

Health and Well-being amidst budget cuts and combating the misuse of public funds- where to for HIV and infant and child mortality.

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Background: Goal 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals¹ (SDG's) is geared towards good health and well-being for all². Alongside the SDG's, South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) 2030³, seeks to establish an equitable health system producing positive health outcomes⁴.

Section 27 of the Constitution⁵ affirms the right to health-including physical well-being which is⁶ denied to millions due to lack of access to healthcare services, water and food⁷. Due to the state of healthcare, health facilities and reduced budgets, South Africans relying on public health institutions cannot enjoy their s27 right⁸.

Intervention description: Using a budget analysis and service delivery review methodology, this paper aims to discuss the viability of South Africa achieving its SDG's in light of the current state of healthcare, budget cuts and mismanagement of public funds.

Results: No final results available.

Lessons learnt: The public healthcare system is beset with problems including key service delivery failures, poor administration, severe resource limitations and the rising costs of medico-legal claims- in light of austerity. To achieve our SDG's and ensure equitable health access to all, urgent intervention is required.

Key Messages: COVID-19 elevated deficiencies in healthcare. Combined with budget cuts relating to COVID-19 budget adjustments, the implications for health outcomes are dire⁹. South Africa's fiscal policy has been described as one of austerity¹⁰.

¹ The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action by the United Nations (UN) to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that people live in peace and prosperity.

² United Nations Development Programme Goal 3: Good health and well-being (Accessed at <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-3-good-health-and-well-being.html> on 8 September 2020).

³ National Development plan 2030 aims to eradicate poverty and inequality by 2030- National Development Plan 2030 (accessed on 25 September 2020 at https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/ndp-2030-our-future-make-it-workr.pdf).

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ Act 104 of 1996.

⁶ Section 27 guarantees the right to health care and obligates Government to take legislative measures to progressively realize this right -Section 27 (1) and (2) of the Constitution of South Africa Act 104 of 1996.

⁷ The lack of access to healthcare services, food and water is caused by socioeconomic factors- A background to health law and human rights in South Africa, P.5 (accessed on 1 November 2018 at <http://www.section27.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Chapter1.pdf>).

⁸ 71.5% of South African households outlined public health institutions as their first port of call when sick – BusinessTech Here is how many South Africans have medical aid May 2019 (Accessed on 11 September at <https://businesstech.co.za/news/lifestyle/319696/heres-how-many-south-africans-have-medical-aid/>).

⁹ This is evidenced through [threats to progress on elimination of child mortality](#) and stockouts.

¹⁰ Austerity is defined as a fiscal and socio-economic policy that affects national and provincial governments across the country, which is implemented by a state- aimed at solving debt and growth problems during

To bring South Africans closer to an equitable healthcare system, health budgets must take into account the rising costs of healthcare and when allocated, provincial entities must ensure that they exercise accountability and transparency in their administration of public funds as well promote the efficient, economical and effective use of public resources.

Advocacy message: The Department of Health must take measures ensuring effective spending of budgets; programme management and bettering of internal control mechanisms to provide communities with quality healthcare as envisioned by the Constitution.

Three keywords: SDG's, child and maternal mortality, budget cuts.

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economic stagnation -Budget Justice Coalition (BJC) budgeting in an era of austerity and state capture: A five year review of budget policies and outcomes Submission by the BJC to the select and standing committee on finance February 2019 (Accessed at <https://iej.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-cost-austerity-lessons-for-South-Africa-IEJ-30-10-2019.pdf> on 8 September 2020).