1. **Report of the Portfolio Committee on Social Development on the Oversight Visit to KwaZulu-Natal Department of Social Development, South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) And the National Development Agency (NDA) projects, Dated 06 June 2018**
2. **Introduction**

The Portfolio Committee on Social Development conducted an oversight visit from 14 – 18 August 2017 at KwaZulu-Natal provincial Department of Social Development, South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) and the National Development Agency (NDA) projects. The Committee also received a presentation from the provincial Department of Social Development on their work in relation to food security and employment creation programmes. On the second day of the oversight visit, the Committee enjoyed a privilege to receive a briefing from the provincial House of Traditional Leaders who highlighted the close working relationship between itself, the Department of Social Development and National Development Agency (NDA). It also highlighted their involvement in the Operation Sukuma Sakhe programmes (OSS) as they have a close relationship with the department in most of their initiatives.

**1.1 Objectives of the oversight**

The objectives of the oversight visit were as follows:

* To consider the provincial department’s progress in implementing key food security programmes, such as the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security and the Households Food and Nutrition Security Strategy.
* To consider the department’s progress in implementing employment opportunities and community development programmes. Particular focus is on women, youth, people with disabilities and older persons.
* To conduct oversight visits to ascertain successes, challenges and impact of the aforementioned programmes on the lives of people.
* To consider the budget and expenditure patterns of the department in implementing the programmes outlined above.
* To conduct oversight over the work of the regional National Development Agency (NDA) and the South African Social Development Agency (SASSA) and what impact it had on the lives of the beneficiaries by conducting site visits to the identified areas.
* To conduct oversight over the department and its entities’ overall financial performance by considering their budget expenditure.
* To consider the Auditor-General audit outcomes and progress made to address matters of emphasis, if any, raised.

1. **Delegation**

**Members of Parliament**

Ms Capa, R N ANC (Chairperson)

Ms Malgas, H H ANC

Ms Tsoleli, S P ANC

Dr Madlopha, C ANC

Ms Masango, B DA

Ms Dudley, C ACDP

Ms Abrahams, B L (ANC) was part of the delegation, however due to ill health she had to leave the province prior to the commencement of the oversight programme.

**Parliamentary staff**

Ms Ntsabo, L Committee Secretary

Ms Khanye, Y Content Advisor

Ms Gudula-Koyana, S Researcher

Ms Mnyovu, N Committee Assistant

1. **Briefing at the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Legislature** 
   1. **Welcome by the MEC, Hon Thusi**

Ms Thusi, the Member of Executive Council (MEC) provided opening remarks and welcomed the delegation. In her remarks she indicated that since 2014 the department expanded its budget structure from three (3) programmes to 5 programmes with the objective to align its budget and service delivery. In 2014, the department also improved service delivery by establishing ward based service delivery with each ward having a social worker, Child and Youth Care Workers and social auxiliary workers. She indicated that the focus of the department’s service delivery is on evidence based learning. Through the Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) programme each local districts have war rooms which include the services of the participating departments.

She reported that the Department of Social Development is always operating in these war rooms even though other governments are not participating. The MEC highlighted that the department has a close working relationship with the provincial Portfolio Committee on Social Development. The department had established a forum of Non-profit Organisations (NPOs) to improve its working relationship with them. She however pointed out that NPOs face challenges of funding due to weak global economy. For its part, the department introduced a process of rationalizing NPO funding.

The MEC assured the portfolio committee that her department is working hard in the fight against fraud and corruption by putting systems in place. For example, in Lower Umfolozi Service Office, it exposed a syndicate that was defrauding the foster care system. Disciplinary procedures were held and those found guilty were either dismissed or suspended. The department also conducted an audit of residential facilities run by the state and NPOs to enforce compliance to norms and standards. It has also embarked on an infrastructure upgrade of ECD centres. As a provincial department it appreciated the Social Work Grant which assisted the province to absorb social workers as it did not have enough funds to continue doing so. The provincial budget had previously funded the absorption of social workers from the equitable share until 2012. However, the department, similarly with other provincial departments, had funding shortages for the absorption of social workers. That was the reason the national department established a grant for the absorption of social workers.

**Issues emanated from the MECs remarks**

The Committee was interested to know the total number of social workers in the province. It highlighted that even though the province has enough number of social workers, it still needed more social workers because the number of wards that have been increased to eight (8) after local government elections. It also suggested that in big wards the allocation of social workers should be increased to two (2).

In relation to the audit of facilities, the Committee advised the MEC to ensure that all facilities funded and not funded by the department to meet the norms and standards.

The Committee wanted to know how had the rationalization of the NPO funding benefited the NPOs. The MEC explained that this process was introduced to address cases of duplication of NPO services, where some NPOs were funded more than others, especially those in rural areas. The department collaborated with Child Welfare Society to deliver Isibindi Model. Social Workers who worked for the NPO sector and who became redundant due to the increase absorption of social workers by the department were employed as supervisors in the implementation of the Model.

1. **Presentation by the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders**

INkosi Chiliza, Chairperson of KwaZulu-Natal provincial House of Traditional Leaders explained that the House of Traditional Leaders saw its role as to provide advice to the department regarding the social needs of communities. It also advices the department on the programmes run by the House. It was reported that King Zwelithini has particular interest in food security and social cohesion. He reported that the House has a good working relationship with MEC Thusi. The MEC keeps the House well informed about social issues happening in the social development sector, such as, the court case between SASSA and BlackSash on the contract of the payment of SASSA and the possibility of Post Office South Africa taking over the payment of social grants. Regional SASSAalso office sent its officials to the House of Traditional Leaders in this province to explain the changes in the payment of social grants.

The department made sure that rural areas were kept informed about these issues. The House is also kept updated about the department’s programmes.

INkosi Chiliza further reported that the House runs a lot of projects in the province. There was one social project in which the House worked in collaboration with the department in Pongola. It also worked with the department in another social cohesion in KwaMashu. The House also runs food security projects (luncheons). It also works in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in the food security programmes in which the department supplied tractors. It also initiated ECD programmes that involved older women who taught children about cultural practices. Traditional leaders are also involved in all the Department of Social Development programmes such as Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS). It does so through traditional councils who work closely with community workers to identify the needs of households. It also works closely with the department in food security projects, such as, farming of sugar beans and indigenous chickens. The House also works closely with other government departments through OSS. The House also work closely with communities where communities will identify their needs and report them to the House and then will be referred to the appropriate department.

**Deliberations**

The Committee commended the relationship between the Inkosi and the department.

The Committee also commended the involvement of the House in the moral regeneration and fight against women abuse.

It request the House of Traditional Leader to compile a report on the information it presented and forward it to the Committee. The Committee was of the view that the report would assist it to gain more insight and be able to share the KZN best practice of collaboration between the department, House of Traditional Leaders and the Provincial Portfolio Committee on Social Development with other provinces.

1. **Presentation by Provincial Department of Social Development on the state of service Delivery in the Province**

**Budget and organizational structure**

The department reported that during the 2014 medium term framework, it reviewed and reconfigured its budget structure. Prior to that the department had had three (3) programmes. These were expanded to five (5) programmes, namely; Administration, Social Welfare Services, Children and Families, Restorative Services and Development and Research in 2014. It also reviewed its organizational structure and reconfigured it into three (3) tiers; Provincial level, District level and Local level, that is, Service Office and Facilities.

**Budget allocation and programme performance**

The table below shows the budget allocation per programme over three financial years. The bulk of the budget is allocated under Programme 3: Children and Families, followed by Programme 2: Social Welfare Services.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Programme** | **Medium-term targets** | | |
| **2016/17**  **R000** | **2017/18**  **R000** | **2018/19**  **R000** |
| Programme 1: Administration | 490 896 | 513 737 | 543 548 |
| Social Welfare Services | 694 234 | 720 697 | 743 228 |
| Children and Families  -ECD Conditional Grant – R71 million  - Social Work Employment Grant – R53 million | 1 078 997 | 1 230 465 | R1 316 821 |
| Restorative Services | 286 895 | 301 168 | 316 338 |
| Development and Research | 227 140 | 238 566 | 254 133 |
| **Total** | **2 771 183** | **3 004 633** | **3174 108** |

**2. Programme performance**

**2.1 Programme 2: Social Welfare Services**

This programme is made up of 4 sub-programmes:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sub-Programmes** | **Medium-term targets** | | |
| **2016/17**  **R000** | **2017/18**  **R000** | **2018/19**  **R000** |
| Older persons | 162 423 | 168 794 | 167 308 |
| Persons with Disabilities | 131 574 | 138 223 | 141 727 |
| HIV and AIDS | 221 970 | 227 864 | 234 151 |
| Social Relief of Distress | 14 377 | 15 096 | 15 972 |
| **Total** | **5 303 44** | **5 499 77** | **5 591 58** |

***2.1.1 Older Persons***

Under this sub-programme the department established 45 residential facilities which operate on 24-hour basis. One of them, being KwaBadala Old Age Home in Nkandla, is managed directly by the department. At the time of reporting the department was funding 2 989 older persons in these facilities. The department also established 137 service centres which are managed by NPOs as day care centres for older persons. At the time of reporting the department was funding 23 877 older persons benefiting from these centres.

Under this sub-programme the department reported that it achieved the following successes:

* It built a state of the art Day Care Centre for the elderly and handed it over to the community of KwaSwayimane in uMshwathi Municipality. This facility also provides for ECD services which seek to promote intergenerational programmes. It also has offices for Social Workers.
* It conducts awareness campaigns for Alzheimer’s, intergenerational programmes and Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in partnership with Local Government Structures, Traditional Leadership, Faith Based Organisations and other civil society organisations. A decline in the incidences of older person’s abuse was observed.
* It increased the number of registered and funded Community Based Care Centres for older persons.
* It established strong partnerships with other government departments such as the Office of the Premier, Sport and Recreation, Health, Community Safety and Liaison and NPO sector.

The department reported that it faced the following challenges under this sub-programme:

* Inability to massify the Community Based Care Centres due to fiscal constraints.
* Reluctance of older persons to attend Community Based Care services and residential facilities which makes them vulnerable to abuse. To address this the department will intensify its awareness campaigns.

***2.1.2 Persons with disabilities***

Similarly, to the aforementioned sub-programme, the department under this sub-programme established residential facilities for persons with disabilities. It established 17 facilities, which two (2) it directly manages. These are Enduduzweni Centre for the Disabled in Ethekwini Municipality and Osizweni Handicraft Centre in Newcastle Municipality. A total of 1 175 persons with disabilities were benefiting from these facilities. The departments also established protective workshops which are managed by NPOs as day care centres for persons with disabilities. At the time of reporting the department was funding 2 469 persons with disabilities. The department under this sub-programme was also managing one (1) training centre called Illovo Skills Development Centre.

Under this sub-programme the department reported that it achieved the following successes:

* It expanded to other types of disabilities, namely albinism where it was programmatically responding to the killings of persons with albinism. It established a database of people with albinism and conducted dialogues in order to develop programmes and services as informed by experiences of people with albinism.
* It created an awareness on other forms of disabilities such as dyslexia and autism.
* It works in partnership with relevant NPOs in areas of albinism, dyslexia and autism.
* It continues to fund the organisations working in the field of visual impairment, physical, deaf, epilepsy and children with disabilities.
* It pays stipends to service users in the protective workshops. This contributes to poverty eradication.

The department reported that it faced the following challenges under this sub-programme:

* Inability to massify services to people with disabilities due to fiscal constraints.
* Closure of Enduduzweni Centre for the disabled due to renovations following the assessment report by the Department of Public Works which found it not to be habitable particularly by people with visual impairment. To address this, the department undertook to transform Enduduzweni Centre together with Osizweni Handicraft Centre to be skills development centres to be accessible to all forms of disabilities.

***2.1.3 HIV and AIDS***

The department’s major role under this sub-programme is to provide care and support to people affected and infected with HIV and AIDS. It thus provides psycho-social support, social behaviour change and prevention programmes. It funded 232 Home Community Based Care services and 32 185 people were benefiting from them.

The department further reported that it achieved the following key successes:

* It instituted a head count of Community Care Givers to ensure accountability and improved service delivery.
* It established strong partnerships with PACT (Partnering and Communicating Together to Act Against AIDS), PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief), AIDS Foundation of South Africa and the Global Fund. These partnerships have ensured that the department deals effectively with the apparent increase in the new infections with HIV and AIDS.
* It constructed six Community Care Centres through a partnership with German Development Bank. This is aimed to improve care and support to OVCs (orphans and vulnerable children), households and communities.

The department reported that it faced the following challenges under this sub-programme:

* Increase in the new infections especially amongst young persons. To address this challenge, the department has entered into partnerships with organisations such as PACT, PEPFAR, AIDS Foundation of South Africa and the Global Fund. The department is prioritising young girls. It will also intensify prevention programmes in partnership with other departments, traditional leadership and other stakeholders.
* The increase number of Orphaned and Vulnerable Children. The department had observed a decrease in a number of orphans due to the rollout of the ARVs; however, it noted an increase in vulnerability. To address this challenge, the department had commissioned a research study to establish the extent of orphanhood and vulnerability of children.

***2.1.4 Social Relief of Distress***

Under this sub-programme, the department designed a special intervention called *#SibahleSiyazethemba* Campaign which was implemented in commemoration of the October Social Development month. It targeted vulnerable children and provided school uniforms and groceries. This was in support of the Department of Basic Education’s Strategy to improve the Matric outcomes.

**2.2 Programme 3: Children and Families**

This programme is made up of 5 sub-programmes:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sub-Programmes** | **Medium-term targets** | | |
| **2016/17**  **R000** | **2017/18**  **R000** | **2018/19**  **R000** |
| Care and Support Services to Families | 12 876 | 13 876 | 14 104 |
| Child Care and Protection Services | 359 137 | 375 178 | 391 376 |
| ECD and Partial Care | 357 729 | 469 534 | 526 784 |
| Child and Youth Care Centres | 119 614 | 125 651 | 126 717 |
| Community Based Care Services | 133 326 | 140 032 | 145 691 |
| **Total** | **6 249 53** | **11 242 71** | **12 046 72** |

The overall key successes of this sub-programme were reported as follows:

* The department has established a Provincial Integrated Forum on Families which coordinates programmes and services which aim to improve quality life within families.
* It established a fatherhood programme in all districts with the participation of the Departments of Health, Basic Education and Justice and Constitutional Development.
* In response to teenage pregnancy, the department targeted 4 District Municipalities with the highest incidences of teenage pregnancy, that is, Ugu, Umkhanyakude, Zululand and King Cetshwayo Districts for identification, profiling of pregnant teenagers, their families and the biological fathers so as to develop appropriate interventions.
* During the commemoration of the International Day for Families and National Marriage Week, the department continued to create awareness on the importance of the family unit.
* The department established a Task Team led by the Deputy Director General to conduct monitoring and evaluation on foster care prioritizing hotspot offices.
* It allocated R53 million for Social Workers Employment:
  + Number of Social Workers in total employment was 1 413 versus 870 wards,
  + A total of 166 Social Workers were recruited through the Social Work Conditional Grant,
  + A total of 37 Social Workers were employed through the recruitment and the selection of the department,
  + A total of 74 care givers were employed through the Home Community Based Care (HCBC) reengineering model,
  + There were 946 unabsorbed scholarship social workers and 1039 were still in university, and
  + It had employed 257 Social Auxiliary Workers.
* It received R71 879 million ECD Conditional Grant for 2016/2017 financial year[[1]](#footnote-1) for infrastructural development and support:
  + 117 ECD centres were identified for maintenance.
  + 18 821 children were receiving subsidy.
  + The department created four (4) jobs – a Deputy Director, 2 Assistant Directors and 1 Administration Officer.
* The department constructed and handed over to the communities 26 ECD centres. They remain in the asset register of the department and NPOs are appointment as implementing agents.
* In an effort to improve accessibility to ECD services in deep rural areas the department established a mobile ECD in the Ilembe District Municipality. There was a plan for the expansion of this service to other District Municipalities.

**2.2.1 Child Care and Protection Services**

This sub-programme is mainly responsible for the management of foster care and adoption services, which it leads in collaboration with the Departments of Justice and Constitutional Development, Home Affairs, Basic Education and the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). At the time of reporting the department had 89 336 children placed in foster care. Foster Care Grant payments per month totalled an amount of R75 042 240. SASSA was paying 2 790 034 child support grants.

**2.2.1 ECD and Partial Care**

The department reported that it had 1 995 ECD centres benefitting 103 630 children.

**2.2.3 Child and Youth Care Centres**

This sub-programme is responsible for the management of children’s homes, places of safety, drop-in-centres for children living and working in the streets, which are all run on a 24-hour basis. It was funding 74of these facilities; ten of these are managed directly by the department. At the time of reporting the Department is funding 2 989 children in these facilities.

**2.2.4 Community Based Care Services to Children**

The department, through the Isibindi Community Based Care model reached 87 385 children. With regard to job creation the department employed 2 089 Child and Youth Care Workers receiving a stipend.

**2.2.5 Challenges**

The department reported the following challenges:

* Non-compliance of foster care placements with the Children’s Act and its Regulations as well as fraud and corruption in relation to foster care grants. To address this challenge, a team led by the department and SASSA was established to regularly address and monitor this challenge. Furthermore, a high level monitoring team led by the Deputy Director General conducts monitoring visits to high risk Service Offices.

In April 2016, the MEC temporary closed the Lower Umfolozi Service Office due to rampant fraud and corruption relating to foster care. Twenty seven (27) officials were subsequently charged; eight (8) have been dismissed; two (2) have been given a three months suspension without pay; one (1) has received the final writing warning; the balance of 16 disciplinary hearings were scheduled to be finalised at the end of September 2017. A further 17 officials have since been charged for misconduct.

* Fraud and corruption in inter country and national adoptions. The department found out that there were cases where children were adopted twice – by local adoptive parents who thereafter passed them on to foreign adoptive parents. Another case involved a situation where a child was given for adoption to a Canadian family because it did not cry when it was given to them during the assessment process. The child had apparently cried when it was given to two (2) local adoptive parents. The department challenged this and it was taken to court.

To address this challenge, the department reviewed the adoption delegations for the authorisation to the Head of Department. It also established a centralised provincial panel for the canalisation of all applications for adoptions.

* Inability to massify the Early Childhood Development programme due to fiscal constraints. To address this, the department embarked on the Rationalisation of Social Development services rendered by the funded NPOs as well as accessing conditional grants to improve their infrastructure.
* A sizeable number of ECD Centres constructed by municipalities have been found to be not meeting the established norms and standards. To address this, challenge the department would engage with municipalities to ensure compliance with the norms and standards. The matter was to be raised at the Premier’s Coordinating Forum.

**2.3 Programme 4: Restorative Services**

This programme is made up of 3 sub-programmes:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sub-Programmes** | **Medium-term targets** | | |
| **2016/17**  **R000** | **2017/18**  **R000** | **2018/19**  **R000** |
| Social Crime Prevention | 126 399 | 132 141 | 138 883 |
| Victim Empowerment Programme | 36 845 | 38 943 | 40 602 |
| Substance Abuse Prevention and Rehabilitation | 91 008 | 95 840 | 100 642 |
| **Total** | **2 542 52** | **2 669 24** | **2 801 27** |

**2.3.1 Social Crime Prevention**

Under this sub-programme the department reported that it successfully implemented the Integrated Social Crime Prevention Strategy. In line with the Child Justice Act of 2008 it established three (3) Secure Care Centres specialising in catering for children in conflict with the law and protecting them from going deeper into the criminal justice system. The department reported that it observed improved access to diversion programmes to both adults and youth in conflict with the law conducted in collaboration with the Justice Cluster.

**2.3.2 Victim Empowerment Programme**

The department reported that it achieved the below mentioned successes under this sub-programme:

* It established trauma response programmes in all districts in order to provide urgent needed psycho-social counselling during traumatic situations.
* It expanded the existing departmental call centre to cater for gender based violence reporting. This is where victims and witnesses of gender based violence phone and report incidences. The centre was planned to be staffed by qualified Social Workers who would provide online short-term counselling and then refer callers to relevant law enforcement agencies.
* It was in the process of establishing therapy rooms in all departmental Children and Youth Care Centres with relevant infrastructures in order to improve the quality of psycho-social services rendered by Social Workers prioritising abused children.
* It had entered into partnership with a Norwegian family in the establishment of a shelter for abused women at KwaXolo at Ray Nkonyeni Municipality. The name of the shelter is Hanne’s Shelter and Madikiza Outreach Project.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned successes, the department reported that it experienced a challenge of withdrawal of services by Khulisa due to disagreements on the funding criteria and that created a gap in the provision of diversion programmes. It had started a process of calling for proposals and accreditation of departmental Probation Officers was underway.

**2.3.3 Substance Abuse, Prevention and Rehabilitation**

The department establishedanti-substance abuse forums at Local, District and Provincial levels in partnership with municipalities and other stakeholders. These are chaired by the Premier as per a decision taken by the Provincial Executive Council as a way of escalating intervention against substance abuse. The department manages three (3) state of the art rehabilitation centres, namely; Newlands Park Centre at Ethekwini Municipality, Madadeni Rehabilitation Centre at Newcastle Municipality, Khanyani Centre at Newcastle Municipality which caters for children 18 years and below. Through successful negotiation with the Department of Health, the detoxification services are now provided in hospitals within the Province. The department is leading the coordination of inputs from KwaZulu-Natal stakeholders in the current review of the National Drug Master Plan.

Despite the aforementioned successes the department reported that it experienced challenges of compliance with the National Drug Master Plan and functionality of the Anti-Substance Abuse Forums at Local, District and Provincial level.To address this challenge, the department had scheduled to host an inter-sectoral Provincial Anti-Substance Abuse Summit in September 2017, which will inform the Programme of Action in respect of the implementation of the National Drug Master Plan. It also experienced undue delay in the establishment of the Khuseleka One Stop Centre in the Ethekwini Municipality, Inanda. The MEC made an intervention to address this and engaged in high level negotiation with the Mayor of Ethekwini Municipality.

**2.4 Programme 5: Development and Research**

This programme is made up of 6 sub-programmes:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sub-Programmes** | **Medium-term targets** | | |
| **2016/17**  **R000** | **2017/18**  **R000** | **2018/19**  **R000** |
| Institutional Capacity Building and Support to NGOs | 58 501 | 60 657 | 64 625 |
| Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Livelihoods | 14 586 | 15 449 | 16 500 |
| Community Based Research and Planning | 1 851 | 1 994 | 2 057 |
| Youth Development | 35 886 | 38 140 | 40 885 |
| Women Development | 7 844 | 8 419 | 9 119 |
| Population Policy Promotion | 2 956 | 3 154 | 3 395 |
| **Total** | **1 216 24** | **1 278 13** | **1 365 81** |

* + 1. **Population Policy Promotion**

Through this sub-programme the department organised community dialogues and profiling. It reached 8 083 households and developed 651 community based plans across the Province.

* + 1. **Institutional Capacity Building and Support to NPOs**

The department established NPO forums at a local, district and provincial levels, which sought to promote a healthy and vibrant relationship between the NPO sector and the department, as 30% of the department’s budget is transferred to the NPOs to render services that are in line with the departmental strategic objectives and mandates. It also provided capacity building and support to all 7 431 funded and unfunded NPOs in the Province. It trained 2 131 NPOs to improve management capacity. It further formed a partnership with the National Development Agency to mentor, coach and incubate emerging funded NPOs.

* + 1. **Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Livelihoods**

It was reported that through the Radical Agrarian Socio Economic Transformation (RASET), the department was aligning its Social Relief of Distress, Community Nutrition and Development Centres and catering services in the 15 state-owned residential facilities. A process was underway to re-design the contractual arrangements with the ECDs to massify the rechannelling of sourcing of perishable food to the RASET programme. At the time of reporting the department had established 52 Community Nutrition and Development Centres (CNDCs) and funded about 13 000 beneficiaries. Through the implementation of these centres, 1 350 participants had been linked with Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) employment opportunities and skills development.

* + 1. **Youth Development**

The department established two (2) youth academies in Umkhanyakude and King Cetshwayo Districts. These are flagship programmes for youth development in the department and had benefitted 506 young people. It also runs six (6) Youth Development Centres at Newcastle, Umlalazi, Msunduzi, Ethekwini, Ndwedwe and Nquthu Municipalities. There were 7 231 young people benefiting from the youth centres. The department has also established partnerships with Technical Vocational Education and Training (**TVET)** Colleges in the Province for vocational skills development for vulnerable youth.

* + 1. **Women Development**

The department established a Women Sub-Directorate. It plays a catalytic role for women development through profiling dialogues and support to income generating projects, social cooperative support and empowerment and mobilisation projects.

* + 1. **Population Policy Promotion**

The department established a partnership with the United Nations Fund for Population (UNFPA) to implement population development programmes, that is, sexual and reproductive health for women, young boys programme across the Province. It also launched population advocacy programmes for other government departments and municipalities.

* + 1. **Challenges**

The department reported that it experienced challenges of irregularities with regard to the utilization of public funds by NPOs. To address this, department would be hosting a NPO Governance Summit in September 2017, which would inform the NPO Capacity Building Framework. The department was also strengthening the physical verification of NPOs.

The department further experienced a challenge of fiscal constraints in adjustments of subsidies for NPOs. To address this challenge, the MEC conducted Post-Budget Roadshows and engaged all the funded NPOs on the fiscal position of government. The department also believed that the process of rationalisation would also contribute in addressing this challenge.

* 1. **Deliberation**
* The Committee was impressed by the success of the province in integrating services of government departments through Operation Sukumasakhe Strategy. It also congratulated the department for a well-coordinated implementation of food security programme.
* The Committee also noted the focus the department had put to ensure that NPOs, funded and unfunded, comply with to norms and standards as well as its efforts in the fight against fraud and corruption and its transparency about it.
* It also congratulated the department for implementing the one social worker per ward policy. It however encouraged the department to absorb more social work graduates using the Social Work Conditional Grant.
* It also appreciated the voluntary presentation of the department’s new organogram as it was not requested to do so. This showed transparency in its presentations.
* It noted with concern challenge relating to adoption processes. This was a serious challenge especially in the context that the national department developed the Adoption Policy. It means there is a need to review the success of this policy.
* It wanted to know the number of ECD centres run by municipalities. The department explained that it was unable to give the exact number of ECD centres run by municipalities because their database resides in the municipalities. There was a possibility of double funding and this had been identified as a challenge. There is a need for the department to compile its own the database.
* The Committee also wanted to know how many NPOs, funded and unfunded, were operating in the province. It was reported that there were 176 000 registered NPOs across the country, 32 565 of them were registered in KZN. A total of 13 218 NPOs render social services including faith based NPOs in KZN.
* The department was also asked how it provides services to families of women who are in prison. The department noted the Committee’s input for intervention on this area. It however explained that as according to the Children’s Act, children from these families are classified as children in need of care. When necessary they are placed in alternative care.
* The Committee cautioned the department and its entities against the challenge of duplication of service delivery between themselves and the NPOs. It advised them to relook the practice of outsourcing to NGOs services they had been funded to deliver. Government has a number of local structures such as community development workers, ward councillors, war rooms under Operation Sukumasakhe Strategy that could be utilized to deliver these services.

1. **Presentation by the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA)**

SASSA focused its presentation on the theme areas of the oversight visit – food security and employment creation. It therefore reported on its Integrated Community Registration Outreach Programme (ICROP) and projects linking social grants beneficiaries to economic opportunities.

ICROP is a ministerial campaign aimed at intensifying the fight against poverty. It aims to improve access to service delivery and to increase the uptake of social grants. It brings all relevant government services[[2]](#footnote-2) under one roof and closer to rural communities utilizing mobile office trucks. In the province, ICROP was used to reach children who were identified by a study done by UNICEF as excluded from the social assistance programme.

The study had identified that more than 2 million children in South Africa were excluded from the programme. SASSA KZN was mandated to visit 124 wards within the 2016/2017 financial year. In this year it reached 100 children in Umkhanyakude, Zululand, Midlands and Durban (25 per children per area). In Pietermaritzburg it reached 24 children. It distributed 59 664 school uniforms to the amount of R118 million. It reached 71 428 beneficiaries through Social Relief of Distress to the amount of R54 million. In 2017/2018 financial year, it was mandated to reach 142 children. By the end of the Quarter 2 of this year, it had rendered ICROP services to 39 wards.

**Lima Project**

This is a pilot project that was implemented in 2016 to link unemployed youth to economic opportunities. National SASSA, through this project facilitates linkage of youth to skills development and learnerships. Youth, are thereafter referred to potential employers. SASSA appointed an NPO called Lima Development Foundation to implement this pilot project in six (6) sites across the country – two sites in Gauteng, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. In KZN Msunduzi and Richmond were identified as pilot sites. A total of 713 youth were linked to work opportunities out of 1 335 that were referred.

1. **Presentation by National Development Agency (NDA) Advisory on its food security and employment creation projects**

The NDA contributes towards food security and employment creation by supporting civil society organizations by granting funds and capacity building. It grants funds for income generation, food security and Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes. With regard to capacity building, it provides technical support and organizational strengthening. In 2016/17 financial year, the NDA funded 13 ECD centres and 15 income generation programmes. It provided capacity building to 48 cooperatives benefitting 119 participants. In 2017/18 financial year, it funded 17 ECD centres and six (6) income generation programmes.

In line with the new Business Model of the NDA which decentralized the structure of the NDA, the regional office opened four (4) Advisory Centres in Zululand at Vryheid; Umkhanyakude at Big 5 Hlabisa; Harry Gwala at Ixop and Ethekwini in Durban, also responsible for UMgungundlovu). It also plans to open these centres at King Centshwayo, Ilembe, Mzinyathi and Uthukela districts. The regional office also partnered with government departments, governments agencies, local and district municipalities and private sector. The aim of these partnerships is to holistically assist NPOs and cooperatives, avoid duplication in the funding of NPOs, avoid underfunding or over funding and ensure sustainability of the projects.

**Challenges**

It was reported that the NDA faces the challenges of declining funding for the past years. It had now reached a critical point where the current level of funding was not adequate to meet its strategic plans. This also had a dire effect on the CSO sector as a whole, as the NDA ends up competing with these CSOs in fund raising.

The Agency also faces human resources challenges. The number of personnel does not match the work that needs to be done in the province. As of 10 April 2017, the Agency had 12 permanent operations staff members, who are responsible for all the districts and also participate in war rooms, Operation Sukumasakhe Strategy, District Municipal Forums and NPO District Forums.

**Deliberations**

* The Committee noted with concern that the NDA CEO failed to attend the meeting and it received no apology.
* It appreciated the new structural organization of the regional office because it is aligned to the national New Business Model that was presented to it by national NDA.
* It expressed a concern that the presentation lacked details regarding the financial report of the regional NDA. Even though it was reported that the NDA was experiencing a decline in funding, no further details were given, that is, how much was the decline over MTEF period. There was no report on the annual budget allocation and its expenditure.

The Department of Social Development reported that it was engaging National Treasury to source more funding for the NDA. National Treasury advised it to approach other government departments and source funds.

* The Committee noted that the list of stakeholders the NDA works with did not include traditional leaders. This was a concern because traditional leaders had reported that they do not have any working relationship with the NDA. As a result, it has no knowledge on the work of the NDA. The Committee continues to be concerned that the work of the NDA is still not known, especially in rural areas.
* The Committee also noted that the presentation lacked timeframes on the establishment of additional district and advisory offices in Empangeni, Mandeni, Greytown and Ladysmith.
* The Committee was concerned over lack of clarity on the roles done by the NDA and the Department of Social Development in capacity building of NPOs. It seems there is a duplication of roles.

1. **Site visit to Provincial Food Distribution Centre, Pietermaritzburg**

**5.1 Presentation on Provincial Food Distribution Centre and Community**

**Nutrition Development Centre (CNDC)**

It was reported that the concept of CNDC refers to a place where individuals from households in need of food come together to enjoy nutritious meals which meets their most basic human needs. A CNDC also enables those identified individuals to participate in developmental programmes and projects. It also serves as a point of coordination of integrated interventions for food security and poverty alleviation. It is a platform for the protection of the dignity and creating the necessary inclusivity for the beneficiaries. CNDCs are designed to empower peoplethrough training and skills development. The CNDC is ideal to run workshops and conduct training programsto beneficiaries of the CNDC. It serves nutritious meals to 250 beneficiaries including satellite centers. A weekly menu is provided for the meals cooked in a week. Beneficiaries have the chance to be seated in a table and eat a 3 course meal

CNDCs were piloted in five (5) local municipalities during the 2013/14 financial year. They are now being rolled out to 52 most deprived wards which have been identified using the South African Multiple Deprivation Index. The 52 CNDCs cater for 11 000 individuals. Each CNDC cater for 250 beneficiaries per ward.

**Eligibility and selection**

It was reported that the selection of beneficiaries is done through the war room. Community Care Givers assist in identifying the beneficiaries. The local leadership can also recommend beneficiaries to benefit from CNDC. Beneficiaries are also selected from household profiling. Some beneficiaries can be referred by the clinics. Registration of beneficiaries is done on the 1st day of operation of the CNDC and signing on daily basis is done to monitor frequency of people visiting the center.

**Human Resource**

The Committee was told that a CNDC can employ a maximum of 3 cooks of which one of those is a head cook. It also has volunteers who render various activities which include home visits, gardening, cleaning and maintenance. An EPWP rate is applied for the remuneration of all CNDC employees. Two (2) Security personnel are also allocated per CNDC. Other services provided are supply of gas, vegetables and meat by local suppliers and delivery of food to satellite centers.

**Budget implications**

A number of 44 provincially funded CNDCs amounted to a budget of R14,95 million and eight (8) were funded nationally. All CNDCs would have an initial allocation of R607 500 each eventually R408 000 for annual operations. The budget is inclusive of management cost, groceries and salaries. The amount allocated is for operating a CNDC for a year (1 year).

**5.2 Presentation on National Food and Security Plan and Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme update**

In September 2013, Cabinet approved a National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security, together with the Household Food and Nutrition Security Strategy. The Strategy calls on DSD to establish a robust network of Food Distribution Centres backed by a substantially larger financial commitment from the fiscus.

An Integrated Interdepartmental Committee (TWG) comprising of relevant sector departments, Civil Society Organizations, and academia, was established to coordinate implementation of the Policy and Strategy. The mandate of the Department of Social Development - amongst many deliverables, is expected to ensure that the poor and vulnerable members of our society have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food at all times.

The development agenda of the Republic of South Africa continues to place food and nutrition security high on the country’s developmental agenda with DSD prioritizing food & nutrition security, job creation and contribution to the economy.

**National plan for Food and Nutrition Security**

Under the leadership of the Office of the Deputy President, an Inter-Governmental Technical Working Groupwas constituted in 2015 to develop a National Food and Security Plan, which comprehensively incorporates the directives from Cabinet, the findings of the Nutrition Diagnostic Evaluation of Nutrition Interventions for Children under-5 years. It also ensures synergies with the National Policy on Food & Nutrition Security (NPFNS) together with Fetsa Tlala and the Household Food and Nutrition Strategy.

The plan also reflects a common vision across government departments, and entail a unified set of national goals and objectives, indicators and targets for monitoring progress, as well as a common budget for implementation of activities. It is aimed at enabling the country to address problems such as hunger, malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies that affect physical growth and cognitive development, especially among children, as directed by the National Development Plan 2030.

**Challenges and proposed solutions**

* Lack of intra-sectoral collaboration in the implementation of food and nutrition security interventions. The proposed recommendation is to strengthen coordination of DSD niche on food and nutrition security policy, strategic interventions & programming.
* Inconsistent reporting which leads to under or over reporting. The proposed recommendation is to work with Strategy and M&E Units to strengthen reporting by the Sector.
* Some CNDCs feed fewer beneficiaries due to vastness of the area where CNDC is located. To resolve this challenge, the department recommended that there should be a resource plan for establishment of satellite feeding points as per demand.
* Linkage of CNDCs beneficiaries to exit developmental programmes and sustainable livelihoods. To address this, the department will cooperate with development partners and develop sustainable livelihoods interventions.
* Delayed processing of programme funding by provinces. The department has recommended that Heads of Departments assist with the processing of the provincial allocation

**5.4 Deliberations and recommendations**

* The Committee reiterated its concern regarding the outsourcing of the department’s services such distribution of food and negotiating of food prices to Non-profit Organisation (NPOs). It was of the view that the department should capacitate people or establish cooperatives that will assist communities to be self-sufficient.
* It commended the department for developing good programmes such as the now National Integrated Food Programme. Even though, the programme is good in fighting poverty, the Committee expressed dissatisfaction that its implementation is outsourced to NPOs. It was of the view that the department was funded by government to implement this programme instead of outsourcing it. The department noted the Committee’s observation and concern and the lack of utilising local government structures in delivering its services. It promised the Committee that the matter will be escalated to the office of the Deputy President in order to be addressed and coordinated.
* The Committee advised the department to consider increasing its capacity with the assistance of local government through Community Development Workers. These workers can be used in the food distribution.
* The Committee advised the department to do more with less in its budget expenditure. It can do that by delivering services itself instead of outsourcing to NPOs. In that way an amount of R830 million (out of R1.2 billion allocated to the department) that was reported to have been transferred to NPOs can be saved.

**Resolution**

The Committee resolved to invite the national Department of Social Department to brief it on the comprehensive report on the Integrated Food Security Programme.

1. **Visit to Makhalima Develoment Centre – Mnqampompweni CNDC**

**Background**

Mnqampompweni CNDC is managed by the Makhalima Development Centre which is an organization operating at Ezimwini, Mahleka area under the traditional leadership of Inkosi Mkhize from Embo –Thimoni Traditional Authority. Makhalima Development Centre was established in 2003 and was registered as a Non-Profit Organization on the 25th of February 2004. The organization was established to assist children and families that were affected and infected by HIV/AIDS. The organization’s main aim was to provide cooked meals to orphaned and vulnerable children and also provide food parcels to the extremely needy families. The centre was funded by the Department of Health and employed a number of volunteers that were assisting the centre with the identification of households, preparing meals for children and also do some administration work.

The organization exhausted all its funds and was not able to implement its programmes. Makhalima Development Centre was based in ward 5 of Mkhambathini Local Municipality as per the old demarcations and the ward had since been moved to Durban Metro as ward 105. Makhalima Development Centre was identified by the war room as an organization that could implement Community Nutrition Development Centre (CNDC) programmes. The project signed Service Level Agreement with the Department of Social Development for 2014/2015 financial year and the Service Level Agreement (SLA) was signed in October 2014.

Makhalima Development Centre (CNDC) was funded with an amount of R 500 000 for 2014/2015 financial year and funds were carried over to 2015/2016 financial year.

Through EPWP the centre employed five (5) general workers as Cooks and security guard. Additional five (5) volunteers receive stipend through the Non-State Sector EPWP programme. They provide services at the five (5) CNDC satellite centres.

The centre used to provide food to 258 beneficiaries until the ward from which it operates has been re-demarcated to exclude a satellite that has been servicing 96 beneficiaries. The 96 beneficiaries remained under uMkhambathini Local municipality whist the rest are now in ward 105 of the Durban Metro.

**Financial report**

Makhalima Development Centre was funded with an amount of R 500 000 in 2014/2015 financial year for the implementation of CNDC deliverables. Some funds were carried over to 2015/2016 financial year. The 2014/2015, 2015/2016 funds were exhausted in June 2016. The organization received an additional funding of R347 000 for 2016/2017 financial year and the funds were transferred to the organization’s account in October 2016.

The funds were spent on buying dried goods from South African Food Security and Development Agency (SAFSDA), paying stipends for two (2) security guards, two (2) assistant cooks and one (1) head cook, pay for service providers who deliver food to satellite points, buy gas cylinder, stationery and also to buy fresh vegetables, fruits and chicken weekly. The organization received additional funding for 2017/2018 financial year to an amount of R 163 048. The amount will be transferred to the organization in four tranches. The first tranche amount of R 40 722 was transferred to the organization’s account in July 2017. The balance in their bank account as of the 31st of July 2017 was R 62 738.

**7.1 Committee deliberations on issues emanated from the presentation**

The Committee was not satisfied with the state of the Centre because it lacked some resources that were needed to respond to the needs of beneficiaries. The Centre does not have a refrigerator to store perishable goods. The Centre is also not electrified due to the electrical box that was stolen. The centre was unable to continue with the electrification of the hall.

The Committee during its site inspection found that the gas cylinders were located inside the kitchen. This was a serious fire hazard. The Committee advised that the Centre Manager and the Department of Social Development to ensure that arrangements were made to move the cylinders outside.

1. **Visit to Vuma Youth Development Centre** 
   1. **Presentation on Youth Academy and partnership with Services SETA**

Vuma Youth Development Academy was officially launched on 30 April 2014. In line with the Youth Development Academy Model, four (4) cooperatives were established to provide various essential services for the Academy. The DSD organised unemployed youth into various cooperatives. Young people were mobilized from the Traditional Authority in consultation with iNkosi Shange. The department provided capacity building as well as sustainable markets for the cooperatives. A total number of 44 jobs were created through the establishment of the cooperatives.

The Centre was official launched as a pilot programme on 16 March 2013. The Youth Development Academy is an initiative of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial government as a response to the challenges facing youth of the province. It was guided by the national and provincial policy imperatives. These include the curbing of increased unemployment, lack of skills, poverty, crime and the range of social ills leading to general moral decay and importantly, an increase in inequality and social exclusion. The concept is based on a model that seeks to address the challenges of youth development using a multi-dimensional and holistic approach which is driven through emotional development, physical development, cognitive development, skills development and citizenship values.

The academy has the following objectives:

* To increase steady flow of contributing and productive young people in the province,
* To unlock the potential of young people through cognitive, emotional and physical empowerment,
* To develop self-esteem of the young people to believe on their potential and to be responsible citizens,
* To strengthen collaborations and partnerships with the different stakeholders for youth development,
* To provide relevant skills to youth, and
* increase prospects of employability and job creation.

Since the main focus of the academies and centres is on lifeskills, behaviour change and vocational skills development, the cohort of young people have been identified from the categories such as youth exiting the Foster Care System of the Department of Social Development, youth who have completed diversion programmes. It also focuses on youth who have completed the drug rehabilitation programme in centres owned by government or those centres that are funded by government and others in the province and youth heading households. Lastly, it was reported that unemployed youth seeking information and opportunities and other vulnerable young people are also identified and referred to the academies through Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Rooms.

The recruitment and assessment process of youth encompassed (i) interview session and pre-placement assessments, induction, medical assessment, background checks and physical assessment. The selection criteria require children to be South African citizens residing in KwaZulu-Natal, must be between the ages of 18-25 years, have a minimum of grade 9 education or have no qualifications, must be prepared to undergo fingerprint checks and health assessments, be prepared to remain in the academy for the duration of the programme and be prepared to abide by the conduct of the academy/centre.

The curriculum focuses on Life skills, career guidance, citizenship values, vocational skills programmes and entrepreneurship development for the unemployed young people. The Centre offers curriculum on Home Based Care and Counselling, beauty therapy, computer skills, entrepreneurship development, safety management and construction, welding and boiler making, electrical, plumbing, carpentry, hospitality and tourism and sports coaching. The Centre also focuses on discipline and safety of children and measures are in place to monitor that.

In terms of progress to date, these achievements were reported:

* A total number of 335 students have graduated from the programme since its launch.
* Thirty-five (35) young people have received formal employment subsequent to graduation.
* Fifty-nine (59) young people were doing a learnership programme with Graaf Reinet Hotel School in the Eastern Cape and will be employed by Tembe Elephant Park upon completion.
* Fourteen (14) young people were allocated into cooperatives that will provide hospitality services and some are currently self-employed.

It started engagements with Vodacom to launch a call centre where young people can contact to obtain assistance on issues they are faced with. The call centre will be staffed by Social Workers. This will be part of the centre’s after care programme.

**8.2 Remarks by Services SETA**

A representative from Services SETA informed the Committee that role of the SETA was to promote skills development at the workplace through partnerships. She reported that the KZN DSD is one of its best partner. It was declared as Number 1 partner because of its cooperation in skills development.

Since 2015, Services SETA has provided 1 000 learnerships in the Province. By end of August 2017, 661 students will graduate from these learnerships. Services SETA had started a process of working with the Department of Social Development to provide skills development to cooperatives. It started initial planning and was waiting for the department to come back to them.

**8.1.1 Visit to Sizamimpilo Cooperative**

Sizamimpilo was registered in November 2013 and has thirteen members (3 males and 10 females) and its core business is hospitality industry (food and beverage). The cooperative has been rendering the catering services to the Vuma Youth Development Academy since April 2014.

A series of capacity building programmes were provided to the youth working at the cooperative which included amongst others, training in hospitatility by uMfolozi Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College, training on Cooperative Business Model and registration and compliance by Department of Rural Development and training on Financial Management by the Department of Social Development.

The Cooperative provides catering services during graduation and other outreach programmes, such as meetings and community events. It also provides three (3) meals per day to 60 learners per academy intake at a rate of R82 which cost an amount of R152 520 per month. Expenses to run the project amounts to R109 000 and the cooperative had a savings of R43 520 per month.

* 1. **.2 Deliberation and recommendations**
* The Committee commended the presenters for a clear and detailed presentations on the Vuma Youth Academy and Sizamimpilo cooperative.

* It also expressed appreciation for the inclusion of House of Traditional Leaders as one of the stakeholders that has partnered with the Centre. It also appreciated the partnership the Vuma Youth Development Academy has with private sector, such as Vodacom.
* The Committee congratulated the department for launching an excellent programme, but it advised it to ensure that future presentations of the centres should include a detailed budget report.
* The Committee advised the department that this model can be used as a best practice for other Child and Youth Care Centres in terms of principles of behavioural change. This programme can also be implemented to other provinces.
* In relation to the partnership with private sector, such as Vodacom, the Committee wanted to know whether the partnership includes skills placement to these sectors after the youth have exited the academy. The Centre representative responded that the partnership with private sector is still very limited but through TVET colleges they are linked to economic opportunities
* The Committee noted that the presentation did not specify the level of qualification acquired by youth when they exit the programme.
* The presentation also did not report on the impact of the behavioral programme to communities and its success rate. It also did not report on how the skills development benefited communities after the programme.

The Committee wanted to find out whether the centre was linked to National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC) as both of them do similar programmes. The department responded that the centre was different to NARYSEC because it is community driven.

1. **Visit to RASET**

**10.1 Presentation on RASET**

Radical Agrarian Socio-Economic Transformation (RASET) was presented to clusters and various forums and adopted by the Executive Council on the 06 July 2016. The RASET concept was adopted by the Executive Council of KZN for the Province of Kwa-Zulu Natal through a Cabinet Resolution. The resolution clearly approves the setup of a RASET project office. However, at the time of the oversight visit there was no agreement as to the most suitable body to implement and coordinate RASET.

RASET is a Government Programme directed at addressing the crisis of joblessness, poverty and inequality by supporting Black African subsistence and small farmers of South African origin and from previously disadvantaged communities as well as entrepreneurs in related sectors. It is aimed at empowering them to make the most productive use of natural resources in the most sustainable manner in order to effectively participate in the agro food supply chain.

The Mission of RASET is to open quality opportunities in favour of qualifying Previously Disadvantaged Individual (PDIs) entrepreneurs in order to operate sustainable agriculture, manufacturing, trading and service businesses that provide jobs, alleviate poverty and redress inequalities. It does this through the provision of secured government markets and using technology to link a network of diverse logistical and cash transactions for the movement of goods and services whilst behaving in a socially responsible and environmentally friendly manner.

RASET is also aimed at transforming the socio-economic landscape of PDIs by creating an environment within the Previously Disadvantaged Communities (PDCs) that is conducive to trade between customers (government and private) and PDI suppliers right from primary supply through value addition up to final consumption of local goods and services. It will gear entrepreneurs to access and secure 30% market share of all food consumed in KwaZulu-Natal by 2021.

RASET reflects the synergistic linkages in the food production and market access value chain from the supply side (i.e. agricultural inputs, equipment supply and extension support), primary agriculture production, product processing (services in the agri-hubs) and access to markets (government Departments of Basic Education, Health and Social Development and private sector markets).

Essentially, RASET seeks to improve the value chain of food production and supply for underprivileged farmers and emerging agro-business using the concept of incubation and widening market opportunities.

**10.2 Visit to Umzamowethu Youth Agricultural Project**

Umzamo Wethu Youth Agricultural Co-operative is based in King Cetshwayo District Municipality, Umhlathuze Local Municipality, in Ngwelezane Location, Ward 24. The co-operative has fifteen (15) committee members, with five (5) board members, comprised of three (3) males and (2) two females. All these are young people. The total project budget was R932 646 and R 858 596 was spent. A sustainability fund of R74 150 was also spent. The project has created 16 jobs.

The Co-operative was funded in 2014 by National Development Agency, for a period of 24 months: 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 financial years. At the end of the second financial year, the cooperative requested a sustainability fund of R74 150, to build a pack house and a cold room, and this was completed in the 2016-2017 financial year.

The project addresses poverty, unemployment and food and nutrition security.

Ngwelezane Township, where the project is located, is characterised by a high unemployment and poverty rate. The majority of youth, who have completed their matric, are unable to further their education, hence the high rate of unemployment.

**Specific Objectives:**

The following were identified as objectives of the cooperative:

* To extend the vegetable garden by planting green peppers and tomatoes in the tunnels, but they ended up planting tomatoes only, so as to meet their supply demand.
* To sell these vegetables to local community members, caterers, schools and local retailers.
* To train all fifteen (15) committee members on hydroponic planting methods.
* To train five (5) board members in financial and business management.

The hydroponics tunnels are used to effectively preserve the crops even during bad weather, which normally affects the crop production negatively. High crop volumes are produced and the growing time is lessened. The tunnels are fitted with antivirus nets, irrigation system, grow bags, floors plastics, roller hooks and strings.

**Achievements to date**

The project reported on the following outcomes:

* Five (5) board members were trained on governance, financial management and business management.
* Fifteen (15) members were trained on hydroponic plant production methods.
* Two (2) tunnels were procured and erected.
* Tomato seedlings were procured.
* Fertilisers used to enhance yield quality and quantity and pest control were procured.
* Pack House and Cold Room were built
* Harvest was sold to caterers, schools, community and local retailers.

It was reported that the local community and local leadership fully support the project. All fifteen (15) members are from the community, where the project is operating. The land used by the project was donated by the local municipality. Other community members give technical assistance, when the need arises.

The Centre has strategic partnership with the Department of Social Development, which previously funded the project with R250 000 to pay for operational costs, Owen Sithole Agricultural College for agricultural technical support. Umhlathuze Municipality donated the land where the project is operating.

**Challenges**

* It was reported that even though the project was self-sustainable, it needed two (2) more tunnels to experience an exponential profit increase.
* The project had secured a contract with Spar supermarket but unfortunately, could not meet the demand of 200 boxes of tomatoes on a weekly basis thus there was a need for two (2) more tunnels. The project was only supplying Uthungulu Fresh Produce, caterers and other local retailers.

* Project members reported that the project faced a challenge of theft. Two (2) jojo tanks and fence supplied by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, were stolen. To address this, project members tried to have some of them stay in the premises to secure it but their request was declined by the Municipality.
* Project members told the Committee that they were paying rent to the municipality. This contracted the report in the presentation that the land the project was located in was donated by Umhlathuze Municipality.

1. **Recommendations**

The Committee made the following recommendations:

**National Development Agency**

* The Minister of Social Development should ensure that the NDA does not limit its fundraising at national level. Fundraising should also be done by provincial offices.
* The Minister should also ensure that the NDA, both at national and provincial levels, work with traditional leaders.

**Vuma Youth Academy**

* The Minister should ensure that the provincial department assist the centre to include in its plans implementation of food production programme for the youth. This will ensure that young people are trained and involved in food production.
* The Minister should also ensure that the provincial department makes sure that youth development programmes promote social cohesion programmes involving older persons. Older persons have knowledge on cultural behavioural practices and other skills. This was supported by a local business man who expressed an interest to work with the centre. The business man was also trained at the centre when it was still run by a local Traditional Council.
* The Minister should ensure that the provincial department assist the centre to establish partnerships with the private sector with the aim of negotiating for placement of students after graduation.

The Minster should further ensure that the provincial department assists the centre to strengthen and monitor its aftercare programme. This will ensure that students who graduated from the Academy are able to invest or sharing knowledge to their communities.

**Makhalima Development Centre**

* The Minister should ensure that the provincial department urgently address the issue of shortage of resources in Makhalima Development Centre. This includes the electrification of the hall, procurement of a refrigerator and installation of proper fencing to prevent theft and protect the vegetable garden.
* The Minister should engage with the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to provide the facility with seeds that will be provided to beneficiaries for gardening. This will encourage food gardening on each household.

**Umzamowethu Youth Agricultural Project**

* The Minister should ensure that the provincial department expedites the process of putting fencing around the project to avoid theft of materials.
* The Minister should also ensure that the provincial department negotiates with the Umhlathuze Municipality and employ a security guard for the project.

Report to be considered.

1. For 2017/18 financial year it will receive R112 347 million and R118 629 million for 2018/2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Main stakeholders are Departments of Home Affairs, Health, South African Police Services, Local Municipalities including Districts, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Social Development and Agriculture and Rural Development [↑](#footnote-ref-2)