

Poverty Stoplight Office, South Africa

What's it all about

The Poverty Stoplight Office has been set up in South Africa in response to a demand to provide a platform and service that will support the use of the Poverty Stoplight approach (methodology and metric).

The ultimate aim of the PS Office is to assist in improving the impact and success rates of organisations delivering social impacts through poverty-related programmes, enterprise development initiatives and upliftment and empowerment community-based projects.



poverty stoplight

Structure

In 2014, The Clothing Bank customised and localised this Paraguayan-based tool for a South African context and integrated the approach into their development cycle. They built a new change framework that has informed the organisation on the way forward, with much success. The Clothing Bank is wholly committed to this approach and is now keen to share their experience with other non-profits, social enterprises and interested parties in order to transfer knowledge and replicate success across South Africa.

In November 2016, the PS Office was spun off as a separate legal entity and now runs as an independent, non-profit company (NPC), in collaboration with the founders, Fundación Paraguaya. We are currently registering for NPO and PBO status.

The PS Office has been funded by two progressive foundations, DG Murray Trust and The Saville Foundation, who are actively participating in this initiative.



Ambition

It is our ambition to:

- Raise interest and awareness within organisations about the importance of the poor being engaged in their own upliftment and to participate and own their journeys out of poverty.
- To provide a platform to equip and enable the adoption of a new approach that reflects this philosophy – the Poverty Stoplight approach – used to measure aspects of multi-dimensional poverty in families and provide clear definitions of non-poverty within a common set of indicators, against which organisations can measure their objectives and share learnings.
- Catalyse a paradigm shift - poverty can be eliminated with an integral, and not solely quantitative, approach.

Service Offering

The PS Office will provide the following access and service:

- Access to the Poverty Stoplight survey tool and upgrades, as developed and localised for the South African context
- Induction training on the PS tool and metrics
- Access to a database of facilitators trained to work with the PS survey tool
- Access to the online technology platform as provided by HP (VSP software)
- Access to the SA Poverty Stoplight website

- A Poverty Stoplight Forum that will meet monthly to discuss learnings, impacts and questions
- Access to the Referral Pathway Network
- Access to the Global Poverty Stoplight Network

Benefits

The benefits of the PS Office and Forum include:

- A collaboration space for organisations working to eradicate poverty in South Africa
- Enabling organisations to measure outcomes against a common framework
- Aggregation of data which offers a better perspective of the real issues at hand
- The more policy-relevant information there is available on poverty, the better equipped policy-makers will be to reduce it
- Referral pathways that will ultimately inform stakeholders of priority areas for engagement
- The establishment of a community of practice
- Enabling organisations to collectively engage in the evolution of a tool that is gaining traction in Africa

Commitment

The PS Office is committed to being:

- Enabling and Catalytic
- Pro-choice, i.e. non-judgemental of the end clients' choices (the beneficiaries we all serve)
- Unbiased to and independent of Members' programmes
- Transparent and driven by value-add
- An advocate for the role of the poor in taking control of their own lives

Theory of Change

The TOC below explains how organisations (direct actors) will change as a result of the Poverty Stoplight Office and Forum, and *NOT* how the beneficiaries will change (indirect actors). More info on the latter is available on request.



- Organisation conducts survey and is seen to be engaging differently with beneficiaries, encouraging line of sight to their own poverty-diagnosis
- This engagement leads to heightened awareness of role played in poverty for beneficiaries and increased trust in the organisation
- Organisation has access to family data for all poverty dimensions, providing organisation with knowledge and confidence on how to progress further with appropriate programmes and validate current programmes (priority areas for engagement)
- Organisation is able to target areas where programmes can be re-designed and implemented for maximum impact and where referral pathways need to be executed if competencies don't exist internally
- Changes in beneficiaries' circumstance are closely monitored, including the success of mentoring/coaching activities that enable family to move from "red to green", which validates programme activities
- Positive progress is evaluated and corroborated through physical evidence, and celebrated, which motivates both organisation and beneficiary to continue with programme and deepens trust bond
- Impact of moving beneficiaries from "red to green" for target dimensions and indicators validates the organisations objectives, increasing confidence in reason for existence and ability to make impact
- Assistance in moving beneficiaries from "red to green" for other dimensions and indicators, where organisation lacks competencies, increases levels of collaboration and learning with other organisations

Note: The desire is not to replace existing M&E methodologies but to add a strong complementary approach that is backed up by the experience and excellent history of success from existing users of this approach.

Membership

Membership is based on:

- Organisation must have the goal or intent to assist families to eradicate poverty on at least one dimension
- Signing a Collaboration Agreement with Fundación Paraguaya for adoption of the Poverty Stoplight methodology
- Signing a Membership Agreement (MoU) with the PS Office and compliance with policies and procedures
- Annual payment of membership fees and related survey fees (if applicable)
- Sharing of data with other members

Organisations can join as an implementation member or a support member.

There is a nominal annual membership fee and a per survey fee, depending on whether the organisation has non-profit or for-profit status. More information is available on request.

Contact details

For more information and to sign up as a Member of The Poverty Stoplight Movement, contact:

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