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review

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Cape Town's global competitiveness under the gun

MONEY MATTERS
But do we know how to use it?

Disclosing HIV status
Is it the right thing to do?

Suffer the little children
To foster or to adopt?

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THE CEO NOTES

North-South collaboration can strengthen health research

In today's world, technology and scientific evidence play a key role in increasing life expectancy. Conducting research and translating it into technological innovation is vital to reducing the disease burden on populations worldwide.

The advent of vaccines to prevent childhood diseases and the provision of treatment with antiretroviral therapy to prevent or treat HIV are just two examples of innovations arising from scientific studies. With its good scientific infrastructure, including skilled scientists, countries in the global North are better able than those in the global South to generate knowledge, apply it and thereby reduce mortality in their populations.

GLOBAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Using the WHO analysis framework, there are four major non-communicable diseases (NCDs) globally that share the same behavioural risk factors. These are cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers and chronic respiratory diseases, and all share risk factors relating to tobacco use, an unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and the harmful use of alcohol.

These four diseases contribute to 60% of deaths globally; and 80% of these deaths occur in developing countries. Of these deaths, 40 to 50% are premature. When we grasp the sheer magnitude of these figures, we begin to understand the major socioeconomic impact NCDs have on poorer countries.

Many of these deaths are preventable if we apply the knowledge and technology gained through scientific studies. Premature deaths can be prevented if we combat the risk factors by changing our behaviours, and early treatment of the diseases can extend life expectancy.

HEALTH CHALLENGES IN AFRICA

Africa is plagued by both communicable and non-communicable diseases. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other tropical diseases continue to exert a disproportionate disease burden on its inhabitants.

Taking a look at HIV/AIDS, 67% of those living with the disease globally reside in sub-Saharan Africa. While the prevalence of HIV is continuing to grow in this region, new infections (incidence) are declining in 22 high-burden countries, and so is AIDS mortality, thanks to the application of scientific knowledge. The long-term projections show this trend is likely to continue.

This, however, is the opposite of what is happening in the area of NCDs, of which the WHO projects significant growth over the next two decades.

Of great concern is that both communicable and NCDs occur in the same population and sometimes in the same person. Considerable resources were dedicated to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, while NCDs were left to grow unchecked.

Another complication is that as more people with HIV/AIDS live longer due to the use of ARTs, they are likely to develop NCDs, posing challenges to health service provision in sub-Saharan Africa – a region with too few skilled scientists to conduct the necessary research .

This calls for more and better North-South collaboration to increase the capacity to manage this epidemiological transition in the South.

SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND USE

For collaboration to occur there is a need for research capacity in the North and South, but currently research capacity is skewed towards the North. The Economist of 9 January 2010 published an article celebrating the 350th anniversary of the Royal Society of London and its contribution to the development of science. This is indeed a very productive society, with 74 of its 1300 living members being Nobel Laureates.

Royal Society Fellows have been credited with the invention of processes used by modern science, such as experimentation and peer-review, and it has published articles since the 1660s. The French Academy of Science was established in 1666; and the American Academy of Science was formed in 1848. In contrast, the Third World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) was formed in 1983; and ASSAf, the Academy of Science for South Africa, in 1995.

But we should not forget that in Africa, as early as the 12th century, scholars were flocking to Timbuktu to study ancient manuscripts. 'Islamic study during this period of human history, when the intellectual evolution had stalled in the rest of Europe, was growing, evolving, and breaking new ground in the fields of science, mathematics, astronomy, law, and philosophy within the Muslim world,' wrote Chris Rainier, for *National Geographic News* in the 27 May 2003 edition.

It is sad that today Africa has lost many of its intellectual capital to developed countries due to a lack of research infrastructure, career growth paths and poor salaries at home.

KNOWLEDGE EQUALS GROWTH

Obtaining knowledge and applying it is vital to the growing of economies. Health is a significant sector of the economy – in some countries contributing to more than 8% of its gross domestic product.

Using the 2009 World Bank knowledge economy index (KEI), which is the average score derived from the four key indicators of knowledge economy (economic incentive and institutional regime; education and human resources; the innovation system; and ICT), Western Europe leads in the knowledge economy, followed by the G7 countries, which include Canada, France, Italy, Japan, UK and the USA.

Next in line is the East Asia and Pacific region, but with lower scores than industrialised countries, followed by the Middle East, North Africa and Latin America. Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have a long way to go to become knowledge economies.

INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

Investment in research and development is crucial for production of a critical mass of scientists. Based on the latest Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) indicator of Gross Expenditure on Research and Development (GERD), it is clear that there is a low level of investment in research and development in the South compared to the North. Sweden, Korea, Finland and Japan lead in spending on research and development.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS [GERD]

It is therefore not surprising that the number of full-time researchers per 1000 people in employment is lowest in countries of the South; for example, South Africa (1.4), has a low FTE rate compared to countries such as Sweden (10.5), Japan (10.4), Australia (8.4) and Spain (7.0).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GLOBAL COLLABORATION

Funding remains a major factor in making North-South collaboration possible. Although there are examples of Northern institutes calling for joint applications, the issue of equal partnership is still a major concern.

INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

For scientists from the South to be able to collaborate with scientists in the North on an equal footing, they need good infrastructure. Scientists in African countries, with the exception of South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt, face major barriers to conducting research, preventing them from becoming global players in knowledge production and dissemination.

These include poor economic development, low investment in research and development, poor salaries, few libraries – often containing older books and journals, and poor access to ICT with high-speed bandwidth. Other barriers are a shortage of skilled scientists to tutor, provide mentorship and review articles, and institutions that promote scientists without requiring them to have a scientific publishing record.

Some of the external factors (real or perceived) have to do with attitudes or practices of scientific journal editors and scientists in the North. English as the language of scientific communication results in higher rejection rates from Northern-based journals for research papers submitted by non-English

speaking authors. One solution is for journals to create sub-editing departments dedicated to translation.

Another major obstacle to publishing scholarly articles from the South is the high fees some journals charge for publishing electronically or in hard copy. If a researcher wants an article to appear within 12 months he/she may have to pay an exorbitant fee. One publisher charges authors a fee of US$ 3 000 to post papers online with immediate unrestricted open access. For researchers in resource-constrained settings in a country where the majority of the population lives on two dollars per day, this simply means that the article won't be published.

Delayed access to information hinders the speed of knowledge application. Northern publishers should adopt a free open-access policy to allow those living in resource-constrained settings to participate in global information exchange.

In my own experience, collaboration becomes easier when scientists articulate the principles of collaboration up-front, subscribe to concepts of cogeneration of knowledge, and the use of an integrated science approach.

The epidemiological transition offers an opportunity for us all to build capacity and tackle non-communicable diseases that are becoming a global health phenomenon common to all countries.

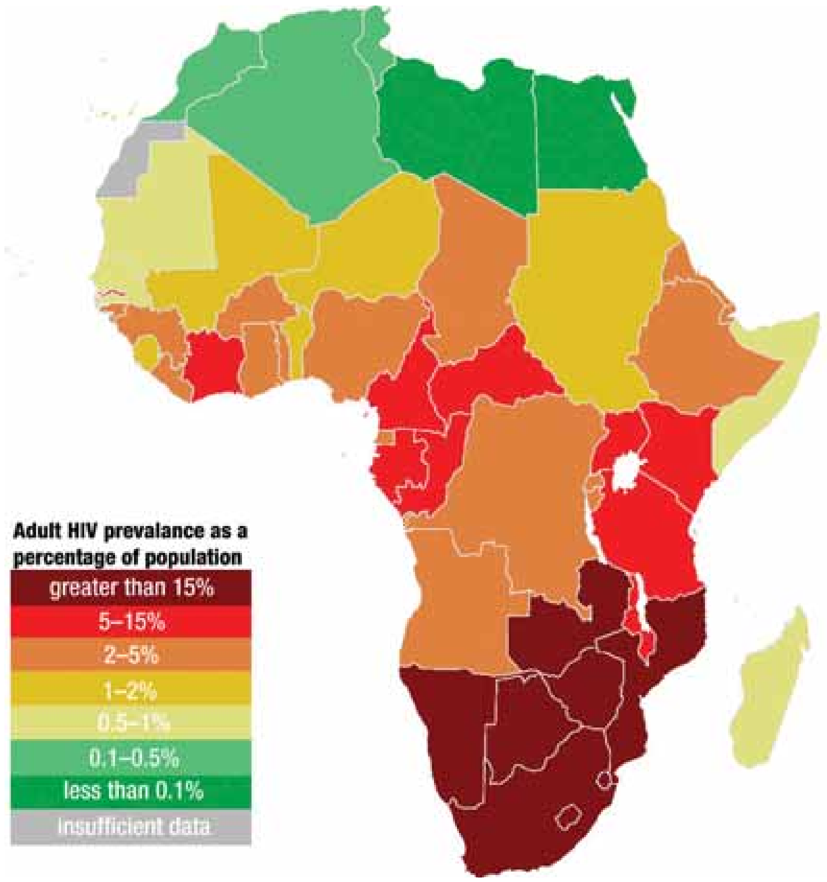
Extract from the keynote address delivered by Dr Olive Shisana, CEO of the Human Sciences Research Council and president of the World Social Science Forum on 24 October 2011 at the World Health Summit, Berlin.

HSRC to host the secretariat of the Global HIV Prevention Working Group

The HSRC has won a bid to host the secretariat of the Global HIV Prevention Working Group (PWG) at its office in Cape Town. The PWG was convened by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, and consists of an international panel of more than 55 leading public health experts, clinicians, biomedical and behavioural researchers, advocates and people affected by HIV/AIDS.

The activities of the PWG, which was launched in 2002 to inform global policy making, programme planning, and donor decisions on HIV prevention, consist of issuing periodic reports and fact sheets on key issues in HIV prevention science and policy; building consensus on evidence-based HIV-prevention programming; advocates for a comprehensive international response to HIV/AIDS that integrates prevention, treatment and care; and provides information and guidance to donors, media, and policy makers.

CEO of the HSRC, Dr Olive Shisana, who is a member of the PWG, said hosting the secretariat would enable the group to identify and advocate ways to optimise HIV prevention, encourage prevention programmes to have maximum impact among populations at highest risk, and to maximise the value of prevention expenditures.



Source: www.aidsfreeworld.org

The overwhelming majority of all infections occur in sub-Saharan Africa, and 52.8% of all people living with the disease are in Southern Africa. Swaziland has the highest HIV prevalence at 25.9%, while South Africa continues to be the epicentre of the epidemic, home to 24.4% of all HIV-positive people in sub-Saharan Africa.

Dr Shisana said: ‘The secretariat will support the PWG in creating some think pieces to inform global and national policy making, programme planning, and donor and country-level decisions on HIV prevention. It will arrange and host face-to-face and teleconference meetings and will oversee all logistical and administrative elements of the PWG’s work.

‘The PWG – and the broader HIV field – is at a critical juncture. A broader array of validated, well-defined prevention tools are at our disposal now more than ever before. However, declining support for HIV assistance calls into question our ability to effectively use these powerful approaches.

‘Moreover, the emergence of highly effective prevention strategies underscores the urgent need for a more strategic approach to service prioritisation, resource allocation and impact monitoring, presenting under-resourced countries with potentially difficult challenges.’

The HSRC will collaborate with the PWGs in the USA to undertake a strategic programme of action that unites multiple disciplines and the perspectives of stakeholders from all regions in an effort to encourage use of evidence-based HIV-prevention intervention programmes. ◄◄

A study of nine cities

Professor Ivan Turok, the deputy executive director in Economic Performance and Development (EPD), will lead a study for the South African Cities Network on the distinct challenges and strategic responses of South Africa’s nine largest cities. The research will assess the comparative economic, social and environmental position of each city and explore the various strategies in place to improve local circumstances. The intention is to assist the new metro authorities and their leaders to strengthen their ability to transform socioeconomic and spatial conditions.

Fourth national household survey on HIV/AIDS to start soon

Some 66 teams consisting of 400 trained fieldworkers will take to the streets from mid-January to May 2012 to collect information on health-related data of people living in 15 000 South African households throughout the country.

The survey aims to assess access to health services; to establish the levels of HIV infection in South Africa; to learn what South Africans know, believe and feel about health-related topics; and to assess the efforts of the National HIV and AIDS and STI Strategic Plan.

All members of the randomly selected households will be invited to participate in the survey and it is expected that questionnaires will be completed by close to 40 000 individuals. Furthermore, it is projected that 27 000 household members will provide a blood sample for HIV testing.

This survey is the fourth in a series of national population-based surveys conducted for surveillance of the HIV epidemic in South Africa.

The previous three surveys were conducted in 2002, 2005 and 2008. The data from the 2012 survey will serve as a basis for the evaluation of the current South African National Strategic Plan (NSP) for HIV and AIDS and STI 2007-2011. It will also provide the baseline information for tracking the progress and impact of the next NSP currently under development.

The study design and methods will be based on the methods used and validated in the previous surveys but, unlike before, all members of the household will be invited to participate, be interviewed and provide a blood specimen for HIV testing.

The 'take all' approach allows the study to report on the sero-discordance (a couple in which one partner is HIV positive and the other is HIV negative) between sexual partners, and mother and child HIV discordance (where either the mother or child is HIV positive, but not both) living in a particular household. Participants in this survey will be able to access their HIV survey results at the nearest HIV counselling and testing (HCT) sites in the area.

Questionnaires used in the 2011 survey will be expanded compared to those used in the 2008 survey.

Additional modules will be included to address some demographic and health indicators, including child and maternal mortality and fertility.

These indicators are also crucial for international reporting such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS).

As in the previous surveys, all information collected in questionnaires and the HIV test results will be kept strictly confidential. Participants will be given a voucher with a barcode that will enable them to obtain their HIV results after undergoing counselling at their nearest clinic.

For more information call either 021 466-8000 or 012 302-2000 and speak to an HSRC team member who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Breaking new ground in health and nutrition

The HSRC is pioneering the establishment of a continuous National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), such as that practised in the USA, Canada, China and Europe.

The South African National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (SANHANES) will, among other actions, combine questionnaires with physical examination and disease/determinant-specific biomarkers, thus allowing health and nutrition to be explored in much greater detail in order to better inform policy on a cross-sectional and longitudinal basis.

The first in the series, the SANHANES-1 survey, is planned for 2011-2012. It aims to determine selected aspects of the health and nutritional status of South Africans of all ages, which will address and support the Department of Health's priority health indicators. For this purpose, a random sample of 20 households will be selected from each of 500 enumerator areas. The households will be representative of the sociodemographic profile of South Africa. This cohort will be followed up regularly over the coming years. Data collection is scheduled to begin in 2011 and will be undertaken by 65 research teams based in the nine provinces.

Each team will comprise a team leader, four field staff and three mobile clinic staff, yielding a total of 546 staff members. The Department of Health will make available 65 well-equipped mobile clinics to be used to undertake the survey in the nine provinces.

The plan is to conduct this survey annually, using a modular design approach. This approach subdivides a system into smaller parts (modules) that can be independently created and then used in different systems to drive multiple functionalities.

The implementation of SANHANES will greatly facilitate both the detecting and tracking of the extent of current and emerging health priorities and the associated risk factors in the South African population of all ages.

The survey, using modern technology, will generate information on the prevalence of specific diseases, together with the social determinants/drivers associated with the disease(s), the nutritional status of South Africans, as well as health promotion and disease prevention.

SANHANES will yield information and trends for determining national standards for weight, height and blood pressure. The survey will generate data that can be used to develop health policy and health programmes and services. It will also help South Africa to determine the health literacy of the nation; information that is vital for planning disease prevention and health promotion programmes.

World Social Science Forum comes to South Africa

The HSRC will be hosting the World Social Science Forum (WSSF) conference in 2015, CEO Dr Olive Shisana announced at the launch of the HSRC's 2010/2011 Annual Report.

Dr Shisana, who was appointed president of the International Social Science Council last year, said this event will boost the social sciences in South Africa, the African continent and the global South.

The social sciences in sub-Saharan Africa operate under conditions that are seriously under-resourced.

'Institutions working in these disciplines receive little government support and they have poor facilities,' she said, referring to information contained in the authoritative World Social Science report to which HSRC researchers also contributed.

'Hosting the WSSF conference will therefore be a big boost for social sciences in Africa.'

In 2010 the HSRC embarked on a process of making its research data available for further analyses, and at this stage some 17 data sets have been curated, further contributing to the promotion of the social sciences and humanities.

THE SCIENCE OF THINGS: HSRC CEO Dr Olive Shisana and Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor, discuss facts and figures at the launch of the HSRC's 2010/2011 Annual Report.

On the financial side, Dr Shisana reported that the HSRC has received an unqualified audit for the tenth consecutive year.

The HSRC receives a parliamentary grant of just over R170 million and an external income budget average of R140 million, of which R80 million was funded by the international donor community, suggesting that the HSRC works well with the funding agencies and donor organisations.

It was a difficult financial year for the HSRC as the global economic meltdown resulted in a reduction of income for the organisation in the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years. The economic downturn, which mainly upset western markets, impacted severely on the HSRC's activities, with the United States providing most of the international funding recorded over the past five years.

Dr Shisana expressed her gratitude to the Department of Science and Technology (DST), which assisted the organisation in securing a number of government-commissioned research projects. The DST also supported the HSRC by making extra funding available to sustain its research work.

The organisation is implementing a strategy of ensuring that our markets are diversified, with the European markets and other areas earmarked for growth to ensure long-term sustainability from all parts of the world, Dr Shisana said.

The HSRC Annual Report 2010 – 2011 is available on www.hsrc.ac.za

Africa renews its commitment to accelerated youth development

The 17th African Union (AU) Summit of Heads of States and Government, held in Malabo, Guinea Bissau recently, accepted recommendations made in the HSRC's State of the African Youth report. The report, commissioned by the AU, is a follow-up of a previous report compiled in 2005 by the HSRC on the status of youth in Africa and the drafting of the African Youth Charter.

The Summit accepted among other things that:

> All AU member states should advance the youth agenda and adopt policies and mechanisms towards the creation of safe, decent and competitive employment opportunities by accelerating the implementation of the Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009-2018) and the Ouagadougou 2004 Plan of Action on Employment Promotion and Poverty Alleviation;

> The AU Commission, in collaboration with its partners, should elaborate a technical and vocational education and training (TVET) framework that specifically addresses the domains of agriculture and information and communication technology (ICT), while accelerating the implementation of the Youth Decade Plan of Action. The 2011 report was developed by a team of researchers from the HSRC's Public Health, Health Systems and Innovation research programme.

It painted in broad brush-strokes the main demographic and socioeconomic issues relating to population size and age-gender structure of young people in Africa, such as education and ICT access, labour market participation, hunger and poverty, youth mobility, health, substance abuse, youth crime and violence, and civic participation.

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Adoption: who is going to look after the children?

Foster care is the most widely preferred form of alternative care in South Africa for children whose families have abandoned or relinquished them. Yet research shows that adoption is the best possible alternative for children. **ZITHA MOKOMANE** and **TAMSEN ROCHAT** looked into why people do not want to adopt children. Adoption is the least popular childcare choice, and there are indications that less and less people want to adopt, leaving children for whom there is no immediate alternative care within their extended family exceptionally vulnerable to the devastating long-term effects of putting them into an institution.

Against this background the Directorate of Adoptions and International Social Services at the national Department of Social Development (DSD) commissioned the HSRC to study the perceptions, understanding and beliefs of South Africans regarding adoption and the barriers that prevent or inhibit people from adopting children in need of alternative family care. We used different research methods for the study: a literature review; an investigation into strategies that could be implemented to increase the uptake of adoption; and an analysis of data from the National Adoptions Register (NAR) to establish the levels and trends of adoption; a brief sociodemographic profile of adoptive parents and adopted children; and a qualitative survey undertaken in four provinces (Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo).

The survey entailed key informant interviews with adoption social workers in government, as well as private adoption agencies, child welfare agencies, and commissioners of child welfare. Focus group discussions were also held with adoptive and prospective adoptive parents, foster parents, parents with non-adopted children, and childless adults to gain insight into their views on the subject.

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TRENDS AND LEVELS OF ADOPTION

Recent statistics show that 510 713 children were in foster care and were receiving the foster-care grant as of January 2010. In contrast, the number of adoptions has been hovering around 2 000 per year. There were considerably more national adoptions than inter-country adoptions in any given year. Key informant interviews further showed that while many social workers recognised that inter-country adoptions could be a noble and charitable act, as well as a source of better education and other material comforts for neglected children, many had reservations about the practice and were not eager to encourage it. Concerns about the loss of cultural roots and the ultimate welfare of the children in the receiving country were recurring themes in the interviews.

PATTERNS OF ADOPTION

Cross-cultural patterns

As in many western countries, current policy and practice in South Africa prioritises adoption of children within their own communities. This policy was reflected in the National Adoptions Register (NAR) data, which showed that the majority of national adoptions in the period under study took place within the same culture (i.e. where a child was adopted by a person of the same racial group). However, the pattern is in contrast to current evidence showing that most people in South Africa approve of transracial adoption.

Family type patterns

The NAR categorises national adoptions in South Africa into four groups: biological adoption (adoption of a child by his biological father when parents are not married; family adoption (adoption of a child by relatives such as uncles, aunts and grandparents); foster adoption (adoption of a child by a legal foster parent); and step adoption (adoption of a stepchild by a step-parent).

Based on this categorisation, data from the NAR shows that in recent years the most popular type of adoption was step adoption, followed by foster adoption. Family adoption has remained steady, while biological adoption has been the least popular.

The Foster Care Grant (FCG) may be playing a role in establishing and supporting the pattern of foster adoption. In essence, it has been widely argued that many children remain in foster care because their caregivers cannot afford to lose the FCG, which is inevitable if they proceed with adoption.

This hypothesis was supported by key informants in the survey, many of whom vigorously advocated for the introduction of some form of adoption subsidy or assistance if adoption was to be encouraged, particularly given the context of poverty.

A further hypothesis is that the majority of foster caretakers are extended family members such as grandparents, aunts, uncles and older siblings, who see no particular value in engaging in the extensive administrative process of adoption.

WHO IS ADOPTED?

Research has shown that the uptake of adoption can be influenced by several individual characteristics of the child available for adoption, such as age, gender, legitimacy and race.

Age

The NAR does not collect data on the age of the child at the point at which they become eligible for adoption, but qualitative data from the key informant interviews revealed that the overwhelming majority of prospective adoptive parents prefer babies.

Gender

The NAR data did not reflect a clear gender preference. As an official in Gauteng said, 'Gender is not usually the deciding factor; as long as the baby is healthy they [the prospective parents] are often satisfied.'

Race

The NAR data showed that the pattern of national adoptions in South Africa heavily favours white children, with African, Indian and coloured children being less likely to be adopted. Given the generally positive attitude of South Africans towards transracial adoption revealed by the study, this finding is more likely a reflection of the generally very low adoption levels, and that when adoption takes place it is motivated by particular patterns of adoption illustrated by the data on cross-cultural and family type patterns in figure 1 on the following page.

It is noteworthy that the racial pattern was reversed when data for inter-country adoptions were analysed. Here African children made up the bulk of inter-country adoptions, followed by coloured, white and Indian children.

Legitimacy

The NAR revealed that the largest group of adopted children is in the 'born out of wedlock' category, while those who are abandoned make the smallest proportion. This is in line with international evidence that children who are abandoned are less likely to be adopted, as prospective adoptive parents may feel uncomfortable with the absence of medical and family background and have concerns that children may have a history of abuse and neglect and would be more likely to present emotional and behavioural problems that may lead to disruption of the adoption.

WHO ADOPTS?

The NAR provided limited sociodemographic data on adoptive parent characteristics. Only two main variables: race and marital status, were available. Data on marital status showed that in recent years the majority of adopters have been single or unmarried. With regard to race, the register suggests that Africans were markedly under-represented in the adoption statistics, while whites made up the bulk of the adoptive parents.

SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE AND ADOPTION

In part, the qualitative survey examined social work practices around adoption to identify obstacles or restrictions to adoption. The obstacles can be classified into the following: system- and knowledge-related barriers in the legal system, shortage of social work staff and resources, and social worker attitudes.

System- and knowledge-related barriers in the legal system

The findings showed that social workers felt there was a lack of consistency and uniformity in the interpretation and implementation of the adoption legislation. Public sector social workers acknowledged that they did not adequately understand the requirements and processes of the legislation regarding child adoption.

Shortage of social work staff and resources

Human resource shortages and the associated burdens and risks were highly salient in the key informant interviews, where they were repeatedly cited as one of the main barriers to successful implementation of all social work practices, including adoption.

SOCIAL WORKER ATTITUDES

Given that social workers act as gatekeepers in the adoption process, several social worker attitudes that may represent prejudice against particular groups of prospective adoptive parents – most commonly those who are not married, those with low income and those of same-sex orientation – were identified. These attitudes were most prevalent among

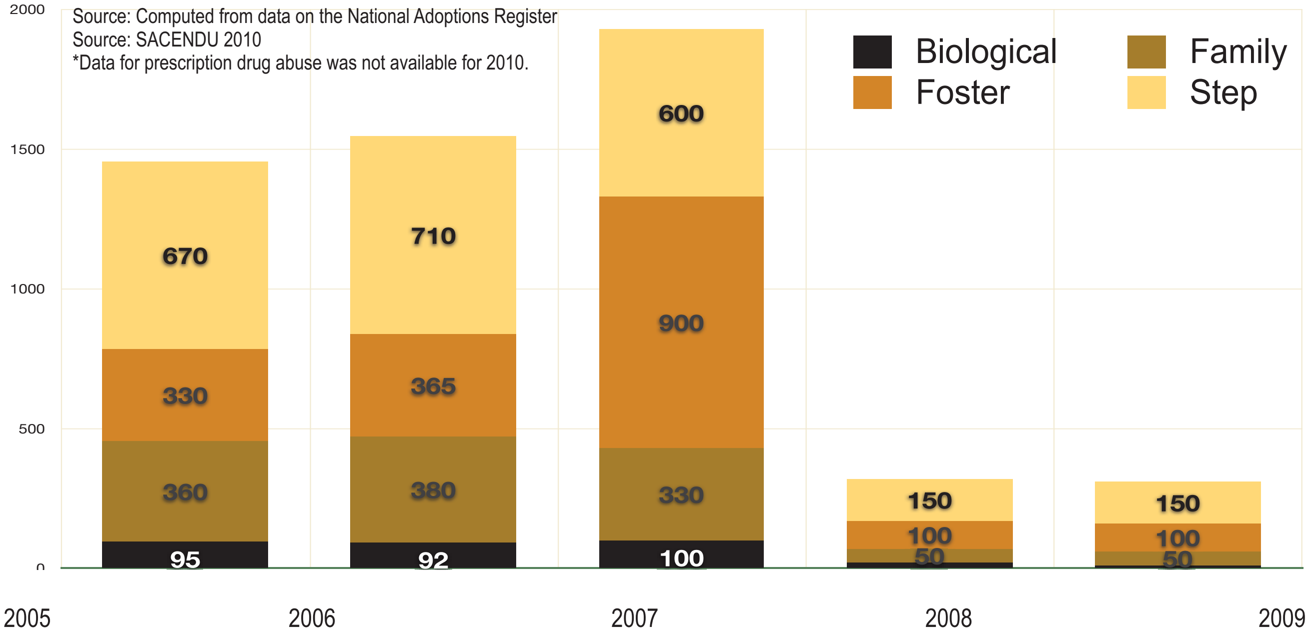


Figure 1: National adoptions by family type (April 2004 to March 2009)

the private sector, but also featured among public sector social workers.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Taking into account the limitation of the data available from the NAR, a major investment to improve the NAR system could result in a data tool that is insightful, accurate and robust, and which could allow for regular and adequate examination of the patterns of adoption to improve the cost-effectiveness of social welfare investments, resource allocation and to inform policy. Three specific recommendations were made in this regard:

→The need for greater inter-agency data sharing between directorates within the DSD to improve the depth and quality of data available for strategic decision-making.

→The need for greater investment in technology and technological expertise to ensure a comprehensive, user-friendly and automated interactive data system that ensures that data is well disseminated and easily accessible to social welfare practitioners to make the adoption process more efficient.

→The need for greater investment in the monitoring of statistics over time to enable reflective social welfare practices to drive improvement in adoption levels. ◄◄

This article is an extract from a paper, Adoption in South Africa: trends and patterns in social work practice, Mokomane, Z., Rochat, T.J. & The Directorate, (2011). Child & Family Social Work: Onlinelibrary.wiley.com

AUTHORS: Mr Mohammed Yacoob Vawda, junior researcher; Professor Arvin Bhana, deputy executive director, programme on Human and Social Development; HSRC.

PERIOD	NATIONAL ADOPTIONS	INTER-COUNTRY ADOPTIONS	TOTAL NUMBER
1/4/2004 – 31/3 2005	2 601	239	2 840
1/4/2005 – 31/3/2006	2 520	248	2 768
1/4/2006 – 31/3/2007	2 560	256	2 816
1/4/2007 – 31/3/2008	2 058	231	2 289
1/4/2008 – 31/3/2009	1 150	218	1 368
TOTAL	**10 889**	**1 192**	**12 081**

Rands and sense

Financial literacy in South Africa

The recent global economic downturn, coupled with the rising cost of basic commodities and services, increasing debt and persisting unemployment, has meant hard times for many. In such a context, it is imperative that South Africans have a basic knowledge of money matters and are able to make appropriate choices to ensure their immediate and longer-term needs. **BEN ROBERTS** and **JARÈ STRUWIG** present findings from an ongoing collaborative project aimed at measuring and monitoring levels of financial literacy, both within the country and relative to other nations.

Data for this study draws from the 2010 round of the nationally representative South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS), conducted annually by the HSRC since 2003. The sample size for the 2010 round was 3 112 individuals, aged 16 years and older, living in private households.

A module of questions on financial literacy, funded by the Financial Services Board (FSB) and developed by the OECD International Network on Financial Education (INFE), provided an international and robust measure of financial literacy. The OECD defines financial literacy as 'a combination of awareness, knowledge, skill, attitude and behaviour necessary to make sound financial decisions and ultimately achieve individual financial wellbeing'.

The results capture the way in which South Africans approach day-to-day money management, planning for the future, and the choosing of financial products, together with their level of basic financial knowledge. South Africa was one of 13 countries to pilot this new module.

FINANCIAL CONTROL

Financial control is an aspect of money management that includes budgeting and record keeping, together with awareness of one's own financial position. The survey included measures on the extent to which households share responsibility for financial matters, as well as information about the respondents' attitudes and behaviour towards financial management.

In terms of making ends meet, nearly half (44%) of South African adults had personally experienced income shortfalls in the year prior to interviewing. Of those experiencing financial difficulty, the most common coping responses were either to borrow in cash or kind from family and friends, cutting back on spending, or doing without. Other strategies hardly feature, with only a nominal reliance on financial products to help address deficits.

With respect to household money management and budgeting, 64% reported some personal involvement in household daily money management (27% solely; 37% jointly), while 55% indicated the presence of a household budget. These are positive financial behaviours, but it is important that being engaged in financial decision-making and monitoring is accompanied by prudent attitudes to saving and spending. In this respect, South Africans display a broadly favourable view of their approach to financial management – they tend not to make impulsive purchases, pay bills on time, and closely watch their personal finances. However, they hold a more ambivalent, inconsistent view on 'money is there to be spent' (Table 1).

LONGER-TERM PLANNING

The extent to which people have plans in place to ensure their future financial security is another core indicator of financial literacy. Planning for the future includes making provision for unexpected events, as well as making plans for things one knows will happen in the medium- to long-term, such as retirement.

We tested several attitudes on long-term planning (Table 1). Firstly, 47% stated that they find it more satisfying to save for the long-term than spend money, with 39% giving preference to spending. The second statement in Table 1 shows that 26% of people agreed that they were more likely to 'live for today', while the majority, at 59%, disagreed with the statement. Finally, 55% mentioned that they always or often plan financially for the long-term, compared to 22% who never or seldom do.

With regard to savings behaviour, a significant majority used at least one type of savings instrument in the year prior to interviewing. Paying money into a savings account or building up a balance of money in a bank account were the most common responses. Saving cash at home or in one's wallet was also quite prevalent (18%). In terms of emergency funds, 59% would only be able to survive between one and three months without external assistance if they lost their main income source.

CHOOSING FINANCIAL PRODUCTS

The ability to choose appropriate products that meet one's needs is also considered a fundamental part of financial literacy, including an awareness of the features and risks associated with different financial products, as well as shopping around before buying products. Many financial literacy studies have suggested that capabilities in this area tend to be relatively weak.

The results indicate that South African adults have a moderate to low level of awareness of financial products (Figure 1). There was a basic familiarity with only half of the 14 different financial products asked about, with 91% aware of bank accounts and 66% aware of credit cards. Barely half the adult population had heard of insurance policies, *stokvels* and private pension funds, and less than a third knew about of retail bonds, stocks and shares, and microfinance loans.

As for access to financial services, 20% possessed none of the 14 products, with the most common financial product being a bank account (68%). A relatively low proportion reported holding the other products.

KNOWLEDGE

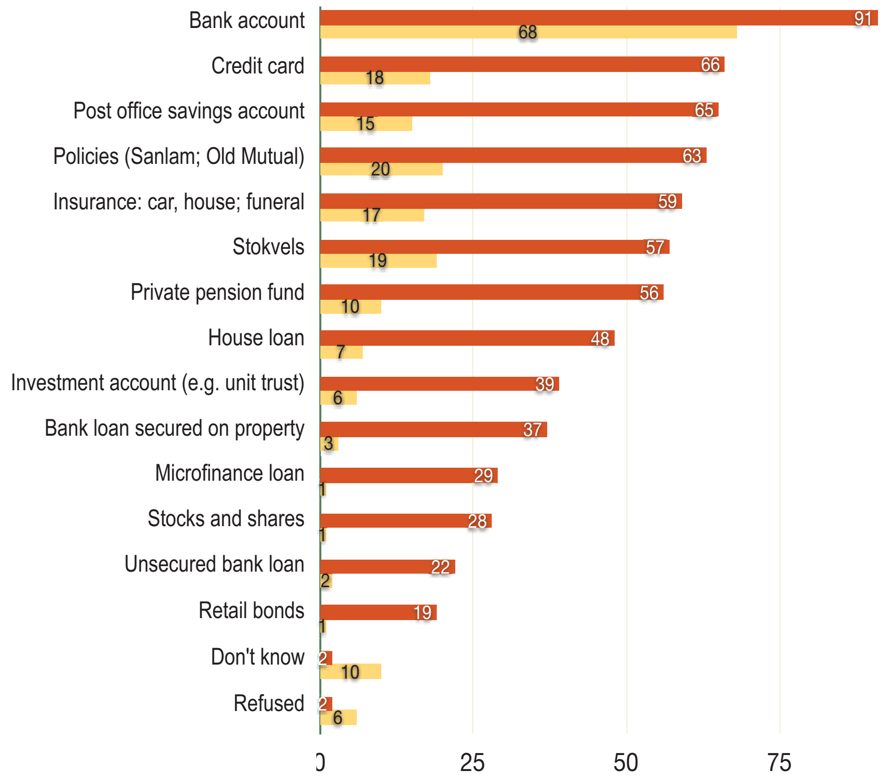
To make sound financial choices, individuals require not only a basic level of financial knowledge, but also the skills to apply this knowledge in their financial decision-making. The survey administered a short set of questions in the form of a quiz, in order to provide an assessment of the familiarity and proficiency of South Africans with basic financial concepts. The items tested knowledge of concepts such as mathematical division, inflation, interest rates and compound interest.

The responses at the national level suggest that South African adults know a few basic financial concepts, but that financial knowledge is not especially broad-based. Only 6% were able to answer all eight questions correctly, while 43% were able to answer half or less of the questions correctly. Knowledge was substantially

Table 1: Responses to attitude statements about money management and planning (%)

	Always/ often	Sometimes	Seldom/ never	Don't know/ refused	TOTAL
I keep a personal watch on my financial affairs	65	17	16	3	100
I pay my bills on time	60	19	16	5	100
Before I buy something I carefully consider whether I can afford it	83	10	6	0	100
I set long-term financial goals and work hard to achieve them	55	14	22	3	100
	Agree	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Don't know/ refused**	**TOTAL**
I find it more satisfying to spend money than to save it for the long-term	39	14	47	1	100
I tend to live for today and let tomorrow take care of itself	26	14	59	1	100
Money is there to be spent	42	18	39	1	100

Figure 1: Awareness and current possession of different financial products (%)



lower among those with limited education, discouraged work-seekers, those looking after the home, those aged 70 years and above, and poor households.

Of the set of items, while most were able to supply correct responses to the basic arithmetic question (80%) and inflation questions (78%), the proportion responding correctly decreased somewhat in relation to interest on loans (66% correct), but considerably in relation to issues of interest rates on savings and compound interest (45% and 37% correct responses respectively). Even though there does seem to be a broad appreciation of the fact that high-return investments often entail high risk (73% declaring this 'true'), there is widespread ambivalence about risk diversification, with only 48% believing that it is less likely you will lose all your money if you save it in more than one place.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The survey findings represent an initial contribution to a broader exercise aimed at harmonising the measurement of financial literacy globally. They also test a multidimensional approach to form a concept of financial literacy in South Africa that is based upon assessing individual capabilities in relation to the four components discussed in this article. The results indicate that South Africans exhibit moderate to low levels of financial literacy on many indicators across the four domains, and that a sizable proportion of the population is under strain to maintain financial commitments. They also highlight the need for the forthcoming National Strategy on Financial Education to promote an improved awareness of financial products and concepts in addition to increasing financial inclusion.

At the same time, there is an associated need to measure progress in implementation and ensure adaptable, evidence-based policy. To this end, the HSRC is currently undertaking a comprehensive baseline assessment of financial literacy on behalf of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and National Treasury. This will assist in identifying needs, gaps and target groups. Periodic evaluations of the cumulative effect of interventions to improve financial literacy are also being planned. It is only by adopting such practices that we can ensure that suitably targeted and adaptive policy, programmatic and project-based interventions serve to progressively realise the vision of a financially capable citizenry that is able to make informed decisions in the face of risk and vulnerability. ◄◄

AUTHORS: Ben Roberts and Jarè Struwig, are SASAS coordinators, Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery research programme, HSRC. The report on which this article is based is available on the FSB website (www.fsb.co.za).

From bonds to bridges: towards a social cohesion barometer for South Africa

How does one measure social cohesion – that elusive but highly desirable attribute of a nation referring to a sense of solidarity and a safer, caring, more equal and harmonious national society? The South African Social Cohesion Barometer project attempted to do just that by developing a measurement tool for social cohesion using data from the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS). **JARÈ STRUWIG**, **BEN ROBERTS** and **YUL DEREK DAVIDS** explain the complexity of this task and summarise some findings.

The term 'social cohesion' has become common in South African development debates, government planning documents, academic panels, media debates and parliamentary hearings. South Africans are generally worried that the country's legacy of racial division remains unresolved and that class divisions, along with regional, ethnic and cultural divides and prejudices, simmer beneath the national surface and may re-erupt if the country's economic, political or demographic stresses worsen.

The term 'social cohesion' seems to group all these pressing issues into one overarching question: how can South African citizens be led to think and act in solidarity with each other, in the interests of everyone and the nation as a whole?

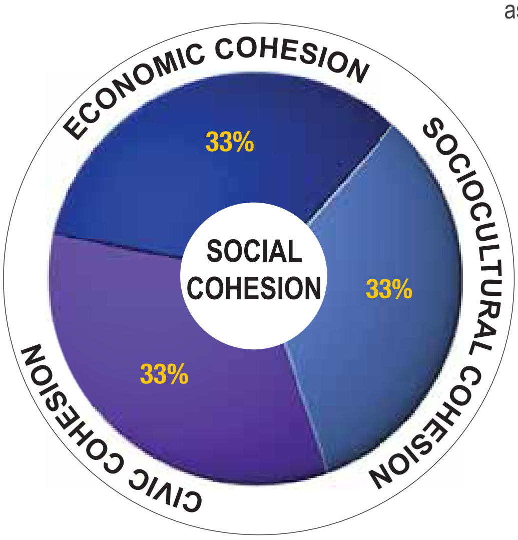
MEASURING SOCIAL COHESION

People seeking to translate social cohesion into empirical research or real-world policy have been hindered by uncertainty about what, exactly, is meant by the term. If social cohesion is defined as a distinct quality or condition of society, how is that quality identified and measured? And precisely how will South African public policy benefit from doing so?

The overall objective of this project – awarded to the HSRC by the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) in the South African Presidency – was to define and devise a method to measure social cohesion in South Africa. For this we had to rely on literature and expert opinions that incorporated the complexities associated with the concept whilst simultaneously providing a platform which could be used as a measurement framework.

CONSTRUCTING A FRAMEWORK

The social cohesion conceptual framework included three domains: a sociocultural domain that touches on social issues such as social capital, social networks, civic participation, belonging, trust, tolerance and shared identities; an economic domain which touches on issues of economic development and fosters strategies to reduce wealth disparities; and a civic domain that incorporates issues relating to common values and a lively civic culture.



EMBRACING THE RAINBOW – SOME FINDINGS

In analysing the economic, sociocultural and civic domains, some distinct differences in sociodemographic characteristics became evident. The youngest age group, between 16 and 19 years old and often referred to as the 'born frees', is significantly different from other age groups. They are much more socioculturally cohesive, meaning that they are far more tolerant towards immigrants and gay people, have much more interracial contact, feel less discriminated against and are generally more satisfied with life.

Clearly this is a very encouraging sign and signifies hope for the future. This finding is, however, reversed when the civic domain is analysed. Here, the youngest age cohort is significantly less civically cohesive than older age groups. They are specifically less likely to participate in traditional forms of activities associated with active citizenship, such as voting.

In analysing the different race groups, the differences in value systems became apparent. In the economic domain, the coloured, Indian and white groups scored higher, indicating that they are more economically cohesive, as compared to black Africans, confirming the unequal economical divide among the race groups.

When analysing the sociocultural domain by race, it is interesting to note that the coloured population scored the highest, followed by black Africans, Indians and whites. Coloured people were therefore the most socioculturally cohesive and whites the least, indicating that whites are the least tolerant, feel most discriminated against and are more fearful of crime than all other race groups.

In the civic domain, coloured, Indians and whites are much less civically active; in other words they are less likely to vote, less likely

The youngest age cohort is significantly less civically cohesive than older age groups. They are specifically less likely to participate in traditional forms of activities associated with active citizenship, such as voting.

to have trust in institutions and less likely to be satisfied with the fruits of the South African democracy and with service delivery.

Almost unanimously, higher education (especially having a matric certificate or above) led to higher social cohesion scores in all the domains. People with a higher education were likely to be more supportive of economic redress and also more economically comfortable; they were more tolerant, more satisfied with life and felt less discriminated against. They were also more likely to be active participants in matters relating to civic and citizenship duties.

People with different living standards measurements (LSM) tended to hold different values. Generally, people in the highest LSM were more cohesive in the economic, sociocultural and civic domains.

In terms of geography, it was clear that in the economic domain people from urban informal settlements, rural farm-worker households and rural traditional authority areas were more economically cohesive than people in urban formal settlements. For instance, respondents from these areas were all negative about redress of basic services compared to those in the urban formal areas.

In the sociocultural domain it was found that people living in traditional authority areas were significantly different from people in urban formal areas, being notably less cohesive and tolerant. People in traditional authority areas were generally more marginalised and felt discriminated against in terms of geography, language and income. They also tended to be very conservative in their views and therefore intolerant of 'other groups', such as homosexuals.

Analysing the domains by province, the Eastern Cape was found to be much less economically cohesive than other provinces. Communities in the Eastern Cape and North West provinces were the least socioculturally cohesive of all the provinces, meaning they are the least tolerant provinces.

In terms of the civic domain, the Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and Limpopo were significantly different from the Eastern Cape in terms of civic values. People from Gauteng and the Northern Cape were more community oriented than people from the Eastern Cape, and therefore tended to have more confidence in political structures and be more active citizens. The opposite was true of KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo, where people were less active in terms of civic values. The rest of the provinces did not differ significantly.

REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

This project has attempted to distil the international conceptual and operational material, as well as the South African policy discourse relating to social cohesion, and integrating it into a conceptual framework that can inform ongoing policy and measurement work on the topic.

The analytical results provide a mere glimpse into some salient aspects of economic, cultural and civic cohesion and emerging trajectories on some of the core indicators.

Across all domains, the importance of addressing social inequalities remains a recurring theme, speaking to the necessity of strong state leadership in driving and effectively implementing a developmental redress agenda and the importance of a social commitment among the public in support of such societal objectives.

It must be clearly stated at this juncture that the conceptual and empirical work discussed in this project represents the formative stages in a longer journey. The foundational part may be complete. However, substantive engagement with relevant government policy makers and other non-state actors is still required to ensure that the proposed indicators are debated. ◄◄

The full report *From Bonds to Bridges: Towards a Social Cohesion Barometer for South Africa* is available on www.hsrc.ac.za

Sources: SASAS 2009 for the economic and civic domains;
SASAS 2010 for the sociocultural domain.

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Fighting the scourge

Violence at school plagues teachers and learners

Violence and crime are antisocial maladies beleaguering a significant number of schools in South Africa. These ailments have debilitating effects on learning and teaching, posing a major management problem for school principals and their management teams. **TSHILIDZI NETSHITANGANI** reports on a pilot study that investigated the internal dynamics of schools where these incidents occur.

Principals have had to implement a wide range of measures developed by government, non-governmental organisations and school governing bodies (SGBs) to exterminate school-based violence.

The phenomenon of school-based violence is international in both its scope and scale. South Africa has had its share of this scourge.

Whereas serious acts of violence occurring in schools were not a regular feature of the former racially divided schooling system in South Africa, there seems to have been an unprecedented increase in these acts in the post-1994 democratic dispensation.

Of more significance is that violence and crime directly affect the school principals' and teachers' managerial and instructional duties, consequently exacerbating the problem of achieving quality education.

The HSRC undertook a pilot study in Gauteng to understand this disturbing development.

SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE DEFINED

School-based violence can generally be described as threats, weapon possession, or physical conduct or intimidation perpetrated against learners and staff while at school or travelling to and from school. Learners are exposed to various kinds of crime and violence at schools, including physical and sexual assault, robbery, intimidation, bullying, shooting, stabbing, gangsterism and drug trafficking.

Normalisation theory underpinned the research undertaken for this study, which advocates that children who are exposed to more risk than protective factors are more likely to use violence. The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) reports talk about 'the normalisation of violence' in South Africa. Because young people's sense of identity is shaped by what they see around them, and because crime is so rife, many schoolchildren see crime and violence as normal.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

As part of a larger investigation into the phenomenon of school-based violence, this pilot study focused primarily on the internal dynamics in schools.

We visited four secondary schools in Gauteng that have experienced relatively large measures of any form of violence. We interviewed principals, deputy principals and their school management teams (SMTs), teachers and school governing bodies (SGBs). Principals were interviewed individually, while focus group interviews were used to interview SMTs, teachers and the parent component of SGBs.

> Surprisingly, educators strongly identified the abolition of corporal punishment as a problem, carefully stating that, although some educators abused it, in general it was a helpful strategy.

HOW VIOLENCE AFFECTS TEACHING

Violence in schools affects teaching because it wastes time in school. Most learners get excited and become uncontrollable; they enjoy it when less serious cases, like fighting over a partner, occur.

When an act of violence occurs, it generally results in disruption of the normal teaching and learning activities, as some learners run towards or away from the scene, while others are fearful and uncertain of what will happen next, wanting to go home as soon as possible.

Learners involved in violent acts are disruptive, imbued with a spirit of wanting to demonstrate their 'heroic' status and be emulated by other learners.

Other learners might feel uncomfortable and 'shy away' from the perpetrators, as they become afraid of them. The learners receiving counselling take time to catch up with the rest of the class.

VIOLENT LEARNERS IN CLASS

The study also revealed that learners who were perpetrators of violent acts generally show poor performance. Sometimes, violent behaviour could be a demonstration or rationalisation of their underperformance or feeling of 'exclusion' from the 'mainstream'-performing categories of learners.

Such learners create disturbances in class to attract attention. Some of the children, particularly the student leadership (the Learner Representative Council or LRC), assist in controlling violent learners in class.

But, in general, perpetrators relate normally to other learners, educators and management.

What is interesting is that educators generally do not have difficulty dealing with aggressors in classrooms as they tend to use the opportunity to come up with strategies to deal with them. Both educators and management relate well to violent learners and this good relationship is used as a strategy for giving violent learners the attention needed to modify their behaviour and monitoring how such learners do so.

Educators are generally supportive of such learners, and understand that they are in need of the kind of help and interventions they lack at home. Depending on the nature of the violation, educators see it as their responsibility to contribute towards their learners' character moulding.

GENDERED LENS

What emerged was that female teachers, particularly young teachers, felt more unsafe on the school premises than their male counterparts. When intimidated by learners they tend to ignore such learners – a reaction not consistent with individual classroom-based strategies and, as a result, effective teaching is compromised. Female teachers depended strongly on male teachers for security on the school premises and had confidence that male teachers would be able to assist them in such a situation.

DISCIPLINE AT SCHOOL

Some violent acts are a result of the indiscipline of learners, which is attributed to a lack of parental guidance as most parents are absent from homes for various unavoidable reasons. In addition, some mothers, both educated and uneducated, always defend their children, denying the school's version of their children's behaviour.

Further, principals, educators and some parents believe that government's policies on violence reduce the educators' right to discipline a child in class. It was indicated that for schools to instill discipline and ensure a violence-free learning environment, educators must be given enough power to control violent behaviour in their classes, which requires that long and complex procedures to be addressed.

The major issue is that government policies emphasise learners' rights, but underemphasise their responsibilities. The passionate voice of these educators suggests that for government initiatives to meet the objective of assisting schools to manage violence, a trade-off between the two extremes (learner rights versus learner responsibilities) needs to be negotiated.

Critically, however, allowing violent children into class compromises the rights of the larger group of learners in a class. The latter become the victim of circumstance because their Constitutional right to a safe and conducive learning environment is violated.

Thus, for a policy to be fair, it must promote the rights of both the aggressors and the non-aggressors. This constitutes a formidable policy challenge. This 'skewed child right' agenda is not only one of the major causes of escalating indiscipline, but also makes it difficult for educators to discipline violent learners in schools.

The role of the LRC is also crucial in the school. The LRC is governed by a committee, and members of the LRC also assist with discipline. Like educators, they walk around to observe, and if something unacceptable is noticed it is reported immediately for action. The LRC is therefore very helpful in maintaining discipline at school and in eliminating school-based violence.

Surprisingly, educators strongly identified the abolition of corporal punishment as a problem, carefully stating that, although some educators abused it, in general it was a helpful strategy. Their constant lament was that the national office of the Department of Basic Education provided them with rules and regulations but did not empower educators to implement them. These views clearly demonstrate the frustration of educators in dealing effectively with violence and disciplined behaviour among learners.

These preliminary findings will be compiled into a final report, which will be available later this year.◄◄

AUTHOR:

Dr Tshilidzi Netshitangani, senior research manager, Education and Skills Development programme, HSRC.

Let's talk about sex

Giving children knowledge is giving them power; the power to make better decisions about sex

Children and young people lack accurate and comprehensive knowledge of HIV and how to avoid its sexual transmission. The silence around sexuality in general and children's sexuality in particular generates misconceptions, myths and misinformation which contribute to children and adolescents' risky sexual practices. **ARVIN BHANA, VELEPHI RIBA** and **MOHAMMED VAWDA** report on a study to examine attitudes, practices and knowledge of sexuality, as well as gender, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV among children aged 5 to 17 years old in South Africa and Zambia.

The background to the study, commissioned by Save the Children, the world's largest independent child rights organisation, is that children have a right and a need to receive information and services regarding their sexuality and HIV and AIDS.

The HIV and AIDS context in the region has led Save the Children to adopt a sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and comprehensive sexuality education focus to support effective HIV prevention efforts.

The last two UNAIDS global reports on the AIDS epidemic for 2009 and 2010 confirmed that early sexuality education delays sexual debut; further, if children receive messages consistent with their age and evolving maturity from an early age, they are more likely and better able to make informed choices once they become sexually active.

Research shows that sexuality education rarely, if ever, leads to sexual initiation. An essential part of this messaging is a continuing flow of non-judgmental information that looks at children's sexuality in the context of love, self-esteem and relationships through the lifespan.

While education programmes on their own cannot realistically be expected to eliminate the risk of HIV and other STIs, they can reduce some of the risks and vulnerabilities associated with ignorance.

Until recently, implementation efforts have been limited by the tendency to focus HIV prevention and sexual and reproductive health initiatives on young people 15 years and older, but rarely asking their opinion on the information and services they receive. This pioneering study involved a survey among children and teenagers between 5 and 17 years of age.

METHODS

We used enumeration areas census data to randomly select 218 children, 109 of whom were between 5 and 11 years old; and 109 who were 12 to 17 years old. A total of 2 180 interviews were conducted in South Africa (Limpopo, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape).

In Zambia, a total of 2 040 interviews were conducted in three sites with 218 children; 109 were between 5 and 11, and 109 were 12 to 17 years old. (Central Zambia, Lusaka and Southern Zambia).

> **The fact that having fewer sexual partners can reduce the risk of AIDS was endorsed by less than half of both boys and girls.**

Children aged 5 to 11 were interviewed, focusing on relationships, values, attitudes and skills, the role of culture, society and human rights in relation to sexuality, human development (sexual and reproductive anatomy), sexual behaviour and sexual and reproductive health (UNESCO Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education, 2009). Children aged 9 to 11 years were also interviewed about their knowledge of HIV and AIDS and its transmission. We used a questionnaire to interview children between 12 and 17 years old.

FINDINGS

The study showed that 5- to 11-year-old children have very limited knowledge of their own sexuality, reproduction or their sexual and reproductive health. Both boys and girls in this age bracket reported that they turned to their parents (usually mothers) for information, but the study indicated that the primary focus of the parents' communication was on protecting children from sexual abuse by strangers and less on how to protect them from HIV transmission.

The age group 12 to 17 had higher levels of knowledge but it was still not comprehensive. For example, the fact that having fewer sexual partners can reduce the risk of AIDS was endorsed by less than half of both boys and girls.

Those participants who were already sexually active reported varying levels of condom

use, indicating that consistent condom use appears to be a difficult behaviour to inculcate.

This is significant because according to the research the average age of sexual debut for both boys and girls was between 14 and 15 years, but most parents were unaware that their children were sexually active.

The study found that for 12- to 17-year-olds, schools and peers were the main sources of information on sexuality and reproductive health, with only 12% of parents or guardians having discussed issues of sex and HIV and AIDS with their children. Children and adolescents were not adequately informed and educated about sexuality and how to avoid HIV transmission specifically, and HIV prevention in general.

Most children preferred mothers to fathers when it came to seeking advice about sexuality. Male custodians, however, provided specific instructions that 'boys need to experiment; girls need to be protected'. These cultural formations tend to hinder sexual and reproductive health and information.

In addition, there was a low level of involvement of fathers in the sexual and reproductive health of their children. While in some cases this may be attributed to an 'absent father', the South African and Zambian data shows that 67% of South African children and 72% of Zambian children still live with their biological parents.

Moreover, in South Africa 13% had lost their father, while in Zambia it was 16%. The low level of involvement of fathers is therefore less likely to be related to the death of a parent and more likely related to the 'invisibility' of fathers in general. Further, the invisibility of young fathers in the lives of their children is exacerbated by the lack of support for such roles. Together with the finding that parental communication about sexual and reproductive health is low in both Zambia and South Africa as a function of cultural beliefs, makes this an especially significant challenge.

TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

Parents and other adults in children's lives need to start talking openly to children from as young as five years old about their sexuality as part of positive and healthy relationships. The information given must be consistent with their age. For example, for very young children there should be a greater focus on talking about their bodies and how their bodies work, how infections are transmitted, 'body rights', tolerance and respect, and healthy relationships within and outside of their families.

Talking about sexuality is a universally difficult subject, but failing to do so puts children at risk as they are less able to make the right choices when they need to. The involvement of parents in sexuality education would require specific strategies such as family programmes involving parents to enhance appropriate involvement of both mothers and fathers with a view to a more positive focus on sexuality advice and education.

We advocate an amendment of the basic education curriculum to include accurate and comprehensive sexuality information, and teachers should be trained (and supported) to deliver it. Vital to this effort is ensuring the development of the meaning of sexuality as it applies across the lifespan to reduce the tendency to associate sexual activity with all sexual and reproductive health messaging.

School-based educational strategies need to be complemented by community mobilisation and outreach strategies. Gatekeepers like community leaders need to be engaged to be supportive of the provision of sexuality information and education to children before entry into formal school. ◄◄

The full report, *Regional Baseline Survey to Establish Children's KAPB in Relation to Sexuality and Gender, Access to Sexuality and HIV Information and Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in Zambia and South Africa* is available from www.savethechildren.org.

AUTHORS: Professor Arvin Bhana, deputy executive director, Human and Social Development, HSRC; Velephi Riba, regional programme officer, Children's Rights and HIV and AIDS, Save the Children (Sweden); and Mohammed Vawda, MA intern, Human and Social Development, HSRC.

To TELL or not to TELL?

Making sense of HIV disclosure

HIV disclosure varies depending on the HIV status of the other partner in the relationship, but safer sex doesn't necessarily follow, finds a study by **MOTLATSO MLAMBO** and **KARL PELTZER.**

As the HIV pandemic continues to spread rapidly, with an estimated 5.7 million people living with HIV and AIDS in South Africa in 2009, HIV-positive people face ongoing decisions regarding disclosure of their status. In Mpumalanga, the HIV prevalence increased from 14.1% in 2002, to 15.2% in 2005, to 15.4% in 2008.

HIV disclosure is an essential aspect in the prevention, care, treatment of and support for HIV-infected people. Disclosure of HIV-positive status is also an important part of coping with the disease, and understanding the circumstances surrounding it is critical in both the prevention of HIV and mitigation of its impact.

Disclosing one's HIV status has been shown to decrease the risk of transmitting the disease to sexual partners and may alleviate the stressful burden of concealment, increase material and emotional support, facilitate shared responsibility for safer sex practices, as well as acceptance of one's condition. It has also been noted that, from a public health perspective, HIV disclosure has been encouraged primarily because of its contribution towards HIV-transmission reduction, including condom use and HIV testing of the sexual partner.

> **Since I'm afraid of being killed by my husband, I just have sex with him without using any protection. I once tried to use a condom with him and he refused, saying he does not use those things.**
>
> *[52-year-old married woman]*

DO ARVs PROVIDE FALSE CONFIDENCE?

It has been shown that sexual behaviour of people taking antiretrovirals (ARVs) might pose a challenge. It is possible that sexual risk-taking may increase with ART, especially once the sufferer's health improves and sexual activity is resumed. Studies show an increase of acquiring sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among heterosexual people receiving ART. Research conducted in African settings also suggests that, although some risk behaviours actually decrease with ART, a substantial proportion continues to have unsafe sex, even with partners known to be HIV-negative.

The aim of this study was to assess HIV sero-status (presence of HIV in the blood) disclosure and sexual behaviour among 90 HIV-positive patients who are on ART in a public hospital in Mpumalanga, in order to assess risky behavior and interventions that may be needed.

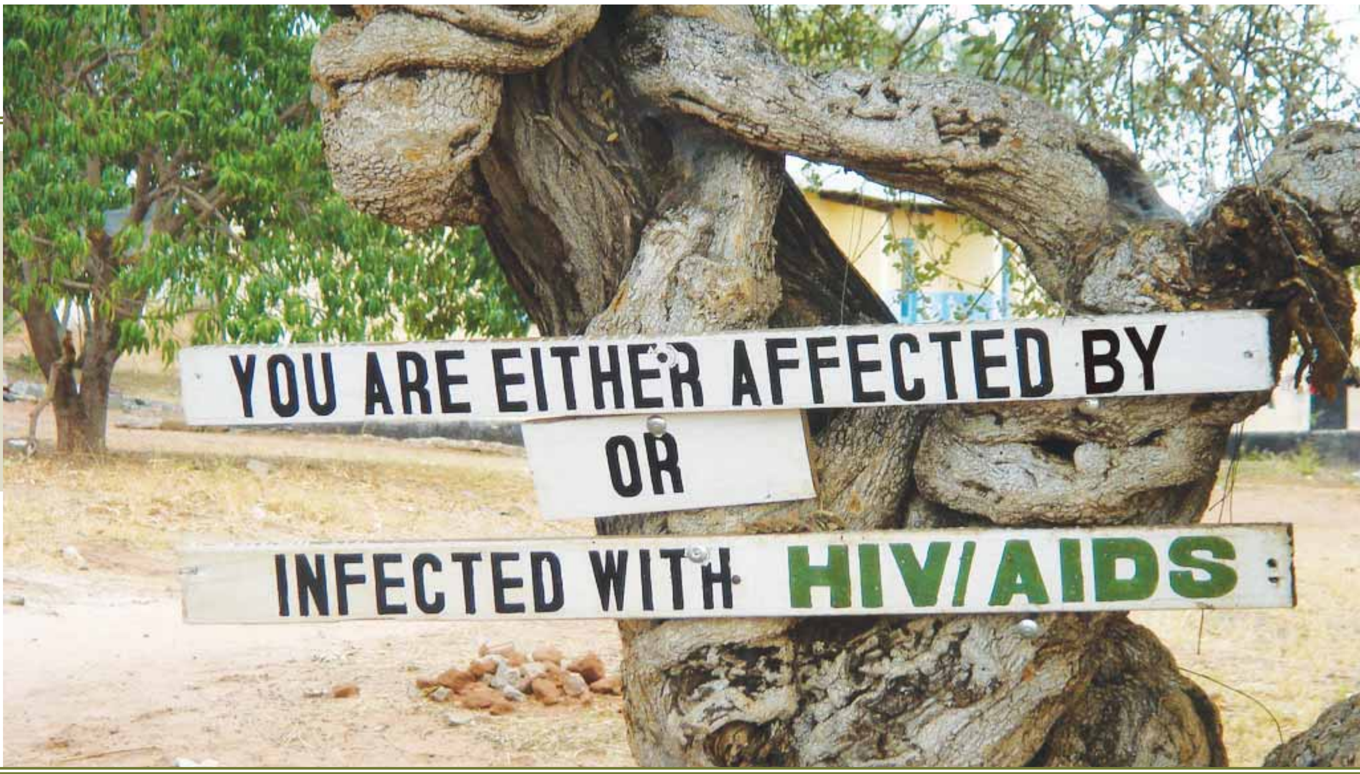
The participants in this study were found to be in the following types of relationships:
→ 21% in sero-concordant relationships (both partners have HIV); 13% in sero-discordant relationships (only one partner has HIV);
→ 53% were in a relationship in which the HIV status of one partner was unknown.

WHY TELL?

For participants who were in sero-concordant relationships, HIV disclosure was mostly influenced by the following factors: poor health, pregnancy, death and sero-sorting (practice of using HIV status as a decision-making point in choosing sexual behaviour).

Because of the above factors, the other partner would feel obliged to also test for HIV, often finding they were also HIV-positive. Other partners were forced by circumstances, like a child's death, to test together for HIV. Some had met each other when they went to collect the ARVs, and therefore did not have any difficulties of disclosing their HIV status (sero-sorting).

The following varying post-HIV disclosure behaviour patterns were noted in sero-concordant relationships: partner togetherness; partner separation and sero-sorting. For partici-



pants in sero-discordant relationships, three scenarios prevailed: separation from partner after HIV-positive diagnosis (mostly women deserted by their boyfriends); partners living together with non-disclosure; and partners living together after HIV disclosure. In some instances the discordant status is only known to the person who has tested positive, for fear of being rejected. In very few cases, partners test together and find that one is negative and one positive, and still stay together.

For participants in a relationship where the HIV status of the other partner is unknown, reasons for nondisclosure included the relationship being new; a relationship ending; men's refusal to share results; men postponing testing; having no steady partner; not wanting to be blamed; partner violence; not ready to disclose; fear of losing the relationship; and not knowing how to disclose.

> **I was coughing, I lost energy and I lost weight. My mother took me to hospital and asked to test me. The results came back positive. I told my partner that I am positive and he also tested and found out that he is also HIV-positive.**
>
> *[35-year-old single woman in poor health]*

ACTIONS TAKEN POST-HIV DISCLOSURE

Most participants in sero-concordant relationships (21%) tried to use or were using condoms after learning about their HIV status, though some expressed a desire to have children. Most of the participants in sero-discordant relationships used condoms. Among participants with partners with unknown status, some were using protection, but since most of them did not disclose their status to their partners, they would give alternative reasons for this, including being weak, sick, not trusting the partner and fear of infection.

There were also a few cases whereby participants continued to have unprotected sex even though they knew their status very well. The reasons they gave are that partners do not want to use condoms; they like it; or they fear losing their marriage.

SAFER, BUT NOT WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

The results of this study found a decrease of unsafe sex among sero-concordant and sero-discordant partners, but for partners with one whose status is unknown there was no relationship between disclosure and safer sex. In order to aid disclosure between partners, there is a need to improve intimate dialogues between sexual partners, paying careful attention to women living with abusive partners.

There is also a need for wider initiatives to challenge prevailing gender stereotypes. Intervention strategies need to identify why HIV-positive people may or may not decide to disclose their HIV status.

The results show that some ART patients continued having unprotected sexual intercourse without disclosing their status even though they knew they were HIV-positive. This shows how imperative disclosure strategies are.

Also, understanding the disclosure patterns among the sero-concordant partners, sero-discordant partners, and partners with unknown status will be essential for tailoring intervention strategies. This study may help HIV/AIDS service providers to develop more effective counselling protocols. ◄◄

A summary of the study, *HIV Sero-status Disclosure and Sexual Behaviour among HIV-Positive Patients who are on Antiretroviral Treatment (ART) in Mpumalanga, South Africa*, is available on www.hsrc.ac.za

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Double trouble for couch potatoes

High blood pressure in a rural population in South Africa

Africa is faced with an increasing burden of hypertension, but a paucity of population-based evidence hinders effective preventive and control strategies for hypertension, write **SETH MKHONTO, MUSA MABASO** AND **DEMETRE LABADARIOUS**.

Until recently, high blood pressure was thought to be rare in Africa. But an increasing body of literature reports that hypertension is now common in both rural and urban African populations, due mainly to physical inactivity and body weight.

In spite of this, there is limited epidemiological data useful for effective implementation of existing preventive and control strategies in most countries, including South Africa. This is partly because of a lack of reliable, large-scale, population-based surveys on high blood pressure on the continent.

Recently, a demographic health surveillance survey that also measured physical activity and anthropometric (human body measurements) parameters was initiated in the Dikgale village of Limpopo Province in South Africa. It measured physical activity and studied body measurements among the rural population.

The aim of this study was to investigate the association between body weight, physical activity and hypertension, using the Dikgale Health Demographic Surveillance System (DHDSS).

WHAT WAS DONE?

The study included 300 participants recruited from households in the DHDSS. Trained fieldworkers recorded standard anthropometric measurements, such as body mass index (BMI), waist circumference (WC), hip circumference, and waist to hip ratio (WHR), physical activity (average steps per day), blood pressure (systolic blood pressure or SBP, and diastolic blood pressure or DBP) and hypertension (SBP ≥140 and DBP ≥90 mmHg).

FINDINGS

The analysis included 319 women and 81 men between 14 and 81 years of age. Study participants differed significantly in body weight as measured by anthropometric parameters, with women having an absolute body weight higher than that of men, and conversely, men were more physically active than women.

SYSTOLIC AND DIASTOLIC BLOOD PRESSURE

The study found that SBP and DBP increased significantly with age, especially in the age group 41 to 60 and in those 61 years and older in both women and men (Figure 1).

Increased SBP and DBP was related to an increase in BMI, which is an indirect measure of body fatness or obesity (Figure 2).

Another indicator is hip circumference, which measures abdominal obesity, which was associated with an increase in diastolic blood pressure only in women.

This is probably because in most women fat is distributed around the hips and in men around the waist.

Although there was an indication that SBP and DBP declined with increasing physical activity in both women and men, no clear pattern could be established (Figure 3).

HYPERTENSION

The risk of developing hypertension also increased with age, especially in women, and it was higher in older women (61 years and older) compared to young adults. An increase in body mass index, waist circumference and waist-hip ratio was associated with an increased risk of hypertension in women, but not in men, probably due to physical activity which appeared to reduce the risk of hypertension. This may be because physical activity reduces blood pressure by improving lipid metabolism and decreases body weight.

WHAT CAN BE DEDUCED?

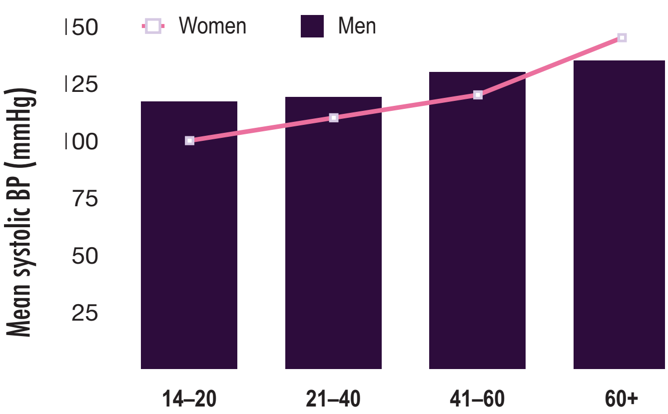
The study showed that overweight and inactive older people are more at risk of hypertension, especially women. A review of data on obesity in South Africa found that shifts in dietary intake to higher fat consumption combined with lower physical activity contributed to a higher prevalence of obesity among women.

It is therefore possible that modernisation of rural villages, such as Dikgale, has greatly reduced physical activity at home, with a consequent increase in obesity and hypertension, especially in women.

Future studies should also consider hypertension in relation to other lifestyle behavioural risk factors, such as smoking, alcohol and dietary habits. ◄◄

AUTHORS: Seth Mkhonto, PhD research intern, Population Health, Health Systems and Innovation (PHHSI); Dr Musa Mabaso, senior research specialist, HIV/AIDS, STIs and TB; and Demetre Labadarious, executive director, PHHSI, HSRC.

Figure 1: SBP and DBP by age and gender



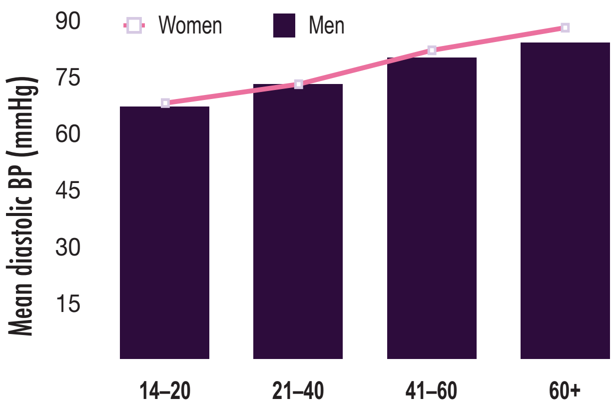
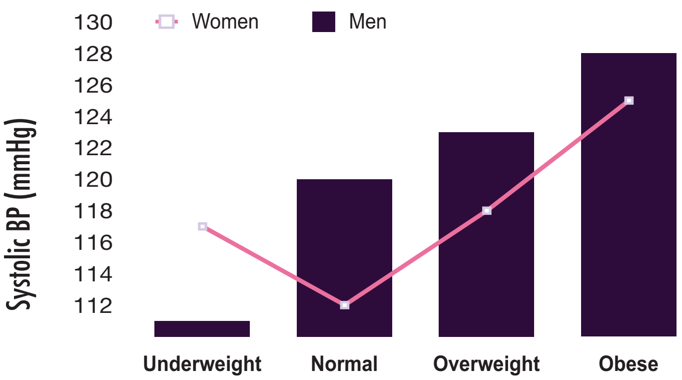


Figure 2: SBP and DBP in relation to BMI by gender



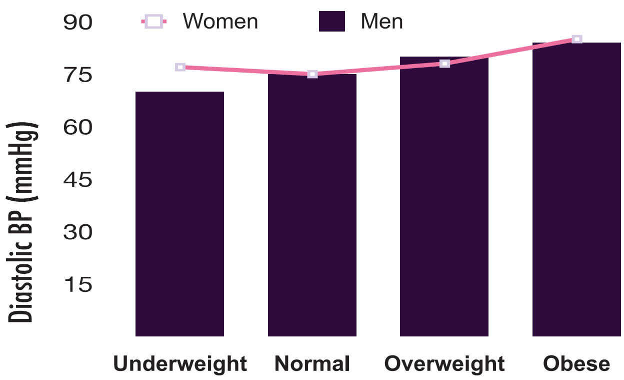
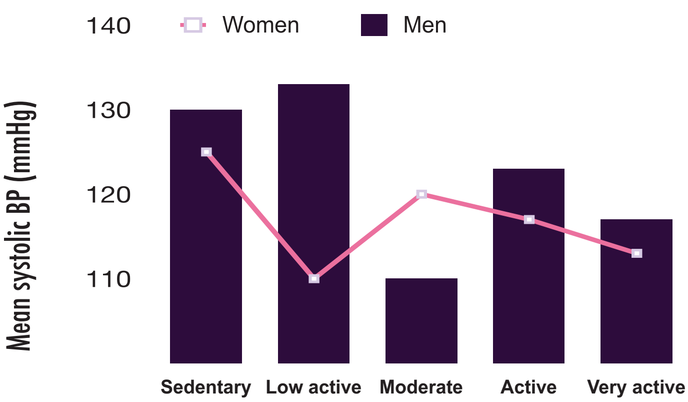
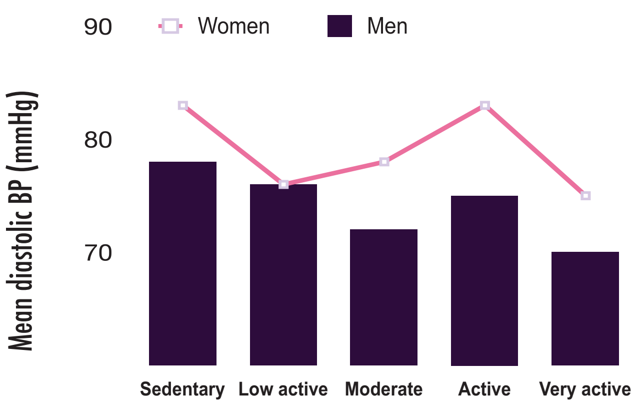


Figure 3: SBP and DBP in relation to physical activity by gender





Value chains to drive rural development

Policy makers frequently associate rural development with how 'value chains' work. A value chain is the set of activities whereby a company takes raw materials and turns them into finished products by adding value at each step. **PETER JACOBS** and **STEWART NGANDU** review how value chains can contribute to improving the living standards of rural communities, using examples like organic food, tourism and craft value chains.

Under apartheid, the state used an array of policies to direct the geographic spread of key economic activities and sectors. Policies fostered a highly skewed geographic concentration of economic sectors, with high value-adding industries in a limited number of cities. Rural homelands largely functioned as labour reserves.

Since 1994, the government has been searching for workable and lasting strategies to pull rural areas out of underdevelopment.

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), launched in 2009, for instance, seeks to pool resources from multiple state departments to uplift the most downtrodden rural locations. Its emphasis is on 'participatory development' and suites of projects to fast-track the delivery of much-needed rural infrastructure and services.

The New Growth Path also spells out far-reaching goals. It aims to increase employment in agriculture, despite ongoing job shedding in the farming sector. It also wants to expand the number of smallholder farmers and help them to effectively participate in agricultural value chains.

WHAT IS VALUE-CHAIN ANALYSIS?

At its most basic level, a value chain refers to the movement or lifespan of goods and services through production, trade and consumption stages. Consumers form the downstream end of the chain, whereas the initial producers make up the upstream beginning. Between these extreme points of the chain are many other segments, markets and actors.

Value-chain analysis begins with a detailed map of the full economic value of a product or service at each stage in its production and distribution process. But it embraces a wider domain as it also seeks to diagnose pro-poor impacts in supply chains.

Timothy Sturgeon and his colleagues at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology – leaders in this field – proposed the following core elements to guide such a step-by-step interrogation:

- geographic spread and character of linkages between tasks, or stages, in the chain of value-added activities;
- distribution and exertion of power among firms and other actors in the chain, and;
- roles of institutions in structuring business relationships and industrial location.

With any systematic application of these guidelines it ought to be possible to pinpoint 'who gets what' or how benefits are distributed along the value chain. Enabling poorer producers to move into higher-value segments in a value chain is broadly called 'upgrading'. It is a critical mechanism to redistribute benefits towards low-value upstream actors.

Functional upgrading refers to the progressively expanding mix of value-adding tasks devolved to marginalised producers, thus enabling them to capture a larger share of value-added returns.

> Since 2003 there has been a remarkable expansion in South Africa's demand for organic foods.

Researchers who use these concepts and principles to examine the development potential of specific commodities usually rely on the following list of questions:

- Who benefits?
- How should the benefits be calculated?
- Are the gains equally spread between the participants?
- Are firms being upgraded or downgraded in the process? Upgrading is an essential aspect of ensuring a sustainable trajectory of economic development.
- What drives upgrading through the value chain? (upgrading of products, processes and functional upgrading)

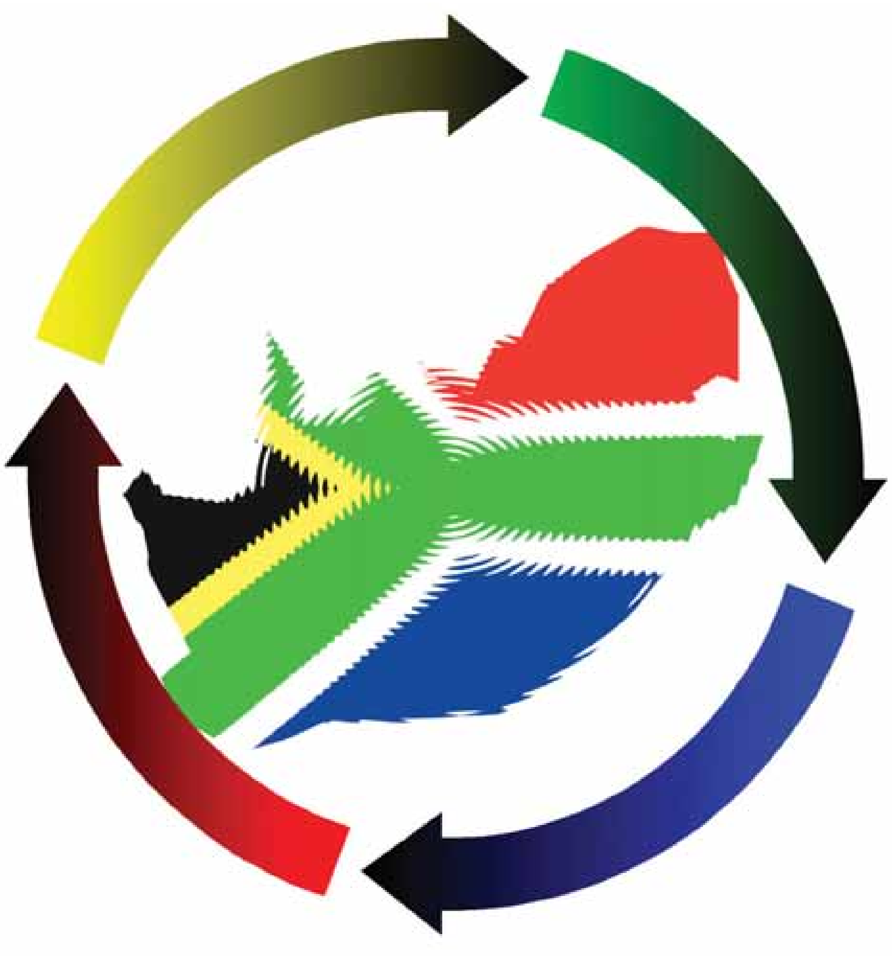
EXAMPLES OF HOW VALUE CHAINS WORK

To demonstrate the policy relevance of value-chain analysis, we summarise insights from three value chains: organic foods, tourism, and crafts. Each case highlights the mechanisms through which the rural poor stand to benefit – especially in the long-run.

Organic foods: Since 2003 there has been a remarkable expansion in South Africa's demand for organic foods.

Total sales revenue from organic exports and local consumption increased from R5 million in 2003 to R100 million by 2008. Two major domestic retailers have been driving this growth: Woolworths and Pick n Pay. Available estimates suggest that formal retailers might control 90% of all organic sales in the domestic market.

South Africa still has to formulate a coherent set of laws governing standards for organic produce. Consequently, the retailers that dominate this industry currently define the 'quality dynamics' through standards and certi-



fication. Certified organic food is predominantly consumed in metropolitan areas. Organic fresh produce sells at a considerable price premium. Experts say that organic produce might be healthier for consumers (particularly certified products) and organic farmers pride themselves on their environmentally friendly farming methods.

Consumers who understand the health and environmental benefits of organic produce are prepared to pay the price premium for organics, if they can afford them.

There is no precise figure on the total number of organic farmers and producers in South Africa. Estimates from the most recent research suggest that there are 250 to 300 certified organic farmers in South Africa farming on approximately 45 000ha. Cost is arguably the main barrier to the spread of organic farming: organic farming might be 20 to 30% more expensive than industrial farming models. However, organic farming tends to take place on smaller plots of land, which opens opportunities for smallholder farmers, besides other social and environmental benefits.

Other determinants of success in this lucrative value chain include: post-harvest handling practices, such as storage, transportation, costly and onerous certification to comply with standards, for example. This context requires more proactive approaches in supporting small-scale farmers' market access – beyond their reliance on non-governmental organisations. Policy needs to address the potentially exclusionary dynamics of the quality trends.

> **Non-managerial workers tend to earn very low wages, increasing their dependency on generous but precarious tipping.**

Tourism: Natural resource-based and cultural tourism offers sustainable livelihood opportunities for communities in marginalised rural areas. But the potential benefits that flow to the poor from such tourism value chains depend on many factors, such as market segments targeted, direct employment in the sector, and inter-sectoral linkages.

The direct impact of employment is closely related to wage levels in a particular segment of the tourism market and the degree of labour-intensity in locations where tourists spend their money. Non-managerial workers tend to earn very low wages, increasing their dependency on generous but precarious tipping.

Yet direct flows to the poor from tourism depend on their ability to find a job in the sector (hotel and restaurant workers, taxi drivers and guides), especially during the peak tourism seasons.

Such direct flows usually account for over half of all pro-poor benefit flows. Indirect linkages, through downstream crafts and local agricultural spending, could also account for sizeable pro-poor benefit flows. The strength of the relationship between the tourism and non-tourism economy is a crucial determinant of the developmental spillover along this value chain.

Crafts: Globally and in South Africa, the size of the creative arts industry is relatively large and the demand for crafts is projected to grow at above average growth rates in the near future. However, rural craft makers tend to sell their creative artifacts in local markets. Connecting these rural enterprises (e.g. self-employed, co-ops) into particularly high-value external markets is a challenge.

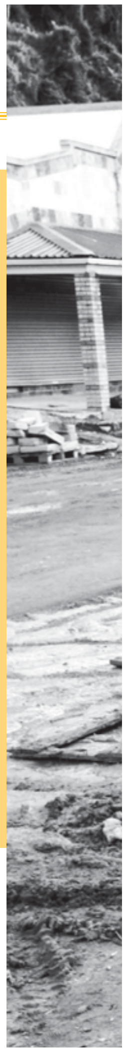
In order to market crafts as niche products, special attention must be paid to product design, development and branding, in addition to pricing, fair trade and sustainable craft source material.

Switching from informal and ad hoc seller-buyer transactions to cultivating durable relationships in a highly competitive supply chain will be another challenge. Moreover, survival in the niche retail sector is tough for both retailers and producers, as they target a more affluent but smaller segment of the market. ◄◄

This is a summary of a background report, *Spatial dynamics of agricultural and non-agricultural value chains*, completed for the 2011 Diagnostic Report of the National Planning Commission (NPC).

AUTHORS: Dr Peter Jacobs, chief research specialist, and Stewart Ngandu, chief researcher, Economic Performance and Development research programme, HSRC.

The perplexing problem of salvaging rural municipalities



Service delivery and debt collection go hand in hand

The Auditor-General gave only seven out of 237 municipalities clean audits for the 2010-2011 financial year. This is no wonder, says **HENDRICK KANYANE,** as municipalities in the rural areas are not financially viable because their revenue base has been depleted by a culture of nonpayment, corrupt supply-chain management and weak accountability mechanisms.

Public finance is considered the overriding factor in determining the viability of local government. Without sound financial management systems, municipalities will be forced to discontinue their operations. It is imperative that municipal stakeholders, such as municipal officials, mayors, ward councillors, traditional leaders and interest groups have a sound basic knowledge and application of the Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003) and other related legislations.

Most municipalities are not self-sufficient and many require national government bailout, but this unfortunately creates dependency syndrome and a vicious circle.

WHAT IS FINANCIAL VIABILITY?

By financial viability we mean the availability and sustainability of revenue sources, underpinned by a three-pronged concept of availability, viability and revenue base.

Funds must not only be available, but they must be viable and optimally utilised. This depends on the revenue base of the municipality in question. In most instances it is clear that if grants and subsidies were to be deducted from the revenue base, most municipalities would not survive financially.

In many instances the revenue is only collected after a long delay, if it is collected at all. This in itself is a recipe for debt accumulation, which exposes the municipality to the potential risk of collapsing service delivery.

LEGISLATIVE IMPERATIVES

The Local Government Budgets and Expenditure Review states that municipalities should be largely self-financing. This means that the bulk of their resources should be raised from their own revenue sources, such as taxes and service charges. This principle is an important factor in any democratic local government system, ensuring that municipalities are responsive to the needs of residents, and that residents take responsibility of paying for such services.

However, in South Africa there are two important dimensions to this basic principle. Firstly, there is a structural imbalance between available local revenue sources and the expenditure functions assigned to local government. Secondly, not all municipalities have the same capacity to raise revenues, as levels of poverty vary considerably and are particularly high in rural municipalities.

Section 96 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) states that 'a municipality, be it rural or urban must collect all [monies] that [are] due and payable to it and for this purpose must adopt, maintain and implement a credit control and debt collection policy that is consistent with its rates and tariff policies'. This view is supported by the Constitution, which states that a municipality must strive, within its financial and administrative capacity, to achieve the objective of providing the services to communities in a sustainable manner.

Against the legal background, one needs to take into account that strong municipalities, especially urban municipalities, have an unfair advantage over rural municipalities.

CAUSE AND EFFECT OF REVENUE COLLECTION

One of the greatest challenges facing local government is the collection of the revenue for services rendered to various consumers. Contributing factors are inappropriate taxes and tariffs due to unreliable billing systems; water pipe leakages; illegal electricity connections; high unemployment rates; and ratepayer boycotts and riots aggravated by a culture of non-payment.

These, combined with other factors such as unreliable postal services; inaccessible pay-

Until such time as municipalities are able to raise their own revenues maturely and viably, and that grants drawn from provincial and national spheres of government are understood as complementary stimuli packages, service delivery in rural municipalities will always be inadequate.

ment and enquiry facilities; problems with the justice system; political opportunism; lack of incentives and sanctions to encourage good payment; a volatile economy; and the current world economic fallouts, pose a significant challenge to smaller municipalities.

Approximately two-thirds of all municipalities are under severe financial stress, with one-third financially unviable.

The budgeting process is often not properly aligned to integrated development planning and is not always open to community participation. In some cases revenue is overstated, resulting in unrealistic budgets.

Whereas metropolitan cities may write off bad debts, this is not possible in rural municipalities. The increase in outstanding consumer debt highlights governance's problem of paying lip service to credit-control policies. Further, the amount of debt that municipalities choose to write off as uncollectable impacts on the amount of debt older than 90 days. Some municipalities appear to be resistant to writing off debt because of the belief that this will send a negative signal to communities regarding the consequences of non-payment.

On the one hand, a culture of nonpayment has increased the outstanding debts of municipalities and other public institutions to alarming proportions and has far-reaching ramifications, not only for the municipalities concerned, but also for every South African citizen. This is regarded as serious enough to collapse the most important building blocks of the municipalities, which are at the coal face of service delivery. The escalating debts of municipalities are confirmation that the Masakhane Campaign, introduced to invoke a culture of payment, has lost its steam and relevance.

On the other hand, the depleted revenue base is not only caused by the ratepayers, as municipalities are equally to blame. In most situations councillors continuously receive complaints from the ratepayers that they are presented with an amount to pay without any indication as to how the municipality has calculated that amount and for which services.

Another problem is caused by meter readers who produce data incongruent with actual usage. Ratepayers' concern creates a negative attitude about the concept of paying for services rendered by the municipality, eroding the trust ratepayers should have in their municipalities.

CONCLUSION

It is worrying that the strategies employed to salvage municipalities are not effective. The conclusion is that financial viability is directly connected to service delivery. If revenue collection is not taken seriously, the accumulating municipal debts will continue to sabotage municipalities' financial capacity.

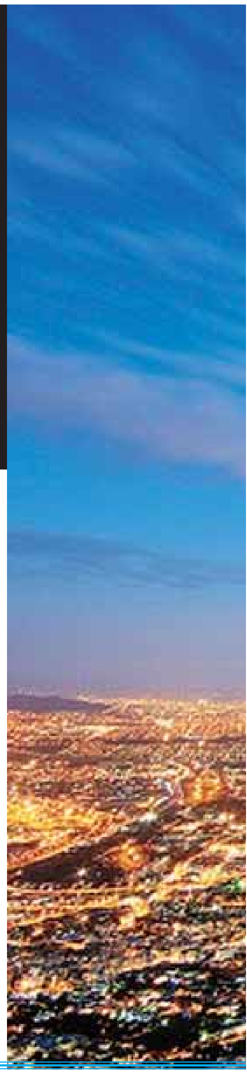
Failing to effectively collect revenues due to municipalities will result in the ultimate collapse of small-town municipalities, forcing them into unnecessary legal trouble at the expense of the affected communities.

Until such time as municipalities are able to raise their own revenues maturely and viably, and that grants drawn from provincial and national spheres of government are understood as complementary stimuli packages, service delivery in rural municipalities will always be inadequate. This calls for a complete overhaul and reintegration of rural municipalities so they are able to come up with a sophisticated and productive revenue enhancement model. ◄◄

For further reading, go to the *Journal of Public Administration*, Volume 46 number 2, June 2011, available on www.saapam.co.za

AUTHOR: Professor Hendrick Kanyane, acting director, Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery, HSRC.

Mother city, mother lode?



Cape Town's global competitiveness under the gun

A team of researchers scrutinised a host of statistics and interviewed 88 companies employing over 40 000 workers for a Cape Town City Council study to analyse the city's economy and provide advice about how to boost performance in the years ahead. The broad conclusion was that the City needs a bolder approach towards economic policy, because business-as-usual will not suffice for the future, writes **IVAN TUROK** and **SHIRLEY ROBINSON**.

Much of the evidence suggested that the City of Cape Town has not taken the economy very seriously in the past. A robust economy is fundamental to Cape Town's long-term viability and well-being of its citizens.

Delivering better municipal services can improve living conditions, and extending social programmes can relieve severe hardship, but creating more and better jobs is the only sustainable pathway out of poverty. Stronger economic growth will also increase the tax base to pay for enhanced household and community services.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER: DEVELOP THE ECONOMY

The evidence also pointed to the need for the City to put economic development at the heart of what it does and how it functions. A more outward-looking approach, engaging actively with the business community, would

Cape Town's infrastructure is inferior to that of many of its international rivals, with bottlenecks, ageing systems and deficient water and sanitation capacity. The transport network is particularly inefficient, unreliable and congested.

mean their concerns and constraints were properly understood. Better internal coordination and clear strategic leadership within the City would enable the impact of its major spending decisions and regulations on local investment and jobs to be taken into account more consistently.

Public investment in shared infrastructure underpins competitive strength. Cape Town's infrastructure is inferior to that of many of its international rivals, with bottlenecks, ageing systems and deficient water and sanitation capacity. The transport network is particularly inefficient, unreliable and congested.

Companies expect an effective supply of serviced land with a predictable regulatory framework, but complain about fragmented civic structures and complex procedures.

The City is uniquely placed to work alongside other parts of government and champion better planning and management of major economic infrastructure in order to improve Cape Town's business environment. In the

interests of long-term resilience and social stability, it is crucial to align land-use planning, transport and housing policies so as to integrate and densify the urban form, and facilitate job growth in appropriate locations.

IMPROVE THE INFRASTRUCTURE

It is also vital to boost the level of investment in Cape Town's basic infrastructure to address the competing imperatives of future growth, current maintenance and historical backlogs. If funds aren't forthcoming from local taxes or national sources, the City should borrow externally. A cautious, ratepayer mentality is inappropriate for a city with global ambitions, since this requires consistent upgrading of its fixed assets.

GREEN GROWTH VISION

A unifying vision could help Cape Town to mobilise its citizens and business community towards practical problem-solving and action to increase prosperity for all. The City needs a vision that connects the goals of competitiveness and inclusion. A new 'green growth' strategy might be just the idea to draw together disparate current policies towards the environment, poverty and jobs.

Under a green growth theme, policies to promote innovation and creativity could fit with schemes to improve urban design and retrofitting of housing and commercial buildings to boost insulation and recycling.

The greening of urban infrastructure would support developments in environmental technology and ecosystem management. It could link the region's eco-diversity with its unique visitor appeal, creating thousands of jobs in the process. An expansion of agro-processing and spin-off activities could connect with concerns about hunger and food security.

Dynamic companies with strong creative and adaptive capabilities are the bedrock of durable growth and development. Flagship projects and one-off events risk confusing short-term success with sustained achievement.

The City and its special purpose agencies could do more to support ambition among local businesses and to encourage reinvestment and growth within the Cape metropole.

Universities, colleges and other publicly funded institutions could also be encouraged to play a bigger part in strengthening the capabilities, output and employment among local firms. ◄◄

AUTHOR: Professor Ivan Turok, deputy executive director, Economic Progress and Development, HSRC; Shirley Robinson, director, Economic Rise Consulting.

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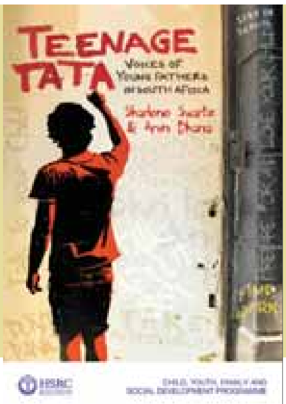
BOOKS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

TEENAGE TATA: VOICES OF YOUNG FATHERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Sharlene Swartz and Arvin Bhana

Soft cover, 136pp, ISBN 978-0-7969-2287-8, monograph, August 2009, R165.



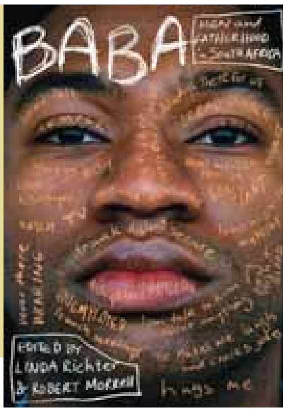
Teenage Tata: Voices of young fathers in South Africa provides a fresh and in-depth portrait of impoverished young South African men who became fathers while teenagers.

The study highlights young fathers' strong sense of responsibility; poignant accounts of emotional engagement with their children and the women in their lives; the motivating power of young fathers' own absent fathers on their parenting intentions; their desire for sex- and relationship-education from male family members and their clear recognition of the help they need.

BABA: MEN AND FATHERHOOD IN SOUTH AFRICA

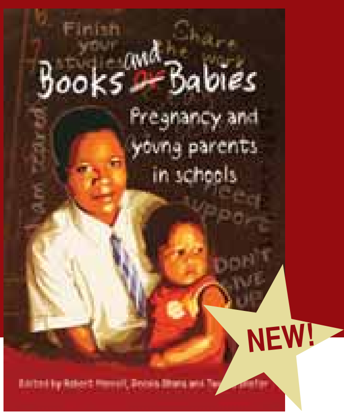
Linda Richter and Robert Morrell (editors)

Soft cover, 416pp, ISBN 978-0-7969-2096-6, peer-reviewed book, November 2005, R187.



Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa provides answers to some of the most difficult questions about fatherhood in South Africa. Who is a father? What does it mean to be a father? Is it important for fathers to do more for children in a world that assumes that mothers take the primary parenting role? Do different people understand fatherhood in different ways? What evidence is there of new fatherhood styles emerging in South Africa?

The authors argue that men can make a major contribution to the health of South African society by caring for children and producing a new generation of South Africans for whom men will be significant by their positive presence rather than by their absence or their abuse.



BOOKS AND BABIES: PREGNANCY AND YOUNG PARENTS IN SCHOOL

Robert Morrell, Deevia Bhana and Tamara Shefer

Soft cover, 256pp, ISBN 978-0-7969-2365-3, peer-reviewed book, February 2012, price on publication.

Being pregnant and a young parent in South African schools is not easy. *Books and Babies* examines why this is the case. Drawing on both quantitative and qualitative research conducted in secondary schools in Durban and Cape Town, the book explores how teachers and principals respond to the presence of pregnant learners and young parents in school, and surveys the attitudes of fellow learners towards them.

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