SASAS - A view on South Africa’s people

The South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) is a nationally representative survey series that has been conducted annually by the Human Sciences Research Council since 2003.

- It measures the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of the country’s diverse population, thus providing a unique account of changes in public values and the country’s social fabric.
- The survey infrastructure produces rigorous data which is available free of charge for policy, academic and general science communication purposes.
- Compared to other national survey series, SASAS has a broader scope, is conducted more regularly, allows for international comparison in some areas, and benefits from the HSRC’s survey design, data management and curation expertise.

Advancement of science / technological innovation/ new knowledge generated

- Covers a wide variety of topics that tap into notable issues of relevance to contemporary South Africa.
- Enriched our comparative understanding of South African society through the engagement with international research infrastructures.
- Insight in specific areas of investigation: public understanding of science (PUS), attitudes towards biotechnology, astronomy, climate change and the environment, indigenous knowledge systems, general attitudes towards science, energy attitudes and behaviour, as well as nuclear energy.

Relevance to South Africa and its people as a whole and resultant contribution to SET and innovation policy

Contributed insights for the
- National Development Plan
- South Africa’s 10-Year National Innovation Plan
- Parliament’s High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change
- Presidency’s macro-social review and 15 and 20-Year Review
- National Consumer Financial Education Strategy
- EU-Presidency Programme to Support Pro-Poor Development

Data

- Curated data sets: 35 in 2003, 21% of data sets in the HSRC’s data repository
- Data quality:
  - Prerequisites of quality
  - Relevance
  - Accuracy
  - Timeliness
  - Accessibility

What others say ...

SASAS is among the world’s highest-quality social surveys. Questionnaire is rich and detailed.”

“I have explored and used the HSRC (SASAS) –database during the past few years. The HSRC database which is a repository of national and regional level data on varied issues that South Africa faces is a gold mine for the scholar, particularly those who are working in different disciplines of social science.

Recognition for an outstanding contribution to science, engineering and technology (SET) and innovation by advancing the availability, management and use of data for research