



human settlements

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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BENEFICIARIES CONSULTED ON HOUSING CONSUMER PROTECTION BILL

Interests groups, councilors and private institutions had an opportunity to make inputs on the Housing Consumer Protection Bill during a consultative workshop held at Mbombela, City of Mbombela early this week. The Bill aims at ensuring adequate protection of housing consumers and effective regulation mechanism by expanding the protection to consumers. The National Department of Human Settlements is currently on a nationwide drive consulting communities, public and private institutions on the Protection Bill prior its enactment into law.

The Bill also aims to introduce effective enforcement tools and prescribing appropriate penalties or sanctions to deter non-compliance by homebuilders. "Once the new Bill is passed into Law it will allow the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBC) more efficiency in holding builders and contractors accountable and ensure they abide by set standards and regulations," explained NHBC Head of Legal Services, Mr Hulisani Mbara. He added that this will also strengthen government's efforts to curb the rise of unregistered builders.

During the engagement, Mr Isaac Skhosane a resident from eLukwatin under Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality said they need government to assist them with quality houses, water sanitation and electricity. "Some of these houses would normally start to develop cracks a year or two after they have been built and this becomes a challenge because by then the contractor would have moved to another project." Poor workmanship and contractor's ineptness have proven to be challenges in the delivery of projects, especially which are government driven.

Sharing Skhosane's sentiments was Ms Nelly Mhlongo agitating that the Bill must also cover issues of accountability between government and beneficiaries. "I want to thank our government for giving us the opportunity to participate in the formulation of the Housing Consumer Protection Bill, I hope this Bill will come to our rescue," she said while adding that there must also be a binding clause to sanction contractors to rectify any faults or shoddy work.

Responding to the concerns National Human Settlements DDG Chief of Operations, Ms Sindisiwe Ngxongo cited that housing consumers who wish to build or buy new homes are advised to verify builders' registration credentials and home enrolment beforehand with the NHBC in order to be covered by the warranty fund. "We welcome all your concerns and positive inputs. I want to urge all homebuilders to acquaint themselves with the Bill to avoid non-compliance and that beneficiaries must be involved during the construction of their houses. We want quality houses for all," said Ngxongo. Another consultative session will also be rolled out to eMalahleni Local Municipality this Friday.

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