

SOUTH AFRICA Yearbook 2021/22

Social Development



Social Development

Social development ensures protection against vulnerability by creating an enabling environment for the provision of a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable social development service. The Department of Social Development (DSD) provides social development services and leads government's efforts to forge partnerships through which vulnerable individuals, groups and communities become capable and active participants in their own development as well as society's.

The National Development Plan (NDP) acknowledges the need to address the critical challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality to improve short-term and long-term prospects of current and future generations. In its efforts to give expression to this guiding policy, the DSD aims to improve quality of life for poor and vulnerable people and, in so doing, contributes to Priority 3 (consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic services) and Priority 6 (a capable, ethical and developmental state) of government's 2019 – 2024 Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF).

Over the MTEF period, the department will focus on: providing income support to the poor and vulnerable; providing developmental social welfare services and increased access to services; supporting and monitoring the implementation of policies, legislation, norms and standards for the provision of social welfare services to children; addressing gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), HIV and AIDS and other social ills; and building sustainable communities.

Income support to the poor and vulnerable

The Social Assistance Programme is an important element in government's strategy to tackle poverty and inequality. This programme has proved vital in mitigating the severe effects of the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, which led to many job losses. As the elderly population – people older than 60 – is expected to increase by 3% per year over the medium term, the number of beneficiaries who receive old age grants is expected to increase from 3.9 million in 2021/22 to 4 million in 2024/25. Similarly, as the child population is expected to increase from 20.9 million in 2021/22 to 21.3 million in 2024/25, the number of beneficiaries who receive the Child Support Grant (CSG) is set to increase from 13.3 million in 2021/22 to 13.9 million in 2024/25.

The Social Security Policy and Administration programme is responsible for developing policy and administering social assistance fairly. Through the programme's Social Security Policy Development subprogramme, the department plans to coordinate consultations on social security reforms over the period ahead. These include a review of proposals on extending social assistance coverage; mandatory contributions for retirement, death and disability; the participation of informal-sector workers in a contributory social security system; and the institutional architecture and governance of a coherent, efficient and sustainable social security system. To carry out these activities, R69 million per year over the medium term is allocated to the subprogramme.

In an effort to limit fraud in relation to social grants and conduct investigations into instances of it, R219.8 million over the MTEF period is allocated to the Social Grants Fraud Investigations subprogramme.

According to Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) General Household Survey of 2021, the percentage of individuals that benefited from social grants steadily increased from 12,8% in 2003 to approximately 31% between 2017 and 2019 before increasing sharply to 35,7% in 2021.

This growth was tracked closely by that of households that received at least one social grant (growing 30,8% in 2003 to 45,5% in 2019, and 50,6% in 2021). Grant beneficiaries were most common in Eastern Cape (47,8%) and Limpopo (46,5%) and least widespread in Gauteng (23,6%) and Western Cape (26,2%).

Households that received at least one type of social grant were most common in Mpumalanga (65,8%), Limpopo (65,1%), and Eastern Cape (63,3%), and least common in Gauteng (38,4%) and Western Cape (38,7%).

The Special COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant of R350 per month was introduced in 2020 in an attempt to offset the impact of COVID-19. Nationally, 5,8% of respondents received the grant in 2021 compared to 5,3% in 2020. The highest uptake in 2021 was noted in Mpumalanga and Limpopo (both 9,5%), while the grants were least common in Western Cape (2,8%) and Gauteng (4,0%).

About 25,2% of all individuals, and 38,9% of all households in metropolitan areas received some kind of social grant (compared to 35,7% of individuals and 50,6% of households nationally). Individual grant receipt was highest in Buffalo City (35,3%) and Mangaung (32,6%) and least common in Johannesburg (24,0%) and Tshwane (25,8%).

Developmental social welfare services and increased access to services

Although the shift of the early childhood development function to the Department of Basic Education has resulted in an 80% (R3.8 billion) budget reduction in the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme, it has created capacity for the department to prioritise other aspects of social welfare. Accordingly, over the medium term, the department will focus on developing and coordinating overarching policies, legislative frameworks, norms and standards that promote integrated, quality-driven, professional and accountable service delivery.

This includes finalising the draft White Paper for Social Development, amending the Older Persons Act of 2006, training social workers to render adoption services in line with the Children's Amendment Act of 2016, and strengthening the department's monitoring of how the Social Service Professions Act of 1978 is implemented by institutionalising the oversight role of the South African Council for Social Service Professions.

Expenditure for these activities is within the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme's allocation of R939.6 million over the MTEF period. Of this allocation, R238.4 million is for the Children subprogramme, R58 million is for the Older Persons subprogramme, R41.2 million is for the People with Disabilities subprogramme and R32 million is for the Families subprogramme.

Addressing GBV, HIV and AIDS and other social ills

The provision of psychosocial services by social service practitioners is a key contribution of the sector in the fight against gender-based violence and HIV and AIDS. Activities in the Social Crime Prevention and Victim Empowerment subprogramme in the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme are focused on implementing policies related to psychosocial services. The subprogramme has an allocation of R230.8 million over the period ahead.

Through the HIV and AIDS subprogramme in the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme, the department aims to address the social and structural drivers of HIV and AIDS. The subprogramme has an allocation of R130.2 million over the medium term, R49 million of which is set to be transferred to the South African National AIDS Council to fund its operations.

According to Stats SA's mid-year population estimates of 2022, the estimated overall HIV prevalence rate is approximately 13,9% among the South African population. The total number of people living with HIV was estimated at approximately 8,45 million in 2022. For adults aged 15-49 years, an estimated 19,6% of the population was HIV positive.

The estimated number of AIDS-related deaths has generally declined since 2007 from 278 741 to 85 796 AIDS related deaths in 2022. Access to antiretroviral treatment has changed significantly over time, altering the pattern of mortality over time. Access to ART has extended the lifespan of many in South Africa, who would have otherwise died at an earlier age, as evidenced in the decline of AIDS deaths post-2006.

The presence of the COVID-19 pandemic has hampered the ability of the health sector to extend life expectancy in South Africa in the year 2021. A slight increase in AIDS related deaths is apparent in the year 2021, despite efforts to ensure ART rollout and better regimens of treatment.

Sustainable communities to reduce poverty

Activities carried out through the Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery programme include profiling vulnerable households and communities to determine their socio-economic needs and creating structures and enhancing capacity in communities to reduce social ills. To fund these activities, R90.4 million over the period ahead is allocated in the Community Development subprogramme. The department will also support civil society organisations that focus on initiatives that aim to improve livelihoods through an allocation of R669.4 million over the same period in the National Development Agency subprogramme.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the DSD had to continue providing food parcels to impoverished and vulnerable persons and households. The DSD Food and Nutrition Programme provided food to a total of 10 006 423 vulnerable individuals and 2 348 848 vulnerable households by the end of March 2021.

The Programme helps to achieve the goal of increasing access to a wide range of nutritious foods at reasonable prices. The department will continue to strengthen its participation in the District Development Model (DDM), including a DSD plan. It will coordinate participation in the DDM in 18 districts. Furthermore, a total of 18 districts will be capacitated on Community Mobilisation and Empowerment Framework towards the implementation of the DDM.

Legislation and frameworks

Several pieces of legislation determine the mandate of the DSD:

- Children's Act of 2005, as amended, which gives effect to certain rights of children as contained in the Constitution, and sets out principles and processes relating to their care and protection;
- NPOs Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997), which establishes an administrative and regulatory framework within which NPOs can conduct their affairs, and provides for their registration by the DSD;
- Older Persons Act, 2006 (Act 13 of 2006), is aimed at maintaining and promoting the rights, status, wellbeing, safety and

security of older people. It provides for older people to enjoy quality services while staying with their families and in their communities for as long as possible, and to live in residential care facilities;

- Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act, 2008 (Act 70 of 2008) associated regulations provide a legal framework for the establishment, registration and monitoring of in-patient treatment centres and halfway houses;
- 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;
- Social Service Professions Act, 1978 (Act 110 of 1978), which provides for the regulation of social service professionals;
- the 1997 *White Paper for Social Welfare* sets out the principles, guidelines, policies and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa. A new white paper for social development is currently under review;
- 1998 *White Paper on Population Policy for South Africa* is aimed at promoting the sustainable development of all South Africans by integrating population issues with development planning in all spheres of government and all sectors of society;
- 2015 *White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* focuses on putting in place measures to reduce the exclusion and inequality experienced by persons with disabilities. This includes contributing towards fighting poverty among people with disabilities and their families, and providing policy guidelines on building capacity in the public sector to deliver equitable and accessible services to them.

Budget

For the 2021/22 financial year, the DSD was allocated R232.1 billion. An estimated 96.6% (R684.4 billion) of the department's budget over the MTEF period goes towards the payment of social grants, which is administered by the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). The department expects the agency to pay social grants to 18.6 million beneficiaries, excluding recipients of the special COVID-19 Social relief of distress grant, in 2022/23.

Expenditure is expected to decrease by an average of 0.1% over the MTEF period, from R233.7 billion in 2021/22 to R233 billion in 2024/25, mainly as a result of the special COVID-19 social relief of distress grant being discontinued.

New allocations in this budget include R44 billion to extend the Special COVID-19 SRD grant until March 2023, R13.1 billion for inflation-related increases in social grants, and R1.6 billion to introduce an extended CSG for double orphans in the care of relatives.

South Africa hosted the 5th International Conference on the Eradication of Child Labour from 2 to 4 May 2022. The conference is convened every three years under the leadership of the International Labour Organisation. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was postponed from 2021 to 2022.

The conference was expected to deliberate on the global efforts to eradicate child labour. Member states would get an opportunity to reflect on their respective interventions to stop child labour in their countries. South Africa has a child labour programme of action which provides the country's roadmap towards eliminating child labour.

Entities

National Development Agency

The primary focus of the agency is to contribute towards the eradication of poverty and its causes by granting funds to civil society organisations to implement development projects in poor communities.

To inform government's response to alleviating poverty and facilitating development, over the MTEF period, the agency will partner with research and academic institutions to produce a targeted 11 research publications and host dialogues to debate the findings, which will eventually inform policy.

To carry out these activities, R33.3 million is allocated over the period ahead. A further R12.8 million is allocated for supporting a targeted 8 000 civil society organisations to meet their registration and reporting requirements, and to build their capacity in areas such as financial and general management.

Expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 2.2%, from R247.9 million in 2021/22 to R232.1 million in 2024/25, mainly as a result of one-off allocation of R30 million in 2021/22 to extend the agency's volunteer programme. The agency expects to derive 99.1% of its revenue through transfers from the department, also decreasing at an annual average rate of 2.2%, from R246 million in 2021/22 to R230 million in 2024/25.

South African Social Security Agency

The SASSA Act, 2004 (Act 9 of 2004) provides for the establishment of the SASSA, the objectives of which are to ensure the effective and efficient administration, management and payment of social assistance. The agency's core business is to administer and pay social assistance transfers. It has a large network of centres where citizens can apply for social grants and manages a large system of payment services.

The agency is currently able to process applications online only for the CSG, old age grant and foster care grant. To increase efficiencies in the distribution of social grants, the agency will focus on modernising its disbursement system to extend to all grant applications. The new, automated system is expected to be complete by 2024/25 at an estimated cost of R128 million over the medium term. It will also entail upgrading and automating core business applications, and ensuring compliance with changing regulations related to beneficiary maintenance, such as enabling real-time interface with other databases.

The agency's business process reengineering project, which began in 2021, is still under way. The project mainly involves mapping the agency's current operating model, developing a blueprint for staff organisational structures and capacity, and developing norms and standards for future operating procedures. The aim of the project, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2022/23 at a projected cost of R23.9 million, is to ensure that the agency is fit for purpose and has systems in place to improve its efficiency.

To become more customer-centric, the agency plans to consolidate its existing communications channels into a single platform. This entails the introduction of an integrated call centre to serve as a single point of contact for all incoming and outgoing communications, and provide a single view of beneficiaries and real-time access to their information. The agency plans to complete the project by 2023/24 at an estimated cost of R113 million. The agency expects to derive 99.9% (R23 billion) of its revenue over the MTEF period through transfers from the

department. Revenue is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 0.2%, from R8 billion in 2021/22 to R7.9 billion in 2024/25. This is mostly as a result of a high baseline in 2021/22 due to allocations for the special COVID-19 social relief of distress grant.

Over the medium term, the agency's total expenditure is expected to amount to R23 billion.

Programmes and projects

Social Assistance

Over the medium term, the DSD will continue to transfer funds to the SASSA for the provision of social grants to the elderly, children, war veterans and persons with disabilities. Social grants account for an estimated 94.3% (R175.3 billion per year on average) of the department's total budget over the MTEF period.

Spending on grants is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7.5% over the medium term. Mostly due to inflationary adjustments to the value of the grants and growth in the number of beneficiaries. The elderly population – people older than 60, is growing by 3% per year. As such, the number of beneficiaries who receive the old age grant is expected to increase.

As the child population grows, the number of beneficiaries who receive the CSG is also expected to increase. The high level of unemployment and poverty level in the country, combined with high wage inequality and low labour market participation, are contributory factors to the growth of the social grants to children. Furthermore, the continuing trend of generally low wages paid to those who are working means that a high proportion of working parents do not earn sufficient wages to adequately provide for their children.

For the foreseeable future, the Social Assistance programme will continue to be an important lever in government's arsenal to tackle poverty and inequality. In the immediate future as the country battles the COVID-19 pandemic, the social assistance system has become even more important as a key response to mitigate the severe impact on incomes and livelihoods of vulnerable workers and their households.

The economic fallout of the pandemic continues to reverberate across the economy, necessitating urgent intervention including the increased allocation of R40 billion to augment the social grants budget. This has been applied to provide a R250 increase for the Older Person's Grant, Disability Grant, Foster Child Grant and the Care Dependency Grant, together with a R300 once off increase to the CSG and R500 per month to the caregiver for five months. In addition, a temporary R350 per month COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant was introduced to mitigate income losses among the 18 – 59 age group who ordinarily do not receive social grants.

Social Security Policy and Administration

The programme aims to amend the Social Assistance Act of 2004 and the Fund Raising Act, 1978 (Act 107 of 1978), to address existing gaps and inconsistencies in the legislation. Specifically, the Social Assistance Amendment Act, 2020 (Act 16 of 2020) introduced a provision to empower the Minister of Social Development, with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance, to augment the CSG benefit provided to orphaned children residing with relatives. This is intended to reduce the demand on the foster child system, by reducing the number of children entering the foster care system purely to access the Foster

Child Grant due to the large differential in value between this grant and the CSG.

The Act will also enhance access to administrative justice, by reducing the time it takes for appeals to be adjudicated from 180 days to 90 days. The DSD expects the workload of the tribunal to increase once the Act is passed, since all the complainants will be able to come directly to the tribunal without first approaching the SASSA. When proclaimed, the Act will also pave the way for the establishment of an inspectorate for social assistance appeals, which will be tasked with ensuring and promoting the integrity of the social assistance framework.

The programme further aims to complete the extensive policy proposals on social security reform, ranging from extending social assistance coverage to all, introducing mandatory contributions for retirement, death and disability, creating a platform for informal sector workers to participate in social security coverage and developing an appropriate institutional architecture for a coherent, efficient and sustainable social security system in the long term.

The severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and its ability to create jobs has raised new questions about the reliance on economic growth to address unemployment and poverty, and revived interest in the prospect of a basic income grant as another lever to tackle poverty and inequality, and engender a more inclusive growth path. Ongoing policy development will continue, particularly to address very specific social security coverage gaps in relation to pregnant and lactating women, and institutional mechanisms and the cost thereof, to crowd in all government interventions to address the social protection needs of children, using the social grants as an entry point.

The department will also table the Fundraising Amendment Bill to Parliament, in order to streamline the administration of the various funds established before the democratic dispensation to provide humanitarian relief in times of disaster.

In 2020, Parliament enacted the Social Assistance Amendment Bill, which was signed by the President in the same year. The Bill prepares the stage for the introduction of a CSG Top-up Programme, which will provide a greater CSG to orphans living with family members. This policy is intended to help approximately 540 000 orphans at a cost of R1.5 billion per year. In addition, the DSD has finalised the *Green Paper on Comprehensive Social Security Reforms*, which had been discussed at NEDLAC for the previous four years.

The study provides major and far-reaching recommendations for overhauling the current social security system. The reforms are expected to create a social security system that covers everyone in the country, ensuring that those who are unable to support themselves receive social grants, and that those in both formal and informal employment have an institutional platform to make mandatory and voluntary contributions to cover themselves and their families in the event of retirement, death or disability.

Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support

The purpose of the programme is to create an enabling environment for the delivery of equitable developmental welfare services through the formulation of policies, norms, standards and best practices; and the provision of support to implementing agencies.

This programme consists of the following subprogramme:

- Service Standards, which ensures the transformation and standardisation of social welfare services through the development and coordination of overarching policies and legislation that promote integrated, quality-driven, professional and accountable service delivery;
- Social Work Scholarship, which provides full scholarships for social work students;
- Substance Abuse, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation, and norms and standards for combating substance abuse;
- Older Persons, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation, and norms and standards for social welfare services to older people;
- Disability Rights, which promotes the empowerment and rights of persons with disabilities through accelerated mainstreaming of disability considerations and the strengthening of disability specific services;
- Children, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation and norms and standards for social welfare services to children;
- Families, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation and programmes for services aimed at strengthening families;
- Social Crime Prevention and Victim Empowerment, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation and programmes aimed at protecting, empowering and supporting victims of crime and violence; and
- HIV and AIDS, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, programmes and guidelines aimed at preventing and mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS in line with the 2017 – 2022 National Strategic Plan for HIV, sexually transmitted infections and TB.

The psycho-social support programmes are meant to build competencies and capacities for these groups to cope with life demands and stresses and manage relationships well. Some of the interventions entail building capacity of Social Service Practitioners to enable mainstreaming of counselling, testing, treatment and adherence support for children and adolescents in particular. Similarly, some of the HIV prevention programmes ensure building the capacity of adolescent girls and young women and boys to be able to resist temptations to engage in risky sexual behaviour and be able to make informed choices.

Ultimately, this will result in a society where individuals, families and communities are empowered and made resilient to deal with the HIV epidemic and women, children and people with disabilities form part of the key and vulnerable populations outlined in the National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and STIs (2017 – 2022).

The DSD continues to make significant efforts to improve access to substance misuse treatment services, as seen by the construction of public treatment centers in the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Free State, and North West in 2020/21. In addition, the department received €9 million in financing to build 17 community care centres in North West, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo.

These centres work to improve service delivery in all beneficiary communities by ensuring that multiple partners provide integrated and comprehensive services in a safe and well-equipped location. Through a collaboration with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure,

the DSD was able to secure a state-owned facility to use as the GBV Command Centre.

Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery

The purpose of the programme is to support community development and promote evidence-based policy making in the DSD and the social development sector. Community development programme implementation is geared towards empowering communities through capacity enhancement and creation of structures.

Poverty and inequality continue to ravage communities as they are experienced through multi deprivation and vulnerabilities, which include poor nutrition, unemployment, poor education and poor health outcomes. The department plans to intensify its effort to ensure that vulnerable households and communities are profiled to determine their socio-economic needs. It will conduct community capacity enhancement in all nine provinces to bolster social cohesion.

Functional community structures will be created as part of prevention and addressing social ills of communities. Out of 19.1 grant recipients, the department intends to target 2% to link the beneficiaries as a means to alleviate poverty and build sustainable communities. Through the programme, the department will facilitate the implementation of the NPO Funding Policy and Partnership Model thereby ensuring uniformity in the sector. The programme will also ensure the formulation of the overarching Community Development Policy that will harness implementation of community development in the country.

Through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), the DSD will continue to create meaningful work opportunities as a social protection safety net for vulnerable individuals over the MTSF period. This is in line with government's commitment to job creation as contained in the Phase 4 EPWP Business Plan. The department also administers the NPO Act of 1997 and has identified the following outputs: NPO Policy Framework, turnaround time on NPO registration, NPO compliance monitoring and NPO education and awareness programmes as pillars that will ensure that the outcome – reduced levels of poverty – is achieved.

This is hoped to be achieved by increasing public trust and confidence through effective yet fair regulation of NPOs. Reducing poverty levels require contributions from NPOs in delivering programmes that support the achievement of set outcomes. This requires that NPOs understand legislation and compliance thereof in order to be credible and accountable entities that can deliver on their respective mandates. The planned outputs on provision of education and awareness programmes to NPOs will lead to an empowered and strengthened sector that is able to deliver quality services to vulnerable and poor communities, thus improving the quality of life.

The DSD will, in the next MTSF, implement the National Food and Nutrition Security Plan for South Africa. The plan seeks to ensure implementation of food and nutrition security initiatives targeting vulnerable individuals and households. This will be accomplished through the coordination of the DSD food and nutrition interventions which include all centre-based feeding programmes providing nutritious food to the poor and vulnerable in partnership with civil society organisations, social partners and agencies. Community development will seek to ensure development of the National Community Development Policy Framework, with an emphasis on the creation of vibrant and sustainable communities. The department will also

prioritise the linking of recipients below 60 years of age to sustainable livelihoods opportunities. The Community Development branch will continue with the development of policy framework, guidelines and tools to enhance community development within the country.

Ten-Point Plan

The strategic plan of the DSD is informed by the 10-Point Plan, which represents the priorities to be addressed by the social development sector. These are:

- Rebuilding of family, community and social relations: restoring the ethics of care and human development in all welfare programmes. This requires an urgent rebuilding of family, community and social relations in order to promote social integration.
- Integrated poverty eradication strategy: designing an integrated poverty eradication strategy that provides direct benefits to those in greatest need, especially women, youth and children in rural areas and informal settlements.
- Comprehensive social security system: developing a comprehensive social security system that builds on existing contributory and non-contributory schemes and prioritises the most vulnerable households.
- Violence against women and children, older persons and other vulnerable groups: responding to brutal effects of all forms of violence against women, children, older persons and other vulnerable groups, as well as designing effective strategies to deal with perpetrators.
- HIV and AIDS: programmes include a range of services to support community-based care and assistance for the people living with HIV and AIDS. Particular attention will be given to orphans and children infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.
- Youth development: developing a national strategy to reduce the number of youth in conflict with the law and promoting youth development within the framework of the National Crime Prevention Strategy and in partnership with the National Youth Commission.
- Accessibility of social welfare services: making social welfare services accessible and available to people in rural, peri-urban and informal settlements, and ensuring equity in service provision.
- Services to people with disabilities: redesigning services to people with disabilities in ways that promote their human rights and economic development and working with people with disabilities to ensure that their needs are met without further marginalising them.
- Commitment to cooperative governance: work must be based on a commitment to cooperative governance that includes working with different spheres of government and civil society.
- Train, educate, re-deploy and employ a new category of workers in social development: this includes the re-orientation of social service workers to meet the challenges of South Africa and link these to regional and global demands.

Expanded Public Works Programme

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. The EPWP projects

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

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.

The EPWP Knowledge Management Committee is composed of various national government departments such as Social Development, Environmental Affairs, and Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) leading the committee. Whilst the DPWI must continue with its role of coordinating the EPWP nationally, the DSD drives the implementation of the projects in the social sector space.

War on Poverty campaign

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

The project is in line with government's developmental agenda 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.

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 DSD and the FoodForward SA 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.

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 2013 *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, children, the elderly and people with disabilities.

National Minimum Wage (NMW)

The NMW came into effect in January 2019. In March 2022, the NMW for each ordinary hour worked was increased from R21.69 to R23.19. The adjustment provides exceptions for several worker groups, including:

- farmworkers are entitled to a minimum wage of R23.19 per hour;
- domestic workers are entitled to a minimum wage of R23.19 per hour;
- workers employed on the Expanded Public Works Programme are entitled to a minimum wage of R12.75 per hour; and
- Workers who have concluded learnership agreements contemplated in section 17 of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) are entitled to allowances contained in Schedule 2.

The minimum wage is a tool to ensure that vulnerable workers do not fall below the poverty line and it is designed to reduce inequality and huge disparities in income in the national labour market.

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. 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.

Almost 300 Isibindi projects have been replicated across South African provinces, serving over 100 000 children who would otherwise have fallen outside of the care and protection matrix. Including quality assurance mechanisms, and a community development approach, the Isibindi model has received public acclaim, and is currently being scaled up through a South African government initiative.

Additional components of the model include a young women's empowerment programme, a young men's empowerment programme, a non-centre based ECD model and a disability model – all of which enable progressive realisation of a wide range of children's rights and protection needs, through effective deployment of community-based child and youth care workers.

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 four main pillars – disclosure, communication, rights and 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; and
- 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.

Victim Empowerment Programme

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 Victim Empowerment Policy 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 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 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 home community-based care 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

The Child Labour Programme of Action is a national partnership initiated by government and civil-society partners comprising organised business, organised labour and NGOs. It is led by the Department of Labour. It is South Africa's roadmap towards the prevention, reduction and eventual elimination of child labour. The programme 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.

Childline South Africa

Childline offers a 24-hour toll-free crisis line (116) 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 creates 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 services and children,
- therapy for abused and traumatised children and their families,
- court preparation of child witnesses,
- networking and coordination,
- lobbying and advocacy, and
- analysis of law and policy.

National Child Protection Week

National Child Protection Week 2022 was commemorated from 29 May to 5 June. It was held under the theme; "Let us all Protect Children during COVID-19 and Beyond". National Child Protection Week is commemorated in the country annually to raise awareness of the rights of children as articulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and Children's Act of 2005.

The campaign is led by the DSD in partnership with key government departments and civil society organisations rendering child protection services. The Constitution has the highest regard for children, their protection and non-violation of their rights. Protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse is not only a basic value but also an obligation set out in Article 28 of the Constitution.

Government has put in place various early intervention programmes that focus on sexual and reproductive health, and rights, such as an Integrated Programme of Action that responds to teenage pregnancy by coordinating the work of all stakeholders. It ensures that resources are directed to the hardest hit areas with a focus on prevention and early intervention.

The National Integrated School Health Programme strengthens key interventions towards dealing with teenage pregnancy. The policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Schools is grounded in supporting learners who fall pregnant and is aimed at reducing the increasing number of learner pregnancies at schools.

The DSD's Sinovuyo Parenting Programme helps build the capacity of teenage parents to care for their children, and life skills programmes such as Yolo, ChomMY, Boys and Men Championing Change and Ezabasha are helping develop young people.

The DSD has a 24-hour call centre dedicated to provide support and counselling to victims of GBV:

- The toll-free number to call is 0800 428 428 (0800 GBV GBV) 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.

- Other numbers to call are Childline South Africa on 0800 055 555 and Child Welfare South Africa on 0861 4 CHILD (24453)/ 011 452-4110.

COVID-19 Rapid Needs Assessment Report

In October 2020, the DSD and the United Nations Development Programme officially launched the COVID-19 Rapid Needs Assessment Report after the department commissioned the agency to conduct a rapid assessment of the COVID-19 situation, with a specific focus on vulnerable groups.

The results have further revealed the deeply ingrained socio-economic challenges such as poverty, unemployment and inequality. The human impact of the pandemic has been devastating with income loss estimated at between R41 and R53 million for 9.5 million affected formal sector employees, and 2.5 million informal workers and owners of small, micro and medium enterprises.

The report also revealed that 740 616 informal workers were at risk of falling below the upper poverty line during the extended lockdown due to COVID-19, while 900 000 households had severely inadequate access to food. The report recommended that the country needs to prepare for the long haul. The key recommendation includes raising the COVID-19 Relief Grant from R350 to at least R560 per month.

Role players

Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities is situated in The Presidency. The department derives its mandate from Section 9(3) of the Constitution. It is required to champion socio-economic transformation and the empowerment and participation of women, youth and people with disabilities through mainstreaming, advocacy, and monitoring and evaluation.

The NDP envisages economic participation, education and skills development for women and other vulnerable groups, and the elimination of violence against women and children. This vision is given expression by Priority 1 (economic transformation and job creation), Priority 5 (social cohesion and safe communities) and Priority 6 (a capable, ethical and developmental state) of government's 2019 – 2024 MTSF. The work of this department is directly aligned with these priorities through facilitating the planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and auditing processes responsive to gender, youth and disability rights across the State.

Accordingly, over the medium term, the department intends to focus on reducing GBVF, and strengthening the national gender machinery; making interventions for economic empowerment; engaging in responsive government-wide planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation; ensuring compliance with international commitments; promoting the rights of people with disabilities, and supporting the development of young people.

People with disabilities

The 2016 DSD White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (WPRPD) takes its cue from the Constitution and a number of international instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, the 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 the country closer to a fully inclusive society.

The White Paper:

- updates South Africa's 1997 *White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy*;
- integrates obligations of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and in the Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (both of which South Africa has signed), with South Africa's legislation, policy frameworks and the NDP;
- endorses a mainstreaming trajectory for realising the rights of persons with disabilities;
- provides clarity on and guides the development of standard operating procedures for mainstreaming disability;
- guides the review of all existing, and the development of new, sectoral policies, programmes, budgets and reporting systems, to bring these in line with both Constitutional and international treaty obligations;
- stipulates norms and standards for the removal of discriminatory barriers that perpetuate the exclusion and segregation of persons with disabilities; and
- outlines the responsibilities and accountabilities of the various stakeholders involved in providing barrier-free, appropriate, effective, efficient and coordinated service delivery to persons with disabilities, and guides self-representation of persons with disabilities.

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, the 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.

The vision of the WPRPD is the creation of a free and just society inclusive of all persons with disabilities as equal citizens. It commits duty bearers to realising the rights of persons with disabilities by:

- accelerating implementation of existing legislation that advocates equality for persons with disabilities;
- taking calculated action to ensure that their rights as equal persons are upheld;
- removing discriminatory barriers to access and participation;
- ensuring that universal design informs access and participation in

the planning, budgeting and service delivery value chain of all programmes;

- recognising the right to self-representation;
 - acknowledging that not all persons with disabilities are alike, and that personal circumstances, gender, age, sexuality, religious and cultural backgrounds, and geographical location, requires different responses; and
 - embedding the obligations contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in legislation, policy and service delivery.
- The WPRPD is built on nine strategic pillars:
- Removing barriers to access and participation.
 - Protecting the rights of persons at risk of compounded marginalisation.
 - Supporting sustainable integrated community life.
 - Promoting and supporting the empowerment of children, women, youth and persons with disabilities.
 - Reducing economic vulnerability and releasing human capital.
 - Strengthening the representative voice of persons with disabilities.
 - Building a disability equitable state machinery.
 - Promoting international cooperation.
 - Monitoring and evaluation.

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 South African official languages, Braille training that entails writing and reading, and orientation and mobility training.

The purpose of Blind SA is to end the cycle of poverty for blind South Africans, empowering them with knowledge and information through education, Braille and developmental services. It aims to break down barriers, provide opportunities and create answers that improve the quality of life for the blind community so that they can live the life they choose. Recent initiatives include Mali-Bhala – a money counter and signature guide.

This locally created device comes in two standard sizes that are designed to fit either in a person's wallet or pocket. It is used as an indicator to differentiate between the five South African 'Mandela' bank notes and as a signature guide.

South African Braille Authority (SABA)

The SABA promotes and advocates for Braille and Braille-related matters in South Africa. Its 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 the SABA include schools for the blind, consumer organisations of the blind, student disability units, Braille producers and the South African Library for the Blind. Through the SABA, South Africa is a member of the International Council on English Braille. The membership enables the country 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 fundraising 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. It is also affiliated to international organisations, including the African Union of the Blind and the World Blind Union.

Support for the deaf

South Africa's national organisation for the deaf is the Deaf Federation of South Africa (DeafSA). It acts as the national research, information and community action organisation on behalf of South Africans that are culturally and linguistically deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind.

DeafSA, formerly known as the South African National Council for the Deaf (SANCD), was founded in 1929. In 1995, the SANCD was transformed to a new democratically elected organisation, the DeafSA. This resulted in a paradigm shift from an organisation for the deaf to one of the deaf.

The changes in the constitution and attitudes also meant that decisions about the services and affairs of deaf people were no longer taken by hearing people on behalf of deaf people – but by deaf people. The organisation has nine provincial chapters throughout South Africa. An estimated 500 000 to 600 000 South Africans use the South African Sign Language (SASL). As sign language has grown in South Africa – particularly baby sign language – an NPO, Sign Language Education and Development, has been formed to promote the language. Signing with hearing babies and children is being promoted through the Signational Kids website. South Africa has a long-established deaf education system.

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 the 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. In 2018, sign language was administered as a new subject for the first time during the National Senior Certificate examinations.

SASL Charter

In 2020, the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) launched the SASL Charter. With September being Deaf Awareness Month, the launch of the SASL Charter kickstarted various activities that were undertaken by the PanSALB in various parts of the country to raise awareness about this initiative.

The charter was conceptualised to address issues that relate to communication, access to information, facilities and social justice for the deaf community, including the type of service provided by the SASL Charter interpreters in general.

The charter articulates the linguistic rights of deaf persons in South Africa and is aimed at creating conditions for the development of the SASL. It compels all government departments, and other organs of state, as well as the private sector to make provisions for SASL interpreting. It also guarantees access to services by deaf persons through ensuring that essential service staff, such as social workers and police officers, receive advanced level training in SASL.

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, Arts and Culture, and other stakeholders to promote general health among older persons, especially through sports to promote general well-being. In 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 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. 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 DSD about the number of unemployed social workers who have studied outside the DSD scholarship programme. This aims to address the issue of

qualified social workers who are unemployed.

Government has 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 of Social Development on matters affecting the professions in respect of which professional boards have been established; and
- controlling and exercising authority regarding all financial matters relating to the council and the professional boards; and assisting in the promotion of social services.

