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**REVIEW**

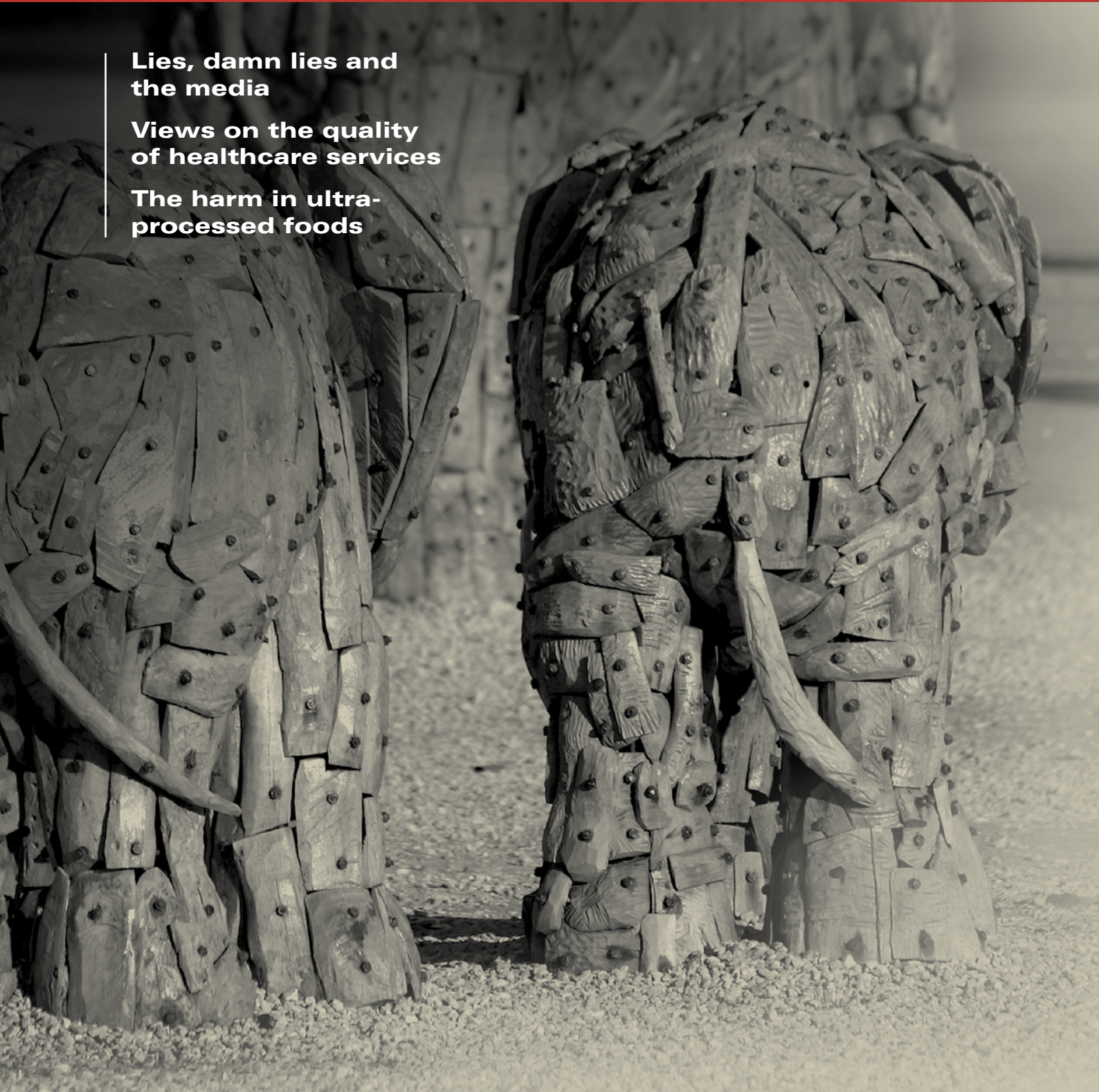
VOLUME 12 NUMBER 1

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2014

**Lies, damn lies and  
the media**

**Views on the quality  
of healthcare services**

**The harm in ultra-  
processed foods**



SPECIAL EDITION: NOTES FROM THE WORLD SOCIAL SCIENCE FORUM 2013

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## EDITORIAL ADVISOR

Professor Dan Ncayiyana

## EDITOR

Ina van der Linde

## CORRESPONDENCE

For feedback, questions or copies of reports, email [ivdlinde@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:ivdlinde@hsrc.ac.za)  
An electronic version is available on [www.hsrc.ac.za](http://www.hsrc.ac.za)

## Pretoria

Private Bag X41, Pretoria, South Africa 0001  
Tel: +27 12 302 2000, Fax: +27: 12 302 2001

## Cape Town

Private Bag X9182, Cape Town, South Africa 8000  
Tel: +27 21 466 8000, Fax: +27 21 466 8001

## Durban

Private Bag X07, Dalbridge, South Africa 4014  
Tel: +27 31 242 5400, Fax: +27 31 242 5401

## PRODUCTION

The *HSRC Review* is produced by the Science Communication Unit, HSRC  
Design and layout: Blue Apple

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## Learning from one epidemic to tackle the next

Sub-Saharan Africa is undergoing an epidemiological transition in which both communicable (infectious) and non-communicable diseases are simultaneously growing in prevalence.

### Prevalence of 'lifestyle diseases' on the rise

For many years our continent was ravaged by communicable diseases resulting in high rates of premature deaths. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria contributed significantly to high morbidity and premature mortality. This was particularly so in southern Africa. Today, sub-Saharan Africa is reversing the trend through improved access to antiretroviral therapy and better care and support, resulting in increased life expectancy. But with winning one battle, another is visible on the horizon; with increased longevity comes the increased likelihood of non-communicable diseases.

A good example of dual epidemics is HIV/AIDS and hypertension. South Africa is known to be the epicentre of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, where more than 6.4 million people are living with HIV. At the same time, the country has very high hypertension (high blood pressure) rates for the adult population. At a recent HSRC seminar, Professor Peter Lloyd-Sherlock of the School of International Development at the University of East Anglia, in the United Kingdom, reported that 78% of adults 50 years and older who took part in a 2008 World Health Organization (WHO) survey in South Africa, screened positively for hypertension. Less than one in 10 hypertensive people were controlling their condition with medication.

He based his conclusion on a further analysis of data from the Study on Global Ageing and Adult Health (SAGE), conducted by the WHO and to which the HSRC contributed national data on South Africa. This survey included more than 35 000 people aged 50 and older in South Africa, China, Ghana, India, Mexico and Russia.

### Radical healthcare adjustments needed

The co-existence of these two epidemics, one communicable and the other non-communicable, calls for radical adjustments in the functioning of healthcare systems. Countries that previously accumulated decades of experience managing communicable diseases must now also develop expertise to deal effectively with the epidemic of non-communicable diseases.

While these may be challenges that need urgent attention, the WHO has called for the inclusion of universal health coverage in the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals. It is a time of revival of the movement to improve the health system to benefit all, similar to the time when the Alma-Ata Declaration of 1978 was adopted in Kazakhstan.

Universal health coverage is now a global movement which, according to the WHO, aims to 'ensure that all people obtain the health services they need without suffering financial hardship when paying for them.' This requires:

- a strong, efficient, well-run health system;
- a system for financing health services;
- access to essential medicines and technologies; and
- sufficient capacity of well-trained, motivated health workers.

### Collaborating to strengthen the healthcare system

Closer to home it requires realignment in the delivery of health services and resourcing of the healthcare system. The alignment should result in improved financing, staffing, skilling

and equipping of the health system, which culminates in improved access to quality health services. In such a system, staff will ensure that those with non-communicable diseases have easier access to screening, diagnosis, treatment, access to medicines and education to prevent complications associated with communicable and non-communicable diseases.

At the moment, the public health system needs urgent attention. This was demonstrated by the outcome of the National Health Care Facilities Baseline Audit of 3880 hospitals and clinics in South Africa between May 2011 and May 2012. It found that only one of the 394 hospitals, for example, met the accepted standards for cleanliness, infection, drug stocks, staff attitude, patient safety and waiting times. The state of clinics was also an issue of great concern.

It is encouraging that the National Department of Health has launched the Office of Health Standards and Compliance to 'monitor compliance with norms and standards for

healthcare delivery'. This requires putting an accreditation system in place, and that all health facilities, public and private, meet these norms, and standards and are judged with the same yardstick.

A concerted effort is needed from all who are working in the health sector to help shoulder the burden and take responsibility, so that the healthcare system may be strengthened and become more efficient, particularly as the country works towards establishing national health insurance.



Professor Olive Shisana, BA(SS), MA, ScD,  
Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* (Monash University)  
CEO, HSRC



## NewsRoundup

### Ultra-processed foods the new health hazard

*Jean-Claude Moubarac*

Industrial food processing is now the main shaping force of the global food system and a fundamental determinant of recent changes in diets and related states of health and well-being. This is according to Jean-Claude Moubarac, Centre for Epidemiological Studies in Health and Nutrition, University of São Paulo, Brazil, who was speaking at a science seminar on indicators for household food security in South Africa, hosted by the Department of Science and Technology and the HSRC in November 2013 in Cape Town.

He said international research showed that ultra-processed products now dominated the food supplies of high-income countries, and consumption of these products was rapidly increasing in middle-income countries. Ultra-processed food is rapidly replacing freshly-prepared meals and in the process, nutrients are being 'dismantled'. This trend has health, economic, social, cultural and ecological implications.

The NOVA Food Classification differentiates three groups of foods:

- Unprocessed foods and minimally processed foods – including grains, legumes, roots, vegetables, fruit, nuts, seeds, meat, fish, seafood, milk, eggs and water.
- Processed substances – including oils, animal fats, sugar and salt.
- Ultra-processed, ready-to-consume products – including bottled, canned, salted, cured and smoked products.

those using stabilisers, emulsifiers, bulkers, synthetic micronutrients, hydrogenated oils or hydrolysed proteins; and those resulting in products such as industrial breads, sweetened breakfast cereals, snacks, salty, fried or baked products, carbonated soft drinks, reconstituted meat and fish products, spreads and sauces, baby food products, health and slimming products, and ready-to-eat dishes.

Nutritionally, ready-to-consume products are more energy-dense than unprocessed foods, and contain larger quantities of free sugars, sodium, fats and saturated fats, but less fibre, iron, zinc, potassium and vitamin C.

Ultra-processed products, Moubarac said, were often sold in large portion sizes, were manufactured to be hyper-palatable (even habit-forming or addictive), and were extensively advertised. They increased the risk of passive energy over-consumption.

Although such foods have created space and opportunity for the development of professional careers for women, to whom the role of cooking has traditionally fallen, research shows that higher consumption of ultra-processed products substantially increases the risk of obesity. Conversely, frequency and complexity of cooking and meal structure are associated with higher diet quality and higher food security. The culinary art of cooking and the associated skills and knowledge of preparing a shared family meal is also suffering under this tendency.

## Verdicts of the highest courts: the impact on society

How do decisions of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court of Appeal impact on the transformation of our society?

This question was the core of discussions at a colloquium held on 7 February 2014 in Kempton Park. More than 40 participants, including two former Constitutional Court justices, lawyers, prominent legal and social science scholars, representatives of Chapter 9 state institutions supporting constitutional democracy, and civil society human rights organisations shared their knowledge and experience to fine-tune a research project, commissioned by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development.

The research is unique and applies multi-disciplinary, international, African and gender lenses. The colloquium dealt with four sets of interrelated issues that form the body of the project. The first discussion addressed the proposed analysis of the contribution of court decisions to the reform of South African jurisprudence and law, with a focus on socioeconomic rights (SER) and common and customary law.

Participants pointed to the realities of poverty, racial and gender inequalities and the need for a clear definition of concepts, such as transformation, implementation of court judgments, and the impact of these cases on society.

Furthermore, the apex courts should be viewed within the context of the entire court system, and particularly their relationship to the high courts, where many SER cases are heard. The colloquium participants contributed to the final selection of sample cases, which will be analysed in-depth.



The second discussion dealt with the extent to which court decisions have been implemented by government departments, especially with regard to the delivery of basic services. Participants pointed to the complex variables that impact on implementation, including the complexity of intergovernmental relations, and the difference between deliverables (i.e. action by government departments) and outcomes (i.e. the impact on people's lives).

The third issue dealt with access to the highest court on constitutional matters, the Constitutional Court, and how poor and vulnerable communities have limited access owing to the fact that the state does not cover litigation costs for such cases, but only for criminal trials.

The last session discussed inhibitors to litigants in their approach to these courts, such as costs, time and emotional experiences. The role of civil society organisations (such as the TAC) and public interest law firms (such as SERI) in court decisions was mentioned as an important factor in the success of implementation.

The Minister of Justice, Jeff Radebe, will formally launch the project during human rights week in March 2014.

## VakaYiko project: building capacity for use of research evidence



Alinah Kelo Segobye

VakaYiko, a new three-year project involving the Research Use and Policy Analysis (RIA) unit of the HSRC, consists of a consortium of five organisations working primarily in three countries, namely South Africa, Ghana and Zimbabwe. 'Vaka' is Shona (southern Africa) for 'build' and 'yiko' is Dagbani (Ghana) for 'capacity'. Professor Alinah Kelo Segobye, deputy executive director of RIA, is leading the project.

Consortium members are the Ghana Information Network for Knowledge Sharing (GINKS), Zimbabwe Evidence Informed Policy Making Network (ZEIPNET), the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

Alex Ademokun, programme manager for INASP explains the purpose of the project, namely to support or strengthen the systematic use of evidence to improve the decision-making process. Primarily a capacity-building project, the core



Alex Ademokun

components of VakaYiko will be to test selected evidence-making tools in government departments and among members of parliament.

A lot of work has been done on ways to improve the supply of evidence to policy-making processes, explains Dr Louise Shaxson, a research fellow at ODI, but much less has been done inside government departments to improve the way they demand and use evidence. The project builds on the understanding that the routine use of research to inform policy requires at least three factors to be in place:

- Individuals with the skills to access, evaluate and use research evidence;
- Processes for handling research evidence in policy-making departments; and
- A wider enabling environment of engaged citizens, media and civil society.

VakaYiko is being led by the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) and is one of six BCURE projects being funded by the Department for International Development (DFID). The South African project will focus on the organisational tools and processes used by policy-makers to consider evidence in their policy work.

Key questions include:

- What tools do policy-makers use to take an overview of all the evidence they have?
- How do they know whether the evidence is strong or weak?

## Understanding green economy activities in Limpopo

A baseline study to gather information about current, emerging and planned green economy activities in Limpopo is underway that will provide a better understanding of the profile of green economy activities, their progress, expected and realised impacts, lessons learnt and the challenges they face.

The Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) commissioned the HSRC's Economic Performance and Development (EPD) programme to undertake the study. It will rely mainly on qualitative research methods, including documentation reviews; structured and/or semi-structured interviews with key informants; green economy case study community beneficiaries; participant observation; indicator development and measurement, and triangulation.

According to Dr Charles Nhemachena, a senior research specialist in EPD, researchers have conducted interviews with government departments and agencies; businesses; various organisations that have running green economy programmes or activities, and beneficiaries of current green economy programmes in Limpopo.

A secondary document review helped provide a broader conceptual understanding of the green economy concept from an international and national perspective. This provided the base for an inventory of green economy initiatives and potential activities that could be explored in the short, medium and long term.

The review also helped generate key informant interview questions and checklists for data collection from identified stakeholders. A detailed analysis of findings from the project is expected to provide information that will be used to help profile and inform future design and support for green economy activities in Limpopo.

- What are the processes for handling uncertain evidence? The starting point will be to understand the landscape of evidence-based policy-making in South Africa, finding the best instances of good practice, sharing these with government departments, filling in the blanks with processes that have been used in other countries, and seeing if we can build and test a toolkit for South Africa.



## Rethinking the approaches to HIV prevention in young women

*Dr Heidi van Rooyen*

Dr Heidi van Rooyen, a research director in the HIV/AIDS, STI and TB research programme (HAST), has been invited to be part of a core group of eight international HIV prevention experts tasked with reimagining and reinvigorating thinking about the prevention of HIV among young African women.

The year-long project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through Dr Connie Celum from the University of Washington, will bring together multidisciplinary experts in HIV prevention, health psychology, behavioural economics and social marketing.

This will involve the careful mapping and prioritising of the barriers, facilitators and modifiable factors that influence uptake and adherence of HIV prevention tools among young African women.

## Linking male circumcision to testing and care

Dr Heidi van Rooyen is also leading a community-based study in the Maqongqo area near Pietermaritzburg, with the primary aim to screen for HIV-positive participants not on treatment and to assess strategies to link them to care.

In addition, the study will also assess the most effective strategies to link HIV-negative men between the ages of 16 and 49 to medical male circumcision. The study is being conducted in collaboration with the University of Washington and is funded by the United States National Institutes of Health.

A critical contributor to the recruitment of participants to the study is the presence and visibility of the study in the community, says Hilton Humphries, the study project manager. In an attempt to reach community members and encourage participation, the study outreach includes a motorcade of study vehicles through the community during which the Linkages study team engages community members and shares information about HIV, the benefits of testing, the advantages of early treatment and medical male circumcision.

The motorcade visits various hot spots and high-traffic areas in the community, such as taxi ranks, community venues and tours key main roads.

# Healthcare services: the public perspective

With the aim of understanding how people use healthcare services and their views on the quality of both public and private health services, SANHANES-I solicited the views of the public. It also looked at the barriers to accessing care in view of the government's policy to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) through national health insurance (NHI).

*Charles Hongoro, Demetré Labadarios and Whadi-ah Parker analysed the results.*

It is no longer conceivable to consider patients as simply passive consumers of healthcare services since they are active users whose personal experience with the services has an impact on treatment adherence and future use of those services.

Negative perceptions impact on the use of healthcare services as they directly influence patient behaviour. People who seek care at the early stages of their illness are likely to have better treatment outcomes than those who seek care at a later stage. However, for people to seek care early when they are ill they must trust the healthcare system. Trust is built on perceptions and lived experiences. These lived experiences are shaped by many factors, which include the availability of the services required, waiting times, the physical environment in which they are served, the attitudes and practices of health workers, and the overall acceptability of services.

**Black African respondents had the lowest rate of access to healthcare services.**

## General use of health services

### **Access to reasons for accessing services**

The large majority of respondents (96.8%) older than 15 years, accessing services in both the private and public healthcare sectors reported that they were able to access these services when needed. However, younger people (15–24) and women were significantly less likely than the older age groups to have needed care. Black African respondents (96.0%) had the lowest rate of access to healthcare services when compared to whites (99.4%), coloureds (98.2%) and Indian (98.9%) participants.

More than a third of respondents (38.4%) accessed the healthcare services for an acute condition; 40.3% accessed care for 'other condition'; 18.0% for a chronic condition, and a very small proportion (3.3%) for a communicable disease.

**71% of the population who received inpatient care received it in the public healthcare sector.**

### **Utilisation of and reasons for using healthcare services**

When assessing how participants used inpatient and outpatient services, it was found that 71% of the population who received inpatient care received it in the public healthcare sector, compared to those who sought care in private hospitals (27.7%).

People living in rural informal (89.0%) and urban informal (89.4%) areas used public health services more than those living in urban formal (63.0%) areas. Nine percent (9.1%) of the population, 15 years and older, received inpatient care in the last 12 months.

Women (10.8%) were significantly more likely than males (6.8%) to use inpatient services once within a year. Residents of rural informal areas were significantly less likely (6.6%) than residents in urban informal areas (11.1%) to have stayed in inpatient facilities.

The reasons for using inpatient services varied, with 17.1% of respondents seeking care for acute conditions, 20.1% for chronic conditions, 3.6% for communicable diseases and 59.2% for 'other conditions'.

Of the participants older than 15 years who visited outpatient care facilities in the various healthcare facilities in the 12 months preceding the survey, 38.2% received care.

Most respondents (62.7%) used public healthcare facilities, with 35.4% of participants seeking such care in private healthcare facilities. Forty percent (40.0%) of the population 15 years and older received outpatient care once in the last 12 months. Males (46.6%) were significantly more likely than females (35.8%) to have received outpatient care once within the past year.

Nearly a third (32.4%) of respondents sought outpatient care for acute conditions, less than a third (27.0%) for chronic conditions, a smaller percentage (3.6%) for communicable diseases and just more than a third (35.0%) for 'other conditions'.



**Sources of payment for healthcare services**

A quarter of participants (25.3%) reported paying for inpatient healthcare in the last 12 months using their medical aid. This was followed by out-of-pocket payments (17.9%), of which 11.4% and 6.5% was paid for by the respondent and family member respectively, and 11.3% by 'other sources'. The rest (47.5%) received the services free of charge.

Differences in the use of medical aid to pay for inpatient care by province showed that Western Cape residents were more likely to pay for inpatient services using medical aid (38.6%), while residents in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng were more likely to obtain free healthcare services (39.2% and 57.3% respectively).

Payments for outpatient healthcare services for participants aged 15 years and older over the last 12 months comprised contributions from the medical aid (20.2%) followed by out-of-pocket payments (18.7%) and 'other sources' (4.3%). The rest (57.7%) was free of charge at the point of care.

More males (22.7%) than females (18.3%) paid for outpatient care through medical aid, while more females (60.0%) than males (52.9%) received free outpatient care.

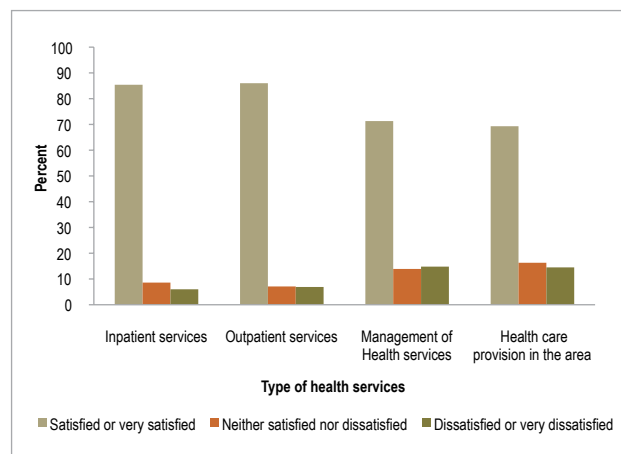
**The overwhelming majority of participants were satisfied with the inpatient and outpatient healthcare services they received.**

**Overall satisfaction with healthcare services**

The overwhelming majority of participants were satisfied with the inpatient and outpatient healthcare services they received (85.5% and 86.0% respectively) (Figure 1). However, more than a quarter of them (28.7%) expressed uncertainty (13.9%) or displeasure (14.8%) with the

way services were managed in their areas, and 30.7% were uncertain (16.3%) or dissatisfied (14.5%) with how healthcare was provided in their area of residence. Black African participants (83.2%) were significantly less satisfied than whites (96.4%) with their experiences of outpatient care.

Figure 1: Levels of satisfaction with the healthcare system

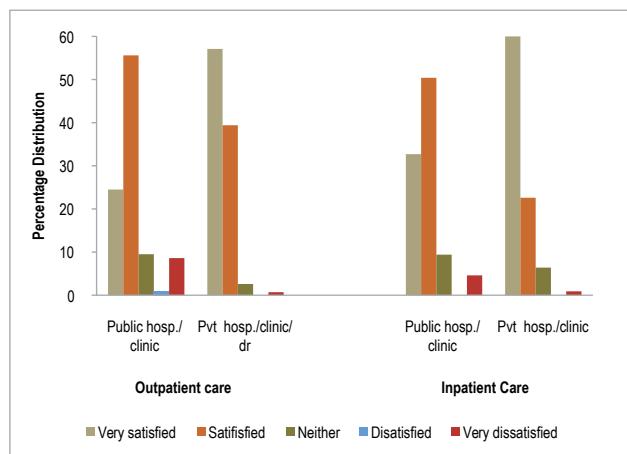


Source: SANHANES 2013

**Overall satisfaction: levels public vs private healthcare sector**

With regard to outpatient services, 96.5% of respondents were either satisfied (39.4%) or very satisfied (57.1%) with private services, compared to 80.1% for public services (24.5% very satisfied and 55.6% satisfied) (Figure 2 on page 6). Satisfaction levels for inpatient services showed a similar pattern, with 92.1% either satisfied (22.6%) or very satisfied (69.6%) with the private healthcare sector services. When compared with public healthcare, 83.1% was satisfied, of which 32.7% was very satisfied and 50.4% satisfied (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Overall satisfaction with inpatient care and outpatient care at the last visit among all participants aged 15 years and older by public compared to private sector, South Africa, 2012.



Source: SANHANES 2013

### Satisfaction levels with selected aspects of healthcare delivery

The respondents were also asked specific questions related to waiting times, experience of being treated respectfully, experience of privacy, choice of healthcare provider, cleanliness of facilities as well as availability of medication and diagnostic tests at the inpatient and outpatient level of care.

The results showed that providers performed well overall in both sectors. The consistent pattern that emerged, however, was that the private healthcare sector achieved overall higher rates of ‘very satisfied’ clients or ‘very good’ diagnostic services, whereas the corresponding rates of ‘satisfied’ participants or ‘good’ diagnostic services were higher in the public sector. The rates of ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ clients, as well as the rates for ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’ services, were consistently higher in the public sector (Table 1).

### The private healthcare sector achieved overall higher rates of ‘very satisfied’ clients or ‘very good’ diagnostic services.

Table 1: Summary of public perceptions on other key aspects of health services

Perception domain	Key findings
Satisfaction with waiting times	For both public and private users: 78.4% of inpatients and 69.9% of outpatients thought waiting times were very good or good.
Experience of being treated respectfully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall, 85.9% of outpatients thought their experience of being treated with respect was very good or good.</li> <li>Private sector users compared to public sector users had a greater proportion of very good experiences (46.8% versus 17.7%).</li> </ul>
Experience of privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both public and private outpatients mostly had very good or good experiences (87.9%).</li> <li>Private outpatients were much more likely to have a very good experience (45.6%) with privacy than public sector outpatients (17.4%).</li> </ul>
Choice of healthcare provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall, the majority of inpatient users (86.9%) were able to see the healthcare provider with whom they were happy.</li> <li>Private sector users (62.5%) were significantly more likely than public (24.9%) to feel so.</li> </ul>
Cleanliness of facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The majority of both public and private outpatients found the cleanliness of facilities to be very good or good (88.8%).</li> <li>Private sector users (50.4%) were more likely to consider the facility to be ‘very good’ than public sector outpatients (22.0%).</li> </ul>
Availability of medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both public and private sector outpatient users found the availability of medicines to be very good or good (84.0%).</li> <li>Private outpatients (49.1%) were more likely than public outpatients (17.6%) to find medicine availability to be very good.</li> </ul>
Availability of tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall 88.7% of inpatient users were very satisfied that diagnostic tests were available.</li> <li>Private sector users (67.1%) were considered more likely to have the tests available than public sector users (26.6%).</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

The South African public cares about the healthcare services provided by both public and private providers. Although the levels of overall satisfaction with health services are generally high in both sectors, the private sector is more likely to be considered superior in satisfaction levels and all other quality respects.

Utilisation patterns show greater use of health services by females and the older age groups. The main form of paying for inpatient services in the private sector is medical aid, while in the public sector these services are largely free.

This is similarly reflected for both inpatient and outpatient care services. Interestingly, utilisation patterns and the quality of services in selected domains were considered generally good across the sectors. ■

Authors: Professors Charles Hongoro, research director, Population Health, Health Systems and Innovation programme (PHHSI), HSRC; Demetré Labadarios, executive director, PHHSI; and Dr Whadi-ah Parker, research specialist, PHHSI.

The full report is available on [www.hsrc.ac.za/en/research-outputs/view/6493](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/research-outputs/view/6493)



# Combating alcohol abuse – one household at a time

Alcohol misuse remains a serious problem among South Africans, as almost a third of heads of households in informal urban areas who participated in SANHANES-I regarded alcohol misuse as a serious or very serious problem. *Liezelle Pretorius, Leickness Simbayi and Demetre Labadarios* report on the findings.



**H**ow do heads of households view alcohol consumption in their homes and is it a serious problem? Does alcohol use have a serious impact on household violence? The SA National Health and Nutrition Survey (SANHANES-I) looked at these and other alcohol-related behaviours.

The Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, 2012–2016, set the target to reduce, by 20%, the per capita consumption of alcohol by 2020. These findings contribute to tracking progress in meeting that target.

**More than a quarter of household heads in urban informal areas perceived alcohol misuse as a serious or a very serious problem.**

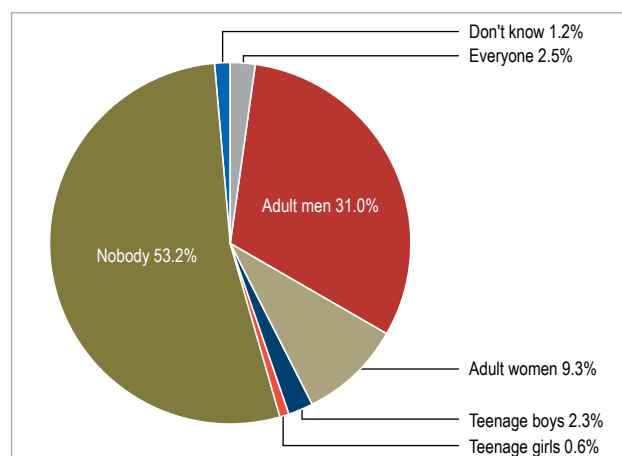
## How households perceived their drinking habits

More than 53.2% of households who participated in the study reported that nobody drank alcohol in the home. Adult men (31.0%) were more likely to drink alcohol compared to their female counterparts (9.3%), as shown in Figure 1.

Of the 45.7% of households in which the head of the household reported household alcohol consumption, the majority (61.3%) reported that alcohol use was not perceived as a problem.

But if data was classified according to the type of area and the province, a significantly different picture emerged. More than a quarter of household heads in urban informal areas (28.1%) perceived alcohol misuse as a serious or a very serious problem (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Consumers of alcohol in households.



Source: SANHANES 1, 2012

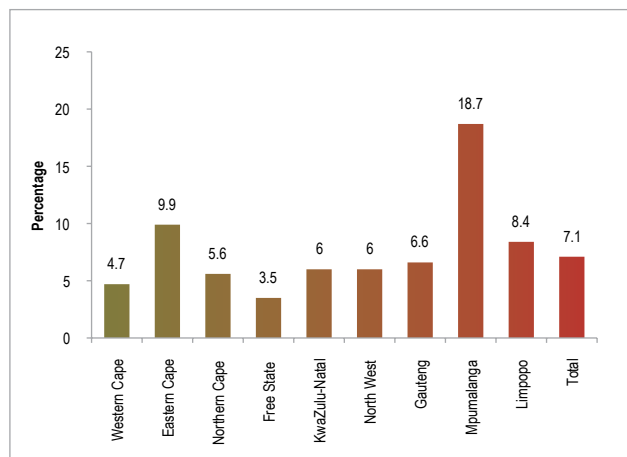
This finding also showed that 14.8% of heads of households living in urban informal areas reported that the abuse of alcohol in their households was a serious or a very serious problem when measured against urban formal and rural informal (tribal authority) households.

**A significantly higher percentage of heads of households from Mpumalanga reported that the abuse of alcohol by a household member was a very serious problem.**

**How serious is household violence due to alcohol abuse?**

Once the findings were disaggregated by province a significantly higher percentage of heads of households from Mpumalanga (18.7%) reported that the abuse of alcohol by a household member was a very serious problem (Figure 2), when compared with those of households in other provinces such as KwaZulu-Natal (6.0%), Gauteng (6.6%) and the Western Cape (4.7%).

Figure 2: Perceived seriousness of violence due to alcohol abuse in the household by province.



Source: SANHANES-I, 2012

**Implications of SANHANES-I**

Recommendations include increasing alcohol sales taxes, brief interventions by health providers such as nurses in primary healthcare settings, and discouraging the marketing and consumption of alcohol in general, and to young people in particular, so as to prevent them from drinking from earlier ages. ■

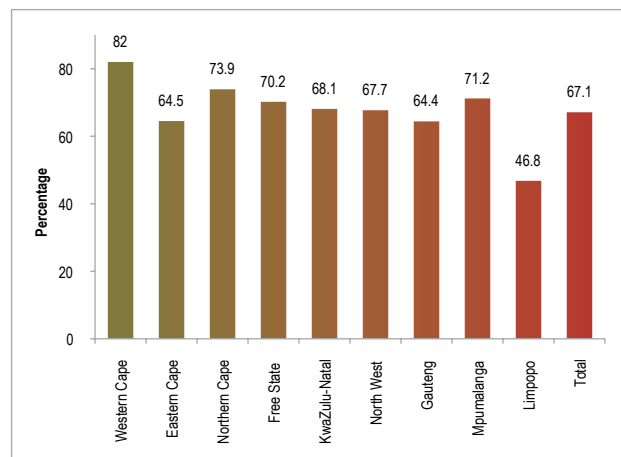
**A large majority of the heads of households (67.1%) indicated that snacking occurred while people in their households were drinking alcohol.**

**Snacking while drinking**

Food taken with alcohol diminishes its side effects, such as intoxication – as the saying goes, ‘do not drink on an empty stomach’. Overall, a large majority of the heads of households (67.1%) indicated that snacking occurred while people in their households were drinking alcohol. In terms of race, significantly more of both white (80.7%) and coloured (82.6%) heads of households indicated that members of their households consumed food or snacks while drinking alcohol than did their African counterparts (63.4%).

As for provinces (Figure 3), the Western Cape (82%) had the highest reported level of snacking while Limpopo (46.8%) was the lowest. Overall, the Western Cape (82.0%), the Northern Cape (73.9%), the Free State (70.2%), and Mpumalanga (71.2%) had significantly higher levels of snacking than Limpopo.

Figure 3: Snacking while drinking alcohol in the household by province



Authors: Dr Liezelle Pretorius, post-doctoral intern, Population Health, Health Systems and Innovation (PHHSI), HSRC; Professors Leickness Simbayi, executive director, HIV/AIDS, STIs and TB programme (HAST), HSRC; Demetré Labadarios, executive director, PHHSI.

The full report is available on [www.hsrc.ac.za/en/research-outputs/view/6493](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/research-outputs/view/6493)

The HSRC and our partner organisations, the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), presented their work at the conference of the World Social Science Forum 2013 (WSSF) on the theme, 'Social transformations and the digital age', in Montreal in October.

As stated at WSSF 2013, the role of digital technologies has become a major focus of social research. These technologies, with social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Wikipedia and WikiLeaks, have the transformative potential 'to challenge traditional hierarchies in politics, science, and the media', at the same time noting the downside of how these technologies can also be used for slandering, hoaxes, misinformation, narcissism and the loss of privacy.

Digital technologies reach far beyond social media and have affected nearly all areas of society in the form of computers and the networks that enable them to communicate with one another. 'They have changed how people think about themselves, how work is organised, how knowledge is produced, and how access to information is regulated. Education, healthcare, shopping, agriculture, finance, security, leisure have all been deeply affected by information and communication technologies,' the WSSF programme states.

In this special edition of *HSRC Review*, we present seven articles based on papers delivered during different sessions at the WSSF 2013. These articles cover a wide range of topics, such as citizen engagement through the internet; the successes achieved by homeowners using social media; transformation through human rights films; an analysis of how the media reports on Africa; access to ICTs in rural areas; the social dynamics of innovation for rural development, and social media's role in democracy.

## Enhancing digital citizen engagement: lessons from South Africa

Digital technology (ICT) has an important role to play in enhancing South African democracy. In an interconnected world, Web 2.0 and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, MXit and YouTube fulfil the role of 'public sphere' by facilitating social interactions as well as civic and political participation, maintains *Narnia Bohler-Muller*.

It is clear that the South African government must keep up with ICT trends, and develop and update communication policies for the constructive use of digital platforms. These must be informed by citizen needs and democratic principles of openness, transparency and accountability.

### 'New' ways of enhancing democratic participation

The innovative use of ICTs can enhance democratic practices, as no substantial limits to participation in time and space exist. Thus, digital democracy is an addition, not a replacement, for dialogue practices. According to Zimbabwean media expert, Last Moyo, new media augments the scope and breadth of democratic engagement. Furthermore, in creating space for a plurality of voices, ICT platforms are more interactive than traditional media, such as radio, television and film, which tend to be linear and do not facilitate conversations.

A review of literature on participation in the public sphere illustrates the diversity of forms that such participatory

initiatives may take. For instance, some studies distinguish between instrumental and normative participation. Instrumental or indirect participation refers to a one-way process of information exchange in order to gain citizen acceptance of policy, and where the roles of citizens are limited to that of voters or passive recipients of services.

The normative form, or direct participation, refers to processes where citizens actively engage in planning, policy-making and decision-making, and is believed to engender a sense of community, to enhance social cohesion and to enrich democracy. Citizen, civic and community engagement processes should take into account the ways in which new media can be used differently to entrench a culture of normative or direct participation.

### Some relevant statistics

The *South African Social Media Landscape 2012* report found that social networking in South Africa had crossed barriers and divides, mainly in terms of age and geography. The fastest growing group of Facebook users in terms of age was



people older than 60, which saw a user increase of 44%. This was compared to the 19–30 age group, which saw a user increase of less than 20%, and the teenage group, where a user increase of less than 10% was observed.

An important dimension of digital communication in the South African context is the prevalent use of mobile phones to access the internet and social media platforms. The 2011 national census reported that the proportion of households owning mobile phones had increased from 31.9% in 2001 to 88.9% in 2011. Although almost 65% of all South African households still did not have access to the internet via landline computers, a large proportion used their mobile phones to access the internet.

In a survey conducted in 2011/2012, Research ICT Africa found that the mobile phone is now a major point of entry for internet usage on the African continent. According to its figures, the internet in South Africa is accessed through mobile phones by 70% of the total number of internet users in the country.

Public libraries, internet cafés and access to free WiFi via digital hubs also enhanced availability to online communication tools and addressed some issues related to the high cost of data in South Africa.

**The government recognises that its policy related to ICT is outdated and that efforts must be made to connect all South Africans.**

### **South African government policy**

In the *Proposed ICT Policy Review Framing Paper* (22 April 2013), the government recognises that its policy related to ICT is outdated and that efforts must be made to connect all South Africans in a way that enhances democracy. The framework document is useful in that it defines ‘communications’ broadly to include telecommunications, broadcasting and postal services as well as new communications technologies.

**The Department of Communications ... recognises broadband as a strategic tool in building a knowledge-based economy.**

The new communication policy adopted by the government should be based on the principles articulated in the framing paper and should also be informed by what is already happening on the ground. Furthermore, the Department of Communications’ *Consultation Document on the Proposed National Broadband Policy for South Africa* (2013) recognises the benefits of improved broadband infrastructure in South Africa, and also recognises broadband as a strategic tool in building a knowledge-based economy.

The department identifies the following benefits of adopting a better policy on broadband:

- Supporting economic development and growth;
- Increasing access and improving delivery of essential social services such as education, health, electronic government and public safety; and
- Minimising the digital divide.

It is therefore clear that South African policy-makers are aware of the benefits of connectivity, and that infrastructure growth is required in this area. The new Minister of Communications, Yunus Carrim, published the National Integrated Policy Green Paper for public consultation on 24 January 2014. The green paper states in its introduction that ICTs are important in building an information society and knowledge economy as envisioned in the NDP (2011). This vision necessitates government to facilitate the provision of seamless information infrastructure that will enable access to the creation and consumption of a wide range of converged services required for effective economic and social participation.

### ***Mobilitate as a tool to monitor local government service delivery***

Mobilitate ([www.mobilitate.co.za](http://www.mobilitate.co.za)) is an online platform that enables citizens to actively participate in improving service delivery and holding local government accountable. Its mission is ‘to enable, foster and promote the communication, collaboration and participation of all citizens, communities and government toward a prosperous South Africa for all!’ Its vision is to enable a country that embodies and promotes the five principles of networked intelligence, namely collaboration, openness, sharing, trust and integrity, and interdependence.

Individuals register with Mobilitate and can then lodge service delivery complaints or concerns on the website in a specific area, linked with Google Earth. All logged issues in the area are mapped, with each category of issue indicated in a different log in such a way that progress can be tracked and councillors and municipalities rated in terms of responsiveness. In addition, online groups of residents associations and community organisations can be created to discuss service delivery issues collectively. By December 2013 the Mobilitate website had about 27 000 registered users and received up to 40 000 visits a month. The service is also available as an app for Apple and Android devices.



**Telecommunications should be regarded as both a basic utility as well as a basic human right.**

### **Governance and e-participation**

E-participation can be described as ICT-supported participation in government and governance. Such processes may include administration, service delivery, decision-making and policy-making. E-participation is therefore closely related to (e-) governance participation.

The need for the term emerged as citizen benefits and values have traditionally received less attention than those of service providers in e-government, and it became clear that the roles of citizen and customer had to be distinguished.

A more detailed definition sees e-participation as 'the use of information and communication technologies to broaden and deepen political participation by enabling citizens to connect with one another and with their elected representatives.' This definition includes all stakeholders in democratic decision-making processes and goes beyond top-down government initiatives.

In 2012, the LG ICT Network launched a model e-participation project together with a number of selected local authorities. They were given SMS credits and a direct call number. Citizens could then use these numbers to submit their proposals or complaints, and to report incidents such as power failures, burst pipes and potholes. Equally, the local authority could use the system to inform residents about scheduled council meetings, festivals or anticipated restrictions. The system is integrated into the local authority's normal email system and is entirely voluntary.

This project is showing early signs of success. In Emakhazeni, a rural authority in the province of Mpumalanga, there has been a significant fall in the number of complaints about poor services, and public attendance at council meetings has increased dramatically over the same period.

Such activities help to improve the quality, transparency and general image of local government, as well as encourage people to participate more actively in processes that enhance democracy through citizen participation.

### **Affordability, accessibility, availability: the way forward**

The above examples provide a snapshot of what is possible, especially in facilitating normative civic and political engagement at the local level. But, needless to say, ICT platforms are not much use by themselves, and should be seen as complementing and enhancing processes that are already in place.

In an interesting development, the Right2Know (R2K) campaign is calling for a 'right to communicate' to be recognised in South Africa. In its submission to the parliamentary hearings on the cost of communication (1 August 2013), R2K focused on the fact that telecommunications should be regarded as both a basic utility as well as a basic human right. Section 16 of the 1996 Constitution recognises a right to receive or impart information or ideas.

It is clear that the government has a role to play in ensuring that all South Africans are able to exercise this right to communicate via various platforms. For this reason, limited connectivity and the high costs of data should be addressed, and new policies developed and adopted to ensure that voices are heard – and responded to. ■

*Author: Professor Narnia Bohler-Muller, acting executive director, Democracy and Governance research programme, HSRC.*

# Social media: a driver for improved citizenship

Could using social media simply to keep in touch with others and meet new people possibly lead to better citizenship? A study by *Homero Gil de Zúñiga, Logan Molyneux* and *Pei Zheng* attempts to answer this and other questions on social media and democracy.

Using the internet and social media to look for information, including news, has been linked to greater political participation. But social media is used for much more than simply seeking out information; it is also playing a vital role in encouraging citizenship, especially among younger people.

Some research suggests that younger generations may be participating in democratic processes in different ways compared to older generations, and that these digital natives may use different forms of communication and expression to do so.

In a study which surveyed a panel of US adults in two waves, about six months apart in 2010, participants were asked how they used social media, how they expressed themselves online and to what extent they participated in the political process (whether in person or online).

The results suggested that even using social media to keep in touch with others could lead people to expressing themselves politically, thereby putting them on a pathway to participation. The results contributed to an understanding of the role of social media in the democratic process. This understanding may aid engagement efforts and expand the range of activities that political communication researchers study.

**Using social media to keep in touch with others could lead people to expressing themselves politically.**

## Informational social media use

Social media, as the name suggests, was designed for users to keep in touch with friends and develop social networks. Yet, researchers have found that social media is also widely used as a source of news. As an example, the official Twitter accounts of news organisations such as the *New York Times* and CNN are among the top-ranked Twitter accounts worldwide.

People seek information via social media because it provides information quickly and in a flexible way. Moreover, social media makes news interactive, thus extending forms

of political participation. When reading news on social media, one can share opinions by mentioning, forwarding or commenting on the news. One can also donate or vote through social media.

All this can be done with far fewer resources than have generally assumed to be necessary for political participation. Accordingly, this study aimed to learn more about how informational use of social media could be positively related to political participation. As expected, our results showed that the more people turned to social media to keep up with what was happening around them, the more they also tended to participate in democratic political activities.

**The more people turned to social media to keep up with what was happening around them, the more they tended to participate in democratic political activities.**

## Political expression on social media

Interestingly, the connection between getting news on social media and participating politically may not always be direct. In other words, using social media for news may start people on a path that eventually leads them to participate, but what stops do they make along the way?

One such stop is political expression, or using social media to post or share political content. The way social media is structured facilitates group interaction and discussion by lowering barriers to entry. It is easy to join groups, make new connections and begin discussing common interests.

When people use social media to read news, political or informational postings, they may be more likely to begin posting such content themselves, or at least commenting on it and discussing it with their friends.

Our results confirmed a relationship between using social media for news and political expression on social media. Talking about politics, in turn, is likely to lead people to action. Expressing yourself requires that you take action on your

thoughts and ideas by sharing them. Having done this, it may be easier to take further actions, eventually leading to participation.

When people use social media to express their political views they may end up participating as well, both online and offline. Results from the survey showed a strong connection between political expression on social media and both online and offline political participation.

**Findings revealed a small but notable connection between relational social media use and political expression.**

**Relational social media use**

As mentioned earlier, people use social media for much more than getting news and information. In fact, those informational uses most likely form a small part of how social media is actually used. Could using social media simply to keep in touch with others and meet new people possibly lead to better citizenship?

Sociologists have noticed that people with more connections to other people, especially in a community, tend to be more active in that community and in politics. Social media, it turns out, helps people make more connections and gives them the opportunity to interact with new groups of people – people they might not otherwise interact with. Specifically, users of social media are able to simultaneously maintain several groups of friends that may never cross over during real life, and this greater variety of interactions is what is key here.

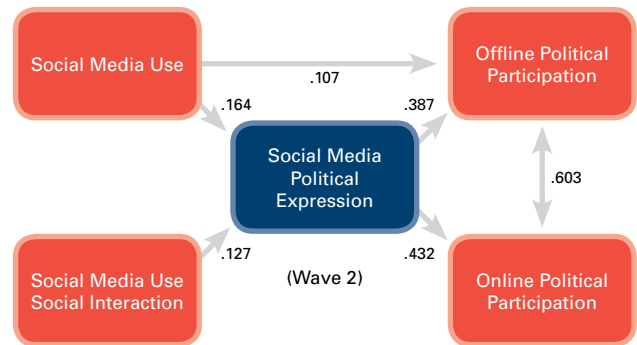
Psychologists suggest that people develop different aspects of themselves in order to fit into whatever group they're participating in. So the more people use social media, the more groups they interact with. The more groups they interact with, the more aspects of themselves they are likely to develop. The more they develop different aspects of themselves, the more likely it is that they begin to develop a political self.

Our study put these thoughts to an empirical test in order to find out whether using social media to interact with others would lead people to begin expressing themselves online. Findings revealed a small but notable connection between relational social media use and political expression.

**New pathways to participation**

Each of the previously mentioned social media 'connections' can be combined to form a model that describes how using social media can lead to political participation, as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Results of SEM model of social media uses, social media political expression and political participation.\*



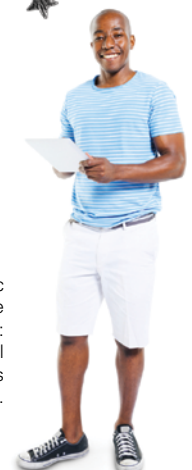
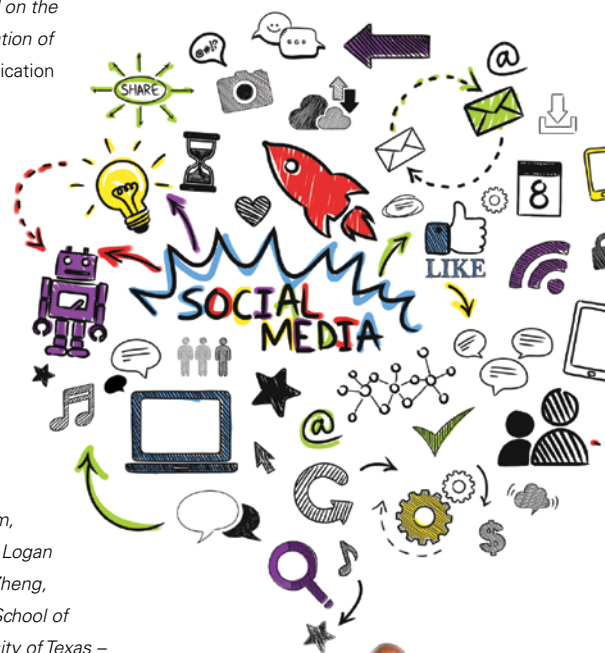
Using social media as a source of news has a direct connection to offline political participation and online and offline political expression. Using social media for interaction has a connection to online and offline political participation via political expression.

These findings support the work of other researchers who suggest that some people are inventing new models of citizenship and finding new ways to participate in the democratic process. ■

*This article is based on the forthcoming publication of Journal of Communication – Social Media, Political Expression and Political Participation: Panel Analysis of Lagged and Concurrent Relationships*

*Authors: Associate professor Homero Gil de Zúñiga, School of Journalism, University of Texas; Logan Molyneux and Pei Zheng, doctoral students, School of Journalism, University of Texas – Austin, USA.*

*For all correspondence relating to this article, contact Homero Gil de Zúñiga on hgz@austin.utexas.edu.*



\* Note: Sample size = 312. Path entries were standardised SEM coefficients (Betas) at  $p < .05$  or better. The effects of demographic variables (age, gender, education, race and income), political antecedents (political efficacy and strength of partisanship), media use and discussion network size (online and offline) on endogenous and exogenous variables were residualised. Model goodness of fit:  $\chi^2 = 1.69$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .63$ ;  $RMSEA = .000$ ,  $CFI = 1.000$ ,  $TLI = 1.001$ ,  $SRMR = .012$ . Explained variance of criterion variables: political expression  $R^2 = 6.7\%$ ; offline political participation  $R^2 = 16.3\%$ ; and political participation online  $R^2 = 17.8\%$ . This theoretical model was also bootstrapped based on the standard errors with 1 000 iterations, converging in 960 iterations and with a 95% confidence interval.

# Petitioning through cyberspace: an effective platform for homeowner protests

As a virtual social space, the internet offers a new public sphere for political discussion and participation in the grassroots politics of China. It has also become an important protest platform for homeowners and is helping to enhance the effect of traditional demonstrations, sit-ins and petitions, says *Ying Wu*.

In recent years, China has witnessed rapid internet development. The 32nd statistical report on internet development set the Chinese 'netizens' at 591 million by the end of June 2013. Due to the extensive use of mobile phones as an internet terminal, more people were able to access the internet. As a virtual social space, the internet offers a new public sphere for political discussion and participation. Since internet interaction is low in risk and cost, collective activities on the internet are easier to spread and to amplify.

The housing commercialisation reform in China was accompanied by protests from homeowners, and this became an important phenomenon of Chinese urban life. Compared with the protests by peasants or labourers, the strategies and tactics of homeowners were more diversified.

One of the most prevalent strategies was the use of the internet for information sharing, consensus building, network construction and resource mobilisation. The internet homeowner forums facilitated the expression of concerns over neighbourhood affairs, promoted the self-identification of community members and created enthusiasm over collective actions.

## **Social participation on the internet is deeply influenced by the social context and political institution.**

However, social participation on the internet is also deeply influenced by the social context and political institution. In China, the state is still the most powerful authority and has the ability to affect the result of online mobilisation. So, the regulation and management of the internet must also be considered when discussing the role of the internet for collective actions.

By analysing two cases, this article describes the functional mechanism of the internet for homeowners' protests and how the state-society relation in China affects internet functions.

## **Two case studies**

### ***Anti-pollution action of Fangya Garden***

Fangya Garden is a commercial residential community built in 2003 in the north-eastern suburb of Beijing. According to the construction plan, the developer would buy a plot of land to build a lawn from the nearby factory, BP Electronic Motor Company (BP). But BP cancelled the sale of the land and the residents of Fangya Garden had to endure the noise and air pollution emitted by the BP workshops.

By sharing the information online, more and more homeowners noticed the pollution issue. One homeowner tried to send a petition letter to the Environment Protection Bureau (EPB) but got no response. By following the protest logic in China, Fangya residents decided to create a bigger disturbance so as to achieve a bigger result. Using the internet as a mobilisation tool, around 30 homeowners signed three complaint letters to relevant government departments. As a result, the section chief of the local EPB and the chief of BP came to meet Fangya residents, and BP agreed to move one of the polluted workshops to a suburb.

However, by 2006, many of the promises made in this meeting had not been fulfilled. The anti-pollution team decided to continue its protest by using the opportunity of the Beijing Olympics. With the approach of the 2008 Olympics, environmental protection was a sensitive issue for the Chinese government. By using the government's concerns over the green image of Beijing, Fangya Garden residents implemented a schedule of anti-pollution actions and posted it on their online forum. The schedule also included a public consultation forum, a questionnaire survey, an anti-pollution meeting and a 'clean and environmental health action'.

This continued collective resistance brought strain to the Beijing EPB with the approaching Olympics, and resulted in EPB officials once again meeting with Fangya Garden residents. After this round of negotiations, efforts to find a solution to the pollution of the neighbourhood finally moved forward.





*Silent protest: A banner calling estate owners to join the forces in their protest against industrial pollution.*

### **Opposition to a garbage incineration project**

In September 2009, the local government announced that a garbage incineration plant would be built in Dashi Street, Panyu, a district in southern Guangzhou. The news caused great panic among residents, especially the homeowners in the 13 neighbourhoods located within a 10 kilometre range of the supposed project site.

Immediately after the news was announced, a special discussion forum about the garbage incineration plant was set up online. It included a status report, event progress, mass media concern, garbage separation and recycling, and treatment.

Residents affected by this project exchanged information, shared knowledge about garbage processing and summarised the successful experiences of other environmental protests. With some online education under their belts, the residents became environmental experts overnight.

In addition to the discussion, practical actions were soon put on the agenda. An indictment against the Guangzhou municipal government and Garden Administration Bureau of Panyu District was posted on the online forum on 3 October 2009. This post was viewed 2 514 times and evoked widespread reaction.

Meanwhile, 49 518 people joined the online signature petition to oppose this project. The protests continued until 23 November 2009, the open day of the committee of city administration.

On that day, thousands of homeowners gathered outside the meeting venue with supporting banners to request that plans for the incineration plant be terminated. The public assembly was then broadcast live online via cell phones and the internet, and subsequently covered by media agencies like the *Southern Metropolis Daily* of China and Britain's *The Guardian*.

To avoid the issue being turned into a confidence crisis, the Panyu district government was forced to openly declare a suspension of the project, pending a meeting with the residents and media to further discuss the long-term solutions of garbage processing.

### **The internet as a channel for protests**

The two cases happened in different cities and at different times, but shared some similarities. Most of the actions of the homeowners' protests were operated within the approved

boundaries. In addition to traditional protest tactics, such as demonstrations and petitions, homeowners continually used the internet to make their demands.

On the one hand, the use of the internet facilitated the collective actions of homeowners and helped to build connections between individuals. This was followed by the virtual interactions being transferred to face-to-face relations, which brought about the offline collective actions.

### **Interactions in the virtual community were followed by many collective activities in the real world.**

In both cases, the interactions in the virtual community were followed by many collective activities in the real world. The overlap and mutual promotion of virtual and real interaction was the key for forming collective actions.

On the other hand, the effect of the internet depended on how much government attention it could attract. The core strategy of using the internet was to attract the focus of government.

### **The use of the internet relieved the collective actions of the restrictions of physical distance and population size.**

So in these instances, the use of the internet relieved the collective actions of the restrictions of physical distance and population size, and was successful in attracting the attention of the government. ■

*Author: Dr Ying Wu, associate research fellow, National Institute of Social Development, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.*

# Lies, damn lies and the media



The bursting of citizens onto the streets of Tunisia and Egypt in early 2011, and the ensuing overthrowing of the dictators Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak attracted widespread media attention, characterised as an 'Arab Spring'<sup>1</sup>. But during the same period, mounting protests, demonstrations and actions by citizens in a number of other African countries received little attention. What prompted this lack of awareness in the mainstream media's reporting, asks *Firoze Manji*.

Other African countries that were protesting against their governments at the time of the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings included Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Gabon, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Somalia, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, Western Sahara and Zimbabwe.

While these protests were not on the scale witnessed in Tunisia or Egypt, they still represented qualitative changes in the political and social environments of these countries. And yet, they received little attention.

**Such lack of awareness is symptomatic of much of the mainstream media's reporting on the global South, where the agency of citizens is assumed to be lacking.**

Such lack of awareness is symptomatic of much of the mainstream media's reporting on the global South, where the agency of citizens is assumed to be lacking. It is the narrative of imperial power or of corporations that tends to predominate. Or, put another way, there is a tendency to see the people of the global South, and especially those in Africa, as natives, not citizens, and as mere objects and not the makers of history.

## A common history

The discontent that precipitated the uprisings in North Africa had causes and origins similar to the social upheavals witnessed in other parts of the continent, namely the growing impoverishment of the majority associated with the neoliberal economic policies that have dominated the global South for the last 30 years.

This was a period during which there were systematic reversals of the gains of independence, particularly in Africa.

There were major economic and social transformations carried out by post-independence governments as part of the social contract established with the mass independence movements. According to a United Nations University (UNU) World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER) report, during the 40 years from 1950 to 1990, countries of the South sustained an average annual growth rate of more than 5% by a population 10 times larger than that of the developed world. There were significant levels of industrialisation and an increasing share of manufacturing in exports; an increase in the rates of savings and investment; and an unprecedented expansion of social development, including in the areas of health, education, life-expectancy (from 35 to 60+ years) and literacy.

Such gains of independence were to be cruelly arrested, beginning in the early 1980s. Almost without exception, the same set of social and economic policies – the so-called structural adjustment programmes – was implemented across the African continent, opening avenues for capital expansion through the extreme privatisation and liberalisation of the economies. The result of neoliberal policies was to increase the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

It is no surprise that as a result, we are witnessing a growing disenchantment with the policies pursued by our

<sup>1</sup> Both Tunisia and Egypt are in Africa and are members of the African Union and both have a long and intimate political and historical connection with the rest of the continent.

governments; a rising anger at the widening gap between rich and poor; and a growing realisation that the lot of the majority has been to continue to suffer in much the same way as – and sometimes worse than – they did under colonial or apartheid rule.

It was this anger that fuelled the explosion of citizens onto the streets of Tunisia and Egypt, and it was this same anger that brought about protests and uprisings across so many African countries.

**It has become conventional to describe Africans only in terms of what they are not.**

### **Stereotypical perspectives**

The predominant view of Africa is not as a place that was devastated and impoverished by slavery and colonialism; nor as a place that succeeded in the immediate post-independence period in reversing some of those historical disadvantages against all odds; nor a place where attempts to implement social policies that favoured the majority were frequently thwarted by assassinations, Western-supported coups d'état, threats and economic blockades, to say nothing of foreign military intervention to achieve regime change.

On the contrary, it has become conventional to describe Africans only in terms of what they are not. They are chaotic not ordered, traditional not modern, tribal not democratic, corrupt not honest, underdeveloped not developed, irrational not rational, lacking in all of those things the West presumes itself to be. White Westerners are still represented as the bearers of 'civilisation', the brokers and arbiters of development, while black, post-colonial 'others' are still seen as uncivilised and unenlightened, destined to be development's exclusive objects.

**The volume of capital flight far exceeds the amount of official development aid and foreign direct investment received... making Africa a net creditor to the rest of the world.**

The stereotypical view is that Africa is hopeless, indebted and heavily aid-dependent – a 'basket case', as former British prime minister, Tony Blair, so delicately put it. That it is a continent that fails to develop without the assistance of aid and the *noblesse oblige* of the development industry. But, according to a recent study of 33 sub-Saharan African countries conducted by the University of Massachusetts, these countries lost a total of \$814 billion through capital flight during the period between 1970 and 2010. Taking into account a modest estimate of the interest earned, this would

amount to a cumulative total loss of at least \$1.06 trillion. Even without interest, the volume of capital flight far exceeds the amount of official development aid (\$659 billion) and foreign direct investment (\$306 billion) received by these countries over the same period, making Africa a net creditor to the rest of the world.

### **Development pornography**

This perception of Africa is also to be found pervading, to varying degrees, in business, academia, parliamentary political milieu (especially foreign policy), the arts and literature.

NGOs need to entice the public to make donations for their work in Africa. To raise funds effectively, or to justify aid, Africans are portrayed as suffering victims, starving, emaciated and pleading for help. Graphic images are used of starving children by ever-growing numbers of competing charities to gain the attention of the public. But repetitive portrayal deadens the appeal, so each image depicting poverty has to be more graphic than the last to elicit responses. The spiral this leads to may be characterised as 'development pornography'.

### **Media and social protest**

The media's shortcomings, however, are especially revealed in relation to the reporting of protests by citizens or strikes by workers. It is rare to have analyses that explain to the reader, viewer or listener what brought about the protest or strike. Instead, if the action is reported on, there is a tendency to report on scenes of violence or to portray those engaged as causing disruption to the public or to 'development'. The result is a caricature that criminalises protesters in the eyes of the public and the police, and legitimises state repression.

**The media's shortcomings are especially revealed in relation to the reporting of protests by citizens or strikes by workers.**

The way in which the now infamous miners strike in the Lonmin platinum mines in Marikana, South Africa, during which more than 40 workers lost their lives, was reported (at least in the early period) is illustrative. Research by Jane Duncan from the School of Journalism, Rhodes University, showed that the media focused almost exclusively on the views of business, parliamentarians, mine owners and management, government and police, with only 3% providing the views of miners themselves. Wrote Duncan in her report, '... of all 153 articles [analysed], only one showed any attempt by a journalist to obtain an account from a worker about their version of events. There is scant evidence of journalists having asked the miners the simplest and most basic of questions, namely "what happened?"'. ■

*Author: Dr Firoze Manji, head, CODESRIA's Documentation, Information and Communications Centre, Dakar, Senegal.*

# Transformation through human rights films

In an increasingly digital age, films have the potential to promote human rights activism that could transform society. A key question to ask is, how do we decide on the scientific value of these films? *Sharlene Swartz* explores whether film can serve a similar purpose to, for example, a qualitative interview with a key informant or an ethnographic case study, to bring about social change.



Film can persuade, educate, entertain, inform and is relied on to 'document, explain, expose, or complicate global human rights issues' according to US political scientist, Safia Swimelar.

Think for example of blockbuster films such as *Lord of War*, *Blood Diamond* and *Constant Gardener*, which dealt with the topics of nefarious arms dealing, exploitative resource extraction and the immoral aspects of the pharmaceutical industry in developing countries.

In South Africa, as elsewhere in the world, there are increasing numbers of human rights films being produced that are showcased at documentary film festivals, on television channels, over the internet and, in the case of big-budget productions, in cinemas.

Topics showcased in recent films (according to an analysis of the South African-based Tri-Continental Film Festival over the past 10 years) include human trafficking, political violence, environmental change, religious freedom and sexual choice.

The question does however need to be asked, how do those responsible decide which films are worth broadcasting or using in educational or research contexts?

## Cases studies from South Africa, Sierra Leone and Burundi

This article describes three recent films set in various African contexts. *Ezra* (2007) tells the fictional story of a child soldier in Sierra Leone during the civil war in the 1990s. The film follows Ezra, who was kidnapped at the age of nine by one faction of the civil war, and details some of the atrocities he was involved in, including the role of drug use in war. It culminates in his experience at the subsequent Truth and Reconciliation Commission, convened when he was 16. The film is dramatic, poignant and highlights the complexities of actors, actions and consequences.

*My Heart of Darkness* (2010) narrates the story of four war veterans, from various sides of the conflict during apartheid South Africa's border wars (in Namibia and Angola) between 1975 and 1992. The story focuses on the men's reunion – an initiative taken by a white former South African conscript in an effort to deal with his demons, and find forgiveness and reconciliation. The film offers a frank and nuanced discussion of war atrocities, human emotion and culpability.

*Kamenge Northern Quarters* (2010) showcases civic action in post-genocide Burundi and relates two stories. The first is of a Catholic priest who runs a youth centre situated in Kamenge, Burundi, on the border between former Tutsi and Hutu zones. The second story is of a Burundian journalist and aspiring politician who returns to Burundi from exile in France only to be imprisoned for drawing attention to alleged corruption and power-mongering in Burundian politics. The film also offers a detailed historical perspective on the genocide in Burundi and the political landscape following it.

## A way to evaluate human rights films

We offer a rubric through which human rights films might be evaluated under five main headings:

### 1. *Perspective, content and form*

What is this film about? What point of view does it take? What does it defend, advance or omit? Who are those wronged, and who are portrayed as those able to make it right? Who is given power? Who is left powerless?

**2. Provenance of filmmaker**

What are the background and politics of its creator (writer, director, producer, funder)? Is the filmmaker local to the context portrayed or foreign? What difference does this make? How does the personal location and milieu (time of writing, political events, culture) of the filmmaker affect our understanding and interpretation of the film?

**3. Audience and representation**

Who is the intended audience for the film? What is its stated intention? What response does it evoke in the viewer?

**4. Theory of change and theoretical lens**

How does the film position actors (as architects, implementers, inheritors, dishonoured, beneficiaries of injustice or resistance to injustice)? How does it address the elements of personhood (dignity, memory, belonging and opportunity)? In what domains (individual, communal, institutional) does it suggest action?

**5. Authority and film as social science text**

What other literature supports or contradicts its basic argument? What weight or authority ought to be given to this film as social science text, as educational material, as provocation to activism?

**Film is an important component of humanities research.**

**Assessing the films according to this rubric**

While these questions are complex and answering them in detail is beyond the scope of this review, a synopsis of answers reveals valuable insights. All three films are contemporary accounts of events less than 20 years' old. As such they offer immediate histories from specific vantage points.

*My Heart of Darkness* and *Ezra* do well to locate themselves historically and address issues of power. Only *Ezra* is produced by an African (although a Nigerian rather than someone from Sierra Leone); the others are European produced and funded. This is especially apparent in *Kamenge Northern Quarters*, where only one story, that of external agents, is told rather than the more complex features of the genocide and political transition that followed.

Both *My Heart of Darkness* and *Ezra* invite an audience response through offering nuanced accounts. Not so with *Kamenge*, which focuses almost solely on a critique of the current Burundian government. *Ezra* depicts a complicated location of actors, while *My Heart of Darkness* and *Kamenge* use mainly binary categories of good and bad, right and wrong in their story-telling. The latter two also depict how change could happen at the interpersonal and communal level, while *Ezra*'s focus is on structural change (through the truth commission it describes).

From a theory-of-change point of view, all three films address issues of dignity and memory, but only *Kamenge*

addresses the socioeconomic impact of injustice (opportunity) as well as the current political effects of past injustice (belonging).

As social science texts, *My heart of darkness* and *Ezra* perform relatively well. However, the same cannot be said for *Kamenge*. Many of the reasons are to be found in the earlier analysis, which points to the usefulness of such an interrogative framework. As a catalyst for social activism, all three make a worthwhile contribution.

Figure 1 provides an evaluation of these five elements and how each film fared using a basic metric of 'good' (thumbs up), 'not so good' (thumbs down) and 'so-so' (a pointing finger).

Figure 1: Summary of the elements against which the human rights films were assessed.

	My Heart of Darkness	Kamenge Northern Quarters	Ezra
Perspective, content and form			
Provenance of filmmaker			
Audience and representation			
Theory of change and theoretical lens			
Authority and film as social science text			

**Conclusion**

This article highlights the need for further research in this area. Film is an important component of humanities research and studies on human rights films, such as this one, bring together the humanities and social sciences with critical application for everyday social transformation.

**Studies on human rights films bring together the humanities and social sciences with critical application for everyday social transformation.**

Outcomes of such research offer active engagement and practical educational opportunities for youth in schools, film festival goers and the general public who might encounter these films through mass broadcast. A key additional recommendation that emerged from a discussion at the World Social Science Forum 2013 was that such an evaluative framework would be useful for filmmakers to ensure that the films they produced realised their maximum potential for transformative impact. ■

Author: Professor Sharlene Swartz, director, Human and Social Development research programme, HSRC.

# The social dynamics of innovation for rural development



The idea that innovation is only for increased market shares and profits is widely held. How poor communities benefit from innovations as direct users but also as innovative actors in their own right is rarely discussed. *Peter Jacobs et al\** explore how people at the bottom of the rural socioeconomic pyramid might benefit from progress in science technology and innovation (STI), drawing on new evidence from rural South Africa.

**A**lmost all businesses innovate because their goal is to make the maximum amount of money for their owners. But immediate commercial gain is merely one of the reasons for this innovation. Many rural enterprises, for example, engage in innovation activities to increase the social and human wellbeing of people or for traditional commercial motives.

Invented goods, services and processes that trickle down to marginalised members of society are classified as social innovations. This is a new concept and a fixed definition of social innovation has not yet taken root. Direct participatory forms of local organisation of people to access services and goods and improve livelihoods receive virtually no attention in mainstream innovation literature. Moreover, local actors rarely call such new arrangements innovations.

Alternative ideas of how poor communities can benefit from innovation are becoming more widespread. These are often labelled bottom of the pyramid, below the radar, grassroots or inclusive innovation. What it means to develop new products and organisational arrangements that benefit people is highly contested and underexplored.

We investigated the main purpose of innovation and several factors associated with it. The study took place in four of the poorest rural district municipalities in South Africa. Among the 473 rural enterprises interviewed, 43% self-reported participation in innovation for direct improvement in social and human welfare compared to 57% who engaged in innovation activities first and foremost for increasing commercial opportunities.

**Non-profitable entities appeared to be more likely ... to innovate for betterment in people's living conditions.**

## Key insights

How does the primary purpose for innovation relate to the profiles of rural enterprises? Non-profitable entities appeared to be more likely than either private or public enterprises to innovate for betterment in people's living conditions. Other enterprise characteristics – like business tax registration status, registration with a formal business regulator, and output sales outside the boundaries of the municipality where the enterprise is located – also affected the main purposes for engaging in innovation activities.

Whether enterprises operated in the primary, secondary or tertiary sector also influenced whether innovation was for direct social and human wellbeing or not. Roughly 71% of suppliers of tertiary services innovated for this purpose against 41% that innovated for bigger market shares and profits.

The link between the purpose of innovation and a respondent's awareness or not of scholarly definitions of social innovation was puzzling. A surprisingly small share of enterprises self-reported an understanding of the meaning of social innovation, with slightly more than a quarter of respondents evidently innovating for social outcomes. By contrast, almost three-quarters innovated for social outcomes but did not know the meaning of social innovation.

## The primary reason why rural enterprises innovate is not restricted to enriching the owners.

Does government support for innovation prioritise innovations that directly benefit the rural poor? About two-thirds of responding enterprises that innovated for social

welfare enhancement stated that they were aware of state support for innovation. While a relatively smaller share of enterprises applied for government's innovation assistance, only 44.8% of applicants were innovating to broad-based societal benefit.

A total of 86% of visited enterprises participated in knowledge sharing networks and innovated for better social and human welfare. These enterprises participated mainly in formal innovation networks, with 77.8% of them pursuing socially oriented innovation involved in formal networks.

## Whether enterprises operated in the primary, secondary or tertiary sector influenced if innovation was for direct social and human wellbeing or not.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics: Social/Human Wellbeing Purpose of Innovation Activities, N=473

Variable Name	No =0 Yes =1	Commercial/ Profit=0 N=270	Social/Human Wellbeing=1 N=203	Total Valid Observations	Chi-2
Public Enterprises	0	91.85	63.55	377	57.39*
	1	8.15	36.45	96	
Private Enterprise	0	35.93	87.19	274	124.96*
	1	64.07	12.81	199	
Non-Profit Organisations	0	72.22	49.26	295	26.03*
	1	27.78	50.74	178	
Registered Legal Entity	0	11.11	5.42	41	4.74**
	1	88.89	94.58	432	
Business Tax Registered	0	23.7	25.62	116	0.23
	1	76.3	74.38	357	
Primary Sector	0	63.33	79.31	332	14.14*
	1	36.67	20.69	141	
Tertiary Services	0	58.89	29.06	218	41.48*
	1	41.11	70.94	255	
Local Market Output Distribution	0	61.85	85.71	341	32.79*
	1	38.15	14.29	132	
District Market Sales	0	61.11	67.98	303	2.37
	1	38.89	32.02	170	
Social Innovation Awareness	0	80.97	73.76	366	3.47**
	1	19.03	26.24	104	
Aware of Gov't Innovation Assist	0	43.7	32.51	184	6.11**
	1	56.3	67.49	289	
Applied for Government Innovation Support	0	70.74	55.17	303	12.19*
	1	29.26	44.83	170	
Knowledge Sharing Network Participant	0	34.07	13.79	120	25.17*
	1	65.93	86.21	353	
Formal Innovation Network	0	43.7	22.17	163	23.79*
	1	56.3	77.83	310	

Notes: This bivariate relationship is often described as a non-parametric method using Pearson Chi-2 testing the null hypothesis of no significant difference. Interviewed enterprises were 482, but only 473 enterprises remained with zero non-responses and missing information. Significance levels: 1% =\*; 5% =\*\*.

## Conclusion

In summary, the primary reason why rural enterprises innovate is not restricted to enriching the owners. Non-profit and public enterprises in rural South Africa who participate in formal innovation networks and get appropriate state support for innovation activities play leading roles in innovation for social and human welfare enhancement. Alongside the important conceptual and policy lessons that flow from our

findings is support for a broader mix of methodologies to study ways of harnessing innovation for equitable social change in rural areas. ■

Authors: Dr Peter Jacobs, research specialist, Economic Performance and Development research programme (EPD), HSRC; Tim Hart, senior research manager, EPD; Alexandra Mhula, Hlokomla Mangqalaza and Kgabo Ramoroka, junior researchers, EPD.

# How do small farm households benefit from ICT access and use?

## Connecting smallholders to knowledge and networks through ICT



Small farm households in rural South Africa are learning to exploit information and communication technology (ICT) devices and services to accumulate wealth. *Kgabo Ramoroka, Tim Hart* and *Peter Jacobs* look at some recent evidence and highlight the implications for pro-poor rural innovation policy actions.

Small farm households in some parts of Limpopo use the digital doorway to access information quicker and easier, and do not depend entirely on extension officers for information. Digital doorways are robust computer stations with multiple screens initiated by the Limpopo Department of Agriculture to provide internet access to small farm households and rural communities.

**Modern ICTs have the potential to increase the agricultural productivity of small farm households through knowledge and information sharing.**

Modern information and communication technologies (ICTs) have the potential to increase the agricultural productivity of small farm households through knowledge and information sharing, and through providing them with access to markets and resources. For example, in Rungwe District, Tanzania, farmers use ICTs to access market information. Interestingly, farmers who use ICTs obtain higher prices than farmers who do not use ICTs for accessing market information. Similarly, in Benin, small pineapple farmers use mobile phones to save time and reduce transaction costs. The Kenya Agricultural

Commodity Exchange Limited collects and disseminates current market information to farmers through short message service (SMS).

In recognition of wider socioeconomic spin-offs from ICT usage in rural areas, government policies are developed that attempt to ensure that all communities have the opportunity to access and effectively use ICTs in their day-to-day social and economic activities. Despite remarkable progress of ICT penetration reported by Stats SA in rural areas of South Africa, there are disparities in ICT access and usage between areas and communities in rural areas.

**A major impediment to rural ICT access is inadequate telecommunication infrastructure.**

Research ICT Africa reported that despite its high mobile penetration rate, South Africa has low personal computer and household internet usage. A major impediment to rural ICT access is inadequate telecommunication infrastructure. Furthermore, the South African telecommunications market is characterised by high prices across a range of services. In essence, creating reliable and affordable ICT services in rural areas is a complex challenge.



Costs, adequate infrastructure and local skills are crucial determinants of what social gains these ventures could yield for rural communities. To understand the extent to which ICT services are being distributed among small farm households in rural South Africa, we analysed the 2011 General Household Survey (GHS) – one of the main, official surveys Stats SA has been conducting annually since 2002. We further presented evidence from the Rural Innovation Assessment Toolbox pilot test on ICTs’ access by agricultural enterprises.

**ICT access by small farm households in formal and ex-homeland areas**

Questions about ICT access in the 2011 GHS provided a sense of how functional landline telephones, cell phones and internet connections were distributed per 100 households. It also asked for information about computer and internet access through libraries and schools. A descriptive analysis of access patterns to these ICTs by different households is summarised in Table 1.

The results revealed a larger concentration of ICTs in formal rural areas, indicating huge disparities in ICT access between

formal and ex-homeland rural areas. In both rural localities, at least 80 per 100 small farm households regardless of farming type had access to functional cell phones.

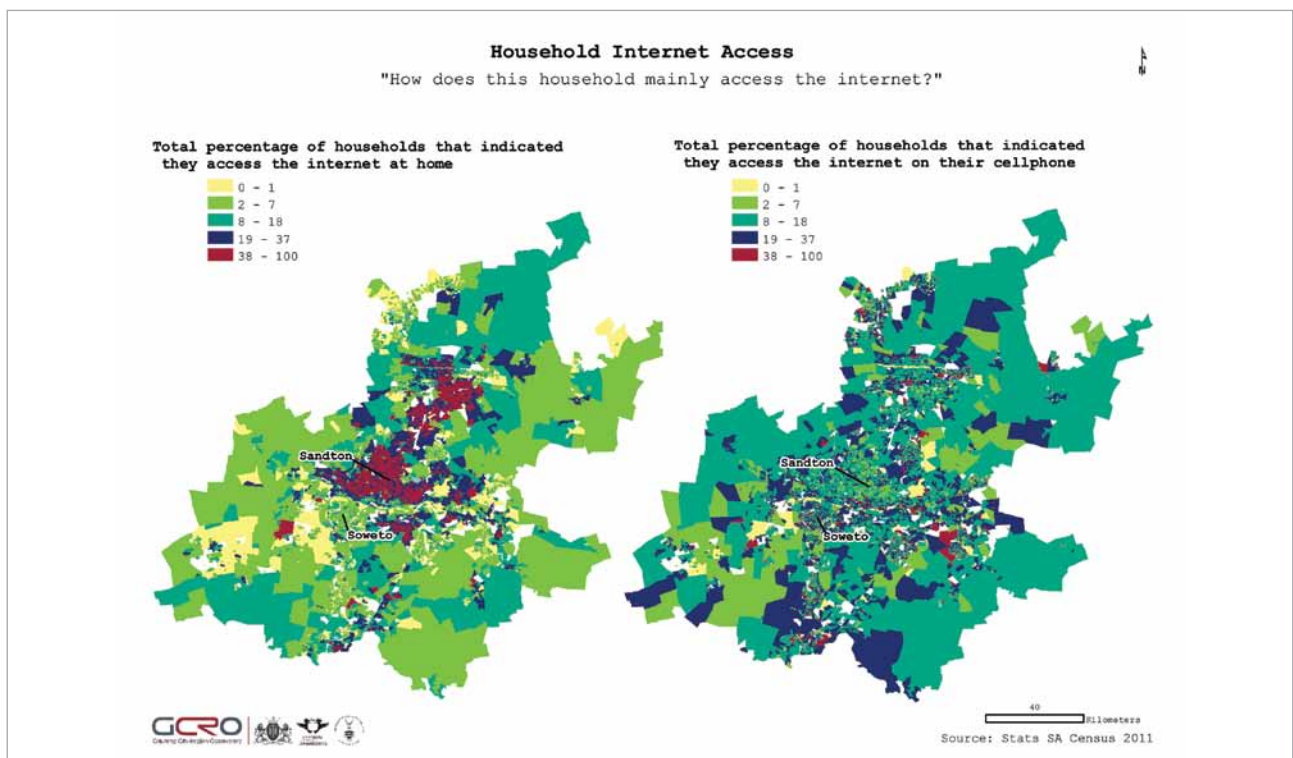
Landline telephone access was relatively higher among households in formal rural areas. Entrepreneurial (commercially oriented) farmers had better access to landline telephones and private internet services in contrast to households farming for consumption and as a leisure activity. The results further revealed a low level of ownership of personal computers and household internet connectivity across the two rural locality types.

Even though private internet services access was low, at least nine per 100 subsistence farmers and 19 per 100 leisure farmers in formal rural areas indicated that they had access to private internet services. This was in contrast to the one per 100 subsistence farmers and two per 100 households farming as leisure activity. Subsistence farmers accessed the internet mostly through communal internet services. None of the households in the formal rural areas accessed internet services through state funded institutions.

Table 1: Access to ICT services within farm households by farm household type (per 100 households)

Functional ICT service	Ex-homeland			Formal rural		
	Source of Food (/100hhs)	Source of income (/100hhs)	Leisure activity (/100hhs)	Source of Food (/100hhs)	Source of income (/100hhs)	Leisure activity (/100hhs)
Cell phone	91	93	93	90	94	92
Landline telephone	1	1	0	9	47	17
Internet in household	1	0	2	9	38	19
Internet at work	2	4	3	5	25	30
Internet library	1	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Statistics South Africa, 2012. General Household Survey 2011



Source: Gauteng City-region Observatory – <http://bit.ly/1gGxyt>

**ICTs were very unevenly spread across rural areas classified as formal versus ex-homeland localities.**

**ICT access by agricultural enterprises**

In 2012, the HSRC was contracted by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) to design, develop and pilot-test a Rural Innovation Assessment Toolbox (RIAT). The research team adopted a purposive snowball sampling technique, i.e. researchers recruit participants for a study and those participants then recommend additional participants, thus building up like a snowball rolling down a hill. This technique was used in four rural district municipalities in South Africa. We interviewed 482 formal and informal innovating enterprises, using a structured questionnaire to map innovation activities. The questionnaire contained a section on ICT access. A total of 129 agricultural enterprises participated in the interviews. Among a sample of these agricultural enterprises in rural South Africa, there were public, private and non-profit enterprises.

Table 2 provides a summary of self-reported access to ICTs by agricultural enterprises interviewed during the pilot study. The results showed that more than 90% of enterprises interviewed owned functional cell phones, but only 31% of enterprises had access to functional landline telephones. Ownership of personal computers by these enterprises was very low; on average less than 50% of enterprises indicated that they had access to computers. Internet connectivity was also very low, with less than a half of the enterprises reporting access to internet services.

Table 2: Shares (%) of rural agricultural enterprises self-reporting access to ICTs (N=129)

Functional ICT device	Access (N=129)	No access (N=129)
Cell phones	98	2
Landline telephones	31	69
Computers	45	55
Internet	44	56

**Conclusion**

The 2011 GHS survey results and the evidence from RIAT present a similar pattern of ICT distribution among small farm households and agricultural enterprises, i.e. cell phones are more accessible compared to other ICT devices and services. From the findings we observed that, in most formal rural areas in South Africa, ICT devices were more accessible than in ex-homeland rural areas. The 2011 GHS also showed that ICTs were very unevenly spread across rural areas classified as formal versus ex-homeland localities. In the case of internet access, small farmers in the ex-homeland areas found themselves at a considerable disadvantage. Entrepreneurial farmers in formal rural areas were better connected to higher-end ICT devices. The results presented here suggest that the majority of the lower income segment and the rural poor remain unconnected regardless of the reported increased penetration level of ICTs. ■

*Authors: Kgabo Ramoroka, junior researcher, Economic Performance and Development research programme (EPD), HSRC; Tim Hart, senior research manager, EPD; Dr Peter Jacobs, research specialist, EPD.*

The BRICS Forum

**The BRICS Development Bank and human rights**

Where will the BRICS Development Bank fit into the wider spectrum of multilateral development banks (MDBs)? *Gary Pienaar* sketches the background to MDBs, their role in human development and deliberates on the direction the bank could take.

Multilateral development banks (MDBs) have an indirect relationship with the international human rights framework. MDBs include the World Bank Group (WB), the Asian (ADB), African (AfDB), Inter-American (IADB) and European (EBRD and EIB) Development Banks.

They are not states and are therefore not signatories to the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), its covenants and protocols, and the like. However, their members and shareholders are states that usually have ratified these legal documents. Because rights are universal, MDBs have a moral obligation akin to the duties of states parties to 'respect, promote, protect and fulfil' all rights.

**The human development approach aims to enhance the quality of life by widening people's life choices and emphasising human dignity.**

**Human development**

The human development (HD) approach emerged in response to conventional economic development models' failure to produce general improvements in human conditions. Quantitative economic growth, measured by gross domestic product (GDP), is not an end in itself, but merely one way to improve human wellbeing. The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) focuses on education, health (longevity) and economic equity, using gross national product per capita as a measure of comparative inequality, unlike the conventional GDP measure that doesn't assess resource distribution in an economy.

This approach aims to enhance the quality of life by widening people's life choices and emphasising human dignity. Poor, unhealthy and illiterate people simply have fewer choices in life, whereas an HD approach enables the correlation of inputs and outcomes to increase opportunities to choose and the capabilities that enable meaningful choices and self-actualisation.

HD is flexible, recognising the complexities of human existence. People are simultaneously individuals, social beings and political actors, with different needs, aspirations and autonomy. HD thus embraces its relevance for social cohesion and for sustainable human development, widening choices of both present and future generations.

HD enhancement of personal agency promotes active citizenship. Knowledge and health – together with a livelihood and political freedom – provide their bearers with even greater chances for a better life. Traditional and formal modern education develops knowledge, which is applied to information to produce awareness, understanding and action.

**The advancement of human rights promotes human development, which entails the realisation of all human rights and vice versa.**

**Human development and human rights**

The advancement of human rights promotes human development, which entails the realisation of all human rights and vice versa. The global human rights framework, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Covenants on Civil and Political Rights, and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), regards these rights as essentially 'indivisible, interrelated and interdependent'; a virtuous circle.

Consequently, the UNDP's 2000 report *Human Development and Human Rights* declared that 'poverty eradication is not only

a development goal – it is a central challenge for human rights in the 21st century' and that 'an adequate conception of human development cannot ignore the importance of political liberties and democratic freedoms'.

The causal links between human rights render them mutually reinforcing. Ensuring civil and political rights – freedom of expression (which requires access to information), association and participation – thus empowers people to claim their social, economic and cultural rights.

Political and civil rights are necessary to exercise influence and power in a democracy to effect change to structural injustices that prevent human development, whether by social or economic exclusion, marginalisation or discrimination, which undermine dignity and equality. Enjoyment of essential levels of development likewise optimises choices over exercise of power.

In moral philosophy, the basis for human rights, access to information is understood as necessary in order to live a 'minimally good life'. Human beings are creatures with desire and capacity for knowledge. Deprived of adequate information and knowledge, life is seriously impoverished. Knowledge is a primary good – useful to everyone, whatever their conception of the good life – and pragmatically essential so people have the capacity to exercise their other rights.

The right to information is an instrumental right, pivotal to creation of awareness of the existence of rights, to break down barriers of disbelief, to mobilise for changes in policy and behaviour, and to create a culture of accountability for realising other human rights. Before the adoption of the UDHR, the UN general assembly declared that 'freedom of information is a fundamental human right... and the touchstone of all the freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated' (1946).

**MDBs have progressively developed standards and policies that ever more closely approximate international human rights norms.**

**Implications for multilateral development banks**

A broad HD approach may be discerned in the African Development Bank's mission to 'support the economic development and social progress of African countries individually and collectively, by promoting investment of public and private capital in projects and programmes designed to reduce poverty and improve living conditions.'

As institutions with independent legal personality, but protected from legal accountability by diplomatic immunity, MDBs have opted for self-regulatory systems. Accountability is exacted not through judicial enforcement, but through forms of administrative justice. Monitoring, reporting and advocacy create incentives to nurture a culture of compliance, as do performance standards, complaint mechanisms and dispute resolution forums. Underpinning all of these mechanisms is the right of access to information: none can be effectively utilised without this essential prerequisite.



MDBs have progressively developed standards and policies that ever more closely approximate international human rights norms. They have succeeded in doing so despite their member states' national practices sometimes lagging behind. Thus, the purposes for which aid or lending is undertaken, and the way in which those activities are managed, have arguably become more consistent with this normative framework. MDBs have become standard-setters in respecting social and environmental standards. How have they done so, and will the BRICS Development Bank will be able to improve on those standards?

For example, the AfDB, in following the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, recently adopted a very progressive disclosure and access to information policy, 'fulfilling a key commitment to shareholders' and reaffirming the centrality to the bank of good governance, with emphasis on transparency, accountability and information sharing.

### **Prospects for the BRICS leadership**

That the BRICS Development Bank (BDB) should fulfil this commitment to shareholders is hopefully beyond question. Widespread hope has been expressed that BRICS members – the BDB's first shareholders – will provide impetus for greater democratic fairness, voice and accountability in global governance institutions. Internal BRICS arrangements are currently too informal and inchoate to allow many insights into the features of its first formal entity.

Some basic considerations, although not adequately predictive, may permit a preliminary assessment of the prospects for desired BDB leadership. First, BRICS members have mostly supported or ratified the primary components of the international human rights framework.

Second, the internal power distribution (shareholding) in existing MDB boards reflects dominance of the most powerful Western democracies. In the WB, add China and

Japan. In the ADB they're joined by India, Australia, Indonesia, Canada and South Korea. The IADB is dominated by the USA (30%), Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Japan and Canada, while the AfDB enjoys the most egalitarian leadership, spread among Nigeria, Algeria, the USA, Germany, Japan, Libya, Egypt, Canada, South Africa and France.

**Hope has been expressed that BRICS members – the BDB's first shareholders – will provide impetus for greater democratic fairness, voice and accountability in global governance institutions.**

Third, the quality of national governance, particularly voice and accountability (as a proxy for participation and access to information), is assessed in the 2012 Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI). Scores range from more than 90% for Canada and Germany; per cents in the 80s for France, the USA and Japan; per cents in the 60s for South Africa and Brazil; 58.29% for India; 27.5% for Nigeria; 19.91% for Russia and 4.74% for China.

The absence of WGI leaders will likely mean that the BDB will test its shareholders' commitment to democratic human development approaches. ■

*Author: Gary Pienaar, senior research manager, Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery programme, HSRC.*

# Housing the urban poor in Africa:

## experiences of un-serviced housing plots

Self-provision of housing has always been part of the African culture and tradition. The fundamental ingredient in urban homeownership schemes for the poor is the smooth facilitation of the provision of appropriately located land at nominal cost. But how do we achieve this? *Trynos Gumbo* explains.

**T**he majority of African cities were designed and modelled to cater for a small number of elite and the privileged minority during colonialism. The religious application of strict urban planning and development ideals against the backdrop of rapid urbanisation, which coincided with the wave of independence within the continent, has given rise to serious social ills.

There has been a proliferation of squatter settlements, which have become common sites of social struggles and crimes, communicable diseases and fire outbreaks that result in a loss of property and human lives. In the quest to inform ways of improving and promoting homeownerships among the urban poor in cities of the developing world, the study reported here focused on innovations in land and housing delivery that sought to bridge gaps in the outcomes of formal and informal land and housing delivery systems.

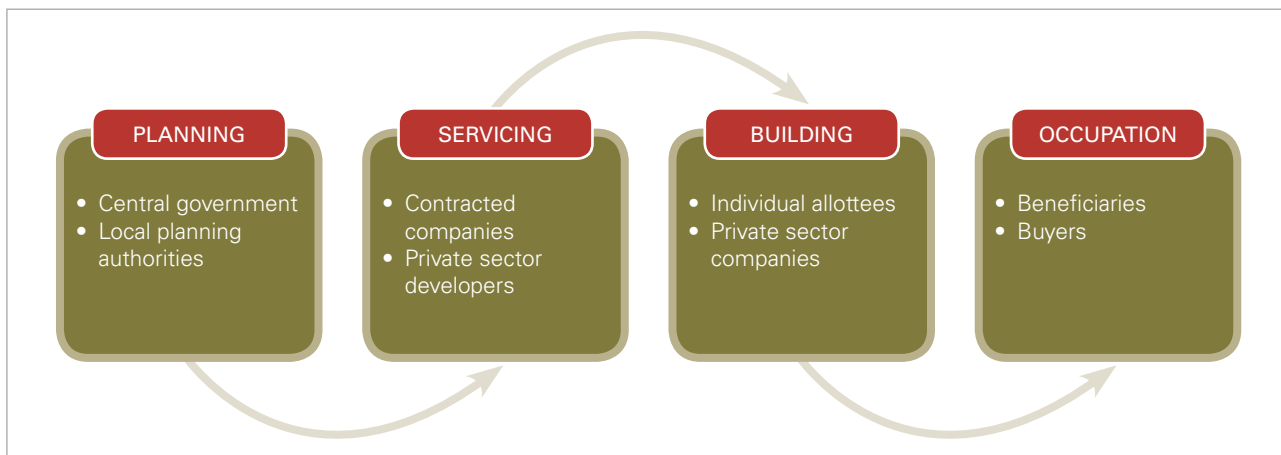
**Conventional land and housing delivery systems have perpetually failed to serve millions of the urban poor.**

### **Formal land and housing delivery processes**

Conventional land and housing delivery systems have perpetually failed to serve millions of the urban poor in cities of the developing world, particularly so in almost all African cities. Predominantly, land and housing units delivered through the planning-servicing-building-occupation (PSBO) framework – a formal model that forms the basis of most urban planning systems – has been unaffordable to the majority of the urban poor and does not meet soaring demands. This model places much emphasis on orderly land parcelling processes and sequential development of structures to stipulated standards, as represented in Figure 1 (on page 28), ignoring affordability in the process.



Figure 1: The sequence of formal land and housing delivery.



Source: Gumbo, T., developed from ideas by Baross (1990)

**Spatial practices ... assist in the creation of sustainable, harmonious, compatible and secure urban environments.**

Throughout the planning, servicing and building stages, built environment professionals perform prescriptive tasks to fulfil conceived or abstract space ideals, giving rise to substantial increases in costs that cannot be met by despondent urban poor households.

**Informal land and housing delivery processes**

In most African cities, rigid and inaccessible land and housing delivery processes have left the urban poor with no options but to devise illegal mechanisms and unconventional frameworks of accessing housing. Their solutions usually follow the occupation-building-planning-servicing (OBPS) sequence, as depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The sequence of informal land and housing delivery.



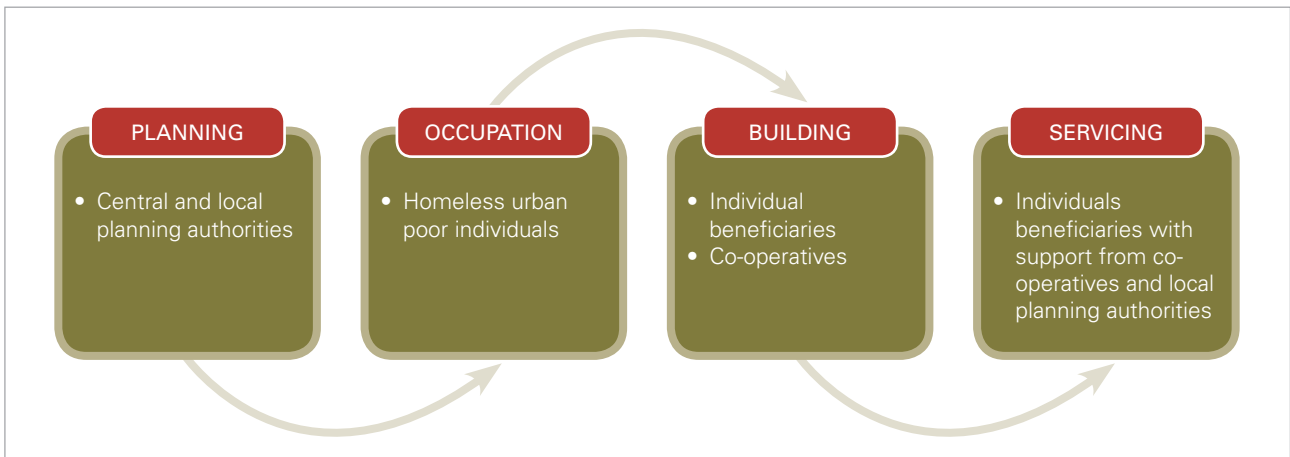
Source: Gumbo, T., developed from ideas by Berner (2000)

Representational spaces give rise to insecure and substandard housing outcomes with serious repercussions that include overcrowding, disease outbreaks as well as unsecured investments that suffer from demolition and eviction threats. Disregarding order and spontaneous reaction to situations create unstable urban communities.

**Bridging formal and informal land and housing delivery processes**

Innovative delivery of land and housing to the African urban poor helps bridge extreme outcomes of the formal and informal approaches. The adjusted approach follows the planning-occupation-building-servicing (POBS) framework. It takes into account the benefits of providing properly planned housing stands, at the same time relaxing regulations on servicing the land before building and occupation (Figure 3 on page 29). This results in the development of stable, secure and affordable housing outcomes.

Figure 3: The adjusted land and housing delivery approach for the African urban poor.



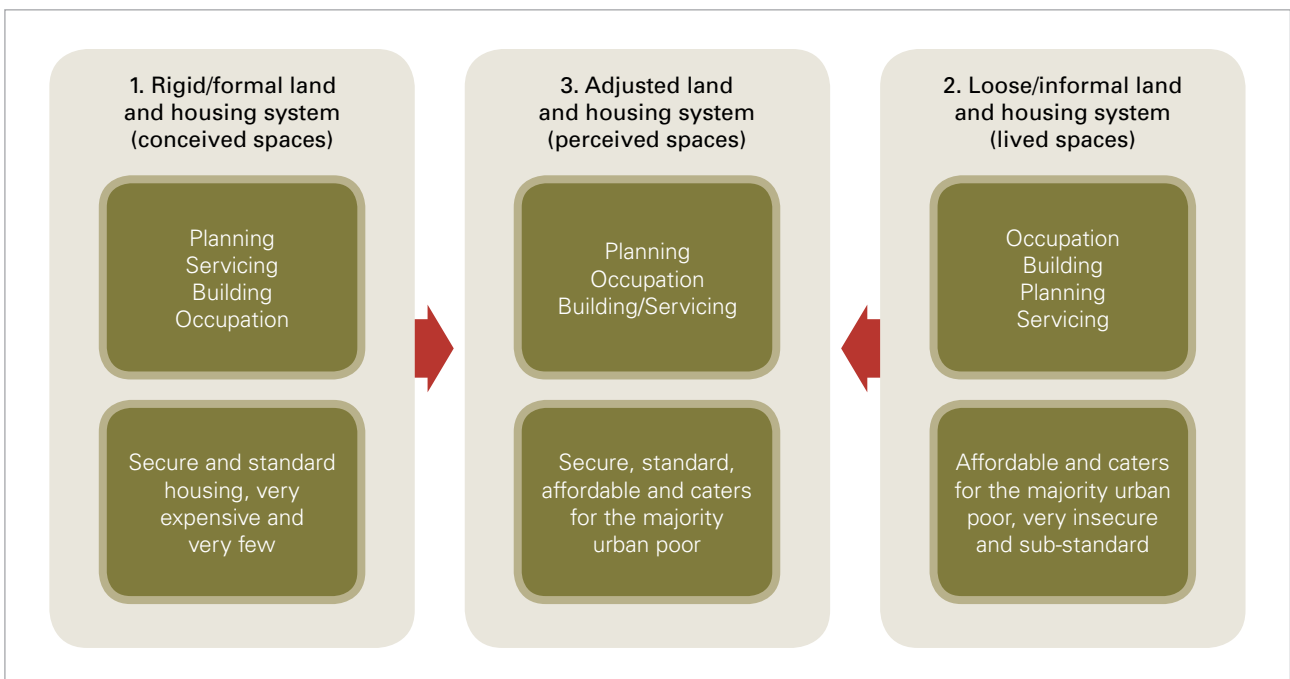
Source: Gumbo, T.

Allocating housing stands on planned schemes ensures security to the urban poor who subsequently improve their structures and environments incrementally, creating liveable and healthy communities. Spatial practices by both built environment professionals and the urban African poor assist in the creation of sustainable, harmonious, compatible and secure urban environments. Secure and adequate housing plots encourage incremental improvements of structures, onsite infrastructure and community environments, making them habitable, without any fear of future victimisation and loss.

### Innovations in land and housing delivery for the urban poor homeless in Bulawayo

Following the evictions of the urban poor across all urban centres through Operation Murambatsvina (OM), the Zimbabwean government innovatively devised less costly but environmentally and socially viable land and housing solutions to alleviate the plight of evictees. Borrowing from both approaches (Figure 4), the government allocated thousands of appropriately planned but un-serviced housing plots across major urban centres of the country.

Figure 4: Bridging the gaps between formal and informal land and housing delivery approaches



Source: Gumbo, T.

In Cowdray Park extension, one of the high-density residential suburbs of Bulawayo, 7 860 planned but un-serviced housing plots, measuring on average 200m<sup>2</sup>, were allocated to the urban poor. They were allowed to occupy the housing plots and to develop three-, four- or five-bedroom houses depending on their choice and levels of affordability. To ensure orderly development, a layout plan with spaces left for the future development of roads, water and sewer systems as well as community facilities such as schools, clinics, halls and churches was adopted and implemented.

Offering housing stand numbers to beneficiaries guaranteed and secured ownership, leading to massive development of structures and onsite infrastructure development. To date, the community has been connected by road and was provided with communal water infrastructure. Efforts to fully service and transform the area with running water and sewerage in the suburb to make it a habitable community are at an advanced stage.

Encouraging occupation before the servicing of stands greatly improved targeting those without homes and most in need. The innovation also discouraged speculative tendencies and down raiding.

**There is a need for pro-active and timeous identification, expropriation and efficient allocation of planned land to the urban poor.**

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

The innovative POBS model significantly addressed the traditional problems of conventional public housing programmes. African governments should adopt the sites-without-services approach that permits the phasing of not only the development of housing structures but also onsite infrastructure. Such an approach recognises the urban poor's needs, rights, capabilities and the gross inequalities inherent in most post-colonial cities of the continent.

There is a need for pro-active and timeous identification, expropriation and efficient allocation of planned land to the urban poor for housing development purposes. Physical planning and land surveying services should be improved, and relevant personnel well-resourced to efficiently respond to the demands of land by the urban poor.

Only the needy who do not own properties should be allocated planned land to achieve the objectives of urban poor housing programmes, as it would help if occupation of the allocated plot was a major element of the programme.

Beneficiaries of such housing plots need to be organised to pool their resources beyond building their houses and contribute towards serving the physical development of the community at large.

Supply-side instruments of making housing affordable through cost-reduction mechanisms by cutting back on standards and relaxing regulations should be intertwined with demand-side instruments, such as strengthening income resources for the beneficiaries of the housing plots.

There is also a need for continuous research and development on affordable building materials and innovative low-cost technologies for servicing and encouraging their uptake by urban low-income communities, for example in the prefabrication of sewer and water pipes. ■

*Author: Dr Trynos Gumbo, research specialist, Sustainable Development Programme, Africa Institute, as incorporated into the HSRC.*

# Population considerations in development planning

Population dynamics, such as changes in population size, structure and distribution, and the associated demographic factors of births, deaths and migration, affect all facets of human life. Planners in every sector should examine the population aspects of their sectors carefully and address their sector plans with reference to the relevant population issues. *Oladele Arowolo* explains why this is so important.

The vision of South Africa's population policy, according to the May 1998 white paper, is to contribute towards the establishment of a society that provides a high and equitable quality of life for all citizens in which population trends are commensurate with sustainable socioeconomic and environmental development. The goal of the policy is to bring about changes in the determinants of the country's population trends so that these are consistent with the achievement of sustainable human development.

In essence, by promulgating a national population policy, South Africa has joined other nations in the world in recognising the importance of population issues in development in various sectors, such as health, education, agriculture and transport.

To facilitate the implementation of the national population policy, the government established the Chief Directorate of Population and Development within the Department of Social Development. At the provincial level, population planning units were appointed to address population-related issues through policies and plans.

The current National Development Plan (NDP Vision 2030) also recognises the importance of population issues by looking at challenging issues to be addressed through the government and collaborating agencies' interventions during the programme cycle. However, the document stops short of actually integrating population issues into the plan for development, which requires systematically identifying population-related factors and strategies and addressing them in each sector of the economy. This shortcoming can



still be effectively addressed at the next level as each sector develops its implementation plan for the NDP Vision 2030.

**The population has increased at a rate of about 2.1% annually, but growth rates have slowed down generally since 2000.**

**Population trends in South Africa**

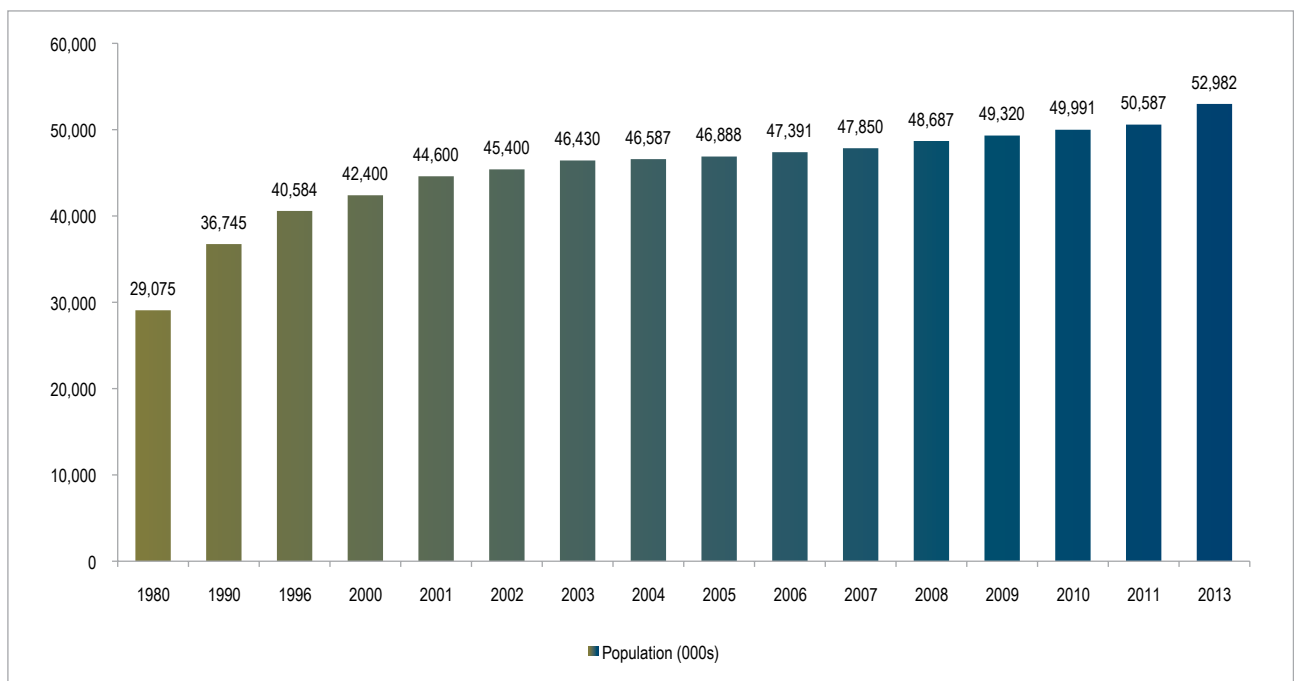
For many years, South Africa has had a relatively high and steady population growth, estimated at 29.1 million in 1980 and steadily increasing to 50.6 million in 2011. The most recent Stats SA estimates suggest that South Africa currently has a total population of about 52.9 million (Figure 1).

In terms of annual growth rate, the population has increased at a rate of about 2.1% annually, but growth rates have slowed down generally since 2000, largely due to the effect of AIDS deaths and declining fertility. The most recent estimates by Stats SA imply an overall growth from 1.30% (2002–2003) to 1.34% (2012–2013). It is noted that while the natural growth of the population has been declining over the past decade or so, Stats SA ascribes the overall increase in population growth in 2013 to the relatively high number of international migrants.



**According to UN projections ... the working age population in South Africa will reach 38.9 million by 2030.**

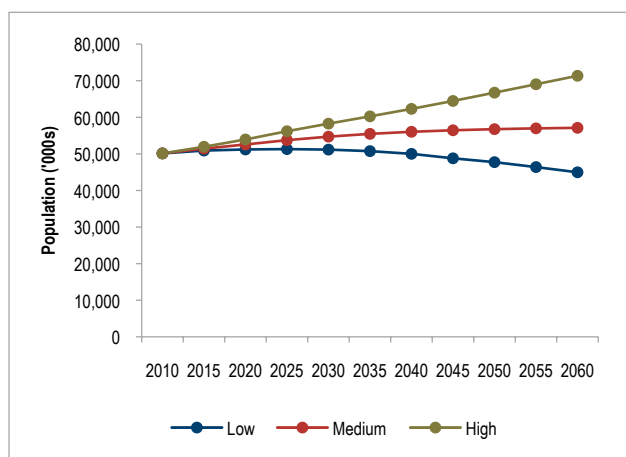
Figure 1: Trends in total population in South Africa (in '000s), 1980–2013



Source: Statistics South Africa releases; SADC: Statistics Yearbook 2012

In terms of future growth of the population, there are no official figures. The most recent United Nations projections for all the countries in the world, including South Africa, were that the country's population was poised to continue to grow steadily. Based on the 'medium' variant of the projections (which is recommended for planning), the population of South Africa could reach 54.7 million by 2030 (Figure 2). Under the 'high' growth scenario, by 2030 South Africa could have a population of 58.3 million.

Figure 2: South African population projections, 2010–2060

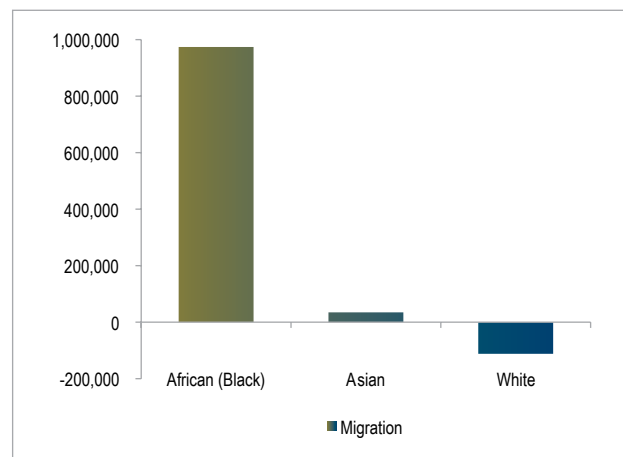


Source: Based on United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision, Population Division (2010 Revision), New York, ([www.data.un.org](http://www.data.un.org))



Much of the growth of the population will be due to natural increases, i.e. the balance of births over deaths in the population. However, migration trends will also play a key role in the population dynamics (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Estimated number of migrants into and out of South Africa by population group, 2006–2010.



Source: Statistics South Africa. 2013. Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013, Pretoria; based on Table 4; p6

One consequence of high population growth, promoted largely by high fertility, is the predominance of young people in the population. Children aged younger than 15 years make up 29.2% of the total population. However, due to differences in fertility levels, the black population with the highest fertility level also has 30.7% of the population aged younger than 15 years, compared to 17.4% of the white population, which has the lowest fertility rate among the four population groups (Figure 4).

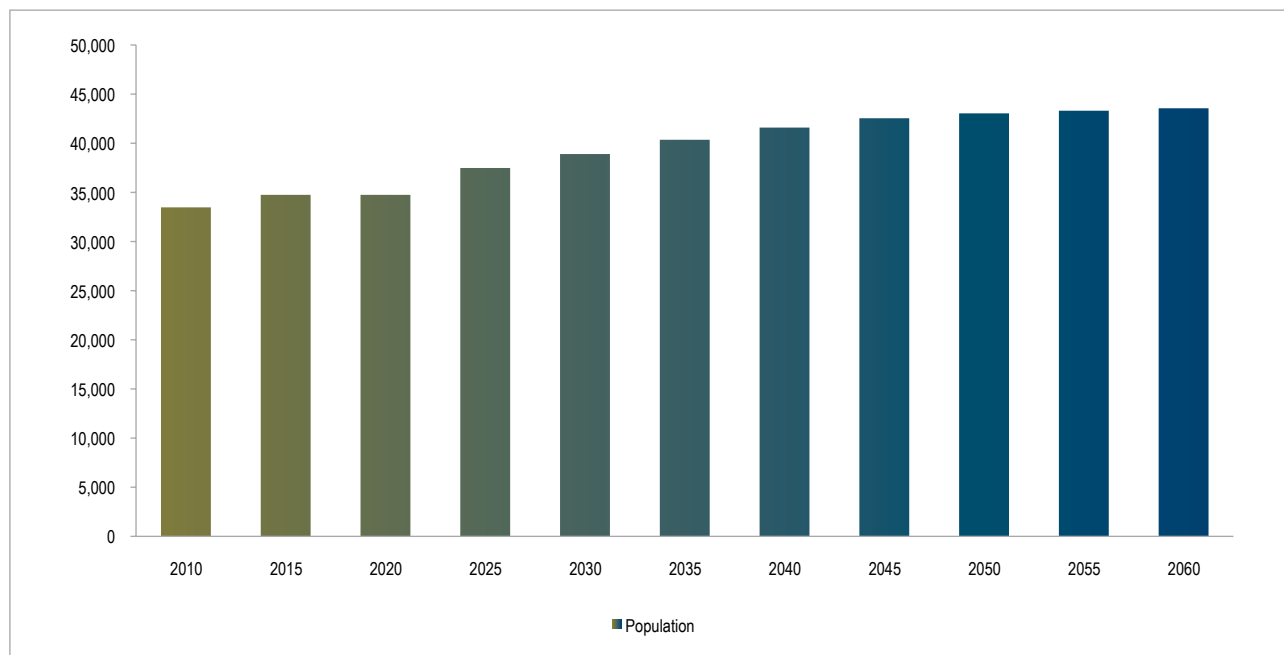
Table 1: The percentage of children aged 0–14 years and adults aged 65+ in the four South African population groups.

	% in Age Group	
	0–14	65+
African	30.7	4.2
Coloured	27.3	4.7
Asian	21.6	6.8
White	17.4	14.0
South Africa	29.2	5.2

Source: Statistics South Africa. 2013. Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013, Pretoria; based on Table 9; p9

Having a youthful population also implies that there will be an accelerated growth of the working age (15–64) population in South Africa over the coming years. According to the UN projections shown in Figure 4 (on page 33), from 33.5 million in 2010, the working age population in South Africa will reach 38.9 million by 2030. If the working age population is increasing so rapidly, efforts to create jobs for the new entrants into the labour market, which is already heavy with unemployment, should more than double. That is, if the unemployment situation is to be prevented from worsening.

Figure 4: Growth of the working age (15–64) population (in '000s) in South Africa, 2010–2060.



Source: Based on United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision, Population Division (2010 Revision), New York, ([www.data.un.org](http://www.data.un.org))

## Understanding the role of population in development is critical to achieving sustainable human development.

### What planners should know

Understanding the role of population in development is critical to achieving sustainable human development, which has been at the heart of the government's programmes since 1994. For planners, it is important to understand the role of population factors in the dynamics of social and economic development. For decision-makers, it is necessary to appreciate the nature of the relationship between population dynamics and development.

If development planners understand the role of population in development, they will be disposed to integrating population issues into their development plans. In addition, if decision-makers appreciate the interrelations between population and development, they are more likely to provide support to planners for integrating population issues into development plans.

**Population dynamics ... and the associated demographic factors ... affect all facets of human life, including the environment.**

Population dynamics (changes in population size, structure and distribution) and the associated demographic factors

(births, deaths and migration) affect all facets of human life, including the environment. Therefore, planners in every sector should examine the population aspects of their sectors carefully and address their sector plans with reference to the relevant population issues. For instance, the education sector should seek to analyse the current size and future growth of school age population as well as the supply of school teachers at all levels, their distribution in urban and rural areas and their future growth.

There is no sector that does not have its own population dimension, but most planners simply go ahead with their conventional planning practices with the hope that somehow some people might benefit. On the contrary, the focus in development planning should be the people, which is why the most meaningful indicator of development outcome is the one that is measured using population as its denominator. If there is development, it should be possible to see it in the people.

The government itself has called for a deep understanding of South Africa's demography over the next 20 years so as to ensure that correct policies are designed and adopted, potential windfalls exploited and threats avoided. Equally important in this regard, all sectors should develop the capacity to integrate population issues into their plans and implement accordingly. ■

Author: Prof. Oladele Arowolo, chief research specialist, Research Use and Impact Assessment, HSRC.

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## The future of South-South economic relations

**Author:** Edited by Adil Najam and Rachel Thrasher

**Publication month and year:** September 2013

**ISBN soft cover:** 978-0-7969-2434-6

**Format:** 235 x 168 mm

**Extent:** 240 pages

**Price:** R250.00

**Rights:** Southern African Rights Only (ZED)

The book presents a forward-looking analysis of South-South economic relations, and how they might impact, and be impacted upon, by the rest of the world. It includes a broad array of empirical case studies from across the global South, including Africa, Latin America and China, and features a truly global group of authors, both policy practitioners and academics, including leading names in their field. The phrase 'South-South co-operation' gained popularity in the 1970s as developing countries negotiated agreements aimed at narrowing the development gap with the North (UNDP 2004). More recently, however, the term has taken on new importance in the face of the global financial downturn and stalled multilateral trade negotiations. The surprising resilience of certain emerging economies and regional integration trends indicate that the global South may yet sit in the driver's seat of the world economy.



## The search for quality education in post-apartheid South Africa: Interventions to improve learning and teaching

**Editor:** Yusuf Sayed, Anil Kanjee and Mokubung Nkomo

**Publication month and year:** March 2013

**ISBN soft cover:** 978-0-7969-2407-0

**Format:** 240 x 168 mm

**Extent:** 448 pages

**Price:** R290.00

**Rights:** World Rights

Almost 20 years after the first democratic elections, education in South Africa is still in a state of crisis. Failure to deliver textbooks, limited support available to schools, ineffective districts, under-qualified teachers, poor matriculation results, and low performance in national and international assessments is symptomatic of a fundamental malaise in education. And it is the poor, marginalised and disadvantaged who are most affected. For those who have access to private and 'better quality' public schools, there is no crisis.

*The search for quality education in post-apartheid South Africa* considers these issues by reviewing selected large-scale interventions to improve education quality in South African schools. Academics, policy-makers and practitioners reflect on education development and shed light on the continuous but elusive search for quality education for all. The book provides a basis for a critical conversation about the history of education change in post-apartheid South Africa, and the implications for interventions aimed at improving education quality.