

# MEDIA RELEASE

21 February 2020

## Poverty and Inequality in Australia

**EMBARGOED TILL 10:30am Friday 21 February 2020**

The St Vincent de Paul National Council welcomes the release today of *Poverty & Inequality in Australia*, the report published by ACOSS and UNSW in Sydney.

National Council CEO, Toby oConnor said the report shows that more than one in eight adults and one in six children (that's 774,000) live below the poverty line.

'The next generation is set up for failure because of increased housing costs and failed policy around social housing, stagnant rates of income support and slow wage growth', he said.

'The Government can reduce poverty by boosting jobs growth, increasing Newstart and Rent Assistance and investing in social housing.

'In Australia the poverty line, which is measured as 50 per cent of median income, is \$457 a week for a single adult. The average poverty gap (the gap between the poverty line and the incomes of people in poverty) is \$282 a week.

'The report highlights the persistent, deepening poverty in Australia – 42 per cent of households in poverty are living on average at 42 per cent below the poverty line, compared to 34 per cent in 2007.

'Every day, Vincentians work with people who are struggling with a range of issues in communities across Australia. For many, their struggle is exacerbated by persistent, grinding poverty.

'Today's report is an important measure of poverty in Australia. We track GDP and other economic indicators we consider important.

'We must also track poverty, or nothing will change,' Mr oConnor said.

*The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia consists of 60,000 members and volunteers who operate on the ground through over 1,000 conferences located in individual parishes across the country.*

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**Media contact: Judith Tokley 0408 824 306 / [media@svdp.org.au](mailto:media@svdp.org.au)**