Governance and Institutional Trust in South Africa: November 1999 to September 2000

Paper given at the University of Paris X, France,
Conference on Restructuring and Social Change

13 December 2000

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1   Introduction

The 1994 first non-racial democratic election in South Africa ushered the country into the ranks of democratic states in the world. The second national elections, which took place in June 1999; and the municipal elections, which took place in December 2000 are seen as key pillars of democratic consolidation. Using the HSRC September 2000 survey, the aim of this chapter is to provide a public's appraisal of the culture and legitimacy of governance in South Africa between November 1999 and September 2000. The chapter focuses on public perceptions of government performance at national, provincial and local spheres by race, province and class (wealth). Trust in national, provincial and local government and in civil society institutions is also assessed according to race, area type and Living Standard Measure (LSM)[1].

2   Government Performance

Although government performance can be assessed by means of several yardsticks, in this chapter we evaluate government performance by analysing public satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the different spheres of government. (For the purpose of discussing the HSRC September 2000 survey results, the categories "Very satisfied" and "Satisfied" were aggregated to form one category, "Satisfied", and the categories "Dissatisfied" and "Very dissatisfied" were aggregated to form one category, "Dissatisfied". The same applies to "Strong trust" and "Trust", and "Distrust" and "Strong distrust".)

2.1 Perceptions of the way South Africa is governed

One of the tasks of the first democratic government was to set in place mechanisms for effective governance. These include the establishment of nine provinces within a united South Africa, and also the establishment of local governments.

According to the September 2000 survey (2 700 respondents), slightly more people were dissatisfied than satisfied with the way South Africa was governed. Thirty-six per cent (36%) of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the way South Africa was governed, compared with 39% who indicated that they were dissatisfied. The September 2000 figure is a significant reduction of satisfaction level compared with the November 1999, which was 52%. While levels of satisfaction decreased from 52% in November 1999 to 36% in September 2000, the levels of dissatisfaction with the way South Africa was governed increased correspondingly from

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[1] The following LSMs were determine, LSM1 (5%), LSM2 (8%), LSM3 (14%), LSM4 (17%), LSM5 (16%), LSM6 (15%), LSM7 (12%), and LSM8 (13%), of the total sample. LSM is used as a proxy for class and or income in the discussion.

33% to 39% in the same period. These figures suggest that high levels of satisfaction enjoyed since 1994 was starting to wane between 1999 and 2000.

Table 1: **How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way South Africa is being governed at present?**

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000
Very satisfied	16	6
Satisfied	36	30
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12	18
Dissatisfied	21	27
Very dissatisfied	12	12
Don't know	3	7
Total	100	100

Table 2 How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with the way South Africa is being governed at present?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
				%					
Very satisfied	9	8	9	5	7	6	3	2	6
Satisfied	44	34	28	30	34	34	28	17	30
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	16	17	15	18	14	17	24	28	18
Dissatisfied	23	20	25	26	26	28	29	38	27
Very dissatisfied	4	9	12	12	12	11	14	20	12
Don't know	4	13	11	10	8	4	3	2	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Although more people are less satisfied than satisfied with the way South Africa is being governed, it appears as if it is those who fall between LSM1 and LSM2 are two who indicated satisfaction. Whereas the poor appear to be satisfied with the way the country is governed, they are in fact dissatisfied with the levels of service delivery. Their positive rating of the way South Africa is being governed is unlikely to remain positive in the absence of material improvements in the quality of their life. Indeed there are signs that local communities are organizing themselves with a view to campaigning for better service delivery.

2.1.1 Perceptions of the way South Africa is governed by race

The years of racial discrimination during apartheid in South Africa ensured the exclusion of the majority of South Africans from the governance of the country. This came to an end with the dawn of the democratic era, which enabled effective participation by all at the different spheres of government.

Perceptions of the way South Africa was governed in September 2000 differed by race, with the majority of Africans (40%) being satisfied, followed by coloureds (32%), Asian (29%) and whites (16%).

Table 3: **How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way South Africa is being governed at present?[2]**

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA Population %
				%	
Very satisfied	7	1	2	1	6
Satisfied	33	30	27	15	30
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	16	27	17	23	18
Dissatisfied	25	25	40	39	27
Very dissatisfied	11	10	11	20	12
Don't know	8	8	3	1	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Levels of perceptions among Africans have also declined between 1999 and 2000.

2.1.2 Perceptions of the way South Africa is governed by area type

Thirty-nine percent of respondents were dissatisfied with the way South Africa is governed, compared to 36% who were satisfied. Dissatisfaction with the way the country is governed is higher among urban and metro respondents than their rural counterparts. Whereas dissatisfaction among metropolitan residents was 47%, the comparative figure for urban was 39%, and for rural residents 34%. Although relatively fewer rural residents were dissatisfied with the way South Africa is governed, in fact they constitute the bulk of those who are also dissatisfied with service delivery.

2.1.3 Perceptions of the way South Africa is governed by LSM

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[2] Discrimination on the basis of race is outlawed in South Africa. Racial classification (categorisation) in this chapter refers to previous racial classification and does not suggest acceptance of racial discrimination. The four main racial classifications are "African", "coloured", "Asian" (Indian) and "white".

Asked in September 2000 how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the way South Africa was being governed at that time, the majority of those who were most satisfied were those who fall within LSM1 and LSM2, and those who fall within LSM5, LSM6 and LSM7. Analysis of the data by income level suggests that the wealthy respondents were more likely to be dissatisfied than satisfied.

The high-income segment of the population was the most dissatisfied with the way South Africa was governed in September 2000. This finding is not surprising as government infrastructure and service delivery programmes in the past six years were largely targeted (at least in theory) at low-income groups and not the middle and upper classes of society. However, higher satisfaction levels did not necessarily translate into unconditional support for all policies or programmes. Indeed, there were cases where infrastructure programmes did not provide much-needed jobs, nor were they sustainable.

Table 4 How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with the way South Africa is being governed at present?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8
Very satisfied	9	8	9	5	7	6	3	2
Satisfied	44	34	28	30	34	34	28	17
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	16	17	15	18	14	17	24	28
Dissatisfied	23	20	25	26	26	28	29	38
Very dissatisfied	4	9	12	12	12	11	14	20
Don't know	4	13	11	10	8	4	3	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

2.2 Perceptions of provincial governance

There has been a significant decline in South Africans' satisfaction with provincial governance when comparing the HSRC November 1999 survey and the September 2000 data. Forty-four per cent of adult South Africans were dissatisfied and 32% were satisfied with the way the provinces were governed in September 2000. The level of satisfaction decreased from 44% in November 1999 to 32% in September 2000. On the other hand, the level of dissatisfaction declined by 4% from 38% to 34%. Several reasons may account for the decreased in satisfaction. First, provincial government performance may have deteriorated during November 1999 and September 2000. Second, the public was gradually critical of non-delivery and scandals, which were evident in many provinces during 1999 and 2000.

Table 5: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your province is being governed at present? Comparing November 1999 and September 2000

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000
Very satisfied	10	4
Satisfied	34	28
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13	17
Dissatisfied	24	32
Very dissatisfied	14	12
Don't know	5	8
Total	100	100

2.2.1 Perceptions of provincial governance by race

The various population groups judged provincial governance differently. For example, more than a third of Africans rated provincial governance positively (36%). Of the coloureds, 29% were satisfied. Only 19% whites and 25% Asians indicated that they were satisfied with the way South Africa's provinces were governed. The HSRC September 2000 survey suggest that significantly more Africans were satisfied with the way South Africa was governed than with the way the provinces were governed. Dissatisfaction on the part of Asians and whites with the way South Africa was being governed was slightly higher than their dissatisfaction with the way the provinces were being governed. Proportionally more whites were satisfied with the way provinces were governed (19%) than they were with the way South Africa was governed (16%).

Table 6: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your province is being governed at present? September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
			%		
Very satisfied	5	1	4	1	4
Satisfied	31	28	21	18	28
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	21	16	32	17
Dissatisfied	31	31	48	31	32
Very dissatisfied	12	6	7	14	12
Don't know	8	13	5	4	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100

2.2.2 Perceptions of provincial governance by area type

Respondents in different areas judged provincial governance differently. More people were dissatisfied with provincial governance than those who were satisfied. However, there were slightly positive ratings from rural respondents than metro and urban residents. Urban and metro respondents appear to be more critical of the provincial government than their rural counterparts.

2.2.3 Perceptions of provincial governance by LSM

The HSRC September 2000 survey also sought to understand the relationship between provincial governance and measurement of wealth. The findings suggest that the higher the income of respondents the less they were likely to indicate their satisfaction with the way their provinces were governed. There were proportionally more respondents satisfied than dissatisfied among the low-income earners than among the other income groups. There are several reasons for the differences in satisfaction. In the past the poor were under-provided and the wealthy over-provided in terms of resources. With the dawn of democracy in South Africa, resources came to be re-distributed to those who were historically disenfranchised. The poor appreciate these benefits, and their appreciation appears to translate into high satisfaction levels.

2.3 Perceptions of local governance

The local government sphere has the constitutional role to promote local economic development and deliver services. However, this sphere of government has taken longer than the other spheres to undergo transformation. The September 2000 survey reveals that slightly more respondents were dissatisfied (47%) than satisfied (32%) with the way their local areas were governed. The HSRC September 2000 survey points to a deterioration in the perception of local governance from November 1999. Public perceptions of satisfaction have also declined from 44% in November 1999 to 32% in September 2000. These perceptions also translated into action during the municipal elections, which saw only 49% of the electorate casting their vote.

Table 7: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local area is being governed at present?

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000
Very satisfied	10	4
Satisfied	34	28
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10	16
Dissatisfied	25	31
Very dissatisfied	17	16
Don't know	4	5
Total	100	100

2.3.1 Perceptions of local governance by race

Apartheid thrived in local authorities prior to 1994, and continued to affect local governance thereafter. This explains the difference in the perceptions of local governance by race. More Africans (33%) than coloureds (31%), Asians (35%) and whites (26%) were satisfied with the way their local area was governed in September 2000. Important trends can be noticed from the HSRC survey data. Proportionally more coloureds and Asians were satisfied with the way their local areas were governed than whites and Africans. However, dissatisfaction among coloureds, Asians and whites far surpassed that of Africans in terms of local governance. These findings are not

surprising, as the majority of historically white municipalities have had the capacity and resources to continue to extract benefits for whites. The new municipalities, which came into effect after the December municipal elections, will face daunting tasks in terms of providing local democracy and the delivery of services.

Table 8   **How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local area is being governed at present?**

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop. %
Very satisfied	5	1	3	1	4
Satisfied	28	30	32	25	28
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	11	12	30	16
Dissatisfied	31	29	40	27	31
Very dissatisfied	18	10	9	14	16
Don't know	5	11	4	4	5
Total	100	100	100	100	100

2.3.2 Perceptions of local governance by area type

The overall findings of the HSRC September 2000 survey suggest that more people were dissatisfied than satisfied with the way their local areas were governed. Proportionally more metro and urban residents were dissatisfied than satisfied with the way their local areas were governed. Although the metro and urban residents were the most dissatisfied, they are proportionally on the majority of service recipients. It is the rural households who are most dissatisfied with service delivery than their metro and urban counterparts.

2.3.3 Perceptions of local governance by LSM

The HSRC September 2000 survey suggests that the high-income households were less likely than the low-income earners to be satisfied with the way their local areas were governed. However, in the absence of meaningful and substantial improvements on the part of the poor, they are unlikely to continue to trust local government. In terms of material benefits, in spite of their relatively higher trust levels, the poor continue to be at the margins, with poor quality serves and infrastructure delivered to them. It appears to be the middle and high-income households who are either receiving constant levels and high quality services, or increasing levels.

Table 9 How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with the way your local area is being governed at present?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
Very satisfied	4	4	8	3	4	6	2	1	4
Satisfied	46	35	31	24	23	26	31	23	28
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10	10	9	16	17	14	19	29	16
Dissatisfied	29	25	30	31	31	32	34	30	31
Very dissatisfied	8	15	17	19	19	18	11	13	16
Don't know	3	10	6	7	5	4	3	4	5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

2.3.4 Comparing public perceptions of national, provincial and local spheres of government

South Africa's three-sphere government has averted potential political blood letting in 1994. However, the intergovernmental relations established by the new political order are not optimally effective. It is against this background that public satisfaction with the three spheres of government is analysed.

According to the HSRC September 2000 survey, the majority of people in South Africa were dissatisfied than satisfied with the different spheres of government. However, more people were satisfied with the way South Africa was governed at the national level than at provincial and local level.

Table 10:   How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with performance at the national, provincial and local spheres of government? September 2000

Level	National Government	Provincial Government	Local government
Very satisfied	6	4	4
Satisfied	30	28	28
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	18	17	16

Dissatisfied	27	32	31
Very dissatisfied	12	12	16
Don't know	7	8	5
Total	100	100	100

These results are a wake up call to the ANC-led government that something fundamental needs to occur to restore the credibility of the emerging social order. Although low-income people may have indicated that they are more satisfied than the wealthy, more substantial resources will need to be transferred to them if the emerging political and economic order is to stabilise. Failure to do this will be a recipe for unprecedented upheaval in years to come.

2.4 Trust/Distrust in the Spheres of Government

Trust in the different spheres of government can be seen as a measure of the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of citizens. Moreover, such trust may also signify a certain degree of acceptance by the public of those institutions. This section of the chapter compares trust levels in national, provincial and local government disaggregated by race, province and income. Use is made of the November 1999 and September 2000 HSRC surveys to compare whether there are significant shifts in the levels of trust.

2.5 Trust in national government

When asked how much trust they had in the national government, 43% of respondents confirmed their trust in the national government in September 2000. This figure indicates a significant 17% decreased on the November 1999 survey.

Table 11: How much trust/distrust do you have in the national government?

Level	November 1999	September 2000
Strong trust	25	9
Trust	35	34
Neither trust nor distrust	13	18
Distrust	16	24
Strong distrust	7	6
Don't know	4	9
Total	100	100

The 17% erosion of trust on government should act as a warning that government should shape up or else.

2.5.1 Trust in national government by race

Further analysis of the HSRC September 2000 survey suggests that trust in the national government differed by race. A significant majority of Africans (49%) trusted the national government, but of the coloureds, Asians and whites, 42%, 38% and 13%

respectively trusted the national government. Even among African electorate, where the ANC draws support, trust levels had declined during 1999 and 2000. The national government especially the presidency received unprecedented negative publicity during 1999 and 2000. The way in which the presidency responded to this even complicated matters.

Table 12:   How much trust/distrust do you have in the national government? September 2000

Level	African n	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
Strong trust	11	3	5	1	9
Trust	38	39	37	12	34
Neither trust nor distrust	15	21	22	34	18
Distrust	21	26	24	37	24
Strong distrust	6	3	2	11	6
Don't know	9	9	10	6	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100

2.5.2   Trust in national government by area type

The HSRC September 2000 survey suggests more people trust national government than those who distrusted. Metro residents are proportionally a significant component of those who distrust national government. However, trust levels are higher among rural residents than their metro and urban counterparts. More men than women are satisfied with the political situation in the country; they also trust the national government more than women do. This finding has implications and raises a question of gender equity in South Africa. Even though evidence suggests that metro and urban residents receive proportionally higher in terms of service delivery, they are still the most distrustful of the government

2.5.3   Trust in national government by LSM

The HSRC survey of September 2000 suggests that the higher the living standard measure, the more likely respondents were to distrust the national government. There are several possible reasons for the differences in trust by income. High-income households, who are taxed more, apparently feel that their contribution to the national fiscus is not adequately compensated for. Second high-income earners are mostly (though not exclusively) whites who apparently feel that the new South Africa has eroded some of the exclusive and excessive social benefits, which they previously received. Third, the government focuses on national priorities rather than parochial and minority interests.

2.6 Trust in provincial government

The results of the HSRC September 2000 survey suggest that more respondents trust than distrusted the provincial government. A third of the respondents indicated trust, compared with 35% who indicated distrust in provincial government. When comparing data from the November 1999 data, it is evident that trust in the provincial government decreased while distrust increased.

Table 13: How much trust/distrust do you have in your provincial government? September 2000

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000
Strong trust	12	4
Trust	38	29
Neither trust nor distrust	17	22
Distrust	21	27
Strong distrust	7	8
Don't know	6	9
Total	100	100

2.6.1 Trust in provincial government by race

As with trust in the national government, more Africans trusted the provincial government than whites, Asians and coloureds. Table 11 reveals that 37% Africans trusted the provincial government compared to 31% coloureds, 29% Asians and 16% whites.

Table 14:   How much trust/distrust do you have in the provincial government?

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop. %
Strong trust	5	2	1	1	4
Trust	32	29	28	15	29
Neither trust nor distrust	19	30	31	26	22
Distrust	26	25	32	33	27
Strong distrust	8	4	1	9	8
Don't know	10	10	8	6	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100

These findings are not surprising given the fact that perceptions of levels of satisfaction with provincial government had also decline. However, the proportion of Africans trusting the provincial government is lower than for the national government.

2.6.2 Trust in provincial government by area type

As with trust in national and local government, it appears as if rural respondents were more likely to indicate positive trust rating than their metro and urban residents. Urban residents are more critical of the provincial government than their rural counterparts. The role of traditional leaders in rural areas may also be an important consideration.

2.6.3 Trust in provincial government by LSM

Income levels appear to influence trust in the provincial government. Whereas the wealthy segments of society tended to distrust the provincial government, the poor segments of society tended to trust it.

Table 15 How much trust/distrust do you have in the provincial government?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave
				%					
Strong trust	3	7	5	5	5	5	4	1	4
Trust	52	32	32	30	32	26	28	18	29
Neither trust nor distrust	14	19	16	31	20	22	28	35	22
Distrust	18	19	26	27	27	31	28	32	27
Strong distrust	7	8	9	7	6	8	6	9	8
Don't know	6	14	12	10	11	9	6	5	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

2.7 Local governance

As with other spheres of government, local government has come to be trusted more in the past five years. In September 2000, significantly more South Africans indicated that they distrusted (37%) the local government than those who trusted it (33%). Levels of distrust increased from 32% to 37% between November 1999 and September 2000. Trust levels decreased from 49% in November 1999 to 33% in September 2000. One possible explanation of deterioration in local governance is deterioration of service and infrastructure delivery perceptions at the local government level during 1999 and 2000.

Table 16: How much trust/distrust do you have in your local government?

Level	November 1999	September

	%	2000
Strong trust	13	5
Trust	36	28
Neither trust nor distrust	16	22
Distrust	23	27
Strong distrust	9	10
Don't know	4	9
Total	100	100

2.7.1 Trust in local government by race

Trust in the local government differed by race, with 36% Africans indicating trust, compared to 30% coloureds, 26% Asians, and 16% whites. More Asians (59%) than any other group distrusted the local government. About 50% whites distrusted the local government.

Table 17: How much trust/distrust do you have in your local government? September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
Strong trust	6	1	1	1	5
Trust	30	29	25	15	28
Neither trust nor distrust	18	26	34	40	22
Distrust	26	26	30	30	27
Strong distrust	12	6	4	10	10
Don't know	9	13	6	4	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100

2.7.2 Trust in local government by area type

Trust in the local government differed by area type and by gender. More women than men distrusted local government. Trust levels were however higher among rural residents than urban residents. However, rural residents are more likely to be dissatisfied by levels and quality of services than their metro and urban counterparts.

2.7.3 Trust in local government by LSM

Trust in the local government also differed by income. High-income households distrusted the local government more than their low-income counterparts. Correspondingly, low-income earners trusted the local government more than did the high-income earners. The majority of those in the high-income groups are whites who in the past received better services from local authorities. Since 1994, local authorities have been abiding by a new mandate: to deliver services to all irrespective of race.

Table 18 How much trust/distrust do you have in local government?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
				%					
Strong trust	4	7	6	6	5	4	3	1	5
Trust	45	32	28	26	28	27	26	19	28
Neither trust nor distrust	23	20	13	21	17	20	31	36	22
Distrust	13	19	25	25	33	32	25	30	27
Strong distrust	7	10	13	12	10	10	9	9	10
Don't know	8	11	16	10	7	7	6	5	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Although proportionally more people are dissatisfied than satisfied with the way their local areas are governed, a slightly larger proportion of those who are satisfied is drawn between LSM1 and LSM3

2.7.4 Comparing trust in the different spheres of government

More South Africans trusted the national government than the local and the provincial government. According to the HSRC September 2000 survey, 43% of the respondents trusted the national government, followed by 33% who trusted the provincial government and 33% who trusted the local government.

Table 19 Comparing trust/distrust in different spheres of government. September 2000

Level	National government	Provincial government	Local government
Strong trust	9	4	5
Trust	34	29	28
Neither trust nor distrust	18	22	22
Distrust	24	27	27
Strong distrust	6	8	10
Don't know	9	9	9
Total	100	100	100

2.8 Trust/Distrust in National Institutions

The dawn of democracy in South Africa witnessed the creation of new institutions with the mandate to protect and promote democracy. Hard work was required to transform

old institutions that did not enjoy legitimacy. In successive national surveys over the years, the HSRC included a question to determine levels of trust or distrust on national institutions. This section focuses on public trust in the courts, police, defence force and the Independent Electoral Commission.

2.8.1 Trust in the courts

The courts are pillars of the criminal justice system. With the adoption of the 1996 Constitution, South Africa became a democratic country acknowledging the rule of law. Public trust in the courts and the role courts play in dispensing justice are important to consolidate democracy and create a culture of fair governance.

The proportion of people indicating their trust in the courts decreased from 44% in November 1999 to 37% in September 2000. Thirty-seven percent of respondents in September 2000 revealed trust in the courts, compared to a third who indicated distrust (35%). The levels of distrust in the courts increased from 33 % in November 1999 to 35% in September 2000.

Table 20: How much trust/distrust do you have in the courts?

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000
Strong trust	11	5
Trust	33	32
Neither trust nor distrust	16	17
Distrust	23	28
Strong distrust	10	7
Don't know	6	11
Total	100	100

2.8.2 Trust in the courts by race

Public perceptions of the courts differed by race. Analysis of the HSRC September 2000 survey disaggregated by race suggests that more Africans and coloureds trusted the courts than whites and Asians. A significant number of whites (41%), Asians (38%) and coloureds (38%) indicated distrust in the courts. Distrust in the courts among whites, coloureds and Asians was higher than the national average.

Table 21: How much trust/distrust do you have in the courts, September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
Strong trust	7	1	2	2	5
Trust	33	28	24	24	32
Neither trust nor distrust	15	19	19	29	17
Distrust	26	35	33	33	29

Strong distrust	7	3	8	8	7
Don't know	12	15	5	5	11
Total	100	100	100	100	100

2.8.3 Trust in the courts by area type

The criminal justice system has come under increased criticism for its lack of capacity to yield positive prosecutions. In most cases, backlogs of cases are more evident in metro and urban areas than in rural areas. It is the latter who have proportionally more trust than the latter. However, there is a significant proportion of people from both rural and urban areas who feel that something fundamental should be done about the criminal justice system.

2.8.4 Trust in the courts by LSM

Trust in the courts differed by income. The HSRC September 2000 survey reveals that the low-income earners had proportionally more trust in the courts than the high-income earners. This is contrary to the popular view that, that the poor and low-income earners have low trust and respect to courts.

There are several reasons for the greater trust of the latter two income groups. The low-income earners may have gained improved access to the courts through state legal aid, and probably viewed the courts as credible arbiters of justice. The high-income households may have had greater access to costly lawyers and attorneys to represent them effectively. The public in general has a negative view of the criminal justice system.

Table 22 How much trust/distrust do you have in the courts?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
Strong trust	4	8	4	6	7	6	6	1	5
Trust	44	37	39	35	31	30	28	26	31
Neither trust nor distrust	10	11	21	14	16	16	20	28	17
Distrust	32	28	22	21	27	32	32	34	28
Strong distrust	5	2	6	9	7	6	8	6	7
Don't know	6	14	17	14	13	10	6	5	11
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The majority of low-income house tend to indicate positive ratings for the courts than are the middle- and high-income households. The backlogs within the criminal justice system are considerable. In spite of slightly positive satisfaction ratings among the

poorest of the poor, they are the ones who often have to wait for a considerable amount of time before their cases are heard. In fact the majority of arrested people are the poor, and often they do not have sufficient resources to ensure fair representation in the courts. One possible explanation for the slightly better perceptions of the courts among the poor is that in the past, the court environment was more hostile than it is now. Nonetheless the overall perceptions suggest that 35% distrust the courts against 36% who trust in the courts.

2.9 Trust in the police

During the political upheavals of the 1980s, the police were seen as the extension of the repressive apartheid state apparatus. Public trust in the police significantly declined from 47% to 39% between November 1999 and September 2000.

Table 23: How much trust/distrust do you have in the police?

Level	November 1999	September 2000
	%	
Strong trust	15	7
Trust	32	32
Neither trust nor distrust	14	16
Distrust	24	29
Strong distrust	13	11
Don't know	3	6
Total	100	100

2.9.1 Trust in the police by race

Trust level on different racial groups are probably a barometer of race relations in the country. Trust in the police differed by race, with coloureds on top of the scale with 41%, followed by Africans with 40%.

Table 24: How much trust/distrust do you have in the police? September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
		%			
Strong trust	8	3	4	3	7
Trust	32	38	33	27	32
Neither trust nor distrust	13	16	21	30	16
Distrust	28	34	36	32	29
Strong distrust	13	5	4	5	11

Don't know	7	4	3	2	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100

2.9.2 Trust in the police by area type

More people indicated that they distrust the police than those who trust them. However, it appears as if trust levels are relatively higher in rural than in urban areas. Relatively speaking, rural areas have very little services provided, and the relative lack of daily contact with the police might have increased rural perceptions. On the other hand, the daily contact with police, and brutal experiences encountered in urban and metropolitan areas may have led them to rate the police negatively. Indeed policing in former African townships and squatter settlement is almost non-existing. Where it does exist, the experiences are less than palatable. Women perceptions on the police are negative, as most feel that there is lack of compassion in dealing with sensitive cases involving especially rape.

2.9.3 Trust in the police by LSM

The poor had more trust than distrust in the police. These findings suggest that lower income groups and components of the middle class are more likely to trust the police than the upper income earners. This sea change is a far cry to a decade ago where the police were seen as an extension of the repressive state apparatus.

Table 25 How much trust/distrust do you have in the police?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave
				%					
Strong trust	3	12	7	9	9	5	4	3	7
Trust	51	39	35	27	27	31	32	31	32
Neither trust nor distrust	20	12	10	16	12	12	19	28	16
Distrust	19	23	29	28	30	33	30	30	29
Strong distrust	5	6	9	14	13	16	13	5	11
Don't know	2	8	10	6	10	3	2	3	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The poorest of the poor tend to trust the police than the wealthy. In the past the police were often associated with the enforcement of apartheid policies. Indeed the terror directed at any person seen to be in support of the anti-apartheid struggle was intense, resulting in massive discontent directed at the police. The image of the police has not changed much. As such, 40% of respondents distrusted the police compared to 39% who indicated that they trusted them. The majority of middle and high-income households often perceive the police negatively than the poorest of the poor. These results do not suggest that the poor are the beneficiaries of services for the poor. In fact the resources available for the poor are at best minimal, at worst not even available. The discontent with the police among the middle and high-income households could also be explained by the move towards using private security arrangements in their than relying on the police.

2.10 Trust in the defence force

The former South African Defence Force was seen as a repressive apparatus of the apartheid regime. Because of the transformation that started in 1994, this section seeks to gauge levels of trust or distrust in the defence force. As with other institutions, it appears as if that trust in the defence force has taken a nosedive between November 1999 and September 2000. Nevertheless, more people still indicated high trust levels than those who did not.

Table 26: How much trust/distrust do you have in the defence force?

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000 %
Strong trust	15	7
Trust	42	38
Neither trust nor distrust	16	20
Distrust	14	12
Strong distrust	7	5
Don't know	6	19
Total	100	100

In September 2000, more people trusted the SANDF than those who did not. The national defence force is a key national institution with the secondary aim of instilling patriotism. The higher trust in the defence force bodes well for nation building and this signifies the ultimate acceptance of national symbols, which in the past were seen as white, racist and repressive. However, when comparing survey data between November 1999 and September 2000, evidence suggests that trust levels on the defence force decreased from 57% to 45%.

2.10.1 Trust in the defence force by race

More Africans than other respondents trusted the defence force. In addition, whereas 61% of Africans trusted the defence force, only 18% distrusted it. The majority of

Africans (61%), coloureds (57%) and Asians (50%) trusted the defence force. Even though in the past all white able-bodied males were conscripted into the army, the majority of whites distrusted the defence force in September 2000.

The higher trust ratings among Africans point to progress (albeit painful) in the integration of the liberation armies into the national defence force.

Table 27: How much trust/distrust do you have in the defence force? September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
					%
Strong trust	8	5	3	3	7
Trust	38	45	53	28	38
Neither trust nor distrust	17	22	22	40	20
Distrust	12	8	11	14	12
Strong distrust	5	1	0	6	5
Don't know	21	19	12	10	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100

2.10.2 Trust in the defence force by area type

There are more people who trust the defence force than those who do not. Trust in the defence force is relatively higher in all areas irrespective of whether respondents came from rural, urban and metropolitan areas.

2.10.3 Trust in the defence force by LSM

Trust in the defence force strongly correlated with respondents' class. More respondents falling between LSM 4 and LSM7 than those earning more trusted the defence force. In the highest income bracket distrust was very high. These findings suggest that the lower the income the less likely were the respondents to place their trust in the defence force. Conversely, the higher the income level, the more likely they to distrust the defence force. There are several possible reasons for the increase in trust among the majority of respondents. First, the defence force is sometimes used in poor communities to maintain peace, fight crime and assist if and when there are disasters. Second, the transformation within the defence force and the incorporation of the liberation armies may have increased the legitimacy of the defence force, in the eyes of the majority.

Table 28 How much trust/distrust do you have in the defence force?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
				%					
Strong trust	3	12	9	7	9	8	5	2	7

Trust	56	36	32	34	38	44	40	32	38
Neither trust nor distrust	16	14	17	17	14	21	23	40	20
Distrust	7	9	12	11	16	11	14	12	12
Strong distrust	2	4	3	7	5	2	6	5	5
Don't know	14	25	27	24	19	14	13	10	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The transformation of the defence force has somewhat encountered improved perceptions among those who associated the defence force as a 'force of terror'. Although the majority of people indicated improvement, trust levels on the defence force indicated a decline between November 1999 and September 2000. Even though the levels of trust and distrust appear to be the same across the board, the poorest of the poor tended to rate the defence force slightly higher than any other class.

2.11 Trust in the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

The Independent Electoral Commission was established by the 1996 Constitution as a body to conduct, oversee and manage elections. The HSRC included a question in its national survey to determine public trust in the IEC. An overwhelming majority of respondents (54%) in the HSRC September 2000 survey indicated that they trusted the IEC. Only about 17% indicated that they distrusted the IEC. This finding bides well for democracy and the electoral process, as the higher the legitimacy of the IEC, the greater the likelihood that the outcome of an election will be accepted.

Table 29: How much trust/distrust do you have in the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)?

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000
Strong trust	17	13
Trust	37	37
Neither trust nor distrust	20	17
Distrust	11	8
Strong distrust	6	3
Don't know	10	22
Total	100	100

2.11.1 Trust in the IEC by race

As the IEC is one of the most trusted institutions in South Africa, the question, which arises, is the extent to which trust levels differ by race. Although trust levels are high

among all population groups, the majority of coloureds (52%) and coloureds (51%) indicated that they had trust in the IEC.

Table 30: **How much trust/distrust do you have in the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)? September 2000**

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
					%
Strong trust	15	6	11	4	13
Trust	37	47	50	28	37
Neither trust nor distrust	15	9	14	10	17
Distrust	8	6	12	11	8
Strong distrust	2	1	1	7	3
Don't know	23	32	12	10	22
Total	100	100	100	100	100

2.11.2 Trust in the IEC by are type and gender

A great majority of the respondents nationally indicated trust in the IEC. Trust in the IEC among metro residents was the highest, followed by urban areas then rural areas. However, trust levels in all areas were quite high. Women also indicated higher trust levels than men on the IEC. This may suggest that concerns, which are central to women especially as they pertain to the electoral process, were put at the centre stage by the IEC.

2.11.3 Trust in the IEC by LSM

Although the majority of respondents indicated that they trusted the IEC, trust levels did not differ significantly by the measurement of wealth.

Table 31 **How much trust/distrust do you have in the IEC?**

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
Strong trust	9	13	10	16	16	14	13	5	13
Trust	43	29	32	34	39	42	43	34	37
Neither trust nor distrust	12	18	14	13	13	17	20	34	18
Distrust	4	8	9	7	10	8	7	10	8
Strong distrust	4	4	4	5	1	2	2	6	3

Don't know	28	28	31	27	21	17	13	12	22
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

2.11.4 Comparing public trust in the different national institutions

Table 32: **How much trust/distrust do you have in national institutions? September 2000**

Level	Courts	Police	Defence force	IEC
Strong trust	5	7	7	13
Trust	32	32	38	37
Neither trust nor distrust	17	16	20	17
Distrust	28	29	12	8
Strong distrust	7	11	5	3
Don't know	11	6	19	22
Total	100	100	100	00

The IEC commands a far greater proportion of people who trust it than any other national institution, with the courts and the police trailing far behind. Although significantly more people trust national institutions than those who do not, at the dawn of the new millennium, the public is sending a clear message that these institutions should shape up or else.

3 Trust/Distrust in Institutions of Civil Society

Trust in institutions of civil society is an important indicator of a flourishing democracy. Five institutions were selected for the purposes of our analysis. These are political parties, labour unions, business, the media and churches. Trust in these institutions was analysed by race, province and class (LSM).

3.1 Trust in political parties

Political parties play an important role in fostering a vibrant democracy. Since 1994 political parties have freely contested elections at national, provincial and national level. The 1996 Constitution makes provision for free political activity and the freedom of expression.

Table 33: **How much trust/distrust do you have in political parties?**

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000 %
Strong trust	11	5

Trust	28	24
Neither trust nor distrust	20	25
Distrust	23	25
Strong distrust	11	9
Don't know	6	12
Total	100	100

3.1.1 Trust in political parties by race, and area type

Public trust in political parties differed by race. In September 2000, a quarter (33%) of the African respondents indicated their trust in political parties. The corresponding trust level for coloureds was 28%, whites 11% and Asians 11%. Trust in political parties appears to be slightly higher in rural and urban and metropolitan areas. In general political parties are distrusted in urban (34%) and metropolitan areas (42%) than their rural counterparts (27%). More men than women appear to trust political parties, although women are in the majority.

3.1.2 Trust in political parties by LSM

Trust levels differed by income. The low-income households had more trust in political parties than the middle- and high-income earners. These findings suggest that the higher their income the more likely were respondents to distrust political parties. Conversely, the lower their income the more likely was respondents to trust political parties. There are several possible explanations for this. First, the low-income groups largely constitute Africans and are more likely to be politically active. Second, the middle-income and high-income groups are gradually withdrawing from active party politics. The majority of those in the middle- and high-income groups are whites, and they have the highest level of distrust in political parties, and the highest level of distrust in national institutions.

Table 34 How much trust/distrust do you have in political parties?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
Strong trust	8	9	7	6	4	3	4	1	5
Trust	47	29	25	22	26	28	20	13	24
Neither trust nor distrust	21	19	19	26	26	24	31	31	25
Distrust	12	18	22	20	27	28	26	37	25
Strong distrust	5	9	12	9	5	8	11	12	9

Don't know	7	17	16	18	13	9	8	7	12
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The wealthier components of society tended to indicate distrust on political parties. On the other hand, the poorest tended to trust political parties more. However, there is evidence to suggest that the trust in political parties is declining, even among the poor who now perceive the new political order as not fulfilling some of the promises given during the first democratic elections in 1994. As evidence one may also point out the relatively lower turnout during the municipal elections in December 2000, which saw the youth and the poor staying away from voting. One of the reasons for staying away was that their dissatisfaction with their material conditions at the time, believing that their vote will not make a difference.

Table 35: How much trust/distrust do you have in political parties? September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
		%			
Strong trust	6	0	0	1	5
Trust	27	28	12	10	24
Neither trust nor distrust	23	31	32	31	25
Distrust	22	24	38	38	25
Strong distrust	9	4	8	14	9
Don't know	13	14	9	5	12
Total	100	100	100	100	100

3.2 Trust in labour unions

Labour unions have played an important role in protecting the rights of workers over the years. With the introduction of the negotiation approach to industrial relations by the Labour Relations Act, levels of trust in labour unions became an issue of interest.

Table 36: How much trust/distrust do you have in the labour unions? September 2000

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000
Strong trust	9	5
Trust	29	22
Neither trust nor distrust	20	21

Distrust	17	19
Strong distrust	11	7
Don't know	15	27
Total	100	100

3.2.1 Trust in labour unions by race, and area type

Public trust in labour unions differed by race. More coloured, Africans and Asians trusted the labour unions than whites. Forty-seven per cent of whites distrusted labour unions, compared to only 15% who trusted them. These figures are not surprising, as the majority of unionised workers and sympathisers are mainly drawn from Africans and coloureds and they join strong unions such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). White tendencies to see unions as surrogates of political parties may explain the high levels of distrust among whites.

Trade unions appear to be trusted more by metro residents than their urban and rural counterparts. This is not surprising as the majority of unionised workers reside in metropolitan areas and squatter settlement areas adjacent to metropolitan areas.

Table 37: How much trust/distrust do you have in the labour unions? September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
Strong trust	6	2	1	2	5
Trust	22	29	27	13	22
Neither trust nor distrust	19	25	28	29	21
Distrust	18	16	29	29	19
Strong distrust	5	3	2	20	7
Don't know	31	25	13	9	27
Total	100	100	100	100	100

3.2.2 Trust in labour unions by LSM

Public trust in labour unions differed by income level. Trust in labour unions was higher among the poor and the middle-class. This finding can be explained by the fact that labour unions largely represent the interests of workers, especially those at the lower echelons of the work force, and these workers are mostly Africans.

Table 38 How much trust/distrust do you have in labour unions?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
Strong trust	0	3	5	5	6	5	7	2	5
Trust	38	14	14	20	22	32	22	16	22
Neither trust nor distrust	15	13	17	21	18	18	30	30	21
Distrust	15	20	18	17	19	19	19	27	19
Strong distrust	6	7	4	4	4	3	10	15	7
Don't know	26	42	42	33	30	23	13	10	27
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

A high proportion of uncertainties were noted across the broad. Labour unions appear to look at the interest of the middle class than the poorest of the poor are unemployed, and as such un-unionised.

3.3 Trust in business

Trust in the private sector or business decreased from 55% in November 1999 to 39% in September 2000. The proportion of respondents who indicated that they distrusted business marginally decreased from 17% in November 1999 to 19% in September 2000.

Table 39: How much trust/distrust do you have in business?

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000
Strong trust	12	6
Trust	43	33
Neither trust nor distrust	22	23
Distrust	12	15
Strong distrust	5	4
Don't know	6	19
Total	100	100

3.3.1 Trust in business by race, and area type

The September 2000 survey reveals that the majority of South Africans trusted business. This is one of the few variables where the perceptions of whites were more positive than negative. Substantive trust in business among all South Africans may induce business to play a significant role in future transformation. Sadly, business did not play a significant role in transformation between 1994 and 1999. The protracted negotiations around employment equity legislation, and the reluctance of the organised business sector to introduce effective, and far-reaching affirmative action and economic empowerment programmes, is evidence. Trust levels on business are quite high in all areas, including for both women and men.

Table 40: How much trust/distrust do you have in business? September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
			%		
Strong trust	7	2	2	3	6
Trust	32	35	41	40	33
Neither trust nor distrust	19	27	32	41	23
Distrust	15	18	19	11	15
Strong distrust	5	1	1	2	4
Don't know	22	17	6	4	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100

3.3.2 Trust in business by LSM

Perceptions of trust in business differed by class (LSM). The majority of respondents in all income groups indicated trust in business. However, trust levels increased with income. Conversely, lower income correlated with less trust in business but more trust in labour unions in September 2000.

Table 41 How much trust/distrust do you have in business?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
Strong trust	3	10	7	7	5	5	7	3	6
Trust	41	30	30	26	33	38	33	42	33
Neither trust nor distrust	16	21	17	20	17	25	29	37	23
Distrust	23	13	17	13	17	14	16	11	15

Strong distrust	6	4	4	6	3	3	4	2	4
Don't know	12	23	26	27	25	15	12	5	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

What emerges from analysing the data by LSM is that the poorest of the poor and the wealthy have trust in business than the middle-class. On the part of the poor, their destitute circumstances may have led them to believe that owning their own business may come as a relieve for them. However, the wealthier component of the society often trusted business as they engage either in business activities themselves, or can see the 'benefits', as they partake in the economy.

3.4 Trust in the media

The electronic and print media play an important role in the dissemination of information, education and entertainment. The challenge for the media is also to present reliable information to assist citizens to make informed choices about day-to-day governance. A significant number of respondents (44%) in September 2000 indicated that they trusted the media. The levels of trust in the media decreased from 64% in November 1999 to 44% in September 2000. The level of distrust in the media increased marginally from 16% to 18% in the same period.

Table 42: How much trust/distrust do you have in the media?

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000 %
Strong trust	23	8
Trust	43	36
Neither trust nor distrust	15	23
Distrust	12	14
Strong distrust	4	4
Don't know	4	16
Total	100	100

3.4.1 Trust in the media by race, and area type

The HSEC September 2000 surveys suggests that trust in the media differed by race. However, a significant number (44%) of all the population groups trusted the media. This is the second variable (after business) where the majority of all population groups trusted a civil society institution. What is of concern is that, apart from the financial and sport sections of the media, the messages of the media are based on half-truths, sensational reporting and racism that do not promote objectivity. Indeed racism in the media was recently confirmed by a Human Rights Commission inquiry.

Table 43: How much trust / distrust do you have in the media? September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA
Strong trust	9	2	1	3	8
Trust	36	32	43	36	36
Neither trust nor distrust	19	32	32	33	26
Distrust	12	21	19	19	14
Strong distrust	4	1	1	6	4
Don't know	19	13	5	4	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100

The majority of rural residents rely on radio for entertainment, education and as source of information. A significant proportion of rural respondents indicated that they trusted the media. Urban and metropolitan residents largely rely on TV and newspapers. However, radio is also a significant source of information, which the majority of urban and metro residents trust.

3.4.2 Trust in the media by LSM

Public trust in the media slightly differed by class. The high-income (also perhaps more analytical) groups distrusted the media more than the other income groups.

Table 44 How much trust/distrust do you have in the media?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
Strong trust	6	10	8	10	7	7	10	3	8
Trust	35	31	37	33	34	41	38	34	36
Neither trust nor distrust	16	17	17	20	20	28	27	33	23
Distrust	12	7	9	13	18	15	15	21	14
Strong distrust	5	2	18	6	3	3	5	5	4
Don't know	27	32	24	19	18	9	7	4	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Trust in the media is quite high in all households. However, these households rely on different media type for information, entertainment and education. The poor tend to rely

on radio, whereas the rich often rely on TV. LSM 6 and LSM7 appear to constitute a significant proportion of those who trust the media more than those who fall in other LSM.

3.5 Trust in churches

Successive HSRC surveys confirm that the majority (74%) of South Africans are religious and trust churches. However, trust in church institutions decreased from a high 82% in November 1999 to 74% in September 2000.

Table 45: How much trust/distrust do you have in churches?

Level	November 1999 %	September 2000 %
Strong trust	40	24
Trust	42	50
Neither trust nor distrust	9	12
Distrust	4	5
Strong distrust	2	2
Don't know	3	7
Total	100	100

3.5.1 Trust in churches by race

Trust in churches was very high among all the population groups in South Africa. The high positive trusting in the churches has a potential to place this institution as an important broker in conflict resolution, and facilitation of dialogue.

Table 46: How much trust/distrust do you have in churches? September 2000

Level	African	Coloured	Asian	White	SA pop.
			%		
Strong trust	26	22	9	21	24
Trust	49	61	54	52	50
Neither trust nor distrust	11	8	16	19	12
Distrust	5	4	12	4	5
Strong distrust	2	1	1	4	2
Don't know	8	5	9	3	7

Total	100	100	100	100	100

3.5.2 Trust in churches by LSM

An overwhelming majority of respondents indicated trust in churches, which was the largest percentage of trust in any institution. The poor the people, the more likely they were to trust churches. However, even rich households had more trust in churches than in other institutions.

Table 47 How much trust/distrust do you have in churches?

Level	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	SA Ave.
Strong trust	12	24	28	28	27	25	22	17	24
Trust	51	45	41	44	52	54	55	55	50
Neither trust nor distrust	12	13	12	9	8	12	13	16	12
Distrust	9	7	5	5	5	3	5	5	5
Strong distrust	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	2
Don't know	13	8	12	10	6	4	3	5	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

3.5.3 Comparing trust in the different institutions of civil society

Asked how much trust or distrust they had in organs of civil society, 74% of respondents indicated trust in churches, followed by 44% who indicated trust in the media, 39% in business, 24% in political parties, and 27% in labour unions.

Table 48: How much trust/distrust do you have in organs of civil society?

Level	Labour unions	Business	Media	Churches	Political parties
Strong trust	5	6	8	24	5
Trust	22	33	36	50	24
Neither trust nor distrust	21	23	23	12	25
Distrust	19	15	14	5	25
Strong distrust	7	4	4	2	9
Don't know	27	19	16	7	12
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Churches and the media command far greater trust levels than labour unions, political parties and business. Although trust levels on the media has declined, it still commands a respectful position within the civil society circles.

4   A critical appraisal

The first term of democratic rule in South Africa witnessed an extra-ordinary effort to create institutions to consolidate and protect democracy. Data in this chapter indicate that although democracy is not under threat, support for the emerging culture of democratic governance, which was instituted in 1994 is beginning to erode. There is an indication that South Africans are aware of their rights and the limits imposed by the Constitution on the state.

The coming to power of the Government of National Unity in 1994 led to significant changes in the perceptions of national institutions. Trust among whites decreased dramatically, while trust among Africans increased sharply. However, trust levels among all South Africans is starting to decline, a wake up call for the ANC-led government and other national institutions. One of the key contributing factor in declining trust and satisfaction levels is the continued increase in job losses, rising inflation as a result of massive petrol hikes over the past few years, and snail pace delivery of infrastructure and services.

Responses to the current conjucture varied also by race. For example, white trust in public sector institutions has declined. Nevertheless, there is overwhelming support for the IEC, undoubtedly one of the most important institutions during the election period.

Analysis of the HSRC September 2000 survey by LSM indicates important insights. First, poor households are more likely to trust political parties than wealthy households. Second, trust in government institutions declines with wealth and income. The only institutions that elicit great trust from all income groups are churches, business and the media.

Evidence in this chapter suggests that there has been a transformation in trust in key institutions that have supported governance and democracy in South Africa since 1994. The first term of democratic governance witnessed the creation of a new political order, which is more credible than before. Whereas trust in and satisfaction with government institutions were relatively low among the poor and historically disenfranchised, the past five years have nevertheless seen trust and satisfaction levels eroding. Conversely, those who benefited from the past political and economic order appear to have lower trust in and satisfaction with these institutions. The only common ground is trust in churches, the media, business and the IEC.

The HSRC September 2000 survey suggests one way in which the consolidation of democracy and the unfolding culture of governance could be unpacked. However, international literature also raises the relationship between poverty, democracy and governance. Perhaps one of the most important preconditions for democracy is structural. Poverty and discrimination are suffered by large sections of people in the world, which necessarily compromises capabilities, and therefore participation in the full sense. At the centre of increasing distrust levels, and dissatisfaction is rising poverty

and unemployment. Without introducing a fundamental poverty alleviation programme, and the creation of jobs, more people are likely to withdraw their support to national institutions.