



PIETERMARITZBURG
ECONOMIC JUSTICE & DIGNITY

Economic justice through the lens of human dignity



HOUSEHOLD AFFORDABILITY INDEX

DECEMBER 2019

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In cooperation with the Heinrich Böll Foundation Southern Africa.

 **HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG**
SOUTHERN AFRICA

For information and media enquiries contact:

Mervyn Abrahams on 079 398 9384 and mervyn@pmbejd.org.za

Julie Smith on 072 324 5043 and julie@pmbejd.org.za

Website: www.pmbejd.org.za

Facebook: www.Facebook.com/pmbejd

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About the Household Affordability Index

The Household Affordability Index has been designed in conversation with women living on low incomes in Pietermaritzburg. Its purpose is to provide a lens into the affordability crisis facing households living on low incomes by looking at wage and social grant levels and the costs of goods and services reasonably expected to be covered by this low income. It further provides a measure of inflation as experienced by households living on low incomes.

The research conversations, data collection and analysis are located in Pietermaritzburg however the Household Affordability Index may provide a reasonable sense of the affordability crisis and inflationary pressures for working class households across South Africa.

We release the Household Affordability Index monthly. We welcome its use and distribution and hope that it may be of value in the struggle for economic justice. We would also be open to feedback on how we might make the Household Affordability Index more accessible and useful. Please contact us should you wish to have a conversation, for media enquiries and for further information, data and analysis.

About the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group

The Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group is a Civil Society initiative founded in July 2018. This initiative focusses on issues of economic justice, the low-wage regime and on the increasing household affordability and food price crisis, with its attendant nutritional deficiencies, health and developmental consequences, and the lack of imaginative policy and systemic responses to deal with this crisis.

The Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group envisions and work towards *a society of solidarity, based on a politics of love and universality, and an economy which provides justice, equity, and dignity for all.*

1. DECEMBER 2019 Summary Data Reference Sheet

Summary of Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Household Affordability Index Data

National Minimum Wage in December 2019		
<i>General workers at exemption level of R18/hr</i>		R2 736,00
2 core expenses	% of wage	Rands
Transport to work (2 taxi RTN)	38,9%	R1 064,00
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	21,9%	598,52
Total: transport + electricity	60,8%	R1 662,52
<i>Money remaining to secure all other expenses</i>		R1 073,48

Cost of Household Food Basket in December 2019		
Cost of Household Food Basket (7 members)		R3 199,86
Month-on-month change	3,0%	R93,45
Year-on-year change change	5,9%	R176,96

Cost of VAT on Household Food Basket in December 2019		
% VAT on the Household Food Basket		7,2%
Total VAT on the Household Food Basket		R228,89
In Dec 2019, VAT equivalent to price of 35kg maize meal.		

Cost of core foods in Household Food Basket: <i>these foods are bought first & essential to households</i>		
Core foods	Cost	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019 (%)
Maize meal (25kg + 10kg)	R 223,23	-1%
Rice (10kg)	R 83,79	10%
Cake Flour (10kg)	R 72,39	-5%
White sugar (10kg)	R 142,39	3%
Sugar beans (5kg)	R 87,59	3%
Samp (5kg)	R 34,59	21%
Cooking oil (5L)	R 88,79	11%
Salt (1kg)	R 15,39	8%
Potatoes (10kg)	R 60,74	1%
Onions (10kg)	R 53,41	1%
Frozen chicken pieces (10kg)	R 336,94	4%
Curry powder (200g)	R 26,79	4%
Stock cubes (24 cubes x2)	R 31,18	-1%
Soup (400g x2)	R 25,18	2%
Tea (250g)	R 20,79	-28%
Subtotal of core foods	R 1 303,18	2,3%

Cost of Household Domestic and Personal Hygiene Products Basket	R654,00
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Cost of feeding a family a basic nutritious diet per month	
Household size with 4 members	R2 460,48
Household size with 5 members	R3 107,67
Household size with 7 members	R4 303,61
In December 2019, families with 7 members underspent on basic nutritious food by 26% (-R1 103,75) .	

Cost of feeding a child a basic nutritious diet per month	
Small child aged 3-9 years	R559,68
Small child aged 10-13 years	R603,44
Girl child aged 14-18 years	R636,26
Boy child aged 14-18 years	R704,85
In Dec 2019, the Child Support Grant is set 23% below the food poverty line and 29% below the cost to secure a basic nutritious diet for a small child aged 10-13 years.	

Summary of Statistics South Africa's Economic and Social Data

All South Africans	
Population size	58,8 million
Unemployment rate	29,1%
Expanded unemployment rate	38,5%
Numbers of people unemployed	10,3 million
Numbers of people employed	16,4 million
Number of people one wage supports	3,6 people
The median wage	R3 300,00
Median wage dispersed through a family	R919,40

Black South Africans	
Population size	47,4 million
Unemployment rate	32,8%
Expanded unemployment rate	43,1%
Numbers of people unemployed	9,3 million
Numbers of people employed	12,3 million
Number of people one wage supports	3,9 people
The median wage	R3 000,00
Median wage dispersed through a family	R775,37

White South Africans	
Population size	4,7 million
Unemployment rate	7,4%
Expanded unemployment rate	9,3%
Numbers of people unemployed	190 000
Numbers of people employed	1,9 million
Number of people one wage supports	2,5 people
The median wage	R12 500,00
Median wage dispersed through a family	R4 995,16

The maximum value of the National Minimum Wage [NMW]: general workers	R20 an hour
Level of NMW at 10% exemption	R18 an hour
The value of the Child Support Grant [CSG]	R430,00
The value of the Old-age Grant [OAG]	R1 780,00
The number of children receiving a CSG	12,3 million
The number of pensioners receiving an OAG	3,5 million
The upper bound poverty line [UBPL]	R1 227,00
The food poverty line [FPL]	R561,00

% of people living below the UBPL (30,4m)	55,5%
% of people living below the FPL (13,8m)	25,2%
% of Black South Africans living below the UBPL (±29,9m)	64,2%
Stunting levels in <i>boy children under 5 years</i>	30%
Stunting levels in <i>girl children under 5 years</i>	25%
Estimated overall HIV prevalence rate among population (7,97m)	13,5%

Any errors in data entry or calculations are our own. See reference page 12 for Statistics South Africa data references.

All efforts are made to source the latest data.

2. DECEMBER 2019 Household Food Index

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2018/19			change in Rands		change in %	
		Dec_2018	Nov_2019	Dec_2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019
Maize meal	25kg + 10kg	R 226,18	R 221,22	R 223,23	R 2,01	-R 2,95	1%	-1%
Rice	10kg	R 76,49	R 84,79	R 83,79	-R 1,00	R 7,30	-1%	10%
Cake Flour	10kg	R 76,32	R 75,19	R 72,39	-R 2,80	-R 3,93	-4%	-5%
White sugar	10kg	R 138,83	R 141,19	R 142,39	R 1,20	R 3,57	1%	3%
Sugar beans	5kg	R 85,16	R 91,39	R 87,59	-R 3,80	R 2,43	-4%	3%
Samp	5kg	R 28,49	R 35,59	R 34,59	-R 1,00	R 6,10	-3%	21%
Cooking oil	5L	R 79,66	R 91,19	R 88,79	-R 2,40	R 9,13	-3%	11%
Salt	1kg	R 14,19	R 15,39	R 15,39	R 0,00	R 1,20	0%	8%
Potatoes	10kg	R 60,23	R 49,79	R 60,74	R 10,95	R 0,51	22%	1%
Onions	10kg	R 52,92	R 56,56	R 53,41	-R 3,15	R 0,48	-6%	1%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R 324,98	R 332,94	R 336,94	R 4,00	R 11,96	1%	4%
Curry powder	200g	R 25,82	R 28,99	R 26,79	-R 2,20	R 0,97	-8%	4%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R 31,65	R 35,58	R 31,18	-R 4,40	-R 0,47	-12%	-1%
Soup	400g x2	R 24,65	R 24,78	R 25,18	R 0,40	R 0,53	2%	2%
Tea	250g	R 28,82	R 22,99	R 20,79	-R 2,20	-R 8,03	-10%	-28%
Maas	4L	R 38,16	R 39,39	R 38,99	-R 0,40	R 0,83	-1%	2%
Eggs	60 eggs	R 90,14	R 87,99	R 87,59	-R 0,40	-R 2,55	0%	-3%
Chicken feet	5kg	R 134,72	R 147,35	R 168,48	R 21,13	R 33,75	14%	25%
Gizzards	2kg	R 53,98	R 60,48	R 68,39	R 7,91	R 14,41	13%	27%
Beef	2kg	R 142,99	R 139,44	R 150,48	R 11,05	R 7,49	8%	5%
Wors	2kg	R 83,48	R 107,94	R 119,94	R 12,00	R 36,46	11%	44%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R 50,48	R 62,44	R 69,89	R 7,46	R 19,41	12%	38%
Tomatoes	6kg	R 65,71	R 53,87	R 84,99	R 31,12	R 19,29	58%	29%
Carrots	5kg	R 32,50	R 18,24	R 24,74	R 6,50	-R 7,76	36%	-24%
Butternut	10kg	R 52,66	R 47,27	R 52,84	R 5,57	R 0,18	12%	0%
Spinach	8 bunches	R 37,29	R 37,30	R 42,61	R 5,31	R 5,32	14%	14%
Cabbage	2 heads	R 18,98	R 23,98	R 24,98	R 1,00	R 6,00	4%	32%
Cremora	800g	R 30,66	R 30,59	R 30,99	R 0,40	R 0,33	1%	1%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R 88,64	R 100,15	R 96,55	-R 3,60	R 7,92	-4%	9%
Canned beans	410g x6	R 53,50	R 65,35	R 61,75	-R 3,60	R 8,25	-6%	15%
Bananas	4kg	R 44,63	R 36,76	R 34,96	-R 1,80	-R 9,67	-5%	-22%
Apples	1.5kg	R 21,82	R 18,59	R 19,99	R 1,40	-R 1,83	8%	-8%
Margarine	1kg x2	R 63,31	R 69,98	R 68,38	-R 1,60	R 5,07	-2%	8%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R 49,15	R 55,58	R 54,38	-R 1,20	R 5,23	-2%	11%
Polony	2.5kg	R 57,49	R 60,49	R 62,29	R 1,80	R 4,80	3%	8%
Apricot jam	900g x2	R 49,31	R 53,58	R 46,38	-R 7,20	-R 2,93	-13%	-6%
White bread	25 loaves	R 254,88	R 252,30	R 254,80	R 2,50	-R 0,07	1%	0%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R 234,04	R 229,80	R 232,30	R 2,50	-R 1,74	1%	-1%
Total household food basket		R 3 022,90	R3 106,42	R3 199,86	R 93,45	R 176,96	3,0%	5,9%

Month-on-month: The cost of the household food basket *increased* by R93,45 (3%) to R3 199,86 in December 2019.

Year-on-year: The cost of the household food basket *increased* by R176,97 (5,9%) from R3 022,90 in December 2018 to R3 199,86 in December 2019.

The household food basket has been designed together with women living on low incomes in Pietermaritzburg. It includes the foods and the volumes of these foods which women living in a household with seven members (the average low-income household size in Pietermaritzburg) tell us they typically try and secure each month. Food prices are sourced from supermarkets (5) and butcheries (4) that target the low-income market and which women identified as those they shop at. Food selection at the supermarket shelves mirrors how women themselves make decisions at the supermarket shelves viz. that the foods are chosen on relative affordability and reasonable quality. The date for data collection is between the 1st and 4th day of each month. There are 38 foods in the household food basket.

The household food index is designed with women living on low incomes to provide a sense of what the food baskets of low-income households cost in Pietermaritzburg and is specifically designed to measure food price inflation as experienced by households living on low incomes. Although located in Pietermaritzburg, the household food index may provide a picture into food price inflation as experienced by households living on low incomes in South Africa.

3. DECEMBER 2019 Household Food Index: zero-rated vs. VAT

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2018/19			change in Rands		change in %	
		Dec_2018	Nov_2019	Dec_2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019
Zero-rated foods								
Maize meal	25kg + 10kg	R226,18	R 221,22	R 223,23	R 2,01	-R 2,95	1%	-1%
Rice	10kg	R76,49	R 84,79	R 83,79	-R 1,00	R 7,30	-1%	10%
Samp	5kg	R28,49	R 35,59	R 34,59	-R 1,00	R 6,10	-3%	21%
Sugar beans	5kg	R85,16	R 91,39	R 87,59	-R 3,80	R 2,43	-4%	3%
Cooking oil	5L	R79,66	R 91,19	R 88,79	-R 2,40	R 9,13	-3%	11%
Maas	4L	R38,16	R 39,39	R 38,99	-R 0,40	R 0,83	-1%	2%
Eggs	60 eggs	R90,14	R 87,99	R 87,59	-R 0,40	-R 2,55	0%	-3%
Potatoes	10kg	R60,23	R 49,79	R 60,74	R 10,95	R 0,51	22%	1%
Onions	10kg	R52,92	R 56,56	R 53,41	-R 3,15	R 0,48	-6%	1%
Tomatoes	6kg	R65,71	R 53,87	R 84,99	R 31,12	R 19,29	58%	29%
Carrots	5kg	R32,50	R 18,24	R 24,74	R 6,50	-R 7,76	36%	-24%
Butternut	10kg	R52,66	R 47,27	R 52,84	R 5,57	R 0,18	12%	0%
Spinach	8 bunches	R37,29	R 37,30	R 42,61	R 5,31	R 5,32	14%	14%
Cabbage	2 heads	R18,98	R 23,98	R 24,98	R 1,00	R 6,00	4%	32%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R88,64	R 100,15	R 96,55	-R 3,60	R 7,92	-4%	9%
Bananas	4kg	R44,63	R 36,76	R 34,96	-R 1,80	-R 9,67	-5%	-22%
Apples	1.5kg	R21,82	R 18,59	R 19,99	R 1,40	-R 1,83	8%	-8%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R234,04	R 229,80	R 232,30	R 2,50	-R 1,74	1%	-1%
Cake Four*	10kg	R76,32	R 75,19	R 72,39	-R 2,80	-R 3,93	-4%	-5%
Subtotal of zero-rated foods		R1 410,02	R 1 399,06	R 1 445,07	R 46,01	R 35,05	3,3%	2,5%
VATable foods								
White sugar	10kg	R138,83	R 141,19	R 142,39	R 1,20	R 3,57	1%	3%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R324,98	R 332,94	R 336,94	R 4,00	R 11,96	1%	4%
Chicken feet	5kg	R134,72	R 147,35	R 168,48	R 21,13	R 33,75	14%	25%
Gizzards	2kg	R53,98	R 60,48	R 68,39	R 7,91	R 14,41	13%	27%
Beef	2kg	R142,99	R 139,44	R 150,48	R 11,05	R 7,49	8%	5%
Wors	2kg	R83,48	R 107,94	R 119,94	R 12,00	R 36,46	11%	44%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R50,48	R 62,44	R 69,89	R 7,46	R 19,41	12%	38%
Salt	1kg	R14,19	R 15,39	R 15,39	R 0,00	R 1,20	0%	8%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R31,65	R 35,58	R 31,18	-R 4,40	-R 0,47	-12%	-1%
Soup	400g x2	R24,65	R 24,78	R 25,18	R 0,40	R 0,53	2%	2%
Curry powder	200g	R25,82	R 28,99	R 26,79	-R 2,20	R 0,97	-8%	4%
Tea	250g	R28,82	R 22,99	R 20,79	-R 2,20	-R 8,03	-10%	-28%
Cremora	800g	R30,66	R 30,59	R 30,99	R 0,40	R 0,33	1%	1%
Canned beans	410g x6	R53,50	R 65,35	R 61,75	-R 3,60	R 8,25	-6%	15%
Margarine	1kg x2	R63,31	R 69,98	R 68,38	-R 1,60	R 5,07	-2%	8%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R49,15	R 55,58	R 54,38	-R 1,20	R 5,23	-2%	11%
Polony	2.5kg	R57,49	R 60,49	R 62,29	R 1,80	R 4,80	3%	8%
Apricot jam	900g x2	R49,31	R 53,58	R 46,38	-R 7,20	-R 2,93	-13%	-6%
White bread	25 loaves	R254,88	R 252,30	R 254,80	R 2,50	-R 0,07	1%	0%
Subtotal of VATable foods		R1 612,88	R 1 707,36	R 1 754,80	R 47,44	R 141,91	2,8%	8,8%
Vatable foods (excl. VAT)		R1 402,51	R1 484,66	R1 525,91	R 41,25	R123,40	2,8%	8,8%
VAT total		R210,38	R222,70	R228,89	R6,19	R18,51	2,8%	8,8%
Total household food basket		R3 022,90	R3 106,42	R3 199,86	R93,45	R176,96	3,0%	5,9%

Month-on-month: The **zero-rated foods** in the household food basket **increased** by R46,01 (3,3%) to R1 445,07 in December 2019

Year-on-year: The **zero-rated foods** in the household food basket **increased** by R35,05 (2,5%) from R1 410,02 in December 2018 to R1 445,07 in December 2019.

Month-on-month: The **foods subject to VAT** in the household food basket **increased** by R47,44 (2,8%) to R1 754,80 in December 2019.

Year-on-year: The **foods subject to VAT** in the household food basket **increased** by R141,91 (8,8%) from R1 612,88 in December 2018 to R1 754,80 in December 2019.

19/38 foods in the total household food basket are subject to VAT. Foods subject to VAT make up **55%** of the total cost of the household food basket. VAT on the total household food basket came to **R228,89 in December 2019**. This means **7.2%** of the household food basket is made up of VAT. * Note that regulation on zero-rating cake flour was effected in April 2019.

4. DECEMBER 2019 Household Domestic & Personal Hygiene Index

Products tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2018/19			change in Rands		change in %	
		Dec_2018	Nov_2019	Dec_2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019
Green bar soap	8 bars	R 48,31	R 49,18	R 47,58	-R 1,60	-R 0,73	-3%	-2%
Washing powder	3kg	R 64,33	R 56,59	R 54,19	-R 2,40	-R 10,14	-4%	-16%
Dishwashing liquid	750ml	R 23,16	R 25,99	R 24,99	-R 1,00	R 1,83	-4%	8%
Handy Andy	750ml	R 21,49	R 22,99	R 21,79	-R 1,20	R 0,30	-5%	1%
Jik	750ml	R 20,66	R 22,19	R 22,19	R 0,00	R 1,53	0%	7%
Jeyes Fluid	500ml	R 33,99	R 36,19	R 36,19	R 0,00	R 2,20	0%	6%
Toilet paper	24 rolls	R 87,16	R 91,39	R 93,79	R 2,40	R 6,63	3%	8%
Bath soap	500g x 2	R 23,31	R 23,98	R 23,98	R 0,00	R 0,67	0%	3%
Toothpaste	100ml x3	R 38,47	R 41,37	R 41,37	R 0,00	R 2,90	0%	8%
Vaseline	500g	R 26,49	R 25,74	R 27,24	R 1,50	R 0,75	6%	3%
Cream	big bottle x2	R 34,31	R 33,58	R 34,38	R 0,80	R 0,07	2%	0%
Roll-on deodorant	x4	R 56,64	R 59,57	R 61,97	R 2,40	R 5,33	4%	9%
Spray-on deodorant	big spray x 3	R 65,47	R 69,58	R 69,58	R 0,00	R 4,11	0%	6%
Sanitary pads*	2 big packs	R 81,31	R 68,38	R 70,38	R 2,00	-R 10,93	3%	-13%
Shoe Polish	100ml	R 24,57	R 24,19	R 24,39	R 0,20	-R 0,18	1%	-1%
Total household domestic and hygiene products		R 649,67	R 650,90	R 654,00	R 3,10	R 4,33	0,5%	0,7%

Month-on-month: The cost of the household domestic and personal hygiene products basket *increased* by R3,10 (0,5%) to R654,00 in December 2019.

Year-on-year: The cost of the household domestic and personal hygiene products basket *increased* by R4,33 (0,7%) from R649,67 in December 2018 to R654,00 in December 2019.

Domestic and personal hygiene products are critical expenses for safe food preparation and overall household health, well being and for dignity. It means that, like food, these must be secured every month. Women living on low incomes tell us that the money needed to secure domestic and personal hygiene products are sourced from within the food budget. It means that these products compete with the food budget. Because of this, a more realistic cost of the monthly household food basket should add domestic and personal hygiene products to the food costs.

* Note that regulation on zero-rating sanitary pads was effected in April 2019.

5. DECEMBER 2019 Basic Nutritional Food Index: families

By number of family members	Index 2018/19			change in Rands		change in %	
	Dec_2018	Nov_2019	Dec_2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019
Four (4)	R2 319,94	R2 366,20	R2 460,48	R 94,28	R 140,54	4,0%	6,1%
Five (5)	R2 933,10	R2 989,00	R3 107,67	R 118,67	R 174,57	4,0%	6,0%
Seven (7)	R4 060,59	R4 136,74	R4 303,61	R 166,87	R 243,02	4,0%	6,0%

Month-on-month: The cost of a **basic nutritional food basket for a family of 7 members increased** by R166,87 (4%) to R4 303,61 in December 2019

Year-on-year: The cost of a **basic nutritional food basket for a family of 7 members increased** by R243,02 (6%) from R4 060,59 in December 2018 to R4 303,61 in December 2019.

In **December 2019** the difference in cost between the foods which families living on low incomes try and buy each month (the household food basket) and the foods which families would like to buy and should buy to meet basic nutrition (a basic nutritional food basket) was **R3 199,86 vs. R4 303,61** (-R1 103,75).

It means that in **December 2019**, families with seven members underspent on basic nutritional food by **26%** (R1 103,75).

6. DECEMBER 2019 Basic Nutritional Food Index: children

By age of child	Index 2018/19			change in Rands		change in %	
	Dec_2018	Nov_2019	Dec_2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019
Small child aged 3-9 years	R526,36	R535,70	R559,68	R 23,98	R 33,32	4,5%	6,3%
Small child aged 10-13 years	R569,76	R579,25	R603,44	R 24,19	R 33,68	4,2%	5,9%
Girl child aged 14-18 years	R601,14	R612,04	R636,26	R 24,22	R 35,12	4,0%	5,8%
Boy child aged 14-18 years	R666,08	R682,76	R704,85	R 22,09	R 38,77	3,2%	5,8%

Month-on-month: The cost of feeding a **small child aged 10-13 years a basic nutritious diet increased** by R24,19 (4,2%) to R603,44 in December 2019.

Year-on-year: The cost of feeding a **small child aged 10-13 years a basic nutritious diet increased** by R33,68 (5,9%) from R569,76 in December 2018 to R603,44 in December 2019.

As children grow older, their nutritional requirements increase. It means that the cost of feeding a child increases in price as a child grows older and is also different for teenage girls and boys.

The annual Government Child Support Grant increase was **R10** effected on the 1st of April 2019 and **R10** effected on the 1st of October 2019. The total value of the Child Support Grant as from October 2019 is **R430** per month. *This is a fixed value and does not increase as a child grows older.*

The food poverty line calculated by Statistics South Africa is **R561** per capita per month (latest April 2019).

In **December 2019** it cost **R603,44** to feed a small child aged 10-13 years a basic nutritious diet per month.

The Child Support Grant of R430 per month is set **below** the food poverty line and **further below** the cost to secure a basic nutritious diet for a small child.

In **December 2019**, the Child Support Grant is **23%** below the food poverty line and **29%** below the cost to secure a basic nutritious diet for a small child. This percentage deficit is higher for older children.

7. DECEMBER 2019 Basic Nutritional Food Index: adults

By sex, activity level & lifestage	Index 2018/19			change in Rands		change in %	
	Dec_2018	Nov_2019	Dec_2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019	Nov 2019 vs. Dec 2019	Dec 2018 vs. Dec 2019
Adult women and Elderly women >65 yrs	R569,76	R579,25	R603,44	R 24,19	R 33,68	4,2%	5,9%
Very active women, Adult men and Elderly men >65 yrs	R601,14	R612,04	R636,26	R 24,22	R 35,12	4,0%	5,8%
Very active men and Pregnant & lactating women	R666,08	R682,76	R704,85	R 22,09	R 38,77	3,2%	5,8%

8. DECEMBER 2019 Household Affordability Scenarios

Number of working days in December 2019 = 19 days*

Affordability, in its simplest form, is relative to income levels and the cost of goods and services (expenses). Workers work to support their families. Workers, reasonably expect to cover the costs of goods and services needed for dignity and household functionality off their wages. In most Black South African households, only one family member works. This one wage must support, a reductive average of **3,9 persons in December 2019**. The baseline wages remunerated to most Black South African workers are very low. Divided by 4 persons, the wage becomes a poverty wage. The National Minimum Wage, coming into effect on 1st January 2019, set at R20 an hour for general workers, R18 for farmworkers and R15 for domestic workers is not going to be enough to change the low-wage trajectory.

*The introduction of a 10% reduction in the NMW via an exemption process, will make it even less likely for the NMW to change the lives of South African workers and their families. The affordability crisis faced by Black South African households will continue to deepen. **Where exemptions are granted, the R20 an hour for general workers will be reduced to R18 an hour; the R18 for farmworkers will be reduced to R16,20 an hour; and the R15 for domestic workers will be reduced to R13.50 an hour.***

The tables below provide various income scenarios for households with persons receiving a social grant and/or for workers remunerated at various wage and National Minimum Wage levels for different categories of workers, as well as for different number of days and hours worked. Because of our largely unchanged apartheid geography, the costs of transport to get to work and back home eats away at the value of the low wage, leaving very little money to secure food and other critical expenses. Prepaid electricity costs also are a major household expense. Both services have increased markedly, with Pietermaritzburg electricity costs increasing by 13,07% in July 2019 and water by 9,6% in July 2019. Taxi fares increased by ±7,7% in August 2019. By subtracting transport to work and electricity costs, we are then able to see the money remaining to secure other essential goods and services costs [highlighted in tables as *money remaining to secure all other expenses*].

Households do not prioritise paying for food first out of the remaining goods and services which households need to secure. However we include food costs in the calculations because all other critical expenses, some of which households deem non-negotiable like debt servicing, scholar transport and education and burial insurances, and other important expenses like those of household domestic and personal hygiene products all compete viciously for the money remaining in the household purse. The last row in the tables highlights the *minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs*: **it is this figure which shows the extent of the shortfall in wages because in most of the scenarios shown in the tables below, workers and their families do not earn enough money to secure enough nutritious food to eat, let alone all the other critical expenses which we have excluded from our calculations.** The percentages shown as *minimum food shortfall* mean that households will be spending far less on food because other expenses must also be paid out of this remaining money. If households are not able to secure even food out of the money remaining than it is a stark indication of the deficiencies in low baseline wages and grants.

The data in the tables are derived from the latest available Pietermaritzburg-based costs for expenses, relevant as at December 2019.

**Note that 19 working days is probably a best case scenario - many workers will not work the full month or will work fewer days than normal with the partial or full closure of agriculture, businesses and industries, and reduction of work days of domestic work over the festive season, which can extend mid-way into January 2020.*

9. National Minimum Wage Scenarios

General Workers (all, excluding NMW defined workers)

Both scenario tables below calculate transport to work on 2 taxi fare, return (R14x4). The electricity charge is based on Msunduzi Municipality's prepaid tariffs (R1,71005 per kWh). The first table provides scenarios for the NMW at R20 an hour and the second table provides scenarios for the NMW at the 10% exemption rate at R18 an hour.

General Workers: at NMW

R20 an hour

Income	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Number of days worked	19	15	15
Number of hours worked	8	8	5
Remuneration rate	R20,00	R20,00	R20,00
Wage income	R3 040,00	R2 400,00	R1 500,00

	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Wage income	R3 040,00	R2 400,00	R1 500,00
Household expenses	% of wage	% of wage	% of wage
Transport to work (2 taxi, return)	R1 064,00 35,0%	R840,00 35,0%	R840,00 56,0%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R598,52 19,7%	R598,52 24,9%	R598,52 39,9%
Total for transport + electricity	R1 662,52 54,7%	R1 438,52 59,9%	R1 438,52 95,9%
Money remaining to secure all other expenses	R1 377,48	R961,48	R61,48
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R2 460,48	R2 460,48	R2 460,48
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R1 083,00 -44,0%	-R1 499,00 -60,9%	-R2 399,00 -97,5%

General Workers: at NMW exemption rate of 10%

R18 an hour

Income	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Number of days worked	19	15	15
Number of hours worked	8	8	5
Remuneration rate	R18,00	R18,00	R18,00
Wage income	R2 736,00	R2 160,00	R1 350,00

	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Wage income	R2 736,00	R2 160,00	R1 350,00
Household expenses	% of wage	% of wage	% of wage
Transport to work (2 taxis, return)	R1 064,00 38,9%	R840,00 38,9%	R840,00 62,2%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R598,52 21,9%	R598,52 27,7%	R598,52 44,3%
Total for transport + electricity	R1 662,52 60,8%	R1 438,52 66,6%	R1 438,52 106,6%
Money remaining to secure all other expenses	R1 073,48	R721,48	-R88,52
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R2 460,48	R2 460,48	R2 460,48
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R1 387,00 -56,4%	-R1 739,00 -70,7%	-R2 549,00 -103,6%

Farmworkers

Both scenario tables below exclude transport to work costs but include 'other' transport costs which farmworkers will have to pay for to access supermarkets and public health care services. The electricity charge is based on Umngeni Municipality's prepaid tariffs (R1,49169 per kWh). The food costs may be more than reflected as farmworkers will buy more food in local towns and from local suppliers, which will be more expensive than those prices tracked in Pietermaritzburg. The first table provides scenarios for the NMW at R18 an hour and the second table provides

Farmworkers: at NMW

R18 an hour

Income	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Number of days worked	19	15	15
Number of hours worked	9	9	5
Remuneration rate	R18,00	R18,00	R18,00
Wage income	R3 078,00	R2 430,00	R1 350,00

	Wage scenario 1		Wage scenario 2		Wage scenario 3	
Wage income	R3 078,00		R2 430,00		R1 350,00	
Household expenses		% of wage		% of wage		% of wage
Transport other	R265,00	8,6%	R265,00	10,9%	R265,00	19,6%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R522,09	17,0%	R522,09	21,5%	R522,09	38,7%
Total for transport + electricity	R787,09	25,6%	R787,09	32,4%	R787,09	58,3%
<i>Money remaining to secure all other expenses</i>	R2 290,91		R1 642,91		R562,91	
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R2 460,48		R2 460,48		R2 460,48	
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R169,57	-6,9%	-R817,57	-33,2%	-R1 897,57	-77,1%

Farmworkers: at NMW exemption rate of 10%

R16,20 an hour

Income	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Number of days worked	19	15	15
Number of hours worked	9	9	5
Remuneration rate	R16,20	R16,20	R16,20
Wage income	R2 770,20	R2 187,00	R1 215,00

	Wage scenario 1		Wage scenario 2		Wage scenario 3	
Wage income	R2 770,20		R2 187,00		R1 215,00	
Household expenses		% of wage		% of wage		% of wage
Transport other	R265,00	9,6%	R265,00	12,1%	R265,00	21,8%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R522,09	18,8%	R522,09	23,9%	R522,09	43,0%
Total for transport + electricity	R787,09	28,4%	R787,09	36,0%	R787,09	64,8%
<i>Money remaining to secure all other expenses</i>	R1 983,11		R1 399,91		R427,91	
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R2 460,48		R2 460,48		R2 460,48	
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R477,37	-19,4%	-R1 060,57	-43,1%	-R2 032,57	-82,6%

Domestic workers

Both scenario tables below calculate transport to work on 2 taxi fares, return (R14x4). The electricity charge is based on Msunduzi Municipality's prepaid tariffs (R1,71005 per kWh). The first table provides scenarios for the NMW at R15 an hour and the second table provides scenarios for the NMW at the 10% exemption rate at R13,50 an hour.

Domestic workers: at NMW

R15 an hour

Income	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Number of days worked	19	15	15
Number of hours worked	8	8	5
Remuneration rate	R15,00	R15,00	R15,00
Wage income	R2 280,00	R1 800,00	R1 125,00

	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Wage income	R2 280,00	R1 800,00	R1 125,00
Household expenses	% of wage	% of wage	% of wage
Transport to work (2 taxi, return)	R1 064,00 46,7%	R840,00 46,7%	R840,00 74,7%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R598,52 26,3%	R598,52 33,3%	R598,52 53,2%
Total for transport + electricity	R1 662,52 72,9%	R1 438,52 79,9%	R1 438,52 127,9%
Money remaining to secure all other expenses	R617,48	R361,48	-R313,52
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R2 460,48	R2 460,48	R2 460,48
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R1 843,00 -74,9%	-R2 099,00 -85,3%	-R2 774,00 -112,7%

Domestic workers: at NMW exemption rate of 10%

R13,50 an hour

Income	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Number of days worked	19	15	15
Number of hours worked	8	8	5
Remuneration rate	R13,50	R13,50	R13,50
Wage income	R2 052,00	R1 620,00	R1 012,50

	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Wage income	R2 052,00	R1 620,00	R1 012,50
Household expenses	% of wage	% of wage	% of wage
Transport to work (2 taxis, return)	R1 064,00 51,9%	R840,00 51,9%	R840,00 83,0%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R598,52 29,2%	R598,52 36,9%	R598,52 59,1%
Total for transport + electricity	R1 662,52 81,0%	R1 438,52 88,8%	R1 438,52 142,1%
Money remaining to secure all other expenses	R389,48	R181,48	-R426,02
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R2 460,48	R2 460,48	R2 460,48
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R2 071,00 -84,2%	-R2 279,00 -92,6%	-R2 886,50 -117,3%

10. Social Grant Scenarios

Pensioners and mothers caring for children

The first scenario includes a household receiving an old-age grant (R1 780) and two child support grants (R430x2); and the second scenario includes just an old-age grant. Under expenses we have included burial insurance and transport costs to town to collect grant monies, shop and access public health care services.

	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2
	1 OAG + 2 CSGs	1 OAG
Wage income	R2 640,00	R1 780,00
Household expenses	% of wage	% of wage
Burial insurance	R275,00 10,4%	R275,00 15,4%
Transport other	R154,00 5,8%	R154,00 8,7%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R598,52 22,7%	R598,52 33,6%
Total for insurance + transport + electricity	R1 027,52 38,9%	R1 027,52 57,7%
Money remaining to secure all other expenses	R1 612,48	R752,48
Subtract: food costs (4 persons)	R2 460,48	R2 460,48
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R848,00 -34,5%	-R1 708,00 -69,4%

11. Other Wage Scenarios

For households with a worker who is paid at the median wage for Black South Africans, or a higher rate than the NMW, or for households with more than one worker, or for households with multiple income streams

	Wage scenario 1		Wage scenario 2		Wage scenario 3	
Wage income	R3 000,00		R3 500,00		R4 500,00	
Household expenses		% of wage		% of wage		% of wage
Transport to work (2 taxi, return)	R1 064,00	35,5%	R1 064,00	30,4%	R1 064,00	23,6%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R598,52	20,0%	R598,52	17,1%	R598,52	13,3%
Total for transport + electricity	R1 662,52	55,4%	R1 662,52	47,5%	R1 662,52	36,9%
<i>Money remaining to secure all other expenses</i>	R1 337,48		R1 837,48		R2 837,48	
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R2 460,48		R2 460,48		R2 460,48	
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R1 123,00	-45,6%	-R623,00	-25,3%	R377,00	15,3%

	Wage scenario 4		Wage scenario 5		Wage scenario 6	
Wage income	R6 000,00		R8 000,00		R12 500,00	
Household expenses		% of wage		% of wage		% of wage
Transport to work (2 taxi, return)	R1 064,00	17,7%	R1 064,00	13,3%	R1 064,00	8,5%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R598,52	10,0%	R598,52	7,5%	R598,52	4,8%
Total for transport + electricity	R1 662,52	27,7%	R1 662,52	20,8%	R1 662,52	13,3%
<i>Money remaining to secure all other expenses</i>	R4 337,48		R6 337,48		R10 837,48	
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R2 460,48		R2 460,48		R2 460,48	
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	R1 877,00	76,3%	R3 877,00	157,6%	R8 377,00	340,5%

12. DECEMBER 2019 Expenses for Households Living on Low incomes

The scenarios in the previous pages used a few limited expenses (transport, electricity and food) to show the deficiencies in low baseline wages and social grants. In the NMW and Social Grant scenarios most households could not secure food whilst also securing the typically non-negotiable expenses of transport and electricity. However, the affordability crisis facing households is worse than reflected in the NMW and Social Grant scenarios because households require a myriad of other goods and services to live at a dignified level. It means that if there is a shortfall on food costs, then for sure the money available to be spent on food will be much lower than reflected in the scenario tables as all other expenses have to compete with the remaining money after transport to work and prepaid electricity tokens have been paid, and only some of this money will be allocated to secure food.

Women living on low incomes have told us that expenses are relative to the needs and dreams of individual families, viz. families have different priorities on how they spend their money. However, women agreed that there are a number of expenses which are typically common to most families living on low incomes. Here women identified and prioritised what they said were typical non-negotiable expenses, these include: transport (to work, for scholar transport to school, to go to town to shop, and to access public health care services), electricity (to cook food, keep the lights on, keep warm and for security), education for children (so children can have a brighter future than their parents experienced), burial insurance (so that at least in death there can be a semblance of dignity) and the repayment of debt because households cannot get through the month on the level of income coming into the home and so servicing debt is critical to secure credit going forward. After these expenses, there are a myriad of other essential expenses which households must cover, not least of all food and domestic and personal hygiene products.

Below we provide several Pietermaritzburg-based costs of a range of goods and services expenses which households on low incomes may typically be expected to cover. The cost data is not complete and excludes many potential expenses. Its purpose is however to provide a sense of what some important household expenses cost in Pietermaritzburg for households living on low incomes and further provides insight into what level of income households living on low incomes may require to live at a basic level of dignity.

The table below provides a picture of what a more extensive expense list may look like and cost for a family of four (4) members living on a low income in Pietermaritzburg for **December 2019**.

Several typical household expenses	For	Cost
Burial insurance	Family	R275,00
Transport to work (2 taxi, return)	1 Adult	R1 064,00
Transport to shops and to access public health services	Family	R154,00
Transport to school (omalume)*	1 Child	R0,00
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)**	Family	R598,52
Debt servicing on food (minimum)	Family	R300,00
School fees (reasonable quality primary school)*	1 Child	R0,00
Water (flat rate, unmetered households)	Family	R131,58
Food	Family	R2 460,48
Domestic and personal hygiene products	Family	R654,00
Airtime	Family	R300,00
'Savings' into stokvels/mholiswano, stamps etc.	Family	R200,00
Total for typical expenses***		R6 137,58

The tally of the cost of some typical monthly household expenses which households living on low incomes reasonably expect to cover is **R6 137,58 in December 2019**. It is clear that on low wages and low grants, these expense costs are well beyond the affordability capacity of most households living on low incomes. Households cut back on food (one of the few expenses we have some level of control over) and take on debt to cover expense shortfalls.

**December and January incur atypical education costs of buying school uniforms, shoes, stationery and other learning resources. These costs are not included in the above table but incur a substantial expense to households, who have to find an additional ± R1000-R2000 to cover these mostly non-negotiable costs.*

***Electricity blackouts or loadshedding incur additional costs for households.*

**** Note that the calculations for December are not particularly reflective of the financial burden faced by South African families at this time. December brings with it the need for additional finances to cover rest and visits with and from extended family and for church, as well as to provide children with some sort of festive spirit viz. addition money for transport, food & clothing.*

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