

Africa Check ~ Kate Wilkinson - Does the ANC have a 'good story to tell'?



The African National Congress has been in power in South Africa for twenty years. In the run-up to the 7 May election, it says it has a “good story to tell” about its performance over that period. This is the first of two reports evaluating key claims. Researched by Kate Wilkinson for AFRICA

CHECK.

In this - the first of two reports - we evaluate some of the key claims that the ANC has made in its campaign to win over voters ahead of the country’s general election on 7 May.

“In 1994, 1.2-million families were without homes. In 2013, more than 3.3-million families have free homes.”

The claim is *incorrect* and the comparison is flawed. In 1994, the Housing White Paper estimated that there was an urban housing backlog of 1.5-million houses, not 1.2-million. Two years later, in 1996, the national census revealed that 1,400,000 shacks or informal dwellings remained in the country. This represented 16% of the nearly 9-million households in South Africa at the time.

The 2011 national census found that the number of informal dwellings or shacks had increased to just over 1.9-million. This represented 13% of all households in South Africa; a decrease of 3 percentage points since 1996.

Data compiled by the Department of Human Settlements shows that almost 2.8-million “housing units” and 876,774 “serviced sites” were completed between 1994 and December 2013. This is a total of nearly 3.7-million “housing opportunities”.

The ANC claims that 3.3-million families have free homes. But the real picture is

far more complex. By definition, “housing opportunities” created by the department are not all free and increasingly involve the provision of “serviced sites”, not houses.

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