

Theme: Sustainable Inclusive Development

*Paper Topic: Sustainable Development Perspectives of Inclusive Housing
Policy in BRICS: A Review of South African Policy in the context of BRICS*

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Abstract

Twenty years into post-apartheid democracy housing provision in South Africa is dominated by the legacy of apartheid spatial and socio-economic inequality, social exclusion and living in slums characterized by environmentally unsustainable living conditions. Despite government's best efforts to provide the constitutionally mandated right to basic housing and shelter and related services migration to the cities from poverty stricken rural areas in South Africa and other African countries has increased the demand for sustainable housing. Government is caught between having to provide housing for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and those wishing to access the housing market but cannot, because they fall on the edges of home ownership and housing provision. This segment of households identified as the gap market, is caught between inaccessibility to mortgages because they don't earn enough, and inaccessibility to subsidized housing because they earn too much. Households from this segment are marginalized living in slums with little or no access to shelter, water and sanitation, transport and waste removal. The research for this paper has found that the South African government's housing policy has primarily focused on subsidies to create opportunities for home ownership for the most vulnerable to the neglect of provision of housing and shelter to the gap market. The net result of government policy for the gap market has been a backlog in the supply of affordable sustainable housing in general and social housing in particular. Our paper reviews sustainable public housing policy in South Africa and other BRICS countries to learn lessons for

improving social housing policy in the context of the MDGs and the UN proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Key Words

Sustainable housing, inequality, water and sanitation, waste removal, poverty, segregation, shelter, slums, unemployment