

# Overview

**P**art Two of the *South African Child Gauge* is a collection of essays on a theme of critical relevance to children, based on recent Children's Institute research. This year the theme of children and poverty has been selected and much of the content is drawn from the findings of the *Means to Live*, an extensive research project focusing on government poverty alleviation programmes. Each essay in Part Two is introduced briefly below:

## **Child poverty – Its meaning and extent**

This introductory essay outlines why South Africa has such high levels of child poverty, what child poverty is, and how it has been thought about. It presents a child-focused and multi-dimensional model of child poverty, which was developed by researchers at the University of Oxford. (Page 19)

## **Income poverty in South Africa**

While it is important to understand child poverty as multi-dimensional and more than just a lack of income, this essay specifically explores the extent of income poverty in South Africa and describes its relationship to unemployment and social assistance. (Page 24)

## **Introduction to the *Means to Live***

The *Means to Live Project* examined a range of government poverty alleviation programmes to establish the extent to which they were reaching their intended beneficiaries with a special focus on the poorest children. This essay provides background information to the four that follow by introducing the research project and some of the key concepts underpinning it – including a child rights framework and the notion of targeting. (Page 31)

## **Does the means justify the end?**

### **Targeting the Child Support Grant:**

The Child Support Grant (CSG) is disbursed to more people than all of South Africa's other six social assistance grants put together. This essay highlights the benefits of the CSG and examines some of the key policy and implementation issues related to increasing poor children's access to the grant. (Page 39)

### **Free to learn: The School Fee Exemption policy and the National School Nutrition Programme:**

The School Fee Exemption policy aims to make education affordable to poor children. Children in poor areas are also able to access the National School Nutrition Programme through schools. This essay discusses these school-based programmes and also describes the introduction of the No-Fee Schools policy. (Page 45)

### **Healing inequalities: The free health care policy:**

This essay discusses the South African government's free health care policy and the extent to which it meets children's right to basic health care services, with a particular focus on the accessibility of services. (Page 51)

### **Accommodating the poor: The Free Basic Water policy and the Housing Subsidy Scheme:**

The Housing Subsidy Scheme and the Free Basic Water policy are the South African government's national programmes to deliver on the rights to water and housing. The extent of poor children's access to water and housing through these interventions are discussed together in this essay because access to water is very closely tied to housing or settlement type. (Page 57)