



In this second issue of **From Evidence to Action**, we focus on the *Overcoming Inequality and Structural Poverty in South Africa: towards inclusive growth and development* conference, which took place in September 2010. The event brought together a wide variety of experts in the field to consolidate their collective research and experience, learn from each other and discuss strategies for dealing with the inequality and poverty crisis which faces South Africa. The conference demonstrated that a coherent anti-poverty strategy needs to first and foremost address inequality and that tackling the structure of our core economy is pivotal in redressing the imbalances in South African society and in turn, alleviating poverty.

We also find out more about the Presidency's Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD)

and take a look at the Rapid Evidence Assessments (REA) tool which policy-makers can use to develop evidence. We present some interesting research from the CSIR on the science-policy interface, evidence-based policy-making and knowledge brokering, and provide a variety of resources, from policy briefs to upcoming events and useful links.

From Evidence to Action aims to contribute to the debate around evidence-based policy-making. The HSRC recently participated in a workshop entitled *Improving the impact of development research through better research communication and uptake* (<http://www.researchtoaction.org/donor-meeting/>), which explored how to communicate research findings to policy-makers. If you have anything to contribute towards the debate around getting research into policy and

policy into action, whether successful or unsuccessful, please send your submissions to pan@hsrc.ac.za.



Prof Adam Habib, Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Johannesburg

Photo credit: Mariola Bieła

Overcoming Inequality and Structural Poverty in South Africa: towards inclusive growth and development

The *Overcoming Inequality and Structural Poverty in South Africa: towards inclusive growth and development* conference, which took place in September 2010, brought together policy-makers, members from civil society, researchers and other anti-poverty stakeholders. The aim of the conference was to stimulate

dialogue, share knowledge, and discuss ideas on the causes of – and responses to – inequality and structural poverty. The conference also gave policy-makers the opportunity to engage with the latest research evidence, from where they could integrate it into their work.

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This newsletter aims to inform policy-makers, researchers and development practitioners in South Africa of emerging developments, results and good practice in the application of evidence-based policy-making. It is supported by the HSRC, and the Programme for Support to Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD), a partnership between the Presidency and the EU.

➔ For more information go to www.pan.org.za.

➔ For contributions contact pan@hsrc.ac.za.



The conference was co-hosted by PLAAS (Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies), the Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC), Isandla Institute, Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute (SPII) and the Presidency's Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD).

We spoke to Mastoera Sadan, Programme Manager of the PSPPD, who told us more about the conference and some of the salient points coming from it. "The purpose of the conference was to draw together research and experience on inequality and poverty in South Africa, but also internationally – from both a macro perspective, with presenters from as far afield as Chile and India, to a micro, community-based perspective," she explained.

Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, who is also the head of the Inter-Ministerial Committee that

is tasked with developing the anti-poverty strategy for South Africa, opened the conference via a video presentation. He began his address by re-committing the government to finding solutions to inequality and

poverty. Recognising the immensity of the challenge that remains in South Africa, he then called on conference participants to "reflect on the efficacy of our approach to fighting poverty and inequality since 1994."

Key issues emerging from the conference:

- The voices of the poor need to be included when determining the right policy choices for addressing structural poverty and inequality and existing power imbalances.
- Linkages need to be made or improved between social and economic policies through a combination of interventions that address immediate-, medium- and long-term needs.
- State services need to be shaped so that they are responsive to developmental approaches and are not based on dual services which cater separately for the rich and the poor.
- Policy-makers need to understand and address the way in which spatial and rural development is reinforcing apartheid spatial patterns, and therefore reinforcing inequality and poverty.
- Growth and accumulation paths should be reconsidered with the environment in mind to prevent the impact of environmental degradation on the poor and to maximise potential job creation.
- Employment creation strategies need to consider how they will create sustainable work.

Acknowledging the need to develop a plan of action to alleviate poverty and inequality in the country, the Deputy President further suggested that the conference should be viewed as “a pragmatic call to action.” Of critical importance to the conference, he also pointed out that the causes of poverty and inequality are interlinked and that a multi-level approach is required, which involves “determination to partner up in the fight against poverty.”

During the conference, Ms Sadan highlighted the fact that “the current

poverty debate has neglected the issue of inequality. There is a need to make explicit the link between poverty and inequality – and place inequality on the national agenda.” This link was a strong focus of the conference. Research undertaken by Prof Murray Leibbrandt and Dr Ingrid Woolard, from the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU), shows that although poverty in South Africa has decreased slightly, inequality has actually increased. “Increasing inequality is not unique to South Africa – it is

also an international phenomenon. However, the levels of inequality in South Africa are very high and this is of grave concern in that long-term inequality affects both social cohesion and growth prospects for the country, which can in turn create instability,” said Ms Sadan.

In her post on the conference blog, Rebecca Pointer from PLAAS explains that “chronic poverty is a symptom of structural poverty and inequality. Structural poverty is rooted in the basic set-up of society – in the distribution of assets, continuing unequal social relations and in processes of exclusion and marginalisation... we need to look at how the basic set-up of society systematically denies opportunities for large numbers of marginalised people in South Africa.” She further points out that “persistent chronic and structural poverty in South Africa do not result from a lack of growth; instead they result from the kind of growth we have experienced – growth which is not employment intensive” and that “structural poverty cannot be understood or tackled separately from inequality.” She also notes that “it is necessary to consider in-depth, what kind of policy choices would make for a more inclusive growth path.” In line with this, and of particular relevance to policy-makers, one of the key messages emerging from the conference was that “while social protection is important and provides immediate relief to the most vulnerable households and has led to a drop in poverty levels, it does not provide the ultimate solution to poverty and inequality. Therefore, any mechanisms set up to alleviate poverty need to engage with the causes of inequality in South Africa.”

Moving forward in responding to the inequality and poverty debate, Ms Sadan brought to the fore several ideas emerging from the conference for addressing these issues: “There

Case Study

Community Works Programme

South Africa has one of the highest unemployment rates in the world. Kate Philip, from Trade and Industry Policy Strategies (TIPS), points out in her paper *Towards a right to work: The rationale for an employment guarantee in South Africa*, how “the uneven burden of unemployment in poor areas is just one more feature of the deep levels of structural inequality in South Africa.” She goes on to draw lessons from the government-piloted Community Works Programme (CWP) on how it could work in practise in addressing the unemployment crisis.

- The CWP is an area-based programme, targeting poor communities, in rural and urban areas and informal settlements.
- It is ‘an employment safety net and not an employment solution’, providing regular access to a minimum level of work, on a predictable basis.
- A key feature of the CWP is that work is identified and prioritised through participatory processes at community level.

In her post on the conference blog, Obiozo Ukpabi from PLAAS gives a summary of what the CWP is and how it works:

“The CWP projects often link up with existing poverty alleviation

programmes in the communities, create a labour pool to build such programmes and allow community members to earn an income – often for the first time in their lives. The types of work typically undertaken in CWP projects include health projects (especially home based care), education projects (e.g. teacher support through classroom assistants), construction projects (e.g. building, renovating and maintaining public infrastructure – roads, drains, fencing, public buildings, etc), and agriculture and food security (e.g. food gardens and food co-operatives).

“However, even though such labour-intensive self-help schemes do make a difference in alleviating poverty and according to the self-testimony of those in the projects build self esteem and dignity, they do not change the structure of the economy. And unless they build power to tackle the macro-issues and push for structural transformation, the scale of such projects cannot bring about the fundamental shift needed to overcome poverty and inequality. Such projects have a limited scope because they push the burden of change onto the poor, while the wealthy and middle classes carry none of the burden for change.”

is a need for greater linkage between social and economic policies; and the people creating those policies. Experts need to communicate better with broad-based civil society and more platforms need to be created where there can be engagement.” Ms Sadan also stressed the importance of giving poor people a voice and improving government’s accountability to them so their concerns are heard and addressed. She said that unemployment was also an area

that needed more attention, pointing out that although there was a clear commitment from government to do this, it had to be done in partnership with other stakeholders.

Citing Brazil as an example, Leibbrandt and Woolard argue that achieving growth and reducing poverty and inequality is possible. Although the provision of social grants is an advance in the fight to decrease poverty, better connections need to

be made between grants and other strategies South Africa employs.

“Addressing inequality and poverty is a complex and long-term process and there are no quick-fix solutions,” says Ms Sadan. “It is not a process that is going to happen overnight.” In her blog post, Ms Pointer agrees: “There are no easy answers. However, the link

between inequality and poverty must be addressed more effectively and debate on how to achieve inclusive growth must take place. We need to avoid grandstanding and political gestures, and create space for serious discussion about the kind of policy choices that would make inclusive growth necessary.”

Go to <http://www.plaas.org.za/newsevents/povcon2010/home> for more on the conference, including key messages, papers and presentations. For Rebecca Pointer’s full blog post, go to <http://anothercountryside.wordpress.com/2010/09/03/inequality-and-structural-poverty-linked-in-south-africa-2/> and for Obiozo Ukpabi’s blog post, go to <http://anothercountryside.wordpress.com/2010/09/21/short-term-delivery-of-social-safety-nets-essential-while-tackling-long-term-structural-transformation-to-overcome-inequality-and-poverty-in-south-africa/>.



Photo credit: Mariola Bielek

Spotlight on the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development in South Africa

Poverty and inequality are critical issues in South Africa and to address these issues, the Presidency, in partnership with the European Union (EU), developed the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD). The main objective of the PSPPD is to inform and contribute towards the overall economic and social goals of the government, which are to halve unemployment and poverty by 2014.

The Programme, which was launched in November 2007, aims to support policy-makers and researchers in using research and other evidence to inform pro-poor policy-making, thereby contributing to the poverty and inequality debate. The Programme does this by firstly; generating evidence through the 13 research

grants it has awarded to universities and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and secondly; using a variety of learning and capacity-development tools by working with individuals and building institutions. In a nutshell, the PSPPD is trying to increase the systematic use of good quality research evidence in the policy-making process. This approach is called evidence-based policy-making (EBPM).

To this end, in its effort to understand the rapidly changing dynamics of the South African society, the Presidency commissioned a national panel (longitudinal) study called the National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS). The NIDS is designed to enrich the existing understanding of the general trends of macro-household

dynamics, specifically the movement of households out of and into poverty, and to improve the ability of government to achieve economic and social development goals. It generates the data which sheds light on the changes taking place in South African society. The PSPPD complements the NIDS by ensuring that analysis of the NIDS data feeds into government policy-making.

The NIDS will become a true panel study after the 3rd Wave (third survey round). Three waves are necessary to get a reasonable measure of the core information (income, consumption and assets) to ascertain the dynamics of poverty, and distinguish between transitory and chronic poverty, and the impact of policy.

The data generated over this time will be valuable in assisting our understanding of poverty and inequality, mobility, coping and adjustment mechanisms of society at the household level. The NIDS is being undertaken at two-year intervals and provides research evidence on macro household dynamics which impact on the determinants of poverty and wellbeing, such as education, health, income and spending patterns, fertility and mortality, vulnerability and social capital. The NIDS Wave 1 (first survey round), which was undertaken in 2008 (the dataset is publicly available at www.nids.uct.ac.za), is currently being used by six of the PSPPD grant beneficiaries in their research (see www.psppd.org.za). The data for Wave 2 will be available towards the end of 2011.

The PSPPD works closely with the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation, the National Planning Commission, the National Treasury, the Department of Social Development, Statistics South Africa and other key line departments. The interventions are focused on improving access to and increasing the use of information on poverty- and inequality-focused research through the provision of tools and methodologies of EBPM. Parallel to this, the PSPPD works with the research community to share and (re)package their research findings in formats accessible to policy-makers.

The PSPPD works in the 'gap' which exists between researchers and policy-makers: the 'pushing of evidence'¹ by researchers to policy-makers in the hope that it will inform policy; and the need to create the 'evidence pull' by the policy-makers for this evidence. As a strategy, the PSPPD is therefore promoting the EBPM approach, which requires the building of good relationships



and linkages to facilitate learning processes.

The PSPPD in its current form has a five-year implementation period and a closure phase (2007-2012) and has a €5 million funding envelope for the following key components:

1. Research evidence – comprising of both commissioned research and awarding of grants under the Research Facility. The PSPPD awarded 13 grant contracts to higher education and research institutions in October 2009, and the research outputs will contribute to the poverty and inequality

Evidence-Based Policy-Making (EBPM) is an approach that helps people make well-informed decisions about policies, programmes, and projects by putting the best available evidence from research at the heart of policy development and implementation

Davies, 1999

debates. The research topics include amongst others, education, child poverty, social cohesion, and youth employment. The research evidence will be disseminated at an International Conference in August 2011.

2. Linkage building and knowledge dissemination – the Programme is building on existing knowledge management units and resources and is creating opportunities for new and established networks and linkages to be optimised in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system of government with regard to sharing information, research and evidence. The research is positioned to inform the "12 Outcomes", which are the measurable focus areas developed by the Presidency (see <http://www.presidency.gov.za/pebble.asp?relid=1905>), and the strategic themes of the NPC. The PSPPD is collaborating with the Policy Action Network (www.pan.org.za) of the HSRC as well to provide resources on EBPM and also works closely with institutions that support and promote the use of EBPM in South Africa, including the Research Use

1 Godfrey L, Funke N, Mbizvo C. Bridging the science-policy interface: A new era for South African research and the role of knowledge brokering. S Afr J Sci. 2010;106(5/6)

and Impact Assessment Unit in the HSRC and the Department of Social Development.

3. Capacity-building and training – the Monitoring and Learning Facility (MLF), one of the PSPPD's units, manages the capacity-building and training components of the Programme, with a focus on equipping policy-makers and researchers with the skills and tools to better use, package and systematically review new and existing research evidence, particularly with the use of the Rapid Evidence Assessments (REA) and Systematic Reviews (SRs) methodologies. Training on

SRs was held in partnership with the University of the Free State and the Campbell Collaboration (<http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/>) and a training workshop on how to conduct/undertake a REA was developed and facilitated by Dr. Philip Davies of Oxford Evidentia.

The PSPPD facilitates the increased 'evidence pull' in policy development and aims to increase the use of tools and resources available to the research community to 'push' their evidence into that space in formats accessible to policy-makers. The Programme is continually revisiting its implementation strategy to shape learning through focused training;

the investment in individuals and institutions to assure and increase sustainability in leveraging the funding envelope to create multiplier effects through pockets of capacity that has been developed; and by enabling both researchers and policy-makers to engage with research evidence and each other.

Visit www.psppd.org.za for more on the Programme and its activities.

Tools and methodology for policy analysis

Rapid Evidence Assessments

The last newsletter highlighted the use of systematic reviews as a rigorous tool for collating evidence on a specific question related to existing research, with the aim of drawing out findings. Systematic reviews can take 6-24 months to complete and are the "Rolls Royce" of evidence collation, but with the time constraints facing policy-makers, the shorter method, a Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA), can be considered for policy-making. The UK government referred to a REA as "a tool for getting on top of the available research evidence on a policy issue, as comprehensively as possible, within the constraints of a given timetable", and used it to look at the effectiveness of neighbourhood watch, or hot spots policing. You can read more on this on the UK government civil service website (<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/my-civil-service/networks/professional/gsr/resources/gsr-rapid-evidence-assessment-toolkit.aspx>).

REAs typically take 3-6 months and therefore require less resources in terms of human resources and funding, but some rigour has to be sacrificed. Due to the 'rapid' nature of this method, the grey literature might not always be included and preference will be given to the more readily available research which has been published and written in English. This can in some cases compromise the rigour and comprehensiveness to which the policy question is answered and therefore, where possible, a REA should be followed by a full systematic review. Nevertheless, the REA is likely to pick up 80% of the story and enable policy-makers to proceed more quickly with the evidence they have found.

The South African Presidency's Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) has commissioned a REA on "why crime

in South Africa is so violent", which will be available on www.psppd.org.za shortly. It also funded training of researchers and policy-makers in November 2010 and will run additional training in March 2011 on this tool for policy analysis.

The Presidency has shown interest in using REAs and the PSPPD hopes to commission further REAs to use in policy-making for South Africa to demonstrate the uses of this methodology.

For further information on REAs go to <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/my-civil-service/networks/professional/gsr/resources/gsr-rapid-evidence-assessment-toolkit.aspx> or contact Dr Taryn Young of the Cochrane Collaboration (www.cochrane.org) at Taryn.Young@mrc.ac.za.

Policy briefs

Frontiers of Social Protection Briefs

Authors: Philip White, Frank Ellis, Stephen Devereux and Katharine Vincent

Publisher: The Regional Hunger & Vulnerability Programme (RHVP)

Source: <http://www.wahenga.net/briefs/fosp>

The Frontiers of Social Protection (FoSP) series of briefs, which summarise the main findings of a set of respective studies, is directed at policy-makers and practitioners concerned with hunger, vulnerability and social protection in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. The briefs aim to make sure that the knowledge from the Regional Hunger & Vulnerability Programme's (RHVP) policy analysis

remains relevant and reflects advances on a number of key social protection frontiers.

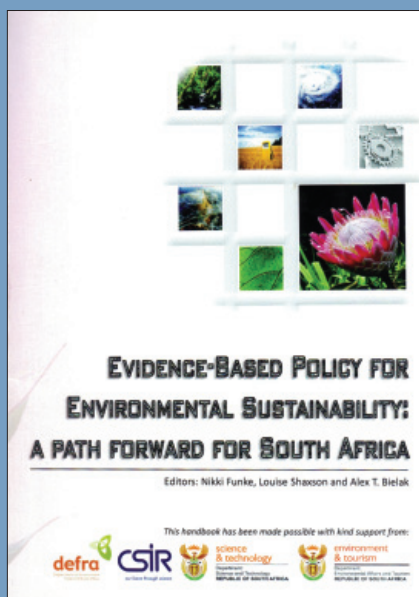
The FoSP body of work builds on the research activities of RHVP's Regional Evidence Building Agenda (REBA), which involved 20 commissioned case studies of social protection programmes in southern Africa and a series of cross-cutting thematic analyses. Like the REBA, the FoSP work was demand-led and focused on a number of 'hot topics' prioritised by stakeholders across the region. Emerging evidence on the practicalities and impacts of delivering large-scale social protection was also incorporated.

The series includes the following briefs:

1. Fertiliser subsidies and social cash transfers
2. Poverty targeting
3. Electronic delivery of social cash transfers
4. Food prices and markets in an era of global instability
5. Dependency and graduation
6. Policy options for reducing risk and instability in staple food markets
7. Social protection in Africa: where are we, and how did we get here?
8. Seasonality and social protection in Africa

Applying Research to Policy

Evidence-based policy for environmental sustainability: a path forward for South Africa



Climate change and dwindling natural resources pose an enormous risk to South Africa, environmentally and

economically. Using an evidence-based approach, government can use scientific research to formulate policies that will mitigate this risk. This "science-policy interface" – where the gap between science and policy is bridged by effective knowledge brokering – was explored in a collaborative workshop on evidence-based policy-making (EBPM) organised by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and funded by the United Kingdom's (UK's) Department of Food, Rural and Environmental Affairs (DEFRA), South Africa's Department of Environment and Tourism (DEAT), and Department of Science and Technology (DST).

The workshop focused on how policy can best draw on evidence and what existing, emerging and new evidence policy-makers in South Africa need to inform the policy-making process

to solve complex issues which have implications for the environment. The following questions were raised during the workshop:

- How can South African policy-makers solicit and source the particular type of relevant and reliable information they require from scientists and other sources to deliver on policy goals?
- How can scientists subsequently ensure that the evidence they produce is taken up into the policy-making process and used by policy-makers?

In order to draw out lessons on the science-policy interface and the policy-making process, the workshop was designed around four case studies; acid mine drainage, climate change, nanotechnology and biofuels. Some of the lessons learnt from the

discussions around these issues conclude that:

- There is no single science-policy interface: instead, the relationship between science and policy can be improved by strengthening links between individuals, teams and whole organisations.
- Maintaining a clear focus on strategic policy objectives can help reorient research in the right direction, and it can also help work out which institutional relationships are most appropriate for each particular issue.

- There is a specific need to develop techniques which help bridge the gaps between policy-makers and parliamentarians who have a generalist background, and scientists with more specialised knowledge.

These and other lessons, tried and tested tools, and conclusions from the workshop are presented in detail in the handbook. To download the handbook for free, go to http://researchspace.csir.co.za/dspace/bitstream/10204/3360/1/Funke_2009.pdf.

Other useful links on evidence-based policy-making and knowledge brokering:

Evidence-based policymaking: A review: <http://sajs.co.za/index.php/SAJS/article/view/249>

Bridging the science-policy interface: A new era for South African research and the role of knowledge brokering: <http://sajs.co.za/index.php/SAJS/article/view/247>

Announcements

Conferences

Poverty and social protection conference 2011, 1 - 3 March 2011

Bangkok, Thailand

This conference will focus on issues of poverty and its eradication, social inequality, race relations and policy management and mismanagement with an international perspective.

<http://www.pan.org.za/event-76.html>

Education and development conference 2011, 5 - 7 March 2011

Bangkok, Thailand

This three-day programme aims to bring scholars, students and experienced professionals together to address the importance of education and its strong correlation with development.

<http://www.pan.org.za/event-77.html>

Toward universal health coverage in Africa: Second conference of the African Health Economics and Policy Association (AfHEA), 15 - 17 March 2011

Saly Portudal (Palm Beach), Senegal

This conference is aimed at all African health economists and health policy analysts working in Africa or on research of relevance to Africa. The overall theme of this conference is "Toward universal health coverage in Africa".

<http://www.pan.org.za/event-68.html>

Social protection for social justice: CSP conference 2011, 13 - 15 April 2011

Sussex, United Kingdom

This three-day conference aims to explore future directions for social protection that go beyond social safety nets and risk management, to address broader concerns with redistributive equity and social injustice.

<http://www.pan.org.za/event-74.html>

Announcement and call for abstracts: Transformation of the role of the State and new instruments of public action, 5 - 6 May 2011

Pretoria, South Africa

Academics, experts, practitioners, civil society and other stakeholders directly engaged in public policy are invited to respond to this open call for papers. The seminar will mainly focus on southern Africa, but papers from the other parts of the African continent and elsewhere are welcome and will be considered.

<http://www.pan.org.za/upcoming-events.html>

Mind the gap: From evidence to policy impact, 15 - 17 June 2011

Cuernavaca, Mexico

With a focus on Latin America, this conference will provide a platform to share and discuss experiences on how to best achieve evidence-based policy in sectors that are highly relevant for countries in all developing regions. Systematic reviews, research and experience papers from all regions are welcome.

<http://www.pan.org.za/event-83.html>

Courses

Applied Fiscal Research Centre (AFReC): February 2011 training schedule, 1 - 28 February 2011

Pretoria, South Africa

The courses, offered by the Applied Fiscal Research Centre (AFReC) which is affiliated to the University of Cape Town, during February 2011 include training on government-wide monitoring and evaluation, performance management for local government and budgeting for service delivery.

<http://www.pan.org.za/event-84.html>

Monitoring and evaluation for complicated and complex aspects of programmes and policies,

1 - 3 March 2011

Natal, South Africa

The Health Economic and HIV/AIDS Research Division (HEARD) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is conducting a course on Monitoring and Evaluation for Complicated and Complex Aspects of Programmes and Policies in Johannesburg. The course is aimed at practitioners in eastern and southern Africa who find that their current monitoring and evaluation does not adequately describe or support effective practice or policy.

<http://www.pan.org.za/event-87.html>

Diploma Course on International Health and Policy Evaluation (IHPE), 9 March - 27 May 2011

The Hague and Rotterdam, Netherlands

This course provides the essential training in health and health services research to support rational decision-making and sustainable improvements in health. It covers the assessment of population health, evaluation of interventions and policies, cost-effectiveness analysis, priority setting, and delivery and financing of health services. The target audience includes professionals, who are involved in translating research findings into policies or the implementation of interventions, as well as (future) researchers.

<http://www.bmg.eur.nl/english/internationalhealthcourse/>

Resources

Find out more about the hosts of the Overcoming Inequality and Structural Poverty conference by visiting their websites:

PLAAS (Institute of Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies)

The Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) is a leading research and teaching centre which undertakes research on land and agrarian reform, poverty, and natural resource management in South Africa and the southern African region. PLAAS also undertakes training, provides advisory, facilitation and evaluation services and is active in the field of national policy development.

<http://www.plaas.org.za/>

Chronic Poverty Research Centre

The Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC) is an international partnership of universities, research institutes and NGOs which exists to focus attention on chronic poverty. It aims to stimulate national and international debate; deepen understanding of the causes of chronic poverty; and provide research, analysis and policy guidance that will contribute to its reduction. The CPRC is funded by the UK's Department for International Development.

<http://www.chronicpoverty.org/>

Isandla Institute

Isandla Institute functions as an experimental 'hot house' where policy ideas about the reduction of urban inequality, poverty, racism and social exclusion are nurtured. By design, Isandla Institute works with multiple partners to guarantee that new ideas are disseminated, tested and remoulded so as to succeed in solving problems in the 'real' world. At the same time, the Institute works with academic institutions to ensure that its applied policy focus is rooted in robust knowledge systems.

<http://isandla.org.za/>

Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute (SPII)

SPii is an independent, non-profit think tank, committed to the eradication of poverty and inequality in South Africa and the sub region. Through research, it seeks to develop innovative, evidence-based solutions that address the causes and consequences of poverty. SPii is rooted in the values of the South African constitution and believes that poverty undermines democracy and inhibits the development of society as a whole.

<http://www.spjii.org.za/>

Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD)

The Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) in South Africa is an initiative that aims at enabling policy-makers to improve their ability to formulate policies, as well as more effectively and efficiently target future interventions within their scope of work. The PSPPD is a complementary programme to the National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS), the South African panel study.

Please note that the website is being redesigned and a new look with comprehensive content will be launched by mid-March 2011.

<http://www.psppd.org.za/>

Other useful links

IFAD Rural poverty report 2011

The Rural Poverty Report 2011 provides a coherent and comprehensive look at rural poverty, its global consequences and the prospects for eradicating it. Released on 6 December 2010, the report contains updated estimates by IFAD regarding how many rural poor people there are in the developing world, poverty rates in rural areas, and the percentage of poor people residing in rural areas.

<http://www.ifad.org/rpr2011/report/e/rpr2011.pdf>

Pension Watch

Pension watch is a comprehensive new online resource for policy makers and development practitioners on non-contributory (social) pensions. Social pensions have proven to be one of the most effective approaches to reducing the poverty and vulnerability of older people, as well as their families and communities. They have also been shown - as part of a wider social protection package - to have positive impacts on areas such as human capital development, local economic development and reducing inequality. The site aims to bring together learning from existing social pension schemes around the world in order to inform policy makers, academics and activists.

<http://www.pension-watch.net/>

The M&E Learning Network

The Presidency's Ministry of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPM&E) has established a learning network as a support mechanism to improve M&E practice in government. This M&E Learning Network is coordinated by a task team comprising of national and provincial departments and they will work and collaborate with research organisations, the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA), and other partners and stakeholders, to engage the public sector, and to disseminate M&E information through newsletters, publications and other media.

<http://www.presidency.gov.za/pebble.asp?relid=1690>

HSRC Policy Brief series

Seen by the HSRC as an important tool in disseminating research to respective stakeholders, as well as a way of encouraging discussion and debate, the Policy Brief series lifts out policy implications of recently completed HSRC research projects. Two policy briefs were released during February:

Decisive action to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by Dr David Hemson, Dr Edward Chikhwenda, Prof Wilbard Kombe and Dr Morena Rankgopo

South African Crude Oil Import portfolio Risks: which way out? by Dr Njeri Wabiri and Mr Hammed Amusa

Both these briefs can be found on the HSRC website at <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/index.php?module=pagesetter&func=viewpub&tid=132&pid=162>

This newsletter has been produced with the financial assistance of the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD), a partnership programme of the Presidency, Republic of SA and the European Union. The HSRC and PSPPD have attempted to make the information in this newsletter as accurate as possible and it is intended for personal and/or educational use only. It is provided in good faith without any express or implied warranty. The content of this newsletter can in no way be taken to reflect the views of these partners, including the HSRC.

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