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MEDIA STATEMENT

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HUMAN SETTLEMENTS APPROVES THE 2023 REVISED ACCREDITATION FRAMEWORK

The Human Settlements Sector will soon have a revised framework to guide municipalities' administration of national housing programmes.

The *Revised Accreditation Framework for Municipalities to Administer National Housing Programmes (2023)*, will ensure municipalities' progressive capacitation to perform the delegated functions, without compromising delivery capacity in the short term. The framework received resounding support and was approved on Friday (15 September 2023), following a presentation tabled at the meeting between the Human Settlements Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi, Deputy Minister Pam Tshwete and provincial MECs of Human Settlements (MINMEC). MINMEC is a quarterly meeting between the Ministry and MECs of all nine provinces. The meeting is also attended by mayors, MMCs and representatives from the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

“This is a big step towards the creation of an objective criteria for accrediting municipalities with a clear accreditation process timetable. Allowing municipalities to progressively build implementation capacity bolsters our long-term objective of creating a fully enabling environment for our municipalities to be self-sufficient in Human Settlements delivery. This way we are capacitating them while ensuring that we reach our targets”, said Minister Kubayi.

The implementation of the 2012 Accreditation Framework was faced with several implementation challenges encountered in some of the provinces. Thus, the 2023 Revised Accreditation Framework is introducing among others, the programme based incremental approach, wherein municipalities are to be accredited for implementing a programme or mixture of programmes that are relevant to their capacity and priority needs. Another major intervention in the Revised Framework is the role of intermediate city municipalities or secondary cities, which are considered crucial catalysts for more balanced and dispersed growth across the country.

Title Deeds

MINMEC also agreed that the title deeds programme must be prioritised, through several interventions including embarking on weekly roadshows to issue the 234,757 available title deeds nationally. Discussion focused on the turnaround time by municipalities to declare townships, with an agreement to collaborate on cross border demarcation, particularly as it impacts on the title deeds roll out programme.

The issuing of title deeds across provinces is an apex priority for the Department and as part of efforts to clear the backlog, the municipalities were urged to refrain from storing them in their offices but to continuously make deliberate efforts to give back dignity and ensure that people become rightful owners to their homes. The Department has been incorporating the issuing of title deeds with housing handovers given the urgency by government to significantly unlock economic benefits.

Sector Performance

MINMEC received a report on the current fiscal environment and reflected on the response by the Human Settlements sector. While the sector understands and supports the effort by the Minister of Finance to stabilise the fiscus, MINMEC emphasised the need to find a balance between service delivery priorities and fiscal consolidation.

The sector has so far had a mix-bag of performance during the Medium-Term Strategic Framework period (2019-2024). The meeting learnt that so far from a target of 300,000, the sector is at 69,5% delivery with 208 358 fully subsidized houses on the ground. This is no mean feat in the face of budget cuts the Department has faced. About 172 066 serviced sites have been delivered from a projected number of 190 437. First Home Finance has surpassed the 20,000 units mark as targeted in 2019. To date, there are 22,035 units that have been delivered. The current delivery is against the budget cuts Department of Human Settlements has faced over the years.

“We are making inroads in ensuring that we bring more people in the housing market and thereby assisting the so-called “missing middle” with home ownership,” said Minister Kubayi.

However, for the current financial year, concerns were raised about provincial spending, wherein provinces are urged to deliver in accordance with their business plans or face redirection of funds to performing provinces. The sector is at 32% spending with eight months left in the financial year.

The Human Settlements Sector has made major improvements on ensuring that all claims are paid within 30-days. As undertaken in the previous MINMEC, all the provincial departments are committed to removing bottlenecks that may result in project delays and blocked projects in the housing delivery.

Similarly, with the mandatory allocation of 40% set aside for first quarter performance, provincial departments are making improvements in ensuring the budgets and contracts are set aside for businesses and companies owned by women, youth and people with disabilities.

Friday’s meeting in the Bojanala Platinum District was preceded by a visit to handover keys to beneficiaries of the Moses Kotane Community Residential Units (CRU) - one of the affordable rental housing projects in North West. The CRUs comprise of 110 units, including bachelor and two-bedroom rental accommodations and supports the upgrading of government-owned communal rental accommodation. As one of the departmental housing programmes, it is aimed at facilitating the provision of secure,

stable rental tenure for lower income earners. Three of the beneficiaries visited – Ms Sharon Chelopo (41), Ms Nthabiseng Mkhwanazi (33), Ms Keolopile Gaolalwe (37), lauded the affordable rental, safety and close proximity to work made possible by the government-subsidized programme.

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