

**Low cost housing delivery in the Northern Province  
with reference to the Central Region**

by  
M.M. MATLALA

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Supervisor:  
M.N. Matamela

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## **ABSTRACT**

According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 106 of 1996), housing is a basic human right. Every citizen of the country has a right to have access to an adequate housing. One of the RDP's first priority is to provide for the homeless. Although housing may be provided by a range of parties, government is ultimately responsible for ensuring that housing is accessed to all.

The government has in its policies and programmes made provision for the delivery of low cost houses to the poor by introducing the housing subsidy scheme to the value of R15 000 per household. The department of housing committed itself to deliver a total of one million houses in five years from 1994-1999. The nine Provinces were also expected to meet a certain target.

The Northern Province was required to deliver 86 000 houses as a contribution to the national target and its housing backlog yet it did not succeed due to some problems which will be highlighted in this report. The purpose of the research is to get reasons why there were some delays in the process and to suggest ways and means of ensuring how the implementation of this housing project become a success.

The research will be composed of four chapters. The first chapter will be introduction, which will outline the problem statement, motivation of the research, the hypothesis, definition of key concepts and the research design.

The second chapter will be literature review, which will give a historical background of housing delivery in South Africa, the types of provincial housing programmes and the procedure for project linked subsidy.

The third chapter is based on the findings. The following will form part of this chapter: profile of sample housing projects, findings based on the methods of data collection and the major obstacles towards housing delivery. Chapter four will highlight concluding remarks and possible solutions to the problems highlighted in the report. A list of sources and annexures will be at the end of the report.

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## **A. CHAPTER 1**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The main purpose of this research is to contribute towards the improvement on quality low cost housing and speedy delivery in the Northern Province with reference to the Central Region.

#### **1.1. Problem statement**

The Constitution of South Africa, 1996 lays a new foundation for housing in South Africa. Housing is a fundamental human right embodied in Section 26 of the Constitution. Every citizen of the country has a right to have access to adequate housing. The government is bound to ensure that within its available resources, this right is realised. As a result the National Department of Housing, in its policies and programmes, committed itself in delivering houses to the low-income group with the assistance of its counterparts, the nine Provincial Departments of Housing.

The Department committed itself in subsidising each household with an amount of R15 000. A target of one million houses was put in place by the National Department of Housing, to be completed within five years, from 1994-1999. Provinces were also required to meet certain targets in order to contribute towards the national target of one million houses.

The Department of Housing in the Northern Province was required to deliver 86 000 houses as a contribution towards meeting the national target and also by addressing its own housing backlog. It failed to

reach that target due to certain problems which the research seeks to identify and make recommendations to the relevant authorities, to deal with such problems.

### **1.2. Motivation of the research**

The topic was selected as a result of several petitions made by stakeholders in the projects to the Portfolio Committee on Local Government and Housing. The complaints were that the progress of the projects was stalled and that the sizes of the houses were too small. The Portfolio Committee was so concerned that it even organised a trip to visit all projects in the Province, in order to get first hand information from all the stakeholders. Several meetings were held with the Provincial Department of Housing to find a way of reviving the projects. The Department identified several problems as the cause of delays to the whole process. Therefore it can be stated that the research is important as it will identify ~~problems~~ and make recommendations to assist in the speedier delivery of houses and improvement in the sizes thereof.

### **1.3. Hypothesis**

Two hypothesis were culminated from the research problem and are as follows:

- (i) the slow pace of low cost housing delivery is as a result of lack of co-ordination
- (ii) the structure, size and quality of the houses do not satisfy the beneficiaries

Two variables have also been used. The Independent and the Dependent. Their relationship is as follow:



- (i) the slow pace of low cost housing delivery is a dependent variable because it is caused by lack of co-ordination. Yet, lack of co-ordination is an independent variable.
- (ii) The structure, size and quality of the houses are independent variables, whereas acceptability by the beneficiaries is a dependent variable.

#### **1.4. Definitions of key concepts**

1.4.1. According to the South African White Paper on Housing [1995,2], “housing is defined as a variety of processes through which habitable, stable and sustainable public and private residential environments are created for viable households and communities.”

1.4.2. The Reconstruction and Development Programme is an integrated, coherent, socio-economic policy framework, which seeks to mobilise all the people and the country’s resources, towards the final eradication of apartheid and the building of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future.

[Reconstruction and Development Programme Book, 1994,1]

1.4.3. The Constitution is the supreme law of the country, which lays the foundations for a democratic and open society, in which Government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law.

[The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, 1]

1.4.4. Public Policy is a desired course of action and interaction which is to serve as a guideline in the allocation of resources necessary

to realise societal goals and objectives, decided upon and made publicly known by the Legislature.

[Hanekom, 1987, 8]

1.4.5. Policy making refers to the actions and thought processes that precede a policy statement [Hanekom, 1987, 13]

1.4.6. According to Hanekom [1987, 55] Policy implementation is the final stage of policy-making where the intentions, the objectives and the course of action selected by policy makers are put into action.

1.4.7. Land Tenure is the process of upgrading and securing land rights of those who are already on land.

[White Paper on South African Land Policy, 1997, 27]

1.4.8. Housing Subsidy scheme is the R15 000.00 grant given to each low-income housing beneficiary for housing.

[Report on the Executive Summary of National Housing Programmes, 1997, 1]

## **1.5. Research design**

The report is designed as follows:

### 1.5.1. Literature review

Housing policies and reports were consulted to get a historical background of housing delivery in South Africa, types of provincial housing programmes, procedure for project linked subsidy and the major obstacles towards housing delivery in the Northern Province.

### 1.5.2. Sample projects

The research is based on the following four housing projects in the central region of the Northern Province: Matamanyane, Mankweng, Puraspan and Avon. A profile of these projects will be fully outlined in the report.

### **1.5.3. Research Methods**

The following methods were used to collect data:

(i) In-loco inspection

All the above mentioned projects were visited for inspection.

(ii) Questionnaires

A questionnaire was designed (see the attached example) and copies of it were distributed to stakeholders.

(iii) Interviews

Structured interviews were conducted with different stakeholders. The following people were interviewed: officials in the department of Local Government and Housing and members of the steering committees in all the projects.

(iv) Visual evidence

A photo camera was used to take photos of a sample of the houses built. (see the attached copies of photos)

#### 1.5.4. Data collection and sampling

The stratified random sampling was used in the report. This simply means that a relatively small sample will be selected e.g. four housing projects in the central region of the Northern Province were selected as a sample.

#### 1.5.5. Data analysis

Data collected will be analysed through the hypothesis and the objective of the research.

## **B. CHAPTER 2**

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Historical Background of Housing Delivery in South Africa**

During the apartheid era in South Africa, people were living in poverty with no basic needs fulfilled like housing, land, clean water, employment etc. These problems were mainly created by lack of coherent national policies. [Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1994, 22]

In trying to address the problems due to the lack of policies, the ANC came up with the RDP Policy Framework in 1994. There are five key programmes or objectives, and meeting the basic need of the people, is one of them. The basic need of the people refers to jobs, land, housing, water, transport etc. As mentioned that housing is one of the basic needs, one of the Reconstruction and Development Programme's objectives is to build houses for the poor, free of charge (low cost houses) and the targeted number was to build over one million low cost houses over a period of five years in both the rural and urban areas. [Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1994, 7-8]

While the Reconstruction and Development Programme emphasises that housing is one of the basic needs of the people, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which is the Supreme Law of the whole country, covers housing in the Bill of Rights. According to the Constitution, housing is a fundamental human right and Government must through legislative and other measures, ensures that the

resources are available to achieve this Right. [The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, 12]

The Reconstruction and Development Programme further outlined measures, which can be of assistance to Government when it addresses the backlog of housing in South Africa. Those are legislative measures, administrative measures, land tenure and subsidies.

[Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1994, 24-25]

The National Department of Housing was established immediately after the 1994 democratic elections to address the backlog of housing in the country. As already mentioned, Government can address the backlog through legislative measures, the national Department of Housing introduced a White Paper on the housing policy and strategy for South Africa in 1995. The purpose of this policy framework was to strengthen the partnership between various tiers of government and the communities in terms of the process of delivering houses to the poor. [South African White Paper on Housing, 1995, 4]

Housing delivery cannot succeed without money and the National Government has the financial responsibility whereas the Provincial and Local governments have the facilitative role of delivering houses. South Africa, in the past, during the apartheid era suffered the consequences of lack of availability and accessibility of credit for housing. The National Housing Finance Corporation was established in 1996 to assist in addressing the backlog of housing through the financing of the process of housing, at a wholesale price.

[National Housing Finance Corporation Annual Report, 1997, 6]

As already mentioned, the Provincial Governments have the facilitative role of delivering houses to the people. The Northern Province also established its Department of Housing on 1 July 1996. Initially, housing was merged with other Departments, like Local Government and Traditional Affairs and their function was not treated as a priority.

Immediately after the establishment of a new Department of Housing on 1 July 1996 in the Province, the process of delivering low cost houses, was effective, but with problems along the way. The Province was supposed to have delivered 86 000 low cost houses as a contribution towards meeting the national target and also in addressing its own housing backlog within a period of five years (from 1994-1999). The Department established the Provincial Housing Board as a statutory body to consider and approve applications for housing subsidies, as well as to advise the MEC on matters pertaining to housing. [Northern Province Housing Report, 1997, 2]

The Northern Province did not manage to reach its target within a specified period and this shows that there were problems along the way. The research intends to identify those problems and also how to address them.

## **2.2. Types of provincial housing programmes**

The following are the programmes drawn up by the Provincial Department of Housing to address its backlog of housing and also contributing to the national target:

- (i) project linked subsidies
- (ii) individual subsidies
- (iii) institutional subsidies
- (iv) hostel redevelopment



- (v) consolidation subsidies
- (vi) relocation assistance
- (vii) extended benefit subsidies

The research will concentrate on one programme, which is the Project Linked Subsidy Scheme. This scheme, is made available to the developers, who undertake to effect the approved projects. The amount of subsidy paid to the developer is R15 000 per house.

The total amount is paid in five progress payments, which are as follow:

- (i) engineering fees
- (ii) town planning and land survey fees
- (iii) services and land cost fees
- (iv) transfer fees
- (v) top structure fees

[Report on the executive summary of National Housing Programmes, 1997,1-2]

### **2.3. Procedure for project- linked subsidy**

According to the report on the executive summary of the National Housing Programmes [1997,3], the community can initiate a project on its own or through the developer and make an application to the Provincial Housing Board. The land to be developed should be identified and all stakeholders should be part of the whole process. The application should include the social compact agreement, which is a document signed by the community and the developer. The document must identify the housing needs and outline the manner in which other stakeholders will be involved in the project.



Once the above process has been completed, the application is submitted to the Housing Board for assessment, based on the following criteria: social compact, housing needs, planning and design, compatibility and environment impact, community self-management and sustainability of the project.

If the Board is satisfied, it will approve the project and appoint the developer and enter into the project subsidy agreement with him or her. Payments to the developer will be made according to the progress payment outlined above. [Report on the executive summary of the National Housing Programme, 1997, 4]

## **C. CHAPTER 3**

### **3. FINDINGS**

#### **3.1. Profile of four sample housing projects in the central region of the Northern Province**

##### 3.1.1 Matamanyane Housing Project

According to the Housing Agreement Report [1997,4] Matamanyane Housing Project is found at Moletjie, in a village called Matamanyane, which is a typical rural village situated in the Magisterial District of Seshego, about 30 km north of Pietersburg. The project was initiated by the community, which approached Van Tonder, Botha & Lindeque Consulting Engineers, in 1994, to apply on their behalf to the Provincial Department for a Project Linked Housing Subsidy Scheme in their village.

The project was approved in October 1995 by the Provincial Department of Housing and Water Affairs. Van Tonder, Botha & Lindeque Consulting Engineering Company was appointed as a Developer. The agreement between stakeholders was signed in November 1997. According to the contract signed, 420 units were approved for construction and the sizes thereof were 40 square meters. [Northern Province Status Quo Report on Housing, 2000, 1]]

Matamanyane Housing Project is a unique project, in that houses are built in people's yards. The materials used are quantum clay bricks and IBR roof sheeting. The supply of water is through boreholes, which are connected to a concrete reservoir. Pit toilets were recommended as a method of sanitation.

[Northern Province Housing Agreement Report, 1997, 4]

### 3.2. Findings based on the methods of data collection

#### 3.2.1 Questionnaires:

Data was collected through questionnaires and the findings were as follow:

- (i) The project started in November 1997 and the developer was Van Tonder Botha.
- (ii) The project co-ordinator was Mr P.S. Botha and the steering committee was composed of all structures in the community e.g. SANCO, TLC, Women's League Youth League, the developer etc.
- (iii) The number of houses approved were 420 and only 116 were completed at the end of 1998 and the rest were not yet started due to the problem with the Induna who refused to allocate the site for development.
- (iv) The houses are 40 square meters with three rooms.
- (v) There is a water supply and pit toilets, but no electricity.
- (vi) Streets are gravel.
- (vii) Material used are quantum clay bricks and IBR roof sheeting
- (viii) No Deeds of Grants were given to occupants.
- (ix) The project is not complete.

#### 3.2.2. Physical observations and interviews

A site visit to Matamanyane Housing Project was done on 28 September 2000. During the visit an interview was conducted with representatives of the Steering Committee, who gave a profile of the project and it is the same as what is highlighted above.

Problems encountered by stakeholders include a soured relationship with the Traditional Leader who is presently refusing to release a site, in order for the project to be completed. He even went to the extent of encouraging people to connect water pipes illegally and this resulted in a water shortage. Several meetings were held by all stakeholders to normalise the situation, but to no avail.

Immediately after the interview, an inspection of the project was done and occupants of the houses were also interviewed. Several photos were taken as shown on Annexure 1.

The following were my observations:

- (i) The project is not complete
- (ii) The houses are 40 square meters with three small rooms, which can only accommodate a bed and not even a wardrobe.
- (iii) Houses are built in the yards of the people involved.
- (iv) Streets are gravelled and access roads to these houses have been upgraded.
- (v) There is water supply and also pit toilets
- (vi) No electricity supply
- (vii) No transfer of ownership of houses to occupants
- (viii) Dwellers are happy with the houses because they said during the recent floods in the Province, most of the houses were washed away, but the ones built by Government remained standing. They only complained about the size of the houses and suggested that they be larger in future.

### 3.1.2. Mankweng Unit D Housing Project

Mankweng Unit D Housing Project, is found in an area called Mankweng, which is a township situated in the Central Region, about 30 km east of Pietersburg. The project was initiated by the community due to the problem of squatting. It was approved by the Department of Housing and Water Affairs, who appointed Deter De Venter as the developer. A number of 1300 Housing units were approved of, for construction and the size is 42 square meters. The project started in 1999. [Northern Province Status Quo Report on Housing, 2000, 1]

### 3.3. Findings based on the methods of data collection

#### 3.3.1. Questionnaires:

Questionnaires were given out to stakeholders and answers to the questions were as follow:

- (i) The project started in 1999 and 1300 units were approved of, for construction but only 325 are completed.
- (ii) The sizes of the houses is 42 square meters and the material used is satisfactory
- (iii) Houses are built in the yards where people were squatting
- (iv) There is an adequate supply of water, electricity and a sewerage system
- (v) Streets are gravelled
- (vi) The relationship among stakeholders was very healthy, except with the Transitional Local Council, because of its political division.

- (vii) Transfer of ownership to occupants was not done, because the proclamation and registration of the area has not yet been completed
- (viii) Problems encountered were: some people had to be removed from their yards when the project started; some refused, and the connection of water and sewerage pipes was very difficult.
- (ix) Some people gave themselves RDP sites even though they do not qualify
- (x) The project is not complete due to the budget constraint faced by the Department
- (xi) Payment of services is not done, because no meter installation was done, due to the suspending of the project.

### 3.3.2. Physical observations and interviews

A site visit to Mankweng Housing Project was done on 28 September 2000. Before the inspection of the houses, a personal interview was conducted with Mr Abby Mawela, a member of Mankweng Unit D Steering Committee, who raised their serious concern about on the suspending of the project, as there was pressure from the people who did not receive the houses.

Their concerned suggestions were the following:

- (i) Money for the subsidy needs to be increased, so that bigger structures could be built.
- (ii) The size of the yards should be increased to give space for extension if a person wishes to do so.
- (iii) The Department should push the issue of the budget through very quickly, in order for the project to continue.

After an interview, several houses were inspected and occupants were also interviewed.

The following were my findings:

- (i) The project is not complete.
- (ii) The houses are 42 square meters with three rooms and toilets inside.
- (iii) There is a supply of water, electricity and a sewerage system.
- (iv) There are no proper routes and streets, because some squatters refused to be relocated to make way for the construction of their dwelling. As a result, some households do not have services like water and a sewerage system.

### 3.1.3. Puraspan Housing Project

Puraspan Housing Project is situated in a portion of a farm called Puraspan in the District of Dendron- Bochum, 110 km North-West of Pietersburg. The project was approved by the Provincial Department of Housing in December 1994 and the agreement between stakeholders was signed in June 1996. Steenkamp Hattingh & Haupt was appointed as the developer for the project.

[Northern Province Status Quo Report on Housing, 2000, 1]

According to the contract 901 houses were approved for construction in stands which were already occupied. The sizes thereof being 36 square meters. Pit latrines were recommended as a method of sanitation. Water was to be supplied through standpipes in the streets. Bulk electricity was available. The project is on a state owned land and the leasehold type of tenure was recommended.

[Northern Province Housing Task Team Report, 1997, 3]



### 3.2 Findings based on the methods of data collection

#### 3.2.1 Questionnaires:

As a method of data collection, questionnaires were distributed to stakeholders and the following are the findings:

- (i) Puraspan Housing Project started in 1997 and has not been completed, due to the fact that Steenkamp Hattingh & Haupt had financial problems, to such an extent that part of the company was bought by Builder's Market and the issue is still being handled by the Department.
- (ii) The project co-ordinator was Mr Steenkamp.
- (iii) The Steering Committee is composed of representatives of all structures within the community i.e. SANCO, the TLC, the Developer, Women's League, Youth League, etc.
- (iv) The project comprises of three phases and the number of houses approved for construction were 901 and out of that number only 474 houses were completed.
- (v) The size of the houses is 36 square meters.
- (vi) There is a supply of water and there are pit toilets on all the completed and uncompleted sites.
- (vii) There is a supply of electricity.
- (viii) Streets are gravelled.
- (ix) The relationship with stakeholders was very good, except with the Traditional Leader who was influencing people to reject the project.
- (x) Transfer of ownership of the houses was not done. Negotiations with Government is still on.



### 3.2.2. Physical observations and interviews

Puraspan Housing Project was visited on 29 September 2000. An interview with Mr Dan Maoto who is a member of the Steering Committee was conducted. He gave a background of the project and further highlighted problems encountered during the process. The first one was with the Traditional Leader who was not supportive to the project, to the effect that he opened a court case complaining that his land is being taken away. He lost the case as it was found that the title deed of that piece of land belongs to Government.

The other problem was with the developer as he started manufacturing poor quality bricks, which did not meet the SABS-requirements. An agreement was then reached between stakeholders and the developer to plaster all the walls of the interior and exterior of the houses in order to meet the SABS- standard.

Mr Dan Maoto further highlighted that negotiations are still conducted in terms of the payment of services, because it had not received the blessing of the Traditional Leader, who consequently incited people not to pay.

Despite the problems encountered with the Traditional Leader, Mr Maoto is determined to see the project revived, because people are seriously in need of the houses. Some are even staying in Government tents, which is not healthy. During rainy days, water easily leaks in.

After an interview with Mr Maoto, houses were inspected and the occupants were also interviewed.

The following were my findings:

- (i) The houses are 36 square meters, plastered inside and outside and not partitioned inside.
- (ii) Some houses were partitioned inside but at own expense.
- (iii) There is a supply of water, pit toilets and electricity.
- (iv) Streets are gravelled.
- (v) There are some people who are staying in Government tents and still waiting for the houses and the conditions in those tents are perilous. During rainy days, water is easily leaks in.
- (vi) The project is not yet completed.
- (vii) Occupants of the houses are happy and mentioned that “half a loaf is better than nothing”.

#### 3.1.4. Avon Housing Project

Avon Housing Project is situated in a rural village called Avon in Bochum, 110 km from Pietersburg. The project was approved in April 1996 by the Provincial Department of Housing. Steenkamp Hattingh & Haupt was appointed as a developer. A total of 1903 housing units were approved of for construction and the sizes thereof being 36 square meters. When the construction started, it was found that out of 1903 approved units, 109 stands were not suitable for residential purposes. They were allocated as open space. The remaining number of units to be constructed was 1794.

[Northern Province Housing Task Team Report, 1997, 4]

### 3.2. Findings based on the methods of data collection.

#### 3.2.1. Questionnaires

Questionnaires were distributed to stakeholders and the findings are as follow:

- (i) The project started in 1997 and is not yet completed, due to the budget constraint faced by the Department.
- (ii) The Steering Committee was established and composed of all organised structures in the community, including a representative of the Developer's company.
- (iii) The project is composed of seven phases and the approved number of units to be constructed were 1903. Only 960 units were completed in phase 1-3 and no construction took place in phase 4-7.
- (iv) The size of the houses was initially 36 square meters and later changed to 40 square meters after an agreement with the Developer.
- (v) There is a supply of water
- (vi) Electricity was supplied in 1993.
- (vii) Streets are gravelled.
- (viii) The relationship with stakeholders was very good, with the exception of the Transitional Local Council, which was sometimes taking decisions without consulting the community.
- (ix) No transfer of Deeds of Grant.
- (x) Problems encountered with the developer was the manufacturing of poor quality bricks, which do not meet the SABS standard. The agreement was then reached between all stakeholders to plaster all the houses on the interior and exterior.

### 3.2.2. Physical observations and interviews

A visit to Avon housing project was done on 29 September 2000. During the visit an interview was conducted with members of the Steering Committee; Messrs Donald Ratladi and Phillimon Morata. They gave an overview of the project and further complained of shortage of water due to the broken machines, which supply water to the reservoir. They further highlighted that there was a misunderstanding with the Developer because of the poor quality bricks he was manufacturing, thereby not meeting the SABS requirements. The problem was however solved when an agreement was reached for all the houses to be plastered on the interior and exterior.

One other problem was encountered with members of the Transitional Local Council who used to take decisions without consulting Stakeholders. An example was given where Transitional Local Council agreed with the Department to transfer money for uncompleted houses to some other areas like Mankweng. The Steering Committee is determined to see the project revived and the community benefiting.

After an interview, a site visit to the project was done and the occupants were also interviewed. Photos were taken (see annexure 6)

The following were my observations:

- (i) Houses are built in people's yards.
- (ii) Houses plastered in the interior and exterior but are not partitioned.
- (iii) No supply of toilets.
- (iv) Streets are gravelled.
- (v) There is a serious shortage of water, because the taps are dry.
- (vi) The project has not been completed.

A visit to the Department of Local Government and Housing took place on 6 October 2000. An interview with Mr Madima T.J, Director of Housing Administration in the Department of Local Government and Housing was conducted to get his views on the reasons for the slow pace of housing delivery in the Northern Province and also the sizes of the houses built. He agreed to the fact that the four sample projects are among the non-performing projects in the Province. They were approved four years back and they are not yet completed todate. The reasons of their non-performance differs from one project to the other.

Mr Madima further highlighted that immediately after the recent floods which affected some areas in the Province, the Department took a decision of relocating funds of non-performing projects to disaster affected areas and housing projects like Puraspan and Avon are amongst them.

His comment on the issue of the sizes of the houses was that most of the projects, which were signed five years back had serious problems because the Provincial Housing Board was still on a learning curve and it could not negotiate bigger structures with the Developers.

He cited the following as the causes of delay for housing delivery in the Province:

(i) Vague contracts

The contracts signed by the Department and the Developers had loopholes to the effect that the completion date of the projects were not included and as such it was very difficult for the Department to put pressure on the developers.

(ii) Political differences

He highlighted that South Africa is a democratic country, which is composed of different political parties and as such when they differ, development projects are always used as the battle- fields. Their differences influenced communities and cause a division thereof and these have affected many housing projects.

(iii) Conflict between local structures and the traditional leaders.

In terms of the relationship between the local structures and the traditional leaders, he mentioned that it is difficult to get the two parties agreeing to each and everything. Most of the rural housing projects do not get a blessing from the Traditional Leaders due to power struggle. In most cases the Traditional Leaders complain of being left out in the process and this lead to lots of tensions and division among the community.

Mr Madima cited an example of Matamanyane housing project, which is not complete due to the fact that the traditional leader is in locker head with members of the Steering Committee. The project has stopped because the traditional leader refuses to release sites for building and even went to an extent of influencing some members of the community who do not qualify for the houses to connect water pipes illegally and refuse to pay for water.

He also made mentioned of administrative procedure, which were so complicated in such a way that officials were unable to act timeously when a problem related to any housing project arises. Transport and shortage of staff in the section of housing administration were cited as



examples, which resulted in a situation where monitoring and inspection of the projects were very difficult to be carried out.

### 3.3. Major obstacles inhibiting the delivery of houses in the Northern Province

Based on the findings, all the projects visited, had problems in terms of the tempo of delivery and the sizes of the houses constructed. If one could check the period when the projects started, even to date not one has been completed. This confirms that there are problems, which need serious attention.

The issue of the size of the houses built and also the slow delivery was also a concern of the former MEC for Housing, Mr Edgar Mushwana. On 9 July 1997, he called a meeting to address the senior management of the Department on those two issues. In that meeting a task team was established to investigate the introduction of minimum housing standards; to compile an audit on all approved projects; and also to provide legal opinion on the options available to review non-performing or under-performing projects.

[Northern Province Housing Task Team Report, 1997, 2]

According to the findings, sizes of the houses constructed differs from one project to the other and the sizes of some of the projects were enlarged after agreement with the developer. As that involved money, some of the benefits were reduced to cater for that. The reason why there was no uniformity in terms of the sizes of the houses is that there was no housing standards specified in the contracts and this led to a situation where the developers determined their own sizes. The reason why projects took long to be completed was that some contracts had a completion date, whereas others do not have and as

such it was very difficult for the Department to force the Developers to expedite the date of delivery.

[Northern Province Housing Task Team Report, 1997, 8]

The following are other factors, which are the major obstacles inhibiting the delivery of houses:

(i) Lack of policies

The Department of Housing operated for a long time without policies and regulations. This emanated from the merging of their function with other Departments, like Local Government and Traditional Affairs. As a result housing was not given top priority.

Projects were approved by the Provincial Housing Board, which was established on 17 March 1995 in terms of the Housing Arrangement Act no 115 of 1993. Because of lack of regulations, the Department was involved in the process of delivering low cost houses, through the Board, by approving the projects and also paying the Developers. The rate of delivery of the houses and the size of the houses was dictated by the Developers and that is where the problem of the slow pace of delivery and the construction of small houses, started.

[Report on the New Operational Procedure for Housing Development in the Northern Province, 1997, 1-2]

From 1994-1998, the Department was operating on the basis of the National Housing Policy and it was not catering for rural areas. The Provincial Housing Act was passed by the Legislature of the Northern Province in March 1999 after which most of the projects started moving. [Legislature of the Northern Province, 1999,3]



The objective of the Act is to promote and facilitate housing development within the Province, establish the Northern Province Housing Development Board and the Northern Province Housing Development Fund. The act also set out powers and duties of the MEC for housing with regard to establishing housing programmes.

[Northern Province Housing Act, 1999, 2]

(ii) Administrative procedures

There are various administrative steps to be followed by the Department for a project to be approved of and implemented. Those procedures are so complicated that they sometimes cause a delay to the implementation of projects. For each and every project to be approved, the applicant must first involve all stakeholders like the community, local structures and the Traditional Leader if the project is to be implemented in rural areas.

The application must then go through the Provincial Housing Board for approval. Immediately after the approval, the section 239 certificate must be obtained and the area concerned should be proclaimed before planning and surveying.

[Progress Report on the State of Housing Delivery in the Northern Province, 1997, 7]

(iii) Planning and surveying of the projects

This is also one of the delaying factors in most of the housing projects. The Northern Province is predominantly rural and a greater portion of land is not surveyed and no proper planning was made and as such housing development takes a long time.

[Progress Report on the state of housing delivery in the Northern Province, 1997, 7]

(iv) Institutional Capacity

From 1994-1996 Housing was not a department on its own, but it was merged with other departments like Land, Local Government and Traditional Affairs. As such there was no capacity to take full charge and control of the process. Because of this merge, developers took an advantage of exploiting the whole process.

[Report to the Standing Select Committee on Local Government and Housing, 1996, 2]

(v) Land Tenure System

Land, is one of the most serious stumbling blocks to Housing development. Most of the projects cannot start due to this problem. As already mentioned, the Northern Province is predominantly rural and as such the Department of Housing has to first deal with the issue of land tenure before the implementation of the approved projects.

A greater portion of land in the Province is in the trust of communities under the Traditional Leaders and the authority to release that land vests with the Minister of Land Affairs. The process to be followed is too long because tribal resolution must be passed and some Traditional Leaders are reluctant to be involved in the process in fear that by doing so they will forfeit their powers.

[Report to the Portfolio Committee on Local Government and Housing, 2000, 18]

(vi) Community participation and involvement

The Constitution and the RDP emphasised that all development projects should be “people driven”. This simply means that people must be involved in each and every stage of the development projects.

This is then the cause of delays because the process of consultation and negotiation could drag on for a long time, especially in rural areas where most people are illiterate.

[Report to the Standing Select Committee on Local Government and Housing, 1996, 3]

(vii) Lack of co-ordination among stakeholders

There is no harmony amongst stakeholders when it comes to teamwork. Everybody likes to be seen as the leading role player and this led to tensions and divisions among stakeholders. In the case of rural projects, Traditional Leaders end up pulling out of the process complaining that they were not consulted when some of the decisions were taken and this had serious impact on the projects. In some instances, there is lack of co-ordination among company directors fighting for ownership of a company and thereby resulting in court interdicts. [Report to the Portfolio Committee on Local Government and Housing, 2000, 18]

## **D. CHAPTER 4**

### **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In line with what the Constitution and the Reconstruction and Development Programme stated, one can conclude by saying, housing is really a fundamental human right and everyone has a right to an adequate shelter. The government must ensure that through its programmes and resources, poor people are provided with quality houses.

The National Department of Housing has introduced good policies and programmes but the problem lies with the implementation process. The delivery of low cost houses to the people is a very good initiative by the department of housing but delivery on the ground is a very serious problem.

It is a reality that the slow pace of delivery of low cost houses to the people is caused by lack of co-ordination among stakeholders as a result of their roles, which are not clear. Occupants of houses are also not satisfied with the sizes of the top structure.

Based on the findings in chapter 3 of the report, the following recommendations are regarded as possible solutions to the problems, which hamper the delivery of houses and also the improvement of the sizes thereof:

- (i) The contracts signed between the Department and the Developer should be sharpened to close all the loopholes. The starting and the completion date of the project should be clearly stated to avoid the situation whereby the developers exploit the

whole process. The sizes and material used should also be clearly stated. The main reason why most of the projects took a long time to be completed and that others are not yet completed, is that their contracts were based on good will. There is a saying that good will does not exist in the world of money.

- (ii) The roles of all stakeholders should be clearly defined and every party should play its role because this is an area, which contributes to lack of co-ordination among stakeholders.
- (iii) The Consultation process should be improved in order for the community to understand the whole development process and therefore not cause unnecessary delays.
- (iv) Transitional Local Councils are the leading role players in most of the development projects. As such they should be capacitated to enable them to take decisions as quick as possible and not wait for the Department to act. If TLC's were capacitated, most of the problems in the sampled projects shouldn't have dragged for so long without solutions.
- (v) Monitoring and inspection mechanisms, especially from the side of the Department, should be improved. Inspection of the projects should be done frequently in order to avoid a situation whereby the developer does not comply with the agreements in the contract. For example at Puraspan and Avon, the developer used bricks which did not comply with the SABS standards, because the inspection process was not effective. That was only realised after a long time when hundreds of houses were already built and it was impossible for the Developer to demolish the houses and start afresh.

- (vi) Communities must be empowered to understand the whole development process. Training must be offered to them in order to understand their role and avoid being stumbling blocks to the whole process. The RDP emphasised that all development projects should be “people driven”. If people can effectively be involved in each and every stage of the process, most of the problems can be solved.
  
- (vii) The Department of Land Affairs must take the issue of land proclamation very serious because this hampers development. Housing projects take long to take off from the ground, due to the problem of the deed registration system.

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**F. ANNEXURES**

Annexure 1: Matamanyane house

Annexure 2: Mankweng Unit D house

Annexure 3: Puraspan house

Annexure 4: Puraspan tent

Annexure 5: Pit toilets in Puraspan

Annexure 6: Avon house

Annexure 7: Questionnaire

## ANNEXURE 1: MATAMANYANE

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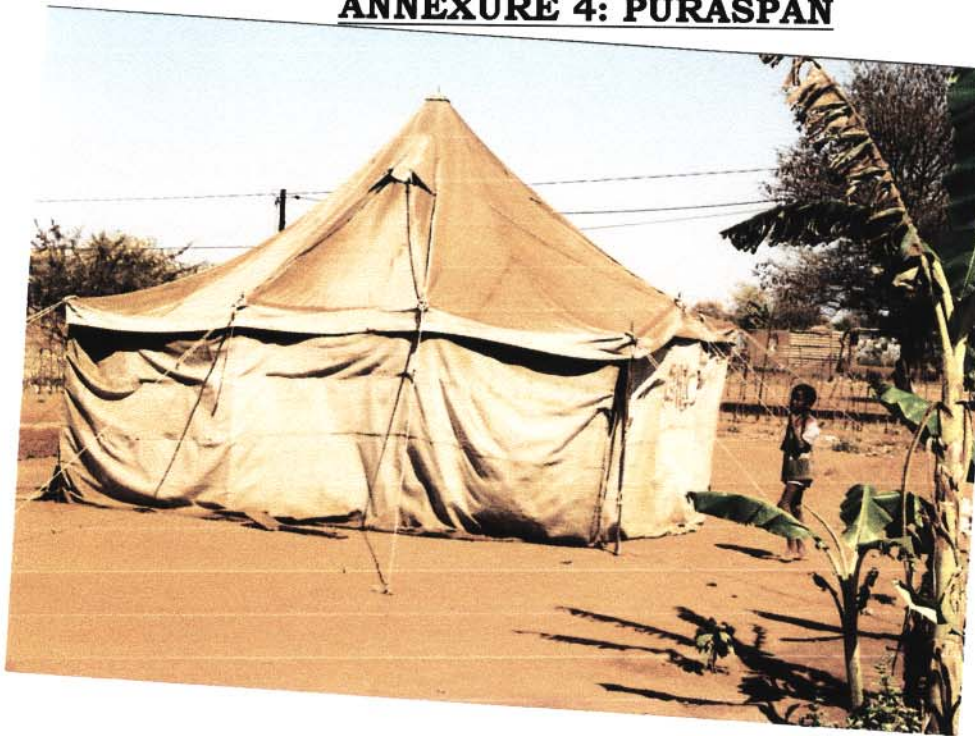
**ANNEXURE 2: MANKWENG UNIT D**



**ANNEXURE 3: PURASPAN**



**ANNEXURE 4: PURASPAN**



**ONE OF THE GOVERNMENT TENTS IN WHICH A NUMBER OF FAMILIES ARE STAYING, WHILE WAITING FOR A LOW COST HOUSES**



**ANNEXURE 5: TOILETS IN PURASPAN**



**ANNEXURE 6: AVON**





**ANNEXURE 7**

**LOW COST HOUSING DELIVERY IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCE  
WITH REFERENCE TO THE CENTRAL REGION**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

1	Name of the Project	
2	Area/Location	
3	Project Co-ordinator/ Steering Committee	
4	Name of the Developer	
5	Number and Sizes of Houses	
6	State of Houses and Materials used	..... ..... .....
7	Supply of water and electricity	
8	Conditions of streets	..... .....
9	Relationship between Role Players	..... ..... .....
10	Transfer of ownership/Deeds of grand	
11	Problems encountered	..... ..... .....
12	Major obstacles towards housing delivery	..... .....
13	Completion date	
14	Perceptions/ Suggestions	..... .....