

An update on the Poverty and Inequality Initiative in #YouthMonth

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June 2016

In this edition of the newsletter for the [Poverty and Inequality Initiative \(PII\)](#), you will find updates on projects and programmes, publications and recent and upcoming events. You can now follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) and if you would prefer not to receive these newsletters in the future, you can [unsubscribe here](#).

Welcome Note by Murray Leibbrandt

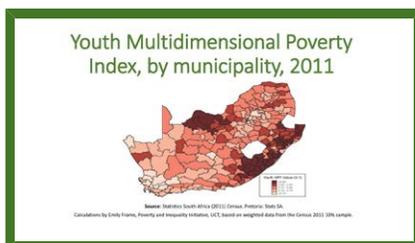
It's been little more than two years since the PII was established, and during this time we have not been idle, despite being a bit sluggish on the news front.

Those of you who have been involved with us will recall that when we set up the Initiative, we took stock of our existing strengths whilst identifying major research gaps. Through this process, Youth and Social Cohesion were identified as underdeveloped but crucial areas, both at UCT and also in the national space. The decision was made to build these themes and to this end, we appointed two theme leaders to lead these processes. For this launch edition, we specifically chose to focus on reporting on the work programme of the Youth Theme – and the timing is not coincidental. This month is Youth Month. In just a couple of days, we will remember the Soweto Uprisings of 1976 – when young people stood up to demand equal education and eventually stood up against the apartheid system. 40 years on, we have to ask ourselves: how are young people doing today? And what is it that research can contribute to policies and programmes that would better support their lives?



In future editions, we aim to profile, in a similar manner, the work of our committed and excellent researchers, whose research processes are aimed at finding and developing viable and impactful policies and interventions to overcome poverty and inequality.

Indicators to monitor Youth Well-Being

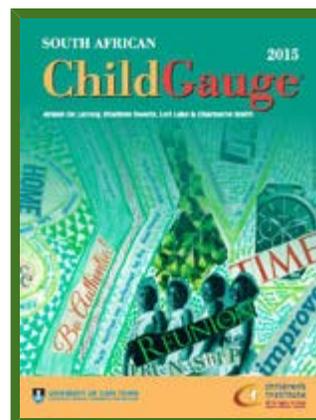


Led by [Dr Ariane de Lannoy](#), this [project](#) was launched in January 2015 and has grown into a broad partnership between the [Poverty and Inequality Initiative](#), [Statistics South Africa](#), the Western Cape Department of the Premier, [Code for South Africa](#) and the City of Cape Town. It draws on a number of data sources to develop a dashboard of local-level indicators that measure key dimensions of youth well-being in South Africa, with the Western Cape as a first pilot area. The aim is to

contribute new knowledge and insight about how young people in the country are experiencing life by offering a tool for assessing their individual outcomes and environmental influences at a small area level and over time. Ultimately, it is anticipated that the indicators will provide a strong evidence base to inform youth-related policies and interventions implemented at the sub-municipal or local community level. As part of the indicator project, a [Multidimensional Poverty Index for youth](#) was constructed, applying the Alkire Foster method and using Census 2011 data. The index is intended to complement the dashboard of indicators by offering a single summary measure that captures the multiple deprivations experienced simultaneously by poor youth. The project recently attracted additional support from the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in Human Development.

2015 Youth-focused Child Gauge

The [South African Child Gauge®](#) is an annual publication of the [Children's Institute](#), University of Cape Town. It provides a snap-shot of the status of children in South Africa, and in particular monitors progress towards the realisation of their rights. Each year, the publication focuses on a major challenge affecting children's well-being as a lens to critically analyse the position of children and the potential policy responses required.



In 2015, the [Poverty and Inequality Initiative](#) partnered with the Children's Institute to produce a [youth-focused edition of the Gauge](#). This publication highlights the precarious situation of children as they transition into young adulthood and the need for interventions that support youth development. The focus on the youth stage (15 to 24 year olds) is informed by a life-course understanding of development. Appropriately, South Africa now places significant emphasis on Early Childhood Development. Yet, little evidence-based support continues for children as they turn into adolescents and later into young adults. The 2015 Youth-focused edition of the Gauge provides an overview of the status of these older children and youth, and allows for the identification of evidence-based programmes for youth that are aimed at breaking the inter-generational transmission of poverty to the next generation of children.

As a key communication and advocacy tool, the 2015 youth-focused Gauge makes academic research accessible to a wider audience. It provides evidence to educate and raise awareness of critical issues affecting the country's youth towards ensuring that government policies, programmes and services promote the realisation of their rights and of the rights of the next cohort of children. The Gauge is accompanied by a youth bulletin called [Youth Matters](#), created by young people. It provides youth with the opportunity to let their voices be heard regarding the issues that shape their lives.

Yazi – PII's Youth Information Portal

In collating evidence on the barriers to post-school education, [Branson et al.](#) (2015) explain: "*Learners face a number of important decision-making moments during their educational career. Yet their choices are often constrained. Matric subjects are chosen in grade 9, when employment*



and careers are far from a reality, and choices may be compounded by poor guidance around subject choice and future possibilities” (Branson et al, 2015).

Young people who worked with the team behind the Child Gauge concurred:

“There is little career guidance and support, so we feel ill-prepared to make the right choices. This starts in grade 9 when we have to choose subjects that we will take in matric, yet we have no idea what we would like to study after school” Read more in the [Youth Matters Bulletin](#).

In an attempt to meet young people in their request for information, [The Poverty and Inequality Initiative](#), in partnership with [The Children’s Institute](#), [Ikamva Youth](#) and the [DG Murray Trust](#) have developed ‘Yazi’, an easily accessible information portal that visually maps the pathways through the educational system – from grade 9 onwards – into higher education or into the world of work. It is meant to provide young people with the details they need to make informed decisions about their educational or career trajectories. After an initial pilot stage, it is envisaged that the portal will be evaluated and the outcomes of the evaluation translated into policy-relevant material.

Systematic Review of Youth Unemployment

On 17 February 2015, a multidisciplinary roundtable discussion was organized by the [Poverty and Inequality Initiative](#), in collaboration with the University of Johannesburg’s [Centre for Social Development in Africa](#) (CSDA). At the meeting, representatives of various departments of national government, various academic disciplines and the [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#) (JPAL) – Africa agreed on the need for a [systematic overview](#) of research, policies and interventions related to youth unemployment. Its goal is to identify and synthesise:

- the available evidence on the drivers of youth unemployment,
- the historical development and implementation of policies aimed at increasing youth employability in South Africa and
- the available evidence on interventions and their effectiveness.

In a final stage of the project, a systematic ‘map’ will be designed that compares the research evidence, policies, and interventions, in order to identify the areas where the three relate, but especially where policies and interventions should aim to be more comprehensive, context and/or target group-specific.

Aiming for a multi-disciplinary approach, UCT’s PII and UJ’s CSDA are leading a dedicated team of researchers to conduct the systematic overview, to suggest a more comprehensive and integrated Theory of Change for youth employability and to translate this into policy-oriented documents. Senior staff are collaborating to support junior researchers or post graduate students in producing the overview, synthesis and final reports. This project is supported by the [Research Project on Employment, Income Distribution, and Inclusive Growth](#) (REDI3x3).

Ongoing Youth Policy Dialogues

A recent policy workshop on [Youth, Inequality and the Labour Market](#) was jointly convened by the [Poverty and Inequality Initiative](#) (PII) and the [Research Project on Employment, Income Distribution and Inclusive Growth](#)



(REDI3x3) on 19th April 2016.

The aim of the workshop was to bring policymakers and researchers together to engage on what sort of policies would be most effective in steering the country towards a new and more inclusive development path. It was attended by a range of academic researchers and NGO leaders who are pro-active in helping young people make the difficult transition between school and employment, and policymakers. [Read More](#)

Upcoming Lunch Seminar ahead of Youth Day

On the 16th June we remember the power of the younger generation. We celebrate the courageous students who defended their right to equal education, and we commemorate those who lost their lives in the struggle. In the week of this important day in our country, we will be reflecting on current efforts directed at developing young people. The [Bertha Centre's Education Innovation Initiative](#) has invited UCT's [Poverty and Inequality Initiative's](#) Dr Ariane De Lannoy, a sociologist and senior researcher, to explore the idea that our country currently lacks a thorough analysis of youth-specific poverty data – including data that shows the extent to which poverty varies from one small, local area to another, or that can track possible progress over time. This kind of information is key to the development of these efforts. The lunch time seminar takes place tomorrow, 14th June. [Read More](#)



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