



**Developmental, Capable  
and Ethical State**

*Making*  
**GOVERNANCE**  
*work*

2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION



## THOUGHTS FROM THE DIVISIONAL HEAD

This is the second newsletter released by the Developmental, Capable and Ethical State (DCES) research division of the HSRC. Through this medium we try to achieve several things: show pride in our work; create awareness about who we are inside and outside the HSRC; and add a personal touch to celebrate the people behind the hard work. In this edition we learn a bit more about Professor Joleen Steyn-Kotze.

Since our last newsletter, COVID-19 is still with us, as is the lockdown, albeit at Level 1 now. As the economy slowly struggles to its feet we are mostly still working at home and facing all the challenges in doing so. For some it is harder than for others. But the work continues unabated as we write research proposals and reports and build local, regional and international networks online. Remote

working conditions will continue where it is possible and where productivity thrives.

In this issue, amongst other items, we share news about a former intern Prof Hangwelani Hope Magidimisha Chipungu who is the SARCHI Chair for Inclusive Cities at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and is soaring the heights; colleagues; Dr Ben Roberts and Dr Cyril Adonis, who have received well-deserved promotions to Research Director and Senior Research Specialist in DCES; Dr Tim Hart who has been awarded his PhD; and the appointment of an Honorary Research Fellow, Dr Ian Goldman, a research impact guru.

As we continue to work remotely, we remain connected to one another by our vision, mission and values. In November the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) fieldworkers will return to field to complete the 2020 round of the survey, which was cut short by the announcement of a national disaster; and we will slowly return to our offices after more than 200 days of relative isolation (other than Zoom of course). The fieldworkers will distribute a COVID-19 cartoon and awareness sheet to the households and communities they visit, the art of which was donated to us by the cartoonist Gavin Thomson who amongst others pens *Mama Taxi*. The cartoon is included in the newsletter at the end and it can be distributed electronically as we take our social responsibilities seriously.



Life has certainly proven to be challenging as many of us have lost loved ones. A former Executive Director of this division and Chairperson of the Financial and Fiscal Commission (FFC), Prof Daniel Plaatjies, passed away on 10 October 2020. Tribute should be paid to a man larger than life itself who left us too soon and has left his mark on this division, many of the people who worked with him, and the HSRC. May his soul rest in peace with all those who have left us.

Many changes await us, but we will continue to thrive as a new division with the public good always in mind and our passion intact.

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## ITHUTENG UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL PROF. JOLEEN STEYN KOTZE

I hold a D.Litt et Phil in African Politics from the University of South Africa and am a Research Fellow at the Centre for Gender and African Studies, University of the Free State. I am a former Associate Professor of Political Studies at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. I hold a C2 NRF Rating and was awarded the Award for Research Excellence in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences by the Common Ground Publishing in 2009 and selected as one of the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chambers' Top 40 Under 40 in 2014. I am the former President of the South African Association of Political Studies (2014-2016) and the former Editor of *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* (2015 - 2019).

**a. Describe yourself in 5 words**

A coffeeholic, stubborn, nature lover, compassionate, and patient.

**b. What keeps you motivated**

Coffee, lots and lots of coffee!

**c. How did you get into research**

I kind of fell into a research career...I come from a refugee background and as I started my studies in political sciences, I became very fascinated with the politics of belonging and citizenship. By the time I completed my undergraduate qualification, I had a bit of an obsession to learn as much as possible. It was during my Masters' studies that my promoter invited me to work as her assistant on several projects on democracy and democratic consolidation. That small beginning ignited a journey of learning (and realising that there is so much to learn no matter how much we already learned).

**d. Please give us a bit of background on your career in research**

My research is focussed on questions of democracy, belonging, citizenship, and the nuances that shape different democratic experiences. I am a little too obsessed with questions of democracy and social justice, something which started with my doctoral studies when I looked at narratives of democracy, and how these narratives of "how we should do democracy" shape theoretical and philosophical creating domination and exclusion in a non-Western context through language and discourse. This theoretical enquiry also leads to curiosity on how people from diverse backgrounds experience democracy and belonging, and how these experiences are constructed. It opened a world where I am continuously fascinated by how people construct the political through language, discourse, narrative and storytelling; thus, creating political realities that differ on so many levels in society. This fascination was born through my childhood experiences where because my family were refugees, we were always seen as a little different.

**e. Did you always want to be a researcher?**

Growing up I always wanted to be a writer (and tortured my mother by making her read my childhood creative writing!). My Masters' studies really opened a world for me where, through my research work I saw the transformative and empowering potential of writing about the political through the experience and eyes of others. It allows one a little glimpse into how others see the world, and the most wonderful thing is that you get a little more understanding on how others experience the world.

**f. What is the best thing about being a researcher?**

Reading, talking to, and reflecting allows you to get a glimpse into the world as others see it; their hopes, frustrations, dreams, and disappointments. Through looking at the world through the eyes of others you can unpack the underlying dynamics, institutions, and issues to work towards creating a more socially just society. For me, this is particularly empowering as it brings about a small transformation in yourself as you explore the realities of others.

**g. What are things people do not know about you?**

My favourite season is winter, I am a very good cook, I am an “in-the-closet” artist, and I really, really, really despise onions.

**h. Who/what inspires you most?**

My mother, a woman who lost everything when she had to flee her country due to civil war, and rebuild everything, including her dreams, in a strange country, with sheer determination in the most difficult of circumstances.

**i. Do you have any words or advice for anyone interested in getting onto research?**

An unanswered question makes a good travelling companion in our research journey.

**j. What do you like to do in your free time?**

I ride and explore the veld with my horses, knitting, baking, spending time lounging around with my kids (and sneakily eating their chocolates), reading, and drawing.

**k. What is the hardest lesson you have learned in life?**

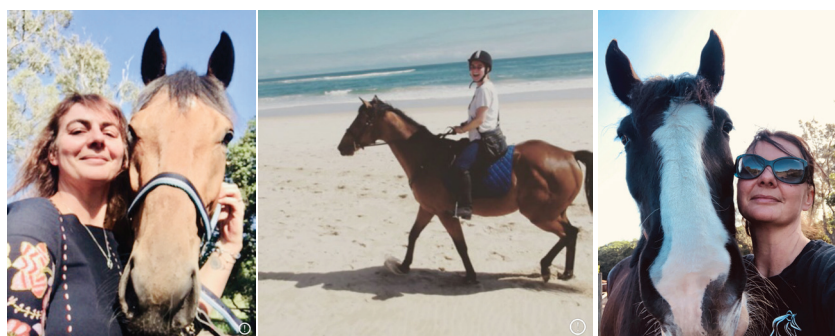
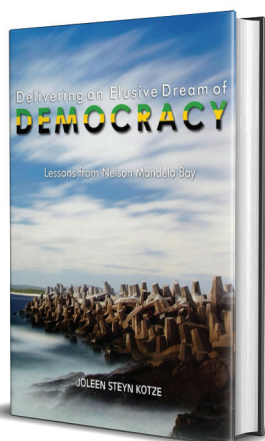
When we fall it is easy to stay down, getting up and trying again is where you build your strength, and sometimes that takes sheer determination and stubbornness.

**l. Professional Achievements and Highlights:**

Being awarded an NRF-rating when I was 36 years old for the first time; selected for the Nelson Mandela Bay Top 40 under 40 Achievers; serving as the president of the South African Association of Political Studies; serving as Editor of Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies; selected as an Inaugural Fellow of the African Science Leadership Programme; and being awarded a new NRF-rating of C2.

**m. Hobbies and Extra-curricular Activities:**

Horse-riding, yoga, reading, knitting, and crocheting, drawing, cooking and baking.



*It looks like our lovely Joleen is leading a charmed life. On top of all her outstanding accomplishments, she is a nominee for the ASSAF Humanities Book Award (image of the book that was nominated for below). Amongst several people who nominated her, was our phenomenal boss lady Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller. Aren't we lucky to have such a supportive boss? Let's keep our fingers crossed that she wins.*

# DR BEN ROBERTS & DR CYRIL ADONIS

## – HARD WORK AND DEDICATION PAYS.

Hard work pays off, they did it! They have achieved new milestones. They are promoted to Research Director and Senior Research Specialist, respectively. Congratulations to the awesome Dr Roberts and Dr Cyril Adonis for their promotions.



Benjamin is a Research Director and Coordinator of the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) series. He has a PhD in Social Policy and Labour Studies from Rhodes University, an MSc Urban and Regional Planning (Development) (with distinction) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and a BSc Town and Regional Planning (cum laude) from the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). He has extensive experience of the micro-econometric analysis of household surveys, with a particular emphasis on the measurement of attitudes, poverty and subjective wellbeing. He was among the researchers responsible for one of the country's first large-scale panel studies, the KwaZulu-Natal Income Dynamics Study (KIDS, 1998), as well as the Department of Land Affairs' Quality of Life surveys. He has coordinated the SASAS series since its inception in 2003, as well as the HSRC's electoral survey series on behalf of the Electoral Commission of South Africa for the last decade.



Cyril is a Senior Research Specialist registered as a research psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) since 2001. In 2011, he graduated with a PhD in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from Nova Southeastern University (NSU) in the US where he was a Fulbright Scholar and a recipient of an overseas doctoral scholarship from the National Research Foundation (NRF). In addition to having gained teaching experience at both secondary and tertiary levels, he also has extensive experience in conducting policy relevant social scientific research in academia, the public sector, and the NGO sector. His research has focused predominantly, but not exclusively on transitional justice issues, including among others, forgiveness and reconciliation, ex-combatant reintegration, memory and memorialisation, and intergenerational trauma. In addition to authoring books and book chapters, he has published peer-reviewed journals articles (last five years and all sole-authored) in Social Epistemology (2019), International Review of Victimology (2017), Indo-

Pacific Journal of Phenomenology (2016), Journal of Psychology in Africa (2015), and South African Journal of Psychology (2014). He has also acted as an external reviewer for several journals, and he has presented papers at a number of local and international conferences.

# A LONG STUDY TO FREEDOM!



On Tuesday, the 14th July 2020 Tim Hart successfully defended his PhD in Social Anthropology in the first-ever Zoom PhD oral examination at Stellenbosch University. The title of Tim's thesis is: *Brokering, mediating and translating rural development: land and agricultural reform in the southern Cape*. It focuses on the social relationships between people and things in development and how the social process of development enables the mediation of policy, interventions and their outcomes. The core argument is on the ability of all actors to perform translations of what was needed, how it should be done and if it was successful or unsuccessful. Brokers are defined as those actors with significant influence in their networks, while mediators are considered to be comparatively less influential but more so than intermediaries, who simply pass on messages without any interpretations. Most studies on rural development in South Africa focus on policy change rather than on the proactive performance of the actors involved at different levels. Simply put, policy is never a blueprint for implementation, hence the ability for diverse implementations and their translations as success or failure. Tim's research covered development activities and sociocultural and

economic change in a former Coloured Rural Reserve in the Western Cape dating back to the late 1800s. A detailed abstract is provided at the end of this article.

The peer examination panel consisted of three Emeritus Professors. One is a social anthropologist from Rhodes University, another is a sociologist from Stellenbosch University, while the international examiner is a rural sociologist and human geographer from Wageningen University in the Netherlands. All three work extensively in rural development and actor relationships in South Africa and elsewhere. Despite the need for some minor revisions and technical corrections, all three examiners recommended that the degree be conferred, and the thesis is published as a book. Each examiner also indicated at least one important journal article, either by pointing out specific chapters or identifying key themes that they considered crucial to the current debates on actor relationships and rural development. The international examiner said it was the best PhD he had read in 30 years.

Tim is overwhelmed at the high regard his examiners attributed to his work and is, of course, ecstatic that the long and torturous episode is over. Initially, fieldwork started in 2000 for an MPhil but research from fieldwork in Uganda was later used to complete the MPhil. Having continued to research development encounters in the village, through various contracts, after accepting employment at the HSRC, Tim returned to writing up and analysing his fieldwork notes and interviews from this village, which spanned more than a decade, subsequently transforming the work into a PhD from 2011 onwards. Tim thanks many

of his former and current colleagues for their support and confidence in him as he shaped his dissertation.

## ABSTRACT

The anthropology of development has begun to focus on the analytical concept of brokers as crucial actors, and to investigate their presence across the 'development chain'. Development does not simply work through technical processes but through complex social processes of brokerage or mediation, invoking processes of assemblage, translation and representation of realities. This dissertation examines the agency of brokers and mediators to understand how development unfolds and is shaped through acts of mediation. It challenges the concept of brokers for being too broad, and not accounting for less influential actors who also mediate and perform broker-like roles and activities.

Since 1994 rural development interventions in South Africa have mostly been marked by the redistribution of large-scale commercial farmland. The assumption has been that commercial agriculture is the economic mainstay of rural areas and that land seekers want the land to farm in order to improve livelihoods and social circumstances. Yet, many of the resulting projects have been economically unsuccessful due to misguided policy, bureaucratic inefficiency, bad planning and insufficient support. The generally accepted consensus amongst policymakers is that success simply requires the improvement in current state policy and agency practices. This oversimplification ignores the actors identified as brokers and their agency of mediation in influencing outcomes.

This dissertation explores the role and agency of brokers in rural development by examining the redistribution of farmland to a number of households in the village of Waldesruhe in the southern Cape and the subsequent promotion of honeybush farming. The study identifies brokers both in the village and in various government departments and the technology-providing science council involved. Waldesruhe, a former mission station and coloured rural reserve, provides a fertile basis for brokers and the development of brokerage capabilities used to mediate these two rural development interventions of land redistribution and honeybush production.

The study is based on long-term ethnographic fieldwork that included extensive participant observation,

workshops, formal and informal interviews, archival research and the analysis of policy and planning documents. In Waldesruhe in the Southern Cape, brokers and other mediators involved in a land redistribution and honeybush project had an influential effect on the outcomes of the interventions. Beneficiary brokers were, at times, able to mediate land redistribution in the favour of beneficiaries and manipulate officials. Artful brokers used their mediation skills to attract support and resources for projects and to shape them, while other, less influential actors also managed to mediate and influence the project.

These findings illustrate that development implementers and recipients have different ideas or logics about the opportunities and resources that development projects

avail and tend to reappropriate these for their own needs. Brokers and other actors are thus not neutral intermediaries and their agency affects development implementation and outcomes. The study shows that mediation needs to be recognised as an intrinsic part of the development process. Development needs to be understood as a social process combining many events, interactions, ideas and models that determine its outcomes, while mediation mitigates only some of these. The outcomes of brokerage and mediation are tempered by the changing positionality and influence of the mediators, while neither the habitus of the actors nor the historical-political economy and structural constraints can be ignored when evaluating the outcomes.



## PROF HOPE MAGIDIMISHA-CHIPUNGU - AN INCREDIBLE ALUMNUS OF OUR PROGRAMME

A mother, a wife, a master and academic, Prof. Hangwelani Hope Magidimisha Chipungu is a remarkable Tshivenda woman from Limpopo. Prof. Chipungu, just like most African women, had to overcome adversity in a system structured to impede the success of people who look like her. Highlighting her achievements is thus not a responsibility to be taken lightly.

The professor progressed spectacularly from humble beginnings as a PhD intern at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to emerge as an exceptional woman, whose three kids will be able to say that their honourable mother made history as the first South African- born black woman to:

- (1) graduate from UKZN with a PhD in Town and Regional Planning; and
- (2) be appointed Associate Professor in Town and Regional Planning at UKZN, having also achieved a master's degree in the same field, as well as degree in Geography and the Environment – both from UKZN.

Prof Hangwelani Hope Magidimisha-Chipungu is an NRF-rated researcher and one of the youngest and the first DST/NRF/SACN South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) Chair in Inclusive Cities, and the academic leader for town planning and housing disciplines in the School of the Built Environment and Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Her other accomplishments really set her apart from the rest. They include

- being one of the 2018 Mail & Guardian Top 200 Young Influential South Africans; the 2018 UKZN Best Young Academic; the College of Humanities Teaching Excellence Award; and the International Society of City and Regional Planning Award of Excellence for the outstanding role she played during the Young Professional Planners' workshop and her participation in organising the Congress in 2016.
- Her research and publications record include authoring and co-authoring a variety of book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles. She has recently published a book titled: *Spatial Inequalities in South African Cities: Towards Redistributive Justice* and was awarded funding by the NRF to undertake research on spatial inequality – a project she recently completed.

Magidimisha-Chipungu served briefly on the City Planning Commission for eThekweni Municipality with a strategic responsibility of advising the Executive Committee and Councillors' in the Municipality. She has served on the advisory committee of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA-KZN) with a focus on spatial equity in the province.

She is a Board member of SACPLAN – a national professional body that governs the teaching and practice of town planning in South Africa. As a professional town planner, she also served on the KwaZulu-Natal Tribunal whose mandate was to resolve town planning disputes in the province.

Magidimisha-Chipungu is one of the few selected people invited to take part in the 24-hour City project with the University of Politecnico di Milan DASTU, Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, in Florence, Italy.

When asked how she balances work and family time, Prof. Hope said: "This is difficult. Suffice to say I have strong family support. I am generally good with time. Every minute is planned for in my daily routine, at the end of 24 hours I always audit how I spend my time and improve the following day"

Because she always knew that she wanted to be a researcher, fitting into the HSRC structures was not difficult, "the HSRC has laid the foundation for my academic career. It built up the confidence and strong appetite for research." She admits that during her time as a PhD intern at the HSRC she learned the hardest lesson in her life, that "Failing is part of life but it is important to learn from your mistakes."

At the young age of 35, it might seem as though Prof. Hope is at the peak of her career having been the first black South African woman to obtain a PhD in the Town Planning discipline at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, but with a vision to develop a model to measure inclusivity in our cities, she feels that she still has a lot to accomplish before she reaches the proverbial summit of the mountain.

The HSRC served as an initial platform that produced a giant. Hope embodies unrivalled excellence. We are very proud of her achievements.





## WE PROUDLY WELCOME **PROFESSOR IAN GOLDMAN,** HONORARY RESEARCH FELLOW

I have just started a first term as Honorary Research Fellow, having been a research associate for two years since 2018. I am currently an Advisor: Evaluation and Evidence Systems with the Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA), based at Wits, and I also teach and supervise Masters and doctoral students at UCT, with the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance where I became an Adjunct Professor in April 2019. In general, my work has been as a reflective practitioner – always with a strong implementation side, but a reflective angle, documenting and writing up what I have learnt. In this article I aim to cover what I have been involved with in the last couple of years and where I hope to take my work forward.

My work over the last 10+ years has been around evidence-based policy making. In 2009 I joined the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) in the Presidency, a fascinating time with the establishment of the new Department of Performance (later Planning), Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME). I worked with researchers all over South Africa, and with a range of policy makers on supporting research, building capacity of researchers and policymakers to use research, and supporting the emerging evidence-based policy movement in South Africa. I then joined DPME in 2011, with my mission the establishment of a national evaluation system. I have published extensively on the lessons from the DPME experience<sup>1</sup>, comparative work with Benin and Uganda<sup>2</sup>, and the lessons emerging from an evaluation conducted on the South African national evaluation system<sup>3</sup>.

In July 2018 I left DPME and joined the Centre for Learning

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<sup>1</sup>Phillips, S, Goldman, I, Leon, B, Akhalwaya, I (2014): "A focus on M&E of results: an example from the Presidency, South Africa", Journal of Development Effectiveness <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19439342.2014.966453>

Goldman, I, Mathe, J, Jacob, C, Hercules, A, Amisi, M, Everett, M, Buthelezi, T, Narsee, H, Ntakumba, S, Sadan, 2015. 'Developing South Africa's national evaluation policy and system: First lessons learned', African Evaluation Journal <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/aej.v3i1.107>

<sup>2</sup>Goldman, I, Byamugisha, A, Gounou, A, Smith, L, Ntakumba, S, Lubanga, T, Sossou, D, Rot-Munstermann, K (2018) "The emergence of government evaluation systems in Africa: The case of Benin, Uganda and South Africa", African Evaluation Journal, 6 (1), <https://doi.org/10.4102/aej.v6i1.253>

<sup>3</sup>Goldman, I., Deliwe, C.N., Taylor, S., Ishmail, Z., Smith, L. & Masangu, T., 2019, 'Evaluation2 – Evaluating the national evaluation system in South Africa: What has been achieved in the first 5 years?', African Evaluation Journal <https://doi.org/10.4102/aej.v7i1.400>

on Evaluation and Results for Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA) based at Wits, became a research associate of HSRC, a visiting Professor at the University of Reading in the UK, and continued to teach and supervise masters and doctoral students at UCT. It has been very good to be working across Africa again.

A key focus has been a research project on evidence use by African governments, including researchers carrying out 8 cases of evidence use in 5 countries (South Africa, Benin, Uganda, Kenya, Ghana) and the ECOWAS region of West Africa. These all looked at a particular policy process and how evidence contributed, and what facilitated that use. My co-PI Mine Pabari and I have built on earlier work by Susan Michie and Laurenz Langer using a behaviour change lens to look at evidence use, working with Laurenz to refine this and ground it in the institutional context of government. Some of the lessons have been the importance of the macro as well as organisational context, and the importance of being purposive around the evidence use interventions that lead to changes in capability, opportunity and motivation to use evidence. So, focusing not just on the methodology for generating evidence but the methodology for encouraging use<sup>4</sup>. Some of my work going forward is likely to be building capacity to facilitate the evidence process, to undertake knowledge brokering, for example in M&E/research units in government and Parliament. We have also explored the lessons from some of our cases on the role of civil society<sup>5</sup>.

The research/book has been a very interesting journey and we are now seeing how we can build on the lessons working with the partner countries, running training, incorporating an evidence use lens in other training, etc. We have also been running webinars on each of the chapters, allowing the 39 authors (including policy makers) an opportunity to expand on their specific case. These webinars continue until February 2021. We are now incorporating the lessons, videos and policy briefs, adapting a course on Evidence-Based Policy Making and Implementation run in Uganda and Benin in 2019 for Ghana and Niger.

Meanwhile some of the engagement with the HSRC during this period has been contributing at strategic events and facilitating strategic planning sessions with the Board.

I have also continued working on evaluation and evaluation systems. In March 2020 I was co-author of a WIDER working paper on the Impact of Impact Evaluation<sup>6</sup> which has been presented at webinars organised by the CEDIL

Programme in London and Centre for Global Development in Washington. I have supported development of an M&E Policy for Ghana, supporting the government and parliament of Sri Lanka around evaluation systems, and have been supporting the Western Cape Government on their evaluation and evidence systems. I have trained on national evaluation systems at the IPDET international training in Switzerland in 2019 and soon remotely in October 2020. I have even done evaluations myself again, doing a review of UNICEF's work in Venezuela in late 2019/2020 just before the lockdown of international travel due to the pandemic.

I have become very involved in how evaluation can contribute to effective oversight of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. Since 2018 I have been training around 10 African countries a year on how to embed evaluations in their Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the SDGs, and this year also worked on Nigeria's VNR, which is now something of a model on using evidence. I developed a Guide which is now translated into French, Spanish and Portuguese. This work is likely to continue for the next 2-3 years. I have also become involved in promoting rapid evaluative methods, writing guidelines and training African countries in rapid evaluations and use of evaluative workshops, amongst other methods. It is very important to look at how evaluative thinking can contribute to adaptive management, and this year also I was the subject matter expert in developing an online course in adaptive programme management, building on the module I teach at UCT. That course has now had its first session and gone well, very rewarding and reaching an international audience.

One of the areas I hope to build on arising from the book is the importance of facilitating dialogue around evidence, so helping to build a coalition to support implementation of the lessons from the evidence. I hope to go back to some of my earlier career and use this to build more community involvement, and dialogues across divides around climate change, so critical for the next phase of the planet.

I am working with colleagues on developing a paper around the South African experience of evidence use in the climate change/adaptation field, and how the behaviour change model applies. I also have doctoral students applying this lens to how parliaments use evidence and to M&E in Benin.

I look forward to further engagement with HSRC over the next 3 years.

<sup>4</sup>The book is called Using Evidence in Policy and Practice – lessons from Africa. It is available from Routledge [www.routledge.com/9780367440077](http://www.routledge.com/9780367440077), Amazon, Loot etc and there is an open access e-version available from the publisher. We are also working on getting it published in French.

<sup>5</sup>Pabari, M., Amisi, M.M., David-Gnahoui, E., Bedu-Addo, D. & Goldman, I., 2020, 'Evidence-informed policy and practice: The role and potential of civil society', African Evaluation Journal 8(1), a470. <https://doi.org/10.4102/aej.v8i1.470>

<sup>6</sup>Manning, R, Goldman, I and Hernandez Licona, G. (2020). The Impact of Impact Evaluation – are impact evaluation and impact evaluation synthesis contributing to evidence generation and use in low- and middle-income countries?, UNU WIDER Working Paper 20/2020, <https://doi.org/10.35188/UNU-WIDER/2020/777-4>

# DGS CORNER

## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Reflecting on our division over the last few months we must be grateful for the many success stories during this very difficult time. We are therefore excited to mention some of the good news of our division and staff. We are especially proud of the “New” Dr Tim Hart who recently received his doctorate degree. Professor Joleen Steyn-Kotze achieved a National Research Foundation rating for her dedication and contribution to research in South Africa. Joleen must also be recognised for successfully obtaining funding for the National Mineworkers Union (NMU) project. Prof Modimowabarwa Kanyane was reappointed by both University of Fort Hare and Tshwane University of Technology as adjunct professor and professor extraordinaire respectively. He also serves at University of Mpumalanga Council as the ministerial appointee from January 2020.

We are delighted that the State of the Nation (SON) 2021 manuscript has been accepted for publication by the HSRC Press. The SON series is unique in South Africa as it has built a consistent body of knowledge about South African politics, economics, cultural development and identity formation within an international context since 2003. The HSRC Press indicated that they “are impressed by the standard of the work overall” and that this edition like previous ones is “unafraid to challenge the research status quo and built on knowledge in truly fresh ways”.



Our collaborative work with the University of Johannesburg (UJ) significantly contributed to the policy debate on the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. The data generated by the UJ and HSRC COVID-19 Democracy Survey generated numerous publications and to date there are seventeen news articles in the Daily Maverick. The research team participated in numerous radio and TV interviews over the last few months and hosted webinars to contribute to the discourse around COVID-19. This collaborative project between remote team members

is extremely valuable because it has brought together a wealth of experience to offer guidance to policymakers regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

## RESEARCH THAT MATTERS

Despite the many challenges that the national lockdown has posed to planned research activities and funding streams, the DCES research programme has continued to undertake a range of policy-relevant studies. While we have had to adapt to the circumstances of recent months, the generation of social science that can be used to inform policy and practices remains at the forefront of what we do. Below is an outline of a few of the research undertakings in which we have been engaged.

## OSF-SA MUNICIPAL SKILLS AND CAPACITY AUDIT

This ongoing study is about municipal skills and capacity audit in local government. It examines the skills and capacity of municipal officials in 8 municipalities and these are: Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality and Fezile Dabi District Municipality in the Free State, Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) Metropolitan Municipality and Makana District Municipality in the Eastern Cape, Elias Motsoaledi Municipality and Collins Chabane Municipality in Limpopo and Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality and Bonajala Platinum Municipality in the North West. The research directly responds to the DCES mandate and the national priority of ‘Building a capable and developmental state’, as outlined in the National Development Plan, 2010-2030. To date we have completed fieldwork in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality and Fezile Dabi District Municipality in the Free State. The fieldwork consisted of three main components: 1) Two Focus Group Discussions – one FGD with entry-level staff and one with mid-level and senior-level staff, 2) One-on-one interviews with senior officials from the municipality, and 3) a Public skills and capacity survey. However, the COVID-19 pandemic required the team to work in ways that will keep our communities, colleagues, friends and family safe and healthy. Consequently, we proposed a revised research approach to ensure that the work continues, but that the research team adhere to the required health and safety protocols. We therefore completed desktop-based case study reports for the Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) Metropolitan Municipality, the Makana District Municipality and the Elias Motsoaledi Municipality in Sekhukhune district. We are currently implementing online surveys with the municipal officials across the eight municipalities to assess their views regarding skills and capacity of their respective municipality.

## THE DISTRICT-LEVEL MODEL OF GOVERNANCE



As a means of advancing service-delivery and redress in South Africa, the government announced in late 2019, the decision to adopt a new district-led model that would see all three spheres of government coordinate and integrate development plans and budgets, with the primary emphasis on being responsive and adaptable to localised district-level needs in the pursuit of inclusive growth and job creation. Piloting of the model has been taking place in the OR Tambo District Municipality, Waterberg District Municipality and eThekweni Metropolitan municipalities. Drawing on the lessons from these experiences, the plan is to implement this model rapidly in other municipalities during 2020 and 2021. Against this backdrop, DCES led by Prof Modimowabarwa Kanyane and the research team is conducting a 'Synthesis Evaluation Study of New District Development Model – the case of the three piloted municipalities in Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces'. It is understood that the proposed research should be of strategic value to the DPME in the Presidency, COGTA and SALGA to make sure that the DDM works successfully with maximum benefits and minimised risk. The research should also enhance COGTA's role in local government oversight and SALGA's active support to municipalities and local government stakeholders.

### COGTA STUDY

The Policy Action Network (PAN) and the DCES are developing the narrative and framework to introduce key policy and research considerations for the wider *Synthesis of Research and Policy Material to Inform Legislative Review on Ward Committees and Public Participation Policy* for CoGTA. Through this high-level review, the

following five areas of influence have been identified as important to the legislative review process:

- Traditional authorities:** This brief will consider the role of traditional authorities in fostering public participation and encouraging engaged citizenship; and a review of the applicable legal and policy framework guiding the role of traditional authorities.
- Legal, human rights, constitution:** This brief will consider the applicable legal and policy framework, the underlying values and principles, as well as their application in practice (through the lens of case studies), in order to identify opportunities for improvement and innovation.
- Socio-economic:** This brief will consider how factors related to socio-economic context affect participation in local governance activities – such as poverty, disability and gender – and how these may be mitigated.
- Technology:** This brief will examine how technology is and can be used to support public participation at a local government level, setting out the applicable legal and policy framework in an effort to identify potential opportunities, problems, and legislative and policy gaps.
- Service delivery approach:** The extent and mechanisms by which the views of the public are solicited in the compilation of municipal Integrated Development Plans, and through surveys to gauge levels of satisfaction with local government services.

### SALGA

Consequences and accountability are at the core of a democratic government. Various pieces of legislation make provision for the enforcement of accountability and subsequent consequences. However, the local government sector lacked a framework to guide related decisions and action. One of the key resolutions of the 2015 SALGA National Members Assembly (NMA) was to develop a Consequences and Accountability framework for municipalities in South Africa. The 2018 SALGA NMA endorsed the 2015 decision, and DCES' predecessor DGSD was contracted by SALGA to develop the framework under the leadership and guidance of Prof Modimowabarwa Kanyane.

Flowing from the development of the Framework, on 22 July 2020, DCES, Sol Plaatje University and SALGA Northern Cape held the first webinar series on local government, entitled "The state of municipalities in South Africa: A critical reflection of the 2018-19 Audit Outcomes for Local Government". The webinar was informed by the Auditor General's report painting a picture of poor management of billions of rand in funds allocated to

municipalities. The webinar attracted 69 participants who attended the session from different organisations and universities.

The main speakers were Dr Samuel Koma from Milpark Education, Dr Molebedi Sisi and Adv Gary Pienaar from the HSRC. The discussant was Cllr Sophia Mosikatsi who is the Mayor of John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality and SALGA Northern Cape Chairperson. The webinar was facilitated by Prof Modimowabarwa Kanyane. Dr Samuel Koma presented on municipal audit outcomes for the last five years and selected some municipalities that have achieved unqualified audit opinions with no findings, commonly referred to as “a clean audit,” and those which have consistently delivered disclaimed audit opinions over the last five years. This was a fascinating analysis to see the contrasting bright and gloomy picture of the municipalities in South Africa. Dr Adv Molebedi Sisi presented a picture of provinces which have municipalities experiencing irregular expenditures. This was a good case study to see which provinces are losing billions of public funds through irregular expenditure alone. Adv Gary Pienaar presented on accountability and consequence management. He raised the fact that unless the amount of loss has been determined by or upon the instruction of the Accounting Officer and action taken to recover such loss, the Auditor General should issue a certificate of debt to recover the financial loss for and on behalf of the municipality. This is in accordance with Public Audit Amendment Act (PAAA).

Following the presentations made by the three speakers, Cllr Sophia Mosikatsi, as a discussant accepted that the 2018/19 Auditor General's report on local government issued on 1 July 2020 is a sorry tale of regression, a deterioration of levels of accountability and a lapse in good governance. She responded by saying that from the outset, SALGA welcomes the Auditor General's report as it gives them yet another opportunity for introspection on the challenges facing the municipalities and also reflection on possible solutions thereto. She went further by saying that the magnitude and severity of the problem identified by the Auditor General calls for decisive action. It means that, as SALGA, they must continue to insist that municipalities implement consequence management and enforce accountability.

Prof Modimowabarwa Kanyane facilitated the discussions and overall, many participants lamented the sorry state of affairs in municipalities. They were concerned about a number of issues, but of critical concern was cadre deployment, which does not assist municipalities as it prioritises comradeship over service to the public. A related concern is the impact of deployment on the high level of unemployment among young graduates with qualification and skills who

are not employed by these municipalities. The other concern worth mentioning is that most municipalities have capacity challenges, leaving incumbents of critical positions such as the MMs and CFOs in acting capacities, which undermines their authority.

## NDA STUDIES

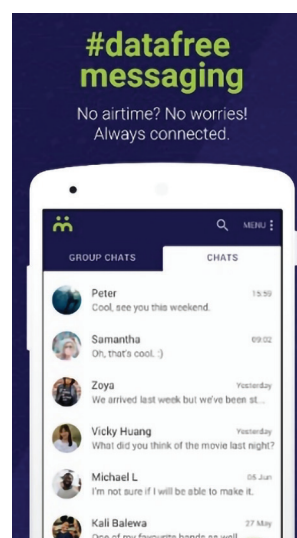
DCES is undertaking three studies for the National Development Agency (NDA). The NDA is mandated to promote and develop a sustainable partnership between government and civil society organisations that work on service delivery and development projects, aimed at eradicating poverty and its causes. The NDA supports these CSOs by helping them to develop their own capacity and by providing them with funding to carry out their activities.

The studies cover three aspects of the work of the NDA:

- Creating capacities and capabilities of the civil society sector
- Requirements for transforming the civil society sector in South Africa
- Regulatory frameworks requirements for the South African civil society sector to promote their active participation in a developmental state

The studies are intended to form the basis for planned engagement and discussion between government and civil society in furtherance of shared objectives to reduce poverty and its causes.

## UJ/HSRC COVID-19 DEMOCRACY SURVEY



Understanding the multidimensional impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on South Africans continues to be a priority of DCES. One of the notable initiatives in this regard has been an online survey conducted jointly with the University of Johannesburg's Centre for Social Change. Round 1 of the survey was administered during the country's hard lockdown phase by means of the #datafree Moya Messenger app between 13 April and

11 May, with more than 12,000 respondents completing the survey. This was followed with Round 2 during Level 3 and Level 2 of the lockdown between 3 July and 8 September, with approximately 8000 respondents. The data were benchmarked to StatsSA population statistics

and weighted by race, age and educational attainment, making the findings broadly indicative of the attitudes, beliefs and behavioural predispositions of the adult population (18+ years).

A webinar to launch Round 2 of the survey was successfully held on 19 August, under the title “What’s Trust Got To Do with It?” with presentations on adherence to mask-wearing regulations, views on the return to school, willingness to make human rights sacrifices and views on the performance of COVID-19 leadership. See Prof. Bohler-Muller discussing these findings in an interview on Newzroom Afrika [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahX0h0\\_RpOO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahX0h0_RpOO)

A series of results-focused articles based on Round 2 of the data have featured in the Daily Maverick. This builds on the 10 articles that were previously written based on Round 1 of the survey.

The DCES team is currently finalising three HSRC policy briefs that rely on the evidence provided by the survey in relation to social protection, human rights and effective leadership and good governance during South Africa’s COVID-19 response.

### **COLLABORATIVE WEBINAR SERIES: COLLECTING SOCIAL DATA - ADAPTING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted many social data collection projects in the global South (and North), but collection of high-quality social data during this period has been - and remains - critical. Understanding the pandemic’s varied impact on human lives is crucial to the design and implementation of efforts to preserve well-being. Social researchers are responding to interruptions of face-to-face data collection by exploring and testing a range of different alternatives. With imperatives to collect high quality data, build relationships with participants, and ensure the ethical conduct of research, they are both encountering new challenges and developing creative solutions. In partnership with the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) and Social Surveys Africa (SSA), the HSRC DCES team have collaborated on the hosting of a virtual seminar series to promote shared learning about social data collection in the context of COVID-19. The series began on July 14, 2020 and has held a webinar once every fortnight since. This seminar series has brought together social researchers from a range of disciplines to explore and share different approaches to collecting social data during the COVID pandemic. It has provided an opportunity for researchers to share learnings and innovations with a diverse audience, discuss challenges with colleagues with different backgrounds, and contribute to the collective strengthening of social research during this unique and challenging time.

Seminars featured in the series so far

- 1: Introduction and overview (14 July 2020)
- 2: Understanding and responding to ethical challenges (28 July 2020)
- 3: Trackers and panels (13 August 2020)
- 4: Community level research (27 August 2020)
- 5: Technological platforms to support data collection and generation (10 September 2020)

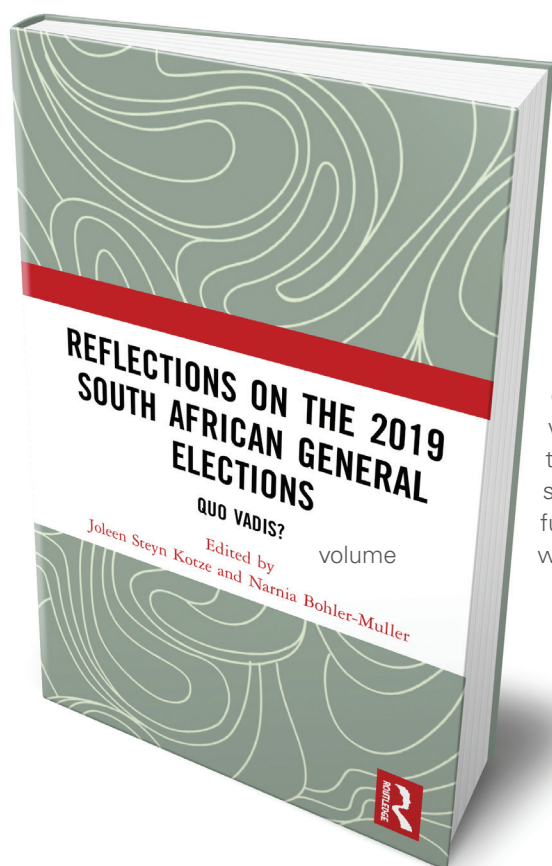
Presentations and session recordings can be found online here: <https://gcro.ac.za/news-events/news/detail/seminar-series-collecting-social-data-adapting-covid-19-pandemic/>

## **CONSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUE**



The DCES team is currently preparing a Constitutional Dialogue with the National Foundations Dialogue Initiative (NFDI), which is scheduled for 22 Oct 2020. This builds on a previous inclusive dialogue that DCES, the NFDI and the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) convened in late 2019 between civil society, the executive, the judiciary and the legislature, to explore the question, “How can all who live in South Africa be assertive in holding the three branches of the state accountable for delivering on the fundamental rights in the Constitution?” The voices of South Africans increasingly raised in protest underscore the need to create safe spaces where the state and citizens can hear one another. These dialogues represent a much-needed safe space where the state and citizens can hear one another and have earnest, solution-oriented conversations.

# UNLOCKING INSIGHT: FORTHCOMING BOOK PUBLICATIONS



**Electoral dynamics.** One of the core thematic areas of focus in DCES is on electoral studies, with the aim of producing in-depth insight into the changing nature of voting patterns and predispositions among the electorate. In November 2020, the volume *“Reflections on the 2019 South African General Elections: Quo Vadis”* that was edited by Joleen Steyn-Kotze and Narnia Bohler-Muller will be published by Routledge. The chapters in the book address critical questions in relation to land, protest, election campaigns, voter turnout, voter apathy, and how opposition parties will be forced to co-exist in the context of declining electoral dominance of the African National Congress (ANC). Using a range of methodologies and sources, the book draws together the evidence to consider the state and future of electoral democracy in the country. Six of the nine chapters in the were authored by present or past DCES staff.

Other book projects that have recently been completed by DCES staff and which will be the subject of more detailed profiling in subsequent issues of the newsletter include the following:

- a) Bohler-Muller, N., Soudien, C. & Reddy, V. (Eds) (2021) *State of the Nation 2020: Ethics and Politics of South Africa's Struggle Against Poverty and Inequality*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- b) Houston, G., Kanyane, B., Davids, Y.D. and Ndinda, C. (Eds) (2021) *Paradise Lost: Race and Racism in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Brill Publishers.
- c) Møller, V. & Roberts, B. (2020) *Quality of Life and Human Well-being in sub-Saharan Africa: Prospects for Future Happiness*. Springer Press.
- d) Reddy, V., Bohler-Muller, N., Houston, G., Tunyiswa, H. & Schoeman, M. (Eds) *The fabric of dissent: Public Intellectuals in South Africa* (2 volumes). HSRC Press.
- e) Sirayi, M., Kanyane, M. & Verdini, G. (2021) *Culture and rural-urban revitalization in South Africa*. Routledge Publishers.
- f) Kanyane, M. (2021) *When top brass officials and politicians behave badly – Issues, cases and Interventions*. AOSIS Publishers.
- g) Ijeoma, E. & Kanyane, M. (2021) *A call for action: Reflection of tenets of Public administration* with AOSIS Publishers.

So there are lots of exciting DCES book outputs to be read and grace the bookshelf in 2020/21!



# BRICS

## RESEARCH CENTRE

DR FUNEKA YAZINI APRIL,  
COORDINATOR, BRICS RESEARCH CENTER



The BRICS Research Centre (BRC) located within the Developmental, Ethical, and Capable State (DCES), is an HSRC research program dedicated to conducting, facilitating and managing multidisciplinary BRICS-related policy research. The BRC ensures that its research contributes towards policies for immediate, concrete impact on the strategic economic, social and geo-political policies of the BRICS countries, the region, and the global community. The vision of the BRICS Research Centre (BRC) is to be the preferred provider of multidisciplinary BRICS policy research in South Africa and the global community. The Centre strives to enhance HSRC's commitment to undertake BRICS related research and become South Africa's preeminent BRICS multi-disciplinary think tank in line with the HSRC's legislated mandate, which is to advise government on policy-based analysis.

The BRC was set up in August 2014 in response to the growing demand for BRICS related research within South Africa and abroad. In March 2013 the South African BRICS Think Tank (SABTT) led by the HSRC drew on its capacity to fulfill obligations as the first Chair of the BRICS Think Tank Council (BTTC). Given the anticipated on-going demand for BRICS related research in South Africa the HSRC resolved to set up an HSRC BRICS Research Centre.

The past decade, the key focus of the BRICS has been on Macroeconomic Modelling in order to best describe inter and intra BRICS macro to micro dynamics across the thematic areas of research. Data Management has been another research focus by the BRICS in order to drive, automate and maintain the longevity of the series of models informing the BRC's research.

Economic Growth and Development was another flagship project of the BRC in 2016/17 in dealing with the Global Financial Crisis, and its Impact on Development in BRICS & Emerging Economies with reference to Unemployment, Poverty and Inequality.

For the next three years, Global Governance will serve as the overarching conceptual framework at the BRC. Intergovernmental cooperation is at the centre of the global partnership for development and has a vital role to play in the achievement of global development goals, not only in terms of the resources and technical assistance it can provide, but also in policy decision-making and norm-setting. Therefore, the key research areas have been identified as follows: ***BRICS and South-South Relations, BRICS and Multilateralism, BRICS Sustainability and Governance, and BRICS and the Right to Development.***

# THE NEW NORMAL: WORKING FROM HOME DURING

It is remarkable that the staff of DCES achieved these heights from their homes by making use of online resources. For instance, an internal DCES Survey in May 2020 assessing the impact and experience of working from home under lockdown restrictions found that interns relative to other staff in the division lack resources and tools to work from home; about 42% of staff indicated that they need to pay for internet and cannot afford it; and only 86% of the staff revealed that they have a laptop that they can use for work purposes. Despite these relatively difficult situations, 95% of the staff felt that they would be able to adopt to work online. Although the success of working from home can be attributed to the resilience of our staff, we must acknowledge that there are many other possible explanations. The technological evolution over the last two decades has given people the necessary tools to isolate themselves and still be in contact with the world. It is now common knowledge that people can use a smartphone to run almost their entire business from any location. While the digital-driven era is characterised by problems, it provides endless opportunities such as buying medicine online, getting food delivered at your doorstep, and connecting people to work together. DCES like many other institutions has certainly relied heavily on technology to perform our tasks.

Fortunately, technology is not new to the HSRC and the staff of DCES. We have a long tradition of utilising online platforms in our work. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdown prompted us to draw on all our resources to implement our projects remotely. We were forced to revise or adapt our research methodologies to produce our agreed deliverables. The health and wellbeing of our people was most central in our “new revised research approaches”. The HSRC leadership therefore implemented measures to assist in the battle against COVID-19. The most significant impact on business continuity was the suspension of all international and domestic travel. This measure among others had major implications for the implementation and normal execution of our projects. For instance, our funder, the Open Society Foundation of South Africa (OSFSA) accepted our recommendations to assess the skills and capacity of public officials at municipalities employing a desktop-based case study approach and for duration of the lockdown, we abandoned any face-to-face interaction. Consequently, we implemented telephonic interviews with key stakeholders and an online survey with public officials. The online survey method is providing us with the opportunity to engage the public officials without travelling to the study sites. Nevertheless, a prerequisite is that a public official has access to a computer and the internet, and that she/he is healthy enough and has the necessary time to complete an interview that may last an hour. It is against this background, that we share our experience and views of online work.

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## BUILDING A BETTER WORLD WITH PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE SECURITY (PASS):



Human security for children and young people is a critical developmental issue that requires policy and programming that effectively addresses the needs of younger members of society across the life course and in varied contexts characterised by transient and enduring disruptions. Dr Mokhantšo Makoae is a sociologist and Acting Research Director in the Developmental, Capable & Ethical State research division (DCES) at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), South Africa. She holds MSc in Social Research Methods (University of Surrey, UK) and a PhD in Sociology (University of Cape Town). Prior to joining DCES she was a Chief Research Specialist in the Human & Social Development (HSD) research unit at the HSRC (2014-2020), before which she worked in the HSRC's Child, Youth, Family and Social Development (CYFSD) research unit. Dr Makoae's work at the HSRC has focussed predominantly on human and social development amongst children, adolescents, and youth. This work is contributing to impactful policy changes in reducing the vulnerability of children in South Africa and Southern Africa through strengthening child protection systems and preventing violence against children; and exploring injustices that constitute barriers to adolescents' and young people's human rights and access to information that support healthy transitions.

Currently she is leading a UNFPA-funded project reviewing the 4<sup>th</sup> generation *National Youth Policy 2020-2030* and has drafted a *Monitoring & Evaluation Framework* with indicators and an implementation plan for this policy, commissioned by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. She worked on this important soon-to-be-launched policy with Dr Precious Tirivanhu and Dr Mathias Alubafi, both in DCES and Dr Ntombizodumo Mkhwanazi in the Human and Social Capabilities research unit. The incoming youth policy focuses on five prioritised strategic policy pillars for the 2020-2030 period aligned to the implementation of the National Development Plan 2030 and supporting the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI) intended to reduce youth unemployment in the next five years. The pillars are Quality Education, Skills and Second Chances; Economic Transformation, Entrepreneurship and Job Creation; Physical and Mental Health Promotion including COVID-19; Social Cohesion and Nation Building; and Effective and Responsive Youth Development Machinery. Her latest work focuses on COVID-19 and competences that children should develop in the context of the intergenerational solidarity that is required to respond to the current pandemic and future outbreaks in South Africa. Dr Makoe is the Deputy Chairperson of the HSRC Research Ethics Committee – the committee responsible for protecting the safety and wellbeing of human participants in social and health research.

## ACCOLADES

Please join us in congratulating and celebrating the following colleagues who were recognised for their hard work and dedication. The following staff members **greatly exceeded expectations in their performance**:



Dr Steven Gordon, Ms Jare Struwig, Mr Ngqapheli Mchunu, Ms Tanya Shanker & Ms Busi Mamba, Dr Shingi Mutanga & Prof Charles Hongoro

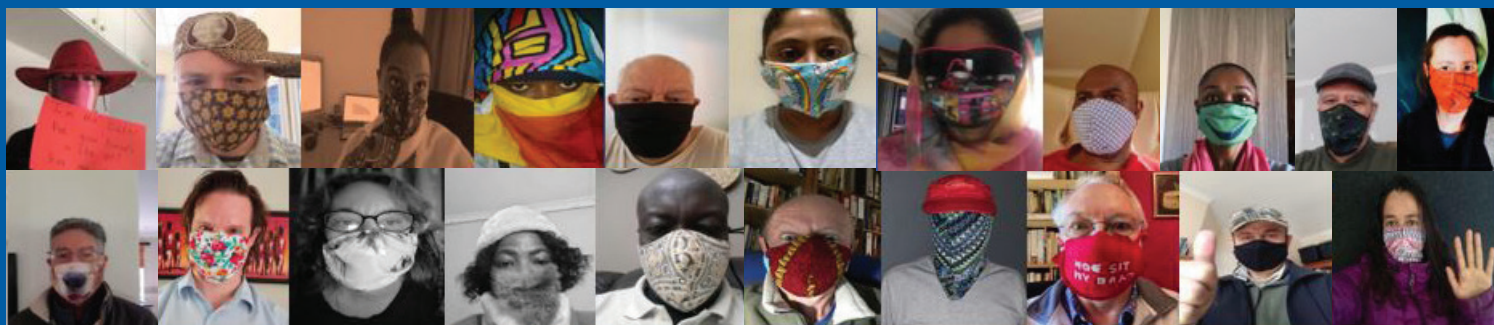
We thank you for your hard work and dedication. Best employees enlighten the organisation and a good organisation improves society.

## DCES KEEPING SAFE

COVID-19 has rewritten life as we know it. Many of us are staying home, avoiding crowded places and changing daily habits in ways we never thought possible.

While we are changing old behaviours, there are new routines we need to adopt. First and foremost is the habit of wearing a mask or face covering whenever we are in a public space.

This is why DCES is preventing the further spread of COVID-19 by adopting the protective behaviour of wearing masks



# REINFORCING COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION DURING LOWER LOCKDOWN LEVELS

In the transition to lower Covid-19 lockdown levels, the individual responsibility for adhering to basic health safety measures (wearing facemasks, sanitising hands and social distancing) assumes increasing importance. One of the lessons from Europe, North America and Latin America is that such health behaviour is crucial in avoiding a significant second wave of Coronavirus. However, survey evidence collected by DCES and the University of Johannesburg suggests that an element of false security is evident among the public, resulting in a lower tendency to self-protect. Community health promotion messaging and campaigning is essential in coming the weeks and months.



In response, the DCES team led by Prof. Bohler-Muller has developed a cartoon with basic COVID-19 health promotion information in different languages. These will be disseminated as part of in-person surveying activities associated with the DCES South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) in November and December 2020. This is part of community engagement effort to impart Covid-19 information in an understandable way, recognising that people and groups with low health literacy may need more explanation and different

communication formats such as animations that explain the virus, the disease, its transmission and protective measures. The cartoon will be handed to individuals participating in our survey and will also be shared widely by our interviewers through electronic means.

We hope that by sharing this information at individual, household and community level, we will help to reinforce the need for the vigilance required if we are to avoid a significant second wave of the pandemic.

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