

Implementing Pro-Poor Policies for Poverty Alleviation: The Case of the White Paper on Families in South Africa

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Abstract : The role of the government to tangibly alleviate poverty, improve and sustain the quality of people's lives remains a "work in progress" twenty-two years after the dawn of democracy in South Africa despite a host of socio-economic programs and pro-poor policies and legislations. This paper assesses the development process and the implementation of the White Paper on Families in South Africa as one of the pro-poor policies intended to curb poverty and redress the imbalances of the apartheid regime. The paper is the result of a qualitative implementation research theory facilitated through in-depth interviews with social work managers complemented by literature and policy review techniques. It investigates the level of basic knowledge and understanding as well as the implementation challenges of the White Paper on Families as causes of its failure. The paper emphasizes the importance of the family-centered approach in the implementation of pro-poor policies. To facilitate the understanding of the White Paper on Families by its users, the Department of Social Development needs take stock of the identified challenges of its implementation so as to facilitate its success in fostering positive family well-being that will directly contribute to the overall socio-economic development of South Africa.

Keywords : poverty alleviation, pro-poor policy, social development, social welfare, South Africa

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