

4,000 families to receive houses in the Northern Cape

Government is set to build over 4,000 houses in municipalities across the Northern Cape over the course of the next 12 to 18 months, in a programme valued at R1bn.



Image source: Leon Swart – [123RF.com](https://www.123RF.com)

“Through this project, thousands of families will now have a home they can call their own, an asset that can be used to improve their lives and access financing for their needs, and a home that can be passed on to future generations,” President Cyril Ramaphosa said on Thursday, 18 January 2024.

Addressing the launch in Kimberley, President Ramaphosa described the mega-housing project as the biggest in the history of the Northern Cape.

“This project is going to help reduce the housing backlog in the Northern Cape, as more people have access to housing in urban and rural areas. The most vulnerable in our society will be prioritised as beneficiaries of this mega-housing project.

“We will strive to ensure that the elderly, child-headed households, military veterans and persons with disabilities get priority

in the allocation of these houses. What is significant about this project is that it will also address the housing needs of the so-called 'missing middle', people who have a form of income but do not qualify for either subsidised housing or home loans with commercial banks," President Ramaphosa said.

The project will also be allocating funds to eradicate informal settlements and unsuitable housing structures like mud homes.

"This project is going to create work and business opportunities in the Northern Cape across its lifespan. These opportunities will be in the construction itself, in the sourcing and production of building materials, in the laying down of bulk infrastructure, in the supply of professional services and other economic activities associated with the project.

"We will be prioritising women and youth-owned businesses. We are determined that it will be Northern Cape residents and Northern Cape businesses that will benefit from the opportunities that will be created," the President said.

He assured residents that the province has put measures in place to ensure these housing projects are delivered within the projected timeframes, according to budget and without any wastage or corruption.

"We know that right here in Roodepan and in other parts of the municipality there are social housing structures that were not built according to quality standards, or are facing challenges with wastewater drainage and groundwater seepage.

"This will not be allowed to happen again. We are going to ensure that the contractors appointed to this project observe the highest construction standards," the President said.

He said the launch of the project is a further demonstration that government is making good on its commitment to fulfil the human rights of all South Africans.

"Providing houses for the poor and vulnerable who are dependent on government support requires innovative funding mechanisms. We have to mobilise resources in partnership with financial institutions, especially development finance institutions.

"By leveraging the Human Settlements Development Grant, the Northern Cape has secured funding through a loan facility of National Treasury and the Development Bank of Southern Africa to build these top structures and housing units.

"This loan will further be augmented by funding from the fiscus and the provincial government to achieve the total project value. This will significantly shorten the time it takes to build these houses," the President said.

Thirty years of democracy

Despite the current challenges in the country, the President said government has made progress in expanding access to housing since the advent of democracy.

"This year, we celebrate 30 years since achieving our democracy. Last year, Statistics South Africa released the results of Census 2022, which give an indication of the strides we have made in improving the lives of the South African people.

"When the census was conducted in 2022, nearly 9 out of every 10 households were living in formal dwellings. When the first census in a democratic South Africa was held in 1996, only 6 out of every 10 households lived in a formal dwelling.

"In South Africa today, 8 out of every 10 households have access to piped water either inside their home or in the yard. These are achievements we must celebrate," President Ramaphosa said.

He said over 4.7 million housing opportunities have been provided since the advent of democracy.

This includes stand-alone houses, multiple storey and multi-unit buildings and serviced stands.

“Security of tenure has been granted to the many households who live in pre-1994 government rental houses. We have given subsidies and transferred title deeds to approximately 376,000 qualifying beneficiaries of these homes.

“We have been working to eradicate spatial inequality by building socially and economically sustainable human settlements close to places of work, study and recreation,” he said.

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