



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### **Celebrating World Toilet Day Matters**

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A toilet is not just a toilet; it means improved health, safety and education, and that really is something to talk about. That was the main message when KwaZulu-Natal Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) continued with the awareness campaign of the World Toilet day at Intuku Primary School on Tuesday 14 November 2017, at Utrecht.

“Absence of toilets at work and in homes has negative impacts and poses serious health risks, particularly to children. Every year, children die from diarrhoea-related disease. Investing in good toilets in workplaces and schools is a positive way to maintain human dignity. That is why celebrating World Toilet Day matters”, said Thembeke Bengu from Directorate: Sanitation during her main presentation.

Without any access to a toilet, people are forced to defecate in open areas, contaminating the local area and making defecation areas uninhabitable and unclean. The contamination affects all areas of the environment such as water sources and local agriculture. With communities drinking unclean water, diseases spread quickly and cause problems like excessive diarrhoea and vomiting. Water borne diseases accounts for more deaths each year than malaria and aids combined; yet toilets are proven to dramatically reduce contamination and lower the risk of suffering from such illness.

A good quality toilet is much more than a toilet; it is a pathway to improve people’s health! Access to toilets leads to improvements in school attendance and achievement. It boosts productivity and improves local attitudes towards health and hygiene..

The World Toilet Day is celebrated every year on 19 November. It aims to create awareness on better sanitation worldwide. Each year, World Toilet Day focuses on a theme, and this year’s international theme is "wastewater." By 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals aim to reach everyone with sanitation, and halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse.

Bengu explained the good toilet habits such as keeping the toilet clean, using a toilet paper to wipe yourself, keeping the toilet sit down, keeping the door closed and always washing your hands with soap and water after using the toilet. Bengu concluded her presentation with a demonstration on how to correctly wash hands using the six-step hand-washing technique.

**Mbali Mahaye**