



human settlements
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



TaseKHAYA

Department of Human Settlements

Official External Newsletter

Fourth Quarter Edition 2016/17



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Editorial Comment



Mr Freddy Ngobe
Head of Communications

The Editorial team would like to welcome you to yet another exciting and final instalment of the fourth quarter - *TaseKhaya*. This year having been pronounced as the year of celebrating the life and times of the then political hero and icon of our liberation, Oliver Reginald Tambo, has prompted our government to shift its gear to a much directed pace in accelerating service delivery to the people.

Tambo was South Africa's anti-apartheid politician and known for his role as a central figure in the African National Congress. Describing his selflessness in the struggle to liberate people, former President Nelson Mandela

once said, "Oliver lived not because he could breathe. He lived not because blood flowed through his veins. Oliver lived not because he did all the things that all of us as ordinary men and women do. Oliver lived because he had surrendered his very being to the people."

This year, like many others in the past, has certainly had a boundless stretch to deliver as precipitated by our mandate – development of sustainable integrated human settlements to the people of the province. This could not have been easy to execute as a department without support and all having their hands on deck. It is a pleasing act to have the Traditional Leadership Committee assigned to monitor every project development in their area of jurisdiction applauds the department's delivery, especially through the Farm Worker and Rural Support Programme. This is somehow giving hope to every one of us to keep focused on the target – delivery of quality human settlements.

Despite showing commitments to bring change in the lives of the needy, we have noticed with great disappointment that there are unscrupulous people who posed as service providers in an attempt to 'crook' contractors working with the Department. Such criminal acts of

dishonesty would not be tolerated in the department and we are glad one such unscrupulous business company was arrested. Earlier this term the National Treasury tabled its budget vote followed by the State of the Nation Address. Taking it from both the pronouncements made by Minister Pravin Gordhan the Hon. President Jacob Zuma, respectively gave an indication of how critical our government values of our people, especially of the less-fortunate by presenting suitable plans to make available life changing opportunities to aid those living below the breadline.

Facing ongoing social challenges, the department continues to grapple with issues such like illegal invasion, poor beneficiary mismanagement, and 'unstructured' allocation of houses to undeserving beneficiaries, amongst others. We would like to commend MEC Speed Mashilo for his sterling intervention by bringing all stakeholders including affected municipalities on board through his road-shows to correct the wrongs. Furthermore is the pronouncement he made to include every beneficiary to partake in monitoring the building processes of their houses to avoid such unfortunate misconducts.

That would be it for now, enjoy your read!

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BILLIONS SET ASIDE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS DEVELOPMENT

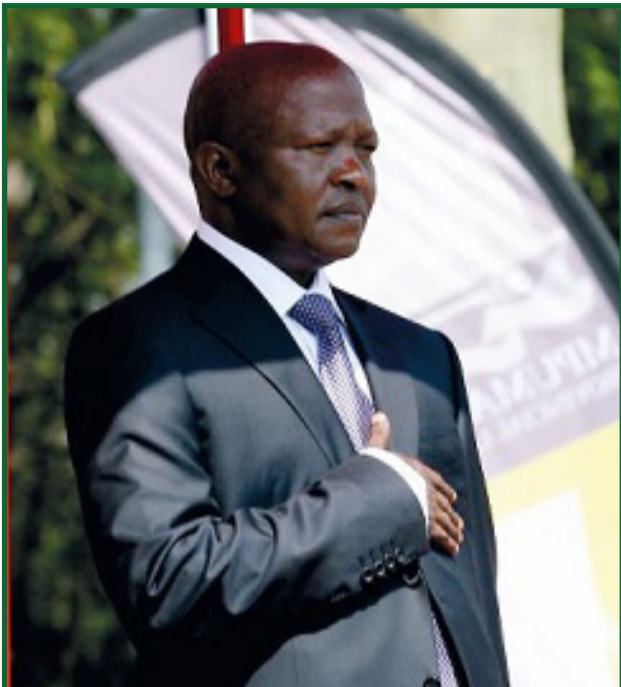
Some not so serious downpours did little to dissuade the high flyers of the province in attending the State of the Province Address (SOPA). This occasion brings together key stakeholders from all spectrums to witness the official opening of the Legislature and Premier David Mabuza delivering SOPA. Over the last few weeks the country experienced some heavy and sporadic rains much to the relief of strained dams.

The rains continued to improve the state of our dams which had taken a

serious knock recently. Notwithstanding the heavy showers and public protest around the Riverside Precinct, scores in their 'elegant' outfits honoured this prestigious occasion.

As the morning grew older – the skies cleared - emblematically making way for Premier Mabuza to reflect on how the province has performed and outline new plans for the coming years. Expensive outfits aside, the stakeholders were to pay more attention on Premier Mabuza's presentation in relation to their space. As

for Human Settlements, a lot was expected following a constraint fiscal period in the province for over the past financial year. Pleasing though was that Mpumalanga is well poised to see more developments unfolding to expand and improve sustainable integrated human settlements. Guided by a planning commission for long term planning, Premier Mabuza the allocation of R5.8 billion, R1 billion and R2.4 billion for integrated human settlements projects in Gert Sibande, Ehlanzeni and Nkangala Districts, respectively.



PROVIDING LEADERSHIP: Premier David Mabuza observing the formalities before presenting the State of the Province Address.

The multi-year projects will deliver on mega projects at Standerton Ext.8, Balfour Ridge, Emzinoni, Mashishing, Sabie, Tekwane North and South, Malalane, Siyanqoba, Siyathuthuka and Rockdale Ext, amongst others. If these undertakings are anything to

go by, the dream of grasping integrated sustainable human settlements will be realised. Mabuza recounted of the unremitting backlog that still persists as a result of dysfunctional and inequitable investments and development patterns of the then apartheid era saying that they still remained a priority to correct to this day.

“As we grapple with these challenges, so too is the ability of our citizens to access basic services, schools, healthcare, open spaces for recreation, suitable sports grounds and appropriate places of worship,” he said, further explaining that government’s work has evolved away from merely providing much needed housing units to the people but towards a holistic approach that considered the broader basket of socio-economic needs which has been apparent in all settlements.

“We have taken our cue from the United Nations Habitat approach,

and our planning and investment now considers a range of cross cutting issues including social inclusion, local economic development, urban prosperity and environmental stability.

Currently, our approach is to implement our programmes, existing and future in the prioritised areas that experience shortages in respect of basic services, or face rapid population growth,” added Mabuza. Putting more emphasis to this, the Premier said that the province being commended by the Statistician-General, Dr Pali Lehohla, for its sterling performance in the provision of basic services, access to basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity, and refuse removal continues to make everyone’s living spaces liveable.

Now that another SOPA has been delivered, the task at hand for all will be in the doing - and that will certainly not require ‘glitz and glamour’ – but hard work.

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS IS CORNERSTONE FOR OUR LIVES – CHARGES ZUMA

Yet only 5% of the built sector is owned by blacks

President Jacob Zuma introduced the all-encompassing Nine Point Plan to focus on key areas of development in the country. In the midst of a much anticipated State of the Nation Address (SONA) by President Jacob Zuma, among other expectations for all and sundry was the progress made in terms of sustainable human settlements as it still remains the cornerstone to everyone’s day to day life. Presenting the SONA on the 09th February 2017 in



STEERING LEADERSHIP: President Jacob Zuma during the State of the Nation Address (SONA).

Parliament, President Zuma amplified that government is actively involved in the property sector thus having provided more than four million houses since 1994.

Despite confirming the impacts observed through the outcomes of the National Development Plan (NDP), he however warned that the economic environment still remains uncertain. “Indications are that we have entered a period of recovery. We anticipate an economic growth rate of 1.3 per cent in 2017 following an estimated 0.5 per cent in 2016.

“It is for this reason that we decided to focus on a few key areas packaged as the Nine Point Plan to reignite growth so that the economy can create much-needed jobs,” explained President Zuma while mentioning that there are some of the people, including youth, who have not worked for years.

As part of his Nine Point Plan to carry out some of the key priorities this year, the President said that government will also address the increasing delays and backlogs in registration and issuing of title deeds to beneficiaries of housing projects

funded by the capital subsidy. He reiterated that radical economic transformation should mean moving beyond share ownership schemes only. In relations to this, he said “We would like to see black people involved directly in business, owning factories. The development of the Black Industrialists Programme is thus critical. The programme has from inception supported more than 22 entrepreneurs.”

According to President Zuma, the State spends R500 billion a year buying goods and services. Added to this is the R900 billion infrastructure budget. He said that those budgets must be used to achieve economic transformation. He further explained that a draft Property Practitioners Bill will be published by the Department of Human Settlements for public comment with the purpose of establishing a more inclusive, representative sector, towards radical economic transformation.

“This sector in our country is valued at approximately R7 trillion, with the subsidized sector being valued at R1.5 trillion. However, less than 5% of the sector is owned or managed by black people and Africans in particular,” as he concluded.

ALL HANDS MUST BE ON DECK IN PROJECTS DELIVERY – PLEADS MEC MASHILO

Constant monitoring and effective systems by municipalities ought to be paramount at ensuring smooth roll-out of human settlements projects in communities. This is an appeal made by Mpumalanga MEC for Human Settlements, Speed Mashilo to councillors and officials during his recent municipal outreach programme.

His visit at Msukaligwa, Govan Mbeki and Thaba Chweu Local Municipalities discovered bottle-necks on the construction of houses and other services such as Community Residential Units and servicing of sites. The programme engages municipal councillors and government

officials from both the department and the municipalities to present progress reports on projects in their respective areas. “I recently held a meeting with contractors and told them that our main responsibility is to settle people, but not to empower them, off course they will benefit in the process”, highlighted MEC Mashilo.

The sessions which demand answers from officials and some ward councillors who are believe to be contributing to slow delivery of projects. A briefing on the state of housing delivery at Msukaligwa showed that some projects could no start on time owing to public protests, poor

beneficiary coordination, and demands by the community to distribute the over 600 allocated units throughout the sections at Extension 6 and 7 in Wesselton. After a lengthy debate in presenting the challenges, it was agreed that the council through the Executive Mayor must engage the affected communities to implement amicable solutions on the persisting matters. “I must say that there is a need by councillors and officials to be more proactive so as to detect challenges on time”, implored Mashilo.

In Govan Mbeki, the construction of 100 CRU units at Extension 9 has stalled owing to challenges raised by a certain eMbalenhle Contractor’s Forum demanding employment from the main contractor, the current occupants are refuse to occupy the newly built units saying they are small, and some enrolled local sub-contractors are demanding better allocation of projects and payments from the main contractor.

A series of stakeholder’s meeting are ongoing to address the impasse at the project. Also in the municipality, there is slow pace by the contractor in delivering 204 of 289 low cost houses at Extension 22, eMbalenhle. The municipal outreach programme is continuing to other municipalities.



MONITORING: Council Speaker, Ms Shirley Nkosi, MEC Speed Mashilo and Executive Mayor Solomon Nkosi during a site visit in one of the projects at Msukaligwa Local Municipality

BUDGET OPENS WAY FOR MORE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Government is to spend R29.8-billion on housing, according to the National Budget. Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan delivered Budget 2017 in parliament late February 2016. He said it was important to have intergovernmental cooperation between the different spheres of government to improved delivery of services such as housing, water and sanitation and public transport, among others.

He explained that collaboration was pivotal in “reversing the spatial legacy of apartheid”. “This spatial transformation is a massive challenge involving land acquisition and development,

infrastructure and transport services, housing, industrial and enterprise support. Much of this depends on collaboration between government and the private sector,” he said. Housing opportunities are still a priority for the National and Provincial Departments and over the next three years government plans to spend R114.8 billion on subsidised public housing.

The Department of Human Settlements (national) has been allocated R30.7 billion for 2016/17 and this will increase to R37.4-billion by 2019/20. Over the next three years the department will

start 25 projects to deliver more housing opportunities, according to the Budget. The funding for housing transfers is part of the Housing Development Finance Programme (HDFP), which is at R29.8-billion for the current fiscal year and will increase to R36.6-billion by 2019/20, according to the Budget.

The HDFP aims to improve access to housing fiancé through collaborations with the private sector and other related entities. “The department expects to facilitate the delivery of 368 530 fully subsidised units, disburse 66 554 financed-linked individual subsidies

and upgrade 623 635 houses in informal settlements by 2019,” the Budget read. This will also be funded through the human settlements development grant, which is expected to increase from R18.3 billion in 2016/17 to R22.3 billion by 2019/20. Further the urban settlements development grant for the eight metropolitan municipalities will focus on providing land, bulk infrastructure and basic services to poor households and upgrading households in informal settlements.

By 2019, a total of 55 171 social rental housing units will be delivered through primary funding by the Social Housing Regulatory Authority’s capital programme. This is expected to provide R3.2 billion over the medium term. The department will also focus on providing title deeds for subsidised housing beneficiaries through the title deeds restoration programme. The total budget allocated will be shared amongst the provinces to realise the delivery of integrated sustainable human settlements.



FINANCIAL PLAN: Minister Pravin Gordhan presenting his budget speech earlier this year.

MKHIZEVILLE COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM A R12 MILLION RURAL HOUSING PROJECT



MONITORING PROGRESS: Departmental project manager for Rural Programme Mr Mandla Magagula leading the delegation from the House of Traditional Leaders during their project inspection and monitoring in Saul Mkhizeville.

Approximately R11.6 million rural and farm worker assistance programme has brought a new leaf of life to the rural and farm dwellers of Saul Mkhizeville (formerly Driefontein) at Mkhondo Local Municipality, Mpumalanga. The 100 housing units’ project delivered by the Department of Human Settlements has 86 units at an advanced stage with three families already taken occupation.

This development was observed by a task team from the provincial House of Traditional Leadership under the guidance of Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs currently undertaking visits to monitor progress of numerous governments’ delivery. Project Manager, Mr Mandla Magagula reported that the project started late last year with the projection to build 100 units in the area for beneficiaries in dire need. “The project has seen a remarkable progress and

we are confident that the contractor will be done by the end of the quarter,” explained Magagula. He outlined that 86 units are almost complete and the remaining 14 are sites the Department is assessing state of habitability before putting up structures. Leading the traditional delegation and Chairperson of the Committee, Chief Sicelo Nkosi from Empakeni, conveyed his satisfaction about the project and declared that it was one of his best based on the previous visits.

“If we could all move with this very same pace I believe that we can deliver only the best our province can be proud of. I am pleased with the works of the contractor and we can only hope that he finishes the project in time since so many beneficiaries are waiting out there,” appreciated Chief Nkosi. After assessing the project, the committee visited the three beneficiaries to check

whether their conditions were conducive and that there were no snags in their newly built houses. One of the beneficiaries, 57 year-old Ms Nompoti Shongwe was stunned and thanked the committee together with the Department for affording her a house to occupy her house before it was too late.

“We were suffering not knowing what to do, where to go especially when it rained. Water would emerge from the floor while we were still sleeping and the entire shack would be waterlogged leaving us stranded as a family,” recounted Shongwe of her plight. The Department has recently held a stock-taking meeting with contractors to urge them to finish their work before the quarter has lapsed or else risk termination of their contracts. The farm worker assistance programme has been designed to assist residents/people who are residing on farms to access housing.

HOUSING BENEFICIARIES IN HIGH SPIRITS TO OCCUPY THEIR PROPERTIES

Ms Martha Mchunu (58) who has been living in a squatter camp at extension 06 eNkanini around Lekwa Local Municipality was excited to finally move into a warm shelter in a newly established Breaking New Ground (BNG) at Standerton Extension 08. Her house came with donations of solar operated television, radio, stove, geyser and a fan from service providers. The R 51 million BNG project which was not occupied for a few years raised disputes amongst the community of Lekwa Local Municipality. Its subject was largely raised just after completion and later in September 2016 at the Taking Legislature to the People by the community since some of the houses were being vandalised and non-rightful owners were planning to take occupation.

Few months down the line, Executive Mayor, Cllr Linda Dhlamini and Human Settlement MEC, Mr Speed Mashilo expedited the process and made sure the elderly, disabled and child headed households families received their houses in time. During the hand over, MEC Mashilo informed the community that regardless of challenges the area faced in the previous year since they moved into their homes things will move with speed. "It is important for beneficiaries to immediately occupy the houses once a project is finished because if they are left vacant for a long time they



IN PROGRESS: Mr Mprofithe Khumalo's house that is still under construction.

are easily vandalised and non-owners may occupy them" said Mashilo in his address. Pleading with the community, Mashilo indicated that, "As community it important to take care of your houses because they are your investment and your generations to come. Do not sell this house because you will go back to live in squatter camps and this it will be forever since you are granted on chance to have a low cost house. This is your land hence the department will soon be delivering title deeds to all beneficiaries who received houses today".

The day was life changing to one of the over 500 beneficiaries, Mr Timothy Maboja who became blind in car accident 1984. Maboja (78) has been living in a shack with son for many years. Divulging his struggles

he said "It was not easy for me as blind man live in squatter camps where there was no electricity and clean water. I am thankful today the government is giving a warm place my son can be proud to call it home".

The IRDP project was initiated to deliver about 2000 government low cost houses (RDPs), 2000 bonded units for middle income earners, regional shopping mall and two filling stations. It was to further provide five schools, clinic and a community center. The required services include water purification plan, sewer pump stations, bulk electricity and electricity connections. Following the intervention by the Legislature, the Department and the municipality has jointly funded the outstanding infrastructure needs to address the long standing challenges.

CONSUMER EDUCATION ESSENTIAL FOR HOUSING BENEFICIARIES

With the mandate to deliver integrated and sustainable human settlements to the most indigent people across the province, the Department of Human Settlements has come up with one of its essential programme to help equip all housing beneficiaries with the right information to maintain their houses. The housing consumer education programme seeks to help educate every beneficiary with information relating to the Housing Subsidy Qualification criteria, beneficiary's roles and responsibilities as well as home maintenance plans.

Talking about the programme, Department's Ms Thobile Fakude, explained that the programme is necessary in the sense that it is not only limited to educating beneficiaries of

their roles but with the right information regarding drafting of their wills. "The programme has yielded positive results over the past few years aiding beneficiaries who could not afford to keep up with the maintenance of their houses, and many others who enlisted their houses as security of tenure against their financial institutions," said Fakude.

According to Fakude, it is prudent that the programme be conducted prior and post the construction of the housing subsidies to keep the beneficiary informed of all the processes and developments that would have taken place in the construction. She added, "Housing consumer Education is there to aid beneficiaries shape their lives. The department's ultimate goal is to educate beneficiaries so that they

are able to receive the best possible service anticipated in their houses." Over the years beneficiaries have become more informed and projected a much better consumer behaviour and that has helped in making it easier for beneficiaries to enjoy their the comfort of their homes.

"The Department does not only provide low cost housing but provide financial assistance as well to people earning between R3500 and R15000 per month," reaffirmed Fakude. Informed beneficiaries through this programme will assist communities to understand the dangers of selling subsidised houses, maintenance of their properties valuing their properties as assets. *(Information is available on the department's website and at local municipalities).*

CONTRACTORS WARNED OF BOGUS SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Mpumalanga Department of Human Settlements has appealed to all service providers (contractors) to be very vigilant when it comes to bogus tenders awarded by government. This follows an incident where representatives of a bogus consortium calling itself Bondeiro Business Development



WARNING: MEC Speed Mashilo addressing the media on bogus service providers.

Consortium (BBDC) were arrested recently at Bronkhorstspuit, Gauteng. The arrest is as a result of a contractor who alerted the Department about this company that wanted to give them work.

The consortium allegedly owned by white individuals' claims to have received massive projects from government throughout the country to deliver services to communities. It targets unsuspecting contractors' claiming to have received tenders to deliver projects such upgrading cemeteries, for R3 million and sports stadium for R30 million at Moretele Local Municipality in Hammanskraal and delivering 10 000 housing units in Mpumalanga for R166 800 per unit", amongst others. Addressing a media briefing, MEC Speed Mashilo stressed that elements of fraud and corruption have a potential to undermine government's efforts of delivering quality services to communities. ***"We believe that this arrest will send a strong message to other unscrupulous people/***

individuals and restore confidence in our communities that corruption has no place in this government" continued Mashilo. The unscrupulous consortium's modus operandi is very appealing to a normal eye and service providers in need of jobs, especially from government. It is believed that BBDC is solicits company names from some data-base whether inside or outside government and target those by selling fake jobs to them.

Those who are being contacted, or have fallen prey to this and other scams be it the construction of government low cost houses (RDPs) or any government services to immediately report such to the police. "As a Department We believe that this arrest will send a strong message to other unscrupulous people/ individuals and restore confidence in our communities – that corruption has no place in this government", charged MEC Mashilo. The Department will take keen interest to see its finality and witness the law bringing the alleged perpetrators to book.

DESPERATE FARM DWELLER RELIEVED AT DEPARTMENT'S INTERVENTION

A 52 year-old disadvantaged Mr. Mprofite Khumalo from Thuthukane farm in Volkrust, Dr Pixley Isaka Ka Seme Local Municipality, gratefully thanked the Department of Human Settlement's intervention to proceed with the construction of his government low cost house (RDP) after an alleged string of attempts to halt it by unscrupulous members of the community recently.

The feud started after the construction of the Khumalo's house, yet the community claim they are new in the area. They charge that how come they are benefiting a house whereas other members of the community are still awaiting theirs. Khumalo has been a resident at the Vryfontein farm before he had fallout with his all-time employer who is alleged to have evicted him following an altercation they had. Since then, he alleges that his life became awful and was left stranded not being able



BENEFITED: Mr Timothy Maboja (78) ushered into his house by MEC Speed Mashilo accompanied by Lekwa Local Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr: Linda Dhlamini and Department's Chief Director for Integrated Human Settlements Planning, Mr Doctor Nkosi.

to access other essential services such like water, electricity and school for his kids. The Department visited Khumalo at his place after becoming aware of the situation to assess his welfare conditions as well as the progress of the house.

Department's Project Manager, Mr. Lucky Duba, confirmed that he was aware of the confusions taking place in the area regarding the arrival of the Khumalos' however; he stated that there was nothing wrong with the family as they are legal beneficiaries

and that they deserved the house just like anyone that would have applied. Duba said, "The family has applied for a house in 2013 and was successfully approved. We urge the community to understand that not having their applications approved on time does not mean that they are not legible to get a house, but there are a criteria with which the Department use to prioritize the allocation of houses to its beneficiaries, such as orphans, elderly, child headed households and people with disabilities." The Department budgeted R23 million to

construct 202 People's Housing Process (PHP) units in the area to develop and offer rural and farm dwellers an opportunity to live in decent and sustainable houses. Since the Department's intervention to this family, the construction of the RDP house has since been resumed.

Of the 202 units planned to be built in the area, 74 units have been completed, 103 are at a roof level and 17 at wall-plate. Over 8200 housing units (RDP) have been planned to be delivered and 4045 sites serviced this financial year.

PREMIER MABUZA BEMOANS INEPT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Premier David Mabuza spared no punches over slow performing departments during a post SOPA media briefing held earlier this month in Mbombela. Mabuza decried several departments including Human Settlements for failing to implement their projects on time. Following his pronouncement after tabling the much anticipated SOPA to outline the plans and state of the province going forward, the Premier said that in appropriate planning lead to department's not reaching targets and result to community protests.

"A long term plan needs to be rolled out for integrated human settlements in various municipalities to ensure that it improves the living conditions and quality of life of beneficiary household," he said addressing the media. Mabuza stressed that the province needs the capacity to predict and plan for the future beyond 2030 and more.

Premier mentioned that a way forward for the province is to implement long term view that will be active for today's generation to the third and more. "However, the process will have to take into account principles of three-dimensional planning especially issues of access to social services like education and healthcare, as these are critical components of human development, since the department are used to work in silos" said Mabuza.

An initiative have been undertaken to establish a Provincial Planning Commission that will take this work forward using human settlements, the ebbs and flows of economic activity, migration patterns, the performance of



BRIEFING : Premier David Mabuza unpacking the commitments of the State of the Province Address to the media.

productive sectors, transport logistics as a basis for long-term planning. The commission will bring together practical, academic and technical expertise and experience from across the sectors as a means to ensure that the upward socio economic curve of the Province is based on sound evidence and specialist advice.

"This has been a crisis for some time provincial departments are grabbing with planning and implementation". A significant progress has been made in eradicating informal settlements and upgrading existing human settlements. Mabuza said, "They will not succeed in building sustainable human settlements that will stand for generations to come, if our processes are not anchored on long-term planning. The process of planning require commitment and to allow help from people outside the department to help implement the way forward".

During the preparation to build integrated human settlements, they identify growth points with chemistry that is sustainable for development of such settlements. This requires careful planning that takes a long-term view and integrates the sustainable economic activities that make such settlements viable. Such plans would have to be cognizant of current and future economic development nodes, priority corridors and migration patterns so that we are able to utilize resources to create settlements proactively.

"Our work has evolved away from merely providing much needed housing units to the people towards a holistic approach that considers the broader basket of socio-economic needs and this is evident in our settlements" concluded Mabuza.

EMALAHLENI HOUSING COMPANY MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Emalahleni Housing Company (EHC) is a fully accredited social housing institution that was established in 2002 as a non-profit company. The core mandate of the company is to provide quality and affordable rental accommodation for low to medium income households; and currently has a total number of 1307 social housing units under management in the eMalahleni area. The services of the entity are encapsulated under the functions of rental management, property development & maintenance and community development.

The delivery of community development programmes is accomplished through the EHC subsidiary company, Likhaya Community Development Enterprise (LCDE), and these programmes benefit communities within the rental complexes as well as the broader eMalahleni community. The award winning social housing company

has successfully rolled out several community-based projects in 2016 which includes the establishment of co-operatives that are run by previously unemployed tenants at its Uthingo Park Project. In 2017 EHC kick-started the year by donating 250 school bags and stationery to local schools in line with its “Back to school” and “Bread tags for Wheelchairs” projects. The project involved encouraging local schools to collect bread tags for recycling. The proceeds from the bread tags are used to purchase wheelchairs for disadvantaged people with disabilities.

The children who collected bread tags each received a school bag with stationery and the two schools that collected the most bread tags received photocopiers sponsored by Nashua. In total, more than 84000 bread tags were collected through the hard work and dedication of local schools. Other initiatives such as

“Take a girl Child to Work”, Youth Day Soccer Challenge and the Heritage Day Talent Competition are planned for the year ahead as short and long-term projects. Emalahleni Housing Company, under the leadership of CEO, Mr George Xaba, is committed to improving the lives of people by transforming neighbourhoods; building communities; and making a difference.

The institution like the other three is supporting the department’s efforts to deliver quality and sustainable human settlements through existing legislations and other forms of interventions. All interactions with the institutions can be directed to the following details:

Chief Executive Officer: Mr MG Xaba
Emalahleni Housing Company

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GIFTS: Ilanga Secondary School learners receiving school bags and stationery.

RESTORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACCELERATED

For nearly 100 years, 96-year old Estell Dlamini has lived her life without legal rights to own a house. Dlamini is among the 759 beneficiaries who recently received a title deed from the provincial administration at the recent Human Rights commemoration at Mkhondo Local Municipality. Like many others – majority of which were the elderly people – she said despite living in fear of being evicted from her house, she is happy now that she has the legal documents to attest her ownership. “No amount of words can define my excitement today. I feel very much in charge right now. It is my house and I can prove it,” said gogo Dlamini jokingly.

Dlamini’s receipt of her legal document to restore dignity and bestow right to property ownership is the Department of Human Settlements’ efforts to pull every stops to ensure the delivery of title deeds is accelerated in the province. This is to put an end to all uncertainties to beneficiaries living in fear of illegal evictions by unscrupulous persons. The issuing of these documents at Mkhondo was followed by the same activity of just over 80 beneficiaries at Victor Khanye Local Municipality at the end of Human Rights Month (March) which MEC Speed Mashilo officiated. The issuing of title deeds ensures that properties (RDP)

are registered in a beneficiaries’ name and in turn restores dignity to owners. With the department having projected to deliver about 15000 title deeds by the end of this financial year, Morethan 8000 have already been successfully handed over to various areas in the province.

During a recent meeting with department and municipal officials prior the Provincial Taking Legislature to the People (TLP), Mashilo stressed that, “the relentless problems caused by illegal invasion or occupation of houses, inept work by contractors, abandoning of projects were mostly as a result of poor beneficiary management and had put a strain in the department to swiftly deliver on these title deeds and many other projects”. In tackling these anomalies, MEC Mashilo contends that beneficiaries should be part of the construction of their houses until delivery.

At Delpark in Victor Khanye, Mashilo bemoaned the illegal renting out of RDP houses by beneficiaries and urged the communities to report such misconduct. “The allocation of these houses is not meant to make profit for the beneficiaries by means of renting them out. Any person found to be renting out a property especially within

the eight year period, will then create the impression that the property is not acquired for the desired purpose, therefore it should be offered back to the Department which alongside with the municipality will find a qualifying beneficiary as a replacement”.

He further elaborated that the department has taken a decision that upon every beneficiary’s application for a government’s low cost house, all processes must commence concurrently with that of applying for a title deed so that when the house is delivered, a title deed must also be presented. Apart from this the MEC has alluded to ensuring that every beneficiary must be brought on-board to know where their houses were built.

Equally excited about government’s drive to expedite human rights restoration was Ms Josephine Dube (80) who thanked the department for keeping to its promise of delivering and caring for the needy. Her praises carried gratitude towards such a campaign, “It is such a blessing to have you in times like this when we cannot be able to do for ourselves and you step in.” The Department has registered just over twenty thousand (20 000) title deeds since 2014 and more are to be issued in the coming financial year.



SECURITY OF TENURE: Title deeds beneficiaries, Ms Martha Dube and Mr Samuel Sukazi displaying their legal documents at the event held in Mkhondo.