

## National Child Poverty Monitor



### Data analysis to inform and evaluate pro-poor policy from the perspective of children, and child outcomes

As pro-poor policy and service provision will benefit from an evidence base that attends to children in a more robust and focused way, this complementary project to Children Count aims to increase knowledge

about child poverty dynamics in South Africa. Child poverty is under-researched and inadequately understood in South Africa – there is a wealth of national household data and related analyses of poverty, but very little quantitative analysis from the perspective of children.

The project aims to build an understanding of child poverty dynamics by updating and expanding the set of child-centred indicators tracked by the Children Count project (see previous page). It uses large national data sets that lend themselves to child-centred analysis and ongoing monitoring. Through exploratory and inferential analysis of the data, it will provide greater insight into the effects of policy and programme access amongst children.

For instance, a paper<sup>13</sup> published in 2010 found that children and households with children remain disproportionately represented in rural areas under traditional authority, and that children have proportionately lower levels of access to services and adequate living environments than adults. The severity of child poverty is related to the fact that over a third of children live in households where no adults are employed.<sup>14</sup>

Social grants are critical for reducing poverty, but the widest reaching grant – the Child Support Grant – makes a relatively small impact on child poverty because the grant amount is set very low. Larger grants, eg the Old Age Pension and Disability Grant, have a far greater effect on reducing child poverty even though they are not intended for children.

Interest in and capacity for analysis of child poverty dynamics will be promoted with an internship programme to constitute a 'Child Poverty Monitoring Group' in 2011. Four postgraduate researchers will get technical support in data analysis as well as a firm grounding in South African social policy and rights frameworks. Working on their own projects, participants will be helped to translate their findings into outputs that are accessible to policy-makers and that are appropriately linked to policy questions.

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