Half of South Africans live below the poverty line

That's 27 million people

Living on

R779 per person per month or less

46% Above the poverty line

34% Below the poverty line

What is the poverty line?

It is a measure used to separate the poor from the non-poor. Statistics South Africa calculates the poverty line by determining the food and non-food items that are essential for daily survival.

SA's national diet: Food basket used to calculate the food poverty line

Beverages
- Aerated drinks
- Fruit juice
- Hot coffee

Dairy products and eggs
- Fresh full cream milk
- Large eggs
- Long life full cream milk
- Skim milk

Fish, meat, poultry and their products
- Poutry (excluding eggs and broilers)
- Beef and mutton (including lamb and beef)
- Boerewors
- Crispy potatoes
- Pulpy

Grain products
- White rice
- Maize flour
- Wheat bread
- Pasta
- Cake flour

Oils and fats
- Edible oils (o.o cooking oil)

Fruits and vegetables
- Cabbage
- Potatoes
- Tomatoes (fresh)
- Onions

Miscellaneous
- Biscuits
- Powdered sugar
- Brown sugar
- White sugar

The minimum daily energy requirement on which the poverty line is based is:

2 100 kilocalories per day

Which is estimated to cost R335 a month

Food poverty lines

Upper poverty line

R779 = R25.50 per person per day

People who live below this line spend more than 1% of their income on food.

Lower poverty line

R501 = R16.50 per person per day

People who live below this line spend more than 4% of their income on food.

Food poverty line

R335 = R11.00 per person per month

People who live below this line struggle to afford their daily food requirements.

Poverty lines in the provinces

Limpopo: R677
Mzimabane: R794
Gauteng: R676
Limpopo: R677
Western Cape: R859
Northern Cape: R859
Western Cape: R859

These are the upper poverty lines that estimate how much essential food and non-food items would cost in each of the provinces.