

reducing
poverty



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1. Strategic objective

There are many definitions of poverty in use today. The PGWC has chosen to take a “capability deprivation” approach, borrowed from the economist Amartya Sen and consistent with our vision of an open opportunity society for all. At its heart is the understanding that substantive freedom – the ability to lead a life you value – is the objective of development and that poverty consists in not having the power, opportunity or means to do so.

For the PGWC, therefore, a lack of agency, a freedom deficit, lies at the heart of poverty and is both its cause and consequence. The *effects* of poverty may be eliminated through state intervention, but ultimately, people can only be said to be out of poverty when they are able to take care of their own basic needs without the help of the state.

It follows therefore that while the state has a responsibility to facilitate opportunities to escape poverty, it is necessary for people to accept responsibility for making the most of those opportunities. No one can escape poverty through state action alone. It must be a joint effort between the state and the individual in which each has responsibilities.

It is also essential to understand that both poverty reduction and poverty alleviation require a joint effort from all three spheres of government, together with the private sector and the not-for-profit sector.

For instance, it is almost impossible to escape poverty without privately generated income, and the only way to increase privately generated income is through job creation. The state, however, cannot create jobs sustainably; only the private sector can do that. The state’s role is to create an environment that encourages investment and growth, and therefore job creation, and to support businesses in their quest for growth.

Equally, poverty alleviation must be driven by all three spheres of government. For instance, national government provides a grant system; provincial government runs a school feeding scheme; local government provides free basic services. And so on.

Thus while the PGWC is determined to reduce and alleviate poverty in the Western Cape, we are not solely responsible for doing so, and will engage other spheres of government, the private sector and the not-for-profit sector in an effort to maximise impact.

Finally, and to the extent possible, every poverty alleviation effort of the PGWC will be designed also to include elements of opportunity creation in order to maximise the government’s overall reduction effort.

Given the understanding of poverty described above, poverty in the Western Cape involves the following dimensions:



- Income
- Unemployment
- Food security
- Health
- Education
- The living environment

These are supported by the quality of democracy.

2. Problem statement

Although the Western Cape is one of the wealthiest provinces, poverty remains a challenge that will be addressed by the PGWC, as reflected in the following figures:

2.1 Income

- 26.2% of the total households in the Western Cape have a household income of less than R1 500 per month.
- 15.5% of households have a total expenditure of less than R800 per month in a given year.

2.2 Unemployment

- The unemployment rate of the province for the second quarter of 2010 was 23.6%.

2.3 Food security

- The percentage of underweight children under five years old is 10.9%.

2.4 Health

- In 2008, there were 24 564 new TB cases in the Western Cape.

2.5 Education

- The percentage of children who are in primary education is 80.9%.

2.6 Improved living environment

- The percentage of households living in informal settlements is 17.1%.
- The percentage of households in the province living in backyards is 8%.
- The Western Cape has a housing backlog of 400 000.

Furthermore, poverty undermines the quality of democracy. There is currently no data to measure the extent to which people feel involved in determining their own needs. An annual survey will be conducted to measure this dimension as part of the PGWC's public participation and communication strategies.

3. Plan to achieve outcomes

To address unemployment and create jobs, we will:

- Implement the Expanded Public Works Programme
- Introduce skills training programmes
- Start projects to employ unemployed persons in the private sector



- Implement Strategic Objective 1: Creating Opportunities for Growth and Jobs
- Link individuals on social security and municipal indigent lists to sustainable programmes and employment opportunities

To address food security we will implement:

- An integrated food security programme aimed at indigent households
- A provincial food security programme aimed at communities living on farms

To address health issues, we will implement Strategic Objective 4: Increasing Wellness, especially in indigent communities.

To address education, we will implement:

- An integrated provincial early childhood development strategy for children aged up to five

- Strategic Objective 2: Improving Education Outcomes

To improve the living environment for poor communities, we will:

- Profile the households and communities of the poorest wards
- Implement Strategic Objective 6: Developing Integrated and Sustainable Human Settlements
- Implement the Social Relief of Distress programme

To ensure good governance, we will:

- Evaluate the use of government transfer funds by social partners
- Ensure that all municipalities develop quality integrated development plans (IDPs)

4. Targets

Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower the percentage of the total households in the Western Cape with a household income of less than R1 500 per month in a given year from 26.2% to 25%. • Decrease the number of households with a total expenditure of less than R800 per month in a given year from the current 15.5%. • Ensure that every person in need receives a social grant.
Food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower the percentage of underweight children under five years from the current 10.9% to under 10%. • Decrease the percentage of children under nine years whose intake of food is below the minimum level of dietary consumption. • Increase share of household expenses that is spent on food in a given month. • Boost the number of people with proper access to food.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the average number of visits per person at primary health care facilities in a given year from 2.96 to 3.84 visits. • Reduce the number of people infected with TB. • Lower the number of people infected with HIV. • Decrease the percentage of children younger than five who are dying from 38.8% to 30% per 1000 for children under five.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the percentage of children who are in primary education from 80.9% to 95%. • Boost access to no fee schools. • Ensure that every child who starts Grade 1 reaches Grade 5. • Increase the percentage of Grade 12 pupils who pass matric with exemption. • Increase the percentage of Grade 12 pupils who pass matric with exemption who have mathematics or science as matriculation subjects. • Boost the literacy rate among 15–24 year olds.
Improved living environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardise the indigent register. • Reduce the percentage of households living in informal settlements from 17.1% to below 15%. • Increase access to free basic water. • Decrease the percentage of households with no access to a flush toilet. • Increase access to free electricity and lower the percentage of households in the province that are in backyards to lower than 8%.