The Department of Social Development aims to ensure the provision of comprehensive, integrated, sustainable and quality social-development services to combat vulnerability and poverty. It also strives to create an enabling environment for sustainable development in partnership with those committed to building a caring society.

The national department provides strategic policy leadership and implementation support to nine provincial departments that are responsible for direct service delivery to citizens. It monitors and evaluates a range of social-development programmes.

The department's key programmes include:
- assistance through the South African Social Security Agency (Sassa)
- social-welfare services
- integrated developmental services, including community development
- research in the area of population and development issues and social policy to enhance evidence-based policy development and planning.

The departmental mandate has also widened in recent years to include initiatives aimed at improving the livelihoods of South Africans by coordinating home- and community-based care (HCBC) for people living with HIV and AIDS (including probation services, childcare and protection, and family couselling and support services), sustainable livelihoods and food-relief programmes, with a focus on programmes for particularly vulnerable groups.

The Department of Social Development collaborates with other government departments within the framework of intergovernmental-relations legislation and co-operative governance. It also collaborates with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs), the business sector, organised labour and other role-players to ensure its strategic objectives are implemented.

The department also undertakes participatory research to provide evidence for developing relevant and appropriate programmes and strategies for sustainable livelihoods, and policies and strategies on community development. This includes creating a conducive environment for facilitating community development practice and overseeing the National Development Agency (NDA).

Legislation
Older Persons Act, 2006 (Act 13 of 2006)
The Older Persons Act, 2006 contains provisions to improve the lives of older South Africans.

The main objectives of the Act are to:
- maintain and promote the status, well-being, safety and security of older persons
- recognise the skills and wisdom of older persons
- encourage older persons' participation in community activities to promote them as people.

Childcare legislation
The Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005), sets out principles relating to the care and protection of children, defines parental responsibilities and rights and provides for matters such as children's courts, adoption, child abduction and surrogate motherhood.

In 2008/09, the Department of Social Development allocated over R22 million towards the protection of children. These resources will be directed at standardising and accelerating delivery in the areas covered by the Act. The department has finalised a set of draft regulations for public discussions. To get South Africa ready to implement the Children's Act, 2005, government increased awareness on the legislation and draft regulations while accelerating service delivery to children.

The Act also:
- gives effect to certain rights of children as contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- sets out principles relating to the care and protection of children
- defines parental responsibilities and rights
- makes further provision regarding children's courts
- provides for the issuing of contribution orders
- makes new provision for the adoption of children
- provides for intercountry adoption
- gives effect to the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption
- prohibits child abduction and trafficking, and gives effect to the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction
- provides for surrogate motherhood
- creates certain new offences relating to children

- provides for matters relating to the trafficking of children and the implementation of the relevant protocol.

The Children's Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 41 of 2007) provides for:
- the partial care of children
- early childhood development (ECD)
- further protection of children
- prevention and early-intervention services
- children in alternative care
- foster care
- child- and youth-care centres, shelters and drop-in centres
- certain new offences relating to children
- the plight of child-headed households
- respect for parental rights by providing that no person may take or send a South African child out of the country without consent of parents or guardians
- the discipline of children.

The Children's Act, 2005 provides for the establishment of the National Child Protection Register (NCPR) that records all persons found unsuitable to work with children.

It also lists any person found by the Children's Court and criminal courts to be unsuitable to work with children.

In terms of this law, childcare facilities, including welfare organisations offering foster care and adoption, are able to check prospective employees, foster parents and adoptive parents against the register.

The register, however, is not open to the public, and all requests for information must be directed through the Department of Social Development.

Health insurance

An estimated seven million South Africans contribute to medical schemes. These schemes account for the largest element of contributory health cover, which was estimated at R43 billion in 2005, excluding the Tax Expenditure Subsidy.

The current private health arrangements incorporate only limited levels of social solidarity. Optimising social solidarity requires:
- Risk equalisation: This is achieved through inter-scheme financial transfers to eliminate demographic differences between medical schemes. This is being implemented following government's approval.
- Minimum benefits: By mid-2007, the mandatory minimum package represented only about a third of a comprehensive package of benefits.

- Income-based contributions: By mid-2007, some medical-scheme members paid at-rate contributions that were insensitive to income. The inequitable provision of tax subsidies to higher-income groups created a perverse outcome.
- Mandatory participation for income-earners: Voluntary contributory health systems are characterised by "anti-selection". Mandating participation in health cover is a key mechanism to bolstering and sustaining risk-pooling.

In July 2008, Cabinet received a progress report on the establishment of a national health insurance system for South Africa and noted that legislation relating to the establishment of the Risk Equalisation Fund was before Parliament.

Community development and sustainable livelihoods

The persistence of poverty calls for the development of innovative and sustainable community-development and poverty-eradication policies, strategies and programmes that will not only create opportunities for sustainable jobs and income generation, but that will also harness and strengthen resources within households and civil society to achieve sustainable livelihoods.

Eradicating poverty is the highest priority in government's efforts to build a better life for all. In this regard, the Department of Social Development manages the Sustainable Livelihoods Programme, which aims to assist communities in a range of developmental projects and to develop best practices to link social grants to the livelihood strategies of direct and indirect beneficiaries and income-generating vehicles such as co-operatives.

By mid-2007, a four-phased pilot project was being implemented in the Eastern Cape, with the first phase completed.

The objective of this pilot project is to restore the poor and vulnerable as quickly as possible to self-reliance.

Through this pilot project, the "sweat equity" principle, which provides beneficiaries with an opportunity to invest in-kind in their own development initiatives, was introduced. This process ensures that beneficiaries do not become passive, but rather play the role of active partners in the development process.

The project also ensures ownership, commitment and accountability on the side of beneficiaries, which are critical and necessary ingredients for sustainability.

Through this process, government supports beneficiary initiatives and is therefore perceived not just as a provider but also as an enabler.

In addition to providing social assistance, the Department of Social Development is implementing poverty-relief initiatives.

War on poverty

In August 2008, government launched the national War on Poverty Campaign to reduce poverty among the country's poorest citizens. The most deprived households identified in the poorest wards will be visited periodically by a team of professionals and community workers to identify their specific needs to accelerate access to government services and to provide safety nets.

The success of tackling poverty and social exclusion requires that every sector plays its part. "War rooms" that are inclusive of, among other things, government at all levels, business, and voluntary and community organisations have been set up to fight poverty. Local government departments will intervene in areas such as the provision of free basic services, public works and other indigent measures.

The War on Poverty Campaign's approach draws on the experience of other focused and targeted initiatives, such as the urban and rural development

In March 2008, support for victims of crime and violence, in particular women and children, received a boost when the Department of Social Development, the European Commission and the United Nations (UN) Office on Drugs and Crime launched a partnership for victim empowerment in Pretoria.

The European Commission has provided donor funds for the Department of Social Development's Victim Empowerment Programme (VEP), with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime as the implementing partner.

The VEP aims to make the criminal-justice process more victim-friendly and minimise the negative effects of crime on victims. Specific emphasis is placed on the prevention of victimisation; and providing support, protection and empowerment for victims of crime and violence, with a special focus on vulnerable groups.

The main role-players are the Department of Social Development as the lead and co-ordinating agency; the South African Police Service; the departments of justice and constitutional development, correctional services, health and education; non-governmental organisations; community-based organisations; and other structures at local government level.

strategy, Project Consolidate and izimbizo to bring about maximum impact in identified communities.

Comprehensive social security

Government has committed itself to specific goals concerning a comprehensive social-security system. The Cabinet-approved framework of the new system seeks to ensure access to social security, including appropriate social assistance as provided for in Section 27 of the Constitution.

The setting up, over time, of a comprehensive social-security system will result in substantial changes to the existing social-insurance funds, the enhancement of administrative arrangements, a new tax structure and adjustments to employee benefits across the economy.

This reform project will affect all South Africans and extend across the entire labour market. Its implementation calls for a new social partnership, constructed on the principles of equity and solidarity, that builds on public-administration reforms and effectively mobilises private-sector capacity.

To give effect to government's social-insurance reform agenda, Cabinet appointed an interministerial committee to provide political leadership. The Department of Social Development will play a key role in designing and implementing reforms in the area of:
• retirement provisions
• social-health insurance
• unemployment insurance
• compensation for injuries and diseases on duty
• road-accident insurance.

Among these reforms, retirement provisions present the most complex of challenges, encompassing savings for old age, contributions to post-retirement medical schemes, disability and survivors' benefits.

A discussion document on the reform of retirement provisions in South Africa can be found on the Government's website: (*www.info.gov.za/ otherdocs/2007/soc_sec_retire.pdf*).

The key proposals regarding retirement reform include:
• removing the means test for the Old-Age Grant and increasing the upper ceiling of the means test for all other grants
• introducing a mandatory system of retirement contributions
• reviewing the current system of tax-expenditure subsidies
• establishing a government-sponsored retirement fund

- introducing ancillary benefits along with retirement savings to cover disability and survivors' benefits
- providing arrangements for post-retirement medical contributions.

Social-assistance policy developments

In the context of South Africa's main challenges of high levels of poverty and inequality, the Department of Social Development continues to expand the social safety net. The Social Assistance Act, 2004 (Act 13 of 2004), creates uniform norms and standards that apply countrywide. It provides for the publication of regulations on performance management and on adherence to the Batho Pele ("People First") principles of customer service.

The Act provides for the rendering of social assistance to persons, mechanisms for the rendering of such assistance, the establishment of an inspectorate for social assistance and related matters.

Social-assistance transfers are funded from general revenue and are appropriated on the Vote of the Department of Social Development. Social-assistance cash grants provide targeted income support to those whose livelihoods are most at risk. The available grants are the old-age; disability; child-support; foster-care; care-dependency and war-veterans' grants; and temporary grant-in-aid relief.

In February 2008, the Minister of Finance, Mr Trevor Manuel, announced that the qualifying age for men for old-age pension would be reduced from 65 to 63 in 2008, to 61 in 2009 and to 60 by 2010. More than 23 million older persons receive the Old-Age Grant and 1,4 million people receive the Disabillity Grant.

Expenditure on social security increased from R36,9 billion in 2003/04, which was 2,9% of gross domestic product (GDP), to a projected R73 billion in 2009/10, constituting 3,1% of GDP.

By March 2008, about R12,4 million people were receiving social grants. By October 2008, 8,3 million children were recieving the Child-Support Grant (CSG), which is provided to children in need (up to the age of 15 years from 1 January 2009).

The growing number of child-support beneficiaries has been the main source of increased expenditure over recent years, with the increase in disability grants taking up a rising share of the total.

Government's medium-term aim is to increase the qualification age limit for the CSG to the 18th birthday.

By October 2008, 494 992 children were receiving the Foster-Care Grant. Foster care is a temporary measure until the children reach the age of 18, unless an extension is requested.

To provide a direct response to poverty and vulnerability in the context of rising food prices, the department ensures that qualifying vulnerable citizens receive the Social Relief of Distress (SRD) Grant. The SRD Grant is designed to address temporary provision of assistance to those in dire situations. An amount of R124 million was allocated in 2008/09 to meet these needs and to complement the department's integrated response to these crises. In October 2008, a further R500 million was allocated to Sassa to provide relief to households or individuals facing hardship.

SRD is a temporary provision of assistance intended for persons who are unable to meet their families' most basic needs. The SRD may be in the form of a food parcel or a voucher to buy food. Some provinces give this assistance in the form of cash. SRD is given for a short time only, usually for up to three months, and sometimes for six months.

Sassa is responsible for SRD for categories relevant to social grants, and provides it in cases where the person:
- is awaiting permanent aid, in the form of a social grant
- is found to be medically unfit for a period of less than six months
- has appealed the suspension of a grant
- needs help while waiting for the children's grants to be processed by government
- has experienced a crisis or disaster, for example, the house has burnt down

Amounts of grants per month as at 1 November 2008	
Grant type	Amount
Old-Age Grant	R960
Disability Grant	R960
War-Veterans' Grant	R960
Foster-Care Grant	R650
Care-Dependency Grant	R960
Child-Support Grant	R240
Grant-in-Aid	R210
Source: South African Social Security Agency	

- is unable to get maintenance from the other parent of the child or children, or the breadwinner has died, or has been sent to prison for a short time (less than six months)
- has been affected by a disaster in the area that has not been declared a disaster area.

By July 2008, 1,4 million people received the Disability Grant.

The Social Cluster is dealing with the implementation of a common tool that will assist in assessing disabilities. The implementation of the tool has been put on hold pending the amendment of the Social Assistance Act, 2004 in the 2009 Parliamentary cycle. In the meantime, the Department of Social Development has appointed 40 members to panels of tribunals to deal with appeals submitted for all grants, especially those for disability benefits.

Implementing social-assistance programmes

Before 2006, the nine provincial departments each had its own administration for social assistance. This situation posed significant challenges for government concerning lack of norms and standards of social-assistance service delivery. The Sassa Act, 2004 (Act 9 of 2004), was introduced to create a single entity for the delivery of social grants. The agency took over this responsibility from the provinces from April 2005.

The agency's delivery model aims to ensure that the administration and payment of social grants become more customer-focused, while ensuring regular reviews of beneficiaries' eligibility. Regular reviews and a comprehensive fraud strategy should reduce levels of fraud, leakage and corruption in the social-grants system.

Sassa was apportioned a budget of R4,5 billion for the 2008/09 period to facilitate proactive service delivery. Its initiatives include the Integrated Community Registration Outreach Programme. This flagship programme involves the participation of the departments of social development, home affairs, health, and education and the South African Police Service (SAPS). The programme has also revolutionised turnaround times for the processing of applications, and it is now possible for an application to be approved on the same day.

Sassa has purchased 40 mobile units to take services to remote and rural communities. The trucks are one-stop shops where beneficiaries can apply for identity documents and grants.

Together with the Department of Health, the Department of Social Development has embarked on a project that aims to bring about the provision of free healthcare and disability grants seamlessly, by piloting and then rolling out a harmonised assessment tool for people with disabilities.

Cabinet approved a new definition of disability, specifically for two programmes (free healthcare and disability grants). This definition necessitated an investigation into possible dispensation for people with chronic conditions, who usually form the bulk of temporary disability grant recipients.

The rehabilitation of people with disabilities is considered imperative to facilitate the development of an exit strategy for them from social grants. Such rehabilitation is expected to enable people with disabilities to access training and job opportunities.

Employment assistance

An employment-assistance directorate has been established to link social-grant beneficiaries with economic activities and poverty-alleviation strategies, for their possible exit from the social-grants' system.

In line with this thinking, Cabinet approved a presentation on this proposal, in principle, to explore possible economic activities and poverty-alleviation strategies for the same purpose.

Combating fraud and corruption

The department's national facilities to combat fraud and corruption in the social-security system consist of:

- a toll-free national security fraud hotline (0800 60 10 11) that operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week

From the beginning of June 2008, the South African Social Security Agency (Sassa) is accepting social-grant applications from eligible applicants who are having trouble getting official identity documents and birth certificates.

As stipulated in the regulations of 2005, Sassa accepts sworn affidavits deposed before a commissioner of oaths testifying to, among other details, the names, age, and parentage of the child and any other applicant.

Although this policy shift was initially designed to accommodate applicants for the Child-Support Grant, the Department of Social Development has decided to extend its implementation to all grant types.

The benefit will be for people who apply and meet the eligibility and means-test criteria.

- an e-mail address (*fraud@socdev.gov.za*) and a free-call fax-service number (0800 61 10 11).

As part of the Anti-Corruption and Fraud Prevention Strategy, internal control systems have been improved, and forensic and investigating teams deployed in all provinces.

By March 2008, the Special Investigating Unit, National Prosecuting Authority and SAPS were busy with investigations, prosecutions and recovery processes involving both private and public-sector beneficiaries who had unlawfully obtained grants.

Disciplinary proceedings were also ongoing against all public servants who had been prosecuted and those who had agreed to repay unlawfully obtained grants.

By March 2008, 3 970 public-sector beneficiaries had been convicted. The target for the 2008/09 financial year was to investigate and prosecute 3 500 public-sector and private beneficiaries. Furthermore, 8 000 beneficiaries were targeted for repayment of grants through acknowledgement of debt agreements.

By September 2008, the department had removed 333 233 grants from the system, with an annual value of over R1 billion. It had ensured that 21 189 irregular private beneficiaries and public servants repay the illegally obtained grants worth R114 374 million.

Improving community development service delivery

To improve community development service delivery, the Department of Social Development is regrading work and salary levels for community-development practitioners.

The department has also worked with the South African Qualifications Authority to standardise the qualifications and training of community development practitioners. An agreement has been reached on the generic qualifications at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels one, three and four.

The department is also consulting stakeholders in drafting a community development policy, which has been identified as an important aspect for improved community development service delivery.

The envisaged policy on community development will integrate the norms and standards for community development practice.

Responding to the impact of HIV and AIDS

The National Strategic Plan for HIV and AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections 2007 – 2011 serves as South Africa's primary HIV and AIDS policy document. Recognising the growing need to combat the further spread of the pandemic, the plan hinges on four key priorities, namely:
- prevention
- treatment, care and support
- monitoring, research and surveillance
- human rights and access to justice.

The sustained national response is beginning to pay some dividends as data indicates that the infection rate among women younger than 20 had decreased significantly while the average national HIV prevalence among young pregnant women had shown signs of stabilisation in the three years to 2006.

The Department of Social Development has also developed a framework for an integrated and co-ordinated response to HIV and AIDS.

The framework includes sourcing reliable research and information; providing social protection to those infected and affected, especially children; protecting children's rights; providing services; special programmes such as the HCBC Programme; empowering women; and capacitating officials to deal with HIV and AIDS.

Partnerships with other government departments, NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs), FBOs, the business sector, volunteers and international agencies underpin the department's response to HIV and AIDS.

The main objectives of the Gender, HIV and AIDS Programme are to:
- facilitate the mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS into policies, and of gender into HIV- and AIDS-prevention programmes
- monitor the development and implementation of policies and programmes.

HIV and AIDS Youth Programme

The expansion of the loveLife Groundbreaker Partnership Programme aims to strengthen the loveLife Mphintshi Initiative by linking it to the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and the prevention programme in relation to HCBC and support.

The HIV and AIDS Youth Programme's services now reach marginalised and vulnerable youth in rural areas. It focuses on preventing the spread

of HIV and AIDS among young people. Behaviour-changing programmes have been implemented to help reduce vulnerability.

HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy and Strategy

The Department of Social Development's HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy and Strategy is managed according to strategic focus areas.

In addition, a set of indicators has been developed to monitor the implementation of the workplace strategy.

Research has been undertaken to monitor the HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy and Strategy, and assess related capacity-building and training needs. The impact of the department's HIV and AIDS workplace initiatives will also be assessed. The aim is to develop a comprehensive programme that addresses, among other things, sexual behaviour and creates awareness about accurate and scientific facts on HIV and AIDS.

HIV and AIDS advocacy, awareness and outreach

Achieving a meaningful and clear understanding of the scientific facts about HIV and AIDS will lead to individual self-management regarding the risk of HIV infection. The awareness programme has the following main pillars:
• disclosure
• communication
• rights
• facilitation.
The programme also deals with the physical and emotional consequences of HIV and AIDS. It addresses the following challenges:
• the lack of accurate and current information on HIV and AIDS
• the lack of access to care, support, treatment and new healthcare developments
• discrimination against the infected and affected
The program aims to involve people living with HIV and AIDS in initiatives that directly help affected and infected people to alleviate stigmatisation.

Care and support

HCBC is the provision of comprehensive services, including health and social services, by formal and informal caregivers in the HCBC and support programmes.

The HCBC Programme has been prioritised as a cost-effective response substituting for a significant proportion of AIDS-related hospital care. The EPWP is a critical component of the effort to deliver holistic HIV and AIDS and tuberculosis-related services. It represents a strategic opportunity to address key pressure points in current interventions.

Some 30 056 community caregivers received stipends up to December 2007. In the same period, some 14 960 community caregivers received basic HCBC and ancillary healthcare NQF level one and two training. Some 1 145 270 beneficiaries received care and support services between April 2007 and December 2007.

A service-provider was appointed in May 2007 to assist in fast-tracking the accreditation of 100 non-profit organisations (NPOs) as training service-providers. The appointed service-provider developed a toolkit that was approved by the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority. The training of facilitators, assessors and moderators from the selected NPOs was conducted in all the provinces.

The departments of social development and health formed a partnership with the Japanese International Co-operation Agency to provide technical assistance for the establishment of a

The objective of government's social cohesion initiative is to provide a material basis for social cohesion and social justice.

By July 2008, the following areas were receiving attention: poverty, unemployment, deprivation, lack of access to basic services and opportunities and the elimination of racism, sexism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance.

The draft National Family Policy had been developed to provide guidelines for integrated services to promote the functionality of families.
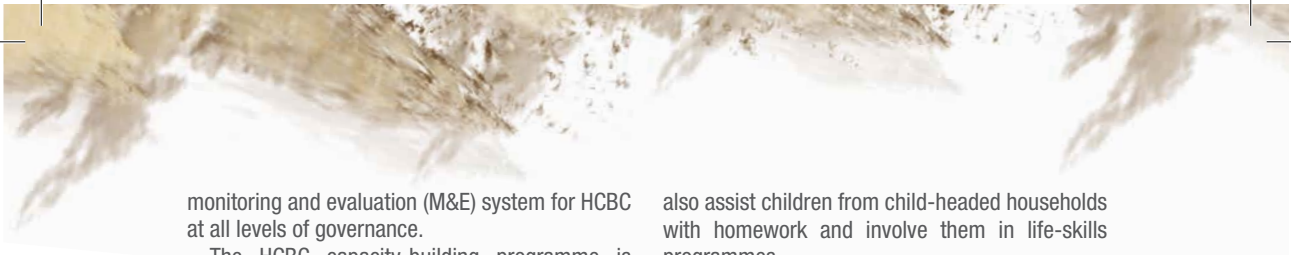
A policy for people with disabilities had been drafted to enhance the integration and mainstreaming of the disabled and to ensure that they receive adequate services and support.

A draft framework for moral regeneration was being finalised.

A progress report on the reform of social security and retirement was handed to the interministerial committee that had been created to deal with this issue. The tasks of the committee included: a review of the social-assistance grants; the design of a contributory retirement system; compiling a social-security governance and system framework; the co-ordination of administrative agencies; national health insurance; and the regulation of complementary social-insurance reforms.

monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system for HCBC at all levels of governance.

The HCBC capacity-building programme is being implemented in four provinces, namely Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo. Three service-providers were appointed to assist in the project.

There are about 130 organisations, 10 mentorship organisations and 10 district officials involved in the programme. Quarterly meetings are held with service-providers and officials from provinces and districts. The main aim of the programme is to improve the management capacity and organisational sustainability of the HCBC organisations.

Services to orphans made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS

A policy framework for orphans and other children made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS was developed, which re ects the collective commitment of government, FBOs, CBOs, civil society and the business sector, and serves as a guiding tool to all people involved in HIV and AIDS and in the children's sector. It seeks to reinforce existing commitments and efforts to create a supportive and enabling environment for children.

A national action plan was then developed to clearly define the value-adding role of various stakeholders in addressing the social impact of HIV and AIDS.

The Department of Social Development is developing a national database of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), which will include child-headed households. The programmes, which are in place to assist OVCs include access to treatment, food, skills training and psycho-social support.

By May 2008, some 237 000 vulnerable children had benefited from the department's programmes. These encourage children from households headed by children to remain within and participate in the communities of their birth. This contributes to integrated community-based care, which is in the best interests of the children concerned.

Each community should have a childcare forum that works with social workers, welfare organisations and other community structures to ensure that identified OVCs receive appropriate services.

The department has established a number of community-based drop-in centres where children are given meals and a packed lunch before they go to school. Caregivers at the drop-in centres also assist children from child-headed households with homework and involve them in life-skills programmes.

Partnerships

The department continues to strengthen its partnerships with national and international organisations involved in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

The department chairs the National Action Committee for Children Affected by HIV and AIDS, which is a multisectoral team consisting of government, FBOs, CBOs, civil society, the business sector, the United Nations (UN) Children's Fund and Save the Children, focusing on the care and support of OVCs.

Faith-based organisations and the business sector

The department has strengthened its partnership with churches and other FBOs, the business sector, volunteer organisations and individuals, to assist with poverty-relief, HIV and AIDS, and social-grant registration programmes.

Promoting and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups
Children and youth

In addition to providing social assistance to children through the CSG and the Foster-Care Grant, the Department of Social Development facilitates the provision of services to children and the youth through the provincial departments of social development and NGOs.

The department has entered into partnerships with research and academic institutions to promote scientific research in the social, population and development fields.

The department leads the co-ordination of the EPWP.

The sector is made up of the departments of social development, health and education, with the Department of Public Works as the overall co-ordinator.

The programme is being piloted through the HCBC and ECD programmes. It intends to improve the quality of training received by both caregivers and ECD practitioners to improve service delivery and offer them better opportunities to access the open labour market.

The department has successfully managed to strengthen co-ordination of these programmes at both national and provincial levels, as well as

create an avenue for skilling and the creation of more job opportunities for unemployed youth and graduates.

In 2007/08, the Department of Social Development's HCBC and support programme identified and lent support to 237 980 children affected by HIV and AIDS. The department provided social support to 20 657 child-headed households.

The Department of Social Development has committed itself, as per the Integrated Plan on ECD, to increase the number of ECD sites from where practitioners are selected for training.

The ECD sites will also be provided with subsidies for children from poor households.

The annual target was set at registering 1 774 ECD sites in 2007/08. However, the total number of ECD centres registered in 2007/08 was 1 981. The total number of children benefiting from the subsidies was 355 762 – an increase of 24 000 children.

In 2007/08, there were 1 682 national adoptions and 231 intercountry adoptions.

The department seeks to:
- increase the number of local adoptions
- increase the number of prospective adoptive parents locally and reduce the placement of children through intercountry adoption
- make communities aware of adoption services
- contribute towards the reduction of the number of children placed in foster care and child and youthcare centres.

International social services (ISS)
ISS are rendered to clients in need of intercountry social services to and from South Africa, focusing on unaccompanied minors.

The South African ISS unit works with other ISS offices worldwide. There is a good network of ISS branches, affiliated bureaus and correspondents.

There is also close collaboration and overlap on enquiries with regard to adoptions.

The ISS unit has initiated training at provincial level to streamline referral processes in the sector across partner departments and NGOs.

Child abuse and neglect
The Department of Social Development's priority is fighting child abuse and neglect, as illustrated by the following initiatives:
- NCPR: By November 2007 a wireless web-based system was being introduced and provinces were to participate in this programme, which had already established a community-based, integrated information management system with an NCPR component linked to the national database.
- The draft Policy Framework and Strategic Plan on the Prevention and Management of Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation has been completed. Effective implementation is expected to reduce the incidence of abuse and neglect, and to clarify stakeholders' roles and responsibilities.
- Isolabantwana ("Eye of the Child"): The department funded the South African National Council for Child Welfare to replicate a prevention programme in communities to eliminate child abuse and promote child protection. The programme aims to provide a safety net for children within a community where services and support can be provided to children at risk on a 24-hour basis, and in areas where resources are limited. Community members contribute to the success of child-protection services, as they reside in the communities and are familiar with the local people, structures and traditions.

Childline South Africa
Childline offers a toll-free crisis line (0800 55 555) to children and families across South Africa on a 24-hour basis. The line provides immediate assistance to children and families in crisis who need counselling and information.

Childline is an NPO that works collectively to protect children from all forms of violence and to create a culture of children's rights in South Africa.

Programmes delivered through the provincial offices include:
- crisis line
- child rights, prevention and education
- training of volunteers
- training of other professionals who work in child protection and children
- therapy for abused and traumatised children and their families
- court preparation for child witnesses
- networking and co-ordination
- advocacy.

Programmes delivered through the national office are:
- training and education
- analysis of law and policy
- lobbying and advocacy
- networking and co-ordination.

Social-crime prevention
Probation services
The Department of Social Development is implementing the Probation Services Act, 1991 (Act 116 of 1991), as amended, and at national and provincial levels provides early intervention services and prevention programmes to offenders and victims of crime. Social crime prevention has been allocated R7 million, a significant increase of 132,6 % since 2004.

In collaboration with the Umsombomvu Youth Fund (UYF) and as part of the National Youth Service Programme for youth in conflict with the law, a voluntary Assistant Probation Officers Programme is being implemented. By August 2008, 180 young people from seven provinces had completed block three training and the social-crime prevention allocation had been increased to R7 million. Twenty-five co-ordinators were trained on minimum norms on diversion and 164 probation practitioners and secure-care officials were trained in customer-care excellence.

The National and Provincial Probation Service Co-ordinators Forum meets on a regular basis to deal with service-delivery issues pertaining to children awaiting trial, especially their removal from correctional facilities.

Provinces have increased the number of diversion programmes to ensure that children are diverted from the Criminal Justice System. One such centre is the Mangaung One-Stop Youth Justice Centre in the Motheo District in the Free State.

Home-based supervision is proving to be a successful programme for any high-risk child or child in conflict with the law. It is a cost-effective manner of bringing about behavioural changes within these children. The parents have to be co-responsible in dealing with their children to achieve the desired changes. Different programmes can be used during home-based supervision. The assistant probation officer is responsible for supervision but the probation officer remains the case manager. Regular consultations should take place between the probation officer and assistant probation officer to achieve the best results.

Overcrowding in prisons remains a concern. The national office and provinces have developed an action plan to ensure that children do not await trial in prisons.

The focus of the action plan is to provide secure-care facilities. By mid-2007, there were 36 secure-care centres in the country and provision was being made for additional facilities, especially near magistrates' courts.

Victim-Empowerment Programme (VEP)
The VEP aims to lessen the long-term impact of crime by proactively tending to the needs of all victims of crime and violence, with a special focus on women and children.

It also ensures that the implementation of such programmes and policies is monitored and evaluated.

The year 2008 marked the 10th anniversary of the VEP. Through the VEP, the Department of Social Development has scored several achievements. These include the establishment of 89 shelters to cater for abused women in the country. In 2001, there were only 39 shelters, which were mostly operated by civil-society organisations.

In 2008, in supporting the programme, the European Union and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime pledged R20 million over a three-year period to strengthen existing shelters and programmes.

Integrated Victim-Empowerment Policy
The Integrated Victim-Empowerment Policy serves as a framework for a victim-centred approach, with strong emphasis on service delivery to victims of crime and violence. It promotes the reduction of secondary victimisation and improved co-operation with the criminal justice process.

The draft policy document serves as a point of reference for all stakeholders regarding the establishment, development, delivery and nature of victim-empowerment benefits and services. It serves as a framework to facilitate the establishment of partnerships for integrated, effective and efficient service delivery to victims.

The core intervention strategies for the Integrated Victim-Empowerment Policy apply to all sectors involved in the empowerment of victims, namely:
- capacitating management structures
- creating awareness and providing information
- building skills
- educating and training personnel and consumers in using the services
- establishing services and programmes
- research and M&E.

National Directory on Services for *Victims of Violence and Crime*

The *National Directory on Services for Victims of Violence and Crime*, which was launched during the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children Campaign in December 2004, is updated annually in collaboration with the provincial VEP managers or co-ordinators and their provincial counterparts.

Minimum Standards for Service Delivery to Victims of Crime and Violence

The Minimum Standards for Service Delivery to Victims of Crime and Violence is a developmental quality-assurance instrument for practitioners. Proficiency, professionalism and respect for the client are uppermost in service delivery.

Workshops concerning the implementation of the minimum standards for service delivery to the victims of violence are continuing in some provinces as a complementary process to the implementation of the South African Victim's Charter of Services. Provinces conducted development quality-assurance criteria "workshops" using the minimum standards document as a guideline.

Campaigns: national/international women's days and 16 Days of Activism

South Africa is a signatory to various international declarations on the promotion and the protection of the rights of women and children, such as the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

To honour these conventions, the department participates in events such as:
- 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children
- International Women's Day.

Women's Strategy

The social-development-specific Women's Strategy guides service delivery to women within the social-development sector. The focus is on empowering women and promoting their resilience.

The Women's Strategy aims to address the needs of women in South Africa and to empower them to know their rights and be assertive, productive and independent, by developing and implementing policy, programmes and services in partnership with stakeholders.

Strategy for the Engagement of Men and Boys in the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence

The strategy aims to strengthen existing programmes and develop new initiatives aimed at mobilising men and boys to positively engage in the prevention of gender-based violence.

The objectives are to:
- guide efforts to mainstream the constructive involvement of men and boys in preventing gender-based violence in the social-development sector, in line with the National Gender Machinery's Men and Gender Equality Programme
- facilitate integration of the involvement of men and boys in preventing gender-based violence programmes into the National Action Plan.

Interdepartmental collaboration

The department is actively involved in the following interdepartmental task teams for an integrated approach to victim empowerment, namely:
- the National Anti-Rape Strategy with the National Prosecuting Authority
- the 365 Days Programme and National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence in South Africa
- Trafficking in Human Beings, the Victims' Charter, and the Victims Identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development.

Care and support to families

Care and support programmes promote the family as the core of society. A well-functioning family addresses the emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual and economic well-being of its members.

It is in the family environment that children are born, nurtured, supported and provided with opportunities for growth and development into competent and productive adults. Therefore, the family is the basic institution in society for the survival, protection and development of children.

The draft National Family Policy proposes a framework for integrated and comprehensive service delivery to families. It identifies the family as the focal point for service delivery and promotes the benefits of a well-functioning, resilient family and the extended family as a strong support system.

The draft policy is linked to the African Union's Plan of Action for Families in Africa for implementation by government and civil society.

The draft Moral Regeneration Strategy for Social Development has been developed to instil positive values in families and communities.

Prevention and treatment of substance abuse

A negative effect of globalisation is that South Africa has become situated at the centre of the world drug trade, being a conduit for the transfer of drugs to other destinations.

Dagga and alcohol are still the most abused substances. An estimated 2,2 million people use dagga or cannabis, followed by cocaine, heroin, speed, LSD, hashish, ecstasy, tik and others.

According to the *World Drug Report,* the approximate number of problem drug-users in South Africa exceeds 200 000. Close to 9 000 problem drug-users were treated at 73 treatment centres between June and December 2006. Considerable abuse of over-the-counter and prescription medicines is also reported.

These include pain relievers, tranquilisers, cough mixtures and slimming tablets, as well as solvents such as glue. The social cost of illicit drug use has not been officially calculated, but up to 12 million family members of drug users face emotional and financial strain. In addition, drug usage has a negative effect on transport safety. A third of heavy-duty long-distance drivers admit to using drugs to relax and stay awake. The main drugs used in this instance are alcohol and dagga.

Meanwhile, a conservative estimate of the economic costs to South Africa of alcohol abuse, based on research studies conducted in other countries, is between R8,7 billion and R17,4 billion a year. The social costs are also enormous. About 11 million family members have to endure the turmoil of living with problem or risky drinkers. Risky drinking affects 17,5 million South Africans. Harmful drinking is defined as people drinking first thing in the morning, drinking to the point of intoxication and taking alcohol between mealtimes.

The Ke Moja Project, launched in the Western Cape, is a prevention programme that targets the youth. "Ke Moja" means "no thanks", and the project aims to inform and educate the public about the dangers of drugs, as well as to mobilise them, particularly children and the youth, to say no to substance abuse.

In March 2008, the Ke Moja Hip Hop Campaign was launched in Cape Town by the Deputy Minister of Social Development, Dr Jean Swanson-Jacobs. Children and adolescents make up over half of South Africa's population. According to the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use, an increasing number of young patients is being admitted to rehabilitation centres.

The Ke Moja Campaign communicates to the youth in their own language the negative effects of drugs.

The Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse Bill was presented to the National Assembly in March 2008. It aims to combat substance abuse through:
- prevention
- early intervention
- treatment
- reintegration programmes.

The Youth Best-Practice Treatment Model was developed, and training provided countrywide to facilitate the roll-out of the model. It proposes essential elements to be considered when offering treatment to youths in residential facilities.

Successful combating of the drug problem requires the application of three elements in an integrated and balanced manner. These are:
- supply reduction through law enforcement
- demand reduction through, among other things, prevention strategies
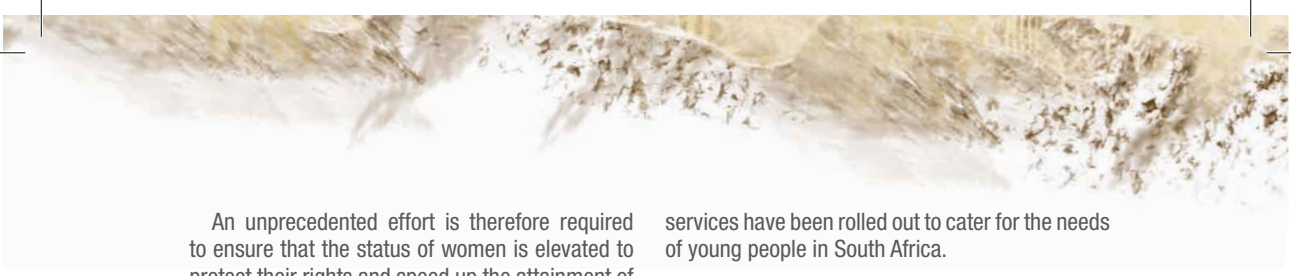- harm reduction through treatment and social support.

All provinces are directed by the National Drug Master Plan to develop provincial mini-master drug plans to carry out prevention, early intervention and treatment interventions in a co-ordinated manner. To facilitate this, the budget of the Central Drug Authority, which is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the National Drug Master Plan, has been increased substantially to R13 million at a rate of 57,2% since 2004.

Provinces have launched substance abuse forums and municipalities are establishing local drug action committees in which officials and members of the community formulate local plans of action to combat substance abuse in their areas.

Women

Social-development services for women is another priority, built on the premise and concern that the inequality that exists between men and women in South Africa is deeply entrenched and has characterised South African society for many decades.

Women are often subject to discrimination, exploitation and violence despite the Constitution, which affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom.

An unprecedented effort is therefore required to ensure that the status of women is elevated to protect their rights and speed up the attainment of gender equality.

Various economic-empowerment projects include bread-baking, leather works, offal-cleaning, child-minding and paper-and-fabric printing.

People with disabilities

There are about four million people with disabilities in South Africa, with the majority being women. The Office on the Status of Disabled Persons is part of The Presidency and is duplicated in the offices of the premiers. Together, these offices have co-ordinated work to mainstream disability issues in all government policies and programmes.

The *White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy* (1997) provides a policy framework for implementation across the whole of society and through all spheres of government. The National Skills Development Strategy calls for 4% of all people who obtain training to be people with disabilities.

The Department of Social Development supports the following national councils:

- National Council for Persons with Physical Disabilities
- Deaf Federation of South Africa
- South African National Epilepsy League
- South African Federation for Mental Health
- Cancer Association of South Africa.

As existing policies are not adequate to address the needs of this vulnerable group, the Department of Social Development has allocated R1 million for research into the needs of people and children with disabilities.

In July 2008, a two-day National Disability Summit was hosted by the Office on the Status of Disabled Persons. The theme of the summit was "Justice and Dignity for All".

Youth development

Youth-development initiatives are guided by, among other things, the National Youth Development (NYD) Policy Framework, the World Programme of Action for Youth and the Ministerial Ten-point Plan. Various youth-development

Youth Development Month is held every June. Activities include Youth Day on 16 June, the National Entrepreneur Exhibition and National Volunteer Week.

services have been rolled out to cater for the needs of young people in South Africa.

Youth-development services

The department developed NYD implementation guidelines in line with the NYS guidelines.

The NYD Forum sits biweekly to consult, secure support for and guide provinces in implementing youth projects. Key to these are provincial visits, including hosting meetings with stakeholders and visiting projects funded by the department to monitor their implementation and impact.

Volunteerism is promoted among the youth. A volunteer manual has been developed, which includes a volunteer-rights charter and a basic code of conduct for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations. These documents are distributed to organisations and government departments throughout the year and, in particular, during the National Volunteer Week held annually from 26 June to 2 July, as part of the Youth Month Programme. Several relations have been developed and strengthened, including the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the UYF on the NYS Programme.

Research and programmes

In 2007, the Draft Youth Development Framework was presented to management for approval.

From a population and development perspective, a process has been initiated to gather information on the expectations, aspirations and needs of the youth, which would serve as a basis for research and policy-making regarding the social and economic integration of youth into society.

Regarding the development of children into worthy citizens, research has been undertaken on OVC, to support policy development and M&E of children's issues.

The Masupatsela Youth-Development Programme, launched in October 2008, is a Department of Social Development-facilitated initiative, which will recruit, train and absorb unemployed and out-of-school youth.

The youth are recruited from and serve in their local communities. Through this programme, the department seeks to address the challenges facing South Africa's youthful population by using them as development resources.

The national and provincial departments of social development are tasked with co-ordinating and implementing this programme. The key responsibilities for the Masupatsela Programme

include auxiliary social-work services, community development and ECD. At the end of the programme, the youth will have employment, bursary and entrepreneurship opportunities.

United Nations Population Fund Third Country Support Programme for South Africa

The UN Population Fund (UNPFA) and other UN partners have introduced a third cycle of assistance to South Africa in the form of the Third Country Support Programme, contextualised within the UN Development Assistance Framework.

The overall goal is to improve the quality of life by contributing to reversing the spread of HIV, reducing gender inequities in the AIDS pandemic, enhancing the centrality of population issues in development policies and programmes, and strengthening the integration of population factors in the national development agenda.

These areas re ect national priorities, articulated in government's Vision 2014. They are contextualised within the millennium development goals and the government-prepared country analysis, which was adopted as the basis for development co-operation with all partners. Implementation of the projects will involve and benefit all nine provinces.

The duration of the Third Country Programme is from 2007 to 2010, and a total of $13 million has been pledged by the UNFPA to support the implementation of identified projects.

Welfare services
Remuneration of social workers

The process of regrading social workers was completed and implemented at national and provincial levels. Social workers on salary levels seven to 12 were regraded. The Minister of Finance allocated funds for revised salary

The South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) has partnered with the Department of Social Development in launching a national toll-free substance-abuse helpline.

i

The helpline is the first in South Africa to offer free substance-abuse support and counselling services nationwide, 24-hours a day. More than 70 volunteers, all with psychology backgrounds, have undergone training specific to substance abuse, before joining the SADAG team of qualified counsellors. The helpline provides on-the-spot counselling services, while offering information and referrals to help centres. The toll-free helpline number is 0800 121 314.

packages to be implemented. The implementation will be evaluated to reduce disparities and ensure uniformity.

Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers

The broader Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers has been drafted and addresses the needs of social workers in the public and private sectors. It includes the following key components:
- increasing human resources by recruiting and retaining social workers
- promoting the education, training and development of social workers
- improving the quality of social-work services
- strengthening governance structures within the social-service professions
- promoting occupational safety standards within the workplace
- improving service conditions for social workers
- marketing and promoting social-work services and programmes.

The implementation of the strategy remains vital to the realisation of the goals of the Department of Social Development. To this end, in 2008, the department was negotiating the Occupation Specific Dispensation for various categories of social workers in the Public Service. This will create better remuneration packages.

In 2008, over 1 126 social auxilliary workers had been trained and 11 service-providers accredited.

The bursary scheme supported 1 917 student social workers in 2008.

Capacity-Building Programme for Social-Service Professionals

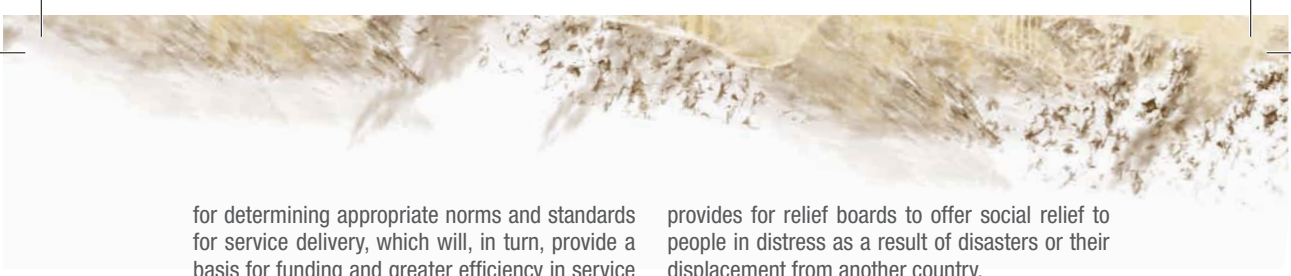About R105 million was allocated in 2008/09 to train about 3 000 social auxiliary workers and family social workers.

Repositioning the developmental social welfare sector

The Integrated Service-Delivery Model for Developmental Social Services aims to implement comprehensive, efficient and quality service delivery that contributes to a self-reliant society.

The model acknowledges the interdependent relationship between the department's main programmes, namely Social Security, Social Welfare and Community Development.

It determines the nature, scope, extent and level of work that constitutes service delivery by developmental social services. It also provides a basis

for determining appropriate norms and standards for service delivery, which will, in turn, provide a basis for funding and greater efficiency in service delivery.

Funding of non-governmental organisations

The services rendered by NGOs as partners of the department in service delivery continue to receive support. The department continues to award funds to service-providers at national and provincial level, with 18 national bodies benefitting.

Statutory bodies
National Development Agency

The NDA is a government agency mandated by the NDA Act, 1998 (Act 108 of 1998), to contribute towards eradicating poverty through funding, capacity-building, research and development. The NDA's primary sources of income are an allocation from the National Revenue Fund and donor funding.

The NDA is a critical engine that ensures growth and skills development in the South African economy and plays an important role in the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa.

Transfers to the NDA increased from R103,3 million in 2003/04 to R123 million in 2006/07. The NDA plays a critical role in finalising a national anti-poverty strategy for South Africa.

Relief boards

The Fund-Raising Act, 1978 (Act 107 of 1978), provides for relief boards to offer social relief to people in distress as a result of disasters or their displacement from another country.

Non-profit organisations

Civil society in South Africa is characterised by a variety of organisations of different sizes and shapes across the political, economic and social spectrum of society.

These range from FBOs and CBOs, charities (welfare) and traditional organisations such as social and sports clubs, to a host of other development and social forms of organisations working tirelessly on weaving and maintaining the social fabric of society.

South Africa, like any democratic society, has an enabling legal environment for civil society that supports and encourages the formation of organisations.

The NPO Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997), is perceived to be the entry point in the regulatory framework for organisations to derive benefits. It provides a registration facility for all public NPOs that are not organs of the State.

The Directorate: NPOs was established in terms of this Act to increase public access to information on registered organisations. The legal mandate requires that the directorate registers organisations within two months of receipt of a complete application, and provides support for organisations to register and meet reporting requirements.

The registration and reporting of organisations have increased substantially since the inception of the Act in 1998.

Suggested reading

Adhikari, M. *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity and the South African Coloured Community.* Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2006.

Amoateng, AY and Heaton, TB. eds. *Families and Households in Post-Apartheid South Africa.* Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) Press, 2007.

Ballard, R, Habib, A and Valodia, I. eds. *Voices of Protest: Social Movements in Post-Apartheid South Africa. Poverty in the New South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2006.

Beukes, L. *Maverick*: *Extraordinary Women from South Africa's Past*. Cape Town: Oshun Books, 2004.

Brown, D. *To Speak of this Land: Identity and Belonging in South Africa and Beyond*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2006.

Dawes, A, *et al.*, eds. *Monitoring Child Well-Being: A South African Rights Based Approach*. Cape Town: HSRC, 2007.

Hoad, N, Martin, K and Reid, G. eds. *Sex and Politics in South Africa. Lesbian and Gay Rights under the New Constitution*. Cape Town: Double Storey, 2005.

Lefko-Everett, K. *Voices from the Margins: Migrant Women's Experiences in Southern Africa*. Cape Town: Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa), 2007.

MacDonald, M. *Why Race Matters in South Africa*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008.

Padayachee, V. ed. *Development Decade? Economic and Social Change in South Africa 1994 – 2004*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2006.

Patel, L. *Social Welfare and Social Development in South Africa*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press SA, 2005.

Pillay, U, Roberts, B and Rule, S. eds. *South African Social Attitudes*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2006.

Prah, KK, ed. *Racism in the Global African Experience*. Cape Town: Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society, 2006.

Ratele, KR, *et al.*, eds. *Self, Community and Psychology*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2004.

Richter, L and Morrell, R. eds. *Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2006.

Robbins, S and Robbins, S. *Slavery Unmasked: Arousing the Conscience of Churches and Civil Society*. Johannesburg: Capsal, 2007.

Roberts, B. *Migration Audit of Poverty Reduction Strategies in South Africa*. Cape Town: Idasa, 2007.

Schlebusch, L. *Suicidal Behaviour in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2005.

Seekings, J and Nattrass, N. *Class, Race and Inequality in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2005.

Stevens, *et al.*, eds. *A Race Against Time: Psychology and Challenges to Deracialisation in South Africa*. Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2006.

Terry, G. *Women's rights*. Johannesburg: Jacana, 2007.