

# Review

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In South Africa, December signifies the start of the summer break, which is supposed to include festivities and recuperation for a new year. But, as the economy continues to slump, many young people approach this time with trepidation as they await academic results that will determine their future employment prospects or face another year of fruitless job applications.

In February 2019, *GroundUp*, a news agency that focuses on the human rights of vulnerable communities, published a [series](#) of heart-wrenching testimonies of unemployment. A [man](#) who had dropped out of school in grade 10 sells empty beer bottles to shebeens for 50c a bottle. He eats once a day. A [woman](#) collects scrap metal to put her daughter through matric and dreams of sending her to university. With statistics showing that a third of unemployed South Africans have matric and that 9% have tertiary qualifications, she is possibly unaware that these qualifications may no longer guarantee employment or financial security.

Labour-force statistics indicate that the official unemployment rate in South Africa rose to 29% in the second quarter of 2019, the highest in a decade. In peri-urban or township areas, 6 out of 10 people are unemployed, warned Bongive Beja, a youth stream manager at [Youth Employment Service](#) at a recent HSRC seminar.

In this edition of the *HSRC Review*, we report on this seminar where experts from the World Bank also shared shocking statistics from its [human capital index](#), which indicate that South Africa is not preparing its youth for the labour market.

Presenters shared the latest work on the HSRC's Labour Market Intelligence Partnership. Now in its second phase, some of the work entails researchers and the government working together to produce a list of occupations in high demand along with a list of important skills in supply and demand to understand the imbalances between the two. This is because the government wants to dedicate resources to train people with relevant skills.

Other articles focus on the HSRC's involvement in innovation activities, boosting tourism and research on public attitudes about the impact of technological advancement on employment opportunities.

But it is a race against time. As the World Bank experts pointed out at the seminar, the problem starts with a low level of learning during the early school years, with challenges related to insufficient teacher training, not being instructed in a home language and learners not learning to read properly. We have covered some of these issues in previous editions of the *HSRC Review*.

On the topic of home language, we report on a symposium on language practices in South Africa's higher education institutions held in September 2019. Presenters pondered the neglect of African language instruction and prevailing [anglonormativity](#), the expectation that people should be proficient in English, and how those who are not are often excluded.

As December is typically characterised by increased holiday spending followed by a traditionally meagre January, this edition includes an article on indebtedness, which is based on a thought-provoking chapter of the HSRC's book, [Poverty and Inequality: Diagnosis, Prognosis and Responses](#). Prof Deborah James of the London School of Economics looks at how aspirations of upward mobility, poor credit regulation and relationships of obligation, duty and care have made people vulnerable to unscrupulous credit providers since 1994.

Understanding how difficult many South Africans find it to repudiate family and cultural obligations to secure their own financial futures is crucial for improved financial education in the country.

This is only a glimpse into a bumper December edition. Please feel free to communicate with the *HSRC Review* team and researchers on the emails provided below each article and all the best for 2020.

Antoinette

**Cover:** The *Abengcongolo* collective, a group of final-year drama students from the University of Cape Town, perform *Nguvu yaMbegu eNtabelanga* (the power of the seed) at the Language Rites symposium in Cape Town on 15 September 2019.

**Photo:** Antonio Erasmus

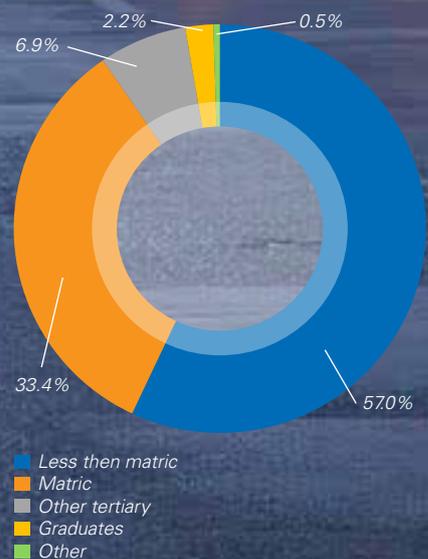
# YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT: Statistics & solutions

Labour-force statistics indicate that the official unemployment rate in South Africa rose to 29% in the second quarter of 2019, the highest in a decade. At a recent seminar, researchers from the HSRC and World Bank focused on youth unemployment, highlighting the impact of education, skills and less tangible capital, such as networks, in finding employment. *Antoinette Oosthuizen* reports.

Young people represent almost two-thirds of the total number of unemployed people in South Africa. Of the total number of those under 35, a staggering 40% do not work but are also not studying or receiving vocational training.

Experts classify them under the acronym NEET - 'not in employment, education or training'. But, while education plays a crucial role in someone's chances to be employed, even graduates are also not spared the humiliation of not finding a job, according to Statistics South Africa's quarterly labour force survey.

Figure 1: Proportion of the unemployed by education level, Q2: 2019



Source: Statistics South Africa

An unemployed person gathers boxes for a living.

Photo: Adziliwi Nematandani

“SUCH A RATE OF STUNTING IS NOT NORMAL IN THE 21ST CENTURY IN A HIGH MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRY”



Children need adequate nutrition for brain development to reach their full potential at school.

Photo: Ashraf Hendricks/GroundUp

In June 2019, the HSRC and the World Bank hosted a dialogue, *Envisaging skilled futures for South African youth*, to look at this crisis. Participants presented on education and human capital development, graduate outcomes, skills development and practical interventions to tackle youth unemployment.

## A HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX: SOUTH AFRICA IS NOT PREPARING ITS YOUTH FOR THE LABOUR MARKET

The World Bank's [human capital index](#) measures the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18, given the impact of health and education in their country.

The combination of survival, schooling and health determines future productivity and the score is relative to what they could achieve, were they to receive full education, learn 100% of the time, go to school, and be healthy, explained World Bank economist Alexandra Posarac at the dialogue.

South Africa scored 41% on the index, placing it 126th out of 157 countries. This means a child born today in South Africa would be 41% as productive as they could be under complete health and education.

Globally, 56% of children live in countries that scored below 50% on the index, but South Africa's score was low compared to its poorer peers. Many countries with lower GDP per capita actually scored a higher human capital index rating than South Africa.

### Stunting

In South Africa, 27% of children under the age of 5 years have stunted growth. Only a few countries of similar income have such high stunting rates. South Africa's rate of progress in terms of reducing stunting is also below several countries in the region.

Inadequate nutrition has an impact on brain development, which may hinder a child reaching its full potential at school and in the workplace, said Paul Numba Um, the World Bank's country director for South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

“Such a rate of stunting is not normal in the 21st century in a high middle-income country,” he said.

### Mortality

Approximately 4% of children will die before their 5th birthdays, said Posarac.

“One can argue that 96 out of 100 will survive, but 4% is a lot. In many countries at South Africa's level of development, child mortality is less than 1%. However, our progress in reducing child mortality has been better than the average in Africa.”

Furthermore, of people now aged 15 years, 32% will probably die before their 60th birthday. Key causes of premature mortality among adults in South Africa include violence, in addition to HIV and tuberculosis, she said.

### Education and learning outcomes

The human capital index showed that a South African child who starts school at age 4 can expect to complete 9.3 years of school by their 18th birthday. “This is extremely low;

it should be 13 years," said Posarac. "It indicates [that] a lot of kids are dropping out before they complete the full cycle of education."

Students in South Africa also scored 343 on a scale called Harmonized Learning Outcomes, where 625 represents advanced learning attainment and 300 represents minimum attainment. When researchers factored in what children actually learn, their expected years of schooling declined by a further 4 years (from 9.3 to 5.1).

### Not a budget problem

Receiving an inadequate education is a "life penalty," depriving children of many future opportunities, said Um. "Since democracy in 1994, South Africa has achieved almost universal access to basic education, with public spending on education accounting for 6.1% of GDP in 2017. Access to health services has also been significantly expanded, representing 10% of GDP."

The problem is not the size of the budget allocated by the government. Many countries have spent less on education and health and yet scored much better on the human-capital index. "South Africa needs to take a hard look at the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending," said Um. The index shows South Africa is not preparing its youth for the labour market. Tackling the human-capital crisis requires commitments from households, communities, the private sector and government leaders, he said.

### Starting early

According to Posarac, the main challenge facing the South African education system is the low level of learning during early school years. These are some of the World Bank's recommendations:

- Improve the quality of Grade R teaching in poorer schools with better and more learning materials and infrastructure upgrades. Existing teachers need training and support. The quality of education and children's cognitive, social and emotional development also needs to be monitored.
- Teachers should be better skilled to teach reading in the foundation phase. Their content knowledge and pedagogical skills, particularly in African languages need to be improved through better initial training at universities and in-service training of current teachers. "Reading is a crucial foundational skill and the most important determinant of what happens later on with learning outcomes," said Posarac.
- Ensure an accountability mechanism, for example, whereby principals are incentivised to play a key role in instructional leadership and classroom monitoring.
- Improve the school climate, which should be safe and nurturing with few staff or student attendance issues.



*A child's ability to read is the most important determinant of later learning outcomes.*

**Photo:** Stephen Andrews/Unsplash



## GRADUATING: IT'S NOT A GUARANTEE

While education plays a crucial role in improving employment prospects, in the first quarter of 2019, labour-force statistics showed that 31% of graduates up to the age of 24 were unemployed.

Dr Michael Rogan, from the Neal Aggett Labour Studies Unit at Rhodes University and editor of *Post-school education and the labour market in South Africa*, spoke about graduates' transitions into the workplace.

Linking data from the Department of Higher Education, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and the South African Revenue Service helped researchers to identify which university graduates were in formal employment. They found that graduate employment rates varied greatly between historically disadvantaged (from 57%) and well-resourced institutions (up to 92%).

### Rhodes vs Fort Hare – the importance of networking

As part of the HSRC's Labour Market Intelligence Project, researchers looked at the employment take-up of graduates from the Rhodes and Fort Hare universities in the Eastern Cape. The data showed a 20% unemployment rate for Fort Hare graduates compared to 6.8% of Rhodes graduates.

How graduates found employment differed, researchers found.

"Nearly half of the Rhodes graduates found their current employment through some type of social network like personal contacts, social media, and relatives," said Rogan. "Of the Fort Hare graduates, fewer than 20% found their current employment through such channels. Only 11% found jobs through personal contacts, as opposed to almost 30% of the Rhodes graduates. More than 36% of employed Fort Hare graduates found their work through responding to newspaper adverts, a very formal and somewhat dated method."

### What explains this?

One theory in the literature is that there is a signalling effect between employers and universities. When for years you have strong industry connections with places like UCT, Rhodes, Wits and the University of Pretoria, it takes a long time for that signalling effect about the quality of the university to change.

"We also found that the vast majority of graduates that were employed from Fort Hare ended up in the public sector. And that was the flip situation at Rhodes where the vast majority ended up in the private sector. It speaks to different types of social networks," said Rogan.

The researchers also explored the effect of unequal schooling backgrounds. Learners from the poorest schools (quintiles one to four) had a higher risk of being in a non-graduate job or in a job that is not commensurate with their education and training, even after controlling for several risk factors.

"A lot of this comes from inequalities in basic education. These inequalities persist in terms of race and schooling quality and are projected through the post-school education system and into the labour markets."

According to Rogan, there is an urgent need to improve the quality of data and research to keep track of the outcomes of investments in post-school education and training.

*Graduate unemployment rates vary between historically disadvantaged and well-resourced institutions.*

**Photo:** Reynaldo Rivera/Unsplash



*Developing a list of skills in supply and demand to understand the imbalances between the two will help the government to focus investment in training.*

**Photo:** Alev Takil /Unsplash

## TACKLING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: LOOKING AT THE DEMAND SIDE AND FOCUSING ON PRIORITY SKILLS

Dr Angelique Wildschut, Senior Manager: Research and Policy at NSFAS, and one of the authors of *Skills for the future - New research perspectives*, focused on the demand side of skills development. Previously, Wildschut was part of the HSRC-led Labour Market Intelligence Partnership (LMIP), a five-year research programme completed in 2018, which addressed the skills planning gap in South Africa.

“For many years in South Africa, providers of education and skills training decided what programmes and qualifications to offer, and young people decided what courses to study, based on their own preferences, capabilities, and financial resources,” she said. “The results were graduates without the skills to access available jobs, critical shortages of artisans and professionals with high-level skills, and outdated intermediate level curricula that do not equip people with the new technical skills required in the workplace.”

A large group of unskilled youth are not working in the formal economy and many of them are regarded as unemployable, Wildschut said.

The research base needed to inform labour-market interventions, through post-school education and training

planning and skills development, remains thin. But South Africa has to be careful not to adopt contextually inappropriate models of skills and development from advanced economies with different development trajectories, she warned.

“Even conservative global financial agencies recognise that current growth models exacerbate inequality and widen the gap between the privileged and the excluded. Innovation and technology have complex impacts on skilling, in some instances deskilling and excluding segments of the formally employed population and, in others, upskilling and empowering segments of the unemployed population. Therefore, matching skills supply and demand is not a simple econometric exercise.”

The LMIP has informed the government’s attempts to build a centralised mechanism for skills planning.

The researchers have looked at skills planning between firms, post-school education and training systems and intermediary organisations in several sectors, including sugar growing and milling in KwaZulu-Natal, automotive-component manufacturing in the Eastern Cape, and the Square Kilometre Array project in the Karoo.

Recommendations have included the need to promote public-private partnerships across all tiers of the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system. South

Africa also needs a centralised TVET curriculum that takes greater account of the needs of employers, shifts in technology, and the needs of students.

Dr Hersheela Narsee from the Department of Higher Education and Training emphasised the need for evidence-based resource allocations and a better balance between funding for TVET and higher education and training.

Following the successful completion of the LMIP in 2018, the HSRC continues to work on LMIP II. Researchers and the government are working together to produce a list of occupations in high demand along with a list of important skills in supply and demand to understand the imbalances between the two.

By March 2020, the government will develop a priority skills plan focused on a few occupations and sectors, Narsee said. Resources will be ring-fenced to ensure there are lecturers to train in those fields and that learners are channelled there.

“We are also looking at skills for sustainable livelihoods because we know the formal economy is not going to grow as much and people will need to look for their own work.”

The government has also established a ministerial task team to focus on the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on education, training and the workplace.

## THE DANGERS OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Bongiwe Beja, a youth stream manager at [Youth Employment Service](#) (YES), said jobless growth – economic growth without increased job opportunities – is an emerging market phenomenon. Unemployment is linked to crime and depression and is one of the main causes of the youth's disgruntlement and protests. Another key cause is spatial inequality.

"If you live in a township or in the rural areas and your job is in the urban area, our statistics show that around 40% to 60% of your salary (often a minimum wage of R3500 per month) is spent on transportation to and from work," Beja said.

Almost half of South Africans live below the poverty line ([R561](#) per month in July 2019). In peri-urban or township areas, 6 out of 10 people are unemployed, much higher than the 29% nationally, she said.

Referring to the 2011 [Tunisian revolution](#) that saw the ousting of the country's president, Beja warned against ignoring the youth unemployment crisis in South Africa.

"Almost 40% of our population is made up of people aged between 15 to 34. Our unemployment rate is double that of what Tunisia was. So, if we keep ignoring this issue, we're likely to see more [protest] action in our country. We are already seeing it in the higher education space with fees-must-fall [protests]."

*The Youth Employment Service initiative establishes skills training hubs in townships to overcome spatial inequality and enables organisations to enhance their B-BBEE levels by providing jobs for young black people.*

Source: YES

## A practical peri-urban intervention

The Department of Trade and Industry published the [YES initiative](#) in the [Government Gazette](#) in August 2018. It enables organisations to enhance their B-BBEE levels by providing jobs for young black people.

A lack of work experience is a major barrier to finding employment. YES asks companies to give youth 12 months' work experience. "This is a chance for the young person to be de-risked from the next opportunity. We encourage absorption, but where absorption is not possible, the young people will get a verified CV and reference letter from a supervisor," said Beja.

YES is also establishing skills training hubs in townships to overcome spatial inequality. In Tembisa, young people learn about hydroponics at such a hub, growing lettuce and spring onions. "We are committed to creating eight hubs this year with funding from corporates. We don't build the hubs unless the offset agreements to sell the produce are in place."

More on the HSRC's work for the Labour Market Intelligence Partnership ([http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/research-areas/Research\\_Areas\\_ESD/LMIP](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/research-areas/Research_Areas_ESD/LMIP))

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# South Africa's Living Labs:

*What inclusive development looks like*



A woman works at her computer in an open-plan working space at Rlabs in Cape Town, July 2019.

Photo: Andrea Teagle

Living labs, community-based tech hubs, gather resources, expertise, and community knowledge to devise solutions to local problems.

The model positions community members as co-creators as well as beneficiaries of innovations, which then have greater uptake within the surrounding community. A recent HSRC study illuminated the positive and far-reaching impact of some of South Africa's living labs, suggesting that they warrant greater government support as transformational tools.

*Andrea Teagle reports.*

Refugees in the United Kingdom face a conundrum familiar to many job seekers in South Africa: jobs require experience and references, but getting such experience requires a job. A lack of English proficiency compounds the problem. According to Anji Barker, a leader of charity organisation Newbegin Community Trust (NCT), which assists refugees in Birmingham, UK, "Even to get a job as a cleaner you now need six months' experience and some health and hygiene certificates or the like for other low-paid work."

Enter [Zlto](#), a South African-developed mobile and blockchain [platform](#) that tracks and incentivises social community work. Users 'bank' hours spent on volunteer work, collecting Zlto digital currency in return. The Zlto can then be exchanged for donated items or services indirectly related to finding employment, such as travel expenses, food and education fees. At the same time, the app builds a profile of verifiable volunteer work experience and real-time references that essentially works as a digital CV for refugees and asylum seekers.

"Asylum seekers who were Zlto members for the past 12 months have been able to get employment as soon as they were granted leave to remain," says

 **zlto**  
Giving is greater

Earn



Senzo Masumpa, co-founder of Zlto, at Rlabs in Cape Town, July 2019.

Photo: Andrea Teagle

Barker. The NCT also uses Zlto to assist ex-offenders who struggle to get jobs.

Zlto is the 2014 brainchild of an innovation and upskilling hub called [Reconstructive Living Labs](#) (Rlabs) in Athlone, a low-income area in Cape Town. In 2018, Zlto won the Google Impact Challenge for South Africa for helping to tackle youth unemployment. Co-founder Senzo Masumpa, who is also a student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, explains that the idea was born when Rlabs realised that youth enrolled in an IT workshop were too hungry to focus. By attending class or volunteering in their communities, young people collected Zlto, which they could redeem for meals.

Later, Rlabs partnered with local supermarkets, including Shoprite, and eventually over a thousand other stores where Zlto can now be spent. The system avoided the danger that

stipends would be misspent, while empowering and incentivising young people in a way that direct handouts would not.

### Tackling youth unemployment

In a country with a [55% unemployment rate](#) among youth (15-24), Rlabs's Zlto gave users an edge over other inexperienced job seekers. As the app picked up speed in Cape Town, headhunting companies even began to search the Zlto database. As for the partnering organisations who donate the items for which the digital currency can be exchanged, Masumpa says that they can track the impact of this corporate social responsibility work through the number of volunteer hours logged.

Rlabs is an example of various 'living labs' that are based on the principle of knowledge exchange between innovators and intended beneficiaries.

Last year, HSRC economic development researchers Dr Alexis

Habiyaremye and Dr Irma Booyens set about investigating the impact of South Africa's living labs, including the Wellbeing Innovation Lab (WINLab), affiliated with the North West University in the Northern Cape and Siyakhula Living Lab in the Eastern Cape.

Participants were asked about their experiences with the co-learning projects, as well as changes in their behaviour attributable to those experiences. The study did not measure the impact of innovation directly. By focusing on the people involved, the researchers hoped to capture the longer-term impacts.

Nearly all Rlabs respondents (93%) reported having learnt new skills and indicated that the project is achieving its overall objectives.

Innovations aside from Zlto include WINLab's flagship food security project that brought together community members and nutritionists to devise nutritious recipes based on traditional food knowledge. Another was the Siyakhula Living Lab digital platform, TeleWeaver, which allowed traders to market traditional Xhosa crafts and tourism services online.

"User capacity building through collaborative learning can enable creators and users of innovations to overcome the hurdles of knowledge asymmetry, in order to co-create innovative solutions to tackle societal challenges," Habiyaremye [writes](#).

### Local knowledge for local innovation

Research increasingly shows that new technological innovations often run into diffusion difficulties in new settings. In some instances, the technology simply does not suit the context. A notorious example is the locally developed merry-go-round water pump – or [PlayPump](#). The idea was to harness the energy of kids at play to pump water for rural communities. Instead, in some instances, women ended up laboriously turning the merry-go-rounds long after the children had tired, or the pumps were abandoned because there was insufficient underground water.

When communities are consulted, such costly mistakes can be avoided. The living labs approach takes this conclusion a step further by involving community members in the entire process of innovation, from conception through to implementation. The advantages pertain to the viability of the product and its successful diffusion, and to the upskilling of community members.

Living labs arguably help to bridge a psychological divide as well as a digital one, by positioning community members as active contributors to their own socioeconomic development. Participants of the various programmes reported greater confidence and belief in their professional capacity.

The Rlabs youth cafe, located in Mitchells Plain, offers a three-stage training programme called Believe, Create, Become. Teri-Lee Dilgee, a programme manager at Rlabs, explains that the youth are first supported to expand their aspirations. They subsequently receive technological education and are then

assisted in pursuing further education or entering a chosen field.

The youth café is space themed and based in an area with high crime and unemployment rates. "For the young people to go to a space like that, it's simply amazing," Dilgee says. The programme gives them the tools to imagine a life beyond the confines of their socioeconomic circumstances. "There are young people who used to want to be taxi drivers. They went through the process, and some of them started their own tech businesses, and are helping their families."

### Untapped potential

According to Dilgee, Rlabs is sponsoring 50 women and young entrepreneurs, providing expertise, resources and guidance, through a Nedbank grant. It is also expanding through a partnership with the multinational internet group Naspers, setting up more youth cafes – called [Nasperslabs](#) – in underprivileged communities.

While private partnerships have enabled some expansion,

Habiyaremye says that the scale-up potential of the living labs has been hindered by inadequate state support. For example, despite its success and its empowerment of women in particular, TeleWeaver was forced to shut down after the withdrawal of two major private sponsors.

South Africa's white paper on science and technology is geared towards harnessing the technologies and opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution towards inclusive development.

"There is an untapped potential, but it needs a lot of investment in capacity building," Habiyaremye says. "Not just for the people who are developing the technology, but also for the communities ... to take this empowerment as a springboard ..."

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Rlabs in Cape Town, July 2019.

Photo: Andrea Teagle



People fear that technological advancement will lead to job losses.  
**Photo:** Franck V. /Unsplash

# RISE OF THE ROBOTS:

South Africans generally positive about technological advancements, but deeply concerned about **JOB LOSSES**

During 2019, the impact that rapid technological innovations will have on societies and individuals in South Africa became an issue of substantive reflection and debate. This led to the idea of the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' featuring frequently in political speeches, the popular media and in general conversation. In this article, *Dr Ben Roberts, Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller, Jarè Struwig, and Dr Steven Gordon* examine national survey data on attitudes towards technological change in the country to provide a more representative picture of the patterns of hope and concern among the public relating to the coming automation revolution.

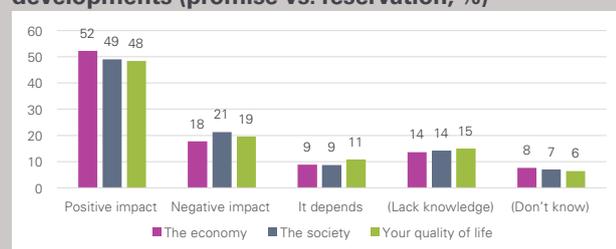
Rapid technological change has been a growing point of discussion among policymakers, business and unions in South Africa. Powerful new technologies are emerging that will continue to affect individuals, communities and society in multiple ways. The term 'Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)', refers to a new era marked by the application of digitisation, automation and machine learning in different areas of society and everyday life. This 'revolution' is one that presents a distinct opportunity, but also substantive risk and human cost.

Despite the considerable attention devoted to this subject, the voices of average South Africans have been missing from the debate. Nationally representative data collected by the HSRC through the 2018/19 South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) can contribute towards addressing this gap. Consisting of 2736 respondents older than 15 years, the results suggest the public recognises the promise and pitfalls of this technological turn.

### A moderately positive view of digital technologies, but scepticism about the labour-market impact

When asked about the envisaged impact of recent computer and internet technologies on the economy, society, and personal quality of life, South Africans appear cautiously optimistic (Figure 1). Around half of South Africans (48–52%) believe that such technological advances are beneficial economically, societally and personally, whereas approximately a fifth express reservations (18–21%).

**Figure 1: Envisaged impact of new technological developments (promise vs. reservation, %)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2018/19 4IR module

In the years to come, automation is expected to have an appreciable effect on the labour market, with robots and artificial intelligence able to perform certain types of roles currently performed by people. South Africans generally acknowledge that automation will have a bearing on the workplace, and a sizeable majority of the employed are concerned that it will affect them (Table 1).

Over three-quarters (73%) of South Africans believe that, in the next decade, machines or computer programs will assume many of the jobs presently done by humans. In addition, 6 in 10 workers (62%) are very or quite worried that such automation will threaten their job security. Compared to the UK, South Africans exhibit almost equivalent views on the likelihood of automation affecting

**Table 1: Attitudes to automation over the next 10 years, South Africa compared to the UK**

	National average	
	SA	UK
<b>Likelihood many of the jobs currently done by humans will be done by machines and computer programs</b>	%	%
Definitely/probably will happen	73	75
Definitely/probably will not happen	16	19
<i>Unweighted base</i>	2672	2410
<b>How worried job will be replaced by machines and computer programs? (among the employed)</b>	%	%
Very/quite worried	62	10
Not very/not at all worried	28	81
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1705	1556

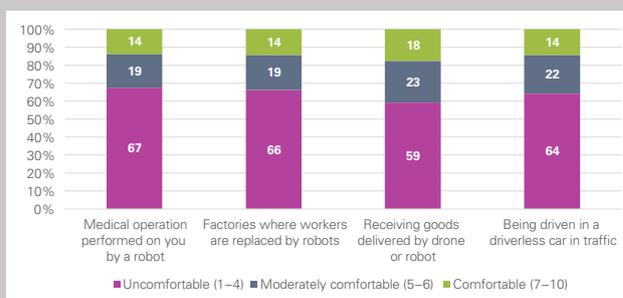
Sources: HSRC SASAS 2018/19 4IR module; NatCen British Social Attitudes (BSA) Survey 2017

the labour market (73% versus 75%), but local workers demonstrate vastly higher levels of worry about the personal job impact of automation than is evident among British workers (62% versus 10%). This may be attributed to the way in which discourses around new technologies differ in each country.

### Low levels of cultural acceptance of technological change

To gauge how culturally accepting South Africans are of technological change, respondents were asked to rate how comfortable they felt with four situations involving the use of robots: (i) a medical operation performed by a robot; (ii) factories where workers are replaced by robots; (iii) receiving goods delivered by drone or robot; and (iv) being driven in a driverless car or taxi in traffic. They provided scores using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means 'totally uncomfortable' and 10 means 'totally comfortable' (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Cultural acceptance of the use of robots (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2018/19 4IR module

On average, the South African public is not especially accepting of any of these four scenarios. Only 14–18% expressed comfort, 19–23% would be moderately comfortable, while 59–67% were uncomfortable with such propositions.

### Ability of government to manage the labour-market effect of new technologies

Given the substantial concern over the potential job threat posed by new technologies in the future, how confident is the public that the government can intervene successfully to minimise adverse labour-market impacts? As Figure 3 shows, a little more than a third (37%) were very or fairly confident that the government could effectively put in place strategies to ensure that new technologies do not result in job losses, whereas 57% were doubtful. Poorer South Africans express greater scepticism than better-off South Africans in this regard. While the survey results do not address the role to be played by other parties (especially market actors), they do nonetheless provide a sense of the views on state policy to address any adverse labour impact that automation might produce.

**Figure 3: Perceived ability of the government to avert job losses brought on by new technologies, by poverty status (%)**



Source: HSRC SASAS 2018/19 4IR module

### The new dawn

The analysis suggests that South Africans are generally more optimistic than circumspect about the impact of the newest digital technologies on society and their personal wellbeing. However, it is recognised that automation will affect the labour market and deep concerns exist over the threat this poses to jobs. There is also broad discomfort with robots performing a range of tasks. This points to quite low levels of cultural acceptance of the application of robots.

If technological change creates further labour-market inequality and sustained reductions in human employment, then carefully planned social, educational and labour market policies will be required to address low pay, precarious employment, and expanded, long-term unemployment.

At this stage, the public is fairly pessimistic about the ability of the government to minimise the human costs of the 4IR. Ongoing multi-sectoral and public dialogue, such as that organised by President Cyril Ramaphosa, will be required

to promote new insights and develop responses to rapid technological advancement. This should be accompanied by campaigns to inform the public about technological change and the planned response for the country.

**Note:** This article originally featured in [The Conversation](#).

**Authors:** Dr Ben Roberts and Jarè Struwig, coordinators of the South African Social Attitudes Survey, Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller, executive director, and Dr Steven Gordon, senior research specialist, in the HSRC's Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery research programme

*With the rising accessibility of drones, many of the most dangerous and high-paying jobs within the commercial sector are ripe for displacement by drone technology.*

**Photo:** [VisionPic.net/Pexels](#)



“ IN THE  
COMMUNITY,  
WE ARE THE  
EXPERTS AND  
OUR VOICES ARE  
OUR DATA.

- NTOMBOZUKO KRAAI ”

# Our voice is our data

Researching innovation in the informal sector requires engaging with communities to understand the nature of their businesses, which often includes household enterprises ‘hidden’ from view. One approach is to use participatory visual methods, which allow researchers to involve communities in the entire research process, often using digital technology. In March 2019, experts discussed key principles that underpin this approach at a policy seminar in Sweetwaters, a semi-rural area in KwaZulu-Natal. *Dr Il-haam Petersen* reports.

*Ntombozuko Kraai, founder of local NGO African Women Rising, at a policy seminar in Sweetwaters, a semi-rural area in KwaZulu-Natal*  
**Photo:** Antonio Erasmus

Digital technology has enabled faster and more effective communication between people from all sectors of society. In research, it has enabled participatory visual methods whereby researchers and participants co-produce knowledge with the help of digital technology. Such engaged research has the potential to produce meaningful data with deeper social impact. At the seminar, five key principles emerged to guide such approaches.

The first principle is **participatory inclusion**. "In the community, we are the experts and our voices are our data," said Ntombuzuko Kraai, founder of local NGO African Women Rising.

When we engage community participants in the research process from the start – that is, from the process of refining the research topic, questions and design – we improve the usefulness of the knowledge collected. Thereafter, fieldwork, analysis and dissemination become processes of engagement and co-production.

By involving community participants, we can increase the chances of conducting research that addresses practical questions and can be used to address development challenges that are important to them. The impact may be as big as a shift in mindset or a solution for improving service delivery, or as small as facilitating linkages in the community.

A second principle is **reflexivity**. Prof Heidi van Rooyen, the executive director of the HSRC's Human and Social Development programme, summed up a key message of the seminar: the value of challenging 'traditional ways of conceiving of how we know'. Participatory approaches force researchers to think critically about their own assumptions about the concepts they are using and the topics they wish to address.

Presenting the findings of a project on engagement and knowledge flows, researchers of the HSRC's Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII) highlighted how, through a participatory approach, an innovation hub located in a Cape Town township can be seen as more than just an

infrastructure development.

It is a space where people from different sociocultural backgrounds, and with different identities and needs, interact and shape how the hub is used.

Photo-stories (photographs accompanied by narratives) co-produced with the research participants revealed some of the unintended barriers to access and the ways in which people worked around them to make the space useful to them.

The project identified specific ways for improving the contribution of such hubs to small business development and youth development in townships.

### **This is my story**

One of the digital stories produced through the research was [played](#) at the seminar. The storyteller, Grace Dila, an informal business owner from Philippi township in Cape Town, proudly stated, "This is my story"; and impressed the audience with a detailed description of the ways in which she had drawn on formal knowledge and used innovation



to grow her business and employ people.

Since digital storytelling emphasises participatory engagement, reflexivity and co-production, the team has built strong relationships with locals working in the informal business sector.

The individual stories informed the questions of the standardised questionnaire and fieldwork tools for CeSTII's baseline survey on innovation in the informal sector. This points to the third and fourth principles of **flexibility** and **openness** to change and learning from and with participants.

### Useful tools for empowering community-based actors

Diana Sanchez Betancourt, a senior researcher in the HSRC's Democracy and Governance programme, emphasised the value of unintended positive impact on individuals.

A challenge is that interventions and research are often designed around what can be scaled up. Sanchez Betancourt described the value of a [community scorecard methodology](#), piloted in Cape Town, which underscores the importance of the relational and human aspects of technological tools.

Through the community scorecard methodology, the research team could develop a set of indicators, in collaboration with the local

municipality and the community, which could be used for improving service delivery and, with the use of technology, enabled citizen engagement and real-time feedback on services.

Creating linkages and building local networks stimulate the development of local capabilities. The fifth principle is to find ways to **promote agency**. Creating platforms for community-based actors to voice their opinions and share their stories is a key way to do this.

For example, through a consortium of European and South African universities, an online [platform](#) has been developed where individuals can showcase their digital stories on their social innovations. The initiative was funded by the European Union Erasmus+ Capacity Building initiative, said Dr Deidre van Rooyen of the University of the Free State.

### 'New' role for the HSRC?

Bibi Bouwman, the chair of the South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum emphasised that it is part of universities' mandate to learn from and engage with the communities around them.

But, how much consideration has been given to the importance of engagement for science councils to perform their mandates? And is applied research the same as engaged research?

The research presented at the seminar showed how, through engaged research, the HSRC has acted as an intermediary by stimulating linkages to improve the usefulness of knowledge produced, and contributed to building local capabilities.

Have we considered this potentially new role for the HSRC in fulfilling its mandate in the inclusive national system of innovation envisioned in the [2019 White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation](#)?

The five principles highlighted at the Sweetwaters seminar are potentially useful pointers not only for how we can "include community voices much more strongly"; as Van Rooyen noted, but for how we can improve the usefulness of our research and thus our impact on the lived realities of people in our communities.

Links to the YouTube videos of the seminar:

[Participatory innovation CESTII](#)

[New digital technologies](#)

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A policy seminar in Sweetwaters, a semi-rural area in KwaZulu-Natal  
Photo: Antonio Erasmus

# Language rites: Writing ourselves into the academy

Africanisation and decolonisation have brought education into a new age, one which embraces multilingualism. African societies are transforming from knowledge consumers to active knowledge producers.

However, the process is slow and the historical privileging of Afrikaans and English in South Africa requires restructuring, which is achievable through the development of indigenous languages in universities. If indigenous languages and knowledge are not used, not developed, not intellectualised, then how will we meaningfully Africanise and decolonise? *Dr Alude Mahali, Jaqueline Harvey and Zibuyile Nene* report on a panel discussion at the recent Language Rites symposium in Cape Town.

Language is never neutral, particularly the eleven official languages and their use in South Africa. Even with the multilingual aims of the new dispensation, Afrikaans and English remain the principal conduits of instruction, business, and knowledge production at South Africa's universities. Language Rites, a symposium on language practices in South Africa's higher education institutions held in September 2019, challenged the maintenance of these language practices that do not affirm indigenous language speakers as learners and knowers.

Despite policies supporting multilingualism, higher education institutions have been unsuccessful in formalising African languages as alternative languages of instruction, communication or examination. Reasons include insufficient buy-in from the government about the importance of developing, promoting, publishing and using African languages, particularly in education, or dwindling African languages student numbers and lack of adequately trained faculties to teach them.

The *Writing Ourselves into the Academy* panel confronted these reasons and discussed the intellectualisation of African languages in the academy. Four scholars with higher degrees in isiXhosa, isiZulu or Tshivenda were on the panel: Drs Phephani Gumbi and Gugulethu Mazibuko of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Dr Hleze Kunju of Rhodes University (RU) and Moffat Sebola of the University of Limpopo. The panel was chaired by Prof Nobuhle Hlongwa of UKZN who was the second person in South Africa to graduate with a PhD in isiZulu in 2001.

## Enabling backgrounds recast as disabling?

At the symposium, Assoc Prof Carolyn McKinney asked how it was possible that “the most valuable resource a child brings to formal schooling, language, can be consistently recast as a problem?”

Most of the panel speakers described how they came from places where their language was a resource but how that same language was positioned as a problem once they entered the academy. The perceived elevated status of English continues to undermine development of other languages as they are seen as holding less value in comparison.

*“The first thing is the language; as you know, language is identity, culture and it’s who you are. Now you get to a new place and your identity and culture is not there; you have to learn a new language, culture and identity. You are like a newborn. You are in a first-year class with people who already speak English as a first language and you still need to perform just like them.” – Dr Hleze Kunju*

Another challenge was the lack of imagination about the outcomes of an indigenous language degree. Speakers reported instances where colleagues actively discouraged them by citing extended completion rates, struggles with translation, ‘lowered standards’ and the lack of job security. This too stems from viewing an indigenous language background as a problem rather than as a rich resource. We need only look to fellow African countries for examples of celebrating the richness of indigeneity with the ubiquity of Kiswahili in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Afan-Oromo in Ethiopia. There is no deficit perspective and instead a tremendous sense of national pride, identification and feelings of belonging that comes as a by-product of embracing indigenous language on a national level.

## The lack of established historical precedence for the intellectualisation of African languages

Gumbi termed African languages being taught in English in the

academy as the “biggest abuse on the African child and languages.” The prestige of English continues its ubiquitous impact here in multiple ways. Kunju and Mazibuko noted that they had to produce their work in English and in an African language – twice the amount of work as other students. Sebola decried postgraduate students needing to translate their submissions into English; a counter-intuitive measure to being empowered to write in your own language.

*“I have always thought that language is a vehicle to knowledge and information; for when I think, I do it in my own language, and yet the whole education system excludes my language.”*

– Dr Phephani Gumbi

Other barriers speakers faced were: 1) a dearth of academic literature in indigenous languages; 2) the lack of adequate resources at universities, e.g. writing centres for those studying in indigenous languages; 3) the multiple dialects of indigenous languages making translation complex; and 4) a lack of terminology for academic concepts. The speakers also noted that the development of indigenous languages requires flexibility rather than a purist view of academic rules. Kunju spoke of how *umthombo wolwazi* (spring of knowledge), for instance, could be translated as the French-derived ‘bibliography’ and that purists might argue for use of the latter.

*“We didn’t have spellcheckers or Corpus; you had to struggle on your own. That did not discourage me.” – Dr Gugulethu Mazibuko*

## Leading the charge in African language knowledge production

All the speakers associated their success with the increase in the number of indigenous language postgraduate students that they are enrolling and supervising. Triumph for the speakers means growing the field, and this requires those who have already moved through the system to improve upon it and pay it forward.

*“I was also inspired by the fact that there is very little literature in isiZulu; I wanted to contribute to that. I had to pave the way for future isiZulu scholars.” – Dr Gugulethu Mazibuko*

Mazibuko also spoke about tangible outcomes, including the growing pool of isiZulu research editors and collaborations across regions. Their work includes: using sister languages to isiZulu, like isiXhosa and siSwati, to verify terms; the development of the South African Centre for Digital Language Resources and the UKZN Language Planning and Development Office to digitise language spaces and digitise as a corpus; the imminent publishing of an academic book in isiZulu; the development of Facebook in Swahili and isiZulu; and a soon-to-be published isiZulu-Mandarin dictionary. The speakers have triumphed personally and are taking their knowledge back to their places of origin in their language without compromising their identity.

*“When I went to Rhodes, I wanted something I could take back to Mqanduli where I come from and have people engaging with it.”*

– Dr Hleze Kunju

## Changing the academy

The journeys and victories of the panel speakers have sparked change in the academy, directly and indirectly. UKZN, RU and the University of Cape Town have embarked on corpora (datasets of natural language) development in indigenous languages as well as other initiatives, including communication development, multilingual academic dictionaries for science and mathematics, textbook and learning material development, and creative writing.

Offering higher education in all languages builds on what has been previously learned, treats all languages as a resource, promotes bilingualism and multilingualism, and benefits all South Africans.

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# LANGUAGE PLANNING MIGHT HAVE STALLED, BUT INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES ARE MAKING QUIET INROADS IN SOUTH AFRICA'S UNIVERSITIES

Post-apartheid language policy aimed to plant seeds of multilingualism in South Africa's education system. But, over 20 years later, the harvest has been disappointing. At a recent HSRC-hosted seminar, Language Rites, researchers, former postgraduate students and government representatives discussed how language planning might help to bridge the persistent gap between policy and practice.

By *Andrea Teagle*

*The Abengcongolo collective, a group of final year UCT drama students, perform Nguvu yaMbegu eNtabelanga (the power of the seed) at the Language Rites symposium, 15 September 2019.*

*Photo: Antonio Erasmus*

When Dr Hleze Kunju arrived as a first-year student at Rhodes University, just a few kilometres from the village where he had spoken, learned and lived isiXhosa his whole life, his world was turned on its head. Everything was in English.

"I thought I was in another country," Kunju recalled, laughing, at an HSRC conference on language in education. Years after his first discombobulating university lecture, Kunju went on to become the first person to complete a PhD in isiXhosa. Today, as the associate head of Rhodes University's Creative Writing Programme, Kunju supervises students who wish to pursue their doctorates in indigenous languages. He also teaches a bilingual creative writing course, to increase the scope and availability of isiXhosa fiction.

Despite progressive language policy, multilingualism remains largely absent from South African classrooms and lecture halls. The experiences relayed by Kunju and other former students illustrated how the impact of imposed English education extends beyond that of immediate learning, to identity, confidence and a sense of place. Dr Phephani Gumbi, who obtained his PhD in African languages (written in isiZulu) spoke of the deeply ingrained belief, growing up, that English proficiency symbolises intelligence.

It is this pervasive ideology, dubbed [anglonormativity](#), that confers power to people with so-called 'white' South African accents, said keynote speaker Prof Carolyn McKinney, an associate professor in language education at the University of Cape Town. "[Language ideology] is about what we believe language signifies," she said.

Perpetuating the problem is the school model, which sees a transition from indigenous language education to English as the sole medium of instruction in grade 4. This change occurs against a backdrop of under-developed literacy in both languages, setting the child up for a lifetime of playing 'catch up'.

### Poor language planning

McKinney's fellow keynote speaker, the post-colonial scholar and applied linguist Prof Robert Balfour, argued that this is a result not of poor policy but poor language planning, the bridge between policy and practice.

In schools and universities, language planning – or the way that language is taught – is not underpinned by an understanding of how language is acquired, said Balfour, who is also the deputy vice-chancellor for teaching and learning at North-West University (NWU). Firstly, the educational system is built on the biased assumption of monolingualism, which holds that languages are acquired consecutively, with a child first developing proficiency in a home language and then moving on to learn other languages. As McKinney pointed out, in South Africa, and indeed globally, monolingualism is the exception, not the norm.

Secondly, the way that literacy is acquired is informed by how the language is structured. Calling the availability of direct translations of high school teaching resources – as provided for by [policy](#) – an "educational travesty," Balfour emphasised that structural differences between English and South African indigenous languages necessitate different models of teaching.

Language planning requires collaboration between linguists, researchers and pedagogists, Balfour argued.

### Multilingualism in universities

The question of how to facilitate multilingualism has been approached from a number of different angles in small-scale studies. For example, translanguaging is one area of study that shows potential for improving comprehension by encouraging students to draw from their linguistic repertoire how ever best suits their communicative ends. Recent research has suggested that students arrive at deeper conceptual understanding when allowed to move fluidly between languages.

Balfour argued that a meta-analysis of studies at different levels of education is required to piece together a more holistic picture of South Africa's multilingual context.

"Our systems aren't geared to produce teachers who can facilitate multilingual understanding," Balfour said. While critics of indigenous language in education often point to a lack of resources, the primary resource is the teacher. Often, teachers are not sufficiently literate themselves, and yet are tasked with overseeing a sudden transition from an indigenous language to English. Lecturers are not trained in how to teach, let alone how to teach in a multilingual setting.

NWU is introducing voluntary multilingual pedagogy courses for their lecturers.

The University of Limpopo has offered a dual-medium degree since 2003, which aims to produce bilingual specialists. After the conference, lecturer Abram Mashatole recounted the difference in confidence and expression in his students when taught in Sesotho sa Leboa (Northern Sotho).

The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) is developing a fully bilingual teaching system, with isiZulu accorded equal status with English. It is creating an isiZulu mobile lexicon and an online isiZulu term bank so that students can search for technical terms already developed by those who have come before them.

In addition, all UKZN doctoral students are required to produce a thesis in English and isiZulu. The resulting [corpora](#) (datasets of natural language)

will enable machine learning, and ultimately the development of an automated machine translator, said Prof Langa Khumalo, the director of language planning and development at UKZN.

It was suggested that the UKZN capacitation model be developed as a prototype and extended across tertiary education nationally. A shared term bank would help to standardise technical vocabulary in indigenous languages, and avoid duplication of labour.

### Incentivising indigenous language use

Kunju recounted the pushback that he encountered when borrowing terms from English in his thesis. But the idea of languages as static, bounded objects that do not and should not mix is a Western import and does not reflect how languages are used, McKinney observed. English itself has borrowed liberally from Latin and other languages.

As Kunju and his peers showed, language evolves and develops through use. In some sense, then, the challenge is beginning. How do universities convince more students to use indigenous languages? It is within the professions that multilingualism would be most useful and where it could be rewarded, Khumalo pointed out. For example, healthcare professionals who can conduct themselves in more than one language have an advantage over monolingual speakers.

A national commitment to multilingualism would also open opportunities for translators who could move across universities and government sectors. Speakers from the Department of Education indicated the possibility of providing non-financial support for multilingualism projects in and between universities.

If, as writer and director Mandal Mbothwe said, language is the vehicle for moving away from ourselves, then the act of choosing to use our indigenous languages, despite the challenges and unknowns, is the start of the way back.

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Photo: Frantisek\_Krejci/Pixabay

# Indebtedness and aspiration: A credit journey to higher status or ruin?

Aspirations of upward mobility, poor credit regulation and unscrupulous credit providers have contributed to millions of South Africans becoming critically indebted. When the latest amendments to the National Credit Act were published in August 2019, the issue once again received significant media coverage. In a chapter of the HSRC's latest book in its State of the Nation series, *Poverty and Inequality: Diagnosis, Prognosis and Responses*, Prof Deborah James of the London School of Economics looks at some of the factors that drive people to over-indebtedness. This article is based on the chapter, with additional reporting by Antoinette Oosthuizen.

The recently published [National Credit Amendment Act 7 of 2019](#) allows for some of the poorest over-indebted South Africans' repayments to be suspended or their debt entirely written off. Details of how this will be implemented are still being worked out, but many have opposed the changes, including the banking industry, clothing retailers and the DA. They claim South Africa's lowest income earners might be left out in the cold with few credit providers willing to risk lending them money. In addition, as Prof Deborah James points out, the amendments will likely have no impact on those who borrow from 'loan sharks', or *mashonisas*.

#### The latest:

- The National Credit Amendment [Act 7 of 2019](#) was published in the Government Gazette on 19 August 2019
- The relief applies to those who earn R7500 or less per month with R50 000 unsecured debt, and those who are critically indebted.
- The process may involve suspending debt repayments or extinguishing the entire amount, but, if the debt is written off, the person will not be allowed to apply for credit for a period of up to 12 months.

Many consumers start their credit journey through clothing purchases, said Michael Lawrence, executive director of the National Clothing Retail Federation of South Africa, during [public hearings](#) on the bill in 2013. Being provided credit by retailers is a “constructive” way to start this journey, he said in a comment to [Netwerk24](#) in August 2019. How would consumers prove their credit-worthiness without having had access to such credit? The industry had hoped for further consultation.

But what is the reality of this ‘credit journey’? Over the last 25 years, there have been countless reports of desperate consumers resigning their jobs to avoid debt repayment instalments obliterating their salaries. The associated psychological and social stress, and feelings of hopelessness have even driven some to suicide.

### Overcoming a racist legacy

South Africa’s debt landscape is particularly difficult to reform, writes James.

After the first democratic elections in 1994, various aspects of apartheid were abolished, coinciding with a massive rise in expectations and considerable state spending on salaries and social grants.

South Africans embraced a sudden credit supply, boosted when the government repealed the terms of the Usury Act which previously capped the interest rate.

### Repealing the Usury Act

- The ceiling placed on lending rates by the Usury Act of 1968 protected borrowers from excessive charges. It also excluded many people from getting credit because the transaction cost per rand lent was just too high to make lending small amounts to low-income earners profitable for banks, writes Prof Andrie Schoombie of Stellenbosch University’s Department of Economics in [South African banks and the unbanked: Progress and prospects](#) (2004).
- In 1992, the Minister of Trade and Industry exempted certain moneylending transactions not exceeding R6000 (later R10 000) from the provisions of the Usury Act. The informal micro-lending industry mushroomed.
- The [National Credit Act \(No. 34 of 2005\)](#) repealed the Usury Act.

The global emphasis on consumerism, lifestyle and the status of having access to material goods and services led to many who may have previously been content with a lower social position now desiring equality. Access to credit allowed them lifestyles from which they were previously excluded. But, as James writes, Clara Han calls this a “loaned life” in [Life in debt: Times of care and violence in neoliberal Chile](#). While borrowing actualised dreams and soothed family relations, creditors eventually knocked on their doors.

### Pouncing on the money

In the 1990s, a rising black middle class entered the South African civil service. Many of the former public servants used their redundancy packages to build a new micro-lending industry. They extended credit to those replacing them, often charging excessive interest rates. The informal micro-lending sector expanded, with loan sharks, or *mashonisas* (isiZulu), confiscating ATM cards outside factory gates on payday, and some charging interest of 50% per month. In the formal financial sector, borrowers were seduced by housing loans, store cards for clothing, vehicle finance and the purchase of household items on instalments.

Urban black working-class people were especially vulnerable to unsustainable borrowing levels. Many took out loans from numerous informal lenders and retailers, rather than banks, becoming over-committed. Income growth could not keep up with the rate of credit consumption. The borrowing at high interest rates eventually exacerbated their poverty.

A 2018 [report](#) commissioned by Wonga Finance SA (Pty) Ltd estimated that South Africa had at least one *mashonisa* per 100 households in low-income areas.

The [National Credit Amendment Act 7 of 2019](#) has probably put the “sharks” in a “jovial mood” wrote Dean Macpherson, the DA Shadow Minister for Trade and Industry in the [Daily Maverick](#). Responding to its signing into law, he warned that banks will decrease their exposure to low-income earners and the *mashonisas* will benefit by providing them with informal credit.

### A sense of social obligation

Those hardest hit by indebtedness are not only the poorest in society but rather the so-called “new middle class,” writes James. Ironically, it is their credit-worthiness – their access to collateral such as salaries and social grants – that makes them vulnerable to exploitative lenders.

Often, social obligation pressures borrowers into obtaining credit, sometimes repeatedly, she says. In addition to embracing and displaying a lifestyle of upward mobility, many receive requests for financial support from poorer families and friends. Others borrow to fulfil cultural expectations related to *lobola* (bridewealth) payments and large ceremonies.

James quotes the example of a rural-based casual labourer who received debt counselling at the University of Pretoria Law Clinic in 2008. Pressured by his mother, he borrowed R5000 to pay *lobola* for the mother of his three children. In addition, he owed Jet R6000 for children’s clothing and another R5600 for DVD players that he’d bought for two households. Finally, he borrowed money from SA Loans, at a massive interest rate, to repay those debts. After paying his debt instalments every month, he did not have enough money to live on. The debt counsellor pointed out to creditors that they were

# UNTIL DEBT TEAR US APART

reckless to have extended him credit in the first place, and in contravention of the [National Credit Act](#) that had come into effect the previous year. She convinced them to write off some of his debts.

Many others did not have access to publically funded debt counselling or became entrapped by informal microlenders operating illegally. To escape this 'enslavement', they resigned their jobs, switched bank accounts or cashed in their pensions. Some employers paid wages in cash to protect workers against creditors getting their hands on the money.

## Regulating credit providers

A class action court case in the [Western Cape High Court](#) (2015) and the [Constitutional Court](#) (2016) ruled against many of the practices that enslaved people to exorbitant levels of debt.

One of the applicants, whose net income was R2260, was granted a loan of R6280 to be repaid in monthly instalments of R1574. Another earned an income of R1221 and was granted a loan to be repaid in instalments of R513 per month.

"These were quite obviously reckless loans and unsurprisingly the applicants defaulted on their repayments," the judge said.

## The height of the 'journey'

In 1994, the ratio of household debt to income in South Africa was just under 55%, rising to a record high of [86.4%](#) in 2008. According to the South African Reserve Bank's [Quarterly Bulletin](#) published in June 2019, the ratio was 72.5% in the first quarter of 2019. The cost of servicing debt as a percentage of nominal disposable income was at 9.3%.

Can regulation alone contain South Africans' borrowing? Or does the answer lie in a deeper understanding of South Africa's unique debt landscape, which, according to James, includes the way that commodification and mutuality (relationships of obligation, duty and care) interweave in society?

Many young South Africans have resorted to avoiding the types of mutuality that forced them to borrow money. James cites the example of a young woman who avoided *lobola* obligations to in-laws and expensive marriage ceremonies by remaining unmarried. She was a young member of the new middle class, but her parents still lived in an informal settlement.

By opting out of mutuality in this way, people like this woman truly "become middle class" in a classic sense by focusing on their immediate family only and repudiating obligations to others, writes James.

## Consumer rights protected by the National Credit Act

- To apply for credit
- To be protected against discrimination in the granting of credit
- To be informed why credit has not been granted, should you ask
- To receive a free copy of your credit agreement
- To receive a credit agreement in plain and simple language
- To have your personal and financial information treated as confidential
- To understand all fees, costs, interest rates, the total instalment and any other details
- To say no to increases on your credit limit
- To decide whether or not you want to be informed about products or services via telephone, SMS, mail or e-mail campaigns
- To apply for debt counselling should you be overwhelmed by debt

Source: [The Banking Association of South Africa](#)

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# WHO SHOULD BE LET IN?

Photo: pony\_caoch/Wikimedia Commons

The South African government has been debating who should be allowed entry into the country for generations. Today, skilled immigration is an area where debate is especially fierce. Critics argue that existing laws and procedures make it difficult for skilled migrants to enter and undermine much-needed enterprise development. The current visa requirements have been criticised as excessive, uncompetitive and harmful to economic growth. Moreover, the government has been accused of routinely underestimating the number of skills permits required by the labour market.

Until recently, we knew little about what the general public thinks about immigration selection criteria. This is a serious oversight given the efforts to reform immigration legislation in South Africa via the [White Paper on International Migration](#).

## Public attitudes towards immigration selection criteria

Immigration has become an emotive topic of debate globally. The question of who should be allowed to cross national borders has divided people in Europe and the United States, and we have seen walls go up all over the developed world. But what about South Africa? Who do the general public think should be allowed to enter the country's borders? According to the findings of the HSRC's South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS), they seem to prefer immigrants with work skills and education. By *Dr Steven Gordon*

## Asking the public

In the latest round of the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS), HSRC researchers included a set of questions on immigration selection criteria. SASAS is a nationally representative survey series administered by the HSRC and the last round was fielded in late 2018. Fieldworkers interviewed adults aged 16 years and older living in private households and the sample size for the survey was 2885.

The respondents were asked to rate four types of immigration criteria. The exact wording of the question was as follows:

*Please tell me how important you think each of these things should be in deciding whether someone born, brought up and living outside South Africa should be able to come and live here: (i) educational qualifications; (ii) Christian background; (iii) work skills that the country needs; and (iv) being African.*

Responses were coded on a scale from extremely unimportant (0) to extremely important (10). When answering these questions, a small number responded 'don't know'. These responses were treated as missing.

## Results

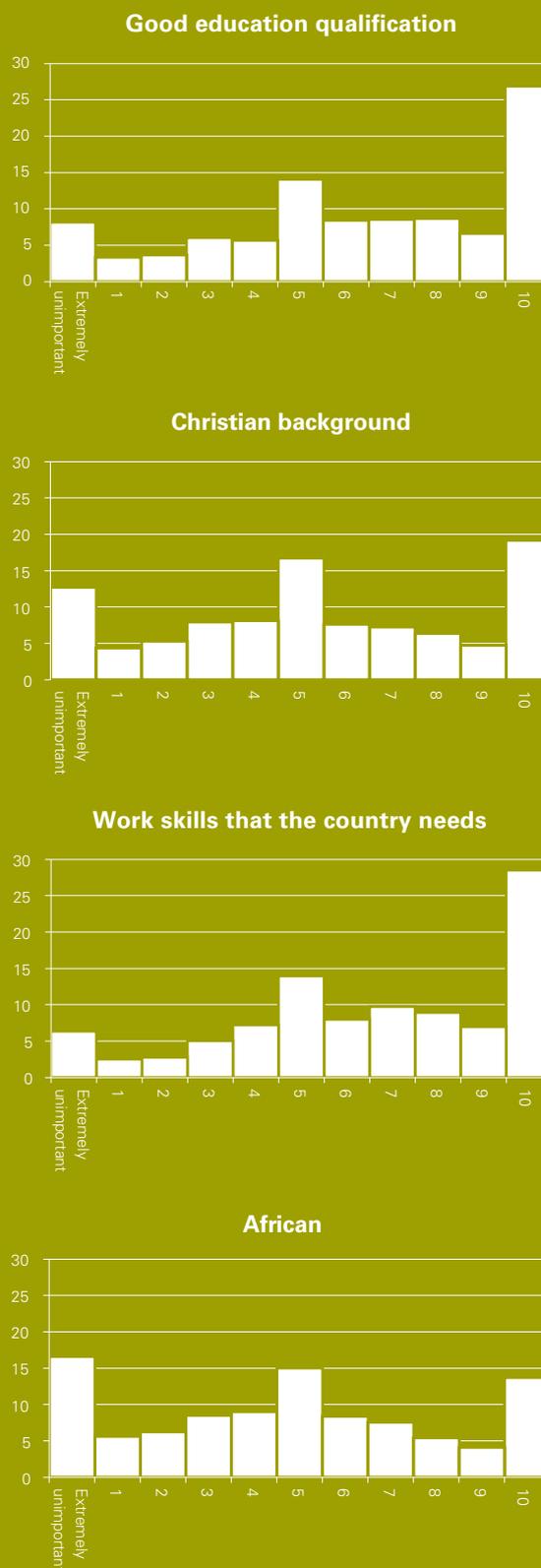
Out of the four selection criteria, 'work skills and education' were the most highly-rated as being important and the least important was 'being African'. This result suggests that there will be a degree of public backlash against regional integration efforts proposed by the African Union (AU). As part of its Agenda 2063, the AU wants to position 'being African' as one of the main criteria for cross-border migration on the continent.

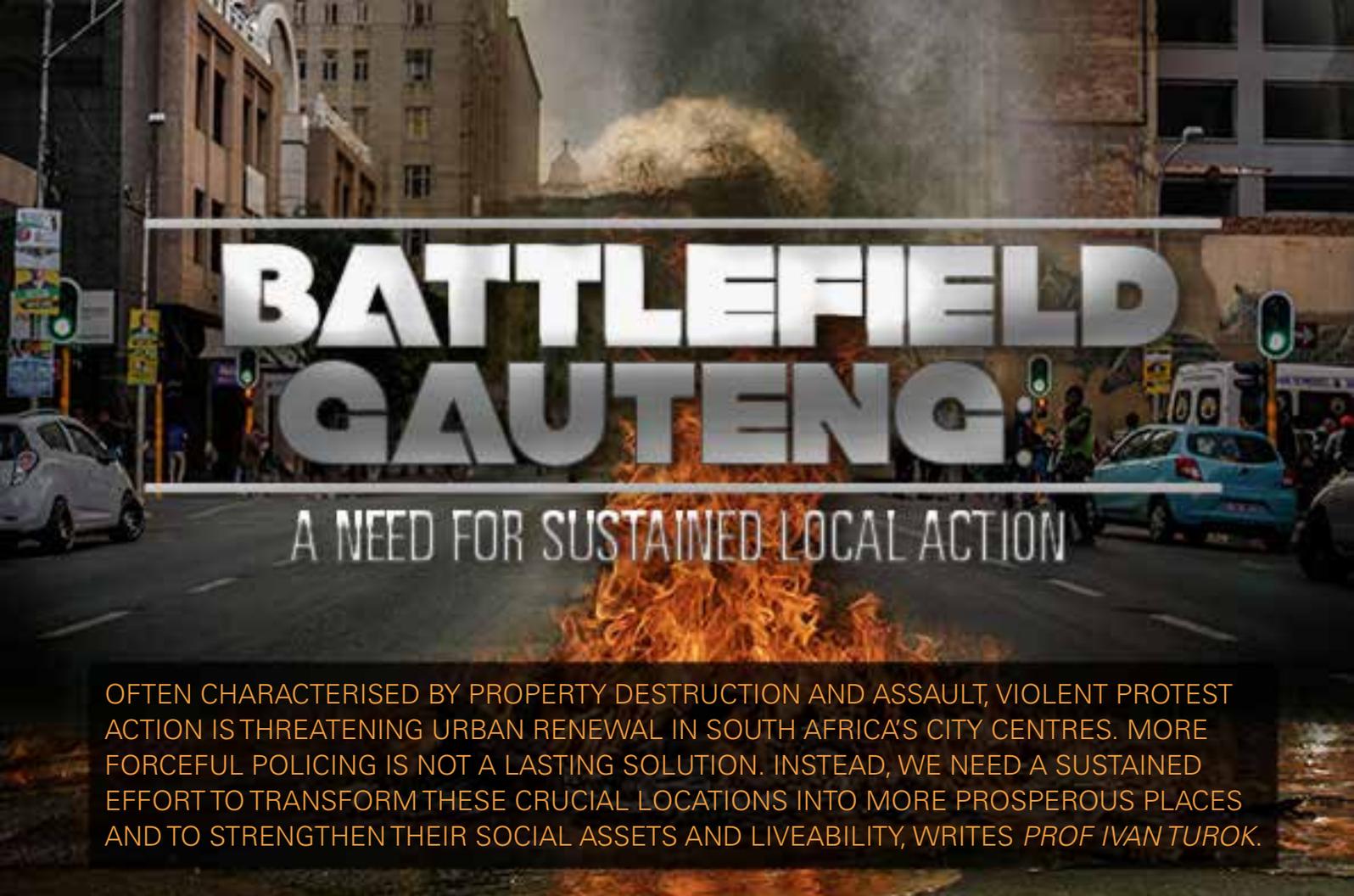
For most of South African history, questions relating to who gets into the country were centred on race and religion. In days long past, parliamentarians would raise angry rancour about non-Christian immigrants. Given how much the immigration debate has changed in the last 20 years, it is surprising that Christianity was ranked as an important selection criteria by so many in the country.

## Conclusion

The modern South African migration regime is not perfect and significant reform is required. The current task is to stimulate economic growth by encouraging more skilled and entrepreneurial immigration. The visa application processes for this type of immigration must be streamlined and made faster, cheaper and more convenient. Such reform will not be easy, but public opinion is behind policies and programmes that allow qualified people to enter the country.

**Figure 1: Support for four different immigration selection criteria in South Africa**





# BATTLEFIELD GAUTENG

## A NEED FOR SUSTAINED LOCAL ACTION

OFTEN CHARACTERISED BY PROPERTY DESTRUCTION AND ASSAULT, VIOLENT PROTEST ACTION IS THREATENING URBAN RENEWAL IN SOUTH AFRICA'S CITY CENTRES. MORE FORCEFUL POLICING IS NOT A LASTING SOLUTION. INSTEAD, WE NEED A SUSTAINED EFFORT TO TRANSFORM THESE CRUCIAL LOCATIONS INTO MORE PROSPEROUS PLACES AND TO STRENGTHEN THEIR SOCIAL ASSETS AND LIVEABILITY, WRITES *PROF IVAN TUROK*.

The recent violent looting of foreign-owned shops and burning of buildings and vehicles across Gauteng's urban centres has prompted a security crackdown and mass arrests. The malicious damage to people and property has caused enormous distress and anger at home and abroad. But it has largely gone unnoticed that the disorder could set back a vital process of central city renewal and regeneration that is underway in many of the affected areas.

The mayhem is clearly related to the national economic crisis and deepening social malaise. Rising unemployment, hardship and perceptions of government inaction and impunity for wrongdoing are fuelling discontent and undermining confidence in political leaders and the state.

Yet conditions are obviously not the same throughout the country. The atmosphere is particularly volatile in the densest urban districts, where

a potent cocktail of social pressure, raised expectations and frustration is being stirred by opportunists and purveyors of xenophobia and racial hostility.

### The need to transform places

These complex grievances and social dynamics won't be rectified by more forceful policing and punitive action on the part of the justice system. Stopping the violent crime and restoring law and order are imperative, but a lasting solution to the unrest requires a more profound and sustained effort to transform these crucial locations into more prosperous places and to strengthen their social assets and liveability.

The important role of local action to renew and develop the crumbling physical infrastructure and fraying social fabric has been neglected in the media coverage of the turmoil, just as it was following previous outbreaks of anti-immigrant unrest. Locally based action should be in addition to, and not instead of, the

national campaigns that are essential to tackle the scourges of xenophobia and gender violence.

### Managing a diverse and transient population

It is no coincidence that the hotspots of strife are the epicentres of Gauteng's cities and townships. These are rapidly-growing, well-connected places marked by intense human interaction, high aspirations and entrepreneurial dynamism. They function as powerful magnets of opportunity that attract diverse flows of domestic and international migrants searching for secure livelihoods and other ways of getting ahead. Vigorous competition for scarce resources puts extra stress on the environment and public facilities, and pressure on space to trade, to work, to live and to socialise.

Governing these unique places is inevitably complicated because of the potent activity mix, the ethnic diversity and the transient

nature of some population groups. Special forums and institutional arrangements are needed to find common purpose, to channel people's energy and goodwill in constructive directions, and to prevent the social strains and burdens from boiling over.

Local and provincial authorities have struggled to manage these shared spaces in ways that harness the positive possibilities enabled by urban density and diversity. Different functional departments operate autonomously and battle to deliver essential services and public facilities reliably, responsively and seamlessly. Stringent compliance regimes make it difficult for officials to try out novel ideas and design creative responses to distinct local challenges and unusual situations. Disjointed government initiatives and planning exercises rarely engage communities seriously or focus on encouraging private investment by reducing risk and improving safety. And the embryonic national urban policy seems to have had little impact as yet on the ground where it really matters.

### **A turnaround in central cities**

Despite the difficulties faced by all spheres of the government in overseeing and supporting these places, recent research reveals that a notable turnaround has taken place in central cities in recent years. After the extensive dislocation, decentralisation and decline of the 1990s and early 2000s, people and firms have rediscovered the fundamental advantages of core urban locations over the sprawling suburbs and peripheral townships as places to live, work, play and invest.

For instance, there has been a remarkable upsurge in decent affordable housing in the Johannesburg CBD. Pioneering private developers and black entrepreneurs have risked their capital to spur the revitalisation of key precincts through the adaptive reuse of redundant buildings and run-down public spaces for attractive rental accommodation, play areas, nurseries and other desirable amenities. This is satisfying enormous pent-up demand for city-centre living from ordinary workers, students and young professionals. Similar improvements have been happening in Tshwane and eThekweni, albeit on a smaller scale.

Another positive example of urban vibrancy is the emergence of specialised retail and wholesale enterprises engaged in cross-border trade of low-cost consumer goods. Johannesburg's inner city accommodates thousands of such businesses, together with the providers of related hospitality, transport and logistics services in a dense ecosystem that contributes over R10 billion a year to the local economy.

Meanwhile, listed developers of commercial and residential property and mainstream financial institutions have begun to return to the CBDs and other old business hubs and transport corridors. They recognise the rising demand for convenience and proximity from households and firms right across the socioeconomic spectrum.

### **The way forward**

The government needs to recognise that central cities are relatively open incubators of economic and social

progress, but also cauldrons of competing interests.

More focused attention is required to bolster and maintain these accessible urban centres in the face of competition from exclusionary retail and business precincts in outlying areas. Facilitating the growth and regeneration of mixed-use districts in a way that is inclusive is inherently difficult and requires a more concerted and integrated local approach. The process cannot be managed from city halls or provincial headquarters, let alone from the Union Buildings. It needs the bureaucracy to have a physical presence on the ground, in the places where citizens and businesses can access officials and articulate their needs and problems directly.

Robust and accountable local institutions are fundamental for the state to work hand-in-hand with civil society in ways that break down barriers and build social trust. Municipalities need to engage meaningfully with different groups and communities to restore confidence and to strengthen their knowledge and capabilities. Partnerships with the private sector and non-profit organisations are also vital to mobilise additional capacity to address the multiple challenges. Sustained local action may not capture the news headlines, but it is far more likely to improve people's lives.

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# LESSONS FROM CAPE TOWN'S DAY ZERO:

RESIDENTS ARE WILLING TO COOPERATE BUT NEED CLEAR COMMUNICATION AND SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT

Children fetching water from stand pipes in Green Point, Khayelitsha.

Photo: Masixole Feni/GroundUp

In January 2018, the City of Cape Town's water supply dam levels dropped to 28%. It was the lowest in a century of rainfall records. The city declared Day Zero and stringent water restrictions, which mobilised Capetonians to reduce their water consumption sufficiently to stave off disaster until the winter rains came. An HSRC survey revealed how households, businesses and organisations conserved water during the water crisis and how people experienced the impact of the drought differently, depending on their income, age and location. The findings will inform policy dialogues and an HSRC policy brief.

At the end of the 2017 winter season, the City of Cape Town's water supply dam levels stood at a mere 38.5% compared to 78.4% the previous year. The dams depend on winter rain to be replenished, but the levels were the lowest in 100 years of record keeping. December's dry summer festive season lay ahead and it was unlikely to rain for months.

Cape Town is a prominent international tourist destination, but during its dry summer season, the region also sees an influx of domestic holiday makers for the December school holidays, with increased water consumption.

The City issued warnings and alerts, but residents and businesses did not reduce their water consumption significantly. By January 2018, dam levels had dropped to 28%. At prevailing consumption rates, Cape Town's water supply would have been depleted by 16 April 2018, a date which the City declared as Day Zero. Water restrictions were lowered to 50 litres per person per day and the City established an online dashboard to keep residents up to date about dam levels.

Consumption dropped and Day Zero was averted, but in many households, buckets stayed in showers, even months after the winter rains came. In wealthier suburbs, grey-water systems and water tanks continue to signal a certain virtue. In hindsight, it is easy to criticise the local and national government for its handling of the crisis, but researchers and the authorities realised that the lessons learnt needed to refine future disaster management protocol. To this end, the HSRC embarked on a survey between January and March 2019 to find out how Capetonians conserved water and adapted their habits in response to the drought.

Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with government officials about the management of the crisis and surveyed seven areas across the Western Cape.

**Table 1: Geographical distribution of survey sample**

		n	Business/ Organisation	Household
City of Cape Town (CoCT)	SOUTH-EAST (Mitchells Plain & Beacon Valley)	39	18.4%	81.6%
	CENTRAL MIDDLE-INCOME (Athlone/Bellville)	28	14.3%	85.7%
	NORTH (Brooklyn)	32	39.4%	60.6%
	SOUTH (Fish Hoek)	23	26.1%	73.9%
	CENTRAL LOW-INCOME (Langa)	69	11.6%	88.4%
Small towns	CLANWILLIAM	57	31.6%	68.4%
	PIKETBERG	63	23.8%	76.2%
		<b>311</b>	<b>22.8%</b>	<b>77.2%</b>



Of the 311 responses, 77.2% were from households and 22.8% from businesses and organisations.

### Resilience and impact

A relatively large proportion of low-income respondents in the Langa township (14.5%) reported that the drought had “no impact at all” on them. Another 31.9% reported “a small impact”. The researchers believe this reflects the resilience that poorer people have developed in their daily lives. Households and businesses in that area are familiar with frequent walks to fetch water at communal taps and the water saving and recycling activities necessary for survival.

People aged 30 years and older were more likely than the younger people to indicate that the drought had a considerable or major impact on their lives. This suggests that the age group most likely to be home or business owners were more likely to be aware of the drought and the associated punitive tariffs on their lives.

The most serious effect was in respect of hygiene and household duties (29%), gardening (16%) and a financial burden (10%). Behaviour changes included taking shorter showers, reusing bath water for reuse, catching grey water and reducing laundry routines and cleaning activities.

### Costly water installations

A small proportion of respondents provided data on their water consumption, which showed the average domestic household water usage declined by 50% from 16.82 litres per month in 2016 to 8.94 litres in 2018. Higher-income respondents mitigated the impact of the drought by installing water tanks, boreholes, purification systems and related infrastructure to secure off-grid water supply. These installations became a significant talking point and a matter of pride for the respondents. However, the cost was totally beyond the budget of the low-income respondents, who used other ways to reduce consumption, as one woman explained:

*“We used bins for ukukhongozela amanzi, which we used for gardening and cleaning.”*

The term “grey water”, which was not in common use before the drought, became part of everyday conversations.

**Table 2: What were the main ways your household or business saved water?**

Water saving method	%
Recycling	34.3
Stored water	17.8
Used less water	33.9
Fixed leakages	2.4
Did not save water	3.5
Other	8.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>



*Household water harvesting and use in Piketberg*



*Theewaterskloof Dam, July 2018, level restored to 41% after good winter rain*

### Messages did not reach all

More than 80% of respondents were aware of the water restrictions that the municipality imposed, but in some lower-income areas, many people indicated no awareness, notably Langa (18.8%), Clanwilliam (10.5%) and Piketberg (9.5%). This may indicate that the communication strategy and engagement across the Western Cape was less effective among specific categories of residents. In Langa, 32.4% of respondents did not think that authorities communicated well about water restrictions. Many residents in informal settlements do not receive utility bills, which may have impacted on their general awareness on water restrictions and tariff changes.

**Table 3: Do you think the authorities communicated well about the restriction? (By location.)**

	Clanwilliam	CoCT-SOUTH-EAST	CoCT-CENTRAL MIDDLE-INCOME	CoCT-SOUTH	CoCT-SOUTH	CoCT-CENTRAL LOW-INCOME	Piketberg
Yes	48.2%	46.2%	75.0%	51.6%	45.5%	42.6%	67.2%
Partly	35.7%	28.2%	21.4%	32.3%	45.5%	25.0%	14.8%
No	16.1%	25.6%	3.6%	16.1%	9.0%	32.4%	18.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Significance X<sup>2</sup>=27,360; df =12; sig. = 0,007*

### Going forward

In its policy brief, the HSRC recommends that official communication about a disaster should be timeous, clear and transparent.

Almost 43% of the survey respondents believed that the authorities handled the crisis effectively, but a third thought they had not. In an open-ended question, respondents were asked in what ways a drought could be managed in future. Almost 19% suggested enhancing communication and awareness. The most preferred communication method was television, followed by radio and posters, with people under the age of 30 years more likely to prefer online and social media platforms.

Other suggestions included the need for more stringent water saving (22%); better maintenance of existing water-storage infrastructure and the establishment of new water-storage capacity (18%); and subsidisation of the installation of storage tanks (7%) and boreholes (6%).

Given that there was a general willingness to cooperate, the HSRC recommends that water restrictions should be strict and imposed for longer periods when necessary. Messaging should continue during wetter periods to sustain the new water-saving culture and be tailored to different target groups. There is a need to refine legislative guidelines to improve and promote water usage and management behaviour, including better building codes and municipal standards for grey-water systems and run-off re-capture. Other suggestions from respondents included non-punitive water management devices, positive behaviour feedback systems such as credit rewards on their water bills, and the installation of community water-storage tanks.

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# TURNING UP THE HEAT:

## How a warming climate might worsen violent crime in South Africa

South Africa could experience a thousand more homicides a year, were the temperature to rise by 1°C, according to a recent editorial review of the impact of temperature on violent crime. How the weather affects risk for crime is mediated by a host of other factors, the authors note. As temperatures rise, understanding heat-violence mechanisms will become increasingly important in anticipating and mitigating crime hotspots. By *Andrea Teagle*.

*Young people protest for action against climate change outside Parliament in Cape Town, South Africa, 15 March 2019.*

*Photo: Masixole FAshraf Hendricks/GroundUp*

Violent crime fluctuates with the weather. Between 2001 and 2012, almost half a million (418 327) homicides and 1.5 million sexual offences occurred in South Africa. Using ward-level crime data across the country, researchers from Ruhr Economic Papers – a collaboration between four German universities, including Ruhr-Universität Bochum – found that higher temperatures and droughts significantly affected levels of violent crime, as well as burglary.

Specifically, a 2.7°C increase in the maximum temperature (or [one standard deviation](#) away from the average) in an average month increased total crime counts by 3.7%. The same increase in minimum monthly temperature — which the Ruhr team read as a proxy for night-time weather conditions — led to an increase in crime of 5.3%, suggesting that night temperatures have a greater effect on crime rates.

## “HOTTER WEATHER INCREASES IRRITABILITY AND HOSTILITY; IT ALSO HAS AN IMPACT ON SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS SUCH AS DROUGHT AND WATER SCARCITY.”

The findings support other research that suggests that higher temperatures increase the risk of violence. Hotter weather increases irritability and hostility; it also has an impact on socioeconomic conditions such as drought and water scarcity that influence human behaviour.

Studies suggest that rising temperatures might have a greater impact on crime when people are already under strain — for example, in areas experiencing widespread poverty, high crime rates, gender imbalances or political unrest.

Additionally, the effect of temperatures on violence is not necessarily linear, as Prof Matthew Chersich of the Wits Reproductive Health and HIV Institute and his colleagues noted in a recent South African Medical Journal [guest editorial](#). Warmer temperatures might initially lead to greater violence, but extreme heat tends to diminish activity, so crime might be expected to plateau or even drop.

The [effect size differs widely](#), and untangling the impact of weather from other drivers of crime is notoriously challenging. However, given South Africa's already violent climate, and the fact that it is going to get warmer, it is worth asking – what impact will a rising temperature have on crime rates?

### Impact on vulnerable populations

In their guest editorial, Chersich and his team, including Dr Ian Edelstein, a former HSRC researcher, estimated a 4–5% increase in local homicides were the temperature to increase by 1°C. This translates into 800 – 1000 homicides on top of the current homicide count of 20 336 per year.

The estimate is based on the Ruhr findings, as well as those of 15 other studies investigating the heat-violence nexus. Of those, 6 found a positive correlation that was statistically significant. Chersich and his colleagues note that their estimate is conservative – one of the reviewed studies [estimated](#) a 17% increase in homicides across Africa for a 1°C temperature increase. Another, [a 2018 study based in Tshwane](#), found a 50% higher rate of violent crime on hotter days, on average, over a period of 5 years.

However, the authors recommend additional modelling using empirical data and including mediating factors to refine the expected impact.

While Chersich and his colleagues' 4–5% estimate pertained to homicides, results from the Ruhr study suggest that higher temperatures are likely to result in an even greater increase in gender-based violence. Based on the 2001–2012 data, they found that an increase of one standard deviation in daily minimum temperature in an average month caused sexual crimes to surge by over 8.6%.

Individuals already at higher risk for violence are likely to bear the brunt of the increase. Although the Ruhr study did not measure xenophobic attacks, the same mechanism likely applies to foreign nationals.

“Importantly, physical environmental triggers of violence, such as heat, are set against the backdrop of complex social processes, poor governance and historical circumstances that influence violence in South Africa,” Chersich and colleagues write.

### Mechanisms for weather-induced violence

In addition to affecting mood, weather can also influence social environments in ways that may change the costs and benefits of committing a crime on a particular day: a crowded outdoor area might make pick-pocketing easier, for example.

Warm weather also has a lagged influence on non-violent crime, according to the Ruhr study. The data showed that spikes in property crime in rural areas followed poor harvests,

as households reliant on agriculture turned to other means to make up the shortfalls.

And, while the editorial was concerned with individual cases of crime, a large body of research shows that [weather is associated with collective violence](#) and conflict. As in the case of individual crimes, extreme weather interacts with, and exacerbates, existing drivers, such as political unrest, dissatisfaction with government services, and gang warfare.

### Rising temperatures

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's special report on climate change, unless ambitious measures are taken, by the end of the century, the world will easily surpass a [1.5°C temperature increase](#) above [pre-industrial levels](#) – which is around 0.5°C away from where we are now. And in inland South Africa, temperatures are projected to increase at [twice the global average](#).

Climate change also increases the risk of conflict through resource scarcity and population displacement, or 'eco-migration', is anticipated to be a primary driver of conflict in the coming decades. By 2050, an estimated [150 to 200 million people](#) will be displaced due to extreme weather conditions, drought and rising sea levels, according to Unesco.

In South Africa, evidence suggests that [internal displacement](#), particularly of low-income groups, is already happening.

Chersich and his colleagues note that a better understanding of the heat-violence pathways might help authorities to deal better with increased crime risk ahead of hot spells in different parts of the country. Preventative measures could include air conditioning in schools or prisons, and greater police presence in high-crime areas, for example, while police and health professionals could prepare for more cases of assault ahead of heat spikes.

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# HERITAGE TOURISM

## *in a city of legends*

Since the end of apartheid, much has been made of the Eastern Cape as the home of the founding fathers of African nationalism and of the great intellectual traditions stemming from the early mission stations, which produced the constitutional traditions of the ANC. The province has embraced this history and called itself the 'home of legends', and yet it is still the prehistoric [coelacanth](#) fish – which remains an abiding pre-occupation at the East London Museum – that prevails in the city's memorialisation of its own past. In 2019, as part of an ongoing collaboration, the Buffalo City Metropolitan Development Agency (BCMDA) asked the HSRC to help re-evaluate its museums and heritage infrastructure to boost tourism. By *Prof Leslie Bank and Mark Paterson*

**A**t a [conference](#) in Ecuador in 2016, the United Nations launched its Habitat III global initiative on the future of cities. In preparation for this event, it called for papers on the current state of cities and new initiatives for sustainable development.

An interesting finding was that culture, heritage and the creative industries accounted for more than 20% of the global urban economy, which, in turn, made up more than 80% of the total world economy. Cities that developed a distinct sense of place and were able to promote a positive sense of belonging, culture and identity, it was found, were more likely to succeed economically and socially than those that did not.

As part of a master plan to address declining tourism in the region, the Buffalo City Metropolitan Development Agency (BCMDA) requested help from HSRC experts in the field of place-making and city development to review the heritage sector and assist the city with finding its unique identity, a project

which began in February 2019 and is ongoing.

### **The colonial legacy and the coelacanth**

When the HSRC team arrived in Buffalo City in April 2019 to assess the museum sector, it found that the East London Museum was running a special exhibition in its foyer on the discovery of the [coelacanth](#), a prehistoric fish which was found off the coast of East London in 1938. In the late 1930s, when the frontiers of natural science were expanding and fascination with evolutionary thinking was at its height, such finds were seen to be of enormous scientific importance globally, pointing to previously hidden evolutionary genealogies and lines of species development. Accordingly, the coelacanth became the main attraction at the museum.

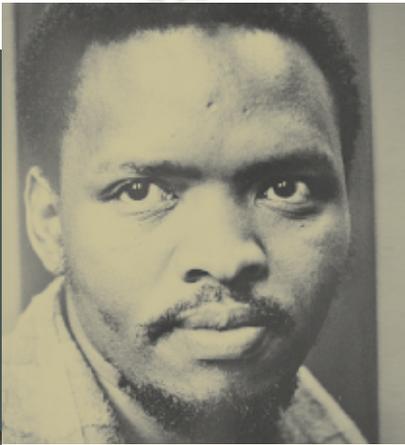
However, times had moved on and the fishy throwback to the age of the dinosaurs is no longer as culturally significant, notwithstanding its zoological interest. In this context, the East London Museum's 'temporary' coelacanth exhibition, which had been

in place for more than a year during the HSRC's visit, may be viewed as indicative of a wider crisis in the cultural tourism and heritage sector in the city-region.

The museum's main challenge was that it had remained trapped by its own history. The overriding narrative that defined its displays had remained a colonial discourse of social and natural evolution, anchored by the coelacanth in the natural history section of the museum but also shaped the presentation of human history of the city-region.

Dioramas showed the traditional culture of the Xhosa people and other tribes, rendered in a way which emphasised the 'timelessness' of African cultural traditions as if these were features of the natural Eastern Cape landscape rather than aspects of its human history. By contrast, the 'real history makers' were the 19th century German and British settler pioneers, presented as having brought 'progress' and modernity to a troubled frontier.

Since democracy, a combination of chronic underfunding and some



Struggle icon Steve Biko was born in the Eastern Cape

Source: [Wikimedia Commons, South African History Online](#)



A postcard commemorating the discovery of the coelacanth by Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer in December 1938.

Source: [Wikimedia Commons, The South African Institute for Aquatic Biology](#)



A statue of Steve Biko in at the East London city hall

Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

laissez-faire policies in the heritage sector had left this institution frozen in time just as the contemporary city-region urgently needed to redefine its place in the country and the world.

### Home of Legends: The Steve Biko Centre

In contrast to the East London Museum, the [Steve Biko Centre](#) in King William's Town represented a beacon in the city-region's heritage sector. Built in the Ginsberg township as a modern, multi-purpose facility in 2012, it became popular for visitors, but it also adopted an activist role within the local community.

Featuring a conference facility, a restaurant, an auditorium, a museum and a shop, it was visited daily by locals, domestic tourists and international guests. The centre was also in touch with the local community, with a range of initiatives including a business incubator to support local entrepreneurs and free open-air feature films with positive, black-empowerment themes.

The centre's focus on the history of Steve Biko and black consciousness in South Africa was the context of a broader history of globalised, transatlantic interactions between South Africa, Africa, the US and the Caribbean. It had established an intellectual profile and function in the area, with book launches, public lectures and a community library.

At the time of the assessment, the centre wanted to launch a community

radio station and expand the suite of community projects under its auspices. However, there was tension between the institution and the larger heritage sector in the city and the province, with the centre's leadership complaining of poor communication with, and limited support from, officials, and inertia in the sector.

Although multi-functional as a tourist destination and a place of education, connection and empowerment for locals, the Steve Biko Centre did not hold the attention of visitors for a whole day, unless they were specifically interested in black consciousness, the researchers found. Another drawback was that its shop had limited merchandise, and although it had a few attractive Steve Biko t-shirts on display, it had none in stock, with little prospect of new supplies arriving soon.

A number of tours organised internationally and out of Johannesburg had placed the centre on an itinerary exploring the region's black history, but there had been few efforts on a municipal or provincial level to integrate the facility into local heritage offerings. It was also found that this disconnection was symptomatic of a broader lack of coordination in the local heritage sector.

### Reworking the old and connecting the new

In discussions about heritage and tourism opportunities in Buffalo City,

it has been argued that too much emphasis was placed on the old cultural heartlands and not enough on the city region. Disillusionment with the management of the city and the state of democracy in South Africa in general had fostered the politics of nostalgia, which could regard the pre-colonial past through rose-tinted spectacles.

The HSRC researchers believe the city region's heritage does not have to be viewed this way; nor does there need to be such a sharp divide between the rural and the urban in the popular versions of history. For example, the East London Museum could recontextualise its material, modernising its narrative to make it more relevant to the lived experience of contemporary residents of the city, both black and white.

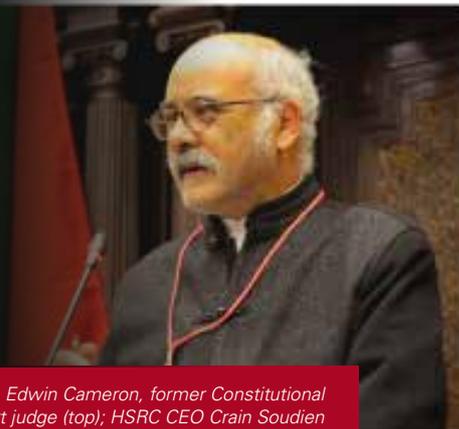
It is critical that Buffalo City uses its rich, diverse history and beautiful physical location on the Wild Coast to bring new focus to its story. Connecting the Steve Biko Centre with other innovative projects in the neighbourhood and restructuring the East London Museum are good starting points to help the heritage sector re-emerge as a powerful educational resource for the city and the region, to stimulate job creation and to drive tourism.

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# THE POWER OF CONSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUE:

## BRINGING THE VOICES OF ORDINARY SOUTH AFRICANS INSIDE THE WALLS OF PARLIAMENT



*Edwin Cameron, former Constitutional Court judge (top); HSRC CEO Crain Soudien (bottom left); Max Boqwana, Director of the National Foundations Dialogue Initiative (centre); and Stan Henkeman, Executive Director of Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (right), speaking at the Constitutional Dialogue in Parliament, 24 October 2019*

**Photo:** Shouneez Khan

The voices of South Africans increasingly raised in protest underscore the need to create safe spaces where the state and citizens can hear one another. Last week, the HSRC, the National Foundations Dialogue Initiative (NFDI), and the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) convened an inclusive dialogue between civil society, the executive, the judiciary and the legislature, to explore the question, “How can all who live in South Africa be assertive in holding the three branches of the state accountable for delivering on the fundamental rights in the constitution?” By *Andrea Teagle*

We need a new sense of constitutionalism, one that is defended and protected by the people of South Africa, Professor Barney Pitso, the keynote speaker and a former leader of the Black Consciousness Movement, argued at a recent constitutional dialogue held in Parliament.

Representatives of the three branches of the state – the executive, the judiciary and the legislature – agreed that collaborative efforts to find ways of realising the constitution’s transformative vision required greater inclusion of the voices of ordinary citizens.

This conversation, continuing from the dialogue, comes at a critical time for South Africa. The optimism of a new, democratic era has soured into what NFDI’s Max Boqwana called “a prevailing mood of despair”. In this climate, where dialogue happens behind closed doors, Justice Edwin Cameron warned, we risk fracturing into elitism.

The gulf between the citizen and the state, and between the values of the constitution and the lived reality of the majority of its people in the face of enduring poverty and inequality, threatens to break apart our carefully built democracy.

### The role of citizens

The speakers, including Cameron (representing the judiciary), the deputy speaker of the National Assembly, Lechesa Tsenoli (legislature), and Acting Chief State Law Advisor Ayesha Johaar (executive) affirmed the critical role of citizens in safeguarding South Africa’s hard-won democracy and in holding the government accountable.

It was citizens’ suspicion of power, Cameron said, that brought about the downfall of apartheid and, more recently, that led the court to the decision that Zuma had to pay back money misappropriated for his private home, Nkandla.

It was also the participation of civil society, and the weight of the evidence put forward, that enabled the Constitutional Court to order the state to initiate a national rollout of

“ WE ARE AN ARGUMENTATIVE AND A NOISY SOCIETY ... BUT WE’RE ALSO A SOCIETY PARALYSED BY FEAR ... IF THAT WERE NOT TRUE, WE WOULD NEVER HAVE HAD A GOVERNMENT THAT SUCCESSFULLY MANIPULATED ALL STATE INSTITUTIONS FOR AS LONG AS IT DID.” ”



anti-retroviral treatment in the early 2000s – a rare instance in which the court specified the “minimum core” content of socioeconomic rights, as Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller and her colleagues write in the HSRC’s latest book in the State of the Nation series, [Poverty and Inequality: Diagnosis, Prognosis and Responses](#).

While the Constitutional Court acts to uphold the rights of citizens, with a pro-poor leaning aligned with its transformative agenda, it is inherently reactive: it must wait for suitable cases to be brought before it.

These limitations underscore the need to create complementary spaces in which the voices of marginalised and

Lechesa Tsenoli, Deputy Speaker of Parliament (top); Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller (bottom left); Barney Pitso, former Black Consciousness leader (centre); and Prof Amanda Gouws (right), speaking at the Constitutional Dialogue in Parliament, 24 October 2019

Photo: Shouneez Khan



*Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana, General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches (top); Sheila Camerer, former DA MP (bottom left); Ayesha Johaar, Acting Chief State Law Advisor (bottom centre); and S'bu Zikode, founder of Abahlali baseMjondolo (bottom right) speaking at the Constitutional Dialogue in Parliament, 24 October 2019.*

**Photo:** Shouneez Khan



Abahlali baseMjondolo, which campaigns for housing and other rights for marginalised groups, has a long [history of conflict](#) with the state. “We have lost 18 housing activists since 2009,” Zikode said, “when [Abahlali] insisted that land and wealth must be shared amongst those who work it.”

vulnerable groups, in particular, can be heard outside of courtrooms and protests.

In their research conducted for the [Constitutional Justice Project](#), the HSRC and the University of Fort Hare found that inclusive dialogue could improve the functioning of the three branches of the state while maintaining the independence required by the separation of powers doctrine.

In the absence of such channels for meaningful exchange between the three arms of the state and civil society, cases bottleneck, and discontentment spills out onto the streets.

To reconnect South Africans with the constitution – and possibly, to reimagine it – respondents, including Prof Amanda Gouws (Stellenbosch University), suggested that the constitution be taught in schools and printed and distributed among young South Africans.

### **Paralysed by fear**

Despite the popular culture of protests, Tsenoli argued that the public

had been largely unable to exercise its constitutional duties. “We are an argumentative and a noisy society ... But we’re also a society paralysed by fear ... If that were not true, we would never have had a government that successfully manipulated all state institutions for as long as it did.”

Pityana observed that “matters that could and should be resolved by dialogue, and by political engagement among all parties, end up being matters for the courts to decide. The problem is that ... communities that should be working together to find solutions for their betterment and common wellbeing no longer bother to do so. The tendency is to ‘outsource’ our duties to correct and rebuild.”

Yet, where citizens have demonstrated democratic spirit and self-organised to advocate for their rights, they have been met with violence and repression at the hands of the state, claimed S’bu Zikode, the founder of the shack dwellers’ movement, Abahlali baseMjondolo. “The democracy of 1994 was never for impoverished communities,” he said.

### **Empowering community-driven solutions**

Professor Murray Leibbrandt, the director of the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit at the University of Cape Town, proffered that dialogues should focus on finding ways of empowering communities to find solutions to localised problems.

Referring to the government’s new district coordination model, which aims to [revolutionise service delivery](#), Leibbrandt argued, “There’s a wonderful opportunity for dialogues like this to ... commit to helping communities tell the government how the district development model is going to work in their district.”

Constructive ideas for tackling inequality and poverty that stemmed from previous dialogues, such as the four-year [Mandela Initiative](#), had not been followed through, he said.

Linamandla Deliwe, speaker of the Western Cape Youth Parliament in 2017, noted that the Youth Parliaments, convened to tackle particular issues, had similarly fallen by the wayside. “We speak about engaging young people, yet when we engage,

nothing is being done with those engagements.”

The gulf between the youth and the state was further underscored by a young panellist’s heated objection, directed at the deputy speaker, to the conviction of #FeesMustFall activist Kanya Cekeshe, and by Tsenoli’s response, which appealed to the importance of following due process.

### **A lack of accountability**

Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana, the general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, pointed to a lack of accountability as a major hurdle to realising transformation. If vigilance and citizen participation were essential ingredients for a healthy democracy, the flip side of the same coin was lack of government accountability.

“In a virtual one-party state, we have a culture where dissident voices are shut down and ostracised,” Mpumlwana argued. “Combine that with a system of patronage, then one has a cocktail of abuse and justification.”

South Africa’s proportional representation system, while simplifying the voting process, precludes citizens from influencing a party’s candidates. “In effect, the party bosses are accountable to no one but themselves,” Mpumlwana said.

Lawson Naidoo, Executive Secretary of the Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution, argued that we need a national debate on our electoral system, but cautioned that changing the system was not a silver bullet. “We have to acknowledge that Parliament has failed to do what the constitution requires it to do,” he said. “As a country, we spend too little time asking why and how this happened.”

In the spirit of working towards greater accountability, the dialogue concluded with a commitment to reconvene, to continue to engage, and – in the words of Bohler-Muller – “to resist giving up hope, even in this time of madness.”

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*Top: The HSRC’s Adv Gary Pienaar talking to Lawson Naidoo of the Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution*

*Middle left: Narend Singh, MP*

*Middle right: Safeeya Mahomed from the University of Cape Town*

*Bottom: (From left to right) Rev Courtney Sampson, head of the IEC in the Western Cape, Prof Barney Pitso of the Thabo Mbeki Foundation, Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana, general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, and the Rev Dr Lionel Louw of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*

**Photo:** Antonio Erasmus



# Locating and dislodging race as a construct: An ongoing project

In a recent workshop and seminar, HSRC CEO Crain Soudien challenged social scientists to explore why racism has such traction; why the idea of race, despite its scientific invalidation, remains so ingrained and psychologically appealing. Charting the history of race, and of counter-narratives that emerged in South Africa in the 1930s, Soudien made a plea to acknowledge the very real impacts of racism, while breaking the construct that perpetuates it. By *Andrea Teagle*

“One of the more important tasks of our time is to dissect this myth [of racial-biology].” These words were spoken more than half a century ago, in a 1953 speech by the South African political thinker and anti-racial activist, Ben Kies. In that same speech, delivered to the cultural debating society, the New Era Fellowship (NEF), Kies went on to expose the myth that civilisation is solely a product of European culture, laying bare the essence of race as a means of control.

Kies had co-founded the NEF almost twenty years previously, in 1937. The fellowship was a safe space in

the heart of District Six, an inner-city residential area in Cape Town, which was demolished in the 1970s after the apartheid government forcibly removed 60 000 residents, most of whom were classified as ‘coloured’. It was a place where young thinkers on the margins of the University of Cape Town could speak freely, and where accepted norms and beliefs could be held up to the light and critically dissected. Over the course of the NEF’s lifetime, what began as an inquisition into the identity of people classified as coloured became a theoretical and lived rejection of race as a concept.

Members of the NEF took their ideas of race as a construct to schools, to counter the prevailing racial ideology that was gripping South Africa ever tighter. “What made these leaders... stand out was their ability to project and make sense of their own local sociological positioning against the global system of imperialism,” writes HSRC CEO Crain Soudien in his recently published book, [Cape Radicals: Intellectual and political thought of the New Era Fellowship, 1930s–1960s](#).

Addressing a collection of doctoral students at a workshop at the Nelson Mandela University in Port Elizabeth,



Soudien said, “They deliberately decided to rewrite SA history... What they were trying to do was to show how this whole thing of empire worked. How empire, through education, through the missionaries, was about keeping people in states of subordination...that only got picked up in formal history and sociology in South Africa 30 or 40 years later.”

### Science undermines race idea

Today, scientific consensus, on the back of the gene-mapping revolution, undermines the idea of essential racial differences. Scientists have argued that the social category of race is a [poor proxy for genetic diversity](#), and its use should be phased out in biological sciences. As Soudien pointed out, referencing a [1997 statement](#) by the American Anthropological Association, about 94% of genetic diversity occurs within so-called racial groups. Indeed, the African continent contains more genetic diversity than the rest of the world combined.

This was poetically demonstrated by the [comparison of the full genomes](#) of James Watson – famous for co-discovering the structure of DNA, and notorious for [racist remarks](#) – with two other scientists: fellow American of European ancestry Craig Venter, and Korean Seong-Jin Kim. As US science magazine [Scientific American](#) reported in February 2016, it transpired that Watson and Venter shared more genetic variations with Kim than they did with each other.

Yet, race remains deeply embedded in our everyday realities and understanding of the world; it is so

pervasive that it takes the form of what Soudien calls ‘naturalised logic’. “To this day, we operate with this belief that I can look at you and work you out... simply on the basis of what you look like,” Soudien said. “You can’t go anywhere in the world and escape that.”

### A means of control

The ‘stickiness’ of race is related to its usefulness as a means of control, Soudien suggested. Tellingly, race has meant different things in different parts of the world at different times, he said. “Race is whatever the politics in a particular space wants it to be... Whatever is convenient to maintain dominance.”

In the early 17th century, plantation owners in North America required a controllable and subordinate workforce. From this need arose racial hierarchies in order to justify the enslavement of workers from Africa. “It’s a discourse that comes after the fact,” Soudien said.

In South Africa, hard racial categorisations came into use only in the late 1800s, replacing more variable social classification: colour, ethnicity, culture. Even at this time, forerunners to the Cape Radicals, such as author [Olive Schreiner](#), were questioning the validity of this kind of categorisation.

In 1929, University of Cape Town biologist [Lancelot Hogben](#), picked up on this thread, rejecting the then widely accepted ideas of eugenics as bad science, and providing critical theoretical fodder for Kies, the influential political activist [Isaac](#)

“THE ‘STICKINESS’ OF RACE IS RELATED TO ITS USEFULNESS AS A MEANS OF CONTROL”

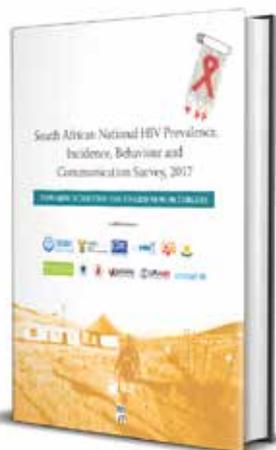
[Bangani \(IB\) Tabata](#) and the other founders of the fellowship. But the tide of racial ideology continued to gain momentum, reaching fever pitch in the 1930s.

Even as scientists in other parts of the world began to distance themselves from racial ideology in the aftermath of the Holocaust, some South African ‘white’ intellectuals, invested as they were in questions of place and identity, were deepening the ideas of race.

The countering impact and legacy of the teachings of the NEF thinkers, and their forerunners, is not easily measured, but evoke for us a critical counterfactual episode in South African history. Today, there is a need to continue the work they started to do in reimagining what it means to be human outside of these drawn lines: to consciously and continuously break down the use of racial categories, even as we recognise the impacts of racism, Soudien said.

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Price **R350**

## South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey, 2017

Towards achieving the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets

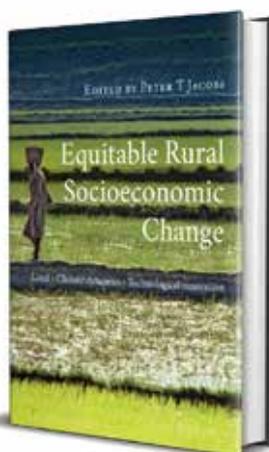
Authors:	Simbayi LC, Zuma K, Zungu N et al.
Pub month and year:	September 2019
ISBN soft cover:	978-0-7969-2444-5
Format:	280 mm x 210 mm
Extent:	256

### About the book

The 2017 HIV and Health Study is the fifth wave of a series of cross-sectional surveys undertaken every few years by a research consortium led by the HSRC. The consortium includes local researchers from the South African Medical Research Council, National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Global Clinical & Viral Laboratories, University of Cape Town, and international researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNAIDS, and UNICEF.

This study is key to maintaining surveillance of HIV infection and behaviour in South Africa, and to obtaining a better understanding of factors driving the HIV epidemic.

The *South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey, 2017* is crucial for the government, policy makers and all stakeholders who work towards reducing the HIV epidemic in the country and reaching the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets.



Price **R280**

## Equitable rural socioeconomic change

Land | Climate dynamics | Technological Innovation

Volume editor:	Peter Jacobs
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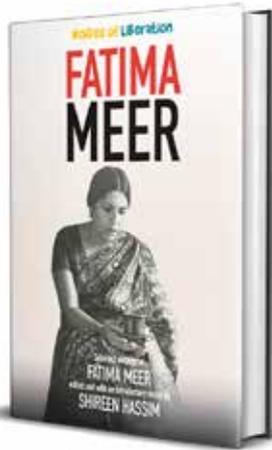
### About the book

More and more of global economic wealth and decision-making power rests with fewer and fewer people, while acute socioeconomic inequities continue to afflict large rural communities in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Land inequalities remain a burning question for rural communities.

*Equitable Rural Socioeconomic Change* brings together original reflections on the intricacies of economic and social transformations that are unfolding in the rural areas of developing countries, and provides a fresh and authentic perspective. This compelling book revisits dominant but exhausted conceptions of rural livelihoods to expose their analytical flaws and thematic limitations.

The interacting themes of land, climate dynamics and technological innovation are brought into a coherent whole through a re-examination of the lens of unequal ownership, and control and use of a society's productive means.

*Equitable Rural Socioeconomic Change* is the first multidimensional and integrated analysis of rural socioeconomic change anchored around rising structural polarisation in the 21st century.



Price **R280**

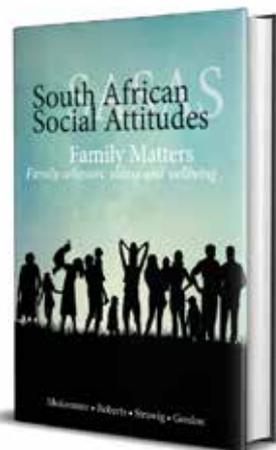
## Fatima Meer

Editor:	Shireen Hassim
Pub month and year:	April 2019
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### About the book

Fatima Meer was an intellectual, academic, writer and activist – a tireless fighter for social justice and human rights. Her intellectual work sought to intertwine place, identity and ethical commitment. In 1994, Fatima declined a parliamentary seat due to her preference to work in the non-governmental sector. She did however serve the ANC government in several capacities. Meer died in 2010 at the age of 81. In her introductory essay, author Shireen Hassim deftly weaves a narrative in which Meer's distinctive individuality as an academic and activist unfolds. In particular, the reader comes to understand how Meer's sense of a common humanity critically informed her stance in the world.

*Fatima Meer*, published by the HSRC Press, is the first book in the Voices of Liberation series that showcases an Indian woman who uniquely straddled the worlds of academia and activism. Each book in the series features an analytical essay by a scholar, a selection from the body of work produced by the eponymous subject, including interviews, as well as short introductions by the editor that contextualise each extract.



Price **R320**

## SASAS - Family Matters

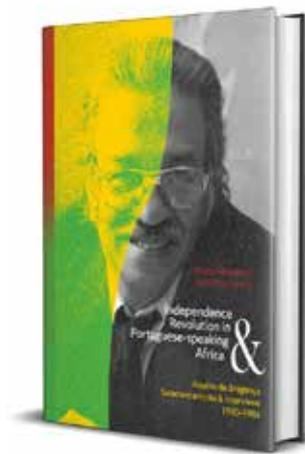
Family cohesion, values and wellbeing

Editors:	Zitha Mokomane, Benjamin Roberts, Jare Struwig, and Steven Gordon
Imprint:	HSRC Press
Pub month and year:	May 2019
ISBN soft cover:	978-0-7969-2526-8
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Extent:	392

### About the book

'The family' has become a significant and growing focus of study across a variety of disciplinary perspectives in the humanities, social sciences and law. In South Africa, there have been controversy and substantial debate over an apparent 'crisis of the family' during the last two decades. Ideological contestations have emerged over social morality and appeals for a return to traditional 'family values'. In order to provide a better understanding of the supposed 'crisis of the family', it is necessary to use public opinion data to explore family cohesion, family values and the promotion of family life.

*SASAS - Family Matters: Family cohesion, values and wellbeing* promotes the family by drawing on unique data to offer insight into the diverse realities of contemporary family life in South Africa. It explores a series of family-related values and preferences and charts the basis and nature of support for policy intervention in the family.



Price **R270**

## Independence and Revolution in Portuguese-Speaking Africa

Aquino de Bragança (Selected Articles and Interviews, 1980–1986)

Authors:	Marco Mondaini and Colin Darch
Pub month and year:	March 2019
ISBN soft cover:	978-0-7969-2433-9
ISBN (pdf):	978-0-7969-2432-2
Format:	210 mm x 148 mm
Extent:	224

### About the book

Aquino de Bragança was a close advisor to Samora Machel, former president of Mozambique. Both lost their lives when their plane crashed at Mbuzini in October 1986.

Born in Goa, fluent in French and Portuguese, and trained as a scientist, De Bragança dedicated his life to the liberation struggles of southern Africa. He was a militant journalist, an academic, diplomat, and public intellectual. His skill in sensitive and discreet political negotiation earned him the nickname 'the submarine' and he played a key role in Frelimo's early contacts with the Portuguese, which eventually led to independence in 1975.

*Independence and Revolution in Portuguese-speaking Africa* brings together a selection of his post-independence writings and interviews, many published in English for the first time. The editors – both specialists on Lusophone Africa – provide a general introduction to De Bragança's life and his thinking, as well as short contextual preambles to each of the twelve texts.

### Endorsement

*'What a treasure! This collection provides a vast amount of information about the character of the Mozambican Revolution and the debates that surrounded it. Aquino's words evoke the spirit of the times, the hopes, fears, disappointments, joys and speculations of a generation of activist scholars willing to devote all their energies, and give their lives if necessary, to the emancipation of humankind.'* – Albie Sachs