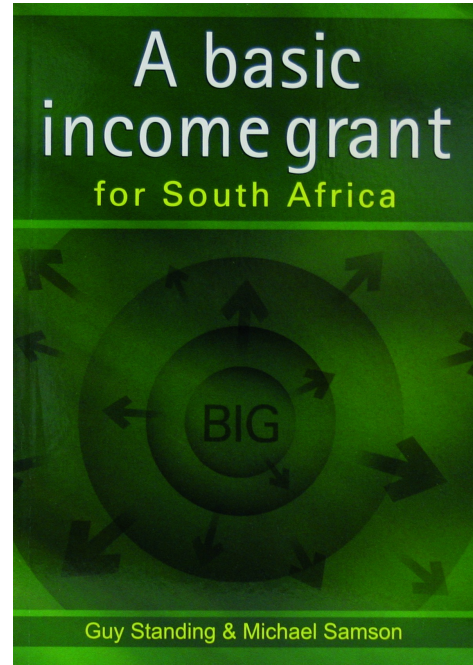


A Basic Income Grant for South Africa

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About this Publication:

This book provides a critical analysis of the feasibility and impact of a universal basic income grant for South Africans. The authors assess how comprehensive social security reform, including a universal grant, will impact on the severe inequality in the country and promote economic growth and employment. Their research reveals that it is affordable, and they argue that it would reduce the criminality that is associated with poverty and inequality. The implications for women and children and for the black majority would be considerable.

At the Presidential Jobs Summit in 1998 COSATU negotiated an agreement with the government to investigate a universal social grant for all South Africans – the Basic Income Grant.

Government policy-makers, civil society stakeholders and South African and international thinkers recognised the merit of addressing the problem of poverty directly and efficiently.

In March 2002 the South African government's Committee of Inquiry into Comprehensive Social Security completed its evaluation of policy options for addressing the severe levels of poverty afflicting the country. Accepting the findings of research commissioned from the Economic Policy Research Institute, the Committee's report stated that 'the Basic Income Grant has the potential, more than any other possible social protection intervention, to reduce poverty and promote human development and sustainable livelihoods'.

Contents Include:

- Preface
- Introduction
- The macro-economic implications of poverty-reducing transfers
- The benefits of a basic income grant in South Africa
- Welfare in Wonderland? The politics of a basic income grant in South Africa
- The South African solidarity grant
- A universal income grant scheme for South Africa
- Mobilising a coalition for a basic income grant in South Africa
- Basic income: a trade union perspective

Of Interest and Benefit to:

Academics, researchers and students studying development studies, political science and African studies; policy- and decision-makers in government, especially those responsible for social security; development agencies; and civil society organisations concerned with poverty and poverty alleviation.

This book provides an accessible collection of the current research on the issue, with chapters by both proponents and critics of the Basic Income Grant. Some of the issues discussed include:

- How can the grant be financed?
- In what ways will the grant promote job creation, economic growth and social development?
- And will the government demonstrate the political will to implement what is likely to be the single most effective policy for reducing poverty and eradicating destitution
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