

# Children, Youth, Society

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# Who we are

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) is a statutory research organisation that advances social sciences and humanities for public use.

# What we do

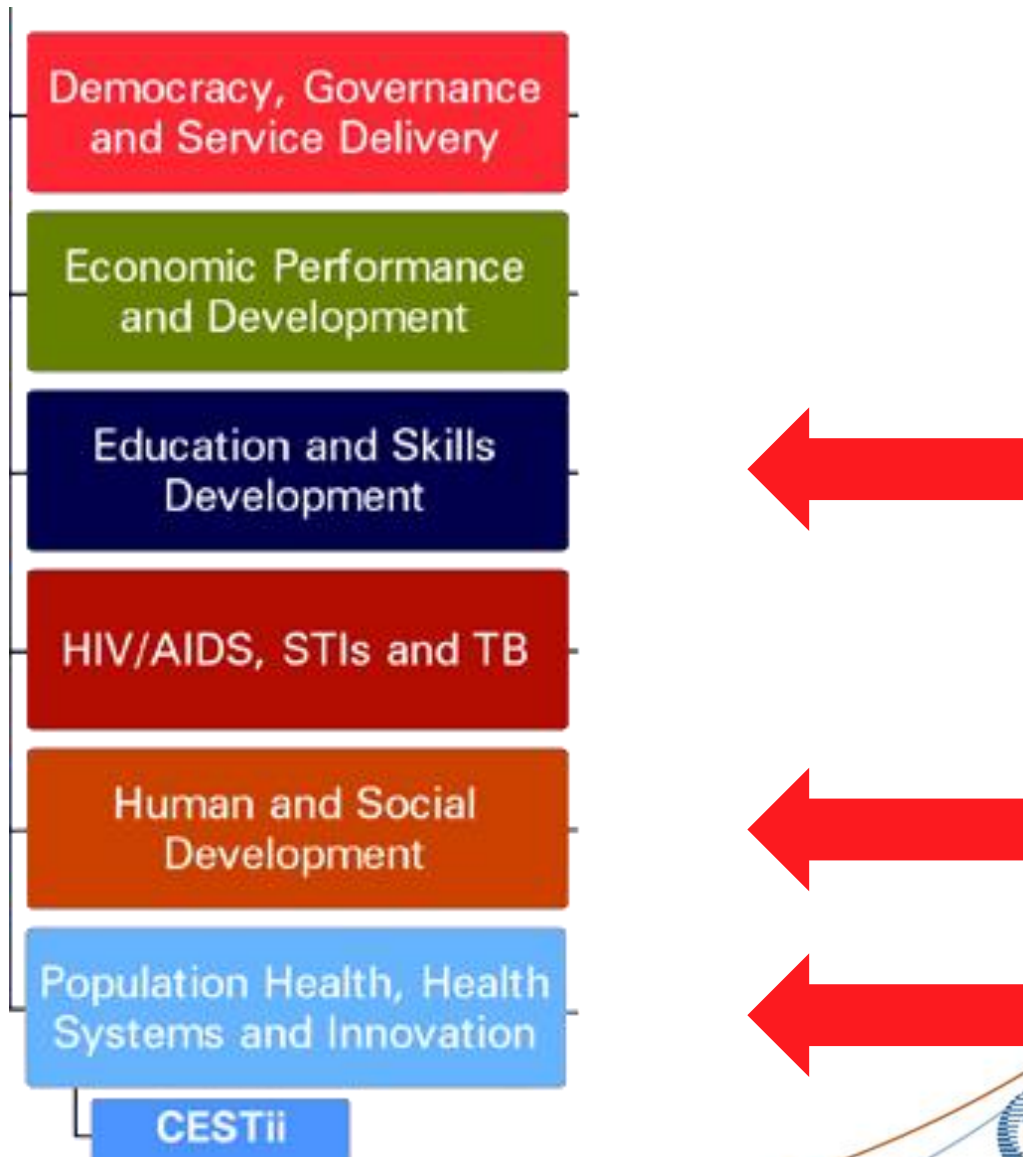
## ± 150 research projects in a year

- Reduce poverty, grow economy and create jobs
- Improve quality of education
- Promote social advancement through skills development
- Accelerate service delivery
- Reduce crime
- Develop youth, families and social cohesion
- Promote health, health systems and wellbeing
- Understand social aspects of HIV, AIDS, TB and STIs
- Nutrition and food security
- Understand innovation

# Research units



# Research units



# Key elements of HSRC's Research

- Advancing social science for public use, **therefore** wide dissemination
- Contribute to development and social progress in Africa, **therefore** strong government policy links
- **And focussed** on vulnerable and marginalised groups
- Enhance capacity development of young researchers, **therefore** multiple internships
- Preserve data for further use, **therefore** inbuilt curation elements to studies.



# Current Research Agenda

## Children

1. Academic expertise in early childhood development
2. Social and emotional learning for children
3. Children's alcohol use

## Youth

1. Navigational capacities for youth employment
2. Youth social cohesion through social networking
3. Youth and marginalized sexualities

## Society

1. Education
2. Families and social protection
3. National dialogue on morality and values
4. Social sources of creativity

# Children

## Developing academic expertise in early childhood development.

- Masters internships, doctoral support and post doctoral mentoring.
- Key expertise available - Professors Linda Richter and Andrew Dawes
- Poverty indicators, HIV and AIDS and well-being, Birth to 20 (25)





# Children

## Understanding and intervening in children's alcohol use

- Finland has one of the highest rates of 'binge' drinking in the world – among children under 13.
- We don't know what the rate in South Africa is.
- Little research.
- Anecdotal evidence from studies
- Children buying alcohol
- 'Growing in shebeen houses'
- Violence, early sexual debut, HIV related to alcohol



# Children

**Social and emotional learning (SEL) for children** in impoverished communities: Utilising out of school time and teacher expertise to advance cognitive and psychosocial well-being of children especially in rural communities.

Aim: Contextualize state of the art advances for sub-Saharan Africa



# Youth



**Navigational capacities for youth employment:** What do youth need to access employment in poor communities

- Youth unemployment 51% among 15-24 olds in South Africa (Statistics SA, 2010)
- Higher than other developing countries
- Age of first job in South Africa, 26 for men and 27 for women

Aim: A mixed method longitudinal cohort panel study aimed at finding and measuring 'navigational capacities'

Target participants: Youth, youth agencies, youth employers)

# Youth

## **Social cohesion through social networking for youth**

- Social media allows for diverse interactions
- Social movements and technology
- Connectivity in Africa
- Cell phones amongst youth
- Unexplored potential



# Youth

## Marginalised youth sexualities

- Centres on the experiences of young gender non-conforming people on the urban peripheries of Cape Town. [LGBTI]
- Considers the intersections between gender, class, geographical location, and sexuality.
- New research methodologies for accessing invisible groups.
- Post-colonial feminist perspective
- Critiquing power in researcher-informer relationships.





# Education

- **Language policy and practice**
- **Educational quality**
- **Whole school development**
- **Mathematics learning and teaching**





# Families

As safety nets, building blocks, sources of social values, livelihoods, and legacy. Intergenerational relations, fatherhood, care, men, aging, young parenting.



- New policy on families – Department of Social Development
- National planning commission – Chapter 11 on Social Protection
- Income transfer
- Baseline study on status of families

# Society

## Advancing the humanities

“It is the role of the Humanities to produce and sustain a viable and lively intellectual community able to deal skeptically and perhaps even subversively with injustice, corruption and all the blandishments of power. Even after apartheid, these *can* reappear”

(Edward Said, Cape Town, 2001: 17)

There is much innovative and unexplored knowledge embodied in our **indigenous languages, histories and cultures** which only the humanities can explore and exploit... the **common problems** encountered by our society – **crime, poverty, violence, corruption, moral degeneration** and unethical conduct – are challenges whose analysis and solutions are more appropriately located in the humanities... **the areas in which we as a country are strong – international mediation, non-racism, reconciliation, justice, equity and even xenophobia are all within the humanities domain...**

finally the raison d'être of our struggle was, fundamentally **to create a humane and just society...** For the above factors I want to **place the humanities as our priority national knowledge project.**

(Malegapuru Makgoba *Sunday Times*, 7 September, 2008: 19)

# Humanities: National dialogue on morals and values

Exploring current discourses of social cohesion, national identity and nationhood.

– including that of business, lay people, government, religious, media and academic

– philosophy, psychology, sociology, educational, theological

– Moral panics, corruption, violence and crime, including child abuse and gender based violence







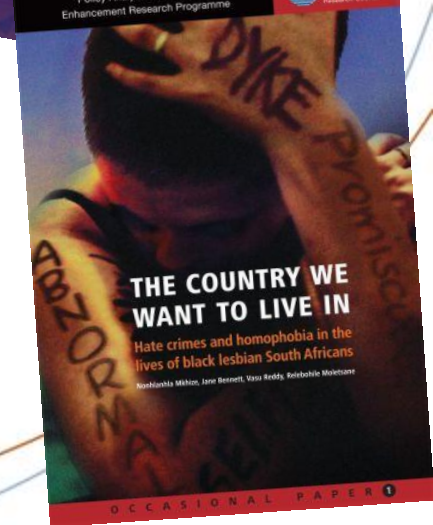
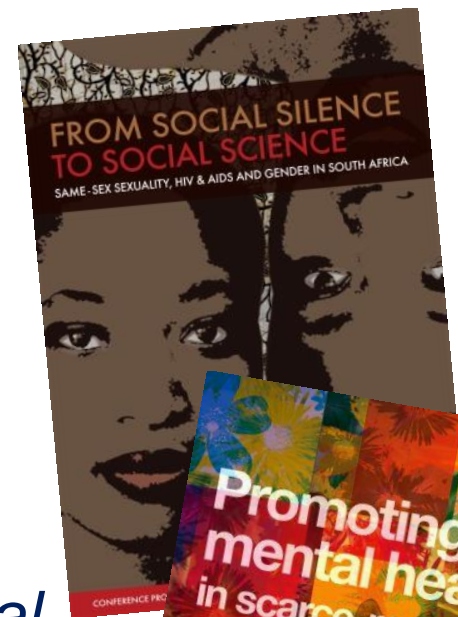
# Achievements

1. *Ikasi: The moral ecology of South Africa's township youth.* Johannesburg (Swartz, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)
2. *Moral Education in sub-Saharan Africa: Culture, economics, conflict and AIDS* (Swartz & Taylor, Routledge, 2011).
3. *Teenage Tata: Voices of young fathers in South Africa* (Swartz & Bhana, HSRC Press, 2009)
4. *Old Enough to Know: Consulting children about sex and AIDS education in Africa* (McLaughlin, Swartz et al, HSRC Press, 2012)





5. *Youth citizenship and the politics of belonging (Swartz & Arnot, Routledge 2012)*
6. *The Country We Want to Live in: Hate Crimes and homophobia in the lives of black lesbian South Africans (Reddy et al, HSRC Press 2010)*
7. *From Social Silence to Social Science: Same-Sex Sexuality, HIV & AIDS and gender in South Africa (Reddy et al, HSRC Press 2010)*
8. *Promoting Mental Health in Scarce-Resource Contexts: Emerging Evidence and Practice (Petersen, Bhana et al, HSRC Press, 2010)*





# THANK YOU