

Programme Director/Facilitator;  
Head of Department, Mr K Masange;  
Chief Directors and Directors;  
Human Settlements Associations;  
Human Settlements Institutions (NHBRC, HDA)  
Office of the Premier,  
Leadership of Labour Union, and  
All Stakeholders and Officials.

## Introduction

I welcome this opportunity to make remarks at this important occasion of the Department.

Whilst appreciating the opportunity to address the house, let me render my profound apology for not have joined the session when it started.

As MECs we are always up and about interacting with communities ensuring that services are delivered.

I with other MECs accompanied the Premier to Mkhondo Local Municipality on other government activities.

As the political head of this Department, it gives me gratitude to welcome our HOD, Mr K Masange and CFO, Mr DR Shipalana.

Their arrival couldn't have come at an opportune time such as this – exactly at the end of the financial year and few months before we start the 2015/16 financial year.

I know that HOD Masange and CFO Shipalana are from other institutions, but glad to note that your previous backgrounds will add impetus to the department.

Our gathering here should assist us to craft enhanced tactics to steer the Department forward, but more importantly to improve the lot of our people out there.

## NDP (Vision 2030)

The country has developed an over-arching blue print which seeks to guide development in a co-ordinated manner.

This document (National Development Plan) calls for all stakeholders including the private sector to play a key role in ensuring that all energies are dedicated at its implementation towards Vision 2030.

As we are reflecting on the progress made since 1994 and the current financial year – we must not be oblivious of the challenges that still lie ahead.

As the ruling party reiterated in its recent NEC Legkotla in Pretoria, our actions as implementers of policy is to ensure that the three ills of **poverty, inequality** and **unemployment** are confronted.

Programme Director, let me make a call to all of you gathered here that you have a huge responsibility to ensure that delivery is visible.

Despite challenges of limited resources, capacity constraints, some inept service providers and other sector impediments, amongst others, this department dares not fail in providing the much needed shelter as espoused in the Freedom Charter (1955) and Constitution.

While going on with our delivery machinery, we ought to be mindful of our position and role in communities.

Communities look upon us to change their appalling conditions they find themselves in.

People out there need houses. We all know that.

Programme Director, knowing only will not assist, therefore imperative to address the challenges. This can be done by focusing on SWOT analysis.

So our strategic plan outcomes should talk to the NDP and also accelerate the establishment of sustainable human settlements.

### Manifesto (January 8<sup>th</sup> Statement)

The Freedom Charter states that: **"There shall be Houses, Security and Comfort"** for all citizens of the country.

This statement compels no one, but this department, of course with other sector departments to ensure that such is realised.

In his January 8<sup>th</sup> Statement Address, party President Mr Jacob Zuma called for all to go back to basics. **"Every single cadre of our movement must know that his or her responsibility is to make local government function better by getting the basics right – wherever they have been deployed"**.

The party's main concern is that local government continued to be at the coal face of service delivery, however, the governance of many of municipalities is` a cause for grave concern.

So, my appeal to the HOD and managers is to rally behind municipalities and support them in our quest for better service to communities.

Human Settlements family, I think we can take solace from the fact that both the HOD and CFO share and bring an impeccable local government background to the department.

In keeping with our mandate, we have to ensure that communities are de-racialised and integrated.

All residents, black and white, must enjoy the benefits of development equally.

As the President puts it, getting the basics right will require leadership and commitment at all levels of our organization and across government.

So the jury is out.

## Local Government Elections

As we build up to the local government polls, the task ahead of us remains huge.

The need for houses continues and will still continue to envelope municipalities and unsettle communities from time to time.

Much as government has clear policies on delivery of services, the practicality still remains to ensure that they are implemented to the latter.

Uncoordinated planning and other delivery challenges have to be trashed out so as to create an enabling environment to roll out projects.

Our delivery has to influence the outcomes of the up-coming local government elections, thus taking an improved methodology, as opposed to normal operations.

We can take lessons from the community driven project such as Vulindlela Model being rolled-out in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

## Department Programmes

Since 2009 the mandate of the Department was broadened.

The widening of the scope required the delivery of services in an integrated and sustainable manner.

The outcome-based approach emphasizes improved coordination of activities amongst all stakeholders.

Simply put, integrated human settlement means that people must have access to all services and social amenities within their jurisdiction.

Economic activities have to be initiated by involving the private sector and explore new innovations.

The Department has to deliver on the following key issues:

- Facilitate the establishment of sustainable integrated human settlements,
- Provide households with basic services,
- Support municipalities with bulk and sewer infrastructure,
- Provisioning of Social and Economic Facilities,
- Informal Settlements Upgrading, and
- Issuing of Title Deeds and provision of housing opportunities to Military Veterans.

## Challenges

As we continue to deliberate, take note of improvements to be undertaken to ensure smooth delivery.

These will include, amongst others:

- Appointment of competent service providers,
- Improved project planning, implementation and monitoring,
- Delivery of quality services,
- Sound coordination of stakeholders,
- Focus on vulnerable groups,
- Effective support to municipalities, and
- Deliver projects on time (e.g. **Emergency Housing**).

Once again, let us welcome HOD Masange and CFO Shipalane in their responsibilities as we all map winning solutions to tackle community challenges.

Let us all join hands and ensure that plans crafted here propel the Department to new height.

I therefore make a call that – When the Sun Rises – We must work hard to deliver human settlements.

Let us move Mpumalanga forward.

**I Thank You.**