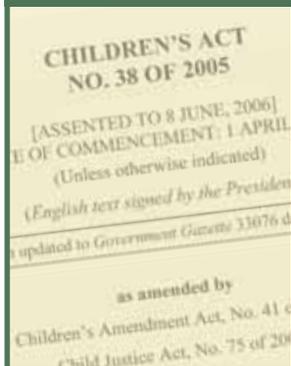


Children's Act: Promoting implementation



Promoting the Act's implementation by monitoring budgets and expenditure trends, and by contributing to human resource development in the social services sector

The whole Children's Act 38 of 2005 (as amended by Act 41 of 2007) came into operation on 1 April 2010, together with its regulations.

There are two main challenges to the Act's implementation: the lack of adequate human resources, and a low budget allocation and expenditure base for social services for children. Practitioners and the public also need to know how to interpret and apply the new law.

A social service practitioners network was established to contribute to the development and growth of the necessary human resources to implement the Act (see p. 32). To promote budget growth, the budget allocation and expenditure trends of the provincial departments of social development have been monitored for the past four years in partnership with the Centre for Actuarial Research at the University. Training was held and guides and popular articles published to promote a better understanding of the Act.

In 2010, seven papers were published on budgets analyses: a comparative analysis of the budgets of all nine provincial social development departments¹⁵, and papers on the budgets of the Eastern Cape¹⁶, Gauteng¹⁷, Mpumalanga¹⁸ and KwaZulu-Natal¹⁹ provinces respectively. Due to concerns from non-profit organisations (NPOs) in the Western Cape about budget cuts, more research was done on this province's budget²⁰, accompanied by a paper²¹ on the different funding mechanisms for NPOs in this province.

Research on the donor funding flows for Children's Act services started in 2010 in partnership with Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE). The findings will be dialogued with the government, donors and civil society to promote increased funding and more comprehensive coverage of all geographical areas and service categories.

Resources to promote understanding of the new law included the fourth edition of a guide to the Act for health professionals²², and a similar guide for child and youth care workers²³. The latter will be published in partnership with the National Association of Child and Youth Care Workers.

Several training seminars have been conducted for health and social service professionals to help them understand their roles and responsibilities under the new Act.

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