



MINISTER
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Speech by the Minister of Social Development, Ms Lindiwe Zulu, MP on the occasion of the tabling of the Social Development Portfolio Budget Vote 19 to the National Assembly

**Tuesday, 30 May 2023
Cape Town**

Honourable Chairperson;
My Colleague, the Deputy Minister of Social Development, Honourable Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu;
Ministers and Deputy Ministers here present;
Honourable Chairperson and Members of the Portfolio Committee on Social Development;
Honourable Members of the National Assembly;
Ladies and Gentlemen; and
Fellow South Africans.

1. Honourable Chairperson of the session. Thank you for this opportunity for me to present the 2023/24 Budget Vote for the Department of Social Development under the theme “DSD@Work: Leaving No One Behind”.
2. We present this Budget Vote to you during the national Child Protection Week that we launched under the theme “Protection of Children during and after CoVID-19” in recognition of the need for resilience where children are affected by shocks and disasters. In the same breath, the matter of newborn babies that were recently reported to have been placed in cardboard boxes instead of incubators or crib beds in the neo-natal ward of the Mahikeng Provincial Hospital is among the harmful instances that warrants our collective wisdom and solutions so that they do not recur.
3. This annual commemoration serves as a reminder that our country’s children are the embodiment of the future of our society. Consequently, when every member of our families and communities actively invests her-/himself in ensuring that no child suffers any form of neglect, abuse, violence or exploitation, we will each be investing in a safer, more productive and prosperous South Africa. For this reason, we should continuously strive to improve the prospects of patriotic and productive future South Africans today. Among others, the Child Protection Week highlights the fact that the success

of all child protection efforts lie in integrating this responsibility into everyday life throughout the year and over one's life.

4. Honourable Chair. We also bring you this budget during the Africa Month: the month during which our collective as South Africans are joining fellow Africans throughout the world in commemorating the founding of the predecessor of the African Union (AU), namely the Organisation of African Unity, in 1963. Whereas South Africans believe that as Africans we have solutions to the challenges that we are encountering, they also stand firmly behind the promotion and achievement of all the aspects of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.
5. Honourable Chair and Members, we note that we are presenting this Budget Vote on the backdrop of: yawning inequalities between South Africans; the rising cost of living; record high unemployment rate of 32.9%; a stagnating economic growth; and shrinking fiscal space. A case in point is the increase of the rate of lending money to a 14-year high of 11.75% last Thursday.
6. Compounding these dim economic prospects are the health, social and climate shocks and disasters that South Africans continued to endure throughout the Sixth Administration. Consequently, this Budget Vote adds to our concerted bush back against the elements, shocks and disasters that are an affront on the people.
7. Honourable Chair. As we are tabling the 2023/24 Budget Vote we reiterate our most pressing concern is that the Social Development budget allocation has not kept pace with our growing population and the complexity of their social development needs that a series of empirical research established over the years. Equally concerning are the rising costs of unfunded and under-funded mandates which this Portfolio is expected to implement. In this regard, we look forward to working with the Honourable Members to correct these resource shortfalls towards ensuring that we meaningfully attend to the aspirations of the people.
8. As a result, I note that it must have been against the state of the people that arises from intolerable conditions such as the ones I have just described that the literary genius of our times, Ben Okri, wrote a poem that he titled "Is Humanity Exhausted?" in which he cautioned [and I quote]:

I hear them talk about the end
Of history.
But those of us who haven't tasted
The best fruits of time yet,
To whom history has been harsh,
We think differently.
We know that history is all there
To be made in the future. [End of quote]

9. Honourable Chair. Yes, beyond our political differences the state of the people of South Africa is a serious matter for every one of us. For the reason that the improvement of the state of the people takes precedence over everything else, in tabling Budget Vote 19 of the Department of Social Development I am calling upon each one of us to join efforts in addressing the multi-faceted challenges that afflict them.

The Priorities of the 2023/24 Budget Vote

10. Working together in pursuit of realizing the aspirations of the people of South Africa, during the 2023/24 financial year we will give priority to:
 - 10.1 building a capable, responsive and ethical Social Development portfolio;
 - 10.2 working together with other mandates of government, the Department of Social Development will produce South Africa's poverty alleviation strategy;
 - 10.3 optimizing the performance of Non-Profit Organisations (NPO) while implementing a risk-based supervision framework that will prevent the abuse of NPOs in money laundering, terrorism financing and proliferation financing;
 - 10.4 strengthening the provision of care and support services for the survivors of gender-based violence and femicide through the provision and operationalization of shelters, economic participation and psychosocial support services;
 - 10.5 expanding community-based child care and protection services as well as early intervention services for older persons and persons with disabilities;
 - 10.6 creating employment opportunities for social service professionals to address the social behaviour change challenges and help curb the rise of social ills;
 - 10.7 scaling up interventions that address the scourge of alcohol and substance abuse and the associated challenges of gangsterism;
 - 10.8 developing and operationalizing the National Integrated Social Protection Information System (or, NISPIS) with the view to derive the value of integrating service delivery data, and from which the quality and reliability these services can be improved;
 - 10.9 working with stakeholders across government, the private sector and civil society sector, the Social Development portfolio will improve its disaster preparedness, coordination and responsiveness; and

- 10.10 devising economic participation interventions that particularly target our programmes' pre-existing youth beneficiaries.

2023/24 Budget Vote

11. Having identified these priorities, I am tabling Budget Vote 19 of the Department of Social Development as follows:
- 11.1 The total budget allocation for the National Department of Social Development for the 2023/24 financial year is R263 billion. Included in this is an amount of R253 billion that consists of direct cash transfer payments that SASSA expects to pay to a projected 19.3 million eligible grant beneficiaries by March 2024. SASSA's allocation accounts for an estimated 96.4% of the Department's total budget over the MTEF period.
- 11.2 The Department's total allocation for the 2023/24 financial year includes an additional R41 billion that will be directed towards:
- 11.2.1 the implementation and administration of the CoVID-19 SRD until March 2024 as announced by the Honourable Minister of Finance (R35.7 billion and R400 million, respectively);
- 11.2.2 the inflationary increase of the value of grants (R5.8 billion); and
- 11.2.3 the compensation of employees (R15 million).
- 11.3 The Department's total budget allocation includes an amount of R7.8 billion for SASSA's administration of grants. R220 million will be transferred to the NDA for this entity to carry out its mandate as legislated in the *National Development Agency Act 108 of 1998* as amended.
- 11.4 Honourable Chair. Having distributed these amounts accordingly, an amount of R951 million remains for the Department's management and operations' budget. This amount is further re-allocated towards the support services programmes as follows:
- 11.4.1 Administration — R426 million;
- 11.4.2 Social Security Policy and Administration — R116 million;
- 11.4.3 Social Welfare Services — R267 million; and
- 11.4.4 Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery — R141 million.

Key Programme Deliverables During the 2023/24 Financial Year

12. These programmes of the Social Development portfolio will particularly focus on realising the following deliverables during the 2023/24 financial year:

12.1 Administration (or, Programme 1): The reason for the existence of this programme is to provide leadership, management and support services to the Department and the social development sector. R426 million is allocated to this programme. Among others, the programme will continue to improve governance and institutional control measures at all levels. As part of this programme, strategic vacancies will be filled during the 2023/24 financial year. In addition, SASSA targets to reach children who are below the age of 1 years. In so doing, SASSA will be ensuring that the number of its prospective beneficiaries within this age band is duly identified and does benefit from diverse statutory services that the Social Development portfolio offers. Ultimately, this will contribute to the visibility, improvement and accessibility of the portfolio services at the community level.

12.2 Social Security and Administration (or, Programme 3): This programme is responsible for the development of the social security policy, the administration of social grants as well as ensuring that administrative justice is enforced with respect to social grants. R116 million has been allocated to this programme. The Social Development portfolio continues to implement the special CoVID-19 Social Relief of Distress. This benefit has created sufficient grounds for our society to implement a permanent intervention that is targeted at helping people who have limited likelihood of rising out of poverty unless government uses its power to raise their life prospects. In the quest to centre the need to invest in the people, this programme will invite rigorous engagements wherein the comprehensive social security paper will be re-introduced and discussed.

12.3 Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support (or, Programme 4): Whereas this programme exists to create an enabling environment wherein developmental welfare services can equitably be delivered, R267 million has been allocated for its implementation. In the 2023/24 financial year, this programme is going to focus on: strengthening the care, protection, support, promotion and advocacy of the rights of children, older persons and people with disabilities; improving interventions that are aimed at moving children from vulnerability to resilience by means of integrating key services such as nutrition provision, educational support, psychosocial support, etc. together; the establishment and operationalisation of gender-based violence protection shelters in metropolitan/district municipalities that do not have them as well as Khuseleka centres in 3 provinces where there are none. Also, while partnering with civil society, universities and the private sector, this year the programme will be intensifying the fight against substance abuse.

- 12.4 Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery (or, Programme 5): The rationale for the existence of this programme is to develop and facilitate the implementation of community development services that will enable the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded among South Africans to build sustainable, vibrant and healthy communities and secure a better life for themselves. An amount of R141 million has been allocated for this purpose. This programme is the Department's primary mechanism with which conducive environments are enabled for the creation of vibrant and sustainable individuals, families and communities. The Department's interventions that target poverty alleviation, capacity building at the community level, community mobilisation and the economic linkages of beneficiaries are expressed through this programme.
13. Through provincial social development departments, the delivery of social welfare services is estimated to result in the expenditure of R65.2 billion over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework.

National Development Agency (NDA)

14. The National Development Agency has been allocated R220 million in this financial year to contribute towards Government's effort to reduce poverty and create job opportunities through grant funding and capacity building to civil society organisations. The Agency is expected to create 3 000 job opportunities in the current financial year. Of this number, 2 300 will be created through the implementation of the Volunteer Programme that will be funded by the Presidential Employment Stimulus Package.
15. With regard to implementation of the Partnership Model, the NDA has signed a new agreement with the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) to the value of R103, 5 million. This will be directed towards funding venture creation and sustainable livelihoods initiatives that will benefit 1 975 UIF beneficiaries.
16. In addition to grant funding, the Agency will support on average 3 000 civil society organisations per year by strengthening institutional areas such as governance, compliance, financial management, reporting and conflict resolution over the MTEF period.
17. To give effect to the District Development Model, the NDA will be piloting one project per district in all nine provinces to enhance sustainable livelihoods and social entrepreneurship opportunities for rural communities across the country.
18. The new NDA Board under the leadership of Ms Ruth Bhengu brings incisive experiences and expertise of the development landscape that are necessary in providing the NDA with strategic direction. This guidance will help this Agency to execute its legislative mandate including its turn-around strategy. On a related matter, I have directed the Board to fill the vacant position of CEO as a matter of priority.

South African Social Security Agency (SASSA)

19. Honourable Chair. Very briefly, let me congratulate the Chief Executive Officer and entire team of one of our entities, the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), for receiving on this Africa Month the prestigious 2023 Good Practice Award in Social Security for Africa. This was recently conferred on SASSA by the International Social Security Association (ISSA) through its Regional Social Security Forum in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.
20. The 2023 Good Practice Award in Social Security for Africa is the meritorious recognition of SASSA's extension of the Child Support Grant (CSG) to vulnerable children in communities throughout our country. SASSA's entry was chosen from among 48 member institutions on the continent. In addition, SASSA received two Certificates of Merit for:
 - 20.1 the responsive implementation of the Social Relief of Distress (SRD) for victims affected by regional floods in the KwaZulu-Natal province; as well as
 - 20.2 the innovative implementation of the Special CoVID-19 SRD in response to the advent of CoVID-19.
21. The recognition of our work at the regional and global levels is an inspiration to our frontline personnel who relentlessly work towards meeting the aspirations of all South Africans through innovations. Indeed, SASSA stands among premier social security institutions on the African continent and in the world. Further, this Award is explicitly saying to all of us in the Social Development portfolio: Continue to be the innovators of regional and global best practices as well as trailblazers where this concerns serving the people.
22. During this financial year, SASSA will implement office accommodation improvement strategy in 54 identified offices focusing on physical accessibility; alternative power supply and network connectivity amongst others. This translates in 6 offices per province. In the same vein, the Queue Management System that SASSA piloted in the previous financial year has proven to be highly effective towards improving operational efficiency and customer experience. Consequently, this financial year SASSA will be implementing its use in 27 SASSA local offices across all nine provinces. Within the first quarter of this financial year SASSA expected to complete its Business Process Re-engineering.
23. A timely initiative by SASSA are partnership collaborations that this entity is entering into with the view link selected grant beneficiaries with short-term skills training and economic participation opportunities.

Conclusion

24. Honourable Chair. Last June we introduced the Top-Up Child Support Grant (CSG) as part of the legal solution to address Foster Care backlogs. Nearly a year later, I remain concerned about the low uptake rate for this grant. In the quest to increase this number throughout the course of this financial year we are going to embark on a nationwide multi-media communication campaign. This Budget Vote marks the beginning of that communication campaign. Accordingly, I appeal to all those who are taking care of orphans and vulnerable children, faith- and community-based organisations to register such children for the Top-Up CSG. I also want to appeal to the Honourable Members to spread the message to your various constituencies across the length and breadth of our country.
25. As I conclude, this Budget Vote continues to fulfil the commitment of the Sixth Administration to improve the provision of the services that we render to the public. Inasmuch as it materializes the benefits of social protection and developmental social welfare for vulnerable South Africans, it further translates the guidance of the African National Congress (ANC) that 2023 should be the year of decisive action to advance the people's interest as well as to renew our society. Consequently, suggestions that seek to divide us where the people are concerned are nothing short of the stubborn past that weakens our strength as a collective.
26. Those of us who are in the Social Development portfolio — inclusive of the Department of Social Development, SASSA, the NDA, and the nine provincial departments — the dim backdrop that I painted earlier exerts additional demands on our responsibility to protect South Africans against the indignity of poverty, incomelessness, hunger and the vicious recurrence and reinforcements of social ills. Let us find our inspiration from the historical framing of the *Freedom Charter* wherein the people resolved that no one should go hungry and that [I quote] the aged, the orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the state [Unquote].
27. In the quest to raise the majority of South Africans above the challenges that afflict them, the Department of Social Development strives to be the embodiment of the hope that carries people into a life that is free from indignity and lack.
28. Honourable Chair and Members, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to: my colleague, the Honourable Deputy Minister Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu; the provincial MECs; the Acting Director-General of the Department, Mr Linton Mchunu; the CEO of SASSA, Ms Totsie Memela-Khambula; the Chairperson of the Board of the NDA, Ms Ruth Bhengu; the Registrar of the South African Council for Social Service Professions, Ms Langi Malamba; the Chairperson of the Central Drug Authority, Ms Nandi Mayathula-Khoza; and members of the DSD family for their continued support and contribution to the work of this Portfolio.

29. I also wish to take this opportunity to thank the provincial Members of Executive Councils for Social Development and the Honourable Members of the Portfolio Committee on Social Development for their sustained and constructive relations.
30. Honourable Chair. I now table Budget Vote 19 of the Department of Social Development for your consideration and support.

Ke a leboha.