

## **Engen pledges the first R2.5m to help eradicate pit latrines at schools**

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As a company that cares deeply about the communities in which it operates, Engen has heeded a call from government and pledged an initial R2.5 million in support of Sanitation Appropriate for Education (SAFE), which aims to eradicate pit latrines in schools across South Africa.

Engen, South Africa's favourite petrol brand\*, is partnering with the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Department of Education on the SAFE initiative.

The official launch of SAFE took place on 06 February 2020 at Madima Primary School, Saulspoort (Rampipi Section), Modderkuil in the North-West province.

Builders drawn from the community helped transform the school's ablution facilities, which now include brand-new bathroom facilities, including ten toilets and six basins for the girl's bathroom, as well as four toilets, six urinals and three basins for the boy's bathroom.

With education a priority social investment area for Engen, the company's head of Transformation and Stakeholder Engagement, Unathi Magida, says the company is honoured to heed government's call to help eradicate the scourge of pit latrines at schools.

"When government called on corporate South Africa to help provide safe and appropriate sanitation, we wanted to do our part and help spare young South African's the indignity associated with using pit latrines, as well as eradicate any future danger."

The United Nations Development Programme estimates that globally there are more than 2.4 billion people who do not have access to basic sanitation like toilets.

"With education being Engen's Corporate Social Responsibility flagship programme, and as a business with "heart", we collaborated with key strategic partners to ensure that more schools have safe and decent sanitation," adds Magida.

As part of government's private sector partnership programme, and in collaboration with the Department of Education, rural and township primary schools in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and North West provinces were identified for modern sanitation upgrades.

"Access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation is a right, not a privilege," contends Magida. "This is why supporting the SAFE school sanitation initiative is so important for Engen.

"Not only will dignified, age-appropriate sanitation facilities improve learner's health and safety, it will also enable them to focus on their studies, and attend school with dignity," she concludes.

*\* As voted in the Sunday Times Top Brands survey (2011-2019).*