**MINISTRY FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.: 3235**

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**Ms T Gqada (DA) to ask the Minister of Human Settlements:**

Has her department considered to launch provincial online housing waiting lists so that persons who are waiting for their Reconstruction and Development Programme houses can monitor their status online; if not, why not? **NW3836E**

**REPLY:**

I wish to preface my reply by reminding the Honourable member that government is no longer building Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses. RDP houses were discontinued as soon as Cabinet adopted the *Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements* in 2004 setting new standards for housing typologies for government houses referred to as BNG houses.

Honourable Member, an online system is already in existence and it is called the National Housing Needs Register (NHNR).

The NHNR was developed in 2010 as a tool to be utilized at a provincial and municipal level to enable citizens to register their needs for adequate shelter/housing opportunities.

The household profile of citizens that registered their needs is recorded to assist provinces and municipalities to plan new housing projects that will address the needs of citizens. The following information is recorded per household on the NHNR system:

* Geographical details regarding, town, area, street address / house number and ward number;
* If the household is currently located in a hazardous area;
* Type of dwelling the household is currently living in;
* The main bathroom facility that the household has access to;
* The main water facility that the household has access to;
* The main energy type that the household has access to ;
* Monthly income ;
* Migration history;
* Preference regarding different housing opportunities;
* Per household member highest qualification attained;
* Per household member, where applicable, the sector In which sector they are employed;
* Per household member, where applicable, current employment status;
* Per household member, where applicable, social grant received from government and type of grant;
* Per household member, where applicable, type of disability and
* Per household member, where applicable, special needs e.g. Severe chronic disease /s (e.g. HIV/AIDS), Orphan / vulnerable child, Frail and infirm, Physical and mental disabilities, Older person

The NHNR also provides for the allocation of housing opportunities in a fair, transparent and auditable manner. The allocation portion of the NHNR has been implemented based on the Guidelines for the Allocation of Housing Opportunities Created through the National Housing Programmes that was developed by the national Department in 2009.

The allocation process is area based therefore households from various geographical areas can be selected based on the selection criteria relevant to the specific housing project, the following criteria is available:

* Women Headed Households
* Child Headed Households
* No Income
* Income above R3500
* Aged Members (+60 to 80 and beyond)
* Adult (35 to 59)
* Widows and Widowers
* Households with children
* Disabled Persons
* Persons with Special Needs
* Preference – House
* Preference – Stand e.g. the land that’s owned by tribal leaders

The selected criteria can be prioritized and based on that, a list of households will be drawn from the NHNR. The list can be committed on the NHNR after approval. The list will form the basis of inviting the selected households to complete housing subsidy application forms.

The NHNR provides provinces and municipalities with the ability to select a person (members of a specific household) or an area basis (geographical location) records to be validated against the:

* + Population Register (Home Affairs);
	+ PERSAL;
	+ UIF;
	+ GEPF;
	+ National Housing Subsidy Database (NHSDB) that contains records of beneficiaries that has been assisted or is in the process for assistance with a housing subsidy) and
	+ Deeds Datasets.

The results returned from the validation process cannot be used to determine or make a decision whether a household qualifies for a housing subsidy or not. The formal qualification for a housing subsidy is done on the HSS (Housing Subsidy System) as the rules related to the various National Housing Programmes as contained in the National Housing Code are built into the HSS.

Various reports are also available on a provincial, municipal and town level. Currently the NHNR that contains information is about **1,607,223 households.** The national Department is the custodian of the NHNR and provides support, training and Data quality services to the various provincial human settlements Departments and municipalities that have implemented the system.

In the process of ensuring that the NHNR Data is always credible, the national Department has just released a new version of the NHNR during the first week of September 2015 and the following new functionalities are available:

* Latest technology;
* The system can now run on a desktop, tablet or a smart phone;
* SMS service that will enable provincial human settlements to communicate with households that have registered their needs for adequate shelter/ housing opportunities and
* Linkage with the Housing Subsidy System that updates the status of households that have completed their housing subsidy applications.