

Pocket Guide to South Africa 2016/17  
Social Development



The Department of Social Development (DSD) is not established in terms of a single act. Several pieces of legislation determine its mandate, including the Social Assistance Act of 2004, which provides a legislative framework for providing social assistance.

The Act sets out the different types of grants payable, as well as their qualifying criteria. It also makes provision for the establishment of the inspectorate for social assistance. Other pieces of legislation define the department's mandate further:

- The **Non-Profit Organisations Act of 1997** establishes an administrative and regulatory framework within which non-profit organisations can conduct their affairs, and provides for their registration by the department.
- The **Older Persons Act of 2006** establishes a framework for empowering and protecting older persons, and promoting and maintaining their status, rights, well-being, safety and security. It provides for older persons to enjoy good quality services while staying with their families in their communities for as long as possible. It also makes provision for older persons to live in residential care facilities.
- The **Children's Act of 2005** sets out principles relating to the care and protection of children, and defines parental responsibilities and rights. It deals with early childhood development (ECD), drop-in centres and early intervention, children in alternative care such as foster care, child and youth care centres and the adoption of children. The national ECD policy aims to define the provision of equitable ECD services in South Africa.
- The **Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act of 2008** regulates substance abuse services and facilities.
- The **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.
- The **National Disability Rights Policy** deepens the mainstreaming trajectory for realising the rights of persons with disabilities. The policy does this through the development of targeted interventions that apply the principles of universal design, and guide the review of existing and development of new sectoral legislation and policies, programmes, budgets and reporting systems

to bring these in line with constitutional and international treaty obligations.

- The **1997 White Paper for Social Welfare** sets out the principles, guidelines, policies and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa. It provides the foundation for social welfare in the post-1994 era.

The DSD's focus over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework period will be on key social protection objectives such as deepening social assistance and social security; making investments to increase access to quality ECD services; improving the welfare sector through policy and legislative reform; facilitating food and nutrition initiatives to ensure that every hungry household is supported; supporting interventions to prevent HIV transmission and strengthen HIV care, and expanding substance abuse treatment centres.

The work of the department contributes to Outcome 13 (an inclusive and responsive social protection system) of government's 2014-2019 Medium Term Strategic Framework. A key element of the outcome entails reforming and standardising the social welfare system. Reforms will largely be driven by the review of the *1997 White Paper for Social Welfare*.

## **Role players**

### **Ministry of Women**

The Ministry of Women is situated in The Presidency. Its mandate is to lead, coordinate and oversee the transformation agenda on women's socio-economic empowerment, rights and equality.

South Africa is a signatory to the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development. The protocol prohibits marriages of girls below the age of 18 and is consistent with the objective of "She Conquers Campaign", which is a national campaign aimed at empowering adolescent girls and young women. It aims to keep young girls at school up to the age of 24.

### **National Development Agency (NDA)**

The NDA focuses on strengthening the institutional capacity of civil society. The agency also promotes consultation and dialogue between civil society and the State, debates policy development and conducts research.

Capacity-building interventions ensure 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's Programme Management Unit provides 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.

### **National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)**

The main role of the NYDA is to initiate, implement, facilitate and monitor youth development interventions aimed at reducing youth unemployment and promoting social cohesion.

South Africa, like most countries, is grappling with the challenge of youth unemployment.

The Youth Employment Accord (2013) and the Skills Accord (2011) – signed by business, government, labour, civil society and NGOs – aim to improve the equipping and placement of young people in jobs, and generally make the economy sensitive to the employment needs of young people.

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.

### **South African Social Security Agency (SASSA)**

SASSA's core business is to administer, finance and pay social security transfers. Among other things, it is required to 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 was expected to conduct extended beneficiary education campaigns to inform beneficiaries of their rights, and to protect them from unwarranted and unsolicited service providers marketing goods and products.

It was also expected to introduce measures to deal with disputes arising from deductions and electronic funds transfer debits from social grants.

## **Programmes and projects**

### **Improving the provision of ECD services**

ECD refers to the processes by which children from birth to at least nine years grow and thrive, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially. The South African Government recognises that increasing access to, as well as improving the quality of ECD provision, will contribute

significantly to improving the learning outcomes of children within the basic education sector.

### **Project Mikondzo**

Project Mikondzo (which means “footprint” in Xitsonga) is a nationwide service-delivery initiative to assess the footprint and impact of the social development system.

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

The project provides a platform for profiling households and communities, and developing community and household intervention plans. The intention is to profile 300 000 households and develop 2 400 community plans in 1 256 municipal wards between 2016/17 and 2018/19.

### **Tackling substance abuse**

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.

### **Gender-Based Violence Command Centre (GBVCC)**

The GBVCC is a 24-hour call centre that was launched in March 2014 to provide immediate, consistent, coordinated and timely support and counselling to victims of GBV. The GBVCC is linked to the services of the police, emergency medical services and the Department of Health.

The toll-free number to call to speak to a social worker for assistance and counselling is 0800 428 428 (0800 GBV GBV). Callers can also request a social worker from the Command Centre to contact them by dialling \*120\*7867# (free) from any cellphone.

The GBVCC has attended to a variety emergency situations including indecent assault, physical violence, rape, abandoned children and verbal abuse. It has also attended to cases such as stalking, emotional abuse, sexual harassment, forced marriages, forced prostitution, elderly citizen abuse, bullying and family disputes.

The GBVCC uses technology to geographically locate a caller from a mobile phone in order to determine the resources

nearest to the caller such as a social worker, a police station, a hospital or safe house.

### **Social security**

Social grants account for 94.3% of the department's total budget allocation over the MTEF period and the number of beneficiaries was expected to reach 18.1 million by the end of 2019/20.

The number of beneficiaries receiving the Child Support Grant (CSG) was expected to grow from 12.3 million in 2017/18 to 12.8 million in 2019/20 as the child population grows and efforts were being made to sign up those who are eligible but currently are not receiving the grant.

The number of beneficiaries receiving the Old Age Grant is also expected to grow, from 3.4 million in 2017/18 to 3.6 million in 2019/20, as the elderly population grows. As a result of these increases in beneficiary numbers and inflationary adjustments to grant values, expenditure on grants is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8.2% over the medium term, reaching R175.6 billion in 2019/20.

Spending on grants is also expected to increase as the DSD works towards providing a higher child support grant to orphans who are in the care of extended family members. This will bring the social protection provided to these orphans closer to parity with that of those in foster care.

These proposed changes to the CSG are contained in the Social Assistance Amendment Bill, which was submitted to Cabinet for approval in 2016/17 and were expected to go to Parliament in 2017/18.

The Child-Support and Old-Age grants are the two largest social grant programmes, constituting about 75% of total grant spending. Others are the War Veterans, Disability, Grant-in-Aid, Foster Child and Care Dependency grants.

### **Food for All Programme**

An estimated 14 million South Africans go hungry every day. FoodBank South Africa collects edible surplus food from manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers, and redistributes this food to hundreds of verified NPOs that collectively feed thousands of hungry people daily. The vision is 'a South Africa without hunger'.

FoodBank South Africa relies on the generosity of corporates and individuals to implement this cost-effective solution to feed hungry people.

## **HIV and AIDS support**

South Africa is continually striving to do more to stop new HIV infections and prevent AIDS-related deaths. In March 2017, the country launched its third five-year National Strategic Plan (NSP) on HIV, Sexually Transmitted Infections and Tuberculosis (2017–2022) under the slogan “Let Our Actions Count”.

The NSP, a guide for the country’s response to these infections, seeks to reduce new HIV infections by 63% – from 270 000 in 2016 to less than 100 000 by 2022.

## **People with disabilities**

In March 2016, government released the *White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (WPRPD) for public comment.

The White Paper is a call to action for government, civil society and the private sector to work together to ensure the socio-economic inclusion of persons with disabilities. Government seeks to create a caring and inclusive society that protects and develops the human potential of its children, a society for all where persons with disabilities enjoy the same rights as their fellow citizens, and where all citizens and institutions share equal responsibility for building such a society.

The WPRPD is intended to accelerate transformation and redress regarding full inclusion, integration and equality for persons with disabilities.

South Africa has been celebrating the International Day for Persons with Disabilities annually since 1997.

## **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, to name a few.

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.

## National Youth Policy (NYP)

The NYP for 2015 – 2020 (NYP 2020) focuses on redressing the wrongs of the past and addressing the specific challenges and immediate needs of the country's youth.

The NYP 2020 builds on South Africa's first NYP, which covered the period 2009 – 2014.

The policy seeks to create an environment that enables the young people of South Africa to reach their potential. It outlines interventions to enable the optimal development of young people, both as individuals and as members of South African society, enhancing their capabilities to transform the economy and the country.

This will be achieved by addressing their needs; promoting positive outcomes, opportunities, choices and relationships; and providing the support necessary to develop all young people, particularly those outside the social, political and economic mainstream. The NYP 2020 emphasises the need for various youth development efforts and interventions that holistically respond to all aspects or spheres of young people's lives.

## 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. 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 National Council for the Blind (SANCB)

The SANCB is the coordinating body for over 100-member organisations throughout South Africa. These organisations span the full spectrum of services offered for and to blind and partially sighted persons.

## Support for the hearing impaired

South Africa's national organisation for the hearing impaired is the Deaf Federation of South Africa (DeafSA), formerly the South African National Council for the Deaf, which was established in 1929. DeafSA has nine provincial chapters throughout South Africa. An estimated 500 000 to 600 000 South Africans use South African Sign Language.



Other private organisations include the National Institute for the Deaf and the South African National Deaf Association.

## **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.

The government has since 2008 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.

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.

## **South African Braille Authority**

The South African Braille Authority was established in May 2012 as an NGO. Its purpose is to set and maintain standards for Braille in all 11 official languages of South Africa.

