

# Introduction:

## Children, families and the state

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People have always organised themselves into intimate groups and social networks in which the young are cared for. Families are not just about biological relationships and parenting is not simply about reproduction: The family serves a social function as “one of the great, enduring institutions of organised human life”.<sup>1</sup>

The state is an amalgamation of individuals, families, interest groups and the different tiers of government, and it relies on families to reproduce the population and the workforce. It needs families to raise and nurture children, keep them safe, provide for their necessities, send them to school and support their educational development. It also needs families to care for sick children, help them access health care services, and bring them up with a set of values that enables them to participate fully in society, with a long view towards the development of future generations. The state also plays a role in these dimensions of care, protection, material support, education, health care and social development. Families rely on the state to provide an enabling environment in which to care for their children and support their development. Wealthy families may be able to pay for private services, but most children rely on their families to access state benefits and services to support their development, and families can also play an important role in demanding good quality services.

This issue of the *South African Child Gauge* focuses on children at the interface of families and the state. The overarching question is how to achieve good collaboration between families and the state so that children have safe and fulfilling childhoods, develop well, are prepared for adult life and, in turn, can care for their own children. Some questions that we explore are: To what extent should family life be considered private, and at what point should the state intervene? How can policies and services for children cater for a variety of family types and living arrangements? How can the state support family strategies in ways that ensure children’s interests are considered and protected amidst competing demands? What are the areas of inconsistency or tension between policy, social norms and practice?

This introductory chapter briefly considers areas that are elaborated in the individual chapters including:

- the intersections between the private sphere of families and the public sphere of the state;
- the diversity of families and problems of definition;
- South African families in the context of global change;
- the historical and social factors that influence the shape of families; and
- how families are viewed by the state and some areas of contradiction.

### **Families and the state as private and public spheres**

The relationship between families and the state sits at the intersection of “public” and “private” spheres. The state should enable parents to raise and nurture children without unduly trespassing on “the terrain of parental authority”.<sup>2</sup> Some of this interdependency is ratified in laws and conventions that specify the rights and obligations of children, families and the state. These include the South African Constitution, especially section 28 of the Bill of Rights which provides for the specific rights of children; the Children’s Act; and the international agreements to which South Africa is signatory, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Other aspects of the relationship are less formalised – for example, the quality of state services that families can expect, or the level of family investment in children’s health, education and social well-being.

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*Families and the state collaborate  
in the development of children.*

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Parents (including family members or guardians in parenting roles) have the primary duty of raising children, but the state must make available essential services and infrastructure that families cannot feasibly provide (such as transport systems, schools, health facilities, policing and welfare services). The

state also carries the final obligation to ensure that children's basic needs are met, and so may intervene when families cannot – or do not – fulfil their responsibilities. In extreme cases, the state might remove children from families and place them in alternative care.

Viewed in this way, families and the state collaborate in the development of children, but there are also areas of tension or conflict. Families require a degree of autonomy but there are limits to the extent to which the state can and should intervene in decisions about co-residence and how to raise children. Yet contestation may arise between families' right to privacy versus the state's obligation to protect the rights of the child (for example, in the case of corporal punishment). Conversely, there are times when families (or individuals within families) require the state to intervene, yet the state may fail to do so because of capacity constraints or the personal beliefs and values of those in the civil service (for example, where police choose not to get involved in "private" matters of domestic violence, or where health workers believe young people should not have sex and deter adolescent girls from using contraception).

Contestation may occur where the state fails to keep its side of the bargain. For example, housing backlogs may make it impossible for families to live together, schools may not be safe for children, and welfare services may fail to respond to cases of neglect. Contestation may also arise when families fail to nurture and socialise children in the ways that the state requires: for example, presenting children at clinics for immunisation, sending them to school and encouraging

their progress, teaching them about road safety and instilling norms and values – for example that stealing and violence are wrong.

Collaboration between families and the state may be positive or negative. When fathers do not support their children and the state fails to enforce the payment of maintenance, it effectively absolves men of their financial responsibilities towards children. Similarly, if families fail to report violence against children because they regard it as a family matter, and the state fails to intervene when someone else reports it, then it may be argued that the family and state are complicit in allowing child abuse. South Africa's dual legal system gives rise to further tensions in determining whether to draw on statutory or customary law when resolving family disputes around maintenance, custody and domestic violence.

### The problem of defining the family

What is a family? The word itself may conjure up memories and ideals. A family could be a large, multigenerational network of people including children, cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles who are linked by blood, marriage or ties of co-residence and who share a home (or neighbouring homes) or are spread across the country. It could be two parents and two children in a three-bedroomed house; or separated parents with new partners and an assortment of biological and non-biological children who move between homes; two fathers with an adopted child; a mother with children and grandchildren; or siblings living together.

#### Box 1: What is happening with families globally?<sup>3</sup>

- **Two-parent families** are becoming less common across the world, especially in the Americas, Europe, Oceania and sub-Saharan Africa. The regions with the greatest share of two-parent families are Asia and the Middle East. Children in Africa are the most likely to live apart from both parents.
- **Marriage rates** are declining in many regions. Marriage rates are highest in Asia and the Middle East and are almost as high in sub-Saharan Africa (with the exception of South Africa). Regionally, marriage rates are lowest in Central and South America.
- **Non-marital childbearing** (having children outside of marriage) is linked to declining marriage rates and is increasing in many areas. The highest rates of non-

marital childbearing are in Central and South America. Rates are also high in North America, Eastern and Western Europe and Oceania, and the lowest rates are in Asia and the Middle East.

- **Overall childbearing rates** are falling across the world. The highest fertility rates are in sub-Saharan Africa. North America, Europe and Oceania now have below replacement-level fertility rates, which is why they have predominantly "ageing" populations.
- **Extended family arrangements** (where children live with kin, either with or without their parents) are particularly common in much of Asia, the Middle East, Central and South America, and sub-Saharan Africa.

Families and household arrangements are dynamic, responding over time to social, economic and political factors. Medical advances in the twentieth century especially gave women greater control over reproduction and reduced maternal and infant mortality rates. Some of these gains were eroded in South Africa by HIV/AIDS, with a sharp rise in mortality and orphaning rates towards the end of the twentieth century, followed by some recovery in the past decade.

Marriage rates have declined globally since the mid-twentieth century for a range of political, economic and social reasons. In South Africa, marriage became increasingly difficult in the context of apartheid-era labour migration and influx control, especially as the migrant labour system enforced the separation of men from their wives or partners for 11 months of the year.<sup>4</sup> The shift to a largely cash-based system of *lobolo* (bridewealth) in the context of high unemployment and low wages make marriage unaffordable for many men.<sup>5</sup> Marriage decisions are increasingly a matter of personal choice rather than a strategic alliance between families. Shifts in gendered relations and high rates of unemployment mean that more women carry the double burden of financial provision and care.<sup>6</sup> Changing social norms have led to greater societal acceptance and legal recognition of children born outside marriage, and of same-sex couples.

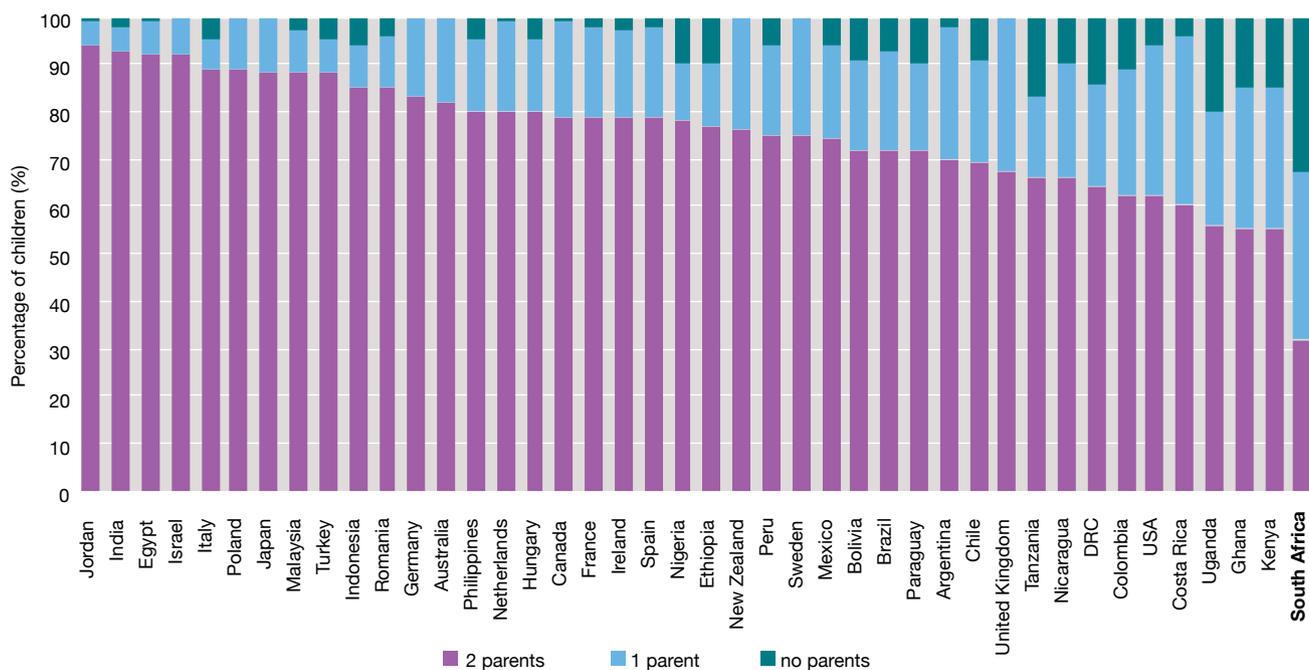
Like individuals, families have a life-course and are constantly developing and changing. Families expand

and contract with births and deaths, they merge and grow through union formation, shrink with dissolution, expand through reunion and develop offshoots as family members move away to form new families of their own. Families have intergenerational continuity, and most children grow up from infancy to adulthood within a family, even though they may move between households and have different caregivers at different times of their lives.

The composition of a family does not signify stability, strength or vulnerability. Chapter 2 shows how residential arrangements may change frequently and how households and families do not necessarily coincide. Households are, to a certain extent, expressions of the material and social strategies of families, used by all or parts of the family at different stages for different purposes, for example to access housing and secure tenure, to access education and income, and to provide care to the very young and the very old. It would be convenient for the delivery of state services if families took recognisable forms within a finite range of possible types, if the relationships of family responsibility and dependence coincided with the place of household residence, and if the composition of households stayed the same and everyone remained in the same place. But this is not the case, especially not in South Africa.

Given the diversity and mutability of families and households, it is not appropriate or feasible for the state to categorise either families or households into typologies for purposes of

**Figure 1: Percentage of children living with two, one and no biological parents**



Source: Child Trends (2014) *World Family Map 2014: Mapping Family Change and Child Well-being Outcomes*. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends.

determining risk or targeting benefits or services (for example, by focusing on single parent households or children living with relatives). As shown in Chapter 2, households in South Africa are highly varied. Extended and complex structures predominate, and family networks often extend beyond the physical boundaries of any particular homestead. What matters most for children are the resources available in the family (within and beyond the household) and the quality and stability of relationships and care. Irrespective of its shape, size or wealth, a family may be at times intimate, warm and supportive, or a place of uncertainty, neglect and risk.

### South African families in a global context

Family forms are changing around the world (see Box 1 on page 23) and South Africa is typical in several respects, including diverse family arrangements and household forms, declining marriage rates and an increase in households headed by women. Yet it is an outlier in the high proportion of children who do not live with either parent, as illustrated in Figure 1.

The World Family Map project provides information about the structure and composition of families across the world. A comparison of 49 countries representing a majority of the world's population found that "in spite of marked family

changes around the globe over the last half-century, children are most likely to live in two-parent families in all countries except South Africa".<sup>7</sup> The World Review for 2017 reported that in terms of parental cohabitation arrangements, South Africa is an outlier, "even by African standards".<sup>8</sup> The only other countries with similarly high rates of parental absence are Namibia, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Lesotho,<sup>9</sup> all of which have a long history of supplying labour to South Africa. South Africa is also unusual in the persistence of dual housing arrangements – for example, where families have two homes and members oscillate between cities and rural areas.

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The unusual shape of families in South Africa and neighbouring countries is partly historical and cultural: for example, it has always been common in the region for children to spend time at the home of their grandparents as a way of strengthening family attachments and intergenerational learning, as well as to provide companionship and draw on the capacity of

### Box 2: Forced removals and the "homeland" strategy

The resettlement policy, implemented as part of influx control, specifically targeted non-working Africans for removal from designated White areas in towns and on farms. Over 3.5 million individual removals took place between 1960 and 1983, and a further two million people were under threat of removal in the mid-1980s.<sup>10</sup>

Coloured and Indian families were affected too, and in some cases entire communities were forcibly removed to the urban periphery (for example from District Six and the southern suburbs of Cape Town to the Cape Flats, and from central Durban to Chatsworth). A nationalist party senator, speaking in parliament in 1977, said: "We make no apologies for the Group Areas Act and for its application. And if 600,000 Indians and Coloureds are affected by the implementation of the Act, we do not apologise for that either".<sup>11</sup>

But it was Africans who were disproportionately affected, in the sheer volume of numbers removed, in the removal of their citizenship rights and the creation of the independent homelands, and in the splitting up of families on the basis of who was considered economically

useful and who was redundant to the needs of the White economy.

General Circular No. 25 of 1967, entitled "Settling of non-productive Bantu resident in European areas, in the homelands", stated:

1. *It is accepted Government policy that the Bantu are only temporarily resident in the European areas of the Republic... As soon as they become, for one reason or another, no longer fit for work or superfluous in the labour market, they are expected to return to their country of origin or to the territory of the national unit where they fit in ethnically....*
2. *The Bantus in the European areas who are normally regarded as non-productive and as such have to be resettled in the homelands, are conveniently classified as follows:-*
  - i. *The aged, the unfit, widows, women with dependent children, also families who do not qualify under the provision of the Bantu (Urban Areas) Act No.25 of 1945 for family accommodation in the European urban areas.*<sup>12</sup>

non-working family members to provide care and support.<sup>13</sup> But these care arrangements are also a product of apartheid social engineering, achieved through an extractive system of labour and systematic discrimination over many decades.

### A legacy of family disruption

The physical separation of family members for sustained periods dates back, in some forms, to pre-colonial times.<sup>14</sup> Family members were separated by the upheavals of the Mfecane wars of 1815 – 1840 and the waves of migration that followed. Children's living arrangements were often restructured, and informal kinship care was common. Pre-apartheid labour migration to (and within) South Africa also contributed to family fragmentation. The extended separation of labour migrants from their family homes was common in the region as far back as the late nineteenth century when gold was first discovered.<sup>15</sup>

Although some commentators caution against a narrowly causal interpretation of the effects of migrant labour on households, the deliberate disruption of households and families by the apartheid regime – or what has been referred to as the “state-orchestrated destruction of family life” – certainly had a massive and lasting effect on African family and household structure.<sup>16</sup> The homeland policy was both an economic and political strategy (see box 2 on page 25): It ensured a cheap supply of labour while absolving municipalities of the responsibility to provide physical and social infrastructure for the families of those who provided labour, and it weakened social structures.

In 1970, anti-apartheid activist and Catholic priest Cosmas Desmond wrote: “More than 40% of the economically active men are absent from the ‘homelands’ at any given time. This enforced splitting-up of families is probably the most evil of all the effects of the resettlement schemes.... For the sake of the comfort of the White man, the Black man must be deprived of his right to live with his wife and family”.<sup>17</sup>

Migrant workers were often forced to live in cramped and substandard conditions such as single-sex hostels that were not designed to accommodate families – although many attempted to do so illegally, and at great risk and discomfort to themselves and their women and children.<sup>18</sup>

African women who had permission to work in White areas, for example as domestic workers, often had to leave their children in the care of relatives. The live-in quarters of domestic workers were regularly raided to ensure that children were not cohabiting with them. Section 10 of the

Group Areas Act was amended over time and progressively eroded the rights of family dependants (mainly women and children) to live together with their men in towns and cities. Even when these rights could be acquired, family co-residence was contingent on the availability of “suitable” family accommodation.

From the late 1960s housing construction in urban townships slowed and eventually ground to a halt, while single-sex hostel accommodation was expanded. The shortfall of family housing became an indirect way of preventing the urbanisation of women, children and other “surplus” Africans.<sup>19</sup>

Apartheid entrenched gender inequalities by relying on women to sustain family homesteads and care for dependents. The care of children remains highly gendered and generally undervalued by society, both when it is provided for free, within families, and as a professional service. Domestic workers, including those providing child care, can be paid below the national minimum wage. Educators in the early childhood development (ECD) sector are paid very low wages, as are child and youth care workers who provide welfare and protection services.<sup>20</sup>

For decades families were fragmented through a combination of laws, regulations and the deliberate undersupply of housing and services. The legal and regulatory controls were revoked in the mid-1980s, but many of the structural obstacles remain. Spatial, racial and gender inequalities persist in the post-apartheid era, alongside the seemingly intractable challenges of income inequality, unemployment, housing shortages and poor quality human settlements, and they undermine the freedom of many families to determine their residential and child-care arrangements.

### How are families envisaged and defined by the state?

Under apartheid, policies and programmes related to the family were primarily designed to promote and protect the interests of White nuclear families. The South African Population Census 1970 defined a family as one of four possible structures:<sup>21</sup> husband and wife; father, mother and children; father and children; or mother and children.

This family classification was limited to two generations and was dependent on the existence of a marital union and/or biological parenting, to the exclusion of other family forms. This was the “nuclear” family that the state aimed to promote and protect, although as the Lund Committee<sup>i</sup> later

<sup>i</sup> The Lund Committee on Child and Family Support was established by the Committee of the Minister of Welfare and the Provincial Members of the Executive Council in 1995 to investigate and make recommendations for the support of children and families. Led by Prof Francie Lund, the committee made proposals for a Child Support Grant, which was introduced in 1998.

noted: "It positioned the Christian family as the centrepiece of the white nation [while] at the same time economic growth was premised on the fracturing of the family lives of those who were not white".<sup>22</sup> The notion of a nuclear family as "ideal" was not exclusive to South Africa. Rather, it has been argued that "while a diversity of kinship systems certainly has existed throughout history and across the globe, it is the nuclear family model which has achieved privilege status in modern social imaginaries and development imperatives... [and] was positioned as a mark of civilisation".<sup>23</sup>

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Expectations of the post-apartheid family form were varied. Some expected that once the legislative controls on population movement were lifted, families would be reunited, reconstituting themselves either as co-resident extended families or in simpler (more nuclear) forms. There was extensive debate in the first decade after democracy about whether African families were in fact becoming more nuclear as they urbanised.<sup>24</sup> Some predicted that the effects of apartheid on family life would persist into the future and that merely lifting the legislative restrictions would not undo their effects.<sup>25</sup> Either way, it is unclear what form most households might have taken in the absence of colonial and apartheid policies.

Arguably, the purpose of current policy is not to influence the shape of families or engineer certain household forms. Rather, it should be about responding to household forms as they exist, removing the impediments to the family arrangements that people desire and providing an enabling environment for the care and development of children. As Martin and Zulaika note:

*Understanding the diversity and dynamic nature of family composition, structure, and living arrangements, as well as other key factors that impact children's care and outcomes, is critical to informing social policies and programs targeted to vulnerable children and their caregivers.*<sup>26</sup>

The White Paper on Families in South Africa, developed by the Department of Social Development, was approved by Cabinet in June 2013 and is meant to provide an overarching framework for all other policies and programmes dealing with families across all government departments. It was envisaged

that the implementation of the family policy would "result in well-functioning and resilient families that are able to nurture and promote care to their family members".<sup>27</sup>

The White Paper consciously departs from assumptions about Western or nuclear families as a normative model, and is careful to acknowledge the diversity of family forms, stating that:

*there are different types of families in South Africa which are products of various cultures and social contexts. Therefore, the need exists to recognise the diverse nature of South Africa's families in all initiatives that address their plight.*<sup>28</sup>

The White Paper defines a family broadly as "a societal group that is related by blood (kinship), adoption, foster care or the ties of marriage (civil, customary or religious), civil union or cohabitation, and goes beyond a particular physical residence".<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, much of its content suggests an underlying vision of the ideal family as a stable unit built on the foundation of marital union and the co-residence of biological parents and their children. For example, it states that:

*Stable marital unions are essential for the stability of families and ultimately society's well-being. Where unions are flourishing, efforts will be made to promote them and where they are under threat there will be a focus on strengthening them ... Where there is a case of parental breakdown or its absence, means will be sought of strengthening this area.*<sup>30</sup>

Given the high rates of mobility among both adults and children,<sup>31</sup> the well-documented fluidity of household form,<sup>32</sup> low and declining marriage rates and generally low rates of parental co-residence with biological children (discussed in Chapter 2), it would require large-scale and draconian social engineering to achieve this vision of stable family units.

Children have a wide range of rights and needs (including nutrition and health services, early childhood services and education, protection, material support and shelter). Many different sectors of government provide services either directly to children or indirectly via their caregivers or households. Government programmes tend to have an implicit or explicit vision of families. In general, the state recognises the diversity and multi-generational nature of many families, but in practice different departments have divergent views of what a family is (or should be) and who is assumed to bear responsibility for children.

- Birth registration processes assume that marriage between biological parents is the norm, despite evidence to the contrary, and that children born to married parents are automatically the children of both parents, making it more difficult to register paternity if parents are not married.
- Child Support Grants can be paid to anyone who is looking after the child, with no assumption that it should be the biological mother. They are meant to follow the child, in recognition that people may move, and care arrangements may change.
- School-fee exemptions take into account the incomes of both parents, irrespective of whether they live with the child or with each other, and irrespective of whether they support the child. This has been challenged in court.
- The free basic water allocation of 6,000 litres per month is based on the minimum amount of water needed for a household of up to eight people, allowing for extended large household arrangements.
- The eligibility requirements for housing subsidies recognise a wide range of family forms, but in practice the housing units only accommodate very small families.
- The child protection system tends to see children as vulnerable to abuse and neglect if they live with family members other than their biological parents, and in doing so risks overlooking potential abuse of a child by a parent.

It is not necessarily possible or appropriate to align the targeting of all programmes, but the differences illustrate the considerable disconnect in the way that government views caregiving arrangements and deals with families.

### Box 3: A note on race

Racial categorisation of the population was inherited from apartheid, where four population groups were defined in the population register and all people were allocated a race. Although it is widely understood that race is a social construct, the old racial classifications continue to be used in post-apartheid South Africa, ostensibly to monitor and support the reversal of inherited racial inequalities.

Like most national surveys, the household surveys conducted by Statistics South Africa still include the apartheid-era racial classifications of “African”, “Coloured”, “Indian/Asian” and “White”, and every individual is assigned to one of these groups.

Even if one applies these classifications to individuals, one cannot assume that all individuals in a household are of the same race. People may refer to “Black families” or “White families” but attempts to categorise families or households by race assume that all members are classified in the same way. In the 2017 General Household Survey, 188,000 households had members of more than one race, even after imputation.<sup>33</sup> This represents only one percent of households, but the number will grow as more interracial unions are formed and more children of those unions are born. The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act was repealed in 1985, and although marriage within races is still the norm, there has been an increase in marriage across what used to be called the colour-line, which is itself becoming increasingly blurred. Interracial marriages are reported to have increased dramatically as a share of marriages, especially for Asian/Indians and Whites, the

two groups that were the least likely to marry outside their race.<sup>34</sup> These patterns may also hold true for unions that are not formalised through marriage, and for biological parenting in a context where children are increasingly born to women who are not married.

Yet, given that most households remain racially homogenous, cultural differences and persistent racial inequalities may continue to influence the formation and shape of families. Eighty-one percent of people in South Africa are classified as African, and 80% of households in South Africa have a nominal “head” or index person who is African.<sup>35</sup> The national profile of families and the dynamics of average household change are therefore driven mainly by changing residential arrangements in the African population.

Much of this book focuses on family and household dynamics linked to the population classified as African. There is good reason to do so, as discriminatory policy under apartheid specifically disrupted the family arrangements of those who were classified as African. Other “non-African” population groups were afforded very different rights and were not subject to the same extent of restrictions on movement, forced removals or interventions in household arrangements. In particular, the independent homelands were established solely for Africans, and this history informs the continuation of circular migration patterns and stretched family arrangements that span urban and rural nodes.

## Overview of the chapters

The central question in this issue of the *Child Gauge* is how the state can support families as the primary social structure that provides care and nurtures children's development, and how government programmes and services can be appropriately targeted without making normative assumptions about what families *should* look like.

The first four chapters provide a contextual overview of family and household dynamics and outline how the roles and responsibilities of families and the state towards children are defined in the legal frameworks.

Chapter 2 provides a **demographic overview** of families and households in South Africa with a focus on children's families and household forms. It paints a picture of families that are mainly extended and household arrangements that change over time. It confirms the low rates of parental co-residence with children and considers some of the reasons for parental absence. It also demonstrates that many absent parents stay in contact with their children and provide some financial support, and that in the absence of parents, children are invariably cared for by other relatives. It tracks some of the underlying trends affecting family and household arrangements, including falling fertility and marriage rates, the reduction in average household size and the rise of single-adult households, and the persistence of labour migration and mobility, including the mobility of children. These dynamics are important for any policies or programmes that provide services to families or that are premised on the notion of family structure.

Chapter 3 offers a **legal perspective on families and the state**. It outlines the respective obligations of family members and the state towards children. It defines parental responsibilities and shows how the Children's Act has broadened the definition of family members who can bear these responsibilities towards children. It shows that despite this progressive legislation, courts have tended to take a narrow view on which relatives bear a duty of support. The Constitution places an obligation on the state to provide for the socio-economic rights of children – an obligation that arises, for example, when families are too poor to provide adequately for a child's needs, or when children are outside of a family environment. The chapter argues for greater prioritisation of children's rights, including through services and support to families.

Chapter 4 examines how rights and responsibilities relating to children are dealt with under **customary law** specifically, and how these processes intersect or conflict with statutory law. Customary law places more emphasis on rights,

duties and obligations for groups rather than individuals. Whereas courts have ruled that parents, grandparents and siblings have a legal duty of support, under customary law this can also extend to other relatives such as aunts and uncles. There are also differences in how marriages and the rights and responsibilities of fathers are acknowledged, and contestation between cultural norms and children's best interests may arise with respect to child support and custody. The chapter argues that customary law is a living embodiment of accepted and localised norms. This creates challenges in ascertaining what the living customary law is in each matter, such as maintenance, custody and duty of support.

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The second cluster of chapters deals with the roles of the family and state in enabling children's care, safety, material well-being and development, highlighting areas of alignment and tension between families and state, and motivating for the design and delivery of services that are responsive and enabling.

Chapter 5 is about **care and caregiving**. It highlights the careful negotiation of family rights and responsibilities, the widespread importance of ancestral lines of care and mechanisms for establishing children's belonging to the patrilineage. It demonstrates the critical role played by families, the gendered nature of childcare and the social role of men in a context where "fatherhood" may be a collective responsibility within the family. It distinguishes between informal kinship care and foster care and questions the use of foster care for orphans living within their own families. It discusses the ways in which the state sometimes undermines the care strategies of families, and how caregivers can be better supported. Providing nurturing care can be demanding and stressful – particularly in the context of poverty and social isolation – and the chapter argues that caregivers need both material and psychosocial support. It ends with two case studies of programmes that seek to support families in holistic ways.

Chapter 6 addresses children's safety and protection, with a focus on integrated approaches to **reducing family violence**.

It outlines the high prevalence of physical punishment and other forms of violence enacted by caregivers. It highlights intergenerational patterns of trauma and violence, and the impact on children who witness violence. It draws attention to the links between violence against women and violence against children and suggests joint strategies for addressing these forms of violence through prevention services that target common risk factors. Finally, it outlines the state's obligations and programmes to prevent violence, describes some areas of mismatch between policy and practice, and considers possible strategies to reduce family violence – something which it describes as a political priority.

Chapter 7 reflects on the importance of **income support** in the context of high unemployment and low wages. It shows that poverty is highly gendered and that women are often responsible for both the care and financial support of children. Many children – particularly those in rural areas – live in households without any salary income, depending mainly on social grants. Lone-parent and extended households are the poorest, but poverty rates are high even in nuclear family households. The chapter considers the cost of raising a child and examines the ways in which the dual responsibilities of providing cash and care are balanced within families. It shows that, although many of the costs of raising children are shared by family members and absent parents may contribute financially to the child, a substantial portion of non-resident fathers do not support their children. This is partly due to the state's failure to enforce maintenance, and partly because many fathers are unable to pay maintenance. The state is responsible for the financial maintenance of children when families cannot afford to provide for them. Although the Child Support Grant is well targeted and reaches millions of children, the amount is not enough even to cover the cost of

feeding a child. Further, the grant may fail to “follow the child” when care arrangements change, as originally intended.

Chapter 8 deals with **human development**, beginning in childhood, and focuses on three pillars of human development – health, education and social development. It adopts a life-course approach to children's development with examples of the contributions of families and the state, starting early and onward into adolescence. The chapter emphasises that optimal human development outcomes can only be achieved by families and the state working together to maximise the investment of each. The chapter also illustrates how both the state and families need to recognise and encourage children's growing autonomy and responsibility in order for them to realise their full capabilities as adults.

Chapter 9 provides a **map of policies and programmes** for families and children in South Africa. It argues that provision of support to families by the state is central to achieving sustainable development. Supportive programmes need to be designed and implemented in a way that enables equal access for all caregivers and children in need, irrespective of the shape of their family. This requires a renewed political commitment to recognise and support the rich diversity of families and co-ordinated implementation of that commitment. Some services are universal and should reach everyone. Some are targeted to particular groups, and it is important that these programmes are appropriately designed and well implemented to ensure that they reach the eligible population. Responsive services are there for those who need them, and include emergency, protective and specialised services. The essay argues that responsive services need to be strengthened so that they are readily available on demand, and through well-functioning referral systems.

## References

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