



SOCIAL COMPACT ON MAINSTREAMING INNOVATIVE BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES (IBTs)

For the Human Settlements Sector in South Africa

3 - 4 February 2026

NASREC Expo Centre, Johannesburg



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PREFACE



Periods of challenges and significant disruption inspire invention and novelty, inspire action, adaptability and putting innovations in focus. Our policy frameworks place greater consideration towards government's responsiveness to the Constitutional mandate, ensuring realisation of the right of access to adequate housing. This IBT Summit is an outcome of an inclusive sector wide participation which sought to maximise our collective efforts and expansive participation across the human settlements value chain.

We, the undersigned representatives of national, provincial and local government; state-owned entities; regulators and certifying bodies; the financial and insurance sectors; built environment professional institutions; industry, innovators and system owners; research and higher education institutions; civil society organisations; community-based organisations; youth formations; and international partners, convened under the leadership of the Department of Human Settlements at the Innovative Building Technologies (IBT) Summit of 3 - 4 February 2026, hereby enter into this Social Compact.

This Social Compact arises from extensive pre-summit consultations across the human settlements value chain and reflects a shared recognition that South Africa's persistent housing backlog, climate vulnerability, spatial inequality, and fiscal constraints require a decisive shift in how human settlements are planned, financed, regulated, built, and sustained.

IBTs- appropriately regulated, financed, socially accepted and locally embedded - offer a strategic opportunity to accelerate delivery of sustainable human settlements, improve quality, enhance climate resilience, reduce lifecycle costs, industrialise construction and expand inclusive economic participation.

This Social Compact represents a collective commitment to move IBTs from the margins of pilots and demonstrations into the mainstream of South Africa's human settlements system.

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MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

We stand on the shoulders of South Africa's pioneering housing accords - from the Botshabelo Accord's foundational commitment to equitable delivery in our own Free State. When we look back at the Botshabelo Accord (1994) states that:

"Government strives for the establishment of viable, socially and economically integrated communities which are situated in areas allowing convenient access to economic opportunities, health, educational, and social amenities and within which South Africa's people will have access on a progressive basis to:

· a permanent residential structure with secure tenure, ensuring privacy and providing adequate protection against the elements; and

· potable water, adequate sanitary facilities, including waste disposal and domestic electricity supply."

The IBT Social Compact draws directly from that partnership model. Where it advances the approach is in applying those partnerships to IBT-specific delivery, enabling faster, more resilient and scalable housing solutions that respond to today's pressures, not those of 1994.

South Africa confronts a myriad of structural challenges: a growing human settlements backlog; increased frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters; rapid urbanisation and informal settlement growth; ageing infrastructure; and constrained public finances. Conventional construction methods alone are insufficient to meet the scale, scope, speed, affordability and sustainability required in this context.

Globally, governments are increasingly adopting IBTs - such as modular and off-site construction, advanced timber systems, low-carbon materials, 3D printing, and performance-based building systems - to respond to similar pressures. International experience highlights the importance of enabling regulation, robust standards, reliable performance data, integrated financing, skilled workforces, and strong community engagement to ensure successful adoption.

In South Africa, IBTs have demonstrated potential but remain constrained by regulatory fragmentation, limited financing, weak market confidence, insufficient skills pipelines, uneven municipal capacity, and low levels of social acceptance. This Social Compact responds directly to these challenges by establishing a shared framework for coordination, accountability and implementation.





THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL COMPACT DEVELOPMENT

The Social Compact was developed through a structured, inclusive and evidence-informed process, comprising the following:

- A national stakeholder mapping exercise across the IBT value chain;
- Dedicated pre-Summit engagements with seven (7) core stakeholder groupings;
- Provincial consultations to assess readiness, pipeline potential and implementation challenges;
- Targeted engagements with civil society, communities, women and youth formations;
- Technical discussions with regulators, certifiers and financiers; and
- Consolidation of international best practices and emerging global trends in IBT deployment.

Stakeholder Groupings

Government (The Enablers)
The Enablers National, provincial and local government institutions responsible for policy, planning, funding, regulation, disaster management and infrastructure delivery.

Regulators and Certifiers (The Market Catalysts)
Ensure quality and compliance by setting standards, providing certification, and protecting consumers.

Financial and Insurance Sector (The Sustainers)
Mobilise necessary capital and manage associated risks through investments and insurance.

Industry and Innovators (The Solution Providers)
Design, manufacture, develop and deliver market-ready solutions across the built environment, driven by system owners, developers, contractors and industry associations.

Science, Academia and Skills Institutions (The Knowledge Base)
Drive innovation and learning via research, testing, and skills development programmes.

Built Environment Implementers and Professional Bodies (The Practitioners)
Ensure the effective translation of policy, standards and innovation into safe, compliant and quality human settlements through planning, design, construction, oversight and implementation across the built environment value chain.

Civil Society, Communities and Youth (The Social Anchor)
Represent diverse community interests, including NGOs, cooperatives, and organised labour groups.

PURPOSE OF THE SOCIAL COMPACT

The purpose of this Social Compact is to:

Mainstream IBTs within South Africa's human settlements system;

Align policy, regulation, finance, research, skills and implementation across the value chain;

Establish shared commitments, roles and accountability mechanisms;

Translate Summit deliberations into coordinated, post-Summit, evidence-based programmes of action;

Build public trust, social acceptance and community ownership of IBT solutions; and

Position IBTs as a core instrument for sustainable, resilient and inclusive human settlements.

This Social Compact reflects shared intent and mutual accountability, in line with institutional mandates and relevant laws and policies.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This Social Compact is underpinned by the following principles:

Collaboration and Co-creation:

Shared ownership across sectors, spheres of government and communities.

Evidence-Based Action:

Decisions informed by research, testing, monitoring and evaluation, reporting and demonstrated performance.

Regulatory Certainty:

Clear, harmonised and predictable approval and compliance pathways.

Inclusivity and Transformation:

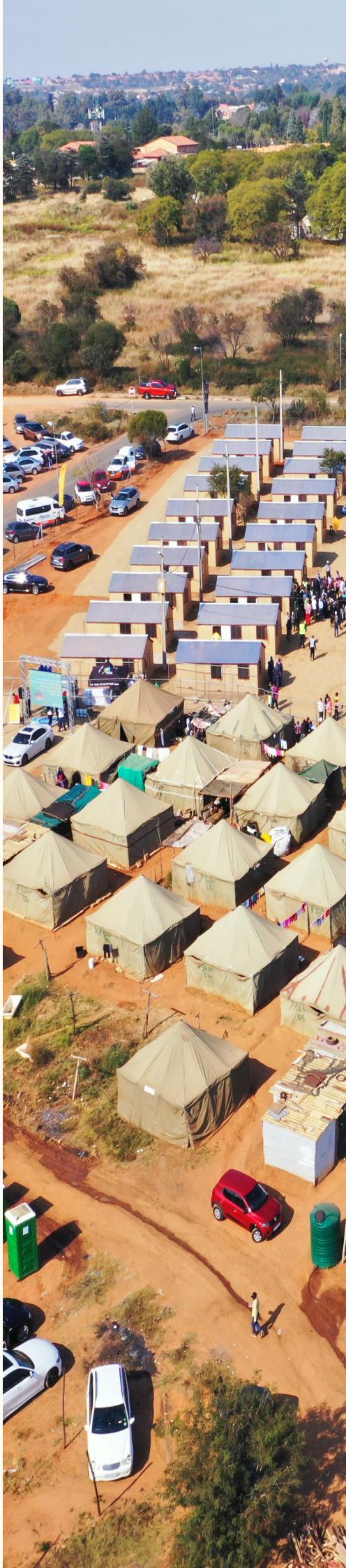
Deliberate empowerment of women, youth, SMMEs, cooperatives and vulnerable groups.

Community-Centred Development:

Meaningful participation of end-users in design, implementation and evaluation.

Sustainability and Climate Resilience:

Alignment with environmental protection, climate adaptation and mitigation goals.



STRATEGIC PILLARS AND COMMITMENTS

PILLAR 1: GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP, POLICY AND PLANNING ALIGNMENT

Government commits to:

Provide coordinated political and administrative leadership, after engagement with professional bodies and key players in the built environment space, to mainstream IBTs across all human settlements programmes;

Integrate IBTs into national, provincial and municipal planning instruments, including housing programmes, disaster recovery frameworks and spatial plans;

Strengthen intergovernmental and interdepartmental coordination on IBTs, including alignment with industrialisation, climate, science and infrastructure policies; and

Provide national guidance on the appropriate application of IBTs in different human settlement typologies, sectors and risk contexts.



PILLAR 2: REGULATORY AND STANDARDS REFORM

Regulators and certifiers commit to:

Harmonise, standardise and streamline certification, enrolment and approval processes for IBTs;

Advance performance-based norms and standards that enable innovation while ensuring safety, quality and durability;

Improve coordination among NHBRC, Agrément SA, SABS, municipalities and other regulatory and certifying authorities;

Strengthen regulatory capacity within provinces and municipalities to assess and approve IBT projects; and

Strengthen post-occupancy monitoring and consumer protection mechanisms.



PILLAR 3: FINANCING, INSURANCE AND RISK DE-RISKING

Government, financiers and insurers commit to:

Support the development of tailored financial instruments and blended finance mechanisms for IBT manufacturing and deployment;

Address market, technical and regulatory risks through shared data, guarantees and pilot programmes;

Support the recognition of certified IBT housing products as financeable and insurable assets;

Align public funding streams, including subsidies and grants, with IBT delivery objectives; and

Mobilise climate and green finance (locally and internationally) to support low-carbon and resilient IBT solutions.

Explore improved alignment and coordination of existing public funding instruments, blended-finance mechanisms and innovation-related grants within approved fiscal frameworks.



PILLAR 4: INDUSTRIALISATION, LOCAL MANUFACTURING AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Industry and system owners commit to:

Expand local manufacturing capacity and resilient supply chains for IBT components;

Improve cost competitiveness, quality assurance and scalability of IBT systems;

Share performance data and lessons learned to strengthen market confidence;

Partner with government on demonstration, pilot and rollout projects; and

Advance localisation, job creation, supplier development and transformation across the IBT ecosystem.

Facilitate technology transfer and capacity building to support local manufacturing, system localisation, skills development and the scaling of IBT solutions within South Africa





PILLAR 5: RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Research and academic institutions commit to:

Advance applied research on IBT materials, systems, climate resilience and lifecycle performance;

Support testing, certification and performance monitoring and evaluation;

Contribute evidence to inform policy, regulation and financing decisions;

Develop curricula, qualifications and skills pipelines aligned with IBT needs; and

Establish national knowledge-sharing platforms and centres of excellence.



PILLAR 6: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

All partners, including professional bodies and trade associations commit to:

Support coordinated skills development programmes for local artisans, emerging contractors, professionals and municipal officials;

Promote targeted training, mentorship and enterprise development for youth, women and emerging enterprises;

Uphold occupational health, safety and quality workmanship across the IBT value chain; and

Expand access to IBT knowledge, training and accreditation pathways beyond registered members with professional bodies and trade associations, to include local artisans, emerging contractors, cooperatives, youth and community-based practitioners;

Enable structured skills transfer, mentorship and on-site learning within IBT project execution, supported by active professional oversight and quality assurance;

Collaborate to reduce cost and access barriers associated with IBT development, testing, certification and professional registration, particularly for local and emerging practitioners; and

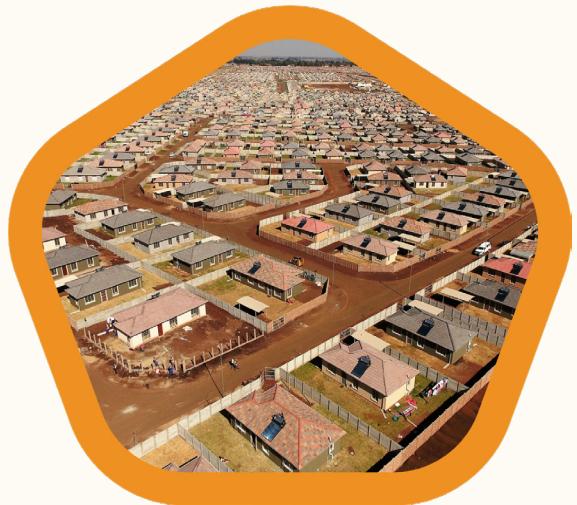
Ensure that professional oversight supports inclusive implementation, with professional bodies actively involved in on-site guidance, quality assurance and knowledge exchange, rather than limited to end-stage regulatory approval.



PILLAR 7: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

Civil society, communities and partners commit to:

- Promote meaningful community participation in IBT project design and implementation;
- Support public education and awareness on IBTs;
- Ensure user-centred design, dignity and cultural appropriateness;
- Strengthen feedback, grievance and accountability mechanisms;
- Advance economic inclusion and transformation across the IBT ecosystem.
- Advance economic inclusion and transformation across the IBT ecosystem.



PILLAR 8: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND LEARNING

International partners commit to:

- Promote global best practices and lessons on IBT deployment;
- Facilitate technology transfer, research collaboration and capacity building;
- Mobilise international finance to support the implementation of IBT inventions and best practices
- Strengthen South Africa's participation in global sustainable construction networks.





IMPLEMENTATION, GOVERNANCE, REPORT- ING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- A Multi-Stakeholder IBT Implementation Forum will be established to oversee implementation of this Compact;
- The Forum will develop proposed action plans, milestones and responsibilities for each pillar within an agreed timeframe;
- The Social Compact will serve in Cabinet for interdepartmental support;
- Following the Summit, the Social Compact will be disseminated through targeted engagements with provinces, metropolitan municipalities and relevant sector stakeholders to promote shared understanding ahead of implementation;
- Progress in implementing the Social Compact will be monitored, evaluated and reported to the Minister of Human Settlements; and
- The Social Compact will remain a living document, subject to periodic review and update in response to emerging evidence, innovation and changing conditions.

COMMITMENT



By signing this Social Compact, we affirm our shared responsibility to move beyond dialogue to delivery. We commit to a coordinated, accountable and evidence-based programme of action that positions IBTs as a cornerstone of South Africa's sustainable, resilient and inclusive human settlements future.

Signed at the Innovative Building Technologies Summit, NASREC Expo Centre, Johannesburg, on the 4th of February 2026.