

Pietermaritzburg housing project remains incomplete four years later

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Families who are set to benefit from the Vulindlela Development Association (VDA) housing project in Pietermaritzburg have been waiting four years for their homes to be completed.



One of the incomplete houses of the R2.1bn Vulindlela Housing Project in Pietermaritzburg. Photo: Nompendulo Ngubane

The R2.1bn housing project in rural Vulindlela in the Msunduzi Municipality was approved by the Department of Human Settlements in 2011. Beneficiaries of the project believe that construction of about 700 houses has stopped as a result of the poor quality of the structures.

Many of the homes remain incomplete, some without roofs, windows, and doors or cement slabs.

Sizakele Majola, 50, of Sweetwater in Nadi said his family has “lost hope”. Majola said they have made several visits to the VDA offices in a bid to get answers.

“They started building the house in December 2013. In 2014, they told me that they are stopping because the [house’s

foundation] was poorly built. They took the bricks that belonged to us and started building the house next door. They said they would return to fix the slab [foundation] and continue with our house, but they didn't. It broke my heart," she said.

Majola then went to the VDA offices to demand answers and said she was shocked when they told her that according to their system their home was done. "I may not be educated, but that information confused me. How can a house that only ended up with a slab be complete? It's been four years now. We don't know if the project will still continue or not," she said.

Majola's daughter Zinhle Majola said the family was forced to share a small mud house with other relatives while they wait for their new home. "We are all squashed in the same rondavel. They should not have raised our hopes. It's clear that people living in rural areas will always be victims of government projects," said Majola.

Spokesperson for the Department of Human Settlements Mbulelo Baloyi said they were aware of the incomplete project. Baloyi said that after the visit by President Jacob Zuma in 2016, VDA management promised to visit the affected households and fix the problems. He said the delays were also due to residents "fighting over houses".

When GroundUp contacted VDA chief executive officer Senzo Mfayela, he said they were forced to halt operations due to funding issues. "The project fund administrator has been replaced. We expect this problem to be resolved in the next two to three weeks," he said.

Mfayela said that any defects were identified by their quality assurance team. He said a field officer will be visiting the homes of families to investigate their complaints.

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