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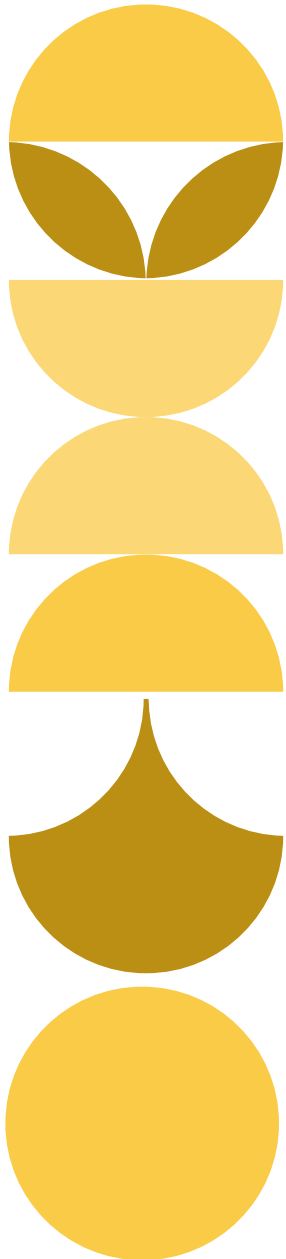
2024

7TH ANNUAL REPORT
ON DOMESTIC WORKER
PAY AND WORK
CONDITIONS

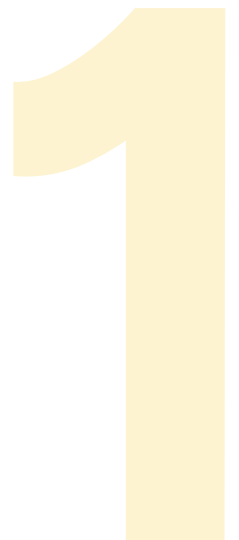
SweepSouth



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Executive Summary



Luke Kannemeyer
SweepSouth Group COO

In SweepSouth's seventh Annual Report on Pay and Working Conditions for Domestic Workers, we gain invaluable insights into the lives of the resilient women and men who care for our homes and families. Since 2018, we have tracked progress in their pay and working conditions. While our 2021 report offered a glimmer of hope, the optimism for continued improvement in 2022 was sadly extinguished. Rising inflation and economic turmoil have disproportionately affected emerging economies, creating a challenging backdrop for domestic workers. Although our 2023 report highlighted some positive trends, concerns around low pay, the impact of rolling blackouts, and stagnant employment figures persisted. Unfortunately, these challenges have carried over into 2024.

The 2024 SweepSouth Report paints a complex picture of the domestic work sector in South Africa, drawing on survey responses from over 5,600 workers. This year's report spotlights the struggles faced by domestic workers amidst high unemployment, rising living costs, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first time, we've explored what life looks like after domestic work and how this sector can be a stepping stone towards economic freedom in South Africa.

The domestic workforce remains predominantly female (92%), with most workers between the ages of 26 and 41 (64%). South African and Zimbabwean nationals comprise the majority of respondents (37% and 59% respectively). These workers play a vital role as breadwinners, with 83% supporting their households financially. The average number of dependents remains high at four, underscoring the immense financial responsibility they carry.

While 42% of domestic workers have completed high school, and an additional 15% have pursued higher education, a thirst for learning remains strong. A significant 85% expressed a desire to continue their education if resources allowed.

Part-time employment across multiple employers remains the norm (79%), with cleaning as the primary role for the vast majority (96%). However, job security is a constant worry, with 36% reporting job losses due to employer affordability issues.

Despite a 5% increase in median earnings for SweepStars, earnings still struggle to beat the rising cost of living, especially for non-SweepSouth workers. A concerning 46% of workers earn below the National Minimum Wage. Expenses have risen across all categories, with housing costs showing a particularly alarming 17% increase - a finding that warrants further investigation.

Financial insecurity is widespread, with 75% unable to save money each month. While there's a positive trend towards savings and pension participation, 35% of domestic workers are in debt, with a third feeling trapped in a hopeless repayment cycle.

The mental well-being of domestic workers is significantly impacted, with 16% reporting a decline in the past year, primarily due to unemployment, financial stress, and family problems. Access to professional mental health treatment remains limited, leaving many to cope without adequate support.

For those who transitioned to different jobs, encouragingly, 39% reported better pay and 70% experienced improved or similar treatment. However, 21% lost their jobs in the past year, mainly due to employer affordability issues or relocation.

Our key recommendations aim to address these issues:

- Enforce labour laws more rigorously, exploring solutions for compliance in private homes, considering diverse work arrangements and vulnerable groups.
- Improve access to ongoing education and training for domestic workers. Government, employers, and the private sector must collaborate to provide affordable education, flexible scheduling, financial assistance, and technology access.
- Invest in mental health support, including accessible services, training for community leaders, and safe spaces for women.
- Increase support for workers facing abuse through education, reporting mechanisms, and material assistance for survivors.
- Foster collaboration among government, private sector, and civil society to drive data-driven solutions and advocate for the rights and well-being of domestic workers.

The 2024 SweepSouth Report underscores the complexities and challenges within South Africa's domestic work sector. While positive trends in earnings and savings offer glimmers of hope, the persistent issues of low wages, job insecurity, safety concerns, and mental health struggles highlight the urgent need for collaborative action. By implementing the recommendations outlined in this report and working together, we can create a more equitable and sustainable domestic work sector that values the essential contributions of these workers to our society.

Introduction

The 2023/2024 period has been particularly challenging for domestic workers. While all South Africans have felt the impact of the stagnant economy, marginal growth, and geopolitical instability, it is those at the lower end of the economic spectrum who are most vulnerable to these hardships. This year's report highlights the immense financial pressure faced by domestic workers, with 83% serving as the primary breadwinners for their households and supporting an average of four dependents.

In the first quarter of 2024, Statistics South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force Survey reported a national unemployment rate of 32.9%, a slight increase from the 32.7% reported in the fourth quarter of 2023. Within this context, the domestic work sector saw a marginal decrease in employment, with 7 000 fewer individuals employed compared to the previous quarter - a 0.8% decline - in sharp contrast to the reduction observed in our 2023 report.

This suggests a potential stabilisation within the sector, although it's important to note that this figure still reflects a nearly 15% decrease in domestic work jobs since before the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, domestic work accounts for 5.2% of South Africa's total employment and a significant 11% of employment for women nationally.* Understanding the key statistics of South Africa's domestic work sector is crucial, but the numbers alone don't reveal the daily realities faced by those employed in this field.

*Stats SA (2024) Quarterly Labour Force Survey 2024, Quarter 1

This is where the seventh Annual SweepSouth Report on Pay and Working Conditions for Domestic Work in South Africa provides valuable insights. As an online platform connecting domestic workers with employers, a core aspect of SweepSouth's mission is advocating for improved working conditions within the domestic work sector. Our Annual Report offers a comprehensive look at the financial circumstances and working conditions experienced by domestic workers in the country.



Study Time Frame

3 - 10 July 2024


Survey Design

This year's survey was distributed via SMS and WhatsApp to a broad sample of domestic workers in South Africa, both within and outside the SweepSouth platform.

Approximately 36 000 domestic workers were invited to participate, including 20 000 who had never used SweepSouth, 10 000 who previously found work through SweepSouth, and just over 6 000 were currently active workers on the platform. The survey was conducted online, which would generally require respondents to have access to a smartphone.

We received a total of 5,617 responses in South Africa. The analysis mainly focuses on respondents who are currently employed as a domestic worker, but also examines those respondents who have worked as a domestic worker in the last year but lost their job (after May 2023), as well as respondents who worked as a domestic worker longer than a year ago but are now either unemployed or have a different job. This makes our survey the largest and most detailed of its kind in Africa, and offers a comprehensive view of the declining mental health and other socio-economic burdens of domestic workers in the country.





Pay & Work Conditions of Currently Employed Domestic Workers

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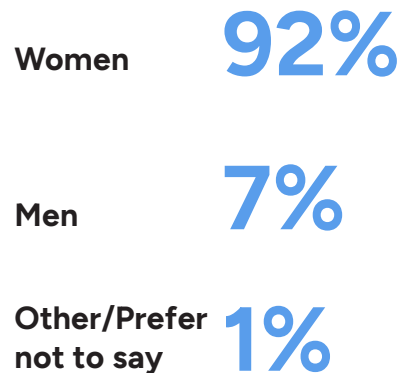
Domestic Worker Demographics

The primary focus of the 2024 survey is individuals who are currently employed as a domestic worker.

Consistent with previous years, the majority of respondents were women (92%) and between the ages of 26 and 41 (64%). The nationality of respondents was split between South Africa (37%) and Zimbabwe (59%), with Malawi (3%), Lesotho (1%) and other nationalities making up the remainder.

The regional distribution of respondents remains broadly unchanged to past years.

GENDER



NATIONALITY



Median Age

37

Which province of South Africa do you work in?

56%
Gauteng

37%
Western Cape

6%
Other

Family Structure

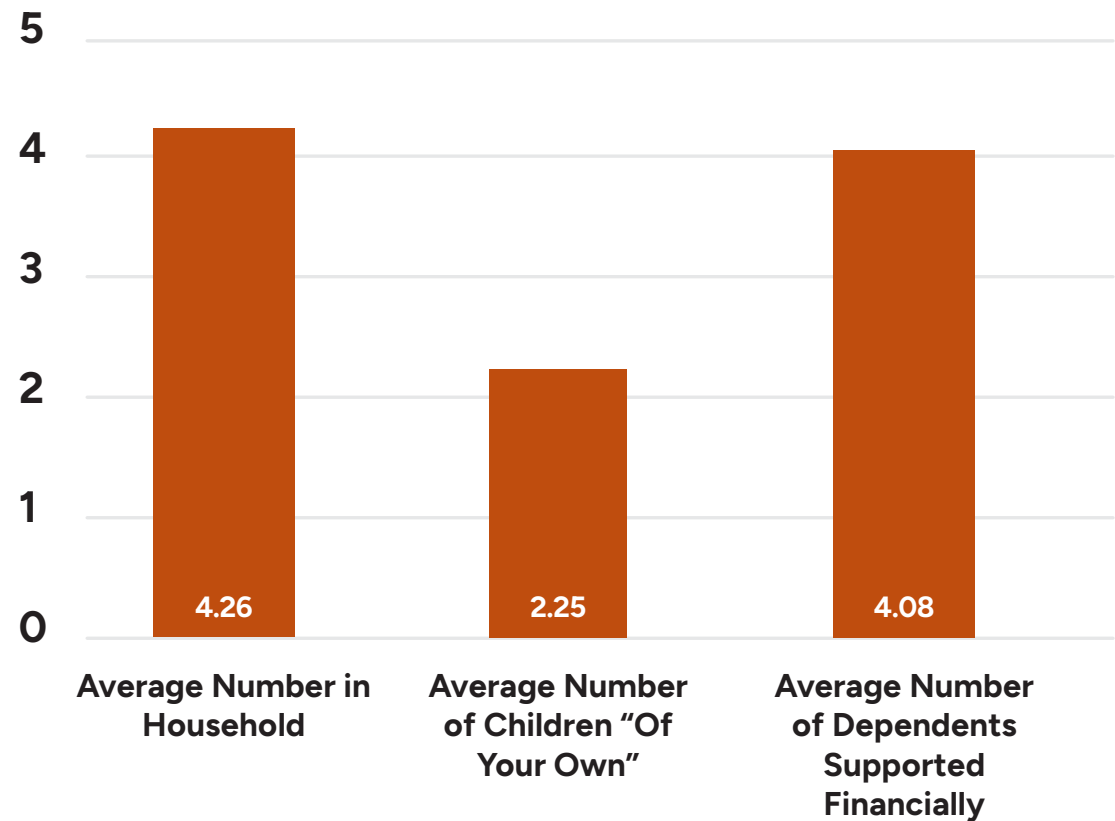
The average number of dependents supported financially, as well as the percentage of respondents who are the breadwinners in their household, has remained relatively stable compared to 2021, 2022, and 2023 after they increased significantly at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.



Breadwinners



Single Parent Household



However, the financial pressure on domestic workers remains high with 83% being the main earners in their household and 60% supporting four or more people (children and adults) in their household.



Education & Aspirations



What is your highest level of education?	
Did not complete high school	43%
Completed high school	42%
Post high school education	15%

Currently furthering their education	35%
Using free online education resources to help with their own education	27%
Want to further their education if they had the money and/or time	85%

The proportion of respondents who have completed high school is 42%, with a further 15% having completed further education including a certificate/short course, an undergraduate degree or diploma, or 'some tertiary education'.

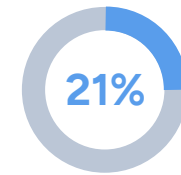
When asked about currently furthering their education, just over a third of respondents (35%) indicated that they are either studying through an academic institution, doing practical courses, or doing self-study. Just over a quarter of respondents (27%) indicated that they use free online education resources to assist with their education, and a large proportion of respondents (85%) expressed a desire to further their education if they had the money and/or the time to do so.

Employment Dynamics

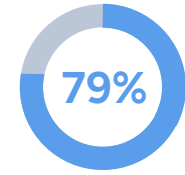
The majority of respondents work part-time for multiple employers rather than full-time for one employer (79% versus 21% respectively).

The vast majority of respondents (96%) reported that cleaning is one of their primary roles while just over one in four respondents (26%) reported childcare as one of their primary roles.

Do you work full-time for one client or part-time for multiple clients?

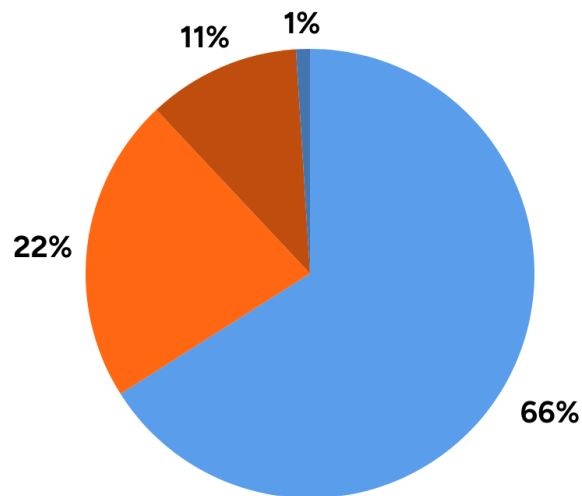


Full-time for One Client

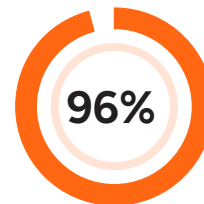


Part-time for Multiple Clients

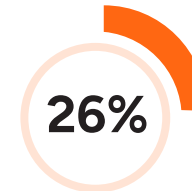
Do you work on the SweepSouth platform?



What are your primary roles as a domestic worker?



Cleaning



Childcare



Cooking



Elderly Care



Special Care*



Gardening

*Care for a child or adult with special needs, such as a mental or physical disability.

- I currently work on the SweepSouth platform (active SweepStar).
- I've never worked on the SweepSouth platform, but I am a domestic worker.
- Not currently on the SweepSouth platform, but still work as a domestic worker.
- I worked on the SweepSouth platform, but no longer work as a domestic worker.



Work Days & Commute

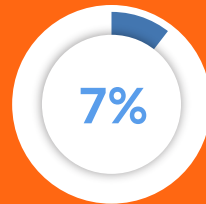
Median number of days worked per week



Work more than 9 hours a day



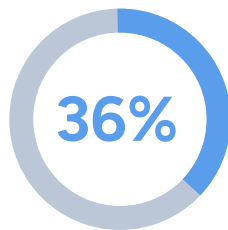
Work 7 days a week



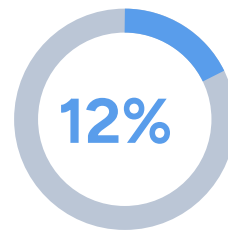
Spend more than 1 hour commuting to work in one direction



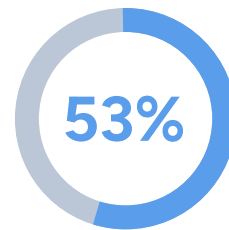
Have you lost some of your clients due to them not being able to afford a domestic worker anymore?



Yes



Maybe



No

Our 2024 survey continues to reveal insights into the demanding working conditions of domestic workers. The median number of days worked per week is 5, with a notable 7% working 7 days a week. This suggests that economic pressures may be driving longer working hours, potentially impacting workers' well-being and family life.

Additionally, over a third (36%) of domestic workers reported losing employers due to affordability issues. This highlights the financial strain on employers and the precarious nature of domestic work, where job security is often tied to the employer's financial stability. These findings emphasise the need for interventions to ensure fair working hours and enhance job security within the domestic work sector.

Earnings Analysis

Median earnings per month from domestic work*

2019	2020 <small>(from COVID-19 report)</small>	2021	2022	2023	2024
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Currently a SweepStar*

R3 600	R3 359	R3 470	R4 203	R4 999	R5 242
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Not a SweepStar (currently working as a domestic worker)

R2 400	R2 814	R2 730	R2 963	R2 992	R3 404
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Never a SweepStar

-	-	R2 615	R2 810	R2 911	R3 105
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Ex-SweepStar

-	-	R2 916	R3 634	R3 540	R4 017
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Minimum wage

R2 699	R2 740	R3 054	R3 710	R4 067	R4 413
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*SweepStar median earnings calculated based on average job earnings and utilisation for post-probation workers, available at least 5 days per week.

SweepStar median earnings have shown a modest increase of around 5% in 2024 despite our recent increase of 8% to our enforced minimum pay per job. While this increase is positive, we do also see the impact of continued economic pressure on all consumers.

Overall, domestic workers who are not on the SweepSouth platform also saw an increase of their median earnings from last year but still fall below the minimum wage increase as of 1 March 2024. Respondents who had previously been on the SweepSouth platform had significantly higher earnings than those who had never joined the platform. This is likely due to the screening processes required to join SweepSouth.

The increases in the minimum wage for domestic workers over the past few years have contributed to an upward pressure in earnings. Continued increases matched with better enforcement hold the potential for significant improvement in domestic worker earnings in the years to come.

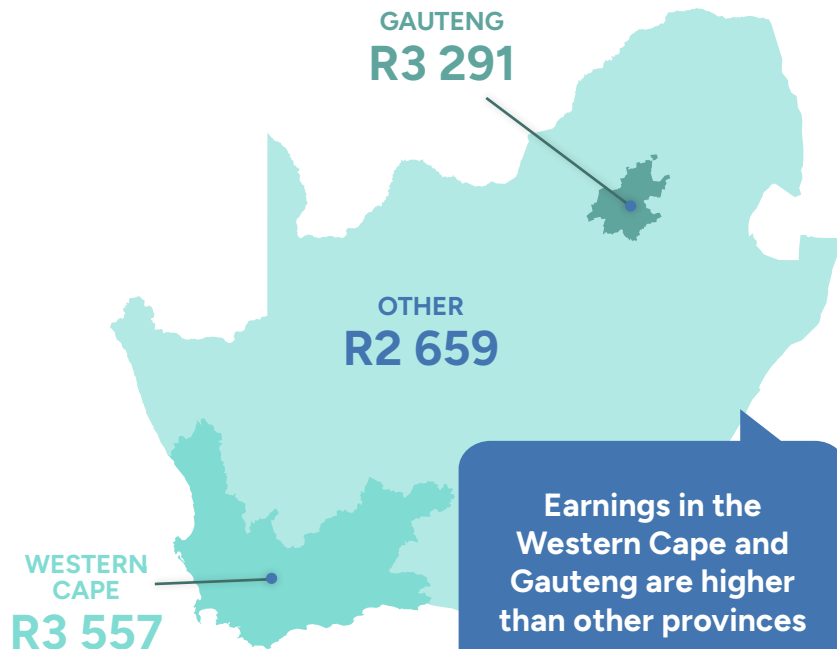
Earnings Analysis



R3 349



R3 059



Earnings in the Western Cape and Gauteng are higher than other provinces

Primary Roles

Cleaning



R3 348

Gardening



R3 128

Childcare



R3 464

Elderly Care



R3 324

Cooking



R3 463

Most domestic workers have a single primary role. Similar to our 2023 report, additional primary roles increase earnings, but in contrast, this seems to level off after two primary roles rather than increase with each additional primary role. Childcare and cooking are the most lucrative roles, while gardening earns the lowest. This is consistent with male respondents reporting lower earnings. Earnings in the Western Cape and Gauteng are higher than other provinces.



Special Care*
R3 352

Number of Primary Roles

1

R3 259

2

R3 571

3

R3 500

4

R3 551

Full-time for one employer/client

R3 702

Part-time for multiple clients

R3 250

*Care for a child or adult with special needs, such as a mental or physical disability.

Earnings vs. Minimum Wage

Since 2022, the South African national minimum wage (NMW) has applied to all workers in South Africa, including domestic workers, and as of 2024, a legal loophole that allowed live-in domestic workers to be paid less has been closed. Prior to 2022, wages for domestic workers were regulated by area and frequency, with a daily, weekly, and monthly rate stipulated.

Given the above, it may be more accurate to look at hourly rates when estimating pay compliance. Our findings are mixed. While men earn slightly more than women, there is little variation by nationality and all average hourly earnings exceed the current NMW of R27.58/h. However, when breaking down hourly rates by individual worker, we found that while the bulk of workers earn above minimum wage (54%), an alarmingly large number of workers earn less than the NMW (46%).

Earning below
minimum wage








46%

Gender	Average earnings per hour
Women	R33.35
Men	R34.24

Nationality	Average earnings per hour
Other	R33.90
South Africa	R36.64

Expenditure Breakdown

The data shows that costs have increased by **15% overall from 2023 to 2024**, with the majority of categories showing a considerable increase. Expenditure on housing has increased by 17% since last year's report, while transport and electricity have increased by 10% and 8% respectively. These increases in the expenses of domestic workers will put further pressure on their budgets, eating into their disposable income and affecting their ability to save, pay off debt, or invest in their future and education.

	Median monthly spend:								
	 Food	 Data/Airtime	 Housing	 Transport	 Electricity	 Other Items	TOTAL EXCL. SCHOOL FEES	 School Fees	TOTAL INCL. SCHOOL FEES
2019	1 100	115	1 136	445	279	-	3 075	62	3 137
2020	1 667	74	1 525	486	371	-	4 123	102	4 225
2021	965	82	1 054	481	308	380	3 270	136	3 406
2022	1 043	92	1 105	531	333	445	3 549	77	3 626
2023	1 170	94	1 081	550	330	447	3 672	74	3 745
2024	1 241	96	1 268	606	357	640	4 207	91	4 298
Annual Increase 2023 vs. 2024	6%↑	3%↑	17%↑	10%↑	8%↑	43%↑	15%↑	23%↑	15%↑







Expenditure Breakdown

The total median expenses for housing (R1 268), food (R1 241), transport (R606), electricity (R357), data/airtime (R96), and other items (R640) brings the basic cost basket to R4 207 per month. This shows a deficit between domestic worker earnings and basic costs, and a surplus when comparing household income and basic costs. While it is good to see that household income covers basic costs, these are median values and therefore many domestic workers still cannot afford these expenses. In addition, given the large proportion of single parent households and that domestic workers financially support on average four dependents, this means a larger financial burden on them as well.

While it is encouraging to see that the new minimum wage in South Africa is above the reported basic expenses, a minimum wage is only as good as its adoption and enforcement. It is also important to recognise that these are basic costs only. When it comes to additional savings and investments, there is little left on the table.

Median monthly
domestic worker
income is approx.
R3 337

Median monthly
household income
is approx.
R5 001

Monthly costs as a % of surveyed domestic work earnings							
 Food	 Data/Airtime	 Housing	 Transport	 Electricity	 Other Items	TOTAL COSTS EXCL. SCHOOL FEES	Surplus/ Earnings Deficit
37%	3%	38%	18%	11%	19%	126%	(R870)
Monthly costs as a % of surveyed household income							
25%	2%	25%	12%	7%	13%	84%	(R793)

“ I stress a lot, the increasing cost of rentals, not able to find an affordable place to stay. ”

Saving Habits & Financial Security



Have savings/pension



Don't make enough money to save

Do you have medical aid?



2%

Do you have a funeral plan?



55%

Are you part of a stokvel?



18%

Three quarters of domestic workers report not making sufficient money to save on a monthly basis. Just 13% say they have any savings or a pension, and 18% participate in a stokvel (rotating savings). A low savings rate leaves households vulnerable to any financial shocks and prevents them from investing in their future.

Medical aid rates remain low and unaffordable for most domestic workers, who typically rely on the government healthcare system. While government facilities are mostly free, inefficiencies within the current system often require workers to take an entire day off work to visit their local clinic. This frequently results in a loss of earnings, forcing workers to make difficult decisions and often delaying treatment until absolutely necessary, which can lead to poorer health outcomes.

While the financial security of most domestic workers remains extremely fragile, there are some positive trends over the past few years. There is a noticeable increase in the proportion of workers who have savings or a pension, while correspondingly, the proportion of workers who do not make enough money to save continues to decrease.

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Saving Habits & Financial Security

Have savings/pension?			
2021	2022	2023	2024
8%	10%	9%	13%

Don't make enough money to save?			
2021	2022	2023	2024
78%	75%	75%	73%

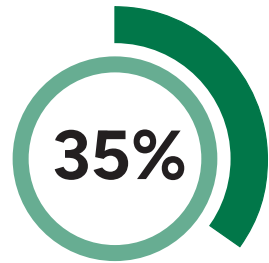
Do you have medical aid?			
2021	2022	2023	2024
2%	1%	1%	2%

Do you have a funeral plan?			
2021	2022	2023	2024
49%	50%	52%	55%

Are you part of a stokvel?			
2021	2022	2023	2024
17%	18%	16%	18%

Debt Levels & Repayment

Domestic workers in debt



Breakdown by nationality

South African	Other
62%	20%

Who do you owe money to?

A shop/store	50%
Friends	27%
Loan shark	20%
Family	16%
My bank	16%
Stokvel	4%
Other	1%

R3 462

Median owed debt amount
(out of those who have debt)



Debt levels are still concerning among domestic workers, with 35% of respondents reporting that they are currently in debt (this proportion is stable since the 2023 report). South African nationals showed higher levels of indebtedness than foreign respondents. This is likely due to a reduced ability of foreigners to access credit.

Debt levels amongst domestic workers remains a concern. 35% of survey respondents reported being in debt, a figure that has remained stable since the 2023 report. The level of debt is higher for South African nationals than foreign respondents, likely due to reduced access to credit for foreigners.

Of those in debt, 1 in 3 described their repayment situation as "hopeless".

Half of those in debt owe money to a shop or store, indicating a high level of easy credit and predatory lending practices in South Africa. This is particularly concerning given the already high financial pressures faced by domestic workers and their role as primary breadwinners for their households. The level of debt and the perceived inability to repay loans highlights the precarious financial situation of many domestic workers in South Africa.

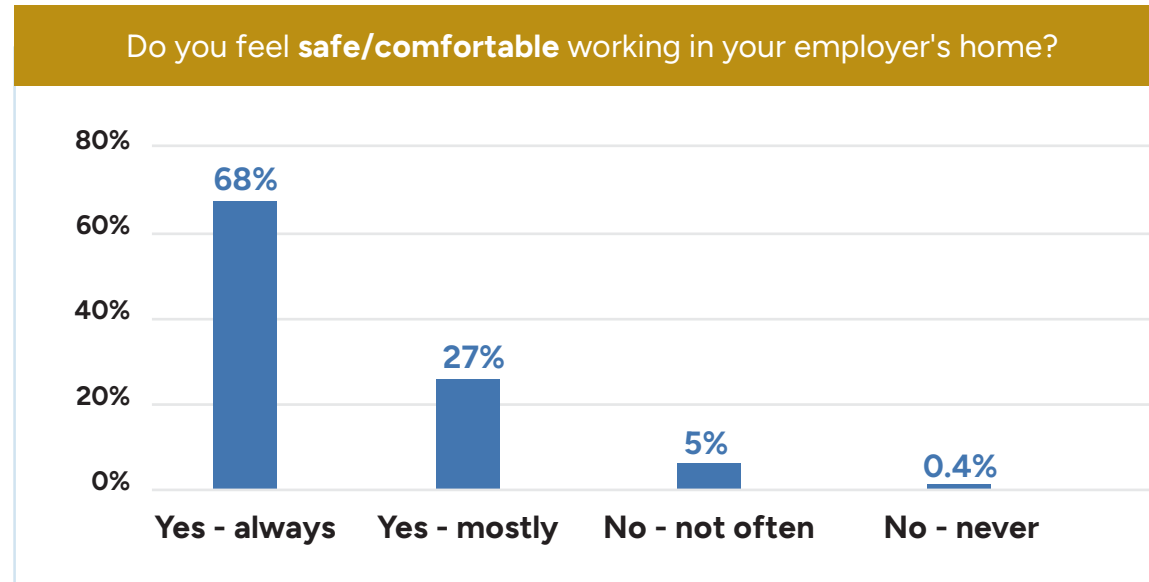
Abuse in the Workplace

18

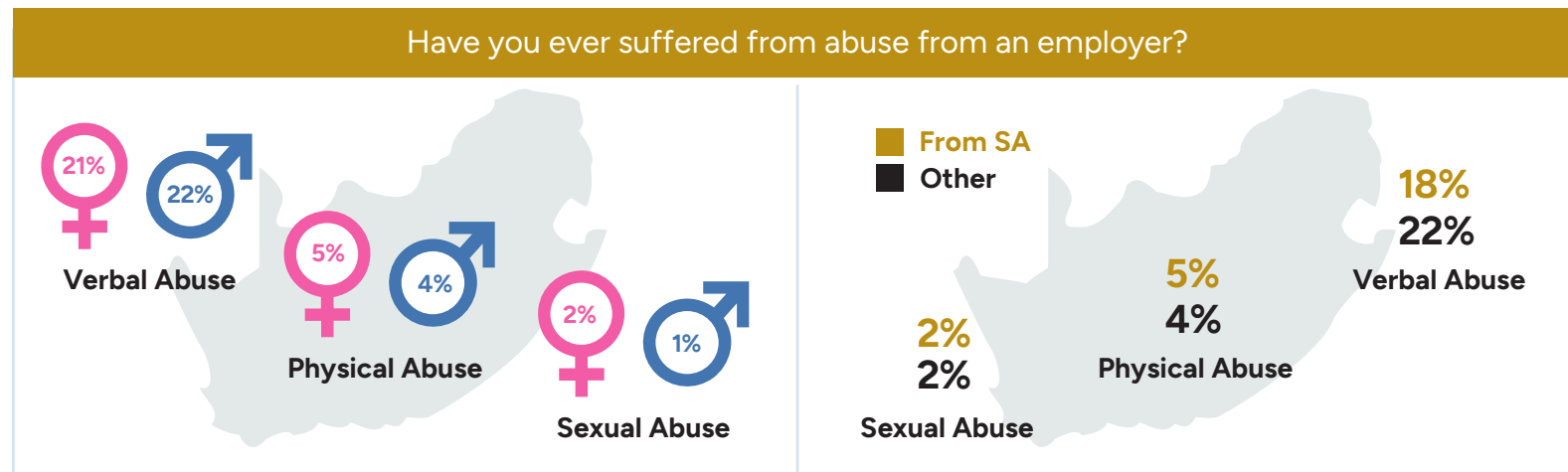
Our data continues to reveal a concerning aspect of domestic work: the issue of safety and abuse. The survey results indicate that 6% of domestic workers do not feel safe in their employer's home, a statistic that points to potential issues with working environments or client interactions.

Even more alarming is the finding that 22% of domestic workers reported experiencing some form of abuse in their workplace, whether verbal, physical, or sexual. This figure underscores the vulnerability of domestic workers and the urgent need for interventions to ensure their safety and well-being. This acts as a stark reminder that despite the essential role domestic workers play, their work environments can sometimes expose them to unacceptable risks.

This is where SweepSouth takes the lead. Workers on our platform rate their clients and can end their relationship with any client, without any reason required. Any abuse reported to us is dealt with swiftly; necessary authorities are informed and the client banned from using our platform.



Foreign nationals are more likely to have experienced verbal abuse



Mental Health

Delving into the critical issue of mental health amongst domestic workers, a significant finding is that 16% of workers reported a negative impact on their mental well-being within the past year, with women being more affected than men. This could be attributed to the multiple pressures they face, including financial strain and balancing work and family responsibilities.

The primary stressors were identified as unemployment, financial concerns, and family problems, highlighting the interconnectedness of these issues. It's encouraging to note that many workers utilise coping mechanisms such as church involvement, exercise, and social connections.

However, access to professional mental health treatment remains low, with only a quarter of those affected receiving a formal diagnosis, predominantly for depression and anxiety. This underscores the necessity for improved mental health support systems within this vulnerable population.

Has your mental health been negatively affected in the last year?

	Women	Men
YES	16%	9%



If yes, what diagnosis did you receive?

Depression	72%
Anxiety	38%
Trauma	10%
Bipolar	3%
Alcohol abuse	2%
Schizophrenia	1%
I have been diagnosed but I don't know the name of the illness	2%

What negatively impacts your mental health the most?

Unemployment	43%
Debt / financial stress	25%
Family problems	23%
Other	10%

How do you take care of your mental health?

Church / religious community	39%
Exercise / spend time outdoors	29%
Spending time with friends or family	29%
Volunteering to help others	9%
Taking medication	5%
Seeing a mental health specialist	4%
Nothing	15%



Life After Domestic Work

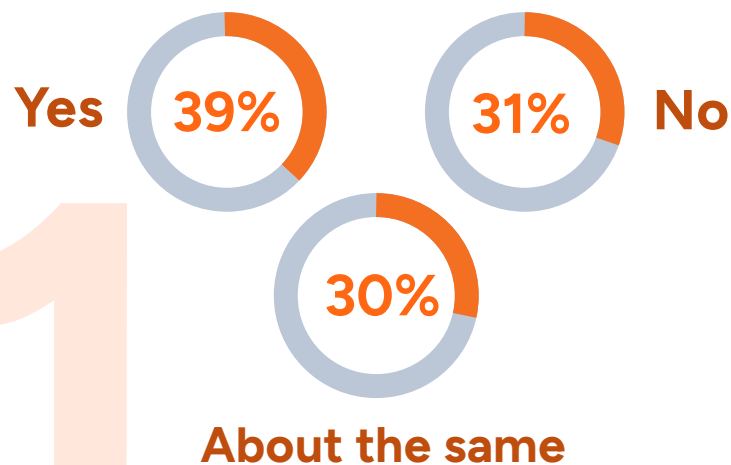
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Employment After Domestic Work

For the first time, our 2024 survey aimed to collect more insights on individuals who previously worked as domestic workers but have since transitioned to different jobs.

The survey results show a positive shift in their employment circumstances. Notably, 39% of these respondents reported better pay in their new jobs compared to their previous roles as domestic workers. Furthermore, a combined 70% of respondents feel better treated or about the same in their new roles, suggesting an improvement in overall job satisfaction and working conditions. This data indicates that transitioning out of domestic work can lead to improved financial and work-related outcomes for some individuals and this continues to emphasise the value of domestic work as a launchpad for career growth opportunities.

Is the pay better at your new job than when you were a domestic worker?



Were you studying or working towards this job while you were a domestic worker?



Do you feel better treated in your new job than when you were a domestic worker?

Yes	30%
No	26%
About the same; I feel like I am treated as well in my new job as when I worked as a domestic worker.	40%
About the same; I feel treated badly in my new job and when I worked as a domestic worker.	3%

Unemployment

The 2024 data indicates that 21% of domestic workers report having lost their job in the last year. The percentage of those who lost their jobs because their employer could no longer afford to pay them remained stable from the previous annual surveys (25% in 2024 compared to 25% in 2023 and 24% in 2022). There was a slight drop in the percentage who lost their jobs because their employer moved home, although still a significant increase over the previous year (34% in 2024 compared to 40% in 2023 and 25% in 2022).

Employers who moved home primarily moved overseas (58%) while a significant portion moved to a different city within South Africa (23%). These trends have continued to be compounded by the accelerating emigration of skilled professionals as well as the evolving semigration trends seen during the COVID-19 pandemic due to remote work possibilities.

Of those respondents who were dismissed by their employer in the last year, 20% do not believe they were dismissed for a valid reason. While a significant decrease from 2023's annual survey, this figure is still concerning and warrants further investigation.

Domestic workers who have lost their jobs in the last year

21%

Lost their jobs due to affordability

25%

Lost their jobs due to dismissal

4%

Lost their jobs due to employer moving homes

34%

Domestic workers who lost their job who were registered for UIF

15%

UIF registered domestic workers who lost their job and submitted a claim

59%

Conclusion

Reflecting on the progress made since our 2023 report, we observe a mix of encouraging developments and persistent challenges, mirroring the situation in South Africa as a whole. The unprecedented levels of loadshedding (rolling blackouts) experienced in 2023 have subsided, promising a positive economic impact and potential improvements in the lives of domestic workers. Concerns about unrest surrounding the 2024 national elections have also proved unfounded. However, the effectiveness of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in addressing the nation's significant challenges remains to be seen.

The cost of living continues to be a major concern for domestic workers and their employers. While inflation has eased and interest rate cuts are anticipated, our data reveals a substantial 15% increase in costs for domestic workers, far outpacing the 5% rise in earnings. Housing costs, in particular, have risen disproportionately, warranting further investigation. The lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are also evident in the domestic work sector, which has

stabilised at around 850 000 jobs, marking a 15% reduction from its pre-pandemic peak.

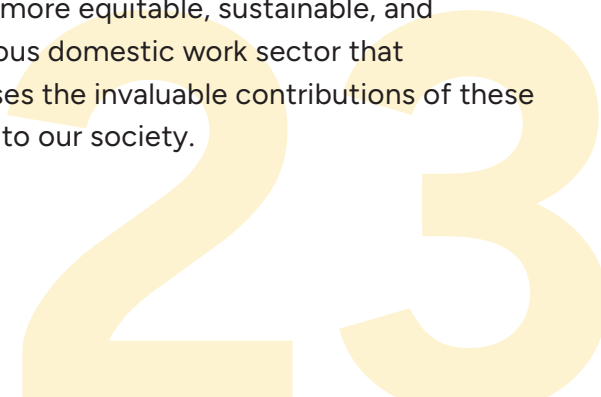
This trend is particularly troubling given the sector's importance for employment and the broader economy. Our findings underscore the potential of domestic work to provide a pathway to a better future for workers and their families. However, the persistent threat of unemployment poses a significant risk, impacting mental wellbeing and making workers vulnerable to exploitation.

This report serves as a vital tool for monitoring the domestic work landscape and evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at improving working conditions and compensation. While it's disheartening to observe the stagnation or reversal of certain positive trends, even incremental gains must be carefully considered. For example, although earnings have increased, these gains may be offset by inflation and remain insufficient to meet the cost of living. Furthermore, the data does not fully reflect the consequences of job losses, which can push domestic workers and their families into precarious circumstances.

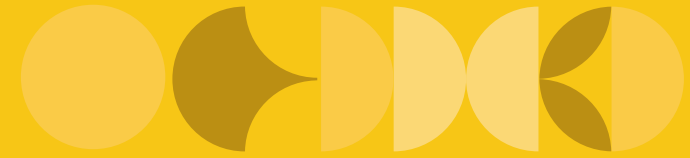
Navigating the challenges ahead will require strong leadership, collaboration, and decisive action. The

results of the 2024 general elections represent a crucial opportunity for South Africa to chart a path toward a more equitable and prosperous future. We must safeguard against political instability, corruption, and violence, which threaten to undermine economic recovery and disproportionately affect vulnerable populations. This demands accountability from our leaders and a commitment to driving positive change at all levels of society.

The global domestic work sector is expected to experience significant growth in the coming years, driven by aging populations and evolving lifestyles. As technology continues to transform the nature of domestic work, it is imperative that South Africa not only keep pace but also seize the opportunity to expand access to benefits and protections for workers. This will require collaborative efforts among individuals, the private sector, and the government to foster a more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous domestic work sector that recognises the invaluable contributions of these workers to our society.



Conclusion



What are we doing to effect change at SweepSouth?

Earning Opportunities:

- **Expanded Offerings:** We've extended our services to other businesses and B2B2C partnerships, creating more job opportunities.
- **Permanent Employment:** We've partnered with various organisations to connect domestic workers with permanent employment opportunities.
- **Data-Driven Approach:** We're continuously raising minimum platform pricing and encouraging customers to contribute more, leading to higher SweepStar earnings.
- **Customer Success:** Over 25% of our customers pay significantly more than the minimum platform rates, demonstrating our success in motivating fair compensation.
- **Industry Collaboration:** We're working with industry players to establish minimum work standards and benefits for domestic workers.

Innovative Products:

- **Same-Day and Express Bookings:** These features increase booking flexibility and earning potential for SweepStars.
- **Matching Algorithm:** We connect SweepStars with multiple bookings per day, maximising their earning potential.

Cost-of-Living Reduction:

- **Rewards Programme:** We leverage partnerships with other brands to offer SweepStars discounts and benefits.
- **Expanded Programme:** Our cost-of-living reduction program is now available to domestic workers beyond the SweepSouth platform.

Upskilling and Training:

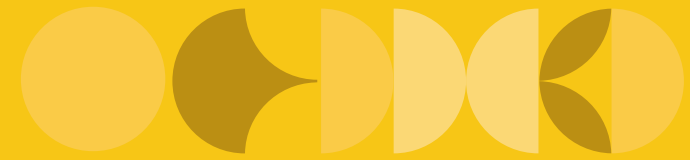
- **SweepSouth Foundation:** We're expanding the Foundation's reach to provide upskilling and training opportunities for domestic workers.
- **Technology Education:** We're equipping domestic workers with the skills to leverage technology effectively.

Public Awareness:

- **Living Wage Education:** We're raising awareness about what constitutes a living wage for domestic workers.
- **Domestic Worker Experiences:** This report sheds light on the lived experiences of domestic workers and supports us to encourage employers and industry roleplayers to adopt better practices.



Conclusion



What can you as an employer of a domestic worker do to effect change?

Fair Compensation: Ensure your domestic worker receives a living wage. Assess your current pay practices using tools like the Living Wage Calculator (living-wage.co.za).

Respectful Treatment: Treat your domestic worker with dignity and respect. Be mindful of their physical and mental wellbeing, recognising the additional responsibilities many face as caregivers. Promote mental health awareness and support access to resources like The Warrior Project (<https://thewarriorproject.org.za/>) if they experience abuse.

Legal Compliance: Adhere to labour laws, including the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Sectoral Determination Seven on Domestic Work, and the National Minimum Wage. Uphold their rights to annual leave, sick leave, lunch breaks, and reasonable working hours. (For a comprehensive guide, visit izwi.org.za).

Shared Resources: Consider sharing bulk food purchases with your domestic worker. This can help alleviate their higher food costs due to limited buying power and transportation options.

Community Engagement: Advocate for fair domestic worker pay within your social circles and community. Share this report's insights and participate in initiatives supporting economically vulnerable groups. Use your voice on social media to raise awareness about the challenges faced by domestic workers.



Key Recommendations

Review and Expansion of Legal Protections:

- **Prioritise enforcement:** Government and labour departments must allocate resources to actively enforce existing minimum wage and labour laws that safeguard domestic workers.
- **Innovative solutions:** Collaborate with technology partners to develop user-friendly solutions that simplify compliance and make it easier for everyone to follow labour regulations in private households.
- **Tailored legislation:** Acknowledge the diverse nature of domestic work, often involving multiple employers and irregular schedules, and adapt legal protections to reflect these realities and protect all workers.

Improve Access to Continued Education and Training:

- **Accessible education:** The government should implement affordable education programs, scholarships, and flexible learning opportunities designed for domestic workers, while actively promoting these initiatives.
- **Employer support:** Employers can play a vital role by offering financial assistance, flexible schedules, on-the-job training, and even simple gestures like providing internet access to support their workers' educational goals.
- **Private sector engagement:** Businesses can contribute through sponsorships, mentorship, resource centers, and initiatives that provide technology access and training, empowering domestic workers to pursue further education.

Improved Access to Mental Healthcare:

- **Invest in mental wellbeing:** Expand access to affordable, high-quality mental health services for domestic workers, especially those grappling with unemployment and financial stress.
- **Community-based support:** Train religious leaders and community members to recognise and address mental health needs within their congregations, offering an additional layer of support for domestic workers.
- **Safe and accessible spaces:** Create safe environments for women to exercise and connect with nature, promoting mental wellbeing and overall health.



Key Recommendations

Increased Support for Workers Facing Abuse:

- **Encourage reporting:** Foster a safe and supportive environment where domestic workers feel empowered to report abuse, both in their homes and workplaces.
- **Education and awareness:** Launch comprehensive campaigns to educate the public, employers, law enforcement, and communities about the signs of abuse, how to intervene, and the legal rights of domestic workers.
- **Practical assistance for survivors:** Offer financial aid, legal support, and resources to help survivors of abuse leave dangerous situations and rebuild their lives.

Collaboration and Collective Action:

- **Partnerships for change:** Encourage collaboration between government agencies, private companies, and civil society organisations to tackle the complex challenges facing domestic workers.
- **Evidence-based solutions:** Use data and research to inform policies and develop effective strategies for improving working conditions and mental health in the domestic work sector.
- **Raise your voice:** Advocate for fair wages, safe working conditions, and access to mental health support for domestic workers. By raising public awareness and promoting these values, we can drive positive change and create a more just and equitable sector.

Contact Information

2024

SweepSouth

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www.sweepsouth.com

For media enquiries, contact:
marketing@sweepsouth.com

For data-sharing and academic
enquiries, contact:
data@sweepsouth.com



Authors

Luke Kannemeyer
Reut Agasi (Independent Consultant)

Design

Kelley Wayne
Caterina Toffoli-Metcalf

With special thanks to

Dean Hopf
Rishka Matthews
Kevin Mafuwe
Kyra Beth
The SweepSouth Team
Irvine Partners
All the respondents