

HSRC review

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Human Sciences Research Council

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view



Halving unemployment by 2014:
What will it take?

MESSAGE FROM PROFESSOR JAKES GERWEL, CHAIR OF THE HSRC COUNCIL



The Council of the HSRC approaches the end of its extended term in October, confident that the organisation it hands over to the next Council is a significantly different and improved one. This is borne out by the findings of the Institutional Review of the HSRC in October 2003, conducted by a panel of international and local experts.

One of the Council's major tasks was to oversee the transformation of the HSRC into an organisation more fully attuned to the nature, challenges and demands of the country's new democratic dispensation. This process of change included aspects such as the increased participation of black and women researchers at all levels; a thorough review of the organisational structure; and a comprehensive understanding of the implications of the societal values of non-racialism, non-sexism and equality for an organisation such as the HSRC.

While matters of corporate governance were obviously a key part of our fiduciary duties, the engagement on issues relating directly to the science and knowledge production functions of the organisation represented some of the most meaningful and fulfilling aspects of our term of office.

The ultimate test for a science council resides in the quality of its research work and outputs. Throughout its term, Council was continually in dialogue with the senior research management team about questions of quality and quality assurance. These conversations went beyond issues of measurability, like peer-reviewed publications and the number of reports produced. They addressed the nature of knowledge production, the relationship between commissioned research and more basic enquiry and theory building, the question of giving voice to marginalised sectors of society through science, the interaction between science

councils and other institutions of knowledge production, and other related themes.

There is always need for further improvement and progress, as the Institutional Review indicated. But the

Council is convinced that the HSRC has made great progress in becoming a science council fit for the purposes of a democratic South Africa.

We had the privilege of working with a management team who remained open to – in fact welcomed – constant engagement by Council. We need to acknowledge the CEO, Dr Mark Orkin, his management team and the entire staff.

The support we received from the Ministry and Department of Science and Technology was a very important ingredient in driving change and maintaining quality functioning and gave evidence of the Government's appreciation of the role of social science in policy development and policy analysis.

We also thank Cabinet for the opportunity and pleasant task of serving on the Council of the HSRC. A final word of thanks and appreciation to my fellow members of Council. It was a rare privilege to work with such a task-focused, non-egotistical and insightful team of people.

This message from the Chair is extracted from the 2003/04 Annual Report of the HSRC, which will be tabled in Parliament during September. After that time copies may be obtained from nlephoto@hsrc.ac.za, or the Report may be viewed on the HSRC website at www.hsrc.ac.za.

WHO WE ARE

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) is South Africa's statutory research agency dedicated to the social sciences. It has approximately 150 researchers and 100 support staff. Its revenue comes in equal shares from a Parliamentary grant, and from earnings (tenders, commissions and foundation grants).

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WHAT WE DO

The HSRC does 'social science research that makes a difference', concerned with all aspects of development and poverty alleviation in South Africa, the region, and in Africa. It undertakes large-scale, policy-relevant, collaborative research primarily for government departments at national, regional and local levels, for other public entities, and for local and international development agencies.

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MR TIM HART, a social anthropologist, has been appointed as a Senior Research Manager in the Integrated Rural and Regional Development Research Programme (IRRDR). Before joining the HSRC, he worked as a Senior Researcher (Agricultural Sociologist and Programme Evaluation) at the Agricultural Research Council at Infruitec-Nietvoorbij in Stellenbosch, where he led a number of evaluation and feasibility studies, several focusing on smallholder farmer support.



MS MARINA MAYER has been appointed as a Chief Research Manager in the Employment and Economic Policy Research Programme (EEPR). Before joining the HSRC, she was Director of the Transport Sector in the restructuring unit of the Department of Public Enterprises where she was responsible for managing the restructuring of transport sector enterprises (including Spoornet, Portnet, Petronet, SAA and ACSA).



MS NTOMBIZODWA MBELLE has been appointed as a Research Project Manager in the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health Research Programme (SAHA). Before joining the HSRC, she worked as a Project Manager overseeing several units for the South African HIV Vaccine Action Campaign, which forms part of the South African AIDS Vaccine Initiative at the Medical Research Council.



PROFESSOR CHERYL-ANN POTGIETER was seconded from the Department of Psychology, University of Pretoria, to establish the Gender Co-ordinating Unit at the HSRC in the Office of the CEO. She is also affiliated to the HSRC's Child, Youth and Family Development Research Programme. Before joining the University of Pretoria she was the Director and Head of the Woman and Gender Studies Programme at the University of the Western Cape.



DR KHANGELANI ZUMA, has been appointed as a Chief Research Specialist in the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health Research Programme (SAHA), moving over from the Surveys, Analyses, Modelling and Mapping Research Programme (SAMM). Before joining the HSRC he worked as a biostatistician at the Medical Research Council of South Africa in Durban. His work involved collaborating with researchers on clinical trials, surveys, data analysis, and scientific reporting of statistical results. He also taught Statistics at university level.

MINISTER MANGENA INDICATES CHALLENGES FACING SCIENCE COMMUNITY

Science can only work well for the country if scientists clearly articulate the need to increase equalities within their own rank, says the new Minister of Science and Technology, Mr Mosibudi Mangena. He opened the annual HSRC research conference held in July in Boksburg, where researchers from the organisation had the opportunity to present and discuss their work.

The Minister indicated the various challenges facing the scientific community and the country, of which inequity is one. He said the national research and development (R&D) strategy clearly articulates the need for increasing the number of women, blacks, and the disabled in science and technology (S&T).

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) has a multi-faceted approach to mainstream gender and disability within the science, engineering and technology sectors. Examples of key DST initiatives to address inequity include the development of computer games for girls to encourage them to become interested in S&T and low-cost, durable, lightweight and environmentally friendly wheelchairs for the disabled.

Another major challenge is unemployment and the extent to which the country can overcome this hardship will be a real test for democratic rule and human rights. He said social scientists could play an important role in measuring the scale and implications of unemployment and in tracing progress and proposing ways to improve the country's economic efforts.

It is disconcerting, however, that the country's research community is ageing and is not being replaced by young researchers. This demands the urgent attention of all parties involved in the training and development of young researchers.

Another challenge facing South Africa is the promotion of S&T in impoverished communities. Of equal importance is to ensure S&T is able to sustain economic development and positively influence



Mr Mosibudi Mangena, the Minister of Science and Technology (second from right), opened the HSRC's research conference. With him is from left: Dr Olive Shisana, Executive Director (Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health Research Programme), Dr Mark Orkin (CEO), and Professor Adam Habib, Executive Director (Democracy and Governance Research Programme).

growth and development.

Science councils provide the platform for the development of initiatives to reduce inequality and poverty, to evaluate policies, and to measure the impact of Government initiatives. Therefore it is in the Government's interest to provide keen R&D activities across the spectrum.

The Minister referred to a recent HSRC publication, *Human Resources Development Review 2003*, which was funded by DST over a period of three years and described it as an "important milestone and authoritative source of information" which acts as a performance indicator for many Government departments. He said Human Resources Development information studies are vital for scientists, educators, academics, information communication technologists, doctors, engineers and many other professionals in the scientific field.

Disparities between rural and urban communities is another major problem. He said SA Technology for Poverty Reduction (SATPOR) is a powerful initiative for driving integrated sustainable development and urban renewal programmes. It aims to build projects that could be developed into small and medium enterprises, mainly targeting women, the youth, the disabled and people living with HIV/AIDS. The HSRC's IRRDR programme is leading a research team on best practices of the Technology for Poverty Reduction Sub-Programme. The final report is due for release soon.

POOR HOUSEHOLDS SINK DEEPER INTO POVERTY

The number of people living in poverty in South Africa may have remained constant but there is no cause for celebration. New research shows that the poverty gap between rich and poor is widening and some municipalities have as many as 85% of their residents living below the breadline.

Craig Schwabe, Director of the HSRC's Geographical Information Systems Centre, says estimating poverty rates for each municipality in the country has shown that 57% of individuals in South Africa were living below the poverty income in 2001, a proportion unchanged from 1996. Limpopo and the Eastern Cape had the highest proportion of poor with 77% and 72% of their populations living below the poverty income, respectively.

The municipalities with the lowest poverty rates are found in the Western Cape, including Stellenbosch (23%) and Saldanha Bay (25%). Pretoria and Johannesburg have somewhat higher rates of 35% and 38%, respectively; and Durban has a rate of 44%. The poorest municipality is Ntabankulu in the Eastern Cape, where 85% of residents live below the poverty line.

POVERTY INDICATORS BY PROVINCE

Province	No. of poor persons (million)	% of population in poverty	Poverty gap (R billion)	Share of poverty gap
Northern Cape	0.5	61%	1.5	1.8%
Western Cape	1.4	32%	4.1	5.0%
Free State	1.8	68%	5.9	7.2%
North West	1.9	52%	6.1	7.5%
Mpumalanga	1.8	57%	7.1	8.7%
Limpopo	4.1	77%	11.5	14.1%
Gauteng	3.7	42%	12.1	14.9%
Eastern Cape	4.6	72%	14.8	18.2%
KwaZulu-Natal	5.7	61%	18.3	22.5%
South Africa	25.7	57%	81.3	100.0%

While the poverty rate measures the proportion of a region's population living below the poverty line it does not give any indication of how far below the poverty line poor households are. In order to determine this, the HSRC researchers used a measure called the "poverty gap" which measures the required annual income that poor households would require to bring them out of poverty.

The HSRC study has shown that the poverty gap has grown from R56 billion in 1996 to R81 billion in 2001 indicating that poor households have sunk deeper into poverty over this period. [For more information, e-mail media@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:media@hsrc.ac.za)



HSRC AND ARC TO DEVELOP LAND DEGRADATION PROGRAMME

The Agricultural Research Council (ARC) has invited the HSRC to become a main partner in implementing a Land Degradation Assessment Programme (LADA) in South Africa.

LADA is a UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) programme in many underdeveloped and developing countries.

The project's main objectives are: to develop methods, techniques and technology of monitoring and measuring land degradation; to assess the physical and socio-economic impact of degradation; and to build national capacity around a whole range of land degradation issues. The latter includes measuring and monitoring the progression of land degradation, developing land rehabilitation programmes, and developing policies to prevent accelerated land degradation.

TOP HSRC EXECUTIVE WINS AWARD



Professor Linda Richter, Executive Director of the HSRC's Child, Youth and Family Development Research Programme, and Professor Karsten Hundeide of the University of Oslo and Head of International Child Development Programmes, have won the Irving B. Harris Award for Outstanding Book Proposals.

Zero to Three Press, who has awarded the prize, says in a media statement that the winning proposal was for a book that will describe strategies for supporting the caregivers of disadvantaged and traumatised young children, living in a world of extreme poverty, war, and HIV/AIDS.

Richter, a prolific writer and editor, has edited, authored and co-authored numerous books, journal articles, research reports and papers for international and national conferences.

A new HSRC study, entitled Partner Violence, Attitudes to Child Discipline and Use of Corporal Punishment, discusses the findings of the first national survey done in South Africa to investigate these issues.

The study, which was funded by Save the Children Sweden, constitutes several modules of the 2003 South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS).

The survey of partner violence, which was representative of the population, indicates that nearly 20% of South African men and women,

In accounting for the high levels of partner violence found in the study, it is important to bear in mind the role played by deeply entrenched norms regarding the legitimacy of male power and the use of force. Other studies, conducted by Rachel Jewkes and her colleagues at the Medical Research Council, have shown that a significant proportion of South African women believe that it is appropriate that they obey their male partners because these men have the right to discipline them. Where these beliefs are evident, women are more likely to be assaulted.

severe corporal punishment (beating with a belt, stick or other object). These proportions are lower than non-representative studies conducted elsewhere in Africa, and somewhat lower than figures collected in the US and Britain.

Younger South African parents are less likely to use corporal punishment than older parents, and cultural patterns are evident in the findings that Indian and Asian parents are least likely to smack their children, while black Africans and whites are more likely to beat their children with a stick or similar object.

The research also indicates that the most common age at which children are smacked is three years of age, while four-year olds are most often beaten with an object. This may be because young children are at home more often than older children and therefore have more time to be exposed to parental discipline. Older children are also more likely to resist physical punishment.

Interestingly, more cohabiting and single parents smack their offspring than other groups (in the latter case possibly due to the stresses of the single caregiving role).

The study identifies other common risk factors for partner violence and corporal punishment. These include both partners' endorsement of patriarchal practices and attitudes, authoritarian family functioning, a violent approach to problem solving, low socio-economic status and frequent marital conflict.

Although not the focus of this study, the research raises the controversial question of whether corporal punishment has a bad influence on children. With regard to mild forms of corporal punishment, such as occasional smacking, the evidence is equivocal. While physical punishment of young children does produce short-term compliance, it is clear

that repeated and frequent use of smacking and beatings over extended periods of childrens' early lives, does have negative outcomes on childrens' emotional development.

Ultimately and regardless of the evidence, beating of children is a moral or rights issue. We must ask ourselves: do adults have the right to assault children? Because it is assault. ●

Professor Andy Dawes is a Research Director in the Child, Youth and Family Development Research Programme. For a copy of the full report, e-mail media@hsrc.ac.za.

PARTNER VIOLENCE HIGH IN SOUTH AFRICA, SAYS NEW STUDY

By Andy Dawes



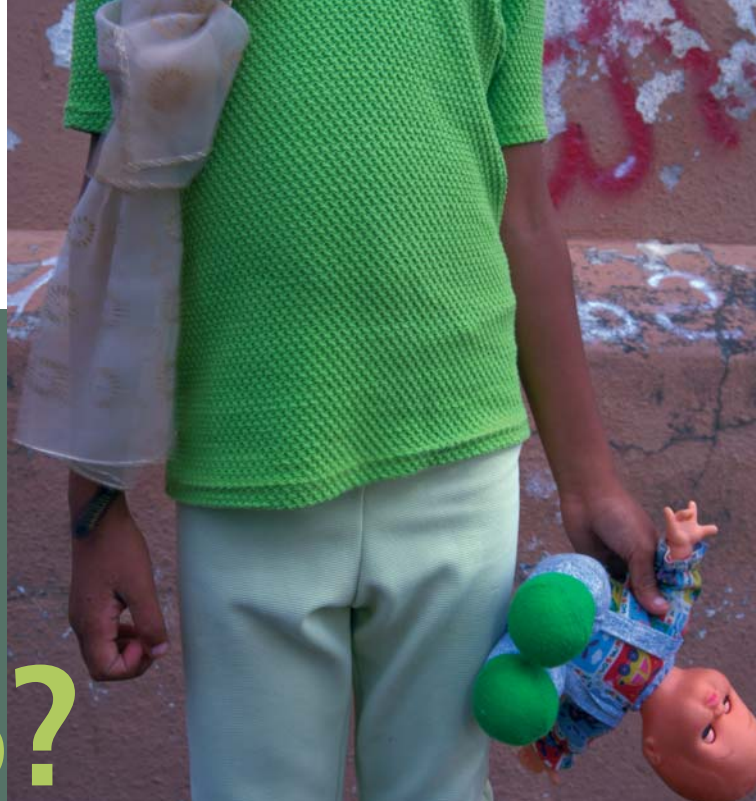
have experienced violent physical assault in their domestic relationships, either as perpetrators, victims, or both. This is almost 25% higher than in the United States.

Women are twice as likely to be victims as their male partners and more men, in the lower income brackets, assault their partners than in higher income groups. Another finding is that partner violence is more prevalent in relationships where the partners are cohabiting rather than married. Poorly educated and younger women are most at risk of being involved in a physically abusive relationship.

Regarding intervention in partner abuse, the report suggests that in addition to legal and policy interventions, changing the collective norms, attitudes and behaviour of both men and women is essential. The message is: start young. Challenges to patriarchal and abusive gender relations should feature prominently in the life-orientation programmes of our schools.

Nearly 1 000 parents with children participated in the section on corporal punishment. It showed that 57% of the participants reported using corporal punishment, with 33% using

RIGHTS OR WRONGS?



PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS MORAL VALUES

By Stephen Rule

Are South Africans apathetic about their beliefs or highly tolerant of diverse opinions and behaviour? South Africa is renowned for having one of the most liberal constitutions in the world, but an HSRC representative national survey of 4 980 adults (aged 16 and older) during September and October 2003, indicates that Government policy on “moral” issues is more “progressive” than the attitudes of the electorate.

Since the 1994 change of Government, the Termination of Pregnancy Act has been passed to permit abortion. Similarly, discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and capital punishment for persons found guilty of murder, have been made unconstitutional. But according to the survey, most South Africans oppose abortion, same-sex adult sexual relationships and support capital punishment.

All three issues are, however, hotly contested in civil society. Pro-life activists are objecting strongly to the termination of 300 000 pregnancies since 1996. Divisions exist within the Christian community with respect to consensual sex between adults of the same gender. The re-introduction of the death penalty is policy for several political parties.

Public opinion gauged by the HSRC’s 2003 South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) reflects this contestation. More than

half (56%) of South African adults think that abortion is “always wrong” in the event of it being discovered that there is a strong chance of serious defect in the unborn child. Only 21% think that it is “not wrong at all”.

It is acknowledged that the way in which a moral-type question is asked and the context in which it is placed, can influence the response. In this case the questions were phrased in the same way as those that have previously been used in European, British and other social attitudes surveys.

Although the two dominant political parties, the African National Congress (ANC) and the Democratic Alliance (DA), support the liberalisation of abortion policies, recent debates suggest some shifts in thinking. In contrast, the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) has consistently been outspoken on the topic. An ACDP member of the National Assembly, Cheryllyn Dudley, has stated that many politicians are actually against abortion in principle, but supported the Termination of Pregnancy Act because “they wanted to be politically correct”.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of black Africans oppose birth defect-related abortion, a much higher proportion than among the other races (coloured 41%; Indian 37%; white 23%).

Opposition to abortion if the family concerned has a low income and cannot

afford more children is even higher. Seven out of ten (70%) think it is “always wrong” under such circumstances. Only one in ten (10%) think that it is “not wrong at all”. More than three-quarters (75%) of respondents in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo think that it is “always wrong”. Whereas almost three-quarters (74%) of black Africans think that abortion is always wrong under such circumstances, this is the case with 59% of Indians and 57% of whites and coloureds.

In respect of the death penalty, 50% of South African adults (aged 16 and older) “strongly agree” and a further 25% “agree” that capital punishment should be imposed on someone convicted of murder. In contrast 7% “strongly disagree”, 11% “disagree”, 5% are neutral on the issue and 2% do not know.

The survey found that more females (78%) than males (72%) “strongly agree” or “agree” with the death penalty, as do more of those aged 35 and older (79%) than those in the below 35 age group (72%). “Agreement” or “strong agreement” ranges from 72% among black Africans and 76% among coloureds to 86% among Indians and 92% among whites. Pro-death penalty sentiment is strongest in urban formal areas (78%) and in the Western Cape (81%), Eastern Cape (80%) and Gauteng (78%).

Regarding sexuality, more than three-quarters (78%) of adult South Africans feel that sexual relations between two adults of the same gender are “always wrong”. Disapproval is at the 64% level among coloureds, 70% among whites, 76% among Indians and 81% among black Africans. These attitudes do not vary significantly by age or gender. Geographically, 90% of Limpopo residents and 88% of Eastern Cape residents hold this view, whereas this is the case among only 64% in the Free State and 68% in the Western Cape. One in twelve (8%) of urban formal residents think that same-gender sexual relationships are “not wrong at all”, this being less so among urban informal dwellers (5%), those in tribal areas (5%) or rural formal areas (2%).

In more than half of the countries in Africa, the practice of homosexuality is illegal for gay men and/or lesbian women. Such sanction is most prevalent in the Muslim-dominated north and the Christian-dominated south. South Africa is one of the exceptions; others include Burkina Faso, Gabon, Comores, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Eritrea, Reunion, and São Tomé and Príncipe. South Africa is thus comparable with many “developed” countries in this regard, where intolerance of homosexual lifestyles is relatively rare and the media is used widely to promote acceptance thereof.

Contrasts are evident from comparable research in Britain, which has found that 60% of adults are in favour of abortion if the couple concerned is in agreement. This varies from only 52% approval among the 65 and older age group to 72% among people aged between 25 and 34 years. In contrast to South Africans, 27% of British adults feel that sexual relations between two adults of the same gender are “not wrong at all”. Reinstatement of the death penalty is favoured by 50% of adults in Italy, 52% in the Netherlands, 60% in Britain, and over 60% in Canada.

So are most South Africans tolerant or apathetic? Perhaps the answer is that it depends who you ask.

Traditionalism is strongest among the religious, black African, married, pre-matriculation sector of the population, while the “progressives” are more likely to be found in

BY PROVINCE, THE PERCENTAGE OF SOUTH AFRICANS AGED 16 AND OLDER WHO SAY THAT ...

BY PROVINCE	EC	FS	GP	KN	LP	MP	NC	NW	WC	Total
It is always wrong for two adults of the same sex to have sexual relations	88	64	72	81	90	84	73	75	68	78
Abortion is always wrong if there is a strong chance of serious defect in the baby	61	53	58	62	65	67	27	61	25	56
Abortion is always wrong if the family has a low income and cannot afford any more children	76	66	69	75	83	79	50	69	48	70
They strongly agree or agree that people convicted of murder should be subject to the death penalty	80	72	78	75	67	68	53	73	81	75

BY RACE GROUP, PERCENTAGE OF SOUTH AFRICANS AGED 16 AND OLDER WHO SAY THAT ...

BY RACE	Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Total
It is always wrong for two adults of the same sex to have sexual relations	81	70	64	76	78
Abortion is always wrong if there is a strong chance of serious defect in the baby	64	23	41	37	56
Abortion is always wrong if the family has a low income and cannot afford any more children	74	57	57	59	70
They strongly agree or agree that people convicted of murder should be subject to the death penalty	72	92	76	86	75

COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES IN SELECTED COUNTRIES TO THOSE IN SOUTH AFRICA

	Chile	Phillippines	RSA	Poland	Portugal	Switzerland	Netherlands
Abortion is always wrong if there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby	58.5	70.7	56.1	30.7	13.7	13.7	7.8
Abortion is always wrong if the family has a very low income and cannot afford any more children	76.5	70.9	70.3	44.4	44.5	25.9	36.4
It is always wrong if a man and a woman have sexual relations before marriage	31.8	64.9	50.6	18.1	22.8	6.0	7.4
Sexual relations between two adults of the same sex are always wrong	87.7	84.6	78.0	74.4	73.8	26.1	15.8

Source: ISSP (1998) and SASAS (2003)

the urban areas where respondents have at least a matriculation qualification, are less religious and unmarried.

Even among those South Africans who consider the “progressive” aspects to be “wrong”, however, this rarely results in activism and has a minimal influence on voting behaviour. •

Dr Stephen Rule is a Research Director in the HSRC's Surveys, Analyses, Modelling and Mapping Research Programme. This article is based on a chapter, authored by Rule and Bongiwe Mncwango, which analyses the results of these questions asked in the South African Social Attitudes Survey, 2003. The chapter is scheduled for publication in a book later this year.

STIGMATISATION

OF TERMINATION-OF-PREGNANCY PROVIDERS IN STATE HOSPITALS

By Cheryl-Ann Potgieter

On paper, the liberal laws in South Africa are providing women with greater reproductive freedom than ever before. The reality is that the lack of trained professionals, especially in the termination of pregnancies, takes this freedom away from the majority of South African women.

The successful implementation of the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act (72 of 1996) is critically dependent on ensuring that there are enough trained termination-of-pregnancy (TOP) providers in state hospitals. Yet, health care providers are reluctant to be trained in this area. Those who choose to be trained experience stigma in the workplace, in their homes, and in their communities.

By the year 2000, only 90 midwives countrywide had completed theoretical TOP training. Of the 90 trainees, only 45 completed their clinical training, and only 31 were active providers of TOP services in 2000. By the end of 2001, less than 50% of designated facilities in the country were providing TOP services because of a lack of service providers.

Why the resistance to training? A recent study involving a small group of men and women (22 black African and coloured TOP providers in state hospitals) who had chosen to be trained, provided some answers.

Reasons given for choosing to be TOP providers were:

- Facilitating access to safe terminations would reduce the number of backstreet abortions;
- The high mortality and morbidity rates associated with unsafe abortions; and
- The consequences of an unwanted pregnancy.

Some saw themselves as “lifesavers”, or said that “...no woman can be blamed for a pregnancy” and that “...contraception fails”. This is very different from arguments put forward by anti-termination groups who generally blame women for unplanned pregnancies and believe that women could prevent falling pregnant.

Many of the participants strongly believed that by providing TOP procedures they were assisting women in exercising a fundamental “human right”. Some participants said they were providing women with choices and opportunities they themselves never had because of the

stringent abortion laws of the past.

Participants pointed out that terminations were not against their culture, or their religion. All participants identified themselves as Christian and argued that providing access to a safe termination was “what God would have wanted them to do”. In their view “Culture changes... Before we used traditional medicine to help women; now we use the modern way”.

Experiences in the workplace, however, made their work difficult. They had to endure derogatory labelling by colleagues, such as “serial killers” or “baby killers”. Pressure to stop rendering TOPs negatively affected their relationships with colleagues, and the work overload led to burnout and absenteeism, and made it difficult to perform optimally. They complained that they did not get support from top management.

Workplace stress, in turn, affected family relationships. Few had any family support. Young people also feel the burden of secrecy. Some did not want to be seen visiting TOP clinics, and came to visit TOP providers at their homes at night.

TOP providers recommended the following:

- All designated areas should provide TOP services;
- The Act should be reviewed to allow nurses and midwives to be trained (the Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Bill, 2003, tabled in Parliament in August, allows for this); and
- Hostile managers and staff should face disciplinary action.

Training programmes should point out that:

- Sexual and reproductive health is a human right;
- Pro-choice argues from a woman’s health perspective; and
- Illegal abortions in apartheid South Africa led to high death rates.



In addition, training should expose nurses to opinions of pro-choice church and religious leaders and others with pro-choice views; supportive people from the community should assist in educating hostile community members; and traditional healers in favour of termination should assist in training. •

Professor Cheryl-Ann Potgieter is Head of the Gender Co-ordinating Unit within the Office of the CEO, and is leading gender research within the Child, Youth and Family Development Research Programme.

THE TRUTH IS BAD ENOUGH, OR IT SHOULD BE!



*In conversation with
Chris Desmond*

How many children will be orphaned by AIDS, and how many children will live in child-headed households by the end of the decade? The simple answer is many. But is that enough to convince policy-makers or the general public that we should be doing more than we are? In a country that has become accustomed to social ills, horror stories and impending crises, what does it take to warrant special consideration?

It would seem that advocates and researchers think that disasters are not enough, but that catastrophes might get some attention. But does the approach of publicising high estimates of the impact of the AIDS epidemic help in facilitating a response? Has our society hardened to the point that disasters simply do not do it for us anymore?

Take the example of child-headed households, an emotive and tragic consequence of adult deaths. In some situations, children are forced to head households after the death of their parents, and teenagers have to take on the adult roles of care and financial support in an effort to cope with the loss of caregivers. Child-headed households are seen as one of the key social challenges associated with the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

These households are often spoken about as if they exist in great numbers across the country. According to the available data, between 0.25% and 0.50% of South African households are headed by children under the age of 18 years. This would seem somewhat less than is suggested by claims for aid made in anecdotal reports, but it is still a very large number of children living in extremely difficult situations. Although a small percentage, the data suggest that in the region of 30 000 households are headed by children under the age of 18 years.



It would appear that, in our efforts to find dramatic stories, we do not take the time to consider what it is we are talking about. For example, what does it mean to be a child-headed household and are there not other forms of households associated with HIV/AIDS that also place children at risk?

According to the 1999 October Household Survey, there are fewer households with no adults than there are child-headed households, suggesting that some child-headed households contain adults. Who are these adults, and do they constitute additional burdens for children?

There are also nearly as many households with only people over the age of 70 and under the age of 18 years as there are households that are child-headed. This would suggest that rather than highlighting only one dramatic-

sounding type of vulnerable household, more time should be spent understanding other vulnerable household conditions and feasible ways to respond – especially as larger numbers of children are becoming more vulnerable as poverty escalates.

South Africa has many social problems, and it is no easy task to convince others of the need to prioritise a particular issue. The temptation exists to portray a worst-case scenario in attempts to gain attention. This approach, however, can have many negative side-effects – not least for social problems, the scale of which is not exaggerated and requires no hyperbole.

People can be overwhelmed by a problem and begin to think that it is too large and too late to do anything about it. From my experiences with working with governments in Africa, I have found that moderate presentations on the impact of AIDS, as opposed to doomsday approaches, elicit a much more energetic response.

Alternatively, if the problem is exaggerated, the issue itself may begin to be questioned. This questioning process may take matters to the opposite extreme, prompting arguments that the entire problem and not just the estimated scale, is a fallacy. Rape, HIV infections, murder, traffic accidents and orphaning, even at the most conservative of estimates, are all of a scale needing urgent national attention.

As a researcher, I want to spend my time trying to identify and evaluate solutions rather than only trying to convince people of the existence and scale of problems. Generally, we know what the issues are and should be devoting our energies to solving them. •

Chris Desmond is a Research Specialist in the Child, Youth and Family Development Research Programme.

made, influenced by the Mandela-HSRC household survey and the Statistics South Africa census results. The latter shows that the labour force may still be growing by up to 2.5% per annum. Once AIDS starts having a larger impact, we could expect that the labour force might grow on average between 1% and 2% per annum over the next ten years. Much will depend on actual HIV prevalence, the relative success of education and antiretroviral roll-outs. To achieve 15% unemployment, the economy would have to generate an average of 400 000 to 500 000 jobs per annum. This requires an employment growth rate of at least 4.2% per annum.

Under current conditions, how many jobs can we reasonably expect? It is worth looking at the experience of employment creation in recent times, as an initial indicator of what to expect in future. Currently about 11 million people work. Approximately 70% are in the formal economy and 30% in

the economy needs to grow even faster. The precise relation between employment and growth is not necessarily known. But we do know that the rate of economic growth needs to be higher than the rate of employment growth.

Serious programme shifts and a strengthening of policy implementation are needed. Government has recently announced important initiatives ranging from a review of education and training policy, to infrastructure reform, to expanded capital expenditure, amongst others. It is clear that the employment target will need to rest not only on growth, but more importantly, on the ability of the economy to absorb labour – whether in the formal informal sectors, or through Government initiated programmes.

What sort of scenarios could we envisage? Ideally, a large proportion of new jobs should come from the formal sector. This has been the case since 1997, but it needs to

HALVING UNEMPLOYMENT?

By Miriam Altman

Government is committed to halving unemployment by 2014. What does this mean? For simplicity sake, let's say that if strict unemployment is currently about 30%, then the target is 15%. What can we reasonably expect to happen over the next 10 years? Has the South African economy yet embarked on a sufficiently labour-absorbing path? Is Government policy moving in the right direction?

There are two sides to the equation – the speed of labour force growth and the rate of job creation.

How fast do we expect the labour force to grow? If very fast, then the job creation imperatives are greater. If slower, then there is less pressure. AIDS is the central variable. The greater the impact of AIDS, the slower the labour force will expand. But a slowly growing labour force due to the AIDS impact can have a dampening effect on growth and welfare generally – certainly not something to look forward to.

Some years ago, it was thought that the labour force might even contract due to the impact of AIDS. Revisions have since been

the informal economy. Over the past seven years, employment has grown by 1% to 3% on average or by about 100 000 to 300 000 jobs per annum. Over the same period, the labour force grew by about 500 000 to 600 000 each year. So, although there is job creation, it is only sufficient to absorb one third to one fifth of new entrants to the labour market.

What are the implications? The unemployment rate is unlikely to fall substantially at current rates of job creation, even if labour force growth slows.

Above the current 100 000 to 300 000 new jobs created each year, the economy needs to generate an average extra 200 000 to 300 000 jobs to reach Government's employment target. By 2014, we would want to see the economy generating at least 500 000 net new jobs annually as a matter of course.

The unemployment problem is not therefore simply the result of rapid labour force growth. There is clearly a mismatch between the scale of the labour force and the rate of job creation due to underlying structural problems.

If employment must grow at 4.2%, then

take place on a much larger scale.

Job creation in labour intensive exports will be an essential ingredient – especially in services that can absorb many low- and middle-level skilled workers. Some crucial improvements will be required to make South Africa a global destination – namely the lowering of telecommunications prices, the upgrading of ports and road infrastructure, improved delivery of education and training and centres of innovation for product development.

In the medium term, the Government has the capability of creating large numbers of jobs through construction and social services.

► Already the capital budget has expanded by more than R10 billion and will continue to rise in the near future. In itself, this additional expenditure will add at least 125 000 new job opportunities each year. These numbers could be multiplied if the Department of Public Works programme to promote labour intensive methods is taken to scale.

► Although not often discussed, there may be an even more strategic role for social welfare programmes in areas like early child development, food distribution and

HIV home and community care. Currently such activities suffer from unstable funding. Government funding is still allocated in small amounts relative to the need. Training, accreditation and quality standards need to be strengthened to enable a roll-out of Government programmes on a mass scale. Herein lies a huge opportunity for job creation and the meeting of basic needs.

- ▶ These are important short and medium term opportunities. But unlike market-related jobs, Government programmes rely on continuous funding – once the programme ends, the job is gone.

Reaching employment targets will critically depend on how well the education system and labour markets function. This problem reaches from basic education through to the process of finding work. Young people have very little access to information about what is needed to succeed, what career paths are available, and where to look for employment.

Access to education is still limited by

Employment creation is fundamentally a story of economic linkages – how one thing leads to another

financial resources – systemic discrimination, based on class and race rather than ability, continues. People live far from centres of work which makes it difficult to get information and expensive to search for a job. And once the job is found, the commute remains expensive and exhausting which in turn affects productivity.

Investment in public transport systems, densification of housing and improved integration of the education system will be amongst the longer-term solutions. Shorter-term solutions will involve considerable private action – for example, private interventions in high schools to provide career advice and course upgrading. Large firms

could also form stronger alliances with education institutions in curricula development, internships and placements.

The role of cities and of densification is often overlooked as part of the employment policy debate. Employment creation is fundamentally a story of economic linkages – how one thing leads to another.

For each investment, how much further activity is stimulated? Urban areas are centres of agglomeration where second and third rounds of investments are more likely to take place. Government can play a central role here – by increasing housing density, improving public transport, and investing in public buildings, spaces and turnkey investments. The direction of spatial policy, and how it relates to private and public investment in urban areas, will have important implications for the relative success in reaching employment targets. •

Dr Miriam Altman is Executive Director of the HSRC's Employment and Economic Policy Research Programme.



For whom the SCHOOL BELL TOLLS

By Michael Kahn



Measuring disparity in school Science and Mathematics in the African community

The history of schooling in South Africa is a history of racial discrimination. While redress in education is a central tenet of Government policy in our new democracy, no procedure was in place to monitor the demographics of schooling and hence to track redress at an individual level between 1994 and 2002.

Race-based data were last collected in 1992 in the dying days of apartheid, and capture of racial statistics was, until very recently, anathema to the education authorities.

With the enactment of the Employment Equity Act (No 55 of 1998), however, and its institutionalisation in 1999, all employers had to compile and return demographic data on their workforce. This promoted a climate in which it became generally acceptable to make use of the old racial categories in gathering data that would advance the general good.

In terms of measuring the inherited disparities in the education system, the main instrument introduced by the new Department of Education was the School Register of

Needs (SRN) of 1996. SRN is the major tool Government uses to attempt to level out educational resource disparities at school level. It was as late as the year 2000, however, before someone thought to ask the question in Parliament: “How many African students pass Mathematics at higher grade?” As the then adviser to the Minister of Education, it befell to my lot to provide an answer.

At that juncture, the data lacuna meant that one was limited to making rough extrapolations from the data of the early 1990s.

Such extrapolation suggested a figure somewhere around 3 000 for the number of Africans that passed Mathematics Higher Grade (HG). Without data being captured according to racial groups no greater accuracy was possible. Or was it?

I believed that it might be possible to obtain a better estimate of the number of

important role in shaping the National Strategy for Science, Mathematics and Technology Education of the Department of Education. This led to the 102 Focus Schools Project which saw Dinaledi Science and Mathematics Centres established in 2001/02.

In 2002 the Department, for the first time, required matriculation candidates to declare

the NLA boys.

- ▶ NLA girls out-perform the NLA boys in five provinces and narrow the gap in the other four.

It is worth noting that the national entry for Mathematics HG was 35 500 and the national pass rate was 57.8%.

Why the NLA difference? The next conjecture was to guess that the NLA candidates were at schools where they could not readily take an African language, namely ex-Model C, Delegates and Reps, or independent schools. This assertion was checked by going back to the database to match candidates to their schools. It checked. The fact that these learners attended well-resourced schools explained the increased pass rate. Since these are mainly suburban schools this may explain why the gender gap, if it is culturally driven, closes or disappears.

The LPM thus turned out to be a highly effective proxy that yielded policy insights far beyond its original design. The policy implications of these findings are considerable and include the following:

- ▶ Gender inequality in Mathematics performance (and Science) is real and persistent. A national study to understand the variation is long overdue.
- ▶ Building quality education in disadvantaged schools requires a much stronger effort.
- ▶ Quality schooling (teaching) in suburban schools is a resource that might be leveraged for greater advantage than at present.
- ▶ Growth in the stock of learners with Mathematics HG will mainly come from the African and coloured communities (saturation has largely been achieved in the white and Indian communities).
- ▶ Introduction of the group identifiers from 2002 onward was a necessary step in monitoring and promoting redress.

African candidates now make up 50% of the Mathematics HG candidates. If Mathematics HG is taken as a benchmark, the dismantling of formal apartheid, by ending legal exclusion, in effect doubled the pool of those available to enter the ranks of the highly-skilled. That their pass numbers still constitute below 30% of the total is unacceptable. •

Professor Michael Kahn is Executive Director of the HSRC's Knowledge Management Research Programme.

The data served to confirm the small proportion of African HG passes in the gateway subjects that restrict access to university programmes of study that lead to science-based careers

African learners writing and passing the various matriculation subjects by means of a proxy. The proxy was based on the assumption that the majority of African candidates took an African language for matric, and conversely that the majority of non-Africans did not.

Accordingly, to determine the number of African learners taking any matriculation subject, for example Mathematics HG, all that was needed was to query the examination database: "provide headcount – candidate takes an African language and Mathematics HG". This so-called language proxy method (LPM) was introduced in 1999 and provided the only means of tracking African matriculation performance until 2002.

What LPM showed for the 2002 African Mathematics HG candidates was that:

- ▶ The total number of candidates was 14 389 and 3 335 passed the subject (i.e. symbol of E or higher).
- ▶ LPM girls were under-enrolled relative to boys across the provinces.
- ▶ LPM girls consistently under-performed relative to boys across the provinces.
- ▶ An identical gender pattern occurred for Physical Science HG, and both Mathematics and Physical Science at Standard Grade (SG).

The gender finding is statistically significant with a random occurrence of 1 in 235. LPM made it possible, for the first time in forty years, to obtain a countrywide overview of the performance of African learners in these subjects. In principle the study could have been extended to monitor other subjects as well as individual performance.

The LPM data served to confirm the small proportion of African HG passes in the gateway subjects that restrict access to university programmes of study that lead to science-based careers. As such, the data played an

important role when they registered for the examination. It now became possible to accurately determine enrolment and performance by group and gender across the provinces. It was also possible to check the validity of the LPM.

The full data set for the 2002 African Mathematics HG candidates showed the following:

- ▶ The number of candidates was 16 663 and 4 688 passed the subject.
- ▶ Girls were under-enrolled relative to boys across the provinces.
- ▶ Girls consistently under-performed relative to boys across the provinces.
- ▶ An identical gender pattern occurred for Physical Science HG, and both Mathematics and Physical Science SG.

This validity check turned up both anticipated and unanticipated information.

- ▶ The gender pattern identified by LPM was confirmed.
- ▶ LPM identified African Mathematics HG candidates with 86% accuracy, and identified 71% of passes (accuracy was considerably higher at 90% for Mathematics SG and Physical Science HG and SG). In other words, LPM provided a reliable floor level that was sufficiently accurate for policy decisions to be taken. The reason why the number of passes detected was lower than the entry figure is explained below.

The unanticipated information concerns the African candidates for Mathematics HG that did not take an African language. This non-language African (we term these NLA) group demonstrates features that are quite different to the African group (and LPM group).

- ▶ The NLA pass rate was 59.5%; African 28.1%; LPM 23.2%.
- ▶ NLA girl enrolment is higher than



SOUTH AFRICA'S emerging black middle class

By Roger Southall

In the ten years since the African National Congress's (ANC's) assumption of power, the black middle class, deliberately stunted during the apartheid era, should have grown dramatically.

But the change is far from dramatic. Out of a total population of 44 million, the black middle class remains very small. This is despite substantial growth, from 29% in 1970 to 48% in 1996, in the distribution of national income accruing to blacks.

Although the apartheid regime needed black middle class elements to serve as politicians and bureaucrats in the homelands, urban townships and the Indian and coloured "Own Affairs" departments, and encouraged a small strata of black traders who were tied to apartheid structures, the black middle class as a whole remained small. Estimates of its

size varied considerably, ranging from Sam Nolutshungu's low estimate of 121 950 for 1970, to Harold Wolpe's higher figure of 1 315 800 for 1974.

Even now, "guesstimates" of the present size of the black middle class vary considerably. Others have suggested that it has grown to some 3.6 million. My own lower calculation places it in the region of 2.5 million.

This low figure is in spite of the ANC's attempts to fundamentally transform societal institutions and the economy through strategies such as "equity employment" and "Black Economic Empowerment" (BEE). The ANC's theory of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) recognises the development of black middle strata as just, desirable and necessary.

Perhaps the answer lies in a recognition by

the ANC that a black middle class could become separated from its background, and develop its own interests in opposition to those of ordinary workers and the broad mass of the poor.

The NDR proposes that the ANC should play a watchdog role to ensure that the new black bourgeoisie should remain "patriotic", that is, it should serve the national interest and deploy its investments to promote domestic welfare and employment. Fears emanate, especially from those who regard BEE as having created a massively rich but tiny black elite, that the new black bourgeoisie is parasitic rather than patriotic.

To explore this question, it is necessary to disaggregate the black middle class into overlapping, yet discrete, strata. Following (but updating and adjusting) Blade Nzimande,

Fears emanate, especially from those who regard BEE as having created a massively rich but tiny black elite, that the new black bourgeoisie is parasitic rather than patriotic

Secretary-General of the South African Communist Party's analysis of the black bourgeoisie in the 1980s, we can recognise four such fractions:

- ▶ A small number of "state managers", composed of senior politicians in both national and provincial governments, senior civil servants and senior executives in the parastatals exist. This relatively tightly-knit group makes up the key political decision-makers, and is bonded together by an ideology of public service, and for the majority, by loyalty to the ANC.
- ▶ There is a considerably larger and much more heterogeneous "civil petty bourgeoisie", composed of those employed in white-collar and service occupations. Its principal elements are in government employment, as civil servants (below the

state managers) and within the wider public service (as nurses, teachers, and local government employees) and parastatals (including the HSRC!). Its size has been massively increased by the restructuring of state institutions which has featured a white exodus and equity employment favouring Africans, coloureds and Indians respectively. Yet, there has also been a continuing expansion of black, especially African, white-collar employment by the private sector, assisted by developments within the educational sphere which have principally favoured the children of the black middle class. Critically, too, the black civil petty bourgeoisie is extensively unionised. Political scientist Jeremy Seekings, of the University of Cape Town, has recently suggested that its self-interested union campaigns have widened the gap between itself and the poor.

- ▶ Although black enterprise remains underdeveloped, a black "trading petty bourgeoisie" continues to be fostered by the State. Of course, there is a major discontinuity with the past in that the Bantustan/urban divide has collapsed into a more integrated, small and medium business sector, which overlaps extensively with the informal economy. Although small business is encouraged by Government as a major supplier of future employment, black traders and small businessmen (especially Africans) remain heavily constrained by lack of experience and skill, capital, traditions, and not least, by the limited growth prospects provided by the informal sector. Furthermore, whereas under apartheid, the ties of black traders to homeland and urban politicians were close, the indications are that the political weight of the trading petty bourgeoisie is minimal.
- ▶ A "black corporate bourgeoisie", composed of both corporate managers and the new breed of empowerment capitalists is growing slowly, yet significantly. It is common knowledge that the expansion of black corporate capitalism has faced many problems since 1994. Today direct ownership of firms listed on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange by blacks amounts to little more than 2%, and indirect ownership (via pension funds, etc.) to no more than 15%. After all, the principal problem of promoting black capitalism is that blacks, as a whole, simply lack capital. To become black capitalists they therefore have to be given or loaned capital at favourable rates. In

this difficult circumstance it is only a relatively tiny handful of emergent black magnates who have emerged as owners of the small number of new black conglomerates, or as partners of established white corporations in so-called empowerment deals. It is because the gains have been so highly concentrated among this highly visible elite that Government is making efforts to render BEE more "broadly-based" – not least by pressuring corporate capital. The latter has recently responded with the development of industrial charters, which establish targets for black ownership, employment, skills training, etc., over the next few years. Yet, the main worry is that, because black empowerment is politically-driven, and because many of its beneficiaries have close connections to the ANC, the present strategy will develop into a "crony capitalism" which is far more parasitic than it is patriotic.

Today direct ownership of firms listed on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange by blacks amounts to little more than 2%, and indirect ownership to no more than 15%

The growth of the black middle class is a welcome and necessary accompaniment of South African democracy and economic growth. The fact that its expansion is heavily State-driven raises the danger that, as in most other African countries, it will become primarily government dependent, mired in corruption, non-entrepreneurial, overwhelmingly consumerist and oblivious to the needs of workers and the poor.

Whether or not South Africa pursues a development trajectory that results in greater or lesser social equity rests in the balance, and depends heavily upon the class character of the emergent black bourgeoisie. •

Professor Roger Southall is a Distinguished Research Fellow in the Democracy and Governance Research Programme at the HSRC.

Who benefits from “KNOWLEDGE FOR DEVELOPMENT”?

By Simon McGrath

Knowledge is like light. Weightless and intangible, it can easily travel the world, enlightening the lives of people everywhere. Yet, billions of people still live – unnecessarily – in the darkness of poverty.

In 1998, the World Bank made “Knowledge for Development” the theme of its annual flagship World Development Report. The Bank’s serious interest in this issue had begun, however, in 1996 with the keynote address of the Bank’s new President, James Wolfensohn, to the joint meeting of the Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Since then, there has been a remarkable growth in interest in knowledge-based aid within development co-operation agencies. Most agencies have launched projects that seek to make their work better grounded in the knowledge they already possess within their organisations and to explore more effective ways of acquiring external knowledge related to their work. At the same time, there has also been a growth in emphasis on disseminating this knowledge more effectively, to other agencies; to their own civil societies; to their partners in the South; and to the billions of poor people who are the stated beneficiaries of the whole intertwined aid and development project.

Equally, there has been a revisiting of old notions that the poor are poor in large part because of their lack of appropriate knowledge. To the old account expressed in many colonial and missionary texts is added the new dimensions of globalisation (as the force shaping the knowledge needed) and information and communications technologies (ICTs) – as an important new set of tools in the dissemination of this knowledge. At its most extreme, this account appears to have a simplistic view that better knowledge makes for better policies and that better policies lead to better lives.

Knowledge for development is increasingly seen as a partial answer to the challenges posed by globalisation, ICTs and the knowledge economy. Projects that are explicitly grounded in the organisational knowledge of donor agencies have now gained currency. But will this paradigmatic shift to knowledge improve aid delivery as it promises to?

In a recent book, *Knowledge for Development* (Zed and HSRC Press, 2004), Kenneth King and I examined the knowledge policies and practices of four agencies: the World Bank, the British Department for International Development, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Japan International Co-operation Agency.

The focus on knowledge has meant that donor interests include capitalising on external knowledge and disseminating their

Some agencies are also increasingly recognising the need to support indigenous knowledge and build capacity within knowledge systems of developing countries.

own knowledge to other stakeholders. Some agencies are also increasingly recognising the need to support indigenous knowledge and build capacity within knowledge systems of developing countries.

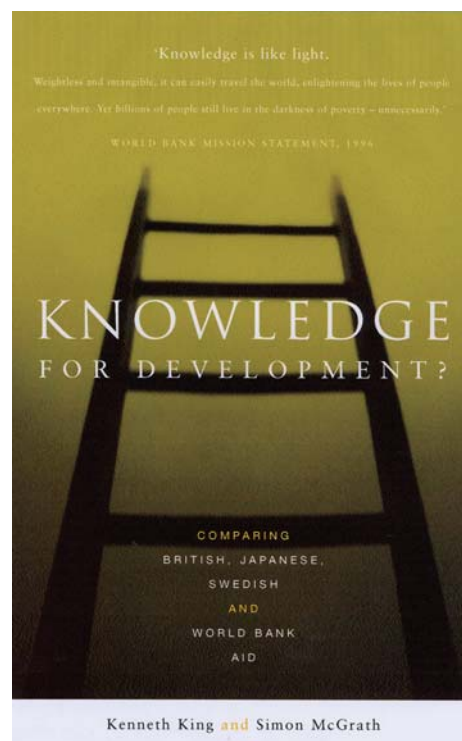
After nearly eight years of this new trend, however, the evidence for the benefits of agencies’ knowledge trend is very weak. The internal benefits to agencies have been limited. Evaluations have been unable to show a clear picture of the effectiveness of knowledge-based aid in terms of its impact on everyday practices of the agencies.

In spite of the hopes of major proponents within agencies, the new approach has not radically transformed the bureaucratic and conservative way in which agencies operate. Orthodoxy continues to be valued over enquiry. Moreover, in agencies such as the UK Department for International Development (Dfid) and the World Bank, spin and news management are increasing.

There are some good examples of agencies encouraging better global sharing of knowledge that is intended to promote development (for example, the support of several agencies for the Southern African Poverty Research Network). These are the exception rather than the norm, however, as knowledge practices in agencies have been more likely to encourage the dissemination of knowledge that is ideologically in line with agencies’ own positions and which comes from trusted sources – typically in the North.

Above all else, it remains difficult to see what knowledge-based aid has done, and is likely to do, to improve the lives of the supposed ultimate beneficiaries: those living in poverty. •

Dr Simon McGrath is Director, Research Programme on Human Resources Development at the HSRC. The book, Knowledge for Development: Comparing British, Japanese, Swedish and World Bank Aid is published by HSRC Press and Zed.



Mathematics and Science results at secondary school level has long been a cause for concern. A new study, commissioned by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), has examined the proliferation of out-of-school programmes that provide extra tuition in these core subjects.

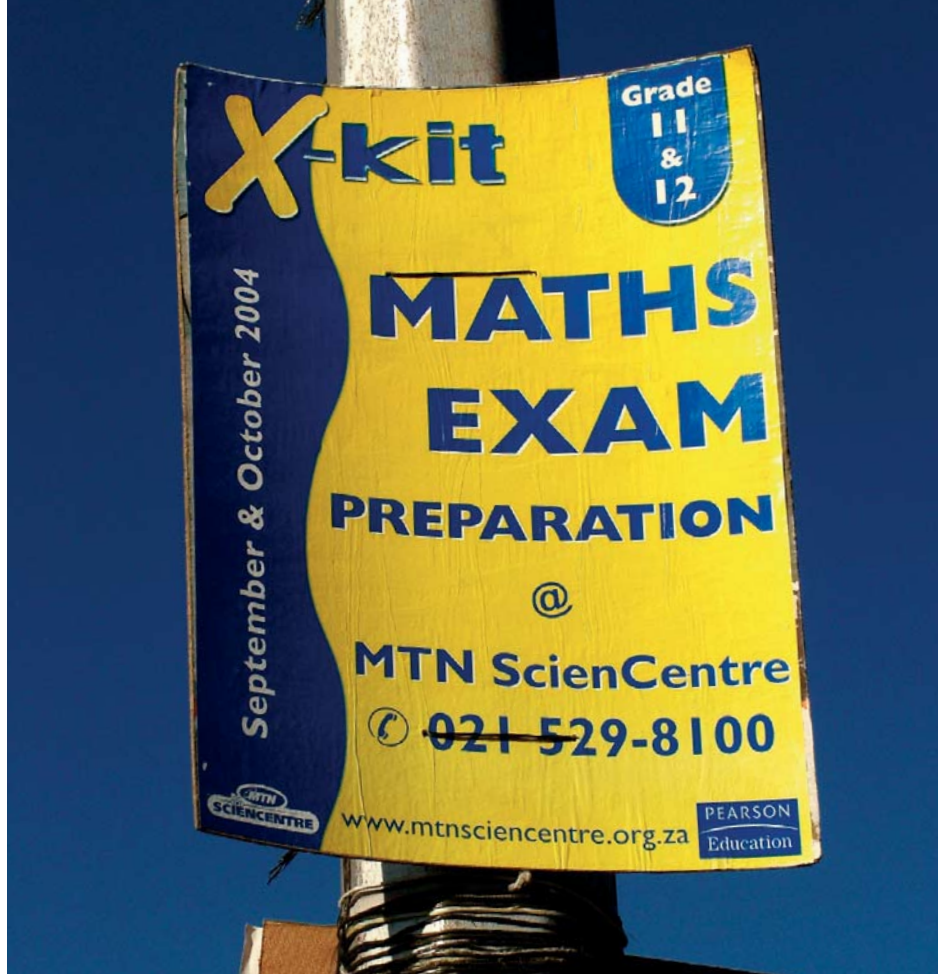
Many learners and parents, concerned about the quality of input from the formal schooling system, have participated in these programmes.

The DST is considering supporting out-of-school interventions as a strategy to improve Mathematics and Science performance at the school level. They commissioned the HSRC to assess the extent, nature and cost of out-of-school interventions in Mathematics, Science and Computer studies for secondary school learners as research into this area of work is limited.

Out-of-school programmes are also referred to as “private” or “supplementary” tuition. It is largely an independent initiative that exists alongside the public schooling system and hence has often been referred to as a “shadow” of formal public schooling.

An area of concern is that private supplementary tuition may worsen social inequalities and interfere with educational processes in the mainstream educational system.

The study found that as many as 70 000



SCHOOL'S OUT... OR IS IT?

By Vijay Reddy
and Likani Lebani

Out-of-school interventions for Mathematics, Science and Computer studies for secondary school learners

learners are already using the services of this fast-expanding sector.

Organisations offering out-of-schools programmes include private sector organisations, franchises, online instruction, instruction on television, non-governmental organisations and the Department of Education (DoE) in partnership with service providers and outreach programmes attached to universities and technikons. Geographically, a number of programmes are located in areas of high population densities with a strong focus on metropolitan areas.

The province of Gauteng has the majority of providers (30%) followed by KwaZulu-Natal (15%) and Limpopo (15%). The other provinces account for the balance. It is noteworthy that a majority of initiatives focus on

Grade 12, and the number of learners per provider tends to increase from Grade 10 through Grade 12.

There are more out-of-school programmes in Mathematics and Science than in Computer studies. Most computer programmes focus on general computer skills. A significant number of providers are also providing extra tuition in business-oriented subjects, such as Accounting.

The type of providers rendering private tuition is diverse. It is largely defined by how the organisation/institution is legally constituted and how it conducts its business. A broad classification of providers includes non-governmental organisations, like Protec, newly-established community-based organisations that operate in small towns, individuals,

and private-sector organisations that offer services on a for-profit basis. Business-oriented programmes are more often linked to corporate organisations and former teachers. Other programmes include international franchises (e.g. Kumon Math which attempts to support the school curriculum, operates in urban areas and is market-driven).

Online instruction tends to be limited to those learners with access to computer facilities. The same applies to TV-based instruction channels. One form of supplementary tuition in South Africa, unlike in other countries, is involving collaboration between provincial DoEs and private providers. An example is the KwaZulu-Natal DoE and Pulse Education Services initiative, which provides out-of-school tuition to Grade 12 learners.

Tertiary institutions, especially universities, also provide enrichment programmes to high performing learners and as such tend to target small groups. The University of Pretoria, for example, drives a programme that extends over a three-year period.

The type of programmes offered by most providers is linked to the school curriculum and measures performance in terms of their ability to contribute towards the matriculation pass rate. Smaller programmes operate more on a help-desk scenario where tutors are available to answer learners' problems or assist with homework exercises.

In a few instances, the provider works with a few learners, who in turn tutor other learners (peer tutoring). Tutors in most programmes are practising schoolteachers.

Other providers utilise Science graduates, university students, or workplace professionals, especially accountants and engineers. Franchise operations prefer tutors who do not necessarily have a Mathematics or Science background but who are able to facilitate and who generally have good business acumen.

Tutor payment varies per provider. The more established providers pay their tutors on a regular basis. The smaller operations have volunteer tutors who are reimbursed their travel costs or are given a stipend as and when learners make payments.

The cost to the learner also varies from one provider to the next, but most providers charge a fee. A number of providers offer free services but have numerous sponsors in the form of banks, the corporate world and foreign donors. The majority of small-scale providers struggle with funding and tend to be limited in the range of services they provide in terms of teaching tools and the total number of learners they can accommodate. Higher costs are associated with private-sector franchises.

One certainty is that this sector is here to stay. The issue is how the DoE and the DST can enhance and support this sector so that the quality of Mathematics and Science can improve. In addition, with a growing number of service providers, there needs to be some form of regulation and quality control to ensure that learners receive quality instruction and are not exploited.

Dr Vijay Reddy is the Director of Assessment Technology and Education Evaluation Research Programme and Likani Lebani an intern. For a copy of the report, School's Out...Or Is It? Out-of-school interventions for Mathematics, Science and Computer studies for secondary school learners by Vijay Reddy with Likani Lebani and Candace Davidson, please e-mail media@hsr.ac.za.

Profile

Executive Director, Employment and Economic Policy Research (EEPR)

By Reneé Grawitzky



Dr Miriam Altman is an unusual combination of practical, real-world experience and deep intellectual economic thinking. It is therefore difficult to pigeon-hole her, as none of the usual labels like “academic”, “manager”, “activist” or even “economist” properly describe her. One colleague ventured that “she is a rain-maker”.

The contexts of her activities range from human rights activism and community development to high-level national policy formulation on employment and industrial transformation. Her mix of practical and intellectual experience enables her to bring special insights into her economic strategy work. She is not satisfied to merely engage in policy-directed research, but is driven by the desire to facilitate and engage in processes to ensure that research ultimately impacts on the lives of ordinary people.

Altman draws on close to 20 years involvement in employment and industrial policy and strategy work coupled with a strong focus on stakeholder facilitation. She studied for a BA in Economics at McGill University in Montreal, and subsequently completed an MA and PhD in Economics at the Universities of Cambridge and Manchester in the UK, respectively.

She lectured at the University of Witwatersrand in the Department of Economics, and then went on to co-ordinate the Economics Programme at the Wits Graduate School of Public and Development Management. There she managed and lectured on the graduate economics courses and also established a specialist professional programme offering tailored courses to Government and parastatals.

The HSRC became an obvious choice for Altman as it gave her the opportunity to combine her deep commitment to both policy and strategy processes.

Altman draws on close to 20 years involvement in employment and industrial policy and strategy work, coupled with a strong focus on stakeholder facilitation

She sees economic and social balance as not simply being a function of a set of economic variables, but also as requiring high-level compromise and institutional solutions

She established the Employment and Economic Policy Research (EEPR) Programme in February 2002, as part of the HSRC's transformation process.

Focusing on improving the balance of economic gains, particularly for marginalised communities, can be identified as the common theme to her work over the past 20 years. In particular, her work explores the economic impact of extractive industry on society and livelihoods. Altman's research relates to global thinking about how economies dominated by mining and oil tend to be structurally biased toward capital intensive industries and high inequality – resulting in social exclusion and unemployment. This has been called “Dutch Disease” or the “Resource Curse”. She has extensive experience in applying this thinking to shaping policy that addresses the need to integrate economies and enhance access to opportunity and livelihoods.

In the early 1990s she was involved in research and strategy for the trade union movement. In 1990, Altman worked with the SA Clothing and Textile Workers Union (SACTWU) to establish a research programme that would enable it to frame strategy in relation to expected changes in the regulatory environment – focusing on trade, business and labour regulation.

This was one of the first projects of its kind, supporting SACTWU's vision of moving from the politics of the 1980s, into the high-level tri-partite negotiations that would ultimately become possible in the 1990s. This research was later incorporated into the Industrial Strategy Project (ISP), which was initiated by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). It is still regarded as one of the most critical interventions in the policy arena pre-1994.

In the post-1994 period, Altman turned her attention to economic advisory support to the new Government. Key themes in this work related to the structural underpinnings of unemployment. She has worked with most of the economic departments in areas relating

to labour, human resource development and industrial policy.

Altman sees economic and social balance as not simply being a function of a set of economic variables, but also as requiring high-level compromise and institutional solutions. This view underpinned her work in the Presidential Jobs Summit in 1998. The Department of Labour had appointed her as Programme Manager for the summit from 1997. In that process, her aim was to draw the parties closer together around a “common language and dialogue about the causes and possible cures for structural unemployment”. Most of the themes agreed on at the Jobs Summit underpin the current work of the Employment and Economic Policy Research Programme at the HSRC.

The Employment and Economic Policy Research Programme focuses on understanding and addressing the complexities of employment and unemployment. The first challenge is to understand employment trends, and in this vein, Altman has introduced groundbreaking work. Along with Dr Ingrid Woolard, and under the review of an expert panel, the EEPR has produced important new work that begins to question many current assumptions about employment trends and South Africa's development path.

The second challenge is to identify strategic policy levers to raise the capacity of the economy to absorb labour. Altman believes that the economic imbalances will be addressed through a combination of labour, industrial and macro-policy interventions.

The third challenge is to locate strategic partnerships to shift the levers in the required direction.

She has had the chance to test a number of ideas practically in her capacity as Convenor of the Economic Programme in the Alexandra Urban Development Project, on behalf of the Gauteng Department of Housing. Altman is responsible for the strategic direction and oversight of implementation of the Alexandra Renewal Project's Economic Programme

which currently has an annual budget in the region of R25 to R50 million, in addition to private finance for various site developments. In this programme of work, she has been able to further ideas on integrating township economies into the wider urban fabric, in this case aligning it to the Joburg 2030 vision.

According to Altman, Government has provided a useful benchmark against which to measure its success in its aim to halve unemployment by 2014. She has therefore established a project to frame “evidence-based employment scenarios”. These scenarios will use the best available evidence on labour supply and demand to chart a path to this objective.

A critical component of Altman's work from the late 1980s onwards has been her ability to engage, consult and facilitate discussions within different government departments and/or between different government, business or labour stakeholders. The need to ensure different constituencies are either kept informed or involved constitutes an important part of the work she is engaged in at the HSRC. Her approach is critical to achieving her vision of building EEPR into a premier think-tank on employment issues.

Altman ultimately believes that the EEPR can play an important role amongst a network of other organisations committed to developing policy positions around employment and economic policy questions. As part of such a network, Altman believes it is crucial that there is an improved flow of ideas between policy-makers from Government, institutions, business and the academic community. With her level of commitment and passion achieving this does seem possible.

She lives with her partner, Leslie Maasdorp and stepson Mikhail. They have been together since meeting in 1993 while participating in the ANC's Macro Economic Research Group. Outside of work, her passions include hiking, music (with eclectic tastes running from jazz to hip hop, soul and classical). And, depending on the pressures of work, she turns her attention to her artwork, which these days mainly involves figurative drawings in pencil and charcoal. •

Ms Renéé Grawitzky is Editor of the South African Labour Bulletin.

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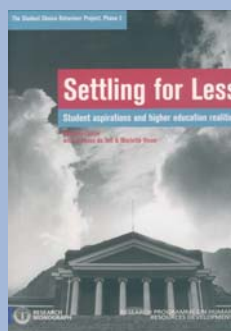


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Edited by Linda Chisholm

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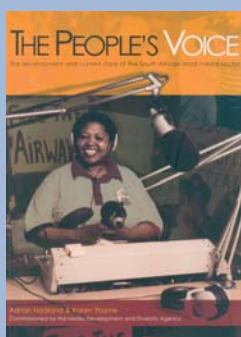


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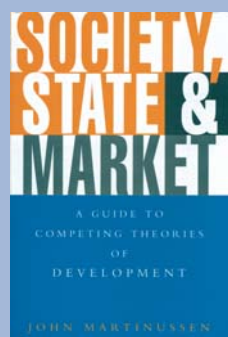


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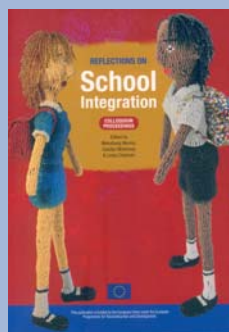
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John Martinussen

(A co-publication with Zed Books, London)

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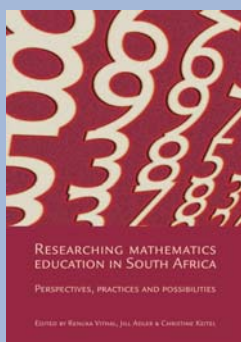


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