



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 6088, Fax: +27 (13) 766 8441

Litiko  
Lekuhlaliswa Kwebantfu

Departement van  
Menslike Nedersittings

UmNyango  
Wokuhlaliswa Kwabantu

## EFFORTS TO TACKLE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS CONTINUING

Conspicuous exertion is underway to reduce the housing backlog in Mpumalanga. This as the Department of Human Settlements is steaming ahead with the servicing 25 000 sites or stands in various informal settlements under eMalahleni Local Municipality. The department has already started with the township establishment processes and installation of internal engineering services. At least 10 000 stands have seen the installation of internal services, and over 11 000 stands at the township establishment phase. Moreover, upgrading plans for 11 informal settlements of areas such as Kwa-Guqa, Empumelelweni and Hlalanikahle are continuously being developed.

Speaking at the recently held Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP) forum Human Settlements MEC, Mr Speed Mashilo expounded on the department's contribution towards the national housing target of 470 000 housing units for the 2019 – 2024 period. "As the province, we are expected to contribute at least 6.6% on the national target, which translates to a delivery of 31 324 housing units by 2024", explained Mashilo. He added that part of the department's priorities is facilitating and implementing Informal Settlements Upgrading in the Province for households in well-located informal settlements to ensure access to essential services and tenure.

However, this development is not without challenges, as suggested by Ms Buyisiwe Zuma who is the Director for Integrated Human Settlements Planning, who cited the obdurate challenge of bulk infrastructure and the scourge of invasions. "The implementation of these upgrading of informal settlements is not as smooth as we would have liked. Challenges of shortages of well-located land for development and lack of adequate bulk-infrastructure capacity needed to service the informal settlements and uncontrolled land invasions continue to blemish our feat", lamented Zuma.

eMalahleni Local Municipality has 74 Informal Settlements with 34 845 informal households as recorded in both the Mpumalanga Informal Settlements Upgrading and Management Strategy and the Mpumalanga Human Settlement Master Plan 2019-2024. Thus, government's current intervention shall greatly relieve the pressures of urbanisation and the nature of a mining town such as eMalahleni. In the recent past, the city has experienced an upsurge in mushrooming of informal settlements and backyard dwellers. The project is envisaged to be completed by the end of 2024.

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

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