



human settlements

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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PROPERTY OWNERSHIP GRANTED TO HOUSING BENEFICIARIES

After having been forcefully removed from the small community of Klipriver and lived in uncertainty for several years, a 75-year old Gogo Esther Mndebele never thought she could ever wake up one day to have legal ownership of her house. Now the Doorenkop resident – an area outside Middelburg, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, was elated to receive her title deed from MEC for Human Settlements, Ms Violet Siwela early this week. The Department started this year's campaign at Msukaligwa Municipality (Ermelo) and it has commitment to deliver **10 000** during this financial year.

Joyful Mndebele said that she was always unsettled to live in a house without the legal documents. **"I always feared that unscrupulous people might come and remove me at anytime. I am glad that today I have a place I can call mine,"** retorted grateful Mndebele. She is amongst the over 1000 recipients from the municipality and some from eMalahleni (Witbank) who have received the legal documents. Other beneficiaries are from Somaphepha, Rockdale, Mhluzi, KwaZamokuhle, Tokologo, Mafube, KwaGuqa, and Klarinet. A title deed reflects as a legal document that ensures ownership of a property, as it allows home owners to make decisions that will improve their living circumstances.

The beneficiaries will also be able to use their title deeds to improve their dwellings, to acquire household's goods and make use of capital borrowing against their properties to start small businesses.

MEC Siwela further emphasised that a title deed is not just an ordinary piece of paper, but a legal document that ought to be valued by beneficiaries. **"From today all the beneficiaries will have their dignities restored and livelihoods improved,"** said Siwela adding that the mushrooming of informal settlements and scarcity of land can be attributed to the 1913 Natives Land Act.

The issuing of title deeds is to facilitate the registration in to the names of the housing beneficiaries, ensure provision of security of tenure for beneficiaries, ensure their lives are continuously and economically improved through guarantees with the title deeds and satisfy the provision of legislation to provide them to beneficiaries. Ownership further allows beneficiaries to use their houses to leverage their economic circumstances by making additional income. However, from the municipal perspective, property ownership compels the owners to pay municipal rates and services received, thereby contributing to its ongoing financial viability and economic sustainability.

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