

THE HOUSING SHORTAGE

Estimates of the housing shortage which are given by governmental authorities and those which are given by non-governmental institutions differ to a considerable degree. In 1975, Prof. Ivor Prinsloo, addressing a symposium of the Institute of South African Architects stated that, in the Cape Metropolitan area alone, 12 - 30% of the population could be said to be inadequately housed, and that 12% were not housed at all.

In 1976, the official estimate of the housing backlog for the 'coloured' population in the Cape Peninsula was given as 46 000 units, and the national shortage for this population group was given as 58 600.² In the same year however, the Cape Metropolitan Planning Committee estimated the shortage for the 'coloured' population in the Cape Metropolitan area alone at 60 000.²

In 1979 the Department of Community Development estimated the Cape shortage for the 'coloured' group at 32 000, and the national shortage at 41 300, and in 1981 estimated that 21 700 houses would have to be built annually nationally for this group yearly for the natural increase and the backlog to be dealt with within five years.³

Table 1 gives the official estimates of the housing shortage for 'coloured' families both in the Cape Peninsula and in South Africa as a whole, together with the number of houses provided by the Department of Community Development, for the period 1976 - 1981.

TABLE I

The Shortage of Housing Units for 'coloured' families in the Cape Peninsula and the Republic of South Africa for the period 1976 to 1980, as estimated by the Department of Community Development, together with the number of houses provided by the Department of Community Development.⁴

	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
No. of housing units required in the Cape	46 000	45 000	34 500	32 200	22 000 ⁵
No. of housing units provided in the Cape	13 690	7 229	11 819	6 468	7 314 ⁵
No. of housing units required in S. Africa	58 600	57 600	44 900	41 300	40 000 ⁵
No. of housing units provided in S. Africa	17 897	7 986	18 704	20 794	10 526

To put the plight of the 'coloured' group in the Cape Peninsula in perspective, official figures for the housing shortage for all population groups nationally are given in Table 2. The figures given for the African population group refer only to the shortage in the Republic, and not to the 'trust' areas, which according to the Viljoen Committee had a backlog of 258 000 units in 1981.

The national shortage for 1981, excluding the 'trust' areas, is thus 251 000. The Urban Foundation puts the national shortage at 400 000 units. (Radio Today, Wednesday 24 March 1982) The Viljoen Committee estimated that provision of the required units for the African population groups alone, at R10 000 per unit, would involve an expenditure of R1,7 billion, as compared with the amount of R280 million which had been spent on the provision of 62 000 units in the previous seven years. The tremendous backlog in the housing provision for the urban African population must have an effect on the provision of housing for other groups. The outgoing Director-General of Community Development, Mr Louis Fouche, has been quoted in the annual report of the National Manpower Commission as saying that, in future, 'the emphasis will have to be on the needs of blacks in white urban areas, whereas it has been on white and coloured housing over the past 20 years.'

TABLE 2

The Shortage of Housing Units for all population Groups in the Republic of South Africa for the period 1976 to 1980, as estimated by the Dept. of Community Development.

Population Group

	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Coloured	58 600	57 600	44 900	41 300	40 000	46 000 ⁷
Asian	21 235	20 700	19 300	15 200	14 000	19 000 ⁷
White	6 100	-	-	-	20 000	18 000 ⁷
African	50 004	200 000	141 000	186 000	168 000	168 000 ⁶

* Figures are taken from the S.A.I. R.R. Annual Survey of Race Relations for the respective year, unless otherwise indicated.

PROVISION OF HOUSING

The estimated national housing requirements are given in Table 3. In August 1981 the Dept. of Community Development issued these figures, stating that the housing backlog and the demand because of natural increase could be dealt with within five years in the case of the white, Asian and 'coloured' population groups,

and in ten years, in the case of the African population groups if these housing units were provided annually by the public and private sector. The average annual investment would be approximately R471 million in respect of the white, Asian and 'coloured' groups, and approximately R422 million in respect of Africans, a total of R882 million.³

TABLE 3

Estimated required provision of housing annually for five years. August 1981.³ *

Population Group	Public Sector		Private Sector		Total
	Units	%	Units	%	
White	4 700 (23 500)	12,37	33 300 (166 500)	87,63	38 000
Coloured	17 350 (86 750)	79,95	4 350 (21 750)	20,05	21 700
Asian	4 820 (21 100)	60,48	3 150 (15 750)	39,52	7 970
Black	46 800 (234 000)	90,0	5 200 (26 000)	10,0	52 000
TOTAL PER YEAR	73 670	61,56	46 000	38,44	119 670

* The number of units which are to be provided in a five-year period are given in brackets underneath the annual figure, for comparison with the actual provision during the previous five year period, given in Table 4.

Table 4 gives the number of dwelling units constructed nationally by the public sector and the private sector for the period April 1976 to March 1981. It will be seen, in comparing the percentage which the State would like the private sector to provide, that the State is desirous of a greater involvement of the private sector in the provision of, for example, 20% of the housing requirements of the 'coloured' population as compared with the 15% provided by them in the previous five year period. This represents a total of 21 750 housing units, compared with a number of 12 468, provided by the private sector, between 1976 and 1981. The figure of 46 000 units which the Dept. hopes that the private sector will provide annually represents an increase of 56,77%

TABLE 4

Dwelling Units constructed nationally by the Public and Private Sector during the period 1 April 1976 to 31 March 1981.³

Population Group	Department of Community Development		Private Sector		Total
	Amount	%	Amount	%	
White	18 584	13,3	121 118	86,7	139 702
Coloured	69 796	84,8	12 468	15,2	82 264
Asian	16 004	61,1	10 176	38,9	26 180
Black	34 299	92,0	2 949	8,0	37 248
TOTAL	138 683	48,6	146 711	51,4	285 394

It must be remembered that the private sector is also heavily involved in the provision of housing in the 'national states'. Of the total amount of R5 884 million which was invested in housing during the five year period April 1976 to March 1981, in the Republic and the 'national states', 67,1% was contributed by the private sector, 20,5% was contributed by the Dept of Community Development, and 12,4% was contributed jointly by other government departments and state corporations.⁴

The parliamentary appropriation of the Department of Community Development rose from R112 876 000 for 1976/77 to R208 620 000 for 1980/81. This represents an increment over five years of 85%, or an annual increase of 17%.³ This increase in the appropriation must be seen in the light of the escalation in building costs, which results in fewer houses being built with the same amount of funds. For instance, in 1980, 20% fewer houses could be built than in 1979 for the same amount. Repayment of loans, which loans the Department relies on augment the appropriation, plays an important part in determining the amount actually available for housing. In 1980, with the completion of the R200 million Special Financial Programme for low-cost housing, the Department of Community Development had to repay the consortium of commercial banks which had advanced the money, an amount of R1,3 million. The next year's repayment would be R65 million, and the Department foresaw that less funds would be available for new housing projects. A considerable increase in the appropriation was considered essential if the provision of low-cost housing was to be maintained. It was stated that no funds were available for the launching of any new projects in 1980, and unless the guideline amount of R290 850 000 set aside for 1980/82 was increased considerably, no new projects would be started in 1981 either.⁴

In the period 1975 to 1980, an amount of R367 million was expended by the Dept. of Community Development on the provision of housing, and 26 685 dwelling units were completed. A further 108 000 houses were incomplete at the end of this period.

Table No. 5 gives a comparison of the number of dwelling units provided for the various population groups, and the expenditure involved.

Table No. 6 gives the total amounts spent on housing for each population group during this period, and the total number of dwelling units erected per population group.

TABLE NO 5

Number of Dwelling Units built by the Dept. of Community Development and Expenditure per population group for the period 1/1/75 to 30/9/80. ⁴

Period	White		Coloured		Asian		African		Total	
	Expen- iture R1000	Dwell- ings	Expen- iture R1000	Dwell- ings	Expen- iture R1000	Dwell- ings	Expen- iture R1000	Dwell- ings	Expen- iture R1000	Dwell- ings
1975	78 794	5 580	70 406	13 172	13 672	1 650	10 966	9 608	173 838	30 010
1976	48 879	5 660	86 574	17 897	16 213	2 534	7 423	8 489	159 089	34 580
1977	38 445	3 359	108 236	7 986	21 056	2 488	12 303	3 030	180 040	16 863
1978	35 470	1 975	112 425	18 704	27 082	3 135	20 386	6 701	195 363	30 515
1979	77 320	3 630	163 356	20 794	59 341	6 268	50 574	12 553	350 591	43 245
1980	76 740	5 831	159 351	10 564	76 826	4 523	53 718	5 767	366 635	26 685
		26 035		89 117		20 598		46 148		181 898
	355 648		700 348		214 190		155 370		1425 556	

TABLE 6

Total Expenditure on Housing, per Population Group for the Period 1/1/75 to 30/9/80, together with Total Number of Dwellings erected. ⁴

Pop. Group	Amount spent per population group R1 000	Percent of Total	No. of dwellings per population group	Percent of Total
White	355 648	24,9	26 035	14,3
Coloured	700 348	49,1	89 117	49,0
Asian	214 190	15,0	20 598	11,3
African	155 370	10,9	46 148	25,4

These tables indicate that the least money has been spent in this period on housing for the population group for which the housing shortage is most severe, namely the African population group. Over twice the amount was spent on 'white' housing, although no shortage for this group was recorded.

The discrepancy in the standards of housing for the different population groups is evident. Just over twice (1,7) the amount spent on 'coloured' housing was spent on 'white' housing, and twice the amount spent on 'African' housing was spent on 'coloured' housing. This means that the standards adhered to for 'white' subsidised housing are four times those for 'African' subsidised housing for other groups should be improved to equal the higher standard pertaining to the 'white' group, but that more realistic standards for subsidised housing for all groups, in terms of available finance, be followed.

An amount of R258 200 000 was budgeted for National Housing programmes, for the provision of dwellings and infrastructure for 1981/82, and an amount of R330 000 000 for 1982/83.⁸ The following table gives the breakdown of allocation of these funds according to population group.

TABLE 7

Allocation of funds per Population Group 1981/82 and 1982/83, for provision of dwellings and infrastructure.⁸

Population Group	Funds Allocated	
	1981/82	1982/83
Whites	20 200 000	24 550 000
Asians	49 400 000	75 450 000
Coloureds	107 100 000	131 300 000
Blacks	81 500 000	98 700 000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	258 200 000	330 000 000
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STANDARDS AND HOUSING PROVISION

The State has for several years followed a policy of the provision of economic and sub-economic housing of fairly high standards. The Viljoen Committee Report estimated an amount of R10 000 per unit as the projected cost of houses planned for low-income families in Soweto.⁶ The standards which the State has followed has meant that, even with heavy subsidisation a great number of low-income families have not been able to afford the accommodation provided for them. Turner⁹ has found that this is a common occurrence in centralised housing projects for low-income families, and that the people for whom the housing is provided seldom occupy the houses.

Referring to the 'coloured' population of the Cape Peninsula, David Dewar of the Urban Planning Research Unit of the University of Cape Town stated that the income distribution of this group 'reveals a picture of abject poverty', and that decision-makers and planners would have to face up to the fact that Cape Town was a city of poverty, in order to begin to tackle the most pressing problems which face them.¹⁰ He indicated that this picture can be extended to four-fifths of the population of South Africa. Bearing this out, the Housing Committee of the Cape Town City Council found that only 6,5% of tenants in older schemes could afford houses in Mitchells Plain, and that their register of tenants revealed a similar picture.¹¹ Dewar warned against the myth of the 'coloured' and Black buying revolution, contending that under the present system the vast majority of people could not afford to pay the costs associated with security of tenure.

There has been consistent resistance on the part of Government to acknowledge the impossibility of providing sufficient housing for low-income groups at the required rate, at the standards set and the costs involved. This resistance has been maintained, against a barrage of extra-governmental encouragement of a more progressive housing policy.

HOUSING AND 'SLUM CLEARANCE'

It can be argued that the housing shortage is exacerbated and attempts at solving the problem rendered less effective by the removal of people in terms of the Group Areas Act, and the rigorous application of a policy of slum clearance, in the absence of alternate accommodation and the insistence of the State in regarding urban Blacks as temporary sojourners. This has led to inadequate provision of housing¹² and the growth of squatter camps around major urban area.

By 1979, 56 482 coloured families, or 292 577 'coloured' persons had been disqualified and moved in terms of the Group Areas Act. A further 9 050 families, or 46 879 'coloured' people remained to be moved - a total of 65 532 families, or 339 446 people, for whom alternate accommodation must be provided.¹³ In 1976 an average of 58,64% of completed dwellings for 'coloured' people were allocated by local authorities for resettled families. During the period 1966 to 1976, R22 723 505 had been spent on expropriation of properties and R1 377 620 on demolitions and planning in one rezoned area, namely District Six. An estimated R4 064 060 would still be spent on expropriations and R6 366 300 on development, giving a total of R34 530 485.¹⁴

Ellis stated that existing housing estates were holding about one and a half times as many people as they were built to house, and estimated that 120 000 to 180 000 people were squatters in the Cape Peninsula and adjacent areas.¹⁵

The demolition of squatter shacks in Cape Town has caused widespread concern for several years. The number of shacks demolished between October 1975 and September 1980 was 20 091. Of these, 4 478 were demolished between October 1979 and

September 1980. A further 10 322 shacks were still to be demolished, according to the Department of Community Development.⁴ There was 26 530 registered shacks in the Cape Town area in 1980, pointing to importance of this type of accommodation for people who either cannot afford other accommodation, or for whom no alternate accommodation is available. The number of registered shacks in the whole of the Republic at that date was 38 990, and the total number in danger of demolition 18 899.

Studies by Turner⁵ have shown that the destruction of the efforts of people to house themselves is the destruction of the beginning of an answer to the problem of housing.

The Black Sash endorses this view, citing the case of a young, married man who, in the absence of any alternative accommodation for his family applied for permission and erected a four-roomed shack on land at K.T.C. Permission was subsequently refused and he was served with a summons for illegally erecting a dwelling. He paid a fine, and made further applications for permission to erect his own home, but received no answer to these. Four months later he received another summons. In spite of the housing shortage, he has not been allowed to use his own initiative to solve his problem.⁶

This young man is just one of the human faces that make up the somewhat impersonal statistics quoted above. A Cape Town official is reported in the same document as saying that of 864 urgent applications for housing which he had received between January and April 1981, he had been able to assist only 6 families. The remaining 858 are families with no-where to live.⁶

LAND ALLOCATION

The provision of housing cannot be considered apart from the provision of, or availability of land on which to build. It is a well-known fact that in South Africa 87% zoned for residential purposes has been allocated to 20% of the population - the 'white' population group. The allocation of new areas continues to be made on an unequal basis. The table below records the number of new group areas proclaimed for the 'coloured', white and Indian population groups for the whole of South Africa from 1976 to 1979, together with the total areas entailed. The figures are taken from the SAIRR Annual Survey for the respective year. (2, 11, 13, 15)

TABLE 8

NEW GROUP AREAS PROCLAIMED - REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

1976-1979

Population Group	No. of Areas	Percentage of Total	Area (Hectares)	Percentage of Total
Coloured	2 107	33,43	360 409	10,11
White	3 300	52,36	3 034 687	85,14
Indian	895	14,21	169 167	4,75
TOTALS	6 302	100,00	3 564 263	100,00

The inequalities in the allocation of land can be seen in reference to the number of areas allocated according to population group, and in reference to size of the areas. 52,36% of the new areas proclaimed between 1976 and 1979 were allocated to the 'white' group, in spite of the lack of a recorded shortage of land for this group. Although 33,43% of the new areas were allocated to the 'coloured' group, these areas represent only 10,11% of the total land area of the new areas. The land area allocated to the 'white' group during this period was 8,42 times that allocated to the 'coloured' group.

In the Cape Peninsula, where the BABS/Mobil project is situated, the pattern is repeated. In 1977 the Metropolitan Planning Committee found that there was an over-supply of 24 000 single residential plots for whites in the Cape Town metropolitan area. The City Engineer concluded in 1980 that if land for which 'need and desirability' approval had been granted by the Provincial Administration, together with land clearly available in the future, was added to the existing sub-divided residential land, more than enough land for white residential purposes would be available in Economic Region 01 (the Cape Peninsula, extending eastwards to embrace Mitchells Plain, Bellville and Kraaifontein and northwards to embrace Atlantis, Darling, Malmesbury and Saldanha) and beyond for perhaps another half century."

In the same report, the City Engineer outlined the plight of the 'coloured' group in the Cape Peninsula. The 'coloured' population of the Economic Region 01 was estimated as 858 000 in 1980. The capacity of the 'coloured' group areas in this region is about 960 000, and the 'coloured' population of the 01 Region is expected to reach this figure before 1985. If an allowance of 10% of the area is regarded as vacant, as in the white areas, to ensure a sufficiency of choice at realistic price levels, the capacity of this region is 864 000, a figure just exceeding the estimated population figure of 1980."

If we consider a wider area, we find that the Metropolitan Planning Committee had found that the 'coloured' group areas in Economic Region 01 together with Kuils River, Macassar, Firgrove and the Strand, as proclaimed in 1977, could accommodate an estimated population of 1 154 577. When all the land in Greater Cape Town zoned for industrial purposes becomes fully developed, it is estimated that the number of 'coloured' workers in the industrial areas of Greater Cape Town, and the supportive 'coloured' population will be not less than 1 250 000. The intention of the government to limit the 'coloured' population of Economic Region 01 to that which can be accommodated in the existing 'coloured' group areas, means, the City Engineer stated, that by the year 2000, over half a million 'coloured' people with origins in the Cape Peninsula and vicinity will have to be provided with housing elsewhere. Alternatively, more residential areas must be provided in Greater Cape Town.

He further stated that by the year 2000, the 'coloured' population of Planning Region 39 (including the municipal regions of Cape Town, Simonstown, Wynberg, Goodwood, Bellville, Kuilsriver, Strand, Somerset West, Stellenbosch, Paarl and Wellington) will be about 1 800 000, a figure of 300 000 more than the capacity of the area.

As has been stated by the 1982 National Symposium for Peace, the Group Areas Act, the Black Trust Act and the Black Land Act 'Inhibit any long-term solution to the housing problem and prevent the achievement of a normal housing process.' The symposium advocated the granting of freehold tenure, open residential areas and the acceptance of that urbanisation is an inevitable process. (Cape Times, Monday May 10, 1982.) The Group Areas Act has created an artificial shortage of land for the 'coloured' population group in the Cape Peninsula. This results in overcrowding in housing units in existing, and especially desirable existing areas, and in prospective developers having immense difficulty in finding suitable land on which to build.

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ESTIMATED NATIONAL NEED, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT POPULATION INCREASE¹⁸
1981 - 2000

	White Housing	'Coloured' Housing	Asian Housing	African Housing	TOTAL
EXCLUDING BACKLOG	840 000	510 000	160 000	3 350 000	4 860 000
INCLUDING BACKLOG	840 000	635 000	190 000	3 696 000	5 361 000
ANNUAL COST 1981-1990	1 170 000 000	235 000 000	93 000 000	832 000 000	R2 339 000 000 (or 23,32 billion in 10 years.)
ANNUAL COST 1991-2000	1 350 000 000	308 000 000	120 000 000	1 053 000 000	R2 381 000 000 (or 28,3 billion in 10 years.)

* At 1981 prices.