

**Provincial Parliament Standing Committee
Social Development**

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MOTIVATION FOR INCREASING EXPENDITURE ON SOCIAL WELFARE:

THE FINANCIAL STATE OF NPOS

Case Study of

Ons Plek Projects for Female Street Children

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Who is Ons Plek Projects?

Ons Plek Projects consists of:

Ons Plek (comprehensive assessment and developmental care) intake shelter for female street children with family reunification priority (CBD, Cape Town)

Siviwe (second phase) therapeutic and developmental children's home for female street children with family reunification priority (Woodstock)

Ukondla (support education and social work interventions) community project with prevention of at risk children becoming street children priority (Philippi)

Ons Plek Projects

Summary of Costs of Programs, Clients helped, Numbers helped, Government Subsidy

Programs	No. of Clients	Annual Cost	Annual State Subsidy	Percentage	Achievements
Ons Plek Intake Shelter	± 150 girls annually and ± 1000 family members	R863 500	R310 284	0.36	Rescue and prevent 150 girls per year from living on street. Previously high intake from Philippi on streets greatly reduced. Enable parents to parent effectively
Siviwe Second Stage Shelter		R777 238	R310 284	0.40	
Ukondla Community Program	23 children 100 family members	R111 722	R 0	0.00	

In terms of the new Children's Act:

- The Act says: Prevention and Early Intervention in lives of children at risk of becoming street children, gangsters, drug addicts is important – yet our preventative program is totally unfunded.
- The Act says: Norms and standards say eight children to one childcare worker – cost to Ons Plek. Another four childcare workers will cost an extra R160 000 per year.
- The Act says: Social Workers and Childcare Workers are required for the work - yet social workers are declared a critical skills shortage area. This is partly due to the low salaries which have forced an unprecedented number of social workers to immigrate.

Secondly this has forced the Department of Social Services to offer higher wages to social workers and childcare workers. NPOs on whom the Department depends to deliver most direct services cannot compete and thus have many vacancies.

Other Reasons:

- The most highly skilled practitioners in the NPO field spend the majority of their time fundraising instead of imparting skills to less experienced staff.
- Many Child and Youth Care Centres (previously called Children's Homes and Shelters) have closed down due to high demand of keeping up professional standards to our children with minimum financial resources.

Conclusion:

Care for South Africa's children is a state responsibility which is borne largely by NPOs. Competent resources in the field of childcare has been diminishing for years. The next few years of increasing costs due to food, petrol and electricity, world economy and more AIDS orphans and refugees, will place very heavy demand on NPOs. If the Children's Act is to have the muscle to achieve its aims, NPOs need to be further resourced. The financial subsidies must be increased therefore.