Uruguay
Third Basic Education Quality Improvement Project
Environmental Assessment

The Government of Uruguay has provided the following information on its site selection and screening criteria for new school construction and rehabilitation.

Site selection.

The Public Education National Administration (Administración Nacional de Educación Pública) has identified 79 potential sites where 750 new classrooms will be built throughout the country. Information on the location of these sites is attached. In all cases, ANEP either owns the land, or the land will be donated by the municipalities and/or other governmental organizations. A school map is currently being generated on a Geographic Information System (GIS) and should be completed during the implementation of the Third Basic Education Quality Improvement Project.

1. Sites were chosen based on community needs for additional schools, and then specific lots chosen based on geographic, topographic, and locational (e.g., traffic pattern) characteristics. The specific process involves site visits and studies to analyze the following:
   - Urban, suburban, or rural characteristics, municipal regulations affecting the proposed lot
   - Accessibility and distance to inhabited areas
   - Land ownership
   - Verification of squatters and other potential legal problems with land acquisition
   - Geographic and orographic characteristics
   - Soils and subsols
   - Contamination of site by lead or other pollutants, according to prevailing regulations
   - Flora and fauna characteristics, and regulations governing habitats
   - Historic and community characteristics

Upon completing the above analysis, the following agencies are contacted to verify and provide further details on issues affecting the proposed site:

- Ministry of Housing, Land, and Environment (National Department of Environment – DINAMA), regarding water and pollution control.
- Ministry of Public Works, regarding roads
- National Department of Hydrography, regarding possible flooding issues
- National Department of Catastro
- National Administration of Electricity
- State Administration of Sanitation Works, Subministry of Water, regarding sanitation issues.
- Municipal Department of Construction, regarding regulations and master plans for the communities
- Municipal Department of Works, regarding exiting infrastructure and future plans

The National Education Council approves the final selection of sites, once this analysis is completed.

B. School design.

Upon site acquisition (whether through purchase or donation), school designs are formulated through a consultation process involving local education authorities, including the Primary Education Council, Departmental Supervisors, and the community through the Promotion Commissions of each school. School designs follow local norms regarding public health, hygiene, and construction quality, and also follow criteria of the Public Education National Administration (ANEP). ANEP criteria include, but are not limited to, consideration of the following:

- Security and handicapped provisions
- Heating
- Ventilation
- Natural and artificial light
- Square footage per student
- Number of students per bathroom
- Sanitation (in cases where there is no water and sanitation system, a treatment process is designed that must be approved by the Ministry of Housing)
- Historic and cultural considerations (in cases where construction may affect culturally or historically important areas, the Ministry of Education and Culture must approve the project)

Specific data on these criteria can be found attached. In addition, permits are issued for sanitation systems, electrical hook-ups, effluent discharge, and road construction.
During the school design phase, the following organizations are consulted:

- UTE – regarding electrical and energy connections and regulations
- OSE (Office of Potable Water and Sanitation)
- DINAMA – in case a water and sanitation system does not exist, the project will formulate a design for water treatment that must be approved by this office. In addition, if a site has been identified as having special environmental considerations, DINAMA must approve the school’s final design.

C. School construction.

Contractors are required to comply with national and municipal regulations governing the environment, public health, and safety. They must ensure that the project does not adversely affect the surrounding infrastructure, vegetation, and water and electrical connections in the area. The materials used in school construction must meet the traditional norms of the country.

During this phase, the following organizations are consulted:

- Municipal officials, regarding the project
- Ministry of Labor, regarding safety and public hygiene considerations
- OSE and UTE, regarding provisional installations during construction
- Technological Laboratory of Uruguay (LATU) and its engineering faculty – regarding quality of construction materials.