



human settlements

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Building No 6 & 7, No 7 Government Boulevard, Riverside Park, Extension 2
Mbombela, Mpumalanga, Private Bag X11328, Mbombela, 1200
Tel: +27 (13) 766 8088, Fax: +27 (13) 766 8441

Litiko
Lekuhlaliswa Kwebantfu

Departement van
Menslike Nedersittings

UmNyango
Wokuhlaliswa Kwabantu

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DISTRESSED TENANTS HALT SERVICE PROGRESS

Aggrieved residents at the Tsalanang Community Residential Units (CRU) in the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality are at loggerheads with the Department of Human Settlements following their change in mind to move to a newly built housing development. In 2015 the Department granted approval for the renovation of 192 CRU's in Tsalanang that had sewer and bulk infrastructure faults and committed to build the 192 beneficiaries a new housing development while renovations were carried out in the old building.

It has since come to the attention of the Department that the beneficiaries have decided not to want to move to the new flats citing issues that the new building does not have enough space for their belongings. The implementation of the project started during the 2016/2017 financial year and ran up until to the 2019/2020 financial year as it was a multi-year project. Social Facilitation workshops were conducted by the Department before the construction commenced to assist the beneficiaries about their roles and responsibilities based on the Community Residential Units policy.

The scope of work for the project was to renovate the old 192 Units, to construct 192 new Community Residential Units, to construct a community hall, child care centre and the refurbishment of the bulk sewer, water, electricity, boundary wall, kiosk and the Guard house at **R160 922 153.42** using the Human Settlements Development Grant (HSDG) as stipulated in the National Housing Code, 2009, Volume no 6.

In 2018, 192 new units were completed and handed over to the Municipality to start with the relocation of the tenants from the old building to the new completed blocks so that the service provider can start with the renovation of the old building including the refurbishment of the whole sewer system, water and reticulation and bulk electricity. However, about 50 tenants managed to move to the new block but the rest refused.

Numerous meetings were held with those tenants until it was agreed that after renovating the old block they will move back to their old respected flats. When the municipality and Govan Mbeki Housing Company tried to move them as per the resolution taken in the meeting, the tenants refused and instructed the service provider to move out of site. For the service provider's safety the Department instructed him to stop and move out of site.

The Department constantly communicated with the Municipality regarding the project and the way forward to proceed with the project. Eviction orders were obtained from the High Court by the Govan Mbeki Housing Company to evict tenants who refused to pay rent, but that also was stopped by the Municipality. Since 2018 the project did not commence and the living conditions in Tsalanang deteriorated with sewer and water spillages.



**ISSUED BY THE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE
MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
CONTACT PERSON: FREDDY NGOBE – 013 766 6014 / 082 859 4630/ flngobe@mpg.gov.za**

