

# **Descriptive Analysis on Key Issues preventing the acceleration of adequate Delivery of Low-Income Housing**

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## **Abstract**

The importance of service delivery in the form of housing cannot be over emphasised. To alleviate the growth of informal settlements the South African government has initiated reconstruction development programmes. The study determined issues preventing adequate delivery of low-income housing in the Gauteng province. A quantitative approach was adopted, which meant administering a structured questionnaire to the nominated occupants. Collected data was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The findings revealed that availability of land, apartheid legacy, poor political will, urbanisation and migration, and budget constraints were recognised issues preventing adequate delivery of low-income housing. While poor on-site supervision, escalating construction costs and inadequate checks and controls were categorised amongst issues that showed no impact on adequate delivery of low-income housing. Adequate service delivery in the form of housing requires political willingness in order to re-write the imbalances of the past, this also includes absolute eradication of corruption. Private participation cannot be ignored for low-income housing, provisions and willingness to involve the private sector towards the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing should be enhanced. Lastly, the study warns that during the delivery of adequate low-income housing, user satisfaction should also be considered.

**Keywords:** Service delivery, reconstruction development programmes, formal and informal settlements, constitution of the republic section 25, government housing policy

## **1. Introduction**

Housing is a complex issue faced by most African countries. Constitution of the republic of South Africa (1996) state that “everyone has the right to access to adequate housing”. To deal with the immense housing backlog and to eradicate the informal settlements located in South Africa. The post democratic government of South Africa has implemented numerous housing programmes with the objective of engaging in bulk delivery of housing for all low-income citizens (Burgoyne, 2008), this was done to accomplish the vision of ‘the right to access to adequate housing for all’ as reflected in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and it is also adopted in the South African National Housing Policy Framework (Aigbavboa, 2014). With the help of descriptive analyses the study determined issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing in South Africa, Gauteng Province in particular.

Since 1994, the housing programmes implemented have assisted the South African government in the delivery of approximately 3.5 million houses to the low-income and middle-income recipients (White Paper on Housing, 1994), who were previously disadvantaged and who were unable to participate in the private housing market because of lack of financial means. While over 3.5 million houses have already been provided, an estimated of over 2.8 million of houses still need to be delivered at an estimated rate of 501, 00 per annum to achieve the provision of houses to low-income and middle-income household group of South Africa (Department of Human Settlement (DHS), 2014). National Treasury (2003) enunciates that government has already spent around R19 billion for 1.5 million low-income housing opportunities. The study therefore analysed the issues that prevent the acceleration of adequate low-income housing experienced in the Gauteng Province.

In pursuit of granting all the citizens of South Africa the “right of access to adequate”, the government is committed to quality delivery of low-income housing. Such delivery involves access to quality accommodation, basic services, secure tenure and affordable mortgage finance (DHS, 2014). While the alarming need for low-income housing provision can be noted, there is an increasing concern also with regards to housing needs, expectations and satisfaction of the low-income housing occupants and beneficiaries (Aigbavboa and Thwala, 2012; Charlton, 2004). More so, the issues raised around the delivery of low-income houses, should indicate in detail the kind of support required from the local municipalities for appropriate dwelling units. Only a few beneficiaries are satisfied with the current status of low-income housing, needs and expectations of the beneficiaries need to be rigorously considered during the delivery of low-income housing (Aigbavboa, 2016). Some of the reasons for the dissatisfaction stems from houses that are not always part of vivacious, effective societies and that are far located from socio-economic opportunities.

## **2. Issues of adequate delivery of low-income housing in South Africa**

The eradication of housing inadequacy and informal settlement in South Africa has been nothing but difficult, for both government and private sector. The existing government and private sector have been in charge of the provision for public housing and have also acknowledged that there has been challenges associated with the delivery of low-income housing (National Treasury, 2003). Thus, this section of the literature aims to review the key issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing in South Africa, particularly in the Gauteng Province, which include South Africa’s history, urbanisation and migration, financial constraints and lack of suitable land and buildings (Burgoyne, 2008).

### **2.1 Availability of Land**

The provision of low-income housing to the low-class citizens of South African reflects to the government’s realisation of citizen’s rights to access to adequate housing, this contributes towards strengthening South African citizen’s sense of belonging (Prinsloo, 2014). However, the availability of new housing project development is a main concern for both the government and South African citizen, as it revealed that most South African citizens are located in derisory housing that are often poorly located and without appreciable land tenure (Burgoyne, 2008). The land problem was further inherited by low-income housing developers and providers as low-income housing are often located poorly which is the consequence of lack of suitable land. The delivery of low-income houses is more abroad than just providing shelter to households, the provision of low-income housing actually mean providing access to quality accommodation, basic services, secure tenure and affordable mortgage finance in which can be realised with the availability of land.

Availability of land has always been a problem which poses complex policy and technical challenges. According to Aigbavboa and Thwala, (2013) as well as Jenkins (1999) low-income housing providers in association with the Department of Human Settlement continue locating the low-income class and the poor blacks in ‘ghettos’ on urban peripheries, far away from jobs opportunities and social services. Land on the urban peripheries is relatively cheap thus the development of low-income housing project is always located in these areas as the government continues to consider affordable and economic development of low-income houses within their budget. The Department of Human Settlement (2015) has further acknowledged that releasing of government land for low-income housing development, to designing housing interventions in ways that combat racial segregation and the highly inefficient spatial form of settlements under apartheid, to housing project management, and to coordination with public infrastructure investment.

### **2.2 South African History: Apartheid Legacy**

In addition to land availability as an issue preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing, South African housing departments and institutions in the provision of houses for low-income group, assert that the legacy of the apartheid regime inherited by the post-apartheid democratic government continues to affect the ordinary people of South Africa (De Beer, 2001). During the time of apartheid houses were delivered and used as an instrument of community segregation. According to the Department of Local Government and Housing (2005) unequal distribution of wealth together with the racial and class separation, contribute in the resistance of the provision of low-income housing. Therefore, as a result of apartheid legacy and social and racial segregation new low-income housing initiatives will forever be located in dysfunctional areas ‘ghettos’ (Pillay, Tomlinson and Du Toit, 2006). The process

of reshuffling and eradication of apartheid spatial and socio-economic patterns of exclusion appear to be the focus of the Department of Human Settlement through 'Breaking New Ground' housing plan.

### **2.3 Urbanisation and Migration**

Since the emergence of the rainbow nation and post-apartheid democratic government in 1994, South Africa has become gradually more linked to most African and Western countries, which has seen the country gain access to both global opportunities and challenges (Burgoyne, 2008). With the rapid growth of population in urban areas the demand for housing keeps accelerating and expensive to accommodate low-income households.

Demand for housing keeps on increasing, especially in urban areas. There is high increase in proportion of the population living in large urban areas, with urban growth arising from both in-migration and natural population growth (United Nations Population Fund, 2007). Furthermore, the average size of urban households living in big cities has significantly increased, this prominently indicates that there is a growing pattern of households relative to the population. These factors clearly reveal a significant increase in the demand for low-income housing in large urban areas. According to the Department of Human Settlement (2015), South Africa's urbanisation rate is increasing at 2.09% per annum. The rate of urbanisation in South Africa's major cities is sitting at about 36% to overall national population while the United Nation (UN) estimated that about 70% of the people will be living in urban areas by 2030 (DHS, 2015). According to Royston and Clark (2014), urbanisation is inevitable, whether or not government policy documents acknowledge it as such. It is evident that an increase to socio-economic access and opportunities together with increase of better life standard in urban areas will constantly attract migrants to urban areas.

### **2.4 Financial Constraints**

There are limited resources made available by the state and housing institutions for housing development. According to the Department of Human Settlement, (2012) and Charlton (2004), it has been estimated that approximately 2 million low-income households, with combine monthly income between R1 500 and R7 500, depend on government assistance for better living and acceptable accommodation. Moreover, the Department of Human settlement (2015) revealed a housing shortfall of approximately 694 000 units in the R2 500 to R7 500 range in 2006/07, which will have risen to nearly 727 000 units by 2009/10. This shortfall point out that demand for low-income housing is considerably growing quicker compared to the supply of low-income housing units. The Department of Human Settlement (2012) further stressed that, addressing this housing need by 2014 would mean erecting 170 000 new houses each year for five years, however 2.1 million households will still experience no access to housing, the majority of which are concentrated in big cities.

The public housing spending programme is estimated to be at R108.4 billion for over the next three years. Tomlinson (2015) shares that despite this rapid increase in the housing budget, the delivery of "free" houses has slowed, and currently averages 118 000 houses a year. The national budget has a huge impact on the degree of the delivery of low-income houses. The current value of subsidy cannot keep up with the pace of inflation rate. With this rate, it will take virtually 20 years to eradicate the shortfall of 2.1 million households (Prinsloo, 2014).

### **2.5 Poor coordination and planning**

Complex arrangements, poor coordination and planning of housing department and support institution are often cited too be too complicated, this includes the three spheres of government, national, provincial and local government. The officials in control of coordinating these housing schemes are said to be incompetent or lethargic, hence these programmes are deem to be complex and poorly coordinated or planned (Department of Human Settlement, 2012). The foundation of this problem is that the municipalities are given insufficient authority in the provision of houses, regardless of the important accountabilities imposed to them for the provision of social housing and other infrastructure which in a long run will assist in the eradication of informal settlements and housing backlogs. This has been seen as the factor effecting the delivery of subsidised housing. According to the Department of Human Settlement (2015) various municipalities have launched numerous complaints to the department regarding housing development delays, which often conflict with the priorities identified and financed in their own plans, thus leading to poor coordination and planning.

### **3. Research Methodology**

This study analysed issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing in South Africa. The study was carried out in the Gauteng Province, and a quantitative survey method was adopted. The research instrument employed was a close-ended questionnaire administered to occupants and beneficiaries of low-income housing. Using a convenience sampling approach, a total of 50 questionnaires were distributed, with 41 recovered and considered appropriate for analyses. This represents an 82% response rate, which is considered adequate for the study based on the selected study area. It might, however, not be enough for generalising the proceedings within the entire low-income houses in the Gauteng Province. The questionnaire adopted was designed in two sections with the first section seeking data on the background information of the respondents. The second section sought the respondent's view regarding issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing. A 5 point Likert scale was adopted for the study. Data gathered was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. The method of data analyses include the use of percentage to analyse the background information of the respondents, while mean item scores (MIS), and standard deviations (SD) were employed in analysing issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing in the Gauteng Province.

### **4. Findings, Analysis and Discussion**

#### **4.1 Biographical Data**

The findings revealed that out of 41 participated respondents 61% were male, while 31% were female. When it comes to ethnicity, 2% of the respondents were Asian/Indian, 7% were White, and 15% were Coloured, while Blacks dominated the ethnicity group with 76%. The nominated respondents showed different levels of qualifications; out of 41 respondents 15% held a higher certificate, 34% had a diploma, while 7% and 5% of the respondents had a degree and masters respectively. It was also revealed that amongst the 41 respondents none of them had a doctoral degree. The respondents were also required to state their years of experience, 49% had 5-10 years of experience, 20% had less than 5 years of experience, 12% had 11-15 years of experience, 12% had 16-20 years of experience, and only 7% of the respondents actually had more than 20 years of experience.

#### **4.2 Issues preventing the acceleration of Adequate Delivery of Low-Income Housing**

Findings in Table 1 show how the issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing in the Gauteng Province were ranked, using mean item scores and standard deviations. Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences was vital to determine the most crucial issues preventing adequate delivery of low-income houses. Amongst the ranked issues there were variables with a mean item score above and below the average 3.0, representing significant and insignificant issues. Most critical issues include the availability of land (MIS=4.66; SD=9.192), South African history - apartheid legacy (MIS=4.54; SD=11.719), segregation (MIS=4.49; SD=10.263), poor political will (MIS=4.27; SD=8.221), lack of appropriate skills (MIS=4.12; SD=2.52), urbanisation and migration (MIS=4.02; SD=6.24) and budget constraints (MIS=4.00; SD=5.737). The findings also alluded that poor on-site supervision (MIS=2.756; SD=1.528), rising construction cost (MIS=2.439; SD=10.693) and inadequate checks and controls (MIS=2.439; SD=10.693) had no impact on the delivery of low-income housing in South Africa.

These findings show that the availability of land as a key issue for adequate delivery of low-income housing, was a critical factor. Burgoyne (2008) makes emphasis that availability of land has always been a challenge, especially for adequate delivery of low-income housing in South Africa, this includes complex policies and technical challenges. Aigabavboa and Thwala (2013) as well as Jenkins (1999) assert the only available land for low-income beneficiaries is located in areas where there are limited socio-economic opportunities. Prinsloo (2014), also shares that the issues of low-income housing is not only delivering adequate houses but delivery quality accommodation, basic services, secure tenure and affordable mortgage finance in which can be realised with the availability of land. More so, urbanisation and migration was considered among the top rated issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of much anticipated low-income houses, these findings were in agreement with United Nations Population Fund (2007), Department of Human Settlements (2015) and Burgoyne (2008) that rapidly growing population in urban cities is affecting adequate supply of the necessary basic services. Royston and Clark (2014) alludes that urbanisation is inevitable whether or not government legislation acknowledges it, as a result cities need to find measures to provide housing for the expected or envisaged population growth. However, the findings were in disagreement with Sommerville (2007) that inadequate checks and controls are not key issues preventing the adequate delivery of low-income housing, the study contradictory to the findings asserts that inadequate checks and controls lead to poor

communication, poor feedback mechanisms and lack of technical expertise and skills development. More so, the findings were also in disagreement with Alink (2003) that poor on-site supervision was not amongst the key issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing, the study makes emphasis that contractors of low-income housing use incorrect building procedures and compromise the quality of the building materials, hence the importance of on-site supervision.

**Table 1. Key issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing**

<b>Issues</b>	<b>MIS</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>RANK</b>
Availability of land	4.659	9.192	1
Apartheid legacy	4.537	11.719	2
Segregation	4.488	10.263	3
Poor political will	4.268	8.221	4
Lack of appropriate skills	4.122	2.517	5
Urbanisation and migration	4.024	6.238	6
Budget constraints	4.000	5.737	7
Limited participation by private sector	3.878	6.419	8
Nepotism	3.805	6.760	9
Poor planning and coordination	3.756	7.396	10
Poor workmanship	3.659	4.658	11
The subsidy's value not keeping pace with inflation	3.293	6.573	12
Inadequate checks and controls	3.220	7.095	13
Limited Resources	3.171	5.070	14
Lack of involvement of professional designers	3.146	7.228	15
Use of unskilled labour	2.976	8.585	16
Poor on-site supervision	2.756	1.528	17
Rising construction cost	2.439	10.693	18
Inadequate checks and controls	2.439	10.693	18

## **5. Conclusion**

This study descriptively analysed key issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing in the Gauteng Province. Described issues were ranked according to their mean item scores and standard deviations. Based on the findings, it is evident that availability of land, apartheid legacy, segregation, poor political will, lack of appropriate skills, urbanisation and migration, as well as budget constraints were amongst the most critical issues preventing the acceleration of adequate delivery of low-income housing. The importance of service delivery in the form of housing cannot be over emphasised, the study recommends that a holistic approach political willingness is enhanced at national, provincial, regional and local level to deliver adequate housing, that high level of governance is promoted, and that corruption is alleviated by all means possible. Despite all tremendous delivery of social housing and development of low-income housing projects, it is clear that apartheid legacy can't be easily eradicated without adherence to political resolutions, which can challenge and reverse the resistance of clustering low-class groups together with the upper-class group in functional communities. The study further recommends that dual diligence is given to the conditions of the delivered houses, the dwelling conditions, and that the quality as well as citizen participation is enhanced. The participation of the private sector cannot be ignored, provisions for extended private participation towards adequate delivery of low-income housing should be made.

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