

Corporate mission (in brief summary)

The HSRC was established in 1968 as South Africa's statutory research agency and has grown to become the largest dedicated research institute in the social sciences and humanities on the African continent, doing cutting-edge research in areas that are crucial to development. The Council conducts large-scale, policy-relevant, social-scientific research for public sector users, non-governmental organisations and international development agencies.

Our mandate is to inform the effective formulation and monitoring of government policy; to evaluate policy implementation; to stimulate public debate through the effective dissemination of research-based data and fact-based research results; to foster research collaboration; and to help build research capacity and infrastructure for the human sciences.

The HSRC Act of 2008 <http://dev.worldwidecreative.co.za/en/about/hsrc-act> offers new opportunities for deeper engagement with South Africa's policy institutions and processes. Indeed, such engagement is demanded and facilitated by the Act which requires a strategic repositioning of the organization to enable it to take on new tasks and adopt new ways of operating. Beyond the requirements of the Act, the demands for multi-level transformation in South Africa should encourage the HSRC to take a more proactive role in creating a new policy environment that allows it to deploy research and knowledge tools to:

- support and monitor the effectiveness and impact of government actions;
- disseminate the results of research to policy communities more systematically; and
- measure the impact of research on policy processes more deliberately.

The HSRC maintains complementary relationships with the higher education, research and policy communities as an interlocutor enjoying a collaborative relationship with the university system and other science councils, serving the public purpose by being directly relevant to policy processes.

While the HSRC is primarily anchored within the South African development context, its research mandate is regional, continental and global. Relevance, effectiveness and visibility need to be accompanied by a prudent goal of regional and international partnerships and collaboration.