

THE ASIDI BRIEF

Helping to restore dignity in education

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basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



THE ASIDI BRIEF

The Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative continues to make headway in its programme to eradicate schools built from inappropriate structures from the landscape. ASIDI is funded from the Schools Infrastructure Backlog Grant (SIBG) and is following a targeted plan to fulfil its mandate.

The scope of the programme comprises the following:

- ✓ 510 schools that were built with inappropriate structures are being replaced with brand new schools that meet the department's standards of basic functionality.
- ✓ 939 schools that previously did not have any access to sanitation will be supplied with a basic level of sanitation
- ✓ 932 schools will get electricity for the first time
- ✓ 1145 will be provided with basic water supplies for the first time.

SECOND QUATERLY UPDATE

The table below shows progress made towards achieving ASIDI's 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 targets.

Period	Replacement of inappropriate schools	Electricity connection	Provision of sanitation facilities	Access to water
As at December 2012	10/49	107/190	144/237	102/173
As at March 2013	17/49	134/190	190/237	116/173

CREATING VALUE FOR CITIZENS



Nobantu, Kwezilethu scenes

ASIDI continues to transform the countryside in the Eastern Cape, one school at a time. With an enrolment of 146 and a brand new school, Principal Majeke of Kwezilethu Junior School, (top third right) has a lot to be proud of, hence the beaming smile. Local community members take it in turn to protect the school at night signalling the seriousness with which they take their children's education and appreciate the new facility. At Nobantu, the reaction is similar. In a spontaneous response, the community decided to buy new uniforms for their children, modelled after the school colours, reflecting their pride in the new premises. The SGB went a step further and employed Miss Zanele Mtirara, 29, a graduate of Walter Sisulu University with a Diploma in Food and Beverage Management as well as a Post Graduate Certificate in Education. She catches a taxi everyday from Umtata and is at the school within an hour to teach basic IT skills. The school has received 28 computers and as soon as ESKOM has connected the power, the children of Nobantu Junior School will join the information superhighway. Miss Mtirara always had a passion for teaching and she approached the Principal Miss B Rune straight after her studies for a teaching position. Miss Rune, who took occupation of the new school, in September 2012, has indicated that enrolment to the school is going up. She added, "The opening of this school is a dream come true and we no longer have to send children home when it rains as happened with the old structures."



Proudly Nobantu, Proudly Kwezilethu

Meanwhile, in the Western Cape the ASIDI programme is taking community involvement to higher levels as the community gets stuck into the business of building a school. The suburb of Hornlee is characterised by high levels of unemployment and poverty. Initially, this factor presented a difficulty as a result of the high expectations for jobs and sub-contracts. An ASIDI Social facilitator, Yolisa Mkalipi inducted the steering committee comprising the school governing body, ward councillors and the principal on what the project meant and stood for. The Hornlee community then organised themselves as a building forum and agreed on the capacity requirements in consultation with built environment specialists. The labour is drawn from the local community as well as sub-contractors, including Lucille Moritz who is contracted to build the admin block and ladies toilets. The socio-economic impact for this project has exceeded EPWP targets after all the community challenges had been addressed. The principal, Anton Titus is satisfied with the work done to date saying, "We are greatly blessed that the project is moving."



Additional information, including school by school progress updates, is available on the Department of Basic Education website. <http://www.education.gov.za/Programmes/ASIDI/tabid/841/Default.aspx>

HOW DOES ASIDI OPERATE?

The programme is driven by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) which has established a Project Support Unit, comprising experienced built environment professionals, to support the Programme Manager, an Engineer in her own right who was profiled in volume 1 of the ASIDI Brief. The DBE works closely with its provincial and district counterparts at Provincial Education Departments on the identified ASIDI projects. Schools are assessed to establish the needs and the guidelines to provision of school infrastructure needs are then used to establish the extent of infrastructure provision. DBE appoints implementing agents who implement and manage batches of projects on its behalf. The Implementing Agents in turn procure and appoint professional service providers and contractors to execute the work.



Mdavuzza before and after

IT IS NOT ALL SMOOTH SAILING

Since inception and appointment of the Programme Manager and the PSU team, ASIDI has followed a planned trajectory notching up notable successes along the way. It is, however, important to note that delays in reaching targets have occurred and will continue to occur. There are certain realities facing construction in the Eastern Cape. Firstly, inclement weather plays havoc with construction sites. For instance in October alone, there were up to 20 days of rain. For both health and safety best practice and practical reasons, construction comes to a halt when the weather conditions make it necessary. Secondly,

while the Eastern Cape is a beautiful setting of rolling hills and valleys, for contractors this scenery provides logistical challenges. Transporting building material to site is challenging at the best of times and becomes literally impossible after a downpour because of the poor state of the roads. Suppliers have been known, in cases, to offload a brick delivery on top of a hill, a few kilometres from the school simply because of the risks that come with driving a fully loaded truck up and down a steeply inclined gravel road. Getting to a site like Nginza, in the picture below, is a tough ask in dry or wet conditions.



Secondly, the recruitment of contractors is done following laid down procurement procedures in keeping with corporate governance and correctly so! This, nevertheless, does not guarantee that the selected contractors will not have their own challenges. The ASIDI programme has been hampered in instances where contractors have undergone liquidation for one reason or another that may originate from other projects that they are contracted to. This means that work stops after termination while measuring of works by the terminated contractors is conducted in preparation for their final accounts and revised bill of quantities for procurement processes of the replacement contractors. To mitigate this risk, the department has allowed for the setting up of a panel of built environment professionals and contractors from which a replacement can be quickly found should the need arise.

Then there is the issue of profiteering. Whenever there is a massive construction project taking place, enterprising business people tend to see short term opportunity leading to higher prices than planned for by contractors. Lastly, shortages of quality material, such as bricks and door frames do hamper progress.

Despite this, the ASIDI team, staffed with Built Environment professionals is working to achieve target dates as much as possible.

PHASE 1 WATER AND SANITATION PROJECT IN LIMPOPO PROVES SUCCESSFUL

The MVULA Trust is appointed by the Department of Basic Education to provide water and sanitation facilities to schools in the Limpopo Province. During the 2011/2012 financial year 38 water and 40 sanitation projects were implemented. The detail is laid out in the table below.

The Junction Primary School is set in the citrus producing valley of Tzaneen. It is a “farm school” built by the DBE and sitting with an enrolment of 162. For a long time, the school depended on Mahela Farming for water supplies via a weekly supply of water. Today, the school has its own borehole and is the proud owner of a Jojo tank that meets its needs to the point where it can run its own vegetable garden. Already, the enterprising school has bought a lawn mower from the proceeds. A proud Principal, Mr M.J. Thuketani is “quite happy because the school has changed a lot” thanks to the ASIDI programme. The flower gardens are more colourful and the lawns greener, thereby offering learners a neat and stimulating environment. Mahela Farming chips in by sponsoring the school caretaker on a full time basis.

The Junction: neat and proud



Principals were equally happy at Mashaha, with an enrolment of 219, where ASIDI has helped to save electricity as the water pump switches itself off when the tank is full. At Totwana Primary school, with an enrolment of 355, a municipality tank used to deliver water once a week and then the children had to play on the “play pump” for the school to get water out of the tank. With ASIDI facilitated access to water, the Principal is happy to say “the situation is not better, it is good!”

“No play, no water”



District Municipality	Total Nr of Projects	Handed to Contractors for Construction	Completed & Commissioned	Under construction	Overall Progress
Water Projects					
Capricorn	10	10	10	0	100%
Mopani	6	6	6	0	100%
Sekhukhune	10	10	10	0	100%
Vhembe	6	6	6	0	100%
Waterberg	6	6	6	0	100%
Total	38	38	38	0	100%
Sanitation Projects					
Capricorn	12	12	12	0	100%
Mopani	11	11	11	0	100%
Sekhukhune	8	8	8	0	100%
Vhembe	3	3	3	0	100%
Waterberg	6	6	6	0	100%
Total	40	40	40	0	100%
Grand Total	78	78	78	0	

SOCIAL FACILITATION IN THE EASTERN CAPE

Government does not simply walk in to a community, point out a spot and announce the construction of a road, clinic or bridge. Local communities have to be consulted as a matter of course. According to Yolisa Mkalipi and Nontuthuzela Ngaleka, Social Facilitators on the PSU for the ASIDI programme, “the notion that local communities and beneficiaries should be involved in interventions to promote development and reduce poverty has enjoyed strong support over recent years. The rationale for community participation is not only that there is an inherent value in ensuring that people are able to influence activities that will affect them, but also that participation helps to build capacity, contributes to empowerment and plays a major role in ensuring sustainability. Through participation people increase their control over their lives and livelihoods. Social Facilitation is one of the critical elements necessary for the success of project implementation. The Social facilitator’s role is to ensure effective cooperation by facilitating coordination between all role-players thereby helping to create an environment conducive for smooth implementation across the total project cycle.” Thus it is, with the ASIDI programme.

The ASIDI Brief spoke to Yolisa in a bid to help readers get a better appreciation of the whys and wherefores of community participation in the Eastern Cape.

AB: What is social facilitation as a concept?

YM: Social Facilitation ensures that there is stakeholder engagement which consists of “a series of interactions” that are well planned and executed, to systematically draw all stakeholders (internal and external) into a process. Please note that engagement is not the same as communication. Where as communication involves imparting or transmitting messages through letters, presentation or other means, engagement involves dialogue and taking personal action.

AB: In practice?

YM: A social Facilitator:

- Ensures community involvement and active participation during the implementation of the ASIDI programme.
- Enables a consistent integration of project /program and community message.
- Helps to identify stakeholder issues so that plans and activities can be put in place to address those issues.

- Coordinates and facilitates for the final handover of the projects and sign offs
- Liaises with stakeholders, especially the Implementing Agents on the risk matrix and action taken thereon
- Works to ensure that there is little or no conflict during and after project implementation
- Provides policy guidelines to the Implementing Agents on development facilitation matters

AB: What kind of person is required to do this work?

YM: The incumbent must have good interpersonal skills and be a good communicator. The need for strategic planning, management and project management acumen cannot be over emphasized. In terms of qualifications a Bachelor’s Degree in Social Sciences or Bachelor of Arts, Masters’ Degree or equivalent is required. Remember one has to deal with various professionals and one is expected to interpret some of the technical jargon into a simple and understandable language without creating any misinterpretation for stakeholders



AB: What work are you doing for the ASIDI programme?

YM: My responsibility in ASIDI is to advise, guide, coordinate, facilitate, execute and recommend to both the ASIDI programme and the Implementing Agents, action on social and community related matters, and that includes all the elements listed above.

WELESE JSS HANDED OVER TO COMMUNITY

AB: What does this require in terms of time and travel?

YM: Traveling requires a lot of planning, management, coordination and communication. Remember one needs to plan trips with the objectives of one's meetings and one's expected outcome in line with the expectations of the program. For example in the Eastern Cape, if you travel between the schools you need to budget two hours time (to and fro) due to the condition of the roads. You also need to budget two hours meeting with your stakeholders. Therefore, four hours is dedicated only to one school. Sometimes the mission is not accomplished because of the weather. In some Provinces, such as the Western Cape, the condition of roads does not have much bearing on your time, but the highly politicized environment can.

AB: You must derive satisfaction from your work. Tell us about it.

YM: The hope that this program brings to the hopeless and the joy that ASIDI provides to communities once the school is introduced and built surpasses the pain, frustrations and stress. I am more than fulfilled. I love my work and I value it everyday especially when the client and the beneficiaries are smiling after the service has been delivered.

The Department of Basic Education has delivered yet another school to the Eastern Cape. Founded on 26 January, 1988 by Principal Christina Deliwe Mhlobo, Welese JSS with an enrolment of 88 learners, was an admirable effort at a people's determination to educate their own. Every year, the Principal turned to the community for another classroom and the parents built the school from the resources at their disposal. On Wednesday 3 April, the community finally took possession of brand new premises, built at a cost of just over R18 million complete with ablution blocks, nutrition centre, two Grade R classrooms, 14 classrooms, a multipurpose centre, multi-media centre with computer, science labs and library. The enrolment has risen to 456 learners.

In a ceremony punctuated by song and dance, various speakers lauded the efforts of the government and the Department of Basic Education in particular in helping to restore dignity to education. The Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga took the opportunity, as part of her speech, to address the community on the Stop Rape campaign followed by His Majesty King Ndamase who reinforced her message.



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