

Projects, commissions and tenders

Since 1994, South Africa has made remarkable progress in addressing the inequities of apartheid and their consequences for children's survival, development and well-being. The Constitution and a battery of new laws and policies provide the enabling frameworks for children's health, care, development and protection; and public expenditure on health, education and social grants has increased dramatically.

Despite these marks of real progress, inequity persists and many children continue to live in difficult circumstances that compromise the realisation of their rights. South Africa has some 18.7 million children.⁹ In 2008, close to 11 million children (64%) lived in poverty (in households with an income of less than R570 per person per month).¹⁰

While child poverty rates have decreased substantially since the introduction of the Child Support Grant, poverty remains an enormous problem. The development of policies and programmes for children is still not consistently based on a systematic evidential approach that fully reflects the principles of social justice underlying South Africa's Constitution.

The University of Cape Town has a long and proud track record of documenting the pervasive and systematic violations of children's rights to health, education, welfare and protection under apartheid, and of the effects of poverty on children's well-being and development. Since its establishment at the University in 2001, the Children's Institute has built on this legacy to conduct research, evidence-based advocacy and education aimed at improving policies, programmes and services for children.

In the face of enduring poverty and its effects on children's well-being, there is a clear need for the Institute to continue this work. Child rights, child poverty, child health and the context of HIV/AIDS are the focal areas for research, advocacy, policy development and education. Self-initiated projects in focal areas (and often cutting across two or more areas) comprise a major part of the Institute's activities. Increasingly, the Institute is also being called upon to bid for government tenders and other commissioned work.

In all these activities – projects and commissions alike – evidence-based advocacy is the main vehicle through which the Children's Institute maximises the impact of research on policy and practice.

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The projects and commissions undertaken during the year in review collectively reflect the interdependence of research, advocacy and education that is typical of the Institute's work, although these three "strands" of the Institute's characteristic methodology are not equally woven into every project or commission. Overall, the projects also demonstrate the Institute's commitment to participatory approaches and to working both at a national level and, where feasible, with selected communities.

Over the next pages, the following projects, commissions, tenders and consultancies are discussed:

- *Abaqophi BakwaZisize Abakhanyayo* – The Shining Recorders of Zisize – Children's Radio Project
- Caring Schools Project
- Child-centred Analysis of Government's Budgets
- Child Rights and Child Law for Health Professionals
- Children Count – *Abantwana Babalulekile* Project
- National Child Poverty Monitor
- Children's Act: Promoting Implementation
- Evaluation Project
- Healthy Cities Project
- Infants and HIV/AIDS: The Fragility of Life
- Ordinary Politics: Race and Opportunity in Contemporary South Africa
- Social Service Practitioners Advocacy Network
- *South African Child Gauge*
- Theorising Children's Participation: Learning Across Countries and Disciplines
- Policy Review: Lesotho and Swaziland
- Mainstreaming Care and Support for Teaching and Learning: SADC Policy Review and Development of Framework and Guidelines
- Baseline Study: Child and Youth Care Centres

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