

'Social grants are SA's soup kitchen'

Four out of every 10 South African households rely on social grants as their only source of income



This is one of the grim revelations of the 2012 General Household Survey by Statistics SA released in Pretoria on Thursday (21 August). It showed that social and economic problems still affect the country where, in the past 10 years the percentage of South Africans dependent on grants more than doubled, rising to 29.6% last year.

While the government's social welfare strategy is often praised for shielding poor families from poverty, the high number of social grants is considered one of the threats to the economy that is growing at a dangerously slow pace.

Deputy director-general of population and statistics Kefiloe Masiteng warned that if the number of households dependent on social grants increases, it will not be sustainable [financially] for the country.

Economist Chris Hart said: "It [the social grant system] is effectively South Africa's soup kitchen where we are trying to make soup with fewer and fewer soup-makers and we are not looking at ways to get people out of the queue and into the kitchen to make their own soup."

Source: Sowetan via I-Net Bridge

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