# CREATING THE RIGHT EXPECTATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

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## ABSTRACT

To combat the housing backlog in South Africa, the government has implemented many initiatives to provide housing assistance to it's citizens. Despite the various programs and policies that have been introduced, the housing backlog remains a problem. There are a multitude of reasons for the backlog including a very problematic application process through the department of human settlements. The application process makes use of several information technology systems which aim to capture and prioritise applications for various subsidies. This study evaluated the state of the current housing subsidy application system at the Gauteng Department of Human Settlements (GDHS). The aim of the study was to identify ways in which the efficiency of the process could be improved. The current state was established making use of interviews, observations and focus group discussions. It was established that there is a lack of education regarding housing subsidy policies, processes and qualification criteria amongst applicants. This lack of information results in unrealistic applicant expectations and high levels of failure demand within the systems. This in turn results in long lead times, wasted resources and ultimately a system that is incapable of allocating subsidies in a fair and transparent manner. This study made a number of recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the housing subsidy processes. Most notably, and discussed in more detail in this paper, was a program to inform and educate applicants to reduce the amount of failure demand within processes. If implemented, it is believed that the recommendations have the potential to improve the housing subsidy application process, and enable the department to move towards reducing the housing backlog.

Key words: Process optimisation, government improvement, failure demand, customer expectations.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

By 1994 the injustices of apartheid had created a huge housing backlog. The laws of the apartheid government forced thousands of Africans to live in small areas of land called Bantustans, reserving the majority of the country's land for the white minority. These Bantustans were impoverished, self –governing communities with little revenue for development (Howcroft, 2014).  The housing issue was further aggravated when an urban black population who left their homelands in search of work were forced to reside in informal settlements or townships with scarce infrastructure.

The ANC came into power in 1994; during this time the backlog was estimated to be 1.5 million housing units (Tissington et al, 2013). The newly elected government began researching and developing various policies to address the backlog. The most famous of these policies were the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994-2003), the Breaking New Ground plan (2004-2009) and the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme developed in recent years.

During the early parts of 1994 the Reconstruction and Development Programme was adopted, the goal of which was to build one million low cost houses within five years (Tissington et al, 2013). These houses are now commonly referred to as RDP houses. In March of the same year the RDP subsidy was introduced to assist beneficiaries wanting to purchase a house of their choice. It was made available to all South African citizens with a monthly income of less than R3 500, and who did not own any residential property.

The Breaking New Ground plan was released in September 2004 to be carried out over the following five years. This plan had its focus on creating sustainable human settlements with improved quality houses.

In 2005 the government saw the need to assist citizens earning more than the minimum amount required to qualify for housing but who were still in need of financial assistance and as a result the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP) was created (Tissington et al, 2013). FLISP provided a once off down payment to households who had secured mortgage finance to acquire a residential property for the first time.

Since 1994 many other policies were created, some of which evolved and lead to the development of new policies over the years. Despite the adoption of various policies, all were created with the common goal of housing backlog eradication; however the backlog still exists today with a large majority of the population still awaiting housing allocations.

**Evolution of application and allocation processes: Gauteng Province**

With each new policy the government introduced they also devised many different methods of allocating these policies. The first allocation system used was the waiting list system of 1994. All applicants regardless of the subsidy they were applying for needed to satisfy several criteria and provide a number of documents as proof of satisfying these criteria.

Applicants were asked to fill in forms that captured their details and were given a receipt called a C-form as proof of their application. Applications were put on a waiting list to be processed on a first-come-first-serve basis, however this created a challenge when building the houses. Since applicants were scattered throughout the country, it was not feasible to build individual houses in different locations. Evidently, an applicant's location was a critical factor when considering their application. Additionally, the waiting list system was prone to corruption and came to be considered as unreliable. In light of these shortcomings, it was replaced by the lottery system.

In order to circumvent the location challenge, the government modified their allocation approach by developing housing projects in certain areas, which they invited people to apply for using advertisements. A lottery system which involved pulling random applications out of a box was used to allocate the houses once the initial screening process was conducted.

In 2008, the department implemented a new allocation policy called the Housing Demand Database (HDD). This was in response to the problems experienced with the waiting list system. The aim of the HDD was to consolidate all applications on one database which could easily be re-viewed and edited. This would allow government to cater for the provinces' demand according to the applicant's requirements as identified on the HDD. It also simplified the process of determining which applicants were eligible for subsidies.  An awareness campaign was launched informing everyone who had applied on the waiting list system to verify their information at the provincial office.  People who had applied in 1996-1997 were asked to bring in their C-forms as proof of their registration to qualify as priority candidates. In essence, the aim of the HDD was to provide government with more information so that they could make more informed decisions when allocating houses.

The HDD also facilitated the application process by allowing people to come in and view the status of, and if necessary, edit their applications. The HDD prevented fraudulent applications by recognizing if a dependent was already registered under an existing application. The HDD also recognized if a particular person had already applied, thus eliminating the possibility of multiple applications under one name. Although the HDD was initially viewed as an efficient process, time revealed that the system required some improvements. The HDD indicated the demand for housing, which government responded to, by planning the necessary supply. This, however, did not take into account the housing needs of the people. Housing needs refer to the number of people who require houses, access to sanitation, water and electricity. To determine housing needs the government also investigates people's employment and current living situation, and their area of residence. By understanding what the needs of South Africa's citizens are, the government can effectively cater to these housing needs.

In response to this shortfall, the National Housing Needs (NHNR) register was adopted in 2009. Although this register was intended to be implemented nationally, it was only adopted by the Gauteng department late in 2013. With the NHNR, an applicant is required to provide detailed information regarding their current living situation. The Needs Register is the government's way of gauging the housing need of the country.

An application made on the Needs Register is not an application for a subsidy. It is merely a way for the government to determine the number of people who require houses and their specific housing needs. Once a suitable piece of land is found for development in an informal settlement the local municipality will call up a community meeting informing them that houses are going to be built. Everyone whose name appears on the Needs Register residing in that area is invited to make a formal application for a subsidy.

Allocation policies vary from province to province. In 2007, a new allocation policy was adopted by Gauteng in response to the issues experienced with the waiting list system. This new allocation policy also took into consideration the challenges that were specific to the province. The allocation policy gave preference to 4 categories of people:

   i.    People with disabilities

  ii.    The aged

 iii.    Destitute military veterans

 iv.    Child headed households

Both the HDD and Needs Register systems were designed to capture information on the demand for housing. In order to keep track of information related to subsidies already allocated, the government developed The Housing Subsidy System (HSS). Through this system, officials are able to monitor and allocate subsidies provincially and nationally. They capture and edit, as well as view and verify approved subsidies.

**OBJECTIVES**

Although various policies and associated technology support systems have been implemented over the years, problems persist. The purpose of this project was to gain an understanding of how the systems and processes which support the various housing policies could be improved to facilitate fairer, more transparent and more efficient allocation of housing and subsidies. The objectives were to:

  i.    Gain an understanding of the current state at the Gauteng Department of Housing

 ii.    Analyse the current state using appropriate methods to identify opportunities for improvement

iii.    Select a specific area of focus and develop recommendations to address the identified challenges.

**APPROACH**

When considering the strategy for this project, a number of theoretical approaches were considered.  These will be discussed at a high level in the following section.

**Lean and its principles**

According to a report published by the IBM Centre for the Business of Government entitled, "Improving Service Delivery in Government with Lean Six Sigma," Lean is defined as "a management approach that seeks to maximise value to customers, both internal and external, while simultaneously removing wasteful activities and practices" (Maleyeff, 2007).

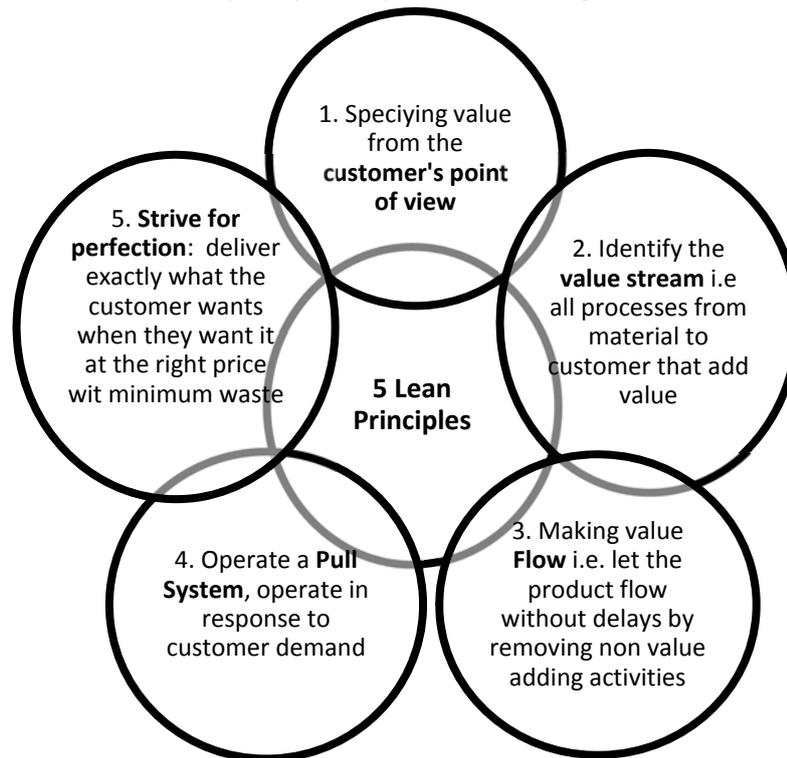Lean thinking is based on five principles represented in Figure 1. (Bicheno & Holweg, 2009)



*Figure 1: The 5 Lean Principles*

Although originally used in the manufacturing sector the Lean approach is becoming increasingly popular in government organisations to improve service delivery (US Environmental Protection Agency, 2013). Lean thinking defines value in terms of the customer (Bicheno & Holweg, 2009). Lean focuses on identifying value adding activities when transforming inputs into outputs. Anything that does not add value is considered waste.

**SYSTEMS THINKING**

Traditional problem solving approaches involve separating the parts of a system and analysing the parts individually in order to determine a solution to the problem. Systems thinking is a problem solving approach that considers the system as a whole and how the individual parts interact with one another before reaching a solution (Bicheno & Holweg, 2009).

In 2005, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom conducted a pilot study to determine the effectiveness of systems thinking in social housing. The systems thinking methodology which the pilot adopted was developed by a company called Vanguard Consulting under the name of "Lean systems" (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005). Lean Systems is a combination of Lean principles and Systems thinking. A summary of the lean principles used in the pilot is given below:

   i.    The work must be understood from the customer's perspective.

   ii.   Understanding the flow of work through the system is critical

   iii.  The system must be designed to respond to customer demand

   iv.  The system must operate as a Pull system

P195

i. The people doing the jobs have the capability to do the work and are responsible for their own work

Lean systems also make use of an adaptation of Deming's Plan-Do-Check-Act approach. The revised approach is found in Figure 2.
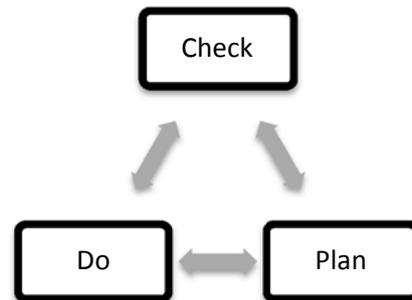
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          ┌──────────┐
          │  Check   │
          └──────────┘
            ↗      ↖
   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐
   │    Do    │↔│   Plan   │
   └──────────┘   └──────────┘
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*Figure 2: Check Plan Do approach*

 The Check step is an analysis of the current system and how it operates with the aim of identifying any problems. The Plan step explores potential solutions and their consequences. The Do step involves carrying out the proposed solution.

Systems thinking is incorporated into this approach by considering the effects of applying individual solutions and their impact on the whole system. The pilot was a success and produced improvements in service levels, efficiency gains, lead times and many other areas (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005).

The selected approach for this project is the combined Lean Systems approach. The project began by investigating the current state of the department through interviews with data capturers. Time was also spent observing day–to–day operations of the queries and complaints department. Once an understanding of the current state was obtained, a specific area of focus was chosen and further analysis was done in order to develop recommendations.

**CURRENT STATE ANALYSIS**

The Gauteng department of Human Settlements (GDHS) is situated in Johannesburg. Anyone applying for a subsidy in Gauteng is required to visit either the GDHS or any of the province's regional offices where they will be required to provide all the necessary information to a data capturer, who completes an online application form. Applicants are also able to view the status of their applications by providing their personal details.  If applicants have any issues or queries they are directed to the queries and complaints office who assist with various matters including structural defects on existing RDP houses, illegal occupation of RDP houses and ownership issues.

The GDHS comprises of two buildings, the main building in which the offices of all the departments are situated and the customer centre which is a smaller building adjacent to it. Upon entering the visitors are greeted by a security guard who will request the visitor to sign in. Thereafter they may proceed down an escalator to the data capturers.  There are typically three or four capturers present at any time. There is ample seating available where applicants sit in the queue. Unlike most government offices, the customer centre has no signage to indicate where things are situated or what the qualification criteria or subsidy details are. Generally, in any waiting area pamphlets and flyers are readily available for use by the consumer. If used correctly, this can be an effective

platform to transfer information to the consumer. However, the customer centre has not made use of this platform, and as a result many applicants who come in with questions leave without getting any answers. Their only source of information is the data capturers who generally don't have much time to attend to queries.

Both the application process and allocation systems have evolved since 1994. Each evolution was an attempt to resolve the problems experienced with the old system, however the new system often gave rise to problems of its own. After speaking to the data capturers and queries department, it was noted that the current operating system of the GDHS i.e. the Needs Register system does not operate as expected.

The system is fairly new (implemented late in 2013) and is not yet fully functional. It is still in the process of being updated, whereby all the information from the HDD is still being transferred to the Needs Register database. This causes the system to operate extremely slowly when new applications are being captured. Furthermore, old applications made on the HDD can only be viewed on the Needs Register and no amendments can be made. This means that applicants who want to change information such as their contact details are unable to do so. All communication with applicants is made via text messaging and since applicants cannot update this information, if their phone number changes they will not receive any communication.

With the HDD an applicant was issued with a receipt as proof of their registration. This verified the details of an application as enabled applicants to check the status of their application. It also gave applicants a sense of security. The Needs Register system does not provide a receipt or any other proof of an application, which can cause unease amongst applicants.

Another issue with the Needs Register is that it does not pick up duplicated information whilst the HDD was capable of doing so. If a dependant is already registered under a certain application and a new application is made with the same dependent, the system does not pick up the duplication and will allow the application to be processed. In this way the same dependants can fraudulently be used on more than one application. Since the system is specific to the Gauteng province, capturers are unable to access the database of other provinces to view their applications. This creates the possibility of a person applying for a subsidy in more than one province.

The issue that is of most concern with the Needs Register is the lack of education applicants have about the system. Most applicants are unaware of the way in which the system works and are under the impression that once an application is made, it is already an application for a subsidy. Many people come in wanting to "view the status of their application" as they do not realise that an application is merely a needs assessment process which allows the government to gauge the demand for houses. The houses are only guaranteed when a development is made in their area of residence and they are called upon to formally apply for a subsidy. These misconceptions lead to much dissatisfaction and frustration amongst applicants as many people travel all the way to the GDHS determined to find out how much longer they have to wait for a subsidy. At the GDHS they are met with answers such as: "you need to wait until you are contacted by your local municipality who will inform you about a development in your area." Many people leave without still fully comprehending the way in which the system works and without realising that they are still not yet officially on the waiting list for a subsidy. Applications are also sometimes rejected as all the required information to make an application is not provided. Other times, applications are accepted

despite not complying with the minimum requirements and are rejected at a later stage in the process.

To effectively eradicate the housing backlog, the maximum number of subsidies needs to be allocated. To achieve this, the application, review and allocation process needs to be optimised so that the maximum number of applications can be processed in the minimum amount of time. If only legitimate and complete applications are made, the number of applications that require processing would reduce as there would be no failure demand or need for reprocessing.

Applications that result in failure demand are created because applicants do not understand what is required from them. A beneficiary education process would help to inform them about the qualification criteria, required documentation and subsidy options, which would ultimately prevent the occurrence of failure demand

## DESIGN OF A BENEFICIARY EDUCATION PROGRAM

### Understanding the customer requirements

The purpose of an educational project is to transfer a set of skills or knowledge to a group of people. When used by government, these projects are created with the intention of promoting awareness about a specific campaign such as public safety or the environment. A critical step in designing a public awareness campaign is to conduct a needs assessment which can be described as "a systematic exploration of the divergence or discrepancy between the current situation ("what is") and the desired situation ("what should be") (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration USA, 2009) In the context of this project, the needs assessment was a review of existing information and an analysis of how much the public already knew (Altschuld & Witkin, 2000). This forms part of the *Check* step in the Check-Plan-Do approach. To determine how much information applicants at the GDHS had access to, and the level of understanding that they had regarding the application process, it was decided that running informal focus groups with applicants would be the best approach.

Focus Groups are "a way of collecting qualitative data, which involves engaging a small number of people in an informal group discussion 'focused' around a particular topic or set of issues" (Wilkinson, 2004). Since the environment in a focus group is more relaxed than in one-on-one interview, participants are more at ease and willing to share their thoughts. Also, watching one participant freely speak their mind often encourages other participants to do the same (Krueger, 1994).

Groups of around 5 people were approached while waiting in the queue and asked if they would be willing to participate. Because applicants come from far off places and have to wait in long queues to be attended to, the applicants were not willing to leave their place in the queue to answer questions. However, they were willing to engage in a discussion if it was held while they were waiting in the queue. Initially applicants were weary and unwilling to participate in any interviews. Conducting the discussions with applicants whilst they were in the queue had the advantage of stimulating the interest of other applicants who would observe the interview taking place and then realise that participating was not harmful to them in any way. Instead, it gave them a voice and a platform to raise any issues or grievances they had. A list of questions was drawn up to guide the interviews and once the participants consented an open discussion was held with each group. The

purpose of the interview was explained and applicants were reassured that the results of the discussion would not have any implications on their applications. They were informed that the aim of the interview was solely to gauge how much applicants knew about housing subsidies and the application process in general. The questions which were posed were directed at determining applicants' level of understanding of the application process and how allocations are made, the qualification criteria which need to be satisfied in order to apply, special needs applications and what the Needs Register System is and how it operates.

**Findings of the focus group discussions**

A total of five focus group discussions were conducted with 24 participants. 79 percent of the interviewees had applied before and were at the office to enquire about the status of their applications. Of these 79 percent more than 60 percent had applied over ten years ago. Anyone who had applied in 1996-1997 with the C-form was asked to come in to reapply as there was no online database during the time that they applied. Therefore, it was necessary to upload their applications onto the database. Many participants who had applied over ten years ago complained that they had spent years waiting for houses whereas there were other people who had received houses within two or three years of applying. When asked if they were aware of the qualification criteria that an applicant needed to satisfy, 75 percent of participants replied in the affirmative. However, many participants admitted that they were only aware of some and not all of the criteria. Around 67% of participants had heard of the Special Needs applications and understood who qualifies for these applications.

Only 4 percent of participants had heard of the term Needs Register System and understood the way the system operated. 95 percent of participants said that they were unaware of the way the application and allocation processes worked. When explained that the Needs Register System was just a way to gauge the housing needs of the country and that an application at the GDHS was not an official application for a subsidy 95 percent admitted that they were under the impression that they were one and the same thing and that once an application was made at the GDHS it was just a matter of time before they would receive a house. Only 4 percent of applicants were aware of subsidy options other than the general RDP house. Most participants admitted to having applied without having any real understanding of the way the system works or the options available to them, they just heard of housing subsidies and applied. When it was explained that developments occurred per area and that residents of that area were supposed to receive the houses a participant expressed her dissatisfaction at this saying that it should be given to whoever applied first regardless of area since some people were waiting for years.

An issue that many participants raised was the attitude of the data capturers in particular towards the applicants. They complained that the data capturers were generally impatient and unhelpful. Often the applicants did not fully understand the way things worked and would need clarification on certain matters but the data capturers were not willing to respond to their questions. This is an issue because apart from the data capturers applicants generally do not have any contact with other officials at the GDHS unless they are directed to the queries and complaints office by the data capturers.

The preferred mediums of transferring information to the public as suggested by the participants in order of importance are:

    i.     Newspapers

    ii.    Community meetings and workshops

   iii.   Pamphlets and posters

   iv.   Television

    v.    Radio

   vi.   SMS

  vii.   Toll Free line

 viii.   Help desk at GDHS

   ix.   Visits by GDHS officials to township areas

    x.    Visits by GDHS officials to community churches

A participant questioned the effectiveness of using newspapers and pamphlets for advertising. She said that many people could not read or write. Also, advertisements placed in newspapers were often misunderstood as people whose first language was not English or were illiterate would assume that the newspapers were advertising the sale of houses and would not understand that it is actually a subsidy. She offered that it would be better to train specific people in communities and equip them with all the necessary information they would need to educate people and respond to queries. Also using English in any programme would not be advised as it is not the first language of most applicants.

**Design objectives**

The focus group discussions confirmed the need for an education program and revealed key areas of the application process that required communication. As part of the *Plan* step in the Check-Plan-Do approach it was decided that the goal of the program would be to raise awareness about the following things:

    i.     What the Qualification criteria are

    ii.    Who qualifies for special needs applications

   iii.   What documents applicants need to bring

   iv.   What the needs register is and how it operates

    v.    How the application and allocation processes work

   vi.   What the subsidy options are and how they can be accessed

  vii.   The rights and responsibilities of beneficiaries and the role of government with regards to each option

The proposed design is called the Housing Consumer Education Program.   The first part of the design addresses beneficiaries' experiences at the GDHS. The second part focuses on ways to transfer information outside of the GDHS.  Samples of elements of the program are included at the end of this paper.

**Elements of the design solution within the GHDS**

*Security Checks*

Upon entering the customer centre visitors are required to sign in at security.  In addition to administering the sign in process, security guards should question visitors about the nature of their visit. If a visitor is a first time applicant then the guard should carry out a quick check to determine if they have all the required documentation.  Each first time applicant should be given a check list as a tool to facilitate the transfer of this pertinent information to the applicants. If the applicant has all the required information they should be directed to the data capturers, if not they should be directed to the helpdesk.

*The Helpdesk*

A help desk should be introduced.  The person operating the helpdesk should be sufficiently trained to respond to any general queries applicants might have regarding issues related to all aspects of the housing process from applying to receiving subsidies. They must also be able to provide information about subsidy options as well as distribute reading material such as pamphlets.

*The General Layout*

The current layout is shown in Figure 3. Applicants come down the escalator and find themselves in front of the data capturers. The improved layout is shown in Figure 4. Visitors should be encouraged to go to the helpdesk first and state the reason for their visit so that they can be directed to the right place. This will also allow them to query any issues they may have before proceeding to the data capturers.
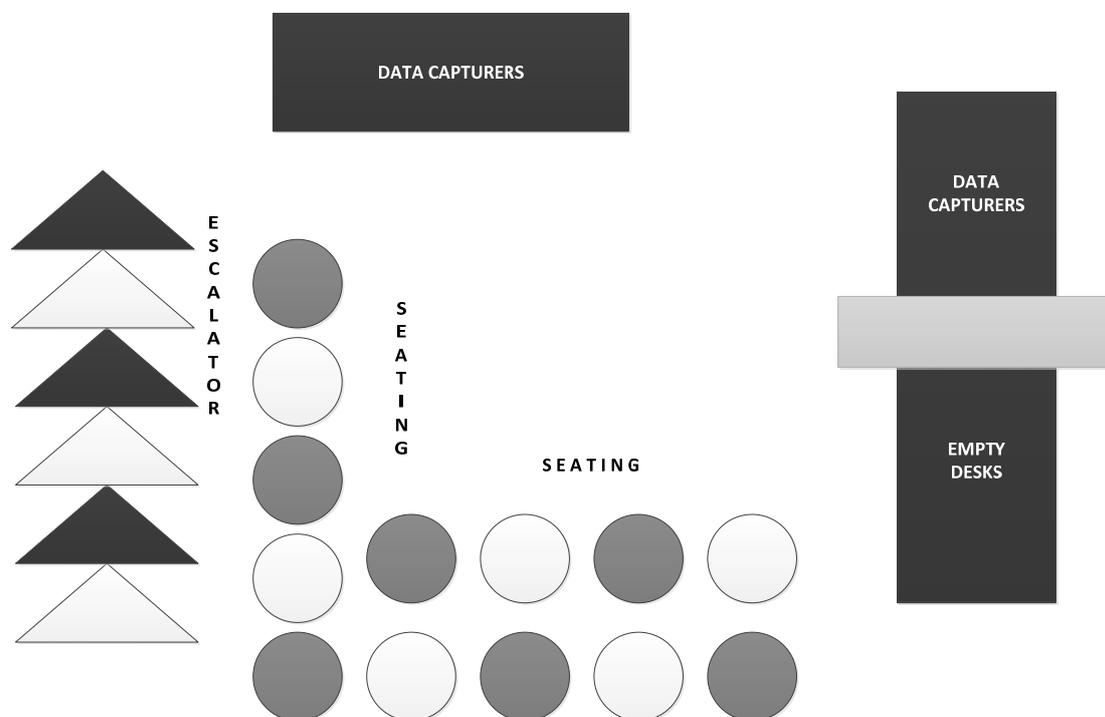
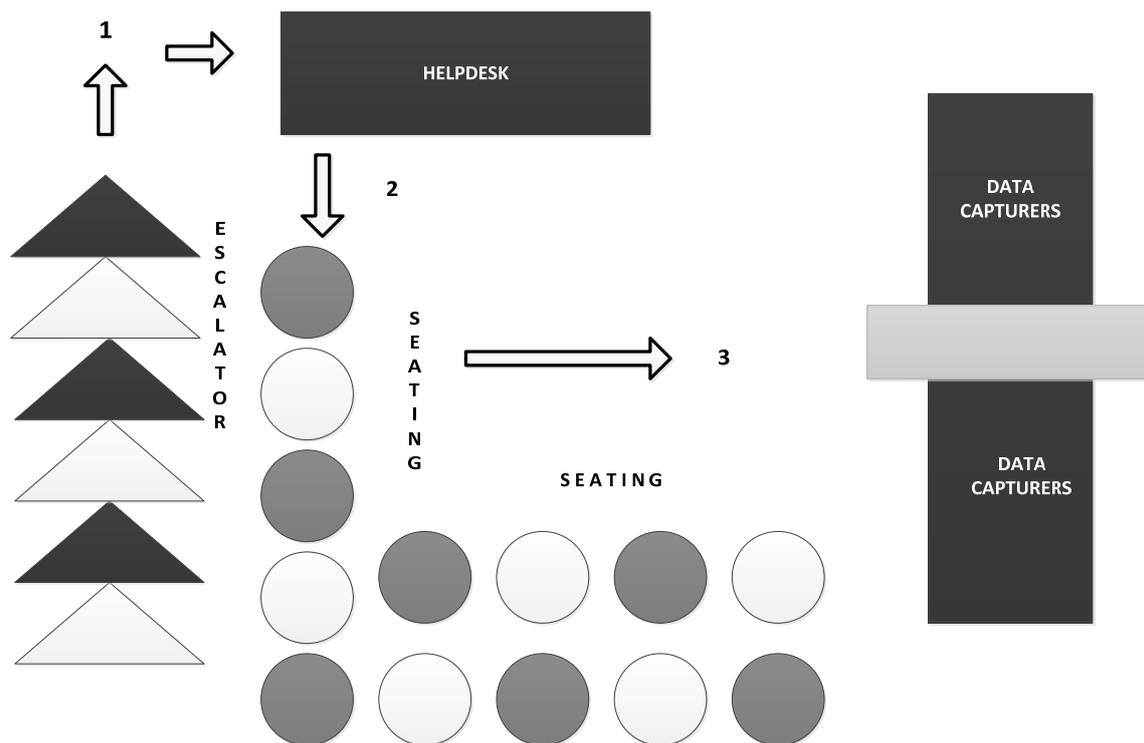*Figure 3: Current Layout at the GDHS*

*Figure 4: Proposed Improved Layout*

Introducing posters containing information on housing will play an important role in transferring information to the visiting applicants. As discussed previously, advertising in waiting areas is an extremely effective method of communicating information to a target audience.

Several posters were created. The posters can be used within the waiting area at the GDHS or any other public area. The first poster highlights the qualification criteria that applicants need to satisfy. The rest contain information related to the documentation that an applicant needs to bring .The pamphlets and flyers should also be easily accessible to the applicants and there should be a constant supply of printed material for applicants to take home. Various pamphlets were created to inform applicants about the subsidy options available

In an effort to ensure that beneficiaries receive all the necessary information, a beneficiary education booklet was created containing everything that they need to know. The book begins with a test that beneficiaries can take to determine if they actually do qualify for a subsidy. It then explains in detail what qualifying applicants must bring when they apply, followed by an explanation of how the NHNR and application processes work. The book ends with summaries of the various subsidies that people can apply for.

*Information Station*

The information station is an interactive stand with a built in tablet or computer screen that applicants can use to view housing information and videos. It could also be used to view pamphlets and flyers. The idea is similar to the interactive touch screen information kiosk that is found in shopping centres.  Most applicants do not have access to such amenities at home and will definitely find such a stand an exciting attraction.

*Wi-Fi hotspots and the Extranet*

Wi-Fi hotspots are areas that provide internet access to wireless network devices such as smartphones, laptops and tablets. The Extranet is a way of giving people access to business information using an internet browser. It is a private network that enables sharing specified information with people such as clients, customers or staff.

By combining both these concepts the GDHS can provide a wealth of information to its beneficiaries. The idea is to create a Wi-Fi hotspot that beneficiaries can use as a means to access the GDHS'S extranet. The extranet should provide information relating to all aspects of housing subsidies and allocations. Using the extranet will enable the GDHS to supply important housing information to the beneficiaries whilst also controlling the information which the beneficiaries have access to. If they have unrestricted access to the internet they will most probably use it for unrelated reasons.

*Training Data Capturers*

The focus groups revealed that applicants perceive data capturers to be unhelpful and unwilling to assist them. It would be beneficial to train the data capturers so that they understand their role at the GDHS and they accept that it is part of their responsibilities to assist applicants wherever possible. Associating some incentive or reward with this obligation may encourage them to become more approachable and align their interests with that of the GDHS. A key step in the Lean Systems approach is ensuring that the people doing the jobs have the capability to do the work and are responsible for their own work. Training data capturers directly aligns with this goal.

**Transferring Information outside of the GDHS**

It is also necessary to transfer information to the public outside of the GDHS. For this reason posters and pamphlets were designed for distribution. Posters for each subsidy option have been created to present the information in an easy to understand format. The information needs to reach the poorer members of community and should therefore be handed out at municipal offices in poor communities, public hospitals, places of worship and other areas that potential beneficiaries may frequent. The pamphlets can also be placed in community newspapers or magazines as the focus group discussions revealed that community newspapers were one of the best channels of communication. Refer to Appendix B for a sample poster.

*Community Meetings and Workshops*

During the focus group discussions the majority of participants suggested community meetings and workshops as an effective medium of communication which they would attend. A workshop manual was created to be used by a workshop facilitator. It contains detailed information concerning all aspects of the housing application process that an applicant would need to know. Using the manual would sufficiently prepare a facilitator so that they can successfully conduct the workshop or community meeting. Refer to Appendix A for a sample page from the manual.

*Radio*

Both the focus group discussions and information gathered in the literature review revealed that radio was an extremely effective means of communicating with members of poorer communities

who did not have access to other forms of communication technology. A sample radio advert was created to be used by the GDHS to advertise housing subsidies.

*Toll free line and SMS*

The GDHS could introduce a toll free line that applicants could call to resolve any queries. In this way applicants will not have to come all the way to the GDHS if they need assistance they could simply call the department.  Since SMS's are already being used by the GDHS they could use also be used to inform beneficiaries about upcoming events such as community meetings and workshops.

**CONCLUSION**

The Department of Human Settlements has been striving to reduce the housing backlog since 1994. Various policies have been introduced with a variety of systems to support them.  Although progress has been made, the systems continue to display a host of challenges.  This study has shown that one of the keys to unlocking the process of applying for the various subsidies is to understand the "customers" who are using the systems and applying for the various subsidies and to ensure that these customers understand the policies and systems that are used to enable the allocation of subsidies.  A comprehensive awareness program has been designed which should start this process.

*APPENDIX A SAMPLE PAGE FROM THE FACILITATOR WORKSHOP MANUAL.*

## Who Qualifies

Persons who are:
- ✓ SA citizen with valid ID
- ✓ Non-citizen with residence permit
- ✓ Legally competent i.e. 18 years or older or legally married

Persons who are either:
- ✓ Married or living with a partner
  OR
- ✓ Single with Financial dependants
  OR
- ✓ Single Military Veterans without financial dependants.
  OR
- ✓ Single aged persons without financial dependant

The applicant and his/her spouse/partner must be:

- ✓ A first time government subsidy recipient.
- ✓ A first time home owner.
- ✓ Earn less than R3 500 per month per household.

If an applicant has previously owned fixed residential property he/she will only qualify for the purchase of a vacant stand.

Persons who have benefitted from the Land Restitution Programme and who satisfy all other criteria may apply

# Rectification of pre-1994 housing stock

The programme allows beneficiaries who received pre-1994 state financed properties to apply for government assistance in upgrading or renovating the above mentioned properties.

The main objective of the programme is to improve upon municipal engineering services which are considered unsatisfactory or to reconstruct dwellings whose conditions have severely deteriorated.

The MEC may prescribe minimum technical norms and standards to accommodate the special circumstances that may exist in each project and/or area.

Minimum technical norms and standards are not applicable to the demolition and reconstruction of buildings in a new location due to inappropriate location and/or township layout and design.

## Who will the programme assist?

❖ Properties currently owned by municipality and individuals
❖ If ownership has been transferred to individuals the original beneficiary will be assisted.
❖ Exceptions may be made, for e.g. Heirs of beneficiaries

*APPENDIX B SAMPLE POSTER*



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