

## **Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) 2018**

### **Spending Trends and Expectations: Human Settlements**

**10 October 2018**

**Monitoring and Advocacy Programme, Public Service Accountability Monitor**

[www.psam.org.za](http://www.psam.org.za) / @PSAM\_AFRICA

This brief is part of a series covering a range of service delivery and governance topics including education, environmental governance, health, human settlements and local government. The brief is in part retrospective and aims to highlight key issues within the national budgeting and planning environment that call for prioritisation or intervention. Prior to the tabling of the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS), Adjustments Estimates<sup>1</sup> and Adjustment Appropriations Bill by the Minister of Finance on 24 October 2018, the PSAM aims to contribute to dialogue and public participation during this important period through these pre-MTBPS briefs and post-MTBPS submissions to Parliament.

According to Section 12 of the Money Bills Amendment Procedures and Related Matters Act, the Minister of Finance is required to table a Division of Revenue Amendment Bill alongside the revised fiscal framework with budget adjustments to the Division of Revenue Act and an Adjustment Appropriations Bill. In addition to this, Sections 30 (2)(B) and 31(2)(b) of the Public Finance Management Act outline specific roles and responsibilities for provincial Members of the Executive Councils (MECs). This includes the requirement for provincial treasuries to table an adjustments budget within 30 days of the tabling of the national adjustments budget where a national adjustments budget allocates funds to a province. Accounting Officers are also obliged to motivate accordingly for adjusted budgets.<sup>2</sup> This period within the fiscal calendar therefore constitutes an important opportunity for members of the public and civil society organisations to participate in the budget process. Civic actors and members of the public can participate in the MTBPS and Adjustments Budget primarily by participating in parliamentary public hearings scheduled after the MTBPS.

#### **THE 2018 MTBPS AND BEYOND**

The National Treasury's 2019 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) Technical Guidelines provide public institutions with guidance on how to prepare their mid-term budget submissions for the 2019 budget. The Guidelines are provided for via section 27(3) of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), Act No. 1 of 1999. It is important to consider the dire context painted by the 2019 MTEF Guidelines given the implications for the departments' and public institutions' budgets.

<sup>1</sup> Adjusted Estimates of National Expenditure

<sup>2</sup> Treasury Regulation as per Public Finance Management Act No. 1 of 1999

According to the Guidelines;

*“There are NO additional resources available for allocation over the 2019 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period within the expenditure ceiling set in the 2018 Budget. This means that additional allocations to a programme will need to be funded by reductions in funding for another programme, either within the department’s budget, or from another department’s budget. This may involve the scaling down of non-priority programmes and projects, changing service delivery models, using technology more effectively...”<sup>3</sup>*

Looking towards the 2019 Budget, the PSAM calls for the Minister of Finance to outline clear mechanisms through which priority social programmes will be protected and through which pro-poor budgets and good governance will be reinforced. The 2019 MTEF Guidelines further underscore the obligation for departments to present submissions in which non-priority programmes and projects will be done away with or scaled down. This calls for close scrutiny and engagement by civil society.

**Plate 1:** The Budget Process and Opportunities for Public Participation in October (Source: [www.vulekamali.gov.za](http://www.vulekamali.gov.za) )

The infographic features a horizontal timeline of months from January to December. The month of October is highlighted with a green background. Below the timeline, there are two sections: 'What are Treasury, Departments and Parliament busy with?' and 'How can I participate?'. The first section contains a bulleted list of activities, and the second section contains a single bullet point about public hearings.

**What are Treasury, Departments and Parliament busy with?**

- Cabinet considers the recommendations tabled before it on the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) and the MTBPS is then tabled. It includes the 3 year policy position on the fiscal framework, key national government spending priorities, the Division of Revenue (DoR) as well as the substantial adjustments to conditional grants.
- In-year budget processes culminate in the tabling of the Adjustments Appropriation Bill and the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill.
- National Treasury issues draft allocation letters to national departments and the departments begin preparing their budget documentation inputs on the basis of these letters.
- Departments prepare budgets and budget documentation in accordance with the received draft allocations.
- Parliament reviews the Annual Reports (ARs) and preparation for BRRRs.
- Within 9 days of the tabling of the adjustments budget, Parliament must submit a report on the revised fiscal framework to the respective houses for consideration and adoption.

**How can I participate?**

- Participate in public hearings on the revised fiscal framework.

<sup>3</sup> National Treasury of the Republic of South Africa, Medium Term Expenditure Framework Technical Guidelines 2019. Available Online: <http://www.treasury.gov.za/publications/guidelines/2019%20MTEF%20Technical%20Guidelines.pdf> Page 1.

## Avoid Reductions to the Human Settlements Budget

The 2018/19 budget reflects major expenditure commitments, and corresponding expenditure reductions and reprioritization in line with new policy initiatives.<sup>4</sup> The Department of Human Settlements experienced budget cuts over the medium term. The Department has a total budget of R101.8 billion over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), increasing at an average annual rate of 2.2 per cent, from R33.5 billion in 2017/18 to R35.8 billion in 2020/21 in nominal terms.<sup>5</sup>

The below inflationary growth in the budget is a result of budget reductions that were approved by Cabinet in 2017. These equate to R3.1 billion in 2018/19, R3.8 billion in 2019/20 and R4 billion in 2020/21.<sup>6</sup> This will exacerbate the slow progress towards reaching the Department's targets and in particular the clearing of the housing backlog across the country. Over the medium term, more than half of the national budget is spent on basic education, community development, health and social protection.<sup>7</sup>

Figure 1 below is an extract from the [Vulekamali](#) budget portal and shows the changes in expenditure between 2014/15 and 2020/21 in real terms. It is a reflection of the continued downward trend in the allocation and spending for the Department of Human Settlements generally with the exception of the 2017/18, which saw a slight increase in real terms. The continued cuts in the allocation towards the delivery of human settlements must cease if the right to housing is to be realised especially for poor and vulnerable groups.

Major reductions in budgets to provinces and other sector programmes since 2017 were due to the need to stabilize government debt and to implement free higher education. This resulted in reprioritization between programs even within the same departments. In the current financial year and over the MTEF, the government has reduced the departmental baselines<sup>8</sup> affecting large programmes and transfers to government entities. National and provincial Departments are also expected to cut on spending on compensation of employees and administration.<sup>9</sup> Large provincial conditional grants such as the School Infrastructure Backlogs Grant, the Education Infrastructure Grant, the Human Settlements Development Grant and the Provincial Roads Maintenance Grant were reduced. Similar cuts were made to local government grants, including the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, the Integrated National Electrification Programme Grant, the Urban Settlements Development Grant and the Public Transport Network Grant.<sup>10</sup> The reduction on the Human Settlements Grant affects the Housing Development Finance programme that funds the delivery of all housing and human settlements programmes.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Budget Review 2018 pg 9 Online <http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2018/review/FullBR.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Estimates of National Expenditure Vote 38 Human Settlements pg 820 Online <http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2018/ene/Vote%2038%20Human%20Settlements.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid 2 pg 820

<sup>7</sup> Ibid 1 pg 9

<sup>8</sup> The baseline is the basis used for preparing a budget for an upcoming year. The baseline budget begins with the current year budget and is adjusted according to actual spending in the current year, inflation, projections for new expenditures and any additional capital expenditures that are expected. A baseline reduction results in the reduction of budget to the Departments or programmes.

<sup>9</sup> Budget Review 2018 pg 52. The National Treasury. Online <http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2018/review/FullBR.pdf>

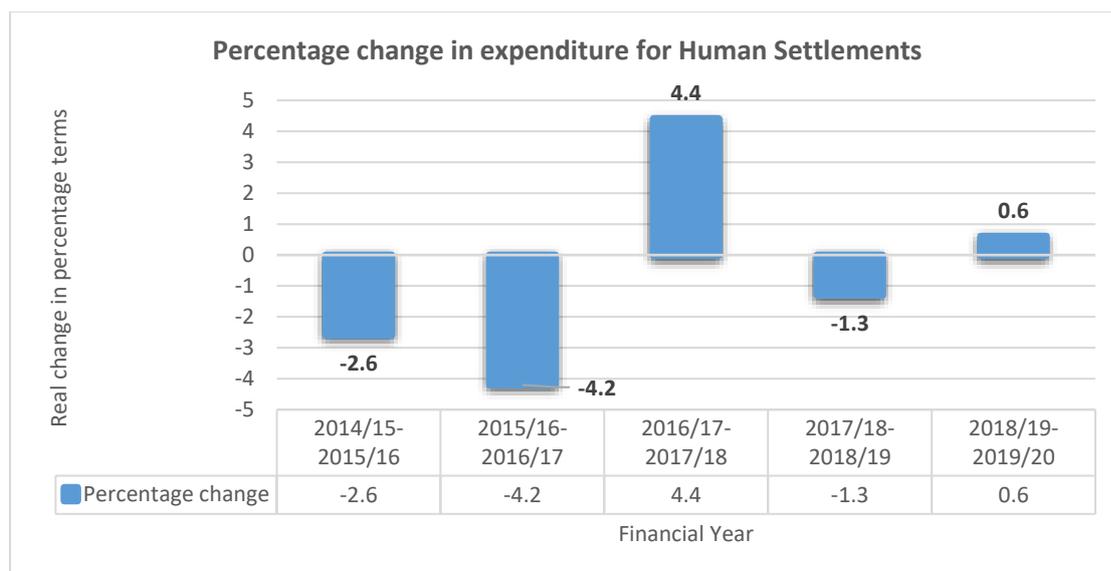
<sup>10</sup> Ibid 7 pg 53

<sup>11</sup> The Department of Human Settlements Annual Report 2017/18. Pg 57 Online [http://www.dhs.gov.za/sites/default/files/u19/ANNUAL%20REPORT%202017-2018\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov.za/sites/default/files/u19/ANNUAL%20REPORT%202017-2018_WEB.pdf)

**Figure 1:** Budget and actual expenditure for the Department of Human Settlements in real terms.<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 2:** This shows detailed percentage change in expenditure for Human Settlements from 2014/15 to 2020/21 in real terms.<sup>13</sup>



<sup>12</sup> Extract from Vulekamali Online <https://vulekamali.gov.za/2018-19/national/departments/human-settlements>

<sup>13</sup> The expenditure trend made available on Vulekamali is also a reflection of the allocations the Department of Human Settlements received. The Department spends over 90% of its budget annually albeit unevenly within the provinces.

## Prioritization of child headed households

Provision of adequate housing to children who reside with no adults is an area that has not been investigated sufficiently. This is despite indications that there are over two million orphans in the country.<sup>14</sup> In addition, in 2016 about 25.8% of the children lived in households without a biological parents, although it is not clear whether the absence of parents mean the absence of an adult.<sup>15</sup> As indicated by Mturi, the South African government recognizes the problem of child headed households but what is not known is the prevalence of the problem.<sup>16</sup> Research on children needs has been focusing a lot on the provision of adequate education, food, water, electricity and sanitation. The government of South Africa has not undertaken research to determine the proportion of households that are headed by children under the age of 18 years and are in need of shelter. As a result, there has not been housing programmes (particularly state housing) targeting child headed households. Although the government provides some social security through the child grant, it is necessary to ensure that the children have adequate shelter as stipulated in section 26 of the Bill of Rights.<sup>17</sup> Why does the Department of Human Settlements not make targeted housing provision for child headed households even after seeking to prioritize vulnerable groups in its policy?

There has been reprioritization between and within departments in order to ensure delivery under budget constraints. Within the Human Settlements Department, the funding for programmes has been reviewed to cater for the new policy that focuses on upgrading of informal settlements, title deeds, housing for the most vulnerable (the youth, the destitute, the disabled, and the elderly), military veterans and emergency housing. The Human Settlements Developments Grant, which funds housing delivery programmes was reviewed for 2018 budget in order to create two human settlements grants, for title deeds and emergency housing.<sup>18</sup> What one does not see in the categorization of the vulnerable are children.

In accordance with the new policy framework for human settlements<sup>19</sup> and the thrust on vulnerable groups, the Medium Term Budget Framework for 2019/20 should provide clear budget allocations for the vulnerable groups to ensure delivery of houses to those who need them the most. In the financial year 2016/17 the Department of Human Settlements delivered 90 000 housing units from the Human Settlements Development Grant prioritising the elderly, women headed households and vulnerable groups.<sup>20</sup> There is no indication if and how the grant benefits child headed households<sup>21</sup> and using the term 'vulnerable groups' without specifying the composition of such group is problematic and requires attention and greater release of criteria informing allocations and spending. The current human settlements policy framework refers to the housing subsidy that the

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<sup>14</sup> Vulnerable group series 111 Report: The Social Profile of Children 7-17 years, 2002-2016 pg 20

<sup>15</sup> Ibid 11 pg 26

<sup>16</sup> Mturi, A J. 2012. Child-headed households in South Africa. What we know and what we do not know. Development Southern Africa Vol 29 (3) pg 506

<sup>17</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Chapter 2 Section 26 of the bill of Rights Online <https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/chapter-2-bill-rights#26>

<sup>18</sup> Medium Term Policy Budget Statement 2017 pg 43 Online <http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/mtbps/2017/mtbps/FullMTBPS.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Towards a policy foundation for the development of Human Settlements legislation, 2015. Online <http://www.dhs.gov.za/sites/default/files/documents/TOWARDS%20POLICY%20FOUNDATION%20FOR%20THEHUMAN%20SETTLEMENTS%20LEGILATION%20-%2001%20NOVEMBER%202015%283%29%20%281%29.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Department of Human Settlements Annual Report 2016/17 pg 25 Online [https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/DHS\\_AnnualReport\\_2016-17.pdf](https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/DHS_AnnualReport_2016-17.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Households headed by children under 18 years. Reference from the Human Settlements White paper: Towards a policy foundation for the development of Human Settlements Legislature pg 40

Department must provide to cater for the elderly (above 60 years) and the child headed households. The policy indicates that the subsidy must include one of the following:<sup>22</sup>

- A serviced site with a newly constructed housing unit.
- Purchasing of an existing housing unit.
- A serviced site and self-help housing unit.
- Self-help housing unit without the serviced site

Consideration of housing provision for child headed households must be made and must reflect in the medium term budget framework. There must be an indication that the Human Settlements Development Grant is used to meet the housing needs of child-headed households. Based on 2011 population census, the Division of Revenue Bill in 2018 clearly stipulates that 70% of the grant is allocated to provinces based on the number of households living in informal settlements, shacks in backyards and traditional dwellings; 20% of allocation is based on poor households in each province between R1500 and R3500 per month. The remaining 10% is measured in proportion to the population in each province based on 2011 census.<sup>23</sup> Although targeting these groups mean that the children who stay with adults are included, those who do not have adults living with them are potentially excluded especially regarding the provision of housing units.

Of critical importance also is for the South African government to collect and utilise statistics on child headed households in order to determine the need for housing for this particular group. The last household survey undertaken in 2017 does not provide data in this regard.<sup>24</sup> Statistics for the disabled are provided in the Household Survey for 2017 which makes it easier to know the number of disabled people who are in need of housing per province. The household survey also provides statistics of the households that benefited from state housing provision according to gender. Statistics around gender framed housing delivery have proved to be useful in the provision of housing to women as shown in Figure 3 below. Likewise, there is need for statistics around child headed households, which is critical in assessing the housing needs for this group of children. Figure 3 is a typical example of how statistics on a targeted group can be used to inform service delivery decisions.

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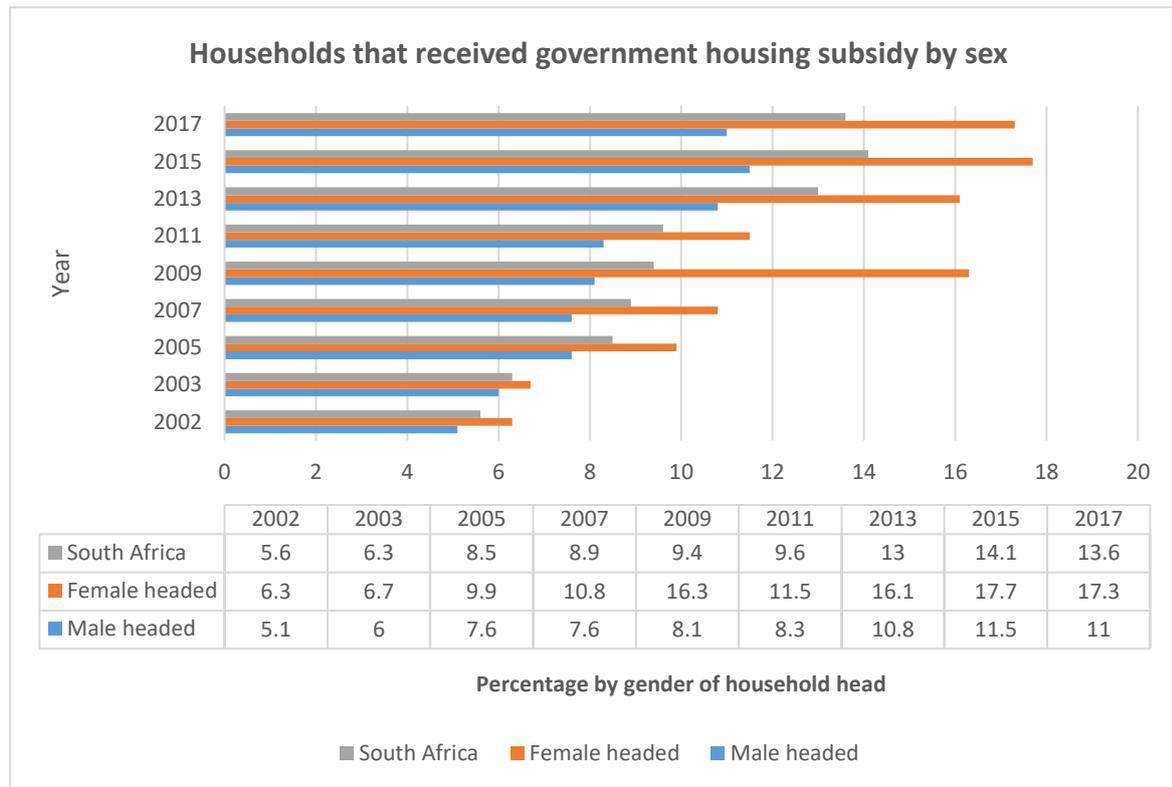
<sup>22</sup> Towards a policy foundation for the development of Human Settlements legislation, 2015 pg 40 Online <http://www.dhs.gov.za/sites/default/files/documents/TOWARDS%20POLICY%20FOUNDATION%20FOR%20THEHUMAN%20SETTLEMENTS%20LEGISLATION%20-%2001%20NOVEMBER%202015%283%29%20%281%29.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> The Division of Revenue Bill 2018 pg 89. Online <http://www.treasury.gov.za/legislation/bills/2018/Division%20of%20Revenue%20Bill%20B2%202018.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Household survey 2017 Online <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0318/P03182017.pdf>

## Human Settlements Grants

**Figure 3:** Percentage of Households that received a government-housing subsidy by sex of the household head between 2002 and 2017.<sup>25</sup>



The government must ensure that the right to shelter for children is adequately met by better accommodating child headed households in both the urban areas and the rural areas. The budget framework must therefore reflect such intention by ensuring that the Human Settlements Development Grant caters for all vulnerable groups including child headed households. A certificate of occupation must be issued to minors that head households until such a time when they are eligible to receive title deeds. The Children’s Institute undertook research on the distribution of children in urban and non-urban households and found out that in South Africa, children are more likely to reside in rural areas than adults.<sup>26</sup> The children may be left with their mothers and/ or grandparents as parents search for employment in urban areas. However, the likelihood of some children having been left alone after the death of their parents cannot be ruled out, hence the need to undertake research on child headed households and plan accordingly for housing provision. There is need for adequate shelter and other related services in the rural areas if the children living in predominantly rural provinces are to realise their rights to shelter and healthy living environment fully.

<sup>25</sup> Figure 1 adapted from the Household Survey in 2017 pg 31

<sup>26</sup> Katharine Hall & Winnie Sambu, Children’s Institute, University of Cape Town. Pg 129 Online

[http://www.ci.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image\\_tool/images/367/Child\\_Gauge/2006/Book\\_Child\\_Gauge\\_2016\\_lowres.pdf](http://www.ci.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/367/Child_Gauge/2006/Book_Child_Gauge_2016_lowres.pdf)

**Table 1: Provincial Human Settlements Development Grant Expenditure as at 30 June 2018**

R thousand	Main Budget	Actual payments as at 30 June 2018	Actual payments as % of main budget	% share of HSDG to total provincial expenditure	% share of HSDG to total HSD grant expenditure	2017/18: Outcome as at 30 June 2017	Year on year growth
<b>Eastern Cape</b>	1 908 439	500 846	26.2%	2.6%	17.3%	683 234	-26.7
<b>Free State</b>	1 072 422	221 029	20.6%	2.4%	7.6%	262 091	-15.7%
<b>Gauteng</b>	5 046 583	262 729	5.2%	0.9%	9.1%	494 100	-46.8%
<b>KwaZulu-Natal</b>	3 152 757	690 096	21.9%	2.5%	23.8%	771 667	-10.6
<b>Limpopo</b>	1 287 681	270 456	21.0%	1.7%	9.3%	181 429	41.1%
<b>Mpumalanga</b>	1 287 427	454 128	35.5%	4.0%	15.6%	262 129	73.2%
<b>Northern Cape</b>	474 791	27 472	5.8%	0.7%	0.9%	63 342	-56.6%
<b>North West</b>	1 926 644	234 658	12.2%	2.7%	8.1%	334 640	8.8%
<b>Western Cape</b>	2 018 776	240 491	11.9%	1.8%	8.3%	221 072	8.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18 166 520</b>	<b>2 901 905</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3 273 704</b>	<b>-11.4%</b>

Table 1 shows spending in the Human Settlements Grant. During the first quarter of the current financial year, provinces only spent R2.9 billion (or 16%) of the R18.2 billion of the budget allocated to the Human Settlements Development Grant for 2018/19. During the same period in the previous year, the provinces had spent 11% more than the current financial year.<sup>27</sup> Spending between provinces is uneven, as KwaZulu Natal, the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga are reported to have spent faster than the rest of the provinces at 23.8%, 17.3% and 15.6% respectively. The rest of the provinces are below 10% spending as at the end of the first quarter of 2018/19.<sup>28</sup> Under expenditure in some provinces may be due to delays in the appointment of contractors or delays in paying such contractors. These provinces are encouraged to spend their budgets more efficiently and effectively.

At the last quarter of 2017/18, the Gauteng Province lost R150 million in form of a transfer to the Housing Development Agency due to under expenditure.<sup>29</sup> The Gauteng Department of Human Settlements indicated that the delay in approval of business plans caused under expenditure and that would definitely delay housing delivery in the province.<sup>30</sup> The Departments must ensure effective spending of the budget and curtail the causes of delay in the delivery process as this impedes housing delivery to the poor communities. Under expenditure on title deeds registration, informal settlements upgrades and housing for military veterans contributed also to poor spending in Gauteng Province as the Department failed to meet its targets.<sup>31</sup> Delays in housing delivery affect

<sup>27</sup> Department of National Treasury Online

[http://www.treasury.gov.za/publications/PIP/2018\\_19/Q1/Media%20Statement%20-%20201st%20Quarter%20Provincial%20Budgets%20and%20Expenditure%20Report.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov.za/publications/PIP/2018_19/Q1/Media%20Statement%20-%20201st%20Quarter%20Provincial%20Budgets%20and%20Expenditure%20Report.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> Human Settlements Quarterly Reports. The Department of National Treasury Online

[http://www.treasury.gov.za/publications/PIP/2018\\_19/Q1/Media%20Statement%20-%20201st%20Quarter%20Provincial%20Budgets%20and%20Expenditure%20Report.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov.za/publications/PIP/2018_19/Q1/Media%20Statement%20-%20201st%20Quarter%20Provincial%20Budgets%20and%20Expenditure%20Report.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Parliamentary Monitoring Group. Online <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/26566/>

Withholding of funds to the Human Settlements Department was in accordance with section 19 of the Division of Revenue Act 2017 that allows the Treasury to stop transferring funds if, in its discretion or on request of a transferring or receiving officer, there is a "serious or persistent material breach".

<sup>30</sup> IOL News. R600 million earmarked for low-cost housing unspent. Online <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/gauteng/r600m-earmarked-for-low-cost-housing-unspent-13363359>

<sup>31</sup> Ibid 13

negatively on the children's welfare as it hinders the development of a healthy and habitable environment especially when the Department fails to upgrade informal settlements. However, it is crucial for government to collect and utilise data on households that are headed by children, which could benefit from effective human settlements delivery.

Funds previously ring-fenced to clear the backlog of title deeds are allocated in a dedicated grant for a three-year period (the Title Deeds Restoration Grant). In addition, a grant has been established to fund responses to emergencies in line with housing policy.<sup>32</sup> The Human Settlements Grant is reduced by R7.2 billion over the MTEF will result in a reduction in the delivery of new houses and servicing of sites. This is despite the Department's plans to build 316 813 houses and upgrade 417 391 sites in informal settlements as stated in the 2018 Budget Review. The Department cannot maintain the same targets they had before the budgets cut and expect to meet them with less funds. This will inevitably necessitate programme-level revisions which should not occur at the expense of the most vulnerable who should be prioritised in housing delivery.

The Urban Settlements Development Grant which funds infrastructure and upgrading of informal settlements was reduced by R650 million in 2018/19, R750 million in 2019/20 and R791 million in 2020/21.<sup>33</sup> Informal settlements upgrade and infrastructure growth is central to the creation of integrated human settlements that enhance human dignity. Reducing the Urban Settlements Grant must not continue as this impacts negatively on infrastructure and informal settlements upgrades. In the financial year 2016/17 the annual target of 175 000 households for upgrade was not met; with only 75 941 households being upgraded as the Department failed to upgrade 99 599 households.<sup>34</sup> This was due to the delays in the adoption of upgrading plans by the council and budgeting for the process thereof.<sup>35</sup>

#### **PSAM expectations of MTBPS: Human Settlements**

1. The Minister of Finance must make clear undertakings to protect vulnerable households by tabling a mid-term budget that is explicitly pro-poor. This must include a clear mandate and targeted budget framework towards the most vulnerable.
2. Further reductions to the Human Settlements budget must be avoided particularly in relation to the Human Settlements Development Grant, which funds all housing programmes that are critical for the creation of integrated human settlements.
3. Given the limited budget allocations towards the Department of Human Settlements; the Minister must outline clear plans to ensure their effective and efficient use.
4. Child headed households must be prioritized and this should reflect in the budget framework. There is need for the South African Government to undertake regular quantitative research to determine the number of child headed households in South Africa. This will provide clarity on the extent of housing need to that particular group. The PSAM recommends the establishment of child sensitive approaches to budgeting and housing delivery in South Africa.

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<sup>32</sup> Budget Review 2018 pg 73

<sup>33</sup> Budget Review 2018 pg 43

<sup>34</sup> Department of Human Settlements Annual Report 2016/17 pg 44

<sup>35</sup> Department of Human Settlements Annual Report 2016/17 pg 44

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#### **ABOUT THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACCOUNTABILITY MONITOR (PSAM)**

The PSAM was founded in 1999 as a research project in the Rhodes University Department of Sociology. Its initial aim was to monitor incidents of corruption within the Eastern Cape government. From 2005, recognising the systemic nature of poor governance and corruption in the province, the PSAM began a concerted advocacy effort to systematically strengthen public resource management by key Eastern Cape government departments.

In 2007, PSAM introduced a training and academic component. The training component has developed to be what is known as the Regional Learning Programme and the academic component has changed to become what is known as the Advocacy Impact Programme. The various activities and interventions by PSAM over the years have emphasised the on-going need for greater and improved accountability interventions by civil society organisations across the region. Through our work we seek to achieve improved networking and advocacy to leverage impact and enhanced learning so that achievements are shared, evaluated and used to bolster social accountability interventions in sub-Saharan Africa.

Visit [www.psam.org.za](http://www.psam.org.za) or follow us on Twitter: @PSAM\_AFRICA

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