

UPDATE 10 APRIL 2020

# COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAMME

## WINDHOEK INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

**COVID-19 poses a special threat to those living in informal settlements on the edges of cities around the world.** Experts have warned that developing countries are extremely vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic. The best ways to prevent infection and the spread of the virus is social distancing and washing hands with soap for 20 seconds on a regular basis. In informal settlements however, this is difficult due to crowded conditions and the often limited availability of water.

**Three weeks ago, Development Workshop Namibia (DWN) and the Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE) launched a programme to help reduce the vulnerability of informal settlement dwellers around Windhoek by installing Tippy Taps.** The aim of the programme's first phase is to set up 20,000 water saving hand washing units ('Tippy Taps') in Windhoek's informal settlements, and provide residents with accurate information on COVID-19 and how to prevent infection. A Tippy Tap can be used "hands-free" and makes regular hand washing more feasible for those who have one installed nearby. The programme is accredited by the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) and implemented in coordination with the local Constituency Council offices of Samora Machel, Moses Garoeb, Tobias Hainyeko, and Khomasdal. These constituencies encompass the main informal settlements in Windhoek.

**As per Thursday the 9<sup>th</sup> of April, 2,600 tippy taps have been set up and more than 4,000 flyers on COVID-19 and tippy tap construction have been distributed.** The programme was initiated with two groups working in the Samora Machel and Moses Garoeb, respectively. On Tuesday the 7<sup>th</sup> of April, an additional two groups of volunteers started operating in Tobias Hainyeko and Khomasdal. Thus four groups of 15 volunteers are now working in the four target informal settlements.

**As each Tippy Tap reaches an average of three households, the current total of 2,600 taps are reaching some 7,800 households, an estimated 23,000 residents.** Each group installs 100 tippy taps per day, so collectively the groups install 400 tippy taps per day and 2,000 each week now that all four are operational. All volunteer groups work with hand held GPS units and take a position of each tippy tap they build. This helps to keep track on coverage and facilitates planning. With support from WWF-Namibia, a web-based GIS application allows for monitoring the areas and

numbers of installed tippy taps. This web based GIS application is also shared with Windhoek Municipality and other partners to facilitate coordination with other initiatives.

Many residents who have watched the teams build tippy taps and have received the "how-to" flyers (see attached in five different languages) have built their own tippy tap once they have seen how it works. This is encouraging as regular hand washing can also help reduce other illnesses, such as diarrhoea and Hepatitis E.

**Plans are currently being developed how to begin implementing the same programme in other regions.**

Multiple interventions are required to ease the burden of lock down measures and COVID-19 on the urban poor. DWN and NCE are looking to develop a larger collaboration and in different regions, with other important programmes by different government and non-government actors.



**A newly installed Tippy Tap (photo by Jana-Marie Smith)**

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- WWF Namibia

**SEE THE FOLLOWING PAGE FOR PICTURES ON THE WORK OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS.**





All Pictures By Jana-Marie Smith