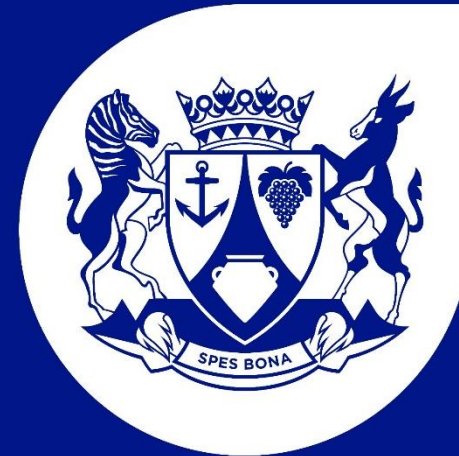


Youth Poverty and Unemployment

MEC for Social Development:
Sharna Fernandez
23 August 2021

0800 50 142 142 | www.westerncape.gov.za

WesternCapeGov  www.facebook.com/WesternCapeGovernment



Western Cape
Government

URhulumente
weNtshona Koloni

URhulumente
weNtshona Koloni



Context:

- The Western Cape Government understands the value of young people, who are the future of our country. We have a vision that every young person in the Western Cape will be an inspired, educated, responsible, independent, healthy and productive citizen with positive personal, family and social relations by the age of 25.
- We have put many structures and strategies in place to make this a reality. We offer services ranging from education and life skills, work opportunities to dealing with substance abuse.
- We convened numerous meetings within the provincial government and with our local government partners: Bosberade, Premier's Coordinating Forums, COVID Hotspot meetings, weekly meetings with Municipal Managers, and Medium-Term Budget Policy Committee meetings, amongst others. We formed new partnerships with civil society in the wake of the myriad of negative impacts of COVID-19 and appreciated anew the importance of partnerships.

Context continued...

Owing to COVID-19, our social and economic challenges are greater while our fiscal resources have dramatically shrunk. This requires the elevation and prioritisation of interventions and collaboration between various stakeholders.

The Western Cape Government developed a “Recovery Plan” in recognition of, and response to, these dual pandemics.

- It identifies the problems that require an urgent, Whole-of-Society response in order to create jobs for both young and old residents, foster safe communities, and promote the wellbeing of all the residents of the Western Cape. It will be pursued with the same energy and collaborative approach that created the coalition that came together to fight the virus.

Through the Western Cape Government’s Recovery Plan, we are working to create jobs, and to uphold the dignity, safety and wellbeing of all residents in the province, especially for our youth.

What is the Recovery Plan?

The Recovery Plan is based on four themes:

- **COVID RECOVERY:** The pandemic is still with us; existing health measures must continue, and new ones put in place, and we must also deal with the secondary impacts of COVID-19 on the delivery of health services.
- **JOBS:** The economic impact of COVID-19 has been severe. We can only recover if our economy grows, and our citizens generate income.
- **SAFETY:** This is the overarching theme for the Provincial Strategic Plan, and it is equally relevant going forward. It is inextricably linked with Wellbeing, as Safety cannot be achieved if basic human needs are not met.
- **WELLBEING:** Government must ensure that the basic human needs of our citizens are realised, as guaranteed in the Constitution.

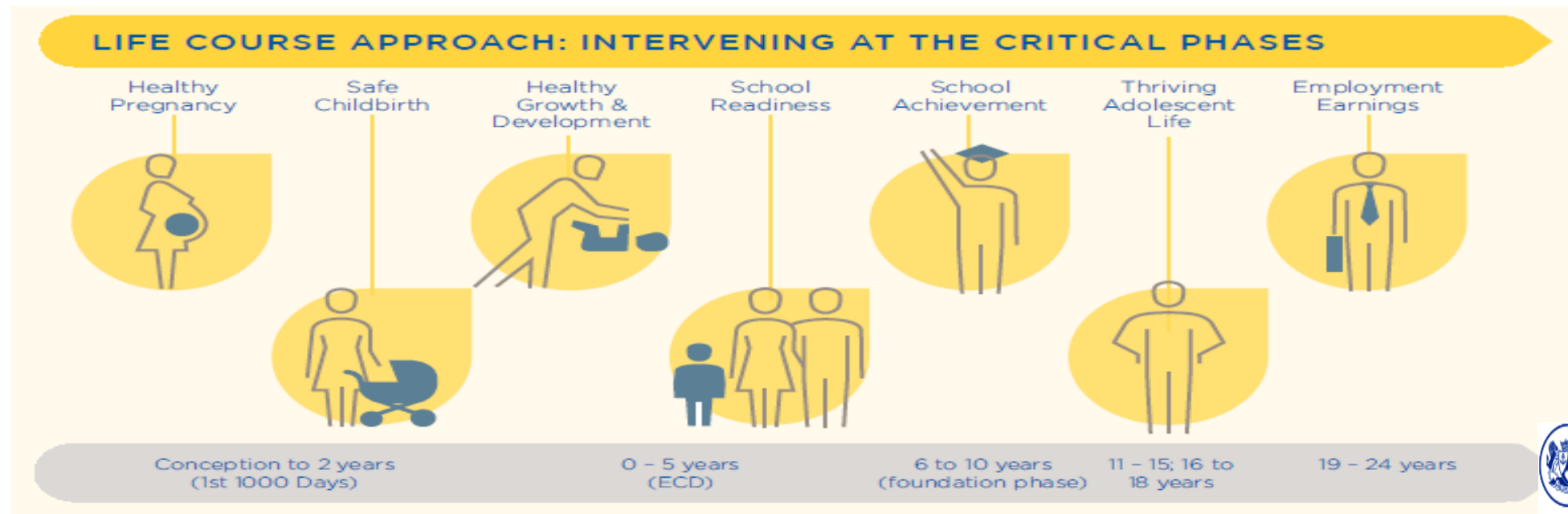
A concept that is central to the above themes is dignity. The citizen is at the centre of everything that we do as government, and what we deliver and how we deliver it must uphold the dignity of every individual, household, and community.

Applying the Life Course approach

The Recovery Plan uses the life course to identify the phases in each person's life and the basic needs that they require.

As a government, we believe it is critical to intervene at the earliest stages of someone's life right through to 25 years old. This is because intervening at the critical early stages from conception to 25 years will have a positive cumulative effect throughout the person's life and across generations.

- The Plan therefore focuses on children and youth up to 24 years of age as a priority and includes vulnerable populations for those older than 24 years – see Figure below.



Jobs:

- *What has been the impact of COVID-19?*

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, our economy was experiencing a period of protracted economic weaknesses. In the Western Cape, the economy grew by only 0.8 percent in 2018, and this declined to a projected 0.2 percent in 2019. By the time lockdown happened, South Africa was already in a technical recession. Then came COVID-19.

In January 2021, the International Monetary Fund estimated that the world economy would contract by 3.5 percent in 2020, up 0.9 percentage points from the October 2020 projection. COVID-19 is expected to result in an 8.5 percent contraction in provincial economic activity and an employment decline of 140, 891 jobs (5.9 percent) in 2020. While the South African labour market showed a strong recovery by October 2020, with employment levels close to February 2020 pre-pandemic levels, there appears to have been a major shift in the labour market.

Only half of those employed in April 2020 were again employed in October 2020, while a third of those employed in October 2020 were employed in February 2020.

In short, those who were employed pre-pandemic were not automatically those who were employed in October 2020.

Jobs continued...

- *How has our strategy changed, given the impact of COVID-19?*

The WCG has taken account of the increase in unemployment, reduction in provincial economic activity, and lack of investment, and has developed a plan to help the economy “bounce back” and “bounce up”.

The goal for the focus area of Jobs is to:

Create an enabling environment for job creation, primarily through supporting the private sector and markets, thereby improving wellbeing and safety

An enabling environment to grow the economy and create jobs will be achieved by focusing on the following themes, across the WCG:

Accelerate Ease of Doing Business	Enable the ease of doing business by addressing 1) the binding and systemic constraints in the economy, and 2) the red tape of government and its agencies
Boost investment and exports	Boost private sector investments and promote and support exports
Boost infrastructure	Stimulate the economy by boosting infrastructure investment and job creation in the public sector
Scale up work opportunities and skills for people without jobs	Boost employment for people without work through accelerating skills supply and work placement initiatives
Economic resilience	Enable energy and water resilience

Jobs continued...

Immediate Interventions:

The jobs theme had an immediate response that focused on providing relief by getting income into households. This was achieved through immediate interventions that focused on supporting and creating jobs within the public and private sectors. Key achievements of the immediate interventions included:

- Over 7 493 job opportunities created or sustained through interventions aimed at supporting businesses to retain or grow employment opportunities by December 2020;
- Over R1.3 billion worth of investment value recruited into the region and over 3 000 companies provided with support;
- Municipalities were prepared to take advantage of the recent legal approval for municipal self-generation of power, which will have a positive impact on economic growth and energy security;
- A total of 1 095 provincial public works projects provided 27 690 work opportunities as at December 2020, of which an estimated 6 766 Full-Time Equivalent work opportunities were provided

The key success within the public sector has been the upscaling of the Expanded Public Works Programme and fast-tracking of existing projects through re-prioritising departmental budgets. Going forward, an additional R50 million has been allocated to municipalities to provide public employment opportunities and thereby offer some short-term relief.

Wellbeing:

- *What has been the impact of COVID-19?*

The level of youth unemployment was high before COVID-19 and has deteriorated much more since then. The Quarterly Labour Force data (Q3 of 2020) show that 25% of Western Cape youth aged 15-24 fall into the category of NEETS (not in education, employment or training), with more NEET males (28.3%) than females (21.9%).

In many areas, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how close the average household is to hunger and food insecurity. As the Premier recently put it, having a job “is for many people the difference between putting food on the table, and starving... Job losses mean malnutrition, starvation, increases in crime and, in the long term, premature death.

- *Our approach to increasing well-being:*

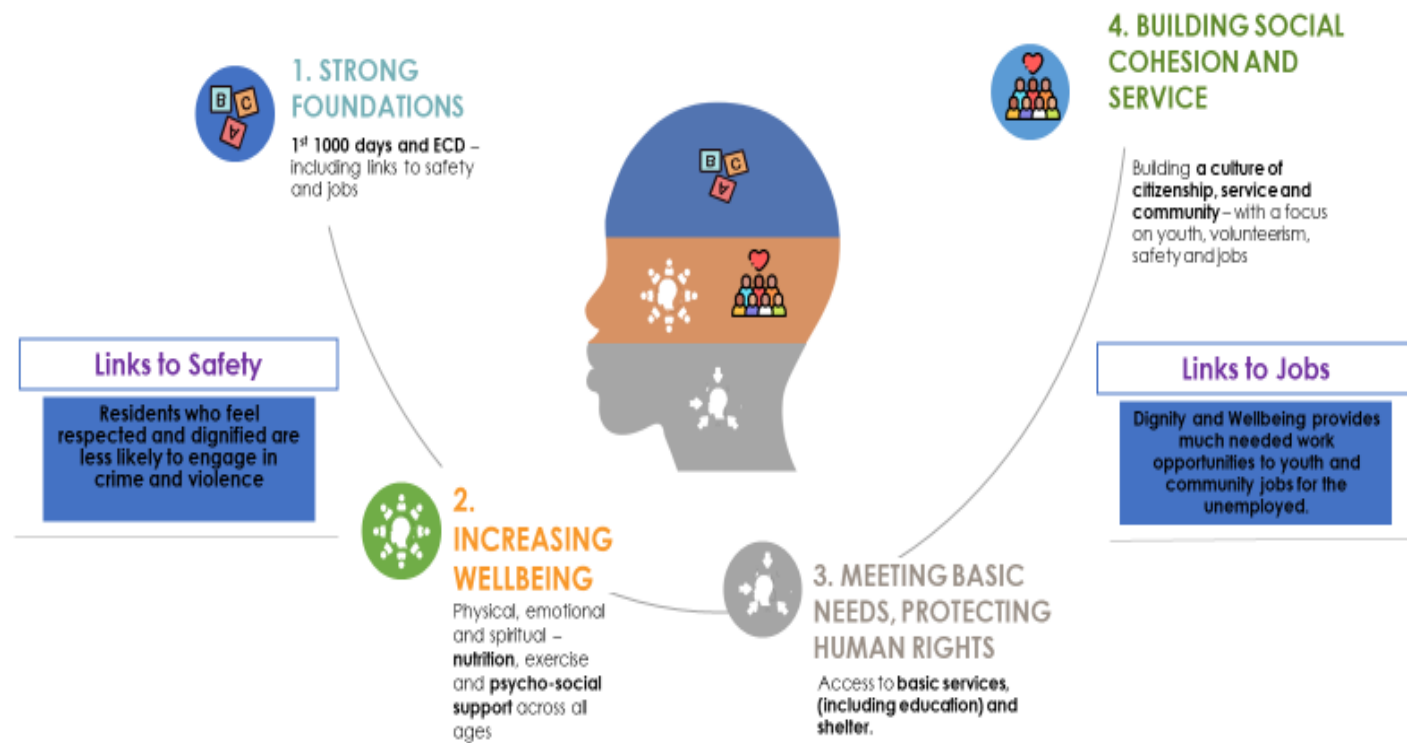
Wellbeing in many circles is viewed as happiness or quality of life, but happiness is very specific in that it refers to the experience of pleasure and the absence of pain. Wellbeing is broader: it includes the idea of happiness but also embraces qualities in broader society.

The Wellbeing priority has been defined as below:

The promotion of wellbeing involves the protection of fundamental human rights, the progressive realisation of socio-economic rights, and the creation of a sense of belonging.

Well-being continued...

- The Wellbeing priority uses an evidence-based approach to determine the interventions. The Wellbeing priority has four focus areas:



Wellbeing continued...

- *How will we respond?*

The Wellbeing priority will elevate the initiatives that are critical to ensuring the psychological, social, and physical health of our residents. In implementing these initiatives, the worst impacts of COVID-19 will also be addressed.

In the area of **strong foundations**, research shows that children who benefit from essential First 1000 Days outcomes (such as child and maternal support, attachment and care, and infant stimulation) can earn up to 20% more as adults versus their counterparts and are more likely to have healthy families themselves.

- The Recovery Plan's focus on Wellbeing therefore elevates the importance of the 1st 1000 days of life for both mother and child.
- For children aged 2-5 years, evidence suggests that substantial **Early Childhood Development (ECD)** interventions can help to improve their cognitive and physical development.
- The Recovery Plan will therefore elevate socialemotional learning and psycho-social skills to build resilience and grit for our most disadvantaged learners. Social and emotional learning, for example, has played a significant role in contexts where violence and conflict exist and where children and youth are disproportionately affected.

Wellbeing continued...

Recovery Plan Interventions for youth:

- School feeding programmes –
- ECD Feeding programmes
- Thusong homework hubs School feeding - WCED
- Thusong homework hubs After School Programmes are being offered by DSD, DCAS, WCED and NGOs at about half of the no- and low-fee schools in the Province.
- The YearBeyond Youth Service Programme offers almost 1 000 youth an opportunity to gain meaningful work experience and build their CVs and pathway into studies or work.
- Peace officers training
- Safety Ambassador Programme roll-out
- Youth participating in skills development programmes
- Youth Cafés
- Support for multidisciplinary arts, youth orchestras and choirs.
- Opportunities to farm worker children.
- School of skills – learners take up practical skill subjects – increase work readiness skills.

The Wellbeing and Jobs priorities are closely linked, as the education system both prepares students for specific jobs and provides them with the confidence and skills to start their own businesses.

Wellbeing continued...

Interventions for youth moving forward:

- Improve youth programme quality through the use of evidence-based guidelines.
- Future focus on psycho-social wellbeing to address Covid impacts
- Increased access to Technical, vocational and skills subjects and schools of skills
- Roll out the Provincial Youth in Service (YiS) Programme
- Youth-at-risk Graduate Work Placement programme
- Youth cafes
- System to identify, assess and refer vulnerable youth and children
- Strengthen focus on youth employment
- Promote programming that focuses on **life-long development** rather than a 'journey to a job'.

Proposed next steps in our approach to youth in the WC

- Need to assess all youth programmes in Province against prescribed **quality guidelines**

YOUTH GUIDELINES



- Require a **provincial definition of Youth at risk to be developed** and agreed to.

DEFINING YOUTH-AT-RISK



- Call for more **independent evaluations of youth programmes** in departments.

MEASURING IMPACT



- **Update the youth audit** for clearer picture of youth programmes in Province.

UPDATED YOUTH AUDIT



Safety and Wellbeing
Priority to **identify potential at risk youth outside “the system”**.

IDENTIFY OUR AT RISK YOUTH



• Produce quarterly **basket of youth indicators across each Priority to track outcomes** – Jobs, Safety and Wellbeing

DATA



Wellbeing continued...

Food and Nutritional Relief



Food relief:

- Number of meals provided by state funded community kitchens/feeding schemes (municipal, provincial and Solidarity Fund)
- Number of meals provided by community kitchens/feeding schemes as reported by NGO sector (not state funded)
- Number of school feeding schemes operational
- Number of food vouchers distributed (municipalities and DEDAT)

Feeding

Meals by state funded kitchens (DSD)	66 740 meal p/m
Meals by community kitchens (DEDAT + EDP)	225 kitchens supported p/m
Meals by school feeding scheme (WCED)	331 995 food parcels provided
Food vouchers distributed (DEDAT)	+/-25 000 meals
Number of food gardens supported (Agriculture)	2 082

Staff Wellbeing

- **Daily Motivational Messages** to all staff during October (e.g. Payslips, Corporate comms, PC Wallpaper, existing government communication platforms)
- Remembrance Candle to staff – “You matter”
- Metropolitan transversal rollout and referral System
- Promote physical exercise e.g. Provincial Gym, walking etc.
- Scale WoW for WCG staff
- New Way of Work:
 - Self-Management at all levels of the organisation
 - Management – How to Manage work in WFH arrangements
- **Staff Care Packs for staff testing positive for COVID-19 e.g.**
- Mental Resilience Support Programmes
 - e.g. Dealing with grief and loss



Keeping hope alive / Creating a social movement for healing / Moving forward together



**Western Cape
Government**

THANK YOU!