



Democracy in Africa Research Unit

The Democracy in Africa Research Unit strengthens empirical social science research capacity in Africa by supporting and conducting systematic research on key factors that shape the survival and quality of democracy in South Africa and the rest of the continent.

DARU's activities are focused in four broad research areas: public opinion, voting and elections, political institutions, and the political consequences of HIV/AIDS. We have strong links with a series of African and international research projects working in these areas and we are a member of the international Network of Democracy Research Institutes (<http://www.wmd.org/ndri/ndri.html#ndri>).

DARU also has a strong commitment to training. Our researchers teach undergraduate and post graduate courses in research methodology; we support training by enabling post graduate students to participate in ongoing research projects; and we provide financial support to students writing theses and dissertations based on data generated by DARU projects. In 2007, DARU provided financial aid for two MA and two Ph.D. students. Glen Mpani and Carlos Shenga earned Masters Degrees (Mpani's dissertation on the sources of protest in Zimbabwe earned a distinction).

DARU also continued its work building research capacity in other research networks. In January and February, we ran the second Afrobarometer Summer School which was attended by over two dozen researchers from around Africa in the Afrobarometer Network. Later in the year, we ran two separate training workshops for new personnel from Afrobarometer core partner institutions. And in November, we ran a workshop in research design, methods and theory for researchers working on the political and social consequences of HIV/AIDS.

DARU Projects 2007

African Legislatures Project (ALP)

In July, DARU hosted an international conference on "African Legislatures: Integrating Research and Policy" at the Centre for African Studies where we presented initial findings from early stages of the project. We also designed and conducted a baseline study of parliamentary strengthening in the National Assembly of Zambia for PACT/Zambia, which included a nationally representative survey of ordinary Zambians and a representative survey of MPs. Later in the year, DfID awarded ALP a grant that will allow us to do additional fieldwork in Zambia, as well as country studies in Kenya, Malawi and Mozambique in early 2008.

Afrobarometer Capacity Building Project

DARU is a support unit of the Afrobarometer project which conducts public opinion surveys in eighteen African countries and is one of the leading social science projects on the continent (www.afrobarometer.org). As noted above, we ran the second Afrobarometer Summer School at UCT offering participants from African research institutes four weeks of courses on key issues of African politics and democratisation, research design and social statistics. We also helped draft new research protocols and trained new Afrobarometer personnel to conduct the next round of surveys. And we hosted four Afrobarometer Fellows from Benin and Uganda who spent three weeks each at UCT conducting research on Afrobarometer data.

Comparative National Elections Project

DARU scholars have been involved in the collection and analysis of voter attitudes in South Africa since 1994. Since 2004, DARU has been the South African national research partner in the Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP) which examines the sources of voter behavior and the quality of elections in over two dozen new and old democracies across the world. In 2007, DARU continued its work creating a single cross national data set out of the various national data sets previously collected by CNEP.

AIDS, Democracy and Governance

DARU researchers began to analyze new data sets on South African municipalities to assess the impact of HIV/AIDS on local government and continued its analysis of public opinion data isolating the impact on democratic citizenship. It began an exciting new initiative with UNAIDS assessing the quality of national reporting on country responses to HIV/AIDS. And it worked with other organisations working on the social and political consequences of HIV/AIDS, building capacity in research design, theory and research methods.

DARU Research Projects 2007

Political Institutions African Legislatures Project

- What is the state of executive-legislative relations in Africa (Mozaffar)
- How do ordinary Africans see legislatures and legislators? (Mattes, Mozaffar, Smiddy, Barkan)
- What is the state of legislative capacity in Mozambique? (Azevedo)
- What is the state of legislative capacity in Malawi? (Smiddy)

Legislative Capacity Strengthening

- What impact have donor legislative strengthening and anti-corruption programs had on the National Assembly of Zambia and its ability to represent ordinary Zambians? (Smiddy, Mattes, Mpani)

Public opinions Afrobarometer Capacity Building Project

- DARU ran the second Afrobarometer Summer School for 25 participants, most of whom represented African research institutes (Mattes, Smiddy, Alence, Bratton, Posner)
- DARU ran two workshops to train new personnel from Afrobarometer partner institutions and develop new research protocols for the next found of surveys (Mattes, Smiddy)

Public Opinion and Democratic Consolidation

- How does poverty, low levels of formal education, and low levels of access to news media affect the possibilities of democratic citizenship in Mozambique? (Mattes, Shenga)
- Are social identities in Botswana as homogenous as widely imagined, and to what extent do social identities shape public opinion and political participation? (Boikhutso)
- What explains levels of protest participation in Zimbabwe? (Mpani)
- Why do some African Presidents attempt to amend constitutions to stay in office? (Mughogho)
- How important is religion to ordinary Africans and how does it affect their political behavior? (Mattes, with Joseph Asunka and E. Gyimah-Boadi of the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development)
- How well do Afrobarometer questions provide a valid and reliable measure of lived poverty, and what are the material versus political determinants of lived poverty? (Mattes)

Voting and Elections Comparative National Elections Project

- DARU is creating a cross national merged data set of post election surveys (Mattes and Borel-Saladin)
- To what extent has South Africa institutionalised the key components of electoral democracy, its electoral machinery and its political parties (Mattes)

The Determinants of Voting Decisions

- Do ethno-regional or performance related factors play the most important role in shaping Mozambicans' support for political parties? (Pereira)
- To what extent have partisan coalitions and the key drivers of partisan evaluations changed in South African since 1994? (Hertzenberg)
- What was the "quality" of South Africa's 2004 election campaign and to what extent did this shape the overall quality of democracy in South Africa? (Africa)

Political consequences of HIV/AIDS The Impact of AIDS on Democracy

- How has political science as a discipline responded to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and why? (Strand, Mattes with HEARD's Alan Whiteside)
- What factors explain why some Africans prioritise AIDS as an issue requiring government attention? (Strand, Mattes)
- To what extent does HIV/AIDS affect Africans' participation in democratic politics? (Strand, Sacks, Mattes)

HIV/AIDS Governance

- How has the South African Parliament responded to HIV/AIDS? (Strand)
- What are the political determinants of successful policy towards children affected by AIDS? (Strand)
- How can research evidence best support policy making on health? (Strand)
- How can we best measure the human right elements of national responses to AIDS? (Strand)
- How well have states complied with the UNGAUSS framework in reporting on national responses to HIV/AIDS? (Strand)

Director Robert Mattes

Project manager Kimberly Smiddy (Project Manager, Afrobarometer Capacity Building Project)

Per Strand (Project Manager, AIDS, Democracy and Governance Project)

Ph.D Scholars Cherrel Africa, Elisabete Azevedo, Keene Boikhutso, Collette Herzenberg, Joao Pereira

MA Scholars Glen Mpani, Danga Mughogho, Carlos Shenga, Mary Kinney

Research Assistants Mary Kinney, Jacqueline Borel-Saladin, Glen Mpani, Dadisai Taderera

Visiting Researchers and Fellows Rod Alence (University of the Witwatersrand)

Joel Barkan (University of Iowa) Michael Bratton (Michigan State University)

Shaheen Mozaffar (Bridgewater State College) Daniel Posner (University of California, Los Angeles)

Audrey Sacks (University of Washington)