



human settlements
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



TaseKHAYA

Department of Human Settlements

Official External Newsletter

Third Quarter Edition 2017/18



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Editorial Comment



Mr Freddy Ngobe
Head of Communications

Greetings.

Welcome to yet another thrilling instalment of our external newsletter; TaseKHAYA. The third quarter edition seeks to bring you all of the most recent activities and deliverables the Department has achieved over the past three consecutive months. It is pleasing to note with great gratification the laudable achievement the Department has registered at the annual National Govan Mbeki Awards held at the Gallagher Convention Centre, Gauteng.

The recent annual stage presented an implausible opportunity to all performing stakeholders in the built sector to showcase their proficiencies with regards to the work they do with government.

This was definitely without a stroke of luck as five of the best performing contractors from the province impressively dominated their counterparts and scooped five of the ten awards at stake to make Mpumalanga one of the best performing of all nine provinces. Indeed this commendable feat will go a long way in the history books of the province and country and we

wish that this will live to inspire many aspiring land developers, contractors as well as town planners and engineers of the future to foster their way up into helping the province realize its goals of a possible sustainable human settlements without slums and informal settlements.

As is with the great performance of our stakeholders, the Department managed to restore dignity to more than 1300 households in the areas of Shatale and Orpen gate, Bushbuckridge Local Municipality respectively to ensure them of their security of tenure and that they can begin to live freely in their own homes without fear of illegal invasion or any form of intrusion by incorrigible scavengers of land in the area.

Many of the beneficiaries would attest to the unnerving living experiences without a title deed to be wicked and would at times make them feel helpless with the fear to lose their properties. Meanwhile, the Department has moved miles in its quest to help former military-veterans receive proper shelter. Most recently an 87-year old female military-veteran has just received her house after having lived in a dilapidated mud house for years. This intervention will go a long way in their lives bearing in mind their contribution to fight to keep peace in the country.

That's it for now, enjoy your happy read!

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HUMAN SETTLEMENTS OMBUDS OFFICE LAUNCHED

Disputes and challenges affecting stakeholders within the human settlements industry will receive special attention henceforth. MEC for Human Settlements Speed Mashilo officially led a delegation in Hendrina, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality recently to launch the Human Settlements Ombudsman which will facilitate and mediate all disputes and queries between all stakeholders involved in the built sector. Accompanied by the Local Municipal Mayor, Cllr Michael Masina, Mashilo told the community that the Ombuds will play a pivotal role to watch over all ill-elements of corruption and grievances lodged by the Department, beneficiaries or even contractors. Speaking to the crowd of desperate beneficiaries, MEC Mashilo said that he is delighted at the

appointment of the Ombudsman, Mr Themba Mthethwa. "This means a lot to every one of us. Most especially to the beneficiaries of the Department who will now have a suitable mediator to handle their everyday frustrations regarding their need for housing," commended Mashilo.

The Ombudsman is among other priorities, expected to set up a structure that will not only mediate but work with all stakeholders to ensure the smooth implementation of sustainable integrated human settlements in the province without delivering on substandard work, to also resolve any disagreements emanating from discontented contractors. Mthethwa who however declared that Mpumalanga was the second



INTERVENTION: Human Settlements Ombudsman, Mr Themba Mthethwa, MEC SK Mashilo and Cllr Mabena.

best compliant province out of the nine said that they are already sitting with 265 cases for resolve submitted to them by mainly contractors who couldn't get paid on time in the other provinces.

"The establishment of the Ombudsman will most certainly bring a huge difference in changing the lives of the less-fortunate for the better. I have a great feeling that this will absolutely propel everyone to pull up their best in order to deliver diligent work for the poor man on the ground. Having worked in the public Protector's office and served also in the legal aid board I believe this will surely

assist me and my team to effectively make an unbiased meaningful impact on behalf of everyone aggrieved," charged Mthethwa. He however explained that the decision to launch the Ombuds was taken three months ago during a MunMEC meeting by Minister Lindiwe Sisulu and that plans are afoot to ensure that every province has its own office.

The Provincial Department also took this opportunity to handover 100 complete units to the rightful beneficiaries in the area. The MEC made assertions that these units are part of the other remaining 300 the Department is still constructing in the area ensuring every

qualifying applicant that they will certainly receive their houses immediately the project is fully completed.

One of the excited beneficiaries, Ms Roseline Hlatshwayo a 37 year-old living with disability, showed appreciation to the government and thanked Mashilo for the proper house. She said, "It is so hard to believe that today I have a house of good quality than where I used to be. I am grateful for all your help and for caring about us. I thank you." All complaints should be sent to the Ombudsman@dhs.gov.za or call a toll-free number, 0800 246 873.

DEALING WITH A CONTINUOUS CHALLENGE OF SLUMS



Informal settlements still continue to pose a challenging threat in many parts of the seemingly developing township due to the huge influx of people looking to improve their livelihoods. Over the past several months, South Africa was instrumental in bringing the issue of informal settlements into the discussions around Habitat III, which is this year's major urbanization summit. Habitat III is shorthand for a major global summit, formally known as the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development that was held in Quito, Ecuador, on 17-20 October 2016. The United Nations called the conference, the third in a series that began in 1976, to reinvigorate the global political commitment to the sustainable development of towns, cities and other human settlements, both rural and urban.

The product of that reinvigoration, along with pledges and new obligations, is the New Urban Agenda, which sets global strategy around urbanization for the next two decades. Earlier this year the country hosted an official meeting on the issue that resulted in a key list of recommendations for the drafting of the New Urban Agenda, the global strategy that came out of the Habitat III conference this October. Touching on this

issue, Minister of Human Settlements Ms Lindiwe Sisulu said, "What we wanted to do is actually bring this as close to the top of the agenda of UN-Habitat as is possible." She mentioned this referring to the U. N. agency that is leading the Habitat III process. "If one out of every seven people in the world lives in slums, then it is a clear and present problem. And it's not just a present problem: It's a present, continuous problem," highlighted Sisulu during the Habitat III meeting in Quito, Ecuador.

While informal settlements have been on the international agenda for years, Habitat III is seen as an opportunity to incorporate best practice on human settlements and sustainable urban development into Africa's urban trajectory. At the same time, the government is grappling with ways to create more inclusive cities in order to move beyond the legacy of apartheid-era spatial engineering. That strategy had long resulted in poor black South Africans living on the periphery of major cities, far removed from economic opportunities.

Between 2002 and 2014, the percentage of South Africa's urban population living in informal settlements dropped from 17 percent to 11 percent, according to Statistics

South Africa. During that time, however, the percentage of households living in informal dwellings dipped only slightly. This was due to an increase in the numbers of "backyard dwellers" - those who have built shacks in the backyards of other people's homes.

Government have delivered more than 4.3 million housing opportunities since the dawn of democracy this includes, houses, serviced sites and "social housing" units since 1994 – This allows approximately 22. Million people access to housing and basic services. "Structural economic transformation cannot be achieved without social and spatial transformation; this is most prominent in our country that is where we in the human settlements and urban development sector come in.

"If we harness urbanization for the achievement of this economic, social and spatial transformation through the creation of livable, productive and sustainable human settlements, our key development objectives will have been met. Only then we will deliver sustainable human settlements achieve sustainable urbanization, and only then we will achieve the promise of the New Urban Agenda in our lifetime. Our commitment is unwavering," concluded Sisulu.

SIYANQOBA BNG PROJECT POISED TO RELIEVE HOUSING BACKLOG



DELIVERY: One of the projects built at Siyancoba settlement

People who live in informal settlements are extremely affected by many socio-economic challenges. The Department has done interventions to improve the economic and social conditions of the informal dwellers by upgrading their settlements. Siyanqoba Integrated Settlements is one of the projects which have been designed by the Mpumalanga Department of Human Settlements to eradicate informal settlements at eMalahleni Local Municipality. Dwellers to be moved to the new settlements are those from the Old Coronation and Masakhane within the municipality.

In his 2017/18 Policy and Budget speech MEC Speed Mashilo pronounced that the development at Siyanqoba will comprise of approximately 8 950 sites for construction of 6 500 low income houses, 2000 gap market housing, 500 social housing units, and other supporting social amenities as prescribed for the Human Settlements Planning Guidelines by the Council for Scientific Industry Research (CSIR)."

Considerable progress has been made thus far with 8 500 sites having been serviced for the development of human settlements. Construction is

underway with 77 individual housing units been completed to date while 500 low cost housing projects has commenced and are at various stages. Twenty one military veterans units have been completed and handed over to beneficiaries. On completion the project will compromise of zoned stands to accommodate low and middle income categories.

Beneficiaries are resettled into their new homes as soon as their houses are complete as a control measure to curb vandalism. Ms Deneo Josephine Kidae and Ms Mathadedi Moloi have moved in already, the two ladies used to stay at the Old Coronation. "We are glad we moved to this new settlement, there is peace here and the area is clean compared to where we used to live. Thank you to what the government is doing to the community of eMalahleni" expressed the ladies.

According to the layout plan for the projects, there are sites reserved for amenities such as a school, recreational park, clinics, Police Station and community residential units. It is anticipated that the project will reduce the total back log of 30 656 households in the municipality. It will also capacitate local entrepreneurs and lower poverty levels through job creation.

PROVINCE'S BEST BUILDERS SHINE AT THE GMA

Five of the best performing stakeholders within the built environment from the province left a remarkable imprint at the recent National Govan Mbeki Awards held at the Gallagher Convention Centre, Gauteng. The contractors impressively dominated their counterparts by scooping five of the ten awards at stake to make Mpumalanga one of the best performing of all the nine provinces. The Govan Mbeki Awards are an annual event hosted to recognize and acknowledge the work done by stakeholders in the built sector in contributing towards the realisation of the human settlements mandate.

Expressing her delight at the remarkable achievers, Minister Lindiwe Sisulu said, "It is my honour to welcome all of you to this, the 11th anniversary of the Govan Mbeki Human Settlements Awards. This is an occasion for us to recognise and appreciate the extraordinary excellent work that has been done by all of us to ensure that our people have good, habitable and secured human settlements, consistent with the prescripts of our Constitution and in pursuit of the directives of the Freedom Charter that every citizen has the right to access housing in a gradual realisation."

However, the Minister mentioned that the awards honour a few among the contractors; the most important message is that she was grateful to all of them for everything they do on a daily basis. She further explained that in this year alone, her department launched two mega projects in Gauteng, one of which is the John Dube Mega Human Settlement, which involves the building of 10 000 houses as well as Ekurhuleni's first university, with a central business district, the Daggafontein Human Settlements project, which is an integrated housing development

expected to deliver over 16 000 housing units upon completion. The province won the best contractor in the Non-Subsidy Market, Best Rental Housing Tribunal, Best Accredited Municipality Level 2, Best Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP) and Best Community Residential Units (CRU). MEC Speed Mashilo attributed these achievements to hard work and dedication by both stakeholders and government in developing communities. "It is critical that we concentrate our efforts to ensure the delivery of quality services," he said.

Mashilo remarked that he's convinced that the people to whom they bestow awards unto, are themselves conscious that they are in this business to be part of an important army as an integral component of agents of change and using housing development as a catalyst. He said that everyone gathered at the awards have a duty to ensure that the great divide between the rich and the poor that has been exacerbated through human settlements would be the thing of the past.

"I have no doubt that we shall walk together, not just to give the much-needed roof over the heads of many who desperately in need; but importantly, give hope where there is hopelessness; bring dignity where there is degradation; restore confidence where there is despair; replace dejection with cheerfulness and distrust with belief. Doing the correct things in human settlements, I have no doubt that we will achieve all these and more. I have no doubt that the man after whom we named these awards would be proud of what we have achieved and would be even more proud of us once we have reached our targets," concluded Mashilo.



GRAT FEAT: Joyful Human Settlements stakeholders with their accolades at the GMA

A FEMALE MILITARY VETERAN AMONG SCORES OF HOUSING BENEFICIARIES

An 87-year old former military-veteran Gogo Saida Sibitane couldn't hold her breath with excitement when she received a much improved 60sq meter house from the Department of Human Settlements recently in Mbangwane, Nkomazi Local Municipality, Mpumalanga. Sibitane who left the country for Mozambique in the 1980's described the then harsh realities of living as a female military veteran to be difficult and an awful experience.

Part of the challenges included being ill-treated by soldiers and authorities of the then apartheid government especially as a female black person during the struggle. She reminisced of her ordeal of being placed at the Mozambique-South Africa border post where she would smuggle young men to the neighbouring country for military training. She was placed along the border line to monitor the situation. "The apartheid soldiers use to come and destroy all our structures where we camped and I had to endure torture from the apartheid soldiers and RENAMO insurgents", she recollected. We endured torture by the apartheid soldiers who use to come and intimidate my parents and siblings during my

absence. "I escaped death from all forces, but I am grateful to have come back alive". Sibitane is appreciative of this government to build her and her peers such houses. The delivery forms part of the 22 houses that were handed over in the municipal jurisdiction by MEC Speed Mashilo on the day. The programme aims at honouring them for the role they played towards the attainment of this country's freedom and for improved livelihoods.

Sharing the same sentiments is 49-year old Mr Sipho Mathonsi who joined in 1991 and served in exile for four years before returning home to join the MKMVA and later the SANDF. Mathonsi, who is unapologetically proud to have contributed immensely to the country's freedom, says that he's now proud to have come home to such an amazing love and care from the country and government as well as his family. "It was however a bit painful to come home to a no proper house to accommodate all of my family members. I am so glad today that finally the Department has come through for us and we shall live safely and better onwards", he stressed. MEC Speed Mashilo hailed and advised them to take good

care of their houses and not to sell them. "Our commitment as the ANC led government is to ensure that we honour these comrades for their immense contribution towards the country's liberation", he accentuated. Another set of similar housing 25 units were also handed over to similar beneficiaries at Bushbuckridge Local Municipality. A total of 87 housing units for military veterans are to be jointly delivered by the Departments of Human Settlements and Military Veterans during this financial year throughout the province.



FINALLY: Gogo Sibitane receives her house from MEC Speedy Mashilo at Nkomazi.

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE APPLAUDS IMPROVEMENT IN HOUSING DELIVERY



AT WORK: Portfolio Committee members and Departmental Senior Management officials during a visit.

The apparent inadequate bulk infrastructure came under the spotlight from Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements during its recent visit to Mpumalanga. The committee which visited the province as part of its oversight programme on government's work bemoaned bulk sewer and water infrastructure challenges at few projects in Govan Mbeki and Steve Tshwete Local Municipalities. The visit was to assess programmes and progress on the implementation of comprehensive integrated human settlements projects in the province.

Led by Chairperson, Ms Nocawe Mafu, the committee held various meetings with officials from the Department and five municipalities to engage on state of service delivery in the municipalities. After the meetings, the Committee visited various projects amongst others, Breaking New Ground (BNG), Informal Settlements Upgrading, Serviced Sites and Integrated Residential Development Programme projects at the City of Mbombela,

Thaba Chweu, Govan Mbeki, eMalahleni and Steve Tshwete Local Municipalities. Central to the inspections was to assess progress made in the construction of houses, coordination and management of beneficiary list and incorporation of backyard dwellers into the provincial housing data base and inroads made in the issuing of title deeds.

Addressing the entourage, Mafu stated that the purpose of the visit goes far beyond oversight, but in essence is to look at the challenges facing the Department in delivering services to the people and that the Committee seeks to promote and enhance intergovernmental relations and co-operative governance principles in the delivery of human settlements services. The impressed Mafu said that as a committee they did not mean to come and police the Department and municipalities but to offer support: "Remember the budget for human settlements for Provinces comes from the National Department which we must

oversight as the portfolio committee. So when we do oversight we then also need to follow the money allocated to provinces to see if it still carries out the purpose it is meant for," she highlighted and noting that despite a few challenges picked up there has been a lot of improvement since their last visit in 2015.

Spending a day with the committee, MEC Speed Mashilo mentioned that the improvement comes after the Department had a number of meetings with municipalities in a form of road shows where they were checking even the beneficiaries list in making sure they are compliant with the Department's policy. The allocation of houses is biased towards senior citizens, people with disabilities, orphans and child headed households. "We welcome the input of the portfolio committee, the bigger challenge that we are facing are lack of bulk infrastructure and illegal invasion of houses, but we are working close with municipalities to ensure that rightful beneficiaries get their houses" charged Mashilo.

The vigorous visits concluded by requesting the Department to instantly compile a comprehensive report on the state of bulk infrastructure in municipalities which affects human settlements delivery in the province. This as it appears that such a challenge is a common feature in some parts of the country. The Committee has a constitutional mandate to conduct oversight of all organs of state including national, provincial and local governments

DEPARTMENT IN ACTION



DEPARTMENT IN ACTION



RESTORING DIGNITY TO MILITARY VETERANS

Government is pulling every stop to ensure that immense contribution made by military veterans from various forces to wage war against apartheid governed are recognised. Nearly 90 beneficiaries are currently received much bigger and decent houses from the Departments of Human Settlements and Military Veterans. Human Settlements MEC in Mpumalanga, Speed Mashilo has been criss-crossing the province handing over houses to deserving beneficiaries in various municipalities recently. The military veterans are being honoured for their indisputable and peaceful contribution towards the liberation of the country.

Mashilo has visited eMalahlani, Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge and Msukaligwa Local Municipalities. In his recent trip to Wesselton, in Ermelo, MEC Mashilo appreciated the military veterans for their incomparable commitment and dedication to stand against all in serving the country with passion. "Being in the military is challenging and requires a lot of courage, determination and

a bit of bravery. What you have done for the country would never go unnoticed. We are proud of you hence the decision to intervene where you encounter challenges," remarked Mashilo. He professed that the Department's decision to build for the military veterans comes as a result that most of them left their homes in their early ages only to come back to live in slums.

Mashilo declared that as part of the Department to encourage healthy living in sustainable integrated human settlements, they are working in conjunction with the Department of Military Veterans to ensure that the lives of all struggling former military veterans is improved. It is a priority for government to look after military veterans who sacrificed so much of themselves and time to fight for their beloved country. Gogo Saida Sibitane (87) is one such a selfless patriot who did her duty for South Africa in the 1980s in countries such as Zambia and Mozambique. To thank her for her service, the Mpumalanga Department of

Human Settlements recently gave Sibitane a brand-new much bigger house. Sibitane reminisced of her ordeal of being placed at the Mozambique-South Africa border post where she would smuggle young men to the neighbouring country for military training. She was placed along the border line to monitor the situation. "The apartheid soldiers use to come and destroy all our structures where we camped and I had to endure torture from the apartheid soldiers and RENAMO insurgents", recalled Sibitane who resides in Mbangwane near Malalane in the Nkomazi Local Municipality, Mpumalanga.

Mashilo also used his visits to the areas to also issue title deeds to restore dignity and bestow property ownership to rightful beneficiaries. The Department has an approved implementation plan to deliver on a number of services during the current financial year. These include 8 358 housing units, 4053 sites, 26 000 title deeds, 208 Community Residential Units (CRUs) and 87 houses for military veterans, amongst others.

PRESENTING A SENSE OF PRIDE THROUGH TITTLE DEEDS

Approximately 1200 home owners at Bushbuckridge Local Municipality in the Shatale and Orpen Gate area were handed over title deeds of their low cost houses. The Department of Human Settlements MEC: Speed Mashilo symbolically handed over ten title deeds to new property owners at Bushbuckridge Local Municipality.

As the MEC addressed the cheerful new property owners, he explained how title deeds are issued within the department. "The Department strives to ensure provision of sustainable human settlements, for example some leave in the farms where they stay far from each other and the area is owned by the farmer and the second category is those who live in the land owned by traditional leadership and the third category is those who live in townships.

"The Department is only able to build houses for farm dwellers however will not be able to give the title deeds because the land is owned by the farmer. One title deed is given to the chief for the land owned by traditional leadership. Those who reside in townships would receive title deeds from the department " said MEC Speed Mashilo.

Florence Phumzile Masuku's heart condition did not stop her from receiving her title deeds from MEC Speed Mashilo in person. "I am grateful for what the government has done for me and my family. I worked as a nurse for four years unfortunately doctors discovered a

hole in my heart I then had to stop working. I am unable to do things for myself but because the government is caring, my medical bills are taken care of and I have a house with a title deed. This morning, some people told me I will not receive a title deed but because I believe in this government I told them I will have it with me when I return" uttered Ms Masuku.

Equally to restoring dignity to military veterans on the very same day, 25 military veteran housing projects were handed over in the same municipality. The department has so far handed

over the same housing project at eMalahlani, Nkomazi and Msukaligwa. The military veterans are honoured for the contribution they had played towards attaining freedom in this country. It is also to support them and improve their lives; like the 47 year-old Aaron Manzini. He is unemployed, survives on the military grant and lives with his wife and children. Manzini was in the army since 1990 to 1994. "I am very happy, the house means a lot to me and my family. I am overwhelmed to own such a beautiful house" acknowledged Mr Manzini.



RESTORING DIGNITY: MEC Speed Mashilo posing with a beneficiary as part of the Title Deeds hand over campaign.