



Press Release

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Immediate Release

Providing access to energy and a better life in Sharpeville

As we mark the 60th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre on Human Rights Day, a project in Sharpeville itself is demonstrating that renewable energy can be used to address service delivery issues and improve basic human rights.

SANEDI's Working for Energy Programme aims to be a catalyst for job creation and retention, social development, rural development, health, education, manufacturing and tourism – all within the context of the Green Economy.

To this end, the Working for Energy Programme has rolled out numerous projects across the country and four Sharpeville public schools have been at the forefront of these efforts.

Explains David Mahuma, General Manager: Working for Energy Programme at SANEDI: "We often find that if you look at schools from afar, it seems they have everything; electricity, lighting and water supply. However, when you start drilling down, you realise that the geysers aren't working because electricity bills are too high and similarly not all the lights are on or functional as and when required. In almost all cases, old and inefficient lighting would be in use, unnecessarily increasing the electricity bill of the institutions."

"From a Working for Energy Programme perspective, we then look at the schools such as those in Sharpeville and investigate how we can create value from the resources they do have, such as land to plant vegetables on and contribute to feeding schemes, solar energy radiating on the roofs, and waste food coming from the feeding scheme."

SANEDI's Working for Energy Programme looks at the immediate needs of schools such as indoor ambient temperature and how technologies such as cool paint can be used to ensure that it doesn't become too hot or cold, thus improving the learning environments and to

generally improve indoor comfort levels. Throughout, these technologies should not be reliant on electricity.

“At the schools in Sharpeville, we have also packaged a lot of value through renewable energy technologies to address various energy issues. For example, we have replaced traditional electric water heaters with two solar water heaters per school. We also looked at their lighting needs and replaced all inefficient lights with energy-efficient lighting options such as LED technology,” he says.

The Working for Energy Programme also looks at innovative ways to minimise waste and optimise it for sustainable use. In Sharpeville, the programme has managed to reduce the waste management load and it has now become a resource to the school. “Instead of attracting flies and becoming a nuisance, the schools can turn their food waste from the feeding scheme into bio-energy and ultimately a resource that can be reused,” explains Mahuma.

“Renewable energy can be used to alleviate service delivery issues and by extension improve access to energy, access to a better life and access to a clean environment – all basic human rights.”

In partnership with public and private partners, SANEDI is demonstrating and supporting the development of various clean energy interventions to rural and low-income communities across the country. These include but not limited to:

- Biogas to energy from all forms of bio-wastes such as animal, food, and farm wastes;
- Developing other biofuels such as biodiesel for implementation in rural applications;
- Establishing micro-grid hybrid and smart grid systems fed from renewable based electricity supplies, for rural and low-income areas’ applications;
- Biomass based Insulation materials, and
- Alternative fuel sources for space heating, cooking and water heating in low cost housing.

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About SANEDI

The South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI), established by the Government, directs, monitors and conducts applied energy research to develop innovative, integrated solutions to catalyse growth and prosperity in the green economy. It drives scientific evidence-driven ventures that contribute to youth empowerment, gender equity,

environmental sustainability and the 4th Industrial Revolution, within the National Development Plan (NDP), through consultative, sustainable energy projects. For more information, go to www.sanedi.org.za.