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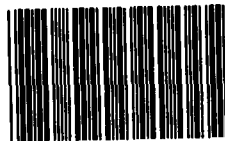
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# **THE WAY WELFARE WORKS:**

## **Structures, spending, staffing and social work in the South African welfare bureaucracies**

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Series editor: Ina Snyman

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## **EKSERP**

Die hoofdoel van die studie waarop hierdie verslag gegrond is, was om die grootte, omvang ("scope") en koste van openbare welsynsburokrasieë te bepaal.

Onderhoude is met amptenare in 17 welsynsadministrasies gevoer: die drie driekamerdepartemente wat deel van die Suid-Afrikaanse parlement vorm, die vier provinsiale administrasies, die ses selfregerende en vier onafhanklike swart state en die twee koördinerende departemente.

'n Groot deel van die analitiese inhoud van die verslag is van 'n vergelykende aard en toon aansienlike ongelykheid in die struktuur en voorsiening van die welsynsisteam aan. As gevolg van 'n gebrek aan standaardisering onder die verskillende liggame, sowel as 'n gebrek aan voldoende basiese demografiese data, is daar egter waardevolle data wat nie vergelykbaar was nie.

Hoewel die outeur 'n groot hoeveelheid inligting en uitgebreide dataontledings aanbied, beveel sy onder andere aan dat openbare inligtingstelsels verbeter word en sodoende toegankliker word vir die groot aantal mense wat kan en graag wil deelneem aan die vorming van maatskaplikediens-beleid.

## **ABSTRACT**

The main objective of the study on which this report is based, was to determine the size, scope and cost of public welfare bureaucracies.

Interviews were conducted with officials in 17 welfare administrations: the three tricameral departments constituting part of the South African parliament, the four provincial administrations, the six self-governing and four independent black states, as well as the two co-ordinating departments.

Much of the analytic content of the report is of a comparative nature and reveals considerable unevenness in the structure and provisions of the welfare system. However, owing to a lack of standardization among the different bodies, as well as a lack of sufficient basic, demographic information some very valuable data have been found non-comparable.

While a great deal of information and extensive data analysis are presented in the report, the author recommends *inter alia* improved public information systems that are more accessible to the vast body of people that can and would like to help shape social service policy.

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The emphasis in the main programme as well as in the subprogramme is on aspects of affordability, responsibility and accountability in the field of social security and the provision of social services.

This report has to do mainly with the welfare and related services rendered by the public welfare sectors in South Africa. Data on structures, resources and the scope of services are presented and analysed critically.

The HSRC, particularly the above committee, does not necessarily agree with all the views and conclusions in this report.

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## SUMMARY

There is broad agreement that the fragmentation of welfare in South Africa under apartheid has led to wastefulness and inefficiency. In this time of rapid political change, there is broad agreement too of the need for a unitary and non-racial welfare system. There has, however, been little concrete investigation of the extent of the present disunity, in terms of the institutional procedures and mechanisms that have arisen as a result of the fragmentation.

South African welfare is delivered by both the public and the private welfare sectors, and this study concentrates on the former. The objective was to determine the size, scope and cost of the government welfare bureaucracies, to formulate a data base for further work on debureaucratisation, affordability, effectiveness and efficiency. It does not answer the question, what should a future welfare policy be? It deals with, what is in place now, in the public sector, which will facilitate or create barriers to an improved future system? It attempts to put figures onto existing inconsistencies and unevennesses in the structures, in the spending, in staffing, and in social work practice.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with officials in the seventeen welfare administrations delivering welfare directly - the three tricameral departments for coloured, Indian and white welfare, the four provincial departments which deliver welfare to black people in the common area, the six homelands and the four independent states, as well as in two coordinating departments. Interviews were supplemented with an analysis of the 1989/1990 Estimates of Expenditure, Auditor-General's reports, parliamentary debates, and policy speeches.

Section One provides the context in which the research was conducted, and includes a brief sketch as to how the departments came into being. The research method is detailed in Section Two, and this should be seen as a substantive part of the report, as it itself indicates the changes that will have to be made to budgeting and information systems if a more efficient system is to be put in place. The departmental budgets are not standardised, and they define welfare matters in different ways in different programmes, such as to make some of the data non-comparable. Budgetary inconsistencies are compounded by the lack of reliable basic demographic data on which to base planning systems. One result is that throughout the report, black people have been undercounted, so all the per capita calculations, for example, are skewed upwards. The report continually reminds the reader to be wary of the figures. One objective of this document, as well as presenting the data collected, is to place the at times unrefined data in the public domain so that other researchers from the welfare sector may be energised into doing more social policy research, as well as improve on the figures.

Section Three gives an overview of welfare's place in the state bureaucracies. In white welfare, and to a lesser extent in coloured and Indian welfare, there is a sense of established procedures, and continuity. Black welfare in all three clusters - provinces, homelands and independent states - has been very mobile, jostled from pillar to post as a result of political decision-making, with consequent undermining of staff morale. The replication of local, regional and national bureaucratic structures is described, as well as changes which have been made in welfare legislation by the homelands and independent states - most of these being token changes referred to by the officials as 'name-change legislation'. The question of whether health and welfare departments should be united or separate is addressed through the issue of representation. The section concludes with a description of the most important co-ordinating mechanisms which have had to be set up to keep some overall control of fragmented welfare.

In Section Four, the budgets of the welfare departments are presented. The Estimates reflect that the welfare budget for the year ending March 1991 was R4,4 billion (R4 426 327 676), comprising R2 billion through the tricameral departments (with R1 billion of this for white welfare, about R800 million for coloured welfare and about R200 million for Indian welfare). The remainder goes to black welfare - about R1 billion through the provinces, and the rest through the other two clusters (the homelands and independent states spending about R800 million and R600 million respectively). When calculated on a per capita basis, coloured welfare has the highest figure at R246, white and Indian figures are nearly the same as each other at about R200, and the tricameral cluster average as a whole is twice as high as for black per capita amounts through all three clusters - about R100.

The section continues with a demonstration of the dominance in the government welfare budgets of pensions and grants, with the proportion of the welfare budgets going to welfare personnel comprising 6,4 percent in the provinces, and between 2 and 4 percent in the other three clusters. The section then examines the social security part of the budget in more detail. The proportional allocations to the four categories of the elderly, people with disabilities, child and family care, and relief of distress, are given, with the old age pensions taking by far the biggest proportion. In black welfare, and especially in the homelands and independent states, very little is spent on the grants concerning child and family care, or poor relief. Pensions comprise 56,5 percent and 42,5 percent of the combined health and welfare budgets of the homelands and independent states respectively, and health and welfare budgets combined comprise 27 percent and 20 percent of the respective total government spending of these two clusters.

In Section Five, aspects of implementation of the social security system are considered, the financial aspects having been dealt with in the previous section. The fragmentation of the welfare system has meant that different pensions and grants and allowances have developed or eroded in different administrations, and the inconsistencies are given in detail. Also described in some detail is the confusion surrounding the concept of the Means Test, and the section concludes with a description of KwaZulu's pilot project for privatising aspects of pensions delivery.

The remainder of the report deals with the more specifically professional social work aspects of welfare. The size of the government social work establishment is given in Section Six. Of the 2175 social workers in the departments, the Houses of Assembly, Delegates and Representatives employed 20 percent, 4 percent and 17 percent respectively, constituting 41 percent of the total. The 59 percent who were employed in departments delivering welfare to black people were distributed as follows: 28 percent in the provincial departments, and 18 percent and 13 percent in the homelands and independent states respectively.

There was less difference than expected in the racial ratios of social workers per population when the homelands and independent states were excluded. The devolution of black welfare to provincial level has had the effect of increasing markedly the number of social workers in those departments (the provincial mean ratio being 1:14576), and the ratio for Representatives was most favourable of the tricameral departments (1:8560, compared to Delegates' 1:10298 and Assembly's 1:12174). The situation deteriorates strikingly in the independent states and homelands, with ratios of 1:25000 being common, and much higher than that in specific remote rural areas.

Racial and gender hierarchies in the social work establishments are then presented. There is white control at senior levels in the tricameral and provincial and coordinating departments, and conversely, the homelands and independent states have been institutional mechanisms for significant black advancement, for the advancement of black women, and for black control over welfare. It is suggested that these practical benefits of the apartheid departments will not be given up lightly in the reunification of welfare. It is suggested that the traditional rural-urban distinction made in social planning is not appropriate when considering the distribution of personnel and other resources. The data are incomplete, but it appears that there is an acute shortage of social workers in the informal settlements and inner urban areas, with ratios in those places looking more like rural ratios.

One of the objectives of the study was to determine the scope of the government social workers' activities, and Section Seven deals with this. The interviews were set against a backdrop of a frank acknowledgement by a broad spectrum of social workers, in and out of government employment, that social work needs to redefine its role in these changing times. The dominance of statutory work in many social workers' lives was apparent in the interviews, but some departments were trying new approaches, with more emphasis on community development. The idea of practising according to the defined fields of service appears to have been a possibility in urban-based white welfare, and in some of the better provided areas of coloured and Indian welfare, but a total pipe-dream for most departments delivering welfare to black people, because of the shortage of personnel, as well as the great distances that many social workers have to cover to reach clients.

Auxiliary or assistant social workers have been mooted as one way of overcoming the shortage of social workers, and Section Seven presents the ideas and experiences of interviewees about this category of worker. The experiences of departments as placement agencies for social work students is described, as also the governments' bursary schemes, which have been one way of trying to encourage human resource development in social work.

Although the focus of this study was government-provided welfare, the interviews did cover the articulation between the public and private welfare sectors. Section Eight covers the subsidisation by government of private welfare, and figures demonstrate the striking difference between support of white, coloured and Indian welfare on the one hand, and black welfare in the homelands and independent states on the other. The number of government-subsidised private sector posts per population through Delegates, Assembly, and Representatives are 1:3751, 1:5030, and 1:6097 respectively. There were no reports of subsidised social workers in voluntary welfare organisations in the independent states or the homelands, though KaNgwane and Transkei had proposals for subsidisation before them for the first time.

Another place of linkage between the public and private welfare sectors is through the new welfare programmes subsidy system, and the advantages and disadvantages of this system, as seen through the eyes of the officials, are given. The welfare programmes were virtually unheard of outside the tricameral and provincial departments. It is likely that this system will further increase the gap between urban-based, better-off organisations and under-serviced rural areas. The national councils are given brief attention as another mechanism for contact between private and public and private sectors.

Finally, rigorous welfare planning research is impossible without good information systems, and it is one important task of state departments to make their information more publicly accessible.

## TERMINOLOGY USED IN THE REPORT

Because South Africa's separate development or apartheid policy has been built on a system of racial classification and racial naming, many studies start with a disclaimer about the author's not liking or accepting the racial terms, and explaining how the terms have to be used just the same.

The situation is compounded in this study, and some explanation for the terms used is required. The research was precisely about a discriminatory welfare system which has been delivered through racially separate channels, to and through government administrations which are differentially located in terms of closeness to, or distance from, the central government in Pretoria. It is about naming and separating and changing of status.

So, in the first place, it was necessary to specify which races were being referred to throughout. I refer to black (meaning African), Indian, coloured and white people. I use black to mean African, because it seems to have come back into common usage in this way once more. I decided to dispense with the often-used and 'politically correct' quotation marks around 'coloured'.

In the second place, a number of scholars prefer not to distinguish between the six places which claimed self-governing status (Gazankulu, KaNgwane, KwaNdebele, KwaZulu, Lebowa, QwaQwa), and the four places which claimed independent status (Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei and Venda). All ten are often lumped together as 'the homelands', or 'the bantustans'. One of the purposes of this study was to investigate whether this different status had made a difference to the provision of welfare. The distinction between the two clusters has been made, and the terms 'homelands' and 'independent states' are used, again without the quotation marks. I sometimes refer to the independent states as TBVC.

Because of the institutional arrangements through which welfare is delivered, it is sometimes necessary to refer to that part of South Africa which falls within the boundaries of the Republic, but which excludes the homelands. I have called this the common area (which is only marginally better than the former term 'white South Africa').

There is a great deal of political sensitivity on behalf of departments surrounding this naming, and the term that is used will often signify a particular political position towards the relationship between an area and Pretoria. This is particularly the case for the independent states.

One result of the fragmentation of welfare has been that the government apparatuses involved call themselves by many different names - divisions, directorates, branches, sections, and so on. These also are sensitive issues, as they are very precise signifiers of status and position in the bureaucratic hierarchy. Where necessary, I give the precise name used. On the whole, however, I use the term 'welfare department' in a generic sense to cover all these other terms, for reasons of simplicity and readability.

None of the above terminological usage signifies my acceptance of the racial classification of apartheid South Africa; none of it is intended to be offensive to any of the individuals in the departments.

## ABBREVIATIONS

### Abbreviations of governments and government departments, arranged in clusters:

National planning and policy-making for welfare in South Africa (for tricameral departments, provinces and to an extent for the homelands) is done by:

**DNH** Department of National Health and Population Development

Welfare for white, coloured and Indian people works through the three tricameral houses:

**TRI** These tricameral departments are:  
**HOA** House of Assembly (white)  
**HOD** House of Delegates (Indian)  
**HOR** House of Representatives (coloured)

For black people living in the common area of South Africa, welfare is delivered through the four Provincial Administrations:

**PRO** These are:  
**CPA** Cape Provincial Administration  
**NPA** Natal Provincial Administration  
**OPA** Orange Free State Provincial Administration  
**TPA** Transvaal Provincial Administration

The affairs of the provinces are planned and co-ordinated through:

**PPA** Department of Planning, Provincial Affairs and National Housing

There are six areas known commonly as homelands:

**HL** They are officially known as:  
**SGA** Self-Governing Areas and they have their own welfare branches or departments:  
**GAZ** Gazankulu  
**KAN** KaNgwane  
**KDB** KwaNdebele  
**KZU** KwaZulu  
**LEB** Lebowa  
**QWA** QwaQwa

The central government department which co-ordinated welfare in the homelands was at the time of the interviews:

**DDA** Department of Development Aid

The four areas independent states are called:

**IS** and these are:  
**BOP** Bophuthatswana  
**CKI** Ciskei  
**TKI** Transkei  
**VEN** Venda

The co-ordinating mechanism between Pretoria and these administrations is:

**ECOSA** Economic Community of Southern Africa, also called  
**SECOSAF** Secretariat of the Economic Community of Southern Africa

**General abbreviations:**

CSW	Chief Social Worker
IDCC	Inter-Departmental Coordinating Committee
NC	National Council
OFS	Orange Free State
PDP	Population Development Programme
RDA	Regional Development Association
RWB	Regional Welfare Board
SABSWA	South African Black Social Workers Association
SACSW	South African Council for Social Work
SSW	Society for Social Workers
TPI	Transfer payments to individuals
TEE	Total estimated expenditure

**Abbreviations for social benefits:**

BPP	Blind Persons Pension
DG	Disability Grant
FCG	Foster Care Grant
LG	Leprosy Grant
MG	Maintenance Grant
OAP	Old Age Pension
SCG	Single Care Grant
WVP	War Veterans Pension



## **SECTION ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

What should the role be of the social services and social security in South Africa? This question is being asked by a broad spectrum of people in the public and private sectors, involved in social welfare and more broadly in the social policy arena, and both inside and outside of political parties. The question arises because of an acknowledgement that all is not right in the welfare field. The most common criticisms are that the welfare system has been racially divided and racially inequitable, that it has been inefficiently planned, and that it has had a strongly urban bias. There is an urgency about getting it right in this time of rapid socio-political change.

There are contradictory forces at work which create tensions in the social policy arena. The process of increasing political openness, when different options for the future are being considered, is counterpoised by the weak state of the economy. Ten years ago, when the ideal of 'affordable health and welfare provision' was promoted (under the influence of the World Health Organisation and the primary health care movement), 'affordable' used to mean what the consumer of health and welfare services could afford to pay. Now it often implies what a government says it can afford to spend. So the potential of a better and broader vision for welfare is being offset by an awareness of scarce economic resources.

In order to achieve economic growth and stability, the government and business are pursuing their project of privatisation; privatisation is also part of the new welfare policy of the government. At the same time, there is an acknowledgement of the extent of the crisis of poverty for millions of South Africans, and of the fact that the high unemployment figures are not only a temporary phenomenon, but part of structural economic imbalances. And there is an acknowledgement that those very policies which are meant to promote a healthy economy, also, in at least the short term, render some groups of people worse off. The new VAT tax system, for example, was acknowledged by government to have such potentially bad material implications for the poor, that it introduced a food relief system to counteract this. Thus, for the first time since the national welfare programmes to counter poor white poverty in the 1930s and 1940s, we again see national nutrition and relief schemes, this time largely for black people.

Having scarce resources to allocate always means having to make difficult choices, and the major decisions in the welfare field will be about prioritising between equally important fields. For example, the welfare budget will face new demands from two different directions in terms of the age cohorts who will need welfare resources. On the one hand, demographic changes have led to there being increasing numbers of older South Africans, relatively few of whom will have been able to make sufficient independent financial

provision for their retirement. On the other hand, the political violence, the disruption of family life, and the near-collapse of the black educational system, combine to make the younger people in South Africa, and again particularly young black people, at risk, and the call is growing for much more robust youth intervention initiatives. The AIDS epidemic inserts itself into the middle of these competing demands, with predictions of its placing a heavy strain on future health and welfare budgets (Broomberg et al, 1991).

The issue of the spatial spread of welfare resources is another area where people allocating welfare resources will face a dilemma. The bias in the previous and present system towards urban provision is well-known and accepted - we need more welfare provision in rural areas. However, the rapidly growing peri-urban informal settlements may arguably be a higher priority for resource allocation.

What kind of welfare do we need to accommodate and best serve these scenarios? There is no hope of forging and constructing an incrementally improved, or altogether different, system, if there is not a comprehensive understanding of what is already in place. Yet one result of a fragmented welfare system is precisely that it makes that understanding difficult, as different parts of the system are being planned, budgeted and accounted for in different ways, which in turn make the collection of comparative and comparable data extremely difficult.

A key objective of this study, therefore, was to lay the groundwork for a composite and comprehensive picture of structures and spending in government-provided South African welfare, at the beginning of the 1990's. The intention was to provide a 'snapshot', with the lens focusing in on:

- the departments and structures which implement and control welfare planning and delivery
- spending, on both the social services and on social security
- the composition and distribution of personnel in terms of such issues as race, gender, region, and rural/ urban location
- the kinds of welfare services provided by the social workers.

The extent of the present fragmentation can be understood through a brief historical overview of the establishment of the government welfare administrations. A useful and recent summary history of government and private welfare is found in McKendrick (1987); Potgieter (1973) and Winckler (1969) provide more detailed accounts. A list of the important events and dates which institutionalised fragmentation can be found in Appendix 1.

The first central Department of Welfare in South Africa was established in 1937, and it was intended to serve the welfare needs of all people. Prior to that, welfare had been attended to by a variety of other departments. Civil and then social pensions were administered by Treasury from 1910. In 1958 the pensions system was amalgamated with welfare into the newly-named Department of Social Welfare and Pensions.

During the 1950s, the policy of 'separate development' or apartheid made itself felt in welfare with the decision to hand over key aspects of welfare delivery to different departments for different races. While the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions continued to serve whites, the establishment of the Departments of Coloured and Indian Affairs in 1959 and 1961 respectively signalled the start of the racial fragmentation of welfare. Welfare for African people was handed over to the Department of Bantu Administration and Development.

In 1971 legislation was passed which paved the way for the creation of self-governing areas and independent states. Lebowa was the first to claim self-governing status in 1972, and was followed in order in the ensuing years by Gazankulu, QwaQwa, KwaZulu, KaNgwane and finally KwaNdebele in 1979, to make six homelands or self-governing areas in all. Transkei claimed its status as an independent state in 1976, Bophuthatswana and Venda followed, and Ciskei was the fourth and last in 1981.

Thus by the end of the 1970s, there were three separate departments for coloured, Indian and white people, a central department for black people in the so-called 'common area', and administrations for black people in the homelands and TBVC states where welfare departments were gradually introduced.

In the 1980s there were three major changes in government welfare structures. First, the 1984 constitution and tricameral parliamentary system designated welfare an 'own affair'. This meant that decisions about welfare for white, Indian and coloured people would be made through the Houses of Assembly, Delegates and Representatives respectively, through the newly created Ministries of Health Services and Welfare.

Second, between 1985 and 1988, social welfare for black people in the common area was devolved from the then Department of Constitutional Development and Planning, (formerly Bantu Administration and Development, with a few other name changes in between) which was a central state department, to provincial level (for an analysis of how this formed part of the broader restructuring and reform policy of the state, see Lund, 1988). The four provinces had previously had no welfare function apart from development-related work done by the Development Services Boards.

The third significant feature of the 1980s was the development of the flip side of the fragmentation that had happened - the establishment of structures for coordination and

control. The overall planning and policy-making for welfare for all races in the common area is the function of the Chief Directorate: Social Welfare and Funds, in the Department of National Health and Population Development; welfare as a 'general affair' moved there after the phasing out of the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions when the tricameral system was introduced in 1985.

The Department of Planning, Provincial Affairs and National Housing plays a coordinating role for welfare for black people in the four provinces (it was formerly called Department of Development Planning among other names). The Department of Development Aid was established in 1985 to keep control of and give budgetary assistance to the six homelands. It created a Social Welfare Services section falling under a wing called Social and Ethnological Services, and this small department played an influential role in homelands welfare. In 1991, the DDA received notice that it would be disbanded.

In the early 1980s there does not appear to have been much coordination or control by Pretoria of welfare in the independent states except via the strong financial dependence of these places on Pretoria for the social pensions budget. However in 1988, the Economic Community of Southern Africa (ECOSA) which had since 1980 been a liaison mechanism between Pretoria and the TBVC states, changed from having an interim to a permanent secretariat (SECOSAF). Moves to harmonise (ie make more uniform) welfare services and pensions started being promoted through SECOSAF in 1988 - a clear early sign that the South African government was laying the ground for some form of re-united southern Africa.

That, in short, is how South Africa came to have seventeen departments of welfare, arranged in four clusters, coordinated by three other departments and one secretariat.

As Donaldson (1991: 19) says:

... restructuring the social services is about getting the details of a wide variety of regulations, prices, institutions and procedures right, and this is likely to be harder to do than the design of a plausible overall blueprint.

The purpose of this study was to understand the similarities and differences in some of the structures, regulations and procedures in the fragmented welfare departments, so as to enable a better grasp of the barriers that stand in the way of a unitary, non-racial welfare system in South Africa.

I had started studying government policy documents and budgets in preparation for interviews when President F W de Klerk made his dramatic February 2 1990 announcements presaging a negotiated settlement for a new South Africa. This timing affected the research in important ways. The political climate became one of greater dialogue. Two years previously, I would not have designed a research project which had me

walking into the heart of Pretoria's departments; two years previously, many may not have admitted me! So in this way some doors were opened.

On the other hand, it made the work more difficult. It is one task to track down seventeen welfare departments plus three coordinating departments and understand, amid the different uses of terminology, different ways of devising budgets, the common features and the differences. It is an even more difficult task when some departments are restructuring of their own accord, or are anticipating being restructured by Pretoria. In a very real way the study has been attempting to pin down an environment which is constantly shifting.

One important implication of this is something which needs to be born in mind throughout the report: some of the figures will definitely be wrong. The section on methodology gives details of why, the most significant reasons being the inadequate population figures that researchers in South Africa have to work with, and the very fragmentation of welfare which the study purports to analyse. In defence, two things can be said: first, the figures on spending are probably less wrong than other research done so far on national welfare; second, the study goes into all the welfare departments across the four clusters of tricameral departments, provinces, homelands and independent states, enabling the beginning, for the first time, of a more comprehensive view.

## SECTION TWO

### RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

#### Introduction

This section has two separate parts - that dealing with the research process overall, and that providing more detailed discussion of the procedure used in analysing the budget. The latter has been given in detail both in order that others may improve on it in future, but also because it is informative itself of the effects of fragmentation in welfare.

First, then, how was the research done, and what were the main problems and limitations?

#### 1 The research process

The primary research method was face-to-face interviews with key officials in the government welfare departments. There were three main phases - preparation for the interviews, the interviews themselves, and the analysis and report-writing.

I spent some weeks studying official documents relating to the government departments. The most important of these were the Estimates of Expenditure, Auditor-General's reports, policy speeches of Ministers, Annual Reports of departments, and parliamentary recordings (particularly questions to Ministers).

A letter was sent in advance to all the departments, indicating the objectives of the research, and asking permission to interview. I relied on the person with whom I corresponded to decide on the appropriate personnel to be interviewed. The interviews took place over a period of about a year (see Appendix 2 for the schedule of interviews). There was no set pattern to the visits. Sometimes, I interviewed three separate people: one on personnel and professional issues, one on pensions and grants, and one on financing. Rarely, the whole visit was spent interviewing just one person.

The aide memoire used in the interviews had three parts:

- questions which would be asked of all departments
- questions relevant only to particular clusters of departments and not others (for example, a question about coordination between the independent states and the homelands would not be put to the provinces)
- questions for particular departments, which were of no relevance to any of the others. These typically concerned budget issues, where I had picked up contradictions or changing trends in the financial statements or annual reports.

Interviews were conducted in English, except for three in which both English and Afrikaans were used. Thus in the great majority of interviews, my home language was favoured, rather than the languages of the interviewees.

The longest time spent in a department was eight hours spread over two days; the shortest was an unsatisfactory three hours, with many interruptions. The mean was about five hours, starting in the morning and spilling over into the afternoon for an hour or so.

I made notes during the interviews, and collected additional documentation. The notes were typed up fully as soon as possible, nearly always on the same day as the interviews. Thus when quotations are given in the report, they are not exactly verbatim, but capture the sense of what was said. A copy was sent to interviewees, with the request that they read through transcripts for errors of fact.

After the interviews were completed, I drew up the categories for analysis, according to the main themes covered. A research assistant, who was an experienced social worker, checked the categories, and did the categorising, which was then double-checked by me. A research assistant constructed the data-base on spending, according to specific categories.

## **2 Some problems with the research**

### **2.1 Broad scope**

The scope of the research was potentially very large. Despite the numbers of hours spent in interviews, there was not enough time to cover all the issues with all departments. It was possible to cover some but not all of these gaps through later correspondence.

### **2.2 Contradictory data, and missing data**

Research of this nature relies on bureaucratic information systems, and there will inevitably be contradictions in the data held by departments. The contradictions took different forms or had different causes. Sometimes what was said in one interview was contradicted by another interviewee in the same department, or by a person from another government some weeks later. I sometimes spotted the problem as the interview proceeded, but in other cases it was only weeks or months after the interview, when analysing the data, that the contradictions became apparent.

There were times when what was said in interview conflicted with what was in a written report which was provided at the time of interview, but read later. There were times when the information was somewhere in the department but held by a person who was not available at that time.

There were times when the information needed was simply not available at all. One example was trying to find out the number of posts in one department:

"I can give you this piece of paper, which says there are x number of posts; or, I can give you that piece of paper which says that there are y number of posts. But I can assure you that neither is correct, and I do not know what is correct, and I do not believe anyone in the whole government knows what the latest figure is, because since the recent unrest, we are not sure what the future is. Pretoria is here deciding it."

In this situation, we settled on a best guess-timate. A likelihood is that there were other interviewees who were not confident of their information, but thought that it would be kinder to me to give me something. Providing data on bits of paper, even if it is known that the figures are not quite correct, not only gives an impression of organisation and efficiency; it is also a way of placating a worrisome researcher who asked for too much!

### **2.3 Lack of information about and emphasis on institutional care**

People closely involved with welfare delivery may be frustrated by the lack of attention given to the analysis of institutional care. I originally intended to include more about it, but was confounded by two things. First, the way institutions are categorised in the budgets varies greatly. I was in the middle of finding a way to achieve uniformity through the tricameral and provincial budgets, when, in a flurry of visits to the homelands and independent states, I realised that institutional care was not an issue, except in the most important sense - there was virtually none. Thus as my national view got broader, the inefficiency of spending more time on such a small part of overall welfare provision became more evident. This is a crucial area for further research, however, and in particular there is a need for comparative cost-benefit analyses of institutional versus community-based care.

### **2.4 Potential for interviewee bias**

There were two main sources of possible interviewee bias in this research. First, the act of investigation typically carries with it the likelihood that those whose policies and practices are the theme of the research will want to show the good side of their work, and not wish to disclose problem areas. This may be particularly so in a rapidly changing South Africa. In fields such as health, welfare and education, there has been an oppositional stance between those in government departments, and those doing future-oriented 'post-apartheid' social policy research. In this situation, I, as an outside 'academic', went inside the state institutions which have been responsible for the implementation of the internationally condemned policy of separate development or apartheid.



Second, the interviews were on the whole conducted with very senior people in the departments. This was appropriate for most of the questions asked, as the study was not primarily about the everyday life of the social worker in the field. Nevertheless, I was very aware at points in the interviews that it was one or two key people speaking for whole departments, and there may well be different assessments and perceptions on the part of more junior social workers. I felt this especially keenly in some of the provincial departments where the racial difference between those at the top of the hierarchy, and the field workers, was very marked.

As I have mentioned already, the interviews - and the whole research process - were marked by exceptional co-operation and openness on behalf of almost everyone. The most important contributing factor, I should imagine, is that the research was timely: people wanted to talk and find a way forward, acknowledging past problems. The attitudes expressed and problems identified by many of the interviewees will speak for themselves in the body of the report.

Further, I used the technique of triangulation as much as possible - the academic word for the common-sense practice of using whatever avenues are available to cross-check the ideas and information that have been given. In this research, there were a number of occasions for doing this. The most significant event was that I was invited to attend one of the multi-lateral meetings held between officials from Pretoria (from the three co-ordinating departments) and the six homelands, having interviewed in a number of the homelands already. This was a useful opportunity to supplement my understanding of the relationship between the homelands and the Pretoria departments, and between the homelands departments themselves. Similarly, opportunities to meet with social workers at all levels socially and through professional social work and social policy meetings were helpful additional sources of information.

## **2.5 Potential for interviewer bias**

Using in-depth, open-ended (and not tape-recorded) interviews as the main tool for data-gathering carries the serious risk that the researcher may select from all the information and available precisely what s/he pleases, to reinforce points of view already held. The safe-guards against this are for the researcher to be clear and public about her/his own position, and then to make the report available for public scrutiny.

## **2.6 Inadequacy of demographic data**

One cannot go far down the road of social policy analysis, especially with regard to resource allocation, without using the number of people for whom services are being

provided as a basis for comparative calculation - the per capita indicators. South Africa's population figures are notoriously inaccurate, with significantly different estimates made by major demographic analysts.

For this study, after consultation with experts in the field, the following decisions were made. For the white, coloured and Indian groups, Sadie's 1988 projections for 1990 were used (Sadie, 1988). His projections would have been used across the board for consistency; however, no separate breakdowns are given for black people on a provincial basis (and black welfare in the common area is delivered through the provinces), neither are disaggregated figures given for the homelands. For black people in the provinces and the homelands, therefore, the Centre for Statistical Services 1991 Census: Preliminary Results was used. These were already known, at the time of writing, to contain serious errors, most notably under-counting in some homelands. Nevertheless, the research required the breakdowns along the administrative lines given in these results, so had to be used. Population figures for the independent states were obtained from the Development Bank of Southern Africa, which acknowledges the probable inaccuracy of the figures it uses.

The population figures used in the construction of the data-base are given in Appendix 3, so that readers can make their own assessment of their adequacy. A broadly correct generalisation is that a result of the inaccurate population figures will be to over-assess the level of welfare provision for black people, relative to the rest of the South African population.

### **3 Approaching the budgets**

Part of the purpose of this research was to make sense of the effects of the fragmentation of state welfare. That very fragmentation posed the greatest obstacle to the part of the study dealing with expenditure. This section will detail:

- the sources of information
- the consistent exclusions and reasons for these
- the comparability of the budgets
- the difficulties in getting a true cost of the social security system
- the problem of calculating social spending (spending on health, education and welfare).

I will give examples of the process of data collection throughout, as this may in itself be useful groundwork for improved future research.

### 3.1 Sources of information

The database was initially constructed as far as possible around the reports, **The Estimates of Revenue and Estimates of Expenditure for the Financial Year ending 30 March 1990**, for the seventeen welfare departments.

I studied these Estimates before the interviews, and where possible compared them with Estimates of the preceding year in order to pick up any dramatic changes in expenditure patterns.

Also in preparation for the interviews, I compared pre-1990 estimates with the Auditor-General's reports of actual expenditure where possible, in order to get a sense of any consistent trends of under-estimation or over-estimation.

This study did not include the Additional Appropriations. This is a report on an additional phase of the budget cycle where those applying for finances get a second chance, as it were, during the financial year, to ask for more money, or to report on money that will not be needed. These reports were, however, perused in order to get a sense of under- and over-estimates in the main budget.

During the visits to departments, I would then supplement the Expenditure figures wherever possible. I was sometimes supplied with figures of actual expenditure for the same period as the Estimates, or for parts of the period, in order to validate accuracy of expenditure. This was especially helpful in getting guidelines for trends in pension spending.

Then, I received an explanation for major anomalies which I had found in the published Estimates prior to the interview. For example, in one department for one year, on two pages of the budget the comma dividing thousands of rands was put in the wrong place, thus distorting estimates by 10 percent. In another department's budget a major inaccuracy resulted from the line item 'Transfer Payments' (the largest part of the budget) appearing on the wrong line - a typographic error which would have led to a significantly different picture of the pattern of spending in that department.

During interviews I gained a better understanding of how budgets were constructed, and this helped explain what had seemed to be curious features. For example, a token amount of R100 appeared next to 'Subsidies to Institutions' in one department year after year. This was not an indication of the lack of support for institutional care, which I first thought. The department had managed with some difficulty to open a new line item in the budget, in anticipation of an institution being built. There had subsequently been a delay in building. It was explained that it was important to keep the item open for future expenditure, thus a token R100 was allocated year after year.

### 3.2 Exclusions

As the study progressed, it became necessary to exclude certain aspects of welfare-related expenditure from the analysis.

- 3.2.1 The expenditure for the **Population Development Programme (PDP, commonly also known as BOP, the Afrikaans acronym for Bevolkingsontwikkelingsprogram)**. The PDP is lodged in different places (sometimes Welfare, or Health, or Economic Affairs, or Bureau of the Chief Minister). The expenditure on it is relatively small. I decided it was not an efficient use of time and energy to track it down.
- 3.2.2 The area of **mental health** posed a particular problem, as it falls across both health and welfare, and across education as well. After a deal of deliberation, it was decided to exclude mental health programmes from welfare budgets, where they appeared separately. In some instances it was impossible to exclude mental health spending from welfare because this was integrated into other spending (eg. salaries of social workers at psychiatric hospitals sometimes fell under the welfare budget, and sometimes under the health budget).
- 3.2.3 Expenditure on **special education** sometimes falls under welfare, but mostly under education budgets. It was excluded.
- 3.2.4 The analysis does not include expenditure or welfare which falls under **other departments**, the most important of which would be Prisons. It should be noted however that discussion of social work undertaken in other departments formed part of the interviews.
- 3.2.5 **Local authority welfare expenditure** did not fall within the scope of this study.
- 3.2.6 The expenditure of the **three coordinating departments - DNH, DDA and PPA -** was not included in the analysis, though the important role played by these relatively small welfare departments is discussed in the report.

### 3.3 Comparability of the budgets

The only thing uniting the seventeen department budgets in the four clusters is that all of them budget and report according to the same financial year (ie year ending 31 March). After that, there are some uniformities within clusters, but also wide discrepancies.

In Appendix 4, the fine details of expenditure allocation for the database are given, in the hope that other researchers will improve on them in future. The purpose of the points which follow is to indicate broadly the difficulties encountered, and the major assumptions and decisions which were made.

### **3.3.1 The tricameral cluster**

The budgets of the three tricameral departments are very similar to each other (notwithstanding that in Assembly, Welfare has a separate vote, whereas in Delegates and Representatives, the Welfare Programme is subsumed under the Health Services and Welfare Vote). They use the same budgeting rules; for example, the salary of the Director, his/her secretary and other Director's personnel and administration costs fall under Vote 1, otherwise all welfare spending is under Vote 4.

### **3.3.2 The provincial cluster**

The Cape and Orange Free State budgets were similar to each other, and it was relatively easy to make assumptions about allocation to welfare as a percentage of overall Community Services expenditure, Community Services being the Directorate under which welfare falls. The Natal and Transvaal budgets are constructed differently, such that it was difficult to apportion spending on personnel in welfare compared to personnel working on other functions. In Natal, for example, it was not easy to separate out the personnel expenditure for those in the library and museum services.

### **3.3.3 The homelands cluster**

There was an almost total lack of uniformity between the six homelands budgets, though one could see that in recent years, the budgets have been gradually beginning to be constructed to look more like each other.

First, in terms of the location of the welfare budget, it was sometimes separate, and sometimes together with health and/or the PDP. This makes for difficulties, especially with distributing personnel expenditure. Also, civil pensions were sometimes in the same department as social pensions (as in Transkei and Venda), though the tendency in recent years has been to send civil pensions to Finance.

The differences in status of the division or branch which dealt with welfare had to be taken into account. Lebowa, for example, has its own Secretary for Welfare alongside the Secretary for Health, in the combined department of Health and Social Welfare, and thereby potentially a bigger welfare superstructure (top level posts) and thus higher expenditure should be allocated to personnel.

There was also a great variation in the standard of information presented in the main and additional budget, and in information held within departments.

### **3.3.4 The independent states cluster**

The budgets of the independent states were very disparate, and welfare was hard to find. This is because welfare changes often from being a separate department to being joined with health and/or social pensions and/or population development; each change brings some alteration to the way the budget is constructed.

The Venda civil service and ministries were being restructured following the recent coup, and welfare was affected. It was decided to use 1989 Estimates, which were obtainable, and supplement these with interview material.

### **3.4 Difficulties in costing out the social security system**

In this report, the expenditure on pensions and grants is taken as the amount which is allocated to accrue to the beneficiaries - what is aimed at the pensioner's pocket. These are referred to as Transfer Payments to Individuals (TPI's), and this is different to other transfer payments which are found in the budgets, which go to institutions (and to other things as well).

No attempt has been made to calculate the costs of the backup system which enables the delivery of these social security services. This involves, inter alia, the major factors of personnel expenditure, computer costs, and transport costs.

These different functions are distributed through different departments. In the homelands and TBVC, it is typical to find that:

- 3.4.1 The main applications and pensions section is in the welfare department.
- 3.4.2 The paymaster is the Department of Justice or Interior, through magistrates' offices.
- 3.4.3 The transport to the pension payout points is to the account of Transport or Public Works.
- 3.4.4 The computer may be in the Department of Finance.
- 3.4.5 In Bophuthatswana and QwaQwa, the whole pensions system is under Internal Affairs and Interior respectively.
- 3.4.6 In Transkei, civil pensions are also paid through the welfare department so it is difficult to allocate personnel costs proportionately. There has been a general move recently to separate the administration of civil and social pensions, which is helpful.
- 3.4.7 In Venda, civil pensions have, in line with the trend, moved to Finance, but still use Welfare and Pensions offices owing to shortage of office space.
- 3.4.8 The tricameral departments pay the Post Office a fee per pension paid through the Post Office (for Representatives, for example, it was R2,18 per pay voucher). This

amount was reflected under 'Professional Services' in the budget, but was not disaggregated from other amounts also reflected there.

- 3.4.9 Sometimes different types of pensions and grants fall under different branches, and thus in different parts of the budget. In Bophuthatswana, for example, grants to do with family and child care are called Social Grants, and are in a very different place in the budget to pensions and grants for aged and disabled persons.

### **3.5 The main problem in the way of calculating South African social spending**

A common way of categorising government expenditure is in terms of three tiers: first tier (by which South Africans would mean 'Pretoria'), second tier (which would mean 'the provincial level', and third tier, which would mean spending through local authorities.

This cannot be done for welfare in South Africa. Welfare is classified as an 'own affair', and for coloured, Indian and white people it goes largely through tricameral administrations which are first-tier departments.

Welfare in the homelands and the TBVC is delivered by departments at a first-tier level (as if from a central state department).

The equivalent welfare services for black people in the common area - ie not in the homelands or independent states - goes through the provinces, or what would otherwise be understood to be second-tier. But the provincial health budget covers health services of certain sorts for all races in the province, whereas the provincial welfare budget is only for black people. McIntyre (1990) encountered the same problem in her analysis of public sector health care expenditure.

It is difficult enough to get calculations for welfare alone. What is quite impossible to calculate is racially disaggregated cross-cluster patterns on social spending, with social spending being taken to mean health, education and welfare combined.

Compounding the problem is that educational expenditure for black people is not to be found in provincial budgets, but in the Department of Education and Training (first-tier Pretoria) budgets. These educational budgets are not (as far as could be ascertained) constructed according to provincial divisions, but according to regional divisions (with the regions having different boundaries to the provinces). But the educational regions (as far as could be ascertained) do not coincide with the development regions according to which population figures are now being collected and distributed, by the Development Bank of Southern Africa, and the Centre for Statistical Services.

## SECTION THREE

### FRAGMENTATION AND CONTROL

#### Introduction

Later in the report, I deal in detail with the size of the welfare structures and establishment, as well as spending. Before taking those closer views, I deal here with five themes which give a sense of the history, place and status of welfare in the bureaucracies. These are:

- the mobility of different welfare departments
- the replication of welfare structures
- the development of fragmented welfare legislation
- the relationship between health and welfare departments
- mechanisms for planning, coordination and control

#### 1 The mobility of welfare departments

An interviewee in the welfare department of the House of Assembly pointed out that their overall structure and functioning had remained essentially unchanged over thirty years, despite the change over to the tricameral system. Coloured and Indian welfare had the major changes initiated at the end of the 1950s and then again the tricameral change in 1984 - nevertheless, there was some tradition and continuity in Delegates and Representatives, in terms of where welfare was located, and how things were done.

The situation throughout black welfare is completely different. At provincial level, the effect of the devolution in the mid-1980s was differentially felt according to region. The Cape office had to be built up from scratch, whereas the Transvaal 'inherited' a lot of central department officials, for example.

In the independent states and in the homelands, welfare has been a very mobile department. Moves were sometimes occasioned by the advent of a new initiative such as the Population Development Programme (PDP). Sometimes moves were a result of local politics, and sometimes a result of restructuring by Pretoria.

The departmental histories of Ciskei and Venda are a good illustration of the mobility. In the Ciskei, at independence in 1981 Welfare and Pensions was with Internal Affairs, then with Health until 1984. From 1985 through 1990, Welfare and Pensions was an autonomous department; following the 1990 coup it re-combined with Health, and has now been joined by the PDP. Thus the department is now called Health, Welfare and Population Development.



In Venda there was a similar pattern, with the separate welfare and pensions department (including civil pensions) rejoining health following the takeover by the Council for National Unity in 1991 (the equivalent of Ciskei and Transkei's Military Councils), but with civil pensions going to Finance.

Interviewees from all departments which had been similarly moved about spoke eloquently of the disruption and undermining of staff morale caused by these moves. "We in welfare are a political football," was one comment.

## **2 Replication of structures**

It would serve no purpose here to document all the inconsistencies in the way the welfare departments are named. I use 'welfare departments' to cover what are variously called chief directorates, directorates, branches, divisions, sections. There is little cross-cluster uniformity in the way rank is allocated to these names in the various administrations. A division is the most senior rank for welfare in some places, while chief directorate is in others. On the whole, however, the models which represent highest status are a chief directorate (in tricamerals and provinces) or a separate welfare and pensions ministry (in homelands and independent states).

A major effect of fragmentation is the duplication of these structures based on a political imperative which has nothing at all to do with welfare needs. Take the creation of the self-governing areas or homelands. The six are significantly different from each other in terms of whether they themselves are spatially fragmented (KwaZulu has 13 or 14 separate bits; KwaNdebele and QwaQwa are now in one piece each, though KwaNdebele has a bit of Bophuthatswana inside it). They have very different size populations, with KwaZulu for example having four and a half million people, while QwaQwa, KwaNdebele and KaNgwane have about half a million each. The six have different levels of urbanisation and employment opportunities as well.

The same can be said of the independent states - they are very different from each other. Venda is small in size and population; Bophuthatswana is spatially vast but with a small population; Transkei is the largest of the four in terms of both size and population.

There is no logical relationship between population, overall government budget and overall spending per capita within the homelands and independent states. Table 1 shows that KwaZulu has the largest budget which services the largest population and it ranks lowest in terms of per capita spending. Ciskei, of middle size compared to the rest, spends most per capita, followed by QwaQwa which has the second smallest population.

**Table 1: Population, total estimated government spending, and spending per capita in the homelands and independent states, 1990**

<b>Govt</b>	<b>Population (‘000)</b>	<b>Govt spending (‘000 000)</b>	<b>Per capita (rands)</b>	<b>Per capita rank</b>
KZU	4 504	2 415	536	10
TKI	3 163	2 309	730	7
LEB	2 098	1 312	625	9
BOP	1 960	2 309	1 173	3
CKI	818	1 143	1 398	1
GAZ	687	668	973	6
VEN	543	590	1 087	4
KAN	445	323	726	8
QWA	314	394	1 255	2
KDB	299	299	1 002	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14 831</b>	<b>11 762</b>	<b>MEAN 793</b>	

One effect of the fragmentation is that all of these administrations must be treated by Pretoria as if they are equal. One then finds a replication of the administrative superstructures. KwaZulu’s Head Office structure and number, designed to serve four and a half million, is very similar to the welfare Head Offices of the smallest administrations serving a few hundred thousand. In the provinces, too, there is a concentrated superstructure. I would typically be interviewing in one of three sub-directorates of a welfare directorate of the community services branch of the provincial administration - all structures which overlay the actual service delivery.

All the welfare departments, from smallest to largest, also operated regionally to some extent (in the smaller places this involved dividing the area into zones, with no physical regional office). The House of Assembly, for example, had 7 regional offices servicing 27 service offices; each of these regional offices had a ‘boss’. Thus apart from the replication of ‘national’ head offices for welfare thirteen times over, and seventeen if the provinces are included, and twenty if the coordinating departments are also added, there is regional replication for the four races as well. This does not apply of course to the independent states and homelands where there are no separate welfare offices for different races.

Nested within the replication of departments, and the pursuit of higher status, is a tendency within departments to create higher level posts. This is bureaucratic practice anywhere. The point in South Africa is that there are seventeen different departments all doing this at the same time, for a sector that is relatively small.

It is certainly the case that in future there will need to be regional and local offices for welfare. It is simplistic to suggest that enormous savings and efficiencies would be introduced simply by going non-racial. South Africa's rural areas, and inner city areas, will arguably need more of government-provided welfare personnel and resources. The need will be to drive service provision downwards and outwards - many more lower level welfare workers getting out to the people.

### **3 Legislation**

The claiming of independent and self-governing status by TBVC and the homelands provided the space for these administrations to pass their own welfare legislation.

The departments themselves refer to a lot of the new legislative changes as 'name-change legislation'. Acts were passed which were almost identical to South African welfare legislation, except names would be changed. Some examples are the QwaQwa Social and Associated Workers Act, the KwaZulu National Welfare Act, the Bophuthatswana Children's Act. Lebowa appears to have had least to do with 'name-change legislation'.

There are a few examples of departments attempting to introduce more appropriate welfare legislation. The most obvious is the House of Representatives Community Welfare Act, which replaced the National Welfare Act for coloured welfare. It attempted to broaden the definition and scope of welfare (though it was limited in other respects).

Bophuthatswana and Ciskei both introduced legislation in 1991 which had the objective of simplifying welfare fund-raising procedures. The Bophuthatswana Voluntary Organisations and Fund-raising Bill (before parliament at time of interview) does away with the tedious and expensive procedure of organisations having to advertise in two newspapers to apply for a fund-raising number; the Ciskei Fund-raising Decree of 1991 accommodates the need of non-welfare organisations who want to register for fund-raising purposes. The intent behind this legislation is not clear.

KwaZulu Children's Status Bill was before the Legislative Assembly. It concerns the inheritance status of adopted children and illegitimate children, seeking to strengthen the position and rights of both. KwaZulu's attempt to do away with racial limitations on children's custodians, which started in 1987 with the KwaZulu Child Care Bill, was delayed by Pretoria, and was finally approved as the KwaZulu Child Care Amendment Act 1990. The Bophuthatswana Children's Act was due to be tabled at the time of the interview. The chief difference between it and the South African Children's Act is that the former will bear no reference to race.

During the interview period, it became evident that two tendencies were at work, moving in opposite directions. On the one hand, the homelands and the independent states were proceeding with moves to have their own, separate legislation. On the other, Pretoria started attempting to move toward more uniformity. In Venda for example, fund-raising and child-care legislation was in the process of being changed when the coup happened and the Council for National Unity took over. A blanket directive appeared which ordered no further changes to Venda legislation, probably with a view to reincorporation within the Republic of South Africa. The Republic of South Africa Social Assistance Bill, introduced in 1992, was an attempt inter alia to introduce embracing, umbrella legislation in welfare.

One can only speculate on what the results would be if a costing exercise were done on this token legislation - the hours of official time in terms of drafting and redrafting, the passage through committees and Legislative Assemblies, the printing costs.

#### **4 The relationship between health and welfare departments**

There has for a long time been a lively debate in the health and welfare sectors as to whether welfare should be a sector or department on its own, or whether it should join with health (see for example Letsebe and Loffell (1992), together with the rejoinder by Freeman (1992)). The debate is complicated by the fact that there is no objectively 'true' answer, and the argument is often based more on competing professional interests than on appropriate service delivery. Evidence for the benefits of separation or unity can be adduced from anywhere in the world to support either position. People wanting welfare to be separate commonly hold up the United Kingdom's separation of health and welfare as the appropriate model. Others will use the United States of America's joint Department of Health, Education and Welfare to demonstrate the benefits of a multi-disciplinary structure.

As has been discussed, the government welfare departments are located differently, within clusters and between clusters, with respect to their structured relationships with health departments. Typically, where welfare is one part of a department of health and welfare, the most senior person (say Chief Director, or Secretary) will be a health person, and most often either a male doctor, or a male administrator. Until recently the secretaries in the homelands, whether doctors or administrators, were most often white male secondments from Pretoria. They are gradually being replaced.

The trend in the independent states had been to set welfare up separately but then more recently to recombine again. In the homelands (but not KwaZulu) the trend had been to amalgamate (often including the Population Development Programme). QwaQwa and KwaNdebele were quick to point out that they were far too small to even consider being a separate department.

There were diverse views and experiences.<sup>1</sup> Nearly all interviewees felt that, where welfare and health were in the same department, welfare suffered - it was described as "the odd appendage", "the poor cousin", and "the addendum", for example. They said that, while conceptually the two belong together, health always emerges as dominant. The following statements were typical:

"What happens when top management are health people who devise the priorities is that on top are the health projects, at the bottom are the welfare projects, except for those which for a political reason have been pushed up the list."

"Health services make demands for physical things like buildings and equipment, welfare tries to avoid physical things, and emphasises the process of working in communities."

Welfare does not have the same assessment tools as does health to measure impact, activities, and service delivery - therefore it cannot argue its case as tangibly as health can. One person said that there had been some progress in assessment tools in the field of rehabilitation, where functional measurements can be used. The prescriptive, authoritarian top-down culture of the health profession conflicts with the more process-oriented welfare culture - and the latter loses the battles for budgets and facilities!

Examples were given in some homelands of how welfare people are treated as inferior to health personnel. Accommodation for social workers, and conditions governing study leave, were among the things mentioned.

There was a perception among a number of welfare professionals that welfare carried the burden of budget cuts if there are shortfalls in the health and welfare budget. However, deeper probing showed that the reality is far from clear. First, the pensions part of the welfare budget is done according to different principles, as it has been in principle a statutory obligation of Pretoria to grant enough to cover it (it is well-known that homelands in fact have sometimes not insisted on this).

Second, according to the accountants in some departments, as well as according to some social workers themselves, the problem was more that welfare did not put in strong enough motivations. "We ask them for facts, they give us stories", would capture the frustration they expressed.

KwaZulu's Department of Welfare and Pensions had recently been divided off from Health, and interviewees were open about both the advantages and disadvantages of the

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1 The relationship between health and welfare was not discussed in the provincial interviews.

split. On the positive side, the split had presented the opportunity for the creation of a welfare policy for the first time (an opportunity not fully exploited), and had enabled welfare to compete on its own terms for more social work posts, which had been successfully achieved. On the negative side, "We have lost the easy ability to coordinate with and understand each other. The team work has suffered".

There can be no objective answer as to which is best, separation or amalgamation. The problem should certainly not be resolved by consulting only social workers, who will be 'judges in their own cause' on this issue. In my view the key is not separation or not, but who speaks for whom, on what platforms - it is an issue of representation.

Where welfare is part of health, it has in the past been the case that for example at major national meetings of government departments, only the Secretary would attend - health would speak for welfare. As many interviewees pointed out, health speaks one language, welfare another. Three departments specifically mentioned that having a sympathetic (non-welfare trained) representative made a positive difference, but this can not substitute for direct representation.

Lebowa has an interesting structure which goes some way to solving the problem. When health and welfare joined as one department in 1991, they established two Secretaries and two Accounting Offices, with health and welfare thereby getting equivalent status at this senior level, and equivalent representation.

A final point to be made is my own personal view: it is not much good having the right Secretary or Director, whatever the department, if the ministers above them are wholly unsuitable political appointments with little knowledge of either health or welfare.

##### **5 Control, coordination and planning: mechanisms to offset the fragmentation of welfare**

A welfare system based on this level of fragmentation has to have some mechanisms for planning, coordination and control. This section describes the most important formal government mechanisms which existed at the time of interviews. Given the current debates on a future regionally-based dispensation for South Africa, attention is given to regional as well as national levels.

**The National Welfare Policy Council** is the most senior welfare body in the public sector. It comprises inter alia the tricameral Ministers of Welfare and is chaired by the Minister of National Health and Population Development (DNH).

The DNH has instituted an **Inter-Departmental Coordinating Committee (IDCC)**, but commonly referred to by its Afrikaans acronym, **TDOK - Tussendepartementele**

Oorlegplegende Komitee). This IDCC on Welfare Matters has representatives on it from DNH, the tricameral departments, and the provinces. The homelands are represented by the Department of Development Aid; TBVC states are not represented. The IDCC on Welfare Matters also has representatives from all state departments, including police, the army and prisons.

The IDCC establishes sub-committees on specific welfare matters, such as Welfare Programmes. These sub-committees may co-opt people who do not serve directly on the IDCC.

The IDCC was described as the structure in the public sector that is parallel to the South African Welfare Council in the private sector.

The National Welfare Act empowered the Minister of National Health and Population Development to set up a Welfare Advisory Council for each race group. The **Welfare Advisory Council for Black Communities** was set up in 1989. For coloured people, the Community Welfare Act enabled the establishment of the **Community Welfare Advice Council** (commonly known by its Afrikaans acronym, **GWAR - Gemeenskapwelsynsadviesraad**). It is chaired by the Minister, and comprises the chairs and deputy chairs of the six coloured Regional Welfare Boards. An interview in Representatives described how there was a clear chain in the welfare sector. At local level there were service groups (*diensgroepe*) and community committees, both non-statutory. Then came the statutory welfare committees, and then the RWBs which reported to the **GWAR**.

The provincial departments go to Pretoria quarterly for a meeting which has three parts over two or three days. First, they meet with the Department of Education and Training, the DDA, and PPA to discuss matters concerning teaching at children's places of safety. Second, they have the Provincial Liaison Committee Meeting between the provincial welfare departments, DDA and PPA, which discusses general welfare matters for black people. The third phase is a meeting of the above bodies with the National Councils, and forms a forum in which the private and public sectors discuss problems.

With regard to liaison between the homelands, and between them and Pretoria, there are two mechanisms operating. First, there are twice yearly **multi-lateral meetings** of the six homelands, the DDA and the DNH. Set up by Pretoria in 1986, these meetings are hosted on a rotating basis by the homelands. The Department of Development Aid played a key controlling role in terms of the relationship between the homelands at Pretoria-based meetings, it was called 'the mother department' by a number of interviewees, and it set the agenda for the multi-lateral meetings.

Second, there is the **Conference of Ministers of Health and Welfare**, with its two sub-committees, for health and welfare. It meets in Pretoria, and is chaired by the Minister of

National Health and Population Development. In 1991, TBVC was invited to attend the conference section of this meeting, but not the formal meeting itself. Sometimes people in homelands welfare departments, also attend the **Joint Technical Committee on Population Development** which met first twice-yearly and then annually in Pretoria.

Welfare in the independent states is coordinated through **SECOSAF - the Secretariat for the Economic Community of Southern Africa**. SECOSAF cooperates with the Foreign Affairs Departments of the TBVC states in arranging twice yearly meetings of the **Multilateral Technical Committee for Welfare Matters**. There are sometimes more meetings for task teams in between the big meetings. Midway through 1991, an interviewee reported that the homelands would in future be incorporated in these SECOSAF meetings - another clue to the restructuring underway. Contact between provincial and homelands welfare workers takes place at the **Regional Development Advisory Committees (RDACs)**; the extent of participation in this body appears to be uneven, with some administrations not attending at all.

**Regional Welfare Boards** are statutory bodies under the National Welfare Act which are meant to coordinate and plan for welfare at regional level. There are different RWBs for different races; at the time of writing, the first experiment with a non-racially constituted RWB was being made in the Transvaal.

It proved impossible, in interviews, to capture how many RWBs there really were for the country as a whole, as some were being collapsed, while in other regions, new ones were being formed. Furthermore the euphemisms used instead of straightforward racial naming in their titles made it difficult to know what was being referred to.

Delegates initially had one RWB for the whole country. It then formed three in 1986, and at the time of interview was moving back towards having one, with regional committees. Representatives had six RWBs in 1990, but was planning an additional three in 1991.

In black welfare the RWBs served as agents for the registration of welfare organisations in the homelands. When the interviews were conducted, the homelands with the exception of QwaQwa sent representatives as observers to the black RWBs in their regions, but were not full participants. This had been a fairly recent development, and in at least one case, cabinet approval had had to be obtained for this new link with a RWB.

The independent states had no direct dealings with RWBs - they had stopped attending at independence. Ciskei, which before independence had registered its welfare organisations with the Border RWB, had created its own National Welfare Board to serve this purpose - though there were no welfare organisations to register.

In addition to these coordinating mechanisms, Natal had two further ones. It has set up an informal structure so that the racially-segregated RWBs can meet on a non-racial basis.



Second, the **Joint Executive Authority** is a mechanism for coordination between Natal and KwaZulu. The JEA sets up committees, and in the welfare field had a Welfare Task Group, which was reported to be very active, discussing a broad range of welfare issues such as pensions and joint subsidisation. It meets bi-monthly. Delegates and Representatives send representatives or delegates but this had not been formally approved by the JEA.

In concluding this section, I want to draw attention to some obvious points. The wastefulness of the overlapping apartheid departments has become a cliché, so one hesitates to re-state it. But it really cannot be said too often, and particularly in these times when any arguments for a more equitable distribution of resources in future seem very rapidly to be countered with, "It will not be affordable".

The fragmentation described above is one of dreadful costliness, both in terms of the rands and cents, and in terms of human dignity. Both are well illustrated by the multi-lateral meeting which I attended in the course of the research. All six homelands had gathered together in the hosting homeland, sending two or three representatives hundreds of kilometers for three days to meet with the Pretoria coordinating departments ("Pretoria comes to visit us to see 'welfare op julle eie plekke'", said one homelands representative). One of the co-ordinating departments, which was to report on at least half of the agenda items, simply failed to arrive, sending last minute apologies as the meeting began. This is an unaffordable face of welfare.

**SECTION FOUR**  
**THE WELFARE BUDGET**

**Introduction**

This section approaches government spending with a narrow focus, and broadens out. It starts with a look at the welfare budgets themselves, with welfare taken to include pensions and grants. It then takes a more detailed look at the pensions and grants budgets - it goes inside social security spending. After this, the budgets for health, welfare and pensions are viewed against each other. This is followed by some figures and discussion of social spending - that is, allocations for health, welfare and pensions, and education - in the homelands and independent states.

**1 The welfare budget****Table 2: Welfare estimates, rands, 1990**

<b>Administration</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Cluster Total</b>
<b>Tricameral</b>		<b>2 016 189 463</b>
HOA	1 019 256 353	
HOD	198 188 510	
HOR	798 744 600	
<b>Provinces</b>		<b>997 010 210</b>
CPA	234 474 000	
NPA	132 351 000	
OPA	152 194 010	
TPA	477 991 200	
<b>Homelands</b>		<b>831 990 843</b>
GAZ	67 121 191	
KAN	33 695 303	
KDB	29 576 000	
KZU	496 000 000	
LEB	170 254 049	
QWA	35 344 300	
<b>Independent states</b>		<b>581 137 160</b>
BOP	149 738 060	
CKI	94 279 000	
TKI	297 980 600	
VEN	39 139 500	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4 426 327 676</b>

The seventeen welfare departments have a combined annual budget of some R4,4 billion. Table 2 shows the welfare and pensions budget of each administration and the cluster sub-totals. A rough and ready way to summarise the situation would be to say that of the four and a half billion spent on welfare, one billion goes to white people, one billion to Indian and coloured people combined, and two-and-a-half billion goes to black people.

Figure 1 shows that of the 100 percent of the total welfare pie, about 45 percent goes to white, coloured and Indian people combined, through the tricameral departments. The rest goes to black people through the other three clusters - the provinces, the homelands and independent states.

**Figure 1: Proportional spending on welfare by the four clusters, 1990**

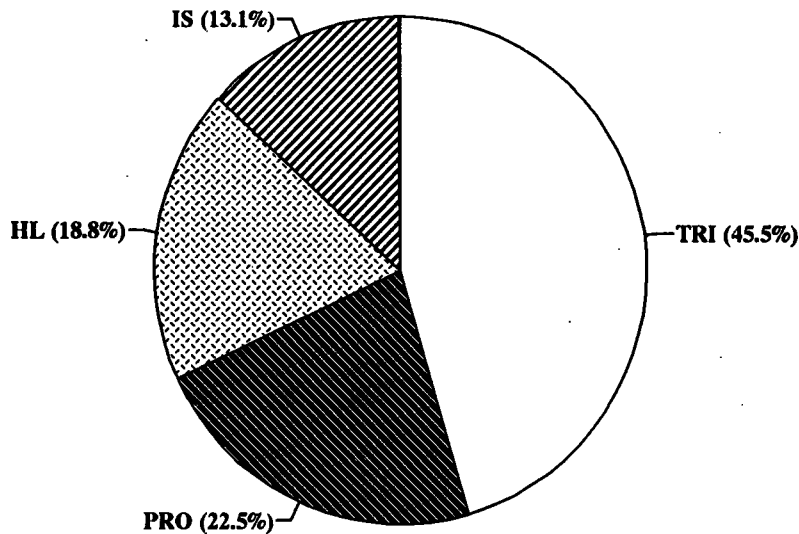
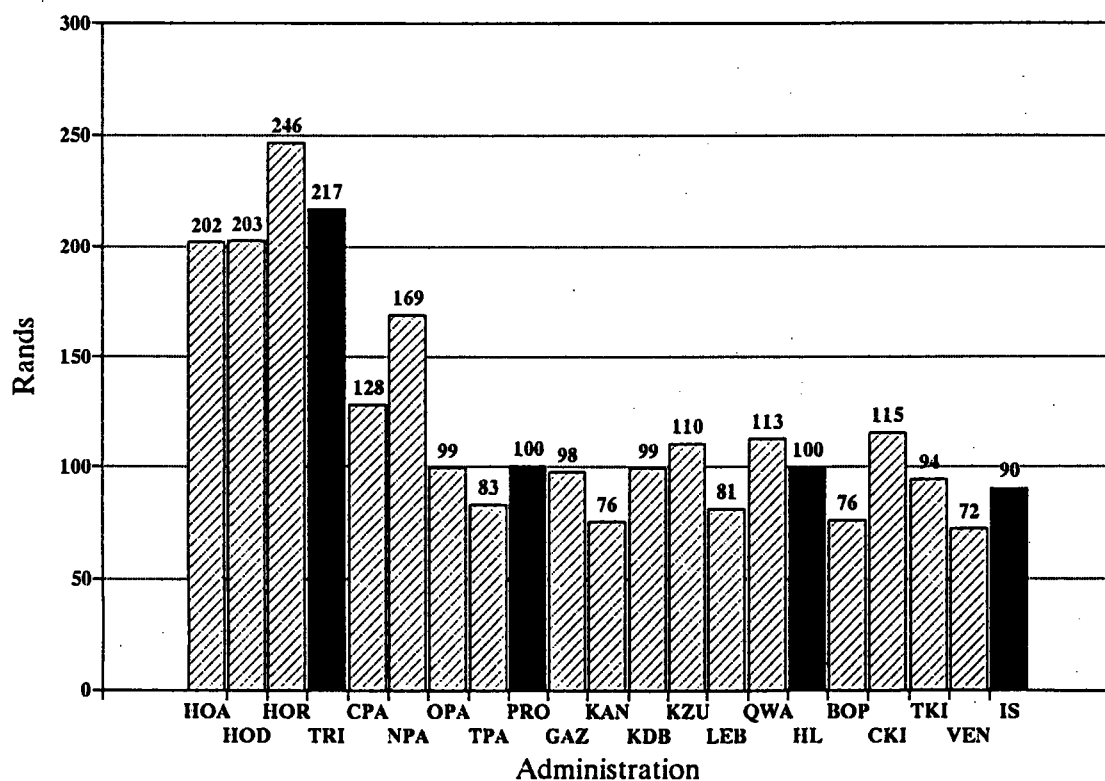


Figure 2 depicts the annual welfare spending per capita for all the departments. Note that the figures for the black population will be lower than presented, due to the population undercount. Note also that, as in the rest of the report, these figures do not deal with welfare spending through other departments such as Prisons, which would make the figure for whites especially, but also for Indian and coloured people, higher than seen here. The uneven nature of South Africa's welfare provision is clearly demonstrated. White people, with the highest standard of living, have a per capita welfare allocation which is twice as high as that for black people, who have overall a very low standard of living. There is a marked difference between the tricameral average (for white, Indian and coloured people) and black people. Per capita spending on welfare is more than twice as high for the former.

Within the tricameral cluster, the Representatives budget per capita is markedly higher at R246 than that of Assembly and Delegates, which are almost identical to each other (R201,75 and R202,78 respectively).

The similarity between the three clusters delivering welfare to black people is evident, with the per capita amount being the same at R100, for the provinces and homelands, and R90 for the independent states. There is marked unevenness within the provincial cluster, with Natal at R169 having more than twice as high a per capita figure than the Transvaal at R83.

Figure 2: Welfare spending per capita, all departments, 1990



**Figure 3: Homelands and independent states spending on welfare as a percentage of their total government spending, 1990**

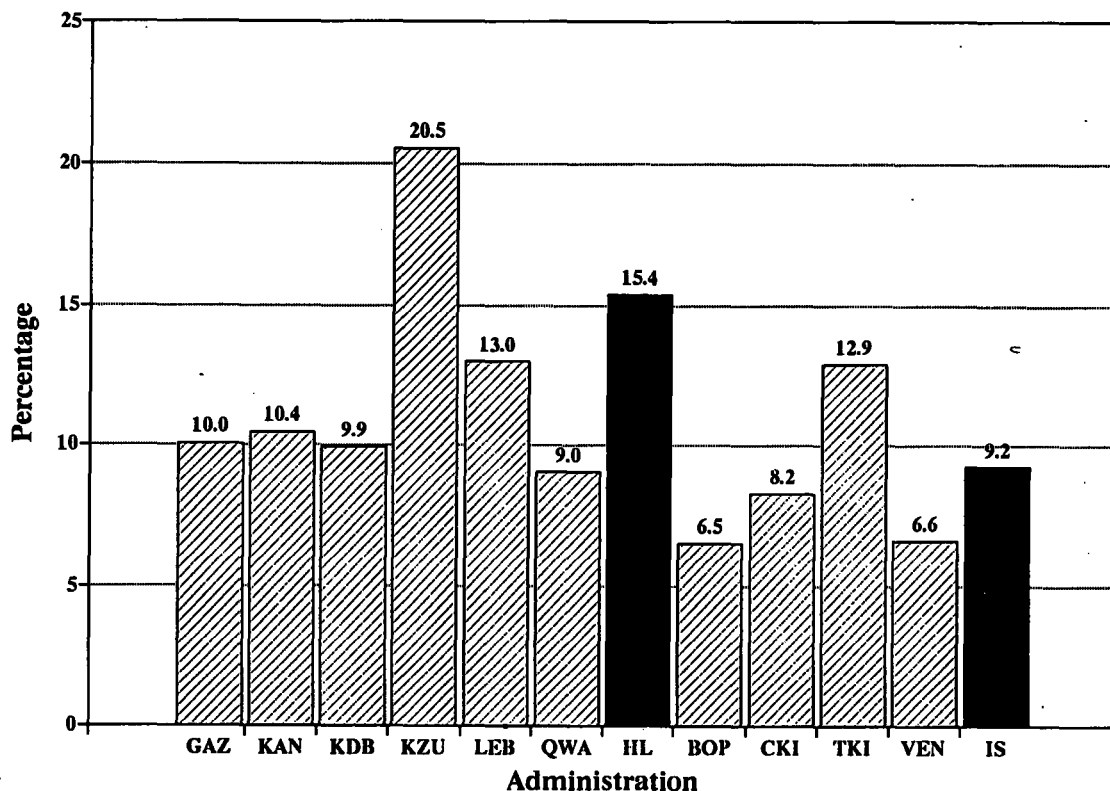


Figure 3 shows the spending in the homelands and independent states on welfare as a percentage of their total government spending, with the homelands' 15,4 percent being a somewhat higher percentage than the 9,2 percent in the independent states. A fifth of KwaZulu's overall expenditure is allocated to welfare and pensions. The same calculation for the tricameral and provincial administrations would be meaningless.

## **2 Personnel and pensions: the dominance of pensions and grants**

The budget commonly called 'the welfare budget' is dominated by pensions and grants, as is seen in Figure 4 (overleaf). Conversely, Figure 5 shows the percentage of the overall budget which was allocated to personnel, as a percentage of overall welfare spending. The provinces are highest, at 6,4 percent; the other averages range between 2 and 4 percent. The slightly higher average for the provinces may possibly be explained by the fact that they do more of the pensions administration themselves. There was little point in doing further elaborate calculations on the differences or similarities between departments as the numbers involved were so relatively small.

In the case of the tricameral and provincial departments, most of the remainder goes to institutional care. The homelands and independent states have very under-developed institutional care. The Department of Development Aid supplied figures for the homelands which showed that for 1990/91, only KwaZulu and QwaQwa were allocated money for capital costs (institutions or other buildings for welfare), and the amount was 0,2 percent and 0,1 percent of their welfare budgets respectively.

Another way of understanding the dominance of pensions and grants in welfare spending and in welfare activities, is to compare the amount spent on personnel in welfare, with personnel expenditure in the departments of health and education. KwaZulu's very accessible and comprehensive budget enables a useful case study.

In the KwaZulu 1989/1990 Estimates of Expenditure, 43 percent of the Total Estimated Expenditure (TEE) across all departments was on the civil servants themselves. A breakdown of selected departments shows the following amounts allocated to personnel:

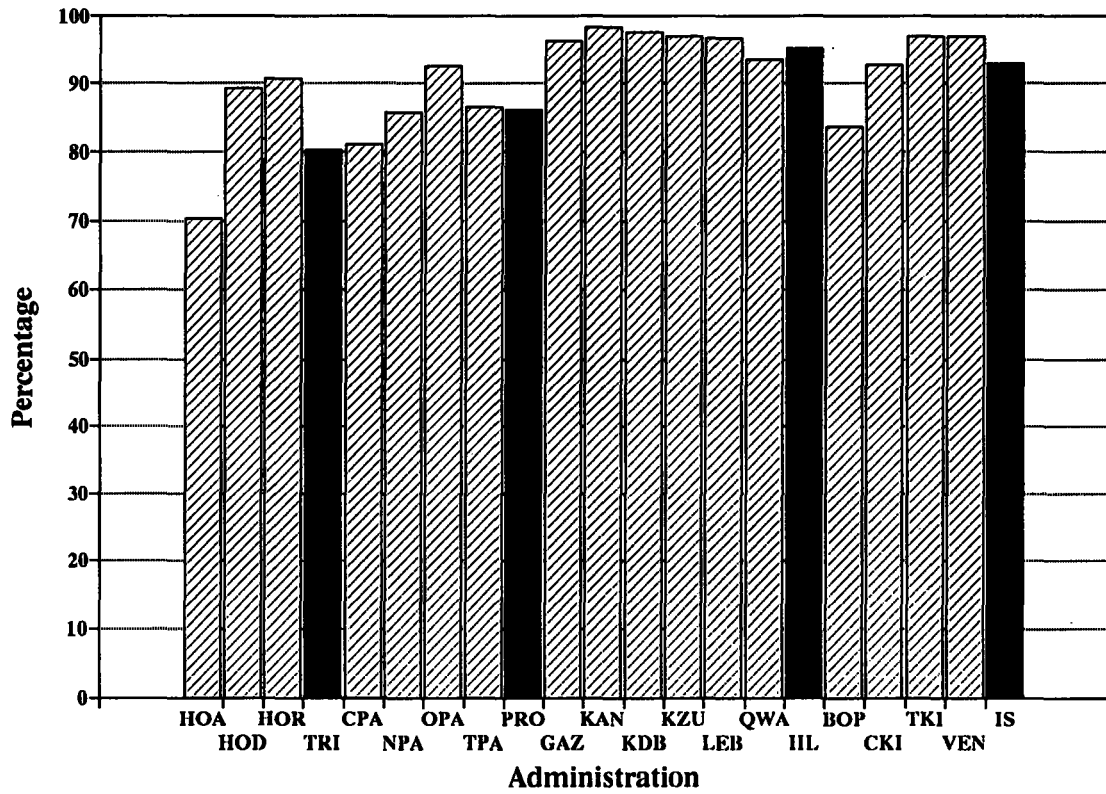
Health	64 percent
Education and Culture	81 percent
Welfare and Pensions	1,96 percent

In simple terms, health employs nurses, doctors and other personnel to work in hospitals and clinics, which need equipment and drugs, so two thirds goes to personnel, and the rest on the capital and current costs. Four fifths of the education budget goes to teachers' and administrators' salaries. Welfare mostly distributes pensions, with the help of a large number of staff in other departments.

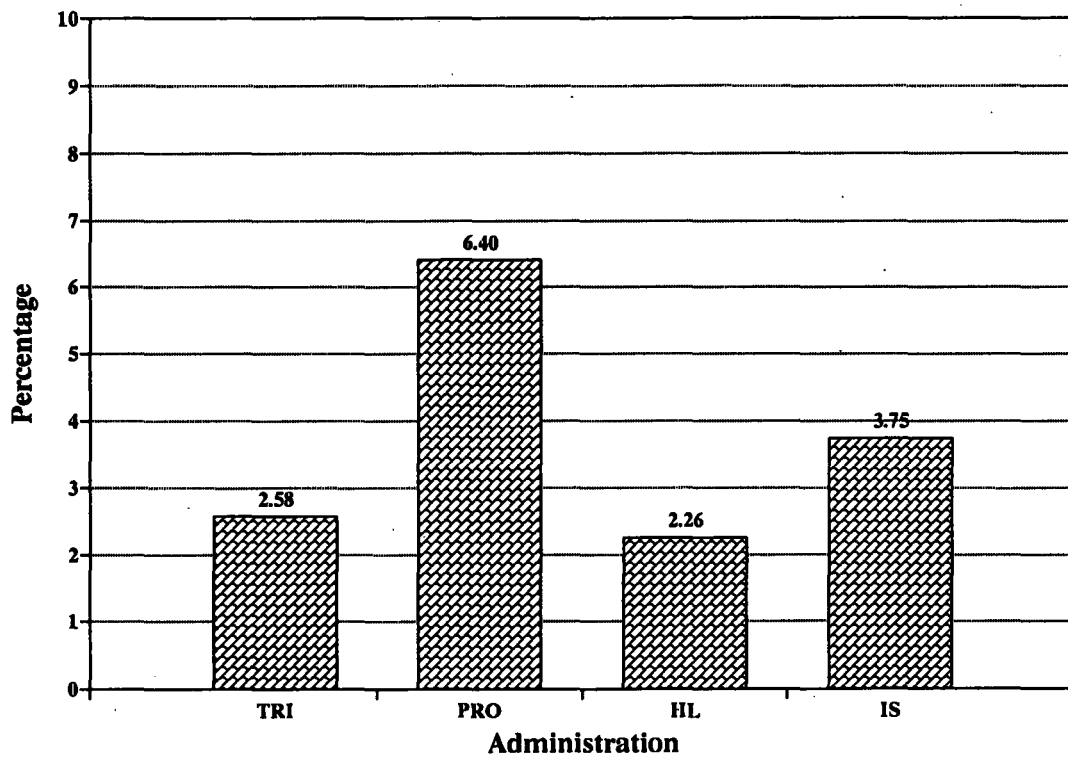
In terms of personnel expenditure within the Department of Welfare and Pensions, slightly more is spent on non-professional staff (most of whom are dealing with pensions) than on professional social work staff.

The amount spent on pensions and grants is equal to about half the amount spent on government personnel across all KwaZulu departments. As with all bureaucracies, it spends a large amount on itself, but it also spends a large amount on welfare.

**Figure 4: Percentage of welfare budgets allocated to pensions and grants, 1990**



**Figure 5: Expenditure on personnel as a percentage of welfare expenditure, cluster averages, 1990**

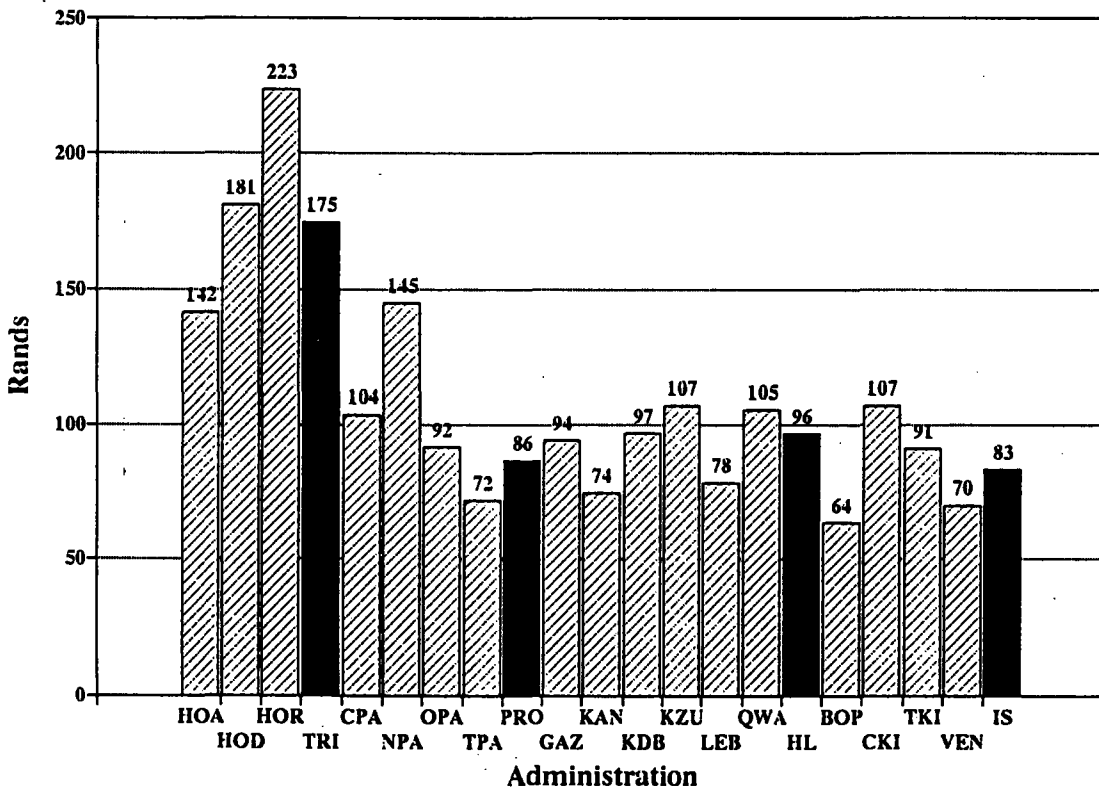


### 3 Inside the social security (pensions and grants) budget

A description of aspects of the policy and implementation of the social security system is given in Section Five. Here, data regarding spending on the various types of pensions and grants is presented. This section discusses only the TPI's - transfer payments to individuals (in government parlance sometimes called TPH's - transfer payments to households), and not transfers to institutions.

Table A1 in Appendix 5 gives the raw overall figures across departments, for each category and with cluster sub-totals. Figure 6 translates these figures to per capita spending on TPIs for all departments. The calculation was made of the amount spent on all TPIs per capita of the whole population served by the department. It is noticeable how the per capita TPI figures shadow the per capita figures for welfare as a whole which were shown in Figure 2. This is to be expected as the TPIs account for such a large proportion of welfare spending. Representatives again comes out significantly ahead of Delegates and Assembly, and the tricameral average is about twice that for the three welfare clusters for black people.

**Figure 6: Government spending per capita on transfer payments to individuals, rands, 1990**





The transfer payments to individuals can be placed in four categories: aged, disability, child and family care, and poor relief. There are significant differences between clusters with regard to the proportions of the TPIs earmarked for the different categories of the aged, disabled, child and family care and poor relief. Results are summarised in Table 3, which demonstrates a few points clearly.

- 3.1 Spending on the aged dominates all TPIs, and especially as far as black people are concerned. This is particularly significant as black people of pensionable age constitute such a comparatively small percentage of the total black population.
- 3.2 At the other end, very little goes to poor relief via welfare departments. The 3,2 percent reflected against Representatives was largely taken up by a R17 million poor relief programme which has since been cancelled. It was the only poor relief programme based in a welfare department of any significance in terms of the budget.
- 3.3 Within tricameral departments, it is interesting to note how Delegates and Representatives have moved away from the 'white model' where the dominance of spending is on aged, and shifted the trend towards more on disabled, and on child and family care. One of the results of the tricameral dispensation has been that coloured and Indian welfare were able to move away from complete white control. A fascinating study could be made of the Hansard debates in Representatives and Delegates following the introduction of the tricameral system, analysing the proportional budget changes in those crucial first few years.
- 3.4 In black welfare, and especially in the homelands and independent states, very little of the TPI budget is spent on grants relating to child and family care.

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**Table 3: Transfer payments to individuals according to category, percentages, 1990**

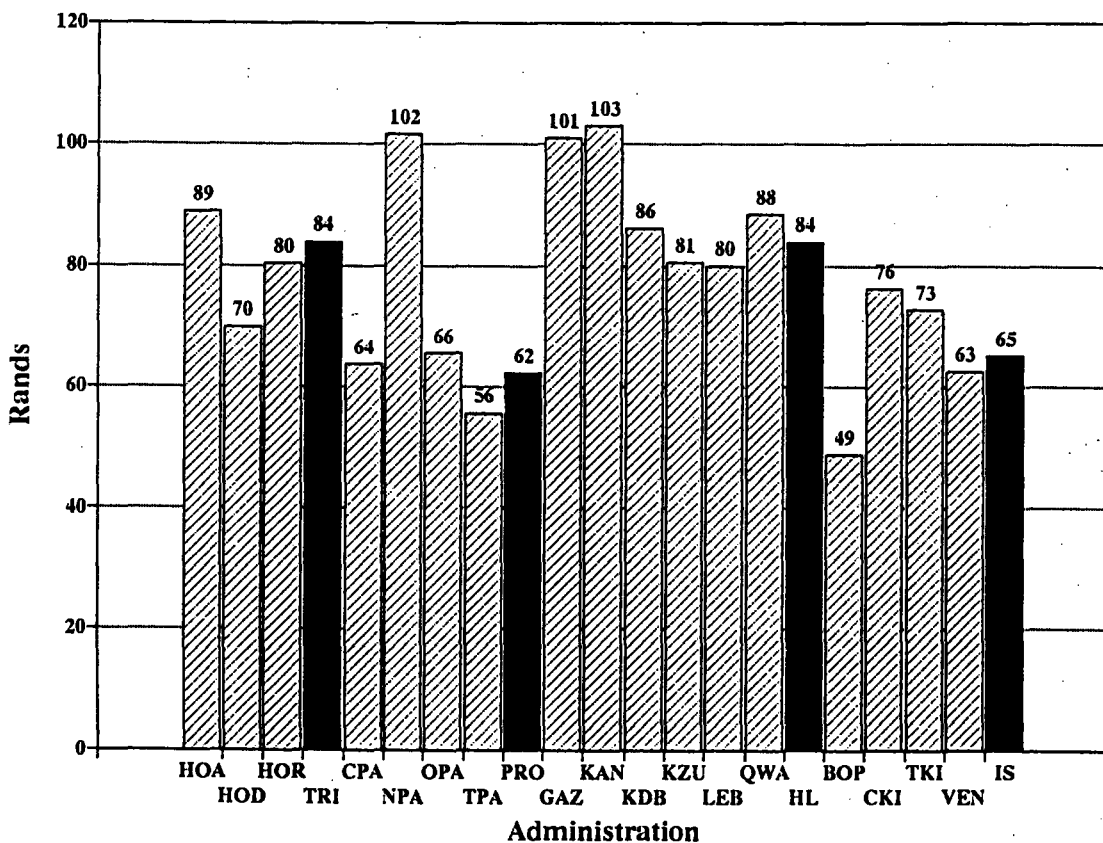
	Aged	Disability	Family	Relief
<b>Admin</b>				
HOA	68.4	16.1	14.4	1.1
HOD	39	29.1	31.1	0.7
HOR	40	27.8	29.0	3.2
<b>Tricam</b>	52.5	22.7	22.8	2.0
<b>Province</b>	72.8	23.1	4.1	0.0
<b>Homelands</b>	81.0	18.3	0.5	0.1
<b>Ind states</b>	78.9	19.1	1.2	0.8

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A calculation was made of the amount spent per department on the Old Age Pension per capita of the whole population served by the department (in other words, not restricted to those of pensionable age). Figure 7 shows that, once other welfare services and other pensions and grants are excluded, the tricameral and homelands cluster averages are identical at R84. (In other words, the homelands spend the same per capita of the total population on the old age pension as do the departments for coloured, Indian and white people). The averages for provinces and independent states are very similar to each other, at R62 and R65 respectively. Assembly at R89 is slightly higher than Representatives at R80 and Delegates at R70, and this is despite the fact that white people are more likely and able to finance their own retirement provision. It is partly explained by the fact that the amount of the white pension is higher than for other people, and also by the fact that Delegates and Representatives have shifted allocations towards child care and disabled (see Table 3).

Figure 7 shows also that among the provinces, Natal's R102 is between a half and third again as much as the Cape's R64, the Orange Free State's R66 and the Transvaal's R56. Transvaal's figure is in turn lower than that for any of the homelands or independent states except for Bophuthatswana at R49.

Figure 7: Spending on the old age pension per capita, rands, 1990



#### 4 Health and welfare spending

Four calculations were done when looking at the relationship between health and welfare spending. These were:

- welfare (including pensions and grants) as a percentage of Total Estimated Expenditure (WEL/TEE)
- pensions and grants as a percentage of Total Estimated Expenditure (PENS/TEE)
- pensions and grants as a percentage of combined health and welfare spending (PENS/ H&WEL) and
- health and welfare (including pensions and grants) as a percentage of Total Estimated Expenditure (H&WEL/TEE).

The results are shown in Table 4. Note that the tricameral and provincial figures can be examined intra-cluster, but not across clusters to each other, nor can they be compared with the homelands and independent states. The homelands and independent states, however, can be compared.

**Table 4: Health, welfare and pensions spending as a percentage of total estimated expenditure, 1990**

	WEL/ TEE	PENS/ TEE	PENS/ H&WEL	H&WEL/ TEE
HOA	15.4	10.8	60.7	17.9
HOD	19.7	17.6	81.0	21.7
HOR	28.9	26.2	81.9	32.0
<b>TRI</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>70.9</b>	<b>22.0</b>
CPA	8.0	6.5	10.5	61.7
NPA	8.4	7.2	2.6	57.1
OPA	15.0	13.9	24.2	57.6
TPA	12.8	11.0	16.9	65.3
<b>PRO</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>51.2</b>
GAZ	10.0	9.7	42.0	23.0
KAN	10.4	10.2	46.1	22.2
KZU	20.5	19.9	60.9	32.7
LEB	13.0	12.5	55.9	22.4
QWA	9.0	8.4	50.1	16.8
<b>HLB</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>26.9</b>
BOP	6.5	5.4	42.2	12.9
CKI	8.2	7.6	37.5	20.4
TKI	17.2	2.5	44.9	27.9
VEN	10.9	6.4	38.0	16.9
<b>IS</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>42.4</b>	<b>20.0</b>

The point of this caution is evident when looking at the tricameral figures, where the contribution of pensions to combined health and welfare spending averages at 70,9 percent for tricameral departments. This looks high but is accounted for by health services largely being delivered through the provinces.

However, looking at the data within the tricameral group, Table 4 shows that Assembly and Delegates are more like each other, with Representatives standing out. Representatives has welfare accounting for nearly 30 percent of the TEE compared to Delegates' approximately 20 percent and Assembly's just over 15 percent. This is partly accounted for by the larger proportion which goes on pensions in Representatives - 26,2 percent of the TEE.

At the provincial level, health and welfare combined account for just over half (51,2 percent) of all provincial spending. The Orange Free State allocates proportionately more to both pensions and to welfare as a percentage of TEE.

In the homelands and independent states, the health and welfare functions account for a large amount of all spending, the average being more than a quarter (26,9 percent) for the homelands, and a fifth (20 percent) for the independent states.

A most striking feature is the proportion of combined health and welfare spending which goes on pensions and grants - 56,5 percent on average for the homelands, 42,4 percent for the independent states. KwaZulu stands out amongst the homelands with its over 60 percent; Ciskei has the lowest proportion (37,5 percent) which must be accounted for partly by its relatively larger health budget.

At first glance it appears as if the homelands as a whole have pensions contributing nearly twice as much (15,2 percent) to TEE as the independent states (at 8,5 percent). However, it is clear that it is KwaZulu's uncharacteristically high proportion of pensions in the overall budget which accounts for most of this difference (the homelands cluster average without KwaZulu would be 10,2 percent).

## **5 Social spending**

To calculate 'social spending', the amounts allocated to health, education, and welfare and pensions were combined. Only the homelands and independent states are strictly comparable in this way.

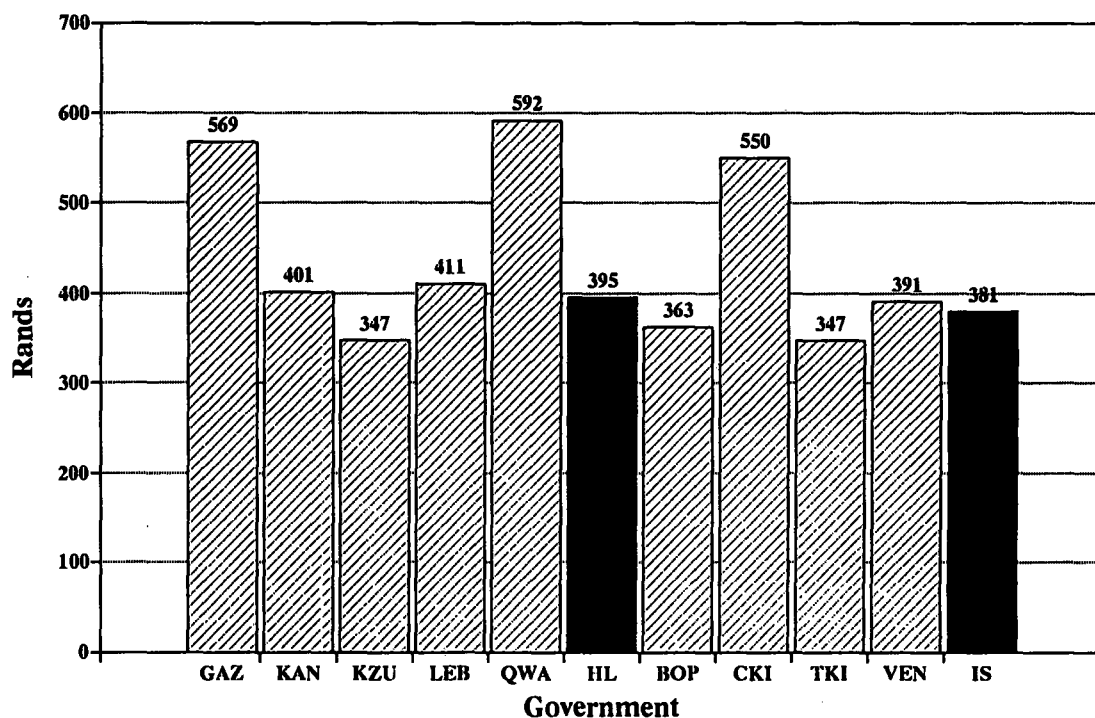
Figure 8 shows per capita social spending in the homelands and independent states. The cluster averages are nearly identical, with homelands at R395, and independent states at R400.

It is interesting to compare the data on social spending with the data in Figure 2 on welfare spending. Among the homelands, QwaQwa has the highest per capita spending for overall social spending (R592) and for welfare spending. KwaZulu which ranked second on welfare alone, ranks lowest (R347) when the health and education budgets are included. Among the four independent states, Ciskei ranked third in per capita spending on welfare above, but ranks a clear first when health and education are combined.

The tricameral figures are not comparable to the homelands and independent states. However they can be compared among themselves. The per capita social spending figures for Assembly, Delegates and Representatives are R1103, R826 and R695 respectively, with the cluster average being R931 per capita.

The Pretoria government has historically limited its role in the direct provision of personal social services, on the whole leaving that to the private welfare sector (subsidisation of private sector posts is discussed in Section Eight). Thus the analysis of the government welfare budgets at this national level is inevitably taken up with the large role played by the pensions and grants.

**Figure 8: Homelands and independent states spending per capita on welfare, health and education, rands, 1990**



Note: Insufficient information for KwaNdebele, therefore not included.

## SECTION FIVE

### THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

#### Introduction

The social security system accounts for a large part of government welfare activities and spending. The system is highly controversial. On the one hand it is racially discriminatory, and rife with possibilities for corruption; on the other hand it is growing so fast that some people are concerned whether it is affordable, and whether it creates dependency on the state by recipients. This report is quite specifically not going to deal with those debates and issues.

The focus here is rather on the inconsistencies in the types of benefits available according to race or administration, and on inconsistencies in delivery procedures. Arguments and calculations about parity in pensions tend to operate at the grand level; my intention in this study was to understand the effects of fragmentation, in order to get a clearer idea of the barriers to a unitary welfare system in future.

It should be noted that what follows does not include all South African social security - it deals only with those aspects delivered as a welfare function. It therefore excludes civil pensions (ie pensions paid to civil servants, as opposed to social pensions). It excludes the large private pensions industry. Finally, it excludes occupationally related social security benefits, the most important of which are workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance (which includes maternity benefits), and provision for retirement through work-based pension and provident funds.

There were three major encouraging changes in the social security environment over the time of interviews. First, the government had finally seen the politically inevitable, and committed itself to racial parity in pensions and grants, to be phased in over two years. There was already parity in the War Veterans Pensions and the Blind Persons Grant, and Representatives was pushing for parity in the Foster Care Grant.

The second change was the advances being made in the computerisation of the system for black pensioners. Pension officials in the provinces, and in those homelands and independent states which have become computerised, could not speak highly enough of how it had transformed their work. For the first time, reconciliations could be made as the payout proceeded rather than there being a delay of up to six months before reconciliation. For the first time, it was possible to keep a check on trends in the spending, and in the number of beneficiaries receiving the different grants. This computerisation of the system across large parts of the country is laying the groundwork for the possibility of a more efficient, and uniform, system.

Thirdly, agreements were being forged which would lead to a more uniform pension system for black people in provinces, homelands, and independent states - a very necessary precondition for any future racial parity in the social security system. Against this, however, stands the attempted passing of new legislation, in January 1992, which would have eroded the legal assurance of the pensions as a right.

In this section, I first outline the types of pensions and grants in the various administrations. I have given details of some small anomalies (such as the Venda single parent allowance) because they may be precedents on which a future welfare system could build. I then go on to describe inconsistencies in implementation and delivery, with special attention being paid to confusion about the Means Test. I then describe briefly the experiment with privatisation of the delivery system in KwaZulu.

## 1 Types of pensions, grants and allowances

Social security benefits can be classified in four categories: those dealing with the elderly people, disabled people, family and child care, and relief of distress. Although the main pensions, such as the Old Age Pension (OAP), were found in all administrations, there were many variations and omissions as well. The different names used for the grants will be given for each sub-section below.

### 1.1 The aged

The following benefits fall under this category:  
 Old Age Pension (called the same by all departments)  
 War Veterans Pension, which is also called  
 Old Army Pension (KwaNdebele) and  
 Ex-Serviceman's Allowance (Bophuthatswana).

The primary pension is the **Old Age Pension (OAP)**. This is a universal non-contributory pension, payable to women and men on reaching the ages of 60 and 65 years of age respectively. There is a large (though rapidly decreasing) difference in the amounts payable to each race. The pattern of discrimination has for a long time been the white pension being the highest, the black pension being the lowest, and the Indian and coloured pensions being pegged at the same rate as each other, between the white and the black amount. The following figures show the monthly amounts at August 1991, followed in brackets by the 1980 figures:

white	R304	(R109)
coloured and Indian	R263	(R62)
black	R225	(R33)

The **War Veterans Pensions (WVP)**, which is somewhat higher than the OAP, is payable to South Africans of all races who did military service in certain wars. During 1991, racial parity for the WVP amount was granted (R320 per month, August 1991). The number of WVPs will start decreasing overall after the next few years (95 percent of white WVPs in 1988 were World War II veterans), so long as the wars specified remain unchanged. The number of WVPs relative to OAPs is small in all race groups (eg 6 percent in the case of whites, and 0,6 percent for black people in the homelands). There have been some small increases in the numbers of black WVPs owing to the pensions system becoming better known.

The **Attendants Allowance** is a grant which may be given to someone who is in receipt of an OAP, to enable someone else to care for them. A person under 85 years old needs to get medical proof of need; over 85, proof is not needed. These allowances do not show as a separate budget item. At the time of interviews they were R50 per month for whites, R25 per month for Indian and coloured people, and Natal province reported R16 per month.

The numbers receiving the allowance are negligible. The amounts paid are so small that very few people apply, and in many cases in the homelands and TBVC the officials had not heard of them. In two homelands it was known they were on the books, but they had never been applied for. I queried whether the lack of applications might not be because pensioners themselves and their families did not know about it. More than once I got the response, "No, the Black Sash makes it its business to know these things, and it would have told people".

The **Supplementary Allowance**, like the Attendants Allowance, is 'on the books' but little use is made of it. It is given to people who delay their application for pension beyond the qualifying age, as an adjustment for non-receipt in preceding years. It is a tiny amount: for coloured people, for example, at the time of interview it was R2,50 per month extra to the pensioner for the first year of delay, then R3,50 up to a maximum of R5,00 per month. The amount is combined in the budget with the overall figure for OAPs, so it is impossible to disaggregate. In the departments where it was known of, it was clear that only a handful of pensioners made use of it.

This is an interesting indicator of the distance between what goes on in the minds of those who create pensions systems, and the economic reality for pensioners on the ground, where the pension is such an important part of not only the pensioner's, but often her or his household's subsistence, and when survival is an uncertain thing. The notion that a delay of the whole amount until next year can be 'bought' for an incentive of R2,50 a month now, is truly remarkable.



## 1.2 People with disabilities

The grants in this area are:

Disability Grant

Blind Persons Grant

Leprosy Grant

Nursing Care Allowance/ Grant (Transkei)

Single Care Grant.<sup>1</sup>

Of these the Disability Grant (DG) has by far the highest number of beneficiaries. At the other end, very few Leprosy Grants are given, and mostly in the tropical north eastern stretch of the country. It was thought that the need for this grant would disappear altogether, along with the disease, but KwaZulu reported finding new cases in far northeastern Maputaland. The DGs and the Blind Persons Grants are supposed to transmute automatically to OAPs when the beneficiary reaches qualifying age; this does not seem to be uniformly applied across administrations.

The Transkei introduced the Nursing Care Allowance or Grant in 1989. When a patient is discharged in to the care of a relative, s/he may apply for this grant in order to enable a relative to care for him/her. The grant application must be endorsed by the Medical Superintendent of the hospital discharging the patient. This Grant is reflected under the health budget, not welfare; the figure was thus not included in the welfare calculations. It is mentioned here as one of the few examples of independent states introducing changes to the social security system which were arguably improvements to what they inherited from the Republic of South Africa.

## 1.3 Family and child care

This category includes grants and allowances paid under the following names:

Maintenance Grant/ Allowance

Foster Care Grant

Parent Allowance

Child Allowance

Capitation Grant (some homelands)

Executive Allowance (KaNgwane)

Safety Rate (Ciskei)

Grant in Lieu of Places of Safety

Single Parent Allowance (Venda)

Family Allowance.

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1 Single Care Grants have been excluded from analysis as they are administered through health or mental health department or budgets, except in Cape Province and in Transkei.

In the fields of aged and disability, while there was racial disparity in terms of amounts payable to beneficiaries, there was considerable uniformity in terms of the types of grants and pensions which were available. This was not so in the case of family and child care, and in addition there was variation in the terminology used for grants and allowances in this field.

There appear to be two basic sorts of categories of grants, though they are called different things. **Maintenance Grants** (in some places divided into parent allowances and child allowances) are for children in the care of a natural parent (usually the mother), who cannot afford to care for the child. This grant is not to be confused with the claim for maintenance (also called a Maintenance Grant) applied for through the courts against a non-supporting father, to coerce him to provide for his child from his own income. Maintenance Grants are called capitation grants in some homelands, and they fall under the budget heading 'executive allowances' in KaNgwane.

Most homelands reported a recent increase in public awareness of and demand for the Maintenance Grants. Transkei was the only place never to have had this grant at all. At the time of interview this had been raised as an issue at a SECOSAF multilateral meeting, and it was to be introduced.

The other main type of grant in the family and child care field is the **Foster Care Grant**, given to adults who take a child or children into foster care. All departments were aware of this grant.

A related type is that paid for a child who is in need of care, or on detention order, to an interim carer to prevent the child going into institutional care. The grant is variously called a **Grant in Lieu of Place of Safety** (in the provinces) or a **Private Place of Safety Allowance** (in the tricameral departments). It is not a very 'active' grant; in the OPA, for example R25 000 was budgeted in 1989/90, and R17 000 spent. It is a smaller grant than the Foster Care Grant but larger than the Maintenance Grant.

The only homeland to have heard of this Grant in Lieu of Place of Safety was KwaZulu, which had 34 such grants in that year. It was understood in KwaZulu to be a grant which could stop children having to go into institutional care, and therefore to be encouraged, as it strengthened the ability of home-based care.

In Ciskei, a very similar grant is called a **Safety Rate**: when a child is found to be in need of care, a social worker may find an interim carer who will get this Safety Rate. It is the same amount as is the Foster Care Grant, is reviewable after fourteen days, and can be extended. The other three independent states did not have this grant.

Venda had introduced a **Single Parent Allowance**. There were 10 beneficiaries at the time

of interview, who were each receiving R200 per month. Unfortunately, further details were unobtainable.

The **Family Allowance** has been available to white and coloured people, and not to anyone else. It was designed to assist families of more than four children where parental incomes were very low. It was in the process of being phased out.

Assembly has had a **bursary loan system**, for the education of children from settlements, or whose parents receive social pensions. It is a small amount, but it is illustrative of the racial bias that has been present in the social security system.

#### 1.4 Poor relief<sup>1</sup>

This includes budget items known variously as:

Social Relief

Emergency Funds

Relief of Distress

Emergency Relief

Pauper Relief

Paupers Rations (Ciskei)

Ex Gratia Payments.

This category has never constituted an important part of welfare expenditure. In very few cases or places is this relief given as cash. In the cities, use is made of a voucher system, where goods can be bought against an amount at a supermarket, and/or the departments may pay all or parts of rents, water and light bills and so on. It is highly likely that in some of the homelands the relief does not actually get paid out at all - it is an item in the budget which does not actually get out to the Magistrates Offices through which it is meant to be disbursed.

The House of Representatives had a scheme unlike that in any other department which was in the process of being phased out at time of interviews. It was called **assistance to unemployed persons** and in 1990 had a budget of some R17 million. An unemployed person whose UIF (Unemployment Insurance Fund) payments had run out, could get 90 percent of his income to a maximum of R500 per month, subject to monthly review, and subject to being workseeking. The amount was given in cash. It was perceived by those in the department to have been greatly abused, and was cancelled in 1989.

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1 This discussion on poor relief should not be confused with either the National Fund for Emergency/Disaster Relief, which is not implemented through welfare departments, or with the poverty relief programme introduced in 1991 by the government, which was linked to the introduction of the VAT tax system.

The Representatives Administration was in the process of rationalising all their social relief, mainly to help people with rent and service debts to avoid eviction. The scheme will be eligible to those with a family income less than R456 per month and who live in council housing. The new rationalised relief scheme is intended to be enabling, for example giving a fare to an unemployed person to go to another centre to look for work.

KwaNdebele had an item called 'ex gratia payments' under social relief, which was used to help people with funeral payments, and which operated through tribal authorities. If a family has little money to pay for a decent burial, they can apply to the tribal authority for the same amount as would be used for a pauper's burial; the tribal authority is able to make immediate payment, and then gets reimbursed by the welfare department after the funeral.

QwaQwa had an interesting though small scale scheme where, in addition to the R550 000 allocated for emergency relief and pauper relief, R190 000 was allocated for wages for poor people, who were taken on for a few months at a time to do simple manual work as opposed to receiving handouts. This was quite separate from the two R1 million each Job Creation Programmes under Works and Agriculture respectively.

## **2 Implementation of pensions and grants for elderly and disabled people**

It is not the intention of this report to chronicle the problems and irregularities in the implementation of the social security system, though that would be easy enough to do. The purpose is simply to document unevenness in the implementation and delivery system, across and within administrative clusters. This may on the one hand lead to an awareness of steps that need to be taken to reduce the unevenness, and also to enable the assessment as to whether any of the less usual measures may be worth saving and building on.

### **2.1 Timing of payment**

In the past, coloured, Indian and white people were paid monthly, whereas black people were paid every second month. The system was undergoing change at the time of interviews, and the following situation prevailed:

**Tricamerals:** all pensions were paid monthly.

**Provinces:** Cape and Transvaal paid monthly. Natal and the Orange Free State were offering the option of monthly or bi-monthly payments. Natal and Orange Free State estimated 40 percent and 60 percent respectively were being paid monthly, and mostly in urban areas.

**Homelands:** KaNgwane had converted to monthly payments. KwaZulu had introduced a privatised monthly service in two urban magisterial districts, and was preparing to pilot this

in two rural districts (more details are given of this scheme later in the section). The other four homelands paid bi-monthly.

**Independent states:** Venda had converted to a fully computerised monthly system. The other three paid bi-monthly.

It is clear that the overall trend is towards the monthly payment system. From the point of view of administration, monthly payments will definitely be more costly, with the mobile teams and their vehicles doing their rounds twelve times a year rather than six. There is no doubt also that some pensioners, especially those in remote rural areas, prefer the bi-monthly system - you walk half the distance, and you have six chances a year rather than twelve of being robbed. Ardington (personal communication) has rightly consistently held that it is not the timing of payments that has been the chief issue for the pensioners, but the efficiency of the system. It may be that there should be a flexible, optional two-monthly system in some remoter areas, with the task being to ensure that whatever system is in place, actually works.

## **2.2 Method of payment**

Pensions for coloured, Indian and white people have predominantly been paid through the Post Office, whereas black people have been paid in cash at various mobile and fixed sites, such as administration offices, trading stores, schools, or under trees. At the provincial level, the Cape and the Orange Free State have introduced the option of being paid by cheque, through the Post Office, or through a bank. The Cape reported that black pensioners in that province had been able to go through a bank or building society even before the decentralisation of black welfare from Constitutional Development and Planning to the provinces, but few pensioners knew of it. When the CPA took over, letters were sent to pensioners informing them of this facility.

Of the homelands and independent states, only KaNgwane had moved to paying by cheque at the time of interviews.

It is certainly not necessarily the case that switching to banks or Post Offices would automatically be in the best interests of all pensioners, as there are few such facilities in many rural areas - far fewer than there are mobile pay points.

## **2.3 Date of activation of pension**

One of the many procedures which have worked to the disadvantage of black pensioners has been that whereas pensions for other races are payable from the date of application for the pension (or the month following such application), for black people it has been payable from the date of approval of the pension by Head Office. Given the long delays in processing black pensions, this has not only worked to the detriment of the individual black

pensioner, but has been interpreted to be a means whereby savings on the pensions monies have been made by the governments concerned.

At the time of interviews, all four provinces had moved toward the fairer system of the pension being paid from the date of application. KwaNdebele had changed in this direction too, and KwaZulu and KaNgwane were in the process of changing. Other homelands and independent states still paid from the date of approval.

## 2.4 The Means Test

The Old Age Pension is non-contributory, statutory and universal, but is subject to a Means Test, which has been set at different levels for different races. Le Roux (1990) presents a strong argument in favour of scrapping the Means Test as it is cumbersome, as well as discriminatory. Be that as it may, it was clear during interviews that much confusion surrounded this subject. In the homelands and independent states there were deep misunderstandings about the nature and intent of the Means Test, which will cause distress in future if attempts are made to make it a more effective measure. This goes beyond being a technical matter; it is a deeply political issue as well.

The main confusion lies in the differential usage of two quite different concepts, **both of which** are commonly referred to as 'the Means Test'. First, there is what I will call the **exclusion level**: this is the amount of 'free' income and assets, determined differently for each race, above which a person is automatically disqualified from being able to apply for a pension. It happens to be extremely difficult and problematic to assess the value of income and assets, but that is not the issue here.

Second, there is a **sliding scale**: if a person qualifies to apply for a pension, s/he may not automatically get the full amount. A determination of the value of income and assets is made, and the more the income/assets (up to the exclusion level), the less the amount of pension that is paid.

Now, when a government official says, "We have abolished the Means Test", it makes a great deal of difference which one of these two measures is being referred to. Different departments understand it to mean either or both of these things.

At the provincial level, both the exclusion level and the sliding scale were applied, and had been integrated into the computer programme. The point was made in the Orange Free State that many black people of pensionable age would have been farm labourers, whose working conditions were such that they had made no savings, no pension provision from the farmer, and no assets had accrued - thus the vast majority qualified into the system, well below the exclusion level.

Discrepancies were rife, however, within and between homelands and the independent states. In nearly all (but not all) places, an exclusion level was still used, even though it was set so low that nearly all people qualified. As far as the sliding scale was concerned most had abolished it. In other words, all who qualified in terms of the exclusion level were awarded the full pension.

Two very different types of reasons were given for the abolition of the sliding scale, one more administrative, the other more political. Some argued that it was cumbersome, inaccurate and very cost-ineffective to apply the Means Test. In two places it was specifically mentioned that the unreliability of the information given to and collected by clerks disadvantaged some applicants, which was a reason to get rid of the whole system. In one curious situation, all people are given the full pension except where there is confidence in the information supplied, in which case the sliding scale would still be applied, and some would get less than the full pension. This seems to create a very good argument for the pensioners en masse to supply imperfect information, and in actuarial language would be an interesting variation on the idea of a perverse incentive, or moral hazard.

Bophuthatswana had created its own system. The sliding scale was still used. However, when the information on the forms was deemed to be unreliable (which happened frequently) the applicant's age was used as a surrogate sliding scale (this applied to both OAPs and DGs). Thus the older the applicant, the higher the amount of pension awarded.

A number of people strongly justified the abolition of the sliding scale not for reasons of efficiency, but on political grounds. Because black pensions have historically been so much lower than for other races, especially relative to those for whites, giving the maximum amount was seen to be only fair, and one small way of compensating for the many injustices of apartheid.

With regard to both the exclusion level and the sliding scale, there will be immense difficulties in reaching a system, which is, and which is seen to be, equitable and fair.

### **3 The KwaZulu experiment with privatising delivery**

KwaZulu is piloting a scheme which privatises the delivery of social pensions for the first time in southern Africa. In two urban magisterial districts, a private company is doing the payments, using the Cash Paymaster System, on a monthly basis. Identification is done on the basis of voice, which is apparently far more reliable than other forms of identification. The scheme was being prepared for piloting in two rural areas, Inkanyezi and Mahlabathini, as well.

The welfare officials I spoke to held out a lot of hope for the scheme, in which they saw many advantages. There will be no possibility any more of 'fictitious pensioners'. New

applicants and people re-registering (which all have to do in order to cross over to the new system) have to present themselves in person. It was claimed that in KwaMashu, where the scheme is in place, the number of pensioners dropped from 13 000 to 11 000 through the introduction of the scheme. The cash dispenser can only pay to the right person (the right voice), and the pensioner will receive the right amount of money - there can be no rake-offs by middlemen. The withdrawal can be made on any day, and over time it will be developed into a 24 hour service, thus obviating the long queues which have typified the black pension system in the past.

The scheme was going through teething problems, with faulty registrations, some applicants having to present themselves three or four times as their information was not captured by the system, and so on. (It was rumoured at one stage early on that the only age group for which the voice identification might not be wholly reliable was the older population, but the rumours were unfounded.) The system has been advocated as a safer way of delivering pensions, as it is a banking institution. That aspect of it has yet to be assessed.

It is an important experiment to watch. It was costing more than had been expected - it was certainly being more expensive than the quote given by Ithala Bank which had been rejected as it had been considered to be too expensive. Government administrations delivering black pensions and grants experience so much criticism because of the corruption and inefficiencies of the conventional system, that they may well place a high, non-market-related price on offloading the delivery onto someone else - at the expense of the taxpayer.

The social security budget is being increased both through demographic pressures and through parity. There is a strong tendency in government circles to focus on the recipients as the source of corruption and costliness (some people draw two pensions, the living claim for the dead and so on). Apartheid itself created the society in which stark poverty accompanies a bureaucratic apparatus of astonishing size and complexity. Once we have a better information system, once we have an adequate system of registration of births and deaths, once we have one pensions department rather than seventeen, and once a bureaucratic milieu has been developed which ensures that those known to be taking advantage of the system are fired, then will be the time to give rigorous attention to how to stop the John Smiths and Mercy Mthembus from drawing double pensions.



## SECTION SIX

## THE SIZE OF THE PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK ESTABLISHMENT

## Introduction

A much-used indicator of levels of provision of health, educational and welfare services is the number of trained personnel. It is certain to be a focus of future welfare planning. Within the overall indicator, useful breakdowns can be made, particularly in racial and gender terms, to show unevenness.

## 1 The number of posts

Table 5: Number and levels of professional social work posts, 1991

	LEVELS <sup>1</sup>					TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Tricameral</b>						
Assembly	2	7	16	42	348	415
Delegates	1	1	3	8	82	95
Represents	1	4	16	32	326	379 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Provinces</b>						
Cape	0	1	2	12	124	139
Natal	0	1	2	9	90	102
OFS	0	2	5	14	123	144
Transvaal	0	1	2	4	209	216
<b>Homelands</b>						
Gazankulu	0	1	2	4	40	47
KaNdwane	0	1		2	13	15
KwaNdebele	0	1	1	2	28	32
KwaZulu <sup>3</sup>	0	1	1	20	178	200
Lebowa	1	1	4	6	80	92
QwaQwa	0	0	0	1	11	12
<b>Independent states</b>						
Boph	ni	ni	ni	ni	ni	93
Ciskei	1	2	3	5	66	77
Transkei	1	1	3	12	79	96
Venda	0	1	0	3	17	21

- 1 Level 1: Chief Director, Director and Secretary  
 Level 2: Deputy Director and Deputy Secretary  
 Level 3: Assistant Director and Assistant Secretary  
 Level 4: Chief Social Worker  
 Level 5: Social Worker Leg 2 (formerly Senior Social Worker) and Leg 1.

2 There was a discrepancy between data provided verbally in interviews, and on an organogram. The former was used.

3 KwaZulu calculation excludes unreleased vacant posts.

Table 5 shows the number of professional social work posts for the different government departments of welfare. Because of the many different names used for posts, they have been allocated to one of five levels according to equivalent seniority or status.

There were 2175 social workers in employment in the government welfare departments (these figures do not include the small number of social workers in the three coordinating departments). The Houses of Assembly, Delegates and Representatives employed 20 percent, 4 percent and 17 percent of social workers for white, Indian and coloured people respectively, which together constituted 41 percent of the social workers. Fifty nine percent of government employed social workers were in the welfare departments serving black people, with provinces, homelands and independent states employing 28 percent, 18 percent and 13 percent of the social workers respectively.

## 2 The ratio of posts to population

The raw figures given in Table 5 become more meaningful when expressed as a ratio of posts per population, and these are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: Ratio of professional social work posts per population by administration, 1991**

	No. posts	Posts: pop	No. filled posts	Filled posts: pop
Assembly	415	1:12174		
Delegates	95	1:10298		
Representatives	379	1:8560		
<b>Tricameral mean</b>		<b>1:10344</b>		
Cape	139	1:13206		
Natal	102	1:7531		
OFS	144	1:10862		
Transvaal	216	1:26719		
<b>Provinces mean</b>		<b>1:14576</b>		
Gazankulu	47	1:14623	32	1:21478
KaNdwane	15	1:12672	12	1:13090
KwaNdebele	32	1:9330	17	1:17561
KwaZulu	200	1:22521	140	1:32173
Lebowa	92	1:22801	89	1:23569
QwaQwa	12	1:26150	11	1:28527
<b>Homelands mean</b>		<b>1:27365</b>		
Bophuthatswana	93	1:26150		
Ciskei	77	1:10623		
Transkei	96	1:32951		
Venda	21	1:25857		
<b>Indep states mean</b>		<b>1:22625</b>		

The government norm for social workers is 3 per 20 000 persons, with one public sector post to two private-sector posts. Racially-based ratios, in welfare and in health, are often used to demonstrate unevennesses and racial discrimination. When applied to the welfare sector at large they can be misleading, as white social workers in a child and family welfare society, or in a society for mental health, for example, do not necessarily only work with white clients. In the case of government welfare in this study however, the racially-based ratios are a pretty accurate reflection of reality, as the government departments have worked, with few exceptions, according to race.

In some of the homelands there is such a discrepancy between approved posts and filled posts that both figures have been calculated. The ratios are tremendously uneven, with the situation being least favourable in the independent states and the homelands, the exceptions being Ciskei (1:10623) and KwaNdebele (1:9330), though the latter's ratio worsens drastically when calculated according to posts which are actually filled (1:17561).

KwaZulu's 1:32173 (filled posts) and Transkei's 1:32951 are the least favourable ratios; both administrations also serve large numbers of people relative to the others in their clusters.

It must be remembered, when looking at these figures, that the private welfare sector for white people is highly advanced relative to the others. Furthermore, the white population as a whole is significantly better off than other South Africans, and has had greater access to sources of financial support for private welfare services.

### 3 White and black ratios in the provinces

A most interesting finding emerged when the ratios for black people in the provinces were compared with those for the white population in the provinces. Table 7 shows that the ratios of social work posts per numbers of the population were, overall, not very dissimilar. The white mean ratio is 1:13383, the black mean ratio is 1:14580. I was told in the interviews that in the Orange Free State the number of black social work posts was doubled when welfare was decentralised in 1988 from Constitutional Development and Planning, and this lessened the gap between white and black welfare significantly. A worthwhile piece of research would be to assess precisely what the effect of this decentralisation was on the size of provincial social work establishments.

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**Table 7: Number of government professional social work posts, and ratio of posts per population, for the white and black populations in the provinces, 1990**

	Population	Posts	Ratio posts to population
<b>Cape</b>			
white	1 221 365	104	1:11744
black	1 835 657	139	1:13206
<b>Natal</b>			
white	533 267	36	1:14813
black	783 175	103	1:7531
<b>OFS</b>			
white	327 765	22	1:14898
black	1 538 171	144	1:10862
<b>Transvaal</b>			
white	2 439 162	202	1:12075
black	5 771 282	216	1:26719
white mean ratio			1:13383
black mean ratio			1:14580

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When viewing Table 7, the undercount of the black population must be taken into account. Also, there can be considerable 'boundary-hopping' between a homeland and a province. The size and direction of this 'boundary hopping' will probably differ for different services. The NPA social workers, for example, doubtless see many people who are residents of KwaZulu who are in need of personal social services. It is thought that pensioners, on the other hand, go from the province to KwaZulu for pension collection, as the latter has had far more mobile paypoints.

Taking these qualifications into account, in the Orange Free State and Natal the ratio for

black welfare is better than for white welfare. Natal's figure of 1:7531 is striking indeed.

The regional unevenness is clearly demonstrated in this table, with Transvaal's ratio resembling the least favourable of the independent states and homelands ratios.

The provincial distribution of posts for blacks and whites can be viewed another way, which highlights the different regional aspect of welfare provision. How is it decided which provinces get which proportion of all social work posts? A sensible way of distributing social work between the provinces would presumably be according to the number of people served, unless there were significant regional socio-economic differences to argue for priority to be given to one region over another.

In Table 8, the percentage distribution of white provincial social work posts is shown alongside the percentage of the white population in each province. The match is remarkably good - Transvaal has just over half (54 percent) of the white population, and just over half (55 percent) of the social work posts for white people. For black provincial welfare, the mismatch is severe. Natal and the Orange Free State have proportionately more posts for their populations, whereas the Transvaal has 58 percent of all the black population which lives in the provinces, but only 36 percent of the social work posts. To compound the unevenness, the TPA social workers work with a population with six or seven languages, compared to the relative linguistic homogeneity of other regions.

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**Table 8: Distribution of white and black population and social work posts according to province, 1991**

	<b>% of all provincial white population</b>	<b>% of all provincial white posts (n = 364)</b>	<b>% of all provincial black population</b>	<b>% of all provincial black posts (n = 602)</b>
Cape	27	29	18	23
Natal	12	10	8	17
OFS	7	6	15	24
Transvaal	54	55	58	36

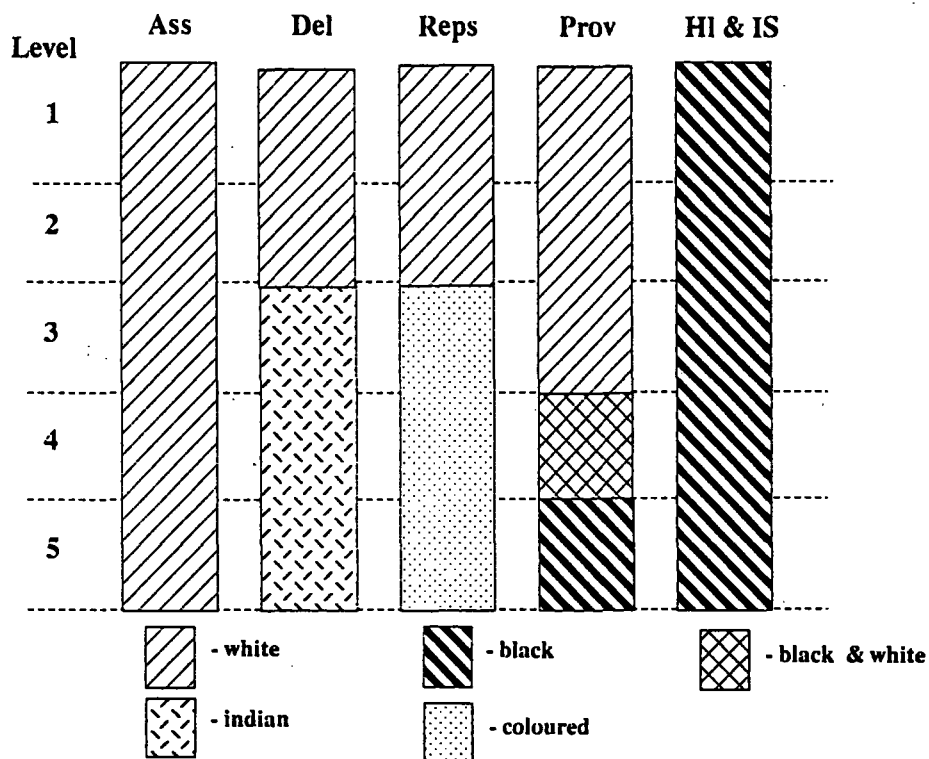
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#### 4 The racial hierarchy in the social work establishment

Figure 9 is a graphic representation of the racial occupancy of the professional social work posts, according to levels of seniority, in the different administrative clusters. The three coordinating departments (DNH, DDA, PPA) as well as SECOSAF are not included. They are the people who de facto control and plan for welfare, and they are almost entirely peopled by whites, except for one senior black person in PPA.

In the tricameral and provincial departments, the posts at the top two levels were all occupied by white people, with the lower two levels tending to be occupied by people of the same race as was served by the departments. At provincial level, the breakthrough in racial terms has been the appointment of black social workers at any level at Head Office, and after that to have black Chief Social Worker appointments. The Orange Free State was the first to have a black Head Office appointment, though a coloured person (a woman) is one of the Assistant Directors. In Natal, all Head Office posts were filled by white people, who also occupied all posts from Chief Social Worker upwards. In the Transvaal, a number of black Chief Social Workers had been appointed.

**Figure 9: Racial hierarchies in the distribution of government professional social work posts, 1991**



**Level 1: Chief Director, Director, Secretary**  
**Level 2: Deputy Director, Deputy Secretary**  
**Level 3: Assistant Director, Assistant Secretary**  
**Level 4: Chief Social Worker**  
**Level 5: Social Worker, Leg 2 and Leg 1**

In the homelands, the pattern in the past was to have senior positions filled by secondments from Pretoria. This has now changed. At the time of interviews, there was still the occasional white secretary of a combined department of health and welfare. All the professional welfare posts were filled by black people. In the independent states, all the professional welfare staff were black, with the exception of one coloured person in Bophuthatswana.

The homelands and independent states have been vehicles for black upward mobility. Whereas in provincial welfare no black person had a higher than Chief Social Worker post, in the homelands and independent states there was career mobility all the way up. So although KwaZulu, for example, still has a much lower ratio of social work posts per population than has Natal province, there have been far better opportunities for career advancement in KwaZulu than in social work in Natal. The significance of this as a barrier to the various administrations agreeing to voluntarily re-unite in future cannot be over-emphasised.

## **5 The gender composition of the social work establishment**

The position of women in the government social work establishment can be summarised thus: while the great majority of social workers are women, men occupy a disproportionate number of the more senior posts, regardless of race (and Minister Rina Venter's position at the top of National Health and Population Development notwithstanding!).

Bophuthatswana has a woman Deputy Director of welfare; apart from that there were no women at the top two levels. Women start entering the hierarchy in greater numbers at Assistant Director levels (particularly noticeable in the provinces and in Delegates); women begin to outnumber men at Chief Social Worker level; and the great majority of rank and file social workers are women.

An interviewee in the Assembly administration said that 90 percent of all social workers were women; the Chief Director and Director were both men, and five of the seven Deputy Directors were men. In Gazankulu, three of the thirty-two filled social work posts were occupied by men; they occupied the three most senior posts of one Deputy and two Assistant Secretaries. In Venda the most senior professional welfare position had recently been filled by a woman for the first time. KaNgwane and QwaQwa each had just one male social worker and in neither case did he occupy the most senior welfare post.

In the provinces, eight of the ten filled Assistant Director posts were occupied by (white) women, and in Delegates three of the four Assistant Directors were (Indian) women.

In most departments, I asked the reason for the disproportionate representation of men at the senior levels. Regardless entirely of the race or so-called ethnic group or gender of the interviewee, the answer was much the same, "It is in our culture". This was a striking example of the pervasiveness of patriarchal relations in South African society.

## **6 Rural-urban differences**

It is tempting, when viewing the figures and ratios, to use the homelands and independent states figures to mean 'rural', but this would be very misleading. KwaZulu's most populated magisterial districts are the urban areas and much of the Orange Free State black population lives in proclaimed townships, but these are not really urban, in the same way, and with the same implications for provision, as, say, Soweto is urban.

I did not manage to get sufficient data to present the following with confidence, but have enough to suggest that, in the social policy arena, there is a need to question the accuracy of the simple urban-rural dichotomy. There needs to be at least a tripartite distinction, with the third being the informal settlements and the densely settled formal urban areas - both of these having worse personnel to population ratios than the urban ratio.

## **7 Changing size**

I asked interviewees whether there had been any significant increases or decreases in the size of the welfare establishment, or whether new policies or trends were expected.

Bophuthatswana had seen a growth in its social work posts from 64 in 1988 to 93 in 1990. Transkei's ten new community work posts had yet to be filled as suitable people could not be found.

Gazankulu, when it claimed self-governing status in 1976 had 14 social work posts created for it. By 1988, there were 47 professional posts, through a system of gradual incremental growth. KwaZulu reported it was satisfied with the number of approved posts, but many of them were not funded. This was perceived to be a consequence of the separation of welfare and pensions from health: that welfare competed unequally for scarce funds.

In white welfare, very few posts have been created since 1975 (12 new posts for Childline, and 3 for one of the regions). A Representatives interviewee reported that 29 new posts had been created for School Social Work; they were not filled by the time of interview. Delegates reported a moratorium on the creation of new posts. It had planned to introduce a pilot school social work scheme using 15 social workers. The moratorium meant reducing the scope of the scheme, and starting with three social workers on one year contracts.

## **8 Shape of the establishment**

I asked interviewees whether they felt the 'shape' of the professional welfare establishment was right - was the allocation of posts to different levels in line with departmental needs?

The Cape, Natal and Free State departments all reported the need for more people at Head Office and for people doing training and supervision. In Natal it was pointed out that unless there was a Chief Social Worker (CSW) for each field of service, no new initiatives were started. In the Cape it was felt in addition that there was a need for CSWs at the sub-



regional offices to strengthen the grassroots services. The Cape also reported a desperate lack of CSWs in institutions - one CSW services ten institutions. The Free State, on the other hand, has one Deputy Director post allocated to one institution.

Ciskei reported a shortage of CSWs, as some CSW posts had been lost in the amalgamation with the Department of Health the year before. Apart from that, most of the homelands and independent states simply said more grassroots posts were needed, or that the shape would be about right if only all the posts were filled.

A useful indicator for future research into welfare planning is the number of senior posts as a percentage of all social work posts, and as a ratio to the general population. In other words, have the administrations differentially created a more centralised establishment structure with more possibilities for upward mobility?

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**Table 9: Level 1 and 2 posts as a percentage of all social work posts, tricameral and provincial departments, 1991**

	Level 1 & 2	Total posts	Percentage
Assembly	25	415	6
Delegates	5	95	5,2
Representatives	21	379	5,5
CPA	3	139	2,1
NPA	4	102	3,9
OPA	7	144	4,9
TPA	3	216	1,4

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The data for the tricameral and provincial departments are reflected in Table 9, where it can be seen that, though the differences are small, the tricameral departments on the whole have a higher proportion of senior posts to rank-and-file posts than do the provinces.

If the ratio of senior (Level 1 and Level 2) posts to population is calculated, the tricameral mean is 1:181 858, and the mean for black welfare administrations is 1:630 170, as shown in Table 10. It is interesting that Representatives has the most favourable ratio at 1:154 495. The tricameral departments serve a **national** network of welfare, so could be expected to have more senior posts; on the other hand, KwaZulu serves a population more than three times as large as that served by Delegates.

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**Table 10: Ratios of senior posts to population, 1991**

Assembly	1:202 084
Delegates	1:197 460
Representatives	1:154 495
Tricameral mean	1:181 858
Province and homeland mean	1:630 170

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## 9 Filling social work posts

With the exception of Assembly and Delegates, nearly all departments reported that there was difficulty in filling or keeping filled posts which were at the lower levels, and/or which were in the remoter areas.

Provincial, homeland and independent states said that the new improved salary scales were making it easier to attract staff. However, some places were so remote that it was very difficult to either open up social work services, or keep staff.

The Cape reported success with an aggressive marketing scheme, recruiting new social workers through the universities; the Orange Free State described the particular difficulty it has, despite recruiting campaigns, because it is perceived to have a bad name with black people - a political barrier to recruitment which was also noted by Representatives. KaNgwane and KwaZulu both said the bursary scheme was helpful in filling posts (described in the next section).

A number of the black departments (across all three clusters) mentioned that posts were becoming easier to fill because of what was perceived to be a softening of political attitudes towards working for the government. Salary scales were becoming more competitive and there were more perks attached to government jobs. Furthermore, as one person put it:

"In government service you spend your time doing social work. In private welfare agencies, you spend a lot of time fund-raising for your own salary."

These things combine with the depoliticisation of government service to make government posts a more attractive option. And as a person from Ciskei said:

"There are better chances of advancement for black social workers in the national states and homelands than the RSA."

Contrary to this, however, Venda and Bophuthatswana both felt that they were used as a training ground by inexperienced social workers who left for the private welfare sector for better promotional possibilities in industry. In Bophuthatswana:

"Our problem is we are so close to the RSA. So there are other employment opportunities nearby. It is the senior social workers - the cream of the crop - who go to the mines, so we continually take in and train the younger inexperienced ones."

## **10 Employment of social workers in other departments**

Not all social workers in government service are employed in departments of welfare. In the interviews I attempted to identify the scope and trends of where else social workers are employed. The information is not complete - that would have required further interviews in other departments. The following are the main points that emerged.

10.1 The major other employers of social workers are the health departments. There is inconsistency as regards how and where they are accounted for: in tricameral departments the psychiatric social workers seem to be on the establishment and budget of welfare, though they work under health, and are not shown separately to other social workers on the Welfare Promotion Programmes. In the provinces, hospital social workers worked in health, and the health budget carried them; the psychiatric social workers were in the process of moving from welfare to health and depending on how far they were with this move, their salaries would be reflected in welfare or health.

In the homelands the situation was simpler in so far as there were fewer hospital social workers. It was impossible to track this down accurately, however, as departments were combining and recombining. KwaNdebele, having no hospital, had no hospital social workers. When residents of Moutse were successful in their struggle for Moutse to leave KwaNdebele and return to Transvaal Provincial jurisdiction, the only hospital - Moutse Hospital - went to TPA too.

A number of people made the point that there was a divide between social workers in different departments, and that social workers in the health services do not have the same potential channels for communication and representation at Head Office or senior decision-making committees.

10.2 A majority of the homelands reported that the past year had seen the employment for the first time of a social worker in the Police Department, to work with the police personnel and their families, rather than with rehabilitation of offenders. The South African Department of Prisons is a big employer of social workers. Among the homelands and independent states, there were very few such cases - KwaZulu a few, Bophuthatswana a few, Ciskei one, Venda one. Bophuthatswana in addition had one or more in Defence.

- 10.3 There was widespread expression of the need to develop school social work services.
- 10.4 Apart from the health (including psychiatric) services, the only other major employer of social workers in government departments was the Population Development Programme.

## SECTION SEVEN

### WHAT SOCIAL WORKERS DO: THE ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

#### Introduction

Near the beginning of one interview:

**Question:** Could you tell me what the social workers do? What are they mainly busy with?

**Answer:** They do prevention, rehabilitation, supervision, statutory work, therapeutic intervention, counselling, and community work.

Much later in the same interview:

**Question:** Could you tell me what the social workers really do?

**Answer:** They give out rations, and get people grants.

There is widespread concern in South African welfare about the appropriate role for social work, and indeed, this was one of the main concerns driving this study. The focus of concern about relevance can be expressed in one of two ways. First, it is sometimes posed as the difference between case work and community work: case work is caricatured as outmoded, expensive, irrelevant, western etc; and against this, community work is said to be relevant, developmental, affordable, etc. The second way it is expressed is as a juxtaposition between two 'worlds': a 'first world' model of training and of provision, in and for the urban sector, particularly the urban white sector, as opposed to a 'third world' reality for the rest. These two ways of expressing the problem obviously overlap.

I went to the interviews with a set of questions: What are social workers doing? What would they like to be doing? What are the things that get in the way of a changing role?

Without exception, the interviewees saw the integrated approach to social work (which combines case work, group work, and community work) as the ideal to be achieved, with more emphasis on community work. They also all saw the need for their work to become more developmentally oriented. What follows will show the difficulties in the way of changing, as well as the attempts that have been made to change.

#### 1 The need for statutory work

South African government welfare departments are there in part to see to certain responsibilities required by welfare legislation. Much of the work requiring statutory

intervention represents a kind of bottom-line protection, for individuals themselves, and for society as a whole.

Some statutory tasks are for example:

- removing abused children from their parents
- supervising adult offenders (after care of prisoners)
- the supervision of children at the order of a court
- investigation of the home circumstances of a person to see if s/he qualifies for a grant.

The world of most social workers in most government departments is circumscribed by the obligation to do this statutory work. The problem for South African welfare is that the statutory work is being affected by the general crisis in the society. We can list some of the key problems: the crisis of legitimacy of the government, the weak economy, the breakdown in the educational system, the influx of refugees from countries around South Africa, or the internal refugees fleeing from violence in the townships. Society has come to be characterised by high rates of unemployment, divorce, alcoholism, crime, truancy and drug abuse. When these problems get very serious, a social worker may finally have to intervene for the courts.

Statutory work is the ultimate responsibility of state welfare departments. In cities, where there is a more developed private welfare sector, some state departments have handed over aspects of statutory work to voluntary organisations (to the general dissatisfaction of the latter). In black communities, both urban and rural, there are few private sector agencies to hand over to.

Department after department reported how their work was largely confined to fulfilling statutory responsibilities. There were differences, however, both within and between the departmental clusters. It seemed that on the whole, the homelands social workers spent relatively less time doing the statutory work.

In the tricameral departments, Delegates reported that in addition to the statutory work, social workers had had to spend time, in the Natal area, intervening in disaster and crisis situations such as riots and floods; they also responded to referrals on housing problems for other Ministers and Departments (such as Local Government and Housing).

Representatives, on the other hand, said that there had been a recent increase of activities in community work as well, with new materials being developed for in-service training.

At the provincial level, both the CPA and TPA spoke of the enormous amount of social workers' time taken doing routine statutory work. The CPA mentioned, as did many other departments serving black communities, the amount of time spent on statutory child care:

**"The social workers do 99 percent statutory work, of which 90 percent is to do with child care. They cannot get away from the statutory work to do the**

preventive work which is really necessary. There is so much statutory work because of the breakdown of the family. Many children are abandoned and left with others; grannies come in and say they will look after the child if they can get the foster care grant, which requires a court report."

This involvement of social workers in getting grants for child and family care was raised by Ciskei, KaNgwane, KwaNdebele and Transkei (this does not mean that it was not an issue in the other areas). All of these said that there had been a noticeable increase recently in the number of cases of child abuse, in the numbers of abandoned children, and in the numbers applying for Maintenance Grants.

An interviewee in Ciskei said of the child and family care grants:

"The Maintenance Grants are for those women with no husbands, with young schooling children, who are unemployed, or who are earning less than R100 per month. Ciskei has a problem: many, many people fall into this category, and many are now applying for Maintenance Grants. In the rural areas, if a social worker has a caseload of 185, about 150 of these will be Maintenance Grants. There are no jobs in the rural areas. People apply because they need the money."

KwaNdebele reported a different brake on doing community work, and that was the tracing work that had to be done when it took self-governing status. One result was that many people who had been seen to by social workers in the PWV area were now referred to the new KwaNdebele welfare department; it had three social workers, all fresh out of university. They were given hundreds of referrals of people who had no addresses, and spent all their time trying to trace these people. To talk of community work in a situation of such instability makes no sense; the social workers were dealing with the disastrous social consequences of apartheid decision-making, and were demoralised when they were not seen to be doing 'relevant social work'.

A time-consuming exercise for social workers in QwaQwa was helping people get material assistance in the form of what is called rations, monthly parcels of food. In past years, the social workers would do the buying and distributing; this aspect is now done by others, but the social workers still have to do the investigations "to determine whether the people would survive without the rations".

## **2 Models of operation**

As said earlier, all the departments showed a high level of awareness of the need for social work to change direction - as one put it, "Social work has to adapt or die". There was widespread agreement also about the direction of the change that was needed - more prevention and community development. The reality on the ground was that the statutory work was retarded these new directions.

Nevertheless, some departments had introduced different ways of working. Without wanting to impose a blueprint on what was in fact a very differentiated set of ways of working, it has been possible to categorise four different models of working which the departments claimed to be doing, and which all called the integrated approach.

**Model 1** is that found most frequently, and is where the same workers do all social work tasks. Each individual social worker, in other words, is responsible for statutory work, non-statutory case work, crisis intervention, dispensing rations. Community work is done if and when there is time left over after the above tasks have been done, and most reported that this seldom happened, if at all. In places where there were welfare institutions, particular social workers may be allocated to doing institutional care.

**Model 2** is that in which a division is made between personnel allocated to case work, and to community work, though they work out of the same physical offices. This has been introduced in the OFS, for example, and was being introduced in Gazankulu. In the OFS, the case workers do the statutory work, prevention and counselling and therapy, i.e. reconstruction and after care, and work to do with people in institutional care. A different set of workers, the community workers, do community work, largely in the field of educare, helping with setting up, and then training and supervision of, educare centres in the townships. These are initiated by community committees, and involve both churches and the private sector. The community workers also help motivate communities to establish welfare committees, which it is hoped will later develop into registered welfare organisations. So far, these have mostly been umbrella committees, working with all the fields of service.

This division between case work and community work is based on direct experience: if the integrated method is tried, where integrated means integrated in the same person, the preventive and community work always gets neglected. Furthermore, different sorts of people feel comfortable with different social work methods - a point made also by an interviewee in KwaNdebele.

So in the OFS, the case workers and community workers work in the same offices, but separately. In Gazankulu similarly, community social workers were introduced in 1985, one in each of six districts. They form part of the attempt to take services to where the people are: Gazankulu's longer term goal is to attach social workers to each of the fourteen health centres.

**Model 3** is based on a way of working which is in the process of being developed by the Cape Provincial Administration. It arose because the social work management realised that the statutory work was necessary, but was consuming nearly all of the social workers' time, and was not addressing development issues. In black communities the problem was



compounded because there was no developed welfare infrastructure for social workers to refer problems on to, for example no child guidance clinics in the area. What the CPA has done is to develop two different divisions, with different tasks. The social work division does the case work and statutory work, and this is done by both social workers and auxiliary workers. Community work and community development fall under a separate Community Development Division, with different categories of workers: community liaison officers (CLOs), and grassroots community developers. At the time of interview, the Head Office component of this division was an Assistant Director, three Chief CLOs, and three clerks; there were 28 CLOs and 4 Chief CLOs in the regions. In other words, this was already a substantial programme.

As I understand it, though some of the terms used in this programme are similar to those used in the Population Development Programme, this is not in fact where the PDP is in the CPA (though some of the CLOs were from the PDP). This is a different idea, and more closely related to social work. The CLOs will work in urban townships, not rural areas. They do not start projects themselves, but support existing projects, and link community needs with outside resources. They are there to direct the different branches within the provincial administration towards community development principles. The CLOs get the same salaries as social workers, but do not have to have the professional social work degree - any related degree will do.

Another new development in the CPA has been approval for the appointment of twenty grassroots community developers, who will be under the guidance of the CPA, but placed in local authorities. They will be equivalent to auxiliary workers, will get salary scales of Senior Clerks, and will get in-service training. Their work will be different to the auxiliary workers, who are more closely tied to conventional social work; and they will work more closely and directly with communities than do the CLOs. It was made clear that no hard-and-fast rules have been laid down; it was being seen as a model scheme, in which all would learn from experience as they go along.

**Model 4** is one proposed by both KwaZulu and Lebowa. It is an understanding of social work which sees community social work as the point of departure, with the case work which is necessary fitting in to the community work.

In KwaZulu this approach started around the establishment of pensions committees, which were supposed to investigate local problems with access to and delivery of the various pensions and grants, but particularly the Old Age Pension. The idea is that, over time, the committees can create points of entry for other activities. In one area for example, the committee liaised with the extramural handcrafts programme of a school. The teachers did not have time to do the work, and pensioners came in and assisted them in teaching the children. While this model responds to a strongly felt need - the enormous welfare problems of elderly people in poverty - it carries the danger of being co-opted by local controlling interests within and outside of the tribal authorities.

In Lebowa, community development was reported to be the main thrust of the activities, especially in the form of assisting self help groups; they also undertook an exercise of making an inventory of registered and unregistered welfare and community projects in the region, and evaluating the kinds of assistance these groups needed. The social workers then played a mediating role between these local projects and funders, helping them write proposals, and approaching funders on behalf of the local groups. This role for social workers is seen as an attempt to help get resources from the richer urban areas out to the rural areas, which find it very difficult to get access to urban information and/or resources.

### **3 Other examples of community work**

The main models of working have been presented above, but it is not at all the case that departments operating according to Model 1, for instance had done no community work, or more developmentally oriented work. Many departments reported that they supported existing women's groups, for example. Others reported spending more time recently supporting creche activities. KwaNdebele had paid particular attention to trying to set up committees around the combating of alcoholism, with community education and involvement.

Many interviewees realised that the most important social problem facing clients was that of unemployment, and some had tried to address it in modest ways. In Venda, the social workers used to spend time motivating for particular clients to get priority entry on to the job creation scheme, which was felt to be a very worthwhile thing to do. At the time of interview, the scheme had been cancelled. QwaQwa had attempted to support self help groups making crafts, but had found themselves unable to provide resources. The department had just been allocated R150 000 towards this end; all the social workers were going to get involved, and there were high hopes for developing the potential of some of the small groups. Ciskei reported that their problems with trying to assist self help projects had been the small amount of start-up money allocated, and then difficulties with distribution.

### **4 The feasibility of fields of service**

"In our department it is not a question of how many social workers per field of service, but how many fields of service per social worker."

South African social work is supposed to operate according to a number of fields of service, which according to McKendrick (1987:29) are:

...the welfare of children, youth and families; care of the aged; care of physically and mentally handicapped persons; care of people who abuse dependence-producing substances such as alcohol and drugs, and combating

such abuse; ... the prevention of crime and the rehabilitation of offenders; and services which enhance the quality of life, such as housing, reducing social pathologies such as prostitution, and aiding people in situations of financial need.

The fields of service may be useful conceptually, and appropriate for some well-resourced urban areas. The overwhelming sense in the majority of interviews, however, was that the fields of service simply cannot work practically, because of the shortage of staff and the distances to be travelled. One interviewee described how it took over half a day for a supervisor to drive to a regional office, where there were two social workers serving a vast geographical area. How would the 'field of service' make sense here, he asked? Should more than one supervisor go all that distance for specialist supervision? How would the social workers allocate the fields amongst them?

The issue of affordability is central here. It seems to me the major challenge facing welfare, in inner urban, peri-urban and rural areas, is to worry less about the appropriateness of fields of service, and more about getting appropriate services to the field. The one-stop centres advocated in recent government policy documents are a decisive step in the right direction.

## 5 Auxiliary workers

The different models of social work practice outlined above show that social work is struggling for a new definition. Closely linked to this is the issue of auxiliary workers in social work. Auxiliary workers exist in nearly all the helping professions, and in South Africa they have been accepted in nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and hearing therapy, to name the most obvious. Social work attempted the introduction of a category called associated workers in the early 1980s, but this was never successful, chiefly through being over-regulated.

Over the period of the interviews, the South African Council for Social Work had agreed to the re-introduction of this category of worker. The Public Service Commission had approved of the idea, and had handed it back to the Council who were working out the rules surrounding training and supervision. So the scenery was shifting, and the interviews captured various states of readiness for such workers, as well as different attitudes towards them.

I went into the interviews convinced of the potential efficacy of such workers through a previous study I had undertaken (Lund, 1987) of community health workers in rural areas. I was aware also of the obstacles to their working effectively, one of which is professional resistance, as that has been the source, internationally, of barriers. As Doyal and Pennell (1981: 288) note for the health profession:

... wherever a western system of medicine predominates, any attempt to train auxiliary personnel to take responsibility for 'medical' tasks has met with very

considerable resistance from the medical profession. Even where there is a severe shortage of doctors, the training of auxiliaries has been regarded as a threat to the profession.

An interviewee in the House of Assembly saw the following positive aspects of a social work assistant, concentrating on skills levels and job creation:

"The aged, for example, need patience and time, they want listening to, and their caregivers need support - not necessarily from a person with a four year degree. In family care, where the prognosis of many families is pretty poor, it would be more appropriate to have social work assistants, under the supervision of a social worker. Social assistants would also be a form of job creation, which the country needs. The social workers' skills should go to planning, coordinating, designing programmes, networking with other professionals."

An interviewee from the TPA drew attention to the economic motivation for auxiliaries:

"There is a need to see that other people than professional social workers can attend to some welfare needs and problems. The reality is that we are working towards parity at all levels of service provision, not just pensions, at the same time as there is less money for welfare. So different ways and means (such as auxiliaries) must be found."

The provinces were in the process of preparing for the arrival of auxiliaries in 1992. CPA, for example, had put in for 25 auxiliary posts, and the NPA was purposely leaving a number of posts vacant to be filled by them, and had appointed a person to do the training, who was at that time writing a study guide.

The OFS administration was particularly enthusiastic about the auxiliaries, and said that the way had been paved by people already in the department, who were ex-Development Board employees who could not register with the CSW as they had diplomas, not degrees, and had demonstrated in practice their usefulness to the social workers.

The provinces identified the following tasks which they saw as being performed by the auxiliaries, with all of them emphasising that the auxiliaries would be doing 'gemeenskapssorg', not 'gemeenskapswerk' (community care, not community work):

- help people who apply for grants, especially doing repeat visits where the original visit has been done by a qualified social worker
- do community profiles in squatter areas, get to know what facilities exist
- work with committees of clubs and creches
- start clubs for the aged
- help with aftercare and reconstruction of people who have been to prison
- routine checkups for simple cases of after care supervision

- the straightforward investigations for reports for discharge from psychiatric hospitals
- help with creche claim forms for subsidy.<sup>1</sup>

There were certain reservations at provincial level about aspects of the auxiliary worker scheme. They posed the following questions: Was it necessary for the auxiliary workers to have a matric, when a Standard 8 might suffice? May it not be better for them to be employed by private welfare organisations, who had more credibility in the community than people working for government departments? May it not be a better idea to start out with one auxiliary to two or more social workers (rather than two auxiliaries to one social worker) until people got more experience in how to work together, and how to allocate responsibilities? It can be seen that these reservations were not in the main motivated by perceptions of auxiliaries as a threat to the profession.

The situation in the homelands in particular, and independent states to a lesser extent, was very different. Here is a selection of responses which capture the general attitude:

"We, the social workers, think they will pose as social workers, they will introduce themselves as social workers in the community, and they will want to work beyond their trained skills."

"It will be like in the PDP - people who are school dropouts will get a certain training and then will think they are social workers, and will go about saying they are social workers."

"There is a lot of talking about it, but there is no doing. It is being resisted by the professionals, even though it is a good idea."

"If the idea was that the auxiliary worker would eventually become a social worker, this would be acceptable. But if he or she were to remain an auxiliary for ever, they would end up interfering with the place of the social worker in the community, or they would take social work posts."

"There is certainly a role for welfare assistants, but they do threaten social workers. Social workers fear that employers will prefer the assistants as they will be paid less. But assistants could be very useful, especially in the rural areas. Social workers, once they are trained, are not basic enough in their approach, and do not want to go to the rural areas."

The professional threat, personally felt, or projected, can be seen very clearly in these quotations. It was a striking feature of the interviews that people who had just been acknowledging the inappropriateness of social work training in terms of the needs in the field, the shortage of social workers, the alienation of doing a job for which one is over-trained - the same people would, when asked about auxiliaries as a solution, close

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1 A complete list of tasks for auxiliaries was supplied by CPA; the above list reflects tasks which were mentioned spontaneously in interviews.

professional ranks, and show that they wanted at least to be cautious about, if not to block, the auxiliaries' introduction.

When asked for evidence of previous experience with auxiliaries, most of the homelands used the KwaNdebele auxiliary project as categorical proof of how the very idea of auxiliaries is bad. I will describe this in some detail, as an analysis of the scheme and people's interpretation of it makes an important threat to the future of these assistants in South African welfare.<sup>1</sup>

The KwaNdebele social work assistants scheme was started with the best of intentions. Some motivations were that social workers were not able to cover the rural areas; their training was not appropriate; they were too case work oriented; there were many community developers working in villages, from different departments, but their work was not well co-ordinated. The department had had its social work bursaries abolished, so the shortage of social workers was seen to be potentially a long term problem.

The objective of the scheme was to give a two-year training to people with Standard Ten to act as assistants to social workers in government employment. Twenty were trained, ten passed, and a number were still employed at the time of the interviews. Their main tasks were to assist in case, group and community care, in particular through helping set up branches of welfare organisations, arranging literacy classes, helping set up workshops for disabled people, and helping nurses promote the preventive aspects of primary health care.

From what I understand, the way the scheme was introduced and implemented meant that it could not possibly not have failed to achieve its objectives. The way it was designed unintentionally ensured that it would cause divisions between the auxiliaries and social workers, and drive social workers into a corner where they would resist any further incursions into their territory by auxiliaries. I list, in brief point form here, some of the aspects which were problematic.

The programme was introduced (just as with the PDP) without involving the social workers fully beforehand. There was lack of clarity about their conditions of employment, their status with the CSW, and their future career paths. The social workers doing the training had had little previous training experience. The supervisors had no experience in how to supervise this new category.

The assistants were posted to the remoter areas, where inexperienced social workers had no idea what they themselves or the assistants were meant to do, or how to involve the

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1 The facts about, and interpretations of this scheme were gathered in a number of interviews in the different administrations and coordinating departments, and should by no means all be attributed to the interviews in KwaNdebele.

assistants in their daily activities. No money was made available for transport for them to do their work effectively. No extra office space was allocated, thus putting a strain on already over-crowded, or non-existent, accommodation for social workers. Finally, there was no pre-planning for what would happen to those who failed the training (which was half the initial trainees).

Some of the assistants started referring to themselves as social workers (just as community health workers refer to themselves as 'nurses' in order for their general role and area of work to be understood by the community); the best of the assistants were in fact objectively a threat to the social workers, as they outshone them.

If one were to construct a case study for teaching purposes to illustrate how to ensure that a good idea fails, one could not do much better than the above. Many new initiatives fail or stumble; people learn from those experiences. But this case is especially serious because it has entered the conventional wisdom of welfare in the homelands as evidence that auxiliary work in itself is a bad idea. "Look what happened in KwaNdebele" was the point made time and again in interviews to support the negative attitudes about auxiliaries quoted earlier.

Is there a way of overcoming this, given that professionals, from all disciplines, and internationally, will resist entry by those with less training? Other departments may well follow the method of introduction of auxiliaries which was reported by the OFS Provincial Administration. There, it was reported that the social workers themselves had expressed the need for assistance (possibly because they already had the model of the ex-Development Board people referred to above). But the department then did a thing which one can imagine would be of vital importance: the senior management got the social workers themselves to identify which tasks the auxiliaries could do, and how they should be trained to do them. This surely shows a proper understanding of both social work dynamics and adult education process.

A greater openness towards the introduction of more different levels of welfare workers (in addition to the auxiliaries) is one key to the survival of a social work which has something to contribute. Already, paraprofessionals in other disciplines are doing work that overlaps with social work: the paraprofessional legal and welfare workers in rural areas, who help people with all manner of welfare problems, are one case in point; the general advice givers trained by the advice office movement are another.

A key to the successful introduction of paraprofessionals must surely be that the dominant level has a clear sense of its own role, and the best it has to offer. Then it 'allows' people with less formal training to come and work at a 'lesser' level - that is how the profession keeps itself intact, and untouched. Social work is in a vulnerable position because its own boundary definitions are not clear at this point in time, and as it struggles to find out how to be more relevant to needs.

There may be valuable lessons to learn from developments within the trade unions, in particular the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa. An intensive study is being made there of education and training for metal workers, with the core idea being to identify competencies required for particular tasks, develop and/or recognise existing appropriate training courses for the tasks, and then develop the possibility of articulation between the forms of training. One does not have to do four years of technical college and then start right at the beginning again with a university course in engineering, for example. The trick is to design horizontal and vertical linkages between different training institutions.

In the case of social work, then, it would not be either a professional social worker or one level of auxiliary; it would be searching for ways of recognising and rewarding different levels of training and experience - whether as a child care worker, a person skilled in helping people get grants, or whatever else is required. This would leave intact the top level of university trained person, and would allow some possibility of an affordable and appropriate social work in South Africa.

## **6 Departments as placement agencies**

In South Africa, social workers training at universities have to do practical placements with welfare agencies, and the government departments of welfare are used as sites for this student training.

Most departments reported that there was not much contact between the universities sending students, and the departments. Some felt neglected by the universities: university supervisors seldom visited, they were not alerted in advance that social work students were coming; they got no feedback about the students' progress afterwards. Others felt that they themselves (ie the departments) were to blame for the lack of communication. They were aware of their limited ability to supervise students, and one got the sense that the students placements were endured, rather than dealt with in terms of enhanced learning by students.

One person captured the tension well:

"The students come here with guidelines as to what they should do when they are here, and they just want to do that. We on our side are guilty sometimes of just wanting to get the burden over with."

The OPA had a proactive attitude towards the placements. It had been on a recruiting campaign to get students, both by going to universities and by hosting visits by the universities of Bophuthatswana and Fort Hare. It had further arranged a workshop, attended by other provinces and universities, to discuss the provincial department as placement agency. A working committee was set up to devise and circulate a policy on field work training of students.



The OPA attributes part of its positive activity as a placement agency to the fact that there is a properly designed training programme, which exposes fourth year students to all of the social work skills. The OPA can offer community work experience. It has appointed a full time field work trainer at the Bloemfontein office, and designated a person in each District Office as having special responsibility to work with students.

## **7 The government bursary scheme**

The provinces, homelands and independent states have a scheme through which financial assistance is given to people to study social work at universities, in exchange for a period of employment in the department after completing their studies. In some cases they are expected to do their training placements in the departments as well. This scheme operates differently in the different areas and the following are the main issues involved.

In the past, the Commission for Administration and the Public Service Commission controlled the bursary schemes for all sectors (eg law, medicine, social work etc). A number of departments in both homelands and provinces reported that control over the selection process of students had recently been devolved, or where not fully devolved, there was now much more consultation.

Two examples show the importance of this devolution to the potential success of the scheme in future. In the CPA, control had been fully devolved to the department, and it was now able to apply specifically for a block of twenty bursaries for black social work students. In the past the students would have been competing in general with prospective social work students of other races.

In KwaNdebele, the department is now able to make recommendations about suitable candidates according to its own selection criteria. One important criterion for them is whether the candidate comes from the area and is likely to return, for example, and this would not in the past have been an important PSC criterion.

There have been problems with the bursary scheme. Some departments reported that students have not returned to work for the departments - they have paid their way out and left. In two areas, it was reported that no more bursaries were being made available by the PSC for social workers. The governments opened up and closed down bursary offers depending on where they foresaw future human resource needs.

Transkei's welfare department was at the time of interview going to be unable to absorb the social work students then doing first, second, and third year at university, as posts would be filled by the time they graduated. The bursaries were therefore going to be curtailed. Second, it was the view of one official that the scheme had encouraged some people to

study social work for the wrong reasons - they saw it as just a future job, not a commitment to social work, or used it as a basic degree from which to study law, for example. Also there had been poor screening of some applicants.

Given the enormous training need in the welfare field facing South Africa, it would seem such bursary schemes could have a valuable role to play. They could be more effective if there were affirmative action criteria which would strengthen the ability of black people to get access to the bursaries. The welfare departments should be intimately involved in the selection and screening process, and there should be rigorous and effective rules to secure the employment which the bursary holders owe to the departments. However, all concerned should accept that no bursary scheme ever delivers 100 percent results; students will be influenced by being exposed to the university and some will want to change courses. This may be an immediate loss to social work, but is a contribution to the general pool of skilled people in South Africa.

## SECTION EIGHT

### THE LINKAGES BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE WELFARE SECTORS

#### Introduction

An investigation of the private welfare sector as such was beyond the scope of this study. However there were places of articulation between the public and private sectors, an understanding of which enables us to see the challenges facing welfare as a whole. These are the uneven development of the private sector through subsidisation and other controls on funding, the new welfare programmes, and the national councils.

#### 1 The uneven development of the private welfare sector

In order to encourage the development and maintenance of the private welfare sector, the government has subsidised social work posts in voluntary welfare organisations. In the course of the interviews, the dire lack of development of the voluntary sector in black welfare, and especially in the homelands and independent states, became evident.

Table 11 shows the number of private sector social work posts which were subsidised by the tricameral departments, and the ratio of subsidised posts to the population served by those departments.

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**Table 11: Number of private sector social work posts subsidised by tricameral departments, and ratio of subsidised posts to population, 1991**

Department	No. posts	Posts: pop
Assembly	900	1:5030
Delegates	228 <sup>1</sup>	1:3751
Representatives	467	1:6097

1 Two different figures, 235 and 222, were given in interviews. The midpoint has been taken.

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It must be remembered that as social welfare is increasingly practised non-racially, these racially-derived ratios will become less valid. However, the Indian population served

through Delegates is shown to have the most favourable ratio of subsidised private sector posts to population, at 1:3751, with the ratio for the coloured population being least favourable of the three tricameral parliaments, at 1:6097, and the white ratio falling between at 1:5030.

In white welfare, no new posts for social workers in the private sector had been subsidised since 1985. An interviewee reported that white subsidies had not been cut back, neither had they been extended, and new welfare initiatives were struggling to get subsidies. Awareness was expressed that new white welfare posts would be put on hold in order that welfare for other races could be developed.

In the interview at Representatives, the wish was expressed that more posts in the private sector could be subsidised. Twenty new subsidised posts had been approved at the time of the interview and the interviewee said that there was an awareness of the need to keep the distribution of posts in mind in future - not to subsidise where services would overlap, but to use the subsidy to get a more even distribution of services.

In stark contrast to the tricameral subsidisation of posts, as far as could be ascertained, there were no subsidised social workers in voluntary welfare organisations in the independent states or the homelands. Transkei and KaNgwane were, at the time of interviews, for the first time considering a proposal from voluntary welfare organisations for the subsidisation of posts.

Interviewees in some areas linked the lack of subsidised social work posts with the lack of a private welfare initiative, particularly in Ciskei, QwaQwa, Transkei and KwaNdebele. A number of interviewees made the point that to say there was no voluntary welfare initiative did not mean there were no welfare activities going on. There was a widespread feeling that the definition of welfare used for registration as a welfare organisation was too narrow.

Bophuthatswana, KwaZulu, Lebowa and Venda had a number of registered welfare organisations. Bophuthatswana reported subsidising about forty local and national organisations, and also that it had been taking over some previously private initiatives which had been poorly run, or had run out of money. A KwaZulu interviewee said that its past 100 percent subsidy of some institutions would be phased out soon, as this created an expectation that "KwaZulu will always pay".

Gazankulu has four registered welfare organisations, for the blind, alcoholics, aged, and an aftercare centre. An interviewee reported that after some effort, the welfare department had got government approval for subsidising staff at its eight registered creches. This decision was overturned by a Pretoria-sent Joint Finance Committee, which ruled that such creches must be supported by private initiative, not by government.

KaNgwane had a unique (for the homelands and independent states) private organisation, the Lusito Lwesive Welfare Association, which acts as an umbrella body for other private welfare organisations. It was established in 1982 to administer disaster funds following a major bus accident. In 1984 its constitution was changed (spearheaded by a senior government social worker) to enable it to see to other social problems, and to fulfill a co-ordinating function. It is registered, it has affiliates, some of which are independently registered, and it plays an organising role for private welfare in KaNgwane.

A number of interviewees mentioned difficulties with fundraising as an obstacle to the development of the private welfare sector. The cumbersome procedure attached to getting a fund-raising number under fund-raising legislation, was mentioned a number of times. QwaQwa gave an example of one organisation which had been carefully nurtured into being by the social workers, to the point where it had the structures in place such as to enable it to apply for a fundraising number. This was granted, but with fundraising activities restricted to magisterial districts in which there was no formal private business sector at all.

This picture was confirmed by the Orange Free State, where it was reported that many of the townships had little economic base from which to raise funds. A result is that organisations stay small, raising funds through small events such as cake sales, jumble sales, beauty contests etc.

In KwaNdebele, an organisation's application for a fundraising number was rejected although it was doing welfare-related activities. The Regional Welfare Board which processed the application considered that because the main actor was a spiritual healer, doing religious work as well as welfare, her organisation did not fall within the scope of welfare.

At the time of interviews, both Bophuthatswana and Ciskei were introducing legislation which would attempt to make procedures regarding fund-raising more simplified, more accessible, and more appropriate to their circumstances.

A further factor which has inhibited the development of the private welfare sector in the independent states has been the stance taken by many funders that they do not support TBVC because they do not recognise their political legitimacy or sovereignty. This has applied to national and international funders. In addition, some funders insist on only giving to organisations registered with Pretoria, with this result for one of the independent states:

"Once we could not get a donation from Coca Cola because we were part of TBVC, not RSA. For Coca Cola to give, we would have to register our organisations with RSA, but we could not do that because we are not in RSA. We sometimes took chances and got money from Indian businessmen in a town near us that is in RSA. This was against the law."

What was surprising to me was that there was not more evidence of such 'law-breaking' (or perhaps it was not disclosed in the interview situation). It is well-known that the present fund-raising legislation is so inappropriate that it is a strong positive motivator for people to simply ignore the law. At the time of writing, the legislation is under review. If and when the government also makes donations to welfare tax-deductible, the private welfare sector would have a better chance of heeding the government's call for privatisation.

## **2 Welfare programmes**

During the time that this study was done, South African welfare was in the process of moving from a system where the basis of government subsidy of the private welfare sector was posts, to one where it was welfare programmes.

Voluntary welfare organisations now have to motivate for subsidy through written proposals which focus on specific welfare priorities, and set specific programme objectives. Though the switch to programmes was motivated largely in terms of better management and accountability, the new system has also been posed as a cost-saver - better managed programmes would be more efficient and therefore more cost-effective. During interviews people were asked about their expectations and experience of the programmes.

None of the independent states was aware of the new programme system; in the homelands only KwaZulu had started orientating itself towards a switch. People in other departments spoke of the positive potential of the new system. They said it reflects a broader, more integrated approach to welfare, and that it could promote better management. Also people would learn to compete more effectively for scarce resources through the programme writing.

Almost without exception, however, welfare personnel who had encountered the scheme thought it had been poorly introduced. Criticisms were that it had not been properly thought through, that unachievable deadlines had been set, and that there was at the time of the interviews a fair degree of bureaucratic chaos which was not doing the relationship between the public and private sectors very much good. The objectives underlying the move to welfare programmes are to be welcomed. Over time, these procedural wrinkles with changing to a new system should be able to be ironed out (the new deadline for complete change over was April 1992). However three substantive problematic issues are in my view inherent in the system as it is presently being implemented, which raise questions about whether it can contribute to a more appropriate and more cost effective welfare system.

The first issue regards the evaluation procedure. As described to me in the provinces, the procedure for application for a subsidy is: a w.o. writes a proposal and submits it to the

provincial regional welfare office. This office evaluates it and if it passes, it gets sent to the nearest Regional Welfare Board (RWB). Here it gets re-evaluated and again if it passes it goes to provincial Head Office where it is evaluated for cost effectiveness, and whether it fits into overall provincial welfare priorities, and whether it meets criteria for professional service standards. If it passes there, the programme gets subsidised.

The cumbersomeness of this repetitive evaluation is apparent, and for welfare organisations working non-racially, it must be remembered that they must submit proposals to four different government departments, so this means twelve evaluative interventions per proposal. This cannot be cost-effective, nor can it be a model of good management for the private sector to follow. It rests on a key assumption that Head Office is sufficiently familiar with and aware of welfare's changing needs on the ground, where welfare organisations work. It also assumes that Regional Welfare Boards act with overall regional interests in mind. The most common criticism of RWBs was precisely that they do not do this - individuals possibly inevitably represent their own sector's interests in the allocation of funds, and they over-represent the urban areas.

The second issue is that at present, proposals are considered only from welfare organisations which employ a professional social worker. Given the backlog of social workers in the black welfare sector, and given the underdevelopment of welfare in rural areas, this wipes out with one stroke the possibility of the energetic driving of scarce welfare resources to where they are most needed.

The third issue is linked. The plan in future is that individual institutions, and individual creches, must each write a welfare programme. At present the applications require a high degree of literacy and numeracy. This will exclude, once again, access to the system by the very people and organisations which a welfare system is supposed to benefit.

One interviewee pointed out how ironic it was that the idea of the programmes was started before the economic squeeze on the welfare services was perceived to be serious. Now that the procedures are more nearly in place (following all the delays in introducing it) there is limited money for welfare. One department said that they had to cut back on the money earmarked for training people in the welfare organisations how to write proposals.

The procedures as they stand at present are acknowledged to be too complicated. The new system must be made to work to the benefit of a better spread of welfare resources, down to the poor and out to the countryside. It will take resources to do this - resources which are at present being decreased.

### **3 National councils**

South Africa has a number of national councils in the welfare field. They are private sector umbrella bodies which operate in the different fields of service. Local child welfare

societies, for example, would affiliate to the National Council for Child and Family Welfare.

There are over twenty councils in South Africa which are recognised by the DNH. A consistent theme of recent government welfare policy documents has been the need to rationalise the councils, as there are perceived to be too many of them, often with overlapping functions.

Interaction between the national councils and the independent states decreased after independence. There is some liaison, for example where a particular council is asked for assistance with training. Bophuthatswana mentioned the helpful role played by SANCA in particular. Also some council meetings and conferences set up by councils are attended by TBVC personnel as observers. With the exception of Bophuthatswana's National Council for the Deaf, the four TBVC states do not have their own national councils. The body that appears in Ciskei's Estimates of Expenditure as the National Council for the Aged does not in fact exist.

The relationship between the South African councils and the homelands seems to be rather delicate. Overall there was little contact, most of this being in the form of homelands attending courses and workshops in a council's head office area. Some mentioned feeling excluded by the councils, and two examples were given where a national council was seen to have blocked homeland initiatives to set up private welfare initiatives. The feeling was that the national councils were not reaching out into rural areas effectively.

There was also a procedural barrier to interaction with national councils:

"We could invite them, but then they have to come here at our expense, and we do not budget for that."

KaNgwane's Lusito Lwesive Association was the only homeland organisation which resembles a national council in terms of structure and function. It may well provide an interesting regional model for the future.

The other welfare departments expressed mixed feelings about councils. On the positive side, one province reported that the quarterly meetings between provinces, DDA and PPA and the councils were a very useful forum for solving problems between the private and public welfare sectors. An interviewee in Assembly pointed to the councils' useful potential role in management training, policy formulation, and the training of social workers. However, there was concern particularly about the large number of councils - five, for example, in the field of disabled people. Further, they were seen as expensive because of being top heavy: "They need fewer top posts and more supervisors." They were seen as too preoccupied with controlling affiliated organisations, but not being supportive when problems arise. They were perceived to contribute to the expense of fragmentation, with



one national council getting subsidies from perhaps eight different departments, and all the procedures that involves.

It is clear that the national councils, on the other hand, would perceive themselves as having to cope with the effects of the government-created fragmentation. Vitus (1990:30), for example, writes on behalf of the National Council of Mental Health:

On the national level alone the voluntary mental health movement deals with twenty eight authorities in the fields of health and welfare... National Councils which serve as links between these authorities and those that provide direct services are slowly grinding to a standstill because of an ever-increasing maze of red tape and confusing policy directives.

## SECTION NINE

### CONCLUSION: PENDING THE NEW SOUTH AFRICA ...

In the course of the interviews, I asked a welfare planner what the government's policy was likely to be on a certain issue, and I was told, "The matter is in abeyance, pending the new South Africa". The main objective of this study, done while the new South Africa was pending, was to do some groundwork for a database which would enable future research work on issues of debureaucratisation, affordability, efficiency and effectiveness in government welfare. For the purposes of a coherent report, the information collected has had to be categorised and discussed in different bits. In this concluding section, I want to get back to the whole, to convey the flavour rather than the figures.

There was an overwhelming sense, from within the heart of government departments, of the need for a radical overhaul of welfare. There was a frank acknowledgement of the wastefulness and inefficiency which resulted from a welfare system which has been primarily ideologically shaped and determined - and which is certainly not affordable. What they perceived to be more positive was the change in attitude towards working for the government on the part of social workers. The feeling of isolation was changing, although there were areas where government employment continued to be a complete barrier to grassroots social work. A new, legitimate government will hold at least the possibility of galvanising welfare workers, and of providing the vision for social policy which many felt was lacking.

All felt that the major challenge was to overcome the backlog in coloured, Indian and black welfare, but particularly for the last. The House of Assembly gave an example from white welfare where seven different organisations in the Pretoria area had recently put forward different proposals for the adoption of children, with each programme budgeting for specialised personnel, training and transport costs. Juxtapose this against the nearly absolute lack of institutional facilities for black welfare. On the positive side, though, there had been concrete gains in the development of welfare for black people, particularly in institutional care in the provinces, and increases in posts.

There had been recent multi-lateral agreements not to duplicate facilities in the homelands and independent states, in order to share existing resources more, and this was also seen as a positive step. However, it would miss the point completely if sharing were taken to mean circulation of the institutionally needy around the outer edges of already under-provided black welfare in the homelands and independent states and in the provinces, rather than sharing meaning a clear inter-racial shifting of resources, including a spatial redistribution towards the informal settlements and rural areas.

Some people made the point that sharing was not just about sharing of physical and personnel resources - in divided South Africa, it needs to be also about sharing awareness of what the unevenness has been. People who have grown up in cities simply have no conception of what the working day in a rural area is like, and people who have not worked in completely under-resourced township offices cannot imagine that situation. The suggestion was made, and it should be taken seriously, that one way to overcome this might be to arrange an exchange scheme between social workers from different departments, staggered over a year or two.

There was a broad consensus in the departments about the need for a broader definition of welfare, one that is oriented more towards community work and development. There had been some brave attempts to introduce innovations; on the whole, new schemes got swamped by the need for statutory work. In addition to this, the one side of the government that is calling for privatisation and independent initiative is being countered by another part of the bureaucracy which discourages new initiatives through burdensome legislative requirements for fundraising activities. This undermines not only local groups but also the welfare personnel.

The mismatch between the skills of four-year university trained social workers and the tasks they were actually required to perform was perceived to be one of the really costly elements of the welfare system. Within the ranks of the professional welfare workers, there would seem to be an inability to follow through on the logic of appropriate and affordable provision when it comes to welcoming the introduction of diverse categories of welfare workers, such as auxiliaries. Some departments embraced the idea, and had prepared the ground for training and integration; they felt that the Council for Social Work was still over-regulating and not being flexible enough. Others were on the whole more wary, and sensed a professional threat. Unless these attitudes change, social workers will find themselves without a role which has appropriateness and integrity.

Most interviewees spoke about the problems facing welfare being caused by the poverty which apartheid is perceived to have created. They understood the limits of privatisation in welfare, and a number of people were very precise about not being able to expect volunteers to do too much because of their struggle to make domestic ends meet. Yet deep concern was also expressed about the potential creation of dependency on a 'welfare state', through the provision of pensions and grants. And the same people would, in another part of the interview, say that it was the pensions and grants that were keeping whole families going.

It is likely that in future there will be a dual system of provision (see Patel, 1991) and that the partnership between the public and private welfare sectors will continue, though with different priorities. One can envisage one centrally controlled department, which determines the general framework, is responsible for planning, coordinating and regulating

(regulating for flexibility, not control) and which finances local provision, private and public, which can be more flexible and responsive. The state subsidy of the private sector could then get used to drive provision in certain directions - programmes that protect women and children, for example, or which encourage rural welfare development.

Threatening any future vision is the possibility that African countries are losing their national sovereignty in the social policy arena, as a result of the intervention by such institutions as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund through so-called structural adjustment programmes. The United Nations Children's Fund, as early as 1985, identified one of the consequences of adjustment policies in Africa:

One of the main threats to the poor and the young comes from the cutbacks in public spending which are a standard part of the adjustment package. Since governments are rarely able to fire government employees en masse, cutbacks in public spending usually mean cutbacks in the operational costs of the social services. The dispensaries will always have enough staff but not enough drugs; the schools will have teachers but not enough teaching equipment. (UNICEF, 1985)

Finally, policy formulation is a process, and part of that process has to be a growing understanding on the part of those who should participate in the discussions and debates as to what is at stake. We cannot move from the rhetoric - from all sides - of the past, to a realistic assessment of available choices, without good information. It is a central task of government departments to provide this. There is a need for information systems, from the bottom up, which relate to welfare needs and resources, which enable better management, which are manageable by those who need to provide the data, which are comprehensible to people outside of government departments, and which are publicly accessible.

The welfare sector in particular is close to the problems and needs of those who have been severely damaged by this country's history. One of its key roles in the changing South Africa could be, through a more imaginative use of information systems, to enable all South Africans to have a greater understanding of what the impact of the past has been. In this way it could help make more apparent the tasks of healing and of reconstruction that lie ahead.

**Appendix 1: Some important dates in the formation of  
government welfare departments in South Africa**

- 1937 Establishment of the Department of Welfare.
- 1958 Merger of welfare and pensions into the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions.
- 1959 Establishment of Department of Coloured Affairs.
- 1961 Establishment of Department of Indian Affairs. Welfare for black people goes to Bantu Administration.
- 1971 Act 21 of 1971 enabling the creation of self-governing areas and independent states.
- 1972 Self-governing status for Lebowa.
- 1973 Self-governing status for Gazankulu.
- 1974 Self-governing status for QwaQwa.
- 1976 Independent status for Transkei.
- 1977 Self-governing status for KwaZulu.
- 1977 Self-governing status for KaNgwane.
- 1977 Independent status for Bophuthatswana.
- 1979 Self-governing status for KwaNdebele.
- 1979 Independent status for Venda.
- 1980 Economic Community of Southern Africa (ECOSA) was formed with an interim secretariat, SECOSAF, which became a permanent secretariat in 1985.
- 1981 Independent status for Ciskei.
- 1984 New constitution brought the tricameral parliament; welfare became an 'own affair' under Assembly, Delegates and Representatives, for white, Indian and coloured welfare respectively; the Department of National Health (and later, Population Development) was formed to deal with health, welfare and population development at a 'general affairs' level.
- 1985 Department of Development Aid was established to 'give budgetary assistance to the six homelands'; the welfare section had a co-ordinating and controlling role in homelands welfare.
- 1985-8 Social welfare for black people in the common area was devolved from Department of Constitutional Development and Planning (formerly Cooperation and Development) to provincial level. The coordinating department is first called Department of Development Planning, then after some name changes became Planning, Provincial Affairs and National Housing.
- 1988-91 Harmonisation of welfare services and pensions in TBVC started being promoted through SECOSAF in 1988; multi-lateral agreement was signed in 1991.

## Appendix 2

### Schedule of interviews

13 September 1990	Department of National Health and Population Development, Pretoria
26 September 1990	Transkei, Umtata
22 October 1990	House of Assembly, Pretoria
23 October 1990	Transvaal Provincial Administration, Pretoria
9 November 1990	House of Representatives, Cape Town
29 January 1991 & 12 February 1991	House of Delegates, Durban
5 April 1991	KwaZulu, Ulundi
8 April 1991	Natal Provincial Administration, Pietermaritzburg
17 April 1991	Bophuthatswana, Mmabatho
21 April 1991	Venda, Thohoyandou
23 April 1991	Gazankulu, Giyani
26 April 1991	Kangwane, Louieville
7 May 1991	Orange Free State Provincial Administration, Bloemfontein
8 May 1991	QwaQwa, Phutaditjaba
28 May 1991	KwaNdebele, KwaMhlangu
29 May 1991	Lebowa, Lebowakgomo
6 June 1991	Cape Provincial Administration, Cape Town
16 August 1991	Department of Development Aid, Pretoria
23 August 1991	Ciskei, Bisho

## Appendix 3

## Population figures used in the construction of the database

		<b>Total</b>
<b>White</b>	5 052 100	
<b>Indian</b>	978 300	
<b>Coloured</b>	3 244 400	
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>9 274 800</b>
<b>Cape</b>	1 835 657	
<b>Natal</b>	783 175	
<b>Orange Free State</b>	1 538 171	
<b>Transvaal</b>	5 771 282	
<b>Black (provinces)</b>		<b>9 928 285</b>
<b>Gazankulu</b>	687 306	
<b>KaNgwane</b>	445 087	
<b>KwaNdebele</b>	298 551	
<b>KwaZulu</b>	4 504 247	
<b>Lebowa</b>	2 097 683	
<b>QwaQwa</b>	313 798	
<b>Black (homelands)</b>		<b>8 346 672</b>
<b>Bophuthatswana</b>	1 969 000	
<b>Ciskei</b>	818 000	
<b>Transkei</b>	3 163 250	
<b>Venda</b>	543 000	
<b>Black (independent states)</b>		<b>6 493 250</b>
<hr/> <b>Total population</b>		<hr/> <b>34 043 007</b> <hr/>

## Appendix 4

### Further details of procedures used in analysing expenditure

The main rules, exclusions and assumptions regarding calculations of expenditure were given in the body of the report. Further details are given here, so that procedures can be checked, and particularly in the hope that future researchers will be able to improve on the methods used.

1990 was used as the benchmark year for the construction of the data base. The Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year ending March 1990 were used wherever they were available. For Venda, the Estimates for 1989 were used. The most recent published data for KwaNdebele was the 1987 Auditor-General's report which provided no data which was comparable with the other departments. This is the main reason why KwaNdebele is absent from some of the tables. The Department of Development Aid provided data which allowed the inclusion of KwaNdebele in some of the calculations on personnel, and other very valuable data on social security spending.

#### 1 Personnel expenditure

The chief problem in analysing personnel expenditure when departments are combined is how to distribute personnel costs proportionally. This is particularly so when budgets are constructed entirely differently from each other. The following procedures were used.

- 1.1 Ciskei, KwaZulu, Transkei and Venda have separate welfare departments, with separate welfare votes, with personnel expenditure listed separately, so they posed no problem.
- 1.2 Where there were combined health and welfare votes, health-specific expenditure, welfare-specific expenditure and combined expenditure were usually distinguishable. For welfare figures, welfare-specific expenditure plus a percentage of combined expenditure were used. The percentage used was the percentage that personnel expenditure in the welfare-specific sections made of personnel expenditure for the whole vote. It would be misrepresentative to take the percentage that welfare-specific expenditure was of the whole vote as it is disproportionately large (with regard to personnel expenditure) due to expenditure on pensions and grants. A similar method was used when the Minister's salary was provided for in another vote (as is usually the case).

These methods were used for Assembly, Delegates, Gazankulu, KaNgwane, Lebowa, Orange Free State Provincial Administration, and Representatives.

- 1.3 The budget of the Cape Provincial Administration had to be dealt with differently to either of the above formulae with regard to personnel. Personnel expenditure for social administration and places of safety were listed separately and posed no problem; 50 percent of the personnel expenditure for the three regional offices of Community Services was allocated for welfare personnel expenditure (which is probably an overestimate).
- 1.4 The Natal and Transvaal Provincial Administrations required a different formula as the figures for welfare personnel were not disaggregated from the overall Community Services figures at all. Natal advised that about one fifth of the overall salary costs would go to welfare personnel; as it appeared that the Transvaal proportional budget allocations were similar, 20 percent was allocated for both these administrations.



1.5 Bophuthatswana presented a problem as first, health and welfare are combined and the personnel figures are not disaggregated, and second, the pensions personnel are in the Ministry of the Interior. Because the professional welfare personnel (without pensions personnel) is so small compared to health, 10 percent of the Health and Welfare personnel vote was used (probably an over-estimate). We were advised that an allocation of 20 percent of the Interior personnel vote to pensions personnel would be appropriate (much of the rest going for the salaries of border post employees).

## **2 Anomalies with the social security data**

2.1 Figures for KwaNdebele were derived from data provided by DDA.

2.2 In Ciskei and Transkei, single care grants appear in the welfare budget. They were excluded from the totals for the purposes of this study.

2.3 Regarding the actual number of social security beneficiaries, 1991 figures, provided during interviews, were used as if they were 1990 figures for Cape Provincial Administration, Ciskei, KaNgwane and KwaNdebele.

2.4 For QwaQwa, actual 1991 pensions and grants figures were used rather than the 1990 estimates, as the former were disaggregated according to category (elderly, disabled, etc.) for the first time.

## Appendix 5

**Table A1: Departments' transfer payments to individuals according to category, R'000, 1990**

<b>Admin</b>	<b>Aged</b>	<b>Disability</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Relief</b>	<b>Total</b>
HOA	490 800	115 552	103 595	7 771	717 718
HOD	69 045	51 579	55 028	1 301	176 953
HOR	289 875	201 247	210 476	23 191	724 789
TRI	849 720	368 378	369 099	32 263	1 619 460
CPA	117 446	61 234	11 320	130	190 130
NPA	80 288	26 758	6 339	58	113 443
OPA	101 645	35 317	3 915	57	140 934
TPA	324 626	74 515	13 761	137	413 039
PRO	624 005	197 824	35 335	382	857 546
GAZ	69 898	9 617	473	45	80 033
KAN	46 264	7 790	6	0	54 060
KDB	25 774	2 543	0	0	28 317
KZU	363 830	111 957	4 667	334	480 788
LEB	169 829	21 279	0	0	191 108
QWA	27 834	5 528	430	741	34 533
HL	703 429	158 714	5 576	1 120	868 839
BOP	97 919	24 020	202	3 146	125 287
CKI	62 529	18 894	5 556	462	87 441
TKI	231 251	56 187	662	668	288 768
VEN	33 974	3 775	130	50	37 929
IS	425 673	102 876	6 550	4 326	539 425
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2 602 827</b>	<b>827 792</b>	<b>416 560</b>	<b>38 091</b>	<b>3 885 270</b>

Note: The zero figure in some columns does not necessarily reflect no expenditure. It can mean the amount allocated was too small for inclusion.

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