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Grade RR class at a preschool on the outskirts of Durban in Thekwini district. Photo: Jenn Warren

Operation and Maintenance Financing for School WASH Facilities in South Africa

2016

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South Africa

The Republic of South Africa, located at the southern tip of Africa, has a land area of 1,219,912 km² and population of 54 million. It is an upper middle income country (GDP/capita US\$ 6,477.9) with nine geographic provinces, governed by legislatures that divide in to 52 districts and 226 local municipalities. The country is mostly urban, and manufacturing is the largest economic sector.

South Africa has three broad bands of education: (1) General Education and Training, which is comprised of optional pre-primary and compulsory primary schooling from grade 1 to 6/7 and secondary schooling from grade 8 to 9; (2) Further Education and Training, which is non-compulsory, for grades 10 to 12; and (3) Higher Education and Training or tertiary education. Education in South Africa receives the largest share of government spending – around 20 percent – in order to address the huge deficits left by 40 years of apartheid education (World Bank).

I. Executive Summary

This is a case study on the financing for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of school-water, -sanitation and -hygiene (WASH) facilities in South Africa, based on a review of documents, key informant interviews and visits to 10 schools in Free State.

The government of South Africa invests in WASH in schools mainly through its Department of Basic Education (DBE), Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), districts and municipalities. The Departments of Health (DoH) and Public Works (DPW) support schools with environmental health surveillance, and some infrastructure work, respectively, operating through the municipalities. NGOs provide occasional support for construction and repair of facilities, and to activate school governing bodies (SGBs).

South Africa has some good practices to ensure an enabling resource environment for the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of WASH facilities in schools. The *South African Schools Act (SASA)* of 1996 and its related norms and amendments set out minimum standards and guidance on infrastructure and maintenance funding for schools, including WASH facilities. Given a backlog of planned upgrades to school infrastructure, the

DBE prioritized improvements in school WASH infrastructure in its 2011-2014 and 2015-2019 strategic plans. A particular focus was given to phasing out pit latrines using funding from government grants. The DBE and PEDs provide schools funds for construction and rehabilitation as well as ongoing O&M and repairs. DBE is required to budget 25 percent of personnel costs to non-teaching staff, which includes cleaners. Additionally, school allocations finance non-personnel and non-capital items, mainly utilities and services, school maintenance and learning support materials (textbooks).

School allocations change dependent on the poverty status of the particular school and vary yearly based on inflation. All schools visited for this study were a part of the second poorest school group. In 2013 these schools received 926 ZAR (~US\$93) per learner. Management of funds also differs based on the school, with PEDs paying for “Section 20” schools that are not able to manage budgets and purchases. Visits to Section 20 schools found that three of four schools were transitioning to paying for WASH maintenance from school allocations. All 10 schools visited also reported having an annual plan, school allocation budgets, an SGB that managed the budget, a school cleaner and routine activities for maintenance of WASH facilities.

However, better implementation of government policies and plans to ensure O&M of WASH facilities in schools is needed. There is space for better collaboration between education and health departments on school environmental health surveillance and the opportunity for DBE and DoH policies to push for its prioritization. There are problems with the water supply at the local level; nearly half of the schools visited noted that the supply of water from municipal agencies was intermittent, available between two and four days a week. Schools also had problems with the cleanliness and functionality of their WASH facilities. Half the schools noted that the system for toilet facility repairs did not function well, especially for Section 20 schools that relied on PEDs for repairs, which took up to 90 days. Section 21 schools manage their budgets; here officials received funds from their SGBs for O&M, however in 2013 the amounts for the three main line items of utilities, maintenance and learning support materials were only 16.5

percent of school allocations, indicating that the majority was used for purposes other than these priorities. Section 21 schools also have the opportunity to develop budget lines to purchase items and pay for services, however none of these visited schools reported budgets for individual WASH items.

Lastly, the role of the student community was found to be limited with respect to hygiene promotion and WASH facilities monitoring, with only four of the 10 visited schools mentioning any student-led activities for WASH.

Recommendations made by schools, key informants and study reviewer to improve the O&M of WASH facilities in South African schools were as follows:

- Advocate to relevant government departments for a national campaign to improve WASH in schools, with a special focus on strengthening the implementation of school infrastructure policies, and standards.
- Reduce interruptions in water supply to schools by addressing municipality infrastructure and service related issues.
- Reduce school facility repair times, especially for Section 20 schools that rely on support from PEDs.
- Improve the rate of conversion for pit latrines to flush toilets, first ensuring regular water supply is established. Simultaneously, create smaller toilets for younger children and provide bins for menstruation waste.
- Increase the ownership and buy-in of SGBs to improve budget management systems, and insert budget lines for WASH maintenance.
- Increase and improve capacity building opportunities to allow SGBs to better utilize their school allocations, increase the proportion spent on WASH O&M, and promote a supportive and healthy school environment.
- Increase the role of students in hygiene promotion and WASH facility monitoring by establishing student health clubs in schools and involving them in WASH initiatives.
- Assess the O&M financing and access to WASH facilities in other quintiles of schools.

Key Indicators for WASH, Education, Finance and Gender

WASH Indicators	Percentage
Estimated urban population coverage, improved drinking water sources (2015)	100
Estimated rural population coverage, improved drinking water sources (2105)	81
Estimated urban population coverage, improved sanitation facility (2015)	70
Estimated rural population coverage, improved sanitation facility (2015)	61
Estimated water and sanitation coverage in schools (2013)	94 & 100
Education Indicators	Percentage
Total net enrolment rate, primary, both sexes (2005)	95.20
Total net enrolment rate, lower secondary, both sexes (2005)	90.94
Finance Indicators	Percentage
Government expenditure on primary and secondary education as % of GDP (2012)	2.54 & 1.93
Primary and secondary education as % of total government expenditure (all sectors – 2012)	8.23 & 6.24
Primary and secondary education as % of total government expenditure on education (2012)	39.92 & 30.26
Government expenditure per primary student (2012)	1,522.2 US\$
Government expenditure per secondary student (2012)	1,687.9 US\$
Aid Indicators³	US\$ (million)
Total aid to education and basic education (2012)- South Africa	105 & 66
Gender Parity Index (GPI) Indicators	Integer
Total net enrolment rate, primary and lower secondary, gender parity index (2005)	1.0 1.02

¹ UNICEF/WHO –Progress on sanitation and drinking water, 2015; ² UNICEF- Advancing WASH in Schools Monitoring, 2015; ³ UNESCO- EFAGMR- 2015; ⁴ UNESCO- education data set, 2015

2. Methods

- **Documentation review:** A desk review of relevant national government documents, websites, Save the Children responses and development partner documents (see references for a detailed list).
- **Key informant interviews:** Officials from the National DBE and Save the Children South Africa.
- **School visits:** Visits included interviews, observation surveys and local shop visits. Interviews and observation surveys at 10 government schools in Free State province (see map) – three primary, five secondary, and two combined schools. All the schools were rural and single shift. Data was collected in September and October 2014. The number of students in each school ranged from 114 and 1,116, with a median school size of 438 students.

Four of the case study schools were section 20 schools, meaning that they rely solely on the PEDs to create the budget for annual school allocations, to purchase supplies and to hire contractors. The remaining six schools were section 21 schools, meaning that they have the capacity to create their own annual budgets, submit those budgets to the PEDs office for approval, purchase supplies and hire local contractors. None of the schools visited received WASH support from Save the Children. Conversion rate used in the study: 1 ZAR = 0.10 US\$ (Source: Oanda Currency Converter, Jun 1, 2013).

3. Resource Setting for WASH in Schools

3.1 Agencies Investing in WASH facilities in Schools

In South Africa, the DBE, PED, and district and local municipalities are the main agencies that invest in WASH in schools. The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and the DoH provide policy support on water and environmental health monitoring, respectively, while the DPW implements public infrastructure projects. These agencies are decentralized to the local municipality and work through local governments. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Mvula Trust and Kagiso provide occasional support for construction and rehabilitation of facilities and activate SGBs to maintain school facilities.

Construction and Rehabilitation

- The construction and rehabilitation of school infrastructure, including WASH facilities, are managed by PEDs in two main ways. First, the provincial



Map of South Africa highlighting Free State where schools were visited.

treasury budget provides equitable share funding, through which the PEDs execute school infrastructure projects. Secondly, the education infrastructure grant (EIG) from the National Treasury through the DBE provides supplementary funding for construction, maintenance, upgrading and rehabilitation.

Additionally, the DBE implements the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI) to upgrade all unsafe and mud-constructed schools with pit latrines using a school infrastructure backlogs grant fund.

- The DPW is responsible for construction and maintenance of public sector funded establishments. It collaborates with the DWS and all projects are implemented by provinces and municipalities with contributions from local governments (DPW, 2015). The DPW does not regularly provide any assistance to schools, unless linked to a special project with the DBE.

Water, Waste Disposal and Hygiene services

- The provision of water supply and sanitation services is shared between district municipalities, local municipality units, municipality owned companies, government owned water boards, or private companies (DWS, 2015).
- Municipalities also manage waste collection, with waste management guidelines set by the DWS (DBE, 2015). Schools pay the local government for water and waste collection services.
- The PEDs are expected to provide cleaning materials and toilet paper for Section 20 schools. However, supply management is an issue. Hygiene education is

part of life orientation lessons in the curriculum. The DBE does not provide training for teachers or SGBs on WASH O&M or hygiene education.

Maintenance and Monitoring

- The DBE, through PEDs, provides school allocation funding for non-personnel costs. This is a per-learner allocation utilized for the maintenance of the school. It includes water and sanitation services and small scale engineering maintenance. Each municipality has the responsibility of supporting WASH maintenance requests from schools.
- The PEDs and District Offices are also responsible for monitoring their schools with in-person visits recommended at least twice per year (DBE, 2015). The National Education Management Information System (EMIS) also contains indicators to track the percentage of schools that comply with minimum infrastructure norms and standards. This percentage was reported to be 74 percent in 2007 (DBE, 2015).
- Municipal Health Services are responsible for the environmental surveillance of premises within municipalities. The surveillance is performed by Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) on an annual basis and involves the identification, monitoring and evaluation of health risks, nuisances and hazards on any premise, including schools.

3.2 Policies for WASH in Schools

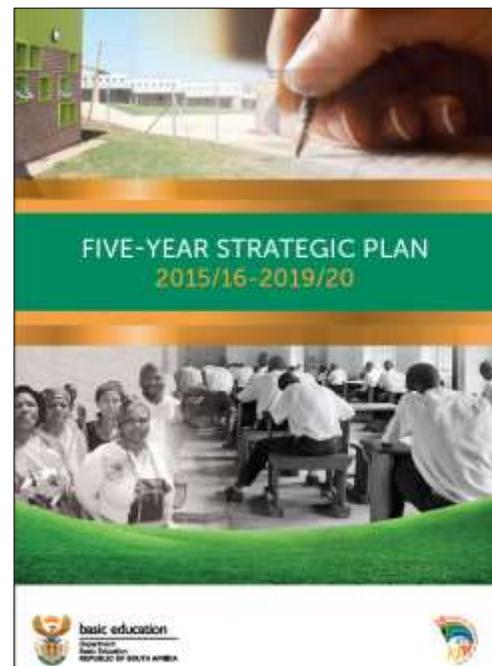
The *SASA* of 1996 and its amendments set out norms and standards for the organization, governance and funding of schools, as well as education of learners. Within the *SASA*:

- Standards for WASH in schools (see box 1) are found in a section titled “DBE Regulations Relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure” (DBE, 2013). Although this document does not cover maintenance of WASH facilities in detail, it stipulates that schools have a responsibility to maintain their water and sanitation facilities and that maintenance plans must be shared with the PEDs and DBE.
- The *National Norms and Standards for School Funding* includes guidance for schools to use government annual allocations to pay for recurring non-personnel and non-capital items including cleaning materials, hardware tools, water and electricity charges, repair and maintenance work (DoE, 2006). These norms also encourage PEDs and schools to pursue resources

other than school allocations to pay for these recurring items.

The DBE *Strategic Plans for 2011-2014* and *Strategic Plans for 2015-2019* include commitments to ensure safe drinking water, sanitation and electricity in all schools by 2017. The commitments include infrastructural improvements (using EIG, PED, and ASIDI grants), in particular the phase-out of pit latrines, and compliance to the minimum infrastructure norms and standards. The Strategic Plan feeds in to the realization of the *National Development Plan 2030* for South Africa through its *Action Plan to 2019*. Although the plan mentions collaboration with the DoH on school health services and health education outlined in the 2012 joint Integrated Health Policy, it does not include collaboration on environmental health surveillance (DBE, 2015).

The *National Norms and Standards relating to Environmental Health* for municipal health surveillance from the DoH includes standards (see Box 1) for school water, waste water, toilet facilities and waste management (DoH, 2013). The DoH notes the need to collaborate with the DBE in ensuring environmental health monitoring in schools. The norms are informed by the National Health Act of 2003, in which municipalities are charged with health surveillance responsibilities to monitor health risks on public premises, including schools (RoSA, 2004).



South Africa's Five-year Strategic Plan for Education includes commitments on WASH

Box I: Excerpts of School WASH Standards listed in DBE Regulations and DoH Norms and Standards

DBE Regulations Relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure

Water

- All schools with sufficient water supply which complies with all relevant laws and which is available at all times for drinking, personal hygiene and, where appropriate, for food preparation.
- Sufficient water-collection points and water-use facilities available at all schools to allow convenient access to, and use of, water for drinking, personal hygiene, and where appropriate, for food preparation.
- An appropriate water technology based on a school assessment; maintained in good working order.
- Water supply may be a municipal reticulation network; rain water harvesting; boreholes; local reservoirs and water-tanker supply from municipalities.

Sanitation

- All schools with sufficient sanitation facilities (numbers provided), easily accessible to all, that provide privacy, security, promote health, comply with relevant laws, and maintained in good working order.
- The choice of an appropriate sanitation technology must be based on an assessment conducted on the most suitable sanitation technology for each particular school.
- Facilities may be waterborne sanitation; small bore sewer reticulation; septic or conservancy tank systems; ventilated improved pit latrines; composting toilets. Plain pit and bucket latrines are not allowed.

DOH National Norms and Standards Relating to Environmental Health, 2013

Water Supply

- Water quality (microbiological, chemical and physical) must comply with the SANS 241.
- Potable running water on all premises for drinking, preparing food etc. continuously.
- Hot and cold running potable water at every hand wash basin. In case of unavailability of running water a minimum of 25 liters of potable water must be kept and stored hygienically for washing of hands.

Toilet and ablution facilities, and waste management

Adequate facilities to meet needs of all, and in compliance with *National Building Regulations and SANS 10400*.

- Separate toilet and wash- up facilities for male and female pupils, and for staff members. A ratio of 1: 20 for pupils and 1:12 for staff members to be maintained. A supply of toilet paper at all times.
- 1 (one) approved toilet (water closet/urinal) in areas without conventional sewage disposal system.
- One (1) handwashing basin for every 20 pupils and 12 staff on the premises. The basin must be located in or adjacent to toilets. An adequate supply of soap and a clean towel must be provided at all times.
- Toilet facilities must be properly ventilated; and kept in good repair and cleaned and disinfected daily.
- The school premises must be kept clean at all times.

3.3 Financial Allocations for O&M of WASH Facilities in Primary Schools

The DBE *National Norms and Standards for School Funding* recommends an 80: 20 ratio of personnel to non-personnel spending in ordinary public schools (DoE, 2006). Although a specific budget line for WASH O&M does not exist within the national allocations, the following

provisions are made to encourage WASH O&M related funding allocations:

- Within the total personnel allocation, teaching personnel costs should be targeted at 85% to allow for the appointment of administrative and support staff. The allocation of non-teaching staff to schools, however, has historically been extremely uneven, and

especially lacking in small and disadvantaged schools (DoE, 2006).

- Non-personnel, non-capital allocations for ordinary public schools, also called school allocations, include both educational items like textbooks and non-educational items like repairs, maintenance, cleaning materials, electricity, water, and first aid kits. School allocations consider the poverty status of schools and the school learner population. PEDs refer to the DBE’s school allocation table (see Table 1), which is adjusted every year for inflation, to determine the per-learner target for a school, given its poverty quintile status. To calculate allocations for a school, the PED then multiplies the per-learner target by the enrolment of that school (DoE, 2006).

Under section 21 of the SASA, each PED is required to provide a recommended breakdown of the school allocation, covering three main functions (DoE, 2006):

- Section 21(a) of SASA: maintain and improve the school property and the buildings and grounds occupied by the school.
- Section 21(c) of SASA: purchase learning support materials (textbooks and educational materials).
- Section 21(d) of SASA: pay for services (utilities) to the school.

Assuming the median case-study school of 438 students had a population from the second quintile with a per learner allocation of 926 ZAR (~93 US\$), the school would receive 405,588 ZAR (~40,558 US\$) in 2013. This amount, shared equally amongst the categories above, would allocate 135,196 ZAR (~13,519 US\$) for each maintenance, learning support materials and utilities.

Table 1. Per-learner targets (in ZAR) from the national school allocation table for 2012-2014 (DBE, 2011).

Poverty Status	2012	2013	2014
Quintile 1	960	1,010	1,065
Quintile 2	880	926	977
Quintile 3	880	926	977
Quintile 4	480	505	533
Quintile 5	165	174	183
Overall	633	665	747
Small schools (fixed amount)	22,218	23,373	24,752

Fund transfers to schools depend on the SGBs’ capacity for financial planning and budgeting:

- Section 21 schools have the capacity to budget and plan, and therefore submit annual budgets to the PEDs for approval each year. PEDs review their targets for schools and accordingly sends school allocation funds to SGBs, who then manage the school budget. The approved budget for Section 21 schools is deposited into each school’s bank account. When Section 21 schools need repairs or maintenance, it is paid for from their school allocation budget. If maintenance and repair costs are greater than the school budget, Section 21 schools may receive subsidies from the provincial government. Though there are no budget lines or formulas for allocating WASH in school budgets, each Section 21 school has the ability to create budget lines, pending approval of the PEDs. Section 21 schools can carry out their own procurement and may deal directly with suppliers and contractors for the relevant budget items (DoE, 2006).
- In Section 20 schools, the school management does not play a part in financial planning and budgeting. Instead, Section 20 schools submit requirements to the PEDs, and the funding is based on school allocation targets. For water utilities and for any repairs or maintenance, Section 20 schools apply to the PEDs to pay for bills and hire contractors to address the issue. It can take the PED up to 90 days to address repairs (DoE, 2006).

Other than school allocations, the DBE and PEDs may pursue other resource mechanisms to remedy shortfalls in school allocations. The SASA also urges public SGBs to raise additional resources, although this does not allow for schools to charge students school fees.

4. Situation in Schools

4.1 Condition of WASH Facilities in Schools

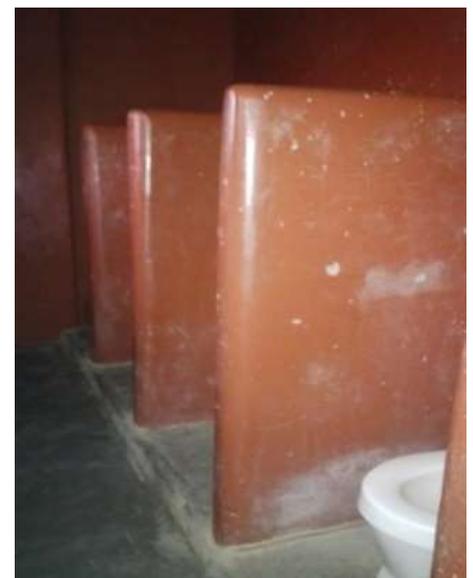
Water points were functional at six of 10 schools on the day of school visits. Handwashing stations were fully functional at six schools, and partially functional at two. Toilet facilities for students, consisting of pit latrines or flush toilets with sewage connections, were partially functional at eight schools and fully functional at two. Half the schools showed signs of open defecation or litter on school grounds. The main challenges included a lack of soap, water access and storage issues, pending requests for repairs and general uncleanliness of school grounds. The conditions were similar in Section 20 and 21 schools.

- In eight schools the most commonly used water supply was from municipal water services. However, only four of the eight were functional. Two schools had boreholes which were functional. Nine schools had water stored for drinking purposes.
- Of the 66 handwashing stations visited in 10 schools, 56 (85 percent) were inside or close to toilet blocks, 49 (74 percent) were functional, 28 (42 percent) had running water, while 42 (64 percent) were found to have good drainage and 41 (62 percent) were found to be clean. Only six stations (9 percent) had soap present. All schools had a posted schedule for cleaning the handwashing stations. The median number of handwashing stations or taps per school was 10 in a range of 3 to 28. The median number of toilets per school was 11 in a range of 2 to 17.
- Five schools had flush and pit toilets, three used only flush toilets, while two used only pit latrines. The three schools with flush toilets did not have water for flushing. Across the 10 schools, there were 131 boy toilets and 131 girl toilets with the majority (86 percent of boy and 81 percent of girl toilets) found to be partially functional. Three schools had clean student toilets, while seven schools had unclean or somewhat clean student toilets. Nine of the schools had a posted schedule for cleaning. An additional challenge was a lack of toilet privacy, either because separators between stalls were not high enough or doors did not lock from inside. None of the schools provided showers or special bins for menstrual waste.

4.2 School Resources and Systems for O&M of WASH Facilities

All case study schools reported having resources and a system for the O&M and repair of their WASH facilities. Schools did not have a budget line for WASH, but reported spending on WASH using their school allocation budget. Generally, the school cleaner or school handyman was responsible for routine maintenance and simple repairs. In some cases students and parents also cleaned facilities.

- All 10 schools reported having an annual plan that included items for the overall maintenance and simple repair of the school. This was sent to the municipal education department at the beginning of the school year for approval.
- All schools reported having a general school allocation budget. School allocations were received through SGBs and included three main line items for utilities, maintenance and textbooks. Specific budgets for WASH did not exist, however all schools reported spending on WASH and reporting expenses on a quarterly basis to their PED.
- All case study schools reported that their SGBs support school maintenance. SGBs are mostly involved in payment of suppliers while some are also involved in hiring and overseeing workers, providing material for repairs and approving school budgets.
- All schools reported maintenance of their water systems on a daily to weekly basis. This included



Stored and piped water from municipal water services in a visited school. Lack of privacy in school toilets. Photo: Topile Zamisa

checking water levels in overhead tanks and leakages from taps, and paying water bills. Four schools, however, reported that the municipal water supply was functional only 2-4 days per week. Schools do not treat their water. All schools reported that maintenance of handwashing stations was done on an as-needed basis; activities included cleaning and checking for leaks. Eight schools reported purchasing soap and/or cleaning materials. Simple maintenance of water and handwashing stations was done by a school handyman, as reported by four schools, or by community members, teachers and cleaners. Nine schools reported undertaking simple repairs.

- All schools reported their responsibility for O&M and repair of toilets. O&M included purchase of cleaning materials, paying the cleaner, and occasionally checking condition of toilets, while repairs included replacement of parts. Eight schools (including all six Section 21 schools) reported that the school cleaner was responsible for cleaning the toilet facilities. None of the Section 21 schools involved students in cleaning toilets, although this is common in three of the four section 20 schools. Two Section 21 and one Section 20 school reported that parents clean facilities as well. Authorities in five schools reported their toilet O&M and repair system was not working well, citing long waiting times for repairs from the PED.
- Nine schools reported that their school cleaner or handyman was responsible for daily solid waste disposal. Three schools reported burning school waste on or near their school compound.
- All schools reported purchasing WASH O&M supplies locally and none reported receiving supplies from the PED. The head teacher was responsible for purchases, and the distance to shops varied greatly (5-

50 km), with the median distance being 15 km. A visit to one shop found that handwashing, cleaning, and repair supplies was available.

- All schools reported that hygiene education is taught by the life orientation teacher. Materials available for hygiene promotion included learner activity books, booklets and textbooks.
- Four schools (two Section 20 and two Section 21) reported having student-led organizations that contributed to WASH O&M. The organizations keep the facilities clean, talk about hygiene related matters, supervise toilet cleaning activities, and monitor students during handwashing sessions. In some schools this support is voluntary, while in others it is considered a chore.

4.3 School WASH O&M Costs

In the schools visited, copies of school budgets and audited financial statements were not provided, although funds received from the SGB for expenses related to WASH in 2013 were provided by some schools and these were used to estimate median funds received per student. With cost inflation it can be assumed that funds received for O&M have increased in subsequent years.

A median amount of 72.25 ZAR (7.22 US\$) per student was received from visited SGBs in 2013 for water and electricity utilities (see table 2). Funds for maintenance of school infrastructure included WASH and non-WASH items and had a median amount of 29.43 ZAR (2.94 US\$) per student in 2013. Together, funds for utilities and maintenance were a small proportion (11 percent) of per learner allocations to quintile two schools in 2013. Median funds received for textbooks were 5.5 percent of the learner allocation, signifying that schools used their allocations for other purposes. A key informant noted that

Table 2. Funds Received from SGBs for O&M in 2013

Item	No of schools (median school size)	Median funds received per student, ZAR (US\$)
Water and electricity (utilities)	6 (s=714)*	72.25 (~7.22)
Maintenance (may or may not include maintenance of WASH facilities)	7 (s=582)*	29.43 (~2.94)
Cleaning (cleaner and cleaning materials)	8 (s=461)**	30.98 (~3.09)
Sewerage (cleaning out drains and pit latrines)	1 (s=1093)	16.49 (~1.64)

*includes two section 20 schools; ** includes three section 20 schools. Median funds received/student for textbooks was 50.47 ZAR; (~5.04 US\$) in 2013 for 7 schools with a median size of 584 students.

schools often do not use allocations as intended by policy due to conflicting priorities such as salaries of staff.

Funds received for cleaning in 2013 were 30.98 ZAR (3.09 US\$) per student and a significant portion of this may have been used for the services of a contract cleaner. Interestingly, three Section 20 schools reported paying for purchases, indicating that SGBs were taking greater responsibility in managing their needs than waiting for supplies and services from their PED.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

South Africa implements some good practices with respect to ensuring an enabling resource environment for the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of WASH facilities in schools. The DBE and PEDs are the lead agencies in ensuring that schools have access to funds for construction, rehabilitation, ongoing O&M and repairs. The *SASA* and its related norms set out minimum standards and guidance on infrastructure and maintenance funding for schools including WASH facilities. The DBE strategic plan also prioritizes improvements in school WASH infrastructure, especially the phasing out pit latrines. School allocation funds are pro-poor and include utilities and maintenance, both of which can be used for WASH. All schools visited reported having an annual plan, school allocation budgets, a SGB that manages the budget, a school cleaner and routine activities for maintenance of WASH facilities.

There is, however, a need to ensure that the policies and plans translate into improvements in school WASH O&M. WASH facilities in visited schools had problems of cleanliness, functionality and access to soap. Half the schools also noted the repair system for toilet facilities was not working well. Section 21 schools that had an opportunity to develop budget lines reported not having

budgets for individual WASH items. The role of students in hygiene promotion and WASH facilities monitoring was also found to be limited.

Recommendations made by key informants to improve the O&M of WASH facilities in South African schools were as follows:

- Create a national campaign for the improvement of WASH in schools to strengthen the implementation of school infrastructure policies and standards.
- Reduce water supply interruptions to schools that are caused various municipality infrastructure and service related issues.
- Speed up the conversion of pit toilets to flush toilets, increase the number of toilets overall, make some toilets smaller for younger children, and provide bins for menstruation waste.
- Increase the ownership and buy-in of SGBs to improve the system of budget management overall, including the WASH O&M system. Include budget lines for individual WASH items to be able to allocate funds for WASH maintenance.
- Increase and improve capacity building opportunities for SGBs to utilize their school allocations, increase the proportion that is spent on WASH O&M, and promote a supportive school environment.
- Conduct studies to assess the O&M financing and access to WASH facilities in other quintiles of schools.
- Reduce the time taken for schools to repair their facilities, especially for Section 20 schools that rely on PED support.
- Increase the role of students in hygiene promotion and WASH facilities monitoring by establishing student health clubs in schools.

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