

Duma welcomes the budget vote delivered by the Minister of Human Settlements, Thembu Simelane and announces a groundbreaking reduction of stalled housing projects from 68 to 15 as guided by the Minister.

Public and media statement by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements, Siboniso Duma

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National Assembly, Cape Town: Today we are attending the budget vote for the Department of Human Settlements as presented by Minister Thembu Simelane.

We are encouraged by the fact that the Minister, in her speech, supported our efforts to work with traditional leaders to make land available to build houses for the victims of floods.

We welcome the Minister's clear articulation on the need to deal decisively with poor workmanship associated with the construction of houses.

Importantly, we are going to move with speed, as guided by the Minister, to use the cutting-edge technology to deliver housing projects efficiently.

We will ensure the modernization of the human settlements digital infrastructure—to manage the application of different housing programs, management of beneficiary lists, processing of complaints, and providing feedback to citizens in relation to the progress of the construction of houses.

In line with today's Minister's guidance, we will continue to deal decisively with prolonged construction of housing projects in different corners of the province. People can't wait any longer.

For instance, we have reduced the number of blocked housing projects from 68 to 15 projects.

In particular, in our interaction with the Minister, we have briefed her about progress we have made in addressing challenges around Thubalethu in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality and Shayamoya and Mnyangweni Rural Housing Projects—both in Inkosi Langalibalele Local Municipality under uThukela District.

The people of Ward 16 in Inkosi Langalibalele Local Municipality have eagerly awaited the construction of 500 houses in the Shayamoya Rural Housing Project for four and a half years.

During this time, only 268 foundations, 262 wall plates, and 178 completed houses with rainwater harvesting systems have been delivered.

As the Department, we have taken over the developer status of the project from the municipality because of the delays.

We have approved just over R60 million for the remaining work to be completed by a new service provider, Mandlethu Projects.

We have also dealt decisively with the implementing agent's poor performance in the Mnyangweni Rural Housing Project in Wards 1 and 3.

We have appointed Lingela Holdings as the new service provider to undertake the remaining construction work.

In addition, we wish to highlight the following progress we have made in unlocking blocked projects in four districts:

1. Thubalethu Informal Settlement Upgrade Housing Project in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality under King Cetshwayo District: The Department has allocated R61 million for the installation of bulk water services and another R19 million for the construction of water infrastructure in the area.

2. Mbulwane Area H Housing Project in Alfred Duma Local Municipality under uThukela District: The Department has allocated R9 million for the upgrading of the sewer pump station.
3. Ncotshane Rural Housing Project in oPhongolo Local Municipality in Zululand District: The Department has allocated R1.5 million towards the assessment of the installation of internal services, which was delaying construction.
4. Madadeni H39 Housing Project in Newcastle Local Municipality in AmaJuba District: The Department resorted to unlocking the installation of bulk services. A total of R164 444.23 was utilized from the Municipal Housing Operating Account (MHOA) funding towards bulk services. The process of appointing a service provider, who will conduct new beneficiary administration and identify those that were allocated in areas where bulk services should be running, has commenced.

In conclusion, as previously reported, as the Department, we have spent more than R1.1 billion providing bulk services, which is actually a municipal function.

We will no longer fold our arms when municipalities abdicate their responsibilities and disadvantage people in the process.

Ends

Enquiries

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