



human settlements

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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HOUSING BENEFICIARIES TO PARTICIPATE IN BUILDING PROCESS – MEC MASHILO

Mpumalanga Human Settlements MEC Speedy Mashilo is keen in seeing low cost housing beneficiaries being afforded a chance to partake in building processes of their houses. This in his view will maximize employment opportunities and bring a sense of ownership throughout the journey. He told a legislature gathering at Amsterdam, Mkhondo Local Municipality recently which was discussing service delivery challenges within the municipality. The legislature's petitions committee convened the meeting to solicit responses from Departments on service delivery concerns as raised by residents.

According to MEC Mashilo, the involvement of beneficiaries during the construction of their houses will help the province to curb unemployment as well as ensuring that contractors do not deliver substandard work. "We have to adopt a system that will assist us with some of the persistent challenges we have been facing by working with municipalities, contractors as well as beneficiaries. If beneficiaries are not fit for the job and cannot participate in the building processes, their unemployed siblings should be brought on board," explained MEC Mashilo. He expressed his concern about beneficiaries signing 'Happy Letters' even though their houses were not completed and cited that the involvement of beneficiaries would ensure quality houses.

Late beneficiary, Mr. John Sibande passed on without knowing that his house was already built and that someone was occupying it. Mashilo said, "I don't think there is anyone in their right mind who can claim ownership of a house they do not have legal documents for. We will evict them to stop this rot." Other petitions for cracked RDP houses were also submitted and the MEC spoke in conviction that since the Department was no longer offering the rectification programme to attend to such he had however, sourced help from his contractors to assist him in this regard. "I spoke to them and they will help rectify these cracks before the end of next month, and of course they are not doing this at the expense of the Department but as part of their campaign to plough back to the communities," he concluded.

In his responses, MEC Mashilo however, slammed relentless activities of illegal allocations of houses by contractors and some government officials to non-qualifying beneficiaries. "I cannot allow for such irresponsible tendencies to develop in the Department. Whosoever is found to be illegally occupying a house will be evicted. We are guided by policies that are clear with a mandate that is justifiable to everyone and as a result, it doesn't make mention of illegal occupation as a legitimate practice," warned Mashilo. Committee Chairperson, Ms. Jeaneth Ngondzweni commended the Department for the swift response to the petitions and advised that the Department should also involve the police where illegal activities are suspected.

**ISSUED BY THE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE
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