



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Budget Speech 2025/2026



A Caring and Self-Reliant Society

**2025/26 FINANCIAL YEAR BUDGET VOTE SPEECH
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT – VOTE 12**



**DELIVERED BY THE MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL,**

Ms FLORENCE RADZILANI

TO THE LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

10 APRIL 2025

A Caring and Self-Reliant Society

Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker
Honourable Premier, Dr Phophi Ramathuba
Esteemed Members of the Executive Council
The Chief Whip of the governing party
Leaders of the opposition parties
Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee
Honourable Members of the Legislature
Members of the media,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good Morning to you all

It is my sincere honour to stand with sense of courage and commitment before this august house to present the budget proposals for Vote 12, the Department of Social Development, on behalf of the Seventh Administration led by the indefatigable African National Congress. Today, as we stand before this august house, we are not merely presenting a budget. We are laying the foundation for the future of our province, for the dreams, aspirations and hopes of millions of the people of Limpopo who trust in us to deliver on the promises we made. These promises to provide comprehensive and integrated services; protection against vulnerability; sustainable development; facilitating access to social grants; promoting social integration; monitoring population trends; and other welfare services in line with our Constitutional mandate.

This Constitutional Mandate compels us to work hard towards the realization of the Freedom Charter which this year we will be commemorating its 70th anniversary. We will be marking this tremendous milestone after the 31st anniversary of freedom and democracy. We pride ourselves for the achievement we have made together and recognise that we are still obliged to do more. This is because we have not yet attained the totality of the aspirations enshrined in the Freedom Charter.

Let me set the tone and thematise the presentation of the commitments tabulated in our budget vote and recite the words of American poet, novelist and civil rights activist, Maya Angelou, when she said, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

This is the determination towards our approach to render services as I have stated in my preamble in which I have stated the mandate of our department in delivering services to our people. In line with our election manifesto priorities, we are committed to delivering services that people can see, can experience and more importantly, transform their lives in ways that make them feel the progress we are making.

A Caring and Self-Reliant Society

The manifesto amongst some of its priorities commits us to:

- Strengthening of our comprehensive social security system to reduce poverty, vulnerability, social exclusion and inequality through social assistance; and
- Preventing vulnerability and destitution as a result of the loss of income through social insurance for workers.
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It is a solemn responsibility that we must carry with pride, determination and unwavering commitment. As we set forth our budget commitments for the financial year ahead, I wish to highlight the pivotal role of the Department of Social Development in implementing the three government's priorities as outlined in the medium-term development plan.

Honourable Speaker


I stand before you today, confident that we are on an upward trajectory, making tangible progress towards the ultimate objective of a better life for all. Every decision we make, every program we implement, every cent we allocate must be seen as a step forward in fulfilling this vision.

We understand that safety is paramount; thus, increasing the feelings of safety among women and children will remain a crucial focus. We will enhance our services and support systems to combat gender-based violence, ensuring that our communities are safer environments for all citizens.

In line with the priority to build a capable, ethical, and developmental state, we are committed to the mainstreaming of gender and the empowerment of youth and persons with disabilities, these commitments also play a crucial role in contributing to the Pillar Four of the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF-NSP) which talks about: Response, Care Support and healing.

We will invest in training and support for our social workers, ensuring that they adhere to the highest ethical standards and work as dedicated professionals committed to serving the public good. The Department will implement programs that foster economic opportunities, equipping our youth and marginalized groups with the skills and resources necessary to thrive in a competitive job market.

We stand ready to implement these priorities, affirming our commitment to building a more equitable and prosperous nation for all. Together, we will strive to uplift the lives of the vulnerable and create a society that fosters growth, safety and dignity for every citizen. As we reflect on the achievements of the Department of Social Development, it is essential to recognise that part of our work involves ensuring that facilities serving our most vulnerable citizens, particularly people living with disabilities, children, and the el-



derly meet the highest standards of care, respect and dignity.

Regrettably, not all non-government run institutions have upheld these standards. In response to these shortcomings, we have taken decisive action to protect the lives of the vulnerable and restore public trust. One of the most significant and challenging issues we faced in recent months soon after we assumed office was the appalling conditions at the three facilities for vulnerable people Vutlhari Centre in Greater Letaba, Nape-a-Kanyane Centres as well as Angels of Planet Earth centre in Makhuduthamaga which were providing services for which they were not accredited for.

All of these non-profit organizations were found to be operating far below the minimum care standards required for facilities that cater to people with disabilities, the elderly and the mental care users.

Honourable Speaker

At the Vutlhari Centre we ensured that 22 residents were safely reunified with their families, while two individuals, whose families could not be traced, remain under our care as we continue to ensure their safety and well-being.


Similarly, at Nape-a-Kanyane Centre for the Aged and Angels of Planet Earth Centre, the facility failed to meet the required standards. After thorough assessments, together with the Department of Health we removed all residents from these facilities.

Thirty-five elderly individuals were successfully reunified with their families and 25 residents, who were in need of continued care, are now under our protection.

These actions, though difficult, are a testament to our commitment to safeguarding the rights and dignity of vulnerable people. We understand the vital role that non-governmental care facilities play in the lives of individuals who cannot fully care for themselves; however, we will not tolerate any institution that compromises their safety and well-being.

The closure of these facilities was not just a response to the immediate crisis, but also a clear message that the Department of Social Development will continue to hold those who take it upon themselves to care for the vulnerable members of our community accountable. I would like to appreciate the confidence of the community who when they observed these did not hesitate to report the violation of the vulnerable persons to our officials.

Honourable Speaker



The Department of Social Development recognises the critical need for support from well-managed Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs), functional families and civil society to help ease the burden of caring for individuals who cannot care for themselves. Our resources are limited and often insufficient to meet every need.

Therefore, to ensure that our services are both efficient and impactful, we seek collaboration from these key stakeholders. However, let me hasten to emphasize that while we welcome their support, we will never compromise the safety and well-being of the vulnerable individuals we serve. We will not partner with those whose primary interest is profit over the welfare of our community members.

Honourable Speaker

The well-being and dignity of older persons remain a top priority for the Department. In recognition of the invaluable contribution of our elderly citizens, we have focused our efforts on ensuring that they receive the care, protection and support they deserve.

This is reflected in the department's continued commitment to expanding both residential and community-based care facilities, alongside offering opportunities for active engagement and social participation. For the financial year 2025/2026 we have budgeted R35,263M for placing older persons in residential facilities and community-based care centres.

To date, over 500 older persons have accessed residential care facilities, ensuring they receive the specialized care they require. So far, more than 15,600 older persons have benefited from community-based care and support centres, which continue to provide essential services to those in need, especially in their own communities where they feel most comfortable.

Honourable Speaker

We remain committed to improving care and support for older persons. As part of this, we will roll out capacity-building programmes focused on the Older Persons Abuse Register (OPAR). As part of this we have trained 50 social workers and 25 supervisors on OPAR.

Through these ongoing efforts and upcoming initiatives, our department is working to build stronger, safer and more resilient communities across our province.

In line with our commitment to promoting active aging, we successfully held the Provincial Golden Games in September 2024, which saw over a thousand older persons, along with key stakeholders, participating in various activities.

The National Golden Games followed in February this year, from the 18th to the 20th, once again highlighting the importance of keeping our elderly citizens active, engaged and involved in their communities.

Honourable Speaker

As part of our ongoing efforts to strengthen the infrastructure supporting older persons, one residential facility was newly registered this year, alongside the establishment of 38 community-based care and support centres. To ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of these services, the department fund eight residential facilities and 189 community-based care and support centers.

For the current financial year, a dedicated budget of R33,751M has been allocated to support these initiatives. Additionally, the one government-run residential facility, which provides care to 120 older persons, has been allocated a budget of R5,035M to continue delivering services that meet the highest standards of care.

These investments reflect our ongoing commitment in providing older persons with the care they deserve while fostering an environment where they can live with dignity, safety and fulfilment. Through these measures, we aim to ensure that older persons can age actively, healthily and with the necessary support to thrive.

Honourable Speaker

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The department remains dedicated to delivering prevention programs that ensure the care and protection of persons with disabilities. By the end of the third quarter of 2024/25 financial year, 289 individuals with disabilities had accessed residential facilities, while 3,950 participated in protective workshops. Protective workshops are safe, disability-friendly environments designed to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to develop and improve their skills. These workshops enable participants to earn an income through the products they create, supplementing their disability grants.

Thanks to sustained advocacy efforts, there has been a significant increase in the number of persons with disabilities accessing a wider range of social development services, thereby enhancing their overall well-being. The department is currently funding 108 protective workshops, 6 provincial councils, 3 residential facilities and 37 stimulation centres, with an allocated budget of R105,760M. The stimulation centres are specialised facilities designed to support individuals with disabilities, particularly those with developmental or cognitive impairments. These centres provide a range of activities and therapies aimed at enhancing sensory, motor, cognitive, and social skills. In the 2025/2026 financial year we have budgeted

R210.4M which is inclusive of funding of Shiluvani Frail Care centre.

Honourable Speaker

The Department of Social Development, in collaboration with funded Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs), continues to implement critical social and behaviour change programs aimed at preventing the spread of HIV, STIs and tuberculosis (TB). By the end of the third quarter of the 2024/25 financial year, a total of 620 implementers were trained to deliver these programs, 107 154 beneficiaries in the process.

In addition to these efforts, 17,573 beneficiaries received psychosocial support services, further strengthening our commitment to holistic care. To support vulnerable children, we have allocated R1,321M for the procurement of school uniforms, benefiting 780 learners from 269 schools.

Honourable Speaker

Let me take this moment and address an important development regarding funding for HIV and AIDS as well as TB initiatives. As you all now know it has been announced that the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has pulled out its funding.

However, I want to reassure everyone that this decision should not send panic among those benefiting from PEPFAR programmes. The Department of Social Development is sufficiently funded to meet our targets and uphold our commitment to providing essential services to people living with HIV and tuberculosis (TB) as per the Annual Performance Plan.

Honourable Speaker

HIV/AIDS

In support of those infected and affected by HIV, the department has earmarked R8,078M for food parcel distribution, benefiting 4,121 individuals. Additionally, 13 NPOs providing Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) programs and 49 Home and Community-Based Care (HCBC) organizations have received funding to continue their vital work.

A total budget R36,040M has been set aside for this financial year to ensure the continued success of these initiatives. Through these efforts, we remain steadfast in our mission to improve the lives of our most vulnerable communities while contributing to the ongoing fight against HIV and AIDS, STIs and TB.



Honourable Speaker

The school uniform programme, which I had the privilege of leading, has been a key initiative in restoring the dignity of learners, particularly those from financially constrained families. By ensuring that no child is excluded from school because they cannot afford a proper school uniform, we are providing not only a physical garment but also an affirmation of the worth and potential of each learner. It is a simple but powerful way to ensure that children are able to focus on their education, not the disparities that might exist in their appearance due to economic hardship. One of the most significant lessons we have learned from this programme is the power of collaboration.

In this case, our partnership with the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) has been invaluable. Their experience in reaching out to vulnerable communities, combined with our collective efforts, ensured that the programme was successfully rolled out in all five districts.

This is just the beginning. As we move forward, we recognise that continuous improvement is crucial. To enhance the targeting and reach of the programme, we have resolved to engage civil partners and traditional leaders more actively in the process.

Honorable Speaker

I want to take a moment to recognize and commend the invaluable services provided by our Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs). These organizations play an essential role in our communities, caring for abandoned children, offering safe havens for abused and neglected youths and supporting people living with disabilities and older persons.

The Department of Social Development views our partnership with NPOs as critical to achieve our departmental mandates and fulfilling our commitment to social welfare. It is in our province's best interest to ensure that our NPOs are well-resourced and properly funded, enabling them to continue their important work and make a lasting impact on the lives of vulnerable individuals and families.

Honourable Speaker

In partnership with the South African National Aids Council (SANAC), we have also engaged a consultant to design and deliver a comprehensive skills development program for children and youth aged 15-24 years across five community care centres.

The program, which includes training in both soft and hard skills, aims to empower young individuals with the tools they need to succeed in life.

For the financial year 2024/25, our goal was to reach 850 beneficiaries in all five Community Care Centres in the Province. I am pleased to report that, to date, 1,441 children between the ages of 15 and 18 have already benefited from this initiative. More children are expected to access these services during 2025/26 financial year and therefore R179.8M has been allocated for this purpose.

In our continued efforts to ensure that Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) provide high-quality services to their beneficiaries, the department, in collaboration with the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA), is launching the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) program.

This program targets community caregivers working in funded NPOs and aims to provide them with formal qualifications in Child and Youth Care Work. The ultimate goal is to enhance their employability and ensure that they are equipped to take on the role of qualified Child and Youth Care Workers.

The target for this RPL initiative is to train 550 community caregivers between 2024 and 2027. In line with what we have reported, 100 care givers are completing their training this month. HWSETA will manage the payments to the service providers facilitating the training.

Honourable Speaker

SOCIAL RELIEF OF DISTRESS

Our department has continued to respond swiftly and effectively to the emergency needs arising from disasters and other adverse social conditions, which often result in undue hardship for our citizens. Through the Social Relief of Distress programme, we have been able to support 7,903 individuals and families affected by incidences of disaster and trauma, ensuring they receive the assistance required to overcome these challenges. For the financial year 2025/2026 for the social relief of distress we have budgeted R1,346M which we believe will bring much needed relief to those who require socio-economic relief.

CARE AND SERVICES TO FAMILIES

The families of Limpopo face numerous challenges that hinder their ability to provide for themselves and their children. These challenges include economic pressure, poverty, violence against women and children, substance abuse, mental health issues, lack of alternative care during parental absence and disrupted family structures. In response, our department has provided vital support to 285,630 families. Additionally, we have partnered with 24 civil society organizations that provide essential services to children and families.

CHILD AND YOUTH CARE CENTRES

We remain committed to ensuring that children who cannot be cared for by their families due to abuse, neglect, or other challenges are provided with the protection and care they need. Currently, 15 Child and Youth Care Centres with 5 government-run and 10 privately-run offer residential care to children who are orphaned, abused, or victims of trafficking. To date, we have provided care and protection for 850 children.

These centres are funded at a rate of R6,269 per child per month.

Thanks to the department's family support initiatives whose aim is to resuscitate dysfunctional families, 133 of these children have been successfully reunited with their families.

Furthermore, in collaboration with the Polokwane Smelters, we initiated a "Take a Boy Child to Work" programme. Ten children from the Polokwane Welfare Complex were exposed to a variety of career opportunities within the mining sector, which has inspired them and broadened their perspectives on potential careers after matric.

Honourable Speaker

COMMUNITY-BASED PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

We are committed to empowering children and communities to move from vulnerability to resilience. In the 2024/2025 financial year, 844,208 children benefitted from community-based prevention and early intervention services provided by 419 registered Drop-in Centres which are funded by the Department. These centres offer essential services such as educational support, child protection, psychosocial care, economic strengthening, health promotion, and HIV and AIDS programmes.

Moreover, we have trained 29 child and youth care workers on the National Qualifications Framework Level 3 (NQF 3) Child and Youth Care Work qualification. This training equips our care workers with the skills necessary to strengthen our community-based services.

Honourable Speaker

CRIME PREVENTION

Social crime prevention remains a cornerstone of our efforts to address the root causes of criminal behaviour. By focusing on improving social conditions and promoting positive youth development, we

have reached 20,393 individuals through various crime prevention initiatives. Additionally, young offenders in conflict with the law have had access to Secure Care Centres, with 548 individuals completing diversion programmes aimed at rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

Honourable Speaker

VICTIM EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME (VEP)

Our Victim Empowerment Programme continues to provide essential support to individuals affected by crime, violence and abuse. This programme offers psychological, legal and social support to victims of gender-based violence, domestic violence, human trafficking and child abuse. In the past year, 8,335 victims accessed support services, and 35 individuals received sheltering.

During the opening of the Seventh Administration legislature, Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba issued a directive for enhanced collaboration between key government departments and stakeholders in the fight against crime in our province. In response to the Premier's instruction, a collaborative approach was established, bringing together the Police, the Department of Social Development, the Department of Transport and Community Safety, the Department of Health, the National Prosecution Authority, and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development.

This partnership led to the formation of a consultative forum aimed at addressing the pressing issue of crime in our communities. In line with this initiative and in collaboration with our sister departments and relevant stakeholders, we organized a successful two-day Crime Prevention Summit here in Polokwane. The summit served as a platform for affected departments to come together and publicly commit to contributing to the ongoing fight against crime and violence, especially as it affects our most vulnerable populations, including women and children.

As part of the commitment, all government departments agreed to report quarterly to the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster on the progress of their crime prevention efforts. Furthermore, Heads of Departments will be required, as part of their contracts, to demonstrate their contributions to the fight against crime and violence. This will enable us to assess and evaluate the progress made in this regard, ensuring that our collective efforts remain on track and impactful.

Honourable Speaker

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse remains a critical social ill in many communities and our department has worked tirelessly to provide both preventative and rehabilitative support. We reached 60,797 individuals through sub-

stance abuse prevention programmes and 364 service users accessed treatment services for substance use disorders. The Department has recently accredited the Leni Nukeri Rehabilitation Centre in Giyani, a privately funded facility that has the capacity of admitting a total of 76 substance abuse users. This will go a long way in helping the Department combat this scourge.

We urge our people to refrain from sending their loved ones struggling with substance abuse to non-accredited centres. Many of these centres offer no support and help with substance addiction but have become money making schemes.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Poverty, hunger and unemployment remain significant challenges faced by communities throughout this province. In response, the Department of Social Development has committed, as part of its five-year plan, to address these issues by increasing employment opportunities, reducing poverty and improving livelihoods through various poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihood programmes and initiatives. In the 2024/2025 financial R30,681M was allocated to the implementation of these programs.

As of the third quarter of the 2024/25 financial year, a total of 1,247 individuals benefitted from poverty reduction initiatives, while 5,849 households had access to food through the Department's food security programs.

These initiatives engage poor and vulnerable individuals in food production within their own homes and provide food parcels to households in need. In the same period, 16,841 people accessed food through the Department's center-based feeding programs at various facilities managed or financed by the Department across the province. Additionally, by the end of the third quarter, 2,573 work opportunities were created across the province through these initiatives.

Honourable Speaker

For the 2025/2026 financial year, the Department has allocated R32,042M for poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods. A target of 1,500 individuals is set to benefit from poverty reduction initiatives, primarily through job creation efforts.

The Department is doubling efforts to ensure that R14M of this allocation, is directed towards food nutrition programs through Community Nutrition Development Centres (CNDCs), which will provide food access to individuals vulnerable to hunger. This initiative will target 3,800 individuals in 2025/2026 financial year, while also offering developmental skills training to economically active participants to ensure they can either compete in the job market or become self-reliant.

A further R5m will support departmental food security programs, focusing on household food production in backyard gardens and other income-generating initiatives for vulnerable households. It is anticipated that 7,250 households will benefit from this initiative.

Honourable Speaker

Cooperatives continue to play a central role in our efforts to alleviate poverty, hunger and unemployment. The Department has set aside R7,136M in the 2025/2026 financial year for the support of primary and women-owned cooperatives. Additionally, 25 cooperatives will be linked to economic opportunities during this period to ensure that the poor and vulnerable can participate more actively in the economy. Through these efforts, the Department of Social Development is committed to consolidating its role in the fight against poverty, hunger and unemployment, while empowering our communities to participate in their own development.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING AND SUPPORT

The Department of Social Development is also mandated to register and support Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs), recognizing the pivotal role these organizations play in community development and service delivery.

To this end, the Department allocates resources annually to provide institutional capacity building to NPOs. In the 2024/2025 financial year, R11,966M was allocated for institutional capacity building and support, benefiting 2,867 NPOs by the third quarter.

For the 2025/2026 financial year, an amount R10,999M has been allocated to continue providing capacity-building support to 3,250 NPOs across the province. Capacity building support will comprise among others training on governance and financial management. We believe this will improve the level of accountability and governance at these NPOs.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Youth unemployment remains a pressing issue in our country and province. The Department of Social Development contributes to alleviating youth unemployment through skills development and entrepreneurship programs. In 2024/2025 financial year R16M was allocated for youth development, focusing on funding youth-led NPOs and skills development initiatives. During the 2024/2025 financial year, the Department provided accredited skills development programs to 682 youth, offering courses in fields such as electrical and civil engineering, business management and digital technology.

Honourable Speaker

I am pleased to announce a groundbreaking gender-based violence and femicide mitigation program which was launched recently. This initiative, which emanates from the collaboration between Capricorn TVET College and Africa Civic Education foundation as well as the Services SETA that will target 12,000 students and staff members of the College. This is in direct response to the alarming rise in gender-based violence incidents within this community.

The program's primary objective is to combat this pervasive scourge not only within the educational institution but also in broader society, emphasizing the importance of creating safe environments both within and outside the post-school education and training sector. This program underscores our commitment to eradicating gender-based violence and fostering a culture of respect and safety for all.

Honourable Speaker

For the 2025/2026 financial year, the Department plans to provide skills development programs for 650 youth, including specialised training in cell phone repairs, accredited through the Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority (MERSETA). The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) has committed to support these youth with Business Development Training upon completion of their training. Additionally, previously trained youth have received ongoing support from the Vaal University of Technology to establish their own businesses.

Honourable Speaker

ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Department continues to support youth participation in the mainstream economy by enrolling them in entrepreneurship development programs. By the end of the third quarter in 2024/2025 financial year, 6,311 youth had enrolled in such programs. These programs aim to reduce vulnerability and poverty, building resilience, business knowledge and the ability to thrive in the economic ecosystem. In the 2025/2026 financial year, the Department plans to support 6,100 youth through its entrepreneurship development initiatives.

WOMEN DEVELOPMENT

In the 2024/2025 financial year, the Department allocated R4M to support women's empowerment initiatives aimed at poverty reduction. Additionally, R1.1M was allocated for the training and development of women. Through these efforts, 15,048 women participated in programs focused on crop and animal farm-

ing, marketing, financial management and production.

In the 2025/2026 financial year, the Department plans to empower 17,100 women through similar programs, providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in the current economic climate. Through these strategic initiatives, the Department of Social Development remains steadfast in its commitment to building an inclusive and sustainable future for all people, ensuring that poverty, hunger and unemployment are addressed through practical and empowering interventions.

Honourable Speaker

When I assumed the responsibility to lead this department, our staff complement stood at a troubling 48 percent, with many key positions, including those at the senior management level, filled on an acting basis. This unfortunate situation hindered our efficiency and negatively impacted on service delivery. Of importance is to note that some of the vacant positions at the time were not funded and could not be filled. As a result, we successfully engaged provincial Treasury and the Office of the Premier.

Through our interactions I am pleased to announce that key strategic positions are now funded and we are proceeding with our recruitment drive to fill those positions. We have made significant strides in correcting the COE baseline, enabling us to address these capacity matters.

Honourable Speaker

In the 2025/26 financial year, we plan to fill over 150 vacant positions. We are further committed to filling all vacated posts within six months of being vacated. Additionally, we aim to stabilize our senior management services (SMS) levels, with plans to fill seven SMS posts, including two top management positions in the chief directorates of Corporate Services and Research & Development by the end of the first quarter.

As we fill these critical positions, we are dedicated to achieving our equity target of having 50 percent of women in SMS roles. Over the past five years, we have maintained a 2 percent employment rate for individuals with disabilities and we will continue to prioritize this in our recruitment process.

To enhance our workforce's health and morale, we conducted an organizational climate survey in the 2021/2022 financial year. The results highlighted the need to improve employee well-being. Therefore, in the 2025/26 financial year, we will implement health and wellness programs, including counselling services, particularly focusing on supporting our Social Service Professionals who serve vulnerable communities.

Honourable Speaker

We are pleased to announce that we are finalizing our organizational structure and though this process has taken longer than expected, we plan to implement the new structure in the 2025/26 financial year. During his recent delivery of the provincial budget, the MEC responsible for Treasury, Honourable Kga-bo Mahoi, announced allocations for infrastructure development across all departments in alignment with the priorities of the medium-term development plan and the strategic objectives of the Limpopo Development Plan.

I am pleased to share that the Department of Social Development has been allocated R15 million for this purpose. This essential funding will be utilized to maintain and refurbish existing facilities across all our districts, ensuring their structural integrity and compliance with the occupational health and safety standards.

To this end, in the Capricorn District, we will conduct maintenance at the Polokwane Welfare Centre and refurbish our offices in Senwabarwana. In the Mopani District, renovations will take place at both Lebaka One Stop Centre and Kgapane One Stop Centre. The Vhembe District will see refurbishments at the Thohoyandou Child and Youth Care Centre and the Mavambe Secure Care Centre. In the Sekhukhune District, we will renovate Parkhomes and the Fetakgomo One Stop Centre while in the Waterberg District we will upgrade Roedtan and Bavaria offices. In total, 18 properties will receive maintenance, refurbishment, or upgrades from this infrastructure funding, marking a significant investment in our commitment to improving service delivery across the province.

Honourable Speaker,

I therefore present the 2025/2026 budget allocations as follows: [continued on next page]

| PROGRAMME | BUDGET | % OF TOTAL BUDGET |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Programme 1: Administration | R467,807 million | 20.38% |
| Programme 2: Social Welfare Services | R577,489 million | 25.16% |
| Programme 3: Children and Families | R719,887 million | 31.36% |
| Programme 4: Restorative Services | R275,862 million | 12.02% |
| Programme 5: Development Research | R253,821 million | 11.06% |
| TOTAL | R2, 294.866 billion | 100% |

Honourable Speaker

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Premier, Dr Phophi Ramathuba for her continued guidance and to my colleagues in the executive for their unwavering support in this endeavour. I also would like to extend my appreciation to the members of the Portfolio Committee for their ongoing robust engagement, ensuring that we remain focused on compliance and accountability.

A special thank you goes to the Acting Head of the Department, Dr. Martin Sehlapelo, whose leadership has brought much-needed administrative stability and efficiency to our processes. I will be making a cardinal mistake if I cannot appreciate men and women of the Department of Social Development who on daily basis strive to deliver comprehensive social protection services to the great masses of our people.

Together, with the effective use of this budget, we will continue to work towards a brighter future for all our people, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Let us remain united in our efforts to achieve the dream of a truly inclusive and prosperous society for all.

I thank you.