Abstract

Housing cooperatives have gained momentum over the decades. This is a result of governments' failure to meet the housing need of their citizens. After independence, the Zimbabwean government inherited an overcrowded and segregated housing stock. The state encouraged the formation of housing cooperatives as one mechanism to fulfil its obligation in relation to housing. Since the early 1980s, housing cooperatives have evolved in Zimbabwe to be the key to housing provision for the poor. This research report was aimed at understanding how governance issues affect the overall outcomes of housing cooperatives in their effort to address the housing shortage in Zimbabwe. The study concentrated on two housing cooperatives in Masvingo. A conceptual framework was used to analyse the data gathered using qualitative methodology interviews and observation. The findings of the research show that basic tenets of governance, namely participation, accountability, transparency and responsiveness are at their lowest levels in cooperatives. As such overall outcomes have been compromised. Thus, housing cooperatives under this study are facing challenges in trying to house the poor populace of Masvingo. The study revealed that if well-supervised and properly monitored, housing cooperatives could be a vehicle for the provision of housing. As such, housing cooperative should create a conducive environment for members to participate and provide financial statements to members. The responsible ministry needs to engage with members at the local level and not just engage management at the national level as was the case at the time of my research in 2017.

HOUSING COOPERATIVES IN ZIMBABWE: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNANCE AND OUTCOMES IN THE CASE OF MASVINGO

MOLINE MUNGATE

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