

## *Housing beneficiaries speak*

**T**o celebrate 20 years of providing houses to South African citizens, the Department of Human Settlements travelled across the country to speak to housing beneficiaries, ordinary South Africans living in various human settlements projects. The idea was to find out how their lives have changed since moving into their new homes. We visited projects in all nine provinces: Cornubia (Durban, KwaZulu Natal), Walmer Link (Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape), Joe Slovo (Cape Town, Western Cape), Lerato Park (Kimberley, Northern Cape), Phomolong (Hennenman, Free State), Klarinet (Emalahleni, Mpumalanga), Rebuile (Groot Marico, North West), Cosmo City (Johannesburg, Gauteng) and Ga-Rena Rental Village (Polokwane, Limpopo).

The developments we visited represent different housing policies adopted by the Department over the years of free low-income housing, social housing and affordable housing. Some of the human settlements such as Lerato Park in Kimberley, Phomolong in Hennenman and Joe Slovo in Cape Town cater mainly for the poorest of the poor who are provided with Government subsidy houses. These human settlements projects are a vast improvement to the humiliating conditions under which our people used to live. For the first time in their lives beneficiaries enjoy basic services such as electricity, water and sanitation.

Ga-Rena Rental Village in Polokwane, mirrors the diversification in the human settlements' sector that started a few years ago, when Government realised that some people did not necessarily want to own their houses. It provides rental housing units for low-income earners, and forms part of Government's social housing initiative. Walmer Link also features a rental housing component

*Bringing The Freed*

as well as the affordable housing wing. Most of the other projects champion Government's new focus on integrated human settlements. They are mixed-income projects that combine housing for households with different income levels, from above-moderate income to very low. The idea behind providing a mixture of housing products within the same neighbourhood is that such settlements contribute towards social integration and community building. True to the spirit of the rainbow nation, they also promote Government's goal of deracialising residential areas. These integrated human settlements projects show that South African housing programmes are not just about the provision of a physical housing structure, but that they rather see this structure as being part of a broader sustainable human settlements infrastructure.

The following pages tell the history of housing in the country from the perspective of a number of housing beneficiaries interviewed earlier this year. We are extremely grateful to all beneficiaries across our nine provinces for opening their homes to us and taking the time to share their stories and housing dreams. While their individual stories are unique, they at the same time also speak for millions of South Africans who have similarly benefitted from a wide range of housing products. They speak of the time when their housing dreams still seemed a far-fetched reality, when they were living in informal settlements far from work and social amenities. We relive their moments of extreme joy upon receiving the keys to their first property, their own homes. Their voices testify to the Department's achievements, but they also express the wish for further improvements of homes and surrounding infrastructures. While there is reason for celebration we should always remember that the journey of building dreams for all South Africans is still ongoing.

# From Charter to Life

# Cornubia





Cornubia, Durban  
KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa



Cornubia, located 25km north of Durban, is a joint venture development between the national Department of Human Settlements, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Human Settlements, eThekweni Municipality and Tongaat Hulett Development.

Cornubia is in line with the vision of integrated human settlements and brings together South Africans of all races and income groups, embracing the idea of a truly transformed South Africa.

The project follows the densification approach and will yield 28 000 homes as well as industrial, commercial and open spaces that can be developed on 1 300 hectares of land over 15 to 25 years. Fifteen thousand of the provided units will be low-income housing. The first 482 units have been completed. In November and December 2013, the first group of beneficiaries moved in and all indications are that they are settling in well in their new environment.

Phase one of the project is set to deliver 2 670 subsidised BNG houses. Phase two of the project will see a broader range of houses built, including double-storey, semi-detached, row, duplex, three to four storey walk-ups and apartments in a village-type environment. The entire development has an estimated construction value of R25-billion over 25 years. There will be schools, clinics and other amenities such as state-of-the-art public transport.

## Gugu Mbulu

### A clear demarcation of space

I'm 21 years old. For many years my family and I lived in Zamani informal settlement before coming to Cornubia. I lived with my siblings – my younger sister (19), brother (11) and son (4). My mother, who was separated from my dad, died in 2010. Life at Zamani was tough. I have bad memories of nights of heavy rain when we huddled together in a corner because the ground under us seemed to be giving way. It wasn't a great place to live and raise children. It was filthy. Some residents threw rubbish everywhere. Not having electricity meant that we could not have a fridge. Perishable food such as fresh milk and meat were out of the question. After cooking, we had to eat and finish all the food. Even now I feel sad thinking about what we had to go through in all the years of living in Zamani.

Through a councillor, we heard about flats that were to be built. It was not clear initially as to who would occupy

them, whether they would be sold or rented out. The councillor told us that his ward had been allocated 10 units for Zamani residents. When I applied for a house in Cornubia, I worked at a supermarket earning R3 500 a month. Often, we would do overtime and the earnings would increase to R3 700 and even R4 800, depending on the month. My application for a house was declined because I was over the R3 500-a-month

settlements such as Zamani. Here, there is a clear demarcation of space ownership. People here are friendly and understanding. They mind their own business and no one is jealous of the other. We are united as a community. Cornubia is ideal for my brother who is now closer to a better school.

The place is clean and secure. There is no theft. Living in the same houses

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**For me Cornubia represents hope and a bright future. I like Cornubia because our houses are clearly marked and distinguishable.**

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threshold due to the fluctuations in my pay caused by overtime. So, we decided as a family that my younger sister should apply for the house. She got it.

For me Cornubia represents hope and a bright future. I like Cornubia because our houses are clearly marked and distinguishable, unlike in dense informal

means that even if you are poor no one can see. I also like the fact that there are shops within the project. Shopkeepers are flexible. If I urgently need to buy something at 11pm or 6am, a shopkeeper would open the shop and give me service. This never happened at Zamani. I know a thing or two about trade myself. I run a small tuck shop from our home,

selling items such as chips, sweets and loose cigarettes. It helps generate a little income for us to survive. I survive on a child grant.

I have big dreams for the future. Two years ago I passed matric but I couldn't proceed to tertiary due to a lack of funds. I'd like to study journalism. To keep myself busy and broaden my horizons, I volunteer in a development committee here at Cornubia. It's a wonderful experience. I get a chance to interact with residents, learn about their plight and help find solutions. I'm learning about leadership. Every day I see and meet Government officials who come here. I get a chance to network and get information. This would have been impossible had I still been at Zamani.

I thank the person who made land available to build Cornubia. I thank President Jacob Zuma and all the people who helped ensure there was no corruption in the allocation of houses. I will always be grateful to the councillors who mobilised Zamani residents to register for houses in Cornubia. 🚶





**Anwar Cassim**

**I'd never have afforded this house**

I am from an informal settlement called Blackburn village. We lived in a tiny shack which leaked when it rained. There was also no proper sewerage system. Underground water ran in and around our house and we couldn't do anything about it. My son suffered from chest pains and had breathing problems. We also didn't have electricity. What made life worse was that I was unemployed. Due to unreliable

who were poor and deserving of homes. Only 10 homes were available. It was important to have a fair method of selecting beneficiaries. We decided to do a raffle. I was lucky to be among those who chose the winning number. I couldn't believe my luck.

In fact, luck has followed me to Cornubia. After moving here, I immediately got a job as a driver at Sasko in Mt Edgecombe. I like the house I was given. I live with my wife and two kids. I am happy with my house. I could never have afforded a house like

**My kids are happy because they feel more secure since there are police patrols and security day and night.**

transport, I couldn't reach work on time. So, I couldn't hold down a regular job. As a result, I lived on fishing and part-time jobs that managed to feed my family for a day. Each day was a struggle.

My moving to Cornubia happened purely by chance. In Blackburn, I used to attend a lot of community meetings. One day the community leader told us that there was a development called Cornubia that was going to be built and that houses would be given to the underprivileged. It was all done by our Government. There were so many of us

this. I truly like the environment here at Cornubia. There is public transport from the early hours of the morning until late at night. It is half an hour's drive from home to the shops in Verulam. I am very happy and do not feel inconvenienced at all because I never had this opportunity to be close to town before. My wife has opened a tuckshop to provide bread and milk every day. My kids are happy because they feel more secure since there are police patrols and security day and night; they feel safe and sleep in peace. It is a dream come true for me and my family. 🌟





### Bavumile Mpisi

#### I feel safe and secure here

I'm 26 years old. I was born in Port Shepstone, where I used to live with my mom and dad while they were still married. They divorced while I was doing Grade 10. My mother then decided to leave Port Shepstone to find work in Durban. I followed her and we lived in Stonebridge, Phoenix as tenants in a garage. Tired of being a tenant in someone else's place, my mother then built a shack in Stonebridge. She was the first woman working as a maid who did so in the area. I was so proud of her. Other women who were maids in our neighbourhood took her as an example and followed suit. But the private owner of the land where we had built our shacks was furious. He started demolishing them, but we resisted.

My mother stopped working and started a small informal business selling goods in the streets to make ends meet. When she passed on in 2000, I continued living in Stonebridge. At the time, my

visit was followed by many other visits by housing officials. Eventually, we were invited to a gathering in our community hall where we were told that we were going to be allocated low-income subsidy houses.

I put my name on the list of potential beneficiaries. On 30 November 2013, the municipal staff called us for another meeting, saying we were going to be given the keys to our apartments.

To be honest, I was initially sceptical because I thought the officials were bluffing. We slowly made our way to the hall that day, not expecting much. But when the meeting finally started we were blown away. All 48 of the residents who were registered received houses. We were the first to live in Cornubia.

I feel safe and secure here in Cornubia. When we lived in a shack, rain would often pour inside and damage everything we had. During storms the roof would blow off. Animals such as snakes would creep into our place. It was scary. Cornubia is a much

### During storms the roof would blow off. Animals such as snakes would creep into our place.

daughter was two years old. I worked as a factory worker at JML White House factory. We had many problems living in Stonebridge. One day, we couldn't take it any longer and approached a councillor. We explained to him that we needed to be integrated into the wider community because we were feeling isolated. After listening to all our concerns, he agreed to come and visit us to see the conditions under which we lived. He kept his promise. His first

better place to live. We now have two bedrooms, a kitchen, lounge and bathroom. It's quite spacious. And we feel safe at night as the whole area is lit. You can see people up and about.

Shops are within easy reach. My only concern is that town is far and that cellphone reception can be a problem at times. But life has changed for the better. I am forever grateful to our councillor who showed real concern. 🙏



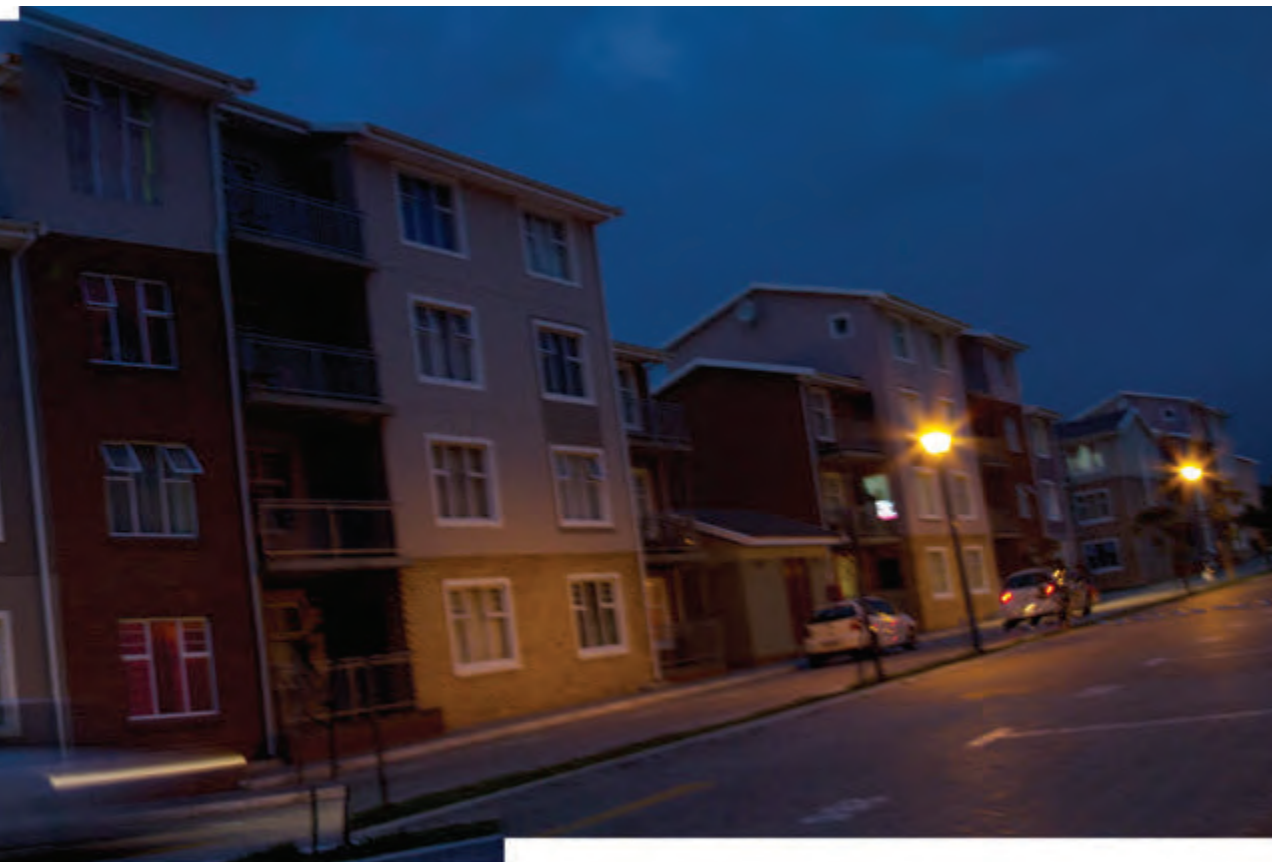
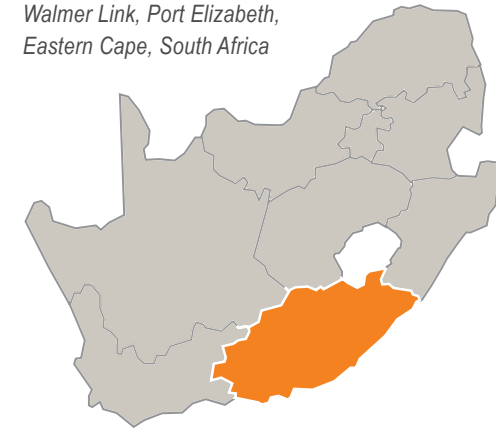
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# *Walmer Link*



Walmer Link, Port Elizabeth,  
Eastern Cape, South Africa



The Walmer Link Project in Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality best symbolises the Department of Human Settlements' push for affordable, integrated, quality rental apartments and affordable houses for people to buy.

The development is divided into two segments: houses for social rental and affordable housing for sale. The Home Market handles the development and marketing of the Affordable Housing model, while Imizi Housing acts as management agent for the social rental stock.

To qualify for social housing rental, prospective tenants have to earn between R1 500 and R7 500 per month. Buyers of affordable housing qualify if they earn between R3 501 and R15 000 per month, and cannot afford to raise mortgages on their own. They benefit from the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP). The high-rise project offers 432 housing units for sale and 347 housing units for rent.

Residents, whether renting or owning their accommodation, can enjoy modern, affordable and spacious living in this mixed-income and mixed-race development. Walmer Link is an ideal location for family living, business, sport and recreation. It is conveniently situated close to schools, medical, recreational and sporting facilities and public transport routes.

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Our dreams of having our own house have come true. Renting for the rest of one's life is not ideal.

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## Khaya Sodladla

### The place is neat

I bought this house at the beginning of December 2013. I used to live in Aliwal North, here in the Eastern Cape. I'm a full-time pastor. When my family and I wanted to buy a house, there was nowhere else to look but Walmer Link. I like this place for two reasons: firstly, it was the only place where we could get a house. We didn't qualify for a bank loan. We also didn't qualify to receive an RDP house. The other advantage of this development is that it's within the city. It's an ideal place to own a house.

Getting the keys to the house was a moment of truth; a moment of great happiness. I remember clearly the day we walked through the door for the first time. We were on cloud nine. Our dreams of having our own house had come true. Renting for the rest of one's life is not ideal. I used to rent a house in Aliwal North. Owning your house is always a big achievement. This is our first house. I live with my wife and two children. I like the fact that it's close to the shopping malls and schools. The place is neat. I don't have any complaints about security. 美



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**Our living space is much bigger than before.  
It's as if we are renting a spacious home.**

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### **Shakira Harrison**

#### **Our children can play safely here**

I come from Schauderville, here in Port Elizabeth. It's a Coloured area. I moved to Walmer Link because the place I was renting was too small, and too expensive. My partner and I heard about this housing project and we decided to take a look. The place is a bit expensive, but it's worth the money you pay. It's a two-bedroomed unit. We pay R1 540, excluding water and lights. This is exactly what we wanted. It's safe for children to play. There is a park right outside our unit where they can play, rather than having to play in the street. Our living space is much bigger than before. It's as if we're renting a spacious home. We also like the service we get here. If you have any complaints you go to the management office, and they make sure that they come to you to have the problem sorted out. So it's a great place to live in.

I work as a cashier at a liquor store that's quite close to where I live. I like the fact that I live close to work now. I just walk down the road, and I'm there. I don't have to spend any money on taxi fares.

We are five in our flat — me, my boyfriend, my two children and my boyfriend's sister. My boyfriend is a supervisor at a company that fits car windscreens. His sister, the one we live with, works at a hair salon. My son, who is five, goes to pre-school, and my daughter, who is a year old, is at crèche. She is the first child to be born in Walmer Link.

I want to own a place of my own one day, but I don't qualify for a subsidy right now. Unless I win the Lotto, I can't buy myself a house. I have to earn a certain salary to qualify for a subsidised house. But for now I'm happy to be living here. It's a great start towards bigger things. ✎



## Rasta Thembelani Batisi

### Thanks to subsidy scheme

We hail from a place called Westville, here in Port Elizabeth. Life wasn't all that great there. We lived in shelter houses in a community of Rastafari. Then the Government came up with a housing scheme for its workers. I work at the Department of Public Works, where I deliver cleaning materials for the Department.

The housing scheme at work was aimed at those who don't qualify for either a bond from a bank or a RDP house. It's called FLISP. We were one of many who were lucky to benefit from the scheme. We moved here on 29 November 2013. I live with my wife and daughter.

Life is great and easy here. We get water, unlike before when we had to ferry it from far away. Our previous house had about five rooms but, because of where it was, life was hard. I live close to work now. I no longer have to travel a long distance. We are close to various amenities such as shops and hospitals.

Moreover, our children are safe. Now our child can do homework because we have electricity that allows her to use a computer — not like in our previous place. Her marks at school have vastly improved. I believe that the great things happening in my family's life are because of Jah's blessings. ✎



I live close to work now.  
I no longer have to travel a long distance.

### Gilbert Gerber

#### I'm impressed by management

I was born here in Port Elizabeth in 1950. I'm a pensioner. In 1973 I was a bus driver in Johannesburg. It did that for only a year. My wife didn't like it there, so we came back to PE the following year. Since then I have lived in PE all my life. I stopped working seven years ago. After quitting being a bus driver, I drove petrol tankers and other

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**My wife and I are happy here.  
Even though we are in a one-bedroom unit,  
the space is enough for both of us.**

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types of trucks for various companies. I also worked for 15 years as a foreman at a company that made tins.

Before coming to rent our unit here at Walmer Link, my wife and I stayed on a farm in the Rocklands area, just outside

the city. We lived with my daughter and her husband. Two years ago my son-in-law died in a car accident in Bloemfontein. So my daughter had to give up the farm. That's when we applied to move here.

My wife and I are happy here. Even though we are in a one-bedroom unit, the space is enough for both of us. For the price alone, you can't complain about this place. For starters, it's much cheaper than other places elsewhere in this city. I would have liked a separate kitchen, but it's perfect for the two of us. Even my grandchildren come to visit and they can be comfortable.

Living in this type of development requires a certain amount of manners. I don't stick my nose into other people's business. That's why I'm the happiest person here. As soon as you start sticking your nose into other people's business, you make their problems yours and your problems become theirs. And so the line continues. It's best to keep to yourself. It doesn't mean you don't have to greet your neighbours,

or that you should be aloof. My wife and I have no problem welcoming people to our place. But we don't like it when some neighbours barge in on us, especially when we have visitors. It's decent and proper to wait until visitors are gone, and then come to visit.

One of the things that has impressed us most about Walmer Link is the quality of management for the rental units. The place is well run. There is security. Our needs and concerns are attended to. But now and then I get upset when I'm billed wrongly. I must say, when that happens, I'm not the same. I stop being Gilbert the jovial guy. Luckily, such problems are quickly resolved.

Sometimes I wish I had a car. Since I'm a pensioner, I have lots of time on my hands. If my wife and I are not helping our daughter look after our grandchildren, we would drive around to different interesting places in PE. Maybe go to the beach more often, to enjoy the scenery. 🌳





# Joe Slovo





*Joe Slovo, Cape Town,  
Western Cape, South Africa*



Joe Slovo Integrated Housing Settlement seeks to upgrade the Joe Slovo informal settlement located in Langa, Cape Town, next to the N2 highway between the city and airport. The area's development is part of the larger N2 Gateway project and solves one of the pressing needs in the city.

For years the old Joe Slovo area had been an eyesore with its ramshackle shelters. Residents had to endure constant fires that damaged property and endangered their lives. Some of the struggles that the Joe Slovo settlement had to face include a low level of education, limited access to services and high levels of contact crime. Drastic action had to be taken. Government and Thubelisha Homes took charge of the area's development. Later, the Housing Development Agency became the lead agency in the development process.

Residents of the new Joe Slovo Integrated Housing Settlement live in decent two-bedroomed units and have access to water and electricity. For the first time, they have houses they are happy to call home. A portion of Phase One has been finished. Other phases are in the pipeline. Joe Slovo Integrated Settlement is one of the projects that illustrates the Department of Human Settlements' legacy of delivering quality human settlements to the vulnerable and needy.

### Agnes Nomazana Manakaza

#### We constantly worried about fire


I come from Ngqamakhwe in the Eastern Cape. I'm 78 years old. I came to Cape Town in 1960 to join my husband who worked at the harbour. I don't remember where exactly. I never got to see where he worked. People like myself who came from rural areas were never familiar with the city and its ways. We were scared to venture to the city. We were comfortable being at home, cooking and washing, and relied on others to run errands to the city for us.

My marriage ended shortly after my arrival in Cape Town because my husband took another woman and started a family with her. I couldn't take it. I didn't want to find myself trapped in a polygamous marriage. I left him in order to start afresh and create a life of my own. I had to feed my children.

I began working as a domestic worker and later as a nurse in old age homes. I worked all over Cape Town – in places like Woodstock and Vredehoek. But

to a temporary shelter. When that didn't help, when too much time passed and we grew desperate, we went back to where our shacks used to be and built

out at any moment. Shack fires spread quickly, making it hard to escape. You couldn't use the door because it would already be engulfed in flames, and at my age you wouldn't have the strength or the tools to break down another section of the shack to escape. It was horrible.

We are thankful and happy with the new homes we've been afforded. Sometimes there are problems with some units, such as rain seeping through the wall and taps not closing properly, but we live in better conditions now. That's what's important. We now have proper and dignified homes. We live well with our neighbours. We are like one big family. As an old person, I'm constantly sick. Recently, I developed chronic asthma, making it difficult for me to breathe. I'm grateful that if I get sick now, I can recuperate in my bed, in a proper home. Even if I die, I'll have a dignified farewell right outside here, in front of my home. 

#### We live well with our neighbours. We are like one big family.

where I worked for most of my life until I retired was in Sea Point. In 1997, I retired from work after breaking my hip from a fall.

On my return to Cape Town I lived in Zone 20 in Langa township. It soon became difficult to pay rent. I built a shack for myself here in the old part of Joe Slovo. In 2005, there was a horrible fire that burned down our shacks, and I was one of the victims. We were moved

new ones. The building of the new Joe Slovo project eventually happened. But we had to fight to get these new homes. We didn't want to be forgotten.

I moved into my house on 4 December 2012. Here at Joe Slovo Phase 3 housing project I live with my granddaughter who is 18. Life is certainly better here. Living in a shack was difficult. At night we couldn't sleep peacefully, constantly worried about fire that could break





### Mntululu Petsenge

#### I'm enjoying hot water

Originally, I come from Idutywa in the Eastern Cape. I'm 59. When I first left home in search of work, I headed to Johannesburg. This was in the 1970s. I lived in a men's hostel in Sebokeng, in the Vaal. I worked for Randwater Board in Vereeniging as a boilmaker and later for Group Five construction company as an assistant rigger. My life changed completely when political violence broke out in the area in 1992.

place of my own. I got myself a shack at the Joe Slovo informal settlement. It was a one-roomed house made of planks.

Life in the settlement was hard. Shacks burned down all the time. When it rained, water leaked into the house and our beds would get soaked. We shared communal toilets that were quite a distance from my home. It wasn't safe to walk to and from the toilets at night because it was so dark. Anything could happen to you. Also, these toilets offered no privacy. You would sit down in the toilet and someone else

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### My other children are in Khayelitsha. They often visit over weekends and we get to be a family.

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After missing work, I got fired. I went back home to Idutywa where I remained for two years before coming down to Cape Town in search of new work opportunities. I could never go back to Johannesburg. I was scared.

In Cape Town, I found work in a company that repaired ships. That's where I have been working for the past 17 years. When I first got to Cape Town, I lived with a cousin in a one-bedroomed house. It wasn't that bad since he was a taxi driver and wasn't there all the time. We could share the little space without any problems. But after three years I wanted to have a

would come and kick the door open, disturbing you. Communal taps were also far away from my shack.

When the new Joe Slovo project started, I got excited and I registered for a house. Luckily, I got it. I moved in December 2012. I like my two-bedroomed unit. The bedrooms are upstairs. The kitchen, bathroom and living area downstairs. I like the fact that it's safe and we don't have to worry about shack fires. I'm enjoying hot water. The house is warm. I live with my son. My other children are in Khayelitsha. They often visit over weekends and we get to be a family. 🏠





**Nomalanga Ntukutezi**

**My grandchildren can focus on school**

I'm 75 years of age and I'm originally from Lady Frere in the Eastern Cape. My husband died in 1979, forcing me to fend for myself and six children. That is how I got to Cape Town in 1980. I worked as a domestic worker all over the city. Work paid poorly. At some point wages were R5 a day. But there was no turning down any work or complaining. I had to survive. I only quit work in 2013.

When I first arrived in Cape Town I stayed at New Flats with my brother. I'd frequently go back to the Eastern Cape to visit my children and give them money. Three of my six children are

still alive and three are late. I have eight grandchildren.

I had to leave my brother's house when he left his job and went back to the Eastern Cape, where he later died. That's when I came to live in a shack in the Joe Slovo area. I stayed in that shack for more than 12 years. It was a rotten existence. We truly suffered there. Fires would break out from nowhere and quickly spread. We lost a lot of property

and possessions. Looking back, I truly have endured a lot of hardship and pain. It's only now that I've moved to the new Joe Slovo settlement that I'm starting to have peace of mind. I got into this house in August 2013. I got the house because I had been living in a shack for a long time. A committee used to keep us informed about developments in the area. As an old person, I was one of the early beneficiaries who moved in. There was

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**It's only now that I've moved to the new Joe Slovo settlement that I'm starting to have peace of mind.**

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a big ceremony when we moved in. It was a relief to finally have a home. I live with my two granddaughters – one is 13 years old and the other eight years. We have access to hot water. My grandchildren and I can take a bath without any problems. It's a good life. We are able to fix any defects on our units. It's really better than living in a shack.

We thank our Government for these houses. I hope my grandchildren will now benefit from having a proper home by focusing on their schoolwork. I didn't go to school, and I don't like it when children don't show any enthusiasm for school. I'd like them to go far in life through education. I don't want them to become domestic workers like me. 𐄂

# Lerato Park



Lerato Park, Kimberley,  
Northern Cape, South Africa



For many years, Lerato Park was an informal settlement. People lived in makeshift houses made of corrugated iron sheets that were frigid in winter and baking hot in summer. Around the settlement is flat, dry terrain. There were no basic services. Thanks to Government's Informal Settlements Upgrading Programme (ISUP) that is enshrined in the National Development Plan (NDP), a new Lerato Park Integrated Housing Development Project has sprung up not too far from the old informal settlement.

Thanks to Government's efforts, a new Lerato Park Integrated Housing Development Project has sprung up not too far away from the old informal settlement. The housing development is situated on a 201-hectare site owned by the Sol Plaatje Local Municipality, in the Francis Baard District.

Lerato Park offers low-income houses that are either high-rise or stand-alone. They are all painted in pastel colours, bringing brightness to a once bleak landscape. This is a national priority project, devised in line with Government's Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements – also known as Breaking New Ground.

It seeks to facilitate the creation of a dignified and integrated suburb of 4 654 housing opportunities that could achieve sustainable development outcomes for the community as a whole. As an integrated human settlement, Lerato Park addresses an extended income market, ranging from fully subsidised housing to partly subsidised institutional and bonded housing. Including rental and Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP) houses, Lerato Park embraces Government's holistic housing vision of housing delivery to the very poor. So far, a portion of Phase One has been completed.

## Sarah Jacobs

### Madiba magic rubbed off on me

I was born in 1934. I moved to Lerato Park in November 2013, becoming the first person to do so. Officials were honouring the fact that I was born on the same day as Nelson Mandela — July 18. When the municipal officials here found out about my birth date, they got so excited! I think they made my house a little nicer, just because of my date of birth! My house was tiled free of charge, and I was given free furniture, including beds, and free electrical appliances. I was promised a lounge suite as a gift, and I'm still waiting for it. I was very pleased and thankful for the generosity of the provincial Government. Never in my wildest dreams would I have guessed that sharing a birth date with such an important man came with so many benefits. It's a pity that I never met Madiba in person; I saw him only once at a stadium when he visited Kimberley years ago.

I had lived in a shack since 2004. It was a one-room house made of corrugated

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### Since moving to Lerato Park, all [our old] problems are gone. Life has changed completely.

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iron. Before 2004, I was in Richie? And then I moved to Lerato Park informal settlement. While living there, I heard that a new housing project was going to be built. Like others, I filled in the application forms, and I was lucky to get this house.

I like my new life in Lerato Park. Living in a shack was utterly miserable. We had no electricity, and I did not like how dark the area was at night. We also had to use the old bucket toilet system. Sometimes the municipality would not come to fetch those buckets, and the place stank horribly. We had to make a plan to get rid of the waste ourselves. We would dig holes in the area and throw everything into them. It wasn't a healthy place to live in. Since moving to Lerato Park all those problems are gone. Life has changed completely. I like the tiles in my house. I like the fact that I now have electricity and running water. 🏠





### Ntombikayise Mashele

#### It is all thanks to my mom

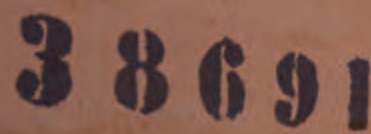
I'm 23. I did my matric here in Kimberley. From there I went to Jo'burg, where I stayed for three years, studying policing and traffic management at Victory College in the CBD. Now I'm back in Kimberley, looking for a job.

Life before Lerato Park was difficult. My family and I lived in a shack for more than 10 years. Rainy days were especially difficult. The shack would become unstable. Sometimes we feared it would be washed away as water seeped through the house. In dry weather, there was also a lot of dust. But my mom found a way for us to cope and get a better life. My mom is very entrepreneurial. She sells all kinds of things. As her children, we appreciate all her hard work and effort. When she realised she was going to get a house,

### As a young person, I have lots of hope for Lerato Park. I wish we could have more youth-orientated activities.

she got really excited. It meant a lot to her. The 10 years in a shack were difficult. Her dream, our dream, came true. I'm also very happy to have a roof over my head.

As a young person, I have lots of hope for Lerato Park. I wish we could have more youth-orientated activities. That could help a lot of youngsters. But it's a new housing project, I suppose. We are yet to unite, to know one another, in order to embark on such communal activities. For now I spend most of my time at home. There's nothing much to do. I help my mom look after the house. I talk a lot to my younger sister, encouraging her to stay disciplined and remain at school. That's the best advice I can give her. ✨

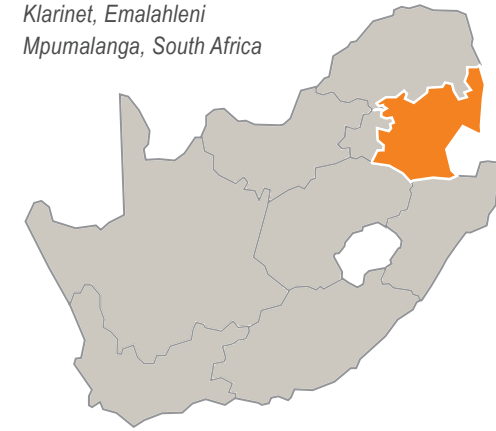


# *Klarinet*





*Klarinet, Emalahleni  
Mpumalanga, South Africa*



One noticeable feature, when the visitor steps into Klarinet Integrated Housing Project in Emalahleni, is the buzz of activity. Workers and contractors move about purposefully, building new houses. Cement is mixed and transported in wheelbarrows to waiting bricklayers. Walls go up. Nails are hammered into brand-new roofs.

Launched in March 2012, Klarinet is a multibillion-rand and the first large-scale integrated housing project in Mpumalanga. It is located in Emalahleni Local Municipality. On completion, it will feature 11 969 mixed housing units spread out over two phases. Of these units, 5 699 will be subsidised houses, 2 322 institutional apartments and will be 3 948 bonded housing. The project will also have social facilities such as schools, clinics, community centres business centres and a cemetery. About 450 beneficiaries live in Klarinet with their families.

Phase One of the project, made up of low-income homes, is almost complete. Current beneficiaries provide labour to units that are still being built. The project is also notable for housing disabled residents, and for accommodating their needs. Overall, Klarinet supports the implementation of sustainable human settlements through the Breaking New Ground (BNG) plan and Outcome 8.

## Letty Mtshweni

### Everyone is comfortable here

I used to stay in the Springville informal settlement near Reyno Ridge, here in Emalahleni. It was not municipal land; we just invaded it. After some time, the municipality came to remove us. That was when the Klarinet housing project was built. I was one of those who benefitted from the move. When the announcement was made, I worked closely with the municipality on a committee to help register those eligible to be on the beneficiary list.

But my move to Klarinet also involved some drama. My working with the municipality meant I had to help verify that prospective beneficiaries really came from Springville. Total strangers would tell the municipality that they were from Springville, and so someone had to help check all the claims. That's why some people began resenting me because of my job. When houses were built, I would go to Springville with the beneficiary list and tell those

And people did. In the end, the rival committee blamed me for spearheading the whole move away from the informal settlement. That is when my life was in real danger. As a recipient of one of the first houses to be finished, I was the first beneficiary to move into the Klarinet project. That was in August 2011. I live in Extension 6. All the other houses were built when I was already here.

Everyone is comfortable here. We live close to the city. We pay only R8 in fares to get there. When we lived in Springville, we paid double that amount because it was far. Since I moved to Klarinet my life has changed because I have electricity and water, and the toilet is inside the house. We don't struggle. We even get jobs here within the housing project. The area is safe. You can walk around at night. Streetlights are bright. You can see someone from a distance — much better than where we come from. Houses don't even have burglar bars.

I even managed to fetch my children from back home in KwaNdebele to

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### Since I moved to Klarinet my life has changed because I have electricity and water, and the toilet is inside the house. We don't struggle.

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who had found new homes. I was the link between the municipality and the community. It wasn't an easy job. A rival committee sprang up, and encouraged residents to resist moving to Klarinet. It was tense.

The municipality moved me out of Springville first because my life was in danger. Those who resisted the move to Klarinet threatened me with death for working closely with the municipality. I encouraged my fellow residents to put down their names for new houses.

come and live with me here. I'm also very happy that we have a school nearby. I have one daughter and two sons. They are also happy here. Unlike back home, here the roads are tarred. When my children play, they don't get dirty like before, when they played in dusty streets. Here, when a child comes back from school they stay inside the house, and maybe watch TV. They are safe. They study. My children are doing well at school, and have benefitted from the better education offered by schools here. They study English and

Afrikaans. In KwaNdebele, they were never introduced to these subjects. Now they can say: 'good morning' in English because of the good schools here in Klarinet. In the evening, they have learnt to say: 'good night, mama.' It's a new thing in their lives. One of them is in Grade 3; the other in Grade 9, and the tiniest one is at crèche. Right now I'm unemployed. I used to work in housing projects. We have stopped for now.

Our houses are warm. They don't get flooded when it rains. We only see the rain through the window. In Springville, it was a different matter. It used to be difficult there when it rained. We would drink the same water as pigs. We had no choice. We used to get water from nearby streams. We didn't even boil the water to kill the germs. We would get water from the stream, go home and cook. There were many other problems. The mobile clinic only came on a fixed day, which was inconvenient. There were no roads and there was a lot of crime. Life in Springville is very poor. When the time comes for those who resisted moving here to Klarinet, they must grab the opportunity like we did. They need to leave that miserable place. They must come and live well, like us here in Klarinet.

I'm grateful to the municipality for what it has done for us. I hope others will be lucky, like me, and get their own homes. I'm also grateful to Government. My children have a brighter future. I dropped out of school in Grade 11 when I fell pregnant. My life is back on track. I now have a driver's licence and my own car, thanks to Klarinet. Being here also helped me to start my own construction company. I build houses, put a roof on them, paint them. I lay sewer and stormwater pipes. I picked up these skills from a construction company I used to work for. I'm still growing my company and gaining more experience. Klarinet has really helped me. ✂







### Anna Wells

#### I'm very proud to be here

I have five children. I stay with them and my husband. I don't work. I'm a housewife. For many years we lived on a farm in Leeuport, here in Emalahleni. Our lives changed when we got this RDP house. I'm very proud to be here. I'm very happy with the house. I'm lucky to be here with my five children and my husband. We have no problems here, not like on the farm. There we had no running water. Things changed when we moved to Klarinet. We're close to the shops. It's easy for my kids to go to school because buses take them to and from school. The place is safe. I don't have burglar bars on my windows. I get along well with my neighbours. I have no problems at all here. I hope my children will have a better future because they live in a better neighbourhood and that will make them better people. ✂



## Chankie Moloto

### The place looks great

I arrived in Klarinet in 2011 after years of living in a shack. Before that I lived at home in old Klarinet township. I was born in Dinnelton, near Groblersdal, here in Mpumalanga. My family came to Emalahleni because my mother, a domestic worker, found work here. I have two siblings – a brother and sister.

I play wheelchair tennis. I'm the number one champion in Mpumalanga. I'm recognised by Wheelchair Tennis South Africa. I'm also involved in athletics. When Klarinet started, it was decided that the disabled should also get homes. We were called to the municipal offices, and had to register our names with the provincial Department of Human Settlements. That's how I got my house.

I moved here in June 2011. I was very happy to get a house here, a permanent stand with my name to it. I left behind a

terrible life of living in a shack. I didn't know what life held in store for me and my family here in Klarinet, but I was confident it was the right move. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I have four children who need a comfortable, stable home. My two sons are aged 10 and eight, and my twin daughters are six. My wife volunteers in home-based care projects. She doesn't have a permanent job. I have a three-month contract to work as a security guard for a community hall that is being built within the Klarinet project. When construction finishes, my job will end. I will go back to subsisting on a disability grant that is R1 200 a month. Otherwise, being here is wonderful. The place looks great. We have a police forum, a disability forum, a councillor and a residents' committee to look after our needs.

I got to be in a wheelchair after an accident five years ago. I used to be a truck driver. One day, heavy grass fell on me while transporting it. My spinal

cord was damaged. I got some money from the Workmen's Compensation Fund. It wasn't enough. Inflation ate into it. Remember, being disabled doesn't exempt you from paying the same amount for electricity as everyone else. It doesn't exempt you from paying tax or rent. You always have to find a way to survive. That is why I'm here at this site, working as a security guard. It's hard. These days I don't even bother opening the envelope with my rates bill. When it arrives at home, I hide it so that I don't find myself preoccupied with its contents. I fear that one day lawyers will throw me out of my house because of non-payment. I'm hopeful that if I get some sponsorship my tennis career will be revived and my financial life will be back on track. We have been promised a sports facility here at Klarinet. It'll be great to have it. People with disabilities need to be active too, to be occupied with meaningful activity. They don't have to lock themselves up at home with nothing to do. That could lead to depression. Or worse. ♿



## Karel Petrus Mare

### We are happy here


I have lived all over the country. I was born in Pretoria. My parents relocated to Groblersdal, and I went to high school in Middleburg. Then I went to the army. I did my electrical course there. I stayed in the army for six years, before moving on to be a miner at the Kloof Gold Mine in Westonaria, west of Johannesburg. When I was 19, my life went completely wrong. I got mixed up with bad guys. The wrong kind of people. Or maybe I was the wrong kind of person. I was always a leader, but on the wrong side of the law. I ended up in jail for stock theft. We stole sheep in Carolina. I can't blame anyone for that. I did it to myself. I was sentenced to 15 years in prison. I served seven-and-a-half years, and came out in 1991. Good behaviour while in prison helped me get released early.

Being locked up also helped me reconnect with my Christian faith, something I had believed in as a child. Then I went to the North West, where I worked on a farm. I married a MoTswana woman, but she died of meningitis. One day, on the way to see her at the hospital, I lost my right leg in a motorbike accident. When I lost my leg, doctors found out that I had blood cancer. They gave me six months to live. I was confused and angry. I wanted to kill myself. But I didn't have the courage. I stayed alone in a caravan at the bottom of my sister's farm. My family turned their backs on me; I drank a lot. Smoked dagga. I never ate any food. I refused to take my cancer tablets. That was eight years ago. Then I met my present wife who hails from Zimbabwe. She helped me turn my life around. We had our first child five years ago. We got married four

years ago. A year ago, we had another daughter.

One day my wife said to me: 'We can't live like this.' She convinced me to apply for a house here in Klarinet. I was sceptical. I said: 'Baby, I'm not ANC in the first place, and I'm white in the second place. You are not South African. There is no way that I'll get a house for us. There's millions and millions of people who need houses more than me.' But within three months of applying, I got the house. I was completely surprised and grateful.

After moving in we had to make a plan to make a living. We depended on my pension money. That's when we came up with the idea of opening a day-care centre for children. We built more space onto this house to accommodate children. More than anything, we wanted to do something that would keep us busy. The plan was to look after only 20 children. At the moment, we have 70 children. God is so good. We have children who come in a taxi from town; others are from a township next to us. They come from all over. My wife is very good with them. She teaches them Christian songs. We charge R200 per child a month. They bring their own food since by law we are not allowed to cook. We are successful because God is centre of all we do. This is God's place. Not ours.

We are happy here at Klarinet. We don't have crime. Our Community Policing Forum is very effective. Even at night I can send my five-year-old daughter to the shops without any worry. I have never been political, but I'm thankful that Government gave me something to live for. Since I got this house, everything is going right in my life. 



**I'm thankful that Government gave me something to live for. Since I got this house, everything is going right in my life.**



# Phomolong



*Phomolong, Hennenman,  
Free State, South Africa*



Phomolong is an old township, about 10km outside Hennenman in the Free State. It falls under the Matjhabeng Local Municipality, comprising Welkom, Virginia, Odendaalsrus, Allanridge and Ventersburg. Under apartheid, the township bore the brunt of neglect and oppression. Four families shared an elongated housing structure that would be divided in such a way that each family got two rooms to live in – a kitchen and a bedroom. Residents used the bucket toilet system. Overcrowding was the norm. Residents built shacks in their yards to accommodate the needs of growing families.

Government has now embarked on a programme to upgrade Phomolong as part of its Informal Settlements Upgrading Programme. Two phases of low-income homes, each with 100 units, are being built. Phase One, in Phomolong Extension 1, started in 2013 and is almost finished. In late 2013, completed houses of Phase One were handed over to families in dire need – child-headed families, and the elderly. The new units, of 50 square metres each, have two bedrooms, an open plan kitchen, a lounge and an indoor bathroom. They come in three different plans in order to bring variety to the aesthetics. Phase Two will see old houses being upgraded on old plots. This will mean breaking up the old, humiliating structures and removing families that occupied the middle section to Phase One. The upgrade will go a long way towards restoring the dignity of the residents of Phomolong.

### Mme Mpuse Nxunyane

#### It is as though I am dreaming

I was the first beneficiary of a low-income house. I didn't pay a cent for it. The house is an example of how houses in the upgraded phase two will look. I am very proud of the new house. It has made a difference to my life. More than anything, now we have some space. It has given us dignity.

I brought up two children in a two-roomed house. There were five of us in the family, including my late husband. We were crammed. Children used to sleep on the floor. We had a makeshift bedroom, using a curtain to separate it from the kitchen. In this situation, children could hear and see anything happening in the house at night. There was no privacy at all. It was embarrassing. Even now I wonder what my children heard or saw. When it rained, the place was flooded and all five

of us had to sleep in one bed. To survive these conditions, as neighbours we worked as a unit. Since our 'houses' overlapped into each other's space, we had to get along. For example, when I opened a window in the middle house, it would open into someone's yard. If you quarrelled with your neighbour, you would never set foot in their yard and that window would never be cleaned. The same goes for the emptying of the buckets we used as toilets. Municipal workers needed the permission of other families to pass through, to carry out your bucket. If you never got along, your bucket would not be fetched. These buckets had to be carried through neighbours' kitchens. It was unhygienic. Life was truly difficult.

While we were five in our house, we were better off compared to others who lived with extended families – grandparents, sons and daughters-in-law. Then there would be visitors ... Our children were unable to study

#### I am very proud of the new house ... It has given us dignity.

at home, as there was no room for it. Older children would return to school at night to study. And then there was the struggle when there were funerals. The coffin had to be placed in the kitchen. There was hardly any room for mourners. Toilet buckets would not be enough, and had to be shared. There were endless problems.

We lived in the two-roomed house for more than 20 years. In 2010, I was the first to get this house as part of the revamp of the area. Everyone from around the township came to see this miracle. We couldn't believe that Government had finally taken us out of the pain of living in a two-roomed house to bigger, beautiful houses. This house was a sample of what was to

come. Others have been built in the area, and they continue being built. The new houses gave others hope and trust in the new Government. People cannot wait for their turn. This area used to have a lot of crime. Since the building of new houses, the area is calm.

Everyone is talking about these beautiful houses. Moving from a two-roomed house to these new houses is a big deal. I know of old residents, around 65 years of age, who are thrilled to be having their own yards and bedrooms for the first time in their lives. Sometimes I feel as though I am dreaming. 'Is this really me?' I often ask myself when I get up in the morning. Has it really happened? I have not spent a single cent on this house, and yet it is mine. 🏡







### Thabani Takalo

#### No more sleeping under the table

I'm one of the first beneficiaries of the Putswastene project. I'm a community liaison officer in this housing project. I work with the Free State Department of Human Settlements, the community and contractors. My job is to see that everything goes smoothly in the project as a whole.

People are excited about this project, particularly the beneficiaries. They have found pleasant and proper housing. It's painful to live in a two-roomed house. I know. That's how I grew up. I know what it's like to sleep under a table because there are 10 of you sharing a tiny space. There wasn't space for anything else at home; not even space for furniture.

The building of new houses has also brought employment to the area.

As a community we decided that beneficiaries needed to come and work on the project as more houses were being built. They do a quality job. The project encompasses the whole of Hennenman, and is not necessarily limited to the beneficiaries from Phomolong. Honestly, people in the

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**People are excited about this project ...  
They have found pleasant and proper housing.**

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area haven't complained. Beneficiaries are happy that they don't live in those two-roomed units any more. Parents and children now have their own bedrooms. They sleep peacefully. Many amenities, such as schools and clinics, are planned for the development. There's enough space for everyone. ✍

