



The work of the Department of Social Development (DSD) gives effect to Outcome 13 (an inclusive and responsive social protection system) of government's 2014-2019 Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTEF).

The department's focus over the MTEF period will be on improving the social development sector through:

- increasing access to social assistance
- investing in and increasing access to quality early childhood development (ECD) services
- reforming and standardising the social welfare system
- expanding social development services
- improving household access to food and nutrition
- strengthening community participation in service delivery.

The strategic goals for the DSD are to:

- review and reform social welfare services and financing
- improve and expand ECD provision
- deepen social assistance and extend the scope of the contributory social security system
- enhance the capabilities of communities to achieve sustainable livelihoods and household food security
- strengthen coordination, integration, planning, monitoring and evaluation of services.

South Africa has made good progress in building social cohesion and promoting a new single national identity. The biggest barrier to increasing social cohesion is the remaining inequality in society, which needs to be attended to.

More than half of all households in South Africa benefit from Government's social assistance programme.

Comprehensive social security alleviates and reduces poverty, vulnerability, social exclusion and inequality through a comprehensive social protection system.

Empowering young and old people, those with disabilities as well as women in particular, helps rebuild families and communities.

Welfare services create and provide social protection to the most vulnerable of society through the delivery of social welfare services via provincial government and non-profit organisation (NPO) structures.

Legislation and frameworks

Several pieces of legislation determine the mandate of the DSD, including the Social Assistance Act, 2004 (Act 13 of 2004), which provides a legislative framework for providing social assistance. The Act sets out the different types of grants payable, as well as their qualifying criteria. It also makes provision for the establishment of the inspectorate for social assistance.

The department furthermore derives its mandate from the following legislation:

- The Advisory Board on Social Development Act, 2001 (Act 3 of 2001).
- The Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005).
- The Children's Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 41 of 2007).
- The Fund-Raising Act, 1978 (Act 107 of 1978)
- The Mental Healthcare Act, 2002 (Act 17 of 2002).
- The National Welfare Act, 1978 (Act 100 of 1978).
- The National Development Agency (NDA) Act, 1998 (Act 108 of 1998).

2016/17 SOUTH AFRICA YEARBOOK

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



- The NPO Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997).
- The Older Persons Act, 2006 (Act 13 of 2006)
- The Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Act, 1992 (Act 20 of 1992).
- The Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act, 2008 (Act 70 of 2008).
- The Probation Services Act, 1991 (Act 116 of 1991).
- The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) Act, 2004 (Act 9 of 2004).
- The Social Assistance Amendment Act, 2008 (Act 6 of 2008).
- The Social Service Professions Act, 1978 (Act 110 of 1978). The Act also provides for the appointment of the Independent Tribunal in a way to be prescribed by regulation, and contains a number of technical amendments and corrections.
- In terms of the Social Assistance Amendment Act, 2010 (Act 5 of 2010), beneficiaries and other applicants may now ask SASSA to reconsider the relevant decision before appealing to the tribunal. All applications for appeal must now show that they have gone through the reconsideration process at SASSA.

According to the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, South Africa needs to pay careful attention to the design of policies between now and 2030 to ensure that vulnerable groups and citizens are protected from the worst effects of poverty.

These social protection measures proposed seek to support those most in need, including children, people with disabilities and the elderly; and promote active participation in the economy and society for those who are unemployed and underemployed through labour market activation measures, employment services, income support programmes and other services to sustain and improve quality of life.

The plan acknowledges that the country has built an advanced and comprehensive social protection system with wide reach and coverage, but the system is still fragmented, plagued by administrative bottlenecks and implementation inefficiencies.

As a result, the various elements of the social protection system are not operating seamlessly. The priority should be improving efficiency in the delivery of services, addressing exclusions by identifying and reaching those who are entitled to the existing benefits of social protection, reducing the administrative bottlenecks that prevent people accessing benefits.

National Family Policy

The DSD is tasked with implementing the National Family Policy and provides training in family-preservation services, marriage preparation and enrichment, parenting/primary caregiving and families in crisis to service providers in the area of family services.

The *White Paper on Families* emphasises the need for all to build strong families that protect the most vulnerable members of society.

The purpose of the White Paper is to provide a platform for all South Africans to engage and exchange views on how to build stable families.

It also addresses some of the challenges faced by individuals in families, including the abuse of women and children, the elderly as well as people with disabilities.

Childcare legislation

The Children's Act 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.

- The Act also:
- gives effect to certain rights of children as contained in the Constitution
 - provides for the issuing of contribution orders
 - provides for intercountry adoption
 - gives effect to the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption
 - prohibits child abduction and gives effect to the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction
 - recognises new offences relating to children
 - provides for matters relating to the trafficking of children and the implementation of the relevant protocol.

The Children's Act of 2005 provides for the establishment of the National Child Protection Register that records all people found 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 is not open to the public and all requests for information must be directed to the DSD.

The Children's Amendment Act of 2007 provides for:

- the partial care of children
- ECD
- protection of children
- prevention and early intervention services
- children in alternative care
- foster care
- child and youth care centres, shelters and drop-in centres
- 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 the consent of the parents or guardian
- the discipline of children.

The national guidelines to protect and care for children include the Constitution, the Child Care Act, 1983 (Act 74 of 1983), as amended, the *White Paper for Social Welfare (1997)* and the Children's Act of 2005, as amended.

Section 137 of the Children's Act of 2005 proposes new protection measures for child-headed households.

This section defines children from child-headed households, provides for appointing an adult to supervise a child-headed household and allows children in child-headed households to access social grants and other material assistance.

Budget

Over the medium term, the DSD will continue to provide social grants to the elderly, children, war veterans and people with disabilities.

These grants boost the incomes of poor households, which bear the brunt of persistent unemployment, poverty and inequality in South Africa.

Grants take up 94,2% of the department's total budget allocation over the MTEF period, and the department projects paying social assistance grants to about 18,1 million beneficiaries by the end of 2018/19.

Expenditure on grants is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8,5% over the medium term, reaching R165 billion in 2018/19, mostly due to inflationary adjustments to the value of the grants and growth in the number of beneficiaries.

The elderly population, that is people older than 60, is growing by 3% per year, and there is continued growth in child beneficiaries.

An additional allocation of R11,5 billion over the MTEF period is for inflationary adjustments to the value of the grants and growth in the number of beneficiaries.

The number of appeals cases to be adjudicated will increase over the medium term as a result of proposed amendments to the Social Assistance Act of 2004. The Act currently prescribes that applicants who have been declined a social grant first lodge an application for reconsideration with the SASSA before they can take it to the appeals tribunal.

The amendments to the Act remove the application for reconsideration function from the agency, and require that the tribunal adjudicates all appeals. The resulting increase in adjudications of appeals is reflected in increased expenditure in the Appeals Adjudication subprogramme in the Social Security Policy and Administration programme over the MTEF period.

At the end of 2015/16, 81% of appeals had been adjudicated within 90 days and that is expected to increase to 100% by 2019/20.

The transfer to the South African Social Security Agency makes up 98,6% of the Social Security Policy and Administration programme over the medium term. The transfer funds the administration and distribution of social grants.

Administration costs constituted 5,2% of the budget for social grants in 2014/15.

Partly due to efficiencies from the new payment contract implemented in 2012/13, these costs are projected to decline to 4,8% of the 2018/19 budget for social grants.

A Cabinet-approved reduction of R209,2 million over the MTEF period to the transfer payment to SASSA will require further efficiencies in the administration of social assistance.

Reforming and standardising the social welfare sector

A new conditional grant to support the employment of social worker graduates from the national scholarship programme will be introduced in 2017/18.

Through the grant, social workers will be employed by provinces and NPOs.

A second conditional grant will expand ECD services and the maintenance of related infrastructure will be introduced.

National Treasury is working with the DSD on a strategy to guide future financing for ECD.

The old age, disability and care dependency grants each increased by R10.

Government increased the Child Support Grant (CSG) by R10 to R360 to offset the effects of high food inflation recorded in 2016.

In addition, Cabinet has approved, in principle, an extended CSG for orphans who have lost both parents but are in the care of extended family members. The grant, which could be implemented in 2018/19, brings the income protection afforded to these orphans closer to parity with that provided to orphans in foster care.

Expanding social development services

To support the DSD's ongoing work to expand social development services, over the medium term the department will focus on managing the command centre – a 24-hour call centre for victims of gender-based violence (GBV) – drafting legislation on victim support services, and enhancing the implementation and monitoring of social crime prevention and gender based violence programmes (such as programmes that provide shelters). Spending on these activities is in the Social Crime Prevention and Victim Empowerment subprogramme of the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme.

Substance abuse is a key social challenge in many South African communities, and the Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act of 2008 prescribes that each province must have at least one public treatment centre.

By mid-2016, there were seven centres in four provinces. The department was expected to construct substance abuse

treatment centres in the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, North West and Free State in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

Protecting and promoting the rights of children

The DSD, in consultation with a range of stakeholders, has developed a government-wide ECD policy and programme. The objectives of the policy are to:

- ensure that comprehensive, quality ECD services are in close proximity and equitably accessible to all children and their caregivers
- enable parents to lead and participate in the development of their young children through the use of these services
- and to ensure alignment and harmonisation across the different sectors responsible for ECD services.

The DSD was expected to put the required systems in place for implementing the policy and the programme. The department will also be working towards alignment and harmonisation with municipal by-laws and provincial legislation, especially related to infrastructure development and management.

To meet these objectives, an ECD programme office was established in 2015/16.

The Children's Act of 2005 requires the DSD to establish and manage a national child protection register as part of the overall child protection system. The aim of the register is to have a record of all reports of abuse and all convictions, and to use the information to protect children from unsuitable persons. All persons working with children are meant to be screened against the register. Organisations providing services to children, such as ECD centres, cannot complete their registration process unless they have screened all employees.

Role players Department of Women

The Department of Women is situated in The Presidency. The mandate of the department is to champion the advancement of women's socio-economic empowerment and the promotion of gender equality.

Its mission is to accelerate socio-economic transformation for women empowerment and the advancement of gender equality.

National Development Agency

The NDA is a public entity, listed under Schedule 3A of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999).

Its mandates are to:

- contribute towards the eradication of poverty and its causes by granting funds to civil-society organisations (CSOs)
- implement development projects in poor communities
- strengthen the institutional capacity of CSOs that provide services to poor communities
- promote consultation, dialogue and sharing of development experience between CSOs and relevant organs of State
- debate development policy
- undertake research and publication aimed at providing the basis for development policy.

The NDA supports the work of civil society in key areas of concern.

It is an important partner in the DSD's efforts to promote ECD by using its grants to strengthen the capacities of ECD community-service organisations, which support the department's efforts to reduce violence against women and children by providing key support to the GBV sector.

NDA programmes include grant funding, capacity-building and research, policy dialogue and impact assessment.

Capacity-building interventions are geared towards ensuring that recipients of grant funding are not only given money to start and run their projects, but that they are empowered with the necessary skills to ensure sustainability.

The NDA has established the Programme Management Unit, which is responsible for offering project management services to private and public-sector stakeholders who wish to fund poverty-eradication projects.

Particular emphasis is placed on those in the NDA's primary areas of focus, namely food security, ECD, enterprise development and income-generation programmes.

South African Social Security Agency

SASSA's objectives are to ensure the effective and efficient administration, management and payment of social assistance grants. It manages a large payment system to more than 16,4 million beneficiaries monthly.

The agency's key strategic focus over the MTEF period will be on putting the required systems in place to transfer the payment function of social grants from a contractor to the agency.

SASSA's operations are set to become largely driven by information and communication technology (ICT) over the medium term.

The focus will be on implementing a range of projects aimed at modernising service delivery and putting the required systems in place to administer the payment function in-house. One of the key modernisation projects will be the scanning of all existing and future social grant files into an electronic system and progressively shredding paper-based files.

The scanning of files will improve efficiencies and mitigate the risk of the loss or destruction of information necessary to ensure that the agency pays grants to qualifying beneficiaries.

SASSA's internal capacity to administer the payment function will be built through the creation of an integrated payment database, and the acquisition of payment hardware and software.

Maintaining the social pension system, which forms the foundation of the current payment system, will account for approximately 47% of SASSA's allocation for computer services over the medium term. By 2018/19, SASSA will have begun work on a replacement for the social pension system.

Other key ICT projects related to transferring the payment function to the agency include:

- developing a data warehouse to store all beneficiary and payment data
- developing a biometric payment standard in partnership with the DHA and the South African Reserve Bank
- acquiring biometric payment equipment.



Biometric identification forms an integral part of SASSA's fraud management strategy.

This initiative aims to reduce fraud by broadly providing positive identification to verify the authenticity of a user on the system with a high degree of certainty, and to link an official from the agency with the beneficiary whose grant they approved. This will also help to serve as a deterrent for fraud-related collusion between staff members and potential beneficiaries, and result in fewer transactions performed on the system being repudiated.

In addition, SASSA will continue to implement other measures, such as eligibility reviews, accuracy checks to ensure that files are complete and contain all supporting documents, and the physical verification of beneficiaries to minimise fraudulent activities and reduce opportunities for fraud to be perpetuated.

To ensure that social assistance grants reach impoverished people, the agency will continue to reach out to poor communities through the integrated community registration outreach programme and Project Mikondzo.

These interventions require officials to visit people in their communities and educate them on their right to access social assistance. Through these vehicles, 714 poor wards were reached in 2014/15, and there was a 17% increase in the number of children younger than two being supported by the CSG in the same year.

Extended beneficiary education campaigns will be conducted over the medium term to inform beneficiaries of their rights, and to protect them from unwarranted and unsolicited service providers marketing goods and products.

Measures will be put in place to deal with disputes arising from deductions and electronic funds transfer debits from social grants.

The agency plans to hold 1 840 integrated community registration outreach programmes, 108 Project Mikondzo interventions, and 1 800 public and beneficiary awareness programmes between 2016/17 and 2018/19.

All these initiatives require SASSA to communicate extensively with beneficiaries through a host of mediums such as radio, print media, television and Imbizo type methods, accounting for expenditure on communications, travel, and venues and facilities.

The agency has a significant footprint across the country, with approximately nine regional offices, 44 district offices, 367 local offices, 917 service points and 9 900 pay points.

Even though the agency has transformed how social grants are paid out, giving beneficiaries access to various payment channels, including points of sale and automated teller machines, it is still required to ensure paypoints are maintained in acceptable conditions.

These improvements involve enhancing accessibility for people with disabilities, and upgrading sanitation and customer facilities to provide beneficiaries with better service delivery.

An average of 150 pay points are expected to be improved each year over the MTEF period.

Advisory Board on Social Development

The Advisory Board on Social Development's key functions include:

- advising the Minister on all matters related to social development
- identifying, promoting, monitoring and evaluating policy, legislation and programmes regarding social development
- facilitating dialogue with and the participation of civil society.

South African Council of Social Service Professions (SACSSP)

The SACSSP is a statutory body with the primary focus of developing and protecting the integrity of the social service professions and the interest of the public at large.

The SACSSP is established in terms of Section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act of 1978.

All professionals who practice any of the social service professions incorporated in the scope of the SACSSP are obliged by the Social Service Professions Act of 1978 to register with the SACSSP. Failure to do so constitutes a criminal offence.

The council guides and regulates the Social Services Professions in the country in aspects pertaining to registration by:

- ensuring compliance by practitioners in order for the sector to be serviced by registered persons, education and training
- ensuring continuing professional development and compliance by training institutions and professional conduct
- ensuring compliance by all registered practitioners in terms of professional and ethical services to communities and individuals.

The council has two professional boards under its auspices:

- The Professional Board for Social Workers.
- The Professional Board for Child and Youth Care.

National Action Committee for Children Affected by HIV and AIDS

The National Committee for Children Affected by HIV and AIDS is a multisectoral structure made up of government departments, CSOs, development agencies and donor organisations.

It is a formal structure used for collaborative planning and decision-making concerning issues pertaining to orphans and other children made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS.

It has a steering committee initiated through consultations between government departments, civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and is currently composed of representatives of government and civil society.

The committee is chaired by the DSD, and co-chaired by a nominated member from civil society.

Relief boards

Four relief fund boards were established in terms of Section 16 of the Fund-Raising Act of 1978.

- Board of the Disaster Relief Fund: The key functions of the board are to assist people, organisations and bodies that suffer damage or loss as a result of a disaster.

- Board of the Refugee Relief Fund: The key functions are to assist refugees as the board may deem fair and reasonable.
- Board of the State President's Fund: This board's functions are to assist victims of any act of terrorism in respect of their medical treatment and rehabilitation, and assist such victims and their dependants during any financial hardship or financial distress caused directly or indirectly by any act of terrorism.
- Board of the Social Relief Fund: The key functions of the board are to make funds available to organisations capable of assisting people with psychosocial challenges, and rendering such social distress relief to victims of violence.

Non-profit organisations

The NPO Directorate of the DSD administers the Register of NPOs in South Africa.

It is a voluntary registration facility that enhances the credibility of the registered NPO as it reports to a public office. Registration promotes effective, efficient and accountable management within the sector.

To strengthen the capacity of NPOs, the DSD will continue to build their capacity and monitor their compliance to legislation.

One of the functions of the department is to monitor all registered NPOs in terms of their compliance with the NPO Act of 1997. The compliance rate has improved by 26%.

Training was provided to 1 200 NPOs and community-based organisations (CBOs).

Plans to strengthen the sector include:

- increasing the number of staff in the department who deal with registrations
- increasing the number of road shows to provide information and listen to challenges faced by the sector.

NPOs registered with the DSD are required in terms of the NPO Act of 1997 to submit their annual reports (narrative and financial reports) to the department. This applies to all NPOs registered under the NPO Act of 1997, whether funded or unfunded.

Currently, there are 140 513 registered NPOs and 87 565 or about 62% of them are not compliant with the provision of the NPO Act of 1997.

Programmes and projects

16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children

The 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children is an annual awareness campaign observed globally.

It addresses policy and legal issues and calls for the elimination of all forms of GBV.

The campaign runs from 25 November, which was officially recognised by the UN in 1999 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

South Africa has added children to the campaign, as there is growing concern about the increasing violence against children.

The campaign ends on 10 December – International Human Rights Day.

Other important days commemorated annually during this 16-day period include World AIDS Day on 1 December and the International Day for Persons with Disabilities on 3 December.

The United Nations (UN) has proclaimed 25 November as International Day of No Violence Against Women.

Project Mikondzo

Project Mikondzo (which means “footprint” in Xitsonga) compels office-bound officials from the department, the NDA and the SASSA to join frontline officials to interact with communities in a bid to tackle social problems such as poverty, malnutrition, violence against women and child-headed households.

The 1 300 wards form part of 23 district municipalities from seven provinces, which Cabinet has prioritised for additional support.

The project includes an audit of ECD centres and the setting up of a command centre with a toll-free hotline open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It also includes a substance abuse awareness campaign targeting sports and music events, the targeting of GBV and the strengthening of NPOs.

The project helps government reach about two million children who qualify for CSG but who have not registered with SASSA to receive grants.

The DSD began training caregivers to improve assistance to child and youth-headed households.

The department audited 92 000 child-headed households that are in the Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) database to ensure compliance with the Children’s Act of 2005 definition of a child-headed household.

Government celebrated Social Development Month in October 2016 by highlighting poverty-alleviation programmes and extending its footprint through Project Mikondzo to reach all vulnerable South Africans.

Since the inauguration of Project Mikondzo in 2013, government officials have visited more than 900 wards with high levels of poverty and unemployment to better understand the diverse needs of communities.

Government continues to implement the service-delivery initiatives, Project Mikondzo and the Integrated Community Registration Outreach Programme (ICROP) to improve the sector’s services and to increase access to social assistance for the impoverished communities.

Anti-Substance Abuse Programme of Action

Alcohol advertising is regulated by the Liquor Act, 2003 (Act 59 of 2003) which outlines the guidelines for liquor advertising. The alcohol industry is self-regulated by the Code of Commercial Communication of Alcohol Beverages, something to which most companies and advertisers adhere.

The Central Drug Authority Board developed regulations for the Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act of 2008.

The Act complements both the National Drug Master Plan (NDMP) (2013 – 2017) and the Anti-Substance Abuse Programme.

The Act provides for a comprehensive national response for combating substance abuse in South Africa through:

- mechanisms aimed at reducing demand and harm in relation to substance abuse through prevention, early intervention, treatment and reintegration programmes

- registration and establishment of treatment centres and halfway houses
- the committal of persons to and from treatment centres and for their treatment.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Combating Alcohol and Substance Abuse, is to coordinate government’s collective national efforts, including prevention, community mobilisation, treatment and law enforcement, among others.

Progressive policy decisions have emanated from the IMC plan of action, such as the removal of liquor outlets from residential areas and near places of worship and schools, restrictions on operating times and on the location and content of advertising related to alcohol, and a reduction of the current legal alcohol limit for drivers.

In its efforts to reduce incidents of GBV which are often caused by abuse of alcohol and drugs, the DSD has launched GBV Command Centre (GBVCC) – a 24-hour call centre.

The GBVCC, which was named the Best Technology Innovation – Small Centre in the world at the Global Best Contact Centre Awards in Las Vegas in 2015, provides support and counselling to victims of GBV. As the Gold Medal Winner, this means the GBVCC is ranked number one in the world in its category.

Victims of gender-based violence are encouraged to contact 0800 428 428 (0800 GBV GBV), a toll-free number to speak to a social worker for assistance and counselling. Callers can also request a social worker from the Command Centre to contact them by dialling *120*7867# (free) from any cellphone.

The DSD had commissioned a review of the Ke Moja Drug Awareness Campaign to ascertain its effectiveness and strengthen dissemination of information tools.

One of the common drugs, Tik, is sold as a combination of amphetamines and talcum powder, baking powder, starch, glucose or quinine. The drug changes users’ behaviour and some symptoms associated with its usage and addiction range from loss of appetite, weight loss, aggression, anxiety, headaches as well as change in dress code.

Health professionals are also concerned about the devastating effects of this drug on the user which among its many effects induces psychotic symptoms, such as seeing or hearing things that are not there, and violence, making it a far more dangerous drug than most other drugs available in South Africa.

Government departments are collaborating with other sectors of society to implement the NDMP to respond to the scourge of drugs and substance abuse.

The Central Drug Authority is charged with the responsibility to develop and implement a coordinated approach encompassing supply control and demand reduction progress.

Provincial substance abuse forums have been established as well as local drug action committees which consists of social workers, teachers, justice and committee representatives.

By mid-2016, the Department of Health was looking into the draft Control of Marketing of Alcohol Beverages Bill that is about the marketing and promotion of alcohol.

The UN General Assembly, in its resolutions 42/112 of December 1987, declared 26 June as the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)

The EPWP is a nationwide programme under the auspices of government and state-owned enterprises.

The programme provides an important avenue for labour absorption and income transfers to poor households in the short to medium term. It is also a deliberate attempt by public sector bodies to use expenditure on goods and services to create job opportunities for the unemployed.

EPWP projects employ workers on a temporary or ongoing basis either by government, by contractors, or by NGOs under the Ministerial Conditions of Employment for the EPWP or learnership employment conditions.

In March 2016, social sector departments, led by the DSD and Department of Public Works, hosted the 12th annual EPWP Social Sector Conference in White River, Nelspruit, in Mpumalanga, under the theme: “Advancing People’s Power for Revitalisation of Mining Communities through EPWP Social Sector Interventions”.

It also served as an opportunity to assess progress made by the EPWP Phase 3 of the social sector. During the launch, the EPWP social sector participants shared testimonies about the impact of the social-sector initiatives towards improvement of their lives.

The EPWP Phase 3 was expected to create six million work opportunities; out of this overall targeted figure the projected work opportunities to be created by the EPWP social sector is 1 037 000 work opportunities by 2019.

The Vuk’uphile Learnership Programme is an EPWP Contractor Development Programme. It is a subprogramme of the EPWP Infrastructure Sector which is aimed at training and developing emerging contractors within the construction industry.

The programme develops the administrative, technical, contractual, managerial and entrepreneurial skills of the learners within a learner-contracting entity. The Vuk’uphile Learnership Programme uses labour-intensive methods of construction and the opportunities that are created through the programme feeds to the six million EPWP work opportunities to be created by 2019.

The EPWP Knowledge Management Committee is composed of various national government departments such as Social Development, Environmental Affairs, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, with the Department of Public Works leading the committee.

The Knowledge Management is a process of creating, acquiring, capturing and using knowledge wherever it resides to enable learning and performance in an organisation.

Early Childhood Development

Government aims to provide the subsidy to all children accessing ECD services in registered centres.

The expansion of subsidies and the upgrades to ECD centres will be funded from 2017/18 through a new conditional grant to provinces, the ECD grant.

War on Poverty Campaign

The Cooperative Shop Project is aimed at combating poverty by linking social grant beneficiaries (particularly the caregivers of children receiving CSGs and other vulnerable groups) to meaningful socio-economic opportunities. The DSD and its entities will identify cooperatives that need support, with the intention of developing the skills of the members of the co-operative to ensure they are able to produce goods of quality.

The project is in line with the developmental agenda of government and could be seen as an addition to the grants that are provided. The primary intention is not to take people out of the grant system but to provide opportunities for grant beneficiaries to supplement their income.

Child poverty in South Africa has declined but more still needs to be done, according to a report released by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) in June 2014.

The SAHRC and the UN Children's Fund SA based the report, Poverty traps and social exclusion among children in South Africa, on a study.

It said according to three income and expenditure surveys, the estimated poverty rate decreased from 65% in 2000 to just below 40% in 2010. The child poverty rate dropped from 76% in 2000 to just below 50% in 2010.

Education, health, assets, social networks, family, and geography are highlighted as areas that require intervention to escape poverty. According to the report, poverty-stricken households are at greater risk of contracting disease.

Often, health problems lower productivity. Ill health can induce perpetual poverty from nutrition deficiencies and undernourishment can affect behaviour. Child hunger affected the ability to learn and function. Policy interventions that improve children's health can dramatically increase their chances of escaping poverty.

Food for All Programme

The DSD is tasked with facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the Food for All Programme.

To this end, distressed households were being provided with food through the department and Food Bank South Africa programme.

While this provides short-term relief for poor households, government recognises that longer-term solutions are needed.

Government is committed to improving its efforts at ensuring food security for all in the country, starting with vulnerable households and communities.

To this end, households have been assisted in establishing food gardens to produce their own food, thus participating in their own development.

Social security and assistance

As of April 2017, the old-age grant increased by R90 to R1 600 for pensioners over the age of 60, and R1 620 for those over 75.

The disability and care dependency grants also increased by R90 to R1 600 a month. Foster-care grants increased by R30 to R920 a month. The CSG increased by R20 to R380 a month.

Job creation and poverty alleviation

The Mid-year population estimates by Stats SA show that South Africa still has a relatively young population. Two thirds of the population is younger than 35 years old. Those aged 15 to 35 years, which are defined as youth, comprise almost 40% of the total population. The youth are also the fastest-growing age group in the country.

This trend creates the prospect for a so-called "demographic dividend", in which resources are invested into activities that promote social and economic development and growth.

South Africa, like most countries, is grappling with the challenge of youth unemployment. Youth unemployment is estimated to be 38,6%, with 58% of unemployed people aged between 15 and 34.

Government has recognised the problem of poor economic participation of young people and has put in place numerous policy interventions geared towards bringing youth into the mainstream of the economy to enhance social inclusion and cohesion.

Through the National Treasury and Department of Labour, the DSD introduced youth unemployment policy options for South Africa with the aim of incentivising entities to employ young people.

The National Youth Development Agency has provided the Integrated Youth Development Strategy with the key mandate of implementing interventions geared towards the economic participation of young people, namely, youth work, national youth services, and education and skills relevant to economic empowerment.

Government strives to provide an opportunity to raise the share of youth-owned businesses and to support youth to engage in cooperatives in the country.



The NDP is clear about the need for skills development in promoting economic growth and reaching related goals and the country has done well in the past 20 years of democracy to ensure that practically all children who should be in primary school are there.

Food banks

With effect from 1 October 2016, FoodBank SA is now known as FoodForward SA.

It collects edible surplus food from manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers, and redistributes it to verified NPOs that collectively feed thousands of hungry people daily.

FoodForward SA works with over 600 member beneficiary organisations that in turn feed over 175 000 people daily. At least 85% of the beneficiary organisations undertake skills development, education, or remedial activities.

HIV and AIDS support

The National Strategic Plan on HIV, AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and Tuberculosis (TB) 2012 – 2016, which addresses the social drivers and social impact of HIV and AIDS, is a key component of the DSD's fight against the spread of HIV and AIDS.

HIV and AIDS Youth Programme

Isibindi is a programme which deploys child and youth care workers in communities to assist children in vulnerable homes. Isibindi has a special focus on Grade 12 learners and in 2016, 3 400 matriculants were part of this programme.

The assistance by Isibindi child and youth care workers ensures that children remain in school and attend classes. The child and youth care workers support these children and make sure that they are relieved from household responsibilities, including being parents to their siblings while they are trying to pass Grade 12.

Currently, the DSD supports 300 Isibindi sites across the country; which are managed by community-based organisations and supporting 200 000 children and youth.

HIV and AIDS advocacy, awareness and outreach programme

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 programme aims to involve people living with HIV and AIDS in initiatives that directly help affected and infected people to alleviate stigmatisation.

Care and support partnerships

The DSD developed a new National Action Plan for orphans, vulnerable children and youth affected by HIV and AIDS (2012 – 2016), which is aligned with the National Strategic Plan on HIV, STIs and TB (2012 – 2016).

The action plan calls for meaningful involvement and participation by all stakeholders in the national response to orphans, vulnerable children and youths affected by HIV and AIDS.

Victim Empowerment Programme (VEP)

South Africa's Victim Empowerment Policy is based upon the concept of restorative justice.

Victim empowerment is a means of facilitating access to a range of services for all people who have individually or collectively suffered harm, trauma and/or material loss through violence, crime, natural disaster, human accident and/or through socio-economic conditions.

It is the process of promoting the resourcefulness of victims of crime and violence by providing opportunities to access services available to them, as well as to use and build their own capacity and support networks and to act on their own choices.

National Directory on Services for Victims of Violence and Crime

The National Directory on Services for Victims of Violence and Crime is updated annually in collaboration with the provincial VEP managers or coordinators and their provincial counterparts.

Prevention and treatment of substance and drug abuse

Sobriety Week, is a national campaign aimed at creating awareness among the general South African public, particularly the youth, women and pregnant women about the adverse effects of liquor abuse.

Sobriety Week incorporates the International Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Day, which is observed internationally on 9 September every year to highlight the irreversible damage caused to unborn babies when their mothers consume alcohol during pregnancy.

Government recognises challenges such as unemployment, which result in people using and abusing alcohol.

Children and youth

The Home Community-Based Care (HCBC) programme is the centrepiece of government's interventions to build a protective and caring environment for vulnerable children.

Most services to orphans and vulnerable children are rendered through the HCBC programme and include early identification of vulnerable children and their families, referrals, training of community caregivers and psychosocial support and material assistance.

This approach is geared towards keeping children within their families and communities. It is aimed at providing comprehensive care and support, which is complemented by proactive action at community level. This includes linking families with poverty alleviation projects and other services in the community, such as food security initiatives and ECD services.

Child Labour Programme of Action (CLPA)

The CLPA is a national partnership initiated by government, civil-society partners comprising organised business, organised labour and NGOs. The lead department is the Department of Labour.

The CLPA is South Africa's roadmap towards the prevention, reduction and eventual elimination of child labour.

The CLPA was first adopted in 2003 after extensive consultation within government, with a wide range of organisations outside government and with groups of teenage children involved in different forms of child labour. The programme sets out specific actions to be taken and assigned responsibility for these actions.

The third phase of the CLPA covered the period April 2013 to March 2017.

Childline South Africa

Childline offers a 24-hour toll-free crisis line (08000 55 555) to children and families across South Africa. It provides immediate assistance to children and families in crisis who need counselling and information. Childline is an NPO that works to protect children from all forms of violence and create a culture of respect for children's rights.

Programmes delivered through the provincial offices include:

- a crisis line
- child rights and education
- training and education of volunteers
- training of other professionals who work with child protection and children
- therapy for abused and traumatised children and their families
- court preparation of child witnesses
- networking and coordination
 - lobbying and advocacy
 - analysis of law and policy.

People with disabilities

In March 2016, the DSD published the *White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, which was approved by the Cabinet in December 2015, for public information.

The White Paper takes its cue from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and a number of international instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, and the sustainable development goals, which reaffirm the human rights of people with disabilities.

The White Paper is a crucial step along the journey of improving the lives of people with disabilities and moves us closer to a fully inclusive society.

It is intended to accelerate transformation and redress with regard to full inclusion, integration and equality for people with disabilities. South Africa had to collectively contribute to the empowerment of people with disabilities through accessible disability information services, inclusive ECD opportunities and accessible rehabilitation services.

This would enable people with disabilities to take up the opportunities created in much larger numbers, improving performance in achieving equity targets.

People with disabilities represent the voice of the sector in institutions such as the South African Human Rights Commission, the Commission on Gender Equality, the Board of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, National Youth Development Agency and many transformation and developmental entities.

The South African experience has also helped to shape the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Continental Plan for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities. South Africa has been celebrating the International Day for People with Disabilities annually since 1997.

Blind SA

Blind SA is an organisation for the blind, and is governed by the blind. Situated in Johannesburg, it is aligned with other member organisations throughout South Africa.

Blind SA's main focus is to improve the quality of life of all South Africa's visually impaired people by empowering them through education.

Its objectives are to protect and promote the interests of people with visual impairment and enable all visually impaired people to achieve their optimal potential through independence; and by providing development care for and protecting the rights of those who, owing to circumstances beyond their control, are unable to do so themselves.

Orientation, mobility and skills development to blind and newly blinded people is an important aspect of the work undertaken by Blind SA.

The organisation provides, among other things, study bursaries for visually impaired students for further education, Braille publications in all of South Africa's official languages, Braille training that entails writing and reading, and orientation and mobility training.

South African Braille Authority (SABA)

SABA's purpose is to set and maintain standards for Braille in all 11 official languages of South Africa.

These standards relate to the development and maintenance of Braille codes; production of quality Braille; the teaching of, access to and promotion of Braille; Braille examinations; and many other Braille-related matters.

Members of SABA include schools for the blind (approximately half the members), consumer organisations of the blind, student disability units, Braille producers and the South African Library for the Blind.

Through SABA, South Africa is a member country of the International Council on English Braille (ICEB).

ICEB membership enables South Africa to stay abreast of and participate in international Braille-related matters.

South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB)

The SANCB is the coordinating body for over 100 member organisations that span the full spectrum of services offered for and to blind and partially sighted people throughout the country.

The SANCB comprises four core business areas, namely social development, the bureau for the prevention of blindness, education and lastly fund-raising and public relations.

To combat as much as 80% of avoidable blindness, the council regularly undertakes tours with its mobile eye care clinics to rural areas for eye screening, referrals and to perform cataract removal operations.

The SANCB provides entrepreneurial training, adult basic education and training, and facilitates skills training such as computer literacy and call centre programmes through its Optima College.

Support for the deaf

South Africa's national organisation for the deaf is the Deaf Federation of South Africa (DeafSA). DeafSA has nine provincial chapters throughout South Africa.

Two other national organisations for the deaf are Deafblind South Africa and SHHH South Africa, the South African organisation for the hard of hearing.

An estimated 500 000 to 600 000 South Africans use South African Sign Language. As sign language has grown in South Africa – particularly baby sign language – an NPO, Sign Language Education and Development, has been formed to promote sign language.

Signing with hearing babies and children is being promoted through the Signsational Kids website.

South Africa has a long-established deaf education system. Statistics indicate that there are more than 40 schools for the deaf in South Africa. They include:

- De la Bat School (run by the Institute for the Deaf)
- Fulton School for the Deaf
- Kutlwanong School for the Deaf (Rustenburg)
- Kwa Thintwa School for Hearing Impaired
- St Vincent's School for the Deaf (Johannesburg)
- Vuleka School for the Blind and Deaf.

The Institute for the Deaf in Worcester operates Deaf College South Africa, which trains deaf people for jobs.

In addition, the Bible College for the Deaf in Gauteng trains people to work in deaf ministry.

The University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg has a Centre for Deaf Studies. The centre offers programmes in deaf education and focuses on teaching, research and community service.

Among other services, the National Institute for the Deaf provides services for multiple disabled deaf, runs two deaf churches and provides audiological and mental health services.

A Deaf Child Centre at the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Cape Town, provides pre-

school education and community services. This centre also focuses on deafness research.

The Carel du Toit Centre, based in Cape Town, provides early childhood auditory-oral education.

In addition, the centre engages in community outreaches, helping families with hearing-related needs and more practical needs such as food.

A similar centre is the Eduplex in Pretoria. It provides auditory-oral pre-school and primary school educational services, teaching hearing and deaf children together and provides training to prospective teachers, audiologists and therapists.

Older people

The DSD promotes a holistic approach to active ageing and well-being among the country's senior citizens. A number of initiatives have been rolled out by the departments of social development, health, tourism, sport and recreation South Africa and other stakeholders to promote general health among older persons, especially through sports to promote general well-being.

Since 2008, government implemented a national active ageing programme in line with the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing of 2002.

The Madrid Plan of Action offers a bold new agenda for handling the issue of ageing in the 21st century. It focuses on three priority areas: older persons and development, advancing health and well-being into old age and ensuring enabling and supportive environments.

The Older Persons Act of 2006 aims to enhance the quality of life and improve the health of older persons by engaging them in programmes that promote social, physical, mental and emotional well-being to prevent or delay the onset of ageing challenges and keep illnesses related to old age at bay.

All citizens over a designated age will be eligible for the grant, which will simplify its administration and address the disincentive to save that arises from the present means test.

The Older Persons' Parliament takes place annually in October. It gives elders the opportunity to engage with the executive on critical issues affecting their lives.

Training and skills development Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers

The Unemployed Social Workers Database informs the department about the number of unemployed social workers who have studied outside the DSD scholarship programme.

This is in response to the issue raised by communities and the media that there are qualified social workers who are unemployed.

Government mandated the development of strategies to facilitate the recruitment and retention of such scarce skills. The DSD has been the main driver in the implementation of this social policy. In addition, the NDP indicates that 60 000 social workers will be needed by 2030 to serve the population.

Professionalising community development

The Council for Social Service Professions was established in terms of the Social Service Professions Act of 1978.

The key functions are:

- protecting and promoting the interests of the professions, in respect of which professional boards have been or are to be established and to deal with any matter relating to such interests
- advising the Minister on matters affecting the professions in respect of which professional boards have been established
- controlling and exercising authority regarding all financial matters relating to the council and the professional boards
- assisting in the promotion of social services.

Social work scholarships

As part of its efforts to develop skills and empower the youth, the DSD invited Grade 12 learners to apply for scholarships.

While recruiting, preference is given to deserving learners in rural areas, including those from child-headed households, those living in places of safety, dependants of war veterans and learners in no-fee schools.