

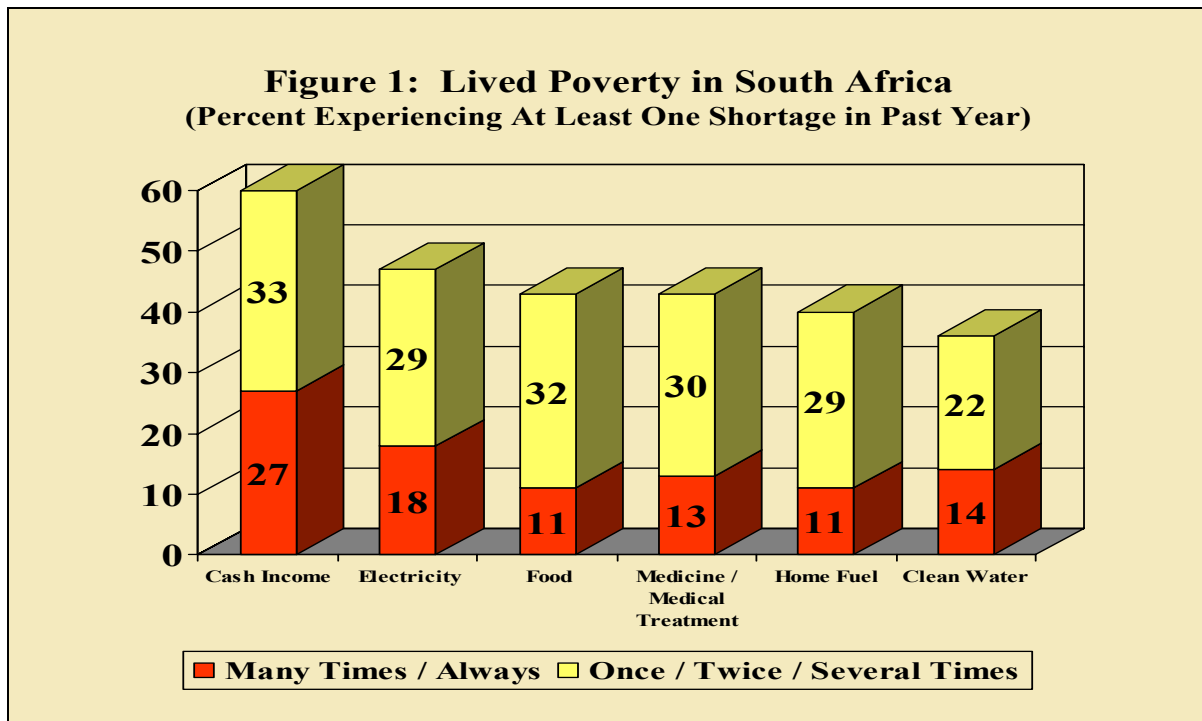


Lived Poverty in South Africa

Despite ten years of massive investment in development infrastructure, many South Africans continue to experience daily poverty. In fact, the proportions of South Africans who experience regular shortages of basic necessities do not appear to have decreased over the past four years.

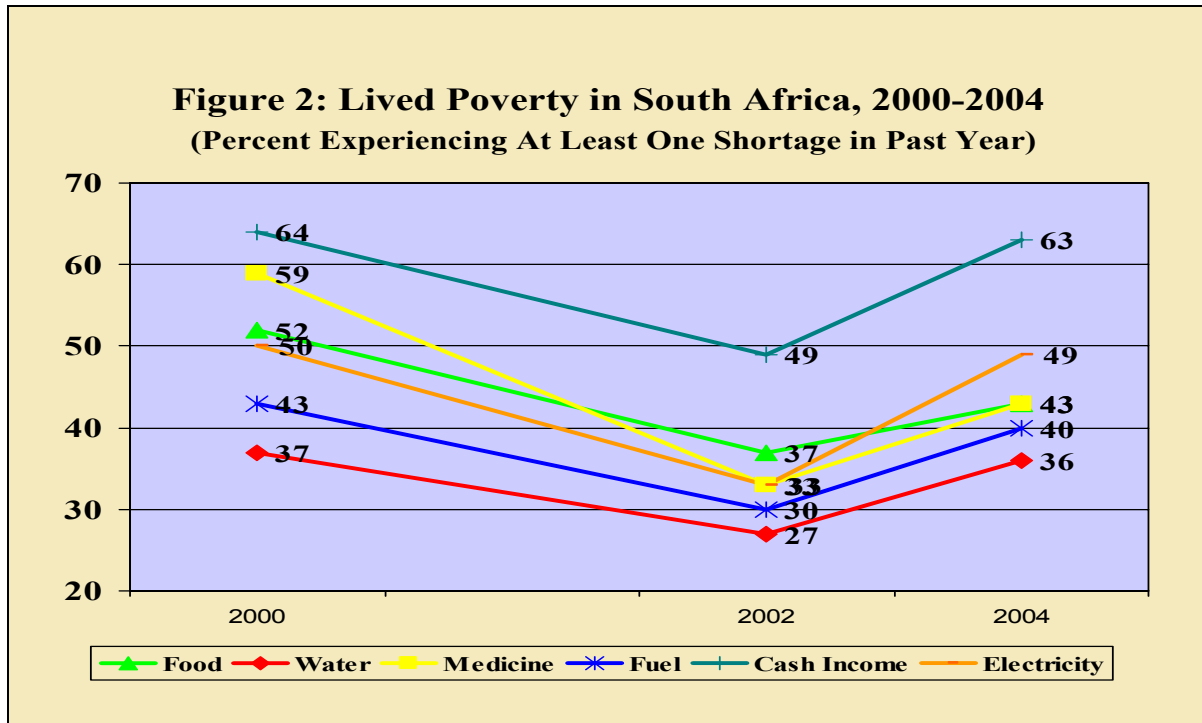
This is one of the many important findings revealed by the most recent Afrobarometer survey conducted in South Africa in October / November 2004. Specifically:

- Forty three percent of all South Africans, 18 years and older, told Afrobarometer interviewers that they “went without” food at least once in the past year.
- And one third (36 percent), say they went without clean water.
- The percentages that experienced at least periodic shortages of other basic necessities were as follows: fuel for cooking or home heating (40 percent), medicine or medical treatment (43 percent), electricity (45 percent), and a cash income (60 percent).

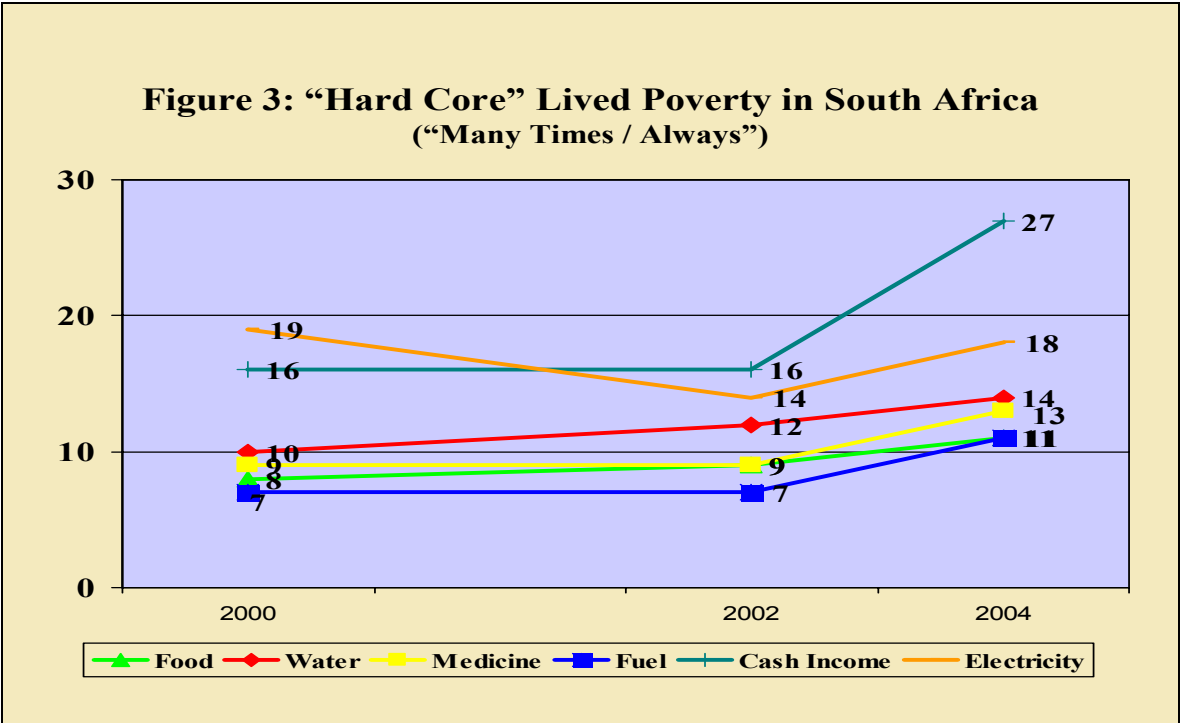


While the Afrobarometer survey of 2002 had registered sharp decreases in various dimensions of lived poverty since 2000 (possibly reflecting the increasing scope of the government’s reconstruction and development efforts), the 2004 survey finds that experienced shortages have returned to practically the same levels as those measured in 2000. This could possibly reflect the

fact that while more South Africans have access to government services and infrastructure, continuing high levels of unemployment deny them the cash necessary to secure regular, uninterrupted delivery of services such as water and electricity.



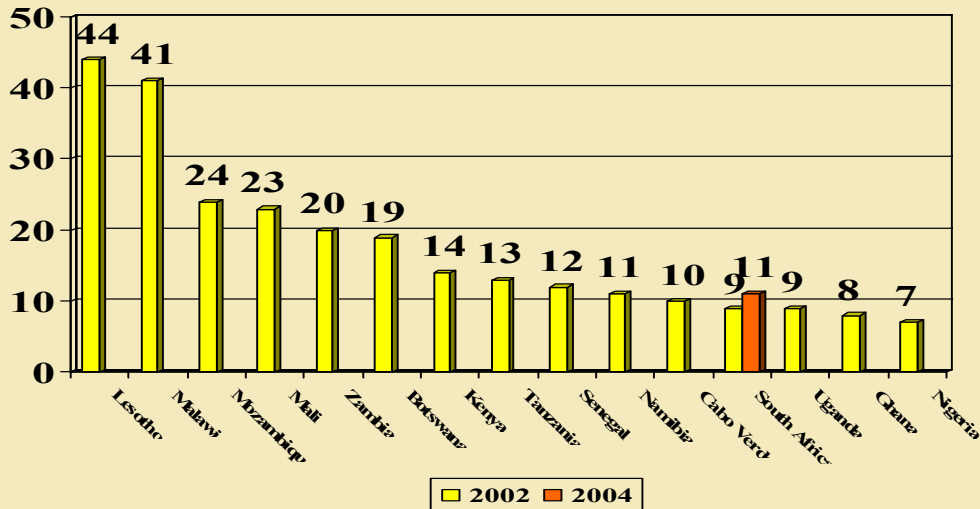
We now shift our focus to society’s most destitute, i.e., those who *regularly* go without basic necessities (i.e., experiencing shortages “many times” or “always”). We find that levels of “hard core” destitution, or lived poverty, have remained relatively constant since 2000. The sole exception is cash income, which regularly eluded at least one quarter of the sample in 2004, a significant jump over previous readings in 2000 and 2002. This may be a reflection of increasing levels of long-term and periodic unemployment, as well as the erosion of alternative sources of income such as remittances. This may be the prime factor lying behind people’s inability to secure other resources.



When set against a broader comparative perspective, we can see that destitution, or “hard core” lived poverty, is generally lower in South Africa than in many other – but not all – African countries where Afrobarometer surveys are conducted.

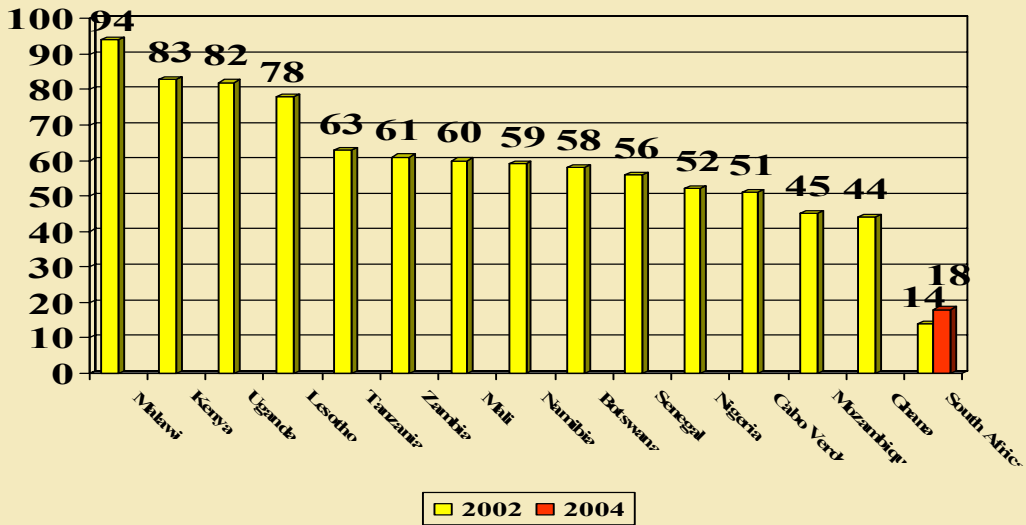
For example, just about one in ten South Africans (11 percent) say they *regularly* (“many times” or “always”) faced food shortages last year. In contrast, in 2002-2003 surveys, publics in Mozambique (24 percent), Mali (23 percent) and Zambia (20 percent) experienced food shortages at about twice that rate. And four in ten Basotho (44 percent) and Malawians (41 percent) regularly went without food in the same period. Yet given the margin of sampling error, the frequency with which South Africans endure regular food shortages is statistically the same as levels measured in Nigeria (7 percent), Uganda (9 percent), Ghana (8 percent), Cape Verde (10 percent) and Namibia (11 percent).

Figure 4: “Hard Core” Lived Poverty Across Africa (Food)

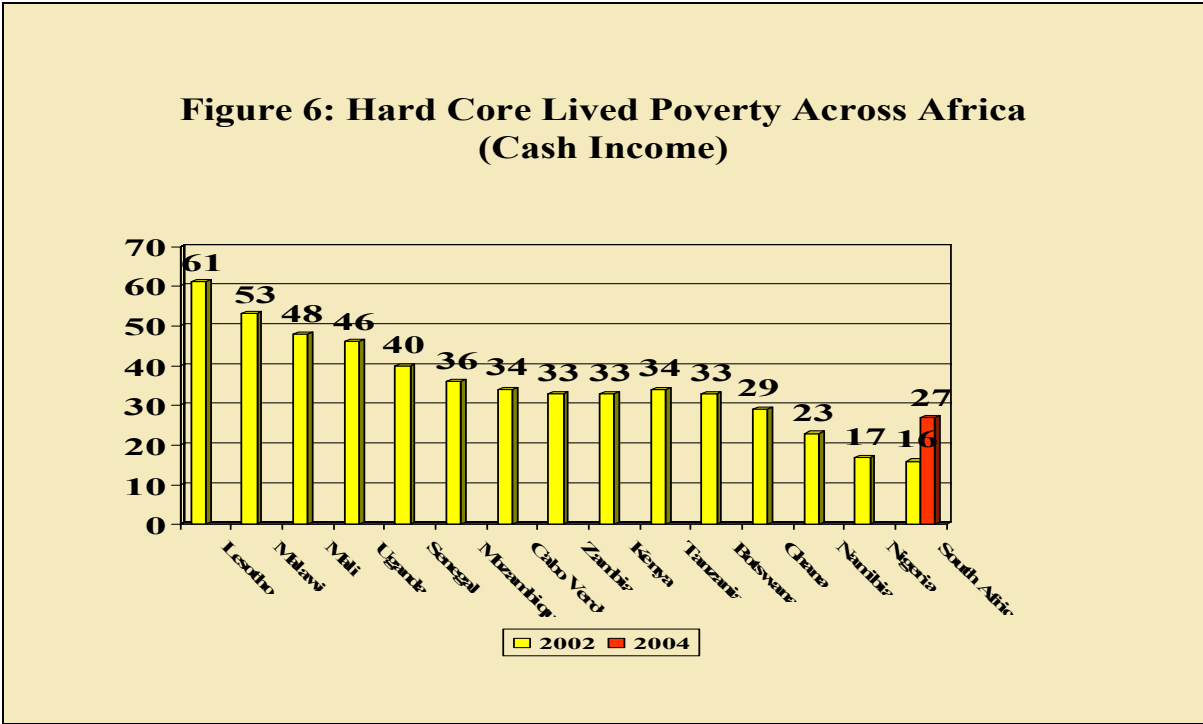


However, South Africans are far more likely to enjoy the benefits of electrification than any other Africans. While it is a concern that one in five adult South Africans still say they *regularly* went without electricity in 2004, the comparable figure in every other Afrobarometer survey in 2002-2003 was at least 40 percent. And at least three quarters of the adult public regularly went without electricity in Lesotho (78 percent), Uganda (82 percent), Kenya (83 percent) and Malawi (94 percent).

Figure 5: Hard Core Lived Poverty Across Africa (Electricity)

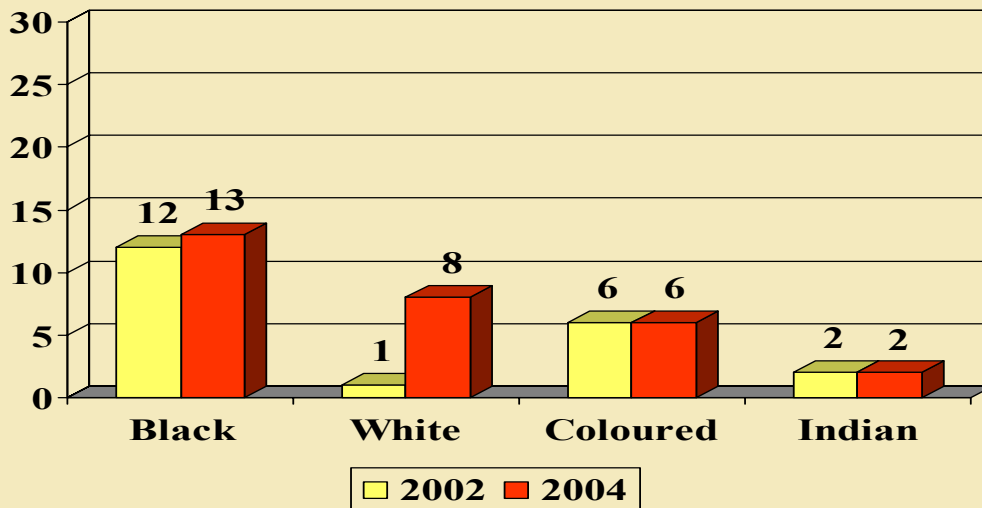


Within South Africa, black citizens still face the highest levels of lived poverty. For example, 13 percent reported frequent shortages of food in 2004, compared to 6 percent of coloured and 2 percent of Indian respondents. However, the 2004 Afrobarometer survey may have detected a sharp rise in experienced food and other shortages amongst white South Africans (from 1 to 8 percent in this case). While this may be an early indicator of the changing opportunity structures in post-apartheid South Africa, it should be clearly noted that the difference between the results of the two surveys is not larger than their respective margins of sampling error, given the smaller sample size of this sub-group.



Finally, a person’s residential location seems to have as large an impact in shaping experienced shortages as race. For example, across four largely black provinces, those living in Mpumalanga (21 percent) and Northwest (20 percent) report going without sufficient food at more than twice the rate of Free State (8 percent) and KwaZulu/Natal (5 percent).

Figure 7: “Hard Core” Lived Poverty in South Africa (Food)



About the Survey: Face to face interviews were conducted in the eleven official languages with 2400 respondents across all nine provinces in October / November 2004. Data was collected from the smallest geographic units, Enumeration Areas (EA's), using the South Africa census data for 2001. All EA's across the country were stratified by province, population group and type of area; 600 EA's were randomly selected with the probability proportionate to its size in the overall population. This ensures that every eligible adult has an equal and know chance of being selected. Four interviews were randomly conducted in each EA generating an overall sample size of 2,400 which is sufficient to yield a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percent at a confidence level of 95 percent. Fieldwork for this survey was conducted by AC Nielsen, South Africa.

The **Afrobarometer** is produced collaboratively by social scientists from 18 African countries. Coordination is provided by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa), the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) and Michigan State University. Several donors support the Afrobarometer's research, capacity-building and outreach activities, including the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the U.S. Agency for International Development. For more information, see: www.afrobarometer.org