

REMARKS BY MPUMALANGA HUMAN SETTLEMENTS MEC, HON. VS SIWELA
DURING THE BUILD-UP EVENT AT THE HANDING OVER OF HOUSES:
PRESIDENTIAL SIYAHLOLA MONITORING PROGRAMME,
MP STREAM, BUSHBUCKRIDGE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.
05TH NOVEMBER 2015.

Executive Mayor: Clr R Khumalo (Bushbuckridge Local Municipality)
Members of the Mayoral Committee
Councilors
Head of Department, Mr. K Masange
Municipal Manager, Mr. C Lisa
Members of the Rental Housing Tribunal
Officials from all Spheres of Government
Traditional Leadership
Business Community
Organised Structures
Members of the Media
All Stakeholders

Warm greetings to all of you gathered here today.

Programme Director, it is no fluke that the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality is one of the hardest hit municipalities with a huge backlog pertaining to basic services.

Challenges of water, sanitation, proper infrastructure and housing, amongst others; continue to be a matter of concern.

Being a caring and humane government, we always ensure that we touch base and connect with communities to check delivery on the ground.

The Hon. President JG Zuma will be in this municipality tomorrow to undertake monitoring and evaluation operation under his Siyahlola Monitoring Programme.

This goes to show how close this government is to its people – therefore this municipality is very fortunate.

As the Department of Human Settlements in the province we are very pleased by this concerted effort to purge the inherited social-ills of homelessness, abject

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poverty and lack of drinkable water; experienced by locals and other communities in this province.

Having on board the Department of Water and Sanitation assisting to spearhead in this intervention, we are quite confident that we will begin to realize immense change in Bushbuckridge.

Water challenges continue to affect communities particularly in rural parts of the province and the presidential programme seeks to identify this and devise intervention strategies to resolve that.

Our event here today is part of many delivered by key ministries as identified by the Presidency relating to service delivery.

Just last week, the Department of Communications led by Minister Faith Muthambi was in Marite engaging the community on the transition towards digital migration.

People of this municipality and others who are of the same make-up in the country stand to benefit in this intervention.

Given the rural nature of the municipality, there are about **700** housing units currently being constructed by the department in various villages here in Bushbuckridge, of which **550** have since been completed.

And today we have officially handed over few houses to disadvantaged families here at MP Stream as part of our providing decent shelter to people as envisioned by the Freedom Charter.

This municipality consists of over 100 settlements and is divided into 34 wards. This without a doubt suggests that it is a growing municipality that will require all services to be delivered in bulk.

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According to Census 2011, the municipality has a total population of nearly 600 thousand of which 99, 5% are black African, with the other population groups making up the remaining 0, 5%.

- Of those aged 20 years and older, 4,0% have completed primary school,
- 32,2% have some secondary education,
- 25,7% have completed matric,
- 7,4% have some form of higher education, and
- 18, 7% of those aged 20 and older have no form of schooling.

These figures clearly means that as government we must compete with time and to ensure that all these people receive the best possible services – and still plan for those that have nothing to show.

In entrenching that aspiration, the Department has made efforts to align its delivery programmes with the United Nations Millennium Goals of sustainable developments which are:

- To develop a global partnership for development,
- to eradicate poverty, hunger and malnutrition,
- to promote gender equality, and
- empower women, just to mention but a few.

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The Department has, however, depicted a huge success rate by improving the lives of the less-fortunate and people living below the bread line.

This is done by providing descent and sustainable houses to, in particular, the elderly, people disabled, the orphaned and the most indigent of people in our communities.

During the current financial year, the department is delivering nearly **700** housing units in this municipality. The units are being delivered through PHP; rural; disaster and military veterans.

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Much as the policy dictates that eligible beneficiaries may satisfy the qualifying criteria, we have taken a conscious position to prioritize mainly elderly, people with disability and child-headed families.

But there are conditions in our communities whereby an urgent need to intervene are required. We need to step in as a matter of emergency and relieve our people.

Some of our beneficiaries today were victims of heavy storms that have hit the region few years back, which left more than 55 households homeless. Another 42 households have been sheltered through the Rural Programme.

The impact of these emergency housing and rural projects has been of great significance in giving a gratifying feeling to many families.

Despite limited resources, this government remains focused in delivering sufficient and dependable integrated human settlements for the betterment people's lives.

Lastly, may I appeal to all community members to use the new coordinating model of Operation Vuka Sisebente which aims at increasing management and communication amongst stakeholders?

All community challenges ought to be discussed and where possible dealt with at the war-rooms.

Once again let me also appreciate the business people who sponsored with household items today and other contributions all in the spirit of building better communities.

“Together we are moving Mpumalanga Forward”

I thank you