

Democracy in Africa Research Unit

DARU

Democracy in Africa Research Unit (DARU) strengthens empirical social science research capacity in Africa by supporting and conducting independent, systematic and comparative research on key factors that shape the survival and quality of democracy in South Africa and the rest of the continent. Its activities are focused in four broad research areas:

- Public Opinion
- Voting and Elections
- Political Institutions
- Political Consequences of HIV/AIDS

DARU has strong links with a series of African and intercontinental research projects in public opinion, voting and representative institutions.

DARU also has a strong commitment to training. Its researchers teach undergraduate and post-graduate courses in research methodology in the Department of Political Studies. It also supports training by enabling post-graduate students to participate in ongoing research projects and by providing financial support to theses and dissertations based on data generated by DARU projects. In 2005, DARU provided financial aid for four Masters and seven PhD students.

2005 saw the publication of *Public Opinion, Democracy and Market Reform* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) co-authored by Mattes (and Michael Bratton and E. Gyimah-Boadi) and *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade* (London: Palgrave Macmillan) co-edited by Lia Nijzink (and Jessica Piombo - a CSSR Visiting Fellow in 2004).

DARU received grants or other support in 2005 from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the South African National Research Foundation, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and the J. William Fulbright Scholarship Board.

DARU is a member of the international Network of Democracy Research Institutes (<http://www.wmd.org/ndri/ndri.html#ndri>).

African Legislatures Project

In conjunction with the Center for Legislative Studies at Bridgewater State College in the United States, DARU began in 2005 to collect publicly available data on legislatures and their political and economic national context for 48 sub-Saharan Africa countries. In 2006 it will then proceed to conduct intensive research on legislatures and legislators in eighteen selected African democracies.

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). In 2005, DARU received a major grant from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation to conduct scientific analysis of Afrobarometer data by conducting summer workshops in public opinion analysis at UCT, by hosting Afrobarometer Fellows at the CSSR, and through its own analysis of Afrobarometer data, all of which will begin in 2006.

Comparative National Elections Project

DARU scholars have been involved in the collection and analysis of voter attitudes in South Africa since 1994. As part of this process, DARU is now 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 2005, DARU produced two major data sets based on a post-election voter survey and a content analysis of media campaign coverage of South Africa's 2004 national election. In 2006, DARU will take a leading role in the project merging and archiving of CNEP data sets from around the world.



Daru staff in their new offices.

People @ DARU

Project Leaders

Robert Mattes
Cherrel Africa
Lia Nijzink
Kimberly Smiddy
Per Strand

Ph. D. Scholars

Cherrel Africa, Elisabete Azevedo, Keene Boikhutso, Ariane de Lannoy, Collette Herzenberg, Joao Pereira

MA Scholars

Janis Kennedy, Glen Mpani, Carlos Shenga, Justin Sylvester

Teaching Assistant

Justin Sylvester

Visitors

Joel Barkan
(University of Iowa)
Jacob Bor
(Harvard University)
Kanchan Chandra
(Massachusetts Institute of Technology)
Shaheen Mozaffar (Bridgewater State College)
Jeff Shen
(Stanford University)

AIDS and Democracy in Africa

Still in its formative stage, this cross-cutting area of research will focus on analysing existing data and creating new data sets that will enable the systematic study of the impact of HIV/AIDS on public opinion, political participation, political institutions, and the overall quality of democracy

in Africa. In 2005, scholars began the process of identification and initial analysis of various indicators of the impact of the pandemic on democratic governance.

A New Book



Electoral Politics in South Africa. Assessing the First Democratic Decade, edited by Jessica Piomba and Lia Nijzink. The volume, published by Palgrave Macmillan, provides a retrospective on a decade of elections and democracy in South Africa.

RESEARCH PROJECTS 2005	
Political Institutions	
African Legislatures Project	DARU researchers began to compile a comprehensive data set on all 48 sub-Saharan legislatures (Robert Mattes, Lia Nijzink, Elisabete Azevedo, Glen Mpani)
Legislative Institutions	<p>What is the capacity and will of South Africa's parliament to act as an independent political institution? (Joel Barkan)</p> <p>What do we know about Africa's legislative institutions? (Lia Nijzink, Shaheen Mozaffar, Elisabete Azevedo)</p> <p>Assessing levels of legislative capacity in Africa (Lia Nijzink and Shaheen Mozaffar)</p> <p>What do Africans know and think about their legislatures? (Robert Mattes, Shaheen Mozaffar and Joel Barkan)</p> <p>What are the linkages between executive and legislative powers and levels of democracy in Lusophone Africa? (Lia Nijzink and Elisabete Azevedo)</p> <p>How do Africans think about legislatures and to what extent is this shaped by the availability of information and the actual performance of legislatures? (Elisabete Azevedo)</p>
Local Government	Metropolitanisation and Political Change in South Africa (Robert Cameron and Alicia Alvarez)
Public Opinion	
Afrobarometer Capacity Building Project	DARU received a major grant from the Norwegian Agency for International Development to begin a systematic capacity building project for the Afrobarometer. Project planning began in November 2005 for a January 2006 Afrobarometer Summer School to be held at UCT (Robert Mattes, Kimberly Smiddy)
Public Opinion and Democratic Consolidation	<p>To what extent do traditional cultural values shape South Africans' and South Koreans' support for democracy? (Robert Mattes and Doh Chul Shin)</p> <p>What factors shape Africans' demand for democracy and their evaluations of the supply of democracy? (Robert Mattes and Doh Chul Shin)</p> <p>Is it possible to measure social capital in a diverse context such as Cape Town and what are its political consequences? (Tracy Jooste)</p> <p>To what extent do competing measures of explicit versus implicit support for democracy predict subsequent changes in democracy across 44 countries between 1990 and 1995? (Christopher Claassens and Robert Mattes)</p> <p>To what extent does the level and source of political information shape Mozambicans' views of democracy? (Carlos Shenga)</p> <p>Are social identities in Botswana as homogenous as is widely imagined, and to what extent do social identities shape public opinion and political participation? (Keene Boikhutso)</p>
Voting and Elections	
Comparative National Elections Project	DARU finalised work on two major data sets emerging from this project: a 2004 post election survey of a nationally representative sample of 1200 South African voters conducted by AC Nielsen (Africa); a content analysis of the South African media's coverage of the 2004 election campaign collected by Media Tenor (Cherrel Africa).
The Determinants of Voting Decisions	<p>Do ethno-regional or performance related factors play the most important role in shaping Mozambicans' support for political parties? (Joao Pereira)</p> <p>What was the impact of political information on the extent to which South Africans based their voting decisions on evaluations of political and economic performance, policies and values, or perceived traits of parties and their leaders? (Robert Mattes and Shaheen Mozaffar)</p> <p>To what extent have partisan coalitions and the key drivers of partisan evaluations changed in South African since 1994? (Collette Herzenberg)</p> <p>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 (Cherrel Africa)</p>
Political Consequences of HIV/AIDS	
Understanding HIV Diffusion	To what extent can the diffusion of HIV across South Africa be explained by competing structural, cultural and institutional theories? (Janis Kennedy)
The Impact of AIDS on Public Opinion	What factors explain why Africans prioritise AIDS as an issue requiring government attention? (Per Strand, Jacob Bor, Robert Mattes)