

SAFE FOR SCHOOLS



Sanitation
Appropriate
For
Education (SAFE)
Initiative

SANITATION APPROPRIATE FOR EDUCATION (SAFE)



Front Row, Left to Right: Ms Bridget Mokwena Halala (CEO Assupol); Mr Ruel Khoza (Chairman Assupol); Ms Angie Motshekga (Minister of DBE); Mr E Malungani (Ward Councillor); Mr MS Raseale (Govani SGB Chairperson). **Back Row, Left to Right:** Mr P Malatji (Induna); Mr Sono (DBE Mopani East District); Mr Booysen Mabunda (Dzumeri Traditional Council); Ms NE Mabunda (Govani School Principal); Polly Boshie (MEC DBE Limpopo); Godwin Khosa (NECT CEO).

At the launch of the SAFE partnership between government, private sector and civil society on 14 August 2018, President Cyril Ramaphosa spoke of the need to “spare generations of young South Africans the indignity, discomfort and danger of using pit latrines and other unsafe facilities in our schools”, describing the appalling sanitary conditions at many of the country’s schools as “an urgent human need”.

NEW-TECHNOLOGY TOILETS

The President invited international agencies, the private sector and non-governmental organisations to support the SAFE initiative to provide innovative, safe ablution facilities at 3,898 mostly rural and township schools. He also called on companies to help construct models of new-technology toilets as the core component of the plan for each school.

The groundbreaking SAFE project arose out of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) and the Department of Basic Education (DBE), to collaborate on developing sanitation appropriate for schools, with the objective of eradicating unsafe and age-inappropriate pit latrines in schools in order to give dignity to learners and teachers.

FUNDING FOR THE SAFE PROJECT

NECT's role in the SAFE project is to mobilise funding for the initiative from the private sector, civil society and government, while the government, through the DBE, has committed to match private sector funding rand for rand.

The NECT has established an internal Project Management Office (PMO), which has recruited experienced professionals from the built environment in the following disciplines: engineering, quantity surveying, architecture, project management and social facilitation.

The NECT is managing funds from both the private sector and the public sector for implementation of SAFE projects in Limpopo, Kwazulu Natal and Eastern Cape provinces.

Funding Source	Number of Schools	Funding Allocation
Private Sector	40	R50 million
DBE	222	R255 million
TOTAL	266	R305 million

The R50 million from the private sector is a commitment over a five-year period and the NECT has already utilized R20 million of the allocation for the SAFE projects.

School sanitation projects completed with private sector funding

The NECT has completed ablution facilities in 20 schools funded by the private sector as indicated in the tables below. Additional ablution facilities in 20 schools are currently under construction and will be completed in September 2020. In total ablution facilities in 40 schools will be completed using private sector funding by end of September 2020.



Partnership with Betram/Amalooloo

The following projects, which were funded by Betram/Amalooloo, were completed by the NECT in the 2019/20 financial year:

Province	Name of School	Number of learners	Number of Seats
Kwazulu Natal	Ubuhlebemvelo Primary School	1046	48
Kwazulu Natal	Mdladla High Schools	860	36
Kwazulu Natal	Inkosi Mgwazeni High School	850	36
Kwazulu Natal	Thembinkosi Primary School	292	14
Kwazulu Natal	Ekucabangeni High School	912	33
Kwazulu Natal	Emthandeni Primary School	168	18
North West	Bojateng Primary School	516	16
Eastern Cape	Dalibango Junior Secondary School	197	22
Eastern Cape	Mahlungulu Primary School	226	18
Limpopo	Tshixwadza Primary School	245	20
Limpopo	Tlhotlhonya Primary School	252	20
TOTAL		5564	281

Partnership with Assupol

The following projects which were funded by Assupol to the value of R10 million were completed by the NECT PMO in the 2019/20 financial year:

Province	Name of School	Number of Learners	Number of Seats
Eastern Cape	Didi Primary School	999	29
Eastern Cape	Ekuzoleni Primary School	580	25
Eastern Cape	Majija Primary School	508	22
Kwazulu Natal	Bhokoza Primary School	975	29
Kwazulu Natal	Ingaqa Primary School	719	25
Kwazulu Natal	Hemu Hemu Primary School	331	20
Kwazulu Natal	Phucuko Primary School	297	15
Limpopo	Govani Primary School	757	40
Limpopo	Maphooko Primary School	509	25
Limpopo	Ntlhodumela Primary School	739	25
TOTAL		6414	255



EFFICIENT AND COST-EFFECTIVE INSTALLATION

The NECT has implemented the installation of the sanitation facilities efficiently and cost-effectively. For example, the cost per seat has been kept at R35 000 and most of the projects were concluded on average in three weeks. A total of 124 workers benefitted from the projects and 80 were trained on the sanitation technology. In addition, the contractor appointed and paid the cleaners for the sanitation facilities for six months after handover of the projects, and the schools are expected to take over the employment of the cleaners thereafter.

Given the success of the implementation of the SAFE initiative in a short period of time, the DBE has allocated 222 schools to the NECT for the construction of ablution facilities, the projects will be completed in the 2020 financial year.

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

As part of the NECT research agenda and knowledge management, the NECT has engaged the services of three PHD students to conduct research from a sociological point of view, in the use of various sanitation technologies in 30 schools in Limpopo, Kwazulu and Eastern Cape, that is: the acceptance of the technology, health and hygiene and the operations and maintenance of the sanitation facilities. The research has given the NECT insight as to which sanitation technologies are used in schools and their challenges and acceptability by the school community. This will inform the choice of sanitation technologies for the NECT SAFE project moving forward.





CHALLENGES

The following are some of the challenges and lessons learnt by the NECT when implementing SAFE projects:

- **The cost reduction challenge**

The cost per seat from construction contractors for building sanitation facilities is too high. Building contractors are charging normal brick and mortar prices for alternative building technologies. These costs range from between R50 000 to R85 000 per seat depending on the sanitation technology used. From the NECT experience, the average cost per seat for alternative building technology using dry sanitation should be R35 000.

- **The hygiene challenge**

The cleaning and hygiene of the sanitation facilities is a big challenge. The majority of the schools don't have cleaners to ensure health and hygiene in schools. This makes the sanitation facilities unsustainable in the long term.

- **The old toilets challenge**

The SAFE initiative requires that old toilets be destroyed when the new toilets are handed over to schools. Some schools refuse to demolish the old toilets because they want to convert the buildings for alternative use, which is unacceptable.

LESSONS

- **Consultation and education**

The school community must be consulted on the selection of the sanitation technology through social facilitation. Most schools want waterborne sanitation, unfortunately this is not feasible when there is no water and municipal bulk infrastructure. As a result, community education on the choice of technologies must be prioritised.

- **Alternative building technologies**

The construction of sanitation facilities using alternative building technologies is quicker and more cost-effective than conventional brick and mortar building. The NECT was able to complete construction of sanitation facilities with 24 seats at a school within 14 days.

- **Pre-construction agreements**

The schools must sign an agreement before construction, to allow for demolitions of toilets after the handover of new toilet facilities.

- **Toilet cleaning contracts**

The NECT contractor appointed cleaners for the toilets for a period of six months with agreement from the schools to appoint the cleaners after six months. The schools did not honor this agreement. The DBE should come with the solution on the cleaning of toilets.

