

WORLD TOILET DAY – A STARK REMINDER OF A WORLD IN CRISIS
Enviro Loo drives awareness with SA activities



This year's second official UN-declared *World Toilet Day*, held annually on 19 November, places the spotlight firmly on the globe's dire sanitation crisis; currently over 2.5 billion people have no access to an adequate toilet with devastating consequences on health, the environment and personal dignity. ^[1] Moreover, every hour 70 women and girls die from diseases related to poor sanitation and water access. ^[2]

Alarming, South Africa mirrors the global crisis. According to the South African Human Rights Commission's (SAHRC) recent *Report on the Right to Access Sufficient Water and Decent Sanitation in South Africa*, approximately 11% (1.4 million) households (formal and informal) have no sanitation services while 26% of households' services don't meet the required standards due to deteriorated infrastructure.

From the above, it is abundantly clear that the world and importantly South Africa are dealing with a massive sanitation crisis. "The impact is more devastating than most realise," comments Lance Joel, MD of Enviro Loo, a sanitation solution provider.

"Poor sanitation not only exposes communities to a myriad of health issues but leads to social decay; research shows that school attendance drops if clean toilets aren't provided and open facilities lead to assault on vulnerable children and women," he says.

In this light, Enviro Loo is driving awareness around this all-important day through a Johannesburg event that will reach out to decision makers, stakeholders and the South African public. Additionally the event will be supported by a digital campaign as well as public relations efforts.

Realising sanitation for all

The globe has a massive task ahead - at the turn of the millennium, world leaders promised to halve the proportion of people living without access to a basic toilet by 2015. However,

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according to the recent estimates, around half a billion people will have to wait another decade before they gain access to this basic service. [3]

The globe's sanitation crisis needs immediate and sustainable solutions. Comments the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council: "Sanitation and hygiene are motors which drive health, social and economic development around the world. An environment that lacks sanitation and clean water is an environment where achieving other development goals is an impossible dream. The time to act is now."

From the above it's clear that private and public sector have to work together to realise safe sanitation. "On a global and local scale, concerted and immediate steps need to be taken to utilise the experiences, knowledge and resources of private and public sectors. Working in silos to solve the country's sanitation is simply not an option," says Joel.

Some answers

What steps can be taken now? For one, governments across the globe need to bring the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target on sanitation back on track. "The target needs to become an immediate and urgent political priority. Post 2015, ambitious targets need to be set and met worldwide. History can't keep repeating itself" adds Joel.

Locally, sanitation must be a top priority in each governmental department, NGO and business that can all make a difference through impactful solutions. "South African business must endeavour to develop and offer the most practical, cost-effective and sustainable solutions that will aid government and NGO's in its efforts to put a stop to country's escalating sanitation crisis," he says.

Enviro Loo's dry sanitation toilet system is locally designed and manufactured and works without water or chemicals. It has been developed to tackle the country's sanitation crisis head on.

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To date, Enviro Loo installations have impacted two million people worldwide. In schools, 1.8 million learners benefit from the over 45,000 Enviro Loo installations. Concludes Joel: "As an organisation our vision is to realise the day when every person has access to sustainable sanitation facilities."

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