

INDICATORS OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL  
EXCLUSION PROJECT

**Findings from the Indicators of  
Poverty and Social Exclusion Project:  
Education**

**Helen Barnes and Gemma Wright**

**Key Report 6**

March 2007

*Building a Caring Society. Together.*



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**Indicators of Poverty and Social Exclusion Project**

**Project 4.3.1 of the Department of Social Development's  
Social Policy Analysis Programme**

# **Findings from the Indicators of Poverty and Social Exclusion Project: Education**

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the Analysis of South African Social Policy, University  
of Oxford**

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# 1. Introduction

This project is being carried out by the Centre for the Analysis of South African Social Policy, which is based in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of Oxford. The project is part of the South African Department of Social Development's Social Policy Analysis Programme which is itself part of a wider programme sponsored by the Department for International Development Southern Africa – 'Strengthening Analytical Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision-Making'.

Poverty research in developing countries has traditionally focused narrowly on income, and often on subsistence income. This conventional approach which is based on money-metric definitions and measurement of poverty, whilst relevant, does not capture the multi-dimensional nature of poverty. Research in developed countries had a similar focus until the 1970s when a paradigm shift occurred towards concepts such as multiple deprivation and, later, social exclusion. Policy makers in South Africa, a country categorised as a middle income developing country and still suffering from deep poverty and inequality resulting from the legacy of apartheid, still tend to define poverty in narrow income terms. The wider goal of this project is to build a strong conceptual and evidence base upon which a more complete understanding of the nature of poverty and deprivation in South Africa can be built.

The Indicators of Poverty and Social Exclusion (IPSE) project addresses the following issues:

- What definitions of poverty and social exclusion are appropriate in contemporary South Africa?
- How can such definitions be operationalised so as to create measures and indicators that will usefully inform policy-making?
- What is the extent of poverty and social exclusion in South Africa using a consensual definition?
- What does a consensual definition of poverty/social exclusion imply for policies to alleviate poverty and generate a more inclusive society?
- How does a consensual definition of poverty/social exclusion relate to subsistence-based income poverty lines?

The IPSE project has three broad stages. These are:

**Qualitative Stage:** A detailed description of the qualitative stage of this project is available in Ratcliffe et al. (2005). In brief, though, 48 focus groups were conducted as part of the IPSE project. They were held in nine of South Africa's eleven official languages; six of the nine provinces; with groups covering a range of incomes; and each of the black African, coloured, Indian and white population groups. A full list of places where the focus groups took place is included in **Appendix 1**. Participants discussed what they considered essential or necessities that everyone in South Africa should have, be

able to do or have access to; what they thought about exclusion for certain spheres of society, and who, if anyone, was excluded; their views on poverty and the poor in South Africa; and their aspirations for the future. The question schedule for the focus groups is contained in Ratcliffe et al. (2005). The aim of the qualitative phase of the project was, first, to inform the survey stage and second, to provide a valuable data set in its own right for analysis of people's views about necessities.

**Survey Stage:** Building on the insights coming out of the qualitative stage of the project a module was designed and incorporated into the 2005 South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) – a nationally representative sample survey. The module was devised primarily to define poverty and social exclusion democratically. Questions included in SASAS have been used to generate a list of 'socially perceived necessities' (Mack and Lansley, 1985) which are the basis for a set of poverty/social exclusion indicators. Survey questions were then incorporated into SASAS 2006 to repeat the definition stage that had been included in SASAS 2005, and additionally to measure the extent of poverty and social exclusion in terms of this set of democratically defined indicators.

The IPSE module in SASAS 2006 comprised 50 questions: 33 about possessions, 4 about activities, 8 about the neighbourhood and 5 about relationships with friends and family. People were asked to say whether they think each item or activity *is essential for everyone to have in order to enjoy an acceptable standard of living in South Africa today*. They were given four options as responses: 'essential' if they regarded the item or activity as essential in this way; 'desirable' if they regarded the item or activity as desirable but not essential; and 'neither' if they regarded the item or activity as neither essential nor desirable. A fourth and final category was 'don't know'. The first two of the four possible responses enable the respondents to distinguish between items that they think everyone should have, and those which they think it would be merely nice (but not essential) for everyone to have. The third category 'neither' allows respondents to state that the item or activity falls into neither of these categories (i.e. it is neither essential nor desirable).

The items in the IPSE component of the module were specifically selected to relate to a range of different standards of living. So, for example, some items were included that, though not essential for survival, might be seen by some groups as essential 'badges of inclusion'. For practical reasons, the list of 50 items was shorter than it could have been and the findings are therefore indicative rather than exhaustive. Thus for example a flush toilet was included, as was a bath and shower, but piped water to the dwelling was not included as this would be covered by default by the other two items. A list of the responses to the 50 items is shown in **Appendix 2**.

**Analysis Stage:** The data generated by the SASAS modules are being analysed to provide a detailed, multidimensional picture of poverty and social exclusion in South Africa. This stage of the project is ongoing.



*Aim of this report*

The aim of this report is to outline some findings in relation to education emerging from the qualitative phase of the IPSE project, supplementing this information with quantitative material from SASAS where this is available.

This report begins with a brief overview of education in South Africa. Subsequent sections are devoted to the analysis of findings from the focus groups and the module in SASAS 2006, specifically on education in South Africa.

## 2. Education in South Africa

Education is important both in childhood and later when children become adults. It is an important process for children and one of the key factors affecting their development. Equal access to education allows participation in and respect by society (Klasen, 2001) and school is crucial for social and cultural contact and different life experiences (Ridge, 2002). In later life, having an adequate education is an important factor in labour market participation and in securing an income above the poverty line:

*'While delivery in many other social sectors alleviates the existing plight of the poor, education gives children the opportunity to change their situation in the future [...] Access to quality education ensures that children grow up literate and able to participate in economic activities, thereby improving their living circumstances and ensuring broader economic development across the country.'* (Robinson and Sadan, 1999: 40 and 54)

Full participation in society as a child and as an adult therefore depends to a large extent on the ability to partake effectively in the education system.

### 2.1 The right to education in South Africa

In South Africa, rights relating to education have a long history: the Freedom Charter adopted at the Congress of the People, 1955 states: 'Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children' (African National Congress, 1955). However, historically, this right has not always been realised for everyone. Post apartheid policies in South Africa set out to improve education for all with a commitment to human rights, equity and social justice. This was reinforced by the inclusion of the right to a basic education in the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996: Article 29, 1a).

Internationally, human rights treaties stipulate that as a minimum, governments are obliged to provide free compulsory primary education for children (Children's Institute, 2007). The Convention on the Rights of a Child (CRC) asserts that states should recognise the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity (United Nations, 1990: Article 28). The CRC obliges the state to 'make primary education compulsory and available free to all'. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child states that every child shall have the right to an education, and this is to be realised by the provision of 'free and compulsory basic education' (Organisation of African Unity, 1999: Article 11). Finally, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights provides that everyone has the right to education and, to achieve the full realisation of this right, 'primary education must be compulsory and available free to all' (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1976: Article 13).

Recent developments include the Millenium Development Goals, one of which is to achieve universal primary education, and the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All which highlighted the need to eradicate extreme poverty and to commit to work towards this aim through education. In particular there was a commitment to achieve universal primary education (free and of good quality) and to improve adult literacy and access to basic and continuing education for adults (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 2000).

## 2.2 Education in South Africa: the past

South Africa has a history of segregated and unequal education, as before apartheid, black Africans who received an education did so primarily because of foreign churches and missions (Fiske and Ladd, 2004). Under apartheid, however, all facets of the education system - funding, governance, professional training, curriculum - were explicitly defined and implemented along racial lines. In the final years of apartheid, 15 different ministries of education were in operation. Education for black Africans in townships was under the control of the Department of Education, there were ten separate departments in the ten homelands, the House of Assembly controlled education for white students, the House of Representatives for coloured students and the House of Delegates for Indian students. The purpose of this segregated education system was to prepare learners of different race groups for the roles they were expected to serve in society (Veriava, 2005). The apartheid government allocated resources to schools on the basis of race with the greatest disparity between white schools and those in homelands. The curriculum was written for white learners and little attention was paid to the needs of non white learners. History teaching sought to legitimise the prevailing social order and to teach learners about their place in that social order. Race provided the basis for practices in higher education also, with restricted access of black people to higher education (Fiske and Ladd, 2004).

Since 1994, legislative and policy reform has taken place, in line with the constitutional obligation to provide basic education. The South African Schools Act (SASA) and the National Educational Policy Act, both 1996, accompanied by related regulations and notices and provincial legislation, create a single system of education that regulates aspects such as school funding, school governance, discipline of learners, and language admission policies (Veriava, 2005).

Transformation involved negotiated change, within a framework of resource and capacity issues, which had important consequences for educational policy (Fiske and Ladd, 2004). The apartheid education policies had also left behind a complicated legacy: residential segregation with better schools located in formerly white residential areas; poor quality of schooling, both facilities and teachers, in former homeland areas; and low rates of educational attainment for non white adults and students (Chisholm, 2005; Fiske and Ladd, 2004).

The primary objective of this new system was the redress of apartheid education (Veriava, 2005). The features of apartheid to counteract were identified as fragmentation along racial lines; unequal access to training and education by race; and lack of democracy (Fiske and Ladd, 2004). Specific areas of change were the integration of education and training; provision of ten years of free and compulsory general education (of a high quality); replacement of the 15 racially defined education systems with a single national system and provincial departments; involvement of parents, teachers and students in the governance of schools; de-racialised curriculum and language policy; and the implementation of a single national qualifications structure (Fiske and Ladd, 2004). The main characteristic of apartheid education was the under funding of black education, and therefore equity in the funding of education was required as well as ensuring that learners who had historically struggled to gain access to education were now able to do so (Veriava, 2005).

According to Chisholm (2005: 203):

*'There are major changes in the state of South Africa's schools, but there are also deep continuities with the past. It is no accident that the poorest provinces with the poorest schools are those that incorporate former homelands: the current state of schools in these provinces is closely intertwined with the twists and turns of a history more than two centuries old'.*

The following sections examine the state of education in South Africa today.

### 2.3 Education in South Africa: the present

In 2005 there were 34,162 established public and registered independent educational institutions in South Africa. Of these, 26,592 were ordinary schools and 7,570 were other education institutions, including adult basic education and training (ABET) centres, special schools, early childhood development (ECD) sites, public further education and training (FET) colleges and public higher education (HE) institutions. There were 13,936,737 learners and students in the education system, served by 437,330 educators and lecturers (Department of Education, 2006c).

Berry and Guthrie (2003: 25) claim that:

*'There are no accurate statistics on the numbers of children who are out of school. The Office of the Deputy President estimates that 5% of children aged between 10-16 years are not attending school. Those attending schools irregularly include those working on farms, learners attending school part-time because of work or family circumstances, street children, children with disabilities who cannot access schools that accommodate their needs and children who leave school early for other reasons.'*

The different education sectors are described briefly below, but the remainder of the chapter will largely focus on issues relating to children in the general education and training (GET) and FET phases.

### **2.3.1 Education sectors**

#### *ECD*

ECD is a set of programmes and policies for children from birth to nine years of age. The Department of Education (DOE) is responsible for children in grades 1 to 3 as part of compulsory schooling. One of the priorities of the DOE is to increase access to ECD provisioning through an accredited reception year (grade R) programme, focusing on expanding ECD provision, correcting the inequalities of the past, ensuring equitable access and improving the quality and delivery of ECD programmes. The medium-term goal of the department is for all children entering grade 1 to have participated in an accredited grade R programme by 2010 (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

The non-profit sector plays a major role in ECD. The majority of places in early learning sites across South Africa have been initiated by the non-profit sector in partnership with communities (Republic of South Africa, 2007). Nevertheless, for many children, access to ECD is limited because of the lack of funding, especially in poor and rural communities (Republic of South Africa, 2007; Biersteker and Kvalsvig, forthcoming). Approximately 10% (1.3 million) of children younger than six years of age were attending some form of educational facility in 2005, of which nearly 1.2 million children were in the 3–5 year age group. This constitutes more than one-third (39%) of children aged 3–5 years (Children’s Institute, 2007).

Biersteker and Kvalsvig (forthcoming) state that the Education White Paper 5 reveals that access to services has not been equitable. A nationwide ECD audit indicated an urban bias in provision of ECD centres and the worst provision in the poorer provinces. Overall enrolment at centres was consistent with national population figures both for gender and population group, but not for all provinces. The audit also showed that very few children with disabilities attended ECD centres and sites serving African children were of lower quality than those serving the rest of the population.

#### *GET*

The GET band consists of the reception year and learners up to grade 9, as well as an equivalent ABET qualification (see below). Under the SASA, education is compulsory for all South Africans from age 7 (grade 1) to age 15, or the completion of grade 9. General school education is structured according to three phases: the foundation phase, intermediate phase and senior phase.

Currently, the foundation phase lasts three years, starting in grade 1. Basic learning activities during this phase centre on three learning programmes: literacy, numeracy and life skills. One additional language is introduced in grade 3. During the intermediate phase (grades 4 to 6), schools decide on the nature and number of learning programmes based on the resources available to the school. However, these learning programmes should draw on the eight learning areas that have to be offered to learners in the senior phase (grades 7 to 9): languages, mathematics, arts and culture, life orientation, social

sciences, natural sciences, economic and management sciences, and technology (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

According to the Children's Institute, in July 2005, 10.6 million children (96%) of school-going age were reported to be attending an educational facility. Of the 417,705 children of school-going age who were not attending an educational facility, the majority (74%) were children aged 13–17 years. Nearly half (44%) of the children who were out of school lived in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces (Children's Institute, 2007). In 2006, just under 9.7 million children were in the GET phase, of which 246,000 were at independent schools and 9.45 million were at public schools (Department of Education, 2006c).

### *FET*

The FET band consists of grades 10 to 12 in schools and all education and training from the National Qualifications Framework levels 2 to 4 (equivalent to grades 10 to 12 in schools) and the N1 to N6 in FET colleges. Learners enter FET after the completion of the compulsory phase of education or via the ABET route.

Transformation of the FET sector took place during 2002/03, when the existing 152 technical colleges were merged to form 50 multisite campus FET colleges. There was an increase in student intake, for example learner numbers in ordinary public and independent schools in the FET band increased from 2,477,412 in 2005 to 2,553,582 in 2006 (Department of Education, 2006a; 2006b). In 2005/06, the government pledged to invest R1 billion over the next three years for improved facilities, equipment and support for FET colleges (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

### *HE*

The HE band consists of a range of degrees, diplomas and certificates up to and including postdoctoral degrees. In 2005, 737,472 students were enrolled in public higher education institutions, slightly fewer than in 2004 when the figure was 744,488. Approximately three quarters were black students (defined as black African, coloured and Indian) and just over half were female. Over 40% of students were enrolled for programmes of study in either teacher education (14.6%) or the broad humanities and social sciences (27.7%), 29.1% were studying business and management, and 28.6% were enrolled for science, technology and engineering (Department of Education, 2006c).

### *ABET*

The 2001 Census showed that at least four million South Africans in the 20 years-and-over age group had no schooling at all, while another four million had limited schooling at primary school level. This translated into at least 18% of the population, excluding school-going children, being in need of basic literacy interventions (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

The ABET Act, 2000 provides a legislative framework for the establishment, governance and funding of ABET centres. Through the Adult Education and Training Multi-Year Implementation Plan, the quality of ABET provisioning and delivery is improving (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

The DOE established the South African Literacy Agency (SANLI) in 2002 to significantly reduce adult illiteracy. Since the establishment of SANLI, more than 320,000 adults have been reached in various non-formal sites, while more than 635,900 have been reached through the public adult learning centres (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

### *Education of learners with special education needs*

Ordinary public schools have to admit learners with learning disabilities or special educational needs where this is reasonably possible, and if they can give the support that the learner needs. The SASA says schools must take all possible steps to make their facilities accessible to the disabled. Learners who cannot be taught at ordinary schools should be educated at special education schools.

The DOE is piloting inclusive education in various districts, selecting a number of ordinary primary schools to be made more accessible to learners with physical disabilities. Once the first phase of implementing inclusive education is completed, the lessons learnt will be applied to the wider education sector. Meanwhile, existing special schools will be strengthened so that some of them can serve as resource centres for full-service schools and ordinary schools in their areas (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

Although there has been an increase in the number of special educational needs schools, there is unequal access across the country. Learners with disabilities in poorer provinces are being disadvantaged through inequitable access to such facilities, and where inclusive education is implemented, teachers do not always feel they are able to deal with the special needs of children with disabilities (South African Human Rights Commission, 2006). In rural schools, 'learners with disabilities either do not go to school because of the difficulties in accessing schools, are hidden by their families, or are mainstreamed by default without any recognition of the attention they may need' (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005: 59).

### **2.3.2 School fees**

Within South African education, an important debate in recent years has been about access to education, in particular issues with school funding and the design and implementation of the school fee exemption system. The SASA states that public schools can charge school fees to supplement funding from the DOE. It is the responsibility of the school governing body (SGB) to draw up a policy on fees in consultation with the majority of parents. School fees are set at annual public meetings of SGBs where parents vote on the amount to be paid. There are large variations in annual school fees charged by

schools. Some estimates suggest fees vary between R50 per year in the poorest schools to R15,480 in a good suburban school (Veriava, 2005). Research has found that mean annual school fees are lowest in the Free State (less than R100), followed by Limpopo at a similar level, and highest in Gauteng (over R800), followed by the Western Cape (approximately R700) (Phurutse, 2005). Parents who cannot afford to pay, or who can only afford a lesser amount, can be granted an exemption or reduction in fees, through the school fee exemption policy. There is a means test for the granting of full and partial exemptions.

Although the SASA expressly states that no child may be refused admission to school for being unable to pay fees, the reality until recently has been quite different. The school fee exemption policy has been difficult to enforce, with the result that parents have had to pay school fees even though they cannot afford them. Government subsidies are insufficient to guarantee an adequate education without additional support from parents. Schools are not compensated for the loss of revenue caused by the exemption policy, so the majority of schools choose not to implement it (Veriava, 2005).

The DOE has acknowledged that learners whose school fees are not paid are often refused admission to schools, despite the SASA banning such discrimination (Veriava, 2005; see also Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security, 2002; Berry and Guthrie, 2003). Schools often fail to make parents aware of the exemption policy and fail to grant exemptions to parents who qualify. Other more covert ways to exclude poor parents are also employed, and differential treatment of learners who cannot afford to pay school fees has been reported (Veriava, 2005). The following quotes illustrate this:

*'The teachers shout at you. They say that we cannot sit on the seats at school because we don't pay school fees. People who sit on the chairs are those who pay school fees.'*  
— (Girl, 11, NP)

*'I didn't receive my report because I didn't pay fees. My mother was forced to pay R50.00 in order for me to receive my report.'* — (Girl, 12, KZN)

(Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security, 2002: 35-36)

Furthermore, the exemption policy fails to adequately cater for parents who do not qualify for exemptions but who find it difficult to make ends meet. It also does not take into account families with more than one child at school as the formula is worked out per learner (Veriava, 2005). Roithmayr (2003) states that many families who are eligible do not apply because the process is too time consuming, and the cost of dignity is too high.

This system of funding perpetuates apartheid inequalities. Schools serving wealthier communities can set higher fees and make up for deficits in school budgets and funding from the DOE. There are, however, few resources to improve services in poor schools (Roithmayr, 2003; Veriava, 2005).



*'The result of South Africa's fee-paying policy has been that richer public schools have been able to retain their privilege and edge over poor schools by employing additional teachers and improved resources to ensure better quality teaching. Poorer schools, on the other hand, have not charged high fees but are often unable to extract even their low fees from impoverished parents. Poor parents are exempt from fees, and pro-poor funding mechanisms have been instituted, but are virtually unknown in rural areas. Unscrupulous and not-so-unscrupulous principals who require income additional to that provided by the Department, often fail to inform or are unable to implement fee-exemption policies.'* (Chisholm, 2005: 211)

Roithmayr (2003) concludes that charging fees is unconstitutional in terms of access, adequacy and equality. The fee system restricts or impedes access to basic education for the poor. Because the state does not provide adequate funding for basic needs in poor schools, the basic education provided is inadequate in fee poor schools. The system also discriminates on the basis of race and class in guaranteeing access and adequacy in education.

In early 2005, it was announced that the government had developed proposals for improving the targeting of funding for schools and the regulations governing school fee exemptions, especially for poor households. The plan of action includes mechanisms to ensure the following (Republic of South Africa, 2007):

- Greater inter provincial equity so that learners with similar levels of poverty receive the same minimum level of school funding.
- The abolition of compulsory school fees, where adequate levels of resourcing are reached, for 40% of learners in the poorest schools.
- A national per learner funding norm, for non-personnel recurrent items, starting with the poorest 20% of learners.
- The granting of automatic fee exemptions to learners who qualify for certain social service grants and payments.

According to Veriava (2005: 14), the amendments to the school fee policy 'suggest a system that is much more complex, uncertain, subject to qualification and unlikely to provide free schooling for 40% of the poorest learners in the country'. She argues that neither schools nor parents will know from one year to the next whether or not a school will be free or fee paying; that the system is prone to abuse from SGBs who continue to charge fees despite being declared free as parents in poor areas are unlikely to know any different; that parents may have to move children to different schools from one year to the next if the school changes from free to fee paying; and that a national system is likely to mean that there will be fewer schools in the richer provinces in the poorest 40%, even if they have poor learners, and therefore poor communities will not benefit.

Veriava (2005) does also highlight the positive aspects, for example prohibiting schools from charging more than a single compulsory fee, with strict exemptions criteria; clear and unambiguous prohibition of discrimination against children who do not pay fees; requiring the school to prove it has implemented the regulations before taking legal action against a parent; prohibiting a SGB from seizing a parent's home to recover fee

costs prior to a court judgement, unless alternative accommodation is made available; extending grants to orphans and children in foster care as well as learners whose caregivers are in receipt of Child Support Grant; and devising a new formula for the calculation of partial exemption that takes into account the number of children for whom a parent is paying fees and that limits the discretion of the SGB.

While school fees have been the main concern in South Africa in terms of children's right to education, there are numerous other issues that have an impact on whether or not children are able to participate fully in education. Even without the barrier of school fees, there are still numerous costs that have to be met, and for which there is no exemption, for example school uniforms, equipment and transport to school, and it is widely reported that many poor families struggle to find the necessary financial resources to send their child to school (Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security, 2002; Berry and Guthrie, 2003; Chisholm, 2005; Porteus et al. 2000; Sogaula et al., 2002). Roithmayr (2003) notes that the Education for All assessment stated that inability to pay for school fees, uniform and transport were the primary reasons for non-attendance at schools.

Issues of importance besides the financial burden of education include: distance to school and availability of transport; number of learners in relation to number of educators; safety at school; gender equality; availability and quality of facilities and resources (including school buildings, desks and chairs, safe water, basic sanitation, electricity); and outcomes. These are discussed in the remaining sections of this chapter.

### **2.3.3 Travel to school**

Access to school remains a problem for children in South Africa, particularly those living in rural areas. Many children have to travel long distances to school (Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security, 2002; Berry and Guthrie, 2003). Schools in rural areas tend to be merging or closing down, meaning children have to travel further to access education. It appears that the problem is greater for children of secondary school age than younger children (Children's Institute, 2007). These quotes from the Nelson Mandela Foundation report on education in rural communities illustrate the situation:

*'I walk a long distance from here to Nongeke. I have to buy shoes approximately three times a year. Our journeys to school are actually not right. We have to pass scary bushes. When we get to school we are no longer tidy as we were when we left home. It's worse when it's raining.'* (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005: 47)

*'As you can see, I start the day by going out to sell wood so that I can get money with which to buy a bus coupon. This is because there is no high school nearby; they are all far away.'* (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005: 47)

The National Household Travel Survey reveals that in 2003, the vast majority of learners (76%) usually walked to their place of education - the proportion was higher in rural than urban or metropolitan areas (91%, 71% and 57% respectively). The Western Cape and

Gauteng had the lowest proportion of learners who walked and the highest proportion of learners who travelled by car. The Eastern Cape and Limpopo had the highest proportion of walkers, and the lowest car usage. Students at tertiary places of education seldom walked and more typically made use of taxis and private cars. For the majority of students (70%) the door to door travel time was 30 minutes or less. For 17% the journey was longer than 45 minutes. In KwaZulu-Natal 42% had to travel for longer than 30 minutes to get to their place of education. About a quarter of primary school children who walk to school walked for longer than 30 minutes in one direction, while for high school children the figure is approximately 30% (Department of Transport, 2005).

In addition to distance travelled and time taken, there are other factors associated with the journey to school, including availability and affordability of transport, safety and environmental barriers:

*'In the mornings, children wend their way to school across hills and through valleys, fields and dongas, rivers and streams, over potholed or muddy rural roads, past bushes and forests [...] Some children have to travel long distances, in many instances having to cross rivers in flood [...] The long distances to school increase the chance of road accidents and the threat from criminals, who in some areas have been known to rob or rape learners going to school. Other studies of children's descriptions of their journey to and from school repeatedly tell stories of older boys and adults who are regularly to be found at certain locations and of whom younger passing children are afraid.'* (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005: 47)

Caregivers may decide that it is safer for their children to remain at home. Besides these factors, children are likely to be physically tired from their long journey, which impacts on their ability to participate at school. Young people perceive the distance from school as one of the reasons some children drop out of school (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005).

### **2.3.4 Gender equality**

In South Africa, girls generally do not experience discrimination with regards to access to education, as is commonly seen in other parts of the world. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) reflects the level of access to education of females compared to that of males. Gender parity is considered to have been attained when the GPI lies between 0.97 and 1.03 (Department of Education, 2006c). In 2005, South Africa had a GPI for grades 1-12 of 1.00. In general there were fewer females at primary school level than there are males, although the differences are small, while at secondary level the pattern is reversed and there are more female than male learners. The GPI for primary schools was 0.96, while for secondary schools it was 1.08. In terms of GET and FET bands, the GPI scores were 0.97 and 1.13 respectively, again indicating that there are more female learners than male learners in the last few years of the school system (Department of Education, 2006c).

The province with the highest GPI was the Eastern Cape, at 1.04, and KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga had the lowest index of 0.98. At the primary school level, the lowest

GPI was 0.92, found in Limpopo. The highest GPI score was 0.99 in the Western Cape. At the secondary school level, the Eastern Cape had the highest GPI score of 1.22, while the Northern Cape had the lowest score of 1.02. The Eastern Cape had high levels of gender disparity in the FET band - a GPI of 1.29 - whereas at GET, the GPI was 1.00 (Department of Education, 2006c).

### **2.3.5 Safety at school: violence and abuse**

Sexual abuse, harassment, gangster activity, drugs, vandalism and corporal punishment are some of the problems reported in schools (South African Human Rights Commission, 2006). Although females do not appear to face discrimination in terms of access to school, girls participating in the education system may experience other forms of gender-based discrimination. Violence and abuse against girls is common in the school environment (South African Human Rights Commission, 2006). Girls are raped, sexually abused, sexually harassed, and assaulted at school by male peers and teachers, and inevitably this impacts on their school performance and attendance (Human Rights Watch, 2001). It is not only girls that experience violence and abuse, however: 'schools are not happy or safe havens for many learners. They suffer maltreatment, abuse and discrimination at the hands of both peers and teachers. There is widespread evidence of sexual harassment and frequent beatings by teachers and bullying' (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005: 61). The report further asserts that many learners drop out of school because of poor educational experiences and discouragement from their teachers.

According to the first National Youth Victimization Survey, 'schools have become places associated with harm and fear for many young South Africans' (Burton, 2006: 2). Approximately 16% of young people aged between 12 and 22 have been threatened with harm, scared or hurt while at school. For half of these youngsters, such incidents happened on more than one occasion and were inflicted by learners from other classes at the school, and less frequently, actual classmates. More than one in ten children were scared of specific places within their school, usually the toilets, open grounds or playing fields (Burton, 2006).

### **2.3.6 Resources**

#### *Educators*

Educators are key resources in the education system, ensuring that quality learning takes place in the classroom. According to the report of the Public Hearing on the Right to Basic Education, too many teachers have low morale, spend too little time in the classroom, are unqualified or under-qualified, are not sufficiently trained in the new curriculum, use outdated teaching methods and are disconnected with the communities they serve (a particular problem in rural areas) (South African Human Rights Commission, 2006).

### *Learner to educator ratio*

The number of children per educator in a classroom setting contributes directly to the individual attention an educator is able to give each child. In 2004, the national average learner to educator ratio at ordinary schools in the country was 33.6, ranging from 29.7 in North West to 35.7 in the Western Cape. The national average ratio was 34.5 for public schools, but for independent schools it was substantially lower (17.1). The national learner to educator ratio stayed fairly consistent between 2000 and 2004, increasing slightly from 32.8 to 33.6 (Department of Education, 2005).

### *Class size*

On average, classes do not exceed 40 students per teacher, but there are still schools with as many as 80 learners to a class (Chisholm, 2005). In 2003, a survey on rural education found that the average class size in Limpopo for the reception year, foundation phase and intermediate phase was over 50 learners. In KwaZulu-Natal, the average class size in the intermediate phase was 62 learners. Class sizes were found to be smaller in the senior phase in the three provinces studied (Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape), which may be due to a high attrition and drop-out rate (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005).

### *School facilities*

The School Register of Needs conducted in 1996 and again in 2000, monitors the physical infrastructure and facilities of schools in South Africa. Between 1996 and 2000, some improvements could be seen. However, some schools, such as farm schools, lack even the most basic facilities and resources, for example electricity, drinking water, sanitation, suitable buildings and adequate learning materials (Human Rights Watch, 2004).

In general, children's access to basic sanitation facilities at schools, critical for hygiene and health, has improved since 1996. In 1996, 55% of learners in South African schools were without toilet facilities on site. By 2000, only 17% of learners were without toilet facilities (Department of Education, 2001). Not all of the available toilets were adequate, as 15% were not in working order in 2000. Limpopo had the lowest proportion of working toilets and the Western Cape the highest. Between 1996 and 2000, there was an increase in the number of schools using flush septic tanks and flush sewer systems, and a decrease in the use of chemical toilets, pit latrines, and the bucket system (Department of Education, 2001).

There have also been improvements in access to water, another facility that is essential for health and hygiene. In 1996, 65% of South African schools had potable water on site. This increased to 71% in 2000 (Department of Education, 2001). Approximately 7,800 schools were without water in 2000, but according to provincial departments, by the end of February 2005, just less than 4,800 schools were without water (Republic of South Africa, 2007). In 2000 the Western Cape had the largest proportion of schools with water on site, followed by Gauteng and the Northern Cape. The Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga,

and Limpopo had the lowest percentages of schools with water on site (Department of Education, 2001).

Another important facility for schools is electricity, and there has been progress in the supply of electricity to schools since 1996. In 1996, 41.8% of all schools had access to electricity, compared to 57.1% in 2000 (Department of Education, 2001). The number of schools without electricity declined further between 2000 and 2005; in 2000, there were approximately 12,250 schools without electricity, but by February 2005 the figure was approximately 5,200 schools (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

In terms of the school buildings, unsafe structures declined from approximately 4,400 in 2000 to 1,700 in 2005, while schools in mud structures declined from approximately 1,750 to 950, and asbestos school structures declined from approximately 950 to 600. All zinc school structures - just over 300 in 2000 - had been replaced by February 2005 (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

The number of schools without fencing halved between 2000 and 2004 (roughly 5,250 in 2000 to 2,550 in 2004), and in 2004, there were approximately 7,200 schools without libraries compared with just under 12,200 in 2000 (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

### **2.3.7 Outcomes**

Three important educational outcomes and measures of achievement are repeat rates, drop out rates and pass rates on Senior Certificate examinations. There is little evidence to indicate much improvement in educational outcomes, such as progress through school or success in examinations, for the majority of previously disadvantaged students (Fiske and Ladd, 2004).

#### *Repetition*

Chisholm (2005: 211) claims that 'Enrolment figures hide the high numbers of over-age learners in classes, and high levels of repetition and dropout, especially in rural areas'. She quotes research by Perry and Arends (2003), who suggest that more than 50% of appropriately aged learners were either outside the school system or held back in primary grades. The Nelson Mandela Foundation also reports high levels of repetition. In Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal, 16% of learners were repeating grade 7 at the time of visiting, and 12% in the Eastern Cape.

#### *Drop out rates*

Chisholm (2005) also provides figures on drop-out rates from Perry and Arends (2003): in secondary school grades, the drop-out rate climbs steadily to grade 11, with 14% of learners dropping out at the end of grade 11. In Limpopo, one out of every six children in each household surveyed was out of school, compared to one in five in the Eastern Cape and one in four in KwaZulu-Natal (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005).

### *Examination results*

In 2005, the overall national pass rate in the Senior Certificate examination for full-time candidates with six or more subjects was 68%. The pass rate increased year on year from 1999 to 2003 (58% to 73%), but since 2003 has decreased each year to 67% in 2006 (Department of Education, 2006c; Pandor, 2006). Four provinces had a pass rate of over 70% in 2006: the Western Cape (84%), Gauteng (78%), the Northern Cape (77%) and Free State (72%). The Eastern Cape had the lowest pass rate (59%), but this was an improvement on 2005 (Pandor, 2006).

More females than males wrote the Senior Certificate examination, but the national pass rate for male candidates (69.7%) was higher than for female candidates (67.2%) (Department of Education, 2006c).

### **2.3.8 Racial integration**

Under the SASA, parents were given the freedom to apply to any school they wished, and schools were no longer legally allowed to exclude students on the basis of race. However, Chisholm states that:

*'...despite desegregation of white, Indian and coloured schools, and significant demographic movements of people over the last decade and large numbers of children being bussed from townships to suburban schools, the large majority of schools in South Africa remain uni- or mono-racial.'* (Chisholm, 2005: 216)

Fiske and Ladd (2004) agree that there has not been noticeable racial integration, and note that schools, through their SGBs, can impact on racial equity by way of admissions and language policies, as well as school fees (see **Section 2.3.2**). Former white, Indian and coloured schools have increased their enrolment of African learners. At the same time, a high proportion of Indian and coloured learners have moved to formerly white schools and some white learners have moved to independent schools (Chisholm, 2005). Segregation takes place within schools through streaming, officially on language grounds, but unofficially on the basis of race and class. Pupils are expected to adapt to the cultural norms and practices of the schools, norms and practices which were established under apartheid (Carrim, 2002; Chisholm, 2005).

### **2.3.9 Attitudes to schooling in South Africa**

The SASAS 2003 asked questions on attitudes to education. This provides further context for the views of focus group participants and SASAS respondents (in terms of questions on essentials). Kivilu and Morrow (2006) analysed the SASAS data and found the following results. When asked 'up to what level do you believe it should be compulsory for all learners to attend school?', almost 80% responded 'up to and including grade 12', while some 15% felt that school attendance should not be compulsory. The majority of

all South Africans, by region, race, age and all other categories, believe that schools should be racially mixed: approximately 90% either strongly agreed or agreed that schools should contain children of different races. However, only 53% of white respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this, compared to over 75% in all other population groups. Respondents were asked to react to a number of statements about reasons for becoming educated. The overwhelming majority agreed that education would improve the chances of getting a good job, and they also agreed that education should enable children to think critically and independently, that it keeps children off the street and safe, that it should help children to become better citizens of South Africa and that it should help children of different backgrounds get along together. Respondents were given a number of choices as to how they felt extra resources should be used in a local high school. Overall, the top three priorities were science and technology equipment (34%), a library and library books (30%) and extra teachers (17%). Not many considered free school meals a priority, even among poor rural respondents. Over 50% of respondents felt that children should be encouraged to continue studies at university, while 23% felt they should be encouraged to study at technikons.



### 3. Project findings in relation to education

#### 3.1 The scope of this report and analysis

In this chapter the focus group and SASAS 2006 data on education are presented. A number of themes could be drawn out from the focus group discussions, including the resources required for attending school, transport to school, the school environment, out of school study facilities, cultural activities, adult education and groups of people who are excluded from education. Skills and training was another theme that was apparent; however, this relates more to employment and so will not be discussed in this report.

Unfortunately, only one question was asked specifically about education in the SASAS module, so there is limited discussion of the quantitative stage.

#### 3.2 Presentation of participants' comments and SASAS results

Education was a theme that was given particular prominence by participants, and was mentioned in the first section of the focus group as well as in the section focusing on children's necessities. The discussions on who is excluded from the education sphere and aspirations for the future also provided some insights into essentials for participation in education.

##### 3.2.1 Pre-school

For some participants, pre-school was seen as essential:

*R: It is important to go to school, and it is important to go to crèche as well. You should go to crèche before you go to school. You will be more disciplined and more respectable. That's where you learn from.*

*Facilitator: At what age should children be going to crèche?*

*A: Crèche is from three to five, and school is from six onwards.*

*R: So it prepares you more or less for school.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, low income, urban, formal, English, male)

The reasons given were varied and included education/training, socialisation, preparation for formal school, keeping children safe (especially while parents/carers are at work), and teaching independence.

*'Children do need to be trained before starting formal school...get used to being with other children.'*

(KwaZulu-Natal, African, middle income, urban, formal, Zulu, female)

*G: Crèches prepare children for school.*

*T: They teach children to respect adults and to protect themselves. Children who attend crèches are not easily stolen. They are taught to say no to strangers.*

*M: They are important because they keep children safe during the day.*

(North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, male)

*R: They get prepared for the next stage of school.*

*S: Pre-school prepares them for the next stage of education.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, low income, urban, formal, English, female)

*A: Crèches are important because they enlighten our children. Our children are taught how to read and write.*

*B: A crèche is necessary because it protects children during they day. Children do not roam around the streets.*

*K: Crèches are necessary because they prepare children for school.*

*B: Crèches are necessary and helpful for parents who are employed. Children are taken good care of during the day.*

(North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

### **3.2.2 Reasons for education**

A basic education, starting at an early age, was seen as essential in all focus groups. Sometimes this was described in terms of rights to education.

*'A child must have a good education and must get school regularly.'*

(Western Cape, coloured, low income, farm workers, Afrikaans, male)

*'An opportunity to start school even at an earliest age if bright and ready.'* (Western Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, male)

*'A child must go to school from primary-school age.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, urban, informal, Zulu, female)

Education was mentioned on numerous occasions in the final part of the focus groups where participants were asked to give their aspirations for the future.

*'Education so that children can have better futures.'* (Gauteng, African, middle income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

*'The thing that I want the government to do for a while is education for the nation.'* (Gauteng, white, high income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

When school was mentioned as an essential, it was very often prefixed by 'good'. The quality of the education that children receive was clearly important to focus group participants.

A number of reasons were given for why education is an essential, most notably for employment and future prospects, for keeping children away from a life of crime, and to teach children language and communication skills.

### *Employment*

Education was seen as a crucial route to employment:

*'Schools are important because they educate our children and make it possible for them to get jobs.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, male)

*'It is not easy to get a job if you are uneducated.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, informal, Xhosa, female)

*'It prepares children for employment. Education enables our children to get jobs.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, male)

*'Employment needs educated people.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, female)

*A: Education is very important.*

*Facilitator: How?*

*B: It is easy to get a job when you are educated.*

(Western Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, female)

*'You can write for yourself, you find work easy and when you do not have an education finding work becomes difficult.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, urban, informal, Zulu, male)

It was stated that education can also lead to good jobs or well paid jobs, rather than the poor quality jobs which it is possible to get without an extensive education.

*'Education enables them to get well paying jobs.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

*'[Schools] Empower us to access better jobs e.g. be a lawyer' and 'equip us with skills so that we should be employable'* (Gauteng, African, low income, urban, informal, Sepedi, female)

*L: Without education your child cannot achieve anything in life.*

*A: If you don't have good education, you can't get into a good job, you will stay behind in your current position.*

(Western Cape, coloured, low income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

*'If you are educated you get a good job and more money and you live a better life. You do not end up looking after white people's children and washing their clothes.'*

(Gauteng, African, domestic workers, urban, informal, Sesotho, female)

### *Future prospects*

Related to the need for an education to secure good employment, participants in many focus groups felt that education was essential for ensuring a 'bright future'.

*'If you do not get to school, you will not get to the university. You must start with school and if you do not get to school you will not get to the other things. School is very important.'* (Western Cape, coloured, middle income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

*'It [education] is important for a child's future and it opens opportunities for a child.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, rural, Zulu, male)

*'Education makes one intelligent and likely to have a good future.'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Venda, male)

*'It is lifelong insurance' and 'it opens up all doors in life'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, female)

### *Crime prevention*

Attendance at schools was seen as a way of keeping children off the streets and discouraging them from getting involved in crime.

*'Education may prevent children from becoming criminals.'* (Limpopo, African, middle income, urban, former homeland, Venda, female)

*J: Discouraging children to loiter in the streets.*

*Facilitator: What do you mean by that?*

*J: It helps children to stop smoking dagga in the streets. Education minimises crime.* (Gauteng, African, low income, urban, informal, Sepedi, male)

*'If a child does not go to school he will resort to crime.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, plantation workers, low income, rural, Zulu, female)

*'Another important matter is that children should have schools. Nowadays children do not go to school. Others end up staying at Highway (taxi-rank) and learning bad ways at an early age.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, male)

Schools were also seen as a place where children would not come to any harm:

*'The school is important because children are kept safe during the day.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, male)

#### *Language and communication*

Some focus group participants felt that education was important for learning languages and enabling one to communicate with people from different cultures.

*'South Africans today do travel around the world, and when you are educated you are able to communicate with people from all over the world.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, informal, Xhosa, female)

*'When you are educated you are able to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, rural, Xhosa, female)

*'They [white people] do get jobs even if a person has standard six because of language, but a Xhosa speaker with the same education cannot express themselves in interviews the way they do.'* (Western Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, female)

*'One is also able to communicate with other people of different origins if is educated.'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Venda, male)

#### *Life skills*

Education in a wider sense was discussed. It was not just formal schooling that focus group participants felt was essential for children, but also teaching children values, manners and respect, and providing them with skills and lessons for life.

*'You need to feed children information in life or else if you do not, they sort of do not grow up knowing anything.'* (Gauteng, white, middle income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

*'Children must be taught and learn respect.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, female)

*'Children should be taught to distinguish between right and wrong.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, rural, Xhosa, male)

In response to the question 'why is education important?', the following observations were made:

*'Ability to choose right from wrong.'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Xitsonga, male)

*'To be able to see the good and the bad.'* (Limpopo, African, middle income, urban, former homeland, Venda, male)

*'They get knowledge and it equips them with life skills.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, informal, Xhosa, male)

*'Education opens the eyes of our children. It enlightens them about various issues of life.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, male)

In one focus group, an aspiration for the future was to teach children values. The exchange below followed a discussion about abuse, unemployment, crime and drugs:

*C: So that means we need to start improving our family values, that's what we need to do.*

*T: Yes, people need to supervise their children to see what they are doing.*

*N: I think we've lost those values we used to treasure, and I think society has lost a lot of values. I think we need to get back those values.*

*U: It starts with children and education.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, high income, urban, formal, English, female)

The following quotes are illustrations of different life skills mentioned in the focus groups:

*'Education develops one's confidence.'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Venda, male)

*'Education makes one not shy.'* (Limpopo, African, middle income, urban, former homeland, Venda, female)

*'Educated people are heard or listened to when they speak'* and *'Education makes one look respectful'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Venda, male)

*'Children who are educated can teach their parents to read and write.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

*'It is important that people go to school because it enables them to read. We are enabled to even read road signs hence we do not get lost when we travel.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, male)

### **3.2.3 Resources for sending a child to school**

A wide range of items that are needed for school were identified as essential for children:

*'Children must have books, school bags and their school fees need to be paid on time.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

*'School uniform and books and everything that is required by the school.'* (Gauteng, African, domestic workers, urban, informal, Sesotho, female)

*'School uniform, books, exercise books and all stationery for school kids.'* (Gauteng, African, middle income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

The major financial burden of putting a child through school was a concern for many focus group participants. The cost of school fees, uniforms, school books and other equipment was felt to be very high by many parents in the focus groups. This recurrent theme can be seen in some of the quotes in the following sections.

### *School uniform*

School uniform was seen as important - and critically having all the school uniform required - but at the same time, it was considered a huge expense that some people are unable to afford.

*'Children who have complete school uniform are not discriminated against. It also makes sure that there is uniformity which is good for children.'* (Limpopo, African, middle income, urban, former homeland, Venda, female)

*'Children must have more than one shirt and trouser for school uniform.'* (Gauteng, African, low income, urban, formal, Sesotho, female)

*'In terms of school clothing, it is expensive and parents cannot always afford it.'* (Western Cape, coloured, high income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

*'Children cannot go to school because they do not have school uniform.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, male)

### *School fees*

Free education was put forward as a necessity by some focus group participants. For others, it was important that the fees were affordable and that some help was given for parents who could not afford the school fees.

*Facilitator: Why do we need money?*

*G: To be educated.*

*Facilitator: Explain.*

*G: To pay for school fees.*

(Eastern Cape, African, low income, rural, Xhosa, female)

*T: Today I would say the cost of putting a child through school is hectic, and it requires both parents to be in work. To ensure that the child goes to school in a good way.*

*Facilitator: And what are you actually paying for?*

*T: The fees and books and stuff as well.*

*K: Education used to be free in this country. Not any more.*

*N: We don't have to have free education but affordable education.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, middle income, urban, formal, English, male)

Free education, especially for poor people, was frequently put forward as an aspiration by focus group participants.

*'Education must be free for poor people.'* (Gauteng, African, domestic workers, urban, informal, Sesotho, female)

*'Free education especially to people who are impoverished.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, informal, Xhosa, male)

*'Free education, as we do not have money to pay school fees.'* (Western Cape, coloured, middle income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

*'Getting children of the poor people to school for free.'* (Limpopo, African, urban, former homeland, middle income, Venda, female)

*'I would want to see that the government act in the interest of parents who have children whose fathers are deceased. They must give the parents something to care for their children so they can get an education and not become gangsters. They must look at the interest of children older than 13 years where the parents cannot afford to give those children an education.'* (Western Cape, coloured, middle income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

Funding for further and higher education was another aspect that was considered important.

*'...and there must be bursaries to educate our children. Most of our children have completed matric, but stay at home because there is no money to take them to universities.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, male)

*M: Those who have standard 10 need to be supported financially.*

*Facilitator: Supported by whom?*

*M: The government for instance so that they continue their education.*

(KZN, African, low income, urban, informal, Zulu, male)

*'Those who have passed matric must get free university education.'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Xitsonga, male)

*'The government must make money available for children to go to university and technikons.'* (Gauteng, African, low income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)



## Food

Adequate food and proper nutrition was seen as essential for enabling children to function effectively at school.

*Facilitator: Why do children need food?*

*A: Children must eat because food enables them to be attentive at school. Food gives them energy*

*B: A child cannot concentrate at school when he/she is hungry*

(North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

*'When a child is hungry they cannot learn at school.'* (Gauteng, African, middle income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

*'Children must have a good diet. If that child then gets to school he will learn and have energy to learn.'* (Western Cape, coloured, farm workers, low income, Afrikaans male)

*'Children must have a good meal before they go to school. Food enables them to concentrate at school.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

## Equipment

In terms of equipment, the main items discussed were stationery and books.

*'Stationery, for example if a child does not have a pen at school the children will laugh at them or they would not want to go to school.'* (Western Cape, coloured, high income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

*'A child must be provided with all her education needs like books.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, rural, Zulu, female)

*Facilitator: School books or his or her own, not shared?*

*N: No, you don't need it, it's not essential because they get them in school.*

*D: I say if you can share you should share because you're saving cost.*

*P: If you bought the maths text book and your friend bought the English text book you share them.*

*C: It's not essential. I shared with my sister.*

*M: But not everyone can.*

*N: I think it's essential from my point of view. I think if you want the best for you child it's essential that your child has the books.*

*D: It is a possibility that you can share but I think it's essential that you have your own. It's not that you can't share, you can share but it's not best.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, high income, urban, formal, English, female)

There was some recognition that different items and costs are necessary for children of different ages:

*'For an older child I would say extra reading books is important.'* (Western Cape, coloured, middle income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

*Facilitator: How much would you expect to spend on books for a primary school child?*

*A: Maybe five or six hundred rand per year on top of school fees. And that will increase as the child gets older.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, low income, urban, formal, English, male)

### 3.2.4 Transport to school

An issue that was raised in many of the focus groups (particularly in the more rural provinces) was transport to school for children. It was mentioned on numerous occasions that some children have to walk very long distances to get to school, especially in rural areas. Buses and bicycles were seen as essential, and were cited most often as the modes of transport that should be provided for school children.

*'Transport. Our children travel 11km to go to school. There must be a bus to transport children.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, plantation workers, low income, rural, Zulu, male)

*'Our children must have bicycles because they walk long distances to school. For example, here in L there are no high schools. Our children have to walk long distances to M to attend school.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

Other reasons for needing transport, besides the distance children have to walk, were to ensure children get to school on time, to keep them safe, and to protect them from the elements.

*'Safe transport for when they go to school.'* (Gauteng, African, low income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

*'They [bicycles] enable our children to get to school on time, especially when the school is very far.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

*K: I think it would be good if the schools can assist parents in getting a bus to transport children, especially during winter. Most of the children are at home because they cannot go to school. If they go, they are soak wet because of the rainy weather.*

*T: It is dark that time of the morning.*

(Western Cape, coloured, low income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

*'Children who use organised transport get to school on time and they are protected.'*  
(Limpopo, African, middle income, urban, former homeland, Venda, female)

For some, it was not only the need for transport to far away schools that was important, but building more schools so that children do not have to travel as far. This was particularly evident in the discussions on aspirations.

*'Schools should be within reach.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, rural, Xhosa, male)

*'There are not enough schools and children have to travel to come to D schools. Even the very young who are doing their first year at school.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, rural, Zulu, female)

*'Technical schools should be brought closer to communities. We are tired of having to travel to places like Johannesburg where we pay a lot of money for travelling and accommodation. These technical colleges should be brought to V.'*  
(Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Venda, male)

*F: There must be sufficient crèches in communities.*

*K: I would like to emphasise the fact that there is a need of crèches and schools. I'll be happy if sufficient schools and crèches are built.*

(North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

### **3.2.5 The school environment**

#### *Facilities at school*

Focus group participants had a number of different views relating to the facilities and resources provided at schools. Class sizes and provision of text books were the two main issues discussed, particularly in the final section asking participants for their aspirations for the future.

*'We had good school buildings. We were in the same school and class, it was very cold in winter it was not nice writing exams now. It was in good condition. It was also in nice surroundings and we were not that many in a class about 30. I've seen classes now that are 52-60 in a class. So we were pretty lucky in that sense. We had chairs and tables, we were happy.'* (Gauteng, white, middle income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

*D: Better school facilities, especially in under privileged areas. It's easy to say those teachers should look after the children, but one teacher cannot be responsible for 60 children. If the government can look at this, then circumstances can change in our under privileged areas.*

[...]

*E: I took my child out because there were too many children in one class. She was slow and was left behind. She then got 3 years behind because of not being given attention.*

(Western Cape, coloured, high income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

*'Schools with enough classrooms'* (Eastern Cape, African, middle income, urban, formal, Xhosa, mixed gender)

*D: More textbooks should be provided to the school children in order for them to read more after school and to get a clear understanding of what is expected of them.*

*J: We need more schools and more teachers.*

(Western Cape, coloured, middle income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

*'Some school communities have their learning classes under the trees as they do not have buildings.'* (Eastern Cape, African, middle income, urban, formal, Xhosa, mixed gender)

*D: And also, quality of education as well. Because it's one thing in government or state schools and another in private schools.*

*Facilitator: Is private superior in the same way as for health?*

*D: Yes, I think facilities-wise it is. In terms of, class-size, they get more attention.*

*C: And also in terms of exposure. In a private school you have more exposure to the place of work, as opposed to a state school.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, high income, urban, formal, English, female)

### *Safety at school*

While focus group participants often considered schools to be a good thing because they keep children safe, a few concerns were raised about the safety of children in schools:

*'[Children] must not be harassed at school.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, plantation workers, low income, rural, Zulu, males)

*'Police must be deployed at schools for the safety of the children and teachers as they are vulnerable to crime.'* (Western Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, female)

*L: What happened to my child at D was when during the period of violence in the squatter camp, the child used to go to school and the teacher would tell him "your father was a murderer". The child came home and told me, "mommy, my teacher say daddy is a murderer". I never went to the school, I just told the child that if this happens again, I would go to the school myself.*

*T: My son came from school one day with a mark on his head. When I asked him about the mark, he said his teacher hit him in his face. I felt bad as a parent because I know I don't do such things to my children. I told my son that I would go and see that teacher. The next day when I went there, she denied ever hitting my son. She said she*

*saw the mark when the child came back from interval. When he got home he said that the teacher apologised to him for what she did.*

(Western Cape, coloured, low income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

### *Racially integrated schools and equality*

An issue that was raised in some focus groups was the desire for racially integrated schools and racial equality in education:

*'Non racial schools with the best education and facilities.'* (Western Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, female)

*'A child learns lots of things when it grows up mixing with other races.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, middle income, urban, formal, Zulu, male)

For one person, their aspiration for the future was for 'education for black people in townships [to] be at the same level as that in white schools' (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, urban, informal, Zulu, female).

### **3.2.6 Out of school study resources**

Focus group participants showed a strong sense of the importance of facilities and resources for studying out of school.

#### *Libraries*

Libraries were put forward as an essential in the majority of focus groups.

*'If I am studying and I need books there must be a place where I can go and borrow books I need, use them and return them.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, urban, informal, Zulu, male)

*'Libraries with lots of books and computers.'* (Gauteng, African, domestic workers, urban, informal, Sesotho, female)

*N: Child should have reading facilities like libraries. Again our children need to walk to other areas for these services.*

*Facilitator: How does this affect the child?*

*N: For example the child comes home from the school 14h00, they need to do research, then it will take him an hour to get to the library. The child's life is at risk because they need to walk on their own and not knowing what they will get on the road. If the facilities are near and in the area, the child can spend more time with his books.*

(Western Cape, coloured, low income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

*'There must be libraries in communities so that parents do not have to pay transport money for children to go to libraries in town.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, rural, Zulu, females)

#### *At home*

The importance of having resources in the home for children to be able to study out of school hours was discussed in many focus groups.

*'They must be able to do their homework.'* (Western Cape, coloured, low income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

*'With electricity you can also read the paper and your children can study.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, middle income, urban, formal, Zulu, male)

*A: Children must have books because they are educative.*

*B: Children can write in their books.*

*K: Our children read from their books.*

*A: Books enhance learning.*

(North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

*T: Yes. The living room must have a computer with a table or desk.*

*E: That can be in the study.*

(Gauteng, African, domestic workers, urban, informal, Sesotho, female)

There was a great deal of discussion - and some disagreement - about whether or not having a computer in the home is essential, as the following quotes illustrate.

*Facilitator: Is it essential for children to have a computer at home?*

*A: Not the kind of computer you have at home, but educational computer games that teach.*

*Facilitator: Do you mean a special spelling game, for instance, rather than a proper computer?*

*A: Yes.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, low income, urban, formal, English, male)

*De: I would say that if you can afford it [a computer] you should get it, but it's not essential.*

*P: You can do without it.*

*C: They can use computers at school.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, high income, urban, formal, English, female)

*B: It [a computer] is becoming more and more essential.*

*G: Yes, it's becoming more essential.*

*A: If it's not for computer games and it's educational then it's essential.*

*M: The school should provide for that, to have it at home...*

*A: Not all schools have computers or there are not enough, either way you need one at home.*

*B: Anything towards the education of the child would be essential.*  
(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, high income, urban, formal, English, male)

*'It broadens their understanding of issues and makes them smart.'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Venda, male)

*S: Children must also have a computer at home so that they can grow up using it. It is a very important thing in today's world.*

*A: Very good point S. Our children must not be like us. We missed out on these things and we must make sure that they get them so that they are not disadvantaged when they come to look for a job.*

*S: You can check and find almost any information on the computer, news, sports, people, if you want to know everything about Mandela you can find it there.*  
(Gauteng, African, middle income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

*'A computer is essential for children. I am told that children can get information for school work and it teaches them many things.'* (Gauteng, African, domestic workers, urban, informal, Sesotho, female)

*Facilitator: Why is a computer essential?*

*L: For me it's more essential for children because everywhere you go there is a computer and knowing how to use it is an important skill these days.*

*D: If you can use a computer it shows that you are educated, you did not run away from school very early.*

(Gauteng, African, domestic workers, urban, informal, Sesotho, female)

Having a television was also debated in terms of its educational value.

*M: TV.*

*Facilitator: How is it essential?*

*M: For children to learn English.*

*B: TV has got educational programmes and lines to phone to get assistance with homework.*

(Western Cape, African, low income, urban, informal, Xhosa, female)

*'TV is also good for kids as they get to know issues which can be very informative and educational.'* (Limpopo, African, middle income, urban, former homeland, Venda, female)

Parents were also considered a resource for children. The importance of parental involvement in a child's education was mentioned by some focus group participants.

*'A parent must be part of his child's school activities. It helps with the child's stimulation.'* (Western Cape, coloured, farm workers, low income, Afrikaans, male)

*'Every parent must be able to educate their children.'* (Gauteng, African, middle income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

*'Must show their homework to the parents, everyday.'* (Western Cape, African, low income, urban, informal, Xhosa, male)

*'As a parent you must provide food to children and make sure they go to school.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, plantation workers, low income, rural, Zulu, males)

*'The staff at schools within S.A. need to be more involved with the parents. They must make time available for the teacher and parent to get together to discuss the children.'* (Western Cape, coloured, high income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

*'The parents must be interested in their children. I don't want to differentiate, but parents who are better educated, you can see a difference in that child's behaviour than those parents who are not educated.'* (Western Cape, coloured, high income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, female)

### **3.2.7 Cultural activities**

Other educative experiences besides formal education were discussed in the focus groups. Participants in some focus groups highlighted the importance of cultural activities for children, for example visits to museums, parks and the zoo, and learning about politics, history, religion and other cultures.

*K: To participate in cultural activities.*

*P: Should learn about their culture and those of other people.*

(Western Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, male)

*'Picnics and visits to interesting places such as the zoo.'* (Gauteng, African, urban, informal, domestic workers, Sesotho, female)

*N: Visit parliament.*

*Facilitator: How is that essential?*

*N: To have exposure of processes and the things that are happening in the country.*

*C: Go to places such as Robben Island and learn about the political history.*

(Western Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, female)

*'I think it's good that parents take children out to places like the zoo so that they learn about different things in life.'* (Gauteng, African, low income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

*'Children should go out to creational activities so that their minds grow and develop.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, rural, Xhosa, female)



*R: They need to learn about religion and culture.*

*Facilitator: Is this though religion? Would they go to a religious building?*

*R: Yes, and at school. They offer cultural studies at schools.*

*Facilitator: By culture do you mean the culture of South Africa?*

*R: Yes. And about their community as well.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, Indian, low income, urban, formal, English, male)

### **3.2.8 Adult education**

The focus so far has been on children and education. However, adult education was brought up as an issue in some focus groups:

*'We also need adult schools because most of us are illiterate.'* (North West, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Tswana, female)

*'Evening school for people that do not have education, for example the ABET programme.'* (Western Cape, coloured, high income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

Some of the aspirations for the future were related to adult education:

*'Night schools as well. They must be open as they will be of great help to some of us.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, urban, informal, Zulu, male)

*P: Reduce illiteracy*

*Facilitator: What do you think needs to be done?*

*H: Formulate programmes that would relate to the existing needs for employment and the reading and writing skills.*

*Facilitator: Who is mostly affected by illiteracy?*

*M: It is more black Africans especially in the rural.*

*P: All ages from 17.*

(Eastern Cape, African, middle income, urban, formal, Xhosa, mixed gender)

*'ABET for the uneducated.'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Venda, male)

The need for people - particularly those people with little formal education - to be taught skills, was considered important. This was generally discussed in the context of employment, and is an issue that is broader than the scope of this report.

### **3.2.9 The excluded**

The discussions from the section of the focus group that asked participants to say who is excluded from the sphere of education provide a good indication of the things that are

essential in education, and further emphasise the points made earlier in the focus groups, which have been discussed above. The following quote summarises the main points made in the focus groups, and further examples are given in the remainder of this section.

*'The poor don't have access as they don't have money for it. People with disabilities are excluded and people who live in the rural and far out areas.'* (Gauteng, white, middle income, urban, formal, Afrikaans, male)

#### *People who cannot afford school fees*

*'It's children who cannot go to school because their parents do not have money for school fees and uniform.'* (Gauteng, African, low income, urban, formal, Sesotho, female)

*A: Parents do not have the means to take children to school.*

*Facilitator: What are those means?*

*All: It's money.*

*M: They are not able to buy children's school requirements.*

*A: Cannot pay school fees.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, African, middle income, urban, formal, Zulu, female)

*'It's people who are impoverished and have not got the money to pay for their education. They cannot even buy school wear.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, informal, Xhosa, male)

*'The poor people or the children of the poor people' and 'children whose parents do not have money'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Venda, male)

*'People who do not have money to educate children.'* (KwaZulu-Natal, African, low income, rural, Zulu, male)

*All: People who do not have money*

*B: Uniform. Not having clothes to go to school.*

*L: Not having parents to pay for schooling.*

*J: Being destitute.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, African, plantation workers, low income, rural, Zulu, female)

Orphans and street children were cited, along with poor children, as those who could not afford to attend school.

*R: It's children who cannot go to school because their parents do not have money for school fees, uniforms and other requirements.*

*C: That is common with orphans.*

(Gauteng, African, middle income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

*'Children who do not have uniform because their parents do not work or are dead'*  
(Limpopo, African, middle income, urban, former homeland, Venda, female)

It was also recognised that orphans and street children have no one to make sure that they go to school.

*'Orphans usually get neglected, without anyone to send them to school causing them to roam around.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, male)

*M: Those who never find a chance to go to school.*

*Facilitator: What is it that makes them not to have a chance to go to school?*

*S: Parents passed away and did not have people to take them to school.*

(KwaZulu-Natal, African, middle income, urban, formal, Zulu, female)

*'People without parents who end up staying with neighbours who don't take care if they go to school or not.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, informal, Xhosa, male)

#### *People who live a long way from schools*

*T: In some areas there are no schools such as universities.*

*E: Some schools are too far and children cannot attend.*

(Gauteng, African, low income, urban, informal, Sepedi, male)

*'People in rural areas sometimes cannot go to high school because there are only primary schools in their villages.'* (Gauteng, African, low income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

*T: Like in health there may be no schools or schools are far. That is a common thing in rural areas and farms.*

*C: Or you find that there is only a primary school and a child cannot go any further with their education.*

(Gauteng, African, middle income, urban, formal, Sesotho, male)

*'People who stay far away from schools.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, rural, Xhosa, female)

*'People who live in places where there are no schools and schools are far.'* (KZN, African, low income, urban, informal, Zulu, male)

*'People who do not have transport and schools are far.'* (Limpopo, African, low income, rural, former homeland, Venda, male)

#### *People with disabilities*

*V: Others cannot access education because they are physically disabled.*

*W: Those who are unable to talk.*

*Facilitator: Can we say more about those unable to attend school because of their physical disabilities?*

*T: Disabled children are being isolated and discriminated against. They should be allowed to attend any school of their choice.*

*B: I differ on this view. I cannot be expected to attend the same school with a disabled person. We do not have the same abilities.*

*V: Another way of addressing this matter is by trying to ensure that physically disabled do not feel isolated by bringing them into contact with other children. All social institutions should be user-friendly for the physically disabled children.*

*T: I'd like to suggest that the families of the affected parties should play proactive role in this matter.*

(Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, male)

*'We do not have schools that are specially built for the disabled in our areas. They are willing but cannot participate.'* (Eastern Cape, African, low income, urban, formal, Xhosa, female)

The essentials for education, then, are not just tangible items such as having school uniform and equipment. Ensuring access for all children is important, regardless of their income level, where they live, their home life, or whether or not they have a disability.

### **3.2.10 SASAS question about school uniforms**

The only education related item in the SASAS 2006 module was 'for parents or other carers to be able to buy complete school uniform for children without hardship'. **Table 1** shows the proportion of respondents with different characteristics who felt that school uniform was essential, as well as the proportion who felt it was only desirable.

Almost 79% of respondents thought that complete school uniform was essential, while 16% thought it was only desirable. Over 80% of both black African and Indian respondents answered 'essential', compared to 70% or less for coloured and white respondents ( $p < 0.01$ ).

There was some difference in the views of people who have children in the household<sup>1</sup> and those who do not have children in the household<sup>2</sup>. Almost 82% of respondents with children thought it was essential for carers to be able to buy complete school uniform for children, while only 73% of respondents without children felt it was essential ( $p < 0.01$ ).

Bounded realities - where 'felt need' may underestimate 'real need' because felt need can be limited by the perceptions or experiences of the individual - may play an important

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<sup>1</sup> Respondents who answered 'yes' to Q.276 'Do you have children living at home with you?'

<sup>2</sup> Respondents who answered 'no' to Q.276.

role. Almost 90% of those who have<sup>3</sup> school uniforms for their children consider them to be an essential, compared to 65% of those who do not have<sup>4</sup> the item ( $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 1: Proportion responding essential and desirable to school uniform by characteristic**

	Essential	Desirable	P
All	78.8	16.2	-
Male	76.6	18.0	0.1860
Female	80.8	14.5	
Black African	81.2	14.5	0.0004
Coloured	67.4	27.1	
Indian/Asian	84.1	10.7	
White	70.3	19.8	
Urban <sup>5</sup>	78.6	16.2	0.2861
Rural <sup>6</sup>	79.1	16.1	
Old <sup>7</sup>	72.5	16.4	0.0323
Young <sup>8</sup>	82.7	14.0	
Children in household	81.9	14.2	0.0032
No children in household	73.3	19.6	
Have school uniform	89.1	9.2	0.0000
Do not have school uniform	64.7	26.3	

Source: SASAS 2006

<sup>3</sup> Respondents with children in the household who stated that they have the item.

<sup>4</sup> Respondents with children in the household who stated that they either 'don't have and don't want' or 'don't have and can't afford' the item.

<sup>5</sup> The 'urban formal' and 'urban informal' categories of the geo\_type (environmental milieu) variable.

<sup>6</sup> The 'tribal' and 'rural formal' categories of the geo\_type (environmental milieu) variable.

<sup>7</sup> Respondents aged 65 years or over.

<sup>8</sup> Respondents aged 16-24 years.

## **4. Concluding remarks**

This report presents qualitative and quantitative findings on adults' views of what is essential in the education sphere, both for children and adults.

Education was an issue that was raised in all focus groups. The majority of participants felt that education was essential and a variety of reasons were given, for example, to enhance employment prospects, to ensure a better future, and to keep children off the streets and away from crime. Learning values and respect through formal and informal education was also seen as important.

A wide range of items that are needed for school were identified as essential for children, but the major financial burden of putting a child through school was also a concern, and it was often argued that school fees should not have to be paid by people living in poverty. School uniform was frequently mentioned in the focus groups and was the only education related item included in the SASAS module. The majority of respondents considered this to be essential, but there were differences between respondents with different characteristics. Focus group participants felt very strongly that children needed to have some form of transport to school - buses and bicycles were the most frequent suggestion - because of the long distances some children have to travel.

Resources for out of school study were discussed, as well as the need for cultural activities to enhance children's learning. It was not only education for children that was considered important: adult education was also mentioned.

## Appendix 1: The focus group locations and profiles

A total of 52 focus groups were undertaken, four of which were eliminated during the quality control process. The remaining 48 focus groups took place in the following places in South Africa:

Gauteng - Melville, Winnie Mandela, Diepsloot, Braam Fischer (Soweto), Chiawelo (Soweto).

Eastern Cape - Mzomhle (Gonubie), Mdantsane, Umthatha, Fort Beaufort.

Western Cape - Scottsville, Phillipi, Malibu (Eersteriver), Heideveld, Ocean View, Milnerton, Khayelitsha, Gugulethu.

KwaZulu-Natal - Phoenix, Chatsworth, Dududu (Port Shepstone), Seven Oaks (Greytown), Clermont, Luganda, Umlazi.

Limpopo - Thohoyandou, Duthini (Thohoyandou), iTsani (Thohoyandou), Mavambe (Giyani), Mchipisi (Giyani).

North West - Lokaleng (Mafikeng)

**Table A1: Profile of the 48 focus groups**

Description of FG	Number of FGs
Urban	35
Rural	13
Female	21
Male	25
Mixed	2
African	34
Coloured	7
Indian	5
White	2
High Income	5
Middle Income	11
Low Income	32
IsiZulu	8
Venda	4
Tsonga	2
Xhosa	12
Afrikaans	8
English	6
Tswana	2
Sepedi	2
Sesotho	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>

## Appendix 2: Summary of SASAS 2006 results

In the table below, the 36 items that were defined as ‘essential’ by more than half of the respondents are highlighted in bold. The 95% confidence intervals are also given. All but one of the 36 items have a 95% confidence interval lower bound that still falls above the 50% threshold. The exception is a garden where the lower bound is 47.4%. Two items have a 95% confidence interval upper bound that exceeds 50%: a car (upper bound = 52.5%) and a landline phone (upper bound = 51.2%).

**Table A2: Percentage of people defining an item as ‘essential’**

Item	% of all saying essential	Confidence intervals	
		Lower bound	Upper bound
<b>Mains electricity in the house</b>	<b>91.5</b>	<b>89.6</b>	<b>93.1</b>
<b>Someone to look after you if you are very ill</b>	<b>91.2</b>	<b>89.3</b>	<b>92.8</b>
<b>A house that is strong enough to stand up to the weather</b>	<b>90.1</b>	<b>88.1</b>	<b>91.8</b>
<b>Clothing sufficient to keep you warm and dry</b>	<b>88.9</b>	<b>86.7</b>	<b>90.7</b>
<b>A place of worship (church/mosque/synagogue) in the local area</b>	<b>86.6</b>	<b>84.6</b>	<b>88.5</b>
<b>A fridge</b>	<b>85.7</b>	<b>83.5</b>	<b>87.6</b>
<b>Street lighting</b>	<b>85.3</b>	<b>83.4</b>	<b>87.1</b>
<b>Ability to pay or contribute to funerals/funeral insurance/burial society</b>	<b>82.1</b>	<b>79.9</b>	<b>84.1</b>
<b>Separate bedrooms for adults and children</b>	<b>81.5</b>	<b>79.0</b>	<b>83.8</b>
<b>Having an adult from the household at home at all times when children under ten from the household are at home</b>	<b>81.0</b>	<b>78.6</b>	<b>83.1</b>
<b>Having police on the streets in the local area</b>	<b>80.2</b>	<b>78.0</b>	<b>82.3</b>
<b>Tarred roads close to the house</b>	<b>79.7</b>	<b>77.2</b>	<b>82.0</b>
<b>Paid employment for people of working age</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>76.7</b>	<b>81.4</b>
<b>For parents or other carers to be able to buy complete school uniform for children without hardship</b>	<b>78.8</b>	<b>76.4</b>	<b>81.0</b>
<b>A flush toilet in the house</b>	<b>77.8</b>	<b>75.3</b>	<b>80.2</b>
<b>People who are sick are able to afford all medicines prescribed by their doctor</b>	<b>77.2</b>	<b>74.7</b>	<b>79.5</b>
<b>Someone to talk to if you are feeling upset or depressed</b>	<b>76.2</b>	<b>73.3</b>	<b>78.9</b>
<b>A neighbourhood without rubbish/refuse/garbage in the streets</b>	<b>75.0</b>	<b>72.2</b>	<b>77.6</b>
<b>A large supermarket in the local area</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>71.8</b>	<b>77.0</b>



<b>A radio</b>	<b>74.0</b>	<b>71.2</b>	<b>76.5</b>
<b>Someone to transport you in a vehicle if you needed to travel in an emergency</b>	<b>73.8</b>	<b>70.8</b>	<b>76.4</b>
<b>A fence or wall around the property</b>	<b>73.6</b>	<b>70.9</b>	<b>76.2</b>
<b>Being able to visit friends or family in hospital or other institutions</b>	<b>72.6</b>	<b>69.8</b>	<b>75.3</b>
<b>Somewhere for children to play safely outside of the house</b>	<b>71.5</b>	<b>68.7</b>	<b>74.2</b>
<b>Regular savings for emergencies</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>68.6</b>	<b>73.8</b>
<b>A television/ TV</b>	<b>68.6</b>	<b>65.7</b>	<b>71.4</b>
<b>A neighbourhood without smoke or smog in the air</b>	<b>68.6</b>	<b>65.5</b>	<b>71.6</b>
<b>Someone to lend you money in an emergency</b>	<b>66.1</b>	<b>63.1</b>	<b>69.0</b>
<b>A cell phone</b>	<b>62.5</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>65.5</b>
<b>Meat or fish or vegetarian equivalent every day</b>	<b>62.1</b>	<b>59.0</b>	<b>65.1</b>
<b>A bath or shower in the house</b>	<b>62.0</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>65.0</b>
<b>Burglar bars in the house</b>	<b>61.6</b>	<b>58.5</b>	<b>64.6</b>
<b>Special meal at Christmas or equivalent festival</b>	<b>55.6</b>	<b>52.3</b>	<b>58.8</b>
<b>Some new (not second-hand or handed-down) clothes</b>	<b>55.3</b>	<b>52.1</b>	<b>58.5</b>
<b>A sofa/lounge suite</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>51.0</b>	<b>57.5</b>
<b>A garden</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>47.4</b>	<b>54.0</b>
A car	49.2	45.9	52.5
A landline phone	47.9	44.6	51.2
A washing machine	43.7	40.3	47.1
A lock-up garage for vehicles	43.1	39.7	46.5
A small amount of money to spend on yourself not on your family each week	41.6	38.3	45.0
Having enough money to give presents on special occasions such as birthdays, weddings, funerals	41.4	38.1	44.7
For parents or other carers to be able to afford toys for children to play with	38.9	35.6	42.4
A burglar alarm system for the house	37.5	34.2	41.0
A holiday away from home for one week a year, not visiting relatives	36.5	33.3	39.9
A family take-away or bring-home meal once a month	33.5	30.4	36.9
A computer in the home	26.0	22.7	29.6
An armed response service for the house	24.5	24.5	31.3
A DVD player	24.1	24.1	30.5
Satellite Television/DSTV	18.7	15.8	22.0

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha can be used to test the reliability of the set of items that have been identified as essentials. For the 36 items that were defined as essential by 50% or more of the population, the coefficient alpha was calculated to be 0.9201. This score measures the correlation of the set of 36 items with all other hypothetical 36 item sets of

essentials. The square root of the coefficient alpha is the estimated correlation of the set of 38 items with a set of errorless true scores. This was calculated to be 0.9592.

The 36 items identified as essentials can therefore be considered a highly reliable set of deprivation measures (Nunnally, 1981). They correlate very highly with both another reliable set of 36 measures and with a set of errorless measures. The coefficient alpha is higher than was achieved in England in the Breadline Britain 1990 Survey - 0.8754 - which also used a 50% majority cut-off point for the essentials (Gordon and Pantazis, 1997: 17).

If a higher threshold is used for the essentials, the coefficient alpha is still high. For the 27 items that were defined as essential by two thirds or more of the respondents, the coefficient alpha is 0.9051 and the square root is 0.9514.

It is also possible to look at the impact of these scores if one of the measures was removed. In the Breadline Britain 1990 Survey it was found that the coefficient alpha would be higher if three items were removed from the list of essentials (inside toilet, bath not shared with another household and television). Analysis of the 36 essentials in SASAS 2006 reveals that none of the items would increase the coefficient alpha of the set of items if removed. This again suggests that the 36 items are a reliable set of measures.

## **Glossary**

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DFID	Department for International Development
DOE	Department of Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HE	Higher Education
IPSE	Indicators of Poverty and Social Exclusion
SANLI	South African Literacy Agency
SASA	South African Schools Act
SASAS	South African Social Attitudes Survey
SGB	School Governing Body

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