

Sanitary platforms (SanPlats)

A basic latrine will often feature a platform made from wooden poles or logs placed over a pit. The logs may be covered with compacted mud to act as a seal. The user defecates through a hole in the platform. However, such platforms are usually unhygienic as they can be difficult to clean. Users who cannot afford to replace a wooden platform with a full concrete slab may be able to afford a cheaper alternative sanitary platform, commonly known as a SanPlat, which is more hygienic than a mud floor.

Design

The SanPlat is made of concrete but is not designed to cover the whole pit. It is placed over an existing platform covering the area where people defecate. This provides a firmer place to squat. The SanPlat features raised footrests to help users locate the correct position over the hole and to keep feet away from any mess left on the floor by previous users. The slab is easier to clean than a mud floor and helps prevent the transmission of hookworm.

A small SanPlat is cheaper to make and easier to transport than a full slab. One or two people can lift it and it can be wheeled in a barrow or handcart. This means that SanPlats can be made in one place but be distributed throughout a whole village without relying on a motorised vehicle.

Construction

As a SanPlat needs to be kept clean, it is important that it has a smooth surface. Using a plastic mould allows for this and means that slabs can be cast in volume to the required design.

The provision of a tight-fitting cover for the hole is also important as this will help to prevent flies breeding in the pit from escaping into the cubicle or superstructure.

