

NPOs moot taking over delivering of social services

PRETORIA: Representatives of non-profit organisations (NPOs) have recommended to the Department of Social Development that they should take over the responsibility of delivering social welfare services to South Africans...

On Tuesday, Social Development Minister Bathabile Dlamini called a meeting to engage with the NPO sector to strengthen partnerships between the department and the organisations.

According to the department, the call by NPOs to relieve government of the delivery of social services was based on the view that this would free up government to focus entirely on policy work and creating a conducive environment for the delivery of services.

NPOs believe they operate under the same conditions as small enterprises which, according to research, take about three years to stabilise after being established.

The NPO sector suggested that funding from government must follow this trend and be institutionalised over a minimum of three years in order to give the organisations a fair chance to survive and deliver the much needed services in a sustainable manner, said the department.

NPOs are recognised as critical partners to the department in delivering social services to communities.

In the last financial year, the social development sector spent approximately six and a half billion rand towards funding of NPOs.

During the dialogue, NPOs and the department also discussed funding and resource mobilisation, the role of NPOs towards addressing unemployment and poverty, the role of NPOs towards promoting social cohesion, as well as mainstreaming gender and disability in the NPO sector to promote sustainable development.

The role of NPOs in improving accessibility of social welfare service including HIV and Aids, child and youth services, as well as substance and alcohol abuse, was also discussed.

Tabling the Department's Budget Vote in Parliament on Tuesday, Minister Dlamini commended the "selfless and dedicated contribution" of NPOs in building a better society.

"NPOs continue through their efforts to extend our footprint. Through the National Development Agency, we have capacitated more than 6,500 NPOs on institutional strengthening, so that they are able to conduct their work efficiently and effectively," said Minister Dlamini.

The NPOs will today have an opportunity to make presentations to the minister on the issues raised.

