

## Implementation of the Regulations relating to Minimum Uniform Norms & Standards for Public School Infrastructure

### Progress Report: November 2019

#### INTRODUCTION

The Regulations relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure; Regulation 4 (6)(a) stipulates that "A Member of the Executive Council must, within a period of 12 months after the publication of the regulations and thereafter annually on a date and in the manner determined by the minister, report annually to the Minister, and provide detailed plans on the manner in which the Norms and standards are being implemented".

This report serves to comply with the said regulations by providing an update on the status as reported at the end of November 2019.

#### 1. PROGRESS WITH THE ELIMINATION OF THREE YEAR BACKLOGS

##### 1.1. Initial baseline

The 3 year targets (i.e. elimination of schools with no basic services and those comprising only of mud structure) were set on the basis of baseline information established from the condition assessments that were conducted by DBE (2013/14) and EC DoE (2014/15). This information established the following baseline:

	Original Baseline (a)	Closed (b)	Potential rationalisation (c)	Balance (d)
No Water Supply	261	55	115	91
No Sanitation	94	32	36	26
Pit latrines only	2 885	866	776	1 243
No Electricity Supply	318	58	151	109
Inappropriate Material (Full) ASIDI	442	139*	-	137

Notes:

1. The Balance column indicate the number of schools that remain with basic service backlogs some which are being addressed through various programmes together with ASIDI and SAFE programme.
2. The baseline figure of 442 entire mud structure schools were on the ASIDI programme. However, due to some closure resulting in cancellation, ASIDI proceeded with 303 schools in implementation with 166 completed to date.

The process followed for reporting the status of schools without basic services in the schedule below is as follows:

a. **Baseline:**

The original number of schools on the baseline list identified as entirely lacking certain basic services is shown (note this preceded the subsequent condition assessments that were conducted by DBE (2013/14) and EC DoE (2014/15), minus the number of schools which are no longer operational has been deducted together with completed projects since then.

b. **Closed schools:**

This is the number of identified schools that have subsequently closed down.

c. **On Rationalisation:**

This is the number of schools identified for rationalization from the baseline.

d. **Balance:**

This is the balance of backlogs forming the revised baseline.

In the case of the 3-year targets (schools without any of the basic services), these have largely been met with the assistance of the ASIDI intervention programme, as discussed later herein. However, additional schools with unacceptable or without basic services subsequently been identified. This is probably a result of further deterioration over the ensuing period, or initial incorrect reporting. This issue is discussed later herein.

The Department's focus has been on the provision of basic services (both 3-year and 7-year backlogs), but it has also addressed some of the 10-year and some of the 17-year criteria (the exceptions being halls and sports fields) with all new schools and major upgrades. This is in line with the intentions of the Regulations. However, the overwhelming challenge is the availability of adequate budget for the schools with insufficient basic services. This together with other funding for all the other facilities required in terms of the Regulations, plus adequate maintenance funding, is constraining the Department's ability to plan for effectively meeting the targets in the light of the available and indicative budgets.

## 1.2 Current status vs baseline

ITEM	REVISED BASELINE	COMPLETED PROJECTS	ACTIVE PROJECTS	BALANCE
No Water Supply	91	17	45	29
No Sanitation	26	8	9	9
Pit latrines only	1 243	85	307	851
No Electricity Supply	109	22	4	83

Schedules to support the summary above, indicating the names of all the schools in each category are available.

It should be noted that the schools identified for potential rationalization may include schools where interventions, either by ASIDI or by the EC DoE have been implemented. These projects will have been initiated before the schools for rationalization were identified.

### 1.2.1 Approach per category

#### a. Schools no longer operational

Since the identification of schools lacking basic services, as per the baseline lists, a number of schools have been closed, or are pending closure, due to their enrolment numbers having dwindled to the point where the schools have been closed and the remaining learners (if any) accommodated elsewhere. This has been done in agreement with the local community. Such schools have thus understandably been no longer been targeted for intervention.

#### b. Projects identified for potential rationalization

Many of the smaller schools in the Province are unviable and are being targeted for rationalisation or re-alignment with secondary schools. A total of 1,902 such schools were

initials identified for closure. These schools were issued with S33 letters explaining the Department's intentions and requesting a response as to compelling reasons for maintaining the school. Based on such responses and subsequent interactions, decisions were made/are being made regarding the future of the school.

Subsequently, the Department engagement in a scientific process of the Circuit School Landscape Plans (CSLPs) which was concluded in January 2018 which identified more schools and confirmed some of the earlier identified ones in total 1,954 to be closed after rationalisation. This process is ongoing and infrastructure in this schools is limited to modular structures and/or prefabricated solutions until the school closures are finalized as other variables like scholar transport and hostels is required to trigger actions.

In the light hereof the Department is delaying any interventions (except in exceptional cases) until such decision is reached. In critical cases mobile toilets will be provided in the interim.

**c. Schools incorrectly classified as lacking basic services**

An analysis of the balance of the schools remaining was done against the asset data derived from the condition assessments described earlier herein (as stated, the baseline lists were extracted from previous surveys as they preceded the recent condition assessments described above). Where a school was found to have access to the specific basic service, it has no longer been targeted for intervention as part of the initial 3-year priority programme. Further on-site assessments will determine to what extent services are lacking, and then include the school in the 7-year programme for insufficient services if necessary.

**1.3 Schools with pit latrines & verification of data**

Schools with pitlatrines pose a major challenge. The initial baseline indicated that there were 2 885 schools with pit latrines. DBE has, however, acknowledged that in many cases its assessors incorrectly classified VIPs as pit latrines.

In response to the national sanitation drive launched in 2018, the subsequent DBE exercise identified the following status with regard to sanitation in the Eastern Cape.

<b>Number of schools requiring sanitation intervention</b>	<b>Schools with pit latrines ONLY and Unacceptable sanitation</b>	<b>School with proper sanitation pits not demolished</b>	<b>Schools (Site) need of Grade R toilets</b>	<b>Schools with insufficient sanitation (Sites) (Additional seats)</b>
3157	1598	323	2810	216

This showed that there were 1 598 schools with pitlatrines, unacceptable or no sanitation.

The list of the 1 598 schools was issued to the Department's Works Inspectors in late 2018 with instructions to establish whether the situation was reflected correctly in each District. The verified information from Districts indicate that the situation is actually worse than reflected in the table above. The responses received indicate that there are 2 158 schools which have been identified as having pitlatrines, unacceptable or no sanitation. This number reduces to 2 104 schools when those schools which are on current ASIDI programmes are removed. These schools have been grouped into 3 categories, with Priority 1 being the worst (no acceptable sanitation or very inappropriate sanitation). The numbers per category are as follow:

- Priority 1        785 schools
- Priority 2        658 schools
- Priority 3        661 schools

The 785 Priority 1 schools are those which are now being targeted for intervention as part of the sanitation drive. The Sanitation Appropriate for Education (SAFE) is currently in different phases of implementation of the first batch of 262 across the Province. These are envisaged to be completed in the financial year 2019/20.

## **2 PROGRESS WITH ELIMINATION OF 7 YEAR BACKLOG TARGET**

### **2.1 Introduction**

As indicated earlier the greater challenge remains with the schools that have insufficient basic services and which still have pitlatrines. Such schools are expected to be addressed within the 7-year period, i.e. by 2020. The 7-year backlog is summarized in the table below (details of backlogs per school are available in the annexures to the U-AMP which is submitted annually):

<b>Component</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
Classrooms (Ordinary)	R6 108 272 726,40
Classrooms (Grade R)	R5 893 677 504,00
Inappropriate Structures (Classrooms + Ablution)	R2 347 365 571,20
Fencing	R1 266 850 878,26
Burglar Bars	R2 615 299 315,20
Insufficient Water	R166 723 589,73
Insufficient Electricity	R554 321 664,00
Insufficient Sanitation	R1 173 375 590,40
Insufficient Sanitation (Other)	R1 220 244 480,00
Connectivity	R24 344 942,17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>R21 370 476 261,36</b>

#### **NB!**

Note that the information above is a current extract from the EFMS database, which may overlook recently completed projects for which NEIMS forms have not yet been submitted or captured.

However, the greater concern is the fact that the quantification of schools with insufficient services is constantly changing as learners move around between schools (a very common phenomenon in the Eastern Cape), or are re-located due to rationalisation and/or realignment of schools.

It has regularly happened that a school which was provided with sufficient classrooms and toilets a few years ago now reflects a backlog again due to enrolment that has suddenly increased. This occurs regularly, despite the overall learner population in the province remaining fairly static over the years.

The focus of the DoE infrastructure programme has therefore been on identifying the schools most in need for intervention (taking into account proposed rationalisation, realignment, strategic priorities and budget availability) and addressing these as cost effectively and efficiently as possible.

## 2.2 Progress made since 2013 with infrastructure delivery and backlog elimination

### 2.2.1 Introduction

The approach of the Department has been to implement the Norms & Standards by addressing the worst backlogs in terms of basic services first, taking into account the operational status and potential rationalisation and re-alignment. At the same time the Department is looking to the longer term needs of the schools identified for intervention, i.e. specialist facilities (laboratories, computer centres, etc.). The cost of these will impinge on the availability of funds to address insufficient basic services, and a careful balance must therefore be negotiated taking value for money and cost effectiveness into account.

### 2.2.2 Summary of projects completed & expenditure per project

Schedules are attached which list all projects completed since 2013, together with the total expenditure on each project. The schedule lists all the schools in the Province, and indicates what projects were completed at each school in which financial year

Note that the total value for each year represents the value of the projects completed, and not the expenditure during the year. It is thus the value of the asset which accrued in a particular year, or in the case of maintenance / refurbishment the value of the work done.

The information in the schedule is summarized in the schedule below:

Financial year	No of projects completed	Value of projects completed
2013/14	236	R 1,481,689,986
2014/15	463	R 1,804,917,746
2015/16	202	R 1,588,748,750
2016/17	307	R 951,780,864
2017/18	443	R1,183,292,489
2018/19	307	R1,101,505,695

### 2.2.3 Summary of delivery of facilities in terms of 7 year N&S timeframe

As indicated earlier, the quantification of backlogs in terms of schools with insufficient basic services and classrooms is a moving target, mainly due to learner mobility. Hence a school with

no backlog one year may have a backlog the following year, and vice versa. It has therefore not been possible to determine a reliable “baseline” of schools with insufficient basic services.

The approach followed during the annual updating of the UAMP has been to determine the needs per school based on the current enrolment for that year. However, because of learner movement new backlogs are created, which gives the impression that capital investment by the Department is reducing the infrastructure backlogs at the expected rate.

Against that background, the delivery of services and facilities in relation to the requirements for the seven year timeframe in terms of the Regulations is summarized in the schedule below:

Priority	2013/14 - 2018/19	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<b>Ordinary Classrooms (Number of New / Replaced Classrooms)</b>	<b>2, 251</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>241</b>
<b>Grade R Classrooms (Number of New / Replaced Classrooms)</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Fencing</b>					<b>132</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Water (Number of schools)</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Electricity (Number of Connections)</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Sanitation (Number of Toilet seats provided)</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>44</b>

It should be noted that all projects since 2013 for new facilities include items such as libraries / media centres, laboratories, administration facilities, etc. as appropriate. These facilities form part of the 10 and 17 year targets, and are outside the scope of this report.

### **3 Achievability of meeting the Norms & Standards**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The Department considers it necessary at this early stage to record its concerns regarding the longer term achievability of the Norms & Standards. In this regard comprehensive feedback is being compiled as per the recent request from our National Department. However, in order to contextualize the enormity of the challenge, a brief overview is provided below.



### 3.2 Condition backlog

The Department currently has 5 524 operational public ordinary schools in the Province. The condition of each of the assets has recently been assessed, either by DBE or the Department itself. This has enabled the Department to determine the extent of both the maintenance backlog (in terms of condition) and the facilities backlog (in terms of the Regulations relating to Minimum Uniform Norms & Standards for Public School Infrastructure).

The condition of the Department's fixed assets is summarised below:

Very poor	4%
Poor	10%
Fair	39%
Good	42%
Excellent	5%

There is thus a substantial maintenance backlog, which is currently estimated in the order of R6,3bn.

In addition, industry norms indicate that an annual budget of at least 2% of the replacement value of the building should be made available for its maintenance. This would imply an annual maintenance budget requirement of almost R1,2bn.

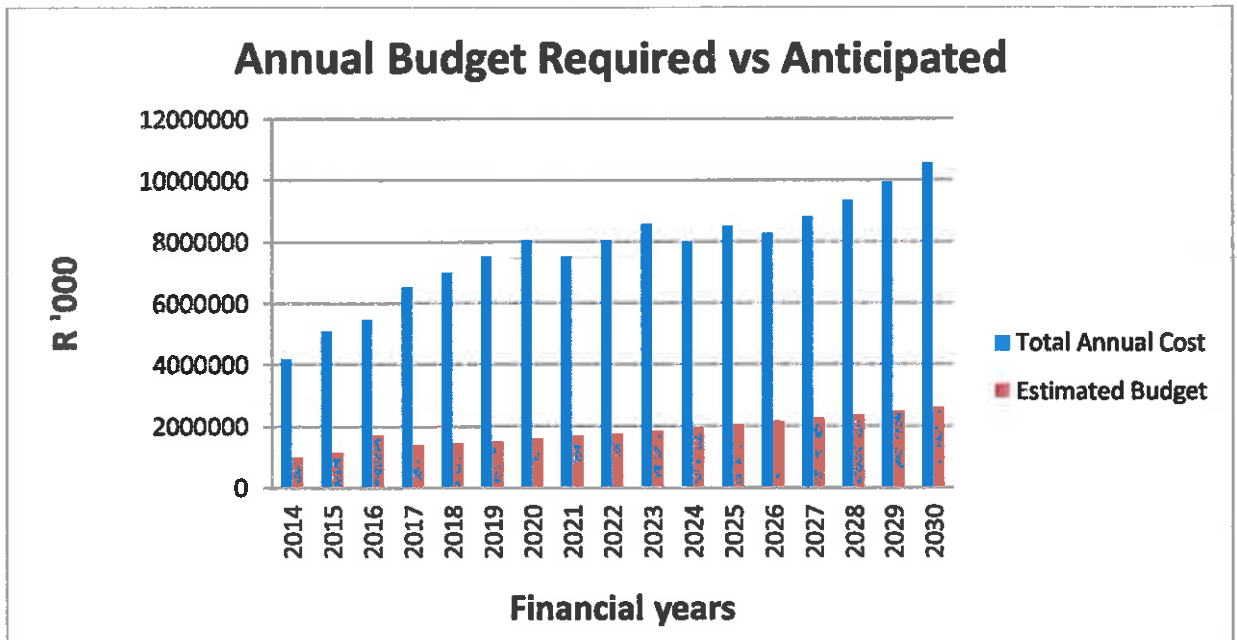
### 3.3 Facilities and Condition Backlogs

3.3.1 The Regulations set out timeframes for the provision of the various categories of facilities required for a school. The estimated monetary value of the backlogs for each of the timeframes, in terms thereof, is summarized below:

Component	Cost
<b>Three Year Timeframe (Nov 2013 - Nov 2016)</b> No basic services (water, sanitation & electricity) and schools comprising entirely of inappropriate structures	R 3 310 350 283,85
<b>Seven Year Timeframe (Nov 2013 - Nov 2020)</b> Classrooms, inappropriate structures, insufficient basic services, fencing & security, connectivity	R 21 370 476 261,36
<b>Ten Year Timeframe (Nov 2013 - Nov 2023)</b> Multipurpose classrooms, libraries, laboratories, computer labs	R 12 944 364 175,29

<b>Seventeen Year Timeframe (Nov 2013 - Nov 2030)</b>	
Administration areas, nutrition centres, parking bays, sports fields	<b>R 29 170 394 596,10</b>
<b>Condition Backlog</b>	
Outstanding maintenance & refurbishment	<b>R 6 327 580 057,95</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>R 73 123 165 374,55</b>

3.3.2 The diagram below shows the required annual budget (including maintenance and escalation) required to meet the backlog needs by 2030; also shown is the anticipated budget. From these it can be seen that there is a huge annual shortfall, from which it is clear that the targets cannot be met within the current budgetary scenario



3.3.3 From the table in Item 3.1 it can be seen that an amount of R21,4bn will be required to meet the backlog of facilities in the 7 year timeframe. To this must be added the schools the schools with pit latrines (non-compliant), which is estimated at approximately R2,5bn. This means a backlog of R24bn to be addressed in the next year, which is extremely more than the current annual funding.

3.3.4 It is also apparent from the earlier table that the outer year backlogs will be even more challenging (more funding needed, no ASIDI). It therefore needs to be acknowledged at

this early stage that achievement of the promulgated norms and standards will not be possible unless a different dispensation is considered.

### 3.3.5 Timeframes for converting pit latrines

Consideration should be given to extending the timeframe for converting pit latrines to VIPs or other acceptable sanitation. The prevalence of pit latrines in the Eastern Cape makes the current 3 year timeframe unachievable. Where pit latrines are still functional there may be a much greater need for other facilities at a particular school.

## 3.4 Effects of rationalization

3.4.1 The rationalization of small schools is a reality which will have a profound effect on infrastructure delivery in the medium term. There are 1 954 schools (36%) that have been identified for rationalization (closure), and this will also have significant infrastructure implications for nearby schools which must accept additional learners.

3.4.2 With regard to the norms & standards, it will not be logical to address backlogs at any schools which are likely to be affected by potential rationalization – both from the point of view of closure or possible expansion. The timeframes for provision of the required basic services (2020: 7 year timeframe) at such schools would thus depend on finalization of the rationalisation processes for the relevant schools, which might not fall within the prescribed dates.



MEC for Education

29/11/2019

Date