



human settlements

Department:
Human Settlements
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INDABA

TOPIC: BUILDING CONSENSUS WITH THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION (NGOs) AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOs) IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE INTEGRATED HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

CONCEPT DOCUMENT

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PROBLEM STATEMENT: “Unlocking opportunities for the NGO and CSO to accelerate the delivery of sustainable and integrated human settlements”

1. INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), section 152(1)(e) encourages the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government matters. The Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) requires the Municipality to develop a culture of municipal governance that compliments formal representative government with a system of participatory democracy.

Housing Code highlights that “fragile community survival networks which are a hallmark of poor communities must be preserved to ensure the future sustainability of the community and the settlement”. It is therefore critical for government to adopt and support a culture of “active citizenry” as articulated in the National Development Plan.

One United Nations document (1981: 5) defined community participation as: “The creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of development”.

Known as the ‘agents of change on the ground’, the role of the NGO and CSO has gone through contestations and uncertainties in the delivery of sustainable integrated human settlements. The effective participation of this Sector is restricted in its duties to effect large scale change in the current model of the development within the human settlements space. The main issue highlighted are how civil society organisations and community-based organisations are excluded in the development and review of human settlements policy agenda, excluded as service agents or part of the implementation cohort in the delivery of sustainable and integrated human settlements and some being under-capacitated through a lack of government support.

NGOs and CSOs have the immense potential to contribute in the acceleration and delivery sustainable and integrated human settlements to the vulnerable groups in society.

2. PROPOSED ROLE OF THE NGOs AND CSOs IN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

2.1. PEOPLE’S HOUSING PROCESS (PHP) PROGRAMME

There is no PHP without the involvement of the NGOs, CBOs and CSOs. PHP is one of the human settlements delivery programmes whereby beneficiaries are actively involved in the decision making over the housing process, product and make a contribution towards the building of their own homes. The Sector leads, drives and capacitates communities including beneficiaries through community-driven initiatives.

The Programme is aimed at assisting government to deliver better human settlement outcomes based on community contribution, partnerships and leveraging of additional resources through partnerships. This will be achieved by developing a culture of savings,

skills transfer, and community empowerment, building of community assets and social cohesion.

The CSO's have long advocated that PHP is not just about housing and top structures, but also participative planning and engagement and housing support **(without actually funding the top structure itself)**. These are key elements in a fiscal environment where there is insufficient funding to subsidise housing. They highlight the need to rather create an enabling environment for people to build their own housing through incremental planning and alternative planning arrangements, appropriate infrastructure, land availability and housing support.

2.2. LAND RELEASE PROGRAMME

The NGO/CSO sector has identified that a key challenge with current state-subsidised housing projects, are their peripheral locations. This impacts on municipalities experiencing challenges in accessing and pipelining well-located land for human settlements. *The Department therefore needs to provide clarity on the extent to which difficulties in current land use and management processes will be circumvented to access well-located land and reduce delays. (HDA)*

Moreover, the location and size of land to be utilised for this purpose is key. Likewise, to achieve spatial transformation, the delivery of site-and-services must be geared towards developing integrated, inclusive, and sustainable communities.

The Sector want clarity on what specific efforts will be made to ensure that land will be used in that way, and to ensure that incremental housing takes shape over time contribute to integrated and sustainable human settlements development and ultimately, the restructuring the current apartheid spatial geography?

Non-governmental organisations and communities have long advocated for well-located public land to be released for the purposes of housing and for mitigating spatial segregation, for decades. The Department including different spheres of government and parastatals have immediate access to a vast array of publicly owned land, which if released could go a long way in addressing access to affordable housing for poor and low-income households. Although the government routinely releases land for this purpose, numerous vacant and under-utilised land parcels remain, and the sector continues to advocate strongly for the release of such land.

2.3. INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS UPGRADING

The NGOs, CBOs and CSOs have a history of advocating for people centred and community driven approaches to development. The Sector have a vast experience in facilitating community participation in the delivery of sustainable integrated human settlements. This includes but not limited to social facilitation, enumeration, re-blocking and layout, Facilitate community participation in the construction of services, livelihoods assessments, monitoring the upgrading process and build capacity of communities.

CSO's also support the idea of incremental planning and tenure arrangements which are critical, not only for incremental upgrading of informal settlements but also for emergency relocation areas and for serviced land release.

2.4. SMALL SCALE RENTAL HOUSING

Small-scale rental housing in privately owned properties is growing and evolving rapidly and is changing the character of South African cities and helping to solve the crisis of accommodation. Homeowners and micro-developers are investing large sums of money (without support from public sector). Brick by brick they are altering the physical fabric of townships and providing sought-after affordable rental units which neither the public nor the conventional private sector supply. Coincidentally, this also contributes to urban densification, income

generation and stronger local economies. vary greatly across and within neighbourhoods. In an effort to counter the lack of support for this crucial housing delivery mechanism, one of the Sector partners incubated the 'Contractor and Developer Academy' (CDA) in 2017. The CDA provides advisory services, targeted training, and direct support to emerging contractors and entrepreneurial micro-developers in order to assist them in providing affordable, better-managed housing. In addition to this, the CDA aims to raise awareness around the crucial role played by micro-developers and contractors in the delivery of affordable rental housing, and thus is involved in numerous lobbying and advocacy activities at different spheres of government.

2.5. FINANCE LINKED INDIVIDUAL SUBSIDY PROGRAMME (FLISP)

The objectives of the Finance Linked Individual Housing Subsidy Programme are:

- To stimulate transactions in the affordable housing market and expand the affordable housing market;
- To promote vibrancy, progression and upward mobility in regard to both the primary and secondary housing markets;
- To extend homeownership to previously neglected or underserved areas e.g. rural areas;
- To broaden the options for accessing home-ownership; and FLISP.
- To increase access to housing through provision of **housing finance** to those who would otherwise not qualify for housing loans by banks but are keen to contribute towards the acquisition of their own shelter. NGO's such as Habitat for Humanity have proposed an intervention they call **Financial Inclusion Through Multi-Partner Resource Pooling**.
- The program is aimed at **leveraging government subsidy (FLISP)** and **creating a revolving fund from corporate donations** to support affordable housing in line with the proposed Department of Human Settlements **Rapid Land Release and**

Site and Service Programme and other private-sector-led land release initiatives.

2.6. EMERGENCY HOUSING

It has been cited that Cape Town is one of the most unequal cities in SA and in the world. Current trends in the local property market indicate that land in well-located parts of the city is becoming increasingly expensive with many of the inner city neighbourhoods becoming exclusive enclaves for the wealthy. These rising property prices reinforces apartheid spatial planning legacies resulting in the displacement of low-income and marginalised households to the periphery of the city far away from livelihood opportunities.

There is a need for affordable housing products, for e.g. social housing which caters for low income earners. Despite social housing income criteria starting at R1 850, many marginalised households who are at risk of displacement do not qualify for this type of affordable housing. *There is a need to explore other housing products such as transitional housing, a type of emergency housing product, which is a temporary solution for households earning little to no income. However, providing transitional housing products in well-located parts of the city is a challenging task due to rising land prices.*

The CSO partners have explored alternative, appropriate housing typologies which people can build for themselves in incremental situations and also utilise in emergency situations.

The sector has also mobilised external funding partners to construct and deliver a certain number of transitional shelters, there are protracted delays in implementing this programme and delivering the temporary units as there appears to be little or no commitment from government with regards to the installation of bulk infrastructure (water and sanitation more importantly) and to identify specific dates or timelines for the beneficiaries to receive a permanent structure. The NGOs/CSOs feel they are risking their brand, people living without water and sanitation,

as well as living in transitional shelter forever. *How do we minimize this risk?*

2.7. RURAL HOUSING

The NGO/CSO Sector has thus far supported the programme not only as agents of change but as planners and implementers of rural developmental plans. They have assisted in mobilizing the local resources to be used for development. NGOs help in building a self-reliant and sustainable society. This sector plays the role of mediator between people and government, utilizing the rural housing programme to extend the benefits of the capital grants to those individuals living in areas referred to as “rural” areas where they enjoy functional security of tenure as opposed to legal security of tenure. Only individuals forming part of a community, whose informal rights are uncontested and are therefore unlikely to lose those rights during a land reform process, will be assisted.

Beneficiaries also have the right to decide on how to use their subsidies either for service provision, building of houses or a combination thereof. *What other changes or enhancements are needed to make this programme more efficient?*

2.8. RESEARCH

The Sector has over the years evolved as a think-tank in research, pioneering and piloting alternative models to service delivery that are people-centred, have pushed the barriers for citizen participation in planning processes and in the implementation of development programmes and has influenced various policy formulation processes.

3. KEY QUESTIONS/ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

- 3.1. What form of support will the different spheres of government provide to NGOs and CSOs towards the acceleration of sustainable and integrated human settlements? (What opportunities are availed to the Sector to participate in the acceleration of human settlements?)

- 3.2. What form of Housing Support Centre or Transactional Support Centres will support the community-driven housing initiatives, who will be responsible to finance and manage the HSC/TSC?
- 3.3. How can the support and expertise of CSOs be tapped into and what funding instruments and procurement methods can be utilised to facilitate this?
- 3.4. How can the NGO-CSO influence Policy agenda of the Department?
- 3.5. Delivery of sustainable human settlements v/s the protection of the environment and the adverse impact of climate change?
- 3.6. What form of tenure can the informal settlements residents access or be given?
- 3.7. What are the principles of effective community participation and engagements?
- 3.8. How can the Sector begin to facilitate a meaningful job creation strategy for community members in the delivery of human settlements?"
- 3.9. How can CSO's make inputs to amend some regulations that impact on Human Settlement (building and land use planning regulations) and other elements that can create a more enabling environment to support self-build, land release and informal settlements upgrading?

5. FIVE (5) KEY ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES FROM THE INDABA FOR THE SECTOR

1. Provinces, Metros and Local Municipalities to acknowledge, recognise and create an enabling environment for the NGOs and CSOs to participate in accelerating the delivery of sustainable and integrated human settlements
2. National to ensure that NGOs and CSOs are part of the development and review of human settlements Policies and related prescripts
3. Revival of engagement platform/s and National Reference Group for continuous engagement and collaboration between the National Department of Human Settlements, Provincial Departments of Human Settlements, Municipalities and Civil Society Organisations
4. In respect of the PHP Programme how can the procurement systems be centralised for the seamless registration of CRO's (Community Resource Organizations) that give impetus to the skill set of the NGOs/CSO's who

possess the requisite competency to undertake PHP projects without the red tape they are facing in several provinces?

5. How can the Department facilitate the directive to ring fence a percentage of the HSDG Grant for the implementation of PHP projects