

For more information, contact Shaamela Cassiem at shaamela@idasact.org.za, or Christina Nomdo at christina@idasact.org.za. Tel: 021 467 5600 **Children's Budget Unit, IDASA (BIS)**

Budget 2006: Monitoring progressive realisation of child socio economic rights¹

"South Africa's economic and social policies flow from democratic values and respect for human dignity enshrined in the Constitution. Through the annual budget, Government seeks to ensure that social and economic rights are progressively realised, that the legacy of historical injustice is redressed, and that future generations will enjoy the fruits of broad-based development and robust economic growth." (Budget Review 2006: 101)

Children's socio-economic rights are enshrined in Section 28 of the South African Constitution. Despite the fact that these rights are unqualified, it is unrealistic to oblige the state to realise all of these rights immediately. Budget 2006 provides an opportunity to monitor the realisation of these rights over the MTEF period 2006/07 to 2008/09.

To this end, this InBrief focuses on social services (the largest beneficiary of an un-projected R40 billion revenue collection – provinces benefit mainly through 56.9% of allocated expenditure). In the health, education, social development and housing departments the following **main** issues emerge:

Education

- FET colleges recapitalisation grant: R470 million (06/07); R595 million (2007/08); R795 million (08/09);
- National school nutrition programme grant: R1 billion (06/07); R1.1 billion (07/08); R1.2 billion (08/09);
- General education (life skills): R144.4 million (06/07); R151.6 million (07/08); R161.9 million (08/09);
- Integrated plan for Early Childhood Development (ECD) implementation for 2006 and beyond;
- Youth development programmes – collaborative effort between DoE and DoL for skills development in FET colleges. R3.2 million Umsobomvu Youth Fund to benefit 200 youth (construction & engineering);
- Fee free schools plan but no time period is offered, nor targets.

Health

- Comprehensive HIV grant: R1.5 billion (06/07); R1.6 billion (07/08); R1.7 billion (08/09);
- R40 million earmarked for the management, support and monitoring of the HIV/AIDS plan during 2006/07;
- Expansion of operational plan for comprehensive HIV/AIDS care, management and treatment to local municipality level, because district level targets have been met;
- Supplementary funding for provinces for expanding community-based care services to support ECD;
- Integrated nutrition grant administered by the Department of Health from 1/04/2006, via the provincial equitable share.

Social Development

- Grants: CSG-R190 (R10 increase); CDG-R820 (increase by R40); SOAP-R820 (increase by R40); FCG-R590 (increase of R30); DG-R820 (increase by R40);
- Expanding welfare service delivery by implementing the Child Justice, Children's and Older Persons Bills;
- SASSA: grants expected to increase to 3.3% of GDP by 07/08. Shift of the social security grant function from the provincial to national government. SASSA to fully administer the social assistance function. From 1/04/2006, social security assistance will not be administered as a conditional grant but funded from SASSA through the DoSD.

Housing:

- Human settlement and redevelopment grant: administered by the Department of Housing, to enable government to deliver on its comprehensive housing strategy in a systematic way. This includes a housing subsidy grant that provides subsidies for low income housing and funds for informal settlement upgrading.

The inter-dependence of rights is important for the full realisation of children's rights. Monitoring social services in South Africa provides insight into the progress of children's socio-economic rights. However, the most salient policy gap is still the non-extension of the CSG to children under 18 years.

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