

# Governance and Society



Empowering society through our  
commitment to democracy, justice and  
human rights

# Crime and violence

Crime and violence are constant challenges for South Africa and therefore important areas of research for the HSRC. Our studies on crime and violence have deepened the common understanding of the incidence of violence in certain spheres of South African life.

Our initiatives have resulted in:

- Developing a better understanding of violent crime in societies in transition;
- Identifying factors that lead to xenophobic violence; and
- Publishing much needed information on gender-based violence and homophobia.

## Societies in transition: an international comparative study on violent crime

Our study aimed to find new and fresh ways to understand and conceptualise the problem of violence and to develop innovative directions that could guide our understanding and response to crime and violence.

It analysed the nature and causes of crime in countries that have undergone political transitions, as well as the measures that have been implemented to address the particular challenges of violent crime in a rapidly changing social environment.

A successful workshop, involving the United Cities and Local Governments for Africa (UCLGA), was attended by delegates from Latin America, India and Africa. The workshop was followed by a visit by Professor Antanas Mockus, the former mayor of Bogota, Colombia, in March 2009. While mayor, Mockus presided over significant homicide reductions. He shared his experiences and leadership lessons in addressing problematic

cause and effect relationships of violent crime in a developing and transitional urban context.

A national and provincial platform was established in South Africa for dialogue and debate with Mockus. The platform generated high-level government representation, including national and provincial ministers of Safety and Security, the mayor of Johannesburg, Business Against Crime, and the Cape Town mayoral committee member for safety and security.

The HSRC team that was involved in organising above events will be visiting Brazil and Colombia to study the initiatives that the two countries have implemented to combat violent crime. The team also aims to further consolidate a collaborative research plan for 2009 - 2011.

*Democracy and Governance programme*

## Study of violence and xenophobia in South Africa

The 2008 xenophobic violence and social unrest that left 50 people dead and thousands of others displaced, forms the backdrop to this study.

Our study aimed to inform policymakers, identify areas where more research is needed, and to think through the prevention of further outbreaks in the future.

Given the urgency of the problem, the study entailed a rapid solicitation of the views of South Africans. It was completed within a two-week period in some of South Africa's poorest



communities where xenophobic attacks against foreign nationals were most acute.

The rapid response and interventionist nature of the report that the HSRC compiled, has contributed meaningfully to making the xenophobia issue a priority on the national agenda. This includes the identification of related and interlinked research foci for deepening the national understanding of xenophobia through the formulation of research questions on:

- the links between xenophobic attitudes, gender and male violence; and
- the role of religion in xenophobia South Africa.

The research outcomes of our work have been positively reported on by the media and have enjoyed the interest of civil society, government and the international community.

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## Human trafficking

As a destination, transit, and country of origin for human trafficking, South Africa is exposed to the various negative consequences of this global phenomenon, such as sexual exploitation, forced labour, illegal adoptions and the extraction of body parts and organs.

Primary source countries in Africa include Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Lesotho and Swaziland. Trafficking victims who are brought into South Africa are primarily found in Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, mining communities and other isolated areas such as commercial farms. The South African phenomenon is also characterised by substantial in-country trafficking of rural women and children.

At the end of 2004, South Africa adopted the Palermo Protocol, an international protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children. A national task team consisting of government departments, international organisations and NGOs, has been established. The team is working on a national action plan to establish policy and allocate departmental responsibility to

ensure that South Africa meets its legal and moral commitments.

As part of the process, the European Union is funding a large-scale programme to assist the South African government. The research component of the programme - aimed at providing research services to deepen knowledge and understanding of human trafficking and to provide assistance to victims of crime - was awarded to the HSRC in December 2008.

Through its active involvement with this pioneering study, the HSRC is providing valuable research services that should ultimately benefit a range of stakeholders in addressing the human trafficking phenomenon in South Africa.

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## Gender-based violence and homophobia

A report based on a roundtable of stakeholders and victims of violence on the subject of gender-based violence, black lesbians, hate speech and homophobia, is being prepared to appear as a book.

Violence against black lesbians is often overlooked in the broader debates about rape of women and children. In partnership with OUT LGBT, the Durban Lesbian & Gay Community & Health Centre, and the Gay and Lesbian Archives of SA, the study shows how crime and violence have deep-seated gender dimensions in a patriarchal and hyper-masculine environment.

The book will be published towards the end of 2009.

*Policy Analysis and Capacity Enhancement unit*

# Democracy and governance

The HSRC investigates contributions to and constraints on democratisation processes and evaluates legislation, policies, strategies and the efficiency of public administration. Our research in this area seeks to inform public debates, policy development and implementation, and to assess the practice of the state and private bodies in strengthening democracy and accountability.

Our initiatives have resulted in:

- Establishing a knowledge base for research and capacity building of traditional governance systems in KwaZulu-Natal;
- Assisting the Free State provincial government in mapping a way forward in terms of meeting its social and economic targets;
- Measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the IEC voter registration process;
- Informing cabinet on the effectiveness and efficiency of the presidential *Izimbizo* programme;
- Investigating progress towards a democratic, developmental state;
- Coordinating and hosting an international symposium on *Knowledge and transformation: social and human sciences in Africa*;
- Disseminating wide-ranging sets of social attitudes via the annual South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS).

## Review of the presidential *Izimbizo* programme

The *Izimbizo* programme is one of the mechanisms introduced by the South African government to facilitate regular interaction and dialogue between the three spheres of government and members of the public.

As community participation forums, *Izimbizos* are intended to provide members of the public with opportunities to receive direct communication

about government programmes; and to hold government leaders accountable for service delivery. *Izimbizos* simultaneously afford government leaders the opportunity to receive direct feedback on government performance, both generally and on specific programmes. Programmes that aim at improving people's lives are of particular interest in the *Izimbizo* context.

The HSRC review of the *izimbizo* programme assessed the extent to which the programme has so far been effective in meeting its objectives.

The research outcomes provide valuable information that can be used in future research on other forms of public participation in decision-making and governance, at central, provincial and local government level. The review report was submitted to the Presidency in December 2008.

*Democracy and Governance programme*

## Constructing a democratic developmental state in South Africa

Building on an ongoing policy dialogue on the concept of a democratic developmental state for South Africa (conceived in 2007), the HSRC



hosted an international conference in partnership with the Development Bank of Southern Africa in June 2008.

Titled *The potentials for and challenges of constructing a democratic developmental state in South Africa*, the conference was attended by South African government representatives and some of the world's leading scholars in the field, including Professor Peter Evans from the University of California, Berkeley, USA; Dr Thandika Mkandawire from the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Geneva; Professor Ha-Joon Chang from the University of Cambridge, UK; Professor Izumi Ohno from the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, Tokyo, Japan; and Professor Jonathon Moses from the University of Science and Technology, Norway.

The conference arose out of recognition that although the concept of the developmental state has received considerable attention among South African academics, the ruling ANC party and the media, there was a lack of clarity and a common understanding of its meaning, policy orientation and institutional characteristics.

Important issues emerging from the conference included the following:

- The goal of a developmental state in South Africa should be the enhancement of human capabilities and improving the wellbeing of all South Africans, which requires paying greater attention to social policy.
- The state has to be both developmental and democratic - unlike the Asian authoritarian developmental state - and should therefore be founded on democratic principles.
- The social policy orientation is as important as its economic policy; what matters is ensuring that social and economic policy work in a complementary manner, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the wellbeing and livelihoods of all South Africans.

The conference led to intensive dialogue, generating a much firmer conceptual platform from which the nationally important project of understanding the developmental state in

South Africa has begun to emerge. It also drew attention to the capacity problem of the South African state; highlighted some institutional reforms that need to be undertaken to enhance the capacity of the state; and made proposals on how to address the implementation problem facing the state.

The HSRC Press will be publishing a book based on the conference recommendations, titled *Constructing a democratic developmental state in South Africa: potentials and challenges*, later this year.

*Policy Analysis and Capacity Enhancement unit*

## Free State 15-year Review

The attainment of democracy in 1994 presented government with twin challenges: significant institutional transformation and introducing new policies; dealing with the legacy of apartheid while at the same time facing new challenges of integrating the country in a rapidly changing global environment.

Similar to the review of the first decade of democracy and freedom at a national level, the Free State 15-year Review focused on the capacity of the provincial administration and its limitations.

It measured the performance of the Free State on the basis of its efficiency and effectiveness in realising certain policy objectives. The review investigated whether certain objectives were beyond the scope of direct state intervention.

The review of the Free State's performance in meeting certain social and economic targets paid specific attention to the system of governance as it operates in the province.

The review included results from a survey of 500 households, conducted by the HSRC Centre for Socio-Economic Surveys. The final report was presented during the Free State provincial cabinet lekgotla in January 2009.

*Democracy and Governance programme*



## History of traditional leadership

The KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs (DLGTA) has engaged the services of the HSRC until January 2011 to establish a knowledge base on the history of various traditional governance systems, as well as to record cultural practices associated with each *ubukhosi* in that province. The department aims at preserving cultural and customary practices that strengthen the institution of traditional leadership.

The research is already providing various stakeholders in the province with information that helps to support effective traditional leadership in the province, including the DLGTA, the Zulu Royal House, various government departments, traditional leaders of the province, and researchers.

*Democracy and Governance programme*

Dr Mbithi wa Kivilu, head of Socio-Economic Surveys (SES) at the HSRC (left) and Mr Yul Derek Davids, present their findings from a national survey on voter perceptions at a media conference in Midrand. The survey was commissioned by the Independent Electoral Commission before the 2009 general elections.



## Voter participation in 2009 elections

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) commissioned the HSRC to conduct a national survey on voter perceptions of, and behaviour towards, the 2009 national and provincial elections ahead of the said elections.

The study comprised a survey among voters, focus group discussions, and a desktop review. The study covered 18 focus groups drawn from Gauteng, Western Cape, Free State, KwaZulu Natal, Limpopo and North West Province. Information was gathered from the following special groups: youth, women, men, persons with disability, local government officials, and community leaders.

The report, which was submitted to the IEC in March 2008, found that over 73% of those interviewed were registered and that the majority found the registration process easy and efficient. Over 97% of those interviewed had the green bar-coded identification document, but 8% of young people aged between 18 and 24 did not have an ID document. Of those, 97% indicated that they intended applying for ID documents.

Asked whether they were registered, 73% of participants said yes, with the Northern Cape (82%) and the Eastern Cape (81%) reporting the highest proportion of registered voters.

Of those interviewed, the overwhelming majority (97%) found it easy to register and were provided with proof of registration. About 20% said that registration took approximately five to 10 minutes, while 16% spent more than 30 minutes on the registration process. Overall, voters were pleased with the performance of the IEC.

*Knowledge Systems unit*

## The South Africa and Middle East project

Between May 2007 and May 2008, the HSRC conducted a project that assessed political developments in the Middle East and that provided an independent research and analysis arm to the South African government during its

tenure as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

The multiple conflicts and related instability in the Middle East were deemed to have a negative impact on South Africa and the rest of Africa as evidenced by rising oil prices, deteriorating security, an insecure investment climate, and the 'war on terror' as it spilled into Somalia and surrounding territories.

The HSRC research project provided South Africa and the UN with valuable support in seeking constructive approaches to the above-mentioned challenges in the interest of the continent and the entire international community.

Research themes included the ideological, economic, social and political obstacles to peace; salvaging the two-state solution in Israel-Palestine; lessons from South Africa's transition to democracy; assessments of policy options for diplomatic relations with the Palestine authority; and Israel's declaration of the Gaza strip as 'hostile territory'.

In May 2009, an international conference of jurists and scholars assembled in London to discuss the research findings of the project and their political implications. This was followed by the *Re-visioning Israel/Palestine* conference held in Cape Town.

*Democracy and Governance programme*

## International symposium on knowledge and transformation

The HSRC, together with the International Social Science Council (ISSC), the International Council of Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (ICPHS) and the National Research Council hosted a landmark symposium on 27 and 28 November 2008, titled *Knowledge and transformation: social and human sciences in Africa*.

The symposium was the scientific highlight of the joint general assemblies of the ISSC and ICPHS and prepared the way for the production of the 2009 World Social Science Report, commissioned by Unesco and to be produced by

the ISSC, and the 2009 Unesco World Report on research in philosophy.

The scientific agenda of the symposium focused on the production of knowledge by Africans and the production of knowledge on Africa; and the contributions of human and social science to innovation and development in Africa.

The symposium was attended by prominent African scholars, such as Prof Bernard Magubane, director of South African Democracy Education Trust; Professor Adebayo Olukoshi, the executive secretary of CODESRIA; Pierre Sane, assistant director-general, Unesco, Paris; Dr Adama Samassekou, executive secretary of the African Academy of Languages; and Professor Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, head of the Department of African American Studies, University of Illinois, Chicago.

Sessions were held on topics that included the African Diaspora; gender, social policy and democratic development in Africa; reflexivity, learning, and quality education in Africa; health, society and the African public space; and food security, migration and climate change in Africa.

The symposium was of particular significance in the light of the statement in the South Africa government 15-year Review, that 'The government and the totality of the country's leadership need to improve South Africans' understanding of the conditions of people on the continent and our humanist role and obligations. More broadly, there is need to attend to the trend

Mr Adama Samassekou, executive secretary, African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) in Bamako, Mali (left) and Dr Olive Shisana, CEO of the HSRC, listen to a presentation at the international symposium in November 2008 in Stellenbosch on *Knowledge and transformation: social and human sciences in Africa*.



in some African countries for some prominent individuals increasingly and openly to question South Africa's credentials as a champion of the African cause'.

The papers presented at the symposium will be published by the HSRC Press in a book entitled *Knowledge and Transformation: Social and Human Sciences in Africa*.

*Policy Analysis and Capacity Enhancement unit*



## South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS)

SASAS is a nationally representative, cross-sectional survey that has been conducted annually by the HSRC since 2003. The survey charts and explains the interaction between the country's changing institutions, its political and economic structures, and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations.

Designed as a time series, SASAS is providing a unique, long-term account of the speed and direction of change in underlying public values and the social fabric of modern South Africa. SASAS represents a notable tool for monitoring

evolving social, economic and political values among South Africans. It holds promise as a predictive mechanism that can inform decision- and policy-making processes.

The SASAS analysis disseminated wide-ranging sets of findings during the 2008-2009 financial year, covering themes such as fear of crime, xenophobia, attitudes to the 2010 FIFA World Cup, homosexuality, local government service delivery performance, youth apathy and the role of religion in politics. Some of the salient findings from these analyses include the following:

**Fear of crime** - The study confirmed that deep-seated fears about personal and community safety continue to be shared by a sizable contingent of South Africans across the socioeconomic and demographic spectrum. This fear was found to exert an influence on confidence in the police force, the demand for public safety, social cohesion, personal wellbeing and, to a limited extent, satisfaction with the democratic system. Identifying, testing out and evaluating strategies for reducing fear of crime should be recognised as a priority alongside that of reducing crime itself.

**Xenophobia** - In the context of the wave of xenophobic violence that occurred in Alexandra and other poor urban communities across the country in May 2008, analysis of SASAS data on attitudes to foreign migrants was undertaken to inform the HSRC's rapid response study. In late 2007, approximately a third (32%) of South Africans expressed the view that they would not welcome any immigrants in South Africa. Another third indicated that they would be receptive to the presence of some immigrants, with only 34% unconditionally accepting foreign migrants to the country. Between 2003 and 2007, xenophobic sentiment tended to fluctuate within a relatively narrow range. Of especial note was the rapid escalation of xenophobic sentiment among those residing in the country's urban informal settlements between 2003 and 2007, which seemed to presage the ensuing conflict against foreign nationals in these areas.

**Homophobia** - Despite guaranteed constitutional freedoms, the survey demonstrated that South African society is still largely prejudiced in favour



of same-sex relations. The negative attitudes reported suggest that despite policy shifts and legal reform within the Bill of Rights, cultural prejudice remains strong. As the incidences of gay bashing and hate crimes against black lesbians attest, the victory of constitutional equality clearly has not guaranteed the end of social discrimination. The analysis suggests that there is much work remaining at the level of public education on diversity, including understanding same-sex issues.

**Youth apathy** - In the lead-up to the 2009 general elections, the study found that young South Africans are committed to the democratic process. A sizable majority of young people consider it a duty to vote while a smaller share holds the view that voting ultimately makes a difference.

Without even considering non-electoral forms of participation, young South Africans emerge as being as interested, aware and engaged in political matters as their elders. There are, however, significant racial differences in attitudes among the younger generation, with African youth expressing more positive attitudes towards voting than other population groups. This reflects heterogeneity in the historical background and

contemporary situation of young people and highlights the need for targeted interventions to encourage civic and political participation.

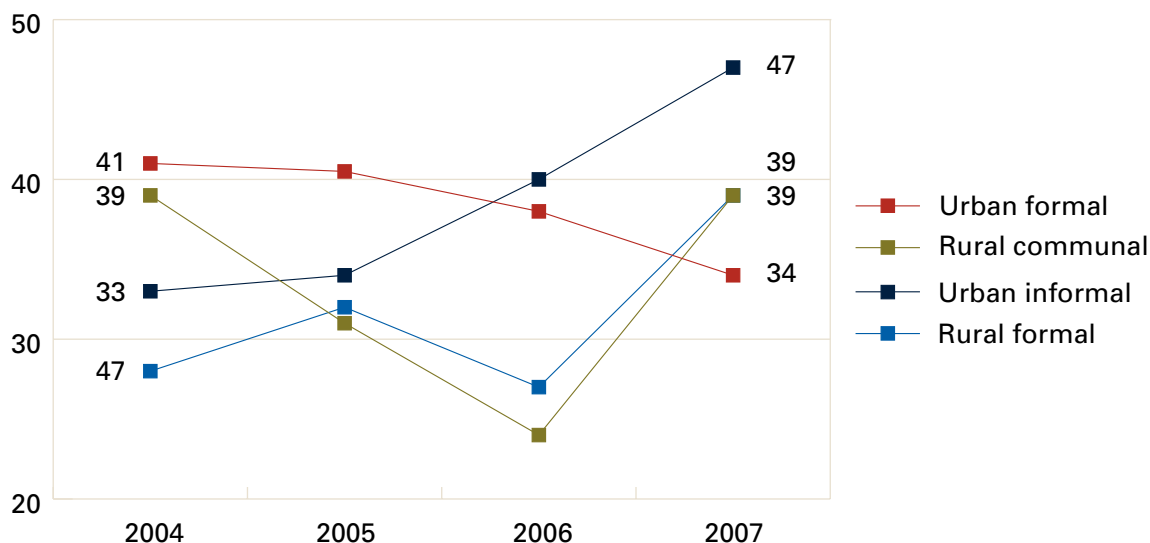
There are encouraging signs that the messages coming from SASAS are reaching decision-makers and are beginning to shape policy choices. Results emanating from the first six rounds of the survey (2003-2008) have been widely cited and discussed in the local print media and on radio. This is partly attributable to a dissemination strategy that focuses not only on formal academic publications, but also makes strategic use of the dedicated SASAS space that was introduced in the *HSRC Review* news magazine in 2007.

Nine of SASAS related articles were published in the *HSRC Review* during the financial year under review.

The attitudinal evidence from SASAS is also increasingly quoted by policymakers and featured in official documentation.

*Child, Youth, Family and Social Development programme*

**Figure 1: Xenophobic sentiment: percent of South Africans saying they welcome no foreigners to the country, by geographic location, 2003-2007**



## Data curation

A baseline funded project aimed at capturing all the SASAS data and other outputs to the NESSTAR platform. So far all the data and other documents on SASAS project from 2003 to 2007 have been captured. The next phase will involve capturing of data and related documents for both baseline and client funded projects.

*Knowledge Systems unit*

## Participation, reconciliation and social cohesion

Following the release of *A nation in the making*, the Presidency's review of macro-social trends in South Africa, the South African government has placed the question of 'social cohesion' on the national agenda. In the context of growing inequality in South Africa, the issues of reconciliation, participation and social cohesion have become especially important.

The HSRC report has tried to gauge the degree to which reconciliation has taken place in South Africa by measuring a host of indicators. This is a welcome intervention as violence and/or resistance is not a spontaneous consequence of either poverty or inequality. Instead, what matters is the presence/absence of institutions and discourses that produce cross-cutting solidarities

(of class or race) that off-set or aggravate potential antagonisms.

Working from this hypothesis, our project sought to build on the Presidency's work in two ways: moving from a description of social trends in South Africa to an analysis of what is behind them; and proposing interventions to further promote reconciliation by developing the social fabric.

Given that the working of democracy and the functioning of governments and markets depend on the social relations in which they operate, it then follows that:

- There is a need to understand what kinds of relations are conducive to these practices;
- It is necessary to consider the state of social relations in South Africa today; and
- It will be important for any scenario planning exercise to consider how government might encourage and strengthen socially valuable institutions and transform, contain or dissolve those that are not.

The research included a desktop study, reviews of existing literature, and interviews with experts in the field. The report findings were presented to a high-level audience, including members of government departments and the Presidency.

*Democracy and Governance programme*