

Poverty

We seek to make a contribution towards alleviating poverty through our research and development



It is our hope that, through our research, we are able to make a contribution to upliftment and development.



POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT

All research done within the HSRC has the eventual aim to contribute towards alleviating poverty, but some of the projects are directed towards research into interventions that could directly influence the dire situation of the poorest in the country.

Our initiatives have resulted in

- Concluding that social grants have a huge economic impact in communities, with pay-points providing trading markets for both local and outside entrepreneurs;
- Seeking ways to achieve poverty reduction through promoting the use of existing and new knowledge and local and indigenous technologies;
- Prioritising research into the impact of HIV/AIDS among orphans and vulnerable children;
- Concluding that poverty alleviation, through fast-tracking South Africa's urban development impetus, is unlikely to be a significant outcome of the 2010 World Cup;
- Revealing that mental health services in four African countries have inadequate budgets with little attention paid to common mental disorders;
- Enhancing understanding of child poverty and evaluating barriers to accessing the Child Support Grant and other child social protection measures; and
- Developing a comprehensive and updated profile of the child poverty situation in South Africa.

Welfare grants

The economic impact of welfare grants on selected KwaZulu-Natal communities, commissioned by the Department of Economic Development KwaZulu-Natal, found that a large number of grant recipients spend their money on commodities that are essential for households. The pay-points themselves provided huge trading markets for both local and outside entrepreneurs. The study concluded that social grants have a huge economic impact in the study areas. A sizeable number of people had managed to start their own small businesses using grant money. At the same time, local formal businesses benefit from grant income as they provide part of the market where recipients spend their money. These effects had also resulted in employment creation for some either on a permanent and/or temporary basis. Policy recommendations include improving access roads and the trading environment at grant pay-points; and addressing taxi violence and crime in general.

Economic development through technology

As the custodian of the national system of innovation, the DST aims to ensure that technology is harnessed towards the objective of rural development. One initiative is the creation of a South African chapter of the African Institute for Capacity Development, namely AICAD-SA. Broadly speaking, AICAD-SA seeks to achieve poverty reduction by means of promoting the utilisation of existing and new knowledge and technologies, including local and indigenous technologies, in

part by facilitating the sharing of information. One of the first steps towards making AICAD-SA a reality is to establish the current technologically-oriented poverty reduction initiatives in South Africa. This will assist the department to figure out how it should position itself to make the greatest possible difference in the fight against poverty. A study conducted by the HSRC, with a particular focus on rural areas, assembled various pieces of information and analysis regarding contemporary, programmatic attempts to promote rural development in South Africa through the use of technology. The emphasis of the exercise was specifically on the development and/or transfer of technologies that seek to address poverty by means of supporting productive activities.

Orphans and vulnerable children

One of the consequences of the hyper-endemic nature of HIV/AIDS in the southern African region has been the premature death of parents of young children, which has produced large numbers of orphans. This has exacerbated an already hazardous situation in which many children are vulnerable because of pervasive levels of poverty. Consequently, research into mitigation of the impact of HIV/AIDS among orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) has been made a priority in order to identify best practices that help improve both their own conditions as well as those of their caregivers in line with imperatives of the NSP. Several outstanding reports in a five-year study in Botswana and Zimbabwe on OVC, funded by the WK Kellogg Foundation, were published in 2007.

FIFA 2010 World Cup and poverty

It is unlikely that poverty alleviation, as a result of fast-tracking South Africa's urban development impetus, will constitute a significant outcome of the 2010 World Cup. This is one of the conclusions reached in a study, captured in a forthcoming book on 2010 titled *Development and Dreams*. The research has revealed that a unique moment has been lost regarding the ability of the 2010 World Cup to serve as a catalyst for urban development. Development benefits in cities are therefore likely to be fairly circumscribed. The study reflected on the urban development implications of the 2010 World Cup, and an academic and applied component. The applied component seeks to contribute to city strategic

and planning occurring at all levels of government. The applied component is given effect through research, peer-reviewed publications and through an annual poll of public attitudes to the 2010 World Cup.

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Mental health and poverty

The Mental Health and Poverty Project (MHAPP), funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), seeks to improve mental health policy and action in Ghana, Uganda, Zambia and South Africa. A situational analysis revealed that mental health services have inadequate budgets with little attention paid to common mental disorders such as depression and anxiety. While traditional healers are viewed as important to mental health service delivery, they are poorly integrated into primary health-care services. All four countries are currently in the process of developing district-level demonstration projects, potentially to be taken up by the Department of Health as part of their delivery of primary mental health-care services.

Child Support Grant

The further development of the Going to Scale Research Project funded, among others, by a Rockefeller Brothers Fund grant, has several aims. Firstly, to enhance understanding of child poverty defined in the multi-dimensional sense. Secondly, to evaluate barriers to accessing the Child Support Grant and other child social protection measures; and lastly, to test the relative cost effectiveness of an additional conditional versus unconditional income allowance for ultra-poor children and their families in high HIV/AIDS prevalence communities.

Child poverty

A collaborative research project with the Economics department at Stellenbosch University on child poverty reviewed the existing evidence base on child poverty. The study also developed a comprehensive and updated profile of the child poverty situation in South Africa, using the recent Income and Expenditure Survey 2005/06. The result will be discussed in a workshop with policy-makers and practitioners and will be included in a policy brief in 2008/09.



Participants at the *Scanning the horizon and influencing the future* discussion

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

Many HSRC studies look at circumstances and tendencies in society that lead to social exclusion, alienation and disenfranchisement within South African society, for example, people with disabilities, the elderly, women, orphans and vulnerable children.

Our initiatives have resulted in

- Findings that many inequalities remain despite post-apartheid South African policies directed at correcting historical injustices;
- Seeking ways to develop and sustain cultural and gender-based interventions to eliminate stigma associated with HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support; and
- Facilitating the formation of coalitions in various African countries to confront official discrimination against access to HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment.

Inequalities in health remain

A study titled 'Social Exclusion and Health Inequities – SEKN [Social Exclusion Knowledge Network] Policy Appraisal and SA Case Study' found that although many of the policies in post-apartheid South Africa have been directed at correcting historical injustices, many of the inequalities still remain at both macro and micro levels. The review, which forms part of work being done for the WHO's Commission on Social Determinants of Health, also showed that greater attention is needed to ensure effective implementation of these policies.



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Social protection against stigma

A five-year project, Social Protection, ending in 2008, aims to strengthen research infrastructure and capacity at the universities of the Western Cape and Limpopo. The project, funded by the USA's National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) through Pennsylvania State University, seeks to develop and sustain cultural and gender-based interventions for elimination of stigma associated with HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support. The eventual aim is to develop an HIV/AIDS stigma scale and test anti-stigma interventions. In the quest to protect vulnerable groups, develop and support sustainable communities with the aim of reducing poverty, promote social inclusion (and reduce its counterpart social exclusion), Social Protection encompasses aspects of mental health, poverty, burden of disease and disability, and access to services. An ongoing activity is to analyse social protection policy documents and their implementation plans in addressing marginalised groups.

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Commercial sex workers and MSM

Several workshops and meetings with MSM, poor (unofficial) female commercial sex workers and policy-makers in various African countries were organised through the SAHARA network. These countries were invited to join the processes of HIV/AIDS strategic planning led by the Senegalese National AIDS Committee. The network also assisted MSM in various African countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Ghana), to form coalitions and confront official denial and discrimination against access to prevention, care and treatment. It was able to bring about: the integration of vulnerable groups in official institutions and in the construction of policy and programme responses; the integration of women traditional leaders into the national responses; the integration of an African perspective into approaches and policies developed by international agencies; and advocacy and lobbying aimed at African heads of state.



SERVICE DELIVERY

Post-apartheid policy in South Africa has focused on the effective and efficient delivery of services to the majority, particularly rural African inhabitants, who have historically been deprived of basic essential services such as water and sanitation, housing, electricity and health facilities. Scientific research towards understanding and explaining the dominant trends in service delivery provision for human development is critical, as is analysing and generating practical solutions to problems of planning and administration.

Our initiatives have resulted in

- Stimulating improved responsiveness of municipalities providing and overseeing water services;
- Speeding up housing and service delivery projects by providing basic planning data at community level;
- Strengthening and supporting the implementation of prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) programmes in districts in the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga provinces.

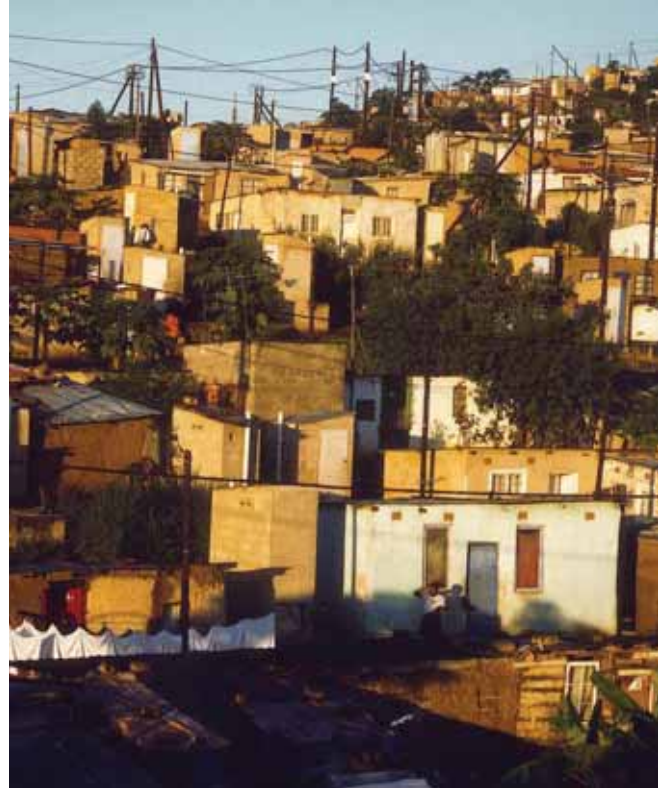
Involving citizens in water delivery

The strategy is to stimulate improved service delivery through these reporting exercises, which will lead to an increase in the responsiveness of municipalities providing and overseeing water services.

As the focus of the national Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) shifts from delivery to regulation, there is keen interest in ways in which citizens can participate. A research team drew up ten indicators (including consultation, access, flow and children's health) central to water standards, which can be used by communities to report to municipalities with the responsibility for water services. Community members have been trained to undertake exercises (such as mapping and surveys) to provide the basis by which services can be measured and judged. A final scorecard in a set of tools provides the input into local regulation. The strategy is to stimulate improved service delivery through these reporting exercises, which will lead to an increase in the responsiveness of municipalities providing and overseeing water services. Successful regulation requires the involvement of thousands of communities and the tool is designed for this task.

Spatial planning for housing and service delivery

The second phase of the joint CSIR/DST Integrated Planning, Development and Modelling project has been registered, and the HSRC is developing a highly innovative new tool to assist spatial planning for housing and service delivery by local government. This work analyses the demographics of settlement at community level in order to profile demand quickly and accurately for purposes of delivering the appropriate housing for specific informal and formal settlements where there is urgent housing need. It is directed to speeding up housing and



service delivery projects by providing basic planning data at community level, where no such data is available in South Africa to municipalities struggling with weak planning capacity. The same HSRC research team has been invited to sit on the national Department of Housing (DoH) reference group for its Policy Research Unit, and has also completed a short study into urban land management for Planact and the Wits School of Public Administration. These initiatives build on critical policy papers written during the previous year for the national DoH, DFID's Urban Land Management Programme and the South African Housing Foundation. The DoH Research Unit has also invited the HSRC as preferred supplier to tender for a major research paper on informal settlements upgrading policy as part of government's current review of the Breaking New Ground housing policy.

Health service delivery

One of the ambitious aims of the NSP is to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV to less than 5%. A five-year study to improve the effectiveness and coverage of the PMTCT services, especially in poor, rural areas is underway. This study forms part of the Marang project funded by the USA's Presidential Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through a collaborative agreement with the USA's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The study seeks to strengthen and support the implementation of PMTCT programmes in Cacadu district of the Eastern Cape and will soon be extended to another district in Mpumalanga.