

# HSRC International Brief

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## HSRC contributes to debates and discussions at World Social Science Forum

The HSRC had a very prominent presence at the International Social Science Council's first World Social Science Forum that was held from the 10 - 12 May in Bergen, Norway. The Forum brought together approximately 800 participants from 85 countries under the theme *One planet - Worlds apart?* to demonstrate the global presence, impact and authority of the social sciences.



*Mr William Blankley and Dr Neo Molotja from the HSRC*

Several institutions and universities from South Africa took part, most notably the National Research Foundation of South Africa, and the Universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Rhodes and the Western Cape.

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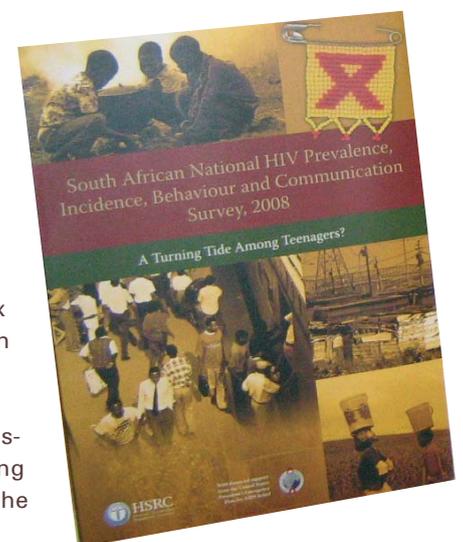
## Release of the 3<sup>rd</sup> survey on HIV prevalence, incidence and communication in South Africa

The report of the third national HIV prevalence, incidence and communication survey, conducted in 2008, was launched on 9 June 2009. Dr Olive Shisana, chief executive officer of the HSRC and a principal investigator of the study, presented the report to the national Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi.

The survey was conducted by the HSRC in partnership with the Medical Research Council (MRC), the Centre for AIDS Development, Research and Evaluation, and the National Institute for Communicable Diseases in Johannesburg. The study results showed that HIV prevalence in the population two years and older was 10.9%. The study estimated that in 2008 about 5.2 million of the total population were HIV-positive.

Successes recorded in the study included a reduction in HIV prevalence in the teenage population, which indicates an overall decline in HIV in the teenage population of 15-19 years in 2008; the percentage of people in the age group 15-49 who reported awareness of their HIV status has doubled from 2005 to 2008. ; and the proportion of the population who reported using a condom at their last sexual encounter was particularly high among young people aged 15-24 years: from 57% in 2002 to 87% in 2008 among young males, and from 46% to 73% among young females. This trend was also obvious in condom use among people in the 25-49 age group, where condom use among males at last sex has nearly doubled, while among females in the same age group it has tripled.

The challenges that remained were the persistent high levels of HIV prevalence among females aged 25-29, namely 33% over the period of three surveys.



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## LOOKING AT CRIME AND SHARING EXPERIENCES WITH COLOMBIA AND BRAZIL

South Africa is known for its high levels of violent crime, which impacts adversely on the relations between its citizens and undermines the potential of its human capital. The South African experience, taken in the international context, is however neither exceptional nor unique. Following a successful international workshop held in March in Cape Town, it became clear that a comparative understanding of the challenge would deepen the understanding of the levels of violence in

South Africa. Such a study would develop an understanding of the challenge violence represents for the long-term consolidation of democracy in the South, and provide knowledge to formulate innovative social interventions to address these challenges at a local policy level.

To establish a research



## Release of the 3<sup>rd</sup> survey on HIV prevalence, incidence and communication in South Africa

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**Ms Chantal Cuddumbey, Nelson Mandela Foundation's 46664 Campaign; Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, Minister of Health and Dr Olive Shisana, CEO of the HSRC**

Health Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, in receiving the report, reflected on the positives of the report, stating: that "there is clearly light at the end of the tunnel, there is real light".

To download the report, click [here](#).

## HSRC researcher awarded fellowship to Newcastle University



**Prof. Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya**

As part of its ongoing commitment to supporting high quality research and to attract top people, the Newcastle University upon Tyne made available funds for visiting professorships and fellowships in 2009. The University's academic units were invited to nominate outstanding scholars.

Prof. Nigel Unwin of the Institute of Health and Society nominated Prof. Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya in October 2008 and she was awarded the fellowship to visit Newcastle University from 17 May to 25 June 2009. The overall aim was to build collaborative links between the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health research programme and the Institute.

A specific objective of the fellowship was to write a joint Newcastle-HSRC programme grant application to the Wellcome Trust based on the impact, treatment and prevention of chronic diseases in those aged 50 and above in South Africa. Specific activities during the visit included:

hosting an Institute seminar, meeting individuals with complementary interests, writing joint papers and proposals, and co-presenting preliminary research findings at the Sub-Saharan Chronic Disease Seminar at Copenhagen University in Denmark.

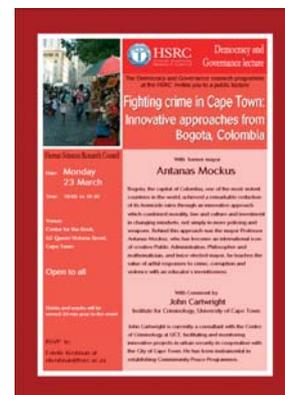
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## LOOKING AT CRIME AND SHARING EXPERIENCES WITH COLOMBIA AND BRAZIL

network on violent crime, colleagues from the research programme on Democracy and Governance (D&G), Vanessa Barolsky, Suren Pillay and Diana Sanchez-Betancour, undertook a visit to research partners in Colombia and Brazil in June.

In Bogota, meetings were held with the former mayor, Antanas Mockus, who visited the HSRC in March and whose approach to developing policies to create safer communities was enthusiastically received by policy makers in South Africa at provincial and national levels. The D&G team conducted extensive interviews with key administrators involved in the successful implementation of policy there, which radically reduced the homicide rates in the city over a ten-year period. Meetings were also conducted with civic, youth and private sector organisations who have implemented innovative strategies to assist in creating safer communities through the cultivation of citizenship based on the respect for life.

It was clear from these initiatives that considerable lessons could be learnt for South Africa, both at a research level of understanding the nature of the challenge of violent crime, and at the policy level. In Brazil, meetings were held with colleagues at the State University of Rio, the UN-Habitat division of Brazil, and the Centre for the Study of Violence at the University of Sao Paulo. Visits were also undertaken to NGO projects focused on addressing violence in the favelas - the poor areas of Sao Paulo and Rio. The levels of inequality and violence that characterise these cities, and the patterns of racial and urban segregation, suggest that key lessons and experiences can be usefully shared by consolidating active research and policy partnerships with organisations in Brazil in the future.



## HSRC contributes to debates and discussions at World Social Science Forum

The HSRC hosted two sessions, session one was titled, *The science of science and innovation policy* and session two, *Rethinking social policies in light of the response to the financial crisis: How to turn crisis into opportunity for social development and policies?*

### The science of science and innovation policy

In this session, sponsored by the HSRC and the European Cooperation in the Field of Scientific and Technical Research (COST), the topic of modern knowledge economies and innovation came under the spotlight. Knowledge economies and innovation is pursued through education policies, designed to foster a flexible work force, and through research policies that promote innovation, adaptability and flexibility. The discussion focused on the social science evidence base for different innovation policies and regimes; and questions such as how policymakers evaluate the investments made in science and research; how can communities linking scientists, firms and policymakers be built to address the complex dynamics in today's global, high-tech society; and what new institutional arrangements may be needed. The session was chaired by Mr William Blankley, the director of the HSRC's Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators, and Dr Neo Molotja, a research specialist in the same Centre.

#### Speakers and topics were as follows:

- R&D and innovation surveys: the difficulties in shaping the future, presented by Fred Gault, former chair of the OECD working party of national experts on science and technology indicators (NESTI), and member of the management team for the OECD Innovation Strategy, Canada.
- The contribution of entrepreneurs from low-skilled immigrant groups to innovative activity in the host country - evidence from Germany. The speaker was Elisabeth Müller, a senior researcher in the ZEW Centre for European Economic Research, Mannheim, Germany.
- Innovation in the rural network society: A social science perspective on ICTs and development approaches, presented by T.T. Sreekumar, assistant professor

in the Communication & New Media Programme, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore.

- Regional based innovation surveys: do we need them and for what? Presented by Prof. John Forje, Department of Political Science, University of Yaounde, Cameroon.
- Progressive nature of national systems of innovation. How do we infer it? The speaker was Prof. Sunil Mani, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, Kerala, India.
- Collaboration, productivity, and networking in African science, presented by Prof. Wesley Shrum, Department of Sociology, Louisiana State University, USA, and Secretary of the Society for Social Studies of Science.

### Rethinking social policies in light of the response to the financial crisis. How to turn the crisis into an opportunity for social development and policies?

In this session, convened by the HSRC with UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme as co-sponsor, the worsening financial and economic crisis was discussed, which is threatening to seriously reverse progress towards international development goals, including the MDGs. The economic crisis also negatively affects achieving human rights for the most vulnerable population groups and has shown the need to rethink social policies. What is required is a real "global new deal" and welfare states with a social contract in which social justice, solidarity and the enjoyment of human rights for all is promoted, especially for women who are the backbones of the family. The need was emphasised for cooperation between policy-makers, researchers, NGOs and the private sector, and for donor countries to respect the Monterrey consensus of providing 0.7% of their GNP in official development assistance.

The session was chaired by Mr Pierre Sané, assistant director-general of the Sector for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO.

#### Speakers and topics were as follows:

- The impact of the financial crisis on

social policies in South Africa and corresponding policy responses, presented by the former South African Minister of Social Development, Dr Zola Skweyiya, who is also the president of UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme.

- The importance of bilateral and international cooperation in the context of the financial crisis, especially focusing on human rights based approaches and the need to keep official development assistance commitments, presented by Elisabeth Walaas, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway
- Actors in social policy formulation and social development in Jordan in times of crisis - the role of government, academics, researchers and the private sector - and how to ensure the linkages between them, presented by Mrs Hala Bsaisu Lattouf, Minister of Social Development, Jordan.
- Protecting women in times of economic and social crisis, presented by Dr Pinkie Mekgwe, CODESRIA
- The future of the welfare state. Is global welfare and a global new deal possible? The speaker was Dr Manuel Riesco, Chile, vice-president of Chile's National Centre for Alternative Development Studies

The forum provided networking opportunities with key research institutions and individuals, ranging from the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) to representatives from India, the Middle East, Asia and Japan. The HSRC's exposure to the international community was excellent and will no doubt prove beneficial in the longer-term.

The HSRC exhibition space was popular with significant interest in our books, brochures and other materials displaying the kind of research we undertake.



Mr Garry Rosenberg, Ms Brigette Prince and Dr Temba Masilela from the HSRC

## Top HSRC researcher briefs UNAIDS on children



**Professor Linda Richter**  
on 23 April 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Professor Richter said the main focus of the time-limited, two-year initiative, was

a knowledge collaboration within an independent, interdisciplinary network of researchers, policy makers, practitioners, community leaders, activists and people living with AIDS. The aim was to generate a new agenda for children affected by HIV and AIDS. In the main, JLICA addressed its recommendations to the role of governments in supporting families to provide care and protect children.

JLICA Learning Group 1, Strengthening Families, was co chaired by Professor Richter and Professor Lorraine Sherr of the University College, London.

The JLICA final report and Professor Richter's key message at the 2008 AIDS Conference in Mexico highlighted that children have been ignored in the epidemic and countries have failed to give children the same level of priority as other vulnerable groups affected by the

epidemic. And in instances where the plight of children were picked up, the issues have been misperceived and we have tended to emphasise only the plight of orphans.

**The four key strategies identified to deliver better results for children affected by HIV/AIDS are:**

- Providing support for children to and through their families
- Strengthening community support for families
- Promoting national social protection systems to address family poverty, and
- Delivering integrated, family-centred services through health,
- Education and social welfare.

See [www.jlica.org](http://www.jlica.org) and [www.hsrb.ac.za/JLICA-81.phtml](http://www.hsrb.ac.za/JLICA-81.phtml)

## Education quality and curriculum reform in Zambia

Dr Anil Kanjee, who heads up the HSRC's Centre for Education Quality Improvement (CEQI), was invited to give the keynote address at the National Curriculum Review Symposium in Lusaka. The topic of his address was Curriculum reform and education quality: Challenges and prospects for improving learning. The symposium, hosted by the Zambian Ministry of Education and supported by UNICEF, formed part of the Ministry of Education's planning process to critically examine the relevance of the curriculum at all levels of the education system in that country and to initiate a comprehensive research agenda for aligning the current curriculum to the national Vision 2030 goals of the country. The symposium was attended by the Minister of Education, the Minister in the office of the president, senior national and provincial education officials and delegates from Zambia and other African countries. Dr Kanjee mapped global trends in curricula reform over the last few decades, focusing on sub-Saharan Africa, pointing out changes that took place in assessment practices, the approaches to curricula, and the initial and continuing professional development of teachers. It underscored the need for a comprehensive reform process to education quality in which curricula reform is at the heart of improving quality. The presentation forms part of the ongoing work of CEQI and laid the foundation for future work and contact with colleagues in sub-Saharan Africa.



**Dr Anil Kanjee, HSRC; Dr B Nsemukila, Permanent Secretary for Education and Prof. G Lungwagwa (MP), Zambian Minister of Education**

## The effectiveness of child welfare grants in Namibia

The HSRC is undertaking a qualitative research study of the effectiveness of child welfare grants in Namibia, commissioned by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) and UNICEF Namibia.



The study, a collaborative initiative involving the MGECW, UNICEF Namibia, PACT Namibia, the HSRC and a local research organisation, Survey Warehouse, focuses on two of the child welfare grants, namely the Foster Care Grant and State Maintenance Grant. Since 2000, there has been a rapid roll out of the State Maintenance Grant and Foster Care Grant in Namibia, but to date there has been no assessment of how these two grants have been assisting towards meeting of basic needs in recipient households and helping children to access critical services or of what the

**Mr Ben Roberts**

# Vibrant HSRC Press programme at the Cape Town Book Fair

The HSRC Press hosted a vibrant programme of panel discussions and workshops at the 2009 Cape Town

and academic Mahmood Mamdani to discuss aspects of his latest book, *Saviours and Survivors: Darfur, Politics*

in this arena. The Book Fair kicked off his extensive author tour with multiple engagements in Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg and Durban.



*State of the Nation panel*

International Book Fair, which has become a regular event on their annual diary. With input from outspoken journalists, top academics, veteran activists and respected scholars, the programme was an engaging exchange of ideas around relevant and sometimes contentious topics.

Panels convened by the HSRC Press marketing department looked at the so-called skills shortage which was put under the spotlight by a team of researchers who questioned the nature and extent of the problem. The recently published *State of the Nation* was placed under review, with commentary on the challenges that face the country, 15 years into our new democracy. Electric capitalism and the environment were examined in a discussion which explores whether government's pro-poor development plans are working in tandem with environmental policies. The myth or reality of teacher shortages was questioned by experts in the field, homosexual transmission of HIV/AIDS was investigated by both health activists and academics as was the benefits and pitfalls of hosting the 2010 World Cup. The question of how to write history in the wake of apartheid came under review and the politics of sexuality and desire were interrogated by a panel of professionals.

The HSRC Press invited esteemed author

*and the War on Terror* (HSRC Press). He focussed on the conflict in Darfur, Sudan, in the context of a manipulative



*Mamdani Dalro Forum*

media and an ominous political agenda, taking a critical look at the major players

The HSRC Press also co-organised the third *Information for change workshop*, together with CODESRIA, the IDRC, Oxfam GB and the World Bank. The *Information for change* workshops bring together individuals and organisations involved in generating, publishing, and using information for development from all parts of Africa. The workshops engaged representatives from research organisations, advocacy organisations, community development organisations and networks, whether NGO managers, resource centre organisers, librarians, academics, publishers or students.

The focus of the maiden gathering, held in 2007, was on *Generating, publishing and applying knowledge for development while the 2008* workshop was based on *Integrating alternative media into publishing strategies*. The theme of this year's workshop was *Publishing for policy impact: How researchers, activists and policymakers could work with publishers to enhance policy change* and explored how publishers, working with the others, can better support effective policy formulation, to achieve greater impact on policy change. Roshan Cader from the HSRC Press made a poster presentation at the workshop, while Press director Garry Rosenberg chaired a number of the sessions.

The feedback from the all-day workshop was enthusiastic and everyone who attended indicated the usefulness of the fruitful discussion and informative presentations.



*Poster presentations*

## EquiAble access to healthcare for the disabled



*Ms Margie Schneider*

In March this year Margie Schneider of the programme on Child, Youth, Family and Social Development (CYFSD) participated in the launch of the 'EquiAble' project, which stands for Enabling universal and equitable access to healthcare for vulnerable people in resource poor settings in Africa. The project, funded by the European Union's Funding Programme 7, will run for four years in four African countries, namely Namibia, Malawi, Sudan and South Africa. The teamleader is Prof Mac MacLachlan from Trinity College in Dublin. In South Africa there are three partners: Stellenbosch University, the Secretariat of the African Decade for Persons with Disabilities, and the HSRC.

The project focuses on people with activity limitations (a proxy for disability) and looks at their access to healthcare in four sites in each of the four participating African countries. The theory is that having one or more activity limitation renders a person vulnerable to inequitable access to health care services. There are a number of factors that can also engender vulnerability in accessing health care, such as being a single mother, living far from a facility, living in an informal settlement, or being elderly or a foreigner. EquiAble aims to look at the relative role of activity limitations alone or in combination with other vulnerability factors in generating inequitable access to health care. The information provided by this study will not only show the importance of considering disability in a mainstreamed manner as one of a range of possible vulnerability factors, but will provide useful information on how to develop policies and strategies to ensure equitable access to health care for all people.

## Improving disability measures and statistics in the Asia Pacific region

The growing interest in and need for disability statistics internationally has resulted in a number of initiatives to develop measures of disability that are comparable across countries and that accurately describe the complex phenomenon of disability. One such effort is that of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG), a city group convened under the auspices of the UN's Statistical Commission. The HSRC's Margie Schneider participated in this initiative.

The Washington Group focuses on developing questions for use in censuses and surveys rather than on clinical applications. The short set of questions for use on censuses has been developed, tested and set out as a recommendation by the Statistical Commission.

The next step is the development of extended sets of questions that complement the short set in providing a more detailed description of disability at population level. About 10 (including seven from the Asia Pacific region) countries each contributed between 10 and 20 qualitative interviews. These interviews provided data for analysis of respondents' understanding of the questions in relation to reasons they gave and what they were thinking about when deciding on their response to each question, allowing the questions to be critically reviewed. The resulting set of questions has been compiled into a field testing questionnaire.

The field test is to be carried out in seven Asia Pacific countries, using a sample of 1 000 respondents in a few localities in each country. The results will provide an opportunity for participating countries to better understand disability measures and statistics as well as providing cross country comparative data for international purposes.

## The effectiveness of child welfare grants in Namibia

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*Dr Tsiliso Tamasane*

obstacles are for children who are entitled to the grants but not receiving them and the study will attempt to shed light on these issues. The study is being undertaken in three regions:

Khomas, Kavango and Hardap, and employs focus groups and key informant interviews to collect data.

In February, March, April and June, Judith Streak, Ben Roberts and Tsiliso Tamasane of the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development programme travelled to Namibia to consult with the reference group for the project on the research design and instruments, and to assist with training of fieldworkers, piloting of instruments and with fieldwork planning. The fieldwork will commence in July and be completed by end of August 2009.



*Ms Judith Streak*

The findings will be made available early in December 2009. This project aligns neatly with another being undertaken by Judith Streak and Ben Roberts from CYFSD in Namibia, which is a project developing a profile of child poverty and deprivation based on the National Income and Expenditure Survey 2003/04.