

# HSRC review

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**BETWEEN TRUST  
AND SCEPTICISM:**  
Public confidence  
in institutions

**40**  
1968-2008



**HSRC**  
Human Sciences  
Research Council

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## THE CEO NOTES Dr Olive Shisana



### Proof of concept in social sciences

RESEARCH EVIDENCE GENERATED FROM SOCIAL SCIENCE does not necessarily see its way into policy or programme development. And often, where research informs policy, the context in which it stands to be implemented is not always taken into consideration.

Consequently, even after expending financial and human resources, some programmes may not show an effect. In other situations, projects, which from conception took scientific findings into account that were not tested in the field for effectiveness, may be scaled up. But this will lack that one step needed to demonstrate the feasibility of the evidenced-based intervention in a real life setting, even though this may be crucial to the effectiveness of the programme and the outcome.

South Africa has major social problems that require implementation of evidenced-based effective interventions. Solutions to crime, poverty, HIV and AIDS, education and service delivery may be eluding us because we are implementing interventions that have not been shown to work.

It is up to social scientists to assist policy-makers and other decision-makers in testing the effectiveness of proposed interventions in communities. The time has come for us in the social sciences to translate knowledge into practice in an organised manner.

This new approach would entail demonstrating firstly that a concept is working in a research setting, then implementing it, and eventually evaluating its effectiveness in a district with the aim of assisting government in scaling up the project.

This implies that in addition to the usual approaches to research at the HSRC, we will now be testing the knowledge, generated through research, in real life settings. The idea is to use science to curb violence, generate jobs, improve quality of education, reduce new HIV infections, and improve the quality of services provided.

It is towards this end that the HSRC is establishing centres that will serve as demonstration sites for science-based projects. The first of these, to be implemented on 1 April, are:

- The Centre for Education Quality Improvement (CEQI), to be led by executive director Dr Anil Kanjee.
- The Centre for Poverty, Employment and Growth (CPEG), to be led by executive director Dr Miriam Altman.
- The Centre for Service Delivery (CSD), to be led by executive director Dr Udes Pillay.

CEQI (previously the National Education Quality Initiative) will continue its function to support the government and other key role-players in enhancing decision making that could contribute to improving educational quality. For this purpose it received significant funding from the Royal Netherlands Embassy to support collaborative research and intervention programmes on quality education in numeracy and literacy. This funding was augmented by an allocation from the national Department of Education.

Continues on page 2 ▶

# NewsRoundup

## IN A CLASS OF THEIR OWN

Professor Linda Richter (HSRC) is one of only two South Africans invited to participate in plenary sessions at the XVII International AIDS Conference to be held in Mexico City, from 4–8 August 2008. The other plenary speaker is Judge Edwin Cameron of the Supreme Court of Appeal, who will address the criminalisation of HIV and AIDS.

The Conference, held every second year, is regarded as the most important international event on the calendar of scientists, activists, and other interest groups involved in HIV and AIDS.

Prof. Richter, executive director of the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development research programme, will present a 25 minute plenary on HIV and children, which will address the following:

- The impact of HIV on early childhood, including the support needs of children affected by AIDS and lessening the long-term affects of HIV on children.
- Paediatric issues in HIV, including diagnosis, treatment, formulations, adherence, and disclosure.
- The prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV, including voluntary counselling and testing, rapid testing, treatment availability, formulas, and breastfeeding.

- The state of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), and the challenges for developing countries.
- Evidence-based research on children, and how research findings and their use can potentially help children. This aspect will include research findings in the Joint Learning Initiative on Children and HIV/AIDS, and how small scale applications of this research can be applied to have a large scale impact.

## HSRC REACHES MIDDLE AGE

The HSRC is entering her roaring forties this year. This is no reference to turbulent sea conditions, but to the fact that the organisation is now entering the grand middle-age of 40. So, work it out: the organisation was established in 1968.

Since then it has come a long way and has faced many boisterous winds of change, but is ready to take on another 40 years.

With the mandate to inform public policy, contribute to poverty alleviation in South Africa and the region and to conduct collaborative research, our brand has become a familiar name in the media, both print and broadcast; our researchers are most sought after for expert opinions; and our research has been used extensively in policy development.

In celebrating our 40 years, the HSRC will host a series of events, so watch this space.

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## NEW @ HSRC



PROFESSOR RELEBOHILE MOLETSANE has been appointed as the director of the Gender and Development unit. Before joining the HSRC she was deputy dean of Postgraduate Studies and Research in the Faculty of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN).



MS WEZIWE SIKAKA has been appointed as a researcher in the Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII) in the Knowledge Systems cross-cutting unit. Before joining the HSRC, she was a research assistant; first in the former University of Port Elizabeth's department of Development Studies and then at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU).



DR TSHILIDZI NETSHITANGANI, a senior research manager in the Education Science and Skills Development (ESSD) research programme, previously worked as special projects manager at the Independent Institute of Education in Johannesburg. She has also worked at the National Department of Education and in the organisation United Negro College Fund Special Programmes (UNCFSP).



MR TSILISO TAMASANE, who previously worked as a researcher and consultant for Khanya – managing rural change (Khanya-mrc) in Bloemfontein, has joined the HSRC as a senior researcher in the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health research programme (SAHA).



DR SHARLENE SWARTZ, a post-doctoral fellow and research specialist in the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development (CYFSD) research programme, was previously at the Harvard School of Public Health on setting standards for peer education. She has also taught Sociology of Education and Psychology at an undergraduate level and has co-supervised masters and doctoral students working on gender, AIDS and child labour in the developing world at the University of Cambridge.



DR KWANDIWE KONDLO as been appointed as excutive director of the Democracy and Governance research programme in the place of Professor Adam Habib, who accepted a position as deputy vice chancellor at the University of Johannesburg. Before joining the HSRC Dr Kondlo was CEO of the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

# NewsRoundup

## DEALING IN SEX SLAVES

Europe, Asia-Pacific and Africa are the primary zones of global human trafficking, and according to estimates by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), a million people are illegally transported annually across borders around the globe.

In a joint statement by the HSRC's Gender and Development unit and the Southern African Counter-Trafficking Assistance Programme of the Southern Africa office of IOM, the organisations appeal to civil society and government institutions to play a role in the prevention of 'this foul practice' by bringing perpetrators to book.

The statement was issued after a workshop, where it was revealed that women and children, usually from poor countries or from poor areas within countries, are especially vulnerable. But in the modern-day slavery practice, there are also records of instances where educated professionals were lured with false promises of marriage, and cases where children were kidnapped. The statement reads:

Trafficked persons are often lured, sometimes kidnapped, to distant areas where they are forced into sex work, sex slavery, forced labour or domestic servitude. They may be sold to pimps, locked up in rooms or brothels for weeks or months, drugged, terrorised, and raped over and over again.

'Being in a strange area or a foreign country with no friends or family to turn to and having little or no money makes it hard, if not impossible, to escape. They may not be allowed to have contact with the outside world. Often their travel documents are confiscated, and they are threatened with violence against themselves or family members should they try to escape or complain to law enforcement officials. They are trapped in a cycle of violence – sometimes from as early as the stages of their recruitment and transportation to the place of exploitation.

*Continues from inside front cover* ▶

**CPEG** (previously the Employment, Growth and Development Initiative) will continue to focus on developing evidence-based employment scenarios, demonstration projects, and contributions to monitoring and policy formulation. It will retain the policy impact objective to identify how AsgiSA's 2014 targets of halving unemployment and poverty could be met on a sustainable basis. Discussions with a high-level reference group, project-level reference groups, and stakeholder support work will continue.

**CSD** will be spun off from the Urban Rural and Economic Development (URED) research programme. It will formulate a set of strategies to help mitigate the service delivery problems in South Africa; not only understanding and explaining the requirements and dominant trends in service provision for human development, but also analysing and generating practical solutions to problems of planning and implementation.

**More information on these new developments will soon be available on [www.hsrc.ac.za](http://www.hsrc.ac.za).**

## APPROACHING 2010 FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES

As part of the HSRC's FIFA 2010 World Cup Research Project, a colloquium on Alternative Voices aimed to move away from conversations about the physical legacies of the 2010 FIFA World Cup to create a space in which alternative voices could engage with one another.

Co-hosted by the Wits Centre for Urban and Built Environment Studies (CUBES), the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER), and the HSRC, the colloquium featured a series of plenary and round table discussions. The programme included a blend of speakers drawn from academic, activist, local authority and other spheres.

Cheche Selepe (World Class Cities for All Campaign) called for the urban poor to be included in the drive towards the 2010 World Cup. Many delegates were particularly interested in Sheila Meintjies and Ursula Scheidegger's (both from Wits) session on taxi violence and 2010.

Equally stimulating was a session on crime, violence and policing strategies which featured contributions from Nazira Cachalia (City of Johannesburg), David Bruce (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation) and Yvonne Johnston (The International Marketing Company of South Africa). Nazira Cachalia viewed 2010 as a valuable opportunity to engage communities around issues of safety and security.

Udesh Pillay (HSRC) reflected on descriptive and analytical 2010 media coverage. He observed that reporting will become more positive as the games approach. His discussion was complimented by Birgit Swartz's (Investigative Journalism, Wits) critical considerations of the media's engagement with 2010. Margot Rubin (CUBES) unpacked a series of gendered media images associated with previous World Cups, stimulating much debate.

**For the conference report, go to [www.hsrc.ac.za/Document-2614.phtml](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/Document-2614.phtml)**

## NEW HSRC OFFICE IN MTHATHA

The Mthatha (previously Umtata) office of the research programme on the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health in the Eastern Cape, houses the 23 staff members behind the Marang Positive Prevention Project. The project is funded by the United States (US) President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Pepfar) and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The Mthatha office was set up in September last year. The project is a collaborative initiative with Walter Sisulu University, the main campus in Mthatha, the Pretoria office of the CDC, and the University of Connecticut in the USA.

The main aim of the project is to pilot two interventions targeting people living with HIV/AIDS, with the main goal of preventing them from infecting their sexual partners and avoiding getting secondary HIV infections themselves.

The Mthatha office is in close proximity to the seven municipalities in the district: King Sabata Dalindyebo, Nyandeni, Qaukeni, Mbizana, Mhlontlo, Port St. Johns, and Ntabankulu. The fieldworkers undertake trips from Mthatha on a daily basis.

Each team of five to seven fieldworkers visits a different site each week, with existing support groups for people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) throughout each municipality. The fieldwork entails undertaking assessments through interviews and running groups at each intervention site. Follow-up assessments are also conducted after a month, three months and six months – to determine the resilience of the effects of the intervention.

# ICT mid-level skills: lively demand matches steady supply

The importance of ICT skills to the economic, social and political trajectory of South Africa in a global context cannot be underestimated, says SALIM AKOOJEE in a new study that examines the supply of intermediate-level ICT skills, providing insight into key elements of demand.

**BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR** have articulated the significance of information and communication technology (ICT) as a national development priority. It is an integral component of numerous initiatives to ensure that the country stays abreast of cutting edge developments and plays an invaluable role in responding to identified socio-economic national imperatives.

The importance of the intermediate level of ICT skills development as a job-creation mechanism is a precondition for national development.”

The importance of the intermediate level of ICT skills development as a job-creation mechanism is a precondition for national development.

This study investigates the demand for intermediate ICT skills in the South African labour market and assesses the supply by private providers of education and training. Based on data from various sources including government and private ICT company employees, and an analysis of data from career and ICT websites, it provides an overview of the capacity and shortcomings in the field.

A key finding is that there is a high demand for ICT *end-user skills* in the trade and

financial sectors. The supply of these skills shows that it is located almost completely in the private sector. The predominance of ‘for-profit’ entities means that companies are completely reliant on a steady stream of learners for sustainability.

While ICT work encompasses different intellectual and employment levels, there are certain characteristics which apply to the ICT sector as a whole. Private provision patterns suggest a robust sector with some specific traits. For example, due to rapid changes within the ICT field and a consequent demand for updated training, the sector exists in a state of constant flux.

There is a considerable diversity in training provision. Provider types are distinguished on the basis of the extent of specialisation in ICT-linked courses, ownership-types (single, multiple ownership or franchising models), location (urban or rural) and premises-based (institutional) or non-premises based (consultant-type) provision patterns.

Most ICT training is not fixed on a particular skills level, but provides either training at all levels (beginner, intermediate, advanced) or training together with ‘soft skills’ such as human resources. Most specialist ICT training providers respond to the needs of the corporate market.

Types of training provision include part-time (evenings and weekends), full-time (during the course of the working week) and short-term (for a continuous duration of up to 7 days) courses. Quality is generally regulated by the industry itself and positive learning experiences represent a defining feature of continued sustainability.

In addition, while progress has been made in the intermediate-level ICT sector with regard to demographic changes, there is still room to address future demand by equity imperatives. The three challenges of regulation, sustainability and quality associated with private skills provision still remain.

...while progress has been made in the intermediate-level ICT sector with regard to demographic changes, there is still room to address future demand by equity imperatives.”

The study identifies a sector crucial to South Africa’s development, and contributes to an understanding of the supply and demand considerations in this field. As such, the research is key to strengthening South Africa’s competitive position in the globalised world. ●

*Salim Akoojee is a researcher in the Education, Sciences and Skills Development research programme.*

*A copy of the publication, ICT skills at the intermediate level in South Africa: Insights into private provision and labour market demand, by Salim Akoojee, Fabian Arends and Joan Roodt, can be downloaded for free, or ordered from [www.hsrcpress.ac.za](http://www.hsrcpress.ac.za).*

# School drop-outs and imprisoned youths

Young people equate life as a 'drop-out' to living in a prison, writes SAADHNA PANDAY and FABIAN ARENDS, following discussions held on learner retention at the fourth round table of the Youth Policy Initiative (YPI) – an HSRC project to highlight key challenges facing young people and finding possible solutions.

**WHAT DO 'DROP-OUTS' DO** with their time? Labelled as 'outcasts' and 'losers', life is filled with negativity and lack of purpose. Without access to income, young people are home-bound, hang out on street corners, hustle to make a living through informal trading, and become easy recruits for criminals.

When work does come their way, it is often piece-meal, poorly paid and labour intensive. 'Drop-outs' are the waiters, security guards, taxi-drivers, cleaners, gardeners and handy-men of our society. But work seldom comes without a 'connection' – a social network is a prerequisite to link them with opportunities.

The round table on learner retention sought to interrogate the adequacy of data sources to determine 'drop-out'; to identify reasons for 'drop-out'; and to discuss possible interventions. Lead speaker Gugu Nyanda outlined that absolute numbers of 'drop-out' are difficult to estimate because data collected through the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) of the Department of Education (DoE), is not geared towards measuring and monitoring 'drop-out'.

Despite major concerns among researchers about the quality, reliability and completeness of data, and a lack of conceptual understanding of what constitutes 'drop-out', some trends can be intimated from data collected by the DoE and the Statistics South Africa's recent Community Household Survey.

## ENROLMENT DATA

Participation levels of the 7 to 15 year age group in the South African population have reached universal enrolment levels of approximately 90% or higher in all provinces. Grades 1 and 2 are characterised by over-

enrolment, pointing towards high levels of repetition rather than 'drop-out'. Nevertheless, the majority of children are completing primary schooling and for the most entering secondary school.

...pervasive and chronic poverty underpins the reasons for learners' not completing school. ”

Entry into secondary school level is characterised by a 'revolving door syndrome' – young people are able to get there, but are circulating in the system unable to make it through to matric. This is qualified by the Community Household Survey that shows overall improvement in the percentages of the population with no schooling and those with higher education, but very slow progress in the proportion attaining matric. Enrolment starts to decline sharply at the end of compulsory schooling at grade 9, or 15 years of age. As such, the highest 'drop-out' rates are experienced from age 16 to 18 years, roughly corresponding to grades 10 to 12.

## 'DROP-OUT' DATA

Data on the reasons for 'drop-out' are also limited. What information is available suggests that repetition and low achievement because of a lack of remedial programmes may be chief among the reasons for bleeding in the system. Poor quality of interaction between teachers and learners also contributes to learners' exiting the system.

Young people concurred with these findings, and suggested that a culture of failure had

become normative. They expressed frustration with the inexperience of teachers, often teaching subjects for which they were not qualified, and the lack of relevance of education to the South African context and to day-to-day life experience. Peer pressure to engage in anti-social behaviour and lack of discipline were also some of the push factors within the schooling system.

Conditions within the home and the community also pull learners out of school. These include financial difficulties by way of direct costs (school fees), indirect costs (transport, books, uniforms), and opportunity costs of education (having to work to support the family, household chores, and taking care of siblings).

Young people also cited health concerns (teen pregnancy and caring for parents and siblings infected by HIV) as reasons for 'drop-out'. Underpinning these factors was limited parental support to cope with both the technical and social aspects of schooling.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In summarising the findings of the round table, the Chair, Prof. Mary Metcalfe, indicated that interventions must recognise that pervasive and chronic poverty underpins the reasons for learners' not completing school. Furthermore, the sectoral insularity that currently characterises service delivery must change. As outlined above, the reasons for 'drop-out' reach beyond the borders of the school yard and are part economic, part social, and part personal. As such, learner retention cannot be the sole responsibility of the Department of Education. An integrated and cross-sectoral approach is a prerequisite. The round table proposed the following interventions to create good first chances:



#### Youth Policy Initiative

Giving voice to young people is one of the aims of the Youth Policy Initiative – a project led by the HSRC in partnership with the youth sector, key government departments, non-governmental organisations and the media.

The Initiative consists of six round table discussions at which experts from the policy, programme and research environments are brought together to highlight key challenges confronting young people. At these round-tables, participants debate the nature of the challenges and their possible solutions, and discuss multi-sectoral and integrated approaches to addressing them.

For more information, go to [www.hsrc.ac.za/ypi](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/ypi).

Young people suggested that a culture of failure had become normative. They expressed frustration with the inexperience of teachers often teaching subjects for which they were not qualified, and the lack of relevance of education ”

- Extend the child support grant to 18 years of age and attach conditions for school completion, as has been successfully demonstrated in South America;
- Build into the education system much more rigorous quality assurance such that the experience of schooling is meaningful and gainful;
- Strengthen the availability of resources to teachers, both within the education and social services systems, to identify and support learners at risk of dropping out – such as school aids and peer support mechanisms;
- Increase the investment in early childhood development and the foundation phase to ensure readiness for school and to prevent early repetition – evidence for which is unequivocal; and
- Improve counselling services available to learners both within the schooling system and through parallel support services such as churches and youth structures.

Given the sheer numbers of young people who exit the schooling system prematurely, Carmel Marock, a discussant at the round table, indicated that a wider and more flexible range of learning pathways had to be promoted to create second chances. Many young people want to obtain their matric but they are largely unaware of the alternative pathways and these pathways are stigmatised as second class education for ‘school rejects’. But the value of Further Education and Training (FET) and other vocational programmes such as the National Youth Service and Expanded Public Works Programme must be conveyed and adequate resources allocated to strengthen these systems, including funding for potential students to access them.

For learners in Grades 10 to 12 and beyond to be able to enter and complete alternative pathways, they need to be linked to viable exit opportunities either in the form of further education or the workplace. Hence

greater coherence is required amongst skills development programmes and between alternative pathways and the world of work. Given the social, economic and personal factors that underpin school ‘drop-out’, alternative pathways must be closely aligned to social support services.

If we hope to turn the tide on the low status attached to FET and to encourage learners to see this as a continuation of their education, we need to espouse a more positive and empowering discourse about school ‘drop-out’; the round table proposed the term ‘non-completer’ or ‘not-yet-complete’ to signify someone who has not yet achieved the status of grade or certificate completion. ●

*Dr Saadhna Panday is a senior research specialist in the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development research programme, and Mr Fabian Arends is a research specialist in the Education, Science and Skills Development research programme.*



# South Africans against abortion

In spite of the legalisation of abortion twelve years ago, most South Africans are of the view that this practice is 'wrong', concludes BONGIWE MNCWANGO and STEPHEN RULE. They have analysed a set of questions on this topic for the fourth consecutive year (2003–2006) included in the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS).

THE CHOICE ON TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY ACT (Act no. 72 of 1996) was seen by government as a means of curtailing backstreet illegal operations. It replaced a far more restrictive law and thereby opened the way for abortion on demand. As a consequence 526 123 abortions took place during the period 1997 to 2005.

The opposing 'pro-life' advocacy lobby has support among groups such as 'Doctors for Life', the 'Christian Lawyers Association', 'Christians for Truth' and 'Africa Christian Action', which has kept the issue in the public mind.

## SURVEY QUESTIONS

SASAS included questions to test public attitudes towards abortion under two different sets of circumstances, both examples



of what are termed ‘soft’ or ‘hard’<sup>1</sup> reasons respectively:

- in the event that the family has a low income and cannot afford any more children;
- if there is a known chance that the baby would be born with a serious defect.

### STRONG OPPOSITION

Consistently over the four years, nine out of ten South African adults were of the view that abortion is ‘wrong’ if the reasons are that a family has a low income and cannot afford any more children. A similar sentiment is evident among three-quarters of South Africans, even if there is a strong chance of the baby being born with a defect.

To determine factors influencing attitudes towards abortion, the four 2003–2006 survey data sets were merged, yielding 2 214 cases.

### EDUCATION LEVEL

Several key determinants of attitudes towards abortion emerged, namely level of education, frequency of church attendance, and race. Educational level is the strongest predictor of attitude under both circumstances. Pro-choice sentiments become more prevalent as levels of education increase. So, South Africans with the highest levels of education are least likely to think that abortion is ‘wrong’.

### RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

In contrast, frequent attendance at church meetings or services correlates positively with the view that abortion is ‘wrong’. Conversely, those who attend services infrequently or never are the most likely to think that abortion is ‘not wrong’.

### RACE

Although race is not the strongest predictor of attitudes towards abortion, black South Africans are far less likely than Indians, coloured or white people to approve of abortion if there is a strong chance that the baby would be born with a defect. But attitudes hardly differ between races in respect of the ‘soft’ reason of a family having a low income and not being able to afford any more children.

### CONCLUSION

The analysis also showed that attitudes also vary – but to a lesser extent – between people of differing marital status, geographical

**Table 1:** Trends in attitudes towards abortion: 2003–2006

Reason	2003 (N=4980)		2004 (N=5583)		2005 (N=5734)		2006 (N=5843)	
	% wrong	% not wrong	% wrong	% not wrong	% wrong	% not wrong	% wrong	% not wrong
If the family has low income and cannot afford any more children	90	10	89	11	91	9	91	9
If there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby	78	22	76	24	73	27	74	26

**Table 2:** Approval of abortion, by level of education

Reason	No schooling	Primary	Gr8–11/ equivalent	Matric/ equivalent	Tertiary	Total
If there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby	14	20	24	33	44	26
If the family has low income and cannot afford any more children	4	7	9	12	16	9

**Table 3:** Approval of abortion, by frequency of church attendance

Reason	Once a week or more	Less than 4 times a month	A few times a year	Infrequently or never	Total
If there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby	24	27	31	30	26
If the family has low income and cannot afford any more children	8	10	10	12	9

**Table 4:** Approval of abortion by race

Reason	Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
If there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby	21	30	34	44	26
If the family has low income and cannot afford any more children	9	8	9	11	9

location and gender. Pro-choice attitudes under both circumstances are less likely among people living in rural areas, married or widowed people, and among men.

In a nutshell, the study revealed two major findings:

- The extent of support for abortion tends to depend on the circumstance surrounding pregnancy, with abortion for hard reasons getting stronger support.
- Education consistently emerged as the strongest predictor of abortion attitudes under different circumstances; that is, people with high educational attainment exhibited greater support for abortion. ●

Several key determinants of attitudes towards abortion emerged, namely level of education, frequency of church attendance, and race

*Ms Bongive Mncwango is a senior researcher in the Knowledge Systems unit of the HSRC, and Dr Stephen Rule is the Director of Outsourced Insight cc (an independent research consultancy that conducts surveys and data analysis on developmental projects), and a former director of Socio-Economic Surveys at the HSRC.*

<sup>1</sup>Hard reasons include but are not limited to pregnancy as a result of rape or incest, the woman’s health being under threat, or the possibility of the baby being born with a defect. Soft reasons include the mother being materially deprived or unmarried or not wanting to have any more children.

# The language of instruction remains unresolved

The scholarly consensus is that mother-tongue education is best at the initial stages of schooling. But an analysis of a set of questions on the topic by MBITHI WA KIVILU and MANDLA DIKO, found a substantial public commitment to English, though considerably less so among Afrikaans-speakers.

THE AIM of the survey questions, which form part of SASAS, was to assess the attitudes of South Africans towards the language of instruction in various levels of the education system. More specifically the study sought to find:

- Statistically significant differences among key demographic characteristics, namely race, personal monthly income, and highest educational level completed, and the preferred language of instruction in the education system;
- Trends in preferred language of instruction over four years, from 2003 to 2006.

## COLLECTING THE DATA

The study was conducted from 2003 to 2006 among people 16 and older, using a face-to-face administered questionnaire. This includes people living in households, informal dwellings and hostels, but excludes those living in special institutions, hospitals and prisons.

The HSRC master sample was used to draw a systematic random sample from ten households in 500 enumeration areas. The sample of respondents that completed the questionnaire was representative of geo-type (urban versus rural), gender, and race.

The sample sizes for data used in the analysis ranged from 2 497 in 2003 to 2 904 in 2006. The average proportion of women respondents was higher (59.9%) than that of men, while that of black Africans was 62.8%, coloureds 15.7%, Indians/Asians 9.9% and whites 11.6%.

Information was gathered from respondents over the four-year period on the following question:

*What do you think should be the main language of instruction in grade 1–3, grade 4–9, grade 10–12 and higher education*

*(university, college, technikon)?*

The following choices were provided:

1. English
2. Home language of the learner
3. Afrikaans
4. Do not know.

## ANALYSING THE DATA

A baseline analysis conducted on data gathered in 2003 showed that a majority of respondents favoured English as a language of instruction, even at grade 1–3, except among Afrikaans-speakers. It was found that race, personal monthly income and education level were the main predictors of choice. The results of the study show a complex and cross-cutting pattern of class, ethnicity, education and preferred language of instruction.

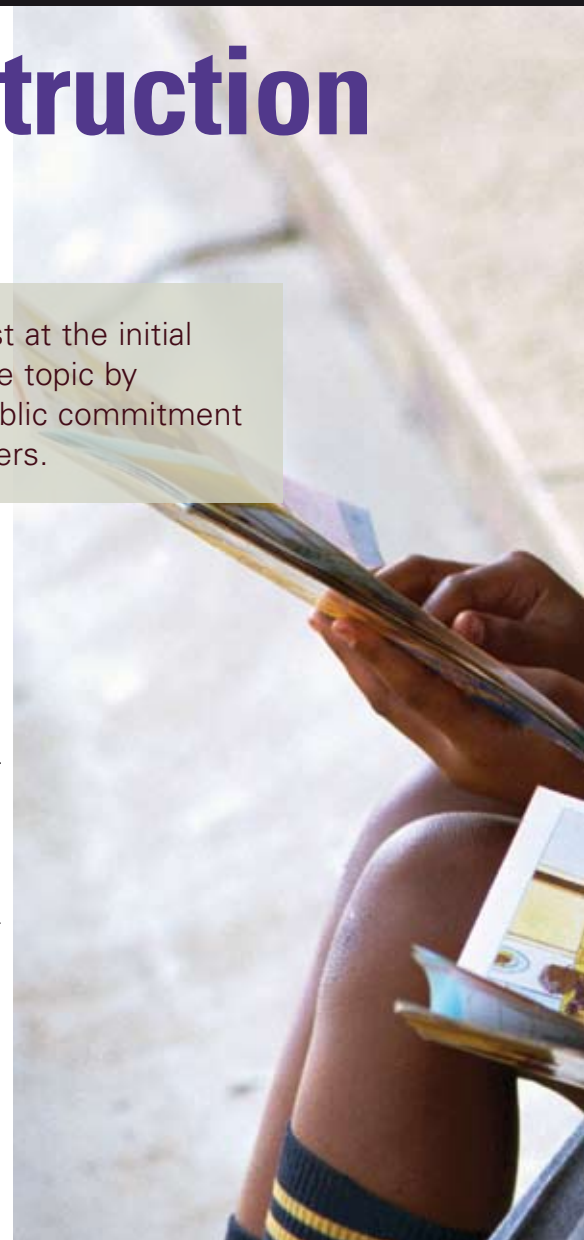
Regarding race groups, Indians/Asians were more likely than whites to select English as the preferred language of instruction in the formative phase of schooling, followed by Africans.

Those with no income were more likely than better-off individuals to select English as the preferred language of instruction in the formative phase of schooling. This trend decreases with increases in income.

Those with lower levels of education were less likely than those with tertiary education to select English.

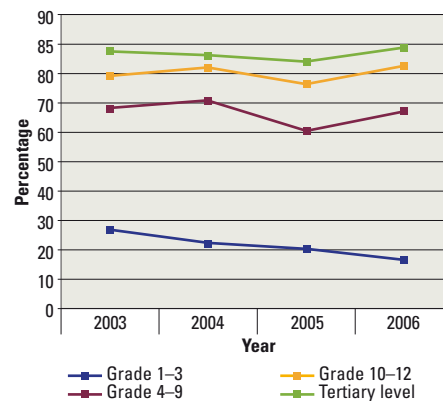
## SPOTTING TRENDS

Preliminary analysis showed that, over the four year period, major changes in terms of preferred language of instruction occurred at the foundation phase (grade 1–3). Preference for Afrikaans at the various levels of education was relatively unchanged, therefore we decided to merge Afrikaans with home language and focused on the foundation phase, where trends over the four years were identifiable.



We first examined the graphic representation of the data over the four year period before identifying the trends that 'best' fit the data.

**Figure 1:** Proportion of South Africans who prefer English as the language of instruction in various education levels.





preferred language of instruction, with a decrease in choosing English as the preferred language of instruction over the years.

Among coloured respondents, there was a curvilinear relationship between time and choice of language. The results showed that there was an increase in the preference for English from 2003 to 2004, followed by a decrease in 2005/06.

Among Indians/Asians, English remains the preferred language. And among the white respondents there was a curvilinear relationship between time in years and preferred language of instruction, with a decrease in the preference for English from 2003 to 2005, followed by an increase in 2006.

Comparison by highest level of education did not yield significant results except for those with primary education, where the preference for English at the foundation phase decreased. No significant results were found with regard to personal monthly income except for the R1 750.00 income group, where there was a decrease in the preference for English in grade 1–3.

### UPWARDLY MOBILE IN ENGLISH

To conclude, English is the language of perceived potential for upward educational mobility among black Africans and Indians and remains the preferred language of instruction in South African schools, except for the foundation phase (grade 1–3). However, Afrikaans maintains some strength among better-off white and coloured respondents.

Mixed results are found in the foundation phase where there is a realisation that home language is important during the formative years of schooling. While a linear decrease in commitment to English in grade 1–3 is evident among black Africans, the curvilinear relationships among the coloured and white respondents require further investigation. Special events in the education sector during the period of the study could shade light on some of the trends. ●

*Dr Mbithi wa Kivulu is the director and head of the Socio-Economic Surveys at the HSRC, and Mandla Diko is a statistician in the same unit.*

The proportions of South Africans who preferred English as the language of instruction in the various levels of the education system are illustrated in Figure 1. It is evident that English remains the dominant preferred language for instruction in the tertiary levels, followed by grade 10–12 and grade 4–9.

Despite a decrease in 2005, the preference for English as the language of instruction from grade 4 upward continued to increase over the years. The demand for English in the foundation phase (grade 1–3) has progressively decreased in preference for the home language of the learner.

A trend analysis was used to investigate long-term social change. In trend studies, the data of the successive waves refer to different persons who all belong to the same population group.

Analysis of the data over the four years showed a statistically significant linear association between time (in years) and preferred language of instruction. The preference for English in grade 1–3 clearly decreased over the four years of the survey while the preference for a home language increased. However, there were no statistically significant changes in the preference for English or home language in grade 10–12 and tertiary education. English remains the preferred language of instruction at these levels.

We examined the trends on preferred language of instruction at the foundation phase (grade 1–3) pertaining to the categories of race, highest level of education completed and personal monthly income.

Among black Africans there was a linear association between time (in years) and

# Between TRUST and SCEPTICISM

## Public confidence in institutions

Internationally, measures of institutional trust are seen as a 'good thermometer of malaise' in a country. Since 2003, a set of questions included in the annual SASAS, asked a nationally representative sample of people older than 16 their views on their levels of trust in a series of important public and private institutions. BEN ROBERTS analyses the findings.

THE COMBINED RESULTS of the SASAS and that of the earlier HSRC national opinion (EPOP) surveys, conducted from 1998–2001, shows a demonstrable improvement in public confidence in institutions, rising from an average of 47% in 1998 across 12 institutions to above 60% in 2004 (Table 1).

Table 1: Trust in Institutions,\* 1998–2007 (ranked in descending order by levels of trust in 2006)

Trust in:	1998	1999	2000	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Churches	82	81	74	81	84	81	81	82	82
The SABC	..	..	..	..	75	73	71	72	..
The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	..	54	49	63	63	69	65	68	..
National government	47	60	43	52	57	69	64	59	52
Big business	56	55	39	43	57	55	53	56	..
Parliament	..	..	..	..	57	65	59	55	46
Your provincial government	41	50	34	..	52	63	59	54	..
Courts	42	45	37	45	50	58	56	52	49
Defence Force	48	..	45	49	62	56	59	49	..
Your local government	37	48	32	38	45	55	48	44	34
The police	42	47	39	40	42	46	45	39	39
Political parties	30	39	29	27	..	..	42	37	27
Average (all items)	47	53	42	49	59	63	59	56	47
Sample size	2 182	2 672	2 611	2 530	4 980	5 580	5 733	5 843	3 163

Sources: HSRC EPOP survey 1998–2001; HSRC SASAS 2003–2007

\*Percentage saying that they 'strongly trust' or 'trust' in each of the following institutions in South Africa at present. Figures shaded in green indicate year-on-year improvements in trust, while figures in orange represent year-on-year declines in trust.

Mr Ben Roberts is a research specialist in the Urban, Rural and Economic Development research programme at the HSRC.

### MARKED DECLINE IN TRUST

But in contrast to the preceding years, the data from late 2005 show a worrisome reversal in trust in virtually all major public institutions, particularly local government and Parliament, but also the other two tiers of government. This downward trend continued into 2006 and 2007.

Over the three-year period between 2004 and 2007, trust in local and national government and in Parliament dropped by approximately 20 percentage points, and by 16 percentage points in relation to political parties (Table 2).

Table 2: Changes in institutional trust between 1998 and 2007 (percentage point differences)

Institution	Percentage point change		
	2004–2006	2004–2007	1998–2007
Your local government	-11	-20	-3
National government	-11	-18	+11
Parliament	-10	-19	n.a.
Political parties	-6**	-16**	-4
Courts	-6	-9	+10
Your provincial government	-9	n.a.	+14*
Defence Force	-8	n.a.	0*
The police	-7	-6	-3
The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	-1	n.a.	+14
The SABC	-1	n.a.	n.a.
Churches	+1	+1	0
Big business	+2	n.a.	0*
Average (all items)	-5	-13	+4

Sources: HSRC EPOP survey 1998; HSRC SASAS 2006, 2007

Note: n.a. = not applicable, due to lack of available data

\* Reflects changes between 1998 and 2006

\*\*Reflects change since 2005

Modest but notable declines in trust (between 5 and 10%) were observed between 2004 and 2006 in relation to the courts of law, provincial government, the defence force and the police.

National and provincial governments, Parliament and the courts received slim majority support in 2006, though by the end of 2007, only national government retained the confidence of more than 50% of the public.

South Africans appear somewhat less likely to place confidence in their local government and the police (34% and 39% respectively in 2007), which are institutions at the forefront of government service. Political

parties have consistently received the lowest trust ratings (27% in 2007) of all the political and social institutions examined.

In spite of the declining confidence in government and other institutions of representative democracy over the past few years, it is equally important to bear in mind that in many instances the levels of trust still remain above those reported in the late 1990s. In the case of the IEC, provincial government, national government and the courts of law, levels of public trust in 2007 were more than 10% higher than in 1998. Exceptions include political parties, local government and the police, in which confidence remains marginally below 1998 levels.

### IN THOSE WE TRUST

Over the decade, the majority of citizens (81% on average) have consistently and resolutely shown that they are most likely to express greatest confidence in religious institutions, such as churches. This is a typical pattern across sub-Saharan Africa.

This is followed by trust in the national broadcaster, SABC, which exceeded 70% between 2003 and 2007. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) has also received fairly healthy approval ratings, with majority support from about two-thirds of the adult population since 2001.

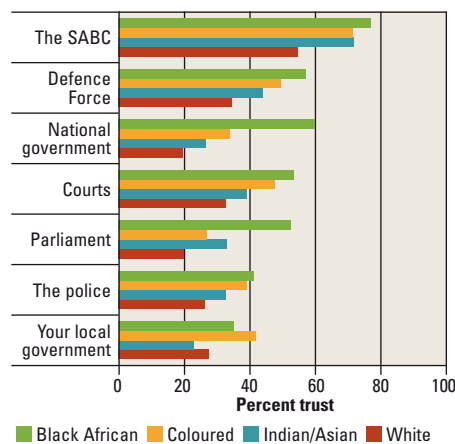
### TRUST BY RACE GROUP

Looking beyond national averages, levels of trust in institutions continue to exhibit important variations by race. There does appear to be broad agreement in the ranking among the different population groups with respect to the institutions they trust the most (religious organisations, media) and the least (political parties).

However, there remains a substantial difference in both ranking and actual levels of trust in institutions in-between the two extremes. For example, in 2006, trust in provincial government, national government and Parliament was more than three times higher for black South Africans compared to white South Africans, and four times as high in relation to political parties (Figure 1).

Support levels for the police and courts are low among both black and white citizens, which may reflect concern over crime and safety. Institutional trust among the coloured and Asian population is reported mainly at intermediate levels between those expressed by the black and white population.

**Figure 1: Trust in selected institutions by population group, 2007 (%)**



Note: The results for the SABC and Defence Force are for 2006, due to a lack of data for 2007.

Is there any evidence to suggest that gaps between population groups in institutional trust have begun to close over the last decade? The trends are rather mixed.

In many cases, there does not appear to be anything more than small reductions in the percentage point differences between different population groups, though there are some exceptions. Most notable is the significant convergence in attitudes towards local government. This is attributable to rising mistrust among the black population (falling from 46% in 1998 to 35% in 2007), compared with a small increase in trust among the white population.

Between 2004 and 2007, trust in local government fell by 25 percentage points for black citizens, a figure far exceeding any other population group. The result has been that a gap of 30 percentage points in 1998 between black and white adults had diminished to a mere 7 percentage points in 2007, with only around a third of both groups expressing trust in their local municipality.

### CAUSES OF MISTRUST

What could be driving the rising mistrust in the country's political institutions? On the basis of other studies, a number of plausible hypotheses emerge:

- political scandal;
- self-enrichment and conspicuous consumption among officials and leaders;
- critical media messages about politicians and the government;
- a public perception that societal problems such as poverty and crime are not being solved;
- perceived poor responsiveness of politicians to citizens' grievances; and

- ineffectiveness in delivering upon developmental promises.

Other factors to be considered include illiteracy, which constrains access to knowledge and information; and the lack of first hand knowledge of many institutions due to geographic isolation from many public institutions. In coming months we will examine the relative importance of competing explanations, and how these are evolving over time.

### NEED FOR ALARM?

Claims that such results constitute a 'crisis of democracy' would be misplaced. It is too early to determine whether the post-2004 trend represents a transitory downturn or the beginning of a gradual but sustained erosion of confidence, especially since trust in many political institutions remains higher than the late 1990s.

Also, there is an argument in the literature that a certain amount of wariness and scepticism is a healthy sign for a democracy, since it implies the emergence of 'critical citizens' that do not place blind faith in public institutions.

But there is still cause for concern, particularly for a fairly young democracy such as South Africa. The survey findings suggest that the professed 'Age of Hope' has lost some of its lustre over the last few years as the 'mood' of the nation has taken a negative turn in the face of uncertain times.

A continued steady decline in public confidence, especially in the principal institutions of representative democracy, could present a risk in that the healthy scepticism associated with critical citizenship is increasingly replaced with political disaffection and alienation. This in turn could begin to undermine the legitimacy of the state.

Of note is the fall in confidence in Parliament, given that the legislature constitutes the main representative institution that links citizens to the state, while the dwindling trust in local government speaks volumes on perceptions of government performance. And trust matters, because the extent to which citizens deem political institutions and leadership trustworthy may ultimately inform their political participation and voting behaviour, support for government policies or reforms, and interpersonal trust.

These findings clearly point to the need for the continuous monitoring of public confidence in our society's institutions, especially in a post-Polokwane context. ●

# South Africans believe 2010 can lift them, but how high?

For the third consecutive year South Africans' attitudes remain positive towards the 2010 World Cup, concludes UDESH PILLAY and ORLI BASS in a comparison between the 2007 data to that of previous years. But given the recent spate of load-shedding, rising interest rates and stadium strike action, policy-makers and 2010 stakeholders should eschew complacency and pay attention to managing expectations in the lead-up to 2010.

**PERCEPTIONS** of national benefits from the 2010 World Cup have begun to stabilise. Much like the previous round, 74% of respondents perceive economic growth, job creation and putting South Africa on the international map as the three main benefits.

Over three survey rounds, approximately a third of the population indicated that they expect to personally benefit from job opportunities.

## READY AND STEADY?

Perceptions of national readiness, while fluctuating within a small band, have been consistently high. In 2007 80% of respondents indicated that South Africa would be ready to host the World Cup in 2010 and public assessment of local authority readiness shows an imperceptible change from 2006; 56% believe that their local authority will be able to meet the needs of 2010.

However, this is coupled with the perception of 41% of respondents who said benefits would be 'short term'. Beliefs remained steady at 50% from 2006 that expected benefits would be 'lasting'. This split points to ambivalence surrounding notions of legacy and suggests the need to create more public awareness around legacy issues.

## UPPING THE DOWNERS

Such perceptions are perhaps explained by the consistently perceived main disadvantages of hosting the event. Given rate hikes, fuel increases and the rising cost of food in 2007, price increases are, as in the 2005 survey round, perceived as the main disadvantage of hosting the World Cup. This concern has demonstrated some volatility – from 25% in 2005, this decreased to 22% in 2006 and then increased appreciably to 30% in 2007.

Concern over the potential of increased crime resulting from hosting the event has also vacillated from 20% to 29% to 27% over the last three years. Price and crime worries significantly outrank other perceived disadvantages. In 2007, the next main category of concern – at an appreciably lower 10% – is that of congestion or blocking of the roads.

As in the previous two survey rounds, 81% of respondents believe that small business will benefit from 2010. While 2006 marked an increase in the number of respondents who broadly agreed with the sentiment that hosting the event would improve black economic empowerment, this figure has dropped to 76% – its lowest level thus recorded. Continuing a declining trend, 79% of respondents in 2007 'strongly agreed' or

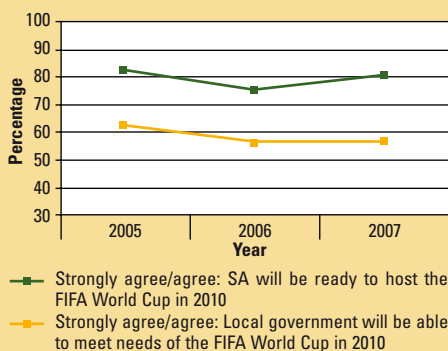
'agreed' with the perception that hosting the mega-event would make South African cities more competitive internationally, as compared to 82% in 2006 and 85% in 2005.

It is vital that these expectations are addressed by policy-makers, government and 2010 stakeholders in planning for the event, as the downward trend in the latter two categories could be indicative of a growing sense of realism regarding 2010. While inflated expectations should not be perpetuated, there is a fine line between realism and disillusionment and it is crucial that the public does not become disenchanted with the event. To prevent this from happening, it is important that relevant information about planned legacy projects is shared and disseminated to the public.

And while on an aggregate scale 2007 represents a stabilising of opinion, it will be crucial to assess whether this plateau is maintained in the event of potential future anxiety over fuel increases, power failures, rising interest rates and construction/infrastructure delays as 2010 approaches. ●

*Dr Udes Pillay is the executive director of the Urban, Rural and Economic Development research programme, and Dr Orli Bass is a post-doctoral fellow in the same programme.*

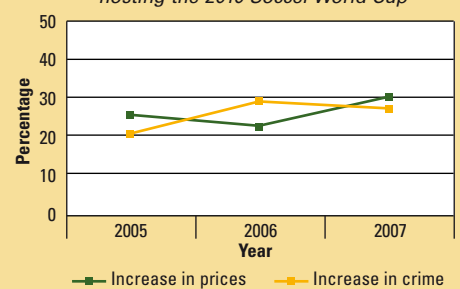
**Figure 1: Perceptions of readiness**



**Figure 2: Legacy considerations**



**Figure 3: Main disadvantages of South Africa hosting the 2010 Soccer World Cup**



# Smoke this: Dagga use among young men gets higher

The increase in cannabis production and improved technology call for more substance abuse treatment centres in South Africa, says SHANDIR RAMLAGAN and KARL PELTZER, following a study on user trends in the country.

**THIS STUDY WAS COMPILED** from surveys, data from specialised alcohol and drug treatment centres through the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (SANCA) and the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU), cannabis-related trauma unit admissions and studies on people arrested for cannabis-related offences over the past 12 years in South Africa.

Results indicate that cannabis is the most common illicit substance used in South Africa, and second to alcohol, the most extensively used substance.

Use is particularly high among the youth (ranging from adolescents to university students) and much higher for young males than for young females. From 1993 to 2002, lifetime cannabis use for young females (7%) remained the same, whereas there has been an increase among young males from 13% to 20% over the same period.

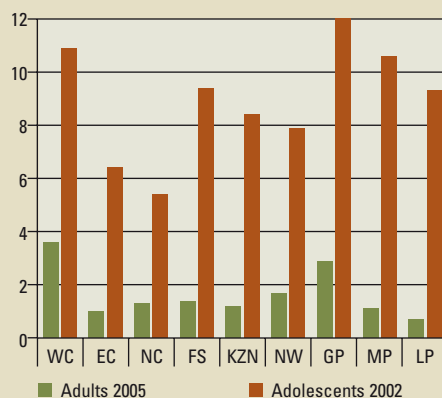
Cannabis use among young males is much higher than that of young females, as is seen in Table 1.

Current self-reported cannabis use was 5–10% among adolescents and 2% among adults. Annual cannabis prevalence rates are lower in South America (2.6%), Asia (2.1%) and higher in West and Central Europe (7.4%), Africa (8.1%), the USA and Canada combined (10.3%), and the USA-only (31%).

Among adults in South Africa, higher current cannabis-use rates were found in urban (2.3%) than in rural (1.0%) areas in 2005. Among youth, current cannabis use was highest among coloureds and current cannabis use was found highest in the provinces of Gauteng, Western Cape, Mpumalanga, Free State and Limpopo. It was found highest among adults in the Western Cape, Gauteng and North West provinces (Figure 1).

Various studies in trauma units show high levels of cannabis use preceding an injury. Cannabis is commonly misused by trauma patients (29–59%) and is often associated with crime (39%).

**Figure 1: Current cannabis use among adults (SABSSM 2005) and adolescents (YRBS 2002) by province (%)**



The demand for treatment in South Africa indicates that cannabis abuse increased from 14% in 1999 to 17% in 2005, while cannabis mixed with mandrax has remained stable (from 7% in 1999 to 7% in 2005). Whether the slight treatment increase is due to the increased potency of cannabis is unknown, as in South Africa cannabis is rarely tested for its active chemical agent, delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), levels.

In a recent HSRC study at drug treatment centres, key informants reported an increase in cannabis psychosis due to the high quality of cannabis now available as a result of hydroponic cultivation.

In conclusion, this study has found that the increase in cannabis production, improved production technology and treatment demands has implications for service delivery, especially considering the lack of treatment facilities in South Africa. More substance abuse treatment centres are needed and that youth, especially young men, need a targeted intervention to reduce their cannabis use.

In considering effective ways of reducing cannabis-related problems, routine screening and brief intervention of substance (including cannabis) use in primary- and emergency-care settings should also be considered. ●

*Shandir Ramlagan is a senior researcher in the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health (SAHA) programme and Professor Karl Peltzer is a research director in the same programme.*

*The article is based on a paper, Cannabis use trends in South Africa, published in the South African Journal of Psychiatry; 13(4): 126–131, by Peltzer, K., & Ramlagan, S. (2007).*

Results indicate that cannabis is the most common illicit substance used in South Africa, and second to alcohol, the most extensively used substance.

**Table 1: Overview of surveys of current cannabis use among youth**

Author	Year/Institution	N	Cannabis use in past month (%)		
			M	F	Total
Flisher et al.	1990/Secondary schools, Cape Town	7 340	9.1	2.4	7.0
Flisher et al.	1997/Secondary schools Cape Town	2 779	7.3	3.0	6.1
Visser & Moleko	Primary schools, Pretoria	460	6.2	1.7	3.7
Terblanche & Venter	Grades 8–12, Port Elizabeth	382			2.8
Peltzer et al.	Urban secondary schools	191	15.1	9.5	12.0
Peltzer et al.	Rural secondary schools	209	11.2	2.6	6.2
Mwansa et al.	Bela Bela & Pretoria	303			4.0
Peltzer et al.	Community survey	800	12.4	1.3	6.9
Peltzer et al.	University students	799	10.7	2.9	6.6
Peltzer et al.	National, 25 higher education 3rd/4th-year students	1 056	3.6	2.2	2.6

# Identity and violent conflict in Africa



The unexpected post-election violence in Kenya has again highlighted the need for a clearer understanding of the relationship between identity and violent conflict in Africa. In a study of nine African countries the interdependence of identity, political power struggles and rivalry for access to resources was found to be an important factor in such conflicts. GERARD HAGG reports on the findings of this study.

**THE NINE COUNTRY STUDIES** involved Burundi, Cameroon, the DRC, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

## **POLITICAL POWER STRUGGLES**

In post-colonial African countries political power struggles generally take two forms: the state is in conflict with identity groups (state-identity conflict), and identity groups compete for 'ownership' or dominance of the state (inter-identity conflict).

The two levels of conflict seldom occur or remain in isolation but are interactive and can develop in two directions: from the state to society and from society to the state. The state may actively support one identity in

inter-identity conflict if this identity occupies powerful positions within the state. In reality, such states often encourage dominant identities to use state resources and institutions to suppress other identities.

Resentment against this suppression leads to resistance against the state as the patron of the oppressors. Conversely, elections and power arrangements often lead to replications of inter-identity conflict within the state. Winner-takes-all results of elections or negotiations will encourage the new state to reward its supporters, to the detriment and resentment of opposition identities, preparing the ground for renewed conflict. Typical examples are the post-2006 DRC and Kenya.



## RIVALRY FOR RESOURCES

The study distinguished between two types of rivalry, namely traditional rivalries, for instance, between herdsmen and farmers about land or water, with Darfur as a typical example. Reconciliation customs usually resolved such perennial conflicts.

More serious are the rivalries between entrepreneurs or elite groups for access to wealth, for example, through mining (blood diamonds, gold) or oil. This conflict is often linked to government leaders or clan leaders, who use private armies to protect their interests. This problem is exacerbated when international companies receive concessions for resource extraction without local communities benefiting from their wealth creation, while carrying the environmental burden. Such communities often revert to illegal extraction and smuggling or resistance against the companies, as happens in Nigeria's oil fields.

## IDENTITY AND CULTURE

The study found that identity and culture became dominant factors in most conflicts. Identity could be ethnic, but also include class, clan, other social networks, regional and international/networks, gender, language, religion or occupation.

Historically, colonial powers created cleavages due to preferred treatment of specific ethnic groups, the destruction of traditional governance institutions, and the division of identity groups between two countries. Many post-colonial states emphasised the need for a single national identity, striving for unity through conformity. But ironically these politics of identity usually led to the promotion of the identity and culture of the dominant group as the national one, and resistance by the excluded groups. In Sudan, this identity was based on Islamic religion, in Cameroon language became the dominant factor.

Whereas in the past, identity and particularly ethnicity had a fluency that allowed for dynamic co-existence of groups, identity legislation under colonial rule resulted in ethnic identity becoming a political identity. This often led to the privileging of specific groups over others in the allocation of senior public service positions, the building of infrastructure and allocation of resources. Thus the combination of non-democratic rule and exclusion from wealth usually leads to relationships in which members of the

The country studies revealed that elite groups and groups that are excluded ultimately challenge opponents with armed violence.



governing elite's own ethnic or identity group benefit, linking identity factors to political and economic ones.

The country studies revealed that elite groups and groups that are excluded ultimately challenge opponents with armed violence. It is particularly in this stage that identity is used for the purpose of mobilisation. 'Own' supporters are motivated to fight the 'others', irrespective of previous harmonious relationships, as in Burundi and Rwanda.

Identity awareness is increased through slogans, the revival or creation of traditions that mark a specific identity group, and stereotyping of the 'self' and 'others' through narratives, political speeches or symbols. Art and cultural forms (such as street theatre, songs and posters) are used to declare ownership of specific geographical areas, as was typical of the cultural struggle in apartheid South Africa.

## DEMOCRACY AND VIOLENT CONFLICT

The lack of democratic systems tends to increase the potential for violent conflict. The more citizens feel they are part of government, the less justification there is for violent resistance. But many countries started off as one-party states, leaving little space for democracy and alternatives. On the other hand, when excluded groups lack legal or constitutional mechanisms to challenge the state or defend their rights, their frustrations will be directed at the privileged groups.

Conversely, privileged identities defend their position against identities that may challenge them, leading to an oscillation in conflict between the two levels, and sometimes hundreds of thousands deaths, as in Rwanda and Burundi.

UNESCO and the African Union have emphasised the potential of identity and cultural diversity to bring peace and prosperity. The HSRC research indicates that identity and culture can either unify or exclude and divide. Even when the state

recognises cultural diversity through institutional arrangements, the centre of power can remain exclusionary, for example in Ethiopia's federal states.

Thus a human rights approach, based on justice, fairness and equity appears to be crucial in the successful resolution of economic, political and identity struggles.

Structurally this implies that strong and generally accepted social democratic institutions are indispensable for conflict resolution. Democracy, which brings the state under the control of citizens, has to be visible in institutions that include recognition of the value of identity and cultural diversity. Examples are the Sudan Comprehensive Agreement and the South African Constitution.

On the other hand, in terms of agency, definition of fairness and justice is often ethically and religiously determined and this interpretation fluctuates over time. This implies two requirements: an ongoing local debate on justice and fairness and how this can be obtained; and the contribution of regional, continental and international institutions to the local understanding and enshrining of justice and fairness. This justifies international interventions and support, as in the UN Darfur and DRC missions

## ARTS AND CULTURE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The study also shows that traditional cultural institutions and arts and culture can contribute significantly to conflict resolution and reconciliation as they are an established part of people's shared heritage.

As some of the country studies show, disadvantaged groups often lack the capacity for equal participation in politics and the economy. Identity and cultural development programmes can contribute to capacity building through human development, for example, critical thinking, creative problem solving and the celebration of identities.

In conclusion, with regard to conflict resolution and peace making, the studies point to the need for a localised, multi-pronged approach in which socio-economic reconstruction and the recognition of human rights and freedom play an important role. ●

*Dr Gerard Hagg is a chief research specialist in the Democracy and Governance research programme. The studies have been published in a special issue of the African Journal on Conflict Resolution, late 2007.*

# No skills training, NO GROWTH

THE QUESTION of what health system South Africans want is not a rhetorical question; it requires us to seriously consider the current state of South Africa's decaying health services. Words like accessibility, equity and efficiency in health care should no longer remain mere aphorisms.

As we move towards decisive political and economic times, it is of utmost importance to evaluate what kinds of policies in the field of education and training are progressive enough and what kinds of research will best be able to serve that policy development.

In the context of evaluating that situation it will be important to evaluate the significance of past policies that were often informed by *good intentions* but, more often than not, resulted in less than satisfactory outcomes. What were the failures of understanding that have disadvantaged many South Africans once again? The current need is therefore not only to critically assess the legacy of apartheid education and training, but also to review the legacy of post-1994 reforms – and to be bold enough to recognise the strengths and limitations of the roads travelled.

In that context the *Human Resources Development Review 2008* is a major milestone. Along with the companion volume published in 2003, it provides a unique opportunity for taking stock at this critical juncture in the field of human resource development and in the context of the social and economic development of South Africa.

## HRD AND FISCAL AUSTERITY

This is a story of human resources development (HRD) in the context of a policy of fiscal austerity derived from models promoted by the World Bank and the IMF, and largely in line with the guidelines of structural adjustment policies so common in

other parts of Africa. It is the story of how that policy project has engaged with the rhetoric of democracy, poverty alleviation and redress, while systematically embracing the often contradictory policies of the free market, growth and global competitiveness.

In the field of education and training that ambiguity, long identified in third world education policies, created a tension between focussing on (a) the skill needs of the modern economy and (b) the needs to develop mass-based learning systems that address poverty and the economic upliftment of the poor.

In the first place it is noted that the rate of growth has outstripped the capacity of supply-side institutions to provide the necessary skills in fields as diverse as pharmacy and IT; engineering and teaching; tourism and the public service. This has created what Kraak calls 'expansion saturation' which has had the effect of placing limits on the quantitative and qualitative expansion of industry.

## LACK OF HRD FUNDING AND IMPEDED GROWTH

The brake on funding for HRD has thus influenced the growth and competitiveness of industry at a crucial time of expansion, but it has been equally influential in putting the brake on the provision of services to the poor. The public schooling system, healthcare services, the provision of Early Childhood Education and Adult Education and Training have all been starved of resources in the quest for fiscal discipline.

In short the collection highlights the conundrum of international competitiveness and growth versus development/poverty alleviation and (un)employment, and highlights the declining share of the budget allocated to education and training at a time when one would have thought this would be a key focus of investment.

This has resulted in a faltering public education system and a decline in enrolments at FET colleges despite their designated flagship status in the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA). What gives this collection a special place in current research is its attention to the detail of policy struggles within that broad framework.

## RECURRING THEMES

The themes that recur are the lack of racial, gender and class mobility and access to economically useful skills, the lack of capacity of the system to produce relevant skills for the private and public sector, and the tensions between public and private provision in many sectors. Above all, there is the question of how policy should be redefined to accommodate the needs of poverty reduction and redress.

The collection expands our notions of the development of human resources (HRD) beyond the traditional industrial and business sector which privileges skills development for growth and global market competitiveness, to HRD as part of the public responsibility of government to ensure a workable state that will provide a social democratic basis for a democratic/caring/welfare society. The focus on ABET, ECD, public schooling, and FET colleges indicates the need for focused research in the future. The collection presents us all with the enormous challenges for research, analysis, policy and political action. ●

*Peter Kallaway recently retired as professor of education at the University of the Western Cape. Human Resources Development Review 2008: Education, Employment and Skills in South Africa, edited by Andre Kraak and Karen Press can be downloaded for free, or ordered from [www.hsrcpress.ac.za](http://www.hsrcpress.ac.za)*

In debates about growth as opposed to development, what are the successes and failures of education and training policies? PETER KALLAWAY gives an overview of a major new reference work on human resources development, *Human Resources Development Review 2008* – an attempt to examine these issues crucial to development.



#### **Key areas of focus in HRD Review 2008**

##### ***Science and Technology and Enterprise Training***

This is an area that is easily understood in terms of the 'needs of industry', even if the challenge to produce sufficient skilled workers is significant, the need to expand such facilities to meet the needs of the poor and make these areas relevant to the needs of poverty eradication is an extreme challenge.

##### ***FET colleges/adult education and training/national skills development strategy/training for Public Works/learnerships/SETAs***

The tensions between the Department of Education and the Department of Labour over the provision of facilities in these areas is highlighted as a cause for concern that has not been addressed significantly to date. Issues of access, curriculum reform, recapitalisation, relevance of training to industry and/or to poverty alleviation are all central research concerns.

##### ***Adult Basic Education and Training and Early Childhood Development (ABET/ECD)***

Chapters on these areas mark a significant addition to the HRD stable and demonstrate a wider definition of the field of HRD, taking into account sectors that are not directly linked to economic policy issues. This wider definition links to the wider development goals now seen to be vital to HRD, something that was rather neglected in the past.

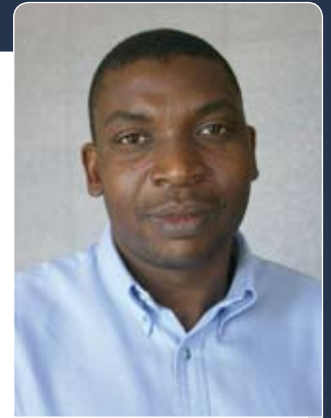
##### ***Higher education***

The effects of policies borrowed rather hastily from around the world have resulted in a major restructuring of this sector. This institutional change, giving rise to mergers and amalgamations, and the whole attempt to assess and measure academic work in line with qualification frameworks and quality assessment measures, have had a significant impact on the nature of academic work and student experience.

##### ***Other***

A range of other sectors is also engaged with, including training in the public sector, the financial services sector, veterinary skills, pharmacy, social work, engineering and public sector training.

Mcebisi Ndletyana  
and James Muzondidya



# Simba Makoni:

## The best president Zimbabwe never had?

Simba Makoni's decision to join the March 2008 presidential election has generated a lot of political hope both inside and outside Zimbabwe. But time and tide may be against him, deliberate MCEBISI NDLETYANA and JAMES MUZONDIDYA.

**THE OCTOGENARIAN MUGABE HAS BECOME A LIABILITY** to the country, while the MDC's Morgan Tsvangirai has proved to be a weak, indecisive leader who has blundered his way through political decisions and serious errors of judgement.

### BEACON OF HOPE?

In contrast to Mugabe and Tsvangirai, Makoni represents hope and pragmatism. He is intelligent, level-headed and realistic. He has outstanding anti-colonial credentials and thus cannot be dismissed as an upstart. When Makoni was in government, he consistently objected to irrational policies in both government and the politburo, and this cost him his position in cabinet. It was not the first time he had been booted out of government for speaking his mind and for his principled opposition to unsound policies.

Most importantly, Makoni is a simple, honest man of honour and integrity. He is one of the few senior leaders in Zanu PF who has not been implicated in corruption when almost the entire top leadership of the party is absorbed in self-enrichment projects and are out-competing each other to strip the country of its valuable assets.

As many observers have noted, his entry presents Zimbabweans with the best prospect for change, but his success depends on the effectiveness of his campaign in a race that has become dirty, vicious and tight. Regrettably, his campaign so far seems incapable of rising to the occasion.

### WEAK CAMPAIGN

His inexperienced campaign team has underestimated the hurdles to be cleared in this race and clearly did not adequately prepare for the difficulty of running against a Mugabe team determined to retain and even mummify him in office at all costs.

All the obstacles that Makoni's team has encountered, from transport, fuel procurement, printing of campaign material to opening a bank account, could have been anticipated by consulting with seasoned Zimbabwean opposition campaigners and by developing effective counter-strategies.

**He is intelligent, level-headed and realistic. He has outstanding anti-colonial credentials and thus cannot be dismissed as an upstart.**

Another major problem is that ordinary people seem to be unaware of his campaign. He also has no visible team around him, save for academic publisher Ibbo Mandaza and the politically inexperienced retired army major Kudzai Mbudzi, who have both been appearing with him since his entry into the race.

The much talked about support of senior members of Zanu PF has remained

speculative. Only former cabinet minister and politburo member Dumiso Dabengwa and former Speaker of Parliament Cyril Ndebele have dared to express their support for him publicly. Other potential backers within the ruling party have benefited from the politics of patronage and are afraid to lose their ill-gotten wealth if they back Makoni publicly. They will continue to play the *sinjono* (hide and seek) politics of Zanu PF and will come out of their political closets only when they are reassured of Makoni's victory.

The biggest challenge that Makoni faces is time. He entered the race at a very late stage when many Zimbabweans had given up hope for change and did not bother to register. This is going to cost him votes. And apart from the initial announcement of his candidacy and the two weekend rallies he has had in Bulawayo and Harare, Makoni has not made much effort to reach out to the voters.

### DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR?

Makoni's lack of visibility may be due to a deliberate snub by the largely state-controlled media. All the same, he has not made extensive enough use of alternative media channels, such as cell phones, independent weekly newspapers, the 'bush telegraph' and radio stations operating from outside the country.

Electoral campaigns require media exposure to be effective, especially in far-flung parts of the country. In Zimbabwe's hostile political and media environment, a sympathetic



The reluctance to explain his political credentials points to an egoistical leader who sees himself as a messianic figure.



independent media would be a crucial ally for any opposition party. Yet Makoni does not seem to appreciate this.

On the few occasions that he has been interviewed by the media, he has appeared aloof, arrogant and abrupt – a characteristic which is soon going to alienate him from the fourth estate.

The unveiling of his manifesto was chaotic and unprofessional. He ducked direct questions and in cases where he had been pressured to provide an answer, his responses were tactless. A good example is a BBC interview he had with John Simpson on 28 February. Initially he responded well to

Simpson's question about 'international prosecution' for Mugabe, but was literally cornered into making a careless statement about this sensitive issue.

During his recent interview with South Africa's Radio 702, Makoni was aggressive and abrasive towards the host and telephone callers. He did not justify his candidacy and arrogantly dismissed callers with pronouncements like 'if you had read my statement' or 'if you know anything about me then you wouldn't ask me that question'.

The 702 interview also betrayed the lack of a coordinated media strategy. Makoni repeatedly inquired if the interview was live

and after he was told that it was, he protested about not being given advance notice. It was only when the talk-show host reminded him that he had been notified about the interview a week before that he reluctantly agreed to proceed.

There is an element of overconfidence on Makoni's part, which might be his undoing. The reluctance to explain his political credentials points to an egoistical leader who sees himself as a messianic figure.

He seems to think it is self-evident that he is the answer to the Zimbabwean stalemate. He may well be that answer, but he needs to do some serious, hard work. Without this, Makoni might be the best president Zimbabwe never had. ●

*Dr Mcebisi Ndletyana and Dr James Muzondidya are both senior research specialists in the Democracy and Governance research programme.*

# Reviewing the question



DR MIRIAM ALTMAN,  
executive director at the  
HSRC, answers questions  
on employment and job  
creation following Minister  
Trevor Manuel's budget  
speech in Parliament.



## Was this an employment-oriented budget?

The budget says that 'reducing joblessness remains South Africa's most critical challenge'. There are many elements in the budget that will support growth and employment, but it is not so easy to see how it comes together.

The budget is one of the government's most powerful instruments, and an important expression of its priorities. Stakeholders need to see more clearly how major budget choices contribute to the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA) targets.

There are many important decisions required to halve unemployment and poverty that concern social grants, public personnel, the expanded public works programme (EPWP), the proposed wage subsidy, public transport, support to the state-owned enterprises, and more. Each of these could be multi-billion rand allocations. These considerations will be central to our work on employment scenarios in the coming year.

## In your view, will this budget support job creation on the scale that is needed to meet AgsiSA's aims of halving unemployment by 2014?

We estimate that 500 000 net new jobs will be needed annually to achieve that. The economy only recently began creating 500 000 jobs a year. In AgsiSA, a growth target of 6% by 2010 was meant to enable the achievement of the unemployment goal. Global growth has slowed, and domestic supply constraints have come at a very bad time.

It is now unlikely that the 6% growth target will be reached. Treasury projects that the average growth rate will be 4.3% p.a. until 2010. If growth recovers to 5% p.a. between 2011 and 2014, unemployment might be 2.6% higher than it would otherwise have been in 2014. That means additional special interventions could be needed for 500 000 more work-seekers than if we had reached the growth target.

The budget was definitely stimulatory. Real spending grows 50% faster than GDP. Growth would have been much lower had this not been the case. So this already softens

what could have been a major blow to job creation targets.

Government should still aim to halve unemployment and poverty, even if the growth rate is slower than desired. This will require more forceful special interventions that can intensify job creation.

## What sort of interventions might make a difference?

Keep in mind that only part of the job lies with the finance ministry. It is sometimes difficult to say where departmental capability ends and the budget decisions begin. There may be very important programmes but the departments might already be working to capacity.

For example, much more could be gained from deepening agricultural support to South Africa's 1.2 million small farmers and subsistence farming households. Historically, South Africa missed an opportunity in developing these producers as a result of apartheid. Small-scale farming has been an important strategy for many countries from Japan to Indonesia. Farming small properties is sub-economic, and much could be done to reduce the cost of inputs and improve yields through better information and extension services. In the budget, only R2 billion was allocated to agriculture support services, which would translate into about R1 600 per small farmer.

As an opposite example, improving the efficiency of state-owned enterprises in key sectors like energy, telecommunications and transport would have an important impact on encouraging activity in new job creating sectors. Our employment scenarios model shows that if South Africa's rail, ports and telecommunications infrastructure were internationally competitive, the unemployment rate could be cut by up to 20%.

R6 billion was budgeted for public transport infrastructure over the medium term expenditure frameworks (MTEF). Making public transport cheaper and more efficient could benefit employment hugely as it makes it cheaper to search for or to get to work. In fact, this is one of the most important labour market interventions.

## How do you see the role of the government in direct job creation?

The government is the largest single employer. For many years, the public service was shrinking and dampening employment growth. There are large numbers of vacant posts, and there has been a commitment to expanding public service employment to address service delivery backlogs. Personnel spending will grow by R20 billion per year over the next three years – about 30% of all new non-interest spending. It will be divided between improved service conditions and new hiring.

This should result in the hiring of about 60 000 new employees each year, or 12% of what is needed to halve unemployment by 2014. This can be stimulatory as long as this spending goes with intensified performance management – in other words, that it leads to better quality public health, education, policing, and so on.

But the public service has become increasingly skill intensive and the lowest salary is about R38 000p.a.. Getting a first job experience is one of the greatest difficulties facing young people and it is worth investigating special interventions for special entry level jobs that offer young people their first work opportunity.

In building employment scenarios we look at a youth jobs plan that would provide labour market entrants temporary work in the public service for one or two years. Such a programme could create up to 100 000 opportunities and cost up to R2 billion. In addition, the budget strongly endorsed a wage subsidy for low-wage employees and focused on first-time work-seekers, though policy is still in the design stages.

At the other end of the spectrum, the budget allocated an additional R1 billion over the MTEF to the social sector Expanded Public Works Programmes (EPWP). Around R2,6 billion is spent on the EPWP per year and the programme is meeting its targets in terms of number of jobs created, but these targets are much lower than what is needed.

In 2006/07, about 317 000 jobs were created, mostly in infrastructure and environmental services. This would have reached the equivalent of about 7% of the unemployed by the official definition, and about 3% of

the unemployed if one includes more marginalised discouraged work-seekers.

Our scenarios show that if the economy grows by 4.5% p.a. on average between 2004 and 2014, about 1.5 million public works and special employment programme opportunities will be needed by 2014. This will cost about R26 billion p.a. in current rands by 2014 and I think that government should start gearing up to that scale.

The biggest job creation opportunity is in the social-sector opportunities, like early childhood development and home community-based care. There is an enormous need for high-quality community-based services in these fields, as part of the general service delivery mandate. A huge expansion would be needed as there are fewer than 40 000 people participating in such programmes.

The government is committed to scaling this up but while the national government is responsible for setting guidelines, implementation is the responsibility of provinces and municipalities, and there has been a tendency to reallocate job-creation funds to other programmes. Unless greater commitment can be obtained from the provinces, it will be difficult to scale up these programmes to any substantial degree. Including them in the list of conditional grants is certainly something to think about.

**On another tack, Eskom's recent announcement that any new big building projects will be put on ice for at least the following six months, and even longer. The building sector has been responsible for creating thousands of new jobs. How will this decision influence the job market?**

This is a broader problem. My unit, is currently looking at what impact an electricity cut might have on industry and households and how this will affect growth and employment. Eskom's communications to industry have created confusion, and one hopes this will not lead to an investment strike! That would be disastrous.

But let's take a specific example. When the mines are cut by 10%, they have to cut production by more than that. Not only are mining jobs then in the balance, but so are the supplier industries. It may seem that cutting smelters has less impact on job creation,

but a cut back to mining and the smelters will also have a major impact on exports. One of the most critical threats to growth (and employment) right now is the ever expanding current account deficit, which will be further exacerbated by this situation.

**The Employment, Growth and Development Initiative, which you've headed up for the last two years, has drawn together some of the best minds available to address issues of job creation. From 1 April, the Initiative will become a permanent Centre for Poverty, Employment and Growth. How will that change what you do at the moment?**

We started the Initiative as an experiment at the HSRC. This experiment involved asking one big policy question facing the nation, that is, how to halve unemployment and poverty by 2014 on a sustainable basis. The experiment also involved the introduction of a 'think tank' model, which builds on networks and stakeholder engagement. This approach has been incredibly successful and is being affirmed by the establishment of a more permanent centre.

Our work on employment scenarios will continue, but with a deeper emphasis on poverty reduction. In addition, we will establish demonstration projects in partnership with stakeholders responsible for implementation. The emphasis will be on identifying critical innovations in programmes that could potentially lead to large scale job creation, but that are not achieving that potential.

The first projects will focus on job creation in early childhood development services, and on private sector procurement to small and medium enterprises. Now that our work is becoming permanent, I plan to invest more in building core research and methodological capability, including a project to develop indicators of the development path. ●

*Miriam Altman is the executive director of the Employment, Growth and Development Initiative at the Human Sciences Research Council. The papers referred to in this article can be found on [www.hsrc.ac.za/egdi.phtml](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/egdi.phtml)*



## Human Rights in African Prisons

Edited by Jeremy Sarkin

While taking note of global research figures, *Human Rights in African Prisons* focuses on the unique problems – and solutions – that occur on the continent. The chapters range from exploring the historical context of African prisons through to contemporary research on women and children in prisons, as well as looking at topics such as good governance and rehabilitation. Through finding the similarities, differences, strengths and weaknesses in prisons across nations in Africa, the authors seek to make recommendations on how the situations can be improved.

2008 / 256pp / 978-0-7969-2206-9 / R180.00 / Soft cover



## Social Work in Social Change: The profession and education of social workers in South Africa

Nicci Earle

This study examines developments in the education and training of social workers within the democratic dispensation, the most significant of which is the development of a national, standardised Bachelor of Social Work degree. It reveals that the dominant profile in student enrolment shows that graduation trends have been negative and losses due to emigration are an additional concern. Given the scarcity of these professionals against the demand for their services, understanding the factors that contribute to this picture are critical for effective intervention.

2008 / 176pp / 978-0-7969-2208-3 / R210.00 / Soft cover



## Stealing Empire: P2P, intellectual property and hip-hop subversion

Adam Haupt

Media studies academic, music journalist and cultural activist Haupt presents a multi-platform exploration of the cultural, technological and legal conflicts between the interests of citizens and those of corporations in *Stealing Empire*. Crossing disciplinary boundaries, the work traces the links between law, political science and philosophy, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), film studies, hip-hop and counter-culture. Haupt concludes that globalisation, commodification, legal frameworks and new technologies can all be harnessed to serve the interests of the marginalised as well as the powerful. The most significant obstacles continue to be the digital divide, disempowering representations of race and gender, and economic inequity.

2008 / 272pp / 978-0-7969-2209-0 / R160.00 / Soft cover



## The Impact of and Responses to HIV/AIDS in the Private Security and Legal Services Industry in South Africa

Compiled by the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS &  
Health Research Programme of the HSRC

This report documents the first study of its kind to be conducted in the private security and legal services industries, and provides clarity on the current status of both industries in terms of the prevalence and incidence rates of HIV, the impact of the epidemic on businesses in the sectors, and their responses to HIV/AIDS thus far. The findings represent a first step in the continued monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of the epidemic in both sectors, and the recommendations offer a starting point for refining HIV/AIDS management strategies at a sector and company level.

2008 / 192pp / 978-0-7969-2205-2 / R130.00 / Soft cover