Summary of the White Paper on Basic Household Sanitation 2001

Department: Water Affairs and Forestry
Your partner in creating a better life for all

National Sanitation Task Team
Communities must be fully involved in projects that relate to their health and wellbeing, and also in decisions relating to community facilities such as schools and clinics.

Not having appropriate sanitation facilities affects privacy and dignity. Women, children and the elderly are especially affected.
INTRODUCTION

Providing adequate sanitation facilities for the poor is one of South Africa’s major challenges. An estimated eighteen (18) million South Africans are without access to such facilities and may be using the bucket system, pit toilets or the veld. In addition there has been a disturbing increase in the numbers of poorly designed and poorly operated water-borne sewerage systems, especially in urban areas.

When sanitation systems fail - or are inadequate - the impacts on the health of the community, on the health of our families and on the environment can be extremely serious. This is evidenced in the annual 1.5 million cases of diarrhoea in children under the age of 5 and the recent outbreaks of cholera.

Purpose of the simplified policy document

Government has a constitutional responsibility to ensure that all South Africans have access to adequate sanitation. The publication of this simplified sanitation policy is an important step in the process of meeting this responsibility and in addressing the problems of inadequate sanitation.

The purpose of this policy document is to:
• highlight the impact of poor sanitation on health, living conditions and the environment;
• spell out government policies on sanitation;
• provide a basis for the formulation of local, provincial and national sanitation improvement strategies aimed at addressing the backlog;
• provide a framework for municipal sanitation programmes;
• ensure that sanitation improvement programmes are adequately funded; and
• put mechanisms in place to monitor the implementation of this policy and sanitation improvement programmes.

This policy focuses on the provision of a basic level of household sanitation to mainly rural communities and informal settlements.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy it is necessary to define sanitation and also to give guidance on the minimum acceptable basic level of sanitation:

“Sanitation” refers to the principles and practices relating to the collection, removal or disposal of human excreta, household waste water and refuse as they impact upon people and the environment. Good sanitation includes appropriate health and hygiene awareness and behaviour, and acceptable, affordable and sustainable sanitation services.

The minimum acceptable basic level of sanitation is:
(a) Appropriate health and hygiene awareness and behaviour;
(b) A system for disposing of human excreta, household waste water and refuse, which is:
• Acceptable and affordable to the users,
• Safe,
• Hygienic,
• Easily accessible, and
• Which does not have an unacceptable impact on the environment.
(c) A toilet facility for each household

This policy will focus mainly on the improvement of health and hygiene and the provision of adequate sanitation facilities in:
• households,
• schools, and
• clinics.

As well as the collection, removal and disposal of human waste and the related health and hygiene practices.

Please note - This document is a simplified reflection of the White Paper on Basic Household Sanitation. Should any part of this document be unclear, please verify the content with that of the White Paper.
# Abbreviations and Acronyms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DPLG</td>
<td>Department of Provincial and Local Government</td>
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<td>EHP</td>
<td>Environmental health practitioners</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
<td>Integrated Development Plan</td>
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<td>IEM</td>
<td>Integrated environmental management</td>
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<td>MIIF</td>
<td>Municipal infrastructure investment framework</td>
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<td>MIIG</td>
<td>Municipal infrastructure investment group</td>
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<td>MITT</td>
<td>Municipal Infrastructure Task Team</td>
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<td>NEMA</td>
<td>National Environmental Management Act of 1998</td>
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<td>NSTT</td>
<td>National Sanitation Task Team</td>
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<td>RDP</td>
<td>Reconstruction and Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>The United Nations Children Fund</td>
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<td>WSDP</td>
<td>The Water Services Development Plan</td>
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THE SANITATION PROBLEM

Overview of the problem

This policy aims at alleviating the following sanitation challenges in South Africa:
- public health problems;
- environmental impacts and contamination;
- the economic impact of poor sanitation; and
- social and psychological problems.

Health problems associated with poor sanitation

The most common health problems associated with poor sanitation are:
- diarrhoea;
- cholera;
- worms;
- eye infections and skin diseases; and
- increased risk for HIV/Aids-infected individuals.

Understanding how infections are transmitted and how to break the cycle of infection are important public health messages. Most faecal-oral infections are transmitted on hands and during food preparation, rather than through the direct consumption of contaminated water, as shown in this diagram:

Disease transmission paths

The environmental impacts of poor sanitation

Factors that affect the impact of sanitation systems on water quality are:
- Size and density of the settlement being served;
- Protecting the water source from contamination;
- Type of sanitation system;
- Capacity of the service provider to manage the system; and
- Soil type and depth to ground water.

Very few soils will create problems that cannot be solved by lining a pit. Even where excavation of rock is necessary, it would still usually be cheaper and more practical to construct on-site dry systems such as Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) latrines than it would be to install and maintain water-borne sewerage.

The economic effects of good sanitation

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organisation have linked investment in appropriate sanitation to:
- increased life expectancy (along with reduced morbidity and child mortality);
- savings in health care costs;
- reduced sick leave;
- higher worker productivity;
- better learning capacities among schoolchildren;
- increased school attendance, especially by girls;
- national pride and strengthened tourism;
- reduced water treatment costs.
The economic impact of poor sanitation services and poor health and hygiene behaviour was again highlighted during the recent outbreak of cholera in KwaZulu-Natal. Here it was shown that a single cholera carrier has the potential to infect an entire prison wing. Improving sanitation through the provision of adequate services saves money through reducing health expenditure.

Social and psychological problems associated with poor sanitation

Not having appropriate sanitation facilities affects privacy and dignity. Women, children and the elderly are especially affected. Poor sanitation facilities at schools could be one of the main reasons for girls “dropping out” of the education system.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

The principles that will guide this policy are policy and intervention strategies that will be undertaken to address sanitation. Namely:

1. **Sanitation improvement must be responsive to the demands of the people and supported by an intensive Health and Hygiene Programme.**
   Household sanitation is first and foremost a household responsibility. For users to benefit maximally, they must also understand the link between their own health, good hygiene and toilet facilities.

2. **Community participation**
   Communities must be fully involved in projects that relate to their health and wellbeing, and also in decisions relating to community facilities such as schools and clinics. Communities must participate in decision-making about what should be done and how; must contribute to the implementation of the decisions; and must share in the benefits of the project or programme.

3. **Integrated planning and development**
   The health, social, and environmental benefits of improved sanitation are maximised when sanitation is planned for and provided in an integrated manner along with water supply and other municipal services.

4. **Sanitation is about environment and health**
   Sanitation improvement must be accompanied by activities promoting health, hygiene and the environment.

5. **Basic sanitation is a human right**
   Government has an obligation to create an enabling environment through which all South Africans can gain access to basic sanitation services.

6. **To provide access to sanitation services.**
   Local government has the constitutional responsibility to provide sanitation services.

7. **Access to sanitation for all**
   Those with the greatest health risk due to poor sanitation must be assisted first.

8. **Equitable regional allocation of development resources**
   The limited national resources available to support the incremental improvement of sanitation services should be equitably distributed throughout the country according to population, level of development, and the risk-to-health of not supporting sanitation improvement.

9. **Water has an economic value**
   The way in which sanitation services are provided must take cognisance of the growing scarcity of good quality water in South Africa.

10. **Polluter pays principle**
    Polluters must pay for the cost of remediation of the effects on the environment of the pollution they create.

11. **Sanitation services must be financially sustainable.**
    Sanitation services must be sustainable both in terms of capital (input) costs and recurrent (ongoing service) costs.

12. **Environmental integrity**
    The environment must be protected from the potentially negative impacts of badly designed sanitation systems.

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<th>STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS</th>
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<td>Develop a Common</td>
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<td>Implementation Approach</td>
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<td>Develop and Use</td>
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<td>Clear the Backlog</td>
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<td>Strategic Interventions</td>
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<td>Promote Health and</td>
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<td>Hygiene</td>
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<td>Facilitate Participation</td>
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<td>in Communities</td>
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<td>Adopt an Integrated</td>
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<td>Environmental Approach</td>
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The sanitation problem will be addressed by means of the following strategic interventions:

- facilitating the participation of communities;
- promoting health and hygiene awareness and practices;
- development and use of local resources;
- upgrading of existing facilities;
- adopting an integrated environmental management approach;
- developing a common approach to implementation; and
- undertaking specific programmes to clear the backlog.

**Participation of communities**

**Community participation is a key requirement** of all the aspects of projects developed under this policy. Community members have a strong interest in choosing a level of service for which they are willing and able to pay. Making informed choices - and being committed to those choices - will happen only if ordinary people participate and have access to correct information.

**Promotion of health and hygiene awareness and practices**

People need to be aware of the benefits of sanitation improvements in order for them to be willing to invest their own resources in those improvements and adopt good hygiene practices. **Influencing hygiene behaviour:** There is little public awareness of the strong links between sanitation and health. This must be redressed through an information dissemination programme aimed at promoting awareness of the role of sanitation in health. Hygiene behaviours to target are:

- personal hygiene
- household hygiene
- community hygiene

**Dialogue:** Hygiene promotion requires far more than giving out information and building demonstration toilets. The starting point is to understand current beliefs, perceptions and practices within a particular community. The messages needed to communicate the importance of a change in the sanitation system must then be developed.

**Educational programmes** are required on national, provincial and local levels through:

- strong media coverage, and
- publicity and promotion in
  - schools and
  - clinics.

The development and use of participation methods will be promoted and encouraged. **Linking to other programmes:** The improvement of water supplies and other services frequently stimulates communities to look at further improvements needed - such as sanitation. **Hygiene information, education and awareness programmes** must be developed hand-in-hand with servicing projects. These programmes must start before construction commences and continue long after the construction phase has ended.

**Development and use of local resources**

Communities and households will accept responsibility for and ownership of the sanitation programme if they benefit directly from it. Local community members’ skills will be developed so that they can build the sanitation infrastructure and facilitate the health and hygiene promotion. Where skills already exist, these will be developed further to suit the needs of the specific programme.

**Upgrading of existing facilities**

Where sanitation infrastructure already exists households will be assisted to upgrade their facilities where necessary. This will especially be relevant where households have built their own traditional houses and have a toilet facility that needs to be made safe and hygienic.

**The adoption of an integrated environmental management approach**

An integrated environmental management (IEM) approach will be adopted for a location to:

1. Minimise the environmental risk inherent in developing new sanitation systems.
2. Ensure the continued protection of the environment throughout the operations phase.

**Integrated environmental planning**

As required by the National Environmental Management Act of 1998 (NEMA), the environmental plans, policies and programmes of government departments in all spheres must be co-ordinated and harmonised. **Catchment management strategies must be co-ordinated** with all relevant water services development plans adopted in terms of the Water Services Act.
Environmental education
Education must form part of the information transfer that is to accompany all sanitation projects. In addition, communities must be encouraged to become involved in monitoring the quality of their own water resources in order to heighten awareness of pollution.

Economic instruments
The principle of "the polluter pays" must be upheld. Users causing pollution should be charged for costs incurred in cleaning up or removing pollution, and/or for repairing associated damages.

Where sanitation-related pollution originates from poor communities, alternative means may be sought to cover the associated expenses. Steps should be taken to prevent further cases of pollution or contamination. The community decision-making body must exercise care in the choice of a sanitation system because they will not be absolved from the consequences of their decision. This is especially true where the environmental consequences of the new sanitation system are predictable and can be controlled.

Adoption of a common approach to implementation

The adoption of a common approach involves:
• alignment of policies;
• adherence to norms and standards;
• integrated development planning;
• a "package of services" approach; and
• agreement on implementation models and technical options.

Alignment of policies
To ensure compliance with regulations regarding sanitation under the Water Services Act and regulations regarding wastewater standards under the National Water Act, a review of municipal bylaws will be undertaken.

Adherence to norms and standards
Municipalities will be required to submit, as part of their Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), evidence that prescribed minimum national norms and standards have been, and will continue to be, met. The prescribed norms and standards are likely to include:
• norms and standards for a minimum basic level of sanitation for households, schools, clinics and other community facilities;
• a requirement for the proportionate provision of sanitation services relative to other services; and
• requirements relating to sustainability (financial, social, technical and environmental).

Integrated development planning and the package of services approach
Integrated planning with an increased emphasis on a "package of services" approach will allow for more realistic decisions to be taken with regard to:
• technical options, and
• affordability.

The sanitation package must address the:

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<th>Needs of Households</th>
<th>Needs of Institutions</th>
<th>Public Places</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Rural</td>
<td>• Schools</td>
<td>• Bus stops</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Urban</td>
<td>• Places of worship</td>
<td>• Taxi ranks</td>
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<td>• Informal</td>
<td>• Crèches</td>
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<td>• Courts</td>
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<td>• Sports venues</td>
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Agreement on implementation models and technical options
There is a wide variety of technical options. These range from:
• various improved latrines;
• septic tanks, and
• composting latrines, to
• full water-borne flush toilets.

The choice of models should, however, take into account:
• affordability to the household;
• operation and maintenance requirements;
• sustainability;
• improvements to health;
• compliance with environmental protection regulations;
• ability of community-based contractors to implement.

The Integrated Development Plan as an interim integrating mechanism for the alignment of funding

Given the unconditional nature of the Equitable Share and the rationalisation of the infrastructure grant system under MIIF and MIIG, it is evident that the municipality has a great deal of discretion in:
• the composition of the service delivery packages;
• the levels of service; and
• the manner in which these are funded.

The Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process is the mechanism for deciding on priorities and for steering and co-ordinating service delivery. In order to plan for addressing the sanitation backlog, the IDP must at least show:
• the existing service levels available to households;
• proposed new service levels per household;
• health and hygiene education to be provided;
• the estimated capital and recurring costs of providing these services;
• the cost to households for service payments;
• the availability of grant funding;
• the implications for the overall municipal budget; and
• how the service impact of the investment will be measured and monitored.

The linking of the WSDP, IDP and Sanitation Plan

The Water Services Development Plan (WSDP) is a component of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The Sanitation Plan is a component of the WSDP. See the diagram below for a graphical outlay.
Specific programmes to clear the backlog

It is unacceptable that an estimated eighteen (18) million South Africans still do not have access to adequate sanitation facilities. The specific actions to clear the backlog are to:

- **develop plans** to address the sanitation problem in all of these communities - by the set target date;
- **structure** suitable institutional arrangements and agree on roles and responsibilities;
- **prioritise** the communities with the greatest need;
- **set** the overall **target date** by which the backlog must be cleared;
- **fund** the plan;
- **implement** the plan; and
- **monitor** the implementation of the plan.

Target date for clearing the backlog

The **target for clearing the sanitation backlog** is aligned with the completion of phase 3 of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of the State President’s Office. That is:

- **By March 2010 all South Africans must have access to a basic minimum level of sanitation.**

With adequate integrated planning and integration of resources, it may be possible to reach the target by 2008.

Prioritising communities with the greatest need

Communities **without at least a basic level of sanitation must be identified.** Providing at least the basic level of sanitation to those communities facing the greatest health risk due to a) inadequate sanitation and b) who cannot afford to meet their own requirements must **receive the highest priority.** Areas that are without sanitation services must, as far as possible, be aligned with the priority development areas identified in the RDP process.

Developing plans to address the sanitation problem in all of these communities by the target date

The Integrated Development Plan (IDP), of which the Water Services Development Plan is a component, is the mechanism that empowers stakeholders to select the “basket of programmes and projects” that address their priorities and to set the time frames within which these priorities will be addressed. The requirement of this policy is to achieve full sanitation coverage of at least a minimum basic level of sanitation by the target date. This requirement must be committed to in the IDP. This can be done by incrementally applying the funding and other resources necessary throughout the period.

**INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The roleplayers who could contribute towards a sanitation improvement programme include:

![Institutional Arrangements Diagram]
Constitutional responsibilities

The institutional arrangements between the various levels of government for the promotion and provision of effective sanitation must be guided by the Constitution, which stipulates that:

- a municipal council is responsible for:
  - promoting a safe and healthy environment, and
  - ensuring the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner; whilst
- national and provincial governments, by legislative and other measures, must:
  - support, and
  - strengthen the capacity of municipalities to:
    - manage their own affairs,
    - exercise their powers, and
    - perform their functions.

The roles and responsibilities of households and communities

Good sanitation begins in the home. Households and communities are responsible first and foremost for their own health, a clean environment and improved sanitation. They have a responsibility to improve their own sanitation practices as inadequate hygiene can jeopardize not only their own health but also that of the community and the nation. Hygiene practices can be improved in a few simple steps - such as washing hands after using a toilet, before handling food and after changing babies’ nappies. Community members can also spread the message of good hygiene and make fellow community members aware of the importance of sanitation and good hygiene practices.

Household toilets are a household responsibility. Local government should support community members to achieve a cleaner and healthier living environment through:

- Community-based programmes whereby local builders are trained to build safe and hygienic toilet facilities. These local builders will assist households to construct their own toilet facilities. This provides jobs.
- Providing guidelines to assist households and builders to meet the minimum standards for a safe and hygienic toilet.
- Subsidising the essential materials to ensure that the toilet facility is hygienic, safe and accessible.

Furthermore, households are responsible for alerting local government of their sanitation-related needs. Communities and community-based organisations should assist local government in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating sanitation projects. Community members should also report any faulty sanitation systems and environmental sanitation risks to local government. Households need to ensure that their toilet facilities are always in good working order and are clean.

The roles and responsibilities of municipal government

Local government has to play a central role in integrating programmes. It is the municipality that is, in the first instance, accountable for the provision of sanitation services. The main roles of municipal government (a) in implementing this policy; (b) in addressing the sanitation backlog; and (c) in addressing sanitation on a sustainable basis are to:

1. Create a demand for sanitation improvement through health and hygiene awareness programmes
2. Identify local sanitation improvement needs
3. Prioritise these needs
4. Plan within the IDP/WSDP process to respond to these needs, including:
   - the need for health and hygiene awareness, and
   - for sanitation services, and
   - other services as an integrated package of services, where appropriate, and
   - alignment with the development of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) nodes
5. Align their budgets to achieve the planned objectives
6. Ensure that sufficient and appropriate human resources are available to execute the plan - including the development of building skills within the community
7. Implement the plan
8. Monitor and report on the results
9. Ensure sustainability
Local government should assist households to improve their own sanitation. They should work with communities and households to promote the importance of sanitation for health, and the benefits and convenience of a safe and attractive toilet. It is also responsible for assisting households to provide their own sanitation. As part of this process it must make communities and households aware of the importance of sanitation and the implications it has for health. Together with the community, local government must launch health and hygiene promotion programmes, identify needs for toilet facilities, prioritise these needs and then through specific projects, help households to build their toilet facilities. Local government planning is implemented through the Integrated Development Plans - of which the Water Services Development Plans (Water and Sanitation) are a component. In order to implement sanitation improvement programmes, local government must budget and source funding for these. The funding arises from various sources, including revenue collection and provincial and national government. In the implementation of the sanitation programme, local government must ensure that the environment is protected. Individual business plans will be developed for each project, in consultation with the sanitation project steering committees, elected from and by the community. The business plans will define the methods to be followed and the community contribution, required, taking into consideration the needs of specific communities. Local government will assist by providing management skills to ensure the success of projects. Health and hygiene promotion messages should be reinforced and health monitored on an ongoing basis.

The roles and responsibilities of provincial government

Many municipalities will need assistance and guidance to develop the capacity required for prioritising, planning and implementing programmes under this policy. The provinces will be key agents in supporting the municipalities in achieving their objectives.

The primary roles of the province relating to this policy are to:
- monitor legislation through the National Council of Provinces;
- ensure compliance with national policy and norms and standards;
- develop enabling provincial legislation and norms and standards;
- co-ordinate regional planning;
- promote integrated development and inter-departmental co-ordination; and
- monitor progress.

Furthermore, certain provincial departments, such as the provincial departments of the environment, local government, education, health and housing are the implementation arms of their national counterparts.

The roles and responsibilities of National Government

The generic roles and responsibilities of national government are to:
- establish legislation, policies, norms and standards;
- co-ordinate and monitor national programmes;
- provide support to other spheres of government;
- regulate service provision;
- intervene where there is a lack of capacity; and
- provide advocacy and guidance.

At a national level, the roles of all of the national departments must be clarified and co-ordinated to avoid duplication.

The roles and responsibilities of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry

The Department will, together with the other national-level role players, be responsible for:
- developing norms and standards for the provision of sanitation;
- co-ordinating the development by the municipalities of their Water Services Development Plans as a component of their Integrated Development Plans (IDP);
- providing support to the provinces and municipalities in the planning and implementation of sanitation improvement programmes;
- monitoring the outcome of such programmes and maintaining a database of sanitation requirements and interventions;
- providing capacity building support to provinces and municipalities in matters relating to sanitation;
- providing financial support to sanitation programmes until such time as these are consolidated into a single Department of Provincial and Local Government programme; and
- undertaking pilot projects in programmes of low cost sanitation.

The roles and responsibilities of the Department of Provincial and Local Government

This department will take primary responsibility for:
- promoting the development by the municipalities of their Integrated Development Plans (IDP);
- ensuring that provincial and local governments have the capacity required to fulfil their functions;
- the co-ordination, together with the National Treasury, of the provincial and local governments’ equitable share and municipal infrastructure grants;
- provision of financial support to sanitation programmes; and
- monitoring of such programmes and maintenance of a database.
The roles and responsibilities of the Department of Health

The Department of Health will, in co-operation with the provinces, take primary responsibility for:

- **co-ordinating information relating to public health** (this includes media liaison and communication);
- **co-ordinating the planning and interventions aimed at influencing the health and hygiene behaviour** of communities and at creating a demand for sanitation services through health and hygiene awareness and education programmes;
- **standardising existing, and prepare new, norms and standards** relating to health aspects of sanitation and water supply;
- **preparing educational curricula** relating to health and sanitation;
- **supporting municipalities** in employing sufficient and appropriately skilled environmental health practitioners (EHPs);
- **providing development orientated training** and other capacity building interventions to EHPs;
- **monitoring compliance with health legislation**, regulations and norms and standards;
- **co-ordinating interventions when a crisis poses a regional or national health risk** (such as a cholera epidemic);
- **providing a systematic approach to the provision of sanitation facilities** in clinics, hospitals and at other health points;

The roles and responsibilities of National Treasury

Treasury will take primary responsibility for:

- **funding arrangements** such as the allocation of the equitable share and the various grants to provinces and municipalities;
- **monitoring of the financial policies** and performance of national departments, provinces and municipalities; and
- **development of financial policies**, norms and standards and guidelines.

Education must form part of the information transfer that is to accompany all sanitation projects. Communities must be encouraged to become involved in monitoring the quality of their own water resources.
The roles and responsibilities of the Department of Housing

The concept “housing development” is pertinent to this policy and includes:
- permanent residential structures with secure tenure;
- potable water, adequate sanitation facilities; and
- domestic energy supply.

The Minister of Housing has prescribed a minimum level for each type of service for subsidy purposes. The minimum level of service prescribed for sanitation is a VIP per household (erf) unless the situation, such as the soil conditions, dictates otherwise.

The roles and responsibilities of the National Department of Education

The National Department of Education is responsible for the development of curricula while the provincial departments are responsible for the provision of school facilities including toilets and other sanitation facilities. The roles and responsibilities of the National Department of Education towards the improvement of school infrastructure, of which adequate sanitation is an important component, are:
- development of norms and standards for school infrastructure;
- improving the funding levels for capital development;
- development, implementation, co-ordination, alignment and monitoring of policy for capital investment in education;
- development of support systems, as well as capacity building, at provincial level; and
- development and maintenance of information systems to support the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of capital investment in education.

Important issues relating to health, hygiene and sanitation in their classrooms are the responsibility of the Department of Education together with the Department of Health. These Departments will develop curricula, guidelines and other support mechanisms required by teachers and other educators.

The Department of Education together with the Department of Health, introduced the Health Promoting Schools Programme in South Africa. The provincial departments are responsible for implementing the health promoting schools strategy. The following strategies provide a framework for developing health promoting schools and sites of learning:
- developing education and school policies which support health and development, and well-being;
- creating safe and supportive teaching and learning environments;
- strengthening community action and participation through enhancing and expanding the relationship between sites of learning and the community;
- developing the personal skills of all members of the school community for optimal development; and
- re-orienting health and hygiene support services towards an accessible, integrated, systematic, preventative and health-promoting approach.

The roles and responsibilities of the Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works has an important responsibility in ensuring that adequate provision is made for sanitation facilities in government and public buildings, especially in the schools, and for ensuring that norms and standards are complied with.

This Department manages the following functions as implementing agent:
- planning of projects to construct facilities (usually buildings);
- administering projects; and
- managing facilities for client departments.

However, all other Departments such as SAPS, Correctional Services, and the SANDF etc. remain responsible for the sanitation services within their installations. Public networks, such as sewerage networks where these exist, are the responsibility of municipalities. At national level, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry has a regulatory responsibility in terms of public networks. The Department of Public Works is also responsible for implementing the community-based public works programme.

The roles and responsibilities of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism

This Department will take primary responsibility for:
- developing policies, guidelines, procedures and norms and standards relating to the impact of sanitation systems on the environment; and
- monitoring environmental impacts of sanitation systems; and
- monitoring compliance with environmental management procedures and guidelines.

The private sector

The role of the private sector can include:
- planning, design and construction of sanitation infrastructure;
- the municipal services partner function or that of water services provider;
- manufacturing and supplying toilets; and
- financing higher levels of infrastructure than government is prepared to fund.
Non-governmental organisations

The role of non-governmental organisations can include:
- health and hygiene awareness promotion and education;
- training and capacity building;
- facilitating community participation;
- implementing community-based sanitation improvement projects;
- developing community-based construction teams; and
- monitoring the implementation of programmes.

Co-ordination mechanisms

District or Metropolitan level

Co-ordination and integration at the local level is the responsibility of:
- The District Municipality; or
- Metro as the Water Services Authority; or
- the Local Municipality when this is more appropriate.

The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process is the mechanism for attaining this integration between roleplayers at the local level and national government counterparts. Within the IDP, the Water Services Development Plan (WSDP) should provide the basis for sanitation provision and operation.

Provincial level

Co-ordination of sanitation interventions at the Provincial level will remain the responsibility of provincial government and will continue to be achieved through the Provincial Sanitation Co-ordinating Forums. Representativesthat will participate on these forums are:
- the district municipalities;
- metro municipalities; and
- the relevant national government departments

Provincial representatives will chair these forums.

National level

Co-ordination of sanitation interventions by national departments is currently achieved through the National Sanitation Task Team (NSTT). The sanitation co-ordination structure will be a sub-committee of the Municipal Infrastructure Task Team (MITT). This will be done to achieve greater alignment between sanitation and other municipal infrastructure programmes. The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, as national co-ordinator, will be responsible for convening the sanitation sub-committee and will ensure participation by all relevant stakeholders.

Government has a constitutional responsibility to ensure that all South Africans have access to adequate sanitation.
Sources of funding for sanitation improvement

Lessons learnt have shown that basic sanitation services can be provided at a capital (input) cost of below R1 000 per household. The cost of operating a basic level of service is approximately R5 per household per month, or R60 per household per year.

The sources of funding available to a municipality include:

- the Equitable Share subsidy;
- infrastructure grants; and
- the municipality’s own revenue.

The Equitable Share subsidy

The Equitable Share subsidy was introduced to allow the local government sector to overcome the burden of service delivery to the very poor.

The Equitable Share subsidy is calculated to ensure that the operating cost of basic services can be covered. **A subsidy will be used to contribute towards the general operating account** of a municipality when the municipality does not recover costs from very poor households.

Infrastructure grants and the requirement for rationalisation

If municipalities are going to be responsible for driving development, then **municipalities must have effective control over their resources**.

Existing financial obligations (projects in process) will, however, be honoured and National Departments will be given a period of at least three years to complete the ongoing municipal infrastructure projects. Currently the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry provides a once-off sanitation subsidy. This is divided into R300* for community development and R900 for the basic toilet structure. **The total subsidy** is therefore **R1 200 per household**. There may continue to be a need for dedicated funding for specific projects and programmes, for instance the demonstration of low cost sanitation interventions.

The implications of this rationalised funding approach for meeting the sanitation backlog are:

- municipalities will drive the implementation programmes;
- infrastructure transfers to municipalities will be efficient;
- infrastructure transfers to municipalities will be predictable (for the three year window which is sufficient for most contracts with private sector contractors);
- municipalities will be responsible for allocating the funds between infrastructure projects and will thus be empowered to prioritise; and
- municipalities will be fully accountable within nationally prescribed norms and standards and cannot decide not to accept transfer of the infrastructure once the construction has been completed.

*M The utilisation of the amounts of R600 and R600 as stated in the White Paper has since been amended to reflect the R300 / R900 split. the total subsidy therefore remains at R1 200.

Municipality’s own revenue

A broad assessment of municipal income in the areas with the greatest sanitation need indicates that it is only in the case of electricity that direct-cost recovery is applied. There is little evidence of cost recovery in other services such as water, sanitation, and refuse removal. Intergovernmental transfers currently carry most of the cost. **Cost recovery in many areas is a matter that must receive urgent attention.**

Sanitation tariffs

The Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry has, under Section 10 of the Water Services Act, prescribed norms and standards for water services tariffs. The Minister has prescribed that a tariff set by a water service institution for the provision of sanitation services to a household must:

(a) Support the viability and sustainability of sanitation services to the poor;
(b) Recognise the significant public benefit of efficient and sustainable sanitation services; and
(c) Discourage practices that may degrade the natural environment.

**Municipalities are, however, responsible for setting their own tariffs within these norms and standards.**
Access to a free basic level of service

Current government policy requires that the very poor be given access to a free basic level of service. Under this policy it is clearly important for the municipality to have clear guidance on the minimum technical standards and health and hygiene promotion standards that will satisfy the criteria provided in the definition of “a basic level of service.” The National Sanitation Task Team (NSTT) will, as a matter of priority, develop these guidelines for different conditions in consultation with other stakeholders.

The housing subsidy

The housing subsidy is targeted at individual households. This subsidy can be utilised to provide houses and, under certain circumstances, a portion of the subsidy amount could be applied to provide internal engineering services.

Currently, the once-off housing subsidy amounts to R 16 000-00 per beneficiary and can be accessed in formalised townships.

• Registered ownership of the property in the name of the beneficiary is compulsory.
• Beneficiaries who enjoy informal land rights to the property they occupy may also access the subsidy.
• The latter is accommodated in terms of the National Housing Programme - referred to as Rural Subsidies: Informal Land Rights.

The concept “housing development” includes:

• the provision of potable water,
• adequate sanitation facilities and
• domestic energy supply.

Therefore, it has become common for a disproportionate portion of the housing subsidy to be utilised for the provision of basic services at the expense of the amount of funds available for the superstructure - hence the small dwellings.

The alignment of the housing development programmes through the mechanism of the Integrated Development Plan is essential so as to avoid:

• duplication of subsidies; and
• the construction of houses without services.

A rural housing improvement grant is being proposed due to a demand (a) for equity in the distribution of funds to (b) rural areas where (c) there are existing basic shelters that (d) need improvement. Attention therefore should be given to:

• the improvement or upgrading of existing facilities to promote health while at the same time providing new sanitation facilities where required.

This could, if adopted, provide a basis for sanitation improvement for traditional rural households.
MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY

The progress of the strategic interventions developed under this policy must be monitored and evaluated. The following broad categories of monitoring are required:

- the involvement of communities;
- the promotion of health and hygiene awareness and education;
- the impact of sanitation improvement programmes on the health of communities;
- compliance with the integrated environmental management approach and the environmental impacts of sanitation systems;
- development of common norms and standards, guidelines and other tools;
- programmes to clear the backlog;
- integrated development plans as well as the Water Services Development Plan and Integrated Investment Plan components;
- the allocation, application and management of funds; and
- the construction of sanitation facilities.

Key performance indicators

*Key performance indicators will be developed* for each of the broad categories. Data collection and measurement will take place at the lowest practical level. The data collected must be evaluated, interpreted, summarised and reported-on to the various spheres of government through the co-ordination structures. These structures are developed at local level to drive the IDP, the WSDP and the Provincial Forums - as well as at the NSTT.

The target turnaround time is:

- 30 days for municipal to provincial reporting against the key performance indicators and
- a further 30 days for provincial to national reporting.

Crisis reporting

Identified crises, such as potential national health risks, environmental disasters, or malpractice and project or programme failures must be reported immediately to the relevant national department for intervention.

Computer systems

A common database accessible by municipalities as well as provincial and national government will be developed as a platform for the sharing of performance monitoring information.

CONCLUSION AND THE WAY FORWARD

The problem of inadequate sanitation is one of negative impacts on the health and social wellbeing of communities, on the environment and on the economy of the country. The sanitation problem will be addressed by means of the following strategic interventions:

- facilitating the participation of communities;
- promoting health and hygiene awareness and education;
- adopting an integrated environmental management approach;
- developing a common approach to implementation; and
- implementing specific sanitation construction programmes to clear the backlog.

Local government will take the leading role in implementing the policy while provincial and national government will support local government. Funding mechanisms will be rationalised to empower local government and to ensure that prioritisation is decentralised and communities are involved up front in project and programme development.

The Integrated Development Plan processes, and where these are not yet fully developed, the Integrated Investment Plan component of these processes, will be used as the focal mechanism to integrate funds, packages of services and roleplayers.

Systems and key performance indicators will be established to monitor and evaluate the progress of the strategic interventions.

*The vision has been agreed and there is much to be done; it is now urgent that we mobilise and rally to action.*
A pedestal and toilet structure still under construction. Community members are encouraged to use local materials in constructing sanitation facilities.

Washing hands after using the toilet and before preparing food is good hygiene practices.
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