

# Surveys, Analyses and Mapping

One of the new cross-cutting research fields introduced in the HSRC over the past year brings together its capacity in surveys, quantitative and qualitative analyses, and Geographical Information Systems (GIS). This clustering of HSRC research and technology skills will support the move from previous fixed research groups and programmes to flexible, user-driven and responsive New Priority Areas to meet development research needs.

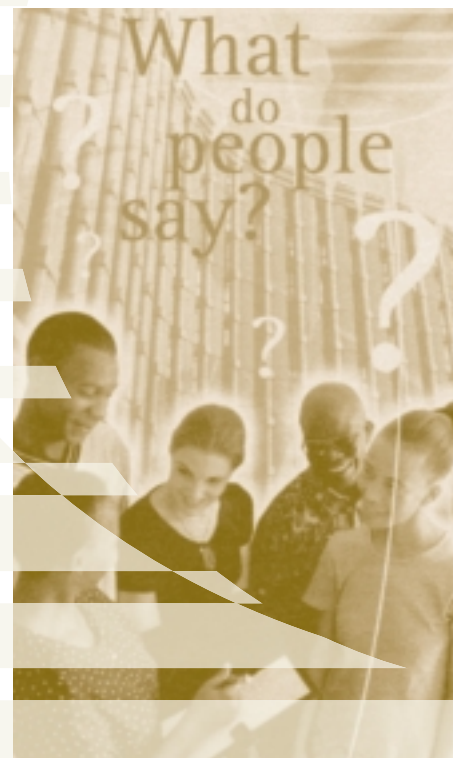
## Social surveys

Democracy requires governments and policy-making institutions to be informed about citizens' needs and aspirations, and citizens in turn need to be informed about policies that may impact on their lives. The measurement and assessment of key institutional transformation processes, and the evaluation of public opinion and attitudes, can yield essential information on the extent to which democratic principles are entrenched in organisational structures and cultures.

In the year under review the regular baseline-funded **evaluation of public opinion** in South Africa during September 2000 was complemented by similar surveys undertaken simultaneously in Lesotho and Namibia. Data were collected on service delivery, governance, national priorities, democratic principles, political preferences, crime, economic policy and levels of trust in public institutions in these SADC countries.

The survey findings generated widespread media interest (especially those related to party political support) at the time of the South African local government election. Indicative top-line results were that 49% of the South African respondents regarded job creation as the most important priority for the government in the next ten years, while 44% felt that race relations in South Africa had improved since 1994.

Additionally, the survey in South Africa included questions inserted by a range of external clients on matters of importance to their spheres of operation. These clients included the Independent Complaints Directorate (perceptions of its function); the National Gambling Board (gambling behaviour); Uthingo (Lotto ticket purchases); the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (human rights); Statistics South Africa (awareness of the 2001 census); the Working for Water Programme (eradication of invader alien plants), and the Medical Research Council (caregiving). Three volumes based on the public opinions will be published in the course of 2001.

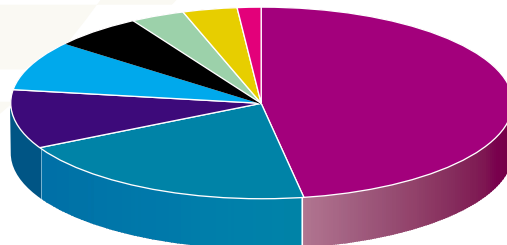




*Public opinion is the thermometer a monarch should constantly consult.*

– Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France

- Unemployed (47,1%)
- Student (20,5%)
- Housewife (9,1%)
- Full-time employed (8,2%)
- Self-employed (6,4%)
- Pensioner (4,0%)
- Part-time employed (4,0%)
- Informal sector (0,7%)



Employment status of potential problem gamblers, March 2000

Apart from the regular baseline-funded surveys of public opinion, three projects were won through competitive tenders. The National Gambling Board commissioned the HSRC to undertake a study on the **social impact of gambling**.

The survey found that potentially problem gamblers were most likely to be unemployed people, housewives, students or the self-employed. More than a fifth of the gamblers interviewed admitted that they sometimes or usually used their household money for gambling.

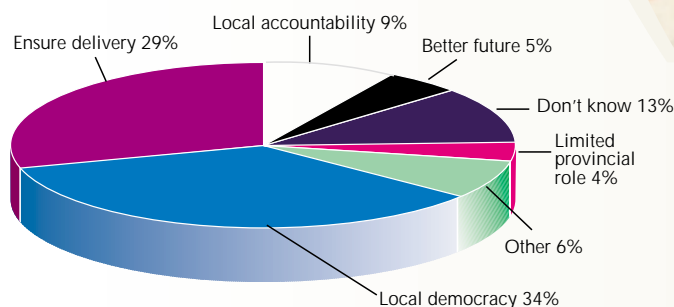
The report recommended interventions such as a national help line, closer monitoring of casino clients for potential compulsive behaviour and the removal of ATMs from the immediate vicinity of slot machines. In November 2000 the HSRC and the National Gambling Board jointly published a book entitled *The social impact of gambling in South Africa*.

Two surveys on the **local government election** were conducted on behalf of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The first took place during November 2000 to establish potential needs for additional information about the

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scheduled election on 5 December. One finding was that there was public confusion about whether or not it was necessary to re-register, voters having previously registered for the 1999 national election.

In an exit poll (the first ever) on election day, the HSRC surveyed 11 135 voters at 210 voting stations across the country. More than 91% pronounced the local government election free and fair. Significantly, it emerged that unemployed and older people were much more likely to have participated in the election than their working or younger counterparts. The reasons for this are likely to be investigated in future HSRC research projects.



Responses from the local government election day survey to the question: "Why is it important to vote?"

To determine the extent to which citizens of the **North West** province were aware of and participated in **legislative processes**, the HSRC did a provincial survey at the request of the legislature. The findings revealed limited public participation in political meetings, public hearings and other legislative processes. It further emerged that greater exposure to and therefore knowledge of the provincial legislature and its procedures was needed to enhance public trust, approval, acceptance and involvement.

In the **future** the HSRC will continue to collect and analyse survey and primary data in order to identify trends in public attitudes to topical national issues such as crime, governance and corruption. In February 2001 the HSRC, as part of a consortium, was awarded a contract project worth approximately R3 million by South African Tourism to conduct a national domestic survey.

Planning is under way for the next national public opinion survey (during June 2001) among adults selected throughout the nine provinces of South Africa, as well as in Swaziland and Zambia. It will test the views of a representative sample of all sectors of the population on the basis of which scientific conclusions can be drawn.

## ENQUIRIES

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Social Surveys

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One of the first books to use GIS to outline government spending on infrastructure development in South Africa.

Regarding the impact of HIV/AIDS on children a

## Geographical Information Systems

The GIS Centre of the HSRC is a major provider of mapped information in South Africa. Its mission is to develop spatial information systems in collaboration with HSRC researchers in order to help policy makers address the many complex issues in the country.

During 2000/01 the GIS Centre refocused its activities so as to provide a far more project management-oriented service to its stakeholders, while at the same time maintaining a high quality of service. In so doing it actively supported HSRC researchers and external stakeholders.

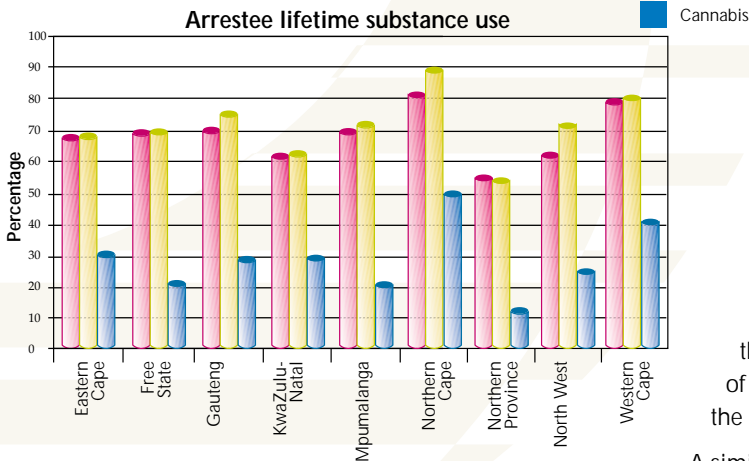
In the period under review various topical issues were dealt with. The three-year project on **arrestee drug abuse monitoring**, funded by the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST), involved an investigation into the complex relationship between drug use and crime in South Africa. The research aimed at establishing the implications of such links for law enforcement and socio-economic strategies against crime. The main findings are contained in a report due for release soon.

The Command Centre for Flood Relief and Emergency Construction commissioned the GIS Centre to track the geographic location of all the **emergency disaster** projects. Apart from presenting the results in GIS format, information was also collected from the provinces on the budget allocations for each emergency disaster project, the actual expenditure, the time budgeted for completion of the project, and the actual time that it took to complete the work.

A similar project arose from a request by the Department of Labour to geolocate the position of all its **labour centres** to help with the implementation of an appropriate national strategy for human resources development and job creation. Work is in progress to refine and integrate information received from the labour centres, education role players and employers. This will strengthen the research foundation of the HRD Strategy (mentioned earlier).

The GIS Centre was requested by DACST to integrate four different **placenames** databases for use by the South African Geographical Names Council. The composite GIS database of more than 500 000 placenames covers the whole of South Africa and will form the basis of the government's undertaking to register and authorise placenames.

In the **future** the GIS Centre will, in partnership with HSRC researchers and external stakeholders, continue to develop spatial/GIS databases to provide up-to-date and accurate information to decision makers, and enable them to meet the needs of South Africa and its people. Examples are a contract project to link census and lifestyle segmentation data for the Department of Agriculture, and a collaborative venture funded by DACST to create an integrated development GIS system for SADC countries.



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