



human settlements

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Human Settlements
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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PRESENTATION TO THE PORT FOLIO COMMITTEE

Recommendations by the Human Rights Commission regarding the National Housing Programmes



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Background

The Human Rights Commission tabled the following recommendations:

1. Formulate a policy on the partial formalisation of infrastructure, informal dwellings and property in at-risk informal settlements, in consultation with DCOGTA and DHA and work towards its implementation;
2. Adopt a management perspective on the issue of informal settlements and undocumented migration into them:
3. Engage with residents of informal and RDP settlements in order to (a) in raise awareness of existing policies and (b) obtain information about the challenges faced in this regard with a view to develop appropriate policies and manage the ownership, sale and rental of shacks and RDP houses



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Response

- The Department was not consulted by the HRC
- We were not requested to provide information/ documents
- Implementation takes place at provincial and municipal level- we facilitate and finance
- We rely on municipalities and provinces to provide feedback on policy enhancement requirements
- Informal settlement upgrading is a daunting task



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Response

1. Housing: MINMEC in August 2004 approved a new National Housing Programme for the Upgrading of Informal Settlements (UISP);
2. The UISP is based on international best practice and tried and tested projects in South Africa;
3. The UISP follows a phased development approach:
 - a) The first phase intervention is to identify and register the inhabitants and to determine emergency interventions;
 - b) The programme provide for the provision and delivery of emergency services;



Response

The phased developmental approach was specifically introduced to provide scope for:

- Shack numbering;
- Identification of emergency services needs;
- Establishing the community profile;
- Requesting Home Affairs to intervene where immigrants are detected; and
- Providing emergency interventions/ services



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Response

4. As part of Outcome 8 commitments, the Department has agreed with DCOGTA to address the issue of bulk and connector and internal services and the funding thereof;
5. Provinces have since 2004 focused on emergency pilot projects and have since rolled out the programme in their areas.



Response

6. One of the cornerstones of the UISP is the fact that the inhabitants must take part and be involved in all aspects of their redevelopment;
7. Funding is specifically available to finance additional capacity to ensure that this is achieved;
8. The inhabitants are required to make informed decisions and for instance must agree to the township layout, the nature and level of the services etc;



Response

- At community participation facilitation stage they are involved in the process of registering the inhabitants;
- The community is also involved in controlling access, as influx will compromise the redevelopment programme
- The Emergency Housing Assistance programme provide for the establishment of transitional areas with formal stands and interim services. It is seldom opted for.



Challenges

1. The main challenge is the overwhelming magnitude of the problem:
 - between 1,2 and 2 million households reside in informal settlements;
 - More that 300 000 new families are annually added to our population;
 - Many household live for years in backyards;
2. We do not have the required capacity to deliver at the scale required, neither funding nor implementation capacity ;



Challenges

- We are unable to control informal selling of subsidy dwellings and shacks;
- Prioritising high risk areas is difficult as many communities are living in worst conditions and/or commitments have been concluded;
- We are required to follow a balanced development approach, focussing on rental housing and the gap market as well;
- Managing obstructive informal leadership is a very difficult task. The community normally resolve this;
- Upgrading projects are community driven and time consuming processes apply;



Challenges

- Informal settlements are not always in acceptable locations, formalisation of tenure security is preceded by investigations and town planning considerations.
- We agree that informal settlement pose a substantial risk in regard to access for emergency vehicles and prevention of fires, etc.
- Solutions require dedensification and resettlement, highly sensitive aspects;



Conclusion

- We have a very good National Housing Programme that specifically caters for the redevelopment requirements of informal settlements;
- Capacity to implement, control and manage the upgrading initiatives remains a challenge;
- Through the assistance of the NUSP initiative we are making progress.
- The Department continuously embark on awareness/capacity building initiatives on policies, rights and obligations of households.
- We must redevelop 400 000 households by 2014.



Thank you for your attention



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