

ANNUAL REPORT 2015



*Building up knowledge
to break down Poverty*

Chairperson's Report

Participation is the cornerstone of democracy. The success of our nation's Constitution is a reflection of this, along with the rigorous execution of these laws that govern South Africa. Deeply embedded in the Constitution is a commitment to respect the dignity of all who take refuge in our country and to make a concerted effort in ensuring equality and justice. It is our pro-human rights ethos that makes it the most progressive Constitution in the world: one that speaks to the needs of its citizens as determined by its citizens. The democratic process is tireless; and it is a privilege for SPII to be able to play an active role in shaping the future of this land.

As we approach a decade since SPII was established, we are proud to announce that the organisation has grown significantly; both in standing and scope, and that 2015 has been a watershed year for the organisation. This report will reflect how our research has not only steered public discourse around poverty and inequality but also served as the foundation of several motions that aimed to affect policy change. SPII's mission, after all, is to champion the development of and advocacy for innovative and empirically-based social and economic policies which combat poverty, reduce inequality and promote sustainable development.

On behalf of the Board, as the Chairperson of SPII, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge all the staff and partners of the Institute who have made possible the amazing work documented in this report. Thank you very much; we look forward to extending our partnerships in the coming year, as well as deepening our ability to share our research findings with other policy-shapers. To our new strategic players, I would like to welcome you and hope that this report ignites a much needed enthusiasm in realising the democratic dreams of this country.

Next year is a momentous year for SPII – and we remain committed to the initiation of honest, robust and critical reflection on the state of our society, the progress we have made and our shortcomings... but most importantly, we aim to inspire a culture of accountability. We encourage all to participate in our work and in our country's democracy.

Langa Zita
Chairperson



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Director's Note

2015 sees SPII heading towards the end of our first decade. Much has changed within the organisations. Staff have come and some have sadly left and our board has grown, although we still have some of our original trustees volunteering their time and strategic wisdom in this oversight capacity of SPII.

Nationally, much has changed too. In 2006, Thabo Mbeki was still President of both the ruling party, and the country. In 2006, before the global financial crisis, growth was recorded at 5%, and in 2006/07, we recorded a budget surplus for the first time in a democratic South Africa. The narrow definition of unemployment was 25,5% (which excluded discouraged work seekers).

Since then we have experienced the backlash of the global financial crisis. The narrow definition of unemployment has increased to just over 26%, and our national growth rate is predicted to be around 0,6% of GDP. However, despite the restricted growth, government has increased its coverage of people receiving social cash transfers to just over 16 million recipients. Social cash transfers constitute the primary source of income for 21% of households, and access to ARVs has dramatically increased. On reflection, would we say that SPII is still a relevant civil society institution?

We definitely think so! Despite South Africa's adoption of the National Development Plan 2030, we have not seen a significant dent in our levels of poverty, unemployment- and perhaps most worrying – inequality. SPII has been involved in the NEDLAC-based negotiations for a National Minimum Wage, which have gone on for far too long, we believe. A meaningful minimum wage will assist in some way to reduce poverty, but it will not suffice to eradicate poverty, especially given the low levels of the most prevalent cash transfer, the child support grant (R330 per child per month).

SPII believes that new and bold thinking is required to radically transform our economy and reverse the inter-generational patterns of marginalisation. Part of our work in this regard includes new thinking about fleshing out of the concept of a decent standard of living that should be the birth right of every person living in South Africa, as called for in the NDP. This we would like to be the guiding objective of all social and economic policies in South Africa, and a yardstick against which the wealth of the rich elite can be gauged.

A further aspect of our work that is increasingly taking shape is our socio-economic rights monitoring tool that we are developing with the Ford Foundation, the South African Human Rights Commission and the Foundation for Human Rights. The tool is a combination of policy and budget analysis, and the development and population of statistical indicators to monitor the extent and pace of the progressive realisation of the socio-economic rights in the Constitution. This work has become all the more critical as a result of the ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in early 2015 (finally) 21 years after we signed it.

Much has changed in the past ten years; but for as long as change is needed in the region, SPII remains committed to its vision of social justice.

Heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed to our cause.

Isobel Frye
SPII Director



Socio-Economic Rights Monitoring Tool Project

About

An analysis of the various judicial and legislative measures and reporting mechanisms and tools used in South Africa to fulfil and monitor socio-economic rights (SERs) highlights their various limitations and points towards the need for a comprehensive monitoring tool which can be applied across all rights.

SPII, with the support of the Ford Foundation and the endorsement of the South African Human Rights Commission, has developed a methodology for monitoring and evaluating the performance of government and the realisation of SERs that is based on a combination of policy (step 1) and budget (step 2) analysis and the development of statistical outcome indicators for each of the rights (step 3). This involves unpacking the content of these rights and the obligations they impose on government, evaluating the extent to which government policies and budget allocations adequately address these obligations, and measuring the enjoyment of rights by people on the ground.

Distinguishing features of the tool are firstly, its programmatic long term approach to monitoring with the overall aim of guiding policy and the implementation of SERs, and secondly, the emphasis on quantitative measures that are well-suited to mapping trends and patterns over time, but remain largely absent in the monitoring process of SERs in South Africa.

Performance

SPII completed and published two major studies during this reporting period: *The right to food in South Africa: An analysis of the content, policy effort, resource allocation and enjoyment of the constitutional right to food* and *Realising the right to a basic education in South Africa: An analysis of the content, policy effort, resource allocation and enjoyment of the constitutional right to a basic education*.

Our report on the Right to Food inspired the Legal Resources Centre to undertake a review of the potential for strategic litigation on the right to food in South Africa (this review is ongoing) and positive feedback on our right to food indicators was received at two major national workshops. We forced our way into the Technical Reference Team for the South African Vulnerability Assessment Committee on food security led by the Department of Agriculture and the Presidency and we held a well-covered press conference with a civil society 'Right to Food Group' at which we challenged government to consult widely before enacting a new food policy. We have also made presentations at various events around the right to food during this period and took advantage of a substantial amount of media opportunities. Inclusion in these processes shows that our goal of using our research to influence key policy debates is increasingly being met.

Our Basic Education report sparked debate on the realisation of this right throughout civil society and is currently being used as a key reference point in a number of processes, including the 20 Years of Democracy Report of the South African Human Rights Commission and the strategic thinking of key civil society groups such as Equal Education. Gender aspects of SER realisation are increasingly considered in reports and our indicator data is disaggregated by gender wherever relevant and possible. Gender-specific indicators regarding the number of school drop-outs were included in our evaluation of the fulfilment of the right to education.

SPII was invited and made a submission to an SA Human Rights Commission National Hearing on the Right to Housing in February 2015. The Commission subsequently released a publication called *The South African Human Rights Commission Investigative Hearing Report: Access to Housing, Local Governance and Service Delivery 23 – 25 February 2015* which prominently featured SPII's work. Our 2014 report on the right to housing was (and continues to be) used as a reference point by the Department of Human Settlements in the formulation of a new Green Paper on access to housing.



A major victory for SPII was the ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) by the South African government on 12 January 2015. SPII sat on the steering committee of a campaign coalition advocating for this move. Our advocacy roadmap now moves towards gaining recognition for our SER Monitoring Tool in civil society, the SAHRC and government in order to convince these stakeholders that our methodology should be used as the basis for reporting on this important human rights treaty.

We have strived to make the most of the opportunities arising from a newly elected administration, to produce shorter, more easily accessible "Peoples Guides" to major reports, and have continued to be inclusive in our approach to monitoring the realisation of socio-economic rights in SA. For example, we included emerging perspectives such as that of "food sovereignty" in our right to food report, and have responded to a newly gazetted Food and Nutrition Security Policy with activism and by timing the release of our research to coincide with the enacting of this policy (July 2015).

SADC Basic Income Grant (BIG) Campaign

About

Poverty and unemployment levels are very high in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and yet many of these countries are among the richest in natural resources. People need to directly benefit from these resources if levels of vulnerability to poverty are to be addressed and socio-economic justice achieved. The SADC BIG Campaign advocates for the introduction of SADC-wide universal social protection to be funded mainly from the proceeds of extractive industries. SPII acts as the secretariat for the campaign and heads up the advocacy initiatives with other members of the campaign steering committee and network partners.

Performance

Following the successful completion and adoption of the SADC BIG Campaign Strategy in 2013, the call for a SADC-wide BIG Campaign has been rigorously working towards garnering more publicity and recognition for the campaign, focusing on five countries: South Africa; Malawi; Mozambique; Namibia and Zambia (with Zimbabwe expressing interest). While progress has been made in cementing the call for the SADC-wide BIG, a weakness of the campaign has been its failure to resonate at the grassroots level. It is against this background that SPII representing the SADC BIG Coalition Secretariat, with support from the Church of Sweden (CoS) and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), hosted a conference in November to discuss the way forward and officially launch the campaign.







SPII joined representatives of over 500 civil society delegates at the SADC People's Summit convened by the Southern Africa People's Solidarity Network (SAPSEN), People's Dialogue and Rural Women's Assembly (RWA) in Botswana. Under the theme 'Reclaiming SADC for People's Development', the meeting culminated in the signing of the *11th CSF Declaration 14 August 2015*.

A four-country analysis of the potential impact of universal cash transfers on poverty and income released in September (*see table of key findings below*), will be used to strengthen our advocacy – and will also be disseminated across OSISA's communication platforms. We hope to intensify our campaigning in 2016 and expand our footprint to include Zimbabwe. This is a multi-year campaign given the vastness of its objectives. It will continue long after this phase of the project and will inform all campaign documentation in years to come.

SADC BIG Four-Country Report key findings:

By giving all residents in the respective countries under review a monthly basic income of US\$15 (PPP), the following impacts on income and inequality are estimated:

| Country | Main changes on income |
|--|---|
| Malawi  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20% of the population account for more than 50% of total income in Malawi, a trend that is synonymous with most African countries, highlighting how income distribution is skewed; - The introduction of a monthly universal BIG in Malawi of US\$15 or MKW 1 143.86 in terms of purchasing power parity, reduces inequality by a margin of 0.07 with the Gini coefficient reducing from 0.45 to 0.38; - In terms of incomes, all income groups experience double digit percentage increases with the poorest 30% (deciles 1 – 3) experiencing the highest income changes ranging from more than 50% to almost 100% improvements. |
| Namibia  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20% of the population account for almost 70% of total income in Namibia; - The introduction of a monthly universal BIG in Namibia of US\$15 or N\$ 69.95 in terms of purchasing power parity, reduces inequality by a margin of 0.02 with the Gini coefficient reduced from 0.61 to 0.59; - In terms of income, all income groups experience increases with the poorest 50% (deciles 1 – 5) experiencing double digit percentage changes ranging from 11% up to 41%. |
| South Africa  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A BIG has a significant impact on inequality which reduces from a Gini coefficient of 0.66 to 0.64; - The poorest 40% benefit the most as their incomes increase by between 22% to 98% with the poorest income decile experiencing the highest income change; - Incomes of the richest 10th decile also increase albeit at a modest rate of 0.88%. Here we note that there are means of recovering the basic income grant of beneficiaries in the 5th – 10th decile, such as progressive taxation and thus, this should not be used as a reason against the role out of a universal BIG. |
| Zambia  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 60% of income is in the hands of 20% of the population; - A BIG has a significant impact on the poorest 50% whose incomes increase by between 40% and 80% with the poorest 20% experiencing the highest income changes; - In terms of inequality, a BIG also demonstrates a significant change in terms of redistribution with the Gini coefficient declining from 0.55 to 0.49 when a BIG is introduced. |

Social Protection and Local Economic Development (LED) Graduation Pilot Project

About

Building on the successes of the graduation model developed by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), the pilot programme sought to link the child support grant (CSG) and Local Economic Development (LED) by targeting small, micro and survivalist enterprises in the informal economy that have a recipient of the CSG within their household.

Performance

On the 31st of October 2015, SPII's 'Social Protection and Local Economic Development (LED): Graduation Pilot Project', which was undertaken in Evaton Township, came to an end after 24 months. The Centre for Statistical Analysis and Research (CESAR) undertook an analysis of the data collected for the impact evaluation of the pilot project.

Throughout the course of the pilot project SPII has participated in a plethora of platforms to highlight and share our experiences. Platforms including the Department of Small Business Development, University of Johannesburg (Social Protection and Community Development Seminar with international experts and development programme), Department of Social Development (DSD), and the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) where SPII sits as part of community constituency alongside government and business in policy discussions.

"After I attended the workshop that SPII invited me to, I came back to my business and started putting money aside and I was able to buy a second zozo (corrugated iron structure) and opened the second hair salon business." - Participant no.65

On-going meetings and discussions with the Department of Small Business Development and Sedibeng District Municipality ensured buy-in on SPII methodology and the Department of Small Business Development (DSB) has formally asked SPII to develop three different proposals for replicating this methodology which have been submitted and SPII is awaiting a response. We are also part of the Task Team established by the Department of Small Business Development which will look at a way forward around the recent spike in Xenophobic attacks targeting enterprises owned by non-nationals in South African townships. SPII hopes to raise funds for a second phase in this project in the coming year.

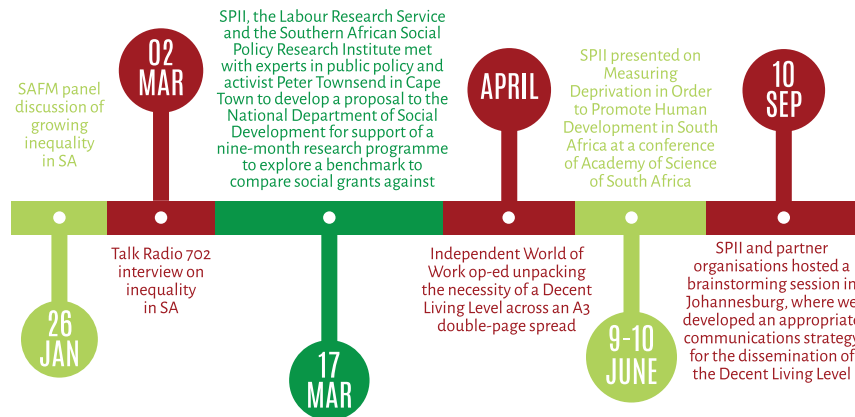
Decent Living Level

About

Poverty in South Africa is currently measured using extremely low poverty lines that, according to our community –based participative research, have very little in common with enabling people to meet their basic needs. Social protection allocations and wage bargaining is based on these survivalist levels rather than meeting people’s needs. Through participative community-based research and advocacy initiatives, SPII seeks to advance this discussion and see the development and adoption of a democratically defined decent standard of living that can be used by CSOs in their advocacy around better social protection allocations, and used by organised Labour in the setting of decent wages.

Performance

SPII has established a strong partnership with the Labour Research Service and the Southern African Social Policy Research Institute to roll out our second phase research into the relationship between the Socially Perceived Necessities and the levels of income required to command these. We have also forged partnerships with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and the University of Witwatersrand, who are conducting extensive research on the National Minimum Wage*. Our second phase research is pending official confirmation from the National Department of Social Development.



* SPII has also contributed to the ongoing debate around the political adoption of the concept of a national minimum wage through our representation within NEDLAC and we have also been able to feed through the research from the first stage of our project, which was initiated through our early partnership with Christian Aid, to inform the negotiating positions of both Community Constituency (civil society) and Labour.

Basic Needs Basket Project

About

In the current South African context, what constitutes basic needs is not clearly articulated. Existing sources of information from government and other research institutions conduct a broad and sometimes complex analysis which is either too technical or too simplified and therefore in both cases fails to speak to what is happening on the ground. The overall goal of this project is to generate information and analysis on what people living in poverty require for them to live a dignified, decent and healthy lifestyle as well as capacity building of selected CBO representatives.

Performance

SPII, in partnership with the Association of Community-Based Advice Offices of South Africa (ACAOSA), has 18 dedicated fieldworkers across the nine provinces that collect data for SPII's Basic Needs Basket (BNB). Data is collected on the prices of 38 food and non-food items every month. We also formed a close relationship with Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action (PACSA) based in KwaZulu-Natal, as we have drawn from PACSA's Food Barometer in our own methodology. Data collected during the period January 2015 to September 2015 was used in a trend analysis of the tracked items for that period:

| | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | INCREASE |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| National Ave. | R799,70 | R828,04 | R841,34 | R849,39 | R824,67 | R821,58 | R832,73 | R836,94 | R828,47 | ▲ 3,60% |
| Gauteng | R766,03 | R800,58 | R820,67 | R769,42 | R737,34 | R760,37 | R767,22 | R705,56 | R705,74 | ▲ 7,87% |
| Northern Cape | R787,77 | R753,87 | R757,10 | R756,29 | R748,98 | R750,91 | R757,41 | R778,04 | R774,87 | ▲ 1,64% |
| Western Cape | R730,79 | R784,65 | R777,18 | R758,62 | R789,33 | R749,30 | R827,84 | R734,25 | R636,61 | ▲ 12,89% |
| Mpumalanga | R820,66 | R768,52 | R807,74 | R844,55 | R856,47 | R834,44 | R807,59 | R898,91 | R808,45 | ▲ 1,49% |
| Eastern Cape | R871,20 | R921,94 | R892,72 | R958,11 | R831,32 | R819,08 | R904,14 | R814,36 | R889,44 | ▲ 2,09% |
| Limpopo | R838,31 | R929,37 | R929,89 | R925,22 | R865,86 | R768,69 | R928,82 | R877,29 | R908,80 | ▲ 8,41% |
| Free State | R829,95 | R852,82 | R806,25 | R824,02 | R818,82 | R844,47 | R898,77 | R850,52 | R788,83 | ▲ 4,95% |
| KZN | R763,32 | R767,91 | R914,57 | R861,21 | R827,12 | R783,79 | R762,70 | R759,44 | R793,15 | ▲ 3,91% |
| North West | R782,85 | R799,54 | R852,79 | R901,41 | R830,25 | R903,33 | 0,00 | 974,43 | 882,44 | ▲ 12,72% |

The table above provides the average prices of the 38 food and non-food items tracked by SPII's BNB. The results indicate an increase in the national average price between January 2015 and September 2015, and that increase was +3,6% on average. Gauteng, Northern Cape, Western Cape, Mpumalanga and Free State Province experienced an increase in the total basket over this period. The highest increase was experienced in the Western Cape Province at -12,80% (-R94,18), and the North West Province experienced the highest increase amongst all provinces of +12,72% (R99,59)

The Social Dialogue Programme

About

This programme refers to the collective initiatives by SPII to disseminate our work and undertake advocacy to advance our objectives. It includes our general media work, our work at NEDLAC and the use of our quarterly newsletter, *SPII Talk*.

Performance

Media | SPII had eight op-eds published in 2015, focusing on two key projects: the Decent Living Level and Socio-Economic Rights Monitoring Tool. In addition, SPII representatives were interviewed three times by SAFM and once on Talk Radio 702. SPII also released three editions of *SPII Talk*. The estimated reach of SPII's media activity is over 5,3 million people. We intend to double this in 2016. Our Facebook page saw an increase in engagement due to regular interaction and we have built up our Twitter following of over four hundred. The SADC-BIG blog linked to our website continues to drive traffic to our website, which has undergone a revamp.

NEDLAC | SPII, as a member of the Financial Sector Campaigns Coalition, is represented within the civil society, or Community Constituency of NEDLAC. There are four social partners, which consist of Community Constituency, Business, Labour and Government. In terms of the NEDLAC Act, all policies that impact on the labour market, as well as socio-economic related policies, are required to be negotiated through this Council. In 2015, the significant focus of our work was on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) negotiations, arising out of the commitment by the President in 2014 to consider the introduction of a NMW. We hoped our work would lead to the adoption of a NMW by the end of the year; however, negotiations are ongoing. SPII attended a study tour organised by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in May to observe the impact of the recent introduction of a NMW in Germany at the beginning of the year.

Publications | SPII released a total of six publications in 2015. These were disseminated through our campaign networks, internal and external media. SPII made a concerted effort to make available electronic versions of all publications through our website. In an effort to make an impact at a grassroots level, the LED team compiled a citizen guide released in May. SPII also supported the work of other organisations and provided peer reviews; our submission to an SA Human Rights Commission National Hearing in February 2015 resulted in SPII's work being featured prominently in a subsequent publication (*see back pull-out for a list of our networks*).

Audited Financial Statements

Donors 2015

Christian Aid
Church of Sweden
Foundation for Human Rights
Ford Foundation
OSISA

Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute

(Registration number IT 3080/2006)
Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2015

Statement of Financial Position

| Figures in Rand | Note(s) | 2015 | 2014 |
|-------------------------------|---------|------------------|------------------|
| Assets | | | |
| Non-Current Assets | | | |
| Property, plant and equipment | 2 | 3 | 10 906 |
| Current Assets | | | |
| Trade and other receivables | 3 | 470 609 | 214 314 |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 4 | 1 341 467 | 2 572 044 |
| | | 1 812 076 | 2 786 358 |
| Total Assets | | 1 812 079 | 2 797 264 |

Equity and Liabilities

Equity

| | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------------|----------------|
| Trust capital | 5 | 100 | 100 |
| Accumulated surplus | | 302 966 | 208 421 |
| | | 303 066 | 208 521 |

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------|------------------|
| Trade and other payables | 6 | 1 509 013 | 2 588 743 |
| Total Equity and Liabilities | | 1 812 079 | 2 772 395 |

Statement of comprehensive Income

| Figures in Rand | Note(s) | 2015 | 2014 |
|-----------------------------|----------|---------------|------------------|
| Revenue | | 5 241 971 | 4 820 570 |
| Other income | | 224 651 | 214 496 |
| Operating expenses | | (5 424 263) | (5 191 986) |
| Operating deficit | 7 | 42 359 | (156 920) |
| Investment revenue | 8 | 52 186 | 55 096 |
| Deficit for the year | | 94 545 | (101 824) |

About SPII

SPII is a not-for-profit trust which was registered in 2006. SPII is also registered with the Department of Social Development as a non-profit organisation (NPO), and has been granted tax exemption status under the Income Tax Act from the South African Revenue Service (SARS). SPII has strong stakeholder networks bridging civil society, government, organised labour and business. We are grounded in a belief in effective democratic engagement, human rights and non-racialism. SPII is committed to the full realisation of political, social and economic rights contained in the Constitution of South Africa. What sets SPII apart from other research and policy institutions is the emphasis on both content (knowledge) and process (inclusive participation). With the strategic guidance of its board of trustees, SPII is an organisation characterised by a sense of vision, justice and commitment to research and policy innovation.

Vision

SPII focuses on generating new knowledge, information and analysis in the field of poverty and inequality studies in South and Southern Africa. Through facilitating collaborative partnerships with and between government, labour, institutions of democracy, academia, social movements and civil society organisations, SPII is able to develop and advocate for the implementation of innovative and empirically-based social and economic policies capable of combating poverty, reducing inequality, and promoting sustainable development. SPII supports the development of a tradition of effective public participation in policymaking and implementation.

Theory of Change

SPII believes that:

- if we engage in well-informed, quality strategic research; and
- if we include informed civil society perspectives in this research; and
- if we have fieldwork that reaches socio-economically marginalised groups;

then we can:

- effectively analyse the features and drivers of poverty and inequality; and
- support the development of innovative, evidence-based measures of poverty reduction; and
- develop specific policies and strategic recommendations for reducing poverty and inequality; and
- promote dynamic participation by civil society in the debate; and
- support oversight bodies around the solutions to poverty and inequality; and
- develop strategic relationships with all three arms of government to ensure the trust necessary for our recommendations to have influence;

we will:

- build a pro-poor policy environment to ensure a shift to a faster and more effective reduction of poverty and inequality and the promotion of agency among all people living in Southern Africa.

Tel: 011 833 0161 | Fax: 011 832 3085 | www.spii.org.za
31 Quinn Street | Civicus House | Newtown | Johannesburg
PO Box 31747 | Braamfontein | 2017 | Johannesburg | South Africa
Registered Trust: IT3080/2006

Public Benefit Organisation: 93002387 | Non-Profit Organisation: 053-621-NPO

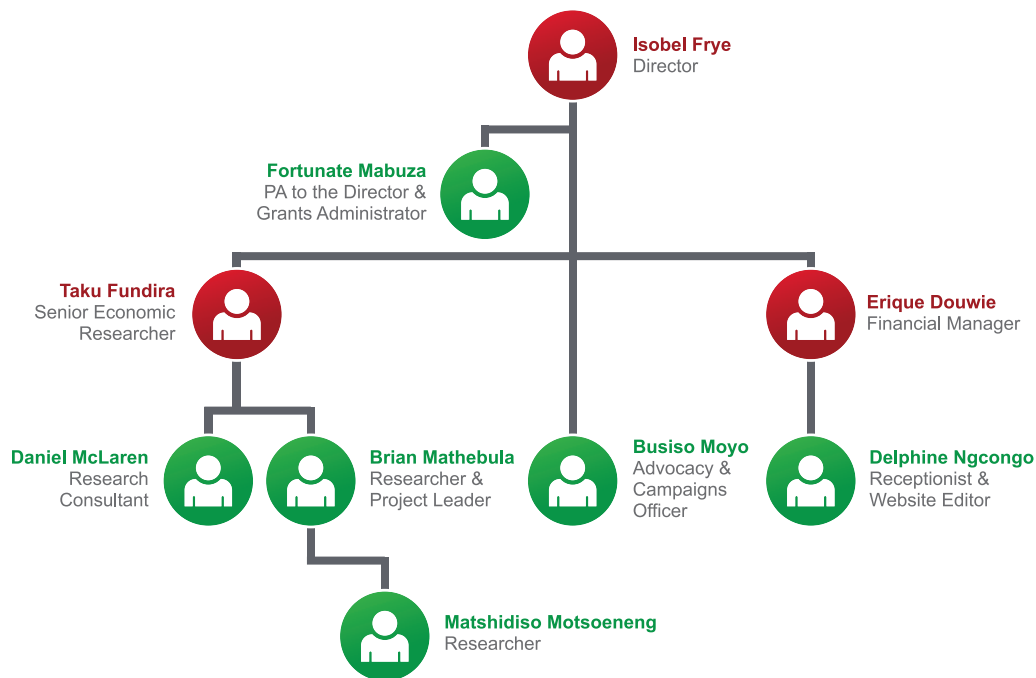
A special thank you to our funders



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Organogram



Enterprise coaches

Tokoloho Chabalala | Tshepo Makoko | Lebohang Moloi | Kgomotso Limba

Networks/ Campaigns

Senior/ Advisory Capacity:

- SADC BIG Campaign (secretariat)
- ICESCR Ratification Campaign
- Food Group
- South African Network on Inequality
- Southern Africa Social Protection Network
- Budget Transparency Campaign

Ordinary members:

- Awethu Social Mobilisation Network
- Financial Sector Campaigns Coalition