



PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE POSTDENE ASBESTOS ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Introduction, Context and Progress

In 2018, the Tsantsabane Local Municipality requested SIOC-CDT to consider funding a project to replace the asbestos roofs on houses and structures in the Postdene area. This work was part of the municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Nationally, around 2012, the South African Government launched a national programme to clear the country of all hazardous asbestos roofs.

SIOC-CDT commissioned a technical assessment, to determine the scope of work, the most pragmatic implementation model/ approach, and a cost-effective approach to conduct the project. After the completion of the technical assessment, the SIOC-CDT Board of Trustees approved the project, for the replacement of 399 asbestos roofs on houses and structures in Postdene, Tsantsabane Local Municipality. The project aligns with "Emergent Needs" within the SIOC-CDT's Community Development Strategy. In particular, the project was regarded as necessary, to address the potential health threat caused by exposure to asbestos, to the community of Postdene.

The Approved Project Scope includes:

- Removal of asbestos materials by a registered asbestos contractor and disposal of materials in line with regulations.
- Like-for-like replacement of roof beams and/or rafters and ceilings and installation of new IBR sheeting, as per specification.
- Beam filling and plastering, as necessary.
- Installation of solar high-pressure geysers; and
- Relocation of families to temporary accommodation ("decanting site") and back into their renovated homes after approximately two and a half months (this period has been shorter in practice).

SIOC-CDT is implementing the project in partnership with the Tsantsabane Local Municipality.

Following broad consultations with the municipality, the community of Postdene and other stakeholders such as the local businesses and business forums, the project was kicked off with the appointment of relevant construction professionals and a main contractor (through SIOC-CDT procurement processes), who were formally introduced to the community in March 2024.

Construction started in October 2024, with the development and preparation of a decanting/relocation site to temporarily accommodate families while their houses are being worked on. The first families were relocated to the decanting site in November 2024. These families were able to move back into their homes before the Christmas break of 2024 (less than a month).

Workmanship

As at 07 October 2025, 126 families are back in their homes, having signed "happy letters", acknowledging that they are satisfied with the work done. Thirty-two (32) families are currently living in the decanting site. Their completed homes are being inspected, and they will be able to move back within the next few days. Twenty-six (26) more families are preparing to move to the decanting site after its cleaning, preparation, and inspection, to be ready for the next occupants. The total is therefore currently 184.



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The project requires significant participation of local labour and local businesses, doing construction and providing labour, or services. It has therefore hired more than 200 labourers to date, and 49 local businesses have been participating in brickwork, painting, beam/rafter installation, roof sheet installation, plumbing, ceiling installation, and electrical work, among other services. R15.99million has been spent on the procurement of building materials from local suppliers and subcontracting of work to 49 local businesses since the beginning of the project, with a target of R27million (59% of the target). The 30% local content target requirement is being exceeded (currently, local content is at 35%).

The involvement of so many local businesses presents challenges, but there are three assurance layers during construction / repair of the houses and structures with asbestos roofs. In addition, as is typical in the construction sector, beneficiaries do "snagging" and report items that need attention or that are not done to their satisfaction, once they have moved back into their homes. These are inspected and repaired. Thereafter, subsequent faulty items, which are linked to the work having been done, can be reported for a period of up to one year, for inspection and repair.

Temporary shelter / Decanting site

The project includes the temporary housing at the decanting site, provision of transport for school-going children as well as free transport for community members commuting to and from town, health facilities, or places of worship. The park homes used at the decanting site are fully wired (electrically) and plumbed when delivered to site, with the relevant certificates of compliance (COC). The contractor has appointed a full-time maintenance team that is located at the decanting site, to assist with quick responses to issues raised.

The contractor fumigates and cleans the units and site prior to new occupants arrival. In response to the concerns raised by beneficiaries, a decision was taken to implement a stronger cleaning and fumigation regime after the vacation of the units by families whose homes have been completed. This would require that the units be vacant for 1-2 days prior to the next occupants moving in and this will be implemented going forward. A schedule of transport is displayed in each unit at the decanting site. The service is provided free of charge, using one vehicle owned by the main contractor, as well as another operated by a local taxi company, with the consent of the Local Taxi Association. Request for amended schedules of transport can be made to the main contractor, through the "complaints boxes" and / or the Social Facilitator and Community Liaison Officer. The Social Facilitator and Community Liaison Officer assist in identifying community needs, facilitating engagements with affected community members, resolving conflict, and addressing challenges as they arise, during the implementation of the project.

In addition to the CLO and Social Facilitator, community members and concerned groups have been advised to escalate their concerns or grievances to the Site Manager, Contracts Manager and in extreme cases the Operations Director, to ensure that matters are resolved. SIOC-CDT staff also hold regular engagements with the community and local businesses people participating in the project.

Provision of Wi-Fi and DSTV services at the decanting site were never part of the scope of the project.

Summary

The success of the Postdene Asbestos Roof Removal Project depends on continuous constructive engagement and collaborative problem solving involving many stakeholders and role players. The contractor recently agreed to meet with beneficiaries fortnightly, to improve communication and be more accessible. Other communication channels are open and flexible, and stakeholders are encouraged to engage constructively, with a problem-solving mindset. SIOC-CDT believes that this project has the support of the community and remains committed to the people of Postdene. We wish to execute this project in the shortest time possible, to ensure healthier living conditions and minimize inconvenience caused by temporary relocation of families.

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