

From: [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation - The Optimist](#)
To: ctcinfohub@gmail.com
Subject: 3.5 billion people are lacking this one essential service
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BILL & MELINDA
GATES *foundation*

The Optimist

Relentless pursuit of an equitable world

Hello,

Nine-year-old Omphile loves to learn, and she really enjoys going to school much more—now. Omphile isn’t alone. For a long time at Tsholetsega Public School in South Africa, attendance rates were very low. One culprit stood out: aging toilets prone to clogging and leaking.

It wasn’t fun—or safe—to attend school alongside overflowing loos.

Over 3.5 billion people around the world live without access to safe sanitation, increasing their risk of life-threatening diseases. While South Africa has made major strides in improving its sanitation systems, sanitation situations like the one that existed at Tsholetsega can still pose major hurdles for students who are eager to learn.

[Fortunately, at Tsholetsega, it was time for an upgrade.](#)

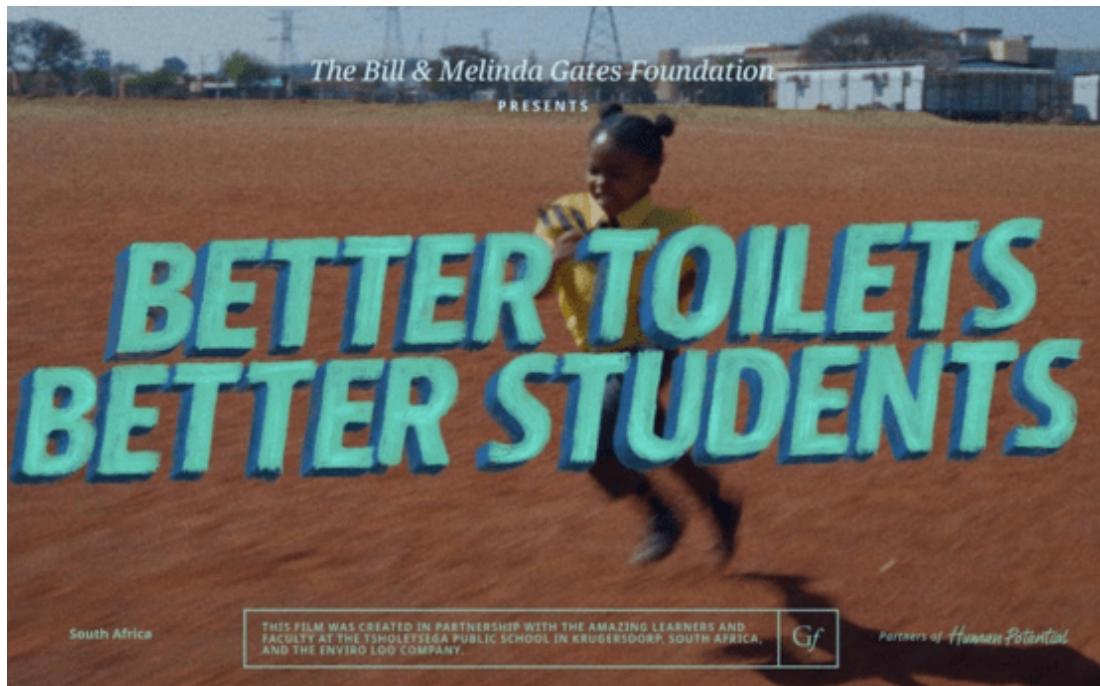
Thanks to a high-tech new system developed through the foundation’s “Reinvent the Toilet” initiative, attendance rates at Tsholetsega have shot up. Now, they better reflect the level of passion for learning that is so clear in students like Omphile.

In this first installment of our new series, *Partners of Human Potential*, [see how the foundation is partnering with innovators in South Africa and across continents to unlock human potential and enable a better future.](#)

— *The Optimist* Editors

[See Omphile's story](#)

Featured article



How do better toilets lead to better students?

Enviro Loo, a toilet technology and water sanitation project in South Africa supported by the Gates Foundation, is impacting the lives of students for the better.

[Read article](#)

New series: *Partners of Human Potential*



What can kangaroos teach us about saving newborns? Why are Scottish cows key to growing family farms in Kenya? And how could a vaccine help prevent cancer? [See the answers to all these questions—and more—in our new video series, *Partners of Human Potential*](#). With five stories in five countries, we're taking an inside look at how our partners around the world are tackling the globe's greatest challenges, and the real people benefiting from these innovative solutions. [Watch a preview of what's to come!](#)

Get a sneak peek

What we're reading

Good Morning America



Melinda French Gates speaks with Dr. Ashton on the future of women's health

Listen to Melinda share the innovative tools that are saving women's lives,

including what has been described as “the single greatest advance in the world of cancer in a century.”

Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy



Phase 3 trial for TB vaccine candidate launches in South Africa

A promising new trial could lead to the first vaccine in a hundred years against one of the world's deadliest infectious diseases.

CNBC Africa



Advancing women's economic power through financial access and digital technologies

In Africa, there is a \$42 billion finance gap for women entrepreneurs. Here's how investing in innovative digital financial services can help close it.

Devex



WHO and Gavi's global push for HPV vaccines gathers momentum

India and Nigeria are leading the charge in a race to prevent one of the leading contributors to cervical cancer.

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