



MEDIA STATEMENT

15 October is Global Handwashing Day

14 October 2022

The 15 October is Global Hand Washing Day globally. This acts as a reminder to all citizens of the world about the importance of washing hands with water and soap. The Department of Water and Sanitation, on behalf of the RSA government, is calling on all role-players in the water and sanitation sector to work together in intensifying the message about the importance of washing hands with water and soap – not only during the month of October, but as a lifestyle to keep a healthy life.

Global Handwashing Day started back in 2008 when over 120 million children around the world washed their hands with water and soap in more than 70 countries. Ever since, the day is celebrated every year on 15 October. The reason is simple, by the washing of hands with water and soap, you can protect yourself from many kinds of diseases and illnesses like COVID-19, cholera, and diarrhoea.

According to the General Household Survey of 2020, 82.1% of households in South Africa have access to a basic level of sanitation. 88.2% of households have access to piped or tap water, be it off site or onsite. This information is very important because households that have access to hand washing facilities such as basins, bowls or functioning taps mainly washed hands with water and soap, rather than those that don't have access to these facilities

Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen support to Water Service Authorities like municipalities; that can be done through water and sanitation sector collaboration and partnerships. Participation by communities will also be strengthened by further enhancing water and sanitation forums.

Clean hands, a recipe for health

END

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

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