

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS BUDGET VOTE 2010/2011

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The North West province is one of the provinces that is lagging behind in so far as the provision of ideal housing is concerned.

This has been occasioned by the ineptitude that has manifested itself in the ANC. The decision to remove government functions of building houses because in the process the contractor wants to make a profit or alternatively he leaves the site without having completed the job. From departments to entrepreneurs has caused all the rot. Incompetent government officials and in some cases politicians cut deals with the contractors they have appointed in a murky way to share the proceeds; the result comes as poorly constructed contraptions that are unhealthy for human habitation.

It is very unfortunate that there are still places such as Boikhutso and Coligny in the Ditsobotla Municipality where the night soil is removed in buckets. One wonders whether this province is awake to the Millennium Development Goals due to be met by 2015 in so far as human habitation is concerned.

We have noted the verve the MEC displayed during the International Sanitation and hygiene week. That campaign we hope will not end at Lesung but will be the theme right through her tenure in this portfolio.

It will be helpful if government would attend to the plight of the people at Monoto Mosetlha in Coligny as they live in squalor and relieve themselves in the bushes while they share facilities with their livestock.

Informal settlements have their origin mainly from defiance rather than need. Hon MEC Tselapedi will know that in his early life he used to tell people to disobey the order of the day and put up "mekhukhu" or shacks and occupy land as they used to say "Izwe lethu".

The chickens have come home to roost and it is difficult to reverse the situation but a challenge remains for this department as the MEC for Finance on the occasion of the presentation of the budget speech in March said among others:

“ ..We believe that this grant will not be utilized to provide houses that are of low quality whereas some contractors are fully paid for incomplete project”.

There is therefore no earthly reason why we should have houses similar to those at Orkney that fall apart because of poor workmanship. There is equally no reason why we should continue to have the “Vezinyao” type of structure which are so small that as one sleeps one’s feet protrude outside let alone dreaming about using a bed with a head board in such houses.

The idea of Human Settlements is to bring an end to residential areas where one sees a sea of badly built incommodious houses with no schools, parks, playgrounds, sites for worship places and roads.

We take the MEC’s word and we shall watch the space.

One’s home should enhance dignity and a sense of pride. The house may not be that big but must be well built.