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## MOKGORO CONDEMNS SHODDY WORK

North West Premier, Prof Tebogo Job Mokgoro, in his State of the Province Address (SONA) in Mahikeng today, stated that the right to adequate housing is an important basic human right which is recognised in the Constitution and international human rights instruments, in the year under review, government had planned to build 6 381 units and to service 3 692 sites and to date 1 862 houses and 3 409 serviced sites have been delivered.

Premier highlighted that the construction sector was hit hard by Covid 19 and as a result no construction could take place for 5 months of the year. Therefore, plans are underway on the backlog and to ensure that the people receive houses." Our review of blocked projects, which are projects that were not completed, revealed that the province has close to 8 000 units that need to be completed, and that close to 30 000 people who have been approved on the Housing Subsidy Scheme, claim not to have benefited from the governments housing policy. We are therefore, increasing our efforts to deliver houses," said Premier.

"Even as we try to implement the Breaking New Ground (BNG) policy, a number of challenges continue to hamper the provision of housing. These relate to questionable quality and workmanship of the houses constructed by the government, as close to 40% of beneficiaries reported weak walls and 30% indicated weak roofs requiring rectification resulting in wasteful and fruitless expenditure. The fact that our people are dependent on government for provision of housing, in no way should subject them to shoddy workmanship or sub-standard houses," emphasized the Premier.

He condemned contractors who provide shoddy work or fail to complete projects awarded to them will be listed on the National Treasury list of Restricted Suppliers which aims to blacklist such contractors and ensure that they no longer participate in the built environment.

“We are taking a hard stance against these contractors by ensuring that they go back and repay and/or rebuild these houses at their own cost. We will therefore have to double our efforts to deliver adequate housing to the people in North West in the 2021/22 financial year. Contractors who fail to deliver as agreed in their contracts will be terminated so that we can appoint contractors who will deliver the number of houses we are committing to,” Premier said.

“The Province has experienced good rainfall in the past month. However, those rains have brought with them some unprecedented challenges that have resulted in flooding, loss of lives and livestock, damage to people’s dwellings as well as the destruction of infrastructure and road networks. The emergency Housing policy is being implemented, with municipalities hard at work doing assessment of households, to determine which houses need government assistance, to make them habitable and safe,” said Premier.

Premier highlighted that preliminary assessments were completed by the 22 February 2021 and the number of affected households is estimated at 4000 houses across the province. These include houses that have totally collapsed, some that are partially damaged, windows broken, roofs blown away and the majority are mud houses that are slowly disintegrating because of the persistent rains.

“The information on all these affected households has been submitted to the Disaster Management Centre en route to the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. Further information is being collated by the disaster management team to finalise our provincial submission for the declaration of a disaster,” he added.

“As an intervention, temporary shelters are being considered to assist families who have lost their homes, as well as those whose homes are still submerged or not habitable. We are considering the use of alternative building technology to provide temporary shelters. Our efforts to address these challenges require a concerted effort and all hands must be on deck to assist,” Premier said.

On the issuing of title deeds, The Premier said that in the 2020/2021 financial year North West Housing Corporation issued title deeds to communities in Atamelang, Mogwase, Lehurutshe and Tlhabane.

“These are communities that have been occupying houses for decades without ownership. We are now planning to issue over 1000 title deeds across the province, to communities in order to improve their livelihood in the 2021/2022 financial year,” said Premier.

Further to that, the Premier said all the North West Housing Corporation flats in Mahikeng are being sectionalised to enable the tenants to purchase the individual units.” There is a culture of non-payment of rental and services remains a strategic threat to service delivery” he added.

“Even though the Department of Human Settlements, in their business plan, has already provisioned for development of Mixed Human Settlements, EXCO will as a matter of urgency conclude the policy framework thereof. We are also in the process of applying for the Social Housing Regulatory Authority accreditation in order to improve our capacity to implement social housing and rental stock. This will enhance the ability of the North West Housing Corporation to execute its mandate of providing housing for the gap market, which is in dire need,” concluded the Premier.

Ends

