

**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**MINISTRY OF URBAN**

 **AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (MURD)**

#

# Stakeholders Consultative Workshop

# on the Revision of the National Housing Policy and the Development of the

# Implementation Action Plan

# 16 & 17 November 2022

# Record of the Workshop

**DAY1**

**Date:16 November 2022**

**Venue: Cést Si Bon Lodge, Otjiwarongo**

**Time: 08:00-17:00**

1. **National & AU Anthems**
2. **Welcoming remarks by His Worship the Mayor, Cllr Gottlieb Shivute**
* Housing is a critical component to restore human dignity for many of our residents across Namibia.
* Research and development (Evidence Based Planning) remains critical in addressing gaps and plugging the leaks in housing development.
* Highlighted rapid population growth, now at 8 billion and that soon 60% of global population in urban areas. The pressure from urbanisation therefore keeps mounting exerting souring demands for socio-economic development and local government services by LAs
* Noted that national housing backlog stands at 950,000 with 62% from the low-income segment. In Otjiwarongo 22 500 f urban residents are found in informal settlements.
* There is high demand to accelerate the provision of housing by LAs- in order to create a conducive environment for the public at local level
* The issue of tenure is important to meet the need for housing
* Affordable housing is a major developmental challenge
* Increase in unplanned informal settlements pose challenges to the administration of various RCs & LAs
1. **Opening remarks by Mr. Nghidinua Daniel, Executive Director (MURD)**
* Welcomed participants and quoted ‘… coming together is a beginning, remaining together is progress and working together is success…’
* Highlighted that ‘Housing’ is the fifth National Priority in the Harambee Prosperity Plan.
* Explained the background to the on-going revision of the National Housing Policy of 2009 including the first National Housing Policy in 1991, and the review of the Mass Housing Programme, the preparation of the Blueprint which all culminated in the current draft Revised National Housing Policy
* Noted that “One of the questions that some people might be asking themselves is on whether we are not indirectly creating additional problems with this policy, there is a need to think forward and for every citizen to play their role’
* Noted too that if you cannot measure something, you cannot manage it. He emphasized the need to monitor and evaluate after implementation to measure the implementation percentage and impact
* Challenged participants to think innovatively and not to leave everything to Government. This should include funding sources and how the process of delivering the land at a faster pace are addressed in the policy.
1. **Presentation of the Overview of the draft Revised National Housing Policy by Dr. Phillip Lühl, NUST**
* Presentation is Annex 2
* In terms of the envisioned impact of the revised Policy, Dr Luehl emphasized that the success of the policy is not just measured by the number of houses provided but also by the housing opportunities that are created

**Comments and questions to presentation on the draft Revised National Housing Policy**

* The Background of the Revised Policy does not include a description of the process of revising the Policy
* The Background only seems to focus on the challenges and is not acknowledging the efforts of what Government has done and achieved in housing delivery over the years.
* In Vision statement – mention urban and rural
* Objectives - How do you measure the ‘consolidation’ and ‘diversification’ components?
* Some objectives in the Policy contains many elements e.g., Policy Objective 3, thus making it difficult to monitor (The participant further asked how objective 3 is to be measured)
* The component on ‘…capacitate the OMAs…’ under Policy Objective 3 needs to be separate
* It was highlighted that no activities should be described in the text of the main body of the Policy. The Policy must be short, concise and clear.
* There is a need to build housing based on the needs of the beneficiaries,
* Provision of decent housing comes with costs of water and electricity. Low-income groups barely afford services such as sewage, and electricity. Prepaid meters charge the same tariffs across income groups
* Should introducing national housing price control not be considered? Consider **-** instead of price control, to focus on managing input costs such as land. Efforts are also ongoing to finalize the Rent Bill taken over from Ministry of Industry
* Align the draft National Housing Policy with other ongoing initiatives such as on land delivery
* How can RCs play a role in housing delivery? The mandate of RCs in housing is unclear. Relationship between RCs and Implementers also unclear. Clarification – Chapter 4 of the Act provides a role for RCs. It was also noted that RCs have land and lead the development of structure plans. A constraint highlighted was, they can only ‘lease’ land.
* Most LAs and RCS have not established their housing needs. No profiling has been done. Baseline studies are therefore required to understand local housing needs and the levels of affordability for planning purposes
* Where will N$20 billion come from? Innovative thinking on funding housing will be required. What are other sources?
* How is the policy addressing financial institutions to fund housing in rural areas as this is currently not allowed?
* Raising funds for RCs and LAs - Explore how taxes from regions can remain in there.
* Need to set laws which requires different companies (the participants made an example of a mining company in Karibib) to contribute through local taxes and levies to infrastructure development within in the areas in which they operate, this according to the participant needs to be done because it will be better to do it when it is clearly stipulated in the law rather than willingly.
* Another proposal was to charge a percentage on companies getting Government tenders to service land. A levy could also be charged on building materials.
* The money from these levies, taxes etc could be ‘ring fenced’ and kept in a housing and infrastructure development fund. Undertake feasibility study on levies, taxes etc and present ideas to Cabinet
* People are ready to do self-servicing
* The Policy should mainstream the approach whereby of members of the public survey and service land with community-based organization that are not recognized as this is being practiced in some towns that have reaped good results.
* The policy refers to shack dwellers and other closely related NGOs as community-based organizations.
* The idea of ‘self-planning’ and ‘self-servicing’ of the land were highlighted. Question was asked on how to compensate communities and households that service infrastructure
* The policy should not use the word ‘cities but rather local authorities as there is only one city in Namibia.
1. **Presentation of the Draft National Informal Settlements Upgrading Strategy by Ms Christina Schade and Ms Audrey Dulan, UN Habitat**

Presentation is Annex 3

**Comments and questions**

* Remove the word ‘slum’ from cover page
* NPC provided comments, advised that the strategy must be for five-years and should follow NPC guidelines
* Examples of ‘self-planning’ and ‘self-servicing’ in selected LAs like Karibib and Otjiwarongo were explained
* Citywide plan is like what is provided in Namibia’s planning legislation: structure plans. Change the word ‘city’ to local authority
* The proposed increment of funding towards the community-based organizations, should it be in the form of a loan or a grant? Answer – grant.
* There is a need to have a strategy which aims to create jobs, as a means to improve the financial situation of beneficiaries, thus in the process making it easy to achieve the policy objectives.
* The Informal Settlement Upgrading Strategy needs to be relooked at. Too many activities, some are micro activities at administrative levels. There is need to be strategic.
* Is the Strategy not encouraging what we do not want? There is need to manage informal settlements (regulating and controlling them), to plan them and for civic education.
* Assign roles properly e.g. ALAN and NALAO assigned wrong roles in Action Plan
1. **Presentation of Definitions and Concepts for National Housing Information System by Dr Isak Neema, NSA**

Presentation is Annex 4

**Comments and questions**

* There is a need for the NSA to provide some definition like for ‘households’, this is important to minimize contradictions in records.
* What stage have you formalized an informal settlement to qualify the informal settlement to be formal?
* Questions on what informal settlements are vis-a-vis proclaimed settlements, one gets different answers. Informality with several dimensions – planning (proclaimed/unproclaimed), provision of services (water, energy, sanitation, access), diverse settings (urban, rural)
* When defining an area as an informal settlement, what comes first? Is it the illegal structures or the spatial planning side of things (proclaimed/unproclaimed).
* There is need to harmonize i.e., reach some communality within the framework of NHIS
* We are unable to measure complicated definitions that are not SMART. Make it simple for monitoring purposes. With time, it can be refined.
* Meanwhile the Policy and the Upgrading Strategy can highlight complexities around informal settlements in diverse settings
* There is a need for NSA to review the definition of Urban Agriculture etc /as the current definition leaves out those who are farming with goats and sheep in urban areas. (Urban agriculture can be redefined as any farming activity per provision of that town)

**DAY2**

**Date:17 November**

**Venue: Cést Si Bon Lodge, Otjiwarongo**

**Time: 08:00-17:00**

1. **Opening remarks by Mr Thaniseb (MURD}**
* Welcomed participants and highlighted the achievements of the previous day.
1. **Presentation of the Preliminary Draft Implementation Action Plan of the Revised National Housing Policy by Dr Chiramba, NUST**
* Presentation is Annex 5
* Highlighted that the formulation of the IAP to be done in consultation with all stakeholders, RCs, LAs, Financial institutions, NGOs and other related stakeholders in line with the partnership approach adopted by the Policy

**Comments and questions**

* Policy Objectives and Strategies well crafted, if we can implement them, there will be change
* Policy Objective 1, Strategy 1 on right to housing: Align to Vision 2030
* Social rental housing – puts pressure on LAs
* Include rent to own housing in Policy
* Policy Objectives and Strategies in Revised NHP and IAP to be aligned
* Use actionable words e.g., construct 100 houses. Activities to remain at high-level. NPC to discuss formulation with NUST
1. **Group Discussions, facilitated by Ms. Tsukhoe Garoes, MURD and Dr Chiramba, NUST**
* Participants divided into three groups; each group reviewed at least two Policy Objectives over 2 hours
* Guiding Questions in Annex 6 guided group discussions
1. **Presentations and Review of Outcomes of Group Discussions, facilitated by Ms. Tsukhoe Garoes**

**Group 1**

# Policy Objective 1: Strengthen Namibia’s human rights framework for adequate housing by 2025

**Strategy 1**

* The group was satisfied with the strategy.

**Activities**

* The group participants were satisfied with activity 1.1, its outputs and indicator.
* The group participant was happy with Activity 1.2 but suggested that the following be added 1.3 **Develop guidelines for dispute and grievances with timelines** **1.4** **establishment of dispute and grievances committees.**

 **Outputs**

* The group stated that they do not necessarily agree with the 1.2.1, 1.2.2 and suggested that it be amended like **1.2 Establishment of unified disputes and grievance procedures**, **1.2.2 Awareness about housing being a human right**.

**General Observations**

* Consider including in Policy something that address irresponsible parents who sell houses and leave children homeless.

# Policy Objective 2: Unlock housing opportunities at scale for urban and rural residents at all socio-economic levels by 2030

**Strategy**

* No new strategy was proposed, or comments made on the proposed strategy

**Indicators**

* Replace indicator 2.2 under this policy objective with **2.2 No of policies developed.**
* NHIS – rephrase the indicator

**General Observations**

* Actions in National Informal Settlements Upgrading Strategy not to be reflected in the IAP in full. Include high level information in IAP
* Look at activities and indicators, they need to speak to each other
* Identify clearly the OMA leading on activities

# **Group 2**

# Policy Objective 3: Re-align state-supported housing provision proportionally to demographic distribution by 2025 and capacitate OMAs and non-state implementers for accelerated and enhanced implementation to meet the housing need

**Strategy**

* No new strategy proposed

**Proposed Activities**

* The Build Together guidelines to be revised and aligned to be on par with the most current National Housing policy
* Re-align financial institutions operations in terms of housing provision to beneficiaries at RCs/LAs
* Reintroduce the mass land servicing programmes to RCs/LAs to intensify mass construction of housing
* Incorporate rent to own
* Train LAs on the NHIS and further change NHIS
* Explore and formalise alternative building materials and building concepts (Actors: NHE/SABS/NSI)

 **General Observations**

* Why the objective 3.4 is narrowed to government employees?
* Social housing rental put pressure on the local authorities.

# Policy Objective 4: Focus public expenditure proportionally on priority target groups

**Strategy**

Incentivize the private sector

**Activities**

* Minimize and regulate political interference in administration of housing programmes
* Independent referee required to administer subsidies
* Subsidise Transport sector to transport building materials at affordable prices to avoid price increases due to transport costs
* The development of the housing fund as an independent body

**General Observations**

* No social housing for nothing. Focus on social rental housing to buy
* Group satisfied with formulation
* Actors properly assigned.

# **Group 3**

# Policy Objective 5: Increase private sector investment in adequate housing provision

**Strategy**

Change to ‘Incentivize the private sector’

**Proposed Activities**

* Keep/Retain indigenous trees in development of neighborhoods to promote sustainability
* Review the National Building Regulation (MWT) and respective building regulations of Local Authority (interface of mandate actors)
* Off-setting contribution of companies to housing projects against other municipal charges (with project support)
* Legislation obligating dominating local companies to contribute to development of local infrastructure & housing (Compliance monitoring)
* Adjustments of land rates to attract investment
* Land delivery incentives by local authorities in the form of advice in town planning and land, assist private sector in addressing the land delivery.
* Cross subsidization in mixed development projects.

**General Observations**

* Private sector focuses on profit and not in line with Government National strategy vision-2030 with a strong social focus
* Lack of proper Collaboration between the private sector and government (one sector is profit Oriented whilst the government aims to address the housing needs).
* Types of incentives not clearly identified and discussed e.g., land delivery incentives are town planning and land
* Incentives for the whole building process i.e., materials and methods
* How will the incentives be paid?
* Cross subsidization through the Trust Fund
* Incentives for the private sector apply to the communities too?

# Policy Objective 6: Improve environmental, social, and spatial sustainability of neighbourhoods and housing units in line with Sustainable Development Goals

**Strategy**

* Private sector and community led incentives for environmental protection
* Improve environmental sustainability in neighbourhoods

**Proposed Activities**

* Keep indigenous trees and public open spaces in neighborhoods.
* Review the National Building Regulation (MWT) and respective building regulations of Local Authority (interface of mandate actors
* Promote alternative building material

**General Observations**

* National building regulations only deals with standardized bricks and mortar.

# Policy Objective 7: Encourage applied research, housing innovation and collective learning in the housing sector

**Strategy**

* No strategy proposed

**Proposed Activities**

* Identify and involve stakeholder partnership for applied research and innovative housing
* Establish mechanism to evaluate and approve pilot projects and mainstream innovation schemes
* Manage and share information while creating awareness amongst stakeholders about housing innovation and materials.
* Review the National Building Regulation (MWT) and respective building regulations of Local Authority (interface of mandate actors)
* Strengthen the testing of building materials

**General Observations**

* Lack of literature and awareness
* No tests done with the bricks whether it is alternative or standard
1. **Remarks by Ivy Muititi, NPC**
* Policy well crafted
* Continue to harmonise the Revised NHP and the draft IAP
* Aim at objectives that are achievable in the Plan
1. **Vote of thanks by Mr Thaniseb**
* Thanked ED, NPC, NSA, NUST and all participants for their attendance and contributions

# Annexures

Annexure 1: Stakeholders Consultation Program 16 and 17 November 2022, in Otjiwarongo.

Annexure 2: Presentation of Draft Revised National Housing Policy.

Annexure 3: Presentation of the Draft National Informal Settlements Upgrading Strategy

Annexure 4: Presentation on Definitions and Concepts of NHIS.

Annexure 5: Presentation of Preliminary Draft Implementation Action Plan

Annexure 6: Guiding Questions for Group Discussions

Annexure 7: Attendance List

**Report compiled by rapporteur team**

**MURD**

* Mr Edwin Liswaniso
* Mr Muikute

**NUST**

* Ms Aune Shikongo
* Mr Boicky Shilongo
* Dr Thomas Chiramba