



SMALL FIXES, BIG IMPACTS:

EMPOWERING INFORMAL SETTLEMENT RESIDENTS TO FIX THEIR OWN TAPS AND TOILETS IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGE.

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Most faults are MINOR:



In one municipality, we found the following:

- 87% of taps had faults, but 67% were minor issues like leaks, broken or missing taps, or faulty pipes.
- 89% of communal flushing toilets had faults, with 79% being minor— broken flush mechanisms, leaking cisterns or pipes, and damaged handles.
- Similar issues exist in other municipalities, inspections of taps and toilets in informal settlements have shown.

The training needed is BASIC:



Short trainings can equip informal settlement residents to fix minor faults:

- One 5-day basic plumbing course combines theory and practical training, with participants receiving certificates verifying their ability to perform basic municipal repairs, and join EPWP programmes.
- The 61-day Plumbing Hands course provides NQF-accredited certificates and toolboxes, qualifying participants to work on municipal infrastructure.
- Various other training programs can be funded by the Energy & Water SETA or public-private partnerships.

Municipalities can INTEGRATE community plumbers:



- Ward councillors can allocate resources from their ward budgets to purchase tools and materials to enable residents to fix minor issues with taps and toilets.
- Municipalities can use supply chain management policies, like requests for Expression of Interest, to encourage contractors to hire local plumbers for minor repairs.

Enhancing fault reporting for EFFICIENT community repairs:



- Categorise faults to direct minor issues (e.g., leaking taps) to community plumbers and major issues to municipal technicians.
- Add a feedback system to the fault reporting app for residents to rate responses or report unresolved issues.
- Conduct workshops to teach residents how to report faults using the municipality's system.