

A group of children, likely at a school event, are shown in profile. They are wearing red long-sleeved shirts with blue cuffs and white bucket hats. Some children are seated in blue metal wheelchairs. They are holding wooden poles with flags. The background is slightly blurred, showing more children and flags. The overall scene is bright and outdoors.

South Africa Yearbook 2015/16

Social Development

The mandate of the Department of Social Development (DSD) is to ensure protection against vulnerability by creating an enabling environment for the provision of a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable social development service.

The strategic goals for the DSD are to:

- review and reform social welfare services and financing
- improve and expand early childhood development (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.

Budget

A total of R113 billion (93%) of the DSD's R120 billion budget went towards the payment of social grants.

The social assistance budget has increased by an average of 11% a year since 2008/09, in part due to the extension of the Child Support Grant (CSG) to the age of 18.

The CSG is the largest by number, totalling just below 12 million, which represents approximately 31% of the South African population. The various social grants recorded an average of 55% growth in value since 2006, for example, the Old Age Grant grew from R820.00 to R1 500.00 in 2016. South Africa now spends close to 3% of GDP on social assistance to the

value of R128 billion in the 2015/16 financial year.

The focus of the DSD over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period will be on: increasing access to social assistance, strengthening community participation, improving household access to food and nutrition, reforming and standardising the social welfare sector, expanding social development services, and protecting and promoting the rights of children.

These priorities are all premised on the NDP, which describes five functions of social protection: protective measures to save lives and reduce levels of deprivation; preventive measures which help people avoid falling deeper into poverty and reduce their vulnerability; promotive measures which enhance the capabilities of individuals communities and institutions; transformative measures which tackle inequities through changes in policies, laws and budgets; and developmental and generative measures which increase the poor's consumption, promoting local economic development.

The department's work over the medium term also gives effect to Outcome 13 of government's 2014-2019 Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) – an inclusive and responsive social protection system.

In accordance with the reorganisation of some national departments, announced by President Jacob Zuma in May 2014, R123,9 million over the medium term has been shifted to the DSD from the former Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities.

The progressive realisation of the rights of children and people with disabilities has become part of the DSD's mandate, while the new Department of Women will continue to promote, advocate for and monitor the realisation of the rights of women.

Over the medium term, the DSD will continue to provide social assistance 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 2015 MTEF period, and the department projects paying social assistance grants to about 17,5 million beneficiaries by the end of 2017/18.

The department's planned improvements to the appeals adjudication process will support increasing access to social assistance grants, and a business information system will be

developed to speed up the adjudication process itself.

Expenditure on grants is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,3% per year over the medium term, reaching R149 billion in 2017/18, mostly due to adjustments to the value of the grants and growth in the number of beneficiaries. Transfers to the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) make up 98,6% of the Social Security Policy and Administration programme.

The transfers fund both the administration and distribution of social grants. Administration costs constituted 5,5% of the budget for social assistance grants in 2013/14 but are expected to decline to 5% in 2017/18, partly due to efficiencies from the new payment contract implemented in 2012/13.

Project Mikondzo, a nationwide service-delivery initiative to assess the footprint and impact of the social development sector, will continue over the medium term.

Through direct interaction with municipalities and community members, the project aims to monitor service delivery at community level, determine the gap between policy formulation and implementation, and understand service delivery challenges and backlogs.

It is one of the two main spending drivers over the medium term in the Community Development subprogramme in the Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery programme.

The department also runs a range of outreach programmes such as Child Protection Week, the Active Aging programmes for older persons, youth camps and youth dialogues. Between 2 000 and 5 000 people participate in the events, and the department covers their travelling costs.

These participatory programmes drive expenditure in travel and subsistence, venues and facilities, and catering across several of the department's budget programmes. Participation often exceeds what the department has expected, resulting in increased expenditure.

To contain expenditure, the national department will share such costs with provincial departments over the medium term. The department has also reviewed its procurement processes for the events, and the resulting efficiencies can be seen in the projected decrease in spending in the Youth and Older Persons subprogrammes over the medium term.

By 2015/16, nine provincial food distribution centres and 72 community nutrition development centres were expected to be fully operational and 600 000 people would have access to food through the department's food relief programme.

The number of people with access to the programme was set to increase to 900 000 by 2017/18. The cost of implementing the programme is reflected in the projected 11,4% average annual growth over the medium term in transfers to households in the Social Policy and Integrated Development programme. Some R17.4 million over the medium term is reprioritised within the department's budget for establishing an office to oversee the implementation of the programme.

Reforming and standardising the social welfare sector

A key element of Outcome 13 of government's 2014-2019 MTSF (an inclusive and responsive social protection system) is reforming and standardising the social welfare system. Reforms will largely be driven by the review of the *1997 White Paper for Social Welfare*, funded in the Service Standards subprogramme in the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme. The review will be completed by 2017/18.

Social workers are essential to improved and standardised social welfare services. Training social workers is therefore crucial to social welfare reform, and the department expects to award 1 654 new scholarships for social work in 2017/18.

Scholarships, funded in the Social Worker Scholarships subprogramme, constitute 42.6% of the budget of the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme over the medium term, and are administered by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme.

Improved processes for registering and monitoring NPOs, which are key partners in providing social welfare services, will also support the reform. The department plans to review the NPO Act of 1997 to improve the regulatory framework, and will also improve the management of the NPO database and enhance the efficiency of the registration process.

The target is that 100% of applications for registration will be processed within two months by 2017/18. The Registration and Monitoring of NPO subprogramme receives 25,3% of the non-transfers budget of the Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery programme to support these activities.

Expanding social development services

To support the department'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), 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. Using funds allocated in the 2014 Budget (R50 million per year), 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 department, 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.

Over the medium term, the department will be putting the required systems in place for implementing the policy and the programme. The department will also be working towards alignment and harmonisation with municipal bylaws and provincial legislation, especially related to infrastructure development and management.

To meet these objectives, an ECD programme office will be established, starting in 2015/16. Spending is in the Children subprogramme of the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme.

The Children's Act of 2005 requires the department 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.

Legislation and frameworks

The department derives its mandate from the following legislation:

- Advisory Board on Social Development Act, 2001 (Act 3 of 2001)
- Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005)
- Children's Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 41 of 2007)
- Fund-Raising Act, 1978 (Act 107 of 1978)
- Mental Healthcare Act, 2002 (Act 17 of 2002)
- National Welfare Act, 1978 (Act 100 of 1978)
- National Development Agency (NDA) Act, 1998 (Act 108 of 1998)
- NPO Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997)
- Older Persons Act, 2006 (Act 13 of 2006)
- Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Act, 1992 (Act 20 of 1992)
- Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act, 2008 (Act 70 of 2008)
- Probation Services Act, 1991 (Act 116 of 1991)
- SASSA Act, 2004 (Act 9 of 2004)
- Social Assistance Amendment Act, 2008 (Act 6 of 2008)
- 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 under-employed 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 care-giving 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, child-care 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.

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, (PFMA) 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 department'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 gender-based violence 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, an agency of the Ministry of Social Development, was established in terms of the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004 to provide comprehensive social security services to eligible poor and vulnerable South African citizens.

Since it started operating, the entity has played an important role of breaking the cycle of poverty through provision of social grants and also Social Relief of Distress (SRD) such as school uniforms to children from poor households.

SASSA's core business is to administer, finance and pay social security transfers. The agency is required to:

- develop and implement policies, programmes, standard operating procedures and systems

for an efficient and effective social assistance benefits administration system

- deliver innovative and cost-effective services to beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries through multiple access channels
- pay the right grant to the right person at the right time and place.

SASSA ensures the provision of comprehensive social security services against vulnerability and poverty within the constitutional and legislative framework.

The agency's key functions include the effective management, administration and payment of social assistance, as well as:

- the processing of applications for social assistance, such as social grants, grant-in-aid and SRD, the verification and timely approval of grant applications
- the management and reconciliation of grant payments to eligible beneficiaries by contractors
- the marketing of social assistance
- quality service assurance by ensuring compliance with norms and standards, and fraud prevention and detection.

SASSA managed to increase the number of social grants in payment by 2% from 16 642 643 at the end of 2014/15 to 16 991 634 at the end of the 2015/16 financial year.

The majority of these grants are children's grants totalling 12 573 955, representing a 1,99% growth from the 2014/15 financial year total of 12 329 716. A total of 479 238 SRD applications were awarded during the 2015/16 financial year.

This number includes 112 469 awards for people who were assisted in time of disasters. The awards were issued in various forms ranging from vouchers, school uniform, cash and food parcels. Most of the SRD awards were food parcels 171 120, followed by vouchers 156 142.

Alongside transforming the payment system, the agency has extended its footprint in each municipality. With such a footprint and high levels of efficiency, the agency has lived up to its slogan, "Paying the Right Social Grant, to the Right Person, at the Right Time and Place. Njalo!

In line with its goal to improve the conditions under which beneficiaries are served, SASSA converted 262 open pay points to fixed structures across all nine regions and continues to convert as and when the need arises.

This number includes both steel structures constructed and migration to community structures, such as churches and community halls.

SASSA implemented its fraud prevention strategy and anti-corruption policy towards curbing incidences of fraud and corruption.

This was done through awareness campaigns conducted in all regions.

The rewards of these campaigns were evident in the 16% reduction of reported cases from 1 328 in 2014/15 to 1 122 in 2015/16. SASSA investigated 83% of the reported cases with various sanctions imposed to affected individuals.

As reaffirmed by the Ministerial Advisory Committee, SASSA is taking over the management and control of the payment process that is currently performed by a third party, from 1 April 2017. The intention is to have a single payment platform, which will facilitate the payment of Social Assistance through multiple channels.

Insourcing the payment processes will ensure that SASSA is in control of the entire operational value chain. This will further improve the delivery of its services.

On 19 July 2016, President Zuma led the celebrations of 10 years of the existence of the SASSA.

The 10 year celebrations served as an opportunity for government to assess progress made since its inception and also to have direct interaction with social grant beneficiaries. To date, SASSA pays social grants to more than 17 million South Africans with a monthly investment of R11 billion.

Social assistance has over the years assisted families and children including those who are orphaned due to HIV and AIDS. In addition, there are many families that would not be able to put food on the table if it was not for the social grants, given the gloomy economic climate which makes the creation of jobs difficult, and also given the fact that some of the job seekers are unemployable due to lack of skills.

To expand its reach to vulnerable children in communities, the DSD adopted a community-based prevention and early intervention child and youth care services model known as Isibindi Model.

In 2015, more than 455 922 learners living in youth-headed households passed matric through the intervention of Isibindi Programme and 304 913 of these learners survived on social grants.

South Africa has been able to achieve goals of reducing extreme income poverty due to government's comprehensive social protection system, which includes social grants, access to free education to more than nine million children, primary healthcare for the poorest and the provision of free basic services of lights and water to indigent members of society in municipalities.

Noting the successful extension of social grants to over 16 million, government through

the DSD, is working on proposals for the creation of a comprehensive social security system that combines contributory and non-contributory elements to eradicate poverty and income protection for everyone living in South Africa.

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, 1978 (Act 110 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 department 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 to submit their annual reports (narrative and financial reports) to the department. This applies to all NPOs registered under the NPO Act, whether funded or unfunded. Currently, there are 140 513 registered NPOs and 87 565 or about 62% of them are

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 gender-based violence.

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.

In November 2016, President Zuma launched the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign in Lebowakgomo, Limpopo, under the theme; "Count Me In: Together Moving a Non-Violent South Africa Forward".

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 gender-based violence and the strengthening of NPOs.

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

The department 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 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.

During the 2015/16 financial year, 570 ICROPs and 78 Project Mikondzo interventions were conducted in poor wards identified as a priority by Cabinet.

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

re-integration 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 amongst 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 gender-based violence which are often caused by abuse of alcohol and drugs, the DSD has launched Gender-Based Violence Command Centre (GBVCC) – a 24-hour call centre.

The GBVCC, which has been named the Best Technology Innovation – Small Centre in the world at the Global Best Contact Centre Awards in Las Vegas on 5 November, 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 cell phone.

The department 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 usage of 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 (DPW), 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 share 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 and 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 and it 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 (DEA), Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta), with the DPW 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 organization.

Early Childhood Development

Government has identified ECD as a key focus area in its effort to improve the quality of basic education and care for children.

The department recognises that one of the ways of breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty is investment in children to aid their development, especially from the ages of 0 – 4.

There are plans in place to ensure that all ECD centres are registered and early childhood practitioners appropriately trained. Programmes for parental training are also in the pipeline.

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 department and its entities will identify cooperatives that need support, with the intention of developing the skills of the cooperative members 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 department 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 SRD 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

The CSG is the largest by number, totalling just below 12 million, which represents approximately 31% of the South African population.

The various social grants recorded an average of 55% growth in value since 2006, for example, the Old Age Grant grew from R820.00 to R1 500.00 in 2016. South Africa now spends close to 3% of GDP on social assistance to the value of R128 billion in 2015/16 financial year.

Ensure the provision of social assistance to eligible beneficiaries, where their income and assets fall below the set thresholds, by extending

income support to:

- Old Age provides income support to people aged 60 and above who earn less than R64 680 (if single) and R129 360 (if married) a year, whose assets do not exceed R930 600 (single) and R1 861 200 (married).
- War Veterans provides income support to men and women who fought in World War II or the Korean War who earn less than R64 680 (if single) and R129 360 (if married) a year, whose assets do not exceed R930 600 (single) and R1 861 200 (married).
- Disability provides income support to people with permanent or temporary disabilities earning less than R64 680 (single) and R129 360 (married) a year, whose assets do not exceed R930 600 (single) and R1 861 200 (married).
- Foster Care provides grants for children placed in foster care.
- Care Dependency provides income support to parents and caregivers whose annual earnings are less than R169 200 (single) and R338 400 (married), to help them care for children who are mentally or physically disabled.
- Child Support provides income support to parents and caregivers of children under 18 whose annual earnings are less than R39 600 (single) and R79 200 (married).
- Grant-in-Aid is an additional grant to the recipients of the old age grant, disability grant and war veterans grant who require regular attendance from another person due to their physical or mental condition.
- SRD provides temporary income support, food parcels and other forms of relief to those facing undue hardship.

Job creation and poverty alleviation

The *Mid-year population estimates* by Statistics South Africa (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 in South Africa is estimated to be 36,1%, which is significantly higher than adult unemployment at 15,6%.

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, DSD introduced youth unemployment policy options for South Africa with the aim of incentivising entities to employ young people.

The NYDA has provided the Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS) 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 department's fight against the spread of HIV and AIDS.

HIV and AIDS Youth Programme

Most funds continued to be disbursed to loveLife, enabling it to increase and extend its HIV and AIDS awareness programmes, and scholarships for social work students. By 2015/16, the number of students benefiting from these scholarships was expected to be 4 248.

Youth-care workers from local communities are recruited and trained for the Isibindi Model at 260 sites throughout the country.

The aim is to recruit 10 000 child and youth-care workers over the next five years. It is expected that the recruitment and deployment of this cadre of social service professionals will go a long way towards upholding government's constitutional obligation to protect and provide care and support for orphans, vulnerable children and youths affected by HIV and AIDS in South Africa.

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 (FAS) 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 liquor.

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 non-governmental organisations. 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 will cover 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 persons with disabilities.

The White Paper is a crucial step along the journey of improving the lives of persons 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 persons 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 persons with disabilities to take up the opportunities created in much larger numbers, improving performance in achieving equity targets.

Persons 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 Persons 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 Signational Kids website.

South Africa has a long-established deaf edu-

cation 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.

In October 2014, the Minister of Social Development opened the National Older Persons Golden Games at the Mbombela Stadium in

Mpumalanga.

The games, hosted in partnership with Sports and Recreation South Africa, saw older persons participating in sport and recreation activities such as the duck walk, dress-up race, football, athletics and others.

Since 2008, the 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 old age related illness at bay. [SAnews.gov.za]

The old-age grant means test would be phased out by 2016, accompanied by offsetting revisions to the secondary and tertiary rebates.

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.