

R9bn social housing project launched, institutions now accredited

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The Department of Human Settlements (DHS) on Thursday introduced accreditation procedures to regulate social housing institutions, to ensure standards were met before institutions became eligible to access government subsidies for social rental housing.

The first project launched through accredited institutions saw R9-billion allocated by the DHS to build 27 000 social housing units, exceeding government's initial target of 25 000 units in the next three years for inner cities.

Government would provide R4-billion, while debt funding from the private sector would total R5-billion.

DHS director-general **Thabane Zulu** said this first round of accreditation brought much needed credibility to the sector, particularly as it related to the protection of the state investment into social housing projects. It would also encourage the private banking sector, which has been a reluctant funding partner in the past, to provide funding.

DHS Social Housing Regulatory Authority CEO **Brian Moholo** added that the accreditation procedures would ensure decent accommodation in the inner city.

He added that the issuing of accreditation certificates to social housing institutions was the first step in ensuring that the DHS provided affordable accommodation in the inner city close to places of work.

"This is the realisation of our long-term goal of ensuring that people who earn between R3 500 and R7 000 a month are provided with appropriate accommodation closer to work opportunities, while in the process improving their economic conditions," said Moholo.

A social housing accreditation register was also introduced, which would help to ensure that set norms and standards are upheld within the sector.