

Title	Urine Diversion Sanitation in South Africa: Is this a solution?
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Author(s)	Gertrude Matsebe and Louiza Duncker
Address	CSIR Boutek, P.O. BOX 395, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa
Telephone	(012) 841 4380
Fax	(012) 841 3400
Mobile	082 482 1175
E-mail	gnmatsebe@csir.co.za
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Urine Diversion Sanitation in South Africa: Is this a solution?

The sanitation policy of the South African government stresses that sanitation is not only a matter of providing toilets, but rather an integrated approach, which encompasses institutional and organisational frameworks as well as financial, technical, environmental, social and educational considerations. Sanitation includes both the 'software' (understanding why health problems exist and what steps people can take to address these problems) and 'hardware' (toilets, sewers and hand-washing facilities). Together, these combine to break the cycle of disease that spread when human excreta and waste are not properly managed (DWAf 2001).

Since 1997, CSIR has been investigating urine diversion sanitation (UDS) worldwide and is currently conducting research on the users' perceptions of this system in South Africa.

UDS is recognised as one of the ecological sanitation technologies, that has been implemented in various parts of the world. This paper focuses on the social implications, that is, the cultural and social **perceptions** of the **UDS** system in four provinces of **South Africa**: Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN), Eastern Cape (EC), North West (NW) and Northern Cape (NC).

The benefits of the technical aspects of this technology are well-known and can be easily applied. However, knowledge is lacking on the constraints owing to particular cultural and social practices and attitudes of the user (target group).

This paper argues the necessity for greater local social research methods when investigating the cultural/social perceptions. It will highlight the initial findings of the research that is currently on-going. This implies a qualitative approach that concentrates on extracting individual users' opinions and ideas regarding their use or non-use of the technology, their use or non-use of the excreta, how the implementation of UDS impacts on their use, satisfaction with the service providers, etc.

It is apparent that, at this stage, the social perceptions constitute a major barrier to greater UDS application/use in South Africa. Recommendations to overcome these limitations will conclude the paper.