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Monitoring the right to social security in South Africa

An analysis of the policy gaps, resource allocation and enjoyment of the right

September 2013

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Monitoring the Progressive Realisation of Socio-Economic Rights Project

Project made possible with funding from the

FORDFOUNDATION

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Introduction

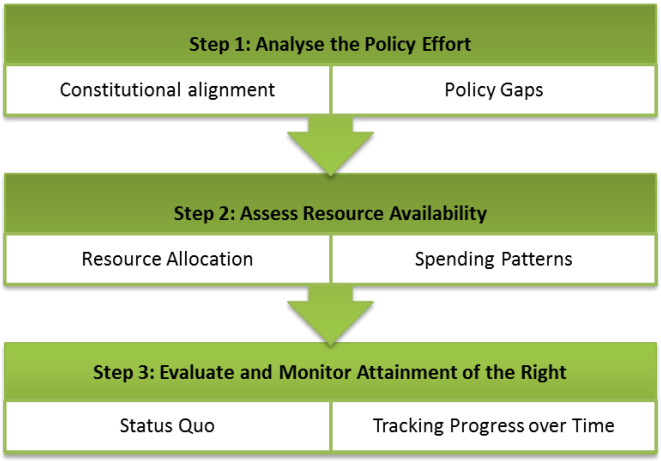
The realisation of socio-economic rights (SERs) is crucial to South Africa overcoming the persistent challenge of poverty and inequality. However, unless the implementation or SERs as promised in the Constitution is monitored and tracked over time, their inclusion on paper might not be felt in reality by millions of poor people.

The implementation of SERs, however, is subject to the internal limitation of "progressive realisation subject to available resources", contained in the Constitution. Section 27(2) of the Constitution states that "The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights."

The limitation clause is silent on timeframes, the percentage or coverage of people over time or even how the state should finance access to SERs. The challenge for policy makers and oversight bodies alike is how best we are able to evaluate government programmes and budget allocations against this binding obligation on the state.

There is increasing interest both internationally and in South Africa in the development of new methodologies and tools for measuring, monitoring and evaluating the progressive realisation of SERs. This work, however, is still in its infancy. The Studies in Poverty & Inequality Institute (SPII) in partnership with the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), which is constitutionally obliged to report annually on the defence and advancement of the rights in the Constitution, has developed a methodology based on international best practice. The methodology combines various approaches to monitoring socio-economic rights including policy and budget analysis and statistical indicators.

The methodology is based on three distinct steps (see figure below).



Step 1: Analysing the policy effort

The first step of the analysis takes a closer look at the underlying policies and legislation guiding the realisation of SERs. This step firstly, assesses whether the actual content of social and economic policies adequately reflect the Constitution and international treaty obligations. Secondly, this step examines what policy gaps exist in the existing legislation (in both principle & practice) in terms of

access, adequacy and quality, non-discrimination, progressive realisation and the 'reasonableness test.'

Step 2: Assess Resource Availability
The second step focuses on analysing budget and expenditure allocations at both national and provincial level to assess the reasonableness of amounts for specific SERs and relevant government departments and population groups. Things that ought to be born in mind are: Is the relevant government line department tasked with the delivery provided with adequate funds? Where does under-spending occur? Are resource allocations increasing or decreasing overtime and why?

Step 3: Evaluate and Monitor Attainment of SERs
The third step focuses on evaluating and monitoring the attainment of SERs with reference to the three dimensions of access (physical and economic), quality and adequacy over time. This provides a clearer and more specific illustration of SERs enjoyment on the ground. This requires quantifiable and replicable indicators (proxies for the different dimensions of SERs) to be developed along with agreed benchmarks and targets. The indicators need to be aligned to data available in annual surveys, and be capable of being decomposed by province and ideally, income decile, race, gender and age – wherever possible and useful. This allows disparities between different population groups to be identified and an assessment of the extent to which progress has been made over time. An on-going challenge with the development of indicators is the balance between a set of indicators which capture the complexity of SERs and are at the same time focused, accessible and easy to populate for non-experts.

The **criteria** for selecting final set of indicators are the following:

1) Data available at least annually,
2) Data disaggregated at provincial level (at minimum)
3) Data is of public interest.

The **purpose** of monitoring goes beyond holding government accountable and aims to achieve specific objectives.

1) Aid clarity on the content of SERs to ensure access to ensure access to and enjoyment of SERs is continuously broadened.

2) Determine the extent to which organs of the state have fulfilled their obligations. This involves:
    - Identifying achievements
    - Detecting failures, gaps and regression
    - Identifying discriminatory laws, policies, programmes and practices

3) Advance evidence-based empirical debate on the implementation of SERs to guide policy and move all actors towards developing roadmaps that will ensure the protection, development and universal enjoyment of SERs.

SPII has to date developed a set of indicators for social security and health which have been populated with data from 2010 and 2011. Over the next two years, indicators will also be developed for housing, education, food, water and sanitation, and the environment.

These policy briefs aim to provide a succinct ***summary*** of the analysis of 1) the policy effort (step 1), 2) resource allocation and expenditure (step 2) and 3) the ***process*** undertaken in developing the indicators (step 3) for each of the SERs. The policy brief also includes the list of indictors for the particular SER under review and a selection of the populated indicators which build up the information at a national level to evaluate and monitor the progressive realisation of SERs.

Defining the content/meaning of the right in its *context* (step 1)

Social security is an important safety net that helps relieve poverty and diminishes some of the immediate hardships of unemployment. An effective social security system is therefore of crucial importance for the future of South Africa. It not only eases the immediate concerns which come with persistent poverty and unemployment but allows government time to tackle the long term problems of structural unemployment and poverty. Social security in South Africa is a two-pillar system made up of a state revenue funded **social assistance** programme (social grants) and a contributory **social insurance** system (i.e. Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), the Compensation Funds, and the Road Accident Fund (RAF)).

This policy brief focuses exclusively on the social assistance pillar of social security. This includes the following grants: Old Age Grant (OAG), War Veteran's Grant (WVG), Disability Grant (DG), Grant in Aid (GIA), Foster Child Grant (FCG), Care Dependency Grant (CDG), Child Support Grant (CSG) and the Social Relief of Distress Grant (SROD) which is available for a limited period of time when in an unforeseen and dire situation. The main reason for this is that contributions to social insurance are restricted to small parts of the working population in a context of massive structural unemployment. For more information on social insurance, see "A Review of the Development of Social Security Policy in South Africa" at www.spii.org.za.

Legal interpretation

The right to social security is one of several socio-economic rights guaranteed in the South African Constitution of 1996.[1] However, the realisation of the right to social security is subject to an internal limitation. Section 27 (1) (c) and section 27 (2) read:

> *'Everyone has the right to have access to…social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents, appropriate social assistance.'*[2]

> *'The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights'*[3]

The potential promise and dilemma contained in these constitutional clauses is evident. The key phrase is thus progressive realisation. Understanding and interpreting what is meant by the progressive realisation of SERs over time has been the subject of debate in several platforms recently. The contention lies in the ambiguity of the time-frames in which enjoyment of SERs must be realised, but also what is meant by "available resources". In short, the Constitution guarantees the right to social security or social assistance and stipulates that the government has to move towards progressively achieving this outcome.

[1] The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996. From now on referred to as the Constitution.
[2] See section 27(1)(c) of the constitution.
[3] See section 27(2) of the constitution.

Analysis of the policy effort

Since 1996, social security has been transformed from a welfare system predominantly aimed at the white population which experienced near complete employment to a more encompassing social security system reaching 16 million South Africans.[4] Despite a significant increase in coverage, the groups that can claim social assistance have largely remained the same, such as the elderly, children and the disabled with serious gaps in coverage.

The major policy developments since 1994 regarding social assistance include the Social Assistance Act of 1992, the White Paper for Social Welfare of 1997, the Social Assistance Act of 2004 and the South African Social Security Agency Act of 2004.

It is necessary to contextualise the policy developments over this period in the wider policy debates and choices, in particular fiscal policy. In particular, the shift from the Reconstruction and Development Programme **(RDP)** to the neo-liberal Growth, Employment and Redistribution **(GEAR)** Plan in 1996.[5]

The draft **White Paper for Social Welfare of 1995** and the adopted version of **1997** reflect the ideas contained in the RDP. The idea was to create a social security system that would support individuals in their attempts to improve their personal position and participate in and contribute to the forthcoming period of growth and development. This emphasized the importance of creating human capacities and the concept of developmental social welfare.[6] The final version of the White Paper eventually incorporated a commitment to establishing comprehensive social security policy and legislation.[7] This commitment in the White Paper marks the first attempt to reform the social security system, as the 1992 Social Assistance Act had merely eliminated racial discrimination, but left the old system in place.

The report of the **Lund Committee** on Child and Family support (1996) examined the State Maintenance Grant, whose distribution was heavily skewed along racial lines. As a result of the cost implications of expanding this grant to all eligible individuals, the committee suggested phasing out the state maintenance grant and replacing it with a flat-rate child support grant of a significantly reduced value. Under the influence of GEAR the committee felt it necessary to choose between awarding the grant to a large number of children, and awarding a grant of a higher value to fewer children.

Aside from financial considerations, this new grant also took the changed family structures into consideration. The grant would be payable to the primary care-giver of a child, subject to a means test. The committee also recommended that the foster child grant and the care dependency grants be continued as they provided crucial support for children in specifically challenging circumstances.

The child support grant was eventually launched in 1998, albeit at a higher value (R100 for each child younger than 7) than initially envisioned by the Lund Committee, following massive

[4] For a comprehensive review of social assistance up till 1992 and the policy developments since 1994, see "A review of the development of Social Security Policy in South Africa" by Stephanie Brockerhoff. Paper can be found at www.spii.org.za.

[5] See discussion in section 2.2.2 "Policy development since 1994" in "A review of the development of Social Security Policy in South Africa" by Stephanie Brockerhoff. Paper can be found at www.spii.org.za.

[6] Visser, Wessel, '"Shifting RDP into Gear"', p. 7.

[7] Makino, Kumiko, 'Social Security policy Reform in Post-Apartheid South Africa', p. 11.

protests by CSOs at public parliamentary hearings.

The **Taylor Committee** of Inquiry into a Comprehensive Social Security for South Africa Report seems to have informed all of the recent changes in the social security system. Firstly, the proposal to centralise the administration of social assistance and the creation of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) which was cast into law in 2004. Secondly, the proposal to extend the age at which children stop receiving the CSG from 7 to 18 years by 2004 and lastly, the gradual introduction of the Basic Income Grant (BIG) to include the unemployed and those in the informal economy in the social security system.

The Social Assistance Act of 2004 replaced the Social Assistance Act of 1992. By and large it consolidated legislation on social assistance and centralised the administration of social assistance which has resulted in significant advantages. The real reform of the social security system in 2004 was the creation of SASSA which became operational in 2006. The Department of Social Development (DSD) overseas and monitors SASSA's activities, sets targets and policy frameworks and is ultimately responsible for social security.

The Social Assistance Act codified the right to the OAG, the CSG, CDG, DG, WVG, FCG, GIA, and SROD. See appendix 1 for a table with the different social grant eligibility criteria, amount and means test. The government rejected the BIG on the grounds that it would be too expensive and did not include it in the Social Assistance Act. The Act, however, did include an extension of the CSG to children up to the age of 18.

Key policy gaps

In 2013, just over sixteen million people access social grants, indicating a massive expansion since 1994. The two largest groups of beneficiaries are the roughly 11.3 million Child Support Grant (CSG) recipients and the 2.8 million Old Age Grant (OAG) recipients. Despite the significant progress that has been made, two major gaps in coverage exist. These are the unemployed and the chronically ill.

The largest group excluded from the targeted system of social assistance are **poor people who are unemployed or underemployed** and between the age of 18 and 59. The current social assistance system does not provide any type of support for people in this age group. The reasons for this lie in the design of the system which targets the 'vulnerable' and 'deserving poor.'

The eligibility of the disability grant for people suffering from chronic illnesses such a HIV/Aids or TB remain ambiguous. To-date the system has enabled some people suffering from **chronic illnesses** to access a temporary disability grant for 6 or 12 months. The bitter irony is that the grant enables people to live according to a certain diet and get treatment with the effect that once their health improves they no longer qualify for a renewal of the grant. This occurs irrespective of whether the individual has found a job or some other means of income. In short, the eligibility criteria for this grant marginalises people suffering from HIV and other chronic illnesses. The incentive structure is faulty and in the absence of a national policy people depend on the good will of SASSA officials and doctors for accessing the grant. The Harmonised Assessment Tool (HAT) which remains to be implemented through the inclusion of a new common definition of disability aims to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the provision of the disability grants but will exclude people with chronic illnesses.

Summary

The expansion of the social assistance programme to 16 million South Africans is without doubt a major achievement and when compared to other middle-income countries' social security system, South Africa's wide-ranging and advanced. In particular, SASSA's implementation of a new service delivery and payment model which marks a shift from manual processes to automation.[8] The benefits of this include beneficiaries accessing grants anywhere in country, accessing electronic banking, having access to money at any time during the month and reducing corruption and fraud.[9]

It is critical to acknowledge, however, that the universal right to social security as enshrined in the Constitution appears not to have impacted on the fundamental policy approach. The Social Assistance Act of 2004 is disappointing in so far as it did not restructure the social assistance system, but merely formed part of the consolidation process and focused on the expansion of the existing system. The strategic papers of both the DSD and SASSA talk about increasing efficiency, decreasing corruption, improving service delivery and expanding the scope of coverage of the existing system. Success is thus measured by these objectives and not according to whether progress towards reforming the existing system into one that grants everyone the right to social security or social assistance is being made.

Budget analysis (step 2)

In 2012 SPII conducted an in depth analysis on the budget allocations and spending patterns of three key government departments, namely the Department of Social Development (on which this section is based), the Department of Health (See health care policy brief) and the Department of Basic Education. This analysis was based on data collected between 2007/08-2010/11. The expenditure trends for the National Department of Social Development (DSD) over this period are presented below. DSD who oversee SASSA and are ultimately responsible for social security, expenditure is split across five programmes:[10]

The DSD's second programme "Comprehensive social security" or as of 2011/12 "Social assistance" is responsible for the provision of social grants. This is undertaken by SASSA, who receive two transfers from DSD: one for grant transfers directly to households and another for SASSA administration. Total grant expenditure as a percentage of GDP has increased from 2.9% in 2003/4 and has remained relatively stable for the financial periods 2009/10 to 2011/12 at 3.4%.[11]

[8] SASSA annual report, 2011/12, p. 15

[9] Beukman, R., 2013, Social Grant payment system: deduction changes, UCT workshop on social security, 27-28 May 2013.

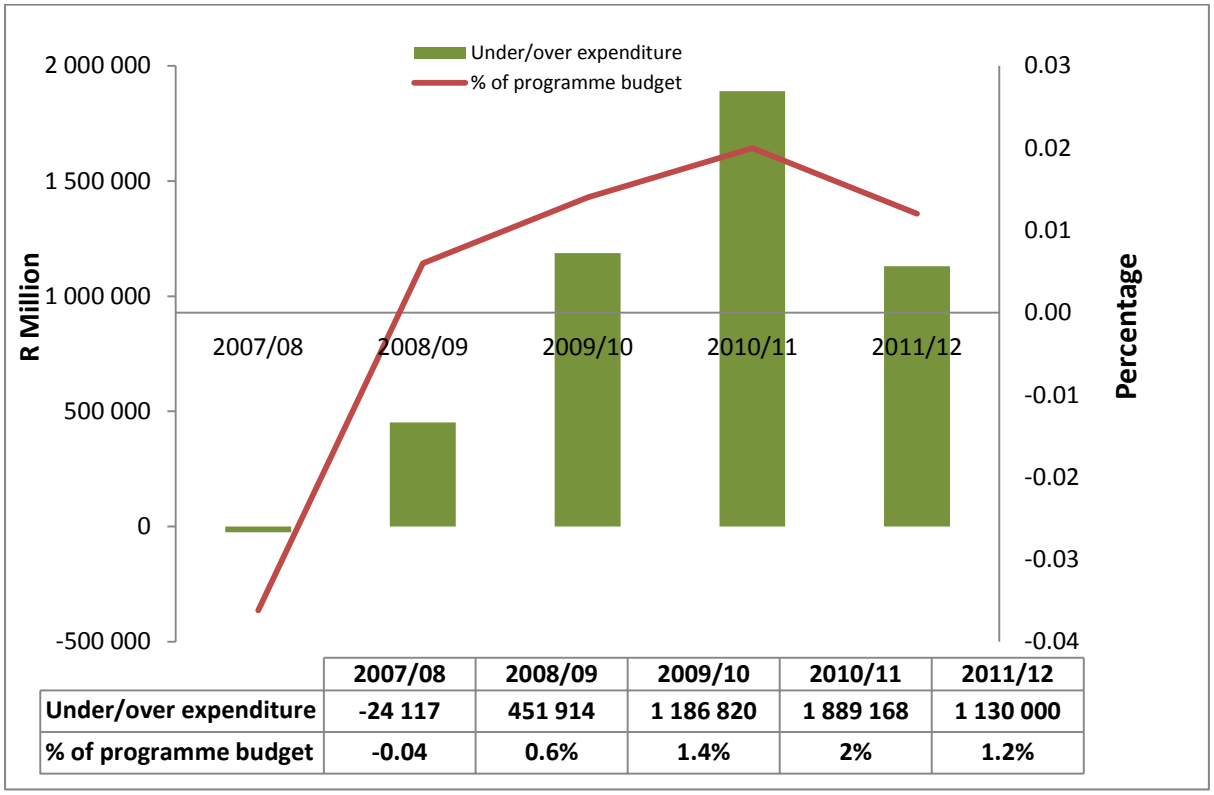
[10] The name of the five programmes have changed as of 2011/12 - this is indicated in the bracketed name: 1) Administration; 2) Comprehensive social security (Social assistance); 3) Policy development, review and implementation support for welfare services (Social Security Policy & administration); 4) Community development (Welfare Services Policy development and implementation support) and; 5) Strategy and governance (Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery.

[11] SASSA Annual reports.

Table 1: Social Grant Expenditure as a percentage of GDP, 2009/10 - 2015/16[12]

R Million	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
				Revised	Medium Term Estimates		
Social Grants Transfers	**79,260**	87,493	95,962	104,239	113,007	121,482	129,493
SASSA administration	5,550	5,313	5,358	5,848	6,683	6,961	7,160
Total	**84,810**	**92,806**	**101,320**	**110,087**	**119,690**	**128,443**	**136,653**
As percentage of	3.4	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.3%	3.2%

Figure 1: Under/over expenditure in Programme 2: Comprehensive social security



	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Under/over expenditure	**-24 117**	**451 914**	**1 186 820**	**1 889 168**	**1 130 000**
% of programme budget	**-0.04**	**0.6%**	**1.4%**	**2%**	**1.2%**

Programme 2 recorded an over-expenditure in in 2007/8 as a result of an increased demand and take up of social grants, especially the OAG, FCG and CSG. There were also a lot of registration campaigns conducted by SASSA which required funds in order to deploy mobile units in remote areas.[13] However, since 2008/9 billions of Rands set aside for social grants have remained unspent, with almost 1.2 billion in under-expenditure in 2009/10, close to 1.9 billion in 2010/11 and 1.13 billion in 2011/12. The reason given for this under expenditure is the lower than expected up take of social assistance in the financial years under review.

[12] This table is taken from the 2013 Budget, p. 86.
[13] Lomahozam , K. et al, (2013), A Review of National and Provincial Government Budgets in South Africa, available at www.spii.org.za

Since 1994, there has been a significant increase in the total number of grant recipients, this was largely due to the introduction of the Child Support Grant (CSG) in 2008. The number of beneficiaries currently sits just over 16 million beneficiaries, 11.3 million of whom are CSG recipients and 2.8 OAG recipients. While there has been an increase in absolute numbers, the percentage of households receiving a grant out of the total population has been slowing. This will be discussed below. It is also important to note that although the CSG makes up the bulk of grants claimed, the expenditure on OAGs continues to exceed expenditure on CSGs due to lower monetary value attached to the CSG.

Developing indicators (step 3)

The process of developing indicators was largely informed by background research including an analysis of policy developments (step 1) for social assistance in South Africa. This was an integral part of the process as it allowed us to identify backlogs, gaps and areas of enquiry that would feed into the conceptualization of the indicators that we would later select. The project also drew upon reporting formats and indicators such as those developed by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights to identify a set of indicators for three dimensions: access, adequacy and quality.[14] *Access* indicators measure both physical and economic access (i.e. transport costs) to social grants. *Adequacy* measures the adequacy of the grant income to meet basic needs and improve quality of life. *Quality* measures the service offered by SASSA and beneficiaries satisfaction with the service.

Consultation with the SAHRC and other experts and stakeholders were useful in refining the list of indicators before scoping available data sets. As is the case with many other measurement tools, indicators are only as reliable as the data that are available. That is why the availability of data to populate the selected indicators was a crucial step in this work, but also why the data scoping exercise was important – to be able to look for reliable national survey and administrative datasets which were available annually and could be disaggregated by province.

After extensive consultation and knowledge of available data, a final set of indicators was developed for Social Security. During this step, there were a few indicators that were developed but did not make it to the final list of indicators presented below because of data availability challenges. Some of these indicators have been mentioned in the footnotes to the indicator table. This so called 'wish list' has been set aside for now, but it is hoped that these indicators will be included in future national household surveys – through ongoing stakeholder consultations with our external data partner, StatsSA. The data sources include both national household surveys such as Income and Expenditure Survey (IES) and the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) and administrative data sets, most notably SASSA annual reports and statistical fact sheets.

The final set of indictors is below.

[14] More on the description of these dimensions and the decision to adopt these three baseline categories can be found in the SERs methodology paper on SPII's website, www.spii.org.za

Table 2: Social Security Indicators

ACCESS[15]	ADEQUACY[16]	QUALITY[17]
• % of households receiving grant income(IES,GHS) • % of grant recipients by gender (SASSA) • % increase in no. of foster care grants (FCG) (until the orphan crisis abides) (SASSA)	• % of HH below poverty line before and after social grants (IES, QLFS, StatsSA) • SASSA budget as percentage of GDP (Budget Review) • % increase of grant value relative to inflation.[18] (Budget Review) • % increase of income threshold relative to inflation (Budget Review, SASSA)	• % of grants processed in the target turnaround time set by SASSA (21 days) (SASSA) • SASSA administrative costs as % of cost of social assistance - (Budget Review) • Number of litigation cases (SASSA) • SASSA irregular expenditure[19] (SASSA financial)

The ***% of HH receiving grant income*** is an important indicator to measure **access** to social assistance. As already mentioned, although the number of grant recipients in absolute terms has increased, the percentage of households receiving a grant as out of the total population has been slowing. As shown in the table below, the number of households receiving grant income increased steadily from 2003 (29.9%) to a peak in 2009 (45.3%) and has been declining slightly since to 43.6% in 2012.

[15] The 'wish list' for measuring access includes the following indicators amongst others: % of child headed HH's receiving CSG/FCG, number of/ % of migrants (non-South Africans) receiving grants and, % of eligible people receiving a grants.

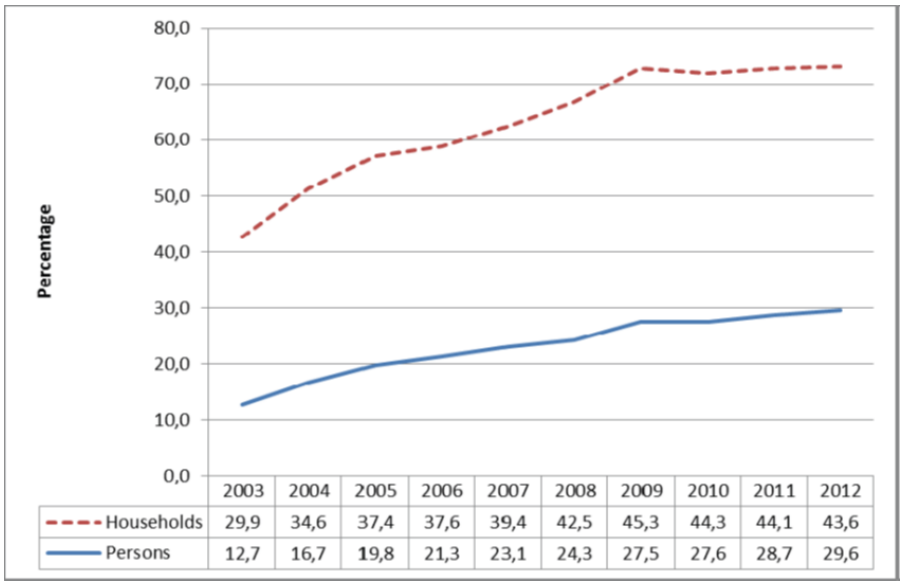
[16] The 'wish list' for measuring adequacy includes amongst others % of HH income grant contributes and what grant money is spent on.

[17] The project had previously included the % of appeals adjudicated within the target period of 90 days and % of identified fraud cases referred to law enforcement agencies as quality indicators. This data is not reliably reported in SASSA annual reports but we have enquired about accessing the Social Pensions (SOCPEN) database maintained by SASSA.

[18] It would be important to measure the increase in grant value against the costing of a basic basket of goods to be able to really evaluate the adequacy of such amounts. SPII is currently working on constructing what a basket of basic goods and services should contain and secondly costs for the average household.

[19] National Treasury defines irregular spending as "expenditure, other than unauthorized expenditure, incurred in contravention that is not in accordance with a requirement of any legislation applicable to public sector procurement.

Figure 2: Percentage of individual's and households benefitting from social grants, 2003-2012



Source: GHS 2012, p. 20

There appears to be very little reference to empirical evidence of the need in setting of grant incomes. However, the ***% increase of grant value*** as it compares to inflation allows for one to determine the **adequacy** of the grant amount and how it affects the purchasing power of grant recipients.

Table 3: % increase of social grant value by type and year[20]

% Increase of grant value		2010	2011	2012	2013
Old age grant	PercentageΔ	6.9	5.6	5.3	5
Disability grant	PercentageΔ	6.9	5.6	5.3	5
Child Support grant	PercentageΔ	4.2	8	5.7	3.6
Foster Care Grant	PercentageΔ	4.4	4.2	4.1	3.9
Care Dependency Grant	PercentageΔ	6.9	5.6	5.3	5
Grant-in-Aid	PercentageΔ	4.2	4	7.7	
War Veteran Grant	PercentageΔ	6.8	5.5	5.2	4.9
Average Inflation[21]		**4.1**	**5**	**5.8**	**5.8[22]**

The increase of grant amounts is meant to keep pace with inflation, but has largely not been the case. This further dilutes the low value of the grants which typically support an entire household. It

[20] 2013 Budget, p.84.

[21] http://www.inflation.eu/inflation-rates/south-africa/historic-inflation/cpi-inflation-south-africa.aspx

[22] The South African National Treasury predicts that Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation will average at 5.8% in 2012/13. National Treasury, Medium Term Expenditure Framework Guidelines, August 2012, p. 24.

is also important to bear in mind that the inflation experienced by the poor is at variance with the national CPI because the poor spend a disproportionate amount of their money on food and transport. Food inflation thus hits the poor particularly hard, whilst the effect is less prominent in the national CPI basket due to the reduced weight attached to food prices.

As shown in table 3 (above), comparing the increase in grant value to the average inflation for that year[23] indicates that that contrary to government claims, grants do not always rise in accordance with inflation. However, the evidence is varied. For example, in 2010 the CSG value increase was 0.1% above the inflation rate but was increased substantially in 2011, 3% points above inflation. However, in 2012 and 2013 the CSG grant value increase is considerably below the inflation rate. When comparing the OAG, CDG and DG at 5% to the CSG at 3.6% (2013), one can argue that the grants of the lowest value (most notably the CSG), have decreased in value the most.

An indicator for accessing the **quality** of the service grant recipients receive is the ***% of grants processed in the target turnaround time of 21 days.*** SASSA has decided to classify all grants not processed within 21 days as 'backlogged'. In 2011, 89% of new applications were processed within 21 days, this improved to 90% in 2012. The Social Assistance Act of 2004 only requires SASSA to classify grants not processed within 90 days as backlogged. Therefore, this indicates that SASSA has managed to improve its performance. However, the backlogs continue to exist and some regions have bigger problems than others.[24]

These indicators begin to build up the information at both a national and provincial level (when decomposed) to evaluate and monitor people's enjoyment of social assistance in terms of access, adequacy and quality. It is crucial to acknowledge that no one indicator can tell the full story, hence the importance of evaluating various indicators for each dimension. For example, the number of grant recipients in absolute terms has increased and yet as a percentage of the total population it is declining. This picture, however, needs to be complimented with information on the type of grants being accessed (as a percentage of all grants) and as discussed above, the grant value in relation to inflation.

Indicators say nothing without clear benchmarks against which to evaluate governments' performance and achievements over time. It is therefore essential to have road maps or long term plans for each of the SERs to provide tangible benchmarks to evaluate whether there has been progress, stagnation or regression. The DSD and SASSA set some targets which can be used as benchmarks (i.e. 21 day turnaround time for processing grant before declared backlogged) however for many of the other indicators there is an absence on agreed upon benchmarks or targets. This highlights the need for government to develop strategic plans and road maps for each of the SERs with clear indicators tied to outcome signifying success so that government can be held accountable and progress monitored and evaluated.

An ongoing challenge is data availability, especially regarding administrative data. SASSA's annual reports are an important source of information for tracking social grants, however, this work has demonstrated that the annual report do not include the same indicators and information every year.

[23] 2010 refers to the administrative year 2010/11 but has been compared with inflation for the Jan-Dec year of 2010.

[24] See "A review of the development of Social Security Policy in South Africa" by Stephanie Brockerhoff, p. 38-39.

Summary

The application of the monitoring tool based on policy and budget analysis and statistical indicators to South Africa's social security system reveals that it is comparatively advanced and comprehensive if compared to other middle income countries. A particular achievement is the massive expansion in eligibility for social assistance.

It is critical to acknowledge, however, that changes in social assistance have instead occurred within the existing system. The focus has been on increasing the uptake of the existing system and has continued to target certain 'vulnerable' groups in society at the expense of the unemployed and chronically ill as discussed. The DSD has adopted the language of comprehensive social security, but has failed to spell out what is meant by it and provide a road map as to how comprehensive coverage might be achieved. In addition, neither the legislative documents, nor departmental presentations or SASSA publications make explicit reference to progressive realisation and the constitutional obligation to arrive, or move towards, universal coverage.

Conclusion

Advocacy efforts to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of SERs are undermined if there is no methodology to monitor and address critical issues relating to the progressive realisation of these rights. The monitoring tool developed by SPII aims to build up empirical information to allow the SAHRC and civil society to assess progress made to date, as well as provide government with information on the effectiveness of their policy programmes.

This ambitious and important task requires increased input from both government and civil society to ensure broader ownership and coordinated advocacy for comprehensive road maps, spelling out how each right will be realised. This will provide a basis for public debate on the critical choices that policy makers are faced with regarding trade-offs and priorities for SERs implementation.

Appendix 1

Table 4: Social Grants and their Eligibility Criteria as of 2012/2013[25]

Social Grant	Purpose	Who can apply	Amount in Rand	Means Test
Old Age Grant	Income support for older men and women	60 years or older SA citizens and permanent residents	R 1,260	**Income:** Single =R 4 160pm or R49 920 pa Married = R831 600 or R99 840 pa **Assets:** Single =R831 600 or Married
War Veterans' Grant	Income support to older men and women who served in 1st, 2nd WW or the Korean war	60 years or older SA citizens and permanent residents	R1,260	**Income:** Single =R 4 160pm or R49 920 pa Married = R831 600 or R99 840 pa **Assets:** Single =R831 600 or Married =R1 663 200
Disability Grant	Income support to adults who are not able to work because of a mental or physical disability	Adults who are 18 or older SA citizens and permanent residents and	R1,260	**Income:** Single =R 4 160pm or R49 920 pa Married = R831 600 or R99 840 pa **Assets:** Single =R831 600 or Married =R1 663 200
Grant in Aid	Income support to people (already getting Older Persons; War Veterans or Disability Grant) who need full-time care from	Adults who are 18 or older SA citizens and permanent residents	R290	**Not means tested**
Foster Child Grant	Income support to caregivers of children in foster care (you must have a court order)	Foster parents of children under 18 (or up to 21 on the recommendation of social worker) SA citizens and permanent residents and refugees	R800	**Not means tested**

[25] Table 2 is taken from Social Grants Summary 2012/13, published by Blacksash.

Care Dependency Grant	Income support to caregivers providing permanent care to children with severe mental or physical disabilities (must have medical assessment)	Parent or caregiver or foster parent of children from 1 up to 18 years (not for infants) SA citizens and permanent residents	R1,260	**Income:** Single =R 12 600 pm or R151 200 pa Married =R25 200 or R302 400 pa **No Asset test**
Child Support Grant	Income support to caregivers of children in need.	Parent or primary caregiver of children born on or after 31 December 1993. SA citizens and permanent	R290	**Income:** Single =R2 900 or R34 800 pa Married =R 5 800 or R 69 600 pa **No Asset test**

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