

HSRC review

www.hsrc.ac.za

VOLUME 1

No. JUNE
02 2003



Human Sciences Research Council

IN THIS ISSUE

- PAGE 1 – 2 NEWS ROUNDUP
- PAGE 3 IMPACT OF HIV ON LAND
- PAGE 4 – 5 RURAL MUNICIPALITIES
IN CRISIS
- PAGE 6 – 7 GENETIC CLUES
FROM AFRICA
- PAGE 8 THE INTRICACIES OF
LARGE SURVEYS
- PAGE 9 CHANGING ROLE OF
EDUCATIONAL NGOS
- PAGE 10 SCARCE SKILLS:
COUNTING OUR LOSSES
- PAGE 11 FLIGHT OF
THE FLAMINGOS
- PAGE 12 PROFILE: PROFESSOR
LINDA RICHTER
- PAGE 13 NEW BOOKS:
DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA:
MOVING BEYOND A
DIFFICULT LEGACY
- PAGE 14 EVENTS 2003

Africa claims its place in the
human genome puzzle

Who we are

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) is South Africa's statutory research agency dedicated to the social sciences. It has approximately 150 researchers and 100 support staff. Its revenue comes in equal shares from Parliamentary grant and from earnings (tenders, commissions and foundation grants).

What we do

The HSRC undertakes 'social science research that makes a difference', concerned with all aspects of development and poverty alleviation in South Africa, the region, and in Africa. It undertakes large-scale, policy relevant, collaborative research primarily for government departments at national, regional and local levels, other public entities, and local and international development agencies.

How we do it

The HSRC has transformed itself to respond flexibly and comprehensively to users' requirements by:

- radically restructuring and expanding its research capabilities into ten research programmes aligned to major development challenges
- recruiting top-quality research executives and specialists
- undertaking national research programmes which integrate its work with that of other science councils, tertiary institutions and research entities.

How to contact us

134 Pretorius Street, Pretoria
Private Bag X41, Pretoria, 0001
Tel: +27 12 302 2999
Fax: +27 12 326 5362

16 A+C Barnes Street,
Westdene, Bloemfontein
Tel: +27 51 451 0138
Tel: +27 51 448 5500

Plein Park Building,
Plein Street, Cape Town,
Private Bag X9182,
Cape Town, 8000
Tel: +27 21 467 4420
Fax: +27 21 461 0836

133 Prospect Road,
Walmer, Port Elizabeth
Private Bag X4019,
Walmer, 6070
Tel: +27 41 581 7825
Fax: +27 41 481 7826

750 Francois Road, Intuthuko Junction,
Cato Manor, Durban
Private Bag X07, Dalbridge, 4014
Tel: +27 31 273 1400
Fax: +27 31 273 1414

Website: www.hsrc.ac.za

HSRC Review is compiled by the Corporate Communications department, HSRC, and produced by HSRC Publishers.

Editor: Ina van der Linde
Editorial Panel: Karen Bruns, Professor Linda Chisholm,
Dr Scott Drimie, Adrian Hadland, Percy Moleke,
Dr Vijay Reddy
Images: lafrika Photos, pp. 3 & 10; ILRIG pp. 4 & 5; Gallo, p.11
Production Management: comPress

Comments, enquiries and letters can be sent to:

HSRC Review
Corporate Communications
Private Bag X41
Pretoria 0001
E-mail: media@hsrc.ac.za
Fax: +27 12 302 2208

HSRC Review is available free of charge.
It can also be viewed on the web at www.hsrc.ac.za

ISSN 1726 9709



Message from the CEO, Dr Mark Orkin

Sitting with my wife in the rear section of Orlando stadium in Soweto, on the occasion of Walter Sisulu's funeral service, I was powerfully reminded in three respects of the worthwhile distinctiveness of our work in the HSRC.

Firstly, in enjoying 'Arch' Tutu's exhortations, I recalled a university planning seminar a quarter of a century ago, when he asked with some exasperation 'What is all this research for?'

In the HSRC the answer is happily rather simple. Our statutory mandate is to do, and to facilitate others' doing, applied social research for the development of our country and our continent, especially through the large-scale projects spanning countries, collaborators and years of duration that have become our speciality.

Secondly, in our swaying together to the songs, praising the movement, the Lord and the AK47 for their part in our liberation, I was reminded of whom our results are ultimately for: the grannies in their scarves, the t-shirted unionists from Mamelodi, the busload from Parys, the scholars in their uniforms.

Thirdly, their insignia vividly signalled that these are people who come together to advance their purposes in organisations: in workplaces, communities and schools. And this was a reminder of how our scientific results are tested: not only, as in a university, by whether they are sound and true, but also by whether such organisations and their representatives can use the findings to improve their members' lives.

Walter, I thought, we hope we're doing a halfway decent job. Certainly your son Max, on our Council, is keeping careful watch. Hamba kahle.

ON THE COVER

Imagining human/Imagining human by Nadja Daehnke formed part of an exhibition co-ordinated by the HSRC during the Human Genome and Africa Conference in April at Spier in Stellenbosch. The title of the exhibition, *Lexicons and Labyrinths*, is a play on the metaphor of the genome map along with its legend and index that allows one to find the minute components of the human chromosomes. The HSRC also organised a public art competition, *What is life?* which drew 125 entries from across southern Africa. Both exhibitions can be seen at the South African Museum in Cape Town.

Photograph: Deryck van Steenderen



MR PHILLIP DEXTER, the executive director of the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac), will join the HSRC's Social Cohesion and Integration research programme on 1 July 2003. Dexter will take part in the Social Fabric Project, which aims to assess South African social networks, including families and faith communities.



DR ERIC UDJO, formerly of the demographic analysis unit and head of analysis and statistical consulting of StatsSA, joined the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health research programme as epidemiology and demography research director.



DR HAYLEY MACGREGOR, a research specialist in the Child Youth and Family Development research programme of the HSRC, holds a doctorate in social anthropology from the University of Cambridge. Prior to embarking

on studies in medical anthropology, she qualified and worked as a medical doctor in South Africa.



PROFESSOR MELVYN FREEMAN, former director for mental health and substance abuse at the national department of health, spends 60% of his time at the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health research programme.

He is also a visiting professor at the University of Stellenbosch. At the HSRC he will research the social implications of mental health and HIV/AIDS.



DR RUBBY DHUNPATH, a former English language educator with a special interest in critical language literacies, organisational behaviour and identity, and life history research, has joined the Education Policy

Research programme as senior research specialist. He is also a former managing editor of the journal, *Perspectives in Education*.

Cycle of credit holds low-income households at ransom

Research among a small sample of low-income households in South Africa who receive government grants (old-age and child support grants), shows that a large proportion of government grants go directly to food purchases.

Ms Salome Modiselle, a senior researcher in the HSRC's Integrated Rural and Regional Development research programme, says in some cases this has perverse effects as it renders grant-receivers dependent on a particular shopkeeper who is prepared to give them credit.

The national Department of Agriculture commissioned the HSRC to develop a survey method to monitor the impact of the volatility of food prices on households, in particular for low-income households.

Although the research sample is small and these figures are preliminary, it appears, for example, that those buying an 80kg bag of mielie meal on credit pay 16% more than those that buy it without credit, accounting for about 5% of the monthly old-age grant.

In defence of shopkeepers, it must be pointed out that they are constantly approached with requests for credit that they must honour lest they quickly find themselves out of business.

As for other ways to access food, low-income households in rural areas state that small-scale production for own consumption is important, but that they often struggle because of high seed prices and adverse weather conditions. Urban dwellers point to the expense of using municipal water, and the problem of theft.



Professor Roger Southall and Dr Kristina Bentley in Bujumbura (insert: Ms Emelyne Kaneza)

HSRC researchers in Burundi crossfire

Three HSRC researchers were caught in the crossfire between a rebel group and the Burundi national army while on a visit to the capital Bujumbura to finalise a report on the role of former South African president Nelson Mandela as the international facilitator for the Burundi peace process. The role of facilitator has now been taken over by Vice-President Jacob Zuma.

In spite of the Arusha Peace Accord, sporadic fighting still takes place between rebel factions and the army. This reality was brought home when the vehicle in which Professor Roger Southall, Dr Kristina Bentley and Ms Emelyne Kaneza (a Burundi citizen working on a contract basis for the HSRC) travelled, was caught up in a crowd of fleeing people. Although bullets whizzed past them, they were not hurt.

The Nelson Mandela Foundation commissioned the HSRC to do a report, covering the period up to 1 May 2003 with the transfer of power from the Tutsi President, Pierre Buyoya to the current Hutu Vice-President, Domitien Ndayizeye.

Nominations for new HSRC Council

The Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Dr Ben Ngubane, is in the process of reconstituting the Council of the HSRC, whose current four-year term expires on 31 October 2003. The Council has up to ten members (plus the CEO) who have distinguished themselves in the field of the human sciences or possess special qualifications in relation to some aspect of the functions of the Council. The new Council will take office on 1 November 2003.

NewsRoundup

Iraq war will not affect aid to Africa

The costs of reconstruction in Iraq would not affect aid flows by the United Kingdom to Africa in support of NEPAD, the UK's minister for African affairs, Baroness Amos, has predicted. Amos, speaking at a recent discussion hosted by the HSRC's Southern African Regional Poverty Network (SARPN), said that on present trends Africa was the one area where the Millennium Development Goals were unlikely to be met. However, the UK was committed to ensuring that 'no country genuinely committed to poverty reduction, good governance and economic reform will be denied the chance to reach the Millennium Development Goals through lack of finance,' Amos said.



Baroness Amos

South Africa to participate in international science and maths study

An important instrument to monitor the state of South Africa's science and mathematics education system is the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) – a project of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. TIMSS measures trends in students' mathematics and science achievements and is repeated every four years. Fifty countries participate in the TIMSS 2003 study.

The HSRC participated in the 1999 study and is co-ordinating the 2003 study in South Africa. In October 2002 the Assessment Technology and Education Evaluation research programme tested 10 000 Grade 8 learners and 5 000 Grade 9 learners in 265 schools in the nine provinces.

South Africa has embarked in major curriculum restructuring over the last few years and TIMSS would provide useful baseline information to measure our progress in the science and technology field. The results of these tests will be published at the end of 2004.

Figures on illegal immigrants invalid

There is no valid scientific method for estimating the number of undocumented immigrants in a country, say Dr Pieter Kok and Johan van Zyl, two HSRC migration specialists, commenting on HSRC figures quoted by a Department of Home Affairs official in a recent court application. The disputed figures came out of a poorly conceived and analysed immigration study done in the mid-nineties. The study has been publicly withdrawn.

Kok and Van Zyl say to count undocumented migrants correctly is virtually impossible. 'Their reluctance to identify themselves for fear of being harassed or repatriated should be understood. The only acceptable numbers are the official figures on the number of "overstayers" – people who entered the country legally but then violated their visa requirements'.

An examination of the methods followed in deriving the quoted estimates revealed fundamental flaws. The surveys asked clusters of households in a national sample if they knew of any illegal immigrants living nearby, but the analysts failed to correct for the probability of several households referring to the same immigrants. Also, the 'multiplier' used to arrive at national estimates should have been based on the number of households rather than on individuals in the sample. This resulted in substantial overestimations.

Kok and Van Zyl warned that quoting inaccurate information adds to the immigration-policy problem by fuelling xenophobic sentiments.

For more information on NewsRoundup reports, e-mail media@hsrc.ac.za

New HSRC office in Bloemfontein

The Heartland Office of the HSRC, launched on 1 May 2003, will fulfil a need to gather information and to analyse burning development issues in the Free State and the Northern Cape, such as service delivery, local government, intergovernmental relations and rural development, says Bloemfontein office head Dr Doreen Atkinson.

She says these provinces tend to be isolated and under-funded, with huge development challenges. The HSRC's research skills will complement existing research capacity at the University of the Free State and Vista University.

Some of the HSRC research projects in this area include:

▶ Municipal commonage (land) management; a study on using municipal land for emerging farmers. The study established the quantity of municipal land available for collective farming. The HSRC, together with the University of the Western Cape, are now preparing proposals to assist municipalities in effective commonage management.

▶ A study on municipal service delivery to farmers and farm workers on the locality of such services (in towns or on farms) to best serve both rural and farming areas.

▶ Building a small towns' research network to do research on coping with HIV/AIDS, distribution of information, and the involvement of the community. The network will be extended to people in municipal and non-municipal areas.

Future plans for this area include creating a database of researchers and consultants in these provinces to bring emerging researchers into the mainstream activities of the area, Atkinson says.



The launch of the Bloemfontein office of the HSRC was attended by (from left) Premier Manne Dipico (Northern Cape), Dr Udes Pillay (HSRC), Premier Winkie Direko (Free State) and Professor Jakes Gerwel (HSRC chairman).



The impact of **HIV/AIDS** on land

Case studies from Kenya, Lesotho and South Africa

By Scott Drimie

There is a clear and significant link between HIV and loss of land, according to a major three-country study to determine the relationship between HIV/AIDS and land use.

HIV/AIDS not only affects the productivity of the infected, it also diverts the labour of the extended family away from productive activities as they take care of the sick. Savings are consumed and assets sold to help pay for medical expenses.

The study, commissioned by the Southern African Regional Office of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations and co-ordinated by the HSRC, found that very high HIV infection rates have a profound impact on land use, land issues and livelihood strategies.

Conducted in Kenya, Lesotho and South Africa, the study indicated that the composition of households affected by HIV/AIDS may change.

It was found that the use of agricultural land declines as inputs become unaffordable, household labour is reduced, and dissipating wealth makes hiring labour difficult.

Sooner or later, the study found, households fall below the social and economic threshold of vulnerability, leaving the survivors – mainly the young and elderly – with limited resources.

The research revealed that under-utilisation is more common than non-utilisation. In the KwaZulu-Natal case studies, fields were often sown but only partially so.

Inadequate weeding meant that less was produced, even in relation to the smaller amount of land used. Where production might have been sufficient to meet household needs before the onset of HIV/AIDS and left a surplus for cash sales, now the level of production fell below what was necessary for household needs.

All the studies indicate a clear and significant link between HIV and loss of land

The research emphasised the importance of land rights, as HIV/AIDS affects the terms and conditions in which households and individuals hold, use and transact land. Women and children are especially vulnerable when their husbands and fathers die of HIV/AIDS; their land rights are often under threat because of rural power relationships.

The study urged that in the context of this devastating pandemic, an attempt should be made to build on existing systems and provide support services for land tenure that

underpin and support strong social networks and inter-household co-operation.

Further disruption to land systems could potentially destroy the social fabric that keeps affected households afloat. From other studies and land literature, it is evident that in many countries there is a lack of cohesion between the planning and implementation of policies and between policy makers, land officials and the communities they serve.

There is a need to galvanise research, policy and implementation to provide a more effective response to HIV/AIDS and its impact on land issues.

According to HSRC researcher Dr Michael Aliber, a follow-up project on the impact of HIV/AIDS on land rights in Kenya found that dispossession of AIDS widows had become an increasingly common problem.

‘Young widows are under pressure to return to their natal home after the husband’s death. Moreover, extended family members sometimes attempt to assert control over land of children or youth orphaned by AIDS,’ says Aliber. •

The report, *HIV/AIDS and Land: Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi & South Africa* can be downloaded from <http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000158/index.php>

Dr Scott Drimie is a senior research specialist in the Integrated Rural and Regional Development research programme.

Small municipalities caught between unrealistic expectations and critical shortages

By Pat Lucas

The national government has placed impossible expectations on the country's smaller municipalities, which are approaching a crisis of survival because of their lack of capacity, according to a recent investigation by the HSRC.

Democracy and Governance research director Dr Doreen Atkinson led a number of research projects of rural municipalities in the Free State and Northern Cape over the last three years, commissioned by various government departments, and the Local Government Support and Learning Programme of the Department of Provincial and Local Government.

Atkinson says the national government has given municipalities a new role but without providing the resources they need to play such a role. For example, the government

In many municipalities, the financial reserves of old councils with positive bank balances have been used to settle the debts of bankrupt councils

envisages a new culture of municipal governance evident in service delivery models that should ideally be customer, performance, and output-oriented, and work in partnership with the broad community, including the private sector, she says. 'The new role envisaged for South Africa's municipalities is that they become local development agencies ... agents of "delivery".'



Atkinson's research reveals that rural municipalities are far from able to deliver on such an expectation. These bodies still struggle with the challenges of post-apartheid amalgamation. They receive inadequate support from the national and provincial governments for achieving the goals set for them. As a result, they fail to focus on 'developmental' strategies and instead tend to focus on crisis-management.

In many municipalities, the financial reserves of old councils with positive bank balances have been used to settle the debts of bankrupt councils.

'Municipalities are desperate for assistance by the Department of Provincial and Local Government,' she says. 'They know their

situation is poorly managed, but they also know that without technical and financial assistance they will not be able to solve these problems. Some individuals have ideas for getting out of the quagmire, but they are drowning in their workload.'

Many municipalities' current woes can be traced to 'the practical difficulty of integrating very different administrative systems after apartheid,' Atkinson says.

Staff with different task descriptions, and who received different levels of remuneration, had to be integrated into a common organogram. The new municipalities had to integrate different tariff structures for municipal services, as well as different levels of municipal rates. In many cases, these tasks

had to be performed by municipalities with poor data management systems. Other problems arise from insufficient funding and a lack of management capacity.

Amalgamation brought the rise of patronage politics. In some provinces, political parties vetted candidates for the posts of municipal managers in all the municipalities. 'Patronage politics has led to the appointment of political parties' "favourite sons", often with very poor qualifications or experience,' she says.

Private-sector consultants who are called in to fill the qualifications gap often do not help municipalities in the long run. 'In interviews conducted for this study, municipal officials in the Northern Cape and Free State did not speak highly of the support provided by consultants. In some cases, consultants reconcile a municipality's bank account month after month, but have not taught a permanent municipal official to perform this task.'

In many rural municipalities, amalgamation has made the financial battle insurmountable. 'The financial reserves of old councils with positive bank balances have been used to settle the debts of bankrupt councils that now fall within the same new municipality.'

Faced with such a mountain of need, rural municipalities could be expected to rely heavily on support from the provincial and national governments to fulfil the developmental role placed on them. However, Atkinson notes that such support is often either too little or non-existent.

'From the perspective of local governments, not enough is being done by the provincial and national spheres of government to support municipalities in their developmental role.'

In many cases, it seems, 'decentralisation' and 'devolution' – good ideas in themselves – are actually doing more harm than good because they are crippling rather than empowering local governments, Atkinson says.

However, she adds: 'Some national departments (such as Water Affairs and Forestry) are playing a pioneering role in decentralising responsibilities to municipalities and supporting them in creating the capacity they need to meet their responsibilities. These initiatives should serve as models and examples for other line departments to follow.'

Because of so many critical shortages, 'real development questions, such as poverty alleviation strategies, small-, medium- and micro-enterprise promotion, or investment attraction strategies are rarely addressed,' Atkinson says. 'It is often the case that



Patronage politics has led to the appointment of political parties' 'favourite sons', often with very poor qualifications or experience

the only residents who get personal attention from the municipality are defaulters and delinquents.'

The answer to municipalities' growing capacity problem, Atkinson says, must come

from the national officials who laid the development burden on them. 'For the model of "developmental local government" to be realised in practice, substantial fiscal allocations and sustained institutional mentoring need to be provided,' she says. 'The question is: Is there sufficient commitment on the part of national government?'

The report, A Passion to Govern: Third-Generation Issues facing Local Government in South Africa, can be requested from media@hsrc.ac.za.

Pat Lucas is a journalist at a Johannesburg-based newspaper.

A MUNICIPALITY THE SIZE OF HUNGARY

The new municipalities are geographically much larger than before. Many district municipalities are inordinately large: Xhariep district municipality in the southern Free State is the size of Hungary; the Northern Free State district municipality has the same diameter as Belgium; and the Namakwa district municipality is almost as wide as Kansas. Some local municipalities are very large as well. In the Northern Cape, most municipalities consist of three to four towns, and have a diameter of up to 150 kilometres. In the Free State, huge local municipalities were created; the most radical case is that of Kopanong, which combines nine erstwhile municipalities, and has a diameter of 150 kilometres.

The challenge of administrative amalgamation in such large municipalities is huge, and that of effective development administration even more daunting.

The difficulty of managing development on this sort of scale is illustrated by the case of commonage management. In the Northern Cape and Free State many municipalities own agricultural land. In the past the use of this land was easy and profitable – it was simply rented out to commercial farmers. In terms of the municipalities' developmental mandate, and in response to popular pressure, municipalities now rent out these lands to township residents, either for survivalist agriculture or to help residents to become 'emergent' farmers.

The giant new municipalities are buckling under the administrative strain of drafting new types of contracts with far-flung communal beneficiaries, often in contexts of community conflict. The communal use of land brings with it environmental hazards like overgrazing, inadequate maintenance of fences and windmills, non-payment of rent, poor animal management techniques, and a myriad of other practical problems which enormous, overstretched, and underskilled municipalities battle to address.

HUMPTY DUMPTY

and the human genome in Africa

By Brett Hilton-Barber

Humpty Dumpty is a useful metaphor for human biology. Having fallen off the wall and spilled his guts, he has provided the world's leading scientists with plenty of DNA sequences, proteins and amino acids for analysis, description and comparison. Using the latest biotechnology, the scientists (all the king's horses and all the king's men), have a fairly good idea what Humpty is made of. But they can't put him together again.

This analogy, coined by Oxford University Professor Denis Noble, explains the status of genetic science. Despite the astounding advances in understanding human biological architecture since the discovery of the DNA sequence half a century ago, we still do not know how it all fits together.

To try to understand how all the constituent elements of human biology fit together, the HSRC co-hosted the Human Genome and Africa conference at Spier Estate outside Stellenbosch in March 2003.

Opening the proceedings, South African Arts, Culture, Science and Technology Minister, Ben Ngubane, said it was vital that genomic knowledge was placed at the heart of the education system: 'How can we in South Africa be players in this field if our children are still not taught that the vast complexity and diversity of living things has a powerful, understandable and usable conceptual basis?' he asked.

The 300 delegates from 20 countries would have agreed with the Minister's concerns about the scientific marginalisation of Africa. Ironically, South Africa was centre-stage in the discussions about human origins, with a main area of consensus being that the country was the probable 'motherland' that gave rise to modern humans (*Homo sapiens*). Genetic research presented at Spier strengthened the argument that all people today may well be descendants of an ancestral Khoisan population that lived in southern Africa 200 000 years ago.

The human genome initiative has provided an astoundingly clear road map of our evolutionary journey, linking past, present and future by isolating the tracing mutations in our genetic make-up. Scientists now understand how genes work, how they mutate and, in a limited way, the extent to which they can be manipulated. But it's another matter altogether to get agreement on issues such as the treatment of diseases, the ethics of genetic engineering of embryos,



ARTIST: Isaac Nkosinathi Khanyile

genetically-modified foods and the intellectual property debate around drug patents.

HIV/AIDS is a case in point. Africa is the continent most affected by AIDS, yet it has the least resources to do anything about it. As Dr David Bourne of the Cape Town School of Public Health pointed out: 'By 2020 the life expectancy of a South African will drop from 63 to 40, and 5 million to 7 million people will be dying from AIDS every year.'

Perhaps Africa should not even pretend to try and come up with the answers. This was alluded to by Nobel Prize winner Dr David Baltimore of the California Institute of Technology, who advanced a radical new approach in trying to contain the virus. In a paper delivered on his behalf, he said the war against AIDS would not be won unless an artificial 'immunity' protein was developed as a vaccine. Only the First World had the resources for this kind of research,

he said, but it was in the developed world's interests to make such a vaccine as widely available as possible.

Kenyan scientist Dr Phelix Majiwa told the conference how he was battling to find the resources to tackle sleeping sickness, which affects up to 500 000 people and millions of cattle in 37 African countries, costing millions of dollars in treatment and lost productivity. The \$6 million investment in Majiwa's

humility that may well prove to be the greatest contribution (of genomics). For almost 50 years we had lulled ourselves into believing that, in discovering the molecular basis of genetic information, we had found the "secret of life". We were confident that if we could only decode the DNA's message, we would understand the ... explanation of life ... Today we marvel not at the simplicity of life's secrets, but at their complexity.'



1



2



3



4



5

programme is dependent on First World donors.

British molecular expert Professor Gordon Dougan said not all research was prohibitively expensive for Africa. Advances in science made it feasible for Africa to produce its own vaccines within the next five years, to combat diseases such as malaria and typhoid. But he warned that the obstacle to developing generic medicines was the major international drug companies. Indeed, some delegates argued that intellectual property rights over certain drug patents should be abolished.

Another area of contention is that of genetically modified (GM) food. Africa has more than its fair share of starving people, yet there is resistance to accepting GM food aid. The director of the African Centre of Gene Technologies, Jane Morris, said 'scaremongering' had given GM foods bad press, but they carried no health risks. However, the director for the International Conservation of Nature, Saliem Fakir, said there was 'mixed evidence' about the benefits of GM foods.

Science has made enormous advances with the human genome initiative, but the project has also exposed limitations in our understanding of what constitutes life itself. As best-selling author and human biologist Evelyn Fox Keller wryly observed: 'The biggest lesson we have learnt from genetic science is the lesson of humility: it is this

How can we in South Africa be players in this field if our children are still not taught that the vast complexity and diversity of living things has a powerful, understandable and usable conceptual basis?

The point repeatedly made was that South Africa is a unique laboratory in terms of human genetics and medicinal plants, and some of the clues in trying to piece Humpty together again may well lie south of the Limpopo. Some of these clues may be presented at the next African Human Genome conference, tentatively scheduled for next year in Cairo. *

For more information on the Human Genome and Africa conference go to www.hsra.ac.za

Brett Hilton-Barber is a freelance journalist.

- 1 Dr Chris Stringer, the head of human origins at the Natural History Museum in London.
- 2 Professor Sydney Brenner, South African geneticist and 2002 Nobel Prize winner for medicine.
- 3 Dr Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza, Emeritus Professor of Genetics at the School of Medicine, Stanford University.
- 4 Evelyn Fox Keller, best-selling author, human biologist and Professor of History and Philosophy of Science at MIT.
- 5 Philip Tobias, Professor Emeritus of Anatomy and Human Biology and Honorary Professorial Research Fellow in Anatomical Sciences at Wits.

The HSRC is gearing up for a comprehensive and hugely complex 'longitudinal' public opinion survey: the annual South African Social Attitude Survey (SASAS), which will go into the field in August 2003. SASAS will determine the views of 5 000 households on issues such as governance, service delivery, safety and security, crime, corruption, and trust in public institutions.

The intricacies of **LARGE SURVEYS**

By Dr Udesch Pillay

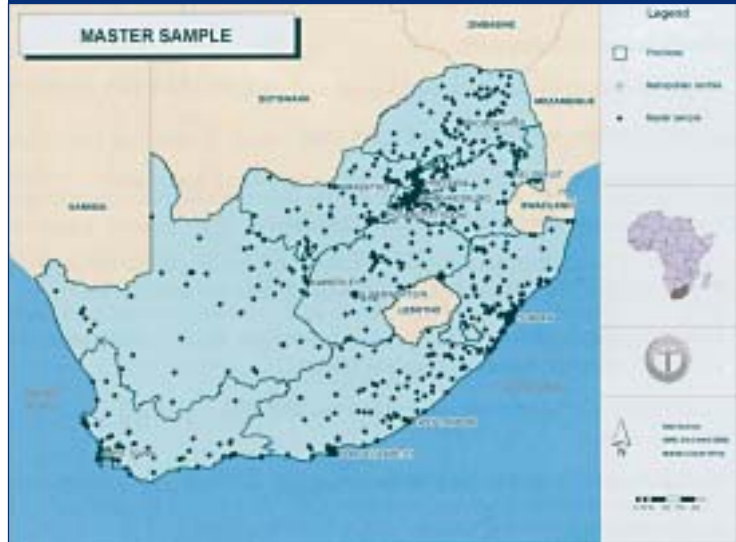


Figure 1: Location of master sample enumerator areas in South Africa

A longitudinal survey implies that the same households can be visited repeatedly over periods of time to identify changes and trends in public opinion, as well as any other subject matter where time-series analysis is deemed to be beneficial. A key requirement for such repeat-visit surveys in the South African context is the development of an accurate and complete 'master sample' of areas that represent the country's provincial, settlement, and racial diversity and dynamics.

The Surveys, Analyses, Monitoring and Mapping (SAMM) research programme, headed by Dr Udesch Pillay, set out to develop an HSRC master sample last year, using the 1 000 enumerator areas (EAs) identified by StatsSA for the 2001 census.

The decision to use the 2001 EAs was based on the consideration that the sampling units should remain relevant for future HSRC

surveys until the next census in five years. It also meant that the HSRC would have access to the most recent census statistics and geographic databases over this period to allow for adjustments for possible annual distortions to the master sample that may compromise future survey results.

The master sample was designed to allow reporting of results at a provincial, geographical type and race level. The two main levels were provinces and geography type. In the 2001 census, the four geography types were urban formal, urban informal, rural formal (including commercial farms) and rural informal (i.e. the deep rural areas). In the formal urban areas, race was used as a third reporting level.

The HSRC hired a specialist geographical information systems (GIS) company, Geospace International, to provide the aerial photography and assist in the fieldwork and capturing the

features of the sample on a database. With the assistance of 15 HSRC staff members and the use of a GIS platform that generated digitised maps from satellite images, aerial photography and ground-based maps of sites, the master sample was eventually created.

Hand-held global positioning systems were used by fieldworkers on the ground to identify the spatial co-ordinates of where they were, and the dwelling units they needed to reach. It's from this master sample that the 2002 Nelson Mandela/HSRC study of HIV/AIDS, involving 10 000 households, was conducted.

The massive project of developing the HSRC master sample was completed in September 2002, and hardcopy and electronic master sample 'navigational kits' have recently been archived in SAMM. •

Dr Udesch Pillay is executive director of the HSRC's Surveys, Analyses, Monitoring and Mapping research programme.



View the new-look HSRC website, launched on 4 April 2003, where you can...

- ▶ Find out more about our research programmes and their projects.
- ▶ Engage in the debate around issues of poverty through the Southern African Regional Poverty Network (SARNP), learn more about the African Human Genome initiative, enquire as to GIS products available and more...
- ▶ Access research monographs, occasional papers and books – order a print copy, or download a digital copy for free from HSRC Publishers. The choice is yours.
- ▶ Download the electronic version of the *HSRC Review*, the news publication featuring our many research activities.

Visit www.hsrc.ac.za

chameleon

'A chameleon-like game' – educational NGOs in South Africa

game

By Seán Morrow

South Africa has a particularly rich NGO history, closely linked to the struggle for liberation. In the 1970s and '80s numerous organisations sprang up in response to the harsh political and social realities of the day. Some directly confronted the apartheid government. Others attempted to work for the welfare of the oppressed in whatever spaces they could find. Donors, especially those from abroad, supported such NGOs in solidarity with their opposition to racism and discrimination, even while in the world as a whole the discourse of value for money, accountability and delivery of services increasingly displaced that of ideological commitment to radical causes.

In South Africa, educational NGOs were particularly crucial. A study of NGOs and education in South Africa for the Washington-based Academy for Educational Development (AED), funded by USAID, showed that the struggle for freedom had always been linked to decent

education. The resistance to 'Bantu Education' from the 1950s further emphasised this relationship. The Soweto uprising of 1976 grew from educational discontents, and the link between education and resistance continued throughout the 1980s. NGOs were a crucial component of the United Democratic Front that led domestic opposition to apartheid in the 1980s.

Majority rule might have been expected to lead to the flowering of educational NGOs. Reality was more complex and ambiguous. The ANC-dominated government, anxious to satisfy the expectations of the masses, launched the RDP, and NGOs were to be harnessed to this national effort. Resources that had previously been directed to NGOs were now generally channelled towards a government elected by the overwhelming

majority of the people. Even when socio-economic policy changed in a market-oriented direction, with the implementation of GEAR, government continued to attract and disburse most donor funds.

One of the ironies of the time was therefore that political freedom was accompanied by the death of many NGOs. Some had no doubt outlived their use, caught in a resistance mode from which they found it impossible to emerge. Others, however, were doing useful work and were a real loss.

Those NGOs that survived often did so by becoming, or extending their role as, service providers, now in collaboration with government rather than in opposition to it. For some, this was a major shift from the critical, even oppositional mode in which they had grown, a shift further complicated by the loss of many personnel to the administrative and political arms of government. For others less directly political in orientation, the transition was easier.

In education, there was a pronounced move towards the commercialisation of NGOs, with some becoming Section 21 companies. Project Literacy, for example, by providing excellent service to companies and other institutions willing to pay for its services, flourishes in spite of overall neglect of adult basic education and training. It has done so by a business-oriented approach that includes cutting down permanent staff to a core of professionals and outsourcing aspects of its activities. The Molteno Project succeeds by focussing on the production and sale of excellent teaching and learning materials in South African languages. These and others are now even exporting their skills and services to other parts of Africa on a commercial basis. As Andrew Miller, the CEO of Project Literacy, puts it, it is 'a chameleon-like game'.

He cites the big United States NGOs. These are, he says, 'very good chameleons ... and they compete against private people for jobs'. In his view, given South African and world realities, this is the way forward.

Thus for NGOs the perhaps surprising outcome of ten years of democracy is a decline in direct donor funding; a corresponding emphasis on commercial success, mainly through a stress on service delivery; the demise of many NGOs, particularly though not solely those devoted to social activism, and a move away from the critical advocacy that many would see as central to the role of NGOs in a vibrant civil society.

Is this the full picture? Are NGOs forced or willing converts to commercial norms, now locked in a service-delivery embrace with government from which they cannot escape? Has the commitment to radical critique, so central to the earlier history of the sector, evaporated?

Perhaps not. There are indications that after a period of painful change, a new pattern of NGOs may be emerging. This may range from organisations barely distinguishable from commercial operations, through hybrid entities using whatever non-commercial resources they can generate to stake out a degree of independence, to bodies that concentrate on articulating various often dissenting and critical positions in the new context. In the latter category, the Treatment Action Campaign, working for the interests of those afflicted with the HIV virus, is prominent; in education, the Education Rights Project, for example, plays an analogous role. What the relative importance of these elements within the sector will be is yet to be determined. Certainly, for a healthy democracy, critical advocacy, as well as efficient and professional service provision, is crucial. *

Are NGOs forced or willing converts to commercial norms, now locked in a service-delivery embrace with government from which they cannot escape?

For further information on *A study of NGOs and Education in South Africa*, please e-mail smorrow@hsrc.ac.za

Dr Seán Morrow is a chief research specialist in the Education Policy Research programme.

Sectoral insights into the scarce skills **DEBATE**

By Simon McGrath

By 2011 South Africa will have an estimated shortfall of 19 000 nurses, and while the country trains enough doctors to serve the population, the problem of a huge shortage of doctors in the public sector will probably not be solved in the near future.

These are some of the conclusions in a range of studies on skills development and shortages commissioned or conducted by the HSRC's Human Resources Development research programme.

The studies aim at providing the best empirical overview of the nature and extent of the scarce skills issue and form part of the Human Resources Review 2003, which will be published later this year. This research

Review's findings in two areas, namely health and engineering, researchers Johan Erasmus and Elsje Hall of the HSRC's Economic and Employment Policy Research (EEPR) programme, examines the likely extent of shortages of doctors and nurses in the next decade.

Erasmus and Hall found that the supply of new doctors from medical schools is likely to slightly outweigh the loss of staff through retirement, illness and emigration. However, this positive picture needs to be carefully qualified: firstly, recent statements by

where only 29% of doctors meet the needs of the 84% of the population not covered by medical aid schemes. It would also not redress the massive inter-provincial and rural-urban disparities in the supply of doctors.

In the case of the nursing profession, the bulk of nurses have remained within the public system and have more successfully been deployed across the country. The ratio of nurses to overall population is also more favourable. However, the skills shortage situation here is starker than for doctors. Even with recruitment to address the 25%

Even with recruitment to address the 25% vacancy rate in the public system, Erasmus and Hall predict a shortfall of nearly 19 000 nurses by 2011



falls within the ambit of one of the key development challenges facing South Africa, as identified by President Mbeki. Scarce skills constrain international competitiveness, economic growth and poverty reduction, Mbeki believes.

The issue has been taken up elsewhere in the government too, most notably in the development of the new Immigration Act, where a new strategy for attracting such skills from outside the country has been developed.

In a preview of the Human Resources

representatives of junior doctors and medical students suggest that the already high levels of migration of doctors may increase significantly; secondly, the projected growth in supply of doctors would not address the major problem that 27% of posts for doctors in the public sector are unfilled; and thirdly, the projections assume that the current disparities and weaknesses within the health system will not be addressed.

This would leave unchanged a ratio of doctors to overall population and a situation

vacancy rate in the public system, Erasmus and Hall predict a shortfall of nearly 19 000 nurses by 2011.

A less serious situation emerges from the study of engineers by Grové Steyn (also EEPR). He shows that engineering is in the process of a major restructuring of their areas of specialisation in the wake of the decline in minerals and military uses of engineering. Instead, there has been a growth in demand for electrical engineers and a shift towards an employer preference for those with postgraduate qualifications. The response of higher education appears to have been relatively prompt and course offerings largely reflect the changes in market demand.

The stagnant overall demand for engineers suggests that there is no scarce skills problem at the moment. However, it is not clear whether there are sufficient learners willing and qualified to take engineering courses if there were to be sustained increases in demand. Steyn highlights the history of poor maths and science performance in historically black schools. However, it is possible that the major attention on this issue by the Department of Education might have had sufficient impact by the time more engineers were needed. *

Dr Simon McGrath is a research director in the Human Resources Development research programme. The Human Resources Review 2003 will be published towards the end of 2003.



Flight of the FLAMINGOS

The loss, gain and circulation of the highly skilled

By Michael Kahn

The Mont Fleur political scenarios of a decade ago envisioned four possible futures. These were the ostrich, the lame duck, Icarus, and the flight of the flamingos. The most desirable outcome would be the last, where the country, like a flamingo, slowly takes off.

Since the early '90s there has been a different flight, where the skilled have left (by air) for greener pastures. Flight is akin to brain drain.

Against this background, the National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI) asked the HSRC's Knowledge Management research programme to study the mobility of research and development (R&D) personnel. We used the flamingo metaphor to understand our pool of skills under the organiser 'the flamingos migrate only to return when the brackish waters are replenished'.

We conceive mobility as involving human resource development, and the loss, gain and circulation of knowledge workers. Our data sources included local emigration and immigration data, as well as primary data from employer interviews, life histories of the mobile, and personnel data from the parallel national R&D survey.

Given the primacy of the survey we added questions on mobility to provide quality up-to-date information on R&D staff.

Mobility is a worldwide trend. For example, the UK sees its top researchers migrating to the US, where they meet Chinese, Indians and Russians that have already made the great leap 'US-ward'.

Under apartheid (both formal and informal) skill shortages were met through active immigration policies. However, through the period of transition, during which official emigration of the skilled has exceeded immigration fourfold, policy has seemingly ignored the looming crisis.

The project has confirmed the earlier work of Kaplan, Brown and Meyer that identified flows into the principal sink countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), whose immigration figures suggest inflows from South Africa at levels four times higher than the official StatsSA emigration data declares.

Also, despite the concerns expressed by many in science and technology over the past two decades, insufficient numbers of school leavers follow science-based careers. Moreover, the majority of those who could do so don't.

One interesting finding is that the age profile of the science council sector is quite different to the ageing profile of higher education researchers, as found by Mouton in a study based on publication patterns. We

have yet to receive and process the data of the other major sectors (higher education, government and business) that will then provide the big picture.

But this much is certain – government immigration policy lacks coordination and is restrictive toward the highly skilled. It is understandable that government will act to protect the semi-skilled or unskilled against competition from immigrants, but disincentives to the immigration of the skilled are counter-productive.

Our flamingos have been flying away. If, as India, Canada and Taiwan have done, we do not ensure that that our lagoons where the flamingos can settle retain their nutrient potential, our R&D system will age and wither.

The Peruvian scholar Franscisco Sagasti argues that it takes 15 years to create R&D expertise, but only two to destroy it. Indeed. One possible source of comfort is that the loss of personnel out of the science councils through emigration in 2002 was as low as 5%. This could of course be cold comfort, meaning that the flamingos migrated long before the survey was conducted. •

Dr Michael Kahn is executive director of the HSRC's Knowledge Management research programme. For more information on the mobility of R&D workers report, please e-mail mkahn@hsrc.ac.za



Executive director of the Child, Youth and Family Development (CYFD) research programme



HER CAREER HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

One of the first executive directors to be appointed to the restructured HSRC, Professor Linda Richter has, in a short 18 months, transformed an idea into one of the most effective and dynamic research units in South Africa.

That she is driven by a passionate concern for children is obvious. 'I think and talk work and children's issues from early morning to late at night, day in and day out. I simply cannot bear the idea that children are harmed by their life experiences. It is my and CYFD's mission to do something about the plight of our children in this country.'

Linda grew up in Welkom in the Free State, matriculating from Eunice High School in Bloemfontein. This all-girls school promoted a culture of service and achievement. It 'made you feel you could be a leader'.

She obtained her PhD in psychology from the University of Natal and then was awarded a post-doctoral fellowship by the Centre for Science Development to follow programmes in child development at the Universities of London, Edinburgh and Nottingham.

Professor Dev Griesel, a neuropsychologist working on brain and behaviour relationships in children's development at the Institute for Behavioural Sciences at Unisa, recruited Linda back to South Africa. At 34 she was appointed as a professor at Unisa. Griesel later became her husband and collaborator.

- ◆ The first non-medical professor in the Medical Faculty at the University of the Witwatersrand's Department of Paediatrics and Child Health.
- ◆ Deputy director of the Centre for Epidemiological Research at the Medical Research Council.
- ◆ Founding scientist of the Wellcome Trust-funded Africa Centre for Population Studies and Reproductive Health in Mtubatuba.
- ◆ Consultant for a range of international agencies, including the World Health Organisation, the United Nations Children's Fund and various international child development programmes.
- ◆ Chair of the first meeting of FutureThink in 2000, a group convened by the World Health Organisation to consider long-term threats to children's development.
- ◆ Corresponding staff member of the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.
- ◆ Member of the Essential National Health Research Committee, Department of Health.
- ◆ One of only five women to be elected as a Fellow at the University of Natal.

In July 2001, Linda came to the HSRC to develop a dedicated research programme focusing on children, youth and family.

She has published on child and adolescent development, HIV/AIDS, women's issues, and the status of the psychology profession in South Africa. Last year she was the co-author with Oscar Barbarin of *Mandela's Children: Growing up in post-apartheid South Africa* (Routledge, 2002).

One of her hobbies is photography and she has made two films, one on social and psychological aspects of malnutrition, the

other demonstrating psychosocial support for children in emergency conditions, filmed in Angola in 1998. In 2002 she worked with Vuleka Productions on a film of a youth project to support children affected by AIDS and poverty, funded by the Ford Foundation. The film, called *Just a Little Smile*, previewed at last year's Durban International Film Festival. Linda continues to work with Vuleka and the Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative for children affected by AIDS to produce a training film and supporting materials. ▶

NEW BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT

CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH PROGRAMME

CYFD aims to help alleviate poverty and advance social and economic development and social transformation and integration of South African society through research focused on children, youth and families.

CYFD conducts research in seven priority areas:

- 1 Early child development and intervention.
- 2 Rights, protection and justice as it affects children, youth and families.
- 3 Socialisation and learning.
- 4 Youth development, including civic engagement.
- 5 Risk and resilience, including intervention to reduce high-risk conditions and behaviours.
- 6 Sexuality and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS.
- 7 Families and households.

CYFD projects

Since its inauguration in July 2001, CYFD has managed 33 research projects, of which 19 will continue into 2004. The continuing projects include three grants from the US National Institute of Health, and other international grants, namely the Wellcome Trust (UK), the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organisation and the Ford Foundation.

Large, long-term projects funded by either local or foreign government agencies and private foundations include:

Birth to Twenty – a follow-up study of more than 2 500 children in Soweto–Johannesburg from birth into their teens, looking at biological and social determinants of health and development.

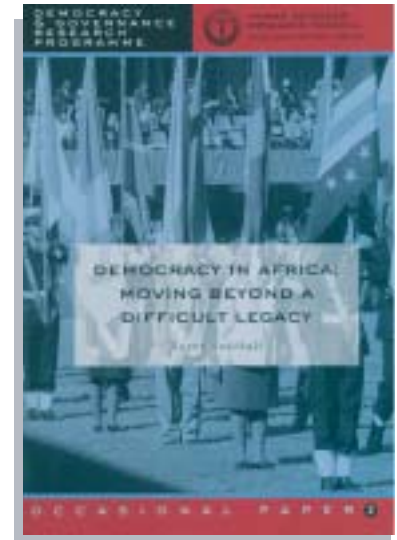
The evaluation of family-, school- and community-based programmes, promoting social and civic engagement and preventing high-risk behaviour such as unwanted pregnancies, HIV infections and substance abuse.

The development, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes to strengthen families, including family support for children, the aged and other vulnerable people.

Studying links between families, schools and communities to protect children and youth from violence and abuse, and evaluating efforts to increase their protection.

2003–2004 projects funded by CYFD's share of the parliamentary grant to HSRC include:

- ◆ Child and youth indicators, co-funded by the Gauteng provincial government and UNICEF.
- ◆ Disability studies, supported by the national Department of Social Development.
- ◆ Men and masculinity, as well as a special focus on fatherhood and media representations of men's relationships with children. • **Ina van der Linde**



Democracy in Africa: Moving beyond a difficult legacy by Roger Southall

63pp | soft cover
148mm x 210mm
ISBN 0-7969-2017-6
R32,00 (including VAT)

'Democracy in southern Africa is centred around electoralism, is otherwise fairly hollow, and does not, on the whole, make a lot of difference to ordinary peoples' lives. Indeed, its association with a capitalism that is largely unregulated is actually promoting greater, not lesser, inequalities.'

This observation is just one of many thought-provoking views contained in the Democracy and Governance programme's latest occasional paper in its series focussing on democracy in Africa. Written by the programme's head, Professor Roger Southall, the publication comprises two essays. The first has a continent-wide focus and looks at the limitations of the so-called 'second wave of democratisation' in Africa in the 1990s in the form of largely unrealised hopes of genuine participatory democracy. These, Southall argues, have produced a growing level of cynicism on the part of the African electorate and a high degree of political demobilisation.

The second essay narrows the discussion to southern Africa, focussing, inter alia, on how the capture of state power by various southern African liberation movements – ones like ZANU and SWAPO which supposedly waged war in the interests of the 'democratic rights of the people' – has led to the very antithesis: corruption, authoritarianism and political decay. Southall ranges over a number of issues including the current flavour of the day – the African Peer Review Mechanism proposed by NEPAD. On this issue, he warns that unless NEPAD becomes 'the property of Africa's people', democratises itself, it will turn into yet another instrument of 'undemocratic domination' by Africa's rulers.

This publication, available at R32.00, is a compelling analysis of the current state of democracy on this continent. It is hard-hitting without degenerating into Afro-pessimism. There is light at the end of Southall's vision of a democratising region but reaching it, he warns, will not be easy and getting there is not guaranteed.

John Daniel

Published by HSRC Publishers, this occasional paper is available for **FREE DOWNLOAD**. To order a print copy, telephone +27 21 701 7302; email booksales@hsrc.ac.za or visit our on-line bookshop at <http://www.hsrcpublishers.ac.za>

events2003events

HSRC seminar series

For bookings kindly contact the seminar convenor, Arlene Grossberg, by telephone +27 21 302 2755 or e-mail acgrossberg@hsrc.ac.za. Seminar details are subject to change. Please verify dates, times and seating available. Unless otherwise indicated, the venue for seminars is at the HSRC's Video Conference Centre, Library, 1st floor, 134 Pretorius Street, Pretoria. The seminars are linked by video to our Cape Town and Durban offices, but owing to limited space, please contact our offices (contact numbers are on the inside front cover) to book a seat.

10 June
12h00 – 13h00

The evolution of skin colour and the sociology of race.

Presented by Professor Wilmot James, executive director of the HSRC's Social Cohesion and Integration research programme.

24 June
12h00 – 13h00

Document management – theory and practice. Presented by Dr Andrew Paterson, chief research specialist in the Human Resources Development research programme and Dr Lucia Lötter, software applications developer, Information Technology Services, both of the HSRC.

29 July
12h00 – 13h00

Mexico's recent economic and social transition in the context of globalisation.

Presented by His Excellency Mauricio de Maria y Campos (Ambassador to Mexico). Contact Marene Bronkhorst +27 21 362 1379.

15 July
12h00 – 13h00

On the way down: How HIV hits rural household labour. Presented by Catherine Cross, chief research specialist in the HSRC's Integrated Rural and Regional Development research programme.

Democracy and Governance (D&G) research programme seminar series

5 June
12h00 – 13h00

Are there new ways to address the crisis of poverty in South Africa? Presented by Margaret Legum, chair of the South African New Economics (SANE) network.

22 July
12h00 – 13h00

Strengthening human rights-related policy implementation in the public service. Presented by Vito Naidoo, senior researcher, D&G.

Conferences and seminars

12 & 13 June

2003 HSRC Research Conference. Presentation and discussion of HSRC research and work-in-progress. By invitation only.

HOW TO ACCESS HSRC PUBLICATIONS

HSRC publications are available from good bookshops, library suppliers, libraries and academic institutions. In addition, visitors to www.hsrcpublishers.ac.za can order from our fully secure on-line catalogue and purchase printed titles from the on-line bookshop – these may be supplied from our warehouse or printed at the client's request.

Some of the publications can also be downloaded free from our website. Researchers and other members of the public may avail themselves of this service, or on examination of the relevant content, may order a printed copy.

All sales-related queries relating to existing published titles or the availability of previously published titles should be directed to Blue Weaver Marketing on +27 21 701 7302 or e-mail booksales@hsrc.ac.za. Blue Weaver will relay requests for free copies, backorders or stock queries to the relevant parties and will be delighted to assist you.

To receive advance information on new titles, e-mail us at publishing@hsrc.ac.za and we will forward to you a form which will take you only a few minutes to complete, ensuring that we only send you information relevant to you; alternatively you can fax your details to +27 21 461 0836 and we will be in touch.

www.hsrcpublishers.ac.za