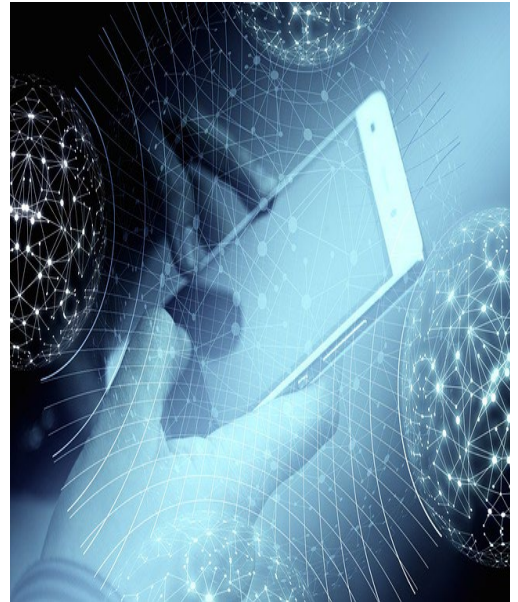


SAPRIN highlights (1 July - 30 September 2022)

18 October 2022

As a research Infrastructure an important achievement has been activating a leadership succession plan through the recruitment of a deputy director for a period of leadership training, with intense mentoring from the current Director and co-Director who have been the champions of the research infrastructure from the onset of SARIR. Furthermore, the infrastructure expanded significantly in this quarter with a focus on developing three urban nodes for the SAPRIN network to complement the founding three rural nodes. The GRT-Inspired Node¹ in Gauteng is currently concluding their baseline data collection round, which has required skill and commitment to overcome the challenges of working in densely populated metropolitan areas. The urban node in the Western Cape² began developmental activities in this quarter and the third urban node in eThekweni³ was successfully started, after a rigorous recruitment process.



Regarding capacity development, a PhD fellowship programme was finalised and approved by the SAMRC executive management committee. An advert will now be posted with a closing deadline of mid-January for applications. Regarding data access, a new harmonised longitudinal population dataset was released on our website, with several options now available for studying population dynamics, including mortality, fertility and migration.

Achievements in science in this quarter was dominated by five exceptional projects:

- A Wellcome Trust funded mental health prize has been awarded to use SAPRIN longitudinal data to develop and validate a digital tool, to predict symptoms of depression and anxiety among young people in South Africa. Multi-level modelling and machine learning techniques, informed by lived experience youth experts, will be conducted.
- A United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) project on adolescent reproductive health got underway, which is a multi-nodal study in the three rural SAPRIN nodes^{4, 5, 6}. To facilitate scientific leadership skills development, each nodal project is led by mid-career African scientist.

- In a newly finished study on access to electricity for rural households, data triangulation with Statistics South Africa national census data was conducted. Comparisons of national census and SAPRIN data are part of the policy evidence foundation being developed in the country.
- Based on an existing collaboration between SAPRIN and Statistics South Africa, SAPRIN contributed to establishing a National Migration and Urbanisation Forum, with national cabinet oversight. Furthermore, a specialised study of internal migrants and their health and economic well-being is conducted at one of the SAPRIN nodes iv, in which about half of the cohort of 3000 young adults are temporary migrants and half not. The triangulation of SAPRIN data with migrant cohort data and national census data provides a good foundation for the policy evidence needed for the forum.
- A multi-country African study on the excess of mortality experienced from Covid-19 got underway, with the three founding SAPRIN nodes participating iv,v,vi, using standardised verbal autopsy tools validated by the World Health Organisation, to establish the cause of death for every person that died in a SAPRIN nodal population, and the equivalent population research infrastructures in other countries.

Gauteng Research Triangle Initiative for the Study of -Population, Infrastructure and Regional Economic Development (GRT-INSPIRED)

Cape Town Surveillance through Healthcare Action Research Project (C-SHARP)

Umlazi Surveillance Initiative to Nurture Grassroots Action (USINGA)

SAMRC/Wits Rural Public Health and Health Transitions Research Unit (Agincourt)

DIMAMO Population Health Research Centre (DIMAMO)

Africa Health Research Institute (AHRI)