
# POLICY BRIEF

## Reducing violence in South Africa

### Resourcing violence prevention

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Facing shrinking incomes, governments must decide how to allocate funds among public services. This policy brief gives an overview of South African government budget decision making. It reviews opportunities and challenges related to funding primary programmes to prevent violence, and suggests that a unique approach is needed to advocate for funds. This is the second in a three-part series on reducing violence in South Africa.

## Key recommendations

In the current constrained economic climate, funders (including the government) are looking to invest in programmes with the highest returns. This poses particular challenges for violence prevention. Recommendations are:

- Prepare for better days – collect information on programmes that can be taken to scale.
- Create short-term outcome measures that fit within funders' budget cycles.
- Keep violence prevention programmes on the political agenda so they are seen as core and additional funds are reprioritised from non-core areas.
- Know what is important for a successful budget bid and be ready when bids for additional funding are next considered.
- Strategise about how to influence processes and people who have direct involvement in budget allocation decisions.
- Guard against having funds reprioritised away from violence prevention by showing efficiencies and willingness to save and adapt to circumstances.

## Introduction

Government budgets are much like household budgets. In households, we make decisions about how to allocate limited income to buy food, pay for education, transport, childcare and so on. In the same way, a government needs to make decisions about how to allocate funds to buy various public services. As in a household, priorities normally dictate where the government spends funds. These decisions are particularly difficult when there are many demands on a shrinking income: this is the challenge we face in South Africa today.

This policy brief provides an overview of how budget decisions are made by government. It reviews opportunities for and challenges to funding programmes aimed at preventing violence against women and children (VAWC). It suggests that, due to pressure on the fiscus, a unique approach will be needed to advocate for funds for this important work.

The policy brief is limited to the funding of primary violence prevention programmes, as opposed to programmes aimed at responding to VAWC or dealing with the consequences of VAWC. For the purposes of this discussion violence prevention programmes refer to **proactive interventions that are implemented before an incident of victimisation occurs**. It acknowledges, however, that prevention and response are both critical to reducing and sustaining reductions in VAWC.

> Costing estimates resource requirements, whereas budgeting happens in an environment of resource constraints and political contestation for those limited resources

This policy brief is the second in a three-part series, the first of which is titled: *Reducing violence in South Africa: from policing to violence prevention*, and the third: *Reducing violence in South Africa: a multi sectoral approach*.

## Budgeting for VAWC: laying the ground work

The policy brief begins with an overview of costing, budgeting and funding in relation to evidence-based programmes that address risk factors for violence.

### Costing

Costing involves using the parameters of inputs, price and quantity to determine the costs of implementing a programme. A costing model provides a way to calculate the consequences of policy choices. It should be designed as an interactive tool that structures information to provide insight into policy objectives and delivery requirements.

While policy and policy choices have an impact on expenditure, this impact is often not costed upfront because it depends on multiple parameters.

A costing model should consider the following:

- Baseline expenditure information over a defined period of time (i.e. the current cost of delivery or baseline expenditure on an existing programme)
- The range of delivery standards from policy/legislation/ norms and standards (what must/may/should be done and at what level, i.e. how delivery should take place)
- The delivery chain and main cost drivers (personnel, capital and operational costs)
- Assumptions, especially about the future rollout of the programme (will the policy or programme be rolled out all in one go or over a few years and how does that impact on costs?)
- Projections of the main cost drivers based on the population the policy or programme is targeting (for example, it is possible to project future personnel, capital and operational costs of an early childhood development programme based on the future projections of the number of children aged 0–6 years old).

The costing model should use a simplified and consistent method of applying costs to elements of the implementation, preferably at activity or beneficiary level. The process of modelling the costs of programmes helps decision makers make informed policy choices. Ultimately, a costing model should, for example, project the costs of delivering a particular programme (such as a positive parenting programme) to a certain number of individuals or households.

## Budgeting

Through the budget process, a large number of public institutions plan, collaborate, negotiate and decide together on a comprehensive government spending plan for the next three years, within fiscal limits.[1]

The process of budgeting has two components:

1) Developing a realistic implementation plan and estimating the budget required to implement that plan; and
2) Participating in the budget process. This is the mechanism governments use to identify priorities and allocate funds in accordance with their priorities.

The difference between costing and budgeting is that costing estimates resource requirements, which are not constrained by prevailing fiscal and economic circumstances; whereas budgeting happens in an environment of resource constraints and political contestation for those limited resources. Budgeting involves allocating a limited amount of resources to a set of agreed priorities. Ideally, the government should cost policy before determining how to meet costs with limited funds.

> The process of modelling the costs of programmes helps decision makers make informed policy choices

## Funding

In the context of primary violence prevention programmes, funding refers to the mechanisms the government uses to allocate funds to non-government providers of services to prevent VAWC. The government might allocate funds to service providers in the form of programme funding, post funding, per capita funding or use a results-based funding mechanism. Each of these mechanisms is explained in more detail below.

- **Programme funding:** Primary violence prevention programmes usually seek to reach specific target populations (such as caregivers, learners, men or women). Therefore, the funding of such programmes is often based on an agreement about the costs of running them and reaching a certain number of beneficiaries. The government would use this kind of funding, for example, to fund awareness-raising programmes about the harm gender-based violence causes.
- **Unit cost funding:** The government often funds centre-based programmes, residential facilities and attendance-based programmes based on the actual number of clients in attendance or in residence over a specified period. In other cases, departments fund centres and residential facilities according to the registered number of places, or the number of places the department agrees to fund in a service-level agreement. The government mainly funds response initiatives through unit cost funding.

- **Post funding:** The government also allocates funding for personnel posts in non-profit organisations, to provide certain social welfare services. The national Department of Social Development has been seeking to get the social welfare sector to move away from post funding, but in practice it is still widely used because of its simplicity.

In summary, costing determines the resources required for the implementation of a policy or programme; budgeting determines how to accommodate these costs in an environment with limited resources; and funding is the method of allocating these resources.

## Funding violence prevention programmes

A key objective of the national dialogue forum for evidence-based programmes to prevent VAWC (convened by the ISS) is to persuade national and provincial governments to allocate additional resources to evidence-based violence prevention programmes. To accomplish this, it is important to understand the key events in the annual division of revenue process, and national and provincial budget processes.

### Are funds available?

> 'We will continue to safeguard expenditure that protects poor households. But the medium term expenditure limits are tight. Across all three spheres of government, and in state-owned companies and public entities, those responsible for deciding how money is spent have to do so with scrupulous rigour and care. It is only right that if households and firms face tough choices in balancing their income and expenses, the same disciplines must be applied in public expenditure.'
>
> *Former minister of finance Pravin Gordhan, 2017 budget speech*

The above quote by the former minister of finance, made during the 2017 budget speech, draws attention to the main challenge facing the funding of violence prevention programmes in the short to medium term. The amount of money available in the national budget has been constrained for a number of years and this is unlikely to change any time soon.[2]

During the budget process, violence prevention programmes compete for resources with other national and provincial priorities. If the national government regards violence prevention programmes as a priority, then it may allocate additional resources to the budgets of departments responsible for these programmes. What happened following the student 'Fees Must Fall' campaign is an example of how this could work. The pressure the protests brought to bear on politicians led the government to earmark R5 billion rand for higher education, in addition to R32 billion rand in extra funds that the minister of finance had previously announced.[3]

> Over the 2018 MTEF and for a few years beyond it, budgets at all levels of government will be under pressure

However, even if politicians accept the importance of primary violence prevention programmes, it is not clear where the money to fund it would come from. During the 2008 economic crisis, despite a significant reduction in total national revenue, the government continued to increase the provincial equitable share and conditional grants over the 2010 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). Since then, national allocations to provinces have continued to grow faster than inflation, despite only a moderate recovery in national revenues. This has contributed to a rapid growth in government debt, which is approaching unsustainable levels, and has forced the government into a period of austerity. As a result, funding for new policy initiatives is extremely limited.

Another complicating factor is that wage negotiations with public sector unions have resulted in above-inflation wage agreements for government employees. This means that the total cost of personnel has increased as a proportion of total budgets. Expenditure on salaries is almost impossible to bring down in the short term. While mechanisms exist for reducing the number of non-core personnel, they are extremely difficult and costly, and processes to bring personnel costs down over the long term are sensitive and potentially disruptive.

It is therefore quite clear that, over the 2018 MTEF and for a few years beyond it, budgets at all levels of government will be under pressure.

Given current economic circumstances, the government is probably not in a position to immediately fund additional programmes, unless it makes departments make savings elsewhere in their budgets. The strategy therefore needs to be to keep violence prevention programmes on the political agenda so that they are seen as core, and the government makes additional funds available through reprioritisation from non-core areas.

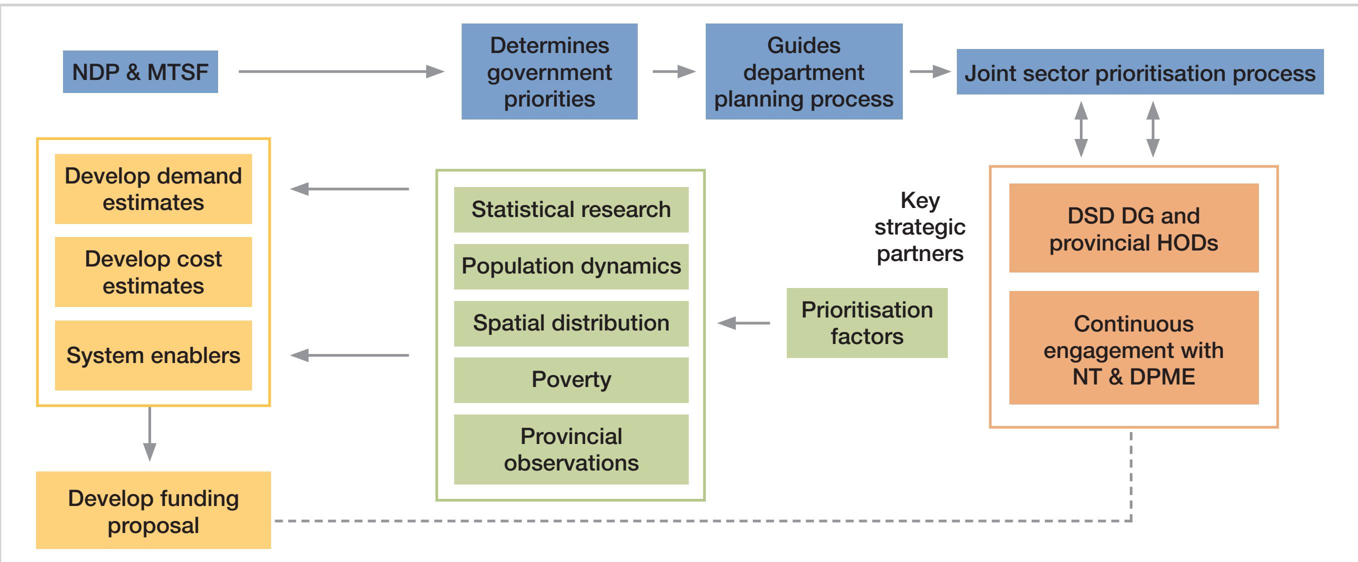
### Setting government priorities

Since 2004, the government has set out its programmes and policies at the beginning of each term of office in a medium-term strategic framework (MTSF), which the cabinet approves and the Presidency publishes.[4] Based on the ruling party's election manifesto and the 2014 MTSF, the cabinet identified and agreed on a set of 14 outcomes that reflect the development impacts it seeks to achieve:

1. Improved quality of basic education
2. A long and healthy life for all South Africans
3. All people in South Africa are and feel safe
4. Decent employment through inclusive economic growth
5. A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path
6. An efficient, competitive and responsive economic infrastructure network
7. Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities with food security for all
8. Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life
9. A responsive, accountable, effective and efficient local government system
10. Environmental assets and natural resources that are well protected and continually enhanced
11. The creation of a better South Africa that contributes to a better and safer Africa and world
12. An efficient, effective and development-oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenry
13. A comprehensive, responsive and sustainable social protection system
14. A diverse, socially cohesive society, with a common national identity.[5]

These outcomes, with the National Development Plan (NDP),[6] provide the basis on which government priorities are determined. Each government department is required to align its long-term plans with the NDP and MTSF, and identify areas where policy changes are required to ensure consistency and coherence. Detailed and costed implementation plans should back each government programme, and clearly set out choices made, actions that departments need to undertake, and their sequencing. This process is set out in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: High-level budget prioritisation process**




Source: Developed by Zaheera Mohamed for Cornerstone Economic Research.[7]

## Overview of budget processes[8]

The Public Finance Management Act requires the minister of finance to table the annual Division of Revenue Bill and an annual national budget before the start of each financial year. Each provincial member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Finance is required to table the respective provincial budgets within two weeks of the minister tabling the national budget. These are the only formal deadlines in the legislation with respect to budget preparation. The actual date on which the national budget is tabled changes every year. In recent years, the minister of finance has tabled the annual national budget on the last or second-to-last Wednesday of February.

The annual budget process officially starts when the National Treasury releases its medium-term budget guidelines, which detail the processes national and provincial departments must follow when preparing their budgets for the upcoming financial year. The National Treasury released the guidelines for the 2018 budget process in June 2017. The guidelines identify growth rates[9] departments must apply when preparing their budgets, as well as the types of expenditure to prioritise (e.g. capital) or reduce (e.g. catering).

> Since 2009 government function groups have tried to identify savings to free up resources for government priorities

In South Africa, government department prepare three-year budgets, referred to as the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). When the budget process begins, the provisional budget in the final year of the preceding MTEF is increased by a growth rate specified in the budget guidelines to project a baseline for the new outer year. In other words, in order to prepare the 2017 MTEF, after removing any non-recurrent projects from the baseline, the 2017/18 and 2018/19 budget projections from the 2016 MTEF are carried over, and the 2018/19 baseline is increased by the growth rate specified in the guidelines to project the baseline for 2019/20.

Since the 2010 budget, the National Treasury has followed a 'function budgeting' approach, grouping government programmes into 'function groups' with other similar programmes. In 2012, the guidelines outlined the function group process in greater detail. There are usually eight or nine function groups, and each is divided into sub-functions.

Each function group has a leader, who is an official assigned from the National Treasury. The function group leader is responsible for coordinating meetings involving national departments, national entities, provincial departments and representatives from local government relevant to the function group. Meetings are typically at sub-function group level, and the group leader shares the economic and fiscal outlook with attendees. These sub-function groups should discuss allocations to violence prevention programmes.

> What makes funding violence prevention programmes particularly difficult is that responsibility for these programme may lie across departments. The Departments of Health and Social Development are not in the same function groups as the South African Police Service or Justice. To illustrate this, Table 1 shows the 2018 function groups and highlights (with black dots) the different function groups where violence prevention interventions could be considered for funding.

The National Treasury prepares the economic and fiscal outlook, with forecasts of government revenue. The National Treasury uses these forecasts to calculate the budget envelope (total resources) available for allocation through the division of revenue and budget processes. Until 2009, discussions during the budget process were primarily concerned with deciding which priorities the government should fund from additional resources. In other words, the function groups would discuss how 'additions to baseline' should be used to fund the expansion of existing services or new priorities. Since 2009, government revenue has been under pressure, and these function groups have focused their efforts on identifying savings that departments could implement to free up resources to allocate to government priorities.

Function groups meet several times before the group representatives present their budget bids to the Medium Term Expenditure Committee (MTEC). The MTEC is an interdepartmental committee of senior officials. After reviewing all the budget bids, the MTEC agrees on what to present to the Minister's Committee on the Budget (MinComBud).

**Table 1: 2018 function groups and preventing violence against women and children**

| Function group | Technical group | Key departments and other institutions |
|---|---|---|
| **Learning and culture** | Basic education<br>• | Basic Education, Provincial Education Departments |
| | Post-school education and training<br>• | Higher Education and Training, Sector Education and Training Authorities, National Skills Fund, National Student Financial Aid Scheme, Quality Council for Trades and Occupations, Council for Higher Education, South African Qualifications Authority |
| | Arts, culture, sports and recreation | Sports and Recreation, Arts and Culture, Provincial and Local Arts, Culture, Sports and Recreation |
| **Health** | Health<br>• | Health, Provincial Health Departments, National Health Laboratory Service, Military Health Services |
| **Social development** | Social protection<br>• | Social Development, South African Social Security Agency, Provincial Social Developments |
| | Social security funds | Road Accident Fund, Unemployment Insurance Fund, Compensation Fund |
| **Community development** | Community development<br>• | Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation, Transport, Energy, Provincial Human Settlements, Provincial Transport and Local Governments |
| **Economic development** | Industrialisation and exports | Trade and Industry, Economic Development, Mineral Resources, Tourism, Small Business Development, Public Works |
| | Agriculture and rural development | Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, Rural Development and Land Reform |
| | Job creation and labour affairs | Labour, Public Works, Expanded Public Works Programmes, Cooperative Governance |
| | Economic regulation and infrastructure | Energy, Transport, Environmental Affairs, Telecommunications, Water and Sanitation, Provincial and Local Governments |
| | Innovation, science and technology | Science and Technology |
| **Peace and security** | Defence and state security | Defence, Military Veterans, Financial Intelligence Centre, State Security, Armscor and the Castle Control Board |
| | Police services<br>• | Police, Independent Police Investigative Directorate, Civilian Secretariat for Police |
| | Law courts and prisons<br>• | Justice and Constitutional Development, Correctional Services, Office of the Chief Justice, Legal Aid South Africa, Public Protector of South Africa, South African Human Rights Commission |
| | Home affairs | Home Affairs |
| **General public services** | Executive and legislative organs<br>• | Presidency, Communications, Women, Parliament, Provincial Legislatures, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation |
| | Public administration and fiscal affairs | Public Service and Administration, National Treasury, Public Enterprises, Statistics South Africa, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Public Works |
| | External affairs | International Relations and Cooperation, National Treasury |

Source: National Treasury, 2018 MTEC Technical Guidelines, with dots added by authors.

According to the 2017 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement, a team of cabinet ministers reporting directly to the president has been established to develop proposals to stabilise the national debt over the medium term. The team is considering a range of steps to bring public finances back on to a sustainable path. Further announcements on this will be made in the 2018 national budget, so it has yet to be seen how this new committee will interact with the budget process.

The MinComBud comprises 10 ministers and is chaired by the minister of finance. The MinComBud considers the budget proposals from the MTEC and formulates recommendations on them. This process can go through a number of iterations before the MTEC presents the key budget decisions to the cabinet, based on the MinComBud's recommendations.

Running in parallel to this is the division of revenue process. This process apportions nationally collected revenue between the national government, the provincial equitable share (and each province's equitable share), provincial conditional grants, the local government equitable share and local government conditional grants.

### The division of revenue process

The division of revenue process starts in May each year, when the Fiscal and Financial Commission submits its recommendations on the division of nationally collected revenue to Parliament. This is followed by Budget Council meetings (the minister of finance and the nine MECs of finance) and Budget Forum meetings (which include representatives of local government). These two bodies discuss how proposed changes to the division of revenue impact on the provinces and local government respectively, and make recommendations to the cabinet regarding the division of revenue for the upcoming financial year.

In October, the cabinet is presented with a set of provisional figures for the division of revenue and suggested changes to the national and provincial budget baselines over the MTEF. When the cabinet approves these provisional figures, the minister of finance presents them to Parliament in the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS).

The National Treasury aims to send allocation letters to national departments and provincial governments by the beginning of November. The letters discuss the issues that informed the decisions MinComBud and the cabinet reached. They discuss in detail how the provincial equitable share should be prioritised, as well as outlining any changes to the provincial conditional grants. For instance, where additions were made to the provincial equitable share specifically for a programme or intervention (such as a violence prevention programme), the letters would address this directly. In November and December, national and provincial departments firm up their budgets based on the information in these allocation letters.

Figure 2 illustrates the division of revenue process and parallel national and provincial budget processes.

In parallel to the events described above, the Technical Committee for Finance (TCF) meets on a regular basis. This involves the National Treasury and the nine provincial treasuries. The content of the discussions in the different function groups is shared with the TCF (provincial treasury representatives also attend some of the function groups). The TCF discusses technical budgeting and reporting issues, as well as other policy priorities affecting provinces that may not have arisen in the function groups.

> The Technical Committee for Finance could emphasise the need to allocate budget to violence prevention

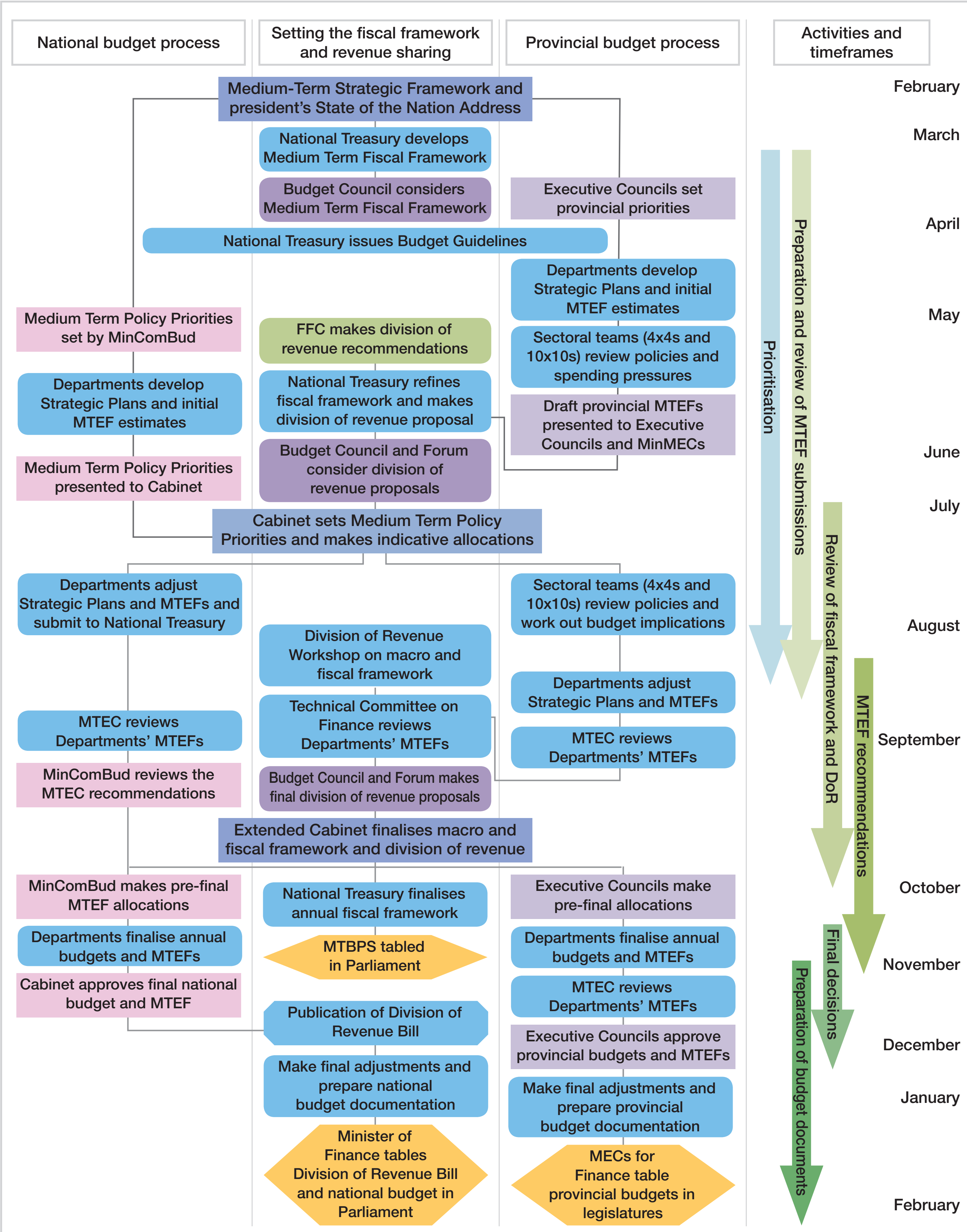
An important function of the TCF is to help the provincial treasuries understand which issues the national government is prioritising, how they are being funded and what this means for provincial budgets. Provincial treasuries also use this forum to influence the national government's budgetary decisions. This helps ensure that resources added to the provincial equitable share and/or conditional grants are allocated to the appropriate priorities in the provincial budgets. In effect, the TCF is the forum where the National Treasury could emphasise the need to allocate sufficient budget to violence prevention programmes.

### Provincial budget processes

From September to January provinces run their own budget processes. These processes differ significantly between provinces. Provinces are required to submit draft budgets to the National Treasury by the beginning of December. In December, budget analysts from the Intergovernmental Relations Branch within the National Treasury perform general analyses of the budgets and ensure that issues highlighted in the guidelines and raised at the TCF have been addressed.

Analysts from some sections of the Public Finance Branch, especially health and education, will also analyse the

**Figure 2: Division of revenue process and the parallel national and provincial budget processes**




Source: Original developed by Ronette Engela. Reworked and updated by Conrad Barberton.

provincial budgets and inspect how they have catered for sector policy issues. The general and sector-specific analyses are rigorous: they analyse all items in the budgets.

In January, each provincial treasury presents its draft budget to the National Treasury during the 'Provincial Budget Benchmarks'. This is a closed-door process between provincial treasuries and the National Treasury. The budget analysts from the National Treasury present their assessments of the provinces' budgets and advise each provincial treasury on changes it should make to its budget to improve alignment with national priorities. Following the benchmarking, the provincial treasuries receive a report that details the recommended changes they should consider before they table their final budgets in the provincial legislatures.

During these benchmarking sessions, the National Treasury has an opportunity to scrutinise the allocations to violence prevention programmes.

**Note:** This is a general description of the budget process to give the reader an understanding of the process. It should be noted that violence prevention is not nearly as high-profile an issue as education or health. Consequently, these functions receive more attention during the processes outlined above. It is therefore important to intensify advocacy to ensure violence prevention programmes are not overshadowed and can demonstrate their contribution to, for example, educational or health outcomes.

The responses of provincial treasuries to these recommendations are mixed; some implement the recommendations, while others appear to ignore them. It is difficult to know if the provincial treasuries themselves ignore the recommendations, or if the MECs for finance or provincial executive councils (EXCOs) do not allow them to implement recommendations. Given the constitutional division of powers and functions, there is little that the National Treasury or cabinet can do to force provinces to comply, unless there are grounds for an intervention under the terms of Section 100 of the Constitution.[10]

### Opportunities in the budget process for interventions or lobbying

Decisions to allocate additional funding (where available) to violence prevention programmes at provincial level can involve the following processes:[11]

- A province, based on its own specific priorities, may choose to allocate funds to primary violence prevention programmes from its equitable share and own revenues (note: this would mean redirecting funds from other priority areas). Such a decision would need to go through the province's annual budget process. The provincial EXCO would need to approve the allocation and, ultimately, the provincial legislature also when it passed the provincial budget.
- The national and provincial governments can jointly agree to prioritise violence prevention programmes and, in the course of the annual division of revenue process, to allocate additional funds (where available) to the provincial equitable share of nationally collected revenues. These additional funds would flow to the provinces as part of their equitable share, and provinces would be expected to allocate the funds to the provision of violence prevention programmes in their provincial budgets, in line with the agreed national priorities. However, equitable share funding is 'unconditional': a province may choose to use these additional funds elsewhere in its budget. The national government can only exert 'moral suasion' to get provinces to allocate the additional funds as intended.
- The national government may choose to prioritise violence prevention programmes and allocate funds from its share of revenue to a conditional grant that would then be transferred to the provinces for spending. The conditional grant would have to be approved through the division of revenue process, national budget process and respective provincial budget processes. This sounds like a cumbersome process, but the framework for managing conditional grants is well established. This approach to funding would enable the national government to force the provinces to prioritise violence prevention.

When considering how to influence budget allocations in favour of violence prevention, those seeking to influence the allocations need to recognise that budgeting in government is a complicated process involving a range of ingredients. These include, in no particular order:[12]

- Technical information about the state of the economy, options, beneficiaries, implementation and costs
- Influential officials who have strong views on what is in the best interests of the country and its people
- Politicians promoting the interests of their constituents (as well as other interests)
- The socio-political mood in the country and what is generally considered important

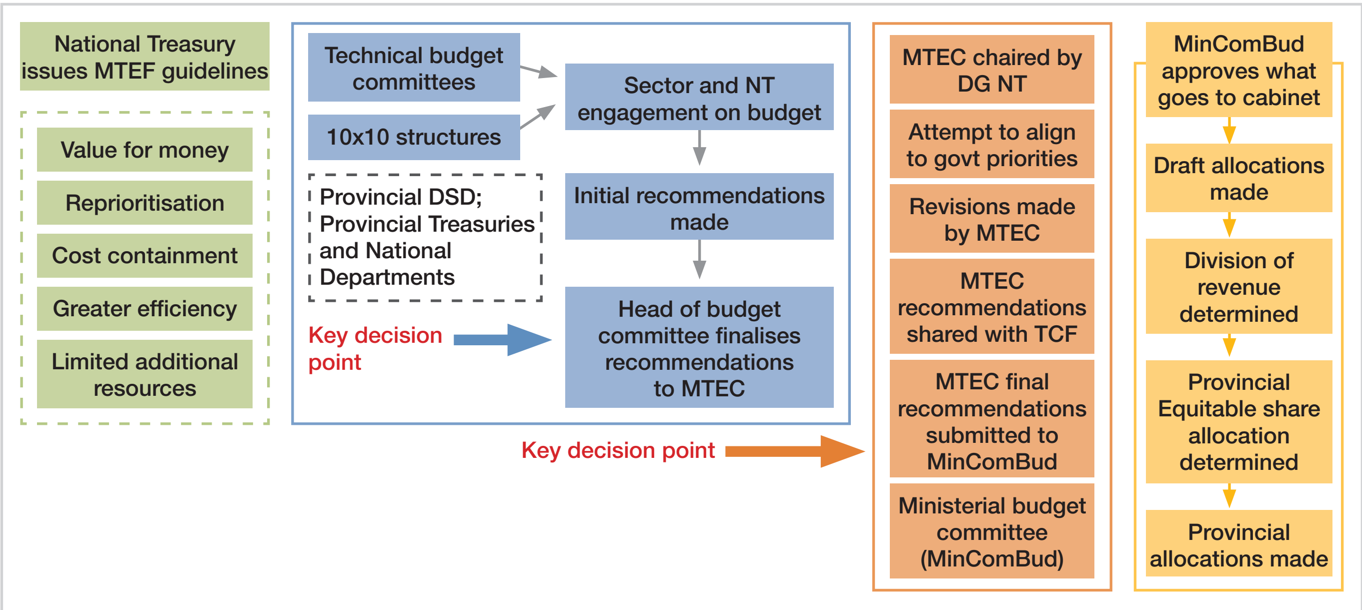
There is scope for more deliberate strategising about how to influence key processes and people directly to ensure that violence prevention is a priority in budget processes. For example, there is a concerted effort to provide information to the ministers who serve on MinComBud and government officials who sit on the MTEC, which reviews budget bids for the relevant function groups. Sharing information on the costing of violence prevention programmes with ministers and government officials is often quite influential and could be one method of informing decisions.

When it comes to feeding technical information into the budget process there are a number of key entry points. Key role players who are directly responsible for taking proposals on the funding of violence prevention in the social development sector into the budget process include:

- Provincial departments of social development, which need assistance in preparing credible implementation plans and budget bids to roll out violence prevention programmes.
- The national Department of Social Development, which needs assistance to motivate for additional funds to be allocated to provinces through the equitable share (or possibly a conditional grant) to fund scaling up violence prevention programmes.
- Officials in provincial treasuries, who oversee the budgets of the provincial departments of social development and play an important role in representing the departments' interests in the provincial budget processes.
- The chief director for health and social development in the Public Finance Branch of the National Treasury, and the chief director's subordinates.

These are just the role players in the social development sector. Other important role players to target are in the South African Police Service and Department of Justice. It is important to have these people onside and support them with technical planning, costing and budgeting information, as well as information on the effectiveness of violence prevention programmes.

**Figure 3: Key decision points in the budget process**




Source: Developed by Zaheera Mohamed for Cornerstone Economic Research.

## Funding challenges

### Information on interventions with potential to take to scale

Currently, violence prevention programmes are scattered across different departments. They are small and lack a solid information repository for researchers or decision makers to tap into. Gathering the required information on interventions that have the potential to be taken to scale may be an opportunity to influence budgeting if done in a coordinated, effective way.

After selecting the relevant programmes to take to scale, the following information should be gathered by programme developers and implementers who seek funding to take them to scale:

- What will it cost to extend a selected prevention programme to the target group and region identified?
  - This does not simply mean multiplying current costs of the programme by the increased number of beneficiaries, but should take into consideration economies of scale, skilling and reskilling of staff (based on lessons learnt from pilot programmes), possible additions to pilot programmes taking into consideration the specific intervention required in a new region, accounting for cultural norms sensitisation (if needed).
- What are the key critical success input variables required to deliver the programme (e.g. social service personnel and training)?
  - In a constrained environment, what is crucial to a programme's success and cannot be done away with?
- What is the cost-benefit of investing in prevention programmes versus response interventions?
- How can we best use existing structures and institutions within government?
- Are there any positive externalities to a specific programme?
  - Is a participant more likely to be employed or enrolled in tertiary education and thus more likely to make a valuable contribution to the economy?
- What oversight or monitoring and evaluation measures are in place or have to be put in place to ensure the programme delivers on its targets?

Although there is no template or fixed method for feeding information into the budget process, organisations should be prepared by generating useful information, building relationships with officials and taking opportunities that arise during this process.

## Funding opportunities

### What underpins a good budget bid?

Violence prevention programmes require delivering multiple interventions simultaneously (e.g. after-school life skills programmes, parenting programmes and programmes to change gender norms). They are difficult to resource and require complex funding bids that are quite different from most conventional bids.

Additionally, when the National Treasury and provincial treasuries consider budget bids, important considerations are the quality of implementation plans and credibility of proposed budgets. Treasuries want to be certain that, should they allocate funds to a programme, recipients will spend the funds. Therefore, budget bids with credible implementation plans are more likely to receive funding.[13] Developing a credible implementation plan involving multiple departments poses a challenge.

> **Note:** This section should be read in light of the current fiscal climate of limited funds. In effect, the National Treasury has moved away from allocating additional funds (i.e. asking for budget bids) and is instead asking for cost and budget pressures (pressures on existing programmes). Cost pressures arise because of factors beyond the department's control (examples include outbreaks of disease, and social factors such as proliferation of drugs or increases in the price of inputs). Departments also have to show that they recognise this as a priority by making funds available within their own budgets to cover cost pressures.
>
> Although it is not anticipated that tax revenues will recover to the extent that the government will have additional revenues in the near future, it is still important to know what constitutes a good budget bid. This section offers an idea of what is essential information to enable additional funding to be released.
>
> Also see the next section on reprioritisation.

In general, a good budget bid will contain the elements in Table 2.

**Table 2: Elements of a good budget bid**

| Element | What does this mean in general? | What does this mean for violence prevention programmes?[14] |
|---|---|---|
| A well-structured document | The document must make technical sense to treasury officials | What is meant by prevention and early intervention (PEI)?<br>Why is it important to invest in PEI as opposed to other government priorities?<br>What does PEI mean within the context of violence prevention? |
| Clear statement of the nature of the service | Who are the beneficiaries?<br>It is important for officials considering the budget bid to know who the funds are intended to reach | What is the profile of the victims?<br>Are certain age groups/genders susceptible to certain types of violence?<br>What is the relationship between the age/gender of the victim/perpetrator and the region where the violence occurs? |
| Clear theory of change | Show how the inputs/activities produce the required outputs and how these contribute to the desired outcomes/impacts | It is important to get the outputs and indicators right, because of the long time horizon within which programmes work |
| Alignment to national or provincial policy priorities | How do the programmes contribute towards the government achieving its policy priorities? | Find and emphasise the links violence prevention programmes have to the NDP and MTSF outcomes |
| Well-structured, detailed budget proposal | What are the existing allocations for this programme?<br>How have resources been reprioritised to increase efficiency?<br>What is the new allocation being requested?<br>Is the document using Standard Chart of Accountants (COA) categories – as set out in government budgets? | Finding existing spending patterns on violence prevention programmes at departmental level may be difficult in this sector<br>As far as possible, data should be gathered from implementing agents and shown to enhance the budget bid document<br>New allocations requested should also, preferably, be backed by evidence of costing done |
| Convincing and robust performance measures | How will departments and treasuries hold programme implementers to account? | |
| Evidence of capacity to spend allocations | What is the department's reputation regarding spending of budgets?<br>Is it underspending what it currently receives? | Is it possible to gather this information across the different departments that address violence prevention? |

Probably the most important aspect of the budget bid is presenting evidence that the spending on a programme makes a difference. If there is evidence that a programme is delivering measurable and meaningful results, it is more likely to be allocated additional funds. This is one of the unique obstacles to violence prevention programmes, where results are measured over a longer period of time and therefore may not stand the scrutiny of a three-year MTEF cycle in which funding may be redirected to other programmes that may show greater results in the short term.

### Reprioritisation – efficiency and savings

The current fiscal climate does not allow for an increase in government spending. Consequently, the government

If there is evidence that a programme is delivering measurable and meaningful results, it is more likely to be allocated additional funds

has to make difficult decisions to reprioritise allocations within the current budget. This might involve, for instance, identifying inefficiencies or poorly performing programmes that could be scaled down to release funds to allocate to priority areas.

Therefore, the National Treasury in recent years has taken to asking departments to reprioritise allocations within existing budgets, looking for inefficiencies (such as instances of non-performance, incompetence and inadequacies) and savings (such as non-critical vacancies, reducing spending on non-core goods and services such as travel, subsistence and catering).

It is therefore important for the violence prevention sector to assist the department to identify areas where funding can be redirected to more efficient programmes. But it is also important for the sector to avoid having its own funds reprioritised or being seen not to be cost effective and efficient.

### Does ring fencing provide a funding opportunity?

The constitution does not allow the national government to ring fence portions of a province's equitable share. However, it is possible to provide a national conditional grant, which has much the same function.

Introducing a conditional grant to fund violence prevention programmes would be a departure from how the national government currently uses conditional grants, as it would mean ring fencing funding for ongoing operations. If the government were to go down this route, it would raise questions over why funding for other priority services should not be treated similarly, and ultimately why provinces exist at all.

> The most effective way of ensuring that provinces fund violence prevention programmes is through advocacy

National departments have used conditional grants to force provinces to allocate funds to specific priorities. This mechanism has become increasingly popular. However, if one looks at the way intergovernmental fiscal relations are set up under the constitution, it becomes clear that, ideally, the use of conditional grants should be limited.

The constitution specifies that national, provincial and local governments are separate spheres, each with their own constitutionally assigned service delivery responsibilities. Since the relationship between the spheres of government is not intended to be hierarchical, the capacity of the provinces to exercise discretion over how they carry out their responsibilities should be protected. This includes deciding how to prioritise the allocation of funds between different services.

Provincial governments need to be held accountable by their own electorates for the choices they make, especially where these impact on service delivery. Provinces are in the best position to decide which services to prioritise within their region. The problem with conditional grants is that, in effect, they remove this discretion. In so doing, they reduce provinces to the role of 'implementation agents' of the national government.

A far more certain approach to ensuring that provinces properly fund violence prevention programmes is for a national department to regulate uniform norms and standards on the content and funding of such programmes. This would create specific, enforceable legislative obligations that provinces were required to implement.

Ultimately, the most effective way of ensuring that provinces fund violence prevention programmes is through advocacy. Once policymakers recognise the critical importance of prevention and early intervention, they can become champions to ensure that funds are made available to implement suitable programmes.

## Conclusion and recommendations

Resourcing any programme has become increasingly difficult in the current economic climate. Funders, whether in government or private donors, have limited funds to go around and are therefore looking to invest in programmes with the highest returns. This makes resourcing violence prevention particularly difficult, given the long-term nature of the outcomes for most programmes and their multi-dimensional nature, which requires cross-departmental coordination.

It is important, therefore, that the sector appreciates the current climate and the unique nature of its programmes, and adapts to the possible opportunities and challenges for resourcing violence prevention. In this regard, this policy brief proposes the following.

### Research and planning

- Prepare for better days – collect information on programmes that can be taken to scale.
- Find better ways of appealing to funders by realising the unique nature of violence prevention programmes.
- Create short-term outcome measures that fit within funders' budget cycles.

- Keep violence prevention programmes on the political agenda so that they are seen as core and additional funds are reprioritised from non-core areas.

### Budgeting

- Understand the key events of the annual division of revenue and budget processes.
- Know what is important for a successful budget bid – be ready for when bids for additional funding are next considered.
- Strategise about how to influence key processes and people directly related to budget processes.

### Protecting what is already there

- Where funds are limited, find efficiencies and savings.
- Help departments to find savings and areas for reprioritisation within violence prevention programmes but also other areas.
- Guard against having funds reprioritised away from violence prevention by showing efficiencies and willingness to save and adapt to circumstances.

## Notes

1 National Treasury, 2018 MTEF Technical Guidelines for Provinces, www.treasury.gov.za/publications/guidelines/2018%20MTEF%20Technical%20Guidelines%20for%20Provinces.pdf.

2 National Treasury, 2017 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement, chapter 3, www.treasury.gov.za/documents/mtbps/2017/mtbps/Chapter%203.pdf.

3 National Treasury, 2017 Budget Review, chapter 1: Transformation for inclusive growth www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2017/review/Chapter%201.pdf.

4 National Treasury, Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans, 2010, www.treasury.gov.za/publications/guidelines/SP%20APP%20Framework.pdf.

5 Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Medium Term Strategic Framework 2014 – 2019. http://www.dpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/outcomesSite/Pages/the-Outcomes-Delivery-Agreements.aspx - .

6 National Planning Commission. National Development Plan 2030: Our future – make it work. Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. Pretoria, 2012.

7 Zaheera Mohamed is the current Early Childhood Development (ECD) financing director at Ilifa Labantwana and former director for social development in the Public Finance Unit at the National Treasury.

8 A version of this description was first presented in a paper commissioned by ISASA: C. Abdoll and J. Carter, *Review of Transfers to Independent Schools from Provincial Departments of Education*, 2013. Unpublished document commissioned by ISASA.

9 Growth rate refers to the rate at which the variable being discussed grows.

10 Section 100 refers to national intervention in a provincial administration when a province cannot or does not fulfil an executive obligation under the terms of the constitution or legislation.

11 Adapted from: Conrad Barberton and Jonathan Carter, *Developing appropriate financing models to enable the scale-up of ECD services*, Ilifa Labantwana, 2014.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Developed with input from a presentation by Yusuf Mayet, *Proposed framework for resourcing prevention and early intervention*, National Treasury, 2017.

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## About this policy brief

This policy brief flows from and contributes to discussions held at the Dialogue Forum for Evidence Based Programmes to Prevent Violence against Women and Children. The forum, established in 2015, brings together academics, local and international non-governmental organisations that are evaluating violence-prevention programmes, and government officials. The government departments involved include the Departments of Basic Education; Women; Social Development; Health; Justice; Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation; and the National Treasury. The forum seeks to build strong, healthy inter-sectoral relationships, catalyse action and support processes that will lead to the sustainable implementation of evidence-based programmes to prevent violence in South Africa. It is convened by the Institute for Security Studies and guided by a driver group that includes representatives from Save the Children South Africa, the Medical Research Council, the Department of Women and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

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