

Basic services helping the poor says Stats SA

Basic services offered to the people of South Africa have had an impact on poverty, says Statistics South Africa (Stats SA).



Statistician-General Pali Lehohla says that free basic services to the indigent households have helped to reduce poverty in certain areas of South Africa. Image: Statistics SA

Releasing the non-financial census of municipalities 2013 results, Statistician General Pali Lehohla said the services rendered by municipalities have reduced poverty.

"This cocktail of services has actually reduced poverty and had a major impact on the poverty index," he said.

The report focuses on basic services namely: water, electricity, sewerage and sanitation as well as solid waste management in the 278 municipalities across the country.

The report showed that 11.8m basic water services were provided to households with 5.3m households receiving free basic services (FBS).

"In terms of water service we actually see that the FBS declined but has now started increasing again. They are not at the levels of 2009 but have started to increase," said

Lehohla.

Of the 11.8m households with basic service for water, 2.5 million benefitted from indigent support which is defined as any households - including child-headed households - earning a combined gross income which qualifies for rebates or a services subsidy. The amount is determined by individual municipalities.

Free basic services for indigent households

The FBS policy which is targeted at indigent households - provides 6kl of free water per household per month as well as 50kwh of electricity and R50 for for sewage and sanitation along with a further R50 for solid waste management.

For electricity, 5.2m households received basic electricity service in 2013. The data showed that 3.4m registered indigent households that got free electricity.

When coming to sewerage and sanitation services, 10,0m households nationally received basic sewerage and sanitation services.

In the Free State, R504m in municipal revenue was collected for sewerage and sanitation charges while R77.4m was spent on capital projects to improve sanitation infrastructure in the province.

With regard to solid waste management, 8.4m households nationally received basic solid waste management services and just under 62.3% of indigent households benefitted from indigent support for solid waste management.

According to the report 3.4m of indigent households were registered with municipalities across the country.

Across time the number of those who would have been indigent or poor has dropped from 57 out of 100 to 46 between the period 2006 and 2011.



Free services of water and electricity have had a direct benefit of the lives of millions of households in South Africa. Image: [Africa Check](#)

Basic services by municipality continues to gradually improve with access to electricity increasing by 2.3% and basic water services rising to 3.3%

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