

# Demography of South Africa's children

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The United Nations General Guidelines for Periodic Reports on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, paragraph 7, says that reports made by States should be accompanied by "... detailed statistical information ... Quantitative information should indicate variations between various areas of the country ... and between groups of children ...".

## THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF CHILDREN LIVING IN SOUTH AFRICA

In 2005, there were over 18 million children in South Africa. Children constitute just over one-third (39%) of the country's population. Most children are living in either KwaZulu-Natal (21%) or the Eastern Cape (17%) provinces. A further 15% live in Gauteng and 14% in Limpopo provinces. Girl and boy populations are almost equal. Of all children, 39% are currently aged between six and 12 years old, while one-

third (33%) of all children are younger than six. These gender and age patterns apply nationally, as well as provincially. In presenting a demographic profile of South Africa's children, a breakdown by population group has been included although such breakdowns are only really useful when monitoring the extent to which inequalities still prevail. (For more details about this indicator refer to page 83.)

TABLE 1a: The number and proportion of children living in South Africa in 2004 and 2005, by province

Province	2004		2005	
	Number	%	Number	%
Eastern Cape	3,215,848	18	3,137,425	17
Free State	1,063,842	6	1,114,138	6
Gauteng	2,641,734	15	2,656,467	15
KwaZulu-Natal	3,792,376	21	3,841,255	21
Limpopo	2,615,605	15	2,614,998	14
Mpumalanga	1,307,862	7	1,351,142	7
Northern Cape	337,193	2	337,494	2
North West	1,488,648	8	1,461,484	8
Western Cape	1,558,710	9	1,572,127	9
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>18,021,815</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,086,530</b>	<b>100</b>

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005; 2006) *General Household Survey 2004; General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.

TABLE 1c: The number and proportion of children living in South Africa in 2004 and 2005, by age

Age	2004		2005	
	Number	%	Number	%
0 – 5 years	5,949,840	33	6,047,373	33
6 – 12 years	7,124,436	40	6,998,372	39
13 – 17 years	4,947,539	27	5,040,785	28
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>18,021,815</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,086,530</b>	<b>100</b>

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005; 2006) *General Household Survey 2004; General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.

TABLE 1b: The number and proportion of children living in South Africa in 2004 and 2005, by population group\*

Population Group	2004		2005	
	Number	%	Number	%
African	15,070,504	84	15,171,869	84
Coloured	1,533,496	9	1,520,850	8
Indian	310,162	2	345,712	2
White	1,098,909	6	1,037,661	6
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>18,013,071</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,076,092</b>	<b>100</b>

\* 'Other' and 'unspecified' categories have been excluded, therefore totals are not the same as in Tables 1a and 1c.

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005; 2006) *General Household Survey 2004; General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.

TABLE 1d: The number and proportion of children living in South Africa in 2004 and 2005, by sex\*

Sex	2004		2005	
	Number	%	Number	%
Female	8,525,502	47	8,595,335	48
Male	9,495,370	53	9,487,940	52
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>18,020,872</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,083,275</b>	<b>100</b>

\* 'Unspecified' category has been excluded, therefore totals are not the same as in Tables 1a and 1c.

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005; 2006) *General Household Survey 2004; General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.

## THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF ORPHANS LIVING IN SOUTH AFRICA

The *General Household Survey* indicates that, in South Africa in 2005, there were approximately 3.4 million orphans. This is equal to 18.6% of all children in South Africa at the time. The term 'orphan' includes children whose mother, father or both parents is/are dead (or whose living status was unknown). Half of all orphans were found to be resident in two provinces: 864,643 (23%) in KwaZulu-Natal; and a further 796,525 (25%) in the Eastern Cape.

The survey also suggests that there was an increase in the absolute number of double orphans between 2004 and 2005 to a total of 626,362 children, and a slight decrease in the absolute number of maternal and paternal orphans. However, the available data does not allow for the calculation of confidence intervals and, although the trends are unsurprising, they should be interpreted with caution. Despite the increase in the number of double

orphans, there is no apparent change in the proportion of maternal, paternal and double orphans relative to each other.

It is important to note that the death of one parent can have different implications for children to the death of both parents, as can the death of a mother relative to the death of a father. Research suggests that the absence of a mother in particular may have greater impact on children than the absence of a father (Case & Ardington 2004). The survey indicates that, in 2005, 12% of all children had lost only their father, whereas 3% of all children had lost only their mother. A further 3% of all children were documented to be 'double orphans', having lost both biological parents. The majority of all orphans in South Africa in 2005 – 12% – were paternal orphans, having lost only their biological father. (For more details on this indicator refer to page 83.)

TABLE 2a: The number and proportion of maternal orphans living in South Africa in 2004 and 2005

Province	2004		2005	
	Maternal orphans Number	%	Maternal orphans Number	%
Eastern Cape	97,878	3	118,254	4
Free State	40,938	4	38,867	3
Gauteng	62,319	2	40,746	2
KwaZulu-Natal	165,125	4	137,379	4
Limpopo	47,016	2	66,404	3
Mpumalanga	45,853	4	39,558	3
Northern Cape	9,556	3	9,720	3
North West	37,588	3	41,373	3
Western Cape	27,473	2	20,686	1
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>533,746</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>512,987</b>	<b>3</b>

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005; 2006) *General Household Survey 2004; General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.

TABLE 2b: The number and proportion of paternal orphans living in South Africa in 2004 and 2005

Province	2004		2005	
	Paternal orphans Number	%	Paternal orphans Number	%
Eastern Cape	516,778	16	561,361	18
Free State	121,996	11	161,261	14
Gauteng	262,623	10	195,376	7
KwaZulu-Natal	515,584	14	527,641	14
Limpopo	304,330	12	307,974	12
Mpumalanga	145,875	11	170,440	13
Northern Cape	33,595	10	26,925	8
North West	213,956	14	171,914	12
Western Cape	125,171	8	98,264	6
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>2,239,908</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2,221,156</b>	<b>12</b>

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005; 2006) *General Household Survey 2004; General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.

TABLE 2c: The number and proportion of double orphans living in South Africa in 2004 and 2005

Province	2004		2005	
	Double orphans Number	%	Double orphans Number	%
Eastern Cape	101,057	3	116,909	4
Free State	42,628	4	66,722	6
Gauteng	47,231	2	64,475	2
KwaZulu-Natal	147,046	4	199,623	5
Limpopo	56,042	2	55,274	2
Mpumalanga	37,904	3	37,395	3
Northern Cape	8,593	3	7,514	2
North West	58,281	4	60,732	4
Western Cape	13,902	1	17,718	1
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>512,684</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>626,362</b>	<b>3</b>

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005; 2006) *General Household Survey 2004; General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.

TABLE 2d: The total number and proportion of orphans living in South Africa in 2004 and 2005

Province	2004		2005	
	Total orphans Number	%	Total orphans Number	%
Eastern Cape	715,712	22	796,525	25
Free State	205,562	19	266,850	24
Gauteng	372,173	14	300,598	11
KwaZulu-Natal	827,754	22	864,643	23
Limpopo	407,389	16	429,652	16
Mpumalanga	229,631	18	247,393	18
Northern Cape	51,744	15	44,159	13
North West	309,825	21	274,018	19
Western Cape	166,546	11	136,667	9
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>3,286,336</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3,360,505</b>	<b>19</b>

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005; 2006) *General Household Survey 2004; General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.

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### THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF CHILDREN LIVING IN CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS IN SOUTH AFRICA

There is much concern that the number of children living in child-headed households will increase rapidly due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. While there is currently little evidence to support this notion, and it seems that many such households exist only temporarily (Meintjes & Giese 2004; Hill, Ardington & Hosegood 2005), it is nonetheless crucial to monitor their prevalence and nature.

The *General Household Survey 2005* enables an analysis of child-headed households but the findings must be treated with extreme caution because of the small sub-sample size, and the absence of confidence intervals. The survey suggests that there

were 118,564 children living in 66,556 child-headed households in July 2005. The proportion of children in child-headed households relative to those living in adult-headed households is small: 0.7% of children were found to be living in child-headed households. Over three-quarters of children living in child-headed households were 11 years and older. Three-quarters (75%) of all children living in child-headed households were located in only three provinces at the time of the survey: Limpopo (39%) the Eastern Cape (23%), and KwaZulu-Natal (13%). (For more details on this indicator refer to page 83.)

TABLE 3: The number and proportion of children living in child-headed households in South Africa in 2004 and 2005

Province	2004		2005	
	Child-headed households		Child-headed households	
	Number of children	%	Number of children	%
Eastern Cape	28,718	0.9	27,280	0.9
Free State	3,773	0.4	5,306	0.2
Gauteng	1,850	0.1	4,590	0.2
KwaZulu-Natal	11,044	0.3	15,152	0.4
Limpopo	36,438	1.4	45,795	1.8
Mpumalanga	7,197	0.6	5,945	0.4
Northern Cape	14,680	1.0	9,156	0.6
North West	98	0.0	474	0.1
Western Cape	626	0.0	1,580	0.1
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>104,423</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>118,564</b>	<b>0.7</b>

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005: 2006) *General Household Survey 2004*; *General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.

### THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF CHILDREN LIVING IN INCOME POVERTY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Income poverty levels are important because they indicate how many children may not be able to have their basic needs met. As money is needed to access a range of services, income poverty is often closely related to poor health, reduced access to education, and physical environments that compromise personal safety.

Child poverty in South Africa is exceedingly high. In 2005, two-thirds (11.9 million) of children in South Africa lived in households that had an income of R1,200 per month or less.

This measure includes all sources of income, including social grants. Rates of child poverty differ across the country. Limpopo province has the highest rate of child poverty – 83% in 2005. The Eastern Cape province follows closely at 80%. KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, and the North West provinces have higher rates of child poverty than the national average. Nearly all poor children (95%) in South Africa are African. (For more details about this indicator refer to page 83.)

TABLE 4: The number and proportion of children living in income poverty in South Africa in 2004 and 2005

Province	2004		2005	
	Poor children		Poor children	
	Number	%	Number	%
Eastern Cape	2,533,770	78.8	2,516,541	80.2
Free State	721,868	67.9	729,756	65.5
Gauteng	1,170,640	44.3	1,141,275	43.0
KwaZulu-Natal	2,623,460	69.2	2,651,938	69.0
Limpopo	2,118,486	81.0	2,169,415	83.0
Mpumalanga	910,900	69.6	938,461	69.5
Northern Cape	1,071,098	63.1	201,093	59.6
North West	212,735	72.0	1,056,026	72.3
Western Cape	542,192	34.8	567,235	36.1
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>11,905,147</b>	<b>66.1</b>	<b>11,971,741</b>	<b>66.2</b>

Sources: Statistics South Africa (2005: 2006) *General Household Survey 2004*; *General Household Survey 2005*. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Debbie Budlender, Centre for Actuarial Research, UCT.