

2007

Ingquza Hill
Municipality

[HOUSING REPORT]

Status report for housing at Ingquza Hill Municipality

Housing Status report

1. Introduction

The Ingquza Hill Municipality has managed and implemented two (2) housing projects in Flagstaff and Lusikisiki with 503 and 1117 units respectively. Both of these projects were implemented through the People's Housing Process (PHP).

There are two rural housing projects at Mantlaneni and Nkozi with 300 units for both projects. Both of these projects were also implemented through a People's Housing Process (PHP) by the O.R. Tambo District Municipality.

2. Project status

Status of the different projects varies from project to projects because of unique challenges that projects are faced with.

2.1. Joe Slovo settlement-Lusikisiki (1117 units)

This project was approved in 1999 during the time of the Lusikisiki TLC.

2.1.1. Progress to date

There are 1111 units have been completed; the outstanding units were not completed because two sites are affected by the neighbouring school (encroachment). The possibility is that the Town Planner who drew the Layout did not take the school into consideration or the school has encroached into the settlement. The other three (3) sites were affected by Land invasion and as such it was difficult to build before the invaders were removed and as such the issue has since been addressed; the last unit is on a very steep area and as such contractors could not build on it.

2.1.2. Services

Water has been provided with a stand pipe per household and they are functional. In terms of sanitation a pit latrine system is used. Gravel roads were constructed and they still exist. Electricity has just been installed to the whole settlement. However; there is a portion that has not been serviced with water as a result the Local Municipality had to provide five taps to serve about 500 households.

2.1.3. Conveyencing

Transfers have not been done because the appointed conveyancers were not paid any monies to start the process of transfers. However, it is understood that the department paid the total funds for conveyencing to the then project manager Mr. Peter Schofelt (spelling); it is alleged that the project manager never paid the funds to the appointed

attorneys. This matter is a matter that is investigated by the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) albeit at a very slow pace.

2.1.4. Challenges

- The issue of title deeds for beneficiaries remains a major challenge
- Management and processing of beneficiaries is also a challenge because many houses are currently occupied by persons who are not necessarily the approved beneficiaries.
- The Township validity has since expired and as such a new process of Township establishment has to be done and the municipality has no funds for that.
- It may also include a process of relocating the beacons which is costly and once more the municipality does not have funds for this.

2.2. Thabo Mbeki settlement (503)

This project was approved in 1998 during the time of the Flagstaff TLC but implementation started in 2000.

2.2.1. Progress to date

Progress has been terribly slow in this project and as such the project is a 'blocked' project; it was 'blocked' during 2003/04 when the municipality was under section 139 of the Constitution. Currently there are 258 units that have been completed albeit with some serious quality challenges as a result of poor monitoring and poor workmanship. The outstanding units are 245 and the municipality has written to the department (DLGHTA) to avail further funding to complete the project but there has not been a response yet. Therefore more information which is inaccessible or at best hard to access would be from the Provincial department.

There is also NHBRC report that is still expected in respect of defects that have been identified in all the buildings (houses). The report shall form the basis of corrective/rectification programme that must be taken up. We believe that this report shall be a basis for unblocking the project as whole.

2.2.2. Services

Gravel roads were constructed, however there is only one access road that is still functional and it is in a poor state and other roads have since degenerated. The same may be said about water that water pipes were laid but due to the time lapse and non-use of the pipes they have since degenerated. In terms of sanitation there were holes that were dug to bury septic tanks but they were never installed and they remain open and dangerous. Some of the residents have chosen to make their own pit latrines. The situation is generally hazardous. There is no electricity at the moment.

2.2.3. Conveyencing

There is no trace that is available to the Municipality that suggests that the township is valid, however it is alleged by some housing officials that transfers had started but it is not clear who was appointed to do conveyencing. The possibility is that beacons are also missing and money may have to be spent to do relocation of pegs, township validation and conveyencing.

2.2.4. Challenges

There are 24 houses that were affected by the recent disaster on the 28th July 2007 and have been reported accordingly. The major problem is that nothing is happening with these reports noting that this incident is not the first there have been others before that were not responded to.

The issue of sanitation remains a major concern as residents are trying to make alternatives and the pits that were dug to bury septic tanks are dangerous to children and residents generally.

Township establishment has to be prioritised so as to begin a process of conveyencing and on the other hand the issue of confirmed list of beneficiaries must be completed as many of those who occupy the houses are not the approved beneficiaries.

Support that is offered by the Provincial department needs to be relooked in terms of structure and management of that support. As part of the support that has been given to date, project managers that were allocated to projects still reside some good distance from the projects which might be contributing to the poor quality and slow pace.

The issue of finances between the municipality and the department still needs attention as it also has played a major role in causing delays.

2.3. Nkozo rural housing

Nkozo is a rural Housing project that is in Flagstaff unit; the project has 300 subsidies that are approved and it is implemented on the Peoples' Housing Process (PHP) policy. O.R. Tambo District Municipality is the implementer of Nkozo project and the Local Municipality is playing a supporting role and also part of monitoring and evaluation process.

2.3.1. Progress to date

Out of 300 units (subsidies) 195 units have been completed; 40 on the roof; 15 in wall plate and 46 are on slab.

2.3.2. Challenges

- Access to material is a huge challenge in terms of cost
- Delivery to the rural area because of roads that are sometimes not designed to carry heavy load vehicles and at times roads are generally not good.
- Access to water for construction is also a challenge.
- Poorly organises building teams and high level of turn over of technical staff (project coordinators)
- Topography on the project site is not easily accessible
- Security of material is sometimes a challenge

2.4. Mantlaneni rural project

Mantlaneni is a rural housing project located in ward 2 at Lusikisiki unit of the Municipality; the project has 300 subsidies that are approved and it is implemented on the Peoples' Housing Process (PHP) policy. O.R. Tambo District Municipality is the implementer of Mantlaneni project and the Local Municipality is playing a supporting role and also part of monitoring and evaluation process.

2.4.1. Progress to date

To this date 88 houses have been completed; 2 on the roofing; 14 at wall plate and 10 at slab level. There are 183 houses that are still outstanding.

2.4.2. Challenges

- Access to material is a huge challenge in terms of cost
- Delivery to rural areas because of roads
- Access to water for construction
- Poorly organised building teams
- Topography of the construction site
- Security of building material

3. What has Happened since the visit of the Honourable Minister and Honourable Members of the Portfolio committee

- The Municipality has continued to communicate with the Provincial government through its regional of lead by Project Manager to get an update in respect to the 11 houses that we were concerned about the speed of construction.
- The Municipality wrote a formal correspondence to the department to raise issues of concern about the 11 houses and the total project completion process which include the investigation by the SIU and the technical report by NHBC.

- The Municipality met with the Survey and Planning section of the department so as to appeal for their intervention in particular to fund the planning and survey sections of the project so as to begin the conveyencing process.
- We also have obtained engineering designs that were done by Ninham Shand consultants for the services in the project.
- We are awaiting a response in relation to the EIA so as to shorten processes if it was done.

4. Conclusion

The municipality has a challenge to review its Housing sector plan which was done during 2005/06. In that Housing Sector Plan there is quite a level of housing backlog particularly in rural areas and as such our focus should be on rural area whilst we note and learn from the challenges that have been evident in the two project that are currently implemented. Lastly, on the Housing Sector Plan there is assistance that has been availed by the provincial department so as to review and update the Sector Plan.

Support that is available from the province needs further coordination for a better impact on quality of the product that we have to deliver. Equally, communication and cooperative governance between the District Municipality and the Local Municipality has to be improved. There are indeed signs of such improvement through the Housing Forum that has started in O.R. Tambo.

Finance administration between the Province and the Municipality has also got to receive a special and swift attention. Failure to refine the financial administration side has also contributed on the delays that resulted in time lag and consequently blocked projects because of cost escalations overtime. Equally, the municipality has to deal with its capacity to respond to the housing delivery requirements and clarify its role in relation to other government spheres.

It is the wish and appeal of this Municipality to get a project under the Breaking New Ground policy provisions. There is land for housing and there is a backlog to be addressed.

Lastly, beyond the low income housing provision, the municipality is battling to increase its tax base; one of possible area is Property Rates, as such we do need further assistance in terms of improving infrastructure so as to attract public and private investment in the Housing Market.

It is a challenge that subsidy allocation for areas close to building inputs (material) also receive the same amount and yet the rural areas have more cost whether implicit or explicit built into the final cost of material and that has an impact on the final product.