## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key messages and recommendations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 1:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance and National Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Continuum of Child Protection Interventions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant PEI Indicators</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Takeaways</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 2:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budgeting for PEI Services at the National and Provincial Social Development Levels</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEI Services in the National and Provincial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget Structures</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trends in PEI Spending – FY2014 to FY2023</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Takeaways</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 3:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ideal Shape and Size of PEI for Children in the Social Development Sector</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Programme that Encompasses the Core</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEI Interventions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role of Non-Profit Organisations Providing PEI Services</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Takeaways</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key messages and recommendations

The new budget structure that underlies the FY2014 budgets and MTEF is an important advance, particularly in respect of children’s services. It allows separate identification of services such as child and youth care centres (CYCWs), early childhood development (ECD) and community-based services. The existence of the community-based services sub-programme implies that there is no need for a new sub-programme for prevention and early intervention (PEI). While other sub-programmes may include some PEI elements, this provincial sub-programme and the families sub-programme together, provide for the key PEI services envisaged by the Children’s Act.

An allocation of 5% of provincial DSD budgets for PEI services is a very unambitious target. Many provinces already exceed this minimum. Five percent also seems a very low target for interventions that were prioritised in the Welfare White Paper of 1997 and the Children’s Act. Furthermore, PEI is cost-effective in that it avoids the large expenditures associated with dealing with harm after it has already been inflicted. There is also evidence of the effectiveness of the interventions in local evaluation literature.

For all provinces combined, the share of the children and families budget allocated to community-based care services ranges over the period FY2014 to FY2023 between just under 5 percent (in FY2018) and more than 11 percent three years earlier (in FY2015). Within provinces, the range is from nearly 22% in Gauteng in 2017/18 to less than 1% in North-West, across the period. The wide range in the share between provinces, and over time, is concerning for a priority expenditure, as are decreases over time. For the care and support to the families sub-programme, there is less volatility in

Preface

This budget brief is one of five that explores the extent to which the national budget and social services sector budgets addresses the needs of children under 18 in South Africa. For the 2021 Budget Brief series, three budget briefs are devoted to an analysis of progress in equity over the last decade (national, basic education, and social development), while two briefs are thematic contributions in the areas of prevention and early intervention in social development and child nutrition, as a cross-cutting issue for children.
the share for all provinces combined over the period, and also a slightly upward trend. However, the differences between provinces are again disturbing, ranging from around 1% of the Children and Families budget throughout the period in KwaZulu-Natal to a high of 20% in the Northern Cape in 2019/20.

Setting targets for a discrete budget sub-programme is of little use if provinces do not use the sub-programme to fund similar services. Setting targets is also of limited use if provinces define and measure performance differently; as it is only with reliable and comparable performance data that we can begin to see how the allocated funds are used. Furthermore, setting a minimum percentage target runs the risk of provinces treating it as a maximum as well as a minimum percentage.

NDSD does not currently feel able to dictate to provinces given the latter’s “autonomy.” There is no need to wait for the South African Law Reform Commission’s Issue Paper (SALRC, 2021) to be acted upon before agreeing on measures that will help achieve compliance with the Children’s Act and the Constitution in terms of child protection. There seems no valid reason why provinces should not immediately start complying with the Minister and MECs’ forum (MINMEC) resolutions. It is also difficult to think of reasons why PDSDs should not use the standard budget structure in the same way as is the case in sectors such as education and health.

The relevant national and provincial social development and finance authorities are encouraged to:

I. Expedite a cross-provincial agreement that the community-based care services for children sub-programme be used for budgeting for the key community-based PEI services for children. This agreement or decision should be discussed and explained to the provincial managers responsible for budgeting and to participants in the cross-provincial programme-specific forum. Rigorous monitoring of the extent to which such decisions are implemented is required, to counter any further fragmentation in the allocation of funding for PEI services in this sub-programme.

II. Avoid the use of percentage targeting (albeit a minimum or maximum target) regimes for ensuring PEI (or other types of) services are provided for. Instead, provincial social development departments should set explicit access targets for beneficiaries, in terms of the possible reach of specified services.

III. Monitor reporting on key performance indicators (KPIs). This task should not be left alone to the Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (DPME). Both the National Treasury and the NDSD should be actively involved in this central M&E activity.

IV. Consider the implementation of a time-bound conditional grant to focus allocations on core PEI activities. The design and monitoring of such a grant is critical as evidence in provincial education indicates that national grant funding may provide incentives to provincial education departments to limit the extent of additional provincial own funding. A repetition of this undesirable financing development must be avoided at all costs, given the current paucity of funding for PEI.
Section 1: Introduction

GOVERNANCE AND NATIONAL POLICY

Clause 28 of the South Africa’s Constitution of 2016 focuses on the rights of children. It states that every child has the right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse, or degradation.

The National Department of Social Development uses the same definition as the World Health Organisation (WHO) to define child maltreatment. The WHO defines child maltreatment as “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligent treatment, commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival or development or dignity in the context of a relationship or responsibility, trust or power”.

The definition is very similar to the UN Secretary-General’s definition of violence against children in the Global Study on such violence. It defines violence against children as including “all forms of physical, mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse”.

The South African government’s 2019–2024 Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) places the primary responsibility for “Priority 4 – Consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality services”, with the departments of social development (DSD). Within this priority, the MTSF emphasises the need to prioritise social protection for children. It states that “breaking historical patterns of poverty and inequality requires the provision of services that interrupt the intergenerational transmission of risks, which keeps historically marginalised children trapped in a cycle of poor development”. It also notes the need for the “adoption of a rights-based developmental childcare and protection policy that provides a nationwide vision for driving investment in programmes that guarantee the universal rights of all children to survival, protection, development and participation.”

The Children’s Act of 2005, as amended, gives legal force to such a policy. South Africa’s challenge is therefore not to adopt the policy, but instead to implement it; and it needs to allocate adequate resources to do so.

The MTSF’s reference to “breaking historical patterns” implicitly refers to the need for prevention and early intervention (PEI), rather than only responding to harm that has already occurred. This echoes the emphasis given to PEI in the Children’s Act.

Chapter 8 of the Children’s Act focuses on PEI. It states that PEI programmes should:

- Provide services to families with children to strengthen and build capacity and self-reliance, and to address problems which, if not attended to, may lead to statutory intervention.
- Provide early intervention programmes to serve families where children are identified as vulnerable to or at risk of harm or removal into alternative care.
- Preserve a child’s family structure.
- Develop parenting skills and the capacity of parents and caregivers to safeguard the well-being and best interests of their children through:
  - Promoting positive, non-violent forms of discipline.
  - Incorporating all those with disabilities and chronic illnesses.
  - Promoting appropriate interpersonal relationships within the family.
  - Providing psychological, rehabilitation and therapeutic programmes for children.
  - Preventing neglect, exploitation, abuse or inadequate supervision of children.
  - Preventing the recurrence of problems that may harm children or adversely affect their development; and
- Diverting children away from the child and youth care system and the criminal justice system.
- Assist families to obtain the necessities of life and empower them to obtain these for themselves.
- Provide families with information to enable them to access services; and
- Support and assist families with a chronically ill or terminally ill family member.

The Act provides that the provincial MEC “must” fund PEI programmes, child and youth care centres (CYCCs), and drop-in centres. Funding of the more institutional CYCCs is mandatory.

---

ii. Emphasis added
iii. Residential facilities, formerly referred to as children’s homes, orphanages, reform schools and the like.
because the children they house are legal wards of the state.\textsuperscript{iv} Funding of PEI and drop-in services is mandatory because of the importance attached to them. In contrast, the Act states that the provincial MEC “may” fund partial care facilities and ECD programmes. Unlike the mandatory “must” services, the MEC thus has discretion as to whether to fund ECD and partial care.

In October 2014, South Africa formally launched a White Paper on Families in South Africa. This document acknowledged the historical forces that have shaped South Africa’s diverse social set-up. It also provided examples of the variety of different family structures. Nevertheless, critics (see, for example, Hochfeld & Patel, 2018) note that it still poses a middle-class heterosexual family as the norm, despite the fact that this is not the norm in South Africa.

The conservative assumptions underlying the document can result in a policy that does not accommodate the diversity of South Africa’s social setup. For example, the assumption that it is “moral degeneration”, among other things, which results in poverty and unemployment, is unhelpful in the way it blames poor people for situations that are endemic in the country (Rabe, 2017).

In early July 2021 a Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa was published in the Government Gazette.\textsuperscript{v} The introduction to the document noted that the revision “will be subject to ongoing consultations in the next financial year”. It is therefore likely that interventions funded by the provincial budgets of early 2021 are informed primarily by the earlier document. Some of KwaZulu-Natal’s planned interventions for 2021/22 – in particular, the celebration of National Marriage Week – and terms such as “family disintegration” may be evidence of this bias.

THE CONTINUUM OF CHILD PROTECTION INTERVENTIONS

The 2016 Review of the Welfare White Paper of 1997 observed that, while DSD continues to provide or fund the mainly institutional services of the apartheid era, it has introduced a range of new services, including many that are community-based. The latter includes drop-in centres, home-and community-based care services, and “prevention and early intervention programmes such as Isibindi” (Ministerial Committee on the Review of the Welfare White Paper, 2016:77). These shifts reflect the introduction of the developmental social welfare approach that is seen as the key underlying thrust of the Welfare White Paper of 1997.

The move away from an almost exclusive focus on institutions promises many benefits. Firstly, it envisages that those receiving assistance should remain and receive support within their communities rather than being removed. Secondly, it focuses on preventing harm from happening rather than waiting for the harm to happen and then trying to reduce the harmful impact. Linked to these two benefits is a reduction in cost for service providers and beneficiaries, as primary services are less expensive than tertiary. Furthermore, there is a greater possibility of generating local jobs for community-based workers in the areas served.

The National Child Care and Protection Policy of 2019 (DSD, 2019) describes the desired “continuum of effective, quality programmes and services”, as including:

- Promotive public childcare and development programmes and services that are universally available to all children, families, parents, caregivers and guardians to support and maximise existing parental, family and caregiver capacities, to provide the care and protection their children need, to develop to their full potential;
- Targeted preventative and early intervention programmes and services\textsuperscript{vi} to build the resilience of vulnerable children and households where social, economic, health and other factors may undermine caregiving capacity and create a risk to children’s development and protection; and,
- Responsive protective services for children deprived of parental or family care and protection and/or who are in the child justice system and/or who experience violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, to protect them from further harm and return them to a nurturing environment, to secure their development to their full potential.

Promotive interventions support the existing strengths that families and children have; PEI interventions attempt to mitigate the vulnerabilities of families and children identified as being at greater risk; and responsive services are utilised once harm has already happened.

\textsuperscript{iv} A child becomes a ward of the state through a formal court process in which the parents are deemed unable to provide the necessary care and support. The court instead places the child in the care of foster parents or a child and youth care centre.


\textsuperscript{vi} Emphasis added
The policy specifies that while promotive interventions should be available to all children and those who care for them, and responsive interventions should focus on those who have experienced harm, PEI interventions fall somewhere in between – they should be available to a much larger number of children than the responsive services if they are to be effective in preventing serious harm, but they should focus on children who are vulnerable or at risk – especially in a context of resource constraints. This targeting allows resources to be concentrated where they are most needed and most likely to prevent harm.

During the research for this brief, a PDSD official named ECD as a core PEI intervention, alongside parenting and psychosocial support to family members. This framing refers to the broad definition of ECD, which encompasses a wide range of measures for children from birth to nine years of age. However, ECD does not neatly match any of the PEI elements listed in Chapter 8 of the Children’s Act. Indeed, the Children’s Act devotes a separate chapter to ECD services.

Currently, there is very little mention of broader Children’s Act PEI in the provincial budget votes. Last year’s budget brief on DSD (UNICEF, 2020b) noted that: “prevention and early intervention appear to be restricted to the substance abuse area.” This year too, most provinces record that relatively large numbers of children and youth were reached through the Ke-Moja drug prevention programme. At least some of this PEI targets children. However, it does not address Children’s Act PEI more broadly.

The FY2021 budget votes also mentions prevention of gender-based violence quite frequently. But the core PEI aspect of child protection receives minimal mention.

**RELEVANT PEI INDICATORS**

In developing their plans and budgets, provincial social development departments (PDSDs) are required to develop targets in respect of a core set of agreed standard indicators. The PDSDs consolidate performance data gathered on a quarterly basis from their regional offices and subsidised NPOs. The consolidated performance should be reported against the targets in their annual performance plans. However, unfortunately, the latter are often not readily available to the public.

Some provinces include tables of these performance indicators in their budget votes. A few do so for the current year, but others do so only for the three MTEF years. The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) is responsible for performance monitoring. In the past it published quarterly reports of provincial achievements on its website. This no longer seems to be the practice.

Neither National Treasury nor NDSD appears to monitor these agreed indicators. Instead, while indicators have existed for some years, in an interview conducted in mid-2021 NDSD reported that their monitoring and evaluation unit was in the process of developing performance indicators for welfare programmes, including CBPEIP. We are thus reliant on the information available in the budget votes for the current standard performance indicators.

Gauteng is the only province that reports performance against target in respect of the indicators of interest in the budget vote. It notes that 8,495 children were reached through the CBPEIP; less than half of the target of 19,473. No reason is given other than that the programme is voluntary and fewer beneficiaries accessed the service. Other provinces report only targets, sometimes with performance (but no target) for the current budget year.
vii. The NACCW first developed the Isibindi programme at the height of the AIDS pandemic. Unemployed community members were trained in child and youth care work. They were employed by selected community-based organisations to deliver family-focused PEI services, primarily through home visits for children whose primary caregivers (parents, grandparents) were ill or had died. Isibindi was subsequently recognised as relevant beyond the HIV and AIDS pandemic. The national Ministerial rollout of the programme between 2014 and 2018 aimed to establish 400 Isibindi sites across the country, train 10,000 community members in the accredited child and youth care qualification and provide decent jobs for them, and reach 1.4 million vulnerable children and youth. NACCW was responsible, among others, for the training, mentorship and quality control.

Figure 1 suggests that the North West reaches more than six times as many children as any other province despite its relatively small population. This seems unlikely. Instead, it seems likely that the North West has defined the indicator, or is counting it, in a different way – for example counting each contact with a child as a separate child.

The total number of children to be reached in FY2023 by the seven provinces is less than a quarter of the 1.4 million-target for the Isibindi rollout, despite the inclusion of provinces that together account for about two-thirds of the child populations. With the North-West’s questionable number excluded from the calculation, the reach is fewer than 90,000 children – equivalent to less than a quarter of the 380,000-plus children reached by the remaining eight provinces in the fifth year of the Isibindi rollout (NACCW, 2018).

Figure 2 shows the indicators for participation in family preservation services. Two provinces – KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga – name the indicator as referring to “family members”, while the others refer to “families”. The difference in what is counted might in part explain KwaZulu-Natal’s high numbers. This explanation does not, however, work for Mpumalanga, which has very low targets. The North-West and the Northern Cape again foresee no increase in the numbers over the MTEF period.

The Northern Cape describes the purpose of the community-based care services for the children budget sub-programme as being to “fund projects aimed to reduce vulnerability caused by psychosocial aspects related to HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support, as these affect groupings such as orphans, vulnerable children, persons living with HIV and AIDS, older persons, youth and people living with disabilities.” This description is clearly not confined to children or even families.
South African legislation is well aligned to international norms and standards in respect of children’s rights and child protection.

Chapter 8 of the Children’s Act states that the provincial MEC “must” fund early intervention programmes to serve families where children are identified as vulnerable to or at risk of harm or removal into alternative care, and develop the capacity of parents and caregivers to safeguard the well-being and best interests of their children, through various means.

The developmental social welfare prioritisation of a community-based approach over institutional solutions is aligned with greater prioritisation of PEI services, rather than focusing primarily on responsive services.

The total number of children to be reached in FY2023 by the seven provinces that provide this information, is less than a quarter of the 1.4 million target for the Isibindi rollout that ended in 2018.

Reliable and comparable performance data on PEI (and other services) are not readily available.

Section 2: Budgeting for PEI Services at the National and Provincial Social Development Levels

PEI SERVICES IN THE NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL BUDGET STRUCTURES

In the national budget there is a single children and families sub-programme under the welfare services policy development and implementation support programme. NDSD’s allocation for children and families is relatively small because NDSD is responsible for formulation and monitoring of implementation of policies, norms, standards, and best practices, rather than implementation.

In contrast, since 2014, PDSDs – which are responsible for implementation – have a full separate budget programme for children and families. Previously, the services for children and families were provided for through two sub-programmes of the general social welfare services programme. Since 2014, the new children and families programme brings together all the allocations for implementation of the wide-ranging Children’s Act, with allocations aligned with different aspects of the Acts, in separate sub-programmes.

The community-based care services for the children’s sub-programme can be readily seen as intended for funding of PEI services. However, it is arguably not the only PEI sub-programme.

The Children’s Act places the child firmly in the family of which it forms part. It is therefore not surprising that the budget programme introduced in 2014 is named “Children and Families”. The Act’s listing of different aspects of PEI shown above clearly illustrates the importance of the family in respect of PEI in particular. One can therefore see the care and support for families sub-programme as encompassing PEI services.
Western Cape does not have a community-based care services for children sub-programme. Nevertheless, it refers to coordination of PEI services “via the integrated Isibindi programme consisting of Drop-in Centres; After School Care (ASC) centres and Isibindi programme linkages, and the development of resilience through family preservation and strengthening services.” The province reports expansion of the integrated Isibindi programme, which include Eye-on-the-Child (Iliso Labantwana) and referrals from probation, from eight to ten sites. In this province, the child-oriented PEI services form part of the care and support to families the budget sub-programme, rather than splitting them, as was the intention of the budget structure introduced in 2014.

The UNICEF 2020 PEI Budget Brief cites National Treasury as naming the child support grant (CSG) and early childhood development (ECD) as DSD’s most important PEI programmes. The CSG could be seen as contributing to clause 8’s injunction that PEI “assist families to obtain the basic necessities of life and empower them to obtain these for themselves”. However, the CSG is funded within NDSD’s budget and so cannot be seen as a provincial PEI intervention.

Over the last decade or so, National Treasury has increased the use of additions to the equitable share for nationally-agreed priority service areas. Unlike conditional grants, provinces are not obliged to spend the additional funds on the service area concerned. They are, however, expected to do so. Some provinces refer to these as “earmarked” funds.

In FY2013 and FY2014 there was an addition to the equitable share for ECD and Isibindi. Neither NDSD nor the National Treasury specified how the amount should be divided between these two service areas. The analysis reveals that the amount allocated was less than needed for both areas of service, and that ECD was generally prioritised over Isibindi (Budlender & Francis, 2014).

Currently there is neither a conditional grant nor earmarked equitable share funds for the core PEI intervention. In contrast, there is now a conditional grant for ECD, reflecting even stronger support for this service area. The Free State’s FY2021 budget vote records that there is also earmarked funding in the equitable share for ECD, as well as earmarked equitable share funding for the Office on the Rights of Children, substance abuse treatment, employment of social workers, sanitary towels for school learners, food relief, compliance with the NAWONGO court judgments, violence against women and children, HIV prevention programmes, and infrastructure enhancement. None of these constitute PEI.

**TRENDS IN PEI SPENDING – FY2014 TO FY2023**

For the MTEF period, the national children and families sub-programmes together account for 85% or more of the welfare services policy development and implementation support programme’s budget. However, the sub-programmes constitute only 0,6% of NDSD’s total budget. The very small percentage is explained by the domination of social assistance (grants), within the total NDSD budget.

The fact that the post of director of the community-based PEI programme went unfunded in the most recent budget cuts in NDSD raises questions as to whether this area of work is regarded as a strong priority.
In the provincial sphere, the intention at the time of the 2014 change in budget structure was that PEI home-and community-based services would form part of the community-based care services for children sub-programme. Figure 3 shows the allocations for this sub-programme as a share of the children and families programme. Free State, North-West and Western Cape (the latter at zero) allocated a more or less consistent and low share of the children and families programme to community-based care services. Northern Cape had a more or less consistent share over the period, but at a higher level, with KwaZulu-Natal being in a similar situation, apart from a spike in the second and third years. Gauteng started with the highest share, dropped to fourth lowest, and then increased again to be third highest. Limpopo vacillated wildly, while North-West showed an exaggerated version of KwaZulu-Natal’s pattern.

Drop-in centres are rarely mentioned in the provinces’ budget votes, although they are explicitly named in the Children’s Act. This is especially surprising, given that drop-in centres are meant to play a central role in the community and home-based PEI programme developed to replace the Isibindi programme. North-West characterises drop-in centres as an HIV and AIDS intervention, focusing more generally on child protection.

Figure 4 shows that Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Western Cape have a more or less constant share of the children and families programme budget going to the care and support to families sub-programme, but at rather different levels. North-West has an overall decreasing share of the budget programme; going to the care and support to families sub-programme; while for the country as a whole, there is a gentle increase to FY2021, followed by a tailing off. Apart from the first year, Northern Cape was consistently in the top two over the period, while North-West was always in the top two.

As with community-based care services for children, it is not always easy to determine which interventions are being funded through the families sub-programme and/or the extent to which the interventions funded differ across the provinces.

With the advent of the COVID pandemic in 2020, policy makers in different parts of the country expanded initiatives in respect of homeless people. Gauteng, and perhaps others, allocated additional funds (R84 million in Gauteng’s case) for their homeless shelter initiative in the care and support services to family sub-programmes. Some of these funds were channelled through NPOs.

KwaZulu-Natal’s description of the performance of this sub-programme in FY2020 is very different. It includes “capacitation” of 62 traditional leaders in a Rock Leadership Programme focused on domestic violence and “family disintegration”, the mobilisation of men and boys in respect of gender-based violence, through the Men Care and Men Champions of Change programmes, and celebration of International Day for Families, National Marriage Week, International Men’s Day, and the Khumubekhaya outreach programme.

Other provinces have less detail, but several refer to marriage guidance and fatherhood programmes.

viii. The figure is drawn to the same scale as the similar figure in respect of Community-based care services for children so as to facilitate comparison.
Section 3:
The Ideal Shape and Size of PEI for Children in the Social Development Sector

A PROGRAMME THAT ENCOMPASSES THE CORE PEI INTERVENTIONS

The 2019 National Child Care and Protection Policy characterises PEI home-and community-based services as including screening for vulnerability; screening for violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation; parental education; referrals for social and material support; behaviour change interventions; and psychosocial support. This matches very closely the types of services offered by programmes such as Isibindi. In an interview conducted in 2021, National Treasury noted the substantial and convincing evidence-base that existed for the effectiveness of the Isibindi programme. NDSD is also convinced of the effectiveness of Isibindi.

Isibindi was developed by the National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW) and rolled out nationally during the period 2013 to 2018, in partnership with NDSD and PDSDs. During the five-year rollout, PDSDs contracted with NACCW to train local unemployed matriculants in a child and youth care diploma course and provided mentoring support while the trainees were in training and beyond. The core service consisted of regular home visits to vulnerable children and their families. Several hundred locally-based NPOs hosted the Isibindi intervention and employed local trainees and workers.

Western Cape DSD continues to contract NACCW to provide support for its PEI services. Some other provinces (for example, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga) report training of child and youth care workers (CYCW) and/or use the term Isibindi (for example, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, the Northern Cape, the North-West).

Despite all the mentions of Isibindi in current provincial budget votes, at this point all, or most, provinces are implementing a programme developed by PACT under DSD auspices to replace Isibindi. The programme is generally referred to by the generic name (community-based) prevention and early intervention programme (CBPEIP), but will soon be renamed Risihi (“resilience”). Interviewees also referred to a “core package of services” on which NDSD has been training PDSD staff.

The budget documents and interviews conducted in 2021 did not give a clear and consistent picture as to whether and how Isibindi, CBPEIP and the core package of services differ from each other. A NDSD interviewee suggested that there were few substantial differences, and the change of name instead represented the change from Isibindi, a “project”, to CBPEIP, a DSD “programme”. Furthermore, despite its name, provinces implementing CBPEIP do not necessarily place the relevant funding in the community-based care services for children sub-programme.

ix. KwaZulu-Natal’s budget vote FY2021 offers payments to NACCW in respect of Isibindi as an example of this but, in reality, no longer makes any payments to NACCW.

x. Interviews conducted in mid-2021 for the purposes of this brief.
THE ROLE OF NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING PEI SERVICES

All provinces provide subsidies to non-profit organisations (NPOs) and the latter provide a large share of the government-funded services for children and other vulnerable groups. In each province ECD centres constitute the largest single grouping of NPO beneficiaries. However, the ECD amount does not necessarily constitute the largest share of NPO transfers, given the relatively small subsidy size for individual centres.

In most cases, the amounts allocated for the various service types vary across provinces. ECD is an exception in this respect, in that most, if not all provinces allocate the same amount per child per day. More recently, it seems there has also been standardisation of the amount allocated per beneficiary for residential care. This standardisation came about as a response to the NAWONGO judgment (see below).

As the term “subsidy” implies, the funds allocated to NPOs that provide services do not cover the full cost of providing them. Instead, NPOs are expected to find other sources of funding and/or to reduce costs by means of strategies such as paying low salaries. Provinces are also free to decide how many NPOs they will fund and the quantity of service to be provided.

While government budgets increase each year in line with expected inflation, the provinces do not necessarily increase the standard subsidy amounts for particular types of services from year to year. All these factors make NPO transfers vulnerable to cuts when budgets are tight.

The Eastern Cape’s FY2021 vote is explicit about reprioritisation of funds from other areas, including transfer payments for NPOs, to cover the cost of the “current warm bodies” of employees. The vote states: “Beneficiary rates for other NPOs [other than ECD] has been kept at current levels due to no additional funding having been received.”

In mid-2010 the National Association of Welfare Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations (NAWONGO), NG Social Services Free State and Free State Care in Action instituted a court case against the MEC for Social Development in the Free State, the Head of the Free State Department of Social Development, and the National Minister of Social Development.xi

The NAWONGO court judgment of 2014 confirmed the serious underfunding of non-profit organisations that deliver the bulk of welfare services. The Ministerial Review of 2016 noted that while all types of services are under-funded, PEI services are less likely to be funded than statutory services. This bias continues in DSD’s current attempts to start complying with the NAWONGO judgment, in that institutional services such as CYCCs have seen above-inflation increases in their subsidies. The amount per child per day for residential care such as CYCCs increased to R4 000 in FY2020, an increase from the extremely low rate of R654 in the Free State.

Other NPO-provided services have not seen this type of increase. The funding bias thus undermines a developmental social welfare approach (Ministerial Committee, 2016: 287).

For CBPEIP and Isibindi, the transfers are meant to cover the cost of stipends for the child and youth care workers (CYCWs) who deliver the community-based PEI service, as well as some basic management overheads. However, the understanding in the Isibindi rollout was that once CYCWs had graduated from their 18-month training, they would be employed with an appropriate wage (rather than a “stipend”).

The table below reveals that only three provinces are currently providing for CYCW pay that is equal to or more than the current national minimum wage of R3,759.60 per month.

TABLE 1: CYCW remuneration by province, 2021
Source: NACCW

Figure 5 shows Gauteng allocating the bulk of the allocation for community-based care services to NPOs, except for the last two years of the MTEF. The other five provinces for which we have this information have a consistently low share going to NPOs. This pattern merits further exploration, given the labour-intensive nature of community-based care services and the role played by community-based NPOs in service delivery to date.

The Free State’s Budget in FY2021 noted that a key requirement of the NAWONGO court judgement was that DSD should cover at least the core costs of its “statutory obligated” services. DSD must then show that it is achieving progressive realisation of the provision of other services. To date, it seems that the term “statutory obligated” has been narrowly interpreted to refer only to residential services. This is questionable when the Children’s Act, a “statute”, states that the MEC “must” ensure the provision of other services, including PEI services for children.

NDSD explained that prioritisation of community-based services could and should not be achieved through reducing the resources available for institutional care, because the latter would always be needed. Institutional care is also clearly a statutory obligation when it relates to wards of the state. Instead, NDSD aims to mobilise and lobby for additional resources so at to fund community-based PEI services, alongside institutional interventions.

Meanwhile, there are arguably some expenditures that are not mandated by law, but have nevertheless been prioritised. For example, several provinces refer to allocation of funds for menstrual sanitary products and school uniforms for children in poorer schools, as well as other categories seen as particularly vulnerable. As noted elsewhere, there was an addition to the equitable share for funding of these programmes.

**Takeaways**

All PDSDs provide subsidies to NPOs that provide a large share of the government-funded services for children, rather than covering the full cost. The subsidy amounts do not show regular annual increases in line with inflation.

A key requirement of the NAWONGO court judgement of 2014 was that DSD should cover at least the core costs of its “statutory obligated” services. The Children’s Act, a “statute”, states that the MEC “must” ensure the provision of other services, including PEI services for children.

Within community-case PEI services for children, only three provinces are currently providing for pay that is equal to or more than the current national minimum wage, to CYCWs with an accredited qualification in child and youth care work.

---

**FIGURE 5:** NPO transfers as a share of the community-based care services for children sub-programme

*Source: Estimates of Provincial Revenue and Expenditure, 2021*
REFERENCES


DSD, DWCPD and UNICEF. 2012. Violence Against Children in South Africa. Pretoria: Department of Social Development/Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities/UNICEF.


