



North West Provincial Legislature Office

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NW Provincial Legislature, Unit 1, Mmabatho

Debate

Budget – Social Development

Hon. H van Huyssteen

22 July 2025

Honourable Speaker,

Let me start off by calling a spade a spade: This Department is severely underfunded from the onset, and its R1.8 billion allocation is out of touch with reality. This Department forms part of the social cluster and speaks directly to the needs of our people. In a province with an unemployment rate of 56%, it speaks directly to the most vulnerable. Just over 3% of the total North West budget is allocated to this crucial vote. That being said, we are here today to debate what the Department intends to do with this funding — and whether this House should support that plan.

The Department's Annual Performance Plan (APP) is detached from the lived realities of our communities. While it claims to protect the poor and vulnerable, its budget tells a different story: one of retreat, neglect, and abandonment.

Take the Kuseleka GBV Centre in Vryburg. The Department intends to fund this centre during the 2025/2026 financial year. But it fails to acknowledge the reality: the centre has already been shut down due to structural problems. There is no funding to fix it. No plan to reopen it. And no alternative services to support survivors of gender-based violence in the Naledi area. This is not a minor oversight — it is an abandonment of duty.

The most shocking example, however, is how this Department is treating persons with disabilities.

On 3 June 2025, MEC Susanna Dantjie presented the Department's APP to the Portfolio Committee. On slide 18, it is clearly stated that the number of persons with disabilities accessing day care services will be reduced from 633 to 548 — a cut of 85 people. Not because services are no longer needed, but because the Department has decided to slash funding to the NPOs that provide them.

To justify this, the Department told the committee that affected individuals would be assessed and placed in special needs schools. But this was a blatant deception.

On 12 June 2025, I visited Amelia After Care Centre in Potchefstroom — a facility that provides 24-hour care to disabled adults over the age of 18. Their funding was decreased by 60%, a funding cut of R2 million. I found that no assessments had been done, no placements arranged, and no contact made by the Department. The promise to place these residents in special schools was a lie — meant only to silence portfolio committee members and pass the budget without scrutiny.

Speaker, these are not numbers. These are real people — abandoned by the very Department mandated to protect them.

Let us also address the lack of digitisation. In the Western Cape, tools like the eReferral system and mobile outreach platforms help social workers respond faster, track cases in real time, and reduce administrative burdens. In Kayelitsha, despite the complex social environment, digitisation empowers workers to maintain consistent, effective service delivery.

In the North West, our social workers are overwhelmed. No mobile systems. No digital platforms. Just paper files, broken infrastructure, and exhausted professionals expected to do more with less. It is no wonder burnout and service collapse have become the norm.

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Instability is further worsened by the Department's erratic funding of NPOs. Organisations providing shelters, meals, counselling, and care are forced to shut their doors because funding is delayed or withheld without explanation. This shatters trust, destroys jobs, and leaves entire communities without a safety net.

Speaker, this budget is more than a set of numbers — it is a clear abandonment of the values once claimed by the ANC. The National Democratic Revolution (NDR) speaks of building a caring, people-centred society. It promises to protect the vulnerable and uplift the poor. Yet this budget does none of that. It cuts support to the disabled, fails GBV survivors, crushes social workers, and destabilises the very NPOs doing the Department's work.

This is not a revolutionary path. It is a betrayal of that vision.

Contrast this with the Western Cape, where services in places like Kayelitsha, Mitchells Plain, and the West Coast are delivered with professionalism, reliability, and dignity. Because there, planning is based on data, funding is stable, and NPO partnerships are respected.

If we in the North West do not urgently adopt those values, our people will continue to suffer under a government that makes promises it has no intention of keeping.

Honourable Members, the Democratic Alliance cannot and will not support a budget that abandons the disabled, betrays the abused, and burns out those who serve them.

I close with the words of Helen Suzman, who said:

"I stand for simple justice, equal opportunity, and human rights. The indispensable elements in a democratic society — and well worth fighting for."

This budget fails those principles. We will continue to fight for those who cannot fight for themselves — and we urge this House to reject this empty budget.

End.

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