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A PLAN FOR THE ANC DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE  
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Since February 1990 the ANC has been called upon to respond to many diverse needs. interests and concerns. Central to this is the critical role the organisation has to play both at a political and social level. In keeping with its status as a liberation movement, it has as its major trusts the promotion of political democracy and the improvement of the quality of life of all through the eradication of condition that hinder and destabilize development individuals, families and communities.

Within this broad ambit of working towards a democratic social welfare system, that is both responsive to the needs of the majority, and a part of a oo-ordinated strategy aimed at promoting sustainable development, what would the strategic role of the Department of Social Welfare be?

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The ANC Department of Social Welfare is faced with two major options. The one would constitute taking the traditional role of defining social welfare within narrow boundaries aimed at meeting the needs of those who be experiencing problems ( residual approach within a clinical model of welfare). The second option would constitute an approach that does not only respond to the needs of special categories of the people but also aims to remove structural inequalities that have contributed to all types of poverty in our society.

. At the National Policy Conference the Social Welfare Policy Guidelines agreed on and are consistent with the second option. The guidelines are underpinned by the need to work towards social reconstruction and development. This has certain practical implications.

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3.1. The ANC Social Welfare Department would have to decide on whether it has the capacity to act as a welfare agency . offering services to its members and the community at large. Can it respond to the many and varied demands in an effective and efficient manner or would its responses be of such a nature that it would reflect negatively at a professional and political level on the movement.

3.2. The question might well be asked " what then of the needs of returned exiles and ex-political prisoners and others who have fought for liberation?" This is an important concern in the light of events unfolding in the country and the ANC's commitment to its members. The issue here would be how to utilize the existing resources in the country e.g. (Government UNHCR, NGOs, 0805 etc. ) through ANC initiatives in a way that is not bureaucratic and that is seen and experienced to be just and caring.

- 3.3.
- 3.4.
- 3.5.
- 3.6.

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The significant implication is how would the department develop an understanding of the social context, the causative factors responsible for social disintergration. underdevelopment and general poverty. Linked to this is the fundamental question of how would social needs and problems be prioritized given the micro economic constraints. The dilemma here would also be the balancing act of responding to popular demands for improvements in material conditions while at the same time ensuring sustainable social programmes that would work in tangent with economic policies that allow for good management and effective distribution of resources.

In attempting to determine what social benefits should be available to whom statistical information on the extent and levels of poverty are required at regional and national levels.

Information is also required on what structures are attempting to respond to social needs at governmental, non-governmental levels and the qualitative impact of such structures.

A need for the Department of Social Welfare begin jointly with other relevant departments to work out a co-ordinated strategy on social development. An aspect of such a strategy should include co-ordinating mechanisms within the ANC, Communities and regions. The functions of such co-ordination would include the identification of priority needs at regional and national level. An issue here would be the role of State and organised civil society in shaping proposals and the functional relationships. Given the above, the Department could work towards achieving the following goals:

#### 4.1.

To WW through which the social welfare membership, especial returned exiles, ex political prisoners. displeased persons etc. would be met. This would be achieved by acting as a referral agency and not more.

- 4.2.
- 4.3.
- 4.4.
- 4.5.
- 4.6.

To utilize the expertise of trained professionals in a structure designed to address the policy mandate of the ANC.

To engage in Policy research on the role of social welfare, programmes and structures required to deliver social goods to those in need.

To identify issues, needs, problems affecting the welfare of people in the country and launch campaigns regional and nationally on these aimed at lobbying for the interests of the poor -

To identify strategies aimed at marginalizing the poor and develop counter I alternate strategies to these.

To promote appropriate training and development of skills to respond to the needs of communities, through anew category of development workers who could be deployed in future at local , regional and national levels.

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The department could achieve these goals through the structure reflected below.

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

STRUCTURE OF THE

' (SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

..... SECRETARY

NATIONAL COORDINATOR

( Social Services )

NATIONAL COORDINATOR

(Policy, Research and

Trdnlng)

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