

Abstract

Regardless of housing backlog and rapid urbanization created by population growth, the promotion of Self-Help Housing by authorities in charge of housing and policy documents¹, there is a limited use of Self-Help Housing in South Africa. In pursuing the Self-Help Housing debate, this research argues that the failure to implement a widespread use of Self-Help Housing is not directly linked to weaknesses of Self-Help Housing. Instead, the difficult access to land for urban poor households, the ignorance from households of their right of having access to adequate shelter, the attitude of dependency evident in households, the paternalistic attitude from the government, the failure to constitute an active community and the failure to establish real priorities of poor people are the main causes of the limited use of Self-Help Housing in South Africa. Tembisa, one of the South Africa's Townships, is used in this research for the purpose of illustrating the unsuccessful implementation of Self-Help Housing, adopted in South as People Housing Process (PHP).

¹ The policy documents consulted that give great audience to Self-Help Housing practice in South Africa are namely: 1994 Housing White Paper, Housing Act of 1997 and Urban Development Framework of 1997.