



September 2018

TOPIC: AVAILABILITY OF URBAN LAND FOR HOUSING
ORGANISATION: NATIONAL HOUSING ENTERPRISE (NHE)
FORUM/COMMITTEE: 2nd NATIONAL LAND CONFERENCE

Introduction

As the country is urbanizing, cities, towns and villages are grappling with a population that is growing rapidly, thereby increasing demand for land for housing.

This pressure on land and housing markets often is exacerbated by inappropriate or inadequate policies and/or implementation of policies.

The result is a supply of land and housing that falls well short of demand, is not within affordable ranges and thus results in the proliferation of poorly serviced informal settlements, many of which are located far from jobs, services and amenities.

Namibia's urban population is growing at an unprecedented rate which exacerbates the housing crisis going forward. Time is running out for the key role players in urban land and housing delivery to act without delay in order to arrest the situation before it gets out of hand.

The National Housing Enterprise (NHE) has built a good reputation over a period of more than 30 years in:

- Housing Construction
- Housing Land Servicing
- Property Management
- Real Estate Management
- Mortgage Financing; and
- Financial Management

With proper support by Government the current housing crisis could be relatively easily addressed in a reasonably short timeline. Government should make use of proven and existing entities such as the NHE to help solve the urban housing delivery issue thereby also saving on time and scarce resources.

The NHE's mandate (Act 5 of 1993 as amended) can be summarized as follows:

- The financing of housing for the inhabitants of Namibia; &
- Providing for the housing needs of such inhabitants.

NHE's vision is *"To be a leading agent in providing adequate, safe and affordable housing in Namibia"*.

NHE's mission statement is *"NHE provides and finances affordable, quality and adequate housing thereby contributing to Namibia's socio-economic development and creating a stable, progressive human habitat"*.

Challenges

Namibia needs to urgently re-organize its urban land delivery approval process and procedures. The current bureaucratic system has not yielded results. There should be one approving authority, a one-stop-shop scenario in order to serve the Namibian people effectively and efficiently.

NHE faces a challenge in sourcing affordable serviced and un-serviced land in urban and peri-urban areas. This affects NHE in effectively contributing to its mandate as well as to the National Development Plan (NDP), Vision 2030 as well as the Harambee Prosperity Plan development goals in the provision of affordable housing.

Lack of Government funding further hampers the provision of affordable housing and housing finance.

Land tenure and property right also affects the delivery and provision of housing.

Insufficient communication and coordination among role players in terms of provision of housing units countrywide further exasperates solution to the housing deficit.

At present this has resulted in the waiting list for NHE houses to soar to approximately 100,000 nationwide and a national housing backlog of over 300,000.

NHE set itself a target of constructing 1250 houses per year in the 4-year period from 2017-2020. Due to funding and land availability challenges only 422 houses could be commenced in first year of the period.

Proposed Solutions

Government should effectively fund Regional and Local Authorities in the provision of land servicing and delivery. This funding should be ring-fenced to be used exclusively for its intended purpose

Regional and Local Authorities should make available serviced land to NHE for housing construction at the same or similar low/subsidized rates as provided for by Government.

Regional and Local Authorities should make available 25% of all serviced land available to NHE for development.

Government should recapitalize and fund NHE (or make zero interest funding available) to fully unleash NHE's potential to bring housing to the people at lowest cost.

Improved forums should be established to address communication and coordination among role players in the national housing delivery framework.

Conclusion

National Housing Enterprise proposes:

- **That Government increases funding to Regional and Local Authorities for servicing of land for housing. This funding should be ring-fenced as such.**
- **Regional and Local Authorities should make at least 25% of serviced land available to NHE for housing provision.**
- **Government should make funding (or funding facilities) available to National Housing Enterprises to fund housing construction as well as purchase and servicing of un-serviced land.**
- **Improved forum to address communication and coordination should be established**
- **Government land approval and delivery process should be reduced to less than six months in order to ease the operations of NHE.**