

Title: *Towards Official Balance Sheet Estimates for South Africa's Household Sector*

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Official balance sheet estimates for the household sector are not currently available in South Africa. Yet with South Africa's well-developed financial sector and deep capital markets, asset market channels are likely to be important determinants of aggregate consumer spending and saving, consumers' demand for credit and their broad money holdings. This paper aims to produce comprehensive estimates of household balance sheets for South Africa. The paper draws, where feasible, on best practice from the Office of National Statistics of the UK. The paper assesses the quality of the data sources and suggests areas where additional surveys or improvements in data collection procedures would be helpful to further improve the quality of the balance sheet estimates. Furthermore, quarterly balance sheet measures to 2003 are provided, and linked to quarterly measures constructed in Aron and Muellbauer (2006a). The main balance sheet categories are liquid assets, household debt and various categories of illiquid financial and tangible assets, including pension wealth, directly held shares and bonds, and housing. Revised debt estimates and new estimates of tangible assets for households and unincorporated businesses are provided. The paper describes the trends of the estimates of the household sector's balance sheets and of total net wealth.