

Reverse Empowerment in Post South Africa's Anti-poverty Strategy

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this paper is to report the results of a study centred on the concept of “reverse empowerment” in the context of state policy and planning. South Africa’s Anti-Poverty Strategy (APS) is analysed in terms of specific indicators to identify evidence that the APS provides empowerment opportunities for the poor. A ground survey of individual sites provided information for comparison with the documentary analysis of the APS itself. Results indicate a mismatch between the strategy and the actual programme delivery, too many poverty programmes with no central governance, problems of management coordination, failure to integrate the APS into the integrated development planning and, the vagueness of the strategy in situating the poor at the centre of the intervention. The relevance of the APS is questioned and, the findings indicate government policy failure in focusing on those input factors likely to have the greatest impact.