

## **DEBATE ON VOTE 30: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**

**UCDP : MATLADI MN**

**TUESDAY, 21 APRIL 2010**

Vancouver Declaration defined human settlements as follows:

Human settlements means the totality of the human community - whether city, town or village - with all the social, material, organizational, spiritual and cultural elements that sustain it. The fabric of human settlements consists of physical elements and services to which these elements provide the material support. The physical components comprise, shelter, infrastructure and services.

Thus, it is with appreciation that the Department of Housing had been renamed to Human Settlements and that gives hope that it shall be a comprehensive department that will not only look at housing or shelter but also look at necessary infrastructure and services needed in communities.

We must congratulate the Department for having an unqualified Audit report, this sets a good tone but the non compliance with certain sections of the PFMA on the N2 gateway project cannot be overlooked and should be addressed promptly. It is also disappointing to note in the Department's Annual Report that they have not reported on the department's performance with regards to its objectives, outputs, indicators and target as per the approved annual performance plan. Without this report, it becomes almost impossible to assess the extent in which the department had been successful in implementing its activities.

Research has shown a direct link between the provision of infrastructure, income growth and human development. Infrastructure has multiple links to poverty reduction i.e. it can support income generation within a household, increase productivity, decrease time needed for collection and transport of resources, and other products. Infrastructure and service delivery can also improve access to health and education. The greatest backlog in infrastructure and service delivery is in the rural areas. South Africa has to make significant and accelerated progress in service and infrastructure delivery to meet national and international targets such as the Millennium Development Goals.

The most critical threats to the sustainability of settlements in South Africa include: water scarcity; energy crisis; crime and the fear thereof; the AIDS pandemic; growing poverty; institutional complexity; and underperformance and inefficiency in some parts of the public sector. We need to see a comprehensive plan that details how these threats would be addressed in order to attain sustainable livelihoods. We cannot continue to build houses and not think of recreation, no police stations, no health care centers; because that is not building sustainable livelihoods.

UCDP also thinks it is not enough for Minister Sexwale to say there is a plan to break 'silos' and to access land without tabling the plan, that goes against principles of transparency.

Nevertheless, UCDP accepts the budget vote.