Informal settlement workshops for the City of Johannesburg

In partnership with the national Department of Human Settlements National Upgrade Support Programme’s technical team and the City of Joburg, the HDA facilitated two workshops in Johannesburg in September and October.

About 30 officials who work in housing and play a role in projects aimed at upgrading informal settlements in the city’s various regions attended the first workshop, which was held on 11 and 12 September. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the challenges of informal settlements and highlight the policy intentions as well as share the lessons drawn from the upgrading programme.

Steve Topham and Monty Narsoo from the national team started by presenting the policy context and other fiscal and financial policies relating to the upgrading programme.

Maki Thellane, HDA Senior Manager Informal Settlement Upgrading, presented the HDA perspective on informal settlement upgrading. The presentation was based on the work that the HDA has been doing in the North West, Limpopo and Northern Cape. Thellane highlighted the importance of the incremental upgrading approach if we are to achieve the scale, complexity and change needed to improve the quality of life of households in informal settlements.

The discussion and lessons from these projects demonstrated the importance of:

- Community participation
- Working with informality
- Approaching informal settlements as part of the city
- Understanding that upgrading the settlements may be a lengthy process that might mean focusing on other community priorities such as providing basic services and an alternative form of tenure in the interim

Held on 9 and 10 October, the second workshop was an introductory one for councillors from the City of Johannesburg’s portfolio committee and was aimed at equipping political and community representatives with the relevant concepts, information and analysis to understand the need for adopting upgrading as an effective strategy to respond to the challenge of informal settlements.

Thando Madonsela, HDA Technical Expert: Informal Settlements, presented the HDA’s approach to informal settlements and offered key learnings and observations on the development of community upgrading plans from current activities undertaken in the Limpopo and North West provinces.

The National Upgrading Support Programme is a programme of the National Department of Human Settlements

The NUSP was established to provide assistance to provinces and municipalities in their efforts to upgrade informal settlements.
FAQs
Informal settlement upgrading policy and funding

Subsidy and relocations
*Can the UISP subsidy be utilised for settlements that are categorised for relocations and if so what does it provide for?*
The UISP subsidy applies in full in cases where a portion or the whole community is to be resettled. The subsidy provides for relocation costs as follows: transport = R455.28, social services = R343.99, food parcel = R566.58. The total amount being R1,365.85. The Emergency Housing Assistance Programme can be accessed to finance households that are relocated on a temporary or emergency basis.

Subsidy and public facilities
*What happens to settlements that have already been upgraded but do not have public facilities and what instrument can be utilised to provide for these facilities?*
There is a National Housing Programme, the Provision of Social and Economic Amenities, that has been designed to provide grant funding to municipalities to deliver public facilities, namely:
- Medical care facility: R694,028.99
- Community hall (520m²) inclusive of day care centre and ablution facility: R1,250,833.66
- Community park or playground and ablution facility: R1,080,300.42
- Taxi rank and ablution facility: R1,183,953.42
- Sports facilities plus ablution: R1,778,974.12
- Small business facilities plus ablution facilities: R1,104,757.28
Total cost including planning and project management: R7,267,964.61.

Subsidy and Emergency Housing Programme
*The Emergency Housing Programme is sometimes seen as an instrument to quickly address upgrading even when there is no emergency – what does policy allow for?*
For emergency services the UISP providers R3,439.89 for interim/emergency services per stand. It only applies in relocation situations and in cases where health and life is threatened.

In some municipalities Temporary Relocation Areas (TRAs) are used as a means to upgrade informal settlements and they end up becoming a permanent fixture – what are the standard application procedures from municipalities to provinces? TRAs are not a national policy concept but are rather linked to temporary relocation needs.

More on the UISP
The Upgrading Informal Settlements Programmes (UISP) represented a major shift away from the way the previous department of housing delivered houses up to 2004. It was the first programme approved after the institution of the Comprehensive Plan for the Creation of Human settlements. And the plan was designed based on lessons learnt as well international best practice and it is still government’s Number One intervention! The UISP contains the following provisions:
- Holistic community-wide redevelopment approach
- Community’s involvement is fundamental
- Security of tenure and basic services
- Flexibility
- Temporary services or ‘emergency’ options

COMING UP
More on the UISP

The Upgrading Informal Settlements Programmes (UISP) represented a major shift away from the way the previous department of housing delivered houses up to 2004. It was the first programme approved after the institution of the Comprehensive Plan for the Creation of Human settlements. And the plan was designed based on lessons learnt as well international best practice and it is still government’s Number One intervention! The UISP contains the following provisions:

- Holistic community-wide redevelopment approach
- Community’s involvement is fundamental
- Security of tenure and basic services
- Flexibility
- Temporary services or ‘emergency’ options

Visit our website www.upgradingsupport.org and click on ‘resources’ to view presentations from the Cape Town introduction upgrading workshop that took place on 14-15 November 2013.