**MINISTRY FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.: 3399**

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**Mr M G P Lekota (Cope) to ask the Minister of Human Settlements:**

Whether, in the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2015, her department had (a) to contend with any community-organised housing protests either in demand for houses and/or to draw attention to corrupt practices or shoddy construction, (b) substantially addressed the accommodation needs of backyarders, especially in townships where congestion was so acute as to make fire hazards and disease a serious and constant danger, (c) done anything substantial to address the accommodation needs of people living in informal settlements and/or at the very least provided such communities with proper planning and adequate services, (d) worked harmoniously and co-operatively with provincial and municipal governments in each province to accelerate housing delivery and (e) worked in partnership with the private sector to develop affordable housing for the working class where income did not exceed a certain threshold; if not, why not in each case; if so, what are the relevant details in each case? **NW4059E**

**REPLY:**

1. The National Department in terms of the Constitution as well as relevant policies and legislation is not directly responsible for the programme and project planning, prioritisation and implementation of National Housing Programmes, as contained in the National Housing Code.

The mandate to plan and implement human settlements and housing projects in terms of the various National Housing Programmes vests with the nine Provincial Governments and the Municipalities. The various community organised protests, as they may be related to human settlements and housing, are therefore by and large organised and directed to local municipalities and/or the provincial departments. There are isolated cased community protests that are directed to national department offices.

1. Each human settlement development project is unique and requires tailored and specific planning and design to meet the prevailing circumstances and housing specific needs and priorities. The Provinces and Municipalities endeavour to follow a balanced, integrated and developmental approach in the targeting of the most vulnerable households that require housing assistance. This means that projects will, where possible and required, be designed to accommodate predetermined percentages of households from the diversity of the housing backlog in an area, including households residing in informal backyard rental units, who wish to relocate to permanent ownership housing financed properties when such becomes available.
2. The upgrading, relocation and redevelopment of informal settlements remains a priority developmental objective of Government. The Provinces allocate the majority of the annual Human Settlement Development Grant (HSDG) allocation for informal settlement upgrading projects and the Government remains committed to improve the lives of our communities who are residing in these areas on a priority basis. In the case of the Metropolitan Municipalities, the Department during the 2011/12 financial year introduced the Urban Settlements Development Grant with the object of prioritisation of funding allocations for land development and servicing aimed at households residing in informal settlements. The first phase intervention under the National Housing Programme for the Upgrading of informal Settlements is the identification of provision of emergency services needs and the design and deployment of such emergency services to curtail any health and life threatening situations.

A fundamental objective of the Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme is the participation, involvement and consultation with targeted communities in all aspects of the planning and implementation of their housing development solutions.

1. The Department and the nine provincial human settlement departments and the metropolitan municipalities are collaborating in the planning and implementation of priority development areas. The Department is furthermore conducting quarterly performance reviews in collaboration with the provinces and municipalities to ensure that planned targets are pursued and to address any constraints where such is encountered.
2. The Department has recently initiated an enhanced housing programme for the provision of assistance to households who are able to access mortgage finance and the rollout of the programme was aided by the important role that was fulfilled by the National Housing Finance Corporation as the National Programme Management Agent. The Department is furthermore continuously monitoring the implementation of the National Housing Programme in collaboration with the private sector and further enhancements to the programme are already in an advance stage of development.