**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2582**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL**

**QUESTION PAPER: 14/J 1/2014**

**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 27/2014)**

**2582. Ms D Carter (Cope) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**Whether she has ascertained through departmental inspections and any other means that (a) all schools had separate toilets for boys and girls, (b) all school toilets were clean. hygienic and functioning at all times, (c) all schools provided information in close proximity to toilets on how and why hands had to be thoroughly washed and dried as an essential habit to be acquired for good health. (d) all schools provided sanitary pads for girls and (e) all schools provided separate bins for the disposal of used sanitary pads; if not, why not: if so. what are the details of her enquiry into the matter of school toilets? NW3219E  
 **RESPONSE:**(a) The provision of sanitation facilities in the education sector is separated into male and female facilities. furthermore the Regulations Relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for public School infrastructure provide guidance for the separation of these facilities based on the enrolment range per gender and the number of sanitary fixtures required to respond to the enrolment range, this addresses aspects on the number of boys & girls in a school against the number of toilets. basins. boys urinals. Grade R toilets and Unisex toilets catering for persons with disabilities.  
  
(b) Yes. Not all toilets are clean, hygienic and functional at all times. Some areas use the pit system which is not easy to maintain. Another challenge that renders school toilets not functional at all times is the lack of water supply to schools. In some cases, the toilets are old, unrepaired and sewerage systems not being regularly serviced by local municipalities.  
  
(c) Yes. during monitoring, one of the areas observed is whether learners practice hand washing before meals. Posters on hand washing and general hygiene which were developed and distributed to schools are often observed on display to be integrated in Life Orientation by educators. Nutrition Education is a key pillar of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP).  
  
(d) Schools are not obliged to provide sanitary pads for girls. There are programmes with external partners that provide sanitary pads and reproductive health programmes to selected disadvantaged schools.  
  
(e) The Department does not have the details on the provision of bins to dispose of sanitary pads in schools.