

**NORTHWEST DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET
SPEECH (VOTE 12) AND POLICY STATEMENT DELIVERED BY MEC
BASETSANA REBECCA SUSSANA DANTJIE AT THE NORTH WEST
PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE ON 22 July 2025**

**Honourable Speaker, Dr Mohono,
Honourable Deputy Speaker, Collen Maine,
Honourable Premier, Lazarus Kagiso Mokgosi,
Honourable Members of the Executive Council,
Honourable Members of the Legislature,
Executive Mayors, Mayors, Speakers of all Municipalities,
Leaders of Political Parties,
House of Traditional Leaders,
Heads of Departments,
Distinguished guests,
Comrades and Friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Revolutionary greetings

Honourable Speaker, it is once again an honour for me to stand before the house to present the 2025/26 Budget Vote 12 for the Department of Social Development. This budget vote embodies the aspirations and hopes of the masses of our people who depend squarely on the services that we render as a department. This budget is a tool of justice, aimed at transforming lives, restoring dignity and building an inclusive society where no one is left behind. We do so fully alive to Mahatma Gandhi's words that "a nation's greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members".

Honourable Speaker, I present this budget at a critical moment in history when our government is forced to strike a balance between fiscal sustainability and meeting our developmental goals. The slow economic growth, unemployment, global wars and instability have resulted in low revenue income thus leading to significant reduction in our ability to fund additional government programmes and projects. This has hit hard on the department of social development as we do most of our work through third parties.

Whilst we are still grappling with the effects of budgetary challenges and shortfalls, the global economic development, trade tensions and policy uncertainty are impacting negatively on the domestic economic outlook. Our small economy depends largely on global trade and financial assistance. It is unfortunate that in just a few months, we saw one of our major trade partners, America, cutting all funding to South Africa thus causing disruptions to our HIV/AIDS programme funded by USAID. The department has, however, put some mitigating measures in place to ensure that services continue in those affected area.

Honourable members, we are in a period where we must make hard choices. We are forced to rearrange our priorities such that we stretch our limited resources to meet service delivery targets and improve the lives of our people. Our focus on spending efficiencies and revenue collection to give expression to the Medium-Term Development Plan is the reality we cannot escape. To keep the poor and vulnerable afloat, the department must strengthen its oversight on all funded Non-Profit Institutions to ensure that every cent reaches its intended beneficiaries.

Madam Speaker, alive to these realities, we remain committed and resolute to the course of struggle. We are a department hard at work driving our flagship programme, announced by Hon Premier Mokgosi, during the State of the Province Address, called **Re Thuse Re Go Thuse**. This programme is intended to intensifying accessibility to the department's services and to enhance governance. Through this programme, the department seeks to rebrand and reposition itself as a beacon of hope to the poor, destitute and the downtrodden people struggling for social justice.

Hon members, the **Re Thuse Re Go Thuse** programme rests in the constitutional mandate of the department to ensure access to social assistance, protect children, promote social integration and to address social development challenges, which promotes teaching a person to catch a fish and to embrace self-sufficiency.

The National Development Plan Vision 2030 is a blueprint that continues to guide the policy priorities of the department and its entities. It amplifies the main objectives of the department as that of offering social safety net for the underprivileged by fostering prospects for self-sustainability, to keep more people from falling into extreme poverty and suffering, combat unemployment and inequality while ensuring that no one suffers the effects of hunger and starvation. Our constitution ensures the rights of every person to access social assistance if they are unable to support themselves, therefore it is our duty and responsibility to give life to that right.

Honourable members, in executing this mandate, we do so with humility, care, commitment and full understanding of the emotions, stress and psycho-social bearing these have on our people. It is imperative of us to show love and respect when caring for this fragile section of our population given the stigma often attached to those afflicted by these social ills.

Madam Speaker, during my maiden budget vote speech shortly after being appointed as the MEC for Social Development, I made commitments to which I owe our people some feedback. I owe to this house full account of whether allocated funds were utilised for intended purpose. Allow me therefore to execute this constitutional obligation as a public office bearer.

Last year we committed to strengthen oversight on funded and unfunded NPOs to ensure full compliance with the law. This commitment arose from the realisation of the challenges the department faces in collaborating with these organisations.

It is common cause that our government inherited a system that systematically and structurally created a country full of social ills, poverty, inequality, unemployment and skewed economy that continue to benefit the rich and making the poor poorer.

Civil Society Organisations are therefore better placed to render indispensable services to our people particularly in far flung and marginalised areas of our province.

We acknowledge the role of Civil Society Organisations in caring and helping improve the lives of our people, however, we should also accept the fact that many of these organisations are non-compliant and in certain instance found on the wrong side of the law. This is evidenced by the statistics that I will reflect on shortly.

Honourable Speaker, compliance to the NPO Act 71 of 1997, is aligned to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendation 8, which addresses risks related to money laundering and terrorist financing in the social sector.

As part of tightening controls and strengthening governance, the department works closely with National Department of Social Development and law enforcement agencies to root out corrupt elements and address non-compliance within the sector.

In the province, we have a total of 16,752 registered NPOs. During the year under review, about 727 NPOs were deregistered, 9,543 are non-compliant whilst 15,264 were yet to report as at the end of the financial year. Out of 5,721 NPOs that are compliant in the province, only 302 were funded by the department to the tune of R241 million during the 2024/5 financial year.

The reality is that the department will not even fund more than the number of NPOs funded last year due to budgetary constraints referred to earlier. The figures as they stand calls for more budget allocation for our government to be able to fund all deserving institutions.

During the period on review, Ipeleng Bagodi, an NPO in Jericho, had to be closed due to acts of criminality happening within the centre. Its operations have since been discontinued and occupants transferred to different centres across the province after consultation with their families.

Another NPO, Imologa Community Project in Mamusa is under investigations by the Hawks for allegations of fraud. We remain resolute to clamp down on all NPOs engaging on any unlawful activities depriving our communities well deserved services.

Honourable members, the department created 1,421 work opportunities through funded NPOs thus surpassing the set target of 1,251 work opportunities last year.

In the past few weeks, through the **Re Thuse Re Go Thuse** programme, we embarked on a second phase of engaging with NPOs. Our focus was on empowering and capacitating both funded and unfunded NPOs on compliance matters, programme specific norms and standards. We conducted these sessions in collaboration with SASSA, NDA, SARS, Provincial Treasury, National Lottery and National Department of Social Development.

We are positive that through these workshops and continued monitoring and engagements, the situation will improve. These workshops have assisted us to understand better the challenges our NPOs face on daily basis. It has also assisted the NPOs offering similar services in the same areas to collaborate instead of competing.

At an administrative level, we are improving internal controls, monitoring and evaluation to align with the provisions of Sector Funding Model and related legislation. Through these efforts we found out that the biggest chunk of our NPO budget fund NPOs from previously advantaged background.

Majority of them are beneficiaries of multiple funding who do not depend solely on the department. On the other hand, many NPOs in rural areas suffers serious challenges of infrastructure and professional management. These requires review of our funding criteria to break the cycle of funding NPOs that are capable of sourcing funding elsewhere to allow deployment of funds to others who never benefited before.

It is about time that we share the cake equitably to NPOs so that we do justice and reach more people particularly those in previously disadvantaged areas. With continued support of all stakeholders and the Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development, victory is certain.

Honourable members, in our efforts to collaborate with Social Workers to ensure their proper assignment /deployments to all wards within the province, we had to investigate the available resources. The department met with about 400 Social Workers Managers and Supervisors to address the challenge and to understand the dynamics involved.

Currently our Social Workers are working in clusters whilst we continue assessing the efficiency, effectiveness and the feasibility of implementing ward based social worker model. The shortage of Social Workers and budget constrains also serves an impediment towards attainment of this goal.

We are however encouraged that with limited resources at our disposal; we continue to provide professional services to our people. In recognition of the significant work of Social Workers, the department will this year celebrate the social workers month in August. Work is already in progress towards achieving this important milestone.

Social Relief of Distress

Honorable Speaker, we continue to strengthen all programs that are geared towards fighting poverty and hunger amongst our people. Through the Departmental Social Relief of Distress (SRD) program, we continue to provide humanitarian assistance to households that experience undue hardships and hunger.

In addition to our social relief programme, we have set aside an amount of twenty million five hundred thousand rand (R20.5 million) to fund 23 Community Nutrition Development Centres to alleviate hunger amongst vulnerable communities. This funding will further create jobs for 184 community members across the districts.

Madam Speaker, our drive to ensure provision of nutritious meals in our funded feeding centres has grown from 5,400 in 2023/24 to 17,287 beneficiaries in 2024/25, thus surpassing our set annual target of 15,156.

More than 14,305 food parcels were provided to insecure household and individuals experiencing distress, undue hardships, and those affected by disasters thus falling short of our annual target of 16,000. About 8,335 indigent learners and women benefitted from the departmental provision of sanitary dignity packs thus overachieving on our target of 6,625 for the year.

In the words of Nelson Mandela, overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity, it is an act of justice. We shall not rest until the dignity of our people is restored and no one goes to bed hungry.

Services to Families

Honourable Speaker, a family is a fundamental social institution that shapes individuals and communities alike. It has a direct influence on every aspect of human life, from emotional support systems to societal norms, economic activities and restoration of functionality of families. To realise this goal, the department has facilitated the participation of 6,636 family members in family preservation services, 5,136 in parenting programmes, and 67 family members were reunified with their families in the current financial year.

The Department will in the current financial year implement family preservation programmes and fund NPO's to the value of thirteen million rand (R13m) to expand coverage to deprived areas. More focus will be on teenage parents and their families.

Services to Elderly people

The Department provide basket of services to older persons through community based, residential care, frail care and statutory services. In the last financial year, the Department funded 133 service clubs reaching 8,190 older persons against the set target of 7,040. An amount of thirty-one million rand (R31m) is set aside to fund residential care programme, old age homes and service clubs. We will facilitate registration of community-based organisations to ensure compliance to Older Persons' Act 13 of 2006.

The Department participated in the roadshows on the older person's amendment bill of 2022 and have consulted with over 2,000 older persons on the Bill in collaboration with local municipalities and provincial legislature.

Madam Speaker, the department implements active ageing programme commonly known as the Golden Games as part of the basket of services to older persons. In the period under review, we implemented the programme at all service points and hosted districts and provincial active ageing programme which reached 5,312 older persons participating in various indigenous games and sporting codes. The province further hosted the National Active Ageing games in Rustenburg on the 10th -13th February 2025. All nine provinces attended this event with more than 1,500 older persons participating.

In the current financial year, the Department have set aside eleven million rand (R11m) for the implementation of the active ageing games and will continue to collaborate with the Social Cluster Departments to ensure improvement on the execution of this programme. The department will continue to raise the Northwest flag by participating in the 2025/26 National Games to be held in the Western Cape later this year.

Women Empowerment

Honourable members, natlafatso ya basadi e santse e le kwa setlhoeng mo toga-maanong ya rona. Mo ngwageng o o fetileng wa ditshetele re kgonne go neela basadi dilwana tse di farologaneng go akaretsa le ditlabakelo tse di maleba go ba kgontsha go tsosolosa dikgwebo-potlana tsa bona.

The department in collaboration with National Development Agency, reached out to various women owned cooperatives and small medium and micro-enterprises as part of empowerment and job creation. The following cooperatives and SMMEs were funded and supported by NDA; Thotaa Tau Fishing Cooperative in Taung, Ma-Rocks Laundry in Tshing, Dirang Batswana Greenery in Koster; Never Say Never Sewing Cooperative in Matlosana; Khothang Mmogo Vegetable and Broiler in Moretele, and Thusanang Maboloka Vegetable Production in Madibeng. These entities have contributed towards poverty alleviation and reducing unemployment.

Gender Based Violence and Femicide

Last year we promised our people to launch a safe house or shelter for victims of GBVF in Rustenburg in partnership with Anglo-American Platinum Mine. We are delighted to report that the Rustenburg shelter was officially opened on the 7th of August 2024. Twenty-one victims have been accommodated at the shelter by March 2025. We also opened another shelter in Mafikeng to render similar services to victims of gender-based violence.

In the reporting period, we provided funding to 16 Non-Profit Organisations to enable them to provide sheltering and psycho-social support services to victims of crime. One thousand, one hundred and thirty-nine (1,139) victims of gender-based violence were accommodated in these funded NPOs, while 15,957 victims received psychosocial support services.

Honourable Speaker, in our effort to mitigate the scourge of gender-based violence in the province, we have implemented 365 Days community outreach prevention programmes, reaching out to 69,569 people.

These programmes were implemented in partnership with 20 Non-profit organisation that are spread across the four (4) districts.

The department in collaboration with men's Organisations and Non-Profit Institutions for men, is driving a campaign to popularise the plight of victims GBVF and LBQT plus. The campaign aims to put an end to this onslaught against women and children. We call upon all stakeholders to join us in this campaign.

Youth and Children services

Youth Development

The welfare of young people is key to the future of our province. It is therefore important to invest in young people. In keeping with our commitment to empower more youth and the call by the Premier during SOPA, the department has set aside Six million rand to train 1,200 young people across the four districts in the province. The training could not commence in the previous year as initially pronounced due to unforeseen challenges with the NDA.

We are however pleased to report that this training will commence in earnest in the second quarter of the year. Out of this number, one hundred young people will be trained on security courses and another 100 will be assisted to acquire drivers' licences. Preference will be given to people with disabilities particularly those from rural areas.

The Department has further budgeted four million three hundred and seventy-nine thousand rands (R 4.379million) for extended public works programme as part of our efforts to create jobs.

The recruitment process to employ thirty (30) graduate interns for a period of two years started during 01 April 2025. In addition, forty-four Child and Youth Care Workers learnerships programme targeting the officials who do not have required qualifications to practise as childcare workers has been implemented in partnership with Health and Welfare SETA.

The Department further commits to train 300 Orphans and Vulnerable children and Youth at the age of 18 to 24 on skills development programmes. These skills development programmes will be implemented in partnership with National Department of Social Development in our community care centres. It will prepare young people to transit from youth to adulthood and grant them the opportunity to be economically viable.

In addition, the Department has signed a memorandum of understanding with NEMISA to further advance the skills Development programme in Child and Youth Care Centres. Through this partnership young persons will be offered training on the end user literacy programmes on Information technology. Twenty other youth will be trained on cell-phone electronics repairs and will in return be expected to train others in various locations within the province.

Children services

Honourable members, we are making great strides in providing care and protection to children and young people. In the year under review, more than 176 children in conflict with the law accessed services in our state secure care centres placed through court orders. We further provided services to 694 children in need of care and protection in Child and Youth Care Centres.

The Department increased the capacity to deliver by funding additional two Child and Youth Care Centre in Bojanala and Matlosana to the value of two million one hundred thousand Rand (R2,1 million). These centres have a seventy and sixty-bed capacity respectively for children in need of care and protection.

We have also provided funding to the value of one million, one hundred thousand rand (**R1.1 million**) to four afterschool care centres in Bojanala, Ngaka Modiri Molema and Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati districts. This funding benefitted 190 children and further created twenty-two job opportunities for the residents. We are on course to increase the number of partial care facilities from 4 to 6 with an allocation of One million six hundred thousand rand (**R 1.6 million**) in the current financial year.

The department have two state run secure care centres within the province which serves as residential containment for children in conflict with the law. In December last year, we repatriated 27 minors plus another five in March this year, back to Mozambique. These children resurfaced from Stilfontein unused mines during Operation Vala Umgodi by SAPS. This is in line with the provisions of Children Act which mandate social workers or police officials to remove a child who is in danger and place them in a temporary safe care.

We express our profound thanks to the Department of Health which assisted with the medical assessments and age determination of these children, Department of Justice & Constitutional Development and NPA for declaring these children as those in need of care and protection through Child Justice and Children's Court.

We further commend SAPS for ensuring that children were rescued from the mine and provided the necessary passage back home.

Foster care

Honourable Speaker, for the financial year 2024/25, the Department implemented foster care programme as other mechanism for protection of children who need care. Most of the children benefitting from the programme are kinship or family related. Last year, 423 new orders placing children in foster care were issued adding up to a total of 19,206 valid foster care orders.

People with disabilities

Globally, people with disabilities are marginalised and excluded from full participation in society and continue to be subjected to multiple forms of discrimination. In our endeavour to comply with the provisions of the National Development Plan (NDP, 2030) the departments provided care and protection services through community-based care programmes reaching out to 840 against the target of 633. We further provide 24-hour care service through our residential care programme reaching out to 367 against the target of 308.

To promote independence and empower persons with Disabilities to compete in the open labour market, the Department rolled out empowerment skills programme to 195 persons with Disabilities against the target of 120. We implemented social rehabilitation services to empower families of persons with disabilities to improve care and support. We have reached out to 4632 families against the target of 2,662.

In the current financial year, the department has set aside an amount of R17 million to support NPOs who continue to provide care, residential, protective workshops, and social rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities within the four districts.

Substance Abuse

Madam Speaker, there is a high demand for substance use disorder treatment services in the province. As part of our commitment to strengthening and improving services in our centres, the department appointed a full-time psychologist at the JB Marks in patient treatment centre at Witrand hospital and will also extend the services to Taung In-patient Treatment Centre in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati.

Madam Speaker, I am also pleased to announce that Taung In-patient Treatment Services has opened its doors to admit substance Abuse Users as per the pronouncement by the Premier in his SOPA. The Department works closely with the Department of health to provide detoxification services to ensure that all users receive comprehensive and quality services.

Furthermore, social workers and nursing personnel were trained on universal curriculum to strengthen care services. Similarly, the department appointed one professional nurse and one assistant nurse at Taung Inpatient Treatment Centre.

The department has entered into agreement with the Taung Hospital to provide Psychiatric services to patients. All staff at the centre have also been trained to meet the required standards.

Honourable Members, we have not fulfilled our promise to open two new rehabilitations centres for victims of substance abuse in Bojanala and Ngaka Modiri Molema districts. This is because of lack of funding and the requirements of having such centres closer to hospitals. We are currently exploring various options with department of health to make this a reality.

Despite this not being achieved, we are pleased to report that the Bojanala Treatment Centre is at planning and designing stage. In mitigating the effects of not having a government owned centre, the district utilises the services of JB Mark Inpatient treatment centre through referrals. Economically viable clients refer their patients to the four registered private centres in the district.

In Ngaka Modiri Molema, the former BOSASA building was registered for this purpose but is currently being used as a temporary safe care centre to address the challenge of children who resurfaced from the Stilfontein illegal mines. The decision to utilise this centre for victims of substance abuse will be re-assessed given its distance away from hospitals. In the meantime, we utilise a dedicated ward at the Bophelong Hospital for rehabilitation and placed some of the victims on the JB Marks waiting list. It remains our priority during the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework period to ensure that the development of the two centres is fast-tracked.

HIV and Aids

Madam Speaker, we committed to expand the social behaviour change through HIV/Aids programme across the province through the continued support and partnership with USAID and Presidents Emergency Plan AIDS relief grant.

It is regrettable to report that the USAID funding has been withdrawn, and this had a negative bearing on NGOs that were funded through it. The beneficiaries who require services are referred to the nearest Department of Health and Department of Social Development to continue receiving uninterrupted services.

The department is committed to ensure expansion of the social and behaviour change programmes across the four districts. This will be funded through our equitable share budget ringfenced to drive the programme to reduce HIV infections in the province and contribute to global building of resilient health and social system by 2030. Eighteen million, Two Hundred and Forty-two Thousand rand (**R18.242million**) has been allocated for the implementation of social behaviour change programmes across the four districts.

Crime Prevention

Honourable Speaker, the department provides social crime prevention services through public awareness and advocacy programmes within communities. This is done through partnership and collaboration with other key stakeholders.

During the year under review, 55,052 people were reached through community awareness and public education programmes pertaining social crime prevention initiatives.

Honourable members, the department also provides behavioural rehabilitative intervention through provision of accredited therapeutic and developmental diversion.

These diversion therapeutic settings are done annually through intersectoral collaboration with stakeholders, particularly, our traditional council and community based residential setting. The department has issued 15 accreditation certificates for diversion services across the province.

Human Capital and Resources

Honourable members, as part of our resolve to strengthen research and administration, the department completed the installation of the network infrastructure at Ratlou service point, Maquassi Hills and Provident House buildings respectively. This will help improve connectivity and efficiency in the provision of services.

All the prioritized infrastructure projects for the maintenance and repairs were duly completed as per the assessment conducted within the reporting time.

The occupation of Maquassi Hills service point was finalized as an alternative measure to respond to the challenges of OHS compliance and to improve productivity in a habitable working environment.

PRIORITIES FOR 2024/25 FINANCIAL YEAR

Madam Speaker, the following are our set priorities for the year 2025/26

- Completion of a shelter for the victims of gender-based violence in Dr Kenneth Kaunda, JB Marks local Municipality
- Provision of an alternative building in Moretele Service Point to respond to the current OHS challenges affecting staff production using the approach of Maquassi Hills.

- Strengthening of the existing short-term shelters for victims of gender-based violence
- The department plan to reach out to more people through integrated services with key stakeholder Departments and Civil Society organizations.

BUDGET ALLOCATION

Honourable members, the budget speech has shed some light to many that the department of social development is not only about food parcels as many believe. Its mandate stretches far beyond food parcels. It reaches to the most vulnerable section of our communities. All these services are prescribed by law and there are penalties for any breach thereof.

The continued budget cuts for the department possess a risk of imprisonment for those in charge of the department. Every cent cut from our budget means a cut in caring for someone in need of care and support. It is also important for members to note that **65.4 percent** of our departmental budget goes to Compensation of employees and **12.5 percent** goes to NPOs. This leaves us with a mere **23.6 percent** for goods and services.

We hope that the Hon, MEC for Finance, Hon Premier, and the legislature will look deep into this matter and do justice when considering future budget allocations.

Allow me therefore to table our budget as follows:

DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET PER PROGRAMME

Programme	Budget Allocation R'000
1. Administration	265,277 Two Hundred and Sixty-Five Million, Two Hundred and Seventy-Seven Thousand
2. Social Welfare Services	673,602 Six Hundred and Seventy-Three Million, Six Hundred and Two Thousand
3. Children and Families	387,174 Three Hundred and Eighty-Seven Million, One Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand
4. Restorative Services	333,653 Three Hundred and Thirty-Three Million, Six Hundred and Fifty-Three Thousand
5. Development and Research	216,707 Two Hundred and Sixteen Million, Seven Hundred and Seven Thousand
Total Budget	1 876, 413 One Billion, Eight Hundred and Seventy-Six Million, Four Hundred and Thirteen Thousand

Madam Speaker, as I conclude, allow me to make a humble plea to everyone to join us as we criss-cross the province with humility, dedicated to our service through **Re Thuse Re Go Thuse**.

Let us hold fast to that which is good, render the needed services to deserving people, strengthen the faint hearted, support the weak, help the needy and the afflicted and honour all people.

Let us love and serve this nation with cheerful hearts mindful that this freedom did not come cheap, it does not automatically perpetuate itself, but we must work it, nurture it, protect and pray for it.

I wish to thank the executive directors of the department, management and the entire staff for the support, dedication and commitment shown in turning things around. Special thanks to the outgoing Acting Head of Department Dr Fezile Ngqobe for keeping the departments' administration afloat during the period of intervention. I also wish to appreciate the sterling work done by the Acting Head of Department, Mme Peggy Mhlongo- Kgoboesele.

Special words of gratitude to my husband, Lungile Dantjie, my sons Khumo ya Thuto and Phenyoe mo Thapelong for allowing me to serve the nation. Revolutionary words of appreciation to my party, the African National Congress and the Premier, Hon. Latsie Mokgotsi, for the confidence they have shown by entrusting me with the task of leading this department.

I thank you.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

