

ADDRESS BY HUMAN SETTLEMENTS MEC, HON. M.A GAMEDE
MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
EMAKHAZENI INTEGRATED PROJECTS HAND-OVER
EMAKHAZENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
12TH APRIL 2014

Programme Director: Madumane
Executive Mayor: Cllr X.S Ngwenya (Emakhazeni Local Municipality)
Executive Mayor: Cllr S Mashilo (Nkangala District Municipality)
Executive Mayors Present
Members of the Legislature
Members of the Executive Council
Councillors
Head of Department
Municipal Manager
Social Cluster Members
Business Representative
Private Institutions
Officials from the Department and Municipality
Members of the Media
Distinguished Community Members

This year marks 102 years since the African National Congress was formed.

The sole purpose of this liberation movement was to ensure the emancipation of people from oppression and afford the country a better life.

In its January 8 Statement, the party made it clear that there will be a great focus on human settlements as another priority for government.

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The focus on this important portfolio is to rid the country of informal settlements and squalor.

Given this marching order by the ruling party, what is then required of this department is to improve its planning and deliver on this requirement.

The mushrooming of informal settlements and scarcity of land can be attributed to the 1913 Natives Land Act. The Act meant that Blacks were deprived of their rights to shelter.

As a result, the majority became homeless - a situation which forced them to go work in mines, domestic work, and generally inferior jobs.

Over the last 100 years, this situation deprived people of better opportunities and compounded their lives by breeding more life disparities.

The huge housing backlog that we see today is as a result of the introduction of the Act in 1913, which immediately declared all Africans to be homeless.

Our gathering here marks a great achievement in the history of the Emakhazeni Local Municipality and its community.

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Since 2009, the department embraced a new approach of delivering services in an integrated and sustainable manner.

The broadened mandate and alignment requires the department to create integrated and sustainable human settlements.

It is also about transforming cities and towns into cohesive, sustainable and caring communities with easy access to work and social amenities, including sports and recreation facilities.

The Department will now no longer just implement houses, but play a larger role to coordinate, facilitate and support the provision of all the elements and aspects that constitute a sustainable human settlement.

To measure performance, government has set out clear targets and priorities to be delivered.

The department's priorities are informed by **Outcome 8** that includes among others – improvement of access to basic services, improved property market, more efficient land utilisation, and accelerated delivery of housing opportunities.

The projects handed over today will surely improve and benefit the lives of this municipality in a sense that they talk to our vision of integrating society and fostering social cohesion.

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The Department has spent over **R 150 million** on the delivery of these projects at this municipality. As we speak today, similar projects are being rolled-out throughout the length and breadth of the province.

The housing units and serviced sites valued at over **R26 million** were delivered through the **Integrated Residential and Development Programme (IRDP)**.

The infrastructure installation to the project started in the 2013/14 financial year and over **300** sites completed.

The entire project which consists of 321 units is currently at various stages of completion.

The IRDP provides for planning and development of integrated projects. Projects are planned and developed in phases and provides for a holistic development approach.

The Community Residential Units (family units) Emakhazeni Phase 2 project valued at **R115 million** handed over this morning has delivered **108** of the **214** units at Emthonjeni at Machadodorp.

The CRU programme provides secure, stable rental tenure for the lowest income persons who are not able to be accommodated in the formal private rental and social housing market.

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The project will cater for people working and staying within the jurisdiction of the municipality who cannot qualify for social housing at the same time are interested on rental.

As far as the project's economic impact, 600 temporary job opportunities were created where the community benefited significantly.

A total of 83 local sub-contractors benefited from the project that includes bricklaying, plastering, plumbing, supplying of material, electricity, tilling, amongst others.

After the completion of the project, the Steve Tshwete Housing Association will manage and maintain the property on behalf of the municipality. The first phase of the project was completed few years.

The Ben Gazi Child Care Centre at Siyathuthuka Extension 2 is valued at over **R9 million**. The community will now have access to a well resourced centre.

The project is aimed at integrating the old settlement with the new Breaking New Ground project that is currently underway at Siyathuthuka Ext 2

The facility is easily accessible to the community as it has been positioned at the centre of the settlement with potential future growth as per the municipal Spatial Development Framework (SDF)

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The community will be able to access a well resourced centre in terms of day care facility. The children will no longer have to travel long distances to access such facilities like before.

During construction, 185 Job opportunities were created which constituted of the youth and females. Twenty (20) local sub-contractors were used. These included bricklaying, plastering, plumbing, supplying of material, electricity, tilling etc

NEW APPROACH

The introduction of the comprehensive approach of housing delivery – Breaking New Ground (BNG) formally adopted the principle of creating government subsidized housing assets.

This meant that (houses) as assets that can be traded or used to move up the ladder in the property market.

It can also be used to a great extent as collateral for financial assistance.

The Department's redefined mandate requires the delivery of services – including title deeds – in a coordinated and sustainable manner.

Since the birth of the new order in 2009, the Department together with municipalities and other stakeholders is hard at work ensuring that mega projects are delivered.

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These projects will boast of a myriad of services that include different housing typologies, business sites, recreational facilities, serviced stands and other required socio-economic facilities.

Equally important is the delivery of title deeds to bestow full property ownership to households or housing beneficiaries.

We have recently handed over 2000 title deeds to various beneficiaries within this district, of which Emakhazeni Local Municipality also benefited.

IMPORTANCE OF TITLE DEEDS

According to the country's Constitution - every person has a right to decent housing, clean water, health and education.

On shelter – as one of the basic human rights - that can only be realized through the acquisition of a title deed.

Houses should at all times be viewed as economic assets as ownership encourages investments through renovations and expansions. This in turn triggers business opportunities in the household and the area.

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Ownership further allows beneficiaries to use their houses to leverage their economic circumstances by making additional income.

Acquiring a title deed enables a beneficiary to have the house as an asset, offer sense of pride and belonging.

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.

Beneficiaries will now 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 and to start small businesses.

In essence, their households can also be used as an asset to build wealth.

Furthermore, houses are social assets in a sense that they can be transferred to descendants, they offer a sense of pride to owners and a sense of belonging to communities.

The Department's mandate is to create integrated human settlements and improve households' life. Beneficiaries will use the title deeds as a legal document that reflects the ownership of their properties.

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In less than a month from today, the country goes to the polls on the **07th May 2014**. The public is encouraged to exercise their democratic right – by voting.

Let us go out there in our numbers to vote – correctly so – to sustain our hard earned democracy.

Ngiyabonga.