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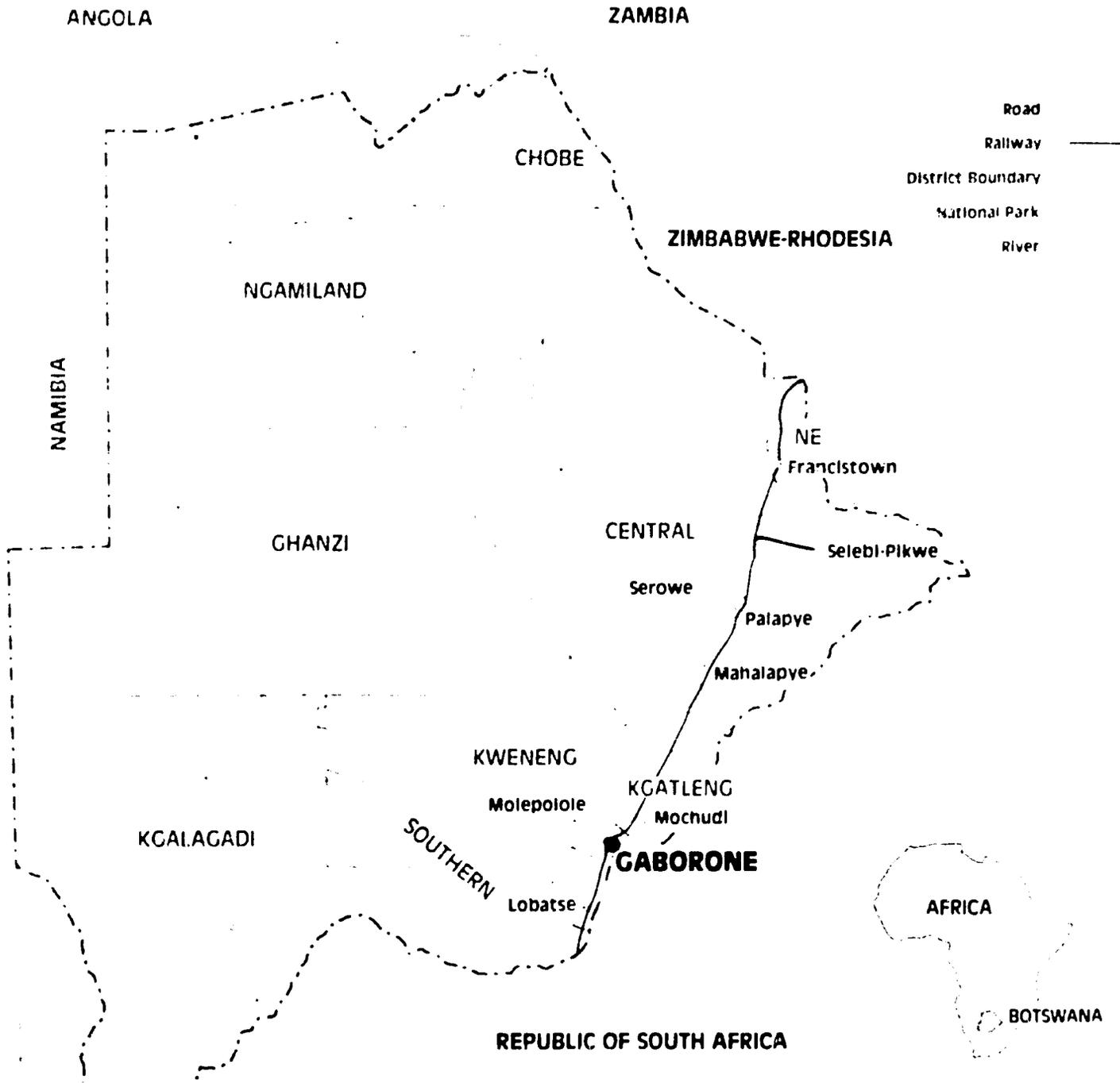
Mansion in the Sky:

**A Lesson in Self-Help
Housing from Gaborone,
Botswana**



The Foundation for
Cooperative Housing
International Program

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA



ANGOLA

ZAMBIA

Road

Railway

District Boundary

National Park

River

CHOBE

ZIMBABWE-RHODESIA

NGAMILAND

NAMIBIA

GHANZI

NE

Francistown

CENTRAL

Selebi-Pikwe

Serowe

Palapye

Mahalapye

KWENENG

KGATLENG

Molepolole

Mochudi

KALAGADI

SOUTHERN

Lobatse

GABORONE

AFRICA

BOTSWANA

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Preface

The poor have been building their own shelter from time immemorial and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. In the account presented here, the Government of Botswana has encouraged and assisted its low-income population, with a boost from foreign donor funds and technical assistance, in developing a viable self-help system of housing. The convergence of talent and resources in the rapidly growing capital city of Gaborone in a successful program is the subject of this account. Presented as one kind of model program, the account is intended in general for practitioners of development assistance and more specifically for specialists in low-income housing.

The part played by the Foundation for Cooperative Housing in this program is in the provision of technical assistance, in response to a request from the Government of Botswana. That assistance is funded by a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The resident FCH Advisor is James Upchurch.

"Mansion in the Sky" is intended to be an expression of the clear potential of the Botswana people to fulfill their shelter needs in an intelligent, enterprising manner. It also reflects a very positive feeling about Botswana, its people, and their part in the program.

This account was prepared by the FCH Development Anthropologist, John P. Mason, in cooperation with the USAID Office of Housing.



Each one of these staff members of the Old Naledi Ward Office has a specific and rewarding task to perform for SHHA.

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The FCH Advisor, Jim Upchurch, in consultation with the first Housing Officer of SHHA, T. Gaboutioeioe.

I. Botswana: An Ideal Case Study of the Low-Income Housing Solution

Unlike what has happened in most developing countries, it is only within the past decade or so that Botswana has seen a significant movement of her people from the countryside to her urban centers.

Botswana is traditionally a cattle-based village society with few towns. Since some of the villages reach a population size of 40,000, the inhabitants of this large but underpopulated country are quite familiar with the idea of sizeable human settlements. What they have not been familiar with until recently is the flocking of unexpectedly large numbers of individuals to the towns. These are people who are drawn to towns not by tribal ties nor the call of their tribal chieftain, but by the expectation of cash-income work.

Botswana is a good case study in low-income housing because the urgent needs of her towns for shelter are new, still unfolding, and easy to grasp. The growth rate of the capital city, Gaborone, though a seemingly large 12%, has meant in fact a modest actual increase of 5,000 new souls per year — a fairly manageable number. It is manageable and at present under control for many reasons. One reason is basic: human density in the towns has not yet reached anything near the critical point it has in many other places. Greater densities, of course, will require a continued concerted effort.

Human settlement in Botswana's towns is also under control because of its enlightened and sound national policies and laws. The development policy attempts to slow country-to-town migration. There are laws which fix property taxes so as to reduce speculation on undeveloped land. A graded tax system helps to ensure that the well-off don't benefit unfairly while the poor suffer. Finally, there is a serious attempt to keep the social classes from polarizing by mixing income levels in all new communities. Many of these laws and policies are not really new, since Botswana has traditionally been an open fair society.

Botswana began its housing program for low-income people later than many other developing countries, enabling it to learn from others' experience. It has not locked into policies which either strangle human potential or induce catastrophe. Since the State controls much of the land, through its sensible policies, and given the human sense of fairness and equality in Botswana, an interesting and workable low-income housing program has come about.

It is into this favorable setting that foreign assistance was requested by the Government of Botswana in an attempt to help nudge along the new housing effort. In the case of the effort in the capital city, the Foundation for Cooperative Housing (FCH), a Washington, D.C.-based

organization, has provided the resident advisor and technical ingredient with back-up from its Washington office under a grant from AID and in cooperation with AID's Office of Housing. Capital assistance is also being provided under the AID Housing Guaranty Program. This assistance has been used to help develop the system used by the Gaborone Town Council Self-Help Housing Agency (SHHA) in delivering more than 5000 prepared plots along with loans and technical know-how. Together with the Botswana Government and other international donor funds and assistance, these monies have supported crucial parts of the Gaborone program, including some of the start-up and development costs and individual loans. The local housing staff have given their commitment, their know-how, and their energies to making the system work. Then there is the main focus of all this — the poor, but often enterprising recipient who uses these benefits along with his or her own funds and hard work to acquire a modest, comfortable house in an improved environment.

THE SELF-HELP EFFORT IN LOW-INCOME HOUSING IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS ACCOUNT. THE LESSON COMING FROM BOTSWANA'S CAPITAL CITY IS POTENTIALLY INSTRUCTIVE FOR THOSE DEVOTED TO HOUSING THE POOR MAJORITY IN THAT AND OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD.

II. Migration to the Capital City and the Need for Shelter

A rural Motswana* comes to Botswana's capital, Gaborone, hoping to find work. He will need an income and shelter. The State government cannot subsidize a house for him. He may or may not find a job. In typical Batswana fashion, he hedges his bets - having left his family in the village he decides to stay in Gaborone to search for work and a place to live.

This Motswana, who more than likely already has a home in the village, another at his field, perhaps even a third at the cattle post, may take any number of different actions to secure a roof over his head. He may stay with relatives, rent a not-so-cheap room somewhere, or put up a makeshift squatter shelter. However well he manages the transition to life in Gaborone, the move will be gradual and probably never complete. His ties to village, cattle and land will nearly always compete for his commitment to urban living.

Botswana's village population has been pulled to the towns of South Africa for decades. Only recently have Batswana been coming to towns within their own borders. This is because prior to the country's 1966 independence most of the cash work had been in the gruelling mines of South Africa, and there were hardly any towns in Botswana. Despite the lack of true towns in the past, the Batswana are quite

used to living in large, traditional settlements. Even today several of these older villages are as populated as each of Botswana's four towns, which flank the eastern part of the country, on or near the railway linking South Africa and Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. The towns and large villages contrast with the rest of the vast nation with its fewer than one million

about 850,000 people and 582,000 km². Such a tiny population falling within a vast landscape makes Botswana one of the least populated nations in the world. Along with an abundance of space, Botswana is gifted with minerals and has large numbers of cattle, four times greater than the human population.

KEY FACTS ABOUT BOTSWANA

Form of Society and Government	:	Multi-racial, Democratic Republic, Political Parties, Elected Presidency, Parliament, Elected Town and Tribal Councils, Independence - 1966.
Tribal Groupings	:	Tswana, Kalanga, Sarwa (Bushmen)
Land Size	:	582,000 Km ²
Surface Area Suitable for Arable Agriculture*	:	5%
Population Estimate 1979**	:	850,000
Annual Growth Rate of Population**	:	3.08%
Annual Compound Growth Rate of Population (less absentees)**	:	2.58%
Major Economic Growth Areas***	:	Mining, Cattle Production

* Country Resource Paper - Office of Southern and Eastern African Affairs, Africa Bureau, USAID 2/77 inferred from **National Development Plan, 1973-1978** - Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Gaborone.

** **Manpower and Employment in Botswana** - Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Gaborone, 1973.

*** **Botswana National Accounts and Selected Indicators, 1966-76** - Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Gaborone, Botswana.

The beginning of the internal movement to Gaborone in the mid-sixties saw the arrival there of mostly men hired to construct the new, British-designed capital city. These men set up cardboard-zinc huts in squatter areas on the fringes of the present center. Most of them came from spacious living conditions in which seasonal work activity typically meant one would live in the village compound for part of the year, followed by some time in the house on the fields, then in the home or shelter on the cattle post.

What drew the men from this far more spacious and inexpensive style of life was partly the lure of a cash income by which they could improve their village standard, including the purchase of more cattle. In addition to their families they left behind in the village the spacious compound with its open courtyard (**lolwapa**) and the round or rectangular one-room mudbrick house known as **ntlo**. The bounded courtyard surrounding the houses, combined with the presence of the extended family provided a strong sense of

privacy and security the migrant would not likely experience in Gaborone.

In the capital city he found no housing suitable to his means. In contrast to Gaborone, house rents in the larger villages were very low or non-existent. That, of course, was the other major reason why married men left wives and children behind. Although insufficient initially to keep them in Gaborone, his new income was adequate to support them decently in the village.



Women and children often stayed behind in the village during the early stages of migration to Gaborone, moving in with the husband only after he was settled.



The traditional mudbrick house (**ntlo**) and the open courtyard (**lolwapa**) are expressions of personal style and village spaciousness.

One of the brighter sides of this picture of the drain-off from rural areas is that the migrants have added the Botswana town connection to the cattle post-field-village cycle. There is nothing especially new in the town connection itself, for mining laborers have been moving back and forth between South African cities and their villages for decades. Whether in the form of cash, food, or clothes, a continuous transfer of goods has been going on in the direction of town squatter to village kinsmen for some years now. This important

kind of transfer keeps town and country from a complete economic divorce. Whether this cycle will continue in the future is unclear, since the town way of life in Botswana has only been around for a short time, too short to measure the migrant's versus his children's response to the new way.

As the responses of different generations to the new way of life become known, such findings can be coupled with those from studies of squatter settlements and the forthcoming results of an important extensive study of national migration patterns* to give a fairly well-rounded picture for planning purposes. It is against this backdrop of generational differences in the adjustment and commitment to Botswana's town life that the future of her urban settlements and their prospect for a continued linkage to village life can be best understood. In the ab-

sence of complete information on these complex processes, there are some other facts which point to the potential future shape of the country's town growth.

Given somewhat strict contours of geography, climate, and economy in Botswana, the place of cattle production and mining and the focus of development in the eastern part of the country are crucial. Specialized mining communities heavily reliant on expatriates, improved cattle versus agricultural productivity in certain rural areas, and rapidly growing government and service centers drawing in more and more underemployed persons — these are already set in motion. That motion, it seems, will certainly accelerate unless huge sums of money are pumped into the unevenly developed agriculture sector. Such an imbalance could have the effect of both ecological and social disarray.

Offsetting that scenario, however, is an effort to reverse this trend through government incentives and disincentives and the practical and highly positive orientation of the Batswana towards the rural environment, including their villages and cattle. Coupled with a traditional sense of democratic behavior, these factors could lead to an eventual balancing or re-balancing of urban-rural development.

Botswana's present handling of new human settlements in the few towns has been basically sensible and unproblematic. With relatively small numbers of people and wide spaces for them to settle in, it would be surprising if serious problems of urban settlement arose in the near future. In Gaborone, the Town Council housing staff has acted wisely and sensitively in responding to the shelter needs of the increasing numbers of migrants coming there.

*The National Migration Study, carried out by the Central Statistics Office in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (supported financially by USAID).

III. Gaborone's "Natural" Shelter Solution As a Prelude to SHHA

In almost any terms Gaborone is small with its 1979 estimate of only about 50 000 people. But considering its modest beginnings in the mid-sixties when the British commenced the transfer of the Protectorate administration from Mafeking in South Africa to Lobatse and eventually to Gaborone where it became the High Commission the capital city has grown immensely. While at independence in 1966 the size of Gaborone was just over 5 000 people, less than a decade later there were well over 30 000 and in the next decade the present number could multiply by two to three times to between 125 000 and 150 000.



The central Mall of Gaborone links government offices and provides modern shopping facilities.

Part of the present population includes lower, middle, and upper level government functionaries and a high-income expatriate support group. Many of the government employees live in houses that were supplied by the state authority known as the Botswana Housing Corporation.* The early expatriate population was concentrated in one general area of the city, an unintended

consequence, more economic than anything else, of the original plan. However, a recently enacted national policy forcefully aims at preventing any form of polarization and requires that all new settlements reflect the general economic mix of the overall community.

The remaining inhabitants are mostly low-income migrants who have come to Gaborone, originally as squatters, with the expectation of earning a cash income in any kind of work they could find. Building the city was the major task of the early migrants, who set up housekeeping in several fringe squatter areas. They put roofs over their heads



The family living in this squatter house in Old Naledi will build a new house with SHHA assistance.

with almost any material they could scavenge, including tree limbs, thatch, tin, cardboard, and plastic. Some of these squatter areas became, over time, true communities with a sense of belonging and exclusiveness.

Gaborone's early days saw a greater number of working age migrant men than women filtering through its sieve. These men, between 20 and 55 years old, at

first made up a predominantly male society with far fewer women and children present than the national average. Their households were considerably smaller than those of their village relatives, in part because many, especially old and young, were left behind and because they were having fewer children than in the village and nation as a whole.

While there were large numbers of unaccompanied men, there were also significant numbers of single women. They came to Gaborone, as did the men, to earn a cash income. Contrary to the norms of some societies, little if any stigma has been attached by the Batswana to these unmarried women and their children.

The amount of money earned by these working squatters is difficult if not impossible to pin down. This is especially so for periods when the migrants were unsure whether or not they were in Gaborone to stay. Much of what they earned seems to have been taken or sent back to the village, but in time more and more of it became committed to bringing and keeping their families in Gaborone. The cost of living was at first quite low, since squatter house-costs were very low. Food costs, however, began to dig deeper and deeper into earnings. Furthermore, not all of these squatters were so lucky as to have work, and in some cases up to a fifth of the men and almost half the women were

*The BHC, a statutory authority formed in 1970 to respond to demands for housing in expanding urban areas, provides construction, management and maintenance of mostly middle-income houses. Much of this housing is rented to civil servants, though a portion has been sold to government employees.

without work at any one time. At least some of those who could not find wage labor used a certain ingenuity in creating various kinds of self-employment in the informal arena. Makeshift goods stores consisting of a few shelves set up on a house plot or home-made beer-making for local sale are examples of such employment. And, despite a municipal ordinance against unlicensed selling, which goes on considerably in the large squatter settlement in Gaborone known as Old Naledi, this activity reflects the spirit of self-help and survival.

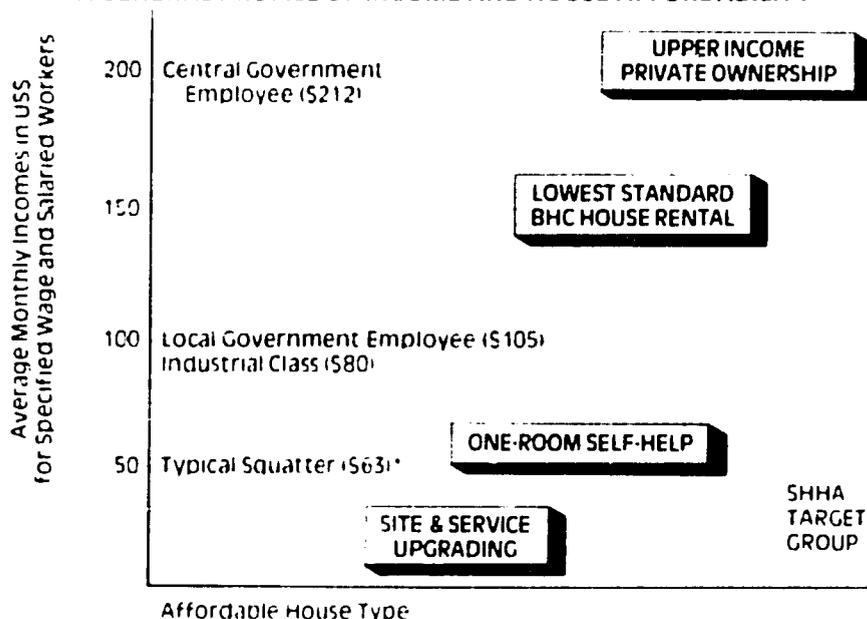
The incomes earned by Gaborone's squatters show vast differences from one household to the next with a monthly range to over \$525 a month. Average monthly income in the late seventies among this group was about \$63 per household. This compares to the slightly higher income population of the SHHA's Broadhurst projects, for which the median is \$81 per month. Both the squatter and site and service* population figures contrast significantly with the Gaborone median monthly income of \$136. A somewhat less happy picture

of the spread shows, however that the poorest half of the squatters had less than a fifth of the total income**.

When viewed alongside the average wage earner in formal sector employment, the squatter doesn't compare too well. And even though his \$63 per month looks good next to the agricultural worker's \$30, his cost of living more than makes up the difference. Some squatters, it must be stated, earn their incomes in the formal sector. Formal wage/salaried employment has grown by over 50% in the last several years, particularly with the expansion of government, but also in mining and quarrying. By 1977 the government employed almost one-third of all working people. At the same time, as migration to towns took place in the expectation by villagers that they would find wage labor, employment in agriculture was declining. Greater and greater reliance on South Africa for foodstuffs reinforces this process.

In breaking down the stereotype outsiders hold of squatters, it was found that in Gaborone the individual squatter house type in no way reflected the person's income. Well-built houses worth \$160 were often owned by squatters with very low reported incomes while just as often poor quality houses worth only \$40 belonged to the reportedly better off ones. As indicated, these incomes are self-reported figures, so it is difficult

A GENERAL PROFILE OF INCOME AND HOUSE AFFORDABILITY



*Extrapolations to current level based on 1974 figure for the first while for the others 1977 figures used

** Not coined in Botswana itself. 'site and service' refers to areas that are plotted for housing, readied for public utilities and services, then served.

** From **A Socio and Economic Survey in Three Peri-Urban Areas in Botswana-1974**, Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

TYPES OF SITE AND SERVICE AREAS, PLOT SIZE, AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Type	Plot Size Requirement (approx.)	Service Provision (upgradable to max.)
Squatter Upgrade Area	200 m ² (minimum)	'Minimal' Service
Squatter Resettlement Area	300 - 400 m ²	'Partial' Service
New Settlement Area	400 - 500 m ² (maximum)	'Full' Service

of course to accurately verify how much of the money stays in Gaborone and how much is sent back to improve the village home.

An encouraging story of Gaborone's squatters is the 15-year-old squatter community known as Old Naledi*. Having a population of over 10,000 and more than 2,300 households, this community shows the potential of squatters to participate in and ultimately stimulate their own uplifting. In getting Old Naledi ready for upgrading, a task which is reported on later, some important social currents were uncovered. One of the most important was the sense of belonging to the squatter neighborhood shown by the residents, a not uncommon African pattern. The upgrading of Old Naledi under the Canadian development program meant some households would have to be displaced to a new, higher standard settlement across town. Almost all plot holders wanted to stay where they were with their neighbors, relatives, or friends rather than move to new, unknown and unpredictable living situations.

In Old Naledi, as well as in other poor settlement areas, the Batswana penchant, perhaps need, for spacious living areas is verified. Although some squatters were found to be living on 250m² or less, they said they required more than 400m² in which to live, work, and play. Those with as much as 400m² suggested that even that amount of space was insufficient. The actual conditions of space and the conditions Batswana find most desirable have converged in a realistic policy and program for plot development. The Government's determination of plot size according to settlement type and level of service provisioning is reflected in the accompanying table.



These two types of traditional houses in Old Naledi show the transition in architectural style from the rural to urban setting.

For the moment it is safe to generalize that the Batswana reference point here is the wide open spaces of the village - field - cattle post. When one puts up these figures against the living conditions in other, much more crowded cities of the world, the Batswana's arithmetic appears to border on the grandiose. Fortunately for them, their population and spatial dimensions are presently conducive to such arithmetic.



The Batswana desire for wide spaces in which to work and play is incorporated into SHHA project planning.

*The upgrading of Old Naledi is a Canadian (CIDA) endeavor; some of these data which follow are found in "A Baseline Survey of the Old Naledi Upgrading Project Area," Ministry of Local Government and Land and Gaborone Town Council SHHA, 1978.

IV. Grants, Loans, and Technical Assistance for Gaborone's Self-Help Housing Program

Now, and for the past several years, the Batswana's needs for shelter in the capital city have been better and better filled by the Gaborone Town Council's Self-Help Housing Agency (SHHA).^{*} The effectiveness of the Gaborone SHHA results in part from the Government of Botswana's continuing commitment to help the growing class of urban poor. It also comes from the kind of human spirit that can move mountains; namely, a small, devoted group of Batswana supported by a dedicated cadre of expatriates.

The human role in Gaborone's low-income housing effort could not have been played without the imaginative infusion of start-up and loan monies by both national and international bodies. Funds for the Foundation for Cooperative Housing (FCH) technical advisor came through a grant^{**} to FCH in September 1977 from USAID. A Housing Guaranty loan^{***} from AID to Botswana in early 1978 was directed toward the construction of new, low-income settlements. Concretely, the loan provided for roads, drainage, sanitation construction supervision, individual Building Material Loans, and equipment for the Gaborone SHHA.

To show its own commitment to the low-cost housing program, the Government of Botswana contributed a significant amount of money, while the European Development Fund (EDF), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the United Kingdom's Overseas Development Administration (ODA) gave generously in money and technical personnel.

This complex weave of multi-donors participating in the same program is unique in the low-cost housing sphere. To make it work smoothly requires no small amount of coordination, which is provided in part by a grant from the UK ODA. The British Urban Development Coordinator supervises the technical and financial matters of the contractors responsible for putting in roads, drainage, water systems

DONOR ASSISTANCE TO BOTSWANA FOR GABORONE'S LOW-INCOME HOUSING PROGRAM

Donor	Purpose
Government of Botswana-Grant (\$5 million)	General Development and Recurrent Costs of Gaborone Town Council SHHA
USAID-Office of Housing (\$2.4 million Housing Guaranty Funds plus \$266,000 technical assistance)	Infrastructure Costs of the Broadhurst II* Project / SHHA Equipment and Technical Assistance Costs, Building Material Loans
Canadian Overseas Development Agency-Grant (\$2.5 million)	Infrastructure and Supervisory Costs of Old Naledi** Squatter Upgrading
UN Overseas Development Administration-Grant (\$3 million)	Infrastructure and Supervisory Costs of the Broadhurst I and II Projects
European Development Fund - Grant (\$2 million)	Water System Construction Costs for the Broadhurst II Project

- * The Broadhurst II Project on the northern side of Gaborone includes 1,848 housing units. The AID monies are also used for individual building material loans.
** The Old Naledi Squatter Upgrading Project, described later, is linked to SHHA through the latter's resettlement of displacees to new settlement areas.

^{*}Self-help here means providing people access to those resources which they cannot readily obtain on their own and enabling them to provide their own houses, whether self-built or contracted privately.

^{**}Operational Program Grant No. 690-0092, for the amount of \$266,000 (September 28, 1977 - April 30, 1980)

^{***}Housing Guaranty Loan Agreement (HIG) for \$2.4 million for the project Broadhurst II, new settlement area.

and sanitation. He also reports periodically to the donor agencies on the spending of their funds. The coordination of the multi-donor monies and numerous contractors has been successful in this case. However, some concern has been shown by the Botswana Government over the potential for confusion or conflict where so many donors are involved. In the absence of a competent, dedicated coordinator such as the present one, the delicate weave could disintegrate.

The American interest in this program was triggered in part by the Botswana Government's policy to push ahead in rural development as one way of slowing urban over-migration and at the same time provide assistance to those migrants in the towns who did not have minimally adequate housing. This joint effort is consistent with the "new directions" of U.S. foreign assistance programs as mandated by the Congress to support activities which "directly and immediately help improve the quality of life of the urban and rural poor." For that reason, it was agreed that any house plots to be developed with AID assistance would go to families whose incomes are below the median. Direct beneficiaries

were to be about 2,000 households, though the proposed work of the Gaborone SHHA would benefit many more families through other foreign and local programs.

The Batswana who have benefited from the cooperative multi-donor effort number more than 5,000 lower-income Gaborone households. Potential Batswana who could be touched by the SHHA approach in the future include an estimated 20,000 households by the year 1990, when Gaborone will have three to four times its present population.

Despite the unique make-up of Botswana's people, its distinct place in the politics and economy of southern Africa*, and the influence of geography on its lifeway, the story of self-motivated housing in Gaborone spills out beyond national, cultural and geographic boundaries. In this sense, the present account is relevant to many places and peoples, for where humans find it in their self-interest to improve, and when they are provided access to the resources to do so, they almost surely will.

* The Foreign Assistance Act passed by the American Congress in 1973 specifically directed US development funds to the poor majority, or even more precisely, in the words of AID directives, to the "poorest of the poor."

** While Botswana has no diplomatic relations with the giant to the south, South Africa, it is heavily dependent on its neighbor through its membership in the Southern African Customs Union for its economic survival. Botswana's position as a "front-line" state vis-à-vis both Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and Namibia and her delicate relationship with South Africa make her future economic status somewhat hard to predict.

V. The SHHA - Growing to Build

Bureaucratic overkill is a tendency the world over, even of the most altruistic, humane of organizations. Where this problem touches on Botswana's low-income housing program, it is due mainly to the overlap, sometimes even competition, of various agencies of government, national and local. In Gaborone, since it is the capital city, there is an abundance of technical opinion available and eager to be heard. For that reason, and because it is felt by some that the capital city should be a showcase, Gaborone seems to suffer from high expectations. This may be the cause of what some planners have termed a false level of public service provisions, in that it is realistically unaffordable by many.



Councillor Gaborone, representing Old Naledi on the Town Council, plays an important part in the capital city's shelter solution.

Several kinds of Botswana Government decision makers are involved in the politically dynamic housing arena, including the President, Cabinet, Parliament, ministries, agencies, town councils, and residential ward committees. Several of these governmental sources participated in negotiating the important Urban Development and Land Policy, which derived from the Urban Development Committee. That Committee is composed of members of the Ministry of Local Government and Lands and representatives from the town councils of Gaborone, Francistown, Selebi-Pikwe, and Lobatse. The policy's importance for all Botswana is that migrants to urban centers who receive self-help housing and related services would have to pay for the costs with little or no subsidy. The pay-your-way idea is meant to help redress the imbalance of urban-rural development, in the hope of encouraging rural Batswana to stay at home in the village. Carried to the President and Cabinet, the policy was made law, to be implemented by the town councils and by their Departments of Treasury, Engineering, and SHHA.

However, one concern on the part of some Batswana with the pay-your-way idea is that ultimately they feel it may have the reverse effect. In the absence of a concerted effort in rural development which would keep more Batswana in their villages than at present, these skeptics feel that it may actually end up attracting more people than it repels. Only time will tell.

Other actors take part in the housing scene, too. In middle and upper-income housing, the earlier-mentioned Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) plays an important role. As a large developer and property manager, the BHC's rents are below market value. Thus, at present the BHC is not cost effective, though proposals to make it so are under consideration.

A savings and loan bank in the four towns, called Botswana Building Society, serves a very small number of the better-off families in making available mortgage loans. Until the age-old self-help idea was formalized in the SHHA, the least well-off had no chance of a house loan. That has all changed now, low-income people having as good a chance as middle and upper for house loans.

Actually, Botswana's villagers have been helping themselves to build houses ever since there were Tswana villages. And they have built excellent, well-adapted houses at that. The oldest urban self-help housing on record for Botswana goes back to 1965-66, in the Bontleng area of Gaborone. It is described more as a happening than a planned activity. Nevertheless, such an occurrence can be seen by those who value self-help as a heartening event.

In June 1973 the Gaborone SHHA came into being. Falling under the Engineer's Department of the Town Council, its main purpose was to take land given by the State, develop plots for low-income housing, and service these sites with water, roads

and drainage; whence the label 'site and service'.

A Motswana, his American Peace Corps counterpart, and a clerk-typist were the Housing Section in the Gaborone of 1973. Later an assistant supplies clerk and driver were added. This small group allocated plots to applicants. It issued Certificates of Rights which gave the plot-holders legally binding, inheritable rights to tenancy on the land. Since the State is the ultimate owner of the land, freehold rights are not given to the plotholder. Once the plotholder builds a house on the land, however, he has virtual control of it and is entitled to transfer that control to his relatives. He, in turn, is obligated to pay monthly for certain public services he receives. The housing section also administered Building Material Loans, which at that time were a maximum of \$500 (400 Pula), at 4% interest over 15 years, or \$5.00 (4.06 Pula) per month.

A local or site office, called a Ward Office, for administering the site and service project, was opened in 1975 in the area known as Extension 14. (The term 'extension' is used by the Town Council and SHHA to designate new housing projects which have been adjoined to areas already inhabited, and although an extension may no longer be new, the habit of calling it that usually sticks.) Ward offices of the SHHA permit a greater flexibility and concentration of effort on a local basis, giving the head-

quarters more opportunity to deal with general and administrative matters.

In the original self-help area of Bontleng, the residents didn't want to sign the Certificate of Rights. They had already lived on their plots for several years without the Certificate, so they were reluctant to accept the SHHA's offer of permanent rights of tenancy. The Minister of Local Government and Lands even visited the Bontleng residents to explain this paper to them. It turned out that one of their very compelling arguments was that the Certificate was not printed in Setswana! They wanted this legal document in their own language* and with the official Botswana coat-of-arms prominently displayed.

Those days seem distant now in looking back. The system for administering the SHHA programs was skeletal and the small staff had to carry the burden of considerable work. This included heavy physical labor; for example, loading the building materials on trucks was done by hand rather than by the present front-end loader. Five years later, by the end of 1977, the "old" SHHA had processed 603 plots and 142 Building Material Loans.

This early SHHA was a one-room operation under the Town Engineer, just a small part of a large operation. The SHHA was totally dependent on the Engineering Department, which itself was under-staffed and also ill-equipped. Besides that Depart-

ment, there were and are today Treasury, Education, Health Inspection, Nursing, Community Development, and Town Clerk's Departments within the Gaborone Town Council. So, SHHA found itself a small part of a larger arena and it had to work hard to find its way.

The upgrading of SHHA was no easy job. The Foundation for Cooperative Housing (FCH) advisor, who arrived in December 1977, understandably found the SHHA unable to do large-scale squatter upgrading or site and service work. The SHHA simply did not have the resources to do large-scale project implementation. This was clearly recognized and identified in the AID Housing Guaranty Project Paper. Such a capability had to be built from the bottom up, and this was the central task of FCH technical assistance. A staff to do the finance and management, community development, and technical assistance had to be recruited and trained. To get the SHHA program and staffing underway, management and accounting systems first had to be devised.

On getting a minimal staff together, the advisor assisted the new core staff group in determining SHHA objectives in light of its earlier mandate. The Peace Corps volunteer had gone, and only one of the original Botswana staff of four remained (she now has the important task of administering the Broadhurst Ward Office). Then the organization had to be given a shape ap-

* Setswana and English are the official languages; the language used in legal documents and matters was English, but recently the Certificate of Rights was altered to Setswana.

appropriate to the objectives. Job descriptions had to be written (no fewer than 17 detailed descriptions), ward and headquarters offices planned, and equipment and operating budgets drafted. Meanwhile, staff recruitment had to be intensified and transport, mobile radio, courier systems and a housing design and costing system devised. The design and costing of housing was done with the help of an FCH team from Washington, D.C.

As SHHA grew from its original three employees to the June 1978 level of 42, it needed more room to house itself. In the second quarter of 1978, it moved out of the Town Council offices into its own headquarters behind the Council, consisting of three attractive and efficient, semi-permanent office structures. By then, SHHA had also completed two new Ward Offices and building material warehouses in Old Naledi and Broadhurst. By mid-1978 it was beginning to flex its new muscles: its presence was becoming known and something to be reckoned with. Most important of all, SHHA was now in a position to do some large-scale good for its constituents — lend a helping hand to the urban poor so they could have adequate shelter.

Almost as if it was a token of its recognition, the Gaborone

Town Council in the second quarter of 1978 awarded the SHHA departmental status. Now it was no longer someone's step-child, but a full-fledged sibling of the other Council departments. In coming into its own, SHHA has been able to fulfill much of its potential while at the same time the citizens have come to expect more and more of it — in some cases, miracles.

For the first time, the SHHA was able to focus on organizing its own activities. Thus began a momentum which has culminated in the development and allocation of plots and the processing of building material loans to an extent never before experienced in Botswana. The formal organization this effort took is shown in the accompanying chart. It depicts the flow of communication and the positions of responsibility for SHHA's activities, included in the



The Gaborone SHHA operates squatter upgrading, resettlement, and new settlement low-income housing projects at several locations in the capital city.



The SHHA Department was formed in early 1978 and moved into these offices soon after.

GABORONE TOWN COUNCIL - SHHA ORGANIZATION CHART

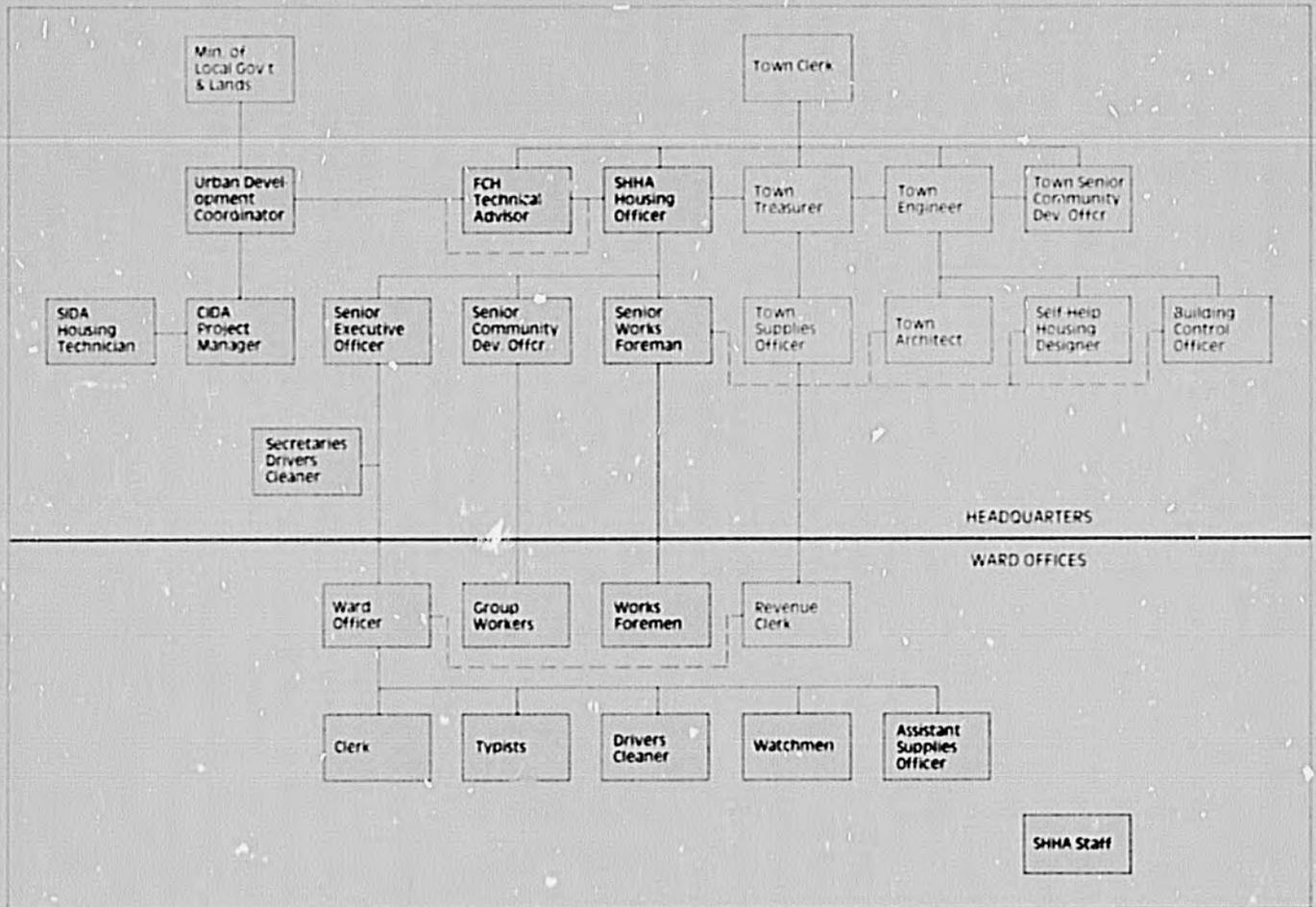


chart are positions in other departments of the Town Council with which SHHA cooperates in matters of monies, supplies, services and designs. Some of these relationships are detailed later in the text. Each of the positions in the SHHA was defined and patterned on the advice of the FCH Advisor but is based on SHHA objectives and previous Botswana experience.

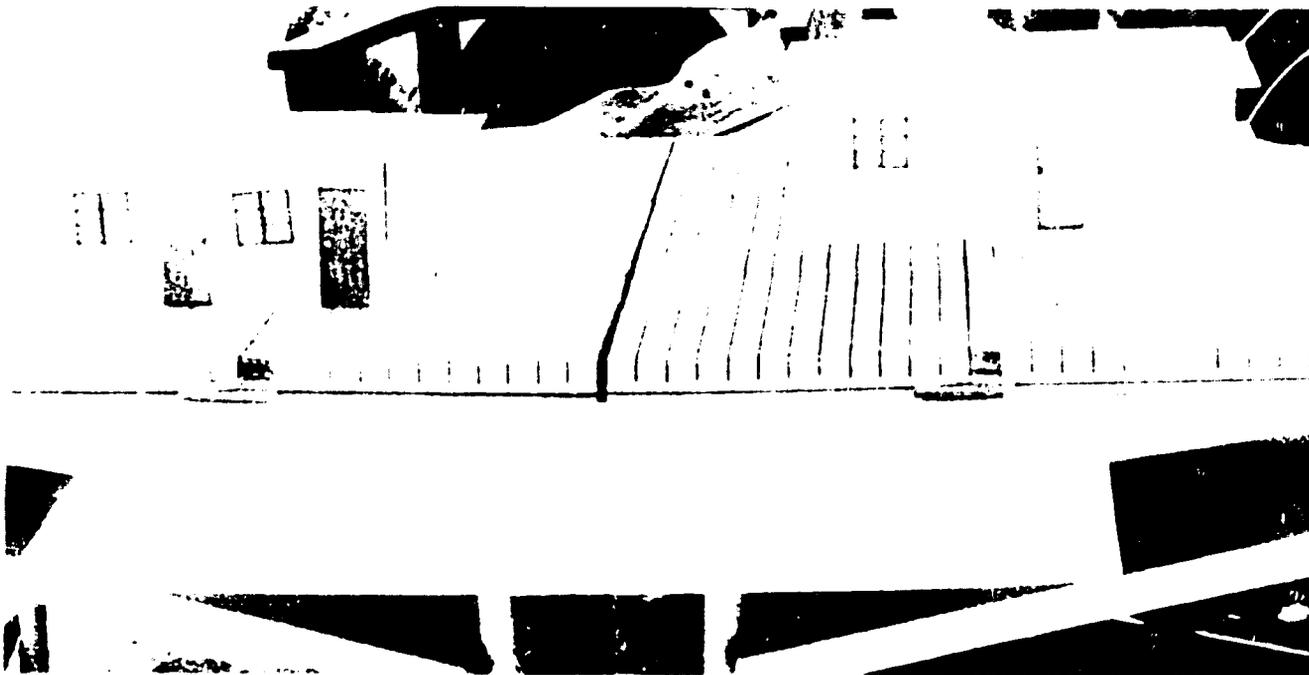
The plotholder more than likely does not know that an enormous amount of activity

goes on behind the scenes to get him onto his new plot and building his house. For certain, he doesn't know at first that he must process through the SHHA system. Perhaps he's lucky in not knowing that particular fact. This means all kinds of details must be ascertained and recorded about the plotholder, so that SHHA can help him help himself — and on schedule.

The overall running of the program and projects is done by

the Housing Officer, who is the head of the SHHA department. The Housing Officer directs the staff and keeps the rhythm of the organization flowing.

Under the Housing Officer are three persons who are crucial to the work: for finance and administration there is the Senior Executive Officer; for getting the program out to the people, the Senior Community Development Officer; and for exchanging construction know-how with self-help builders, the



These model core houses with magnetized, adjustable walls, windows, and doors are used by Group Worker and Construction Foreman in enabling plotholders to visualize exactly what they can afford to build.

Senior Works Foreman. Each of these has a sizable staff to work with, some at headquarters but most out with the people.

Although the above three sections within SHHA are separate, overall success has depended on their togetherness.

Only when there is good management of information about the plotholder, a fitting orientation to what SHHA does for him, and assistance to the plotholder in building his house does SHHA work well for him. These three goals are tightly

linked to one another. All the plotholder knows is that SHHA does somehow work for him.

In order to elaborate the organization chart, a brief description of each of the positions in SHHA is presented.



L. Ghanle - Senior Executive Officer



Z. Kraal - Senior Community Development Officer



T. Meljer - Senior Works Foreman

The three Senior Officers play a pivotal role in making the SHHA effective.

WORK DESCRIPTION SUMMARIES FOR EACH POSITION IN THE GABORONE SHHA

Position	Work Description
HOUSING OFFICER (HQ)	Responsible for all SHHA activities; Town Council Department Head, Management of SHHA through three senior officers; Sets tone, standard.
FCH CONSULTANT / ADVISOR (HQ)	Analysis, planning, staff requirements and budget; Design, implement training program for management, accounting procedures; Assist in daily operation.
URBAN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR (HQ)	Act as principal liaison, coordinating officer between the Urban Division and Departments of Town and Regional Planning and Surveys and Lands for SHHA projects and for Government's consultants; Advise Ministry and Town Council and report to donors on financing; Supervise technical side of contracting for all SHHA projects
CIDA (Canadian) PROJECT MANAGER (HQ)	Supervise Old Naledi upgrading project; Maintain financial records for donor reporting function; Oversight of contractors.
SIDA (Swedish volunteer) HOUSING TECHNICIAN (HQ)	Assist Housing Officer in issuing plot occupancy certificate, handling plot applications, administration of building materials loans
SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER (Administration / Finance Officer) (HQ)	Administration of financial matters, accounts, stores; Office Manager of Headquarters; Supervision of debt management program; Prepares financial reports for Council and Donors.
WARD EXECUTIVE OFFICER (Ward)	In charge of financial matters at Ward level; Supervises Ward level stores program, posting of accounts; Prepares monthly financial statements.
ASSISTANT REVENUE CLERK (Ward)	Posts bookkeeping records at Ward office level for service charge payments, building materials loans, stores records.
ASSISTANT SUPPLIES OFFICER (Ward)	In charge of Ward level stores; Posting stores records, advisor on inventory levels
SENIOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (HQ)	Manager, Community Development section; Directs Group Workers in field activities. Promotes work of program at community level.
COMMUNITY GROUP WORKER (Ward)	Explains SHHA to recipients, what it can and can't do, role of staff; Organizes people for meetings, discussions of activities, issues. Conducts household census.
SENIOR WORKS FOREMAN (HQ)	Supervises overall technical-construction assistance and inspection program; Directs Assistant Technical Officers; Coordinates all self-help construction, construction training, cost estimation, inspections
ASSISTANT WORKS FOREMAN (Ward)	Assist self-help builders order building materials, lay out houses on plots, train in simple skills
SENIOR TYPIST (HQ)	Typing and reproduction of HQ's memos, reports, forms, Receptionist for HQ.
TYPISTS (HQ / Ward)	Assist Senior Typist on typing, running machines
CLEANER (HQ / Ward)	Sees that buildings are clean at all times.
DRIVER (HQ / Ward)	Drive SHHA vehicles, Keep logs of all trips; Responsible for maintenance checks.
TELEPHONE OPERATOR / RADIO DISPATCHER	Answers central telephone, Books transport; Controls two-way radio.

Constant communication in the SHHA — greatly facilitated by mobile radio units — is an important ingredient of SHHA management.



VI. The SHAA System at Work

In the old days of SHHA there was no clear-cut way of deciding who was most in need of a plot. Given a forward-looking national policy and with the introduction of external financial and technical assistance into the country's housing picture, the target of squatters and other low-income people became well-focused. Any project undertaken with AID money, for example, would have to fulfill the objectives of the Foreign Assistance Act of the U.S. Congress which directs assistance to those most in need. How to ascertain who is most in need, of course, is easier said than done, as evidenced by the difficulties posed by this problem in other developing countries.

In order to solve the problem of plot allocation, an application was devised which approached the ideal of serving those most in need. A numerically-weighted point system was set up to determine the eligibility of applicants (for sample Plot Application and point system, see accompanying form). Rather than basing it solely on income measures, factors such as number of persons in the applicant's household, shared or non-shared accommodation, rented or owned, quality of construction materials, years in Gaborone, distance from water, sanitation in home, age disability, previous application submitted — were all carefully considered. Where income considerations came into play, it was a question not of enough, but too much; thus a maximum limit of \$1,800 (or 1,500 Pula) was set.

24 OCT 1978

APPLICATION FOR PLOT
GABORONE TOWN COUNCIL SELF HELP HOUSING AGENCY
2503

Note: This is no-charge required paper, area form for good copies

Date of application: **22 09 78**

SEKOPANE (Surname) **SEICYOP! JOHANNES** (Other name)

P.O. Box 291, GABORONE **P.O. Box 40, Mochudi**

Category and Village Address (Home address)

How many years have you lived in Gaborone? **28** Are you a citizen of Botswana? **Yes** How many years have you lived in Gaborone? **7**

Do you have a self-help plot now? **No** Do you live in a SHC house? **No** If you live elsewhere what is your Plot No. **2121**

DO NOT COMPLETE PARTS BELOW IF QUALIFICATION TEST IS NOT MET

VIOTOP (Name and address of employer) **P.O. Box 1093, GABORONE** (Name and address of employer)

INCOME CALCULATION

First source: amount **92** x 12 mo. = **1104.00**

Second source: amount _____ x 12 mo. = _____

Third source: amount _____ x 12 mo. = _____

DO NOT COMPLETE PARTS BELOW IF INCOME TEST NOT MET — UNLESS DISPLACE

Do you live in Old Ntshani? **No** Do you live in Botswana? **Yes** Have you been displaced by ITC? **No**

Do you rent or own your home? **Yes** How much do you pay monthly? **P 10-00** Do you have someone to live in your current home? **Yes**

POINT SYSTEM INFORMATION

Spouse	20
Children	5
Sharing accommodation with rent	40
Sharing accommodation without rent	20
Existing house built 20-30 years	20
Existing house mud bricks	20
Years in Gaborone	7 x 5 = 35
Live 200M to 500M from water	5
Live 501M to 1000M from water	20
No sanitation at current home	40
No latrine at similar	10
Blind, crippled or missing limb	50
Age greater than 65 years	50
Second application for plot	20
No. of persons in family	1 x 10 = 10
No. of rooms in house	1 x 10 = 10
(A) 1 + (B) 1 + 2 x 10	20
TOTAL POINTS	> 170

THIS SPACE RESERVED FOR POINT CALCULATION

Write total points from list at left: **170**

Write total P.A. income from: **+099 11.00**

Subtract income from points and write the answer here: **-934**

Remember: If you write a score that points the result will be negative, and a sign is placed at right.

Write name of person filling the form: **Sic Bakuba**

LIST BELOW THE NAMES OF MEMBERS OF THIS FAMILY, RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT

HILDA SEKOPANE (WIFE)



The plot application ensures that plots are allocated to low-income families in need of adequate housing.

In the example presented here, the individual is within the limit on maximum income but is given a low priority on the basis of the point system. It should be pointed out that there is an exception to the rule of \$1 800 maximum for a scant 5% who fall in to a slightly higher range. And, although lower income is stressed in allotting plots, it is also important to note that the applicant must be able to pay the monthly service charge of \$5.50 (or 4.50 Pula).

In addition to the criteria on the point system list, preference is given to applicants who live in the Old Naledi Squatter upgrading area. The reasoning for that is that several hundred families in Old Naledi have had to be relocated so as to meet specific health and service standards: widen footpaths into roads, placing of community centers, among others. When households had to be displaced, a fair compensation formula was applied to the house, garden, and plot, a practice which had previously been used in Francistown. The first thing done in the case of an affected house was to be sure the owner applied for a SHHA plot. Then a photograph of the house structure was taken and a drawing made of the area to be affected. The SHHA Compensation Manual would then be consulted to check the house against a series of photographs of many house types based on different materials and the price per square meter of each type. In addition to a cash settlement, a disturbance allowance is paid

for each person in the affected household and compensation allowed for a developed garden, trees, hedges, fencing, outside toilet, and any other improvements. The materials of the house are then transported by the SHHA at no cost to the new site.

In some squatter upgrade areas, questions of land ownership have arisen. These have been handled by an Adjudication Tribunal, made up of the District Commissioner, Town Clerk, Urban Development Coordinator, with Ward Councilors advising. While the Tribunal's findings are decisive, the right of appeal to the Minister of Local Government and Lands is possible.

Once it is determined that an applicant qualifies for a plot, he is issued a Certificate of Rights which gives him the inheritable right to tenancy on the land. The Certificate requires the plot-holder to complete a durable one-room house within the first year, in compliance with the building code which is explained to him by the Assistant Works Foreman. It also commits him to pay a monthly service charge for public services.

The first Certificate of Rights used by the SHHA had more teeth in it than the one presently used. That is, it contained a greater threat in the form of a provision for repossession of the plot (see Clause 7(a) of first Certificate). That approach was originally intended to reinforce the national policy of non-subsidy for urban housing. Repossession

could be carried out as the final response of SHHA to continued non-payment of the service charge or, if held, the loan for building materials. Also, failure to build a one-room house within the specified period of one year was considered a breach of contract and subject to having the plot taken away. A few repossessions have been carried out in extreme cases of non-payment or non-construction of a house within a year. These cases were intended as much to be examples to others of what could happen if they were remiss. They were only carried out after several notices had been sent to the delinquent plot-holder and after group workers had tried to convince him or her of the disadvantages of non-compliance.

The response to the repossessions was a rather immediate improvement in the overall rate of payment on service charges and loans. That extreme action however, met with a quite naturally negative response on the part of the town councillors. Everyone agreed, SHHA personnel as much as anyone, that repossession could be construed as a harsh solution. The reality of the situation is, however, that once this politically unpopular act was ceased, the size of the "hardcore" group of non-payers returned to its earlier higher level.



CERTIFICATE OF RIGHTS

ORIGINAL

7. (a) The Occupier shall pay to the Council a regular service payment in consideration of the rights hereby granted to him and for the services to be provided by the Council to the plot in respect of which this Certificate is granted and to the locality in respect of which this plot is situated.
8. (b) Should the Occupier commit or permit the commission of a breach of any of the clauses of this Certificate of Rights and fail to remedy any such breach within thirty (30) days after notice (which can be given in any of the manners set out in clause 7 (d) above by the Council to the Occupier) then the Council shall be entitled, notwithstanding any previous waiver or anything to the contrary contained herein, but not obliged, to cancel this Certificate of Rights forthwith and to retake possession of the plot without prejudice to its claim for any arrear service payments or for any damage which it may suffer or sustain by reason of such breach and cancellation, and in that event the Occupier will have no claim whatsoever, whether for damages or otherwise, against the Council. Cancellation by the Council shall be given in writing and service of such cancellation shall be deemed to have been validly given if such written cancellation is served in any of the manners set out in clause 7 (d) above.

SECOND

- 7 The Occupier shall develop on the plot at least one habitable room and a toilet of a type approved by the Town Council within.....months from the date of issue of this Certificate, failing which the Council shall have the right to cancel this Certificate and re-take possession of the plot.

The Certificate of Rights gives plotheolders a binding, inheritable right to tenancy on the land – In the portions shown, sections 7a-8b of the original Certificate had more “teeth” in the case of non-payment, while section 7 of the present Certificate shows greater leniency.

A new Certificate of Rights was drafted to reflect a more humane, though perhaps less practical, approach to non-payers. Repossession is only permissible according to the new Certificate (see Clause 7) if the plotheolder does not produce a one-room house, the non-payment clause having been

dropped. The rationale behind keeping the non-construction clause is that the plotheolder who doesn't build is depriving someone else of a serviced plot. Both the earlier and newer Certificates have their respective merits and debatable features which only time and experience will allow the Batswana to judge.

Once the plot is allocated and the Certificate of Rights issued, what is dubbed the SHHA “Unit Development Process” is set in motion. Here the new plotheolding family is interviewed by a Community Worker and a Works Foreman to determine their construction needs and how much they can afford for a

building material loan. An individual house plan suitable to the family is discussed and assistance in construction know-how is offered all along the way from the first shovelful of dirt to the last nail in the roof.



This typical, expandable core house is affordable with a SHHA loan and with SHHA technical assistance.

Whether or not a building materials loan is issued depends on need, desire, and ability to pay which are assessed in the aforementioned interview. In this phase of the SHHA process the measurement of the plot-holder's ability to pay is crucial, since repayment of the loan is considered to be one of the keys to the self-help idea. Equally important here is the necessity of replenishing SHHA's funds for the development of future plots provision of future loans, and its own operating costs.

To keep each plotholder's account straight is no small task. It requires an especially close link between the Ward Officer and the Senior Executive Officer. All of the information on individual

plot allocation—service charge payments, material loan issues and payments, flow of building materials through the warehouses, drawdowns from donor grants—all of these must be readily available to keep the SHHA on target. Their ready availability also permits SHHA to report to Town Council and donor organizations quickly and accurately. These thousands and thousands of pieces of information are all recorded and stored on the technically simple computer accounting storage machine* located in each of the three Ward Offices. This machine is coupled to a Stripdex file list which includes all plotholders names and addresses and sticker labels for easy access.

*Known as the Olivetti Audit 4

PROGRESS IN ALLOCATION OF SELF-HELP PLOTS AND BUILDING MATERIAL LOANS, MARCH 31, 1979*

Project Area	Total Plots	Plots Serviced		Plots Allocated			Material Loans Made		
		No	% of Total	No	% of Total	% of Serviced Plots	No	% of Total	% of Plots Allocated
Bontleng	390	390	100	390	100	100	None Available		
White City	223	223	100	197	88	88			
Extension 14	315	315	100	315	100	100	70	22	22
Old Naledi									
Squatter	2000	**		0	0		0		
Resettlement	150	150	100	105	70	70	57	39	54
Total				105			57		54
Broadhurst I	538	538	100	538	100	100	99	18	18
Broadhurst II									
Area A	561	561	100	337	60	60	100	18	30
Areas B,C,D	1287	579***	45	0			0		
Total	1848	1130	61	337	18	30	100	5	30
TOTAL	5464	2746	50%	1685	31%	61%	326	6%	19%

*From USAID Office of Housing, Project Evaluation, SHHA Operational Program Grant (by DeVoy Collaborative), April 1979

** Roads and drainage nearly complete, water standpipes about 50% complete, work on toilets just starting

*** Assumes Area B infrastructure is complete; in fact, it nearly is and areas C and D are partially serviced

This part of the system provides the SHHA "memory." Nothing can be forgotten so long as the memory has been told what to remember. Thus, each of the many accounts of the supply companies will tell what building materials were ordered when, or how much, and whether they've come to the warehouse yet. The SHHA memory will also tell whether plotholder Molefi (let's call him that) has paid his monthly service charge and materials loan, if he has one. If "no" is the response of the memory, then group workers will get out to Molefi to see what's happening and talk with him about his side of the bargain. When face-to-face contact doesn't work, 15, 30 and 60-day notices are delivered.

FAMILY MOLEFI'S HOUSING PROBLEMS AND HOW THEY WERE SOLVED



Molefi introduces prospective homeowners to the SHHA approach through a comic book format.

Reports to donors, USAID for example, come forth monthly from the SHHA memory to fulfill that particular reporting requirement. One job the memory can't do is to coordinate the various donor grants and loans, which falls to the Urban Development Coordinator. On loan from the United Kingdom's ODA, he works for the Ministry of Local Government and Lands but out of the SHHA headquarters. For example, this coordinator makes sure that contractors on roads, water, and drainage in SHHA projects perform well technically and on time. He also works closely with the Senior Executive Officer both in advising and training.

To return to plotholder Molefi, it was not meant to suggest Molefi is treated as an object. Quite to the contrary, since the Senior Community Development Officer makes sure that doesn't happen. The success of the entire SHHA hangs on its human touch, that is, the way it approaches its clients shapes their acceptance or rejection of the self-help product. The SHHA's approach also influences the plotholder's willingness to pay

for services and loans.

Not to be overlooked is the important part played by the Ward Officers. They must keep all the accounts, but as well must work with the Works Foreman and Group Workers assigned to their offices (all three Ward Officers are women). Since Ward Officers have much direct work with the residents themselves, they have to be adept in people work. A hard part of their job is to supervise the monthly collection of service levies and materials loans made by the ward office Revenue Clerks. While this is actually in the Town Treasurer's domain, SHHA has been of much help to that office in setting up the very accounts system which makes its own funds flow.

Besides the SHHA systems mentioned here, advocacy has played a strong part in changing old ideas, introducing new ones, and convincing others of their value. The personal and professional convictions of those individuals mentioned above, not just the management and accounting systems they've devised, are the real driving force of the SHHA machine.

VII. The SHHA as People to People

One of the main motives in setting up the Community Development section was, frankly, to get and keep plottolders in the mood to pay their service charges and loans. This is, of course, good management.

Problems of more than just good debt management, however, had to be attacked. As said at the outset, Gaborone can be a strange, alienating place for the Motswana villager. Somewhere along the line the shock of town life has to be absorbed. While the villagers have to absorb most of it themselves, the SHHA's Community Development people have helped to offset some of the shock. Dealing with the families in self-help areas from their vantage point has greatly aided the rural-urban transition.

Perhaps the biggest shock for the villager is that his or her extended family, fellow village ward members, and the larger village community are not present to cushion the blow. The back-and-forth movement between town and village described earlier may be the result of not reconciling that loss. Women especially are hit hard



When a Motswana woman is able to help build the new house, her traditional role of house-builder is maintained.

for in the village they were the primary house-builders, the men having spent much time away working at the mines and cattle-posts or in the **kgotla**, or council meeting place.

In town, the old idea of mutual aid seems to have broken down. The **motshelo** or work party is legendary in the villages, for it brought people together for the price of a feast or beer party to dig a well, cut posts for a house, clear a field, or reap a harvest. Now, since Batswana come from far and wide and do not settle primarily with kinsmen or fellow villagers, this practice does not seem to work so well in town. And, although SHHA is working towards the same goal as the **motshelo**, it has far more work cut out than a feast or beer party could accomplish.

The principle of the **kgotla** or open meeting alluded to above is a most important feature of the SHHA community

action program. In villages the **kgotla** is a council, open and representative, in which the community leader takes a consensus of and summarizes opinions on a particular case. It is known especially for its openness and fairness. The parallel here is in Old Naledi, where the Town Council and SHHA helped the residents to organize politically in nine elected Ward Committees and a Village Development Committee. This force serves as a rallying point for Old Naledi community interests. Broadhurst I area has also seen the emergence of local interest groups. Old Naledi displaces and residents from a former construction camp came to compete for the leadership position in Broadhurst I. The SHHA Senior Community Development Officer helped these two opposing parties to negotiate and channel their energies into the confines of the Village Development Committee.



Town councillors and Old Naledi residents discuss community improvement with SHHA staff.

Of all its purposes, the educational one is perhaps the most important for the Community Development section. And it works both ways: people must know what is expected of them before they can do what they are expected to do, SHHA, as well, must know what the people expect of it to do its job.

There has been considerable use of such educational "show-and-tell" projects as a comic book, which explains SHHA, "how-to" manuals (for example, "Build your Type B Toilet"), tape-recorded instructions to plot-holders on how to use SHHA, and popular theatre in skit and play form, all to get across the idea of self-help housing "à la Gaborone." Many of the early ideas for audio-visual materials stemmed from the FCH advisor.



The SHHA Comic Book has informed many residents about obtaining their plots, Building Materials Loans, and advice on construction.

The SHHA encourages residents to communicate their needs and complaints

Not so much fun as comic books and skits is the absorption of residents' complaints and criticism by all SHHA staff, but especially by the community development people. Because the ward offices are local, residents come in to complain about almost anything, much of it unrelated to SHHA. This is because most residents equate SHHA with the entire Town Council. While a place to lodge complaints is fine in theory, an in-

formation campaign by Town Council itself could help the residents to clear the confusion.

SHHA itself has a high degree of openness to residents' complaints. A multicopy complaint form filled out with the help of the Ward Office staff allows the resident to formally lodge a grievance. If the problem falls outside of SHHA's province, a copy of the complaint is sent to the appropriate department or agency. In addition to filling a precise need, this strategy conveys to the low-income resident a sense of worth and confidence that his voice counts for something.



A community meeting held by SHHA to hear complaints about public services — the SHHA Housing Officer, Felix Sebina, presides, accompanied by the Senior Community Development Officer, Zekki Kraal.

Once the eligibility for a building materials loan is determined, an affordable loan is calculated by the Senior Works Foreman and his top assistant together with Molefi. The loan application (see accompanying form) is then sent to the Housing and Development Planning Committee in Town Council. This Committee — which includes an elected councillor from the plot-holder's area, approves or disapproves according to the applicant's priority of need and ability to pay.

In concert with the group worker, the Works Foreman consults with the plotholder to see what kind of house design he or she wants. Often it is found the plotholders want a house with three bedrooms and living and dining rooms, because only a big house is suitable for the town setting, they believe. The fact of the matter is that the S750 (maximum) building materials loan is only sufficient for a modest one or two-room expandable core house and toilet with a combined space of 18m².

Next, Molefi is shown different house designs within his price range. The Works Foreman must adapt the chosen design to the builder's wants, needs, and pocketbook. Then, a miniature model house with adjustable wall panels, windows, and doors is used with the plotholder to allow him a three-dimensional look and feel for what is possible for him to build. The appropriate quantity of materials is ordered by the Works Foreman, who then monitors its movement to the plot, and invoices it in detail.

Unless Molefi happens to be an experienced builder, there are certain crucial features the Works Foreman must discuss with him. Otherwise, he may find his new house soon crumbling to the ground, as one extreme, or just uncomfortable to live in. He must know, therefore, about the 'Damp Proof Course' of weather-proofing by which stripping is placed along the perimeter of the foundation to keep moisture from moving up into the walls. For comfort and health the builder is apprised of the code for ventilation and use of bricks with holes in them, so that each room has a hot air exit. The angle of the house to the sun and appropriate placing of windows and doors for good ventilation are useful points for the builder and assistant to talk over, as well.

Though seemingly mundane, the toilet facility has been an object of no small contention among residents, SHHA, Council, Town and Regional Planning, and others. Everyone has been in on this act. Some engineers and health officials recommended the very expensive waterborne or flush type, while a sanitation sub-committee suggested a modified pit latrine which uses hand-carried water and which was approved by Cabinet. This second, the 'Type-B', has partly failed, for one because of inappropriate soil conditions, and for another, due to inadequate training of the users in its complexities. In many cases, where the toilet could not be kept clean and was creating a smell, the frustrated owner reverted to the bush. In fact, however,

Batswana villagers long ago perfected the simple, straight-drop pit latrine. SHHA has taken this detail at face value and now places the foundation for an improved and ventilated pit toilet on each plot as it prepares the plot for occupancy. The best solution to date seems to be the double-pit toilet with a movable seat — so that when one pit is filled the seat can be moved to the other pit. A screened ventilation pipe places even further distance between the user and the odor.

Before leaving the building side of SHHA's work, Old Naledi's construction and upgrading effort is broached. We have already seen evidence for a political life and sense of community there. Under the care of a sensitive observer of the human scene in Old Naledi, the Canadian (CIDA) architect advisor, with SHHA help, has rallied the forces there to create a sensible and humane use of space. Since the houses and community plan were already there, this effort is basically one of intelligently sorting and blending traditional designs and newer conveniences.

IX. Keeping the SHHA on Track: The Importance of Training

SHHA is not a school, though it sometimes appears as if it could be. Very little is left to doubt, for there is always an answer either in the aforementioned SHHA memory or in the heads of the people working there. A system has been set up which the senior staff endeavor to run smoothly. They have their assistants who are out making the system work for the residents. All of these capabilities must be passed on so they are not lost.

Each of the present (November 1979) 60 employees of SHHA has been given an orientation to that part of the program relevant to his or her work. From senior officers to drivers and office cleaners, the individual employee is familiarized with his or her job description and the importance of that job to the overall work of SHHA, and is then assigned to work with a supervisor or advisor for a period of time. In fact, the training never ends, for there is always something old to correct or new to do.

Meetings, orientation sessions and refresher courses are seen taking place quite regularly in SHHA headquarters, ward offices, and on the sites. This is not to say everyone is involved in these most of the time, for that would be deadly boring, too time consuming and, in the end, unproductive. Rather, the sessions, whether formal or informal, are for persons just starting out or for those who've been around a while, but who need refreshing. The training may range from simply answering an informal, spur-of-the-moment question, to the FCH advisor's request to his Washington office for a consultant, even a team, to help with training. In the second case, a house design and costing group came out to Gaborone to work with the construction section on appropriate designs, and a trainer came to advise on setting up the administrative machinery of the ward offices. Yet another person was invited to assist SHHA in studying site and service residents' preferences and ability to pay for public services and utilities. While helping to find answers to important questions, these short-term consultants all worked with SHHA staff, exchanging ideas and information continuously.

The task of writing the program for that part of SHHA's memory concerned with accounting, the Audit 4 machine, has been taught to the Senior Executive Officer and Ward Officers by both the FCH advisor and the Urban Development Coordinator. For training purposes the "SHHA Accounting Manual"

was compiled, which includes special instructions for Ward Officers. In addition, instructions have been prepared on the important task of balancing SHHA's cash flow against its accounts outstanding.

It is mentioned in the context of training that the FCH advisor was invited to become the Low-Cost Housing Officer in the Ministry of Local Government and Lands. He has accepted that position and, as of October 1, 1979, he may well be able to apply the same systems approach and training programs to the low-cost housing offices in the other three towns.

X. The Pressures on SHHA: The Art of the Possible

In any situation where a group like SHHA is able to do as many constructive things as it has, there must be another side to the story. For the Gaborone SHHA, there is that other side. It consists of the pressures brought to bear on certain scarce resources—in this case plots, loans and personnel—by different interest groups. When these groups are coming from many directions, their impact is often bewildering, but close up it is not really complicated at all.

SHHA had to actively bargain for its position in the Gaborone Town Council scheme of things. It had admittedly not promoted itself with the elected councillors. In fact, this then-insignificant section of the Town Engineer's Department was shaping the approach of Town Council in a way it probably didn't even realize itself. It was doing all its own accounts for the Treasury Department in addition to assisting that Department with its other accounts, including the introduction of a stores inventory system for the thousands of items it needed. Because the departmental organization of the Council had a fixed pattern of operation, the SHHA innovations required some changes, not all of which were easily made. In addition to adjustments on the financial end, the construction side had to adapt from more of a building inspection to an assistance orientation. Further resistance occurred in SHHA's development of its

own Community Development section, since it was believed it would overlap with the existing Social Welfare unit in Council. And the list goes on.

Rather than further chronicle these ebbs and flows, it is simply easier to say that SHHA was growing, bursting at the seams for the lack of room in which to move. The work had expanded geometrically, but the means for carrying it out had not kept up. To the councillors it seemed at the time that SHHA did not need to be a department unto itself, and the other departments were at the same time being protective of their own status. Although they realized it was a blossoming activity, these departments also knew they were not equipped to be in the large-scale housing business. When the councillors learned that SHHA was processing thousands of plots and service charges and materials loans accounts, they took another look at this once-fledgling body. It was clear then that it was in their own best interest to vote SHHA independent departmental status.

Once it became an equal partner to the other units of Council, and as its work grew by leaps and bounds, the SHHA began to require and therefore requested more and more staff. In some quarters that demand was seen as empire building, though most saw the need as legitimate.

A peculiar problem in this

was the way staffing was and still is provided. The Unified Local Government Service (ULGS) provides all staff for local level government bodies.* Although trained persons in urban development areas are difficult to find, some very good staff have been recruited for SHHA by ULGS. Some appointments have not been as effective as others, however, which is partly a matter of the recruitment people not fully comprehending the work of the SHHA and, as well, the absence of time and resources for SHHA to publicize its work to all government agencies. Communicating to the thousands of urban poor in need of plots and houses has been quite enough, at least up to this point.

One hurdle which so far has been difficult to overcome is less tangible than others. That is the dependency which often exists between government agencies and the poor on programs of this type. Perhaps it is partly the closeness of the people to the capital—the source of all good things. As in most countries, the more growth of government there is, the more impersonal the relationship becomes, and people are found acting somewhat less responsibly than they would in more personal situations. At any rate, there is a sense of people wanting to participate in government programs—so long as they are free. After all, they already pay taxes, they say.

*ULGS is a unit of the Ministry of Local Government and Lands, set up specifically to depersonalize appointments of its sizeable staff around the country. It is akin to a civil service appointments, promotion, and transfer body, by virtue of its role it has come to wield some power.

This tendency towards dependency, coupled with the active political life of Gaborone, has caused problems for SHHA's achievement of its central goal: low-income housing produced in the spirit of self-help. Paying for what one gets is integral to the self-help spirit, and that is just where dependency and politics complicate the matter.

It is especially in the setting and collecting of service levies that politics come into the picture. The service levy pays for road maintenance, water (approximately one standpipe for every 20 households), toilet foundation, refuse collection, SHHA operations costs, and street lights (where present). No revised costing of the service charge had been done in some time, but it was known that charges to SHHA residents were well below actual cost. The services (which are provided not by SHHA but by other departments or agencies) are sometimes inadequate and not always worth paying for, the result of rapid physical expansion in the absence of comparable changes in management and personnel. Generally, however, what needs to be done is done, if at times haphazardly.

The costing of services included in the monthly levy was long overdue, so it was calculated in a detailed manner by SHHA. The amount determined reflected actual (average) use, whose cost then normally would be passed on to the consumer. When the monthly figure of around \$8 was calculated, the SHHA personnel recognized that



The long-distance hauling of water, mainly by women and children, has been eliminated by the introduction of standpipes in SHHA areas.



A ratio of one water standpipe to every 20 houses in SHHA areas is an important service for upgraded and site and service communities.

amount, though fair, was too high to have a chance with the town councillors. But when the bottom line figure of \$5.50 was suggested to them as a compromise on actual cost, the councillors were distraught. The reply was, "Do anything else but do not ask us to go to our voters and ask for 4.50 Pula (\$5.50)!" No fewer than twenty meetings at various levels of government were held over this thorny issue.

At times the sessions became quite heated. In the end, and partly in recognition of the national policy not to subsidize urban growth, the still-below-cost 4.50 Pula figure stuck.

A clear alternative to a raised service charge is that of lowering the service and utilities standards presently employed. That has been contemplated, always so long as lowering standards does not damage the health and



Councillor Gaborone (left) listens to residents of SHHA project on the complex issue of the service levy.

security of the people. Where the government distribution of goods and services is concerned, however, a standard lower than that known to exist elsewhere — in, say, another town and at an even lower price — is a sure loser. So, that has not been decided yet.

In order to make up the deficit caused by a lower-than-cost service charge, SHHA had to request assistance from the Government. Though contrary to the idea of non-subsidy, such a request was necessary. A one-time plot development grant was requested, to be given at the time the Certificate of Rights is issued to a plotholder, amounting to \$110 or so per plot. Given that almost 4,000 additional plots were to be developed, the Town Council and national officials easily saw the importance of this work and approved the grant. That grant, however, will not fully resolve the deficit problem, since the one-time payment in fact will only cover about two years of the deficit.

Defaulting is not an uncommon practice of residents when it comes to the monthly payment of service charges and materials loans (if held). Although the default rate in Gaborone has been far less than in the other towns, almost down to the monthly 30% mark at one recent point, it is still worrisome to SHHA, since it prides itself on its efficiency and economy. A default on the part of someone using services (and everyone uses services) could be due to the person simply not having the money at collection time or to this earlier-mentioned sense of dependency people develop regardless of their ability to pay.

What this means, regardless of the precise reason a person does not pay, is that SHHA staff from time to time must act stronghandedly in extracting the service charge and loan from some residents. This is especially destructive for the Community Development section, whose job is to build trust, not to pry. Further aggravating the self-help idea, including payment for

what one uses, is the new Certificate of Rights discussed earlier. The old Certificate was altered by the politicians to the extent that it now seems to have few teeth left in. The new title excludes repossession of the plot except for failure to build within one year, and for non-payment, replaces that last resort clause with a potential court lien on the non-payer's personal (movable) goods. The result of this change is that SHHA's work is being made harder. But, as in other periods of its history, hard work has always been a challenge to SHHA and this time, it is hoped, is no different.

The various forces at work here are all basically natural and healthy. The specific problem — and many, including the politicians, do not think of it in quite this way — is that when plot-holder Molefi (or whoever) doesn't pay his levy or loan, the work of Council and SHHA is compromised. This means that fewer of those in need of shelter will get to have decent housing and those who do will only get it that much slower.

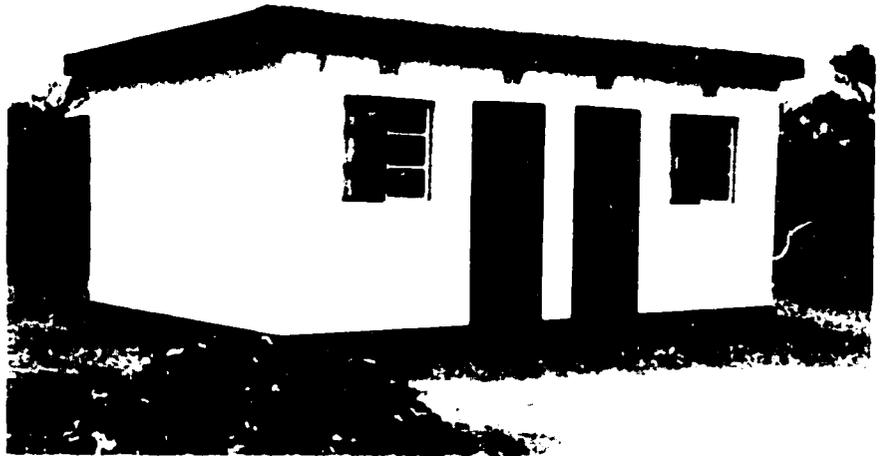
It seems, then, that SHHA could put almost as much effort into orienting the councilors and others in Government to its task as it does residents. A kind of coalition appears to be necessary, made up of present and future recipients, politicians, and SHHA. The seeds for such a coalition are already planted, but need to be carefully nurtured and nudged along. The time now seems ripe for cultivating.

XI. Conclusion

The SHHA task is a continuing one, fulfilling a basic, unending human need. It is clear there are numerous ways of providing shelter. Gaborone's SHHA demonstrates one way of doing it.

The correct balance of ingredients is crucial to SHHA's program. There is a national policy conducive to implementing the SHHA program, the presence of both national and international interest in the financial and technical support of the endeavor, the right combination of persons using a methodical approach, and the will of the recipients to do for themselves what they want and need to do.

While better housing is clearly a worthy goal, the actual house that is the outcome of the process — the simple, box-shaped one or two-room concrete block structure — is perhaps not the final objective. Just as important as a house in a new or improved and serviced community is the strength of Batswana character and commitment, given rather limited material resources and monies, to helping themselves. Beyond that, the physical expression of Batswana human qualities and values is perhaps just an omen. It is an omen which, with the same continued intelligent nourishment from inside and out that is witnessed in this account, could allow every Batswana to go the distance, maybe even to build a mansion in the sky.



The SHHA core house is only the outward symbol of the Batswana commitment to helping themselves.

Appendix



LEVY PAYMENT LEDGER CARD

PLOT No. **6992** **41** Check Dgt

Plot Number	Date	Charges (Debit)	Payments (Credits)	Balance	Check Dgt	Amount Past Due
		Mosi (Lek)		Mathe1		9/78
		Surname		Other Names		
6992	01-12-78	4.50		4.50	10	
6992	06-12-78		4.50	0.00	00	
6992	03-01-79	4.50		4.50	10	
6992	01-02-79	4.50		9.00	20	4.50
6992	05-02-79		9.00	0.00	00	
6992	28-02-79	4.50		4.50	10	

Plotholder's Loan Disbursement Ledger Card

AMOUNT OF LOAN		DATE LOAN APPROVED	PLOTHOLDER NAME (INCLUDING SURNAME)		PLOT No.	CD
AMOUNT	DATE	INVOICE NUMBER	INVOICE AMOUNT	UNDISBURSED LOAN BALANCE	CD	COMMENTS
500.00	2/8/79	DIMAELO	Goleka	790809007	36	
790809007	01-09-79	6947	25.00	575.00	85	
790809007	01-09-79	6945	15.71	559.29	91	
790809007	08-10-79	6995	25.75	533.54	74	

Building Material Loan Payment Ledger Card

790809007	36
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DIXAELC

Goleta

1/8/94

1st Aug.

6.09/44

2.58/40

600.00/17

PLOT NUMBER	DATE	CHARGE'S DEBIT	PAYMENTS CREDIT	AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS DUE		BALANCE OF LOAN		AMOUNT PAID DUE IN DAYS
				CO	CO	CO	CO	
						1792.69	40	
790399007	01-08-79	6.09		6.09	44			
790599007	24-05-79		12.16	2	-6.09	53	1000.51	27
790809007	01-09-79	6.09			00	00		
790309007	23-09-79		6.09	2	-6.09	53	1074.42	58
790909007	03-10-79	6.09			00	00		

SHHA STORES LEDGER CARD

012

47

200

20

MATERIAL CODE	DATE	PLOT NUMBER	AMOUNT TO STORES	TAKEN FROM STORES	STOCKS BALANCE		UNIT PRICE	COMMENTS
					CO	CO		
	4-12-78		3.96					
32	30-07-79	751109033		1	128	91	3.96	
32	25-03-79	5931		1	127	84	3.96	
32	01-09-79	9007		1	126	77	3.96	
32	18-03-79	104514	56		152	16		3.30
32	22-09-79	790809055		1	181	11	3.96	
32	03-10-79	6004		1	180	04	3.96	
32	06-10-79	8944		1	179	56	3.96	

D.P.C. 0311 45