

# Monitoring the Performance of the South African Labour Market

An overview of the Domestic Work Sector from Quarter 2 of 2008 to Quarter 2 of 2011

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# Overview of the Domestic Work Sector in South Africa

The domestic work sector is a large sector of employment in South Africa dominated by African women and often characterised by migrant work. The growth of the sector is a result of both by supply and demand factors. With increased feminisation of the South African labour force, challenges of balancing working life and family life in urban areas contribute to demand for domestic workers. On the supply side, rural poverty, gender discrimination in the labour market as well as limited employment opportunities in general in rural communities and countries of origin ensure a continuous supply of workers into the sector.

The domestic work sector lacks organisation due to dispersion and isolation of workers. In the absence of labour unions, the sector has historically been vulnerable to regulatory neglect. Even now, with the sector regulated in terms of Sectoral Determination 7, enforcement is difficult. The sector is sometimes implanted within socio-cultural structures, which potentially makes it difficult for employers to see themselves as such. Moreover, issues of gender, class and ethnicity come into play, heightening the weak bargaining power of domestic workers. The informality of the employment relationship

between the employer and employed often leaves the latter open to exploitation.

There is perception that domestic workers often work long hours, are poorly remunerated, and have little access to social protection. Their isolation and vulnerability as workers is made more complex by their invisibility in private homes and their dependence on the goodwill of their employers. The vast majority of domestic workers come from poor households – often in rural areas – where access to education and skills development is limited, leaving them with few employment opportunities and choices.

Nonetheless, domestic work is a source of employment for many women who have had little access to education and who would, otherwise, be unlikely to find employment within the formal sector. If the sector is adequately monitored to ensure respect of fair working conditions, it has potential to make a vital contribution to poverty alleviation.

The sector attracts both workers entering the labour market for the first time as well as women who return to work after child rearing. Potentially, the economic independence

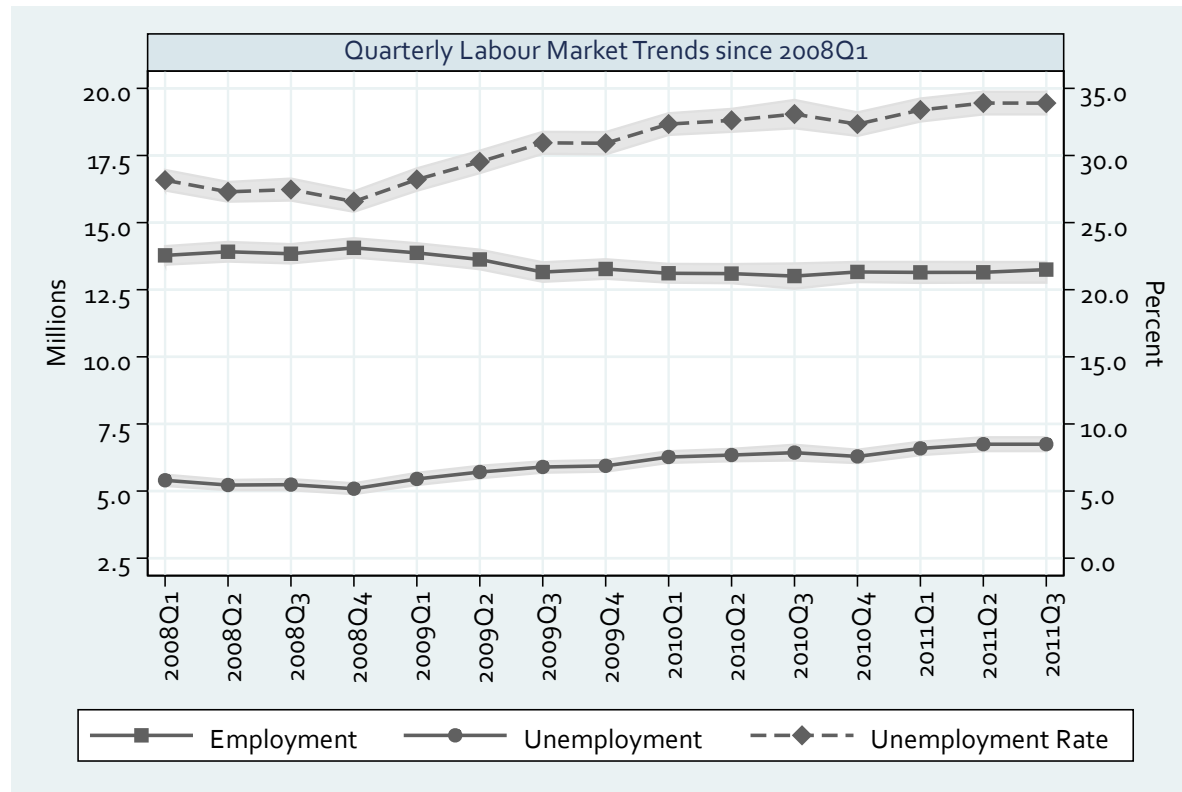
that domestic work may offer can be a source of empowerment for women.

This factsheet therefore aims to provide a brief picture of the trends and characteristics of domestic employment in South Africa. In so doing, comparisons are made with the greater non-agricultural economy to ascertain employment conditions for domestic workers within a relative context. Unfortunately, the QLFS does not have earnings information, limiting our ability to fully understand the nature of employment within the domestic work sector.

In this factsheet, domestic workers are defined to include any worker who performs domestic work in a private dwelling; a person doing gardening in a private home; a person who look after children, the aged, the sick, the frail or the disabled in a private home; or a person employed to take children of a private household to school. This definition ensures domestic work is distinctly separated from the broad 'private households' industrial classification, which includes representatives of foreign governments and non-governmental (extraterritorial) organisations.

# Recent Labour Market Trends

Figure 1: Quarterly Estimates of Labour Market Aggregates



Source: Own calculations, Statistics South Africa, various years

- Notes:
1. The expanded definition of unemployment is utilised here.
  2. Shaded bands represent the 95 percent confidence intervals around the estimates.

By mid-2010, the South African economy had emerged from the recession, recording rates of economic growth not seen since 2008Q3. Real GDP grew at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 3.4 percent in 2010Q3, rising to 3.8 percent in the following two quarters (own calculations, South African Reserve bank 2011). The recovery of economic growth means that the pre-crisis level of output of R1.82 trillion recorded in 2008Q3 was surpassed in 2010Q2. By the first quarter of 2011, real GDP (seasonally adjusted at annualised rate) was 3.2 percent higher than 2008Q3.

While output's recovery was relatively quick, the situation in the labour market remains dire. The recession was accompanied by a massive shedding of employment: from its peak of 14.1 million in 2008Q4, 900 000 jobs had been lost by 2009Q3 and a further 150 000 jobs were lost over the following year. Employment has essentially been stagnant over the past 18 months, with little movement in any direction, totalling just over 13.2 million in 2011Q3.

Unemployment – both its level and its rate – has moved upward since early 2009. Expanded unemployment reached 6.7 million in 2011Q3, up nearly 1.7 million since 2008Q4, while the unemployment rate has risen 7.3 percentage points over the same period to reach 33.9 percent.

The working age population grew by 1.6 percent annually between 2008 and 2011, while employment declined by 1.9 percent per annum over the same period. The economy therefore shed about 765 000 jobs. The labour absorption rate has fallen from 44.7 percent to 40.3 percent, suggesting that reaching pre-recession employment levels may take some time and would be attained at higher rates of unemployment given the expected future expansion of the labour force.

The recession was also accompanied by a slight contraction in the narrow labour force as substantial numbers of individuals moved into non-searching unemployment. The number of discouraged workseekers grew by more than 1.1 million (or 26.8 percent per annum) between 2008 and 2011, the bulk of which occurred from 2009 on, with expanded unemployment growing by 1.5 million. As non-searching unemployment became more common, the narrow labour force participation rate (LFPR) declined from 58.0 percent in 2008Q2 to 54.2 percent in 2011Q2, while the expanded LFPR was almost unchanged over the period. The recession created upward pressure on the unemployment rate. The expanded unemployment rate rose by 6.6 percentage points between 2008Q2 and 2011Q2, while the narrow rate rose by just 2.7 percentage points.

## A Brief Labour Market Overview

**Table 1: Labour Market Overview, 2008 Quarter 2 – 2011 Quarter 2**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Change ('08-'11)	
	Quarter 2	Quarter 2	Quarter 2	Quarter 2	Absolute	Relative
<b>Labour Market Aggregates (Thousands)</b>						
Working Age Population	31 105	31 631	32 163	32 652	1 546	1.6 *
Employment	13 913	13 627	13 099	13 148	-765	-1.9 *
Narrow Unemployment	4 140	4 171	4 401	4 538	398	3.1 *
Narrow Labour Force	18 053	17 797	17 500	17 686	-367	-0.7
Expanded Unemployment	5 223	5 708	6 340	6 745	1 522	8.9 *
Expanded Labour Force	19 136	19 335	19 439	19 893	758	1.3
Discouraged Workseekers	1 083	1 538	1 939	2 207	1 124	26.8 *
<b>Labour Force Participation Rate (Percent)</b>						
Narrow LFPR	58.0	56.3	54.4	54.2	-3.9	-2.3 *
Expanded LFPR	61.5	61.1	60.4	60.9	-0.6	-0.3
<b>Unemployment Rate (Percent)</b>						
Narrow Unemployment	22.9	23.4	25.2	25.7	2.7	3.8 *
Expanded Unemployment	27.3	29.5	32.6	33.9	6.6	7.5 *

Source: Own calculations, Statistics South Africa (2008, 2009; 2010, 2011).

Notes: 1. An asterisk denotes statistically significant changes at the 95 percent confidence level, while a dagger (†) denotes statistically significant changes at the 90 percent confidence level.

2. The working age population includes all individuals aged between 15 years and 65 years inclusive.

*‘The number of discouraged workers grew by more than 1.1 million... between 2008 and 2011, the bulk of which occurred from 2009 on...’*

# Employment Trends by Industry

**Table 2: Employment Trends by Industry, 2008 Quarter 2 – 2011 Quarter 2**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Change ('08-'11)		
	Quarter 2	Quarter 2	Quarter 2	Quarter 2	Absolute	Relative	
<b>Total Employment ('000s)</b>	<b>13 913</b>	<b>13 627</b>	<b>13 099</b>	<b>13 148</b>	<b>-765</b>	<b>-1.9</b>	<b>*</b>
Agriculture	797	720	630	599	-198	-9.1	*
Mining and quarrying	347	325	315	282	-65	-6.7	
<b>Primary Sector</b>	<b>1 142</b>	<b>1 045</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>-262</b>	<b>-8.3</b>	<b>*</b>
Manufacturing	2 007	1 925	1 713	1 737	-270	-4.7	*
Electricity, gas and water	100	98	97	93	-7	-2.4	
Construction	1 168	1 150	1 050	1 045	-123	-3.6	
<b>Secondary Sector</b>	<b>3 254</b>	<b>3 173</b>	<b>2 860</b>	<b>2 875</b>	<b>-379</b>	<b>-4.0</b>	<b>*</b>
Wholesale & retail trade	3 143	3 012	2 913	2 948	-194	-2.1	
Transport and communication	797	753	768	777	-21	-0.9	
Financial and business services	1 726	1 763	1 729	1 708	-18	-0.3	
CSP services	2 656	2 696	2 717	2 837	180	2.2	†
Private households	1 167	1 182	1 160	1 120	-47	-1.4	
<i>of which...</i>							
Domestic workers	926	943	895	879	-48	-1.8	
<b>Tertiary Sector</b>	<b>9 382</b>	<b>9 407</b>	<b>9 287</b>	<b>9 390</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	

Source: Own calculations, Statistics South Africa (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011).

Notes: 1. The expanded definition of unemployment is utilised here in defining the labour force.

2. An asterisk denotes statistically significant changes at the 95 percent confidence level, while a dagger (†) denotes statistically significant changes at the 90 percent confidence level.

The tertiary sector is the leading source of employment in South Africa in 2011Q2, employing 9.4 million people or 71.4 percent of total employment. The primary sector and secondary sector account for 6.7 percent and 21.9 percent of total employment respectively. Employment in the tertiary sector remained virtually unchanged between 2008 and 2011, despite a substantial decline in wholesale and retail trade employment

In contrast, the primary and secondary sectors experienced significant declines in employment over the three-year period. The former contracted at an average annual rate of 8.3 percent, shedding 262 000 jobs, while the latter contracted by 4.0 percent annually. Job losses in these sectors were driven by losses in agriculture (198 000), manufacturing (270 000) and construction (123 000).

Private households constitute the fourth largest industrial sector within the tertiary sector, accounting for 11.9 percent and 8.5 percent of tertiary sector and total employment respectively. Within this industry, the domestic work sector employed around 880 000 individuals, or 6.7 percent of total employment. In the three years between 2008 and 2011, employment of domestic workers appears to have followed a downward trend, although this change is statistically insignificant.

About 880 000 individuals were employed as domestic workers in 2011Q2, marginally down from three years earlier. Africans are in the vast majority, accounting for 91 percent of domestic workers, while Coloureds make up the remainder. Although the changes in domestic work employment by race are statistically insignificant, African workers appear to borne the brunt of possible job losses.

Domestic work is performed almost exclusively by women: 96 percent of domestic workers were female in 2011Q2. Domestic workers are also typically between the ages of 25 and 54 years (83 percent of the total), although it does appear that they are slightly more likely to be older rather than younger. This could relate to better employment prospects and opportunities for African women in particular.

Overall, there appears to be a gradual improvement in educational attainment amongst domestic workers. Close to half of domestic workers have incomplete secondary education in 2011Q2, while almost three in ten have some degree of primary education. However, the number of domestic workers without any secondary education has contracted relatively rapidly over the past three years: employment of those with no formal education declined by 13.1 percent per annum, while falling by 10.8 percent per annum amongst those with only primary education.

## Demographic Employment Trends within Domestic Work

**Table 3: Employment in Domestic Work, 2008 Quarter2 – 2011 Quarter 2**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Change ('08-'11)	
	Quarter 2	Quarter 2	Quarter 2	Quarter 2	Absolute	Relative
<b>Total Employment</b>	926	943	895	879	-48	-1.8
<b>By Race</b>						
African	848	865	817	798	-51	-2.0
Coloured	73	77	78	79	5	2.3
Asian	...	...	...	...	...	...
White	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>By Gender</b>						
Male	37	34	38	36	-2	-1.4
Female	889	909	857	843	-46	-1.8
<b>By Age Group</b>						
15 to 24 year olds	50	41	42	41	-9	-6.2
25 to 34 year olds	237	238	228	220	-17	-2.5
35 to 44 year olds	270	309	296	278	8	1.0
45 to 54 year olds	270	243	228	231	-38	-5.0
55 to 65 year olds	100	112	100	108	8	2.8
<b>By Educational Attainment</b>						
No education	96	81	75	63	-33	-13.1 *
Grades 0 – 7	356	329	291	253	-103	-10.8 *
Grades 8 – 11	364	426	404	430	66	5.7
Grade 12	95	89	108	107	12	4.1
Diploma/Certificate	7	10	5	7	0	-1.1
Degree	...	...	...	...	...	...

Source: Own calculations, Statistics South Africa (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011).

Notes: 1. An asterisk denotes statistically significant changes at the 95 percent confidence level

**Table 4: Demographic composition of Employment among Domestic Workers, 2008 Quarter 2 and 2011 Quarter 2**

	2008Q2		2011Q2			
	Domestic Work	Total Non-Agricultural Economy	Domestic Work	Total Non-Agricultural Economy		
<b>Total Employment (000s)</b>	926	11 949	879	11 430		
<b>Race</b>						
African	91.6	68.0	*	90.8	67.9	*
Coloured	7.9	11.0	*	9.0	10.6	*
Asian	...	3.9	...	...	4.3	
White	...	17.2	...	...	17.1	
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	4.0	59.4	*	4.1	59.1	*
Female	96.0	40.6	*	95.9	40.9	*
<b>Age Group</b>						
15 to 24 year olds	5.3	12.4	*	4.6	10.2	*
25 to 34 year olds	25.6	34.8	*	25.0	33.5	*
35 to 44 year olds	29.2	26.4		31.7	28.8	*
45 to 54 year olds	29.1	18.1	*	26.3	18.8	*
55 to 65 year olds	10.7	8.3	*	12.3	8.8	*
<b>Educational Attainment</b>						
No education	10.3	2.9	*	7.2	1.6	*
Grades 0 – 7	38.5	12.5	*	28.8	10.0	*
Grades 8 – 11	39.3	31.1	*	48.9	30.1	*
Grade 12	10.2	31.7	*	12.2	33.3	*
Diploma/Certificate	0.8	12.9	*	0.8	14.8	*
Degree	-	7.5	*	-	9.1	*

Source: Own calculations, Statistics South Africa (2008; 2011).

Notes: 1. An asterisk denotes statistically significant differences in share of employment at the 95 percent confidence level

The structure of domestic work employment differs significantly from that of the non-agricultural economy (Table 4). Domestic workers are much more likely to be African (90.8 percent vs. 67.9 percent) than workers in the non-agricultural economy, while Asian and White domestic workers are very rare and are not reported in the table due to very small sample sizes.

As noted, domestic workers are almost always female and the female proportion of domestic workers is more than twice that in the broader non-agricultural economy.

Domestic workers are older than workers in the non-agricultural economy. In 2011Q2, 15 to 24 year olds accounted for 10.2 percent of non-agricultural employment, compared to just 4.6 percent within domestic work. Similarly, 25 to 34 year olds are less common within domestic work. The proportion of domestic workers aged 35 to 65 years old is significantly larger than that within non-agricultural employment.

Domestic work is dominated by those with primary, incomplete secondary or no education: in 2011, 85 percent of domestic workers had not completed matric compared to less than 42 percent in the non-agricultural economy respectively. Only 12.2 percent of domestic workers have matric certificates and virtually none have post-secondary education.

# Employment Characteristics

**Table 5: Contract Characteristics among Domestic Workers, 2008 Quarter 2 and 2011 Quarter 2**

	2008Q2		2011Q2			
	Domestic Work	Total Non-Agricultural Economy	Domestic Work	Total Non-Agricultural Economy		
<b>Total Employment ('000s)</b>	<b>926</b>	<b>11949</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>11430</b>		
<b>Contract Duration (share)</b>						
Limited duration	4.5	9.7	*	3.5	11.2	*
Permanent nature	29.5	56.1	*	31.6	56.9	*
Unspecified duration	65.8	16.5	*	64.5	14.3	*
Self-employed	0.2	17.7	*	0.4	17.6	*
<b>Total Employment ('000s)</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>9838</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>9422</b>		
<b>Contract Type (share)</b>						
Written contract	21.6	83.1	*	25.1	87.3	*
Verbal contract	78.4	16.9	*	74.9	12.7	*

Source: Own calculations, Statistics South Africa (2008; 2011).

Notes: 1. An asterisk denotes statistically significant differences in share of employment at the 95 percent confidence level

The QLFS includes questions about the type and duration of employment contracts. There is significant variation in both the duration and nature of contracts between the domestic work sector and the greater non-agricultural economy. Less than a third of domestic workers are employed on permanent basis compared with over 50 percent in the non-agricultural economy in both years. The majority of domestic workers are employed on contracts of unspecified duration (64.5 percent in 2011) compared with workers in the non-agricultural economy (14.3 percent). Over the three-year period, the incidence of permanent contracts appears to increase marginally for both domestic workers (2.1 percentage points) and workers in the non-agricultural economy (0.8 percentage points).

The evidence suggests that the employment relationship is generally not formalised in the case of domestic workers. In that regard, only 25.1 percent of domestic workers report having written contracts with their employers compared to 74.9 percent who report the existence of verbal contracts with their employers. This is in stark contrast to 87.3 non-agricultural workers who have written contracts and only 12.7 percent had verbal contracts. Over the period, the prevalence of written contracts seems to be increasing with both domestic work and the non-agricultural economy recording a 4 percentage points jump in their respective shares.



**Table 6: Employment Characteristics within Domestic Work , 2008 Quarter 2 and 2011 Quarter 2**

	2008Q2			2011Q2	
	Domestic Work	Total Non-Agricultural Economy		Domestic Work	Total Non-Agricultural Economy
<b>Total Employment (oos)</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>9838</b>		<b>875</b>	<b>9422</b>
<b>Benefits</b>					
Medical aid	0.4	33.1	*	0.1	36.6
UIF contributions	27.2	57.9	*	27.7	60.2
Pension contributions	2.2	51.9	*	5.2	53.8
Paid leave	15.0	63.9	*	20.7	72.3
Paid sick leave	-	-		24.2	73.6
Paid maternity leave	-	-		12.0	60.3
<b>Hours of Work</b>					
1-19	14.9	2.1	*	13.3	1.9
20-39	26.9	8.7	*	27.7	8.7
40-44	27.5	39.4	*	35.6	43.5
45-49	13.8	25.8	*	14.1	26.6
50+	16.8	24.0	*	9.2	19.3
Mean hours worked	36.8	45.4	*	35.8	44.3
Work more hours at current wage	5.4	3.3	*	6.8	2.8
<b>Other</b>					
Trade union membership	-	-		0.3	33.4

Source: Own calculations, Statistics South Africa (2008; 2011).

Notes: 1. An asterisk denotes statistically significant differences in share of employment at the 95 percent confidence level

Domestic workers in South Africa were not protected by law until 1997, when the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) was extended to cover them. The act formed the basis for affording basic protection to domestic workers particularly in regards to their working hours, access to leave, and unfair dismissals. The act (amended 2002) further provided for the Minister of Labour to make sectoral determinations which set out minimum wages and other conditions for sectors in which workers are deemed vulnerable. The domestic work sector is covered within Sectoral Determination 7. Table 6 presents statistics about three sets of variables, which together provide a proxy for quality of employment.

The first set of variables considered are six work benefits for which there is data in the QLFs. In most instances, access to these benefits is lower amongst domestic workers than is the case in the non-agricultural economy. Access to medical aid – as proxied by the proportion of workers who report that their employer contributes on their behalf to a medical aid – is virtually non-existent in domestic work sector. In 2008Q2, only 0.4 percent of domestic workers report contributions to a medical aid, compared to 33.1 percent in the non-agricultural economy. By 2011Q2, however, this proportion within the domestic work had declined to just 0.1 percent, while that within the non-agricultural economy had risen to 36.6 percent. Thus, in terms of contributions to medical aid,

mestic workers lag their counterparts within the non-agricultural economy by a considerable margin.

Sectoral determination 7 does not in itself govern unemployment insurance fund (UIF). However, since 2003, domestic workers were covered through an amendment to the Unemployment Insurance Act 63 of 2001. In 2008, 27.2 percent of domestic workers reported having UIF contributions made on their behalf. By 2011, the share was virtually unchanged at 27.7 percent. On the other hand, 57.9 percent of non-agricultural workers report UIF deductions in 2008, while this is true for 60.2 percent in 2011. It therefore appears the gap in access to UIF for domestic workers and non-agricultural workers is widening over time.

The determination does not provide for a pension or provident fund. Nevertheless, 2.2 percent of domestic workers reported in 2008 that their employer contributed on their behalf towards a pension fund, compared to 5.2 percent in 2011. This proportion is significantly higher amongst non-agricultural workers: 51.9 percent in 2008 report pension contributions being made on their behalf, whilst this true of 53.8 percent in 2011.

Although the sectoral determination clearly provides for paid annual leave, sick leave and maternity leave, only 15 percent of domestic workers report enjoying paid annual leave in

2008 compared to 20.7 in 2011. Despite comparison of the estimates for the two periods suggesting that there might have been a slight improvement, the figures are still very low relative to estimates amongst non-agricultural workers. In 2008Q2, 63.9 percent of employees in the non-agricultural economy report receiving paid annual leave. Over the three-year period, the share rapidly increased such that by 2011Q2, 72.3 percent of non-agricultural workers reported receiving paid annual leave. In terms of other forms of leave – paid sick leave and paid maternity leave – the QLFS did not collect information in 2008. In 2011, 73.6 percent of non-agricultural workers report access to paid sick leave, compared to only 24.2 percent of domestic workers. Similarly, 60.3 percent of female employees in the non-agricultural economy report being entitled to paid maternity leave, compared to just 12 percent of domestic workers. These estimates suggest that, overall; there is widespread contravention of the standard labour market practices within domestic work, with workers either unaware of their rights or unable to enforce them.

Table 6 also reports the distribution of employees by the number of hours *usually* worked per week. In the non-agricultural economy as a whole, the majority of workers report usually working between 40 and 49 hours per week in 2011Q1: 43.5 percent work 40 to 44 hours per week, while a further 26.6

percent work 45 to 49 hours per week. Roughly one-fifth (19.3 percent) of employees report working 50 or more hours per week, while two percent work fewer than 20 hours per week.

*'Overall ... it appears that 'job quality' as proxied by these various variables is lower in domestic work sector than in the broader non-agricultural economy ...'*

More than one third (35.6 percent) of domestic workers report usually working between 40 and 44 hours in 2011 compared to 27.5 percent in 2008. Since the sectoral determination for domestic workers provides for different minimum hourly wage rates for workers working less than 27 hours and those working more than 27 hours, this may suggest that employers may be trying to avoid higher wage rates which commensurate with working less than 27 hours a week. Conversely, only 27.7 percent of domestic workers work 20 to 39 hours per week, nearly 20 percentage points higher than the non-agricultural average in this category. Generally, the duration of the working week is sig-

nificantly lower within the domestic work sector compared to the non-agricultural sector. The greater proportions of domestic workers at the lower end of the distribution of hours worked is reflected in the lower mean hours worked in both periods. Mean hours worked, is nearly 10 hours less for domestic workers than in the non-agricultural economy as a whole in both 2008 and 2011. This may be linked to the phenomenon of domestic workers often working for multiple employers.

To determine if the low working hours in domestic work are a result of limitations placed by employers, we checked the proportion of workers who would like to work more hours at their current wage. In 2011, almost 7 percent of domestic workers would want to work more hours at the current wage compared to 2.8 percent amongst workers in the non-agricultural economy. That the proportions are substantially lower may suggest that employers may be placing ceilings on the number of hours their domestic workers work.

The final variable of interest, union membership, provides an indication of the vulnerability of workers to possible exploitation by employers. The data for 2011Q2 indicates that union membership is significantly more common in the non-agricultural economy than is the case for domestic workers. One-third of the former report being members of

unions, compared to 0.3 percent of domestic workers. Trade union membership and coverage is there therefore extremely low among domestic workers, which further increase the likelihood of vulnerability and exploitation within the sector.

Overall, therefore, it appears that 'job quality' as proxied by these various variables is lower in domestic work than in the broader non-agricultural economy. Although the data is somewhat incomplete, it appears that the gap between the two sectors may be widening over time.

## Conclusion

This factsheet provides insight into employment within the domestic work sector, in comparison to trends within the greater non-agricultural economy. The domestic work sector is a significant employer in the country especially for poor rural communities facing few employment opportunities and choices because of limited access to education and skills development. In 2011 the sector accounted for about 7 percent of total employment, employing about 880 000 individuals.

With little change in total employment of domestic workers, it is unsurprising that there are no statistically significant changes in employment by race, gender or age between 2008Q1 and 2011Q1. However, significant changes were observed amongst workers with primary education and below who accounted for all the net jobs lost between 2008Q2 and 2011Q2. This does not necessarily imply that domestic work is becoming a skill oriented occupation rather is an indication of the sample from which domestic workers are drawn. Specifically, older workers with low educational levels are exiting the sector, as is the case with the rest of the economy.

Still on demographic composition of employment, the domestic work sector differs

significantly from the total non-agricultural sector in many ways. Evidence suggests that domestic work is overwhelmingly female, dominated by Africans and Coloureds to a lesser extent. Employment in the sector is also relatively old compared with the non-agricultural economy. Educationally, domestic work employment is clustered among individuals with primary education and less prevalently among holders of secondary education. This indeed confirms the assertion that domestic workers are relatively old as in most cases the majority of workers with no education are old.

In terms of contracts, domestic workers are less likely to be self-employed and more likely to be employed on limited duration contracts. Written contracts are a rarity amongst domestic workers as the majority are employed on verbal contracts, in contrast to the non-agricultural economy where close to nine in 10 workers report having written contracts.

Various indicators of 'job quality' were presented, with a clear indication of vulnerability for domestic workers. In terms of six benefits – medical aid contributions, UIF contributions, pension contributions, paid annual leave, paid sick leave and paid maternity leave – domestic workers appear to be at a severe disadvantage. Respective access to all the above benefits is limited to a maximum of 20 percent of domestic workers ex-

cept for UIF contributions, where about 27 percent report having deductions made on their behalf. Nevertheless, this is still less than half the share of non-agricultural workers with access to all the benefits. However, domestic workers appear to have shorter working hours, with only 9.2 percent reporting working more than 50 hours per week in 2011Q1, compared over 19 percent of those in the non-agricultural economy. Given the distributional differences in hours worked, it is unsurprising that usual working hours amongst domestic workers average almost ten hours less than in the broader non-agricultural economy; a phenomenon which could be linked to domestic workers often working for multiple employers.

Finally, even after identifying that access to most standard labour market benefits is lagging amongst domestic workers, trade union membership is significantly lower within the sector. This suggests that the problem has a considerable time lag before it can be rectified, as domestic workers seem to lack knowledge of their rights, and their membership to institutions that are meant to educate them on their rights is very low, which further compounds the problem.

Overall, it does appear that 'job quality' as proxied by these various indicators is lower among domestic workers than in the broader non-agricultural economy. Going forward, even though legislation to govern the activi-

ties within the domestic sector is available, implementation is lagging, which call for renewed efforts that ensure domestic workers are made aware of their rights and their recourse in situations where their rights are violated.

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