



human settlements

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## AN EARLY CHRISTMAS TO OVER 500 FAMILIES

The lives of more than 500 families have been transformed as they received keys to their newly built homes in Ezinkomeni Settlements, Mkhondo Local Municipality. The R61 million housing project, spearheaded by the Mpumalanga Department of Human Settlements, was officially handed over by MEC for Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements, and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA) Mr. Speed Mashilo, alongside Gert Sibande District Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr. Walter Mngomezulu, and Acting Local Executive Mayor, Cllr. Thembisile Khumalo.

In a symbolic gesture of the government's commitment to uplift destitute families, three fully furnished houses were handed over to elderly beneficiaries who had endured years in unsafe, dilapidated mud structures. Among them was 94-year-old Ms. Esther Hlatshwayo, who expressed heartfelt gratitude: "This is the best day of my life. At my age, I thought I would die without ever owning a decent house." Similarly, Mr. Amos Mkhwanazi (82) shared his relief, recounting the hardships of living without electricity, water, or proper shelter. "I am so grateful to spend Christmas in a new home with my family," he said, visibly moved.

The beneficiaries were identified by local ward councillors, who prioritised them based on their dire living conditions. Speaking at the event, District Executive Mayor Cllr. Mngomezulu praised the project for its life-changing impact. "Today marks a historic and important occasion. It brings immense pride to see the lives of these deserving families improved," he said.

MEC Mashilo emphasised that the handover represents more than just the provision of shelter, it restores dignity and security. "Property ownership brings stability and pride. As government, we cannot fail the residents of this province," he stated. Mashilo also highlighted the disaster-prone nature of the Mkhondo area, affirming the department's commitment to completing all human settlement projects in the locality. He urged beneficiaries to cherish their homes and resist selling or renting them out.

This milestone exemplifies the Mpumalanga Government's dedication to building sustainable and inclusive communities, providing not just homes but hope for a better future.

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