# HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

# 2020 - 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORT







#### **ACCOUNTING AUTHORITY STATEMENT**

In the HSRC's 2020 Theory of Change, it stated that "The HSRC has to undertake basic and applied research that will contribute to the alleviation of poverty, a reduction in the inequality gap and the expansion of decent work opportunities for the majority of South Africa's people." It went on to say that "The HSRC needs to reposition itself to respond to those pressing social issues where it has a competitive advantage to generate impact."

The Theory of Change set out to pursue the desired change, as articulated, by utilising the HSRC's human resources, training programmes, collaborators, grants and infrastructure, to conduct research, collaborate with partners, capacitate, convene and communicate in order to produce high-quality research, high-impact publications and knowledge products, strong partnerships, and trained researchers. Through these inputs, activities and outputs, it would work towards five outcomes in support of the five-year vision of being a national, regional and global leader in the production and dissemination of transformative social science and humanities research in the interests of a just and equal society.

Much work has been done to reflect the progress shown in this report. Over and above the progress made towards achieving the set outcome indicator targets, the Accounting Authority is pleased with the visible progress that the organisation is making in going beyond producing basic research, to solution-orientated research. This was a key message from the 2018 Institutional Review, and along with ten (10) focused recommendations, contributed significantly to the current Strategic Plan. Of the ten (10) Review Panel recommendations, seven (7) have been satisfactorily addressed.

The Accounting Authority, together with the HSRC Management, remains committed to pursuing the outcomes, the mission statement and the vision of the HSRC as envisaged in the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

R. Cassius Lubisi, PhD.

Chairperson

Accounting Authority of the Human Sciences Research Council



Mid-term Assessment Reports provide information about progress on implementing the institution's Strategic Plan (SP) after the first two and a half financial years of implementation, with particular reference to delivery of outcomes in relation to the priorities of government.

Accordingly, the HSRC set about the mid-term assessment by

- (i) synthesising a quantitative and qualitative reflection of progress made against its five outcomes, as measured through seven outcome indicators for which a five-year quantitative target was set; and
- (ii) assessing its programmatic approach to implementation of the Strategic Plan, as given form through a realigned organisational structure implemented in 2020.

A brief update on progress in implementing the recommendations of the 2018 Institutional Review is also provided.

The HSRC set out to achieve five outcomes in its 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, to be measured by seven outcome indicators in Year 5 (2024/25).

The HSRC is making the required progress to achieve the set outcome indicator targets in 2024/25.

Moreover, the HSRC utilised its knowledge-production capabilities to produce impactful results for the public good, as is evident in the portfolio of work reflected below.

The realigned organisational structure was successfully implemented in 2020 and holistically provides the required organisational form and desired model to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan. Having consolidated some former research programmes into three divisions, two centres and one institute, or in implementing the new strategic direction and mandate, certain of the divisions/centres/institutes have recommended minor name changes on the structure to better reflect the extent and nature of their mandates.

#### **Challenges**

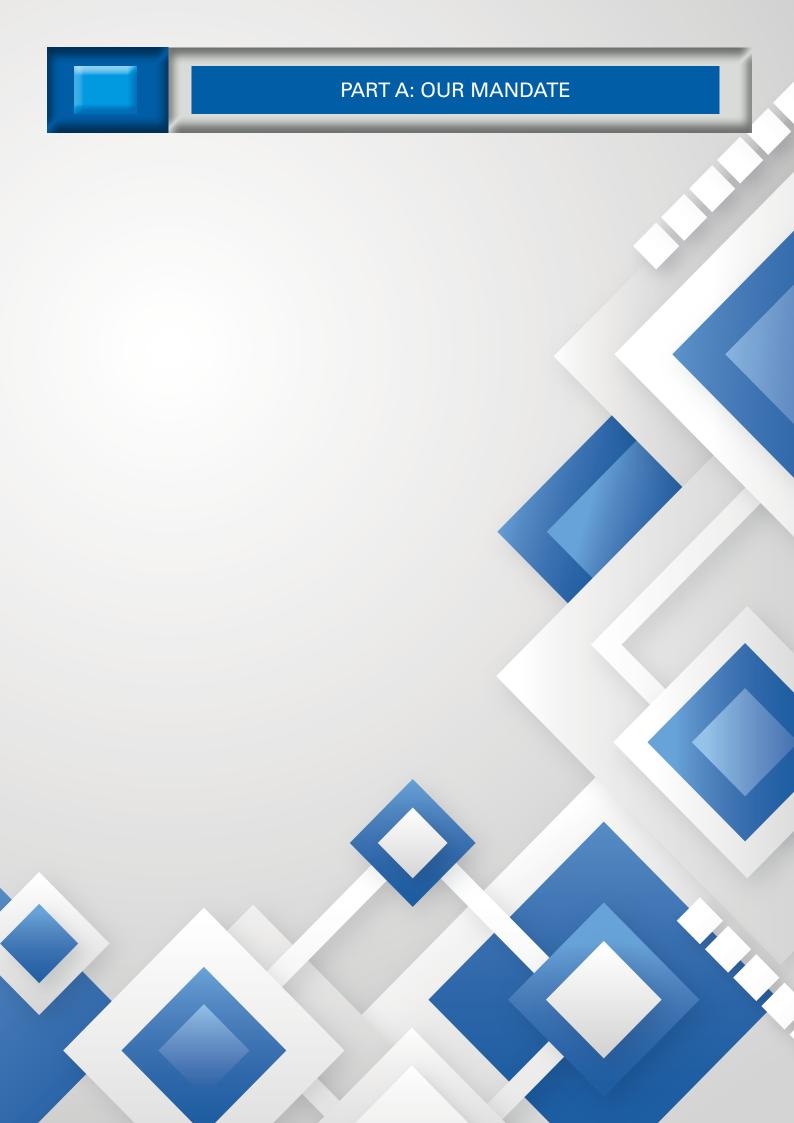
Covid-19 presented both challenges and opportunities. The immediate budget cuts necessitated by the national special budget amendment required the HSRC to cut its baseline budget by 10%. The financial impact of the pandemic was exacerbated by the inability to continue with large projects, particularly those with a fieldwork component, meaning the HSRC could not achieve project milestones and recognise income linked to those milestones.

Conversely, these factors compelled the HSRC to adopt novel approaches to day-to-day operations and leadership, conducting surveys under the lockdown restrictions and disseminating research outputs and building stakeholder relations digitally. Operational cost savings over the next 24 months enabled the organisation to redirect baseline funding towards responding to critical, unfunded research, including several Covid-19 surveys.

Retained surpluses in 2020/21 and 2021/22 also allowed the organisation to address critical IT infrastructure needs, which, at that point, posed a strategic risk to the HSRC.

Capacity, particularly at senior researcher level, is an ongoing challenge, with high vacancy rates allowing little or no agility for responding to urgent or unplanned work and opportunities for externally funded projects, and placing considerable strain on available resources when more than one large survey is underway. Attraction and retention of the skills required in the various divisions/centres/institutes/units is a strategic risk to the organisation. The HSRC competes with both universities and other research councils or research organisations for skilled researchers from a limited pool, and skills in certain disciplines are particularly difficult to attract, such as economics, science communication, public perceptions of science, the impact of science and innovation systems.

While the move from research generation only to research use and impact is being led by the Impact Centre at institutional level, embedding the science of impact in divisions/centres/institutes is still work in progress.



#### 1. Constitutional mandate

As supreme law of the country, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) applies to all laws, and binds all organs of state, including the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). In particular, the values enshrined in Chapter 1 of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights outlined in Chapter 2 affirm the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom that underpin and permeate the research agenda of the HSRC. More specifically, in outlining the principles of co-operative government and intergovernmental relations, Section 41 of the constitution requires the provision of effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government for the republic as a whole, by all spheres of government and all organs of state. The HSRC has a particular role and mandate to fulfil in this, by informing the effective formulation and monitoring of policy, and evaluating the implementation of policy.

Specific sections in the Bill of Rights confer particular rights and responsibilities to a research institution such as the HSRC. Section 16 addresses freedom of expression, including the right to academic freedom and freedom of scientific research. Section 12(2)(c) highlights the right not to be subjected to medical or scientific experiments without informed consent, which reminds the HSRC of its responsibility to ensure that all its research that involves or relates to human participants is undertaken ethically and with integrity.

#### 2. Legislative and policy mandates

The HSRC is a statutory research council, mandated to perform in terms of the Human Sciences Research Council Act, 2008 (Act No. 17 of 2008) (HSRC Act). This act highlights the public purpose of the HSRC and, in terms of Section 3, requires the organisation to:

- a) Initiate, undertake and foster strategic basic and applied research in human sciences, and to address developmental challenges in the republic, elsewhere in Africa and in the rest of the world by gathering, analysing and publishing data relevant to such challenges, especially by means of projects linked to public sector oriented collaborative programmes
  - aa) The Science and Technology Laws Amendment Act (Act 9 of 2020) expanded on this objective by providing for the Council to perform its functions in any territory outside of the Republic.
- b) Inform the effective formulation and monitoring of policy, as well as evaluate the implementation thereof
- c) Stimulate public debate through the effective dissemination of fact-based research results
- d) Help build research capacity and infrastructure for the human sciences.
- e) Foster research collaboration, networks and institutional linkages
- f) Respond to the needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups in society through research and analysis of developmental issues, thus contributing to the improvement of the quality of their lives
- g) Develop and make available data sets underpinning research, policy development and public discussion of developmental issues
- h) Develop new and improved methodologies for use in the development of such data sets.

While most of the clauses under Section 3 explain how the HSRC should do its work, Section 3(f) provides a strategic lens to help focus the research agenda of the organisation. The emphasis is on engaged research to address needs and development issues relevant to (unequal and poor) vulnerable and marginalised groups in such a way that it contributes to improving the quality of their lives.

In terms of Section 4 of the HSRC Act, the organisation is also allowed to undertake or commission research on any subject in the field of the human sciences and to charge fees for research conducted or services rendered at the request of others.

Section 2(2) of the HSRC Act confirms that the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999 as amended) (PFMA) applies to the organisation. The HSRC is listed as a national public entity in Schedule 3A of the PFMA, and complies with the PFMA requirements set for institutional governance, as well as for financial and performance management and reporting.

The way in which the HSRC undertakes research is also informed by clauses in the National Health Act 2003, (Act No. 61 of 2003). The definition for 'health research' is broad, and explicitly includes "any research which contributes to knowledge of the biological, clinical, psychological or social processes in human beings". The HSRC thus adheres to the requirements for ethical conduct of research outlined in Chapter 9 of the National Health Act and associated regulations and guidelines.

The Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI), (Act No. 4 of 2013) ("POPIA") is intended to promote the right to privacy as stipulated in the Constitution, while at the same time protecting the flow of information and advancing the right of access to and protection of information. In its operations, the HSRC processes various categories of personal information, such as Research, Human Resources, Finance, Supply Chain Management, Information Technology, Legal, Communications and Building & Maintenance Services. In processing any information in these categories, the HSRC will adhere to the conditions for lawful processing of personal information as set out in the Act. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that all publicly available datasets are de-identified. In addition, the HSRC Research Ethics Committee (REC) has received ongoing presentations and information sessions relating to POPIA and its implications for research. All research ethics applications received by the HSRC REC are being reviewed for POPIA compliance. It is of interest to note that POPIA provides certain exceptions from the lawful conditions of processing personal information for personal information that is processed for research purposes, for example, the provision regarding collection directly from the data subject can be waived for research, and the further processing of personal information is permissible for research purposes, where there are organisational safeguards in place to protect the confidentiality of the information and any potential harm to the data subject(s), and where the information will not be published in an identifiable form. The HSRC, like all institutions belonging to the NSI, will adhere to the new POPIA Code of Conduct for Research that is currently being finalised by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) and the POPIA Committees for approval by the Information Regulator.

The policy framework in which the HSRC operates and aligns itself to, includes key national and international policies and strategies, notably:

- (i) The National Development Plan
- (ii) The Medium-term Strategic Framework 2019-2024
- (iii) The 2019 White Paper on Science and Technology and its decadal implementation plans
- (iv) The White Paper for Post-school Education and Training (2013)
- (v) The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- (vi) The African Union Agenda 2063

The HSRC Strategic Plan is strongly aligned with national strategies, notably the National Development Plan (NDP), Vision 2030 (2012), the White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation (2019) and associated five-year and decadal implementation plans, and government's Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) for the 2019 – 2024 electoral period.

The overarching emphasis of the National Development Plan and its five-year implementation plans is to eliminate income poverty and reduce inequality, by building on three pillars, namely Achieving a More Capable State, Driving a Strong and Inclusive Economy and Building and Strengthening the Capabilities of South Africa. The research agenda of the HSRC is strategically aligned around these pillars and purposes.

The Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019–2024 echoes the NDP implementation pillars and identifies seven apex priorities through which to achieve the NDP aims.

Priority 1 introduces the President's District Development Model (DDM). The HSRC, in its renewed focus on the use and impact of its research, has an important contribution to make in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the model, and assessing the social implications and potential impact thereof in the affected communities.

The 2019 White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) ("the White Paper on STI") identified the following as priorities:

- Raising the profile of STI in South Africa by instilling an innovation culture and integrating STI into crosscutting government planning at the highest levels
- Strengthening partnerships between business, government, academia and civil society, and creating a more enabling environment for STI
- Focusing on innovation for social benefit and fundamental economic transformation
- Expanding and transforming the human resource base of the National System of Innovation (NSI)
- Increasing investment, both public and private, in STI.

The HSRC's outcomes and outcome indicators are aligned with these priorities, and its research agenda is strongly focused on research for social benefit, as well as economic and societal transformation.

The Science, Technology and Innovation Decadal Plan serves as an implementation plan for the White Paper on STI, aimed at increasing the NSI's contribution in achieving South Africa's national objectives through the implementation of the policy intents of the White Paper on STI, in a changing world.

The National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI) conducted a review of the 2002 National Research and Development Strategy (NRDS) and the Ten-Year Innovation Plan (2008-2018) (TYIP) to establish the successes and weaknesses in the implementation of these policy documents in 2018. The Foresight Study identified nine high-level thematic focus areas, which, together with the review of the National Research and Development Strategy (NRDS) and the Ten-year Innovation Plan (TYIP) enable the formation of the Decadal Plan (DP) interventions.

The Foresight Study thematic areas are framed at the level of three societal grand challenges in the Decadal Plan:

- Climate change & environmental sustainability
- Future-proof education and skills
- The future of society

The HESTIIL Review report identifies similar thematic areas. The HSRC's Strategic Plan for 2020-2025 aligns very well with the societal grand challenges, with the exception of climate change, as there is minimal research focus of the area at present. The HSRC, however, acknowledges the increasing impact of climate change and global warming as an external threat and will assess appropriate opportunities, within its social sciences parameters, to contribute to this research agenda.

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (PSET), 2013, sets out strategies to improve the capacity of the post-school education and training system to meet South Africa's needs. It outlines policy directions to guide the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), (now known as the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology), and the institutions for which it is responsible, in order to contribute to building a developmental state with a vibrant democracy and a flourishing economy. Its main policy objectives are:

- A post-school system that can assist in building a fair, equitable, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa
- A single, co-ordinated post-school education and training system
- Expanded access, improved quality and increased diversity of provision
- A stronger and more co-operative relationship between education and training institutions and the workplace
- A post-school education and training system that is responsive to the needs of individual citizens; employers
  in both public and private sectors; as well as broader societal and developmental objectives.

The HSRC is not primarily tasked with post-school education and training, however, it is cognisant of the provisions and objectives of the PSET White Paper where these concern objectives that the HSRC can support through its work. One such area is in linking education and the workplace.

The HSRC continues to provide training opportunities to post-graduate students through its Master's, PhD and Post-doctoral Fellow Trainee Programme. Further, the White Paper identifies skills planning as a weakness, being a result of, inter alia, inadequate research. This is an area where the HSRC can offer direct assistance and has done so in the recent past through the Labour Market Intelligence Partnership. The HSRC will continue to support the objectives as envisaged in the PSET White Paper through a programme of work clustered together as Responsive Education, Dignified Work and Meaningful Livelihoods.

The HSRC's Strategic Plan and associated research agenda are also strongly aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Agenda 2063.

#### The SDGs seek to:

- End poverty and hunger in the world
- Combat inequalities within and among countries
- Build peaceful, just and inclusive societies
- Protect human rights and promote gender equality
- Ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources.

The achievement of these goals depends on conditions that enable sustainable and inclusive economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all. Several of the SDG goals and targets are addressed, directly or indirectly, through the strategically realigned research agenda of the HSRC.

Agenda 2063 is described as "both a vision and an action plan" for the socioeconomic transformation of Africa over the next fifty years. It builds on, and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing continental initiatives for growth and sustainable development, and presents seven clear aspirations for "the Africa we want", namely:

- A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
- An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance
- An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
- A peaceful and secure Africa
- An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage and shared values and ethics
- An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children
- Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner.

With its mandated focus on developmental issues that are of national, continental and global importance, the work of the HSRC, also in the context of this new strategic planning period, is integrally related to the aspirations of Agenda 2063. The Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) of the HSRC will lead, provide strategic direction and co-ordinate the HSRC's existing Pan-African programme of work, and stimulate new streams of research which are informed by the vision of transforming African societies into dynamic, prosperous and safe and secure spaces.

The Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan is aimed at stimulating equitable and inclusive growth. The Plan proposes three phases, that is Engage and Preserve - which includes a comprehensive health response to save lives and curb the spread of the pandemic; Recovery and Reform - which includes interventions to restore the economy while controlling the health risks; and lastly, Reconstruct and Transform - which entails building a sustainable, resilient and inclusive economy.

The Plan acknowledges the particular role of Science, Technology and Innovation in supporting economic reconstruction and recovery, as well as to improve service delivery. While it points out the significance of Research, Development and Innovation to drive economic recovery, it is in addressing the social distress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns implemented to slow the spread of the disease, that the HSRC was uniquely placed to contribute, and has contributed significantly through various surveys since March 2020. While this work continues and feeds back to Government via the DSI, the HSRC continues playing a vital role in supporting the DSI with:

- analysis of existing data to understand and explain reasons around unemployment and soft skills as part of job readiness and economic recovery; and
- identifying short-, medium- and long-term impacts.

#### 3. Institutional policies and strategies governing the five-year planning period

The HSRC has already implemented a suite of policies in support of its core mandate and does not envisage development of new policies. Instead, it will continue revising and strengthening existing policies to guide its strategic research focus, within the broader legal and policy framework outlined above. These policies include, but are not limited to the:

- HSRC Research Policy
- HSRC Code of Research Ethics
- HSRC Data Management Policy
- HSRC Research Integrity Policy
- HSRC Authorship Policy
- HSRC Performance Information Management Policy
- Language Policy.

The following strategies are instrumental in implementing the HSRC's Strategy and will be developed or strengthened in support thereof:

#### (i) Human Resources Strategies

A set of Human Resources (HR) strategies must support the organisation in transforming research capabilities, by building research capacity and transforming human capital. These strategies will focus on recruitment of suitably skilled human resources, retention, transformation and capacity development.

#### (ii) Information Technology Strategies

The Information Technology (IT) Strategy will provide such support, processes and structures as are necessary to enable the organisation to implement its core strategy. The IT Strategy will provide solutions for global knowledge generation and dissemination; create an enabling research and technical environment; and foster new skills and capabilities by conducting research, and analysing and publishing data using Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies.

In addition to IT, a range of knowledge management activities will be established to oversee and manage data services, collections and resources. These will range from infrastructure that provides data access, and longitudinal studies, to platforms that enable data analytics.

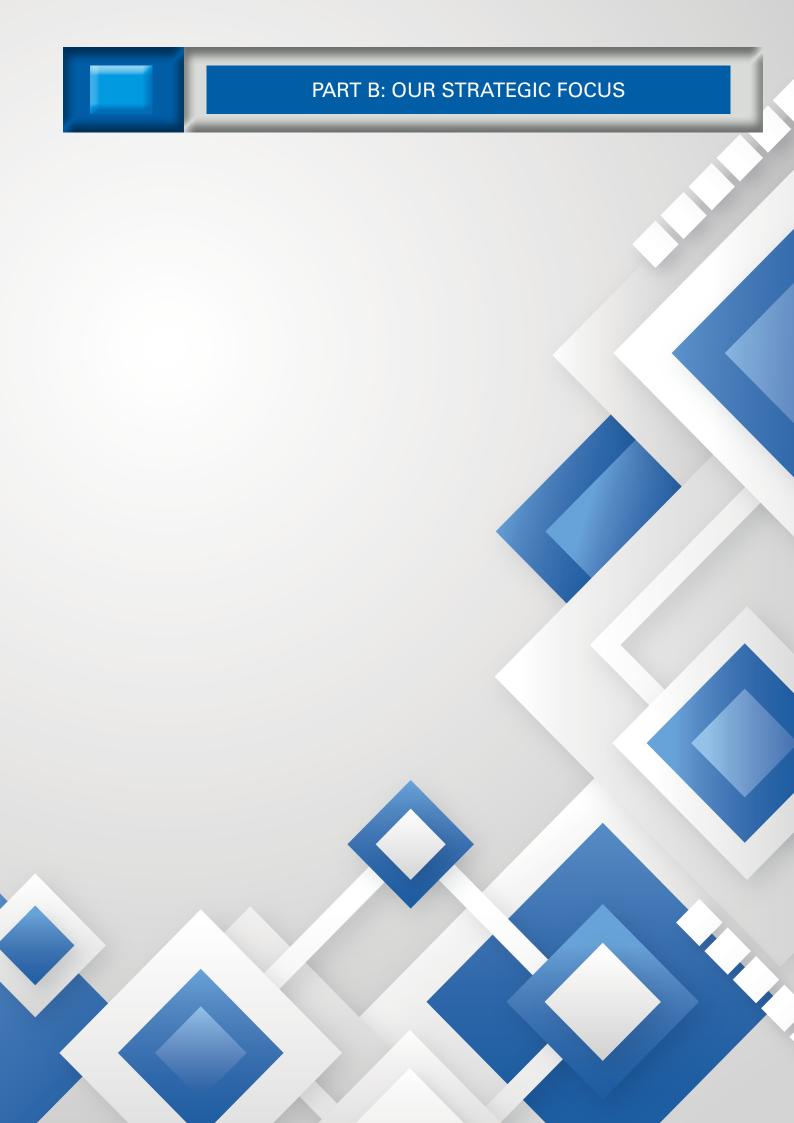
#### (iii) Research Use Strategies

These strategies will focus on increasing research use through appropriate knowledge-brokering of outputs generated in the research portfolio. The strategies will enable and co-ordinate support and mechanisms for collaboration, convening and communicating.

In support of and to give effect to the Language Policy, the Research Use Strategies will include strategies to address language inclusivity.

#### (iv) Business Development Strategy

A robust Business Development Strategy is required to forge funding partnerships and unlock new funding sources in order to enhance the organisation's sustainability.



#### 1. Vision

The HSRC will be a national, regional and global leader in the production and dissemination of transformative social science and humanities research in the interests of a just and equal society.

#### 2. Mission

The HSRC produces leading-edge policy research, through engaged scholarship, to utilise in understanding and explaining social conditions and informing social change for inclusive growth in communities.

#### 3. Values

#### Acceptance

Respecting equality and embracing ideas, speaking out against discrimination of any kind.

#### **Critical friendship**

Pursuing non-partisanship but collaborating with all stakeholders, including government.

#### Integrity

Conducting business honestly, diligently and underpinned by ethical principles.

Embracing, but not abusing, intellectual freedom.

#### Respect

Treating colleagues, stakeholders and members of the public with dignity and humility.

Observing organisational policies and processes.

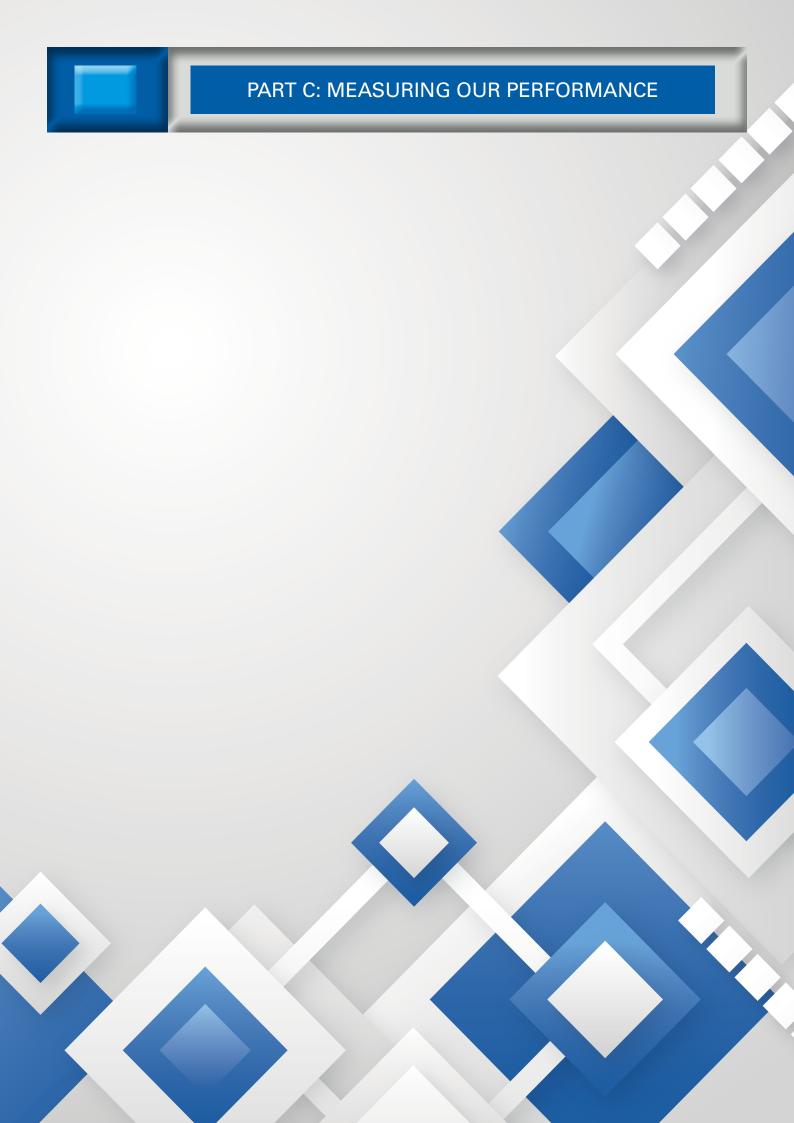
Preserving the environment and natural resources.

#### **Excellence**

Undertaking leading-edge research while remaining relevant.

#### Trust

Creating a safe and supportive working environment for colleagues.



#### 1. Impact Statement

Through its realigned and engaged research agenda, the HSRC will contribute to government policy options and programmes on poverty alleviation.

In collaboration with government and civil society role players, the HSRC will work with research peers and communities to develop and test research-based solutions to reduce the inequality gap.

By strengthening its research focus on economic growth and human capabilities, the HSRC will use its work around the 4IR and engagement with young people to identify and develop research-based innovations around employment creation.

The HSRC's three research divisions, two centres and one institute are organisationally aligned to support the institutional focus on the triple challenges, each through its unique disciplinary lens and approach, as evident in the overview of their work as referenced below.

#### 2. Progress on the Achievement of Outcomes

#### 2.1 Table of Outcomes, Indicators and Targets

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	2019/20 Baseline	2024/25 Target	Actual achievement: 1 April 2020 - 30 Sep 2022	Data Sources (refer to TIDS)	Improvements required for the remainder of the planning period
National, regional and global leadership in the production and use of knowledge to support the eradication of poverty, the reduction of inequalities and the promotion of employment	The number of research articles that achieve a citation count of 10 within five years of initial publication	10	170	Year 1: 179 Year 2: 176 Year 3: 153 (YTD) Citations of the same articles have been removed – the reported total includes unique articles only	Research output captured on the HSRC Research Management System (RMS)	None. The target has been met already.
	The number of curated datasets downloaded for secondary use	496	663	1406 Year 1: 566 Year 2: 574 Year 3: 266 (YTD)	The downloads are registered in a database linked to the HSRC's research data repository  IT is responsible for managing the HSRC's research data repository and extracting the required statistics from the database  This is subsequently verified by the Head: Digital Curation in the eRKC	None. The target has been met already.
	The number of applied outcomes emanating from collaboration on the African continent	New	1	2* Year 1: 1 Year 2: 1 Year 3: 0 (YTD)	HSRC RMS report, based on contracts in legal contracts repository	*Although a narrative is provided for an achievement of two, the organisation will continue pursuing this outcome indicator to align closer to the technical indicator descriptor requirement of a formal contractual outcome.
A consolidated relationship of trust and influence with government to help guide and inform policy	Number of government services or functions where the HSRC research results provided decision support	New	1	1 Year 1: 1 Year 2: 0 Year 3: 0 (YTD)	HSRC RMS, drawing information from quarterly reports to Board and DSI	None. The target has been met already.

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	2019/20 Baseline	2024/25 Target	Actual achievement: 1 April 2020 - 30 Sep 2022	Data Sources (refer to TIDS)	Improvements required for the remainder of the planning period
Recognition as a trusted and engaged research partner with scientific communities and civil society	The number of community innovations supported or enabled by HSRC research	New	1	2 Year 1: 1 Year 2: 1 Year 3: 0 (YTD)	HSRC RMS	None. The target has been met already.
Transformed research capabilities	The percentage of senior researchers (at the level of Senior Research Specialist/Senior Research Manager or higher) from designated groups, with permanent appointments	52%	70%	35% Year 1: 51% Year 2: 40%	HSRC RMS with report extracted from HR data	The HSRC Board recently approved the conversion of fixed-term contracts to permanent conditions of service for qualifying employees. This will assist in improving this number.
Sustainable income streams	Annual income derived from international funding agencies	R76 million per annum	R80 million per annum	R145, 319 million**  Year 1: R59, 566 million Year 2: R100, 352 million	Notes to the audited Annual Financial Statements of the HSRC: Revenue from exchange and non- exchange transactions	**As at 31 March 2022. Although external research funding is cyclical, the organisation seems to be on track to meet this target.

#### 2.2 Explanation of Achieved Performance Over the Mid-Term Period



Through its vision of being a national, regional and global leader in the production and dissemination of transformative social science and humanities research in the interests of a just and equal society, the HSRC will contribute to addressing the major developmental challenges in South Africa and on the continent.

The HSRC will lead in initiating and convening to foster and increase co-operation, collaboration and communication among excellent researchers and research institutions. The aim is to deliver knowledge for policymaking and devise solutions for pressing public matters.

The HSRC's own demonstrated research excellence and proven capability to bring the right experts together will be measured by indicators such as publications, citations and events.

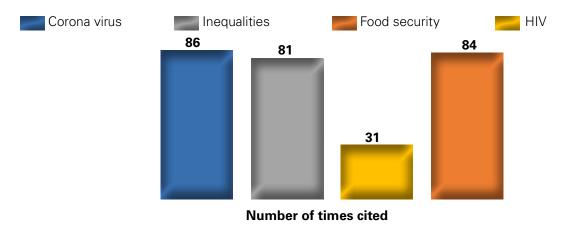
#### Outcome indicator 1

#### The number of research articles that achieve a citation count of 10 within five years of initial publication

Actual performance of research articles that achieved a citation count of 10 within five years of initial publication was 176 articles for 2021/22 and 179 articles for 2020/21. This includes over 15,000 citations of these highly cited research articles over the last five-year period.

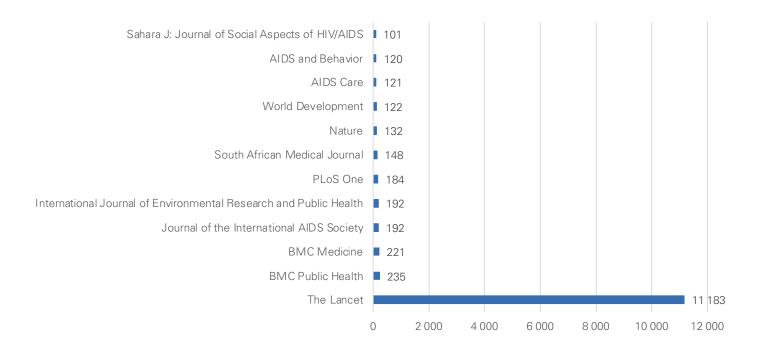
#### **RELEVANCE** Top 10 cited publications in 2020 and 2021 COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy in South Africa: how can we maximise uptake of COVID-19 vaccines? Community-based antiretroviral therapy versus standard clinic-based services for HIV in South Africa and Uganda (DO ART): a randomised trial Income-related health inequalities associated with the coronavirus pandemic in South Africa: A decomposition analysis Socio-economic inequalities in the multiple dimensions of access to healthcare: The case of South Africa Technology adoption and household food security among rural households in South Africa: The role of improved maize varieties 33 31 31 31 28 23 20 20 19 Number of times cited

#### Top cited subjects in 2020 and 2021



#### **REACH**

#### Journals in which HSRC researchers published articles which attracted more than 100 citations



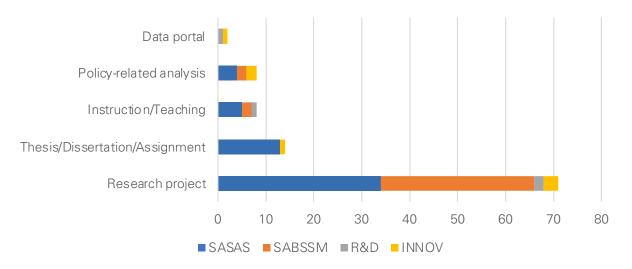
#### **Outcome indicator 2**

#### The number of curated datasets downloaded for secondary use

Actual achievement of data set downloads was 574 in 2021/22 and 566 downloads in 2020/21.

#### **RELEVANCE**

#### Intended use of the data from the studies with the most data downloads



**South African Business Innovation Survey (INNOV)** 

National Research and Experimental Development (R&D) Survey

SABSSM South African National HIV Prevalence, HIV Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey (SABSSM)

**SASAS South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS)** 

#### **REACH**

#### **Geographical Location of Data Users**



#### Outcome indicator 3

#### Applied outcomes emanating from collaboration on the African continent

#### (i) Linking Schools to Sexual Reproductive Health Support and Services

The Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC) School's Out project has become a platform for co-creating and coordinating knowledge production on adolescent and youth Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

Through various strategies, it has generated valuable evidence on adolescent and youth SRHR over two and half years, across Eastern and Southern Africa in Botswana, Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Uganda.

The evidence generated explores socio-structural and socio-cultural factors that facilitate or inhibit linkages of schools to SRHR supports and services. These findings will now also be disseminated in West and Central Africa as an entry point for possible future expansion of the project.

The School's Out project ended in June 2021 and subsequently, as part of the dissemination plan of project findings, a wide range of activities towards engaging member states in policy and community dialogues was undertaken.

A School's Out dissemination launch was held on 29 April 2021. The dissemination plan was aimed at:

- Maximising the reach and impact of School's Out project evidence
- Enhancing the uptake of evidence on linking schools to SRHR supports and services
- Engaging Pan African stakeholders on evidence related to the concept of linking schools to SRHR support and services
- Strengthening the awareness of the concept of linking schools to SRH support and services as a development agenda that cuts across three Sustainable Development Goals.

The School's Out dissemination launch was delivered through a combination of digital and face to face convenings in the four African regions of Southern, Eastern, Central and West Africa. The dissemination launch applied innovative formats to generate and enable a creative discussion environment aimed at fostering productive and lasting dialogue among participants.

The high-level digital meeting brought together various stakeholders including representatives from: the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); the Southern African Development Community (SADC); the African Union; and the United Nations bodies including UNFPA, UNICEF and UNDP. Other key organisations working on adolescent and youth SRHR also participated.

Outcomes from the dissemination launch included:

- Shared evidence from across the region on linking schools to SRHR support and services
- Enhanced uptake of evidence generated by the HSRC and School's Out project partners, Pan African stakeholders including Regional Economic Commissions for Africa (RECAs), the United Nations agencies, knowledge producers and civil society organisations
- Awareness of the concept of linking schools to SRHR support and services strengthened Amongst Pan African stakeholders on adolescents and youth SRHR.

#### (ii) Continental dialogue on 20 years of African women's participation in peace and security

On 23 October 2020 the HSRC jointly hosted an online virtual dialogue with civil society organisations across Africa titled: "20 years of African Women's Participation in Women, Peace and Security: Civil Society Perspectives".

This event came on the eve of the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), as partners around the world took the opportunity to take stock of the progress and to address the gaps of the WPS agenda over the past 20 years.

The event was jointly hosted by 11 civil society organisations across Africa, including: the Human Sciences Research Council, the Africa Institute of South Africa; Women's International Peace Centre; Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS); South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID); West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP); African Women in Dialogue (AfWID); African Leadership Centre; Institute for Security Studies (ISS); Training for Peace (TfP); African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD); as well as the South African Department of Science and Innovation.

The objective of the virtual meeting was to hear women's voices and perspectives on progress and challenges since the adoption of UNSCR 1325 20 years ago and to chart new paths for women in Africa in the peace and security arena.

Speakers included: Ms. Pravina Makan-Lakha, ACCORD; Ms. Shuvai Nyoni, African Leadership Centre; Dr Awino Oketch, University of London School of Oriental and African Studies; and Ms. Caryn Dasah, a Youth Leader in Cameroon. Ms. Shuvai Nyoni spoke to women and leadership in peace and security while Dr Awino Oketch spoke about rethinking the WPS agenda, its conceptual and implementation challenges and where to from here. Ms. Caryn Dasah shared her perspectives on women's participation, especially that of the youth, in peace processes in Cameroon and how things can be done differently.

Following the plenary discussion, participants had the opportunity to engage in breakout rooms on the main four themes: Prevention and protection; Mediation; Peacekeeping; and Post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. The outcomes and recommendations from the discussions were shared afterwards in plenary. Some recommendations from the discussions included:

- To document and profile the role of women and youth as well as their successes in peace and security activities;
- To encourage collaborative exchanges;
- To engage youth and their technological knowledge;
- To encourage a positive peace agenda which places women at the centre; and
- To ensure adequate funding is available for civil society organisations.

Over the past 20 years and more, concerted efforts were made in civil society to popularise UNSCR 1325, the WPS agenda and ensuring that women are not left behind in peace processes. However, as the numbers show, there is still much room for improvement before it can be confidently stated that the goals have been achieved.



The HSRC will demonstrate the value and impact of the knowledge it produces to forge relationships with all spheres of government, including parliament and the judiciary, in support of creating a capable state.

To achieve this, it needs to forge meaningful partnerships within government and disseminate relevant information in suitable formats to government stakeholders. This requires a robust stakeholder and communications strategy, as well as a strengthened business development plan to ensure that the HRSC becomes a preferred service provider in terms of government's research needs.

By being a trusted partner to government, the HSRC can assist policy makers by guiding and informing policies and decision-making through careful knowledge-brokering of high-quality, high-impact output. The success in achieving this will be measured by means of indicators to track requests received and information provided to government.

#### **Outcome indicator**

#### Number of government services or functions where the HSRC research results provided decision support

At the onset of the 2020-2025 strategic cycle the unforeseen realities of Covid-19 had an immediate and significant impact on South Africans as was experienced globally. The HSRC immediately took an active role in assisting government with scientific research to support the coordinated efforts by government towards mitigating and navigating the effects of Covid-19 on the health and wellbeing of South African citizens.

The HSRC conducted several surveys a few weeks into the pandemic to inform government planning and messaging for coordinated and effective COVID-19 responses.

(i) On 27 March 2020, the HSRC launched a national public survey, the Lockdown Survey, to better understand what the South African public knows about Covid-19, state of readiness to deal with this global pandemic and how they feel about it.

The survey comprised two parts:

- The first wave (launched on 27 March 2020) used the #datafree Moya Messaging social media platform and reached 19 330 respondents. The Moya Messaging platform was chosen because of its large user base of about four million members and one million daily engaged users, many of whom were from less privileged and more vulnerable communities. The focus of this first survey wave was to get a better sense of awareness levels and knowledge about the virus.
- The second wave (started on 8 April 2020) included qualitative interviews with participants using telephone communication, video platforms or through an internet-based questionnaire. The purpose of this survey wave was to obtain better insight into the impact of the lockdown on lived experiences of respondents.

A Rapid Assessment and Response (RAR) approach was followed to speed up the process of review, analysis, feedback and responses, facilitated by HSRC researchers in close consultation with researchers from sister institutions and decision makers. With a view to reaching the required respondents, the HSRC worked with a range of partners, including, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South African Population Research Infrastructure Network (SAPRIN) located at Agincourt, Walter Sisulu University, the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) and Acumen Media.

The HSRC also conducted further analysis of tobacco use and cigarette buying data from these lockdown surveys to provide evidence relevant to the ban on tobacco case at the request of the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) during May and June 2020.

These surveys produced very useful data on the public's perceptions and understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the lives of South African citizens. The research results were presented to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April 2020. It was also presented to the President and the National Coronavirus Command Council (NCCC) on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 2020.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2020 the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande, held a media briefing to announce the results of the survey conducted by the HSRC of the impact and awareness amongst South Africans of the coronavirus that was sweeping across the country and the world.

The further analysis of survey data, especially in relation to the implications of lockdown regulations prohibiting the sales of tobacco products, provided evidence-based information that was further utilised by two different Cabinet Ministers – the Minister of Health, as well as the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) – providing examples of immediate uptake and impact, which is rare in the world of research.

(ii) Similarly, the multilingual University of Johannesburg and Human Sciences Research Council (UJ/HSRC) COVID-19 Democracy Survey was conducted through cell phones, social media and the internet, with no cost to participants, on the Moya #datafree platform. The main aim of the survey was to determine public perceptions of the economic, social and political impact of Covid-19 on life across the country.

The survey questionnaire was translated from the English base version into five other official languages, namely isiZulu, isiXhosa, Setswana, Sesotho and Afrikaans. These translated versions were pre-programmed, and respondents could choose which of these languages they preferred to respond to.

The first round of surveying was initiated on 13 April 2020 and was fielded until 11 May 2020. During Round 1, three waves of data collection with a total of 12,232 fully completed responses were largely completed during the Level 5 lockdown and the early part of Level 4 lockdown.

A second round of surveying began on 3 July 2020, with the survey running until 8 September 2020.

Data from these two rounds of surveys were rapidly analysed, and results released in a timely and effective manner. The release of these findings adopted a strategic use of Daily Maverick articles, television and radio interviews, as well as webinar launch events.

A third round of surveying was conducted between 30 December 2020 and 6 January 2021 to see how attitudes and perceptions changed during adjusted lockdown Level 3 and as cases surged again with the onset of a second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Through this study the research team were able to analyse the attitudes, behaviours and experiences of people during the coronavirus crisis. Building onto this research with further data and engagement, the HSRC aimed to broaden its contribution to the social sciences and humanities perspective on the COVID-19 discourse by producing a number of policy briefs.

The results of the 3rd Round survey were circulated to the media and an impact was made relating to the re-opening of schools and vaccine hesitancy. Presentations on vaccines were made to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Minister Nzimande, Health Minister Mkhize and the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) as well as the COVID-19 communications sub-committee of the National Coronavirus Command Council (NCCC).

Three COVID-19 themed policy briefs were also developed from this research:

- The BIG question: COVID-19 and policy support for a basic income grant (Published by HSRC Press in March 2021)
- COVID-19 and human rights limitations: Taking public opinion into account (Published by HSRC Press in March 2021)
- South Africa's Thuma Mina moment: Public opinion and political trust in South Africa's COVID-19 response (Published by HSRC Press in July 2021)

#### **DSI Outcomes MTSF HSRC Outcome 3** Priority 3: Education, Skills Recognition as a trusted 1 A transformed, inclusive, and engaged research responsive and coherent NSI and Health partner with scientific Priority 6: Social Cohesion, 2 Knowledge utilisation for Safer Communities communities and civil economic development 3 Human capabilities and skills for society. the economy and for development 4 Increased knowledge generation and innovation output **5** Knowledge utilisation for inclusive development 6 Innovation in support of a capable and developmental state

The HSRC will contribute to developing the capabilities of South Africans by establishing itself as a trusted and engaged partner with both scientific communities and civil society. By forging active collaborations in the scientific community, it will be able to share, and share in, resources, and provide complementary research to other research disciplines.

To achieve this, the HSRC will require support from its Executive Authority to facilitate processes, systems and structures that are conducive to collaborative projects, rather than competition. In addition, it must endeavour to understand the needs of communities and be able to package and present science for sharing through community networks.

A suite of indicators tracking community involvement and active collaboration in the science community, including reciprocal skills transfer with colleagues in the Global South, will be used to monitor progress.

These collaborations will be used to stimulate community innovation through knowledge sharing and enhancing communities' understanding and use of science.

#### **Outcome indicator**

#### The number of community innovations supported or enabled by HSRC research

(i) During 2020/21, the HSRC in collaboration with Project Preparation Trust (PPT) worked on a research project: "realising the potential of urban density to create more prosperous and liveable informal settlements in Africa." This study was funded by the International Science Council and Network of African Science Academies through their transdisciplinary research programme on "Leading Integrated Research for Agenda 2030 in Africa." The research was positioned within the iQhaza Lethu Upgrading Partnership Initiative in eThekwini towards developing a practical plan and programme of informal settlement upgrading in Durban. The "iQhaza Lethu: Development of Alternative Dwelling Unit Typologies to be used in High Density Informal Settlements" action research project was a sub-project under this research.

A prototype alternative housing typology (i.e. multi-storey timber frame housing unit) to fit better with resources and priorities of communities living in dense informal settlements was developed. The housing design includes a low-cost, lightweight, double-story wood-frame structure with deep pile foundations, metal cladding and appropriate insulation. Design criteria cover cost, structural integrity on steep slopes, the use of materials familiar to local builders, materials availability from local suppliers, and adequate fire and thermal performance. The approximate cost of labour and materials for a medium- sized unit (total floor space of 34.4 m2) is roughly R80 000 per unit compared with approximately R380 000 for a unit in a conventional concrete apartment block. We have built a prototype in Parkington Informal Settlement which was completed in August 2020. There are plans for 150 units to be constructed in 3 informal settlements in eThekwini in early 2021 as part of special Covid-19 'dedensification' funding for informal settlement upgrading.

The HSRC commissioned a team of built-environment professionals led by DesigncoLab (including architects, a professional engineer, and an engineer who is now a green building specialist) to develop an alternative dwelling unit typology that would support building upwards in dense informal settlements based upon the fieldwork and extensive consultation with the local community in Parkington Informal Settlement.

The alternative housing design is the intellectual property of the DesigncoLab architectural team but may be implemented in part or in whole by eThekwini Municipality as part of the iQhaza Lethu Upgrading programme led by the Project Preparation Trust and supported by the HSRC. There was no cost obligation in implementation of these designs in eThekwini but credit must be given to the partnership (HSRC, PPT and DesigncoLab). The designs will be used to help upgrade another 3 informal settlements in eThekwini. A further intention is that local members of the community would also freely replicate the designs as part of 'better practice' in building better housing structures themselves.

(ii) The Centre for Community-Based Research (CCBR) within the HSRC conducts research with rural and periurban communities in and around the Greater Edendale Area of Pietermaritzburg. During 2021/22 The CCBR Community Advisory Board (a group of people representing community), together with Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) War room delegates approached the HSRC CCBR office to aid in alleviating poverty and malnutrition in the community.

The HSRC CCBR, in partnership with the local OSS War room, accepted the call for help to develop an initiative or innovation that would aid communities in meeting their need of low-cost fresh vegetables. Community gardens were identified as one viable option, where communities could be trained on farming using recycled materials. The idea of vertical gardens was found to be a viable option. These gardens use recycled materials which are easily available in the community such as old sacks, old canisters, PVC pipes, etc. Vertical gardens require minimum water for irrigation, they require minimum space, and the vegetables that grow in these gardens become ready for harvesting within twenty-four days.

This initiative was divided into three phases. The initial phase as a demonstration garden prepared and established on an open piece of land within the premises of the community traditional court. The second phase involving 48 families who receive vouchers from the Solidarity Fund to purchase crops. And the last phase as a full roll-out involving all households who are willing to participate in this project.

The aims and objectives for this initiative were:

- To create livelihood opportunities through the sustainable subsistence farming
- To enhance local food security, reduce the economic and environmental costs of food transportation.
- To use solid waste as source of plant nutrients and as growing containers (sacks, bags, cans).
- To conduct developmental research with the community as equal partners.

Phase 1: Demonstration Garden at Mpumuza (November 2021 – January 2022)

During Phase one the HSRC and Mpumuza Traditional Council hosted a vertical garden demonstration at the backyard of the traditional court. The technical skill required to plant this garden was facilitated by the Centre for Community Justice and Development (CCJD) - an NGO that is passionately lobbing for community wellness. There were ten sack gardens that were sowed with the aim of demonstrating how sack gardens works. In less than 24 days' time all sack gardens were harvested, and all vegetables were given to community members for household consumption.

Phase 2: Pilot Project (February 2022 – June 2022)

Subsequently to the success witnessed in phase one, HSRC CCBR in partnership with the Community Advisory Board decided to extend the program. However, in extending this program financial assistance emerged as an obstacle. The Solidarity Fund was approached to support community members with funding to purchase crops and fertilizers or manure. 48 women were identified and were included for a pilot project. These women received R2000 vouchers from South African Women In Dialogue (SAWID), a Solidarity Fund subsidiary entity that is mandated to support subsistence farmers to develop sustainable agricultural value chains, food security and agricultural inputs for own nutritious food production within the Republic of South Africa. Recipients of R2000 vouchers was assisted with relevant training, on-going guidance, and motivation. CCJD will facilitate all trainings and workshops.

Phase 3: Full Intervention (aimed for October 2022)

This phase will seek to draw a significant number of unemployed people into the productive sector of the economy, by gaining skills while they work land and increasing their capacity to earn income. In essence, this stage of the program has a focus of producing fresh vegetables and provide employment opportunities and skills development to the unemployed. Community members who will be part of this program will be doing farming for both subsistence and commercial use.

The HSRC approached these outcomes through a programme of work organised around three divisions aligned with the NDP implementation pillars, i.e. Inclusive Economic Development, Human and Social Capabilities and Developmental, Capable and Ethical State. The mandate is further complemented and supported by the Africa Institute of South Africa, the Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators and the Impact Centre.

#### **Inclusive Economic Development**

Inclusive Economic Development (IED) undertakes research to transform educational outcomes and increase economic participation. It recognises that education and the economy have long been linked, and thus conducts research in both areas, sometimes discretely, many times overlapping, and through a multidisciplinary lens to bring about the gains and growth South Africa needs. The work includes assessments of the effectiveness of government programmes in maths and science education, skills development, land, housing and economic development; participation of young people in accessing dignified and decent work; the transformation of higher education; and innovation that allows for wider access to services, and supports food security, access to land and climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.

#### **Pertinent research questions**

The interrelationship between education and economic outcomes, while complex, is undisputed. On one hand, education, and the skills that the educational system aims to provide young people, is a necessary but insufficient condition for participation in the economy. On the other, whether income is derived through a social wage or through work, there is a national consensus that accelerated economic growth is fundamental to ensuring both.

As South Africa focusses its attention on ensuring economic development, it is critical that efforts are made to both grow our economy inclusively and to ensure that the education young people receive offers them the best possible chance of a flourishing life. To ensure the just inclusion of those excluded from the economy and from high quality education, the HSRC in general, and the Inclusive Economic Development (IED) research division is committed to operating in ways and producing research that reduces inequality and eliminates poverty. This is done with an interest in the role of innovation, place, social capital, skills, transitions, livelihoods and the education needed to make decent work and a better life a possibility. The central questions that this research aims to address include:

- 1. What are the obstacles to economic inclusion and participation, and what practices could mitigate these?
- 2. What will livelihoods look like in the future, and how can (young) people best be prepared for these realities?
- 3. What innovative strategies are there for increasing income opportunities and for creating jobs that are sustainable and dignified?
- 4. What practical inputs can be made to ensure better educational and wellbeing outcomes for young people?
- 5. How can the performance/design of educational institutions be improved to improve outcomes for the most marginalised?

#### Progress on programme of work set out in 2020

#### The Imprint of Education – effect of education on first generation university graduates

Now in its fourth year, this study has considered graduates' pathways, social engagements and transformative leadership practices. It has also interrogated the nature of the African university, and engaged in the many ways in which young people are making livelihoods on the African continent, and engaging in entrepreneurial and ground-breaking ventures, alongside those who remain unemployed and engaged in precarious employment. An important participant-led documentary on leadership has been produced (The Spirit of Kanju: Leaders transforming Africa) with other outputs imminent including a digital museum on youth livelihoods, a collected book on transformative leadership in African contexts and one on the future of the African university.

### Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) – monitoring the quality of South African schooling.

The research team completed four TIMSS Research Reports: The South African TIMSS 2019 Grade 9 results; The South African TIMSS 2019 Grade 5 results; The Western Cape TIMSS 2019 Grade 9 results and The Gauteng TIMSS 2019 Grade 9 results. The focus of this year is on communicating high level policy recommendations to national and provincial policy makers and providing item diagnostic analyses to educators and district officials. In addition the production of academic and working papers from the data is ongoing. All reports and papers appear on the TIMSS-SA website (https://www.timss-sa.org/)

#### Local Innovation Advancement Tools study - decision making mechanisms for service delivery

The project is in its final data collection phase to produce a rapid version of the innovation value chain instrument for the collection of relevant information in designated localities in the Karoo to promote local economic development.

#### Social Security Review - the state of social security in South Africa.

Following the successful publication of the first volume the Department of Social Development recently contracted IED to undertake the editorial and publication services of Volume 2 of the Social Security Review - that will focus on the theme of "Social Security in the times of Covid".

#### Structural changes in the Education, Training and Development (ETD) sector - Covid and 4IR

This longitudinal study is in its first year and is undertaking a rapid systematic literature review of the sector as well as engagements with stakeholders across the 14 ETD Sectors.

#### The creation of a spatial economic panel - mining SARS tax records to map changing economies

In 2021, National Treasury and the HSRC launched eight Metropolitan Municipality Spatialised Economic Data Reports based on the mining of anonymised tax records. This was a first for South Africa and aimed at filling a strategic gap to inform better and more integrated metro planning and performance analysis. National Treasury has entered into a 3-year partnership with the HSRC in order to improve the quality of data for local government.

The importance of having spatialised and up-to-date data means that for the first time we as a country are able to understand and compare what is happening over time to formal firms and jobs within specific city spaces – the central business districts and smaller economic nodes, industrial parks and Special Economic Zones, townships and logistics hubs – and also where jobs are being created and where firms are locating at a city-wide level.

#### The DSI/NRF Research Chair in City-Region Economies - the determinants of urban economic prosperity

The partnership between the HSRC and the University of the Free State on the SARChI in City-Region Economies has made good progress since its inception in 2020. The programme of work has included capacity development with 4 postdoctoral fellows being appointed as well as 4 PhD and 2 Masters students; a teaching stream in spatial economics; and research studies on housing and the urban economy, tradable urban services and the creation of urban economic mapping using SARS tax data.

#### Research into recent student movements – transformation and massification of higher education

The two-student movement related projects funded by the NRF and Mellon are both in their final year and focused on generating research outputs, public engagement and policy impact. So far, in 2022/23 three highly impactful photo exhibitions have been held at Wits, UCT and UKZN, as well as a book launch and a colloquium (UKZN). The major book output "#FeesMustFall and its Aftermath" has been published by the HSRC Press (ebook: August 2022, print: October 2022), as well as a manual for student affairs professionals "Restoring Wellbeing after Student Protests", which was workshopped at UCT in May and UKZN in August. Aspects of the work was presented at University of the Free State, University of Lancaster (UK) and University of East Anglia (UK), all of which will lead to article publications in 2023/24. Interviews are currently being curated for future use and a final book on the student movement is being drafted.

#### Women Rise - building back better after Covid with a focus on women's health and empowerment.

The International Development Research Centre recently funded a 2-year partnership between the HSRC and Mc Gill University to undertake a study in the Eastern Cape. The aim of this project is to determine how women in the rural Eastern Cape have been affected by the Covid pandemic through longitudinal ethnographic case studies, which will explore their experiences of accessing healthcare, finding economic support (through formal employment and via informal avenues), and of striving to mitigate the "thinning" of social relations and cohesion during the pandemic.

#### **Challenges and recommendations**

Finding skilled, South African staff able to work effectively in the area of economics and social science remains our largest, most intractable challenge.

The current workload of projects is large, leaving very little ability to respond quickly to urgent educational and economic issues requiring immediate responses.

During the Covid pandemic the division lost many staff that have now been replaced. Many of the current mid-level researchers are unable to work independently and need a long period of time to master the multiple skills required in this research environment. The division is currently implementing remedial action and a long-term dynamic development plan to upskill staff and grow its own timber.

Developing the science of impact is both an opportunity and a challenge within the division. It is making strides in understanding the dynamics of research impact, documenting successes and building impact into the design of projects.

Designing a happy and productive hybrid working model remains a work in progress. Some staff thrive working from home, whilst others are hampered.

Name change -The current name of the division, Inclusive Economic Development, does not fully represent the division's full portfolio of work. Instead, while it resonates with the national priority of "inclusive economic development" it omits the division's strong focus on "equitable education" (at all levels) as well as the relationship between education, skills and the economy. A recommendation was submitted to the HSRC board to change the division's name from Inclusive Economic Development to Equitable Education and Economies (EEE).

#### **Short-term outlook**

The division will continue its Macroeconomic policy dialogues in the coming period - this time with a focus on bringing together economists and policymakers to have a more open and forthright discussion on the macroeconomics policy implications of debt; and of spending on infrastructure. Previous dialogues concerned the Universal Basic Income Guarantee that included discussions concerning fiscal affordability, design, potential impacts and process to implementation; Stimulus packages and Post-Covid recovery; as well as Financialization, Industrialisation and Value Chains.

A series of Youth Livelihood Policy Dialogues that aims to bring together our current work on education, youth skills, pathways and futures is planned for the coming period.

The Kaleidoscope Series of projects was launched in 2021 committing divisional funds to proposals from researchers to further build a multi-disciplinary approach to South Africa's tough economic questions. Examples of these projects include housing as economic policy, and skills and education for youth in the informal economy. Others are envisaged for the coming term.

#### **Communities of practice**

Two communities of practice were began in the past term and will continue for the coming term. The Global South Youth Studies and Disability and Employment community of practices were launched, details of which are available on the HSRC website.

The Global South Youth Studies Community of Practice brought together over 100 scholars from the Global South in order to write, discuss and strategise for an increased contribution to Youth studies. To date an edited handbook has been produced, a charter for Southern scholars and three global webinars held dealing with theory, practice and methodologies in youth studies.

The Disability and Employment Community of Practice supported HSRC and DSI in hosting a Disability Internship Recruitment Workshop in September 2022. The workshop objectives were to enhance inclusivity of persons with disabilities in the Labour Market through participation in internship programmes.

IED staff are part of the prestigious Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing, and are preparing a rapid review about discrimination and its intersectional effect on adolescent and youth outcomes in the Global South. This work will form part of the larger commissions report that will be presented to the UN General Assembly in 2023.

#### **Human and Social Capabilities**

The Human and Social Capabilities (HSC) division explores the lived experiences, challenges and opportunities faced by under-served, vulnerable and marginalised communities with a purpose of understanding how they navigate their identities and sense of belonging. There is a need to promote optimal mental and physical health as an outcome and therefore we have the obligation to create conditions in which citizens can survive, thrive, and be well for us to achieve social cohesion and social protection.

The main MTSF priority areas of focus for HSC are Education, Skills and Health, Social Cohesion, Safe communities, and a better Africa and a better World.

The Human and Social Capabilities division conducts transdisciplinary, intersectional, policy and programme-relevant research to improve health, well-being and promote a socially just and cohesive society.

#### **Pertinent research questions**

The three main research themes under Human and Social Capabilities are 1) Health and Wellbeing, 2) Identity and Belonging and 3) Centre for Community-based research:

#### **Health and Wellbeing**

The guiding focus of health and wellbeing are 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG) Goal 3 of ensuring healthy lives and promotion of wellbeing (Health and Wellbeing) for all ages and the Vision 2030 of the South African National Development Plan (NDP) of promoting health (Chapter 10). The main intermediate needs for human flourishing are physical health, nutrition (food and water), mental health, access to quality health services, safe birth control childbearing, a safe physical environment and mental health.

Research on health and wellbeing focuses on the impact of poverty and unbalanced income distribution, gender and violence, underdevelopment of community infrastructure, the longer-term impacts of the apartheid system and development of interventions of health promotion and prevention of illnesses. A transformative and inclusive research agenda should focus on spatial differences that reinforce separation and inequalities and seek to understand ways in which people navigate their health and wellbeing for the purposes of developing policies and practices. The WHO' framework defines six "building blocks" that make up a health system, namely service delivery; health workforce; information; medical products, vaccines and technologies; financing; and leadership and governance (stewardship). Addressing key constraints facing health systems require re-orientation of health systems towards comprehensive primary health care and institutional reforms for implementation of National Health Insurance.

#### **Identity and Belonging**

Issues relating to identity and belonging shape the work of this sub-division. Identity is understood as individual, social and political and as shaped by social categories such as race, gender, sexuality, class, ability and age. Identity and belonging have been shaped in very particular ways in South Africa. The apartheid system constructed racial categories that denied or afforded access, resources and privilege to persons belonging to specific groups. While black South Africans suffered discrimination because of their racial classification, women were subjected to both racial and gender discrimination. Sexual and gender minorities experience exclusion and marginalisation due to homophobia and transphobia. There is a need to interrogate the links between gender, race, class and sexuality and see how these shape poverty and inequality in South Africa.

A critical, intersectional, social justice research agenda in partnership with civil society will deepen understanding of the complexity and interrelatedness of the axes of injustice. Deeper understanding of the effects of exclusion in families, communities, institutions and society more broadly will offer possible solutions to address these inequalities. So as to dismantle systemic inequalities, methodologically this work must be participatory and collaborative, transdisciplinary and intersectional and will prioritise cross-stakeholder dialogue and conversation with CSOs. This strategy will draw on both longitudinal and large-scale data sets but also smaller focused qualitative studies to support the inclusion of diversity in policy, guidelines and frameworks at a national and regional level. Theoretically this work is informed by critical African humanities, decoloniality, feminist, critical race theory, queer theory, human rights, public health, and the broader development agendas.

#### **Centre for Community-based Research**

Conceptualised in the 2020-2025 strategic plan as a social laboratory for the entire HSRC, the Centre for Community-Based Research (CCBR) was established in March 2020. The CCBR core was drawn from the rural Sweetwaters office that, for the past 15 years, has conducted community-based intervention research in the Greater Edendale area of KwaZulu-Natal. This core was then supplemented with senior staff from other HSRC offices. Mandated to extend their community embedded model of practise beyond the site, the vision of the Centre is to become a leading social science research and training centre in Africa by 2025. The mission of the Centre is to improve health and wellbeing of the public by primarily undertaking intervention trials, generating evidence, developing novel approaches and methods through the combination of social and biomedical sciences, and to serve as a hub for capacity building and training.

#### **Overarching Research questions**

- What is the impact of poverty and unbalanced income distribution, gender and violence, underdevelopment of community infrastructure, the longer-term impacts of the apartheid system and development of interventions on health promotion and prevention of illnesses?
- What spatial differences reinforce separation and inequalities and what are the ways in which people navigate their health and wellbeing for the purposes of developing policies and practices?
- What are the key constraints facing health systems towards comprehensive primary health care and institutional reforms for the implementation of the National Health Insurance?
- What links between gender, race, class and sexuality shape poverty and inequality in South Africa?
- What critical intersectional and social justice research in partnership with civil society will deepen an understanding of the complexity and interrelatedness of the axes of injustice?
- What are the effects of exclusion in families, communities, institutions and society more broadly in order to offer possible solutions to address these inequalities?
- What cross-stakeholder dialogue and conversations can be done to support the inclusion of diversity in policy, guidelines and frameworks at a national and regional level?

#### **Progress on programme of work set out in 2020**

#### Key projects to answer the pertinent research questions are:

**SABSSM VI** – the sixth South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence and Behaviour Survey (SABSSM VI) in partnership with the National Department of Health and the U.S Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is currently being implemented. The HSRC has previously conducted this survey in 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, and 2017 and provides strategic public health information to the country. The Sixth South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey, (SABSSM VI), a population-based cross-sectional survey of households in South Africa, was designed to assess the prevalence and trends of key HIV–related indicators. The survey provides information on national and sub-national progress toward HIV epidemic control in the country and aims to summarise the HIV epidemic and the impact of South Africa's national HIV response. The objective of the project is to provide a better understanding of not only the HIV status of individuals but also information on socio-demographic and behavioural determinants which greatly enhances the analysis and interpretation of the observed trends in HIV infection in South Africa. It also includes the use of novel laboratory methodologies to help estimate HIV incidence and exposure to antiretroviral treatment (ART). The survey is 70% complete,

**SANSHEF study** - The survey aims to help understand how different life events, childhood experiences and family relations influence health and wellbeing. This survey will assist the government, non-governmental and community-based organisations, and other stakeholders to develop more effective and sustainable interventions to improve the health and wellbeing of all South Africans. The survey is 81% complete.

The **INSIGHT** cohort - insights to advance PrEP discovery and delivery for young African women. This project will offer a PrEP delivery package within a prospective cohort study of sexually active HIV negative women ages 16-30 in locations in eSwatini, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe to understand PrEP uptake, use, persistence and preferences for attributes of PrEP products and PrEP delivery with a focus on long-acting PrEP.

The **people living with HIV stigma index**: South Africa 2021 (Funder: SANAC/Global Fund). Dissemination and report writing of the results will focus on the data for underserved and marginalised communities (i.e. transgender people; sex workers, LGB; people with disabilities; people who use drugs) access to healthcare, education, and rights.

National **COVID-19 Antibody Survey** - a nationally representative study to determine the actual prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 in the South African population to better characterise the pandemic in the country including community susceptibility, and to determine the proportion of COVID-19 cases that remain asymptomatic, to inform interventions to manage the epidemic including vaccinating strategies. Furthermore, it is also important to understand the immune responses and correlates of protection in the South African population to inform herd immunity and other estimations. Consequently, the purpose of the study was to estimate the actual number of previously infected persons and associated factors based on the presence of antibodies in the general population, both nationally and in each of the nine provinces in South Africa. The report is currently being finalised.

Better Information for Health in South Africa: Describing the Impact of a Non-Linear HIV Treatment Cascade on True Patient Outcomes (BetterInfo SA) – aims to investigate the non-linear care cascade to generate meaningful estimates of retention in care for those who have received HIV health services at some point in the past two years at health facilities and identify steps in the cascade which led to the most ingress and egress from the cascade. These data will inform development of context-specific prioritised and targeted interventions (for the system, providers and PLHIV) that can encourage long term retention of PLHIV in care as well as accelerate re-engagement of PLHIV who have discontinued care. Delivery Optimisation for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (DO PrEP) Study: A prospective, interventional, randomised study of community-based PrEP initiation, delivery, and monitoring in South Africa - Community-based services overcome logistic barriers to access to care, normalise treatment, and decrease stigma. Client-centred approaches including HIV self-testing, telemedicine visits, and remote monitoring facilitate decentralised PrEP service but need testing to support implementation and scale-up. We aim to test an end-to-end decentralised community delivery service for pre-exposure prophylaxis to safely increase PrEP access and use among priority populations in South Africa.

**Impact of the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant (SRD)**: A purposive qualitative study implemented with civil society partner, the Black Sash, that explored South African's experiences of applying for the SRD grant during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the grant was found to bring about some economic relief to those with little to no income, the study also revealed the various challenges that adults faced during the pandemic.

These entailed longstanding systemic and administrative issues encountered during the application process, limited understandings of unsuccessful application, and significant hardship due to food insecurity and loss of income. The findings of the study were disseminated through various platforms including a report published in May 2022, virtual results launch on different social media platforms, radio interviews and television interviews. The Socio-Economic, Health, and Gender Impact of Covid-19 on Youth aged 16-35: This study explores the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth beneficiaries of support services offered the Department of Social Development in South Africa. A panel study design was used to follow a cohort of youth and examine the impact of the pandemic and lockdown restrictions during 2021 using three structured surveys. In addition to examining the psychosocial implications, the study also considered the extent to which youth used alcohol and other drugs to cope with the challenges they experienced during the lockdown. The study is currently in its concluding phase where stakeholder meetings will be arranged throughout this year (2022) to disseminate the findings. Study findings were launched through a workshop with stakeholders at national and local levels, including policymakers, government representatives, and researchers. Upcoming events include dissemination workshops across three provinces to share and discuss the findings with local stakeholders and young people. The intention of these sessions is to obtain input from various stakeholders and generate information rich discussions on how to address the needs of South African youth.

**South African families' experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic**: Using a qualitative dominant mixed methods approach, this study explores the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of families in South Africa. The study includes a purposive sample of family units including families with children, adolescents, adults only, and older adults, to explore implications of the lockdown and pandemic for family wellbeing. Issues pertaining to alcohol are considered as they pertain to the alcohol ban, subjective alcohol use and the potential link between alcohol use and gender-based violence during the lockdown. This study has concluded and the team has published two academic articles and presented the work at different seminars and conferences.

**Evaluating a grade RR program**: This study was commissioned by Christel House school and assesses the feasibility of a grade RR program for children's educational development. A quasi-experimental design is used with one control group and one experimental group to assess and compare changes in children's educational development. This study is ongoing and will conclude in April 2023.

African cultural practices and rites of passage that adolescent girls and young women undergo in three SA districts (Alfred Nzo, Nelson Mandela Bay, uThukela). This project is funded by UNFPA (South Africa). It has been implemented since September 2021, and the expected date of completion is December 2022. This study is a qualitative study that explores the knowledge, perceptions and attitudes of community stakeholders including men and women, community leaders, government officials on cultural practices (including ukuthwala) and rites of passages that AGYW undergo. It also explores the lived experiences and access to support services for AGYW who underwent practices such as ukuthwala. Data collection methods include community stakeholder FGDs (9), women/girls in-depth interviews (30), officials' in-depth interviews (7).

#### **Challenges and recommendations**

Loss of skilled staff, particularly at senior level, and inability to replace them.

The implementation of two national household surveys in the same year has put severe pressure on the researchers and administrators.

Developing the science of impact is a work in progress. A challenge is the building of impact into the design of projects.

Name change -The current name of the division, Human and Social Capabilities does not adequately reflect public health and societies in transition. The recommendation for a name change from Human and Social Capabilities to Public Health, Societies and Belonging has been suggested.

#### **Developmental, Capable and Ethical State**

The Developmental, Capable and Ethical State (DCES) is one of the divisions of the HSRC that focuses on building a capable and ethical state. The division seeks to contribute knowledge towards more sustainable peacebuilding and work together with government, oversight bodies and civil society to improve and strengthen accountability through participatory democracy. In addition, the division advocates for an ethical – or values-based – approach that places people at the centre - as actors, mediators and recipients. Over the last few years our work on the Covid-19 has focused on the impact of the pandemic on democracy, governance, peace and security, with a view to identifying innovative methods and strategies to mitigate the impact. Our work is organised around these two key strategic questions but more specifically the divisions seeks to address the following strategic objectives:

- Be a national, regional and global leader in the production and use of knowledge towards a developmental, capable
  and ethical state that is responsive to poverty and inequality.
- Meaningfully contribute towards more peaceful, secure, sustainable, democratic and resilient communities;
- Deepen a relationship of trust and influence with government to help guide and inform policy and provide implementation support; and
- Be recognised as a trusted and engaged research partner within the National System of Innovation and with civil society.

**Pertinent research questions** 

There are two over-arching questions that guide the DCES research interventions:

- How to strengthen democracy through transparent governance, accountable leadership and reinvigorated public participation/ civic engagement; and
- How to ensure sustainable development through peace, human and social security.

#### Progress on programme of work set out in 2020

#### The State of the Nation Series (2022/23)

The DCES contributes every year to the analysis of our state of the nation. Foremost is its deliberate focus on issues of poverty, inequality and unemployment. Since the advent of democracy in South Africa, the State has fought poverty and inequality through a variety of social reform initiatives. These include, for example, the Reconstruction and Development Programme in 1994, the National Development Plan of 2012, alignment to the AU's Agenda 2063 and also as part of the global compact, the Sustainable Development Goals. These policy instruments have focused on overall inclusive development that is directed toward deepening democracy as far as it translates political emancipation into economic well-being and a better quality of life for all. It is against this background that the 2022/23 SON Manuscript Project is presented.

The current edition showcases cutting-edge thinking about social science and humanities research on the problem of poverty and inequalities (as a dominant analytic for understanding social difference) and providing independent analyses of the national agenda to reduce poverty and inequality. The final publication will be available in August 2023.

#### E-Participation and Policy Modelling Platform for South Africa (ePPMOSA)

In May 2022, the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) appointed the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) as implementing entities for the ePPMOSA project.

The Viability and Validation of Innovations for Service Delivery Programme (VVISDP) aims to:

- Pilot the suitability and viability of a selection of potential technology-based options for delivering basic services in some of the pilot district municipalities;
- Evaluate the success of the pilot;
- Build a stronger partnership through policy dialogues between communities, municipalities and technology partners
  (public and private) within the National System of Innovation (NSI) to facilitate technology transfer and to influence
  the work and priorities of municipalities in adopting technology and innovation to improve basic services; and
- Support the development of a more enabling policy environment that facilitates the diffusion of good practices and the adoption and scaling-up of successful innovations and technology pilots in the five areas, namely Innovative technologies to improve service delivery, Decision Support Tools, Innovation capacity and measurement, Integration of innovation in municipal policy environment and e-Participation and Policy Modelling.

The project leadership finalised the governance structure for the pilot projects and the draft mapping of policy and participation objectives, processes and stakeholders have been completed. Consultation with selected municipalities has started in earnest.

#### Climate change - Financing Renewable Energy in South Africa, Lessons from India and China

When exploring the issues affecting public and private financing of renewable energy, one must approach the topic from the investor's perspective to understand their concerns. These concerns relate to political support, the policy environment, the expertise of the financial sector in evaluating risk, currency volatility, capital investments and the prices negotiated through the power purchase agreement. The division explored these issues guided by the following pertinent questions:

- To understand the impact of BRICS policies on advancing renewable energy adoption in South Africa, India and China at national and municipal levels.
- To evaluate the linkage between policy, financial instruments and projects that advance renewable energy adoption.
- To undertake a comparative analysis of renewable energy projects and determine how national and municipal policies have influenced the effectiveness of the project.

The project was concluded at the end of July 2022 and a progress report was submitted to the funders, the National Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences and South African BRICS Think Tank.

#### Human Security with a particular focus on food insecurity

DCES research has shown that Urban residents increasingly feel food insecurity as the migration from rural areas and immigration from African countries increases. The Division is working in collaboration with the University of Newcastle and the University of York in the United Kingdom, and others, to investigate the role and importance of traditional foodstuffs in the City of Johannesburg among migrant populations.

Currently, the research team in South Africa is doing a literature review. Once completed, the findings will be presented, and the proposed fieldwork methodology will be discussed at an inception workshop with policy stakeholders and critical academics in early November 2022. Following this, fieldwork will begin in early 2023.

#### Human Security and Wellbeing of People with disabilities

DCES work aligns with the 2016 White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was overlooked in the National Development Plan of 2011. The work in collaboration with UKRI on "Socio-economic, wellbeing and human rights related experiences of people with disabilities in Covid-19 times in South Africa" aimed to create media awareness, analyse data and present results to various stakeholders along with media releases. This study is complete, while the project team continues writing publications and presenting at ad hoc media interviews. The data is in the process of curation and should be publicly available by early 2023.

#### **Human Security - Human Dimensions of Climate Change**

In addition to the work on climate change financing, DCES is also involved in a new programme of work looking at the human dimensions of climate change. The ultimate purpose of this work is to generate evidence to reduce vulnerabilities, support the energy just transition, resilient economies and communities. This work is in its early phases.

#### Violence Against Children (VAC) in South Africa 2020

The division has been a contributor to understanding drivers of family and domestic violence and this particular initiative is to provide baseline data, and contribute to child friendly policies and programmes. This study is completed, and it has produced three key outputs: the synthesis report, the compendium of studies, development of evidence-based interventions, and a child-friendly report which has been presented to children in the Limpopo province as part of children's consultations. DCES will continue to conduct consultations with children to share the study findings. A manuscript will be written for submission at the end of Q4 in 2022/2023.

#### South Africa Social Attitudes Surveys (SASAS)

The Division is home to the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) which is a flagship project for the HSRC that conducts annual surveys on a variety of contemporary social issues. It has strong international linkages and a reputation for high-quality, freely available public data examining underlying value change in South Africa, with a key emphasis on policy-relevant thematic content. In the recent part, SASAS has collected attitudinal data on decolonisation, the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), protest action, foreign migrants, climate change and energy preferences, homelessness and informal settlements, restitution, as well as sexual orientation and gender identity. Currently, the 2022 round of fieldwork data collection commenced in October 2022 focusing on: the Zondo Commission, environment, digital society, family and changing gender roles, restitution, quality of life and public understanding of science.

#### **Independent Electoral Commission**

The Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) has partnered with the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to undertake a programme of electoral research to ensure that decisions are informed by an evidence-based approach to decision-making. The HSRC has negotiated a 5-year research project plan with the IEC. Two projects, namely the Voter Participation Survey (VPS) and an Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS), have already been undertaken as part of this project plan in the previous financial year. The VPS was undertaken to understand the electoral mood in the country and the ESS was undertaken on Election Day to inform whether the elections were perceived as free and fair. Another project was also undertaken to monitor select electoral indicators over time. Further projects envisaged under this plan is the VPS and ESS for the 2024 National and Provincial Elections; a political party funding study; studies on by elections and electronic voting.

#### **Challenges and recommendations**

Internal Capacity – finding the appropriate skills mix, particularly from previously disadvantages categories has been challenging and negatively affects the transformation targets.

External funding – the pressure for mobilising external resources has a perverse effect on the focal study areas and therefore the ability sometimes to respond to immediate government priorities. Government work should be funded so that the division and indeed the HSRC focus on priority issues and problems affecting communities.

Retention of staff - it is not only difficult to recruit productive workers, but it is also difficult to retain them. The division believes in the notion of growing its own timber. This means that retention of interns and trainees in the organisation need to be supported.

It is recommended to rename the Peace and Sustainable Security (PASS) sub-division to Sustainable Human Security (SHS) to avoid the common confusion of mandate overlap between PASS and AISA work.

#### **Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators**

The focus set in 2020/2021 for the work of the Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII) was to position the team to respond creatively and innovatively to new STI measurement challenges, informed by the unfolding strategic plans of the and the HSRC for the new cycle, and with due regard to the impact of global restrictions to contain the COVID 19 pandemic.

**Pertinent research questions** 

The focal theme guiding CeSTII's work was:

Consolidating to devise new Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) measures and indicators and improving survey quality, in alignment with the strategic goals of MSTF 2019-24, the White Paper on STI 2019, and the new HSRC strategic vision.

CeSTII aimed to achieve its strategic goals by:

Reinforcing core business, deepening exploration of new research areas, solidifying partnerships, strengthening capacity to inform policy analysis, using digital technologies to run surveys more efficiently, and disseminating datasets, reports and outputs more effectively through digital means.

Five strategic focal areas were proposed:

To improve the **quality of national R&D surveys** and to interrogate R&D and business innovation data in new ways, in terms of the ways in which the national system of innovation is oriented to address developmental challenges such as health, the green economy, the oceans economy, a capable state, and priority economic sectors.

To contribute **new conceptual frameworks, designs and methodologies** for measuring innovation in the informal sector, based on the foundation of the Oslo Manual.

To contribute a design and methodology for **measuring innovation in the agricultural sector**, based on the foundation of the Oslo Manual, the baseline survey (2016-2018), and in partnership with agricultural stakeholders.

To experiment with **digital tools** and new research methodologies to enhance the conduct of surveys and improve quality, and to enhance dissemination and advocacy of CeSTII outputs.

To inform the design and create data towards an **indicator framework** for STI oriented to the goals of inclusive and sustainable development in Southern Africa.

#### **Progress on programme of work set out in 2020**

#### Quality of national R&D surveys and interrogate R&D and business innovation data in new ways:

- Changes proposed by the Frascati manual 2015 were incorporated into R&D survey methodology to ensure a foundation for ongoing international comparability.
- Fact sheets on longitudinal R&D trends oriented to STI policy and sectoral actors were produced analysing longitudinal expenditure and personnel trends, in relation to health, the green economy, and three priority economic sectors mining, agriculture, and manufacturing.
- A joint CeSTII-DSI project was initiated: Modelling of the investment requirements to achieve the national Gross Expenditure on Research and Development (R&D) targets in South Africa. Data from the reports was used in the drafting of the new Decadal Plan.
- Case studies were conducted, assessing the ways in which State-Owned Enterprises are geared for R&D and innovation to achieve their mandates. The case studies and analysis of R&D data were used to inform the design of an STI indicator framework, that can be used to monitor their progress.
- A joint project was conducted with StatsSA to assess the impact of COVID on firm R&D and innovation. Fact sheets and policy briefs were prepared, and the work also informed questions to be included in R&D and innovation surveys in field.
- Outputs from the Business Innovation Survey 2014-16 were prepared and disseminated in a policy actor / user-friendly manner, as well as in academic outputs.

■ The BIS survey performance was reviewed to inform strategies and the adaptations required to implement the Oslo 2018 guidelines and enhance survey quality in the next survey cycle. On this basis, Business Innovation survey 2019-2021 went to field in early 2022.

#### Measuring innovation in the informal sector:

- An innovative, Oslo-type innovation survey adapted for the informal sector was rolled out in partnership with the Centre for Community Based Research in the Mpumuza / Sweetwaters area, using digital tools and training local youth as enumerators.
- Digital storytelling and interviews were conducted to illuminate the nature of innovation in local innovation and production systems, for food, textiles and hairdressing.
- Consultation with local stakeholders were convened and forms of outputs were prepared that can be used by local stakeholders and participants.
- Statistical report and secondary analyses were published in journal articles and presented at international conferences.
- The design, methodology and instruments were curated for use by other research teams. Our collaborators in NACATEM in Nigeria used these tools to pilot an innovation in informal sector survey in a few areas. The two teams worked together to compare data trends and determine how to refine the methodology for wider use across other African partners.

#### Measuring innovation in the agricultural sector:

- An Oslo-type baseline survey of agricultural enterprises (2016-2018) was designed and conducted, a first in South Africa, and not widely performed in other countries.
- Consultation and partnership was built with agricultural stakeholders, in government departments and agencies, public research institutes and universities, and industry associations, to inform the design of the instrument and analysis of the data. A relationship with Stats SA, which was rolling out the national Census of Agriculture at the time, was built in attempt to foster alignment between datasets.
- A statistical report and secondary analyses were published in journal articles and presented at conferences. A very
  well attended policy dialogue was convened to share the results with key agricultural stakeholders and policy actors
  in DSI and its entities.

#### To experiment with digital tools:

- Digital methodologies were adopted to conduct the agricultural and informal enterprise innovation surveys, in an attempt to improve quality and effective use of human resources.
- A highly innovative user interface and online survey completion system was designed for the R&D survey, and piloted in the 2020/21 cycle. The R&D team have been integrally involved in the design of the system with the technical team.
- A digital system to distribute CeSTII outputs, events and news for advocacy purposes was institutionalised. It was
  then adopted for use by the survey teams for distribution of instruments and ongoing communication, to assist
  with response rates.
- Online webinars and engagement with stakeholders were convened due to COVID restrictions.

#### Data towards an indicator framework for STI for inclusive and sustainable development in Southern Africa:

- A comprehensive set of indicators were designed to assess how STI in South Africa is oriented to address SDG2: eradicate hunger and ensure food security. This experimental process will be of value for the design of indicators aligned with the Decadal Plan.
- Consultation and collaboration was promoted with partners across the continent, on indicators and measures
  appropriate to African contexts, to promote STISA and SDGs. In particular, the MoUs with NCRST in Namibia and
  NACATEM in Nigeria were very active with two-way exchanges around training, dissemination events and the
  production of comparative fact sheets.
- CeSTII joined a consortium led by ACTS Kenya to lead two work packages on the Evidence for STI policy making project, funded by the Canadian IDRC as part of the Science Granting Council Initiative Phase II. CeSTII partnered with colleagues at University Ankh Diop in Senegal, to run the West African component of the project.

- CeSTII partnered with University of Johannesburg and Department of Science and Innovation to drive the Transformative Innovation Policy South Africa community of practice, centred around a research agenda, capacity building and engaged policy experiments.
- CeSTII continued to provide South Africa's national R&D and innovation data to the OECD, and to participate actively in the NESTI group to keep up to date with developments in the STI measurement and indicators field.

#### **Challenges and recommendations**

The impact of COVID on survey respondents was profound and required international consultation, rethinking and creativity.

The impact of COVID on the organisation and work of the research team required new kinds of leadership and capacity building across all levels.

Ensuring uptake and use of research outputs and building stakeholder relationships with effective engagement through digital mechanisms should be pursued actively.

Aligning the interests and differing needs and timelines of researchers and policy actors remains a challenge that is negotiated continually, and requires time and trust, which once built, is invaluable for joint work on national STI indicators in a changing policy context in this strategic period.

#### **Africa Institute of South Africa**

The Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) leads and coordinates the HSRC's engagements in Africa. It acts as a catalyst for research and implementation support across the continent. AISA undertakes basic, applied policy-relevant and comparative research, and seeks to build capacity and provide policy advice and implementation support to advance South Africa's African Agenda, Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. It collaborates with a range of national, continental, and international governments, as well as multilateral institutions, research institutes, universities, and civil society to achieve its objectives.

Africa faces many challenges and opportunities. It is currently encountering increased poverty and unemployment, climate change, energy and food insecurity, a decrease in the quality of democracy and governance, as well as a new conflict context in which the threat of violent extremism looms large. Many of these vulnerabilities have been compounded by the responses needed to curb the spread of COVID-19. The pandemic also exposed other deficiencies across the continent especially about health care and social support systems and it has therefore impacted the quest for a "Prosperous and Peaceful" continent in which we "Leave No One Behind." The pandemic has forced us to rethink strategies for addressing socioeconomic ills and to restructure how we work and measure impact. The ways in which the AU has responded to the pandemic, however, have also demonstrated that Africa can work collectively to deal with its challenges if it has the leadership and political will required to steer it on new pathways to progress.

The HSRC's organisational mandate requires a broad focus on, and contribution to, eradicating poverty, reducing inequality and unemployment, and facilitating a peaceful future and an end to discrimination and exclusion. The UN, AU and the SA Government have developed the policy frameworks to achieve stated goals; adapting them to current realities and ensuring implementation is what is necessary. AISA seeks to provide a deeper understanding of, and thought leadership on, a range of issues that can inform policy development and narrow the persisting gaps and disjuncture between developed frameworks, policies and their implementation.

AISA, in conjunction with the rest of the HSRC, seeks to do this through evidenced-based research, convening forums, providing strategic and policy advice to governments and intergovernmental organisations, forming partnerships and engaging in implementation support for civil society and governments.

Pertinent research questions

The principal philosophy that characterises AISA's focal themes is Pan-Africanism: the idea that peoples of African descent have common interests and should be unified. Its basic premise is that unity of all those of African descent is needed for economic, social, and political progress.

In that context the following questions drive the work of AISA:

- What is needed to realise and sustain a prosperous and peaceful Africa?
- How can African voices and perspectives be amplified in international relations and global governance?
- How can science and technology be used in the quest for Africa's development and security?
- How can South Africa position itself to contribute more effectively to charting pathways for Africa's peace and prosperity?

The work of AISA finds alignment with MTSF Priority 7: "A Better Africa in a Better World." To further this priority the Institute's research work is organised under the themes:

#### Alleviating Poverty and Promoting Regional Integration in Africa

The research is largely focused on the African Continental Free Trade Area. The African Union and South Africa have prioritised regional integration as a means for growing intra-African trade and Africa's economies. There are many barriers to successfully implementing the AfCTFA. AISA will focus on the opportunities and challenges for implementing this agreement and provide policy advice for improving the effective realisation of the goal.

#### African Institutions and governance structures

This theme is focused on our international, continental, and regional governance and peace and security architectures. It tracks and provides support for the functioning of these institutions and the implementation of their key frameworks.

- Knowledge production on, and implementation support for, the key frameworks of the UN (SDGs, UNSCR 1325),
   AU (Agenda 2063, Silencing the Guns,) and those of the respective Regional Economic Communities in Africa (ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC, COMESA, CEN-SAD, ECCAS):
- Analysis of, and support for, institutional building of UNSC, APSA, AGA, APRM, AUDA-NEPAD, PAP, WPS, African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights)

#### The role of South Africa in Africa

The theme is particularly concerned with South Africa's engagement in Africa. South Africa plays a pivotal role in peace and security on the continent. Moreover, it has expanded its trade and investment and leadership in science and technology throughout the continent. It seeks to promote peace diplomacy, economic diplomacy, and science diplomacy. This theme seeks to provide empirical evidence that can assist the state in making informed policy choices as well as to provide governments with implementation support.

Many countries have developed strategies that inform their bilateral and multilateral African engagements as well as forums through which these relations are co-ordinated, for example, TICAD and FOCAC. This theme also engages the strategies of the respective countries through facilitated conversations with the diplomatic community.

#### **Culture and Development**

This theme concentrates on:

- Culture as a dynamic meaning-making social mechanism: Research into alternative ways of knowing, alternative visions of society and alternative ethics for human conduct.
- Arts, culture and development: Research into culture-led local development strategies: culture as a lever to consolidate local development. Research into principles, policies and practice of heritage resources management.

#### Strategic Dialogues for thought leadership and capacity development in Africa

AISA has been at the forefront of convening forums that deal with key issues on the continent and that provide an opportunity for stakeholder interaction and capacity building. Below are the key convening platforms that it utilises for dialogue and information sharing. It will also introduce a new High-Level forum in which leaders can exchange insights on pertinent issues to move the continent forward.

- African Unity for Renaissance Conference
- Archie Mafeje Memorial Annual Lecture
- African Young Graduates Scholars Conference
- Diplomatic Conversations
- Annual High-Level Forum
- Seminars, Workshops, and Conferences

Progress of programme of work set out in 2020

#### Alleviating Poverty and Promoting Regional integration in Africa

The AfCFTA research titled: The Trans- Inter, and Multidisciplinary (TIM) approach to delivering the African Continental Free Trade Area was launched in September 2022 after a series of consultative meetings with potential research partners and representatives from the AfCFTA Secretariat.

#### The research is present proceeding under four project streams:

- The Africa Continental Free Trade Area Through Agriculture: The Case of The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region
- The Viability Project: Making Systems of Innovation in Africa Work
- Sustainable Pharmaceutical Industrialisation and Global Health Security: Re-Thinking Rationales and Models for Africa
- (Business) Culture and economic development

This research is a collaboration involving almost all Divisions and Centres in the HSRC. External partners include the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Tshwane University of Science and Technology (TUT) through its UNESCO Chair for Innovation, the University of South Africa, AUDA-NEPAD, the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) of Kenya.

Following the workshop, the Principal Investigators are selecting research cases following advice from the launch workshop. Simultaneously applications for research ethics clearance for the different components of the projects are in progress.

The Viability Project: Making Systems of Innovation in Africa Work research stream has secured a spot to present its research focus at the forthcoming World Science Forum in November 2022 in Cape Town South Africa.

Publications under the stream include one policy brief, two peer-reviewed journal articles under review, and one A book titled: The African Continental Free Trade Area and the road to integration which is under-peer review.

Apart from the AfCTFA project AISA conducted a **South African National Food and Nutrition Security Survey** (NFNSS) through funding obtained from the Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) and National Treasury.

The NFNSS commenced in 2020 and marked the country's first country-wide study of food security and nutrition vulnerability. The research project is nearing closure as the provincial and national reports are currently prepared. Data collection and analysis were concluded. The reports will be disseminated and provide results and recommendations for possible policy uptake and interventions to meet the following research study objectives:

- To provide a baseline assessment of food security and nutrition status at households in the respective livelihood zones
- To monitor the changes in food and nutrition security in the respective livelihood zones
- To analyse the link between food security and nutrition. Explore reasons for people's vulnerability; and
- Determine recommendations for planning and targeting of interventions for food and nutrition security vulnerabilities.
- The South African study was conducted not only for South African purposes and use but to gain sufficient research data and knowledge to provide a platform for possible further continental collaboration in efforts to reduce malnutrition, hunger, and food insecurities for the continental population.

#### African Institutions and governance structures

Major work under this focus falls under the Governance, Peace and Security, Nation Building and Politics in Africa research focus. Research output in this area includes:

Journal articles published: Silencing the guns project, Reforms of the AU project and Evaluation of the implementation and application of the various aspirations of Agenda 2063 on the continent project.

Book projects underway: Archie Mafeje Book Project and Multi-dimensional approach to the peacebuilding.

Policy briefs: African Union's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Critical perspectives, South Africa in the African Union: Issues, challenges, and future direction and Sudan at the crossroad: Issues, challenges, and the way forward.

Diplomatic conversations (seminars): Culture and development on the continent, Violent Extremism in Mozambique: Implications for the SADC Region, Ethiopia at the crossroad: Wither peace and stability in the Horn of Africa and Chad and the Sahel region: Assessing conflict triggers in the region.

The National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security for South Africa 2020-2025 was developed and submitted to DIRCO to provide a guiding framework towards creating a safer and peaceful South Africa. A panel discussion was held in 2021 with various stakeholders and representatives from the EU and embassies regarding the journey and implementation of the NAP.

Several Civil Society online seminars took place to promote the work on peace and security.

#### The role of South Africa in Africa

This theme has advanced under the Science Diplomacy thrust. Significant publications under this theme include:

Kevin Jan Duffy, Obiora Cornelius Collins and Thokozani Simelane (2022). **System Dynamics model linking demand, employment movement between sectors and the economy for the South African construction sector**. Theoretical and Empirical Research in Urban Management. Volume 17, Issue 2 (5-15).

Thokozani Simelane and Juergen Knop (2022). **Opportunities and options for energy cooperation among BRICS countries.** (Chapter 5 in S. Zondi (ed). The political Economy of Intro-BRICS Cooperation, International political economy series. Palgrave-Macmillan. ISBN -10 3030973964. ISBN-13 978-303097396

Thokozani Simelane, Rodney Managa, Shingirirai Mutanga and Nicassius Achu Check (2022). **In search for Scientific Collaboration: South Africa's Science Diplomacy towards Africa**. In NAM S&T Centre's Publication on Science, Technology & Innovation Diplomacy in Developing Countries: Perceptions and Practice.

A research project, The System Dynamics assessment of poverty alleviation interventions in South Africa, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Zimbabwe commenced.

#### **Culture and Development**

This theme has engaged with a variety of stakeholders seeking to formulate research whose framing and methodology relate to specific societal concerns. Leading from this, work in the stream was and continues to be focused on events of the year 2021-The AU's year of Culture, Heritage, and Development.

A notable engagement under the work focus is a series of engagements with the International Scientific Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management. The theme's lead researcher was a key presenter at an ICAHM-ICOMOS Conference in August 2022.

Additional projects under the research theme include (i) Research titled Transmodern heritage of Africa is underway with data collection in Cote d'Ivoire, and (ii) a book, a policy brief, and a peer-reviewed journal are under development.

AISA forms part of an HSRC collaborative project, "Strengthen the capacities of science granting councils in gender and inclusivity. The research is currently conducted, and completion is estimated in February 2023".

**Challenges and recommendations** 

Securing reliable and adequately (fairly) funded research in the continent.

Limited institutional links between HSRC and research institutes and universities in Africa. Links are largely personal.

The process of institutionalising links is lengthy and this delays formalising relations.

Lack of resources to train researchers to appreciate other disciplines given the trans, inter and multi-disciplinary nature of research in AISA.

#### **Impact Centre**

In South Africa, in 2020, the Department of Science and Innovation released a monitoring and evaluation framework for the South African science, technology and innovation system. In this context, the HSRC's strategic plan (2021–2025) calls for a coordinated effort to enhance the organisation's impact, and to better showcase this impact to stakeholders and the public. The plan set out a theory of change for the HSRC and mandated the establishment of the Impact Centre to drive the organisation's impact agenda.

The Impact Centre has a three-fold focus on relevance, impact and visibility of the HSRC's research. We aim to do this in the following ways:

**Relevance:** By conducting research and stakeholder engagements to better understand current pressing societal challenges to inform national and continental debates and policy. Deepening of our collaborative roles within HSRC projects, in which we increasingly contribute towards research impact roles and research focused on science in society. Additionally, the Impact Centre must ensure that the HSRC employs a strategic, value-driven approach to partnerships and strategic events to ensure institutional sustainability and mutual benefit.

**Impact:** By defining policy issues and developing best practice models and cases of research, evidence, and data use, and by evaluating and demonstrating impact. To consolidate our support for the HSRC's impact agenda through a focus on the implementation of the Impact Strategy, which includes elements of planning, capacity building, engagement, and resources for impact.

**Visibility:** By communicating research and research impact to wider publics and packaging it for specific stakeholders. To enhance awareness and appreciation of the HSRC brand (research and human capital) among stakeholders, research users and consumers, internally and externally. This is achieved through leveraging several communication platforms, including that which is:

- owned (HSRC digital assets and publications);
- earned (media coverage of key research activities and milestones);
- paid (paid advertisements, advertorials, especially in promoting surveys)

#### **Pertinent research questions**

Areas of science in society praxis within the unit include the development of the HSRC's Policy Briefs, and the implementation of a formal research/policy engagement structure (the Policy Action Network). These areas of praxis are inter-connected, requiring cognate sets of skills and activities; they are also complementary to the science in society (SIS) unit's research portfolio, for example by linking theoretical work on science communication and policy engagement with the practice thereof, and by directly engaging the policy community on SIS research areas. The unit is highly active in providing support to the organisation's divisions and centres, including through the impact resources website, and the development of impact guides, frameworks, training, and consultations.

#### **Progress on programme of work set out in 2020**

#### Visibility

**Annual Report 2021/22** – As one of the unit's critical functions, the compilation of the annual report was completed, approved and submitted to the DSI and Treasury before the end of August 2022 as per the legislative requirements.

Development of the HSRC **Digital Media Strategy** – The unit identified the need to develop a digital media strategy which was completed in August 2022. A bespoke implementation plan will be used to operationalise the strategy.

**Website** development – The new HSRC website was launched in the last week of July 2022. The content management team edited and uploaded all the necessary content to enhance the utility of the website.

**Internal communication** – the internal communication team has continued to develop and design several communication tools for internal communication. A strategy for requests of communication support was shared with staff to provide guidance on the process. This was done to enhance the communication support provided to the organisation.

**HSRC Review** - the first two issues of the HSRC's external newsletter - the HSRC Review - focusing on research outputs were completed and shared with relevant stakeholders.

**Media Liaison**- During the term under review, the media liaison team continued to provide media support to all projects in the HSRC that required such support. The support included:

- Developing media advisories and releases
- Organising media engagements for Divisions, Units and Centres
- Overseeing the media monitoring activities through a service provider
- Notably, during the period under review, the Media Liaison team dealt with a rising tide of fake news linked to the work of data collectors. Various strategies such as radio promos, radio and TV interviews, as well as social media posters/cards were used to curb the spread of fake news.
- In total, 352 print, online and broadcast articles covered the work of the HSRC during the second quarter.

**Multimodal products** – Various multimodal products in the form of digital flyers, infographics, podcasts were developed to support the work of core-function divisions and units.

#### Relevance

The use of digital technologies in the Western Cape health sector. Project (funder: The Health Foundation). The project undertook a survey of Western Cape health sector workers and produced new insights into the use of digital systems into the sector. Policy recommendations were made in relation to skills, capabilities, technologies, and uptake.

The commercialisation of technologies developed in EU large-scale science facilities (Funder: Horizon2020). This project is undertaking a case study analysis of the impact of science-driven technology development within Europe's large-scale research infrastructure. The project aims to produce new frameworks, methods, insights and recommendations for enhancing the impact of big science.

**Policy Briefs:** The first seven policy briefs for the 2022/3 year are currently in production. A new policy brief strategy is being piloted, with enhancements in the look and feel of HSRC policy briefs and intensified knowledge-brokering activities. Mentorship is being provided to HSRC researchers to help them develop their policy briefs in new and innovative ways. A series of training workshops is ongoing, and is now supported by a recently established online Policy Briefs Toolkit.

**Policy Action Network** (PAN): The PAN's primary objective is to work with policy actors to enhance the effectiveness and legitimacy of decision-making through technology. The work of PAN has been consolidating around two main, overlapping areas of work: civic technology and evidence synthesis. 1. PAN is active on a number of artificial intelligence evidence and policy projects, working closely with Research ICT Africa, funded by the IDRC and GIZ. PAN has led the development of a proposal to pilot e-participation and policy modelling in seven municipalities across South Africa over three years, as part of an EU sector budget support programme.

PAN continues to support the DPSA with the Open Government Partnership (OGP) process, through an interim steering committee. As part of the current OGP National Action Plan commitments, PAN is collaborating with civil society, government and private sector partners to provide training and mentoring at data quests and hackathons. PAN is working with SAASTA to provide data journalism training to community media houses in September 2022.

Alliance for African Partnership (AAP) at the Michigan State University, which jointly implemented equitable partnership learning workshop that consisted of various stakeholders from local, regional and global institutions. The design of a short survey together with the University of Pretoria (UP) and the Alliance for African Partnerships (AAP) was implemented and data was collected from various universities and research councils. The outcomes of the survey informed engagements at the Southern African Research & Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) global conference on 1 August 2022 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

**National Science Week** (NSW) in partnership with the University of Pretoria (UP) and units within the HSRC such as Centre for Community Based Research (CCBR), and partnered with community through involvement of Mamelodi Community through City of Tshwane and Bishop Lavis High school and Iziko Museum in Western Cape.

In support of local government, the Impact Centre coordinated the implementation of the first **Masterclass on Policy Briefs** in partnership with the eThekwini Municipality and its knowledge management/learning institute, Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE). The program was co-developed by IC and Kenya Institute of Public Policy, Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) and was implemented place over a period of two days, attended by municipal officials.

#### **Impact**

**Impact Strategies**: The HSRC strategic and business plan has emphasised the importance of highlighting the impact question on all research projects that the organisations undertake. To this end several strategies that include the Impact strategy, the Communication strategy, Research Use strategy and the e-Research Strategy were developed and have been presented to the board for review and consideration. To ensure alignment with how divisions undertake their impact work, and to enable meaningful and proper collaboration between the Impact Centre and Divisions and other HSRC Centres, the Impact Centre has been engaging with Division at different levels including though the Impact Forums, planned meetings as well as sub-unit-initiated engagements.

Securing partnerships such as AESIS (**The Network for Advancing and Evaluating the Societal Impact of Science** (AESIS Network). It is an international, open community for various types of professionals working on stimulating and demonstrating the impact of science on economy, culture and well-being. The network consists of individual and institutional members, and thus connects different stakeholders globally. We regard AEIS as a potential partner to work with on various trainings that are linking research, communication and institutional structures/resources for impact.

Operationalising a platform for a **monitoring and evaluation community of practice** (CoP) with DSI entities: the COP is responsible for developing strategies, M&E and impact strategies, translating these into implementation plans. Through the CoP entities have shared and exchanged experiences in embedding impact in their practice(s). Subsequent workshop will look at the decadal plan and alignment as it impacts on all of us. This will be led by the DSI and DPME.

#### **Challenges and recommendations**

One of the challenges identified is the lack of a coherent strategy for brand management. Consequently, the mother brand (the HSRC) tends to suffer. To address this, it is recommended that the organisation's corporate identity manual should be revised to align it with the Impact Centre's mandate of brand visibility.

Opportunities for externally funded research are significantly greater than the research capacity. Over the medium term, additional researchers, ranging from trainee to senior levels, will be required if this area of work is to be expanded.

It is difficult to find specialist impact skills related to the core knowledge production and practice of the unit. There is a limited pool of expertise in the areas of science communication, public perceptions of science, the impact of science, and innovation systems. This is being addressed through internal development, but recruitment remains a challenge.

Some challenges include uncertainty of the SPU's role, particularly as the organisation transitions from the old business development unit and the formation of SPU as a critical role in supporting and advancing strategic plans and partnerships for impact and the business of the HSRC.

#### **Short-term outlook**

Current trends in communication show that preferences on research packaging and communication are changing. In line with these dynamics, the unit will explore innovative and engaging methods—of packaging and disseminating content across all HSRC platforms. This will include translation of research products to be linguistically and communicatively accessible, and exploration of the use of audio-visuals and narrative approaches that will appeal to wider audiences, while they retain alignment to the HSRC brand. In the quest to create an engaged public, the unit will work on operational plans that ensure that content in the HSRC's interactive platforms is structured to stimulate engagement and dialogue.

Developing a partnership monitoring system for better reporting.

Continuing to lead and coordinate the Monitoring and Evaluation Community of Practice for Science Councils. Through the Strategic Partnership Unit (SPU) office the HSRC was able to resuscitate the COP and mobilise stakeholders within the NSI to be a part of the community of practice. This is evident in the number of entities represented in the CoP, namely: DPME, DSI, WRC, ARC, CSIR, ASSAf, TIA, NRF, SANSA, and MINTEK. PU provides secretariat support to the CoP.

Lead the coordination of the Bilateral Steering Committee between HSRC and CSIR to foster collaboration and transand interdisciplinary research. Planning meetings are convened quarterly to review progress, facilitate resource sharing and development of research projects. Consequently, both entities are developing a framework for implementation of the agreement, that will prioritise key areas of research, solicit support where necessary and implement for the benefit of DSI to advance the decadal plan. The HSRC identified two enabling outcomes to be pursued over the five-year period:



The HSRC's approach to transformation over the five-year period will not be limited to demographic transformation. It will also focus on:

- (i) Developing the required internal processes and systems to enable economic, efficient and effective implementation of the HSRC mandate.
- ii) Approaching the research life-cycle including data gathering, reporting and dissemination, data storage and sharing, and knowledge use in new and innovative ways.
- iii) Building research capacity and transforming human capital.

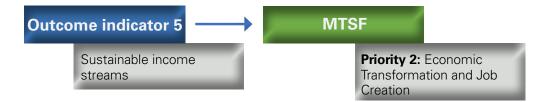
To achieve this, the HSRC will put in place appropriate policies and strategies to support the core business strategy, including a suite of Human Resources, Information Technology, Business Development and Research Use Strategies.

Building research capacity and transforming human capital will also contribute to developing capable South Africans. Towards this end, the organisation will measure progress against a set of indicators on employment equity, and learning and development.

#### **Outcome indicator**

## The percentage of senior researchers (at the level of Senior Research Specialist/Senior Research Manager or higher) from designated groups, with permanent appointments

Achievement against this 5-year target was 40% (18/45 senior researchers from designated groups with permanent appointments) for 2021/22 and 51% (22/43) for 2020/21. This was largely due to senior researchers employed on longer-term contracts in recent years as well as senior researchers already on post-retirement contracts. The HSRC Board has, however, taken a decision on the 24th of February 2022 to implement a new human resource strategy to convert baseline-funded fixed-term contracts to permanent conditions of service effective 1 December 2022. This will exclude Executive Director level appointments. Implementation of this strategy should have a significant effect on this strategic target achievement by the end of the 2022/23 financial year.



The HSRC must secure a steady income stream to ensure its sustainability and alleviate the pressure on senior researchers to raise income year-on-year. To achieve this, it is imperative that it focuses on securing multi-year grants of between three to five years. It will forge collaborative partnerships with universities, science councils and the private sector, locally and internationally, to respond to calls for proposals, but also initiate grant proposals. It will retain its ability to respond to short-term projects, but not as a main income stream.

In both instances, only those projects that are clearly aligned with the HSRC's research focus will be pursued.

In addition to the parliamentary grant, the HSRC will continue to pursue a ring-fenced government allocation to ensure sustainable funding especially for selected longitudinal surveys. These surveys are instrumental in providing comparative data in key areas of health, social attitudes and education, and generate knowledge that should be used in both government planning and monitoring.

Forging funding partnerships and diversifying sources of income will require a strengthened business development activity.

#### **Outcome indicator**

#### Annual income derived from international funding agencies

During 2021/22 the international funding agencies revenue recognised was R100 million and for 2020/21 the international funding agencies revenue was R60 million. Even though research funding is cyclical, this is a positive indication of the HSRC progress made towards this 5-year target of R80 million by annum.

2.2.1 Progress on implementation of the 2018 Institutional Review recommendations

Pursue a new vision, HSRC as a global centre of excellence in Human and Social Sciences (H&SS); focus on the pressing issues facing South Africa	The vision and mission on which the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan is founded encapsulate these sentiments
Play a bigger role on the African continent, build on AISA to bring an Africa lens to your work	AISA's role is being strengthened to coordinate and lead in the African research agenda
Improve government allocation to the HSRC with vigour as state of the SA economy improves	This is a recommendation that the HSRC will continue to pursue in collaboration with its Executive Authority
Drastically revamp the business model to fund priority research areas	<ul> <li>This is an ongoing process of intstutiional realignment and uncovering of funding opportunities</li> </ul>
Narrow the mandate and focus on the social determinants and outcomes of poverty and inequality	<ul> <li>The five-year strategy commencing April 2020 focusses on three core research areas that are aligned with the NDP implementation pillars</li> </ul>
Profile the HSRC strategically to government at all levels, advocate more to government	<ul> <li>The HSRC has adopted as one of its outcomes for the next five years, a consolidated relationship of trust and influence with government</li> </ul>
Occupy the leaderdhip space in the H&SS, be the "go-to" for excellence in poverty and inequality research	<ul> <li>This is encapsulated in the HSRC's 2020 - 2025 vision and mission statements, which are at the core of and form the foundation of the Strategic Plan for 2020-2025</li> </ul>
Strengthen research capacity leadership and seniority; bring in high caliber African and international scholars	A suite of indicators to measure excellence and to transform reseach capabilities have been formualted towards this
Move away from short-termism of having multiple contracts to a long-term view to provide the evidence-base for longitudinal changes and impacts for the country	<ul> <li>The HSRC will endeavour, over the next five years, to secure at least nine (9) multi-year projects</li> </ul>
Seek closer working relationships with partners that pursue research in the H&SS	<ul> <li>The HSRC strategy for the next five years seeks to establish and solidify collaboration with the local and international science community</li> </ul>



Chief Financial Officer: Ms Jacomien Rousseau

Signature

Deputy Chief Executive Officer: Research (acting), Prof Sharlene Swartz

Signature: Sharlere Swar

Chief Executive Officer (acting): Prof Leickness Simbayi

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