



New methods of knowledge production and reaching communities

Young ethnographers explore hunger

Page 10

Service delivery in Nyanga: Officials and residents in dialogue

Page 12

HSRC Press: New books

Page 27

Contents

News roundup	1
Promoting municipal ownership of innovation assessment tools	1
Seminars focus on new approaches to research methodology	2
Internationally renowned historian honoured	3
HSRC collaborates with OUTA on research policy issues	4
Living in a transforming world: the challenge for researchers	5
Urgent intervention needed to build capacity in district land reform	6
The three 'P's of inclusive growth: Participation, place-based and partnership	8
Young ethnographers explore land hunger	10
Service delivery challenges in Nyanga: City of Cape Town officials and residents in dialogue	12
HIV-positive mothers supported to disclose their status: A potential benefit to their children	15
Researching subsidised housing: The challenge of getting the community on board	18
School climate and mathematics achievement: Can the children learn?	21
A nuanced approach to adolescent sexual and reproductive health services legislation: Is it enough?	23
Enhancing healthcare services for sexual and gender minorities in Africa: More inclusive policies needed	25

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Editor's note

When renowned historian Prof. Charles van Onselen received the HSRC's Medal in Social Sciences and Humanities in August, he reflected on the role of these disciplines in addressing the rather volatile social and political climate in South Africa.

“Unlike in the natural sciences, there simply are no ‘iron laws’ in our disciplines that determine the myriad ways in which class and colour, culture and gender, ethnic and racial identity, modernity and tradition, honour and shame, the law and social justice, or poverty and wealth can either help bind us or divide us as we yearn to reduce the appalling levels of conflict and violence that wrack our society,” Van Onselen said in his acceptance speech.

Our inability to listen to each other fuels this climate where people resort to insults, internet trolling, open letters, sloganeering, and even physical violence and property destruction to be heard. Researchers have also realised that they can no longer fixate on traditional methods of generating knowledge to explain this conflicted world.

This year, the HSRC conducted a series of seminars that addressed current challenges to research methodologies within the humanities and social sciences. In this edition, we feature some HSRC projects where researchers relied on new approaches and some non-traditional methods to understand specific challenges that some communities face.

A collaborative HSRC project to deepen insights into the nature and extent of land hunger in rural South Africa provided some valuable insights based on stories told in communities and a combination of other research methods. Young emerging scholars and ethnographers from universities across South Africa joined HSRC research teams in selected district municipalities. They were asked to use their own initiative and apply ethnographic techniques, including in-depth interviews, life histories, observation and case studies, to

shed new light on land hunger.

Using a scorecard method in another project, HSRC researchers involved community members in a participatory action research approach to improve the understanding and practices around service delivery, living conditions and community engagement in Nyanga, a marginalised area of Cape Town. A rather innovative component of this approach was a physical verification day where participants from the City and members of the community joined and evaluated the service provision together. The research process allowed intense discussions that unveiled specific challenges and facilitated understanding between city officials and community members who only months before were experiencing high levels of mistrust and conflict. The researchers say that the collaborative approach and outcomes of this study serve to highlight the potential of using participatory and action research tools and adapting and mixing methodologies to promote a better understanding of service delivery and actual change.

A Gauteng project looked to design a community entry strategy that researchers can use to gain access to subsidised housing projects. In many urban areas, a knock on the door suffices. The homeowner will either let the field worker in or chase them away. In other areas, a researcher needs to get permission from community leaders, the police and local councillors before they enter. This study emphasised the importance of community consent and unique contextual challenges to conducting research in certain communities.

I recently joined the HSRC as science writer and editor of the HSRC Review after several years as a research communication practitioner at the CSIR and a specialist health reporter at Beeld newspaper. I look forward to your comments on these articles.

Antoinette Oosthuizen

News roundup

Promoting municipal ownership of innovation assessment tools

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) hosted a seminar at the end of August to promote the ownership of innovation assessment tools among resource-poor local municipalities.

Informal innovation in rural South Africa is important for growth in local economies, which is why the HSRC's Economic Performance and Development (EPD) research programme designed and led the implementation of a set of measurement tools to monitor, assess and enhance the performance of rural innovation systems. The Rural Innovation Assessment Toolbox (RIAT) toolbox includes a mapping tool, which maps local innovation landscapes, as well as participatory and reflexive learning workshops that promote stakeholder conversations, and in-depth case studies that help identify and support innovative initiatives with widespread and lasting developmental impact.

Prof. Joseph Francis, a rural development expert based at University of Venda who also leads RIAT activities in two local municipalities in Ehlanzeni, facilitated the event.

The targeted delegates included officials working in 16 resource-poor local municipalities, particularly the municipal managers and personnel responsible for local economic development, and university personnel working on the project. The municipalities form the hubs where RIAT has been piloted since 2015 in an effort to collect and store information to foster impactful local innovations. Municipalities can



use these tools for their decisions and actions on socio-economic development based on trustworthy evidence.

The seminar enabled the DST, through its Innovation for Local Economic Development programme, to gauge if pilot municipalities are adopting the toolbox for local innovation assessments following exposure to the benefits of using the tools for the last two years. To ensure that the use of the toolbox becomes the norm in these municipalities, the institutionalisation of the toolbox remains the focus of the third phase of the RIAT programme that will conclude in April 2018.

The EPD team explained the working definition of institutionalisation and how the team applied it in this context for best-practice results. They also listed efforts to forge networks between local municipalities and universities for innovation-driven local social and

economic development. Participating universities, in turn, shared their insights about variations in the depth and solidity of institutionalisation in pilot municipalities.

Conversations to bridge the uneven patterns of institutionalisation were lively. Participants explored the broader conceptions of rural innovation and how resource-poor municipalities stand to benefit from the ownership and use of RIAT. Officials also shared their experience of working within municipal governance systems, which were crucial in fine-tuning the steps for making RIAT an organic element of the practices and procedures of municipalities. These grassroots champions of RIAT also agree on the importance of diffusing these local innovation information and decision tools to non-pilot municipalities in future.

Read more about RIAT [here](#)

News roundup

Seminars focus on new approaches to research methodology

Traditional research methods to understand and improve the lives of society's most disenfranchised communities have come under scrutiny. Do researchers really "see" the communities or is it time for a power shift where communities tell their own stories in new ways?

This year, the HSRC held several seminars to address current challenges to research methodologies within the humanities and social sciences.

The focus of a seminar in May was to introduce decolonised research methods as an approach that disrupts Western and Eurocentric ways of knowing and knowledge production. The Western approach sees research as an objective and value-free activity that can make sense of human and natural realities, while decolonised methods attempt to restructure power relations in the research process to honour the knowledge and strengths in diverse communities. The latter methods inherently promote social justice by exposing and questioning the power dynamics of society.

Prof. Sharlene Swartz, deputy executive director, and Dr Sarah Chiumbu, a senior research specialist in the HSRC's Human and Social Development (HSD) research programme, provided practical examples of ways to decolonise research based on Linda Tuhiwai Smith's book's *Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2001). They sought to show that decolonising research strategies are less about the struggle for method and more about the spaces that make decolonising research possible.

Chiumbu said knowledge outside the bounds of Western modernity is often ignored, marginalised or



Decolonised research methods as an approach that disrupts Western and Eurocentric ways of knowing

repressed. "Therefore our very own understanding of the social world remains largely colonised without us even being aware of it...our framework as researchers and our ways of being, speaking, listening, knowing, relating and seeing is rooted in Euro-American ideals informed by Western knowledge systems."

Later in May, Dr Alude Mahali, a research specialist in the HSD programme, spoke about ethnographic film as methodology.

In August, Candice Groenewald-Rule, also from the HSD programme, spoke about doing sensitive research using a life history tool and storytelling, and in September, Molemo Ramphalile from the HSD programme spoke about how research methods should take into account people's ability to learn by discovering things themselves.

Dr Hester du Plessis, chief research specialist and head of science communication in the HSRC's Research Use and Impact Assessment unit, says researchers in humanities employ methods that are ahistorical, interpretive and analytical in nature because the human experience cannot be adequately captured by facts and figures alone. "The scope of humanities-based methodologies far exceeds that of the scientific method by making use of methods such as visual communication (film documentaries) and literature (poems and essays)," she says.

Du Plessis says researchers using social science methods often have to move beyond their disciplinary training into 'unmarked' territory with limited disciplinary support or guidance. The challenge is to debate the appropriateness of new approaches to research methodologies that will bring the humanities and social sciences closer to each other.

"The call is that we need to begin to 'dare' research methodologies in a qualitative manner, as the space for new knowledge is becoming a highly contested area ... This daring means unpacking different forms of knowledge and challenging the notion that knowledge is universal. This includes looking at the fault lines between what is perceived to be international 'Western' knowledge and the knowledge of local indigenous communities."



News roundup

Van Onselen awarded medal for social sciences

Prof. Charles van Onselen, a research professor in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria received the HSRC's Medal in Social Sciences and Humanities at the second annual HSRC awards ceremony in August. These Awards recognise the role of the social sciences and humanities in transforming society.

Van Onselen is an internationally renowned historian and one of only a few A-rated scholars in South Africa. His work straddles a number of disciplinary domains and has a bearing on the fields of historical studies, sociology, criminology and cultural studies.

Reflecting on the significance of these awards, HSRC CEO Prof. Crain Soudien said, "It has become more important than ever that we in the social sciences understand what drives human behaviour so that we are able to implement meaningful and sustainable solutions to increasingly severe challenges. Despite all our knowledge, the human condition is severely affected by deepening conditions of poverty and inequality.

In accepting the award, Van Onselen emphasised this point.

"Unlike in the natural sciences, there simply are no 'iron laws' in our disciplines that determine the myriad ways in which class and colour, culture and gender, ethnic and racial identity, modernity and tradition, honour and shame, the law and social justice, or poverty and wealth can either help bind us or divide us as we yearn to reduce the appalling levels of conflict and violence that wrack our society," he said.



"... everyday challenges have more to do with the need for an 'intelligent reading' of individual and collective human behaviour than with the 'routinely recited' need for more maths, science and technology ..."

Van Onselen added that the problem is not that South Africa has too many graduates in the humanities and social sciences, but rather that too few of them are trained to the requisite levels in the corporate world, civil service, law-enforcement agencies, parliament and universities. He believes many of the everyday challenges that leaders in these institutions face, have more to do with the need for an "intelligent reading" of individual and collective human behaviour than with "the routinely recited" need for more maths, science and technology.

"In our political life and in Parliament, one is often struck by just how confused, how uneducated, how inarticulate or just plain stupid a fair

number of our public representatives are when it comes to trying to present a coherent, integrated or rounded analysis of economic or social problems before reverting to mere sloganeering. We sometimes appear to be chronically incapable of joining the dots that would give us a more informed and subtle understanding," he said.

Van Onselen said that this "stunted understanding" of the plight of the human condition is not a peculiarly South African problem and can also be seen in other countries, including Britain, parts of Europe and the United States.

He said that the answers to setting right these deficiencies lie in the fields of education, the humanities and the social sciences.

"Care and commitment, compassion and insight, feeling and empathy, an understanding of the subterranean things that we sense but often do not see - the very stuff of civilised societies everywhere are - I would argue, more easily cultivated in the deep soils of the arts, language, literature, music, history, political science and sociology than they are in the carefully furrowed fields of allied and complementary, but often exclusively scientific, endeavours."

[Links](#) to Van Onselen's acceptance speech and citation.



News roundup

HSRC EXPLORES COLLABORATING WITH OUTA ON RESEARCH POLICY ISSUES



The HSRC recently signed an agreement to collaborate with the Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA) on policy, legislation and governance work.

“The collaboration will focus on meaningful research that is truthful and objective in nature, contributing to the ongoing positive development of South Africa through the identification of key issues in society,” says Dr Hester du Plessis, chief research specialist and head of science communication at the HSRC’s Research Use and Impact Assessment unit (RIA). The collaboration was driven by Du Plessis and Erin Klazar, OUTA’s head of research.

OUTA recently sent a petition to Parliament calling for legislation on public participation requirements to be amended to block such participation from running from mid-December to mid-January, as this holiday period has been used to push through controversial policy and legislation. This is the first of many policy issues that OUTA would like to be involved in challenging, but support is required in the ongoing engagement with government and society. This is where research support from the HSRC will be invaluable.

The HSRC undertakes a substantial body of science engagement activities, encouraging discussions between academics, business, policy makers, civil society and the general public.

The collaboration will allow for participation in the HSRC seminars, providing information to the RIA online Policy Action Network (PAN), the RIA Policy Action Network – Children (PAN-Children), the production and dissemination of policy briefs and the RIA publication of the *HSRC Review*.

Wayne Duvenage, OUTA’s Chairman, called the agreement an exciting development.

“We believe that OUTA’s engagement and collaboration with the HSRC will set the scene for meaningful and constructive thought leadership research,” says Duvenage. “We are grateful to the HSRC leadership for enabling this engagement. We see it as a clear display of progressive thinking and a way of embracing the role of civil society in the work you do. We’re looking forward to developing the mutually beneficial energy between us,” he says.

The collaboration will focus on developing appropriate policies and legislation to promote integration in government development programmes and service delivery. It will help to provide strategic interventions, support and partnerships to facilitate policy implementation in provincial and local government; and to create enabling mechanisms for communities to participate in governance.



News roundup

Living in a transforming world: The challenge for researchers



Scientific evidence has demonstrated beyond doubt that the planet is under threat and that human activities are the main contributors. A better understanding of the inter-relatedness of all human actions with those of Earth’s systems, is crucial for sustainable development and our future survival.

In September, more than 300 experts from across the globe shared their experience and discussed these and other challenges of global sustainable development at the 4th International Conference on Research for Development (ICRD) in Bern, Switzerland. The conference was organised by the Swiss Program for Research on Global Issues for Development, the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation and the Swiss National Science Foundation. Dr Hester du Plessis, chief research specialist and head of science communication in the HSRC’s Research Use and Impact Assessment unit, attended.

“The main frame of reference for the discussions was the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development within the context of the anthropogenic ‘great acceleration’. Scientific evidence of this ‘great acceleration’ has by now demonstrated beyond doubt that the planet is under threat and that human activities are the main contributors towards the unstableness of the planetary system,” says Du Plessis.

These include rising ‘graphic spikes’ indicating aspects driven by excessive human population growth

in areas of greenhouse gas levels, ocean acidification, deforestation and biodiversity deterioration. As a species with population growth going unchecked we over-consume, dam and pollute our water sources, exceed energy consumption, fertiliser consumption, paper production, tropical forest harvesting, ocean pollution, over-fishing and many others. As a result, we experience growing challenges of human ‘climate migration’, loss of natural resources challenging agricultural practices, and health issues linked with global epidemics and pandemics.

“No discipline, research theme or country is unaffected by what is popularly termed as ‘living in unstable times’ and ‘living in times of growing chaos’ due to the human population’s impact on planetary resources. Experts from across the globe shared their experiences in managing key global trade-offs and synergies among sustainable development goals and related targets. It was generally acknowledged that better knowledge of these interdependencies is required to balance conflicting interests, set priorities, and to steer the transformation process towards sustainable development in extremely unstable times.”

Du Plessis says a key message that emerged at the conference is that the focus on the interface between science and policy is too narrow; the role of society must also be considered. Where possible, newly generated knowledge should be shared directly with the

public and enable anyone interested to influence policymaking.

Researchers should also consider the wider political context in which they operate when designing and conducting their research, thinking in advance about whose interests their research may or may not serve. Improving science communication is central to making sustainable development science more understandable, trustworthy, and useful to policymakers and to the wider public.

Researchers and research funders ought to take more risks, including addressing politically sensitive topics, supporting capacity building, increasing participation, and building long-term partnerships across disciplinary, sectoral, and societal divides. To that end, experienced scientists should use their accumulated knowledge to offer policy advice when opportunities arise.

According to Du Plessis the conference added considerable value in understanding and addressing the challenges of sustainable development.

“More resilience is required in the human-planetary interaction to absorb disturbance and to reorganise societies undergoing change to retain the same function, structure, identity, and feedbacks. A resilience thinking approach will therefore assist in trying to investigate how these interacting systems of people and nature – or social-ecological systems – can best be managed.



URGENT INTERVENTION NEEDED TO BUILD CAPACITY IN DISTRICT LAND REFORM

Many district land reform committees are not functioning optimally, yet only a few were willing to participate in an HSRC research and capacity building project.

*Tim Hart and
Prof. Leslie Bank report.*



Tim Hart and Prof. Leslie Bank

More than a year after the establishment of district land reform committees across South Africa to facilitate the identification of transferable land and beneficiaries, several of these committees are functioning either sub-optimally or not at all. To address this, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) needs to revisit the mandate of these committees as well as that of key state departments that are involved in land reform at provincial, district and local level.

This was the finding and the recommendation after the HSRC conducted a research and capacity building intervention for selected district land reform committees in 10 districts across South Africa. Researchers completed the 10-month project in August.

The intention of the committees

Land reform in the agricultural sector remains high on the political agenda and is considered an

essential economic contribution to rural development and food security at household and national level. Flowing from recommendations of the National Planning Commission and for the purposes of the National Development Plan, district land reform committees were set up in all 44 districts by mid-2016. These committees are intended to be multi-stakeholder platforms representative of various local constituents in each district. Their purpose is to facilitate and fast track the agricultural land redistribution process to ensure that at least 20% of land is redistributed in each district by 2030. Using a community-led decentralised approach, the committees have to identify local land needs and farming land that can be acquired without distorting the land market. This could typically include land that has already been placed on the market, land owned by absentee property owners who are willing to participate in redistribution, or land in a deceased estate.

Supporting the committees

The focus of the HSRC project was to increase the capacity of the committees to conduct basic research on land use and needs, invoking a participatory framework in conjunction with specific interest groups and communities at large. The researchers also piloted strategies to reach out to these sections of the local community.

The intervention was located in 10 districts across Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape (see Figure 1). The land available for agricultural redistribution varied in size, type, contemporary usage and pricing, so did the needs of residents. Some people wanted land for household cultivation, some for commercial cultivation, while others needed land for housing and household cultivation (particularly former farm-dwellers). In the Western Cape, respondents indicated that land was very expensive and difficult to purchase as a result. In parts of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, some bemoaned the fact that land in traditional areas was lying idle, as those with permission to use this land were not doing so. In Limpopo, people were concerned about the general shortage of land for farming. Therefore, the findings of the study were diverse across districts.

Non-functioning committees

The main finding of the study was that despite more than a year of existence, some of the 10 committees studied were not

functioning as expected and three were not functioning at all.

In some districts, committees were involved in redistributing large tracts of farmland to a small number of recipients, while in other areas they were struggling to redistribute any land at all, apparently because of dysfunctional committees. For example, those in the Overberg and the Cape Winelands were not functioning at all and the committee in Amathole crumbled during the study period. The redistribution of large tracts of land to a few selected beneficiaries was largely due to the continued unwillingness to subdivide large farmland and the desire to transfer as many hectares as possible and as quickly as possible, irrespective of the socioeconomic class of those benefitting. The result was that mainly small groups of elite applicants received large tracts of land.

Too little participation

While most committees were interested in the research and capacity building project, few actually participated in the activities. Some felt that as volunteers they were already too busy dealing with existing applications for large-scale commercial farmland and thus could not get involved in more work for which they did not have the resources. Others were concerned that reaching out to a broader group of land seekers may raise expectations, which government would not be able to satisfy and this would put the committees in an awkward position. Many of the 10 committees were under-represented and consequently under-skilled, as they did not liaise with other important stakeholders in local municipalities, state departments or the commercial farming sector. In

Figure 1: Geographical location of the final LUNA Pilot Districts in South Africa



Source: Bank et al. (2017).

a few cases, the committees were frustrated with the slow procedures of government departments and attempted to move forward without their government partners, raising questions about adherence to their mandate and overall accountability.

Urgent need to step in

Local representatives chair the committees and the provincial arm of the DRDLR serves as their secretariat. Interestingly, both the secretariat and the management feel frustrated with the process indicating that the DRDLR needs to urgently step in and revisit the functioning of the committees regarding their mandate in terms of roles and responsibilities. This needs to be done on a regional basis and involve not only the committees but also key state departments at provincial, district and local level. While the HSRC study only covered 10 districts, subsequent to a scanning exercise,

there is a need to examine the functioning of the remaining 34 committees too.

The HSRC's partners included the University of Fort Hare and the University of KwaZulu-Natal. A number of postgraduate students participated in the research activities to develop their experience in applied research. The project was supported by the DRDLR and the Belgian Technical Cooperation (BRC).

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Reference:

Bank et al. 2017. Land Use and Needs Assessment District Land Reform Committee (DLRC) Research Capacity Building Pilot Project. Final report (31 August 2017) submitted to the DRDLR and the BTC.

THE THREE 'P'S OF INCLUSIVE GROWTH: PARTICIPATION, PLACE-BASED AND PARTNERSHIP

In a recent study that the HSRC undertook of socio-economic conditions in different parts of South Africa, one of the most striking findings was the persistence of local and regional disparities. Therefore, the inclusive growth agenda has to take citizen participation, place-based policies and public-private partnerships much more seriously, write *Prof. Ivan Turok* and *Dr Justin Visagie*.

Despite appearing to be polar opposites, orthodoxy and populism share an assumption that it is possible to engineer a flourishing society from above by the simple mechanism of transferring resources from one group to another. They focus on the distribution of income and assets, but leave intact the very economic and social structures that generate inequality and restrain prosperity.

Their centralised stance deflects attention from the need to build a more productive and integrated society from below. They overlook the many possibilities to mobilise the goodwill and energy of local citizens in the towns and cities where they live, work and invest.

Debates about national development often neglect the opportunities to establish a stronger society by building local institutions and bringing diverse groups of residents and firms together to combine their insights and experience.

Inclusive growth

The idea of inclusive growth implies developing an economy that

works for all by pursuing growth and redistribution simultaneously. Combining prosperity and fairness requires crafting together different values and realities that underpin efficiency and social justice. It can be summed up under the three 'P's of economic development, namely participation, place-based and partnership.

The principle of participation (or active citizenship) is at the heart of inclusive development. It gives people agency, dignity and a stake in society. It means enhancing their skills and capabilities to generate an income through employment or by running their own enterprises. Participation in decision-making is also vital to hold government to account and to press for higher standards of public services, schools and healthcare.

Place-based policies reflect the need for government strategies to be tailored to diverse local circumstances and grounded in local realities and opportunities. This facilitates more responsive public services and positive reinforcement between different economic and social interventions, leading to better results all round.

Places that function well attract investment, retain talent, empower communities and facilitate upward mobility over time.

Inclusive growth is also a collective endeavour involving government, business, labour and civil society recognising their shared destiny and engaging in practical problem solving. Cooperation is essential to overcome fear and anxiety in a fractured society, to build trust and understanding, and to discourage people who can afford to do so from opting out.

Recent developments

In a recent study that we undertook of socio-economic conditions in different places, one of the most striking findings was the relative progress made in the major cities compared with other localities.

Despite large-scale in-migration of poor and marginalised groups from rural areas and foreign countries, economic and social circumstances in the metros have improved to a greater extent than in the rest of South Africa. Unemployment is generally lower and average incomes are higher, so households

tend to be better off than elsewhere. Access to basic services is also superior and educational attainment is higher.

There are stronger signs of a virtuous circle of development emerging in the cities, whereby public and private investment in people and places is translated into a lower incidence of poverty and fewer problems of hunger and misery. Better infrastructure, more capable institutions and more resilient firms are reflected in superior job prospects, which provide sustainable routes out of poverty and exclusion. There is a (relatively) good story to tell.

Upward mobility

Redistributive programmes in the form of social grants and basic services have been skewed towards rural areas over the last decade. However, this support has not yielded the same cumulative impact as in the cities. Levels of destitution and unemployment in many rural areas remain very high. Social welfare appears to compensate rural communities for the lack of economic opportunities, rather

than to offer real mechanisms of upliftment.

One of the most striking findings is the progress experienced by households moving from the countryside to the big cities. People who remain in rural areas are far more likely to stay trapped in poverty than urban migrants. Therefore, the decision to migrate seems rational and pays off for many movers. This appears to be the first time that such clear evidence of upward mobility has come to light.

Policy lessons

Urbanisation should be acknowledged and endorsed as a means of fostering human development by bringing people closer to economic opportunities. Cities are the best places to integrate economic and social objectives and lift people out of poverty in sustainable ways. Creating jobs and viable enterprises is more cost-effective than elsewhere because of the substantial productivity advantages of agglomeration. It is no accident that 80% of the world's gross domestic

product is produced in cities. The United Nation's New Urban Agenda is all about harnessing this transformative power for the good of humanity.

Government policy should do more to support integrated urban development by providing serviced land, improved infrastructure and other public facilities to accommodate expanding populations and growing economies with less congestion, fewer bottlenecks and less sprawl. Investment in upgrading informal settlements and backyard shacks would reduce the intolerable overcrowding and vulnerability to fires, flooding and disease.

Authors: Prof. Ivan Turok is the executive director and Dr Justin Visagie a research specialist in the HSRC's Economic Performance and Development research programme. Their new report is called *The Meaning and Measure of Inclusive Growth in South Africa*.

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One of the most striking findings is the progress experienced by households moving from the countryside to the big cities.

YOUNG ETHNOGRAPHERS EXPLORE LAND HUNGER

Young emerging scholars and ethnographers joined HSRC research teams and gathered insightful case studies to shed new light on land hunger. *Prof. Leslie Bank, Tim Hart and Anele Abraham report.*

To deepen insights into the nature and extent of land hunger in rural South Africa, the HSRC's Economic Performance and Development research unit (EPD) initiated a research programme where young emerging scholars and ethnographers from universities across South Africa were funded on a competitive basis to join HSRC research teams in district municipalities.

The post-graduate students, recruited through the academic networks of Anthropology Southern Africa, were asked to use their own initiative and apply ethnographic techniques, including in-depth interviews, life histories, observation and case studies to shed new light on land hunger. A day of training took place prior to fieldwork, which was conducted in 10 district municipalities during July and August 2017.

In September, the EPD held a workshop in Cape Town where the ethnographers presented their in-depth case studies, interviews and photographs of the lives and experiences of small and struggling farmers across rural South Africa. The results were fascinating and revealed the serious deficiency in the current land reform programme in enabling small operators, former farm workers and dispossessed rural families to enter into any existing opportunity structure for upliftment and development on rural land.

The issue is not so much the amount of land that is being distributed – which, in many cases, is quite extensive – but rather how this land is being parcelled out and to whom, with small- and medium scale black farmers often receiving little support in their attempts to climb out of poverty.

Neglecting small-scale farmers

Various cases from the Western Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, found that land hunger in many rural areas took the form of a groundswell of demand for small tracts that could be developed with relatively modest government help. Small-scale farmers in Limpopo noted that they wanted between one and five hectares of land, as anything bigger was considered too risky until they had established themselves. Such demands run counter to conventional land-reform practice, which is to purchase and lease large farms, many of which become albatrosses around the neck of the state. In some areas, medium-sized redistributed farms

need to be rehabilitated or their agricultural purposes converted from game farming to livestock and crop farming. This makes the redistribution of some farms an impractical solution and enormous financial burden for the state, who chose to purchase these farms in the first place. One woman noted that her 'reconverted' farm was unsuitable for commercial livestock because natural water resources and forage were in short supply.

Conflicting interests

Cooperative projects were criticised for creating often-unworkable partnerships among large groups with widely divergent interests, with some individuals merely seeking to raise cash through leasing land out to non-members and showed no interest in the group's intentions. Others in the group sought to farm the land but were frustrated by the actions of 'tenants' who simply did as they pleased. Similarly, one farmer with a decade of experience, who had mentored farmers on several large estates, could not fathom why his lease agreement with the state required him to have a white farmer as his mentor. Others said that their experience was that state appointed mentors did not always have their interests at heart.

Inadequate support

Small-scale farmers reported continually seeking incremental, steady growth with state support but felt that they remain largely ignored. Cases roundly criticised the extension support in terms of capitalisation, mechanisation, seeds, and agricultural and business



training offered by the government as woefully inadequate, creating substantial frustration and anger.

Contrary to popular media and state opinion, several of the farmers interviewed indicated that they were producing for national markets. However, the ability to become established and to enter markets depended heavily on having access to an alternative income, either in the form of personal savings or through support from family members. They noted the transition out of poverty would be impossible without financial support but are scared of debt so loans are not an option when starting out.

An informal land-market

Through the presentation of the case studies, other themes emerged that the students agreed to incorporate more fully in their expanded case studies. There is a need to extend municipal commonages and for the local municipality to manage these fairly and efficiently. In recent years, there has been the rise of an informal

land-market in some traditional areas where outsiders purchase land from willing local residents with the traditional leader's permission, leaving the purchaser vulnerable to the whim of the traditional leader. Some cases suggested that some new farms acquired by the state are being leased to well-established beneficiaries of previous land redistribution models and to private elites rather than to new and needy farmers.

Going forward

The EPD hopes to make at least of 20 of the best and most insightful case studies available in a report, which will be shared with the head of the Research Directorate of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.

Besides building the academic and analytical capacity of the 15 participants in the project, the EPD converted some of the findings into feature articles that have been placed in local and national media to draw attention to the complexity of local land hunger and challenges

in rural areas.

The opportunities offered to the Masters and PhD students through participation in this initiative demonstrated that the HSRC could make more effective use of the reservoir of research talent located within universities and higher education institutions by engaging in creative, short-term projects with specific disciplinary networks. In this case, we felt that an anthropological and qualitative perspective was needed to deepen the understanding of rural land hunger and people's aspirations with respect to land, especially in view of the intensive and loaded political debate on the land issue.

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SERVICE DELIVERY CHALLENGES IN NYANGA: CITY OF CAPE TOWN OFFICIALS AND RESIDENTS IN DIALOGUE

Interactions around service delivery challenges in South Africa are often characterised by conflict and high levels of mistrust between communities and city officials. By bringing together city officials and residents from marginalised areas of Cape Town to participate in a research project, HSRC researchers found that poor communication and a lack of understanding of how city processes and services work are important contributing factors to this conflict.

Nyanga is one of the poorest townships in Cape Town and home to a marginalised community facing high unemployment. During 2016-2017, the HSRC, the City of Cape Town and a local NGO partnered to improve service delivery and citizen engagement practices in Mau Mau, Old Location and Zwelitsha.

These are three of Nyanga's most under-resourced areas and comprise a mix of formal, informal housing and backyard dwellings whose inhabitants face intricate social, political and economic dynamics.

Receiving funding support from the Tirelo Bosha – Public Service Improvement Facility of the Department of Public Service and Administration, the key objective of the project was to interact with community members and leaders, city officials, workers of an NGO called Project 90 by 2030, and thematic experts to identify the key challenges around electricity and water service provision in these areas.

The community scorecard

The aim was to develop a set of recommendations that would help improve the understanding and practices around service delivery, living conditions and community

engagement in Nyanga. The main tool was the community scorecard, a methodology used to engage local governments and communities in conversations to discuss challenges and opportunities around the provision of services. In international practice, it serves as a valuable monitoring instrument to measure the performance of services through a comparison of user and service provider experiences. All research methods were grounded on the principles of the Participatory Action Research approach that aims to carefully gather and reflect on the lived experiences and bring together the various, and often antagonistic, views of all stakeholders.

While this was a new project, it had its roots and flourished out of the collaborative work by the HSRC, the City of Cape Town and National Treasury between 2014 and 2016 under the Cities Support Programme. During that collaboration, HSRC researchers adapted and piloted, for the first time in South Africa, the community scorecard in a ward. This first pilot project planted the seeds for a working relationship with the Utilities Services Department of the City of Cape Town that championed and fully supported researchers

in all stages of implementation for both projects.

In Nyanga, where the situation was particularly complex, the HSRC partnered with Project 90 by 2030 to enhance a collaborative relationship with community structures and to ensure optimal implementation of field work.

Joint effort to evaluate

Over the course of 4-16 weeks, the researchers conducted a carefully tailored set of workshops that constitute the community scorecard process allowing a facilitated dialogue between City officials and community representatives (see Table 1). A key component of the scorecard method was a physical verification day (or scorecard day) where participants from the City and the community joined and evaluated the service provision together (see pictures 1 and 2).



Picture 1: Community members accompany city officials and researchers to score services.



Picture 2: Residents and city officials examining infrastructure.

Table 1: The community scorecard method

Community scorecard workshops	Description
Criteria development Community leaders	Facilitated by researchers to identify the experiences and needs of residents around water and electricity services. The outcome is a list of community indicators to evaluate these services.
Criteria development City officials	Same as above. The outcome is a list of City water and electricity indicators.
Scorecard development Community leaders and City officials	Residents and City officials come together to agree on the indicators for a shared scorecard instrument gathering issues that both parties want to evaluate.
Scorecard day City officials, community leaders and residents	Together, all participants go into the streets and homes to evaluate service provision and local realities.
Discussing findings Community leaders and City officials	Researchers present the findings from the scoring exercise facilitating a discussion to identify ideas for change and opportunities for collaboration.
Evaluation Community leaders	Community participants evaluate what was useful, why and what could be done in the future
Evaluation City officials	As above. City officials evaluate what was useful, why and what could be done in the future

The community scorecard process was preceded by months of background research to understand the local context, community dynamics and identify key stakeholders. The overall process allowed intense discussions that unveiled specific challenges and

facilitated collaborative relationships and understandings between city officials and community members who only months before were experiencing high levels of mistrust and conflict. While this research method was the core of the project, researchers applied other research

methodological tools such as focus group discussions and follow-up activities aimed at identifying entry points for sustaining changes.

Indeed, a major recurring theme seemed to be the poor communication between citizens

and the City and a lack of understanding on how specific City processes and services work. These included, not knowing what they should report where; how to follow up when problems are not fixed; and when the City is or is not responsible for particular issues. Although the researchers recommend that more consistent work is needed to sustain change, in the evaluation workshop discussions, participants expressed how the project helped them in at least three important ways. It increased City officials' awareness of local realities and challenges around participation and service provision as well as citizens' understanding of City processes and structures. It also strengthened collaboration between officials and the community to improve the provision and maintenance of services.

More collaboration needed

The researchers found that service delivery challenges (and protests) often emanate from communication failures. Therefore, more collaborative spaces are needed to improve provision of basic services and understanding of each other's (the City's and the citizens') realities, needs and resources. Improving communication and active participation processes for residents to provide ideas and communicate constructively with the City, is key.

An infrastructure overload

It was also found that service provision to backyarders is a major challenge for the City, mainly as a result of infrastructure overloading and restricted access for maintenance. This creates unfair conditions for citizens living in these conditions, who are often at the mercy of landlords and can't access benefits such as electricity subsidies.

Private contractors who provide services on behalf of the City play an important role in the service delivery matrix. Therefore, the researchers recommend that monitoring needs to be strengthened to improve quality of the provision and to safeguard the relationship between residents and the City.

The researchers found that City officials are often overworked and under-resourced, particularly for community engagement. Especially junior officials need more support to engage with the community in a meaningful and mindful way.

Value of new research methods

The collaborative approach and outcomes of this frontline service delivery study serve to highlight the potential of using participatory and action research tools and adapting and mixing methodologies to promote not only better understandings of service delivery, but to promote actual change. This experience should be useful to policy makers, activists and academics interested in social research approaches aimed at enhancing local agency to build collaborations to support transformation around service delivery and citizen engagement practices.

Collaboration between officials, residents, politicians, researchers and NGOs is not easy, as it requires time, resources and flexibility to align each other's understandings and needs. However, if we want to improve service delivery and community engagement practices, particularly in marginalised contexts, multi-stakeholder collaboration and applying the principles of participatory action research are essential.

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HIV-POSITIVE MOTHERS

supported to disclose their status: A potential benefit to their children

Research shows nearly one in four HIV-infected people with children have not had the courage to tell them. Yet, children of HIV-positive parents face significant developmental, health and psychological challenges, particularly in communities where the stigma is high. The HSRC's Dr Tamsen RoCHAT and a team of researchers from the African Health Research Institute in KwaZulu-Natal led the Amagugu intervention, which successfully increased the levels of disclosure among a group of mothers with young children in KwaZulu-Natal. These findings were published in the medical journal *The Lancet HIV* in August.

The World Health Organisation recommends that parents disclose their HIV status to children under the age of twelve, but there is little guidance on how to approach this with children. Studies show that mothers benefit from disclosing their status. It reduces stigma and improves adherence to HIV treatment, their parent-child and family relationships and their mental health. Their children also benefit from improved mental health, but also because mothers who disclose tend to plan better for custody and care of their children in periods of illness.

The Amagugu intervention

The Amagugu intervention took place at the Africa Health Research Institute in a rural, HIV-endemic region of KwaZulu-Natal where HIV treatment coverage is good. A total of 428 HIV-positive women on antiretroviral treatment with HIV-uninfected children aged 6-9 years completed the trial.

RoCHAT and her team wanted to address maternal avoidant coping.

These mothers cope with HIV by distancing themselves from the problem, and by avoiding communication about it within their family and close relationships. They try to forget or avoid the day-to-day stressors of being HIV infected. However, open communication with children about parental chronic or terminal illness is important. Although parents want to protect their children from a painful truth, the realities of living with HIV often mean that children become aware that things have changed for their parent. They notice signs, symptoms and medication, and can worry more if they are not reassured. Avoiding open communication can affect the quality of the parent-child relationship and create more stress in the parenting role, affecting the child negatively.

Shifting to active coping

The Amagugu intervention aimed to shift maternal parenting behaviour to an active coping style, by disclosing their HIV status to the child and by addressing issues linked to the

children's well-being, such as health education and custody planning. The aim of the study was to compare the efficacy of the Amagugu intervention with that of a single counselling session at a primary healthcare facility, the standard-of-care group that represented the status quo for women who seek healthcare in that community. The participants were randomly assigned to the Amagugu intervention or the single session.

Home-based counselling

The Amagugu intervention included six home-based counselling sessions conducted by trained lay counsellors over a period of 8-12 weeks. The counsellors provided printed material and activities to support age-appropriate disclosure and to prepare the mothers for their children's emotional reactions and questions after disclosure. The mothers were able to choose whether they wanted to partially disclose (using the word virus) or fully disclose (using the term HIV) or not at all.



Rochat explains, “There is no way to make HIV disclosure to a younger child easy for parents, but the Amagugu intervention focused on making it manageable and on providing the parent with tools to ensure a good outcome for the child. Amagugu participants were supported with user-friendly age-appropriate materials to approach the topic in a way a child would understand. Parents had a chance to prepare for the disclosure, which resulted in it going better than if it was unplanned, or came as a result of something stressful like illness or hospitalisation.”

The results

The results of the study show that 92% of the Amagugu intervention group disclosed their HIV status to their children and only 57% of the group who received the standard-of-care group. In the Amagugu group, 68% of mothers fully disclosed using the term HIV, versus 44% in the standard-of-care group.

Both groups showed improvements in maternal and child mental health, family functioning, health-related quality of life, and overall parenting stress. However, dysfunctional relationship scores between parents and children in the Amagugu intervention group were significantly lower than in the other group.

HIV-infected parents have multiple stressors, including strained family relationships, which complicate care planning for children. When HIV disclosure does not occur, or if it occurs during periods of maternal illness, children are more likely to have emotional and behavioural difficulties and risk of neglect. Timely maternal disclosure of HIV status, with planning before illness, might mitigate some of the

effects of maternal HIV-illness on children.

A key aspect of the Amagugu intervention was that primary school children had the opportunity to learn about HIV and become familiar with their local healthcare clinic with mothers being more likely to take them along on clinic visits.

Improved custody planning by mothers in this group can decrease the likelihood of children being moved between households, separated from siblings or placed in foster care when they fall ill or die.

The outcome of the trial suggests that without an intervention that actively encourages parents to deal with communication about HIV, health education and care planning, the rates of these actions remain low, which is concerning since the absence of these actions confer risks.

Child-friendly tools

A key component that makes Amagugu successful is the materials and tools, says Rochat. “The research has confirmed that providing colorful, branded, child-friendly materials helped mothers have the confidence to address a difficult issue. It was important to community stakeholders and participants that the researchers used illustrations that reflected South African culture and portrayed families in a positive way.”

One community stakeholder explained, “...to have something that looks like you, not like a cartoon with black coloured skin or those stupid things you know, but that really looks like you, your culture, the colours, your hair, the way people dress, you just don’t see things like that... and then you say,

A key component that makes Amagugu successful is the materials and tools

‘Hey look at this – this is really cool. I’m a Zulu guy and this looks like me, this looks like my family’ ... it’s really positive and its counts for a lot, and it says something about who you are and how you want to help and respect people in this community.”

Similarly, mothers said,

“I cannot believe that somebody made something so beautiful to help me.”

“When we started, I was not caring much to do it, now I am really look forward to doing all these steps with the child.”

“I was so nervous about the telling, saying the words, but now I see how the body map works, I can just show the child and take myself there easy.”

The trial, funded by the National Institutes of Health through the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, signals an important milestone for South African-led psychological research aimed at addressing the challenges faced by HIV-infected parents raising HIV-uninfected children. This is the first trial testing a parental HIV disclosure intervention to show positive outcomes on the African continent.

Rochat says, “Amagugu is a great example of how South African researchers can innovate and lead on much-needed psychological research aimed at improving the outcomes of HIV-infected parents living on treatment. In addition, providing HIV prevention education

to young children is crucial in the South African context where their risk is high of becoming HIV-infected as they reach adolescence. The epidemic is evolving, parents are living longer on treatment, and given the success of HIV prevention programmes in pregnancy these parents are raising predominantly HIV-uninfected children. We need to address and respond to the parenting needs of this rapidly growing population. Supporting them to communicate with their children about HIV is central to that.”

Rochat also believes that in resource-constrained settings, it is critical to invest resources where you know they can have impact. “Our health system functions under immense pressure given our large HIV treatment programme. Often, the most rural and poorest do not have access to the additional support needed to live positively with HIV. Amagugu addresses this by empowering lay health workers in their communities and by transferring skills to parents that will help them in the longer term. While the question remains whether Amagugu will show effectiveness at a larger scale, the national Department of Health now has robust evidence to support this additional investment in children and families, with a very good chance of success.”

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Researching subsidised housing: The challenge of getting the community on board

Community entry is the starting point when conducting research in urban dwellings. HSRC researchers encountered some interesting challenges with community entry while researching beneficiary satisfaction with subsidised housing in Gauteng. *Catherine Ndinda, Konosoang Sobane, Charles Hongoro and Tholang Mokhele report.*

Despite being trained to conduct fieldwork, most researchers often experience challenges in accessing targeted communities for data collection at grassroots level.

These challenges include being denied access because someone associated the colour of a fieldwork uniform with a certain political party, because of their race or because of an association with foreigners or a language group that is not dominant in the study area. Some have been denied access on suspicion of being criminals or mistaken for officials of departments considered not to be delivering services to the communities, and threatened with violence. The challenges experienced often result in refusal to collect data and costly delays, which affect research timelines and delivery to the clients.

Understanding the community

The challenges of accessing communities for research, are varied and complex. Gaining community entry depends on a range of factors. A key factor is understanding the language of the targeted population, not just in terms of the linguistics but also the political dynamics

and cultural elements. Cultural competence is critical in accessing communities. While community entry remains a challenge in the studies conducted, the constraints are rarely shared with stakeholders.

From June to August 2017, the HSRC's Economic Performance and Development unit conducted the Gauteng Human Settlements Satisfaction Survey to collect baseline data to establish the levels of satisfaction with subsidised housing among beneficiaries in five regions of Gauteng – the City of Johannesburg, the City of Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, Sedibeng and the West Rand.

Community entry

The first week of fieldwork was set aside for community entry to ensure that when the research team returned for data collection, there would be no obstacles.

Prior to visiting the study sites, the Gauteng Department of Human Settlements (GDHS) disseminated details of the study to the five regions to ensure that the regional departments of human settlements were aware of the study. The research team also designed a

community entry strategy to access key stakeholders (Figure 1).

A step-by-step community entry strategy

The first step of the strategy entailed visiting the nearest municipal offices and introducing the study to the municipal manager and the local department of human settlements. This courtesy call is important as it provides access to details of councillors in the specific wards in the sampled sites. It was important for the local human settlements department to know about the study, as they implemented the subsidised housing projects.

The second phase entailed reporting to the police station and informing the commander of the presence of the study team. The research team leaves a copy of the ethics approval letter and gets another copy endorsed with a stamp of the police station. Anyone in the community interested in knowing why a field team is in their community is shown this letter and given a copy of the study information sheet or introduction letter.

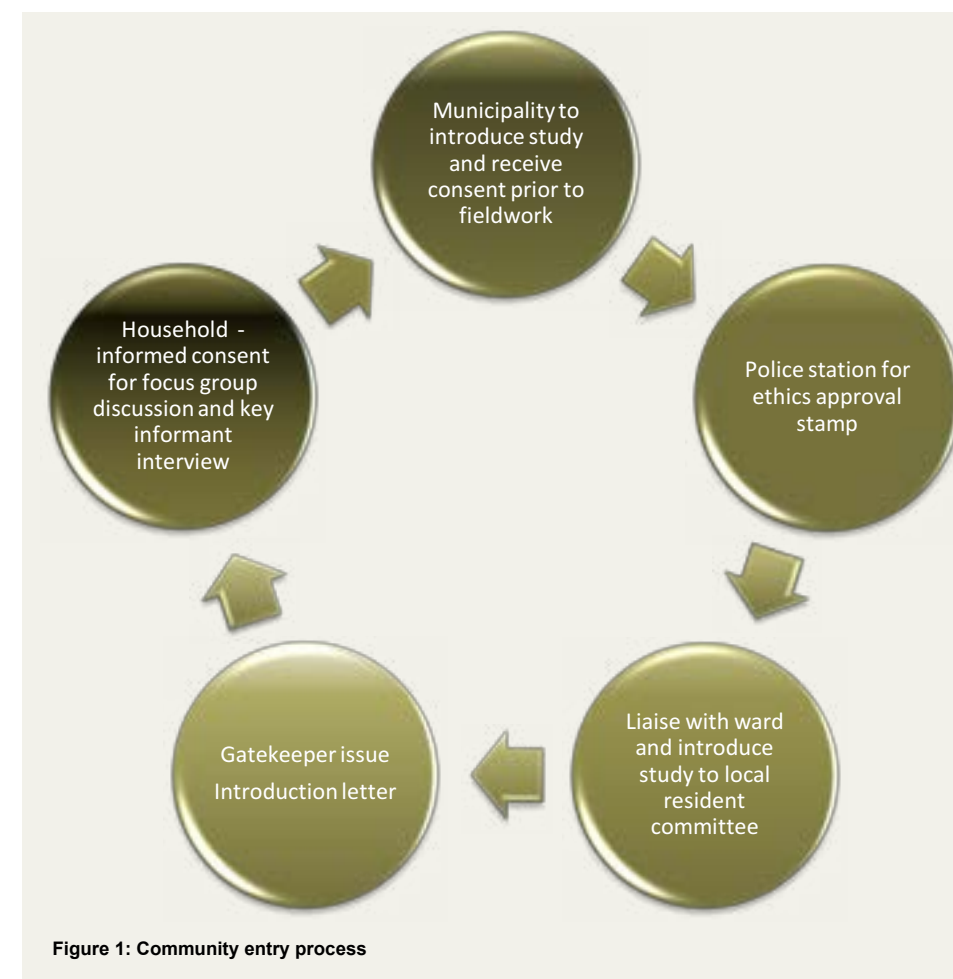


Figure 1: Community entry process

In the third phase, the research team meets with the councillor of the specific research site to introduce the study. The councillor can either consent or ask the research team to introduce the study to the community. Depending on the decision, the research team also requests for a community member who can serve as a gatekeeper with the research team and introduce the team to the sampled households. The role of the gatekeeper is also to help identify participants for the interviews and focus group discussions based on specific criteria provided by the research team.

Findings – the value of MMC support

In Sedibeng, the team began by making a courtesy call to the

regional Department of Human Settlements. The officials had already received communication from their provincial counterparts. They advised the research team to make a courtesy visit to the offices of the Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) where the team was invited to present the objectives of the study at a meeting attended by the councillors.

Presenting the study to all the councillors at a single venue reduced the amount of time the field team would have spent re-introducing the study to each councillor. The field team was able to respond to questions and to get the buy-in of the councillors. At the meeting, the researchers got the contact details of the councillors in the different wards. The MMC's office also provided a team that took the researchers to the sampled areas.

Service delivery protests

The field team in Sedibeng came across service delivery protests and could not access all of the sampled research sites. However, they gained insights into the issues that led to the protests and the precautionary measures to take during the actual fieldwork. With the community entry process stalled, visits to the police station and gatekeepers were conducted during the fieldwork.

In Ekurhuleni, field teams also encountered service delivery protests about the housing allocation process. The protesters attributed the long waiting period for subsidised housing to corruption and bribery.

Hesitant individuals

The Tshwane regional department of human settlements was aware of the study. Earlier, the researchers had tested their data collection instruments (household questionnaires, focus group discussion guides, key informant interview guides) there. The MMC facilitated dialogue with the councillors of the different areas, but the councillors were hesitant to participate until they confirmed that the study indeed had the endorsement of the MMC.

In one instance, the management of a social housing development refused to grant consent for the researchers to access the site. They required the study team to write letters to their board and then wait until the next board meeting in a month. Time for fieldwork was limited and the study team therefore replaced this development with another project.

At most of the sites in Tshwane, the gatekeepers wanted to be paid a day's wage for taking the research team around. Such wages had not been budgeted for and the field team then opted to use the gatekeepers only for introduction to

the community and then moved on without them.

In Ekurhuleni, gaining community entry meant driving long distances to find ward councillors. Some councillors did not honour their appointments and the field team would drive all the way and return to Pretoria without consent. Gaining access to communities was therefore, done during the actual fieldwork. As the team completed data collection at one site, the team leader would proceed to negotiate entry into the next study site.

The taxi strike

In the City of Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni, the provincial taxi strike that occurred in June 2017 disrupted the field team's work. On the first visit to the Ekurhuleni, they had to turn back to avoid being caught up in the violence. After the strike, they visited the regional offices in Ekurhuleni to introduce the study to the MMC who was not available. The assistant of the MMC, however, helped the field team with the contact details of the relevant ward councillors. In addition, the Ekurhuleni team also visited the customer care centres in the region and got details of ward councillors.

Lessons for practice

The researchers found that community entry is dictated by context and the field teams have to adapt to that, hence the variations in entry and consent in each region. Where a field team encounters a service delivery protest, it is best to turn back and visit when calm has returned to the community. Taxi strikes also endanger field teams and when these occur, teams are required to keep away from fieldwork and use the day organising field materials. The unavailability of councillors might signal a potential refusal.

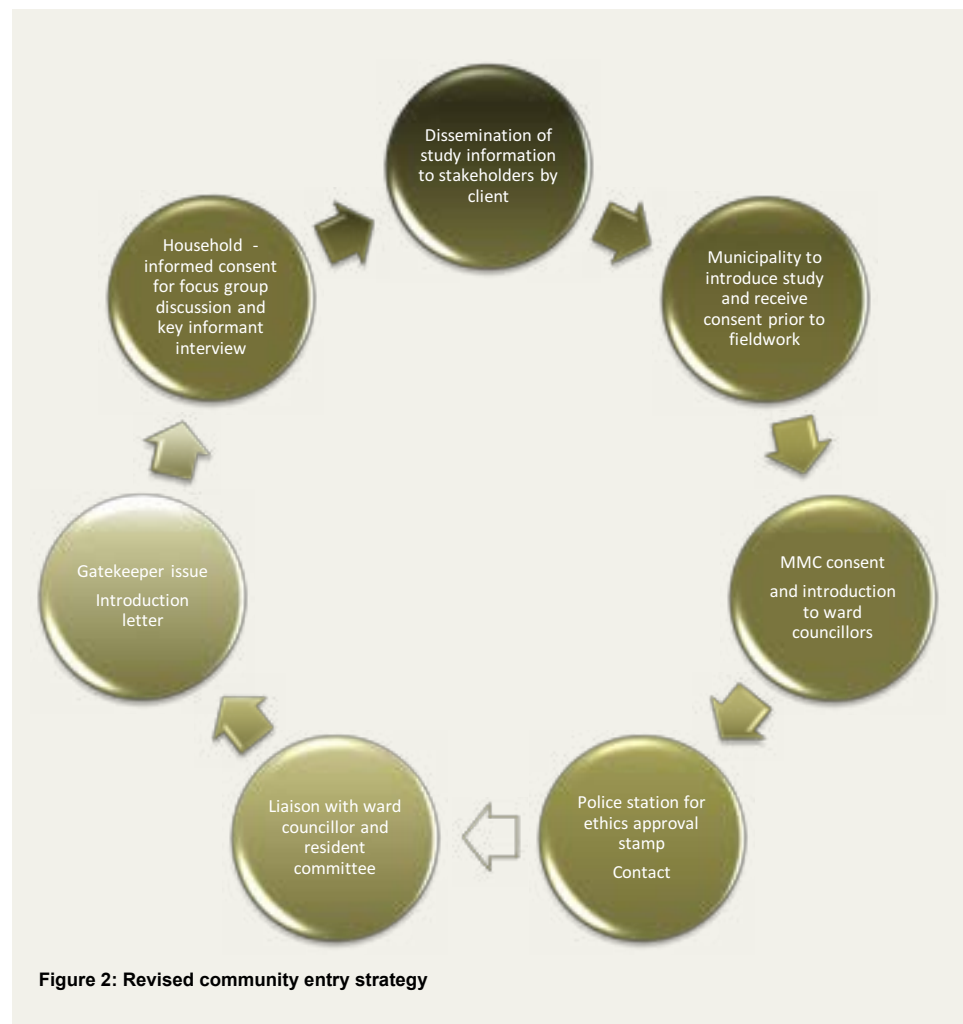


Figure 2: Revised community entry strategy

When councillors are always unavailable to meet the field team to gain consent, it is best to move on to other sampled sites. In the meantime, the field team needs to request an alternative study site while, continuing to attempt to reach the unavailable councillor.

After working in the field, the researchers redesigned the initial community entry strategy by building in two extra steps of consultation (Figure 2). Before visiting and introducing the study at the municipal offices, the team recommends that the client – in this case the GDHS – first disseminates information about the study to the stakeholders. After introducing the study at the municipality, the

team should first meet with the MMC to be introduced to the ward councillors, before proceeding to the police station.

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School climate and mathematics achievement: Can the children learn?

Recently, the media covered high levels of violence and bullying in schools highlighting safety concerns in schools. Learners need to be in an environment where they feel safe for effective teaching and learning to take place. *Lolita Winnaar* examines the school climate in secondary schools in South Africa based on data from the 2015 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

The safety of learners at school plays an important role in their achievement. However, many South African schools are plagued by issues of ill-discipline, disorderly conduct of learners and teachers, and varying degrees of violence, all of which have a devastating impact on learners' ability to learn and to live healthy and productive lives.

To some extent, the school that learners attend is a reflection of the surrounding community; hence, they are susceptible to the same risk factors. There is also a clear relationship between poverty and high levels of violence in schools, which in turn have adverse effects on learner academic success.

School climate has been defined in a number of different ways but, simply put, it is the heart and soul of a school. Ill-discipline, bullying and violence occurring in schools are the results of a poor school climate within schools that are often located in high poverty areas.

Data from the TIMSS formed the basis for analysis in this piece. The TIMSS assesses learners in mathematics and science but it

also collects information from schools, teachers and learners so we can look at whether there are relationships between the learning environment and academic achievement. According to the TIMSS framework, a school with a positive climate tends to place a high emphasis on academic success. Its teachers face few challenges, there are very few or no problems with bullying and discipline, and learners and teachers feel safe there.

These results focus on school climate in relation to mathematics achievement within South Africa compared to the international scenario at the grade 9 level.

Emphasis on academic success

Principals responded to a set of statements relating to the extent to which their schools emphasise academic success. Only 1% of South African Grade 9 learners attended schools that placed a very high emphasis on academic success, compared to 7% internationally. There is an achievement gap in mathematics of 179 points on average between learners attending schools that place a very high

emphasis on academic success and those that do not.

Challenges faced by teachers

Teachers were asked to respond to several statements related to challenges that they face. Some of these included statements related to class size, curriculum coverage and implementation, time to prepare for lessons as well as pressures from parents.

There was an association between the challenges that teachers face, and learners' mathematics achievement. Learners attending schools where teachers face fewer challenges obtained higher mathematics scores on average than learners attending schools where teachers faced many challenges. Sixty percent of South African learners attended schools where teachers faced some challenges. The percentage of schools facing many challenges in South Africa is double the international average.

Bullying

Learners were asked to respond to nine statements related to bullying

that they have been exposed to. These responses were combined to create an index of the extent of bullying; with three categories: 'almost never', 'about monthly' and 'almost weekly'.

A correlation exists between incidences of bullying and learners' mathematics achievement. Learners, who do not experience bullying at school, score on average 68 TIMSS points more than learners exposed to bullying, which is equivalent to more than a grade difference. In South African schools, 17% of Grade 9 learners are bullied on a weekly basis, which is double that of the international average.

The chances of being bullied regularly were higher for boys than girls, especially among lower performing learners. The difference between boys and girls being bullied became smaller as mathematics achievement improved.

School discipline

Principals responded to statements relating to aspects of discipline



in their schools and the results were divided in three categories: schools with 'hardly any discipline problems', 'minor problems', and 'moderate to severe problems'. The percentage of learners attending schools with severe discipline problems is three times higher in South Africa than the international average. There was a positive association between the level of school discipline and learners' mathematics achievement, with a score difference of 64 points between learners attending schools with hardly any problems and those attending schools with severe discipline problems.

Safe and orderly schools

Teachers responded to eight statements included in the safe and orderly school index. It included three categories: 'very safe and orderly', 'safe and orderly' and 'less than safe and orderly'. This index showed an achievement gap of 49 points on average between learners attending schools that are considered very safe and orderly, and those that are not safe and orderly. Compared to the international average (8%), schools in South Africa are almost three times less safe and orderly (22%).

A proactive approach needed to create healthy school climate

The 2015 TIMSS results show that learners that perform well in mathematics mostly attend schools that place a very high emphasis on academic success; whose teachers are faced with few challenges; that have low levels of bullying and very few problems with issues of discipline and safety. Within the South African context, these schools were most often the better-

resourced ones, for example fee-paying schools. This suggests that learners from poorer households are trapped in schools with a poor school climate. A healthy school climate is one where all participants (learners, parents, teachers and school management) have a clear understanding of the ethos of the school and have a sense of belonging. For the majority of schools in South Africa to reach this point, all schools need to emphasise academic success and address challenges related to teaching, discipline and safety.

The Department of Basic Education has implemented initiatives, such as the National School Safety Framework and crime prevention programmes with the South African Police Services to improve safety in schools, however, more needs to be done. A proactive approach is required where school climate resides at the heart of the solution. Each hierarchy within the education system needs to be involved. Provinces have to ensure that schools implement the schools safety framework, and districts have to support schools to improve school climates. Schools have the responsibility to ensure that learners are safe, academically stimulated and disciplined. The ultimate objective is to have schools with a healthy school climate that supports learners' ability to learn and to live healthy and productive lives.

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A nuanced approach to adolescent sexual and reproductive health services legislation: IS IT ENOUGH?

South Africa has progressive legislation enabling adolescents to access various sexual and reproductive health services independently, without consent from their parents or legal guardians. However, are adolescents who engage in consensual sex sufficiently protected, especially the girl child? In a recent article in the *South African Medical Journal*, Prof. Ann Strode from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's School of Law and Dr Zaynab Essack, an HSRC senior research specialist, identified the strengths and weaknesses of this legislation.

Research has shown that adolescents in South Africa are at risk of HIV, sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy owing to high-risk sexual practices as well as other social, physical and structural challenges. Many adolescents have limited access to sexual and reproductive health services.

Statistics South Africa reported that 99 000 school-going adolescent girls fell pregnant in 2013. The 2012

National HIV Prevalence, Incidence and Behaviour Survey found an HIV prevalence of 7,1% for youth aged 12-14 years and that there were 113 000 new HIV infections among young women between 15-24 years, an incidence four times higher than their male peers.

It is therefore crucial that adolescents have sufficient access to sexual and reproductive health services, but requiring parental

permission might deter adolescents from accessing these services. Studies have shown that many do not wish to disclose their sexual activity to their parents, often because they are concerned about disappointing their parents, they are embarrassed or because they feared punishment. The context of South Africa's child-headed households represented an additional challenge.

Previously, the dilemma was that South Africa's Children's Act enabled adolescents to access a range of sexual and reproductive health services independently,



but the Sexual Offences Act continued to criminalise consensual underage sex. This hindered access as children who sought these services could be reported to the police. The fact that this Act also requires that a person with knowledge of a sexual offence against a child had to report it, compounded the challenge.

Age of consent

The Sexual Offences Act provides that the age of consent to sex is 16 years old, but it has been amended to provide that those between 12-15 years old may engage in consensual sex with peers in the same age category. The Sexual Offences Act also decriminalised underage consensual sex between 12-15-year-olds and 16-17-year-olds, if there is less than a two-year gap between them. This approach follows from the Constitutional Court's finding that sexual activity and exploration is part of normal adolescent development into adulthood.

Adolescents at various ages also have the right to services such as HIV testing, male circumcision, contraceptives and virginity testing without the involvement of their parents, provided that certain capacity and public policy requirements are satisfied. Sterilisation is the only sexual and reproductive health service that they may not consent to below the age of 18.

South Africa's liberal approach

Strode and Essack write that South Africa can be commended for expressly identifying an age of consent that applies equally to boys and girls and that does not discriminate based on sexual orientation. By absolving service providers such as doctors and nurses from reporting consensual sex among the younger children to authorities, it is hoped that the uptake of sexual and reproductive health services will improve.

International guidelines recommend that legislators ensure that adolescents can consent independently to medical treatment before the age of 18. South Africa addressed this issue by creating both an age and capacity requirement for consent to medical treatment. The assumption is that more complex forms of treatment may require greater maturity. South Africa also chose to deal with consent to accessing prescribed drugs, contraceptives, HIV testing and male circumcision separately from medical treatment.

Concerns remain.

Strode and Essack write that there remains some disjuncture between the approach in criminal and children's law pertaining to adolescents when there is more than a 2-year age gap between older and younger adolescents who engage in consensual sex because both parties can still be prosecuted.

'This has a disparate impact on girls, who are more likely to have older partners. Where such cases are reported, young girls may be required to testify against their older partners, which may result in social harm to them. Furthermore, the legislature retained the strict mandatory requirements, and as a result, if adolescents declare that they have older partners whilst seeking sexual and reproductive health services, this information may have to be reported to the police,' they write.

The legal framework only recognises sexual and reproductive health services rights for adolescents over the age of 12 years, except for termination of pregnancy, which can be accessed by girls of any age granted that they meet certain maturity requirements. This ensures that there is consistency between criminal and children's law. The Sexual Offences Act provides that adolescents below 12 years do not have the capacity to consent to sex.

However, it also means that the Act is not in sync with the World Health Organisation's approach or with recent empirical research showing that children aged 10-11 have the capacity to consent to medical research. According to Strode and Essack, it can be argued that many research-related decisions would be similar to sexual and reproductive health services choices. They recommend that pragmatic guidance for service providers on how to assess children's capacity to consent, should be drafted.

According to Strode and Essack, the Children's Act does not define medical treatment leaving uncertainty if adolescents would have access to new forms of HIV prevention such as vaccines and microbicides, should they be proven effective and registered for that purpose in future.

Virginity testing?

There is also concern that the Children's Act has legitimised the contentious cultural practice of virginity testing. The Act allows girls who are over the age of 16 years to consent to be physically examined to establish whether they are virgins. The authors cite Prof. John Mubangizi from the University of KwaZulu-Natal who argued that making this customary practice lawful in certain circumstances, violates children's rights to privacy, bodily integrity and dignity.

While Essack and Strode encourage other countries to follow South Africa's nuanced approach around specifying that access to contraceptives, HIV testing and male circumcision fall outside the area of medical treatment; they caution legislators about consent regarding practices like virginity testing.

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Natasha Gillespie and Dr Finn Reygan reflect on the reduced health and wellbeing that sexual and gender minorities continue to experience and the need for more inclusive policies

The idea that homosexuality is unAfrican is widespread in Africa. Resistance to decriminalisation of same-sex sex acts in many African countries is often underpinned by a reluctance to yield to Western pressure calling for the acceptance of sexual and gender minorities. Yet an increasing body of research by African scholars suggests that homophobic attitudes are largely driven by colonial era legislation and religious morality that continues to marginalise people who are seen as different.

Emerging research on pre-colonial attitudes towards sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) shows a greater openness to social inclusion. Thus, African advocacy that strategically positions lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people as historical and contemporary

members of the societies in which they live, holds the potential to create more enabling and inclusive environments for the provision of healthcare services to sexual and gender minorities that are currently severely limited across the continent.

Enabling environments

The baseline results of an HSRC study, *Situational analysis and critical review of sexual and reproductive health and HIV services for men who have sex with men in eastern and southern Africa*, indicate that simply increasing healthcare services is not enough to improve the health and wellbeing of sexual and gender minorities. The study, led by Prof. Heidi van Rooyen, Dr Zaynab Essack, and Dr Finn Reygan, indicates an enabling environment that promotes positive

Enhancing healthcare services for sexual and gender minorities in Africa: MORE INCLUSIVE POLICIES NEEDED

attitudes toward sexual and gender minorities is key to improving the uptake of healthcare services.

Currently, multiple barriers hinder sexual and gender minorities from accessing healthcare. These include negative attitudes of healthcare providers, the lack of SOGI training for healthcare providers and limited access to tailored sexual and gender minority healthcare information. There are also safety concerns related to disclosing SOGI, ongoing stigmatisation or criminalisation of same-sex sex acts and gender nonconformity, as well as sexual and gender minority human rights violations, including widespread abuses by states and police forces. Other barriers include cultural and religious arguments against sexual and gender diversity, the perpetuation of discourses of hate

by governmental and community leaders in particular, and the scapegoating of sexual and gender minorities for political gain across the region, especially in the run up to elections.

Countering barriers

Increasing the number of sensitised healthcare providers who are competent to provide healthcare for sexual and gender minorities should be a priority. Despite the efforts of queer civil society organisations to introduce modules and awareness training, higher education institutions generally do not provide pre-service SOGI education for students in healthcare and allied professions. For sexual and gender minority advocacy, a consortium approach to the challenges faced by sexual and gender minorities is increasingly perceived as the most effective method although funding challenges and different approaches can function as barriers to collective mobilisation. For instance, in contexts where sexual and gender

minorities are criminalised, stakeholders often opt for a public health approach to advocate for sexual health services. However, many stakeholders perceive a human rights approach as superior because the public health approach serves to further pathologise this already marginalised population.

Potential value for policymakers

The baseline results across the seven study countries (South Africa, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) suggest that new approaches are needed to bring about improvements in the life experiences of sexual and gender minorities. A holistic view of sexual and gender minorities should be promoted when designing interventions or engaging with governments, religious leaders, and communities, among others. It is hoped that these new approaches will lead to change in relation to the decriminalisation of homosexuality; the development of inclusive policies across the region;

Currently, multiple barriers hinder sexual and gender minorities from accessing healthcare.

and the roll-out of interventions to promote the health and wellbeing of sexual and gender minorities. In the absence of such work, sexual and gender minorities will continue to experience reduced health and wellbeing across Africa.

Authors: Natasha Gillespie is a PhD research trainee and project manager and Dr Finn Reygan a senior research specialist and content expert on the study in the HSRC’s Human and Social Development research programme.

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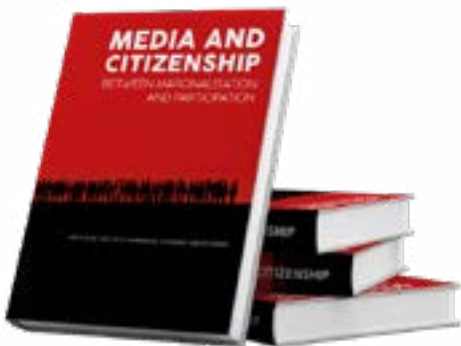
Media and Citizenship

Between marginalisation and participation

Volume editors:	Anthea Garman and Herman Wasserman
Pub month and year:	August 2017
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Extent:	256 pages
Rights:	World Rights

About the book

How central are the media to the functioning of democracy? Is democracy primarily about citizens using their vote? Does the expression of their voice necessarily empower citizens? *Media and Citizenship* challenges some assumptions about the relationship between the media and democracy in highly unequal societies like South Africa. In a post-apartheid society where an enfranchised majority is still unable to fundamentally practice their citizenship and experiences marginalisation on a daily basis, notions like listening and belonging may be more useful ways of thinking about the role of the media. In this context, protest is taken seriously as a form of political expression and the media’s role is foregrounded as actively seeking out the voices of those on the margins of society. Through a range of case studies, the contributors show how listening, both as a political concept and as a form of practice, has transformative and even radical potential for both emerging and established democracies..



Price R275,00

BIKO

Philosophy, Identity and Liberation

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Rights:	World Rights

About the book

Biko was not only considered a ‘brilliant political theorist’, but also considered ‘a formidable and articulate philosopher’. Not simply and merely a philosopher in the manner in which Immanuel Kant was a philosopher, but a philosopher of a special kind, an important Africana existential philosopher. From Biko’s writings, speeches and interviews, Mabogo More’s view is that, philosophy is not a disembodied system of ideas nor is it a mechanical reflection about the world; rather, it is a way of existing and acting.

This important perspective on Biko would be of value to many Africana philosophers of existence, African philosophers, political and social thinkers, social scientists, psychologists, cultural critics, political activists, students, critical race theorists and anyone interested in the ideas that Biko presents.



Price R220,00





Price R290,00

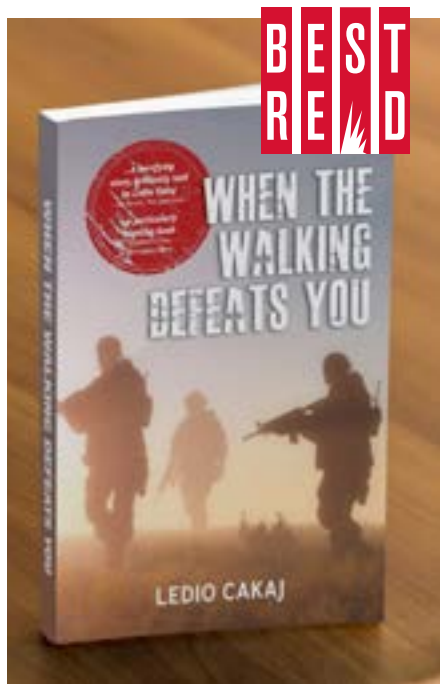
Barometer of Fear

An insider's account of rogue trading and the greatest banking scandal in history

Author:	Alexis Stenfors
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About the book

Are recent bank and financial scandals the work of a few 'bad apples' or an inevitable result of a financial system rotten to its core? In *Barometer of Fear* Alexis Stenfors guides us through the shadowy world of modern banking, providing an insider's account of the secret practices – including the manipulation of foreign exchange rates – which have allowed banks to profit from systematic deception. Containing remarkable and often shocking insights derived from his own experiences in the dealing room, as well as his spectacular fall from grace at Merrill Lynch, *Barometer of Fear* draws back the curtain on a realm that for too long has remained hidden from public view..



Price R290,00

When The Walking Defeats You

One Man's Journey as Joseph Kony's Bodyguard

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Format:	216 x 135 mm
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About the book

Educated and aspirational, with dreams of becoming a teacher, George Omona would seem an unlikely recruit for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a cultish Christian rebel group operating in Uganda and other parts of Eastern and Central Africa. But drawn in by the charismatic pull of its messianic leader, and by the group's claims to speak for the long marginalised Acholi people, George came to regard the group as the best chance for rebuilding his life after his expulsion from high school.

George's education and fluent command of English allowed him to rapidly rise through the ranks, eventually becoming a bodyguard to the group's now notorious leader, Joseph Kony. Having spent almost three years with the group before deserting, George's story – as told to acknowledged LRA expert Ledio Cakaj – provides a unique, unsettling and often astonishing insight into the inner workings of the LRA.