,” said IWSH Managing Director Seán Kearney. “From the IWSH side, we are keen to support, learn and work together with RPO toward greater capacity building in the region. We look forward to collaborating further with RPO and its members under this new MOU agreement.”



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Visit <https://rwandaplumbers.org/> for more information on the Rwanda Plumbers Organization.

Visit [www.iwsh.org](http://www.iwsh.org) for more information on The International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Foundation.