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Creating housing assets

THE government — through the Department of Housing — intends to expand its role in the delivery of houses to the entire residential market.



According to the chief of operations of the housing department, Joseph Leshabane, there is a visible shift from merely building houses to creating housing assets and the development of sustainable human settlements.

Communities have access to integrated settlements providing access to economic facilities and opportunities, transport, recreation, education and other community facilities. He says for the past five years, people earning between R3501 and R7000 a month have been benefiting from the government's housing subsidy, as part of a partnership arrangement with the financial sector.

The government programme, called credit-linked subsidy, is helping beneficiaries to access housing credit for the purchase of existing houses and/or to acquire a serviced stand linked to a house-building contract. "It is envisaged that this programme will contribute to the development of a vibrant residential property market and enhance the linkages between the primary and secondary residential property market," Leshabane emphasises.

"The subsidy amounts are based on a household's monthly income on a basis of higher subsidies for the lower income categories. The government housing grants serve as a capital down payment, so rendering bond repayments more affordable."

The government is also actively supporting programmes to develop townships and has increased the subsidy amounts in order to build bigger, better houses that can be integrated in the housing market.

"We recently launched the Housing Development Agency, which will help provinces and municipalities acquire land and prepare it for implementation of integrated human settlements," Leshabane says.

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