



JULY 2021 REPORT ON WATER AND SANITATION IN SCHOOLS BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

28 September 2021

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1. Background

During the second quarter of 2021, the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) requested reports on Water and Sanitation at Schools from each of the Provincial Departments of Education (PDEs).

Specifically, the Commission requested school-level information on each of the following:

- a) Type of Sanitation at the school. The following options were provided to respondents:
 - water borne sanitation;
 - small bore sewer reticulation;
 - septic or conservancy tank;
 - ventilated improved pit latrines;
 - composting toilets;
 - pit latrine; or
 - none.

- b) The number of learners at each school and the number of teachers at the school.

- c) The number of sanitation facilities at the school and the percentage to which this is in compliance with norms for sanitation.

- d) The source of sanitation infrastructure at the school. The following options were provided:
 - a municipal reticulation network;
 - rain harvesting or tank supply from municipality;
 - mobile tankers;
 - boreholes;
 - local reservoirs and dams; or
 - none.

This report is based on the data provided by the nine provinces in June/July 2021 and provides both the *Types* and *Sources* of sanitation at the schools. It includes information on schools which are reported to have no sanitation facilities as well as schools which use pit latrines as the primary form of ablution facilities. The number of staff and learners at each of these schools is also provided.

2. Responses

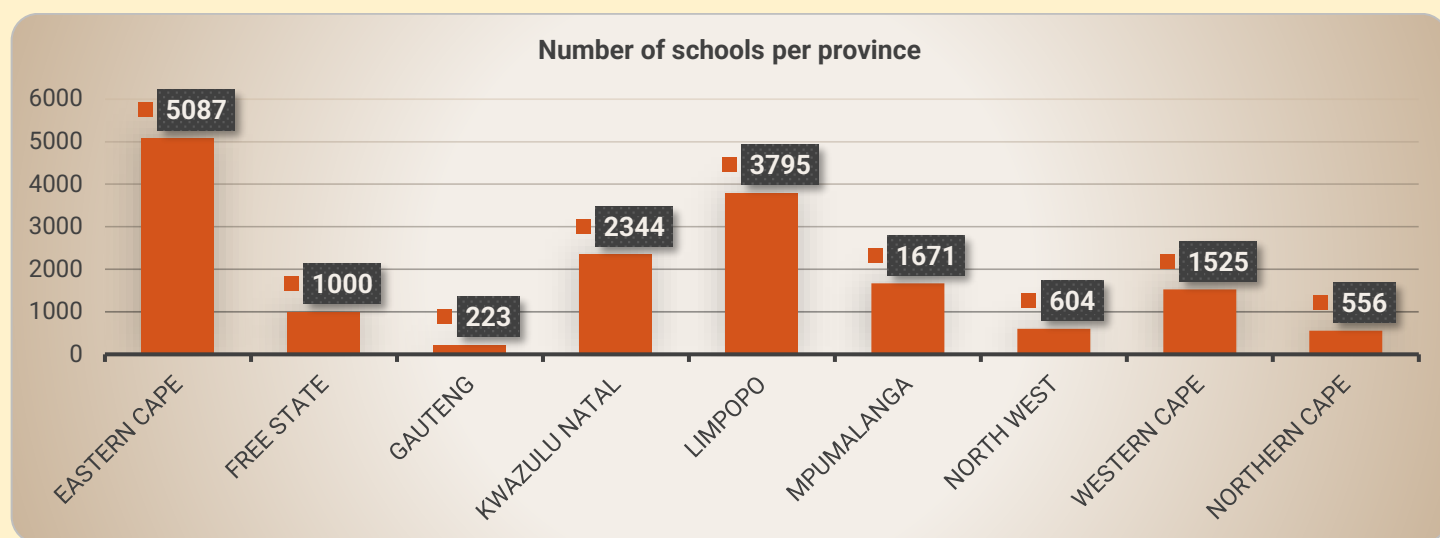
Responses were received for 16 805 schools across the nine provinces. Gauteng, North West and KwaZulu Natal did not report on all schools but only those which have historically had water and sanitation challenges. The remaining six PDEs, Eastern Cape, Free State, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and the Western Cape provided information on all public schools in their provinces.

Table 1 below reflects that the reports received account for 73% of all schools in South Africa. A breakdown of the number of schools per province according to EMIS, 2021 is provided in Graphic 1.

Table 1: Number of schools reported on vs Total number of public ordinary schools in South Africa

Province	Total number of public ordinary schools in each province (EMIS, 2021)	Number of public ordinary schools reported on	Percentage of Public Ordinary Schools reported on
Eastern Cape	5 114	5 087	99%
Free State	1 041	1 000	96%
Gauteng	2 071	223*	11%
KwaZulu Natal	5 814	2 344*	40%
Limpopo	3 713	3 795	102%
Mpumalanga	1 688	1 671	99%
Northern Cape	545	556	102%
North West	1 448	604*	42%
Western Cape	1 453	1 525	105%
	22 887	16 805	73%

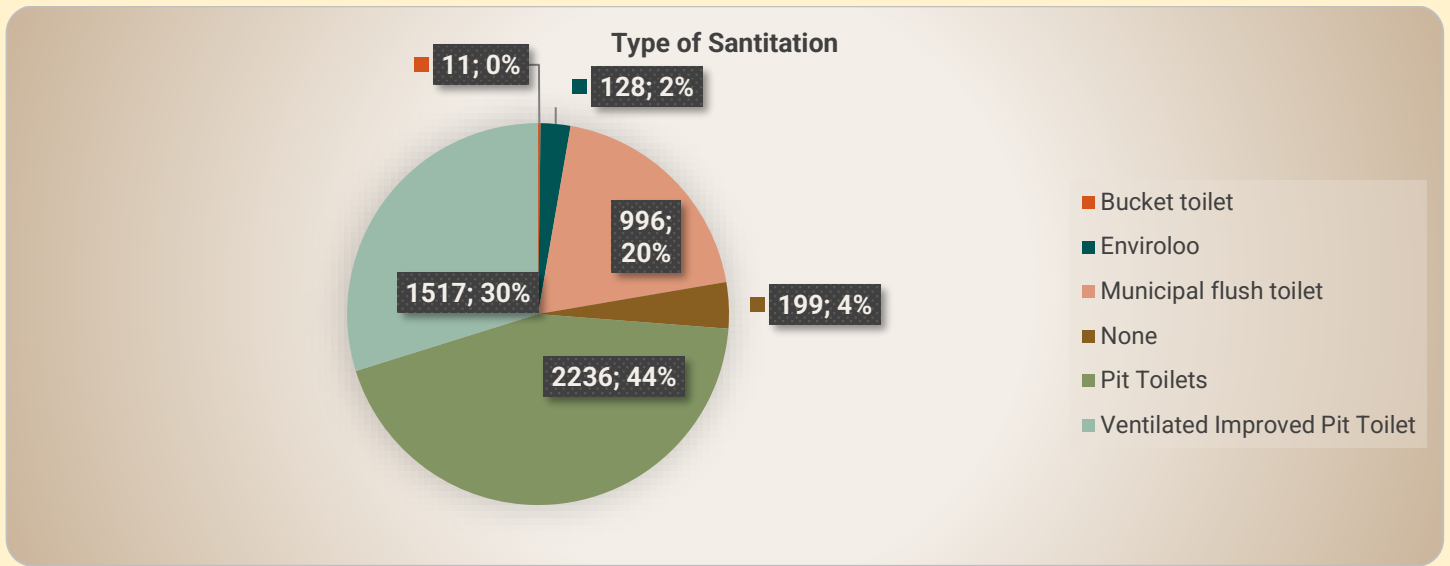
Graphic 1: Number of Schools reported on per province



2.1. Eastern Cape

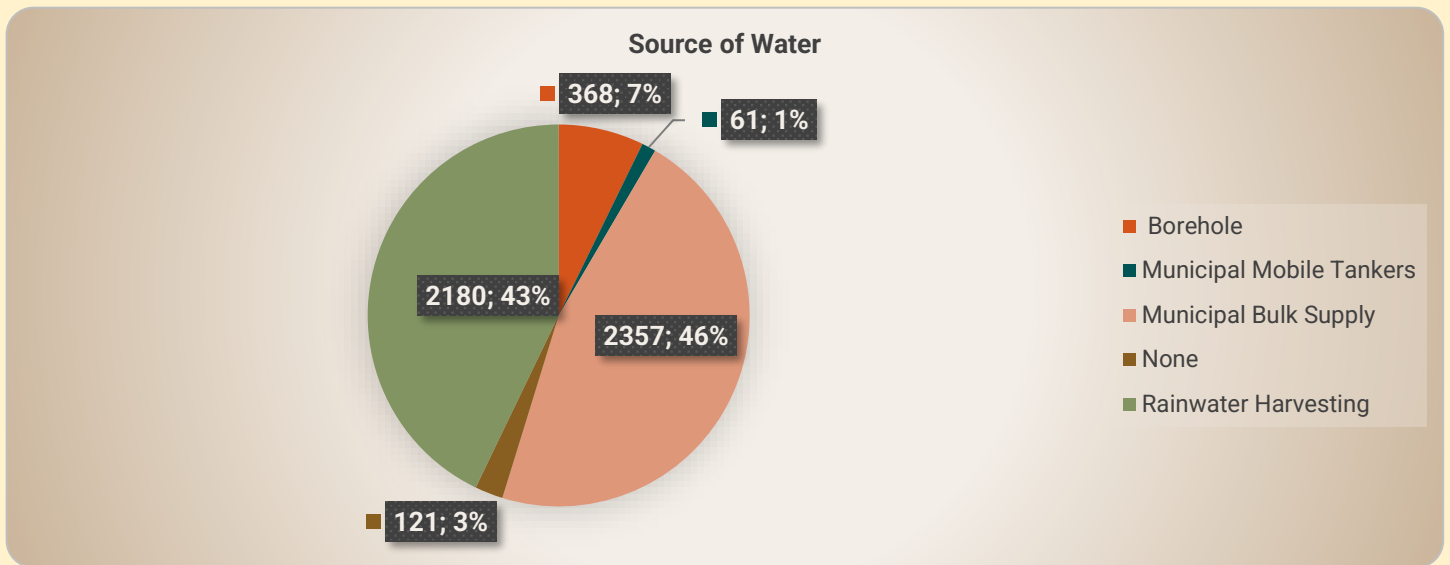
Close to half (44%) of Eastern Cape schools are reported to use pit toilets as their primary ablution facilities. A further 30% of schools in the province use ventilated improved pit latrines as their main ablution facilities. One hundred and ninety-nine (199) schools in the province are reported to not have any sanitation facilities at the school.

Graphic 2: Type of Sanitation used by Schools in the Eastern Cape



There are 2 236 schools which are reliant on pit toilets in the Eastern Cape. A further 199 schools in the province do have no sanitation facilities. These schools serve a total of 717 192 learners and 27 711 teachers, according to provincial Infrastructure records. Graphic 3 below provides a breakdown of the sources of sanitation used by Eastern Cape schools. Note that 121 Eastern Cape schools are reported to have no water supply.

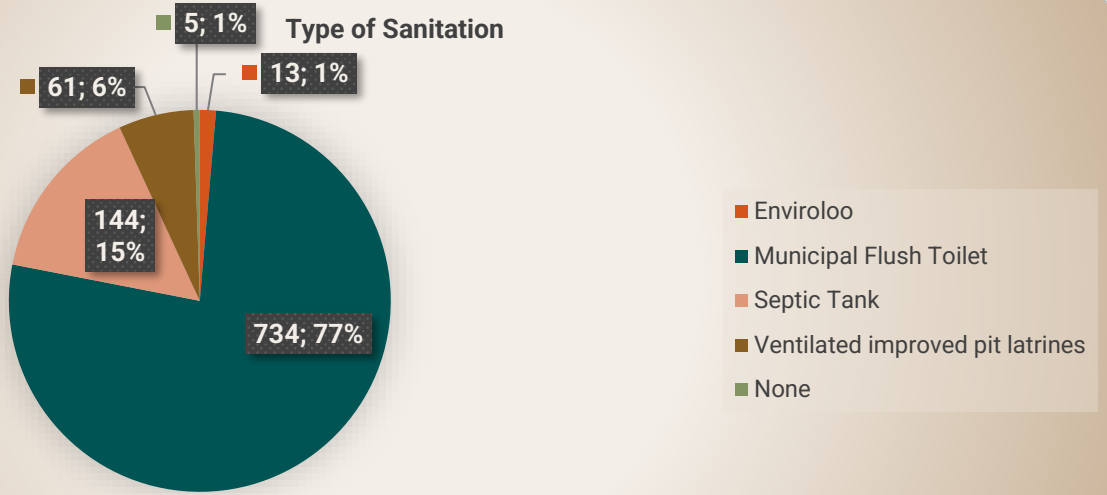
Graphic 3: Source of Water at Eastern Cape Schools



2.2. Free Sate

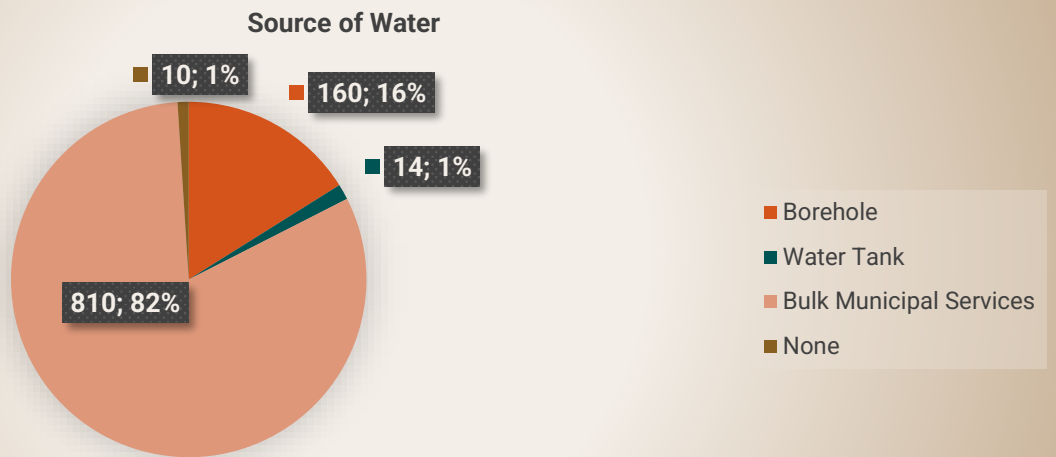
The majority of Free State schools (77%) for which responses were received are serviced by their respective municipal supply of water. See Graphic 4 below. The remaining schools have access to Enviroloos (1%), septic tanks (15%) and ventilated improved pit latrines (6%).

Graphic 4: Type of Sanitation used by Schools in the Free State



Graphic 5 below provides a breakdown of the sources of sanitation used by Free State schools. There are 10 Free State schools which are reported not to have water. Five of these also are reported not to have any form of sanitation.

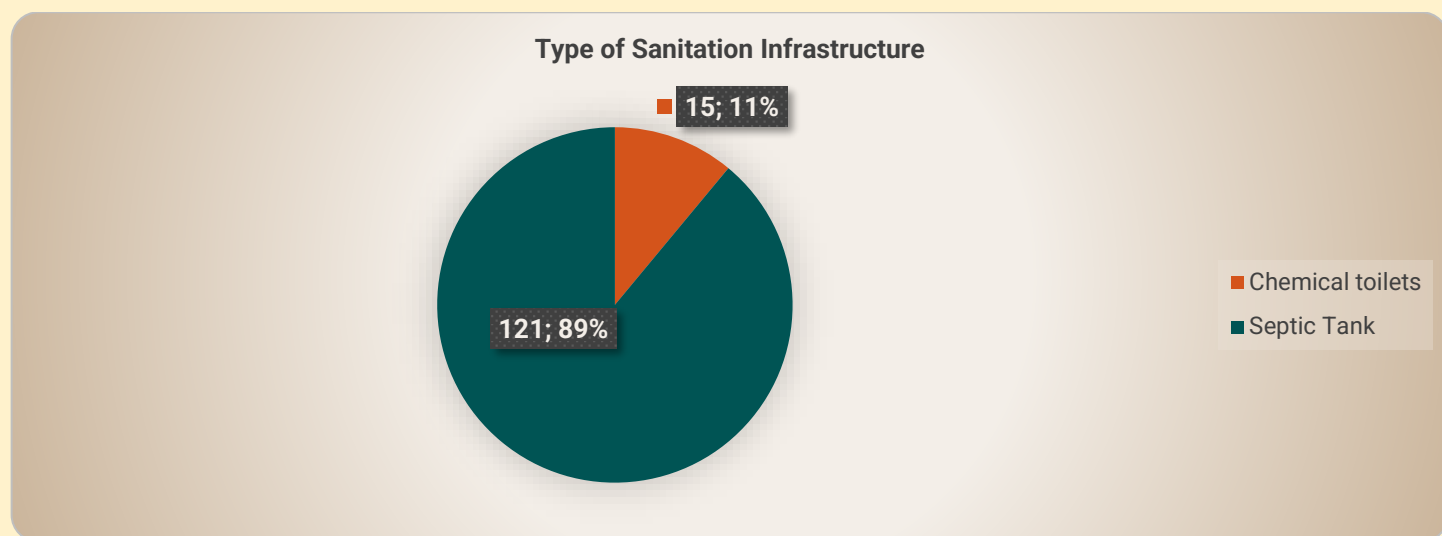
Graphic 5: Source of Water at Free State Schools



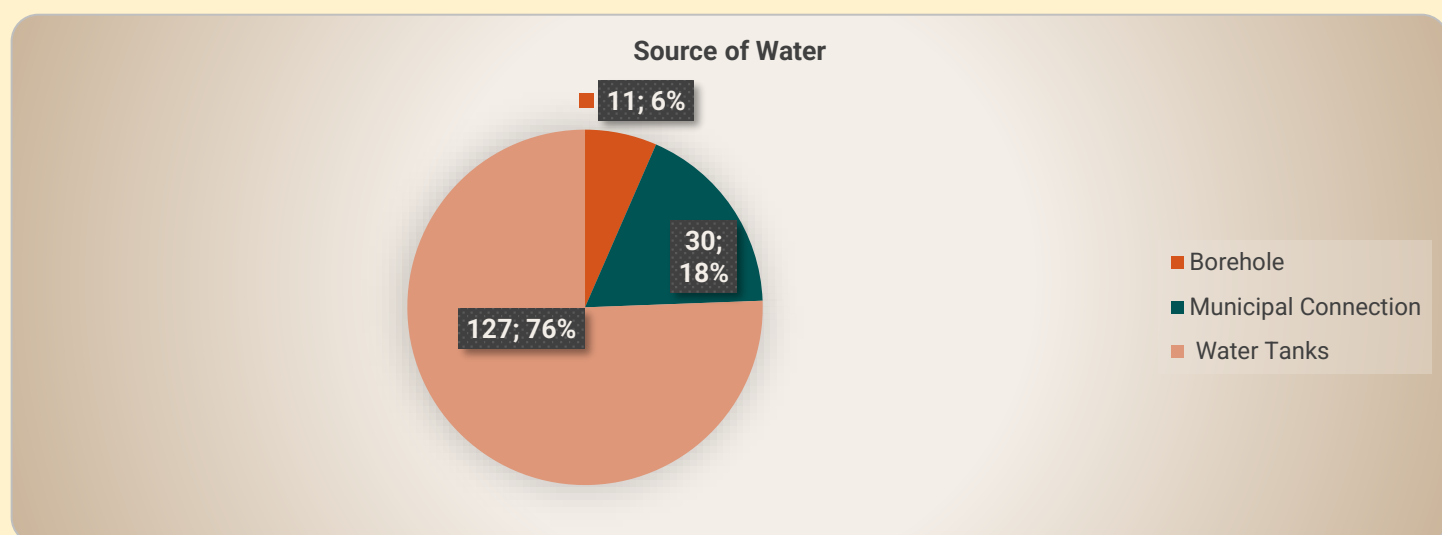
2.3. Gauteng

Gauteng provided a list of 223 schools which have water and sanitation challenges. In the main, the schools are serviced by mobile water tankers, and use septic tanks and chemical toilets for ablutions. Of the 223 schools reported on, there were 136 responses for the question on the *Type* of sanitation infrastructure at the school. Similarly, 168 responses were received for the question on the *Source* of Infrastructure at the school.

Graphic 6: Type of Sanitation used by Schools in Gauteng



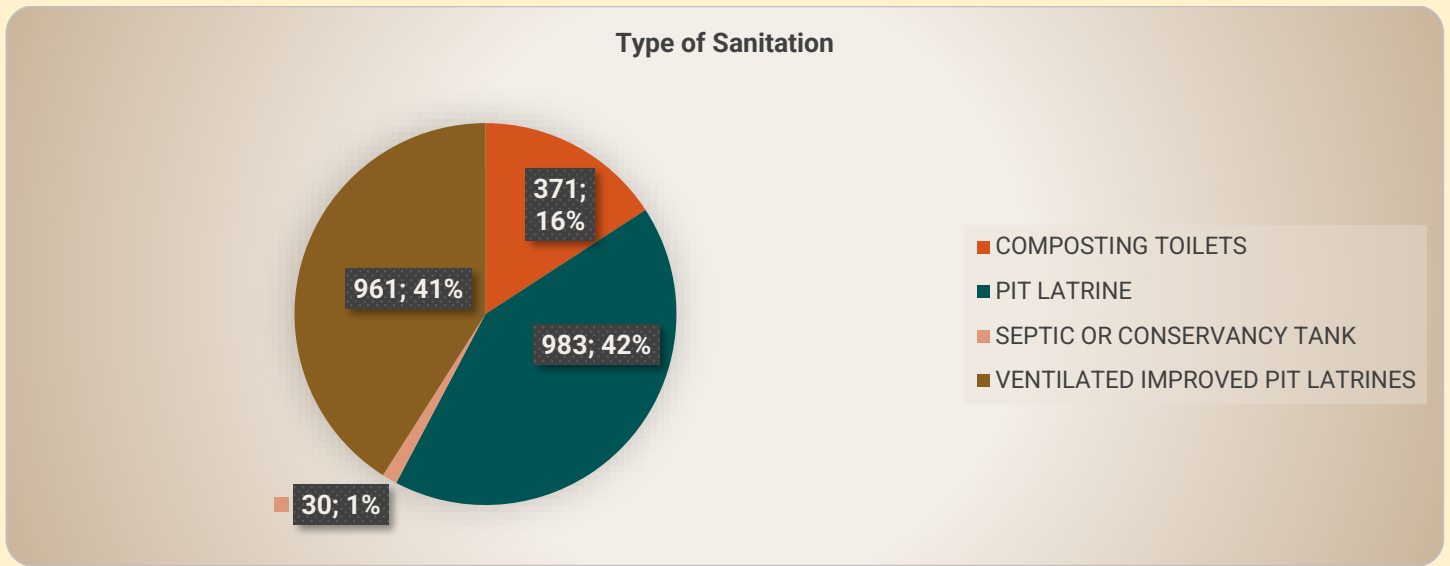
Graphic 7: Source of Water at Gauteng Schools



2.4. KwaZulu Natal

Graphic 8 below reflects that 83% of schools in KwaZulu Natal are primarily reliant on pit latrines and ventilated pit latrines for ablutions.

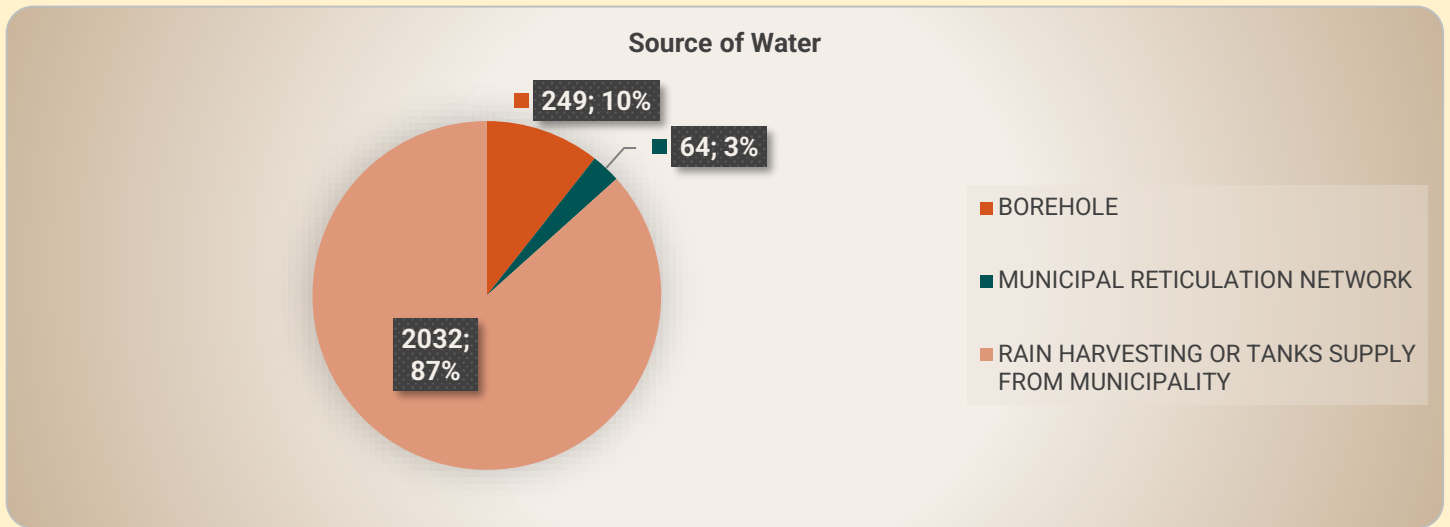
Graphic 8: Type of Sanitation used by Schools in KwaZulu Natal



In KZN, 349 826 learners and 12 978 teachers are at 983 schools which are reliant on pit toilets. The figures are sourced from departmental infrastructure records.

Graphic 9 below provides a breakdown of the sources of sanitation used by KwaZulu Natal schools. Most of the schools reported reliance on rainwater harvesting, and on municipal water tanks. It is unclear how many of these schools rely *solely* on rainwater harvesting for their sanitation needs.

Graphic 9: Source of Water at KwaZulu Natal Schools

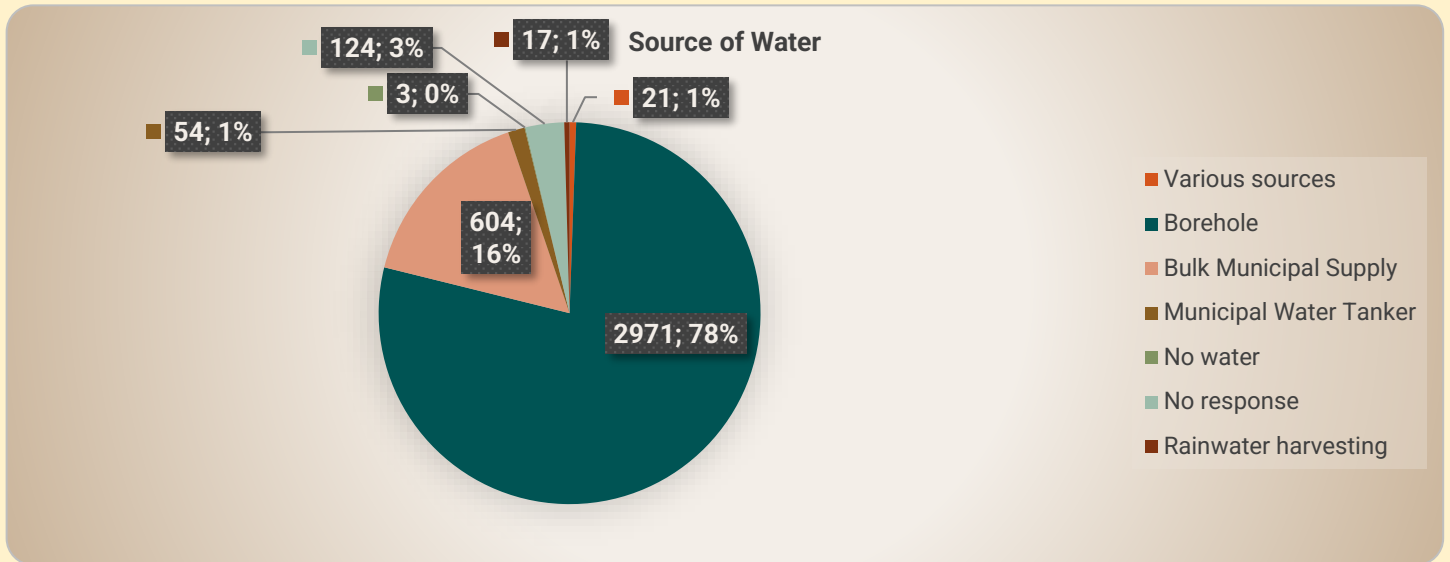


2.5. Limpopo

Seventy-eight percent of schools in Limpopo reported that boreholes were their primary source of clean water. This is often supported by other sources of water. The data provided by the province did not provide the *Type* of sanitation at each school.

There are 113 Limpopo schools which have no water. 49 741 learners and 1 427 teachers are reported to be at these schools, according to provincial infrastructure records. Graphic 10 below provides a breakdown of the sources of sanitation used by schools in Limpopo. The province did not explicitly confirm how many schools use pit latrines, nor did the province confirm the number of schools without any sanitation infrastructure.

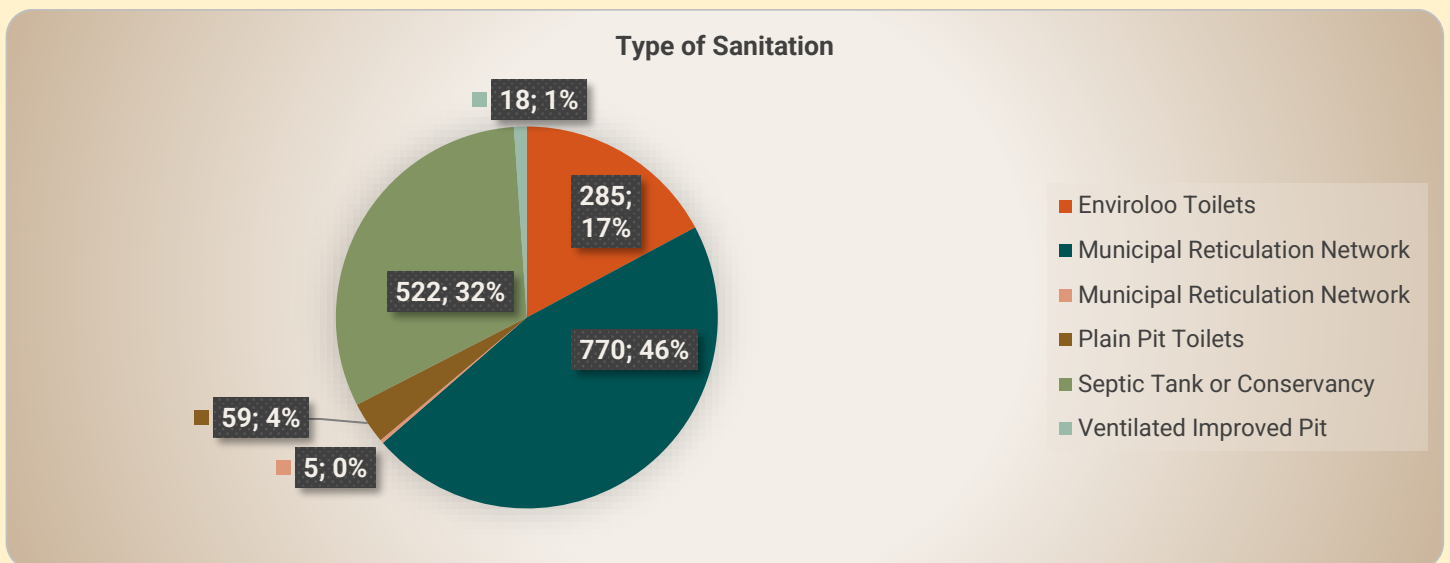
Graphic 10: Source of Water used by Schools in Limpopo



2.6. Mpumalanga

Less than half of the schools in Mpumalanga (46%) use the Municipal reticulation network for ablutions. The balance of schools uses a combination of ablutions, including ventilated pit toilets and septic tanks. See Graphic 11 below:

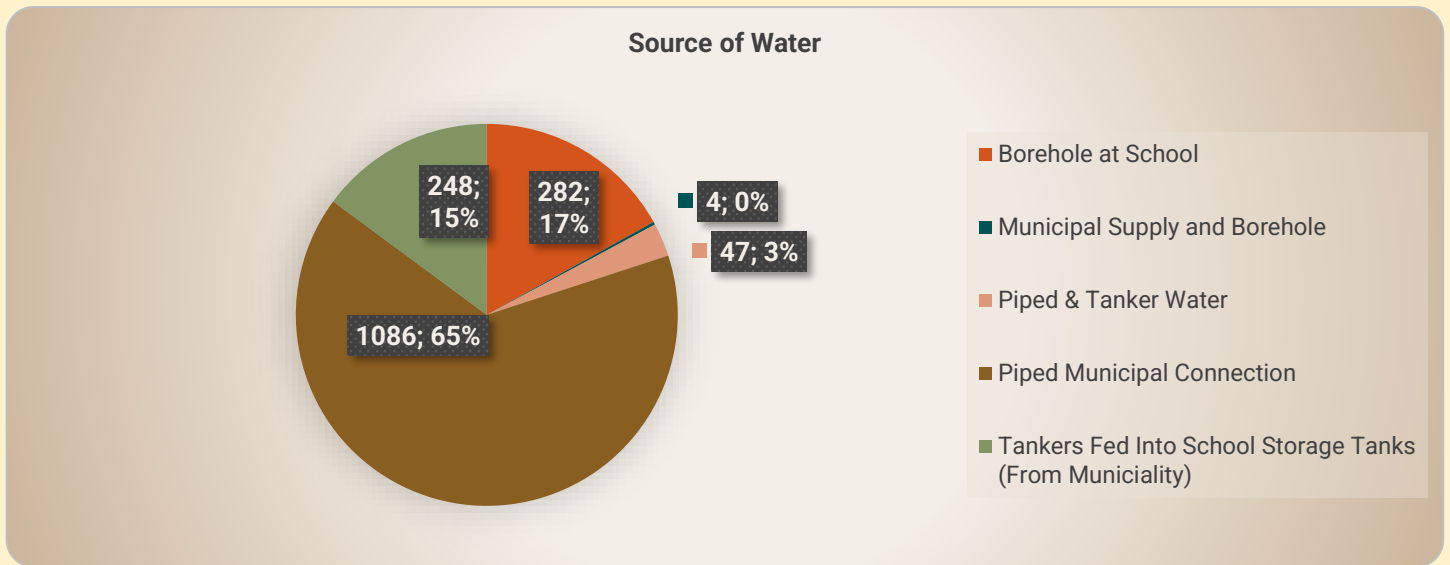
Graphic 11: Type of Sanitation used by Schools in Mpumalanga



There are 59 schools which are reliant on pit toilets in Mpumalanga. There are a total of 30 270 learners and 885 teachers are reported to be at these schools. Graphic 12 below provides a breakdown of the sources of sanitation used by

Mpumalanga schools. The information provided by Mpumalanga does not reflect the number of schools with no water, nor does it reflect the number of schools with no sanitation facilities.

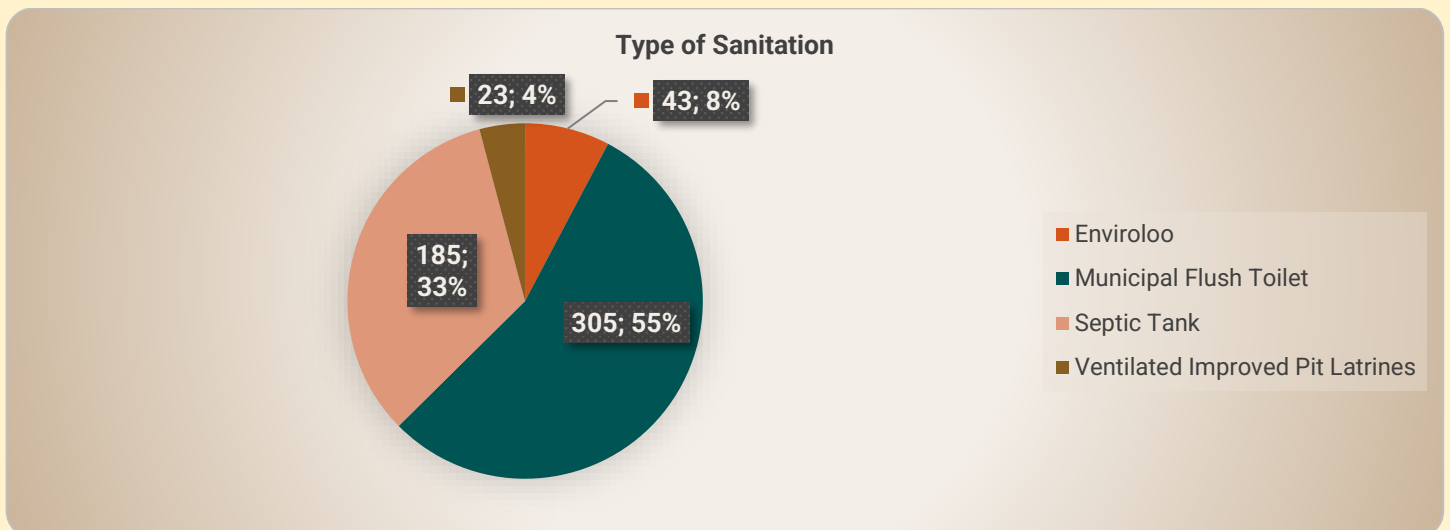
Graphic 12: Source of Water at Mpumalanga Schools



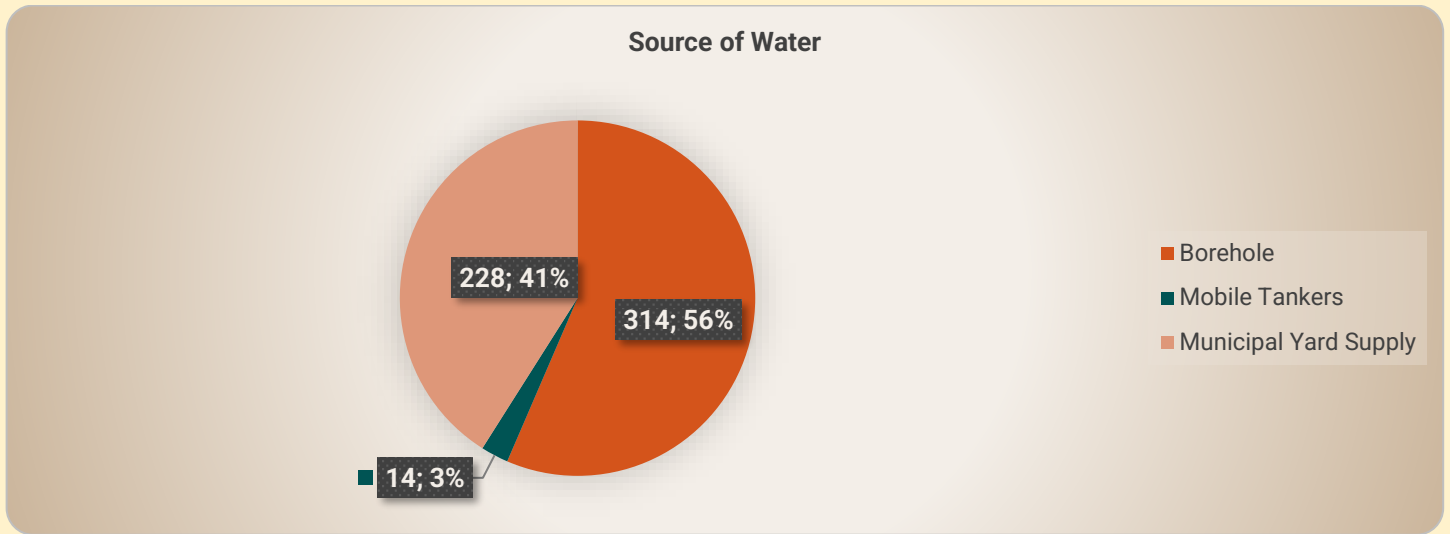
2.7. Northern Cape

More than half (55%) of Northern Cape schools rely on municipal flush toilets for their sanitation needs. The balance of schools uses septic tanks (33%), Enviroloos (8%) and ventilated improved pit latrines (4%).

Graphic 13: Type of Sanitation used by Schools in the Northern Cape



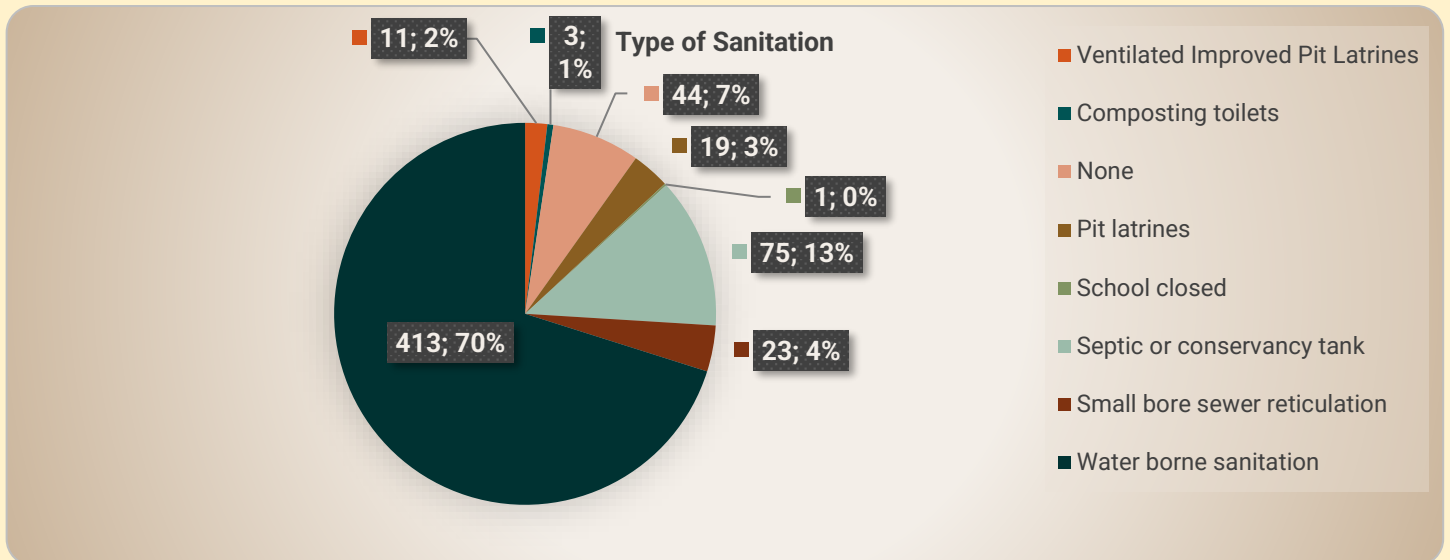
Graphic 14: Source of Water at Schools in the Northern Cape



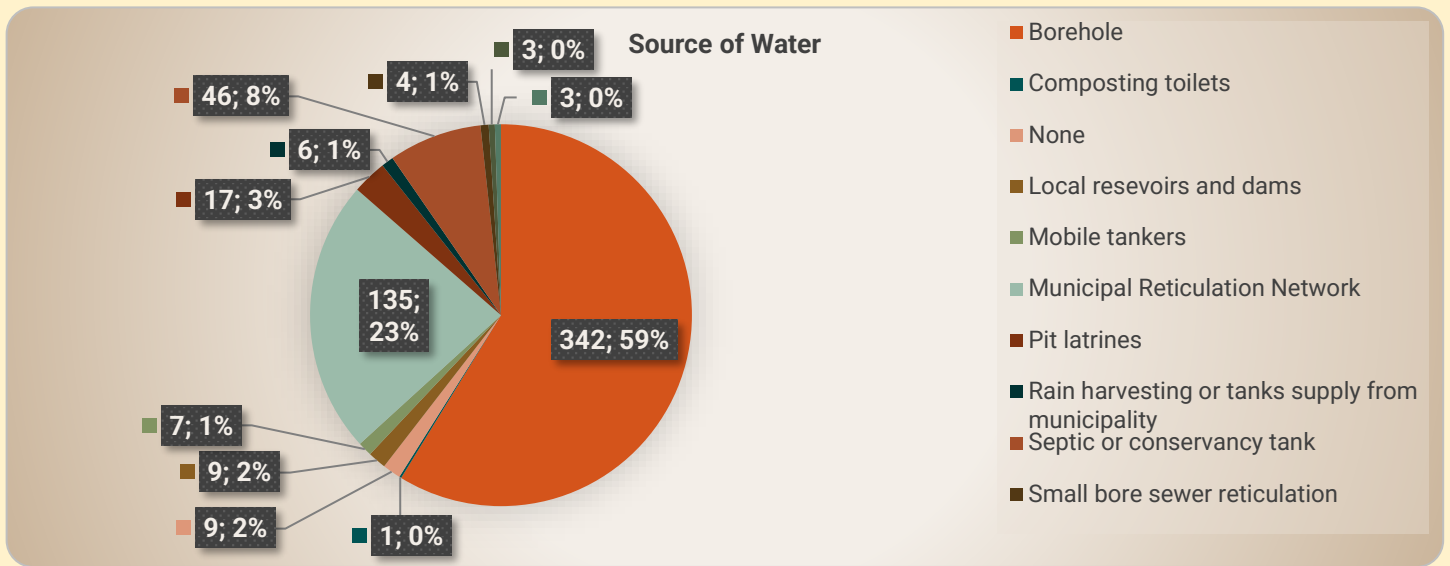
2.8. North West

Graphic 15 below reflects that the majority of schools in the North West make use of water borne sanitation. In the North West, 44 schools are reported to have no sanitation facilities at the school. This figure includes nine schools which do not have water at all. A further 19 schools are reliant on pit toilets in the province. There are a total of 29 407 learners and 985 teachers at these schools.

Graphic 15: Type of Sanitation used by Schools in the North West



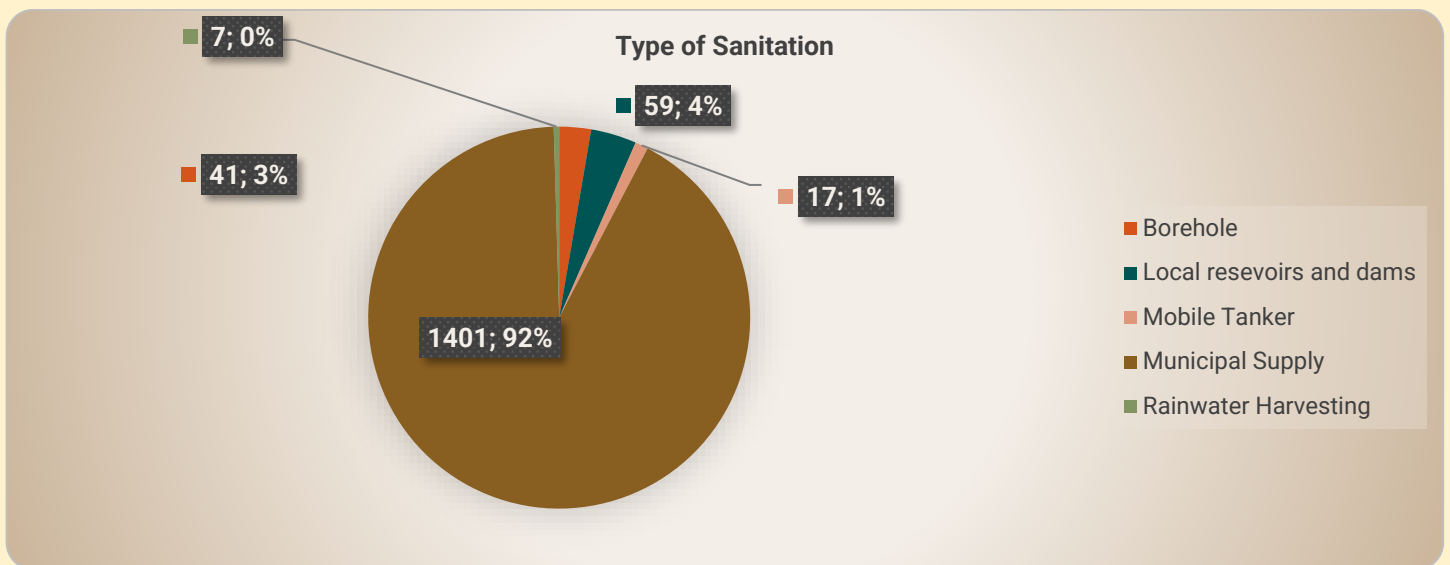
Graphic 16: Source of Water at Schools in North West



2.9. Western Cape

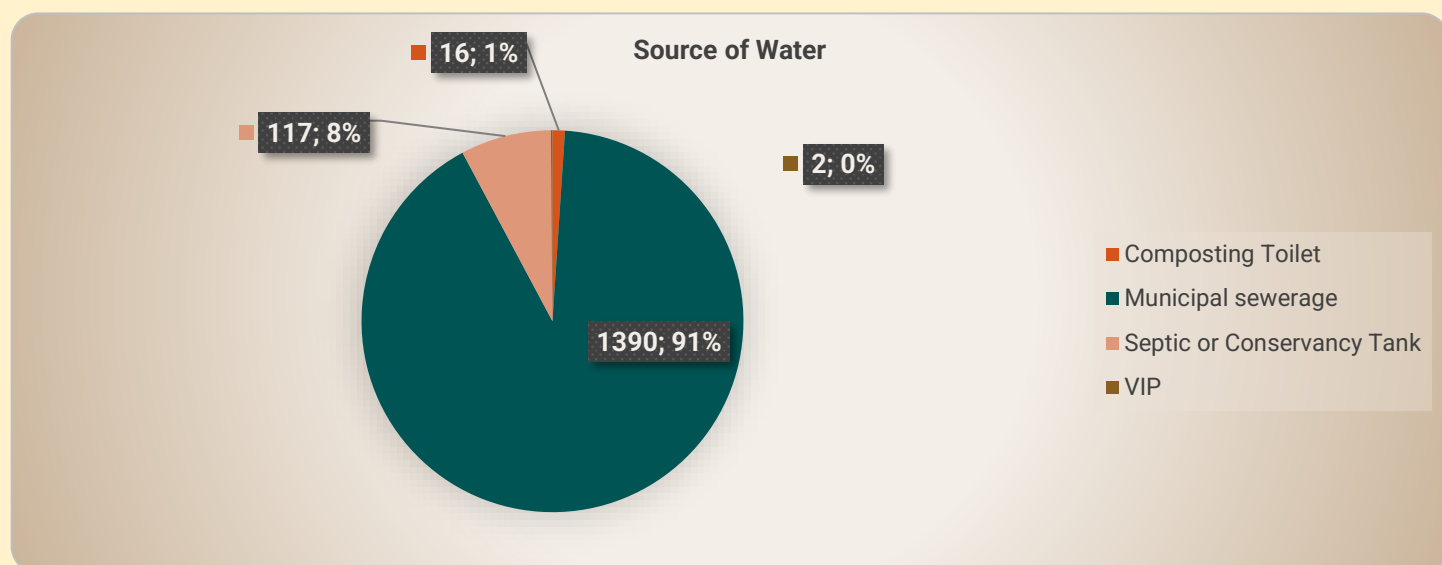
The overwhelming majority of schools in the Western Cape make use of municipal supply of water for sanitation. The province did not report any schools without water nor any schools using pit latrines. Graphic 17 below provides detail of the types of sanitation for schools in the Western Cape.

Graphic 17: Type of Sanitation used by Schools in the Western Cape



Graphic 18 below provides a breakdown of the sources of sanitation used by Western Cape schools.

Graphic 18: Source of Sanitation used by Western Cape Schools



3. Conclusion

The tables below indicate the number of schools which were reported to have no Water (Table 2) and schools which still use pit latrines (Table 3). The learner and teacher enrolment data for these schools is unreliable as it is based on EFMS software rather than EMIS. Despite this, it is concerning that over a million learners and teachers are affected by these challenges.

Table 2: Number of Schools with No Water and affected Teachers and Learners

Province	Number of schools with no Water for Sanitation	Number of teachers affected	Number of learners affected
Eastern Cape	199	3 006	63 676
Free State	10	213	6 936
Limpopo	113	1 427	49 741
North West*	44	783	2 298
Total	366	5 429	144 255

*Nine of the 44 North West schools reported to have no water at all, while the balance of 35 schools reported to have no water and no sanitation facilities.

Table 3: Number of Schools using Pit Latrines and affected Teachers and Learners

Province	Number of schools using pit latrines	Number of teachers affected	Number of learners affected
Eastern Cape	2 236	24 705	653 516
KwaZulu Natal	983	12 978	349 826
Mpumalanga	59	885	30 270
North West	19	175	5 505
Total	3 297	37 858	1 039 117

The learner and educator enrolment figures on some of these reports differ significantly from enrolment data on EMIS.