

# POPULATION COUNCIL IN SOUTH AFRICA

## POPULATION COUNCIL COLLABORATORS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Age-in-Action  
 Alice Hospice  
 Anglo American Corporation  
 Centre for Positive Care  
 Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE)  
 Council of Churches: Eastern Cape and Butterworth  
 Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)  
 Crime Reduction in Schools Project  
 Department of Education  
 Department of Health  
 Department of Social Development & Welfare  
 Development Research Africa (DRA)  
 DFID  
 Dutch Reformed, Lutheran, and Roman Catholic Churches of Carletonville  
 Eastern Cape Provincial Council of Churches  
 Empowerment for Success Training  
 EngenderHealth  
 Eskom  
 Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation  
 Gold Fields, Ltd.  
 Health Systems Trust  
 HOPE *worldwide* Program  
 Human Services Research Council  
 KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Health Department  
 Living in Hope  
 London School of Economics  
 London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine  
 loveLife  
 Nelson Mandela Children's Fund  
 Manyano Women's Group of the Methodist Church  
 Medical Care Development International  
 The Mothers' Programme  
 Mpumalanga Department of Education  
 Mpumalanga Provincial Health Department  
 National Union of Mineworkers  
 Pinetown Highway Child and Family Welfare Society  
 Progressus  
 Reproductive Health & HIV Research Unit  
 Rural AIDS and Development Action Research Program (RADAR)  
 Salvation Army  
 Save the Children  
 South Africa AIDS Information Dissemination Service  
 South African Council of Churches  
 South African Institute for Medical Research  
 South African Medical Research Council  
 Thohoyandou Victim Empowerment Trust, Limpopo  
 UNFPA  
 UNICEF  
 University of Cape Town  
 University of KwaZulu-Natal  
 University of Limpopo/Medunsa campus  
 University of Venda  
 University of the Witwatersrand  
 USAID/South Africa  
 The Valley Trust  
 World Health Organization

Since 1999, when the Population Council first established an office in Johannesburg, our researchers have worked with a broad cross-section of South Africans that includes HIV-positive mothers, elderly caregivers, church members, miners, nurses, men who have sex with men, and many others. The descriptions below represent a brief view of that work. For more complete and detailed information, visit [www.popcouncil.org/africa/southafrica.html](http://www.popcouncil.org/africa/southafrica.html).

### Reducing HIV Transmission

- An essential component of slowing the spread of HIV is preventing mother-to-child HIV transmission (PMTCT). Population Council researchers and our South African partner organization collaborated in evaluating a local mentor program, in which HIV-positive mothers provide support to other HIV-positive mothers and mothers-to-be. The program was found to increase the women's use of key PMTCT services and improve their sense of well-being, and is expanding into other South African provinces and other countries.
- Council researchers are developing and evaluating an innovative HIV-prevention project promoting mutual monogamy among men and women in South African churches. The project will also enhance the capacity of two local faith-based organizations to deliver such programs and services to congregations in their localities.
- Working with local partners, we are developing messages and materials on abstinence and faithfulness to be incorporated into life-skills programs for youth and are examining youths' perceptions, beliefs, and practices related to abstinence and faithfulness.
- Council social scientists have shown how schooling, work opportunities, and household characteristics influence adolescents' sexual activity, contraceptive use, and the timing of first birth. Our researchers also examined whether a



*A technician reads test results for a sexually transmitted disease. (Photo credit: Bev Symmonds)*

school-based life skills curriculum increased levels of knowledge about HIV and AIDS and changed adolescents' risky behaviors that could lead to infection.

- One Council study found that compared to their better-off peers, girls living in poverty become sexually active at an earlier age, are less likely to use condoms or discuss condom use with their sexual partners, and are more likely to experience nonconsensual sex.
- More than 6,000 South African women volunteers participated in the efficacy trial of the Council's first-generation candidate microbicide, Carraguard™. A successful microbicide would be a female-initiated method for reducing male-to-female transmission of HIV, and possibly other sexually transmitted infections, when used during vaginal sex.

### Providing Care and Support to Those Affected by HIV and AIDS

- In addition to helping people affected by AIDS, involving youth in caregiving reduces AIDS-related stigma in the community and increases HIV-related knowledge, attitudes, and communication. Along with a leading local NGO, we evaluated a school-based model that trains students to provide HIV education, homework assistance, and other support to orphans and vulnerable children. The study demonstrated the value of youth-to-youth services and outreach activities in a school setting and has been used by our partner NGO to expand and enhance their program.

### HIV and AIDS Treatment

- To help meet the needs of HIV-positive infants and young children in South Africa, researchers from the University of Cape Town and the Council identified successful ways to manage pediatric HIV treatment programs. We also pinpointed knowledge gaps—particularly about family-centered service delivery, which recognizes the critical role of caregivers and other family members—that need further investigation.
- Other Council projects test several models of antiretroviral therapy (ART) service delivery and approaches to ART and family planning integration.

### Reproductive Health Research

- The Council studied the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of improving public clinic services for antenatal clients by including information on HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). While overall the proportion of women receiving STI services increased, we found that, because of logistical problems, fewer than half of first-time clients actually received STI or HIV services.
- We evaluated a health service delivery project aimed at getting men more involved in women's antenatal and postnatal care. The intervention resulted in significant improvements in partners' assistance during pregnancy and in increased condom use and knowledge of condoms as a means of dual protection against pregnancy and STIs.
- We are providing technical assistance to the national department of health that supports the development of a comprehensive maternal health policy and guidelines.
- In collaboration with national and provincial departments of health, we are testing possible ways to integrate HIV-related services like counseling and testing into existing reproductive health services.
- Several current projects are aimed at reducing gender-based violence, and we are looking for effective ways to deliver HIV post-exposure prophylaxis for survivors of rape.

**These publications and many others on Population Council research in South Africa can be found at [www.popcouncil.org/africa/southafricaRI.html](http://www.popcouncil.org/africa/southafricaRI.html)**

#### 2008

"Identifying sources of adolescent exclusion due to violence..." *Promoting Healthy, Safe, and Productive Transitions to Adulthood Brief*

#### 2007

"Key findings from an evaluation of the mothers2mothers program in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa," *Horizons Final Report*

"Building the capacity of faith-based organizations to promote mutual monogamy in South Africa," *Horizons Research Update*

"Developing an integrated model for post-rape care and HIV post-exposure prophylaxis in rural South Africa," *FRONTIERS Final Report*

#### 2006

"Exploring current practices in pediatric ARV roll-out and integration with early childhood programs in South Africa: A rapid situation analysis," *Horizons Final Report*

*Informed Consent in HIV Prevention Trials: Report of an International Workshop*

"Our current microbicide trials: Lessons learned and to be learned," *Microbicide Quarterly*

#### 2005

"Exploring the role of family caregivers and home-based care programs in meeting the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS," *Horizons Research Update*

"Feasibility of introducing a comprehensive integrated package of antenatal care services in rural public clinics in South Africa," *FRONTIERS Final Report*

"Programmatic implications of a cost study of home-based care programs in South Africa," *Horizons Research Update*

"Reproductive intentions and choices among HIV-infected individuals in Cape Town, South Africa: Lessons for reproductive policy and service provision from a qualitative study," *Policy Brief*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE POPULATION COUNCIL'S RESEARCH AND PROGRAMS, VISIT [WWW.POPCOUNCIL.ORG/SOUTHAFRICA](http://WWW.POPCOUNCIL.ORG/SOUTHAFRICA)**