

Dignity among flood victims

RESIDENTS of Veeplaas, Soweto-on-Sea and Joe Slovo West in Nelson Mandela Bay have marveled at the impact the National and Provincial Departments of Human Settlements have made to their lives.

Human dignity is being restored and lives dramatically changed thanks to the Zanemvula human settlement project, a joint initiative that also includes the Housing Development Agency (HDA) and the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM). Zanemvula, means “bringing the rain” when translated from isiXhosa. Since the project started in 2006, more than 5 000 families have moved from informal settlements, ravaged by floods, to decent homes.

“This has brought back our dignity. We now feel like human beings. Our lives have changed, we are so happy,” said Thulani Dabe, 50, who was one of the many people relocated from the Chatty River floodplains.

The HDA has been involved since 2009. Zanemvula has brought joy and smiles to the faces of husbands, wives and children, who used to curse each time it rained. Their small shacks were flooded; their property and belongings soaked and ruined.

Today, these former shack dwellers are proud owners of four-roomed brick and mortar houses in Chatty.

Dabe, his wife Nomonde and their six-year-old child, had stayed in a shack in Veeplaas for

15 years. They never even hoped of owning a place they would call their own. It seemed a distant dream. Reality has still not sunk in as they stroll outside their yard, looking around every corner of their new home, while remembering the “bad old days of water and depressing conditions”.

“We moved in this year,” said Dabe as he looked at his house, smiling. “I saw other people living in proper housing areas and did not believe one day my family would, too. But, my time has come. I am grand and so excited.

“This is a huge difference from where we used to stay. It is safe, the environment is healthy and life is good. This is decent living,” he said.

Another happy resident is widower Maxwell Mbilini, who moved to Chatty in February this year after living in a shack,

also in Veeplaas, for four years.

“We used to be evacuated by a helicopter to a place of safety each time it rained. We were taken to community halls,



HOME GROWN: Maxwell Mbilini gardening at his new home.

it was that bad,” he recalled.

“Now, life has changed. It’s much better. We now lead a decent life and I am so happy. Thanks to the government for providing us with better accommodation that I can call home,” he said pointing to his small, already thriving, vegetable garden. He lives with his four children. His wife died last year.

Mandisa Ntoshe, a young mother who lived in Moeggesukkel informal settlement for seven years, never lost hope, “I knew one day I would be the owner of a nice house. It was only a matter of time,” she said, sitting in her lounge with her two children.

“I dread thinking of the days when I lived in the informal settlement. When it rained, it was bad. There would be pools of water outside and inside the shack. Everything was wet and the environment very unhygienic. Now, my mind has rested. I have peace of mind,” she said.

However, many of these residents still wait for other services, like electricity. Many have electrical appliances but they cannot use them because there is no electricity. This, however, will soon be a thing of the past as the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality prepares the necessary infrastructure to connect all the houses to the electrical grid. They also hope for crèches, schools and tarred roads.

“ We now feel like human beings... ”

Thulani Dabe

Human Settlements Minister launches houses in Chatty

ON 4 October 2011, Human Settlements Minister Tokyo Sexwale launched 800 houses in Chatty as part of the Zanemvula mega-housing project in Nelson Mandela Bay.

He commented that the project had a “good look and feel”, but added that the roads, pavements, grass, trees and community facilities must now come.

The HDA is the implementing agent for the project, and introduced various elements to improve the quality of houses that were built in Chatty. These include external plaster, tiled roofs, conduit for electricity, verandas, gutters, wooden door and window frames, as well as a 600mm apron around the structures.

The purpose of the Zanemvula project is to address the housing and development needs of the target areas in a sustainable way, in line with national government’s goal to reduce informal settlements to zero by 2014.

Project goals include providing access to affordable and sustainable housing, helping to improve income levels by establishing new opportunities for the residents, facilitating urban renewal, regeneration and socio-economic development, as well as helping to mobilise institutional capacity and capabilities so that integrated settlement upgrading can be accomplished at necessary scale and speed.



HOUSING DELIVERY: Human Settlements Minister Tokyo Sexwale speaks to residents at the launch of 800 houses in Chatty.

Electricity Tips!



The department of human settlements supports developments that educate home-owners about the use of electricity.

They suggest:

- Buy energy saving compact-florescent light bulbs
- Check the energy efficiency rating when buying appliances. An A+ is the most efficient rating and G is the least efficient.
- Don’t leave appliances like television on “standby”. This also consumes power. Rather switch off the power when possible.
- Turn the geyser off until 20-30 minutes before hot water is needed.
- Check that door seals on fridges are in good condition.
- Report illegal electrical connections to Eskom. You don’t have to give your name. Every year across the country lives are lost due to illegal electrical connections. Under no circumstances should anyone, except a qualified electrician, attempt to connect electrical wires.

ESKOM Customer Care: 0860 037 566



MEGA MILESTONE: The Chatty 1347 reception project reached the 1000th completed house milestone on 18 November 2011.

Rectification project improves living standards

THE National Department of Human Settlements has gone the extra mile by rectifying houses poorly built between 1994 to 2005 in Nelson Mandela Bay.

Through its implementing agency, the HDA, it has provided newly built and durable houses for beneficiaries in Soweto-on-Sea and Veeplaas.

About 7 500 poorly constructed houses will be rebuilt as part of the Zanemvula rectification programme. This programme will be tackled in phases.

The HDA subsidy manager said, “Despite these houses being built by other organisations, the Department of Human Settlements decided to rectify them, making them suitable for human habitation. That’s our mandate. To fast-track housing

delivery, and in the process provide proper human settlements which will bring back human dignity to our people.”

Phase one saw 380 units being completed. Phase two involves 2 500 units. Of this phase, eight show-houses and 54 houses are complete. The rectification process is on-going, so the Provincial Department of Human Settlements provides residents with temporary accommodation whilst their house is being rectified. After delays surrounding the Funding Agreement, six contractors and the two structural engineers and principal agents have been appointed and construction is progressing. The estimated completion date of this phase of rectification is May 2013.

THE Zanemvula project was initiated in 2006 to provide approximately 22 700 housing units (13 327 new units, 1 565 informal settlement upgrades, 7 500 rectifications and 323 rental units). Zanemvula involves the relocation of families from the Chatty river flood plain to BNG houses in the Chatty extensions and Joe Slovo West; the servicing of the Greenfield reception areas; the de-densification and improvement of source areas of Soweto-on-Sea/Veeplaas; the rectification programme of storm-damaged, wet and defective housing; and the upgrading of certain informal settlement areas within the project boundaries.

It has been just over two years since the HDA became involved as project managers on the Zanemvula Project – on behalf of the Provincial Government of the Eastern Cape. During this relatively short time the HDA has implemented some important measures in order to improve communications, increase institutional ties, and most importantly provide expert project management capability.

Projects of this nature and size can only work with support from stakeholders and a proper governance framework. The project is governed by a Steering Committee comprising all three spheres of government and supported by the HDA.

Message from the HDA

The Steercom is supported by a Technical Task Team which deals with all the technical issues.

A most important stakeholder is the existing communities and future beneficiaries of the project. Because the project always affects them intimately, good communication and involvement, through elected committees, is essential to the success of any project. The HDA has established project committees for each sub-project of Zanemvula comprising ward councillors, community representatives, contractors and the HDA. We need to ensure that the only agenda is to provide decent human settlements.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all stakeholders who have made valuable contributions to this project.



CEO Taffy Adler

Zanemvula projects on course to change lives

THE Zanemvula project comprises four major role-players – the National Department of Human Settlements, the Eastern Cape Provincial Government as the developer, the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality as landowner and beneficiary

Road in the west, the old Uitenhage Road is the boundary in the East with the Logistics Park in Uitenhage as the northern boundary and Booyens Park to the south.

“The third area is Joe Slovo West which is situated next to the main Joe Slovo township in the east, with the KwaDwesi extension (Mzingisi Development Trust) to the West. To the north is Despatch and KwaDwesi is the southern end boundary.”

Tsewu said challenges to date have included demands from residents of nearby Vaastrap informal settlement who insist that they be included in Zanemvula. Local politicians were called to settle the matter.

“We understand the people’s plight, but proper channels have to be followed. They will definitely be considered, but we have to follow the existing waiting list. They must be patient as they will be accommodated,” said Tsewu.



PLAYTIME: Soweto-on-Sea children enjoying the jungle gym on their way home after school.

identifier, and lastly the Housing Development Agency (HDA) as the implementing agent.

Co-operation among them is vital for the betterment of communities and for development to take place at a faster rate.

The HDA Operations Manager Nicholas Tsewu said the project takes place in three areas. “Veeplaas/Soweto-on-Sea is situated along the Chatty River in the east, with the Uitenhage Road in the west. In the north is KwaMagxaki suburb and in the south is the M17 going towards Njoli Square.

“The second area is the Chatty extensions along Stanford



HAPPY HOMEOWNER: Widower and father of four, Maxwell Mbilini, who lived in a shack in Veeplaas, welcomes Housing Development Agency (HDA) subsidy manager Elijah Takonze into his new home.

New multi-purpose centre for Soweto-on-Sea

NATIONAL Human Settlements Minister Tokyo Sexwale pushed an agenda for better integrated living conditions in human settlements at the opening of a new R22-million multi-purpose centre in Nelson Mandela Bay's Soweto-on-Sea recently.

The charismatic politician said human settlements without recreational facilities are "just as good as not being established".

"An idle mind is the devil's workshop. Amid current unemployment, this facility will keep our youths occupied. This will keep them away from crime, drugs and other vices which

are bedeviling our youth the world over. This is a world-class facility and the community must take good care of it. I don't want to come back and see it vandalised. This is your facility and you should look after it," said Sexwale.

Sexwale, then handed the centre over to Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality Executive Mayor Zanoxolo Wayile.

The construction of the centre will see many unemployed youths in the area occupied by getting involved in activities provided by the facility. When officially opening the centre, Sexwale praised the HDA.

The sporting facility boasts a netball court and a boxing gym – complete with punching bags, a boxing ring – ablution facilities, a sewing room, adult education, a customer care area where residents can pay their municipal bills, a jungle gym and club room. In line with the current trend of using alternative energy sources, a wind turbine and solar panels were installed to power the centre. Water tanks have been installed to collect rain water.

A security company has been employed to guard the centre around the clock. Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality will officially hand over the centre to the community of Soweto-on-Sea at a date to be announced.



CENTRE FOR CHANGE: Human Settlements Minister Tokyo Sexwale and Nelson Mandela Bay Executive Mayor Zanoxolo Wayile.

Visit the centre and witness real delivery.

Useful contact numbers

The Housing Development Agency: 041 393 2600

Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality:

Customer Care (all hours): 041 506 5555

Service Delivery Centre (all hours) – for water, sanitation and all other services: 0800 205 050

Human Settlements Eastern Cape: 043 711 9500

Emergencies: Call from cell phone: 112

Childline: (help when a child is in danger) 08000 55 555

Eskom customer care: 0860 037 566

Public transport information: 0800 656 463



human settlements

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