STEREOTYPING 'JOB-HOPPING' BLACK PROFESSIONALS
an excuse for lack of transformation?

BEING A SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT STATE
what SA needs to learn

BUDGETING FOR JOBS
government policy intentions revealed

CONTENTS

THE CEO NOTES
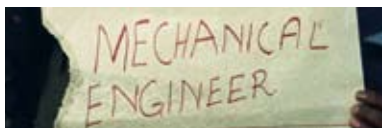
GOING GLOBAL: PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE

How can countries with resource constraints, mostly in the South, become more significant players in the global production and development of knowledge? How can they develop their scientific base and retain their skilled professionals? These are questions resource-restrained countries agonise over in an increasingly globalising world where techno-scientific innovation is considered to be a distinctive feature of knowledge-based economies.

Globalisation increases the need for strong national systems that are able to absorb new advances in global innovation from elsewhere in the world. The fostering of scientific and technological collaboration between resource-restrained countries (for ease of reference, called 'the South') and resource-rich countries ('the North'), is required to ensure the global integration of knowledge.

BARRIERS TO KNOWLEDGE SHARING

What are the barriers to the penetration of scientific knowledge between the North and South countries?

Scientific advance would invariably take greater strides if it happened on a global scale and specifically between the North and South countries. But this will require fundamental changes in the composition and diversity of members of the research community, and while there are some signs of exchange, many barriers remain.

Internal barriers

Economic wealth is a good predictor of scientific output. Figure 1 shows that the poorer countries have lower scientific citation with low levels of investment in research infrastructure and domestic funding for research; they cannot prioritise research ahead of other pressing social needs, and are inclined to leave research funding to international donors; they do not train researchers in cutting-edge fields; and there is a lack of a critical mass of scientists who can provide critical review, and tutor and mentor emerging scientists. Inadequate research resources mean poor salaries for scientists, who then often join either the civil service or private sector for better pay.

It is therefore not surprising that the number of full-time equivalents (FTE) of researcher per 1 000 people in employment is lowest in countries of the South; for example, South Africa (1.5), China (1.9) and Argentina (2.9) have low FTE rates compared to industrialised countries such as Sweden (10.6) Japan (11.0), Australia (8.3) and Spain (6.0). High FTE rates of researchers mean a country has a critical mass of scientists, with high investment in science and technology, an issue which needs to be urgently addressed by the South if they are to succeed in penetrating these barriers and become a significant global player in knowledge generation.

Figure 1: International comparisons, GERD

Gross Research Expenditure as a % GDP

Country	Value
Sweden	3.6
Korea	3.47
Finland	3.46
Japan	3.44
USA	2.68
OECD aver	2.29
France	2.08
Australia	2.01
EU-27 aver	1.77
China	1.49
Spain	1.27
South Africa	0.93
Argentina	0.51

Source: OECD Main Science and Technology Indicators, 2009 (adapted from South African Department of Science and Technology report: National Survey of Research and Experimental Development 2007/08)
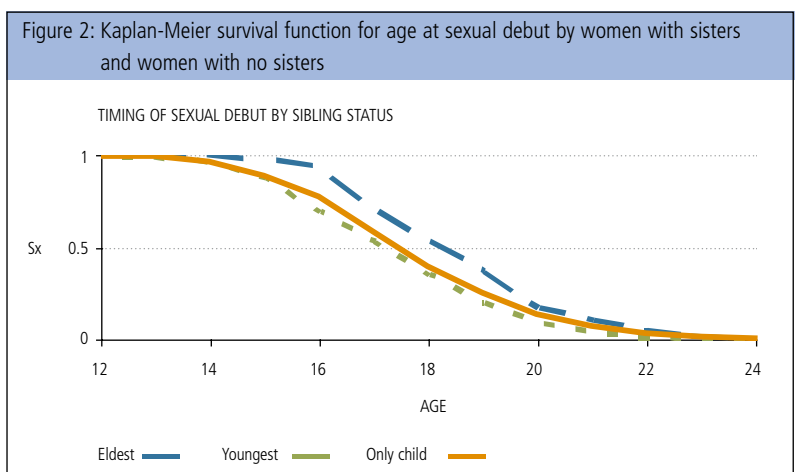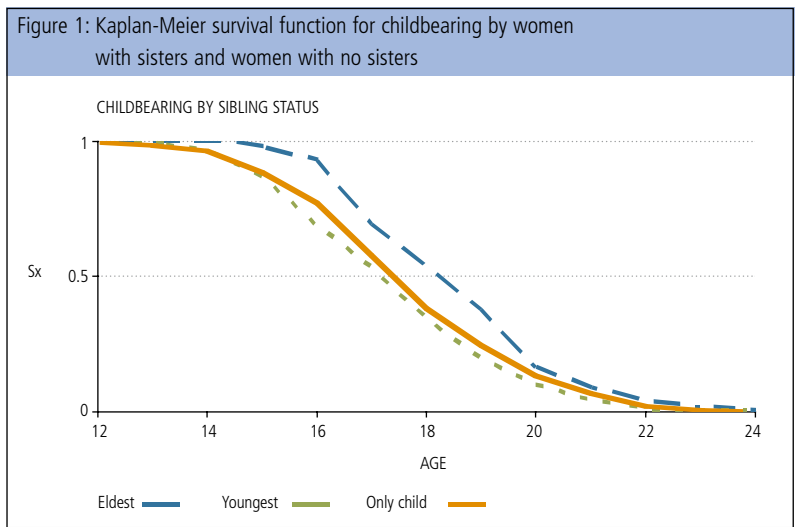
SISTERS & PREGNANCY

How much influence do sisters in a family have upon each other when it comes to teenage childbearing and sexual debut? Crystal Munthree, a master's intern at the HSRC, used the South African Demographic Health Survey (1998) to show that younger sisters of women who had children as teenagers are likely to have children at an earlier age than older sisters and women with no sisters (Figure 1).

The South African Demographic Health Survey (1998) shows that 35% of 19-year-old girls had given birth at least once. The median age of childbearing for younger sisters is 18 and for older sisters the median age of childbearing is 19.

Figure 2 shows that if an older sister is sexually active, her younger sisters are likely to also have sex at an early age, in some cases as young as age 12, whereas the older sisters started having sex by age 14. Early sexual debut also leads to women having children at an earlier age than women who had their first sexual encounter at a later stage.

Munthree says from this analysis it can be concluded that teenagers with older sisters with children are at a greater risk of also having children during adolescence.

'These young women are a relatively easy population to identify, as virtually all protocols of teenage obstetric clinics include a family history on pregnant adolescent clients.' Munthree is currently doing further research to explore the nature of sibling relationships.

Figure 1: Kaplan-Meier survival function for childbearing by women with sisters and women with no sisters

CHILDBEARING BY SIBLING STATUS

Sx

AGE

Eldest — Youngest — Only child —

Figure 2: Kaplan-Meier survival function for age at sexual debut by women with sisters and women with no sisters

TIMING OF SEXUAL DEBUT BY SIBLING STATUS

Sx

AGE

Eldest — Youngest — Only child —

DR ZWELAKHE TSHANDU has been appointed as a senior research manager in the Centre for Service Delivery. He holds a PhD in Sociology in the areas of development studies and political sociology from Ohio State University, USA. Before joining the HSRC, he was deputy director-general, service delivery improvement in the department of public service and administration.

DR MOSES SITHOLE has joined the Knowledge Systems unit as an African research fellow. He holds a PhD in statistics at Curtin University of Technology in Australia. Before joining the HSRC in November 2009, he was a senior lecturer in the department of agricultural economics and management at the University of Swaziland.

DR NYAMEKA MANKAYI is a post-doctoral fellow in the Child, Youth and Family Development research programme. She obtained a PhD in psychology from Stellenbosch University. Before joining the HSRC in October 2009, she was a senior lecturer at the school of psychology, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg).

MS FAZEELA HOOSEN is a master's intern in the Centre for Service Delivery. She holds a Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) in geography and environmental management from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and is currently pursuing her MA in human geography at the University of the Witwatersrand.

DR CATHERINE NDINDA is an African research fellow in the Knowledge Systems unit. She holds a PhD in human science from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Before joining KS in October 2009, she worked as a housing professional in Mpumalanga.

MAJOR RESEARCH ON A DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is contributing R13 million towards a two-year research and policy initiative that will assist in generating knowledge to support South Africa in its efforts to construct a democratic developmental state. The initiative will be the first of its kind by a South African research institution.

> *Ambassador de Vos said his government has observed with keen interest the South African government's growing commitment to establishing a democratic developmental state.*

'We are pleased that the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has agreed to fund the HSRC to undertake this research, which aims to further the debate and inform policy through research', said CEO Olive Shisana, who co-signed the agreement with Netherlands Ambassador Rob de Vos.

In signing the agreement, Shisana said the initiative aims to contribute to the government's efforts to construct a developmental state as a necessary condition to address the country's developmental challenges, including achieving equality, reducing poverty and unemployment, as well as growing the economy and building a knowledge-based economy.

> *We hope that the model will feed into government agencies and departments. The policy element will also include the hosting of policy dialogues on pertinent national issues.*

Ambassador de Vos said his government has observed with keen interest the South African government's growing commitment to establishing a democratic developmental state.

'We believe that the timing of the project could not have been better. The issues that will be placed under the microscope are those that are currently being whispered about in the corridors and shouted about from some rooftops.'

Of special interest is the work around state capacity, the functioning of the labour market, how natural resources can be used in a developmental strategy as well as the function of state-owned enterprises, and the ambassador believes the Netherlands can make a contribution in these areas.

The initiative, which will be implemented under the auspices of the newly established Centre for Africa's Social Progress (CASP) at the HSRC, consists of two elements, namely a policy component that will include the development of a model of a developmental state for South Africa, and a research component, consisting of two main projects: one on the capacity of the state, the other on state-owned enterprises (SOEs).

'We hope that the model will feed into government agencies and departments. The policy element will also include the hosting of policy dialogues on pertinent national issues', she said.

> *Our democratic state is facing huge capacity challenges. There is therefore a need to undertake research that would illuminate the subject matter with a view to contributing to evidence-based public policy.*

Shisana said the choice of these two research projects is self-evident: 'Our democratic state is facing huge capacity challenges. There is therefore a need to undertake research that would illuminate the subject matter with a view to contributing to evidence-based public policy.'

At the same time, SOEs have a central role to play if South Africa is to become a developmental state and it is therefore necessary to carry out research that will draw on experiences of the role of SOEs in other developmental states with a view to drawing the relevant lessons for South Africa. In particular, SOEs have an important role to play in leveraging investment and extending social and physical infrastructures.

Dr Omano Edigheji, who coordinates the activities of CASP, is the principal investigator of the initiative. The HSRC will work closely with policy stakeholders in government, civil society, business, labour, community groups and academics to inform public policy, scholarly discussions and public debates.

Also see the article on the first public lectures in this series on pages 14–16.

Dr Olive Shisana and Ambassador Rob de Vos

Policy framework for STREET CHILDREN

A policy framework for children living and working on the street, drafted by Dr Zitha Makomane, an African research fellow in the research programme on Child, Youth, Family and Social Development, provides interested parties at national, provincial, and local levels with a guideline to develop their own policies for the management of street children.

The policy, commissioned by the department of social development's sub-directorate of street children, is largely based on the development approach of the rights-based framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The basic approach in developing the framework was to take into account current policies, laws, regulations, programmes and activities related to the protection, empowerment and care of children at risk of the violation of their rights.

The framework recommends the following key strategies: prevention, early intervention, protection and reintegration. Each strategy recommends a broad range of actions to guide and assist stakeholders in formulating and implementing their responses to street children. It emphasises, however, that these suggested actions are not meant to be prescriptive, and that the specific mix of actions to be implemented by stakeholders will depend on local needs, capacities and priorities.

Mechanisms for coordinating, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating the key recommendations of the policy framework are outlined, and the framework concludes with a discussion on the resources required to implement the framework.

HSRC 2011 GLOBAL MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE STUDY

The research programme on Education, Science and Skills Development (ESSD) is preparing to conduct the 2011 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which is an assessment of learner achievement in mathematics and science in comparison with about 60 other countries in the world. Boston College's International Study Centre manages the international project activities, while the project itself resides in the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), with its headquarters in Amsterdam.

TIMSS '95 was the first in the series of mathematics and science assessments, conducted every four years, to provide this trend information. In South Africa the study assessment was conducted in 1999 and 2003.

'TIMSS is particularly valuable to detect trends over time in the performance levels of learners within a country, and to benchmark such trends and perform-

Dr Vijay Reddy

ance levels against those in a range of other countries in the world', says Dr Vijay Reddy, head of the ESSD programme and principal investigator of the study in South Africa.

'The study, as all those before, is done in close cooperation with each country's national education department.'

She says the list of supervising bodies and individuals responsible for managing and executing the study helps to give a sense of how big an effort this has become. These include Statistics Canada in Ottawa, the IEA Data Processing Centre in Hamburg (Germany) and a senior mathematics and science coordinator and teams, respectively doing item development and review.

A review of all grades 8 and 4 mathematics and science field test items and scoring guides have been prepared and the field test will start in March 2010.

Globalisation increases the need for strong national systems that are able to absorb new advances in global innovation from elsewhere in the world.

Another barrier is a lack of freedom of speech in countries where scientists are expected to sing praises to the performance of political leaders and never to provide intellectual critique of government policies and programmes in terms of their impact on human development. Poor education, especially in mathematics and science, is also a hindrance.

External barriers

The attitudes and practices of some editors and scientists in the North is an important barrier to knowledge sharing. The dominance of English as the language of scientific communication has resulted in higher rejection rates in North-based journals for research papers submitted from countries in the South. Their papers are rejected for inelegant language, regardless of whether the quality of research could add value to current debates on specific matters. One way to remedy this situation would be for journals to create sub-editing sections dedicated to language, which might encourage more researchers to write in English.

Northern reviewers often fail to appreciate the difficult context within which research is conducted in countries of the South. The insistence that conditions for research be tied to meeting the requirements of the Northern institutional review boards, which may differ significantly from those of local review boards based on local conditions, delays many Southern researchers from conducting research.

Inadequate research resources mean poor salaries for scientists, who then often join either the civil service or private sector for better pay.

Often research undertaken in the South is highly relevant to those residing in their region, but due to the relatively 'local' nature of the research and research questions, there is not an appropriate journal

THE MEERKAT WAITS IN SUSPENSE

South Africa, together with eight other African countries, is bidding to host the world's largest telescope, the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) radio telescope. This global project is being developed by a consortium of 45 institutions in 19 countries. The governments of those countries also participate in the development of this US$2bn project.

South Africa and Australia were short-listed as the potential sites for the SKA in 2006, with a final decision expected in 2012.

or publisher in the North where the study can be published. Consequently, findings are published in local publications with little or no international exposure.

Another major obstacle is the high fees some journals charge for publishing electronically or in hard copy. If researchers want an article to appear within 12 months they may have to pay an exorbitant amount – in some cases up to $US3 000 – which, in countries where the majority of the population lives on two dollars a day, simply means that their article will never be published, let alone in less than a year.

Then there is the issue of the poaching of the best scientists to work for donor organisations, or to work on projects where the principal investigator is in the North. One solution could be if the South opens up their borders to researchers in the North, which would alleviate the human capital shortage and give researchers from the North the opportunity to understand better the context of the research and the South in general.

And too often a research project is conceptual-ised in the North, executed in the South by excellent researchers, who are often reduced to serving as 'field-work coordinators', followed by the findings being published in the North. This is academic colonialism at its worst.

Another barrier is a lack of freedom of speech in countries where scientists are expected to sing praises to the performance of political leaders and never to provide intellectual critique of government policies and programmes...

It is encouraging that the European Union's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development invited scientists from the South to help shape their research agenda so that the calls for proposals include the relevant research questions from the South. Increasingly, researchers from Europe are

South Africa's government has prioritised astronomy and wants to see southern Africa becoming a major hub for astronomy in the southern hemisphere, including the HESS gamma- ray telescope in Namibia, the SALT telescope in Sutherland in South Africa and the SKA, which will stretch across nine countries in Africa.

The South African department of science and technology has made available R2bn for the design and construction of the MeerKAT radio telescope, which is a smaller version of the SKA – called a precursor. This money will help to develop and test the cutting-edge technologies required for the SKA.

The first dishes of the MeerKAT are already in place in the Northern Cape and scientific observation is expected to start in 2013. The team working on South Africa's SKA and MeerKAT project consists mainly of young scientists and engineers with no background in astronomy, but who have acquired world-class generic skills crucial to the global economy. They work closely with such institutions as Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester, Berkeley, the National Radio Astronomy Observatory of the USA, ASTRON in the Netherlands, the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in India and others.

It is essential that Africa should be a host for this major research infrastructure, without which it will not contribute significantly to global knowledge generation. The spin-off from such projects is immense, in strengthening the universities, in strengthening our
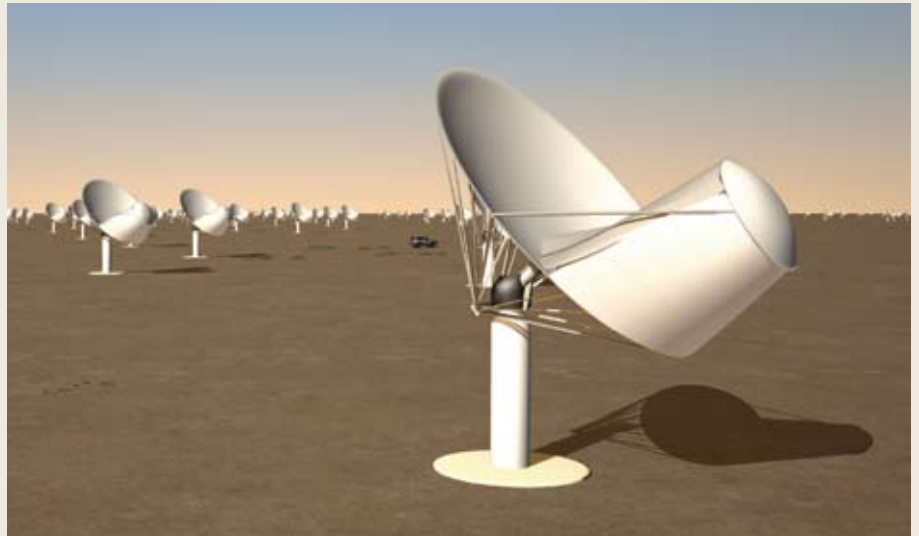
innovation capacity and in changing the way people in Africa see science and engineering and contribute to global efforts to generate and disseminate knowledge.

An artist's impression of the 80 dishes of the MeerKAT radio telescope on site in the Karoo (Jeroen de Boer)

beginning to acknowledge that the South may have a view that might inform Northern researchers, suggesting that a two-way street in knowledge generation is the way to go.

Some of the public funding sources, such as the EU, are open to addressing the concerns of South-based scientists, but some of the private foundations are less amenable to dealing with these concerns, which hinders meaningful participation by the South. These foundations tend to develop their own research agenda, imposing their views on the South, forcing them often to study what we consider 'pet' projects which are of little consequence to the South.

Yet, one must give due credit to the fact that international funding for research and technology comes largely from the North. This has vastly contributed to the development of scientific and technological infrastructure in the South, but it will take the collaboration of scientists in these regions to have global impact.

Another major issue is the migration of profes-

sionals from the South to the North. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) estimated that since 1990, the African continent lost approximately 20 000 professionals each year; and that by 2005 about 300 000 African professionals were living outside the continent. The South needs to create conditions that pull researchers to their countries; to improve the living conditions of their people; to improve education and produce a critical mass of scientists; to create good research infrastructure such as libraries, laboratories, electronic communication with broad band; and above all, cherish scientists and make research a career of choice at universities.

Another major issue is the migration of professionals from the South to the North.

BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS

The world has much to gain if the production and

dissemination of knowledge can be truly global. New forms of technology and a greater awareness of diversity have the potential of reducing some of the barriers of access and dissemination. However, for knowledge production to become truly global, it will be important for North and South to:

- jointly set the research agenda;
- share funding for research;
- remove conditions attached to funding research;
- ensure scientists have good research infrastructure, no matter what country they live in; and
- provide incentives to do research.

The world can benefit if we can all work together in producing knowledge.

This is a summary of a paper delivered at the American Association of Advancement of Science meeting, San Diego, 20 February 2010.

Are black professionals different?

DECONSTRUCTING THE STEREOTYPE

Is there merit in maintaining that since democracy South African black professionals change jobs more frequently than other professionals? JOCELYN VASS investigated the local and international literature on the determinants of employee turnover and found that there are many complex reasons for changing jobs.

I n 2006, the then Reserve Bank governor, Tito Mboweni, sharing his frustrations on recruitment, said that he had stopped recruiting black people because they leave the Bank soon after being trained. This comment confirmed a widely held view that, since democracy and the advent of affirmative action, black professionals job-hop. Thus, in human resource management circles it is argued that there is a 'war' for qualified black professionals, partly due to the skills crisis but mostly because of affirmative action.

PRIVATE-SECTOR RESEARCH ONLY

The perception is that black professionals are always searching for 'greener pastures' or the next job opportunity. More controversially, this characterisation of black professionals as 'exceptions' to certain professional norms and expectations is seen to represent an 'othering' of black professionals, thus perpetuating exclusion in the South African workplace.

A scan of research shows that the job-hopping debate is largely driven by anecdote. In fact, local social-scientific research on employee turnover and job mobility is limited to market research in the private sector and a few company or occupational case studies; there is an absence of official statistics. In contrast, developed nations often investigate employment stability through work-history studies and panel surveys on employee turnover and job tenure.

HOW MOBILE IS THE SA EMPLOYEE?

Limited evidence suggests that the average turnover rate for all types of employees ranged from 12–14% in the past decade. A company survey by De Loitte & Touche, reported in *Business Day* in September 2008, estimated that the average turnover rate among executives increased from 10.5–13.5% between August 2007 and July 2008. These figures included all forms of turnover, such as retrenchments and retirements – not just resignations. There are, therefore, no studies available that suggest South Africa differs greatly from comparable economies, nor that blacks or black professionals are more unstable in their job tenure.

... this characterisation of black professionals as 'exceptions' to certain professional norms and expectations is seen to represent an 'othering' of black professionals, thus perpetuating exclusion in the South African workplace.

The HSRC tracking study on the employment experiences of graduates, conducted in 1999/2000, showed that most graduates (52.5%) changed jobs only once since graduation, irrespective of their field of study. Most Africans (61.8%) were still in their first job since graduation, while only 38.1% of whites were still in their first job, as were only 35.8% of Indians. There is no comparable evidence of racial trends in job stability post-2000, when employment equity legislation came into operation.

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE MOBILITY?

The international literature on employee turnover and mobility suggests that there is a complex set of factors influencing the decision to leave. These factors operate at a structural or external level, at an organisational level, and at a personal or individual level.

The notion that there is a job-for-life came to an end with the advent of globalisation, information and communication technologies (ICT) and increased flexibility in the organisation of work. These factors have generated world-wide generational changes in attitudes to work, values and expectations with regard to careers, jobs and the employer–employee relationship – and South Africa is no exception.

Thus, while the older generation may have believed in a job-for-life (from intern to CEO within one company), the younger generation may now change jobs and even careers several times over their lifetimes. South African young people are no exception in this regard, especially earlier on in their careers. Also, the notion of a job-for-life has become increasingly mythical given the increase in contract, part-time and temporary employment. The rise of professional consultancies, and term limits for executives and senior management in the private and public sector all point towards the underlying conditions for mobility and fragmented work histories post-apartheid among South African professionals.

The notion that there is a job-for-life came to an end with the advent of globalisation, information and communication technologies (ICT) and increased flexibility in the organisation of work.

AN UNFAIR EMPLOYMENT ADVANTAGE?

It is often argued that black professionals have an employment advantage over skilled whites as a result of transformation and the skills deficit. Some employer strategies have included aggressive head-hunting and preferential recruitment and fast-tracking of equity (black and women) candidates.

Statistics, on the contrary, show that this apparent advantage has not led to a significant erosion of the employment advantage of skilled whites in the labour market. The results of employment equity reports, submitted by employers in 2003–2007, show that over two-thirds of top and senior management remained white, with small improvements among black Africans.

In the professions and middle management, reports show that the employment of whites grew from 49.2–56.9%, while African employment declined from 50–41.3%. Local academics described this trend as 'disturbing', as middle management and professional occupations are normally the training grounds to groom new senior and top managers. Given this background, new employment opportunities cannot be seen as driving job mobility among black professionals.

There are, therefore, no studies available that suggest that blacks or black professionals are more unstable in their job tenure.

A SALARY ADVANTAGE?

The financial and business media are littered with claims that job mobility is fuelled by excessive salary premiums being offered to equity candidates, ranging from 30–40%. Objective organisational characteristics, such as sector type, profile and size of the recruiting companies are important determinants of the payment of differentiated salaries, especially at the top end of the skill spectrum. In the public health sector, government pay various allowances for scarce skills and work in rural areas to attract medical doctors and medical specialists to the public sector, irrespective of race.

Where demand exceeds supply in a specific occupation, this may manifest in increased relative remuneration in a particular occupation. Thus, for 2000–2005, remuneration of computer professionals increased at an annual rate of 7.4%, compared to 0.9% for all professionals. In the UK, engineering graduates working in other sectors could earn up to double the engineering entry salary.

A recent report on the engineering profession notes that in an effort to recruit and retain South African engineering professionals, engineering salaries have increased between four and five times across the public and private sectors. None of these examples suggests that salary incentives are peculiar to South Africa or to black professionals.

The results of employment equity reports, submitted by employers in 2003–2007, show that over two-thirds of top and senior management remained white, with small improvements among black Africans.

A study of the racial gap in income for 1995–2004 concluded that there was a narrowing of the wage gap only at the top end, but this was driven largely by improvements in the quality of education of a small section of the black workforce. However, white wage earners, in general, and at the upper end, still had an employment and income advantage. This belies the perceptions of the 'money-grabbing' nature of black professionals in general, but reflects the imperfect functioning of the labour market, due in part to the continued skewed nature of educational investment.

TRANSFORMATION POLICIES AND BLACK PROFESSIONALS

Organisational cultures are fundamental in developing commitment and the retention of staff. Research has shown that the general South African workplace is focused primarily on achieving formal legislative compliance with transformation (developing diversity, training and development policies and numerical targets), but fails to internalise transformation in the strategic objectives and organisational practice of companies, which are the drivers of successful change in organisational culture.

However, white wage earners, in general, and at the upper end, still had an employment and income advantage.

A company case study in the banking sector confirmed that the dominant culture remained one of assimilation. The racial division of labour remained one

where black Africans and women were placed in so-called 'soft' jobs (including human resources), whereas whites were appointed to jobs that were specialist in nature, had more authority, and added more visible value to the organisation. All of these combined to present an alienating context within which the poor retention of black Africans becomes inevitable as a result of their minimal prospects of advancement.

The systemic failure to transform management levels across the economy cannot just be ascribed to supply constraints of black Africans due to throughput failures in the education system.

The systemic failure to transform management levels across the economy cannot just be ascribed to supply constraints of black Africans due to throughput failures in the education system. Organisations themselves also play a role by not taking the long view and failing to become active and committed partners in the skills and career development process. Instead, they rely on quick fixes, such as aggressive head-hunting, even poaching, and offering salary incentives that are often short-term, but unsustainable solutions. These all form part of a failure to develop adaptive organisational cultures that are inclusive and accommodating of diversity.

Succession-planning and internal career-advancement strategies should be part of a developmental process to improve the internal mobility of staff, and to provide opportunities for grooming those with the potential for senior and top management roles.

When it comes to internal promotions, Figure 1 shows that advancement into the top and senior management echelons has remained minimal for Africans,

coloureds and Indians – in fact, their share of promotions declined. The results suggest that internal mobility patterns at this level ensure the continuance of a white male enclave of historical privilege, relatively unaffected by transformation.

Among professional and middle management there has been more progress towards transformation, which may reduce potential turnover, as shown in Figure 2. However, this is where line management is located, which is often white and male, and who may be 'sacrificed' by top management in an effort to create opportunities for black Africans. Local literature claims this creates 'white fear' with white males resisting transformation, perceiving their jobs are threatened by equity candidates.

Leaving the top and senior management untouched by transformation implies that the struggle for resources (jobs) under transformation will mostly be located in the professions and middle management, a recipe for increased turnover, whether black or white.

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD OF WORK

No one factor can explain turnover and mobility sufficiently, and the current job-hopping debate has ignored a range of contextual factors that in a 'normal' society would have been self-evident. Blaming transformation for employee mobility belies global shifts in attitudes towards the employee–employer relationship, the flexibility of employment and the important role of organisational cultures in the development and retention of employees. However, the drive for transformation has to some extent unmasked the internal contradictions in the South African organisational response to the structural necessity for developing black professional expertise. Stereotyping black professionals through the job-hopping debate is to assign to them responsibility for the systemic failure in South African society to effectively address the skills deficit, the challenges in the general, further and higher education systems, and the failure to transform the world of work.

Figure 1: Changes in promotions in top and senior management by population group and sex (2002/03 and 2007/08) (N= 4237) (N=3798)
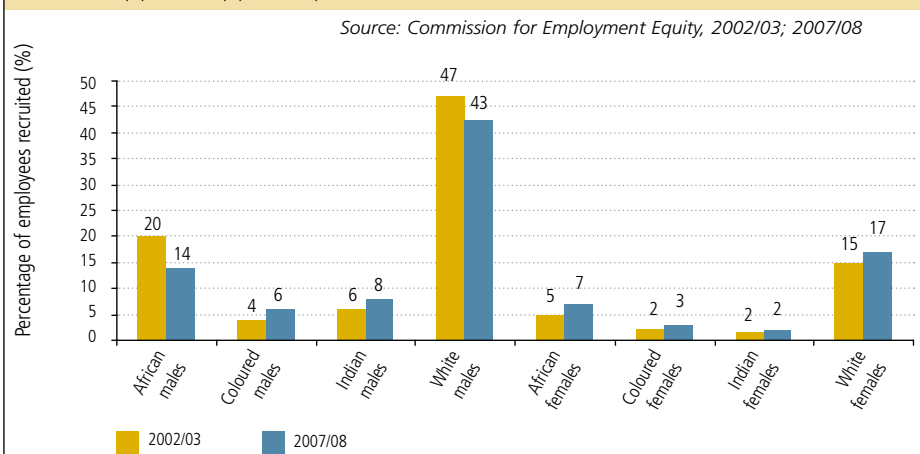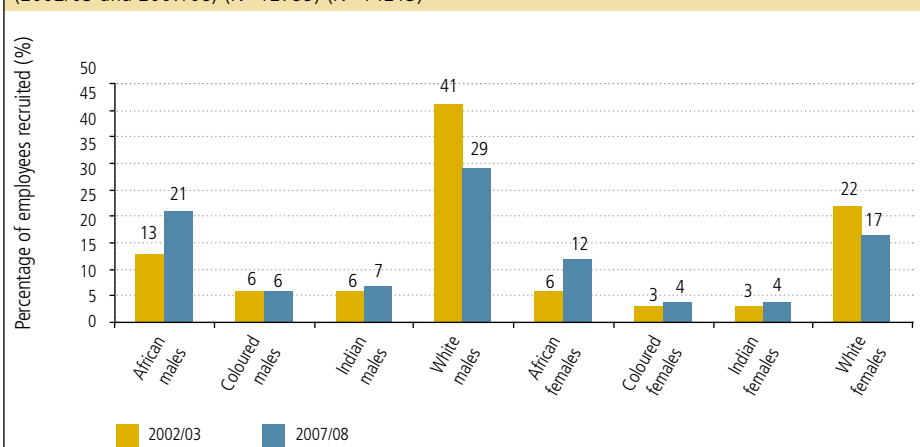
Source: Commission for Employment Equity, 2002/03; 2007/08

Figure 2: Changes in promotions in professional and middle management by population group and sex (2002/03 and 2007/08) (N=12799) (N=14213)

Jocelyn Vass is a chief research manager in the research programme on Education, Science and Skills Development. The full report on The determinants of employee turnover and its implications for the 'job-hopping' phenomenon: A literature review *is available on www.hsrc.ac.za*

MEN & morality

A NEW HSRC-LED RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE

What does it take to be a 'good man'? Men throughout the world are frequently subjected to negative representation. In the South African context this is no different, say SHARLENE SWARTZ, JEREMIAH CHIKOVORE and LINDA RICHTER, who are embarking on a study focusing on men's morality and considering how 'being good' is in fact an asset (or 'capital').

The Latin roots of the word 'moral' address the essence of what it is to be human: to be flourishing individuals within flourishing communities…we find our humanity through the humanity of others – we flourish through promoting the flourishing of others (Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, Moral State of the Nation Address, 3 February 2010).

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

Men are, not always unfairly, portrayed as neglectful, profligate, abusive, sexually uncontrolled and violent. On the other hand, the notion of 'the good man' is a deeply and prevalently valued ideal – devoted son, loyal friend, diligent worker, loving father and wise guardian.

Yet, what it means, or even what it takes, to be 'a good man' is seldom defined, empirically investigated, or deliberately promoted in interventions. A study focusing on men's morality as a 'moral ecology' (in a social context), and considering how 'being good' is in fact an asset (or 'capital'), has the potential to contribute to social cohesion in a society fragmented by political, technological and cultural change.

It also holds promise for a country beset with problems around gender inequality, father absenteeism, criminality and corruption. In addition, men who live in resource-poor environments face greater challenges to 'getting it right' because financial provision is frequently put at the forefront of what it means to be 'a good man'.

MASCULINE MORALITY?

With this motivation in mind, the HSRC has embarked upon a multi-year project to investigate masculine morality. Entitled 'Men and Morality: Investigating the social, cultural and environmental requirements for a society with more than just a few good men', the research collaborative draws on a wide range of expertise from within the HSRC as well as various South African and international institutions. To date 16 senior investigators and five research trainees are involved in the project from the HSRC, University of Cape Town, UNISA, Medical Research Council, University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Johannesburg, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the University of Maryland, USA.

The project seeks to identify new ways of thinking, researching, interpreting and implementing findings around morality for the benefit of society. Key questions that component studies will seek to answer include:

- What defines, and what does it take to be, a 'good man', and in whose eyes?
- What indigenous and social constructions of manhood and morality exist, and in what complex ways do these intersect?
- What dimensions and parameters, including social, economic and political, does men's morality take?
- How does male moral identity develop over time and how have men's moral attitudes changed over the past 20 years?

DISSEMINATING THE FINDINGS

It is envisaged that component studies: include partnerships with active civic moral movements (such as the Moral Regeneration Movement, Heartlines, the African Fathers' Initiative, and campaigns such as Brothers for Life, One Love, and One Man Can); utilise young people in conducting research; and involve communities in public debate and negotiating forums. It is planned that the study culminates in national implementation and dissemination workshops that will form an evidence-base for civil-society and government-led implementation initiatives in social development and education.

…men who live in resource-poor environments face greater challenges to 'getting it right' because financial provision is frequently put at the forefront of what it means to be 'a good man'.

The department of science and technology's grant to the HSRC focus on the Grand Challenges of Human and Social Dynamics provides seed funding for the project. Activities to date include a research symposium, the submission of numerous research proposals to funders and the preparation of a special issue of a journal.

Senior research specialists, Dr Sharlene Swartz and Dr Jeremiah Chikovore, and executive director Professor Linda Richter – all from the research project on Child, Youth, Family and Social Development – are the project leaders for this research collaborative.

JOBS

Easing poverty and unemployment

Over the past year or two, politicians have promised a 'developmental state', 'paradigm change', a 'new growth path', and 'decent work'. These forceful words demonstrate a desire by government to ease South Africa's widespread poverty and unemployment. The national budget is the clearest expression of government's policy intentions, writes MIRIAM ALTMAN.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE DOWNTURN

Government committed to halving poverty and unemployment between 2004 and 2014. Its ability to achieve these objectives seemed possible before the economic downturn. More creative thinking will now be needed. Any government strategy needs to consider the short-term imperatives and the longer-term requirements to generate sustainable, inclusive growth.

The 2007 HSRC employment scenarios showed that about 500 000 new jobs a year were needed to halve unemployment between 2004 and 2014. With the downturn, about 700 000 jobs need to be created each year until 2014.

The 2007 HSRC employment scenarios showed that about 500 000 new jobs a year were needed to halve unemployment between 2004 and 2014. With the downturn, about 700 000 jobs need to be created each year until 2014.

The revised 2009 HSRC employment scenarios showed that the market could potentially generate about 250 000 jobs a year between 2010 and 2014 without special interventions. This would leave the state with the responsibility of generating between 450 000 jobs a year. Alternatively, more creative solutions are needed to promote deeper market-based employment.

The depth and breadth of youth unemployment should be an immediate concern. Before the economic downturn, there were about 2.5m people aged 15–24 who were out of work and not studying. This problem is now worse; almost 800 000 jobs were lost in 2009. Three-quarters of these losses were felt by 15–34-year-olds.

EXPANDED WORKS PROGRAMME AND EDUCATION

Interventions need to ensure sufficient numbers of young people are participating in positive activities that build their capabilities and ultimately smooth their transition into the labour market. The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) will surely be one to watch. Its targets and budgets for 2009/2010 were aimed at creating about 200 000 full-time equivalent jobs, mainly in infrastructure projects. This is set to expand to 1.5m opportunities annually by 2014, divided between infrastructure projects and employment incentive to non-profit organisations and the Community Works Programme.

The EPWP budget has risen from a measly R158m in 2006 to a more meaningful R2.68bn by 2012. There are some creative elements in the new programme which encourage wider participation. Employment in community services will overtake infrastructure as the major source of opportunity. The employment incentive to non-profit organisations will stabilise employment in often cash-strapped organisations. The Community Works Programme will offer a guaranteed two days'

work a week on projects identified by communities.

Unemployed youth will also benefit from easier access to post-school training. Many are capable of studying further but access can be difficult. There are about 84 000 under-24s with a university endorsement who are not studying. There are 558 000 unemployed matriculants under the age of 24 who should pursue further education and training opportunities.

The expanded budget for FET is very welcome in this regard. Public employment and internships are another option. To hire greater numbers, government will need to look at expanding youth opportunities in learnerships, internships and hiring in lower grades of the public service. This needs to be given higher priority in next year's budget.

Interventions need to ensure sufficient numbers of young people are participating in positive activities that build their capabilities and ultimately smooth their transition into the labour market.

SUPPORT FOR THE YOUTH AND RURAL AREAS

A youth employment subsidy was announced in the budget but still needs to be presented. Treasury says this will be a subsidy to companies, like a rebate from the payroll tax. They propose this be extended to the private sector, non-profits and municipalities. Its greatest use

AND THE BUDGET

might well be in non-profits that generally tend to be understaffed, and in the public sector, where very small numbers are hired at the lower grades.

Cosatu has made known its concerns in respect of the subsidy, focusing on the possibility of its displacing existing workers. They are also concerned about proposals to relax labour regulation in respect of the hiring and firing of youth. It is urgent that the parties find each other as times are hard for young people. There are a suite of possible interventions that could make a difference and they should roll out quickly, without undermining those that are employed.

Priority toward those living in rural areas was clearly demonstrated with the creation of a rural development department. Amongst other initiatives, much could be done to expand smallholder agricultural production: approximately 2.5m households are involved in own-production, three-quarters of which is found in Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. With some support (extension, seeds, land access, water, implements, market access), some of these producers could produce a surplus.

FUTURE INTERVENTIONS

Looking into the future, the private sector will need to pick up speed. We hear about an employment absorbing path, but what would that mean? At a minimum, meaningful attention must be devoted to basic contributors building globally competitive industries that have strong employment linkages in the domestic economy. These industries need to pull South Africa out

of its 'resource curse' funk.

There is much talk about manipulating exchange rates, but this is difficult to do in a minerals-exporting economy. The alternative is to dramatically improve the efficiency and productivity of the economy in a way that drives down costs but also stimulates jobs.

Improved governance and delivery in network industries such as telecommunications, energy, water and transport logistics will be central to this agenda. Strengthened human resource development is another. Greater investment in research, development and innovation is essential, not only in manufacturing, but also in agriculture, mining and services clusters.

The economy is bound to shift to lower energy intensity simply as a result of higher electricity prices. Government could soften the blow by promoting faster adjustment with industrial incentives whether the accelerated depreciation allowance or the cash incentives offered through departments like trade and industry. It is hoped that a meaningful programme will be introduced as soon as possible. Most highly energy-intensive businesses are relatively capital intensive, so a faster move to energy efficiency will encourage a labour absorbing path.

PROCUREMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Trade and industry minister Rob Davies has stated that procurement is going to play a critical role in stimulating a capital goods industry. Government's R864bn infrastructure programme should be used strategically to promote supplier industries. In fact, this principle

could be applied throughout government, given that its non-personnel, non-interest expenditure accounts for about 23% of the economy.

Some countries such as Japan, Brazil and Korea have implemented programmes with substantial impact on industrial outcomes. Korea now has export capability in the building of nuclear and coal power plants as a result of its strategic procurement relationship with Westinghouse over 20 or more years.

Trade and industry minister Rob Davies has stated that procurement is going to play a critical role in stimulating a capital goods industry.

But there is a catch. The first step toward success would involve strengthening government's core procurement capability. The second step is to commit to long-term strategic arrangements to give confidence to new suppliers. Short-term contracts with uncertain future commitment are too commonplace. This is an excellent idea that could have real impact on value creation and jobs.

Dr Miriam Altman is the executive director of the Centre for Poverty Employment and Growth.

MAKING SENSE
of electricity price
i n c r e a s e s

The heat generated around proposed electricity price increases is considerable, ignited by Eskom's requests to the regulator for what appear to be stratospheric price increases. MIRIAM ALTMAN analyses the Nersa announcement of the second Multi-Year Price Determination (MYPD 2) which is meant to lay the path for the electricity price for the coming three years.

The Nersa determination will see the electricity price rising by 24.8%, 25.1% and 25.9% in each year starting in 2010. This is considerably lower than Eskom's initial requests for 45% per annum for three years, which it later reduced to 35% pa. However, it is still substantially above inflation. How does one make sense of this in a context where there is an urgent need to address the challenges of a recessionary economy, unemployment and poverty?

The reality is that major investments are needed to ensure secure electricity supply, both in relation to maintenance and for new generating capacity.

The HSRC has done independent research on this question (see end of article for more information), asking what Eskom needs, and what the impact on the economy will be.

The reality is that major investments are needed to ensure secure electricity supply, both in relation to maintenance and for new generating capacity. Current policy sees Eskom as the main supplier of that capacity. Generally, when companies engage in major new investments they rely substantially on a shareholder injection and on financial reserves built up over time.

The electricity price was kept artificially low for many years as part of South Africa's industrial policy. Eskom was therefore unable to build up reserves to sufficiently cover the costs of maintenance, replacement or new capacity.

Given the history, there appear to be legitimate reasons for fairly large price increases that are more reflective of the actual cost of producing, transmitting and distributing electricity. However, there are also reasons for very serious reservations.

RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE PRICE INCREASE

First, Eskom is a monopoly, with no competition to push it to a technological or efficiency frontier. Neither is there sufficient independent analysis to effectively challenge Eskom's assertions. Could efficiency improvements reduce costs dramatically, thereby diminishing pressure on the consumer? No-one outside of Eskom can say for sure. Nor do we definitely know whether Eskom pays sufficient attention to find out what these might be.

Second, about 10% of Eskom's supply goes to exports and directly to large companies in mining and smelting. These pricing arrangements are not regulated and the agreements are confidential. We don't know to what extent we might be subsidising these users.

Third, there is very limited debate on the future of energy in South Africa – whether regarding either the sources of energy or the technologies.

And fourth, there could be an alternative mix of public and private provision which could reduce pressure on Eskom.

Given the history, there appear to be legitimate reasons for fairly large price increases that are more reflective of the actual cost of producing, transmitting and distributing electricity.

IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY

We modelled the impact of a once-off price increase of 35%, which was what Eskom asked for last November. The impact on GDP would be very small, approximately -0.1%. The producer price index would rise by 1.3% more than it would otherwise, and this would raise the cost of a representative basket of South African exports by 0.9%. To the untrained eye, this result might seem surprising. But it must be remembered that electricity accounts for only 1.1% of all costs in services and manufacturing. Electricity contributes 2% or less to total costs in 72 out of 94 sectors in the economy. There are ten sectors where electricity accounts for about 4% of costs or more, such as chemicals, non-ferrous metals, general hardware, textiles, tyres, gold mining and accommodation.

So what might be the impact of the actual determination? The smelters have separate agreements

MITIGATING THE IMPACT

There are two central ways to reduce the inflationary impact of electricity price increases on the poor. The first way involves buffering the poor from price shocks. This would require long-term financial subsidisation, whether raised through a price cross-subsidy or through direct support from the National Treasury. Policy-makers seek to reduce electricity consumption amongst higher-income households and the business sector. Yet, it may conversely seek to raise poor household electricity consumption to promote equity, health status and economic participation.

Poor households could also be affected by some job losses, depending on how companies respond to price increases.

The second way to reduce the impact on the poor involves more active policy to speed up adjustment to energy efficiency. This requires short-term financial intervention, putting the economy on a more efficient energy path which is likely to also be more labour absorbing. The energy-intensive path has created a major bias toward capital intensity in South Africa. This must change. The department of trade and industry has introduced an incentive called the Developmental Electricity Pricing Programme to buffer energy-intensive new investments that might be compromised by rising electricity prices. However, support would be better driven from the usual suite of investment incentives currently on offer, such as the Accelerated Depreciation Allowances, the Critical Infrastructure Programme, or the Enterprise Investment Programme. Adjustments to these programmes to promote the adoption of energy-efficient equipment or processes would require small bureaucratic decisions plus a commitment from the National Treasury. And they would need to be extended to critical service sectors such as property, accommodation and retail.

For more information on this topic, go to www.hsrc.ac.za/CPEG.phtml

Policy-makers seek to reduce electricity consumption amongst higher-income households and the business sector. Yet, it may conversely seek to raise poor household electricity consumption to promote equity, health status and economic participation.

Dr Miriam Altman is the executive director of the Centre for Poverty, Employment and Economic Growth.

that are not regulated, and so they are not affected by the Nersa decision. Some industries are supplied directly by Eskom, and they will pay the full increase. Other industries are supplied by municipalities. Nersa ruled that municipalities are allowed to increase their electricity prices by only about 15–16% each year. While industries supplied directly by Eskom face a higher increase, they will be paying about half the price of municipality-supplied businesses – an average of about 42c per kilowatt hour versus about 91c to 96c per kilowatt hour. For most industries, this should not have a major impact on costs, although it will hopefully spur energy-saving behaviour. However, the energy-intensive industries will be hard hit and will require adjustment support.

Could efficiency improvements reduce costs dramatically, thereby diminishing pressure on the consumer? No-one outside of Eskom can say for sure.

IMPACT ON THE POOR

Most of the debate in respect of the effect on the poor focuses on the prices they pay for electricity. The Nersa ruling results in a much lower increase for poor households. About half of all households, mostly poor ones, are directly supplied by Eskom. Their prices fall in the coming year, and will rise by up to 13.5%

pa in 2011/12 and 2012/13. The other group of households is supplied by municipalities. They will pay increases of about 15–16% pa for the next three years. On average, electricity accounts for 1.7% of household expenditure.

That is only one-half of the challenge. Poor households could also face rising prices of basic items, as producers and retailers pass on their costs to consumers. We found that the impact of these two effects was approximately equal in magnitude.

We also found that poor households are disproportionately affected by inflation caused by electricity price increases. For example, if the price rose by 35%, the consumer price index for poor households could rise by 1.6%, as opposed to 1.1% for rich households. Half of this would be caused because poor households pay more for electricity. But even if poor households received free electricity, their costs would rise by 0.7% as a result of the indirect effects where firms pass on the electricity price increases to consumers.

Poor households could also be affected by some job losses, depending on how companies respond to price increases. We estimate that an electricity price increase of 35% could lead to a fall in total employment by between 0.24% and 0.60%. This amounts to about 25 000 to 50 000 jobs (out of 13 million working people), mostly expected to be lost by less-skilled workers.

DEVELOPING
THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

Becoming a developmental state is not like winning the lottery – it does not happen by chance. There is much to learn from how successful developmental states have achieved their goals, said world experts Professors Linda Weiss and John Mathews at two public lectures, which has direct bearing on the newly announced industrial policy action plans. OMANO EDIGHEJI reports.

Husband-and-wife team Weiss and Mathews, coming from different angles to illustrate the inner workings of developmental states, were invited by the HSRC's newly established Centre for Africa's Social Progress (CASP). The public lectures form part of a research and policy initiative that will assist in generating knowledge to support South Africa in its efforts to construct a democratic developmental state (read more on page 2).

Why are countries like Japan, Taiwan and Korea more effective in their economic development endeavour than most developing countries?

Weiss, from the department of government and international relations, University of Sydney, emphasised the importance of the role of governments in national development and in ensuring industrial development, job creation, economic growth, poverty reduction and the improved living standards of their people.

Based on analysis of three developmental states, namely Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, she points to some lessons that South Africa could learn from their success stories if it is to become a developmental state.

Mathews, Eni Chair of Competitive Dynamics and Global Strategy, LUISS Guido Carli University, Rome, spoke about renewable energy as the 'unfolding, extraordinary third industrial revolution' on our doorstep, illustrating practical ways in which renewable energy could become 'the next great developmental project for South Africa'.

LESSONS FROM EAST ASIA

Why are countries like Japan, Taiwan and Korea more effective in their economic development endeavour than most developing countries? Using different case studies, Weiss identified some factors that accounted for their successful development.

In Japan, for instance, the ministry of international trade and industry played a pivotal role in its economic miracle after WWII. It did not take the authoritarian top-down decision-making approach or first 'getting the policy right', but intensively studied the import profile of Japan, and then focused on replacing imported goods by building industries around a host of high-end products while at the same time promoting an export orientation. Weiss calls this a 'combined export orientation with import substitution'.

Weiss dismissed some myths around the developmental state, observing that there is no trade-off between social equity and economic growth, and that developmental states are not inherently authoritarian.

Working closely with industry, the government devised a strategic industrial policy that gave a directional thrust to move the economy up the technological ladder and created foresight of where industry should be going. This process did not come

to a halt once successful, as the role of government in technological development and innovation continued to be re-invented. This illustrates the evolving role of government – it is not static and does not apply one policy tool for all sectors, but continuously evolves to meet changing circumstances and specific needs.

The entire process could be described as 'continuous discovery', said Weiss, which means being able to access knowledge and act on it, from the smallest to the largest industries.

FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

She said that in thinking about a developmental state, the focus should not be on state intervention but rather on the quality of intervention that could meet each country's specific needs.

Weiss dismissed some myths around the developmental state, observing that there is no trade-off between social equity and economic growth, and that developmental states are not inherently authoritarian.

A common denominator to all these countries is the incentive structures provided by their governments. But these incentives were based on recipients meeting performance targets in certain timeframes. This not only ensured technological upgrading by local industry, but also resulted in their competitiveness in international markets.

Although these countries employed different strategies across time and place, the main factors for success are what she calls 'institutional software and institutional hardware', which make up institutional architecture. This, she said, accounts for transformative capacity – a factor that sets developmental states apart from

Dr Omano Edigheji (left), lisens to Professor John Mathews, warning that if Africa misses out on the 'third industrial revolution', namely focusing strongly on developing renewable energy, it will fall even further behind the rest of the world

non-developmental ones. According to her, institutional software means the 'normative-political environment that supports and sustains the political will to pursue developmental projects'.

Weiss explains that the crucial element is not the proclamation of political will but the ability to *institutionalise the commitment to development*. She explains that the developmental states of Japan, Korea and Taiwan 'demonstrated a commitment to economic and social transformation, and were highly motivated to pursue that goal of "industrial catch-up"'. This is one factor set them apart from others. She points to two factors accounting for the commitment to shared projects, namely external factors and the shared value coherence of developmentally oriented cadre in the bureaucracy that had similar backgrounds and socialisation.

The other side of transformative capacity is *institutional hardware,* which contributed to the effectiveness of policy-making and implementation. This has two elements. First 'the creation of a pilot agency responsible for long-term strategy and coordination of policy inputs, staffed by a competent, mission-oriented professional bureaucracy, sufficiently insulated from the push and pull of special short-term interests'. This was achieved through recruiting and promoting bureaucrats based on merit, and expertise and competence were highly rewarded. An advantage of insulation is that it enabled the state to develop an independent perspective.

The second part of institutional hardware that accounted for the effectiveness of the state in Japan,

Korea and Taiwan is the connection of the state to the surrounding economy. Thus the state established close contacts with the private sector through trade associations, deliberation councils, and other informal networks that enabled the state and industry to regularly interact and that facilitated the exchange of information so crucial for the adaptation of policy to changing conditions. A key element relevant to South Africa in the cases under consideration is that the state was responsible for social goal-setting and worked with non-state actors to achieve them.

> *Weiss explains that the crucial element is not the proclamation of political will but the ability to institutionalise the commitment to development.*

Weiss concludes that what was responsible for the developmental effectiveness of Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Singapore was not 'the presence or absence of industrial policies per se, but in the character and purposiveness of their bureaucracies, in the extent of their political cohesion and insulation, and in the manner of their public–private linkages'.

LESSONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

On the basis of the analysis of the East Asian experience, she points to possible lessons that South Africa

could draw from to become a developmental state, which can be summarised in three words: commit, insulate and connect.

Developmental commitment will be key. This will entail that the state prioritises the pursuit of developmental projects over the long-run, implements them faithfully and consistently, sets broad goals and monitors and evaluates progress.

Insulation: South Africa should create a pilot agency and recruit a core cadre of elite personnel who are among the best and brightest, and who share similar life experiences and values. They should be protected from the corrupting influence of special interests. This cadre, she suggests, should become the 'custodian of the national project, the ones who are responsible for setting social goals, for coordinating the necessary resources, and for ensuring that progress is monitored'. The cadre in the pilot agency in particular and the civil service in general should be well remunerated and recruitment and promotion should be based on merit, and they need to have a performance-based career track.

Connect: There should be good connections between the pilot group and industry, and between the pilot agency and line ministries. Private sector incentives should be conditional to performance targets.

And a timeous warning: 'Nobody has a magic recipe. Creating a developmental state calls for modesty, high-level energy, goodwill, and respect for human potential.'

THE THIRD INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Professor Mathews, in turn, applied the ideas of a development state to a particular sector, namely renewable energy, and said if Africa misses out on this 'third industrial revolution', it will fall even further behind the rest of the world.

The first industrial revolution was driven by traditional energy sources, such as wood and peat, to create steam engines to drive economies. The switch to fossil fuels led to electrification, spawning the second industrial revolution, which brought about top-down, centralised energy systems that could capture economies of scale.

South Africa, he suggests, needs a stronger commitment to renewable energies as the source of renewed industrial development, and new industries based on wind and solar power, and hydro and geothermal energy.

But now, said Mathews, economies of scale are becoming 'diseconomies', with frequent blackouts and brownouts and greater transmission losses as the lines become longer in the ever-growing need for electricity.

'The scale and scope of the energy-driven industrial revolution is greater than anything the world has ever before encountered', he said. He advocates for a total transformation of the global energy system, even more radical than what is called for by the International Energy Agency's 'Blue Map'.

'What is needed is a drastic scaling up of renewable energy sources plus a new design for a new grid – the 'smart grid' – and the first steps in industrial ecology towards a circular economy.'

To do this, there is a need for original instruments to mobilise the credit required. He said lessons from previous huge projects – building the sewers of London; the interstate highway system of the US; and fighting two world wars – is that when the need is clear, the means can be found to do the job.

'Climate bonds' to mobilise the capital needed to build a new energy system, and to create new green jobs, would underpin credibility and force a reality check on how seriously governments are committed to this project.

South Africa should create a pilot agency and recruit a core cadre of elite personnel who are among the best and brightest, and who share similar life experiences and values. They should be protected from the corrupting influence of special interests.

On the subject of South Africa, he said the country finds itself locked into a fossil-fuel energy and minerals economy, with plans to add 40 GW from thermal (coal) and 19 GW from nuclear plants. This does not leave much for renewable energies.

South Africa should create a pilot agency and recruit a core cadre of elite personnel who are among the best and brightest, and who share similar life experiences and values. They should be protected from the corrupting influence of special interests.

South Africa, he suggests, needs a stronger commitment to renewable energies as the source of renewed industrial development, and new industries based on wind and solar power, and hydro and geothermal energy. This could be the basis of new industries that will generate jobs, industrial activity, exports and energy.

'It could also be a great nation-building project for South Africa in the 21st century.'

Mathews said China – also mainly dependent on fossil fuels for energy – could be the model for South Africa to follow. China is committed to weaning itself off coal, and although nuclear is one option, it has a sustained focus on renewable energies to complement its energy needs.

Referring back to Weiss' three foundations for success (commit, insulate and connect), he said institutions like the Energy Development Corporation, the National Energy Research Institute and the Development Bank of Southern Africa should make clear commitments to building renewable energy capabilities. And then the renewable energy development strategy should be insulated from Eskom, meaning that Eskom should carry on with its fossil-fuel plants, but should allow the private sector to create complementary industries and technologies on renewable energy that will help South Africa to take advantage of the third industrial revolution.

He said industry leaders should connect by building 'linkage partnerships' with existing advanced players in the global market, for example, in the field of solar photovoltaic (PV) cells (silicon and non-silicon-based). These leaders should also develop biofuels in partnership with Brazil, and lobby for the restructuring of the biofuels trade together with Brazil to get trade barriers imposed by the USA lifted.

Dr Omano Edigheji is the coordinator of the Centre for Africa's Social Progress , and the principal investigator of the Democratic Developmental State Initiative.

Decentralising
mental healthcare

South Africans suffer from mental trauma because of their experiences under apartheid and their continuing struggles with poverty and HIV and AIDS. There is a serious need for mental healthcare. INGE PETERSEN and ARVIN BHANA look at policy that has focused on decentralising and integrating mental health services into district primary healthcare, but say more focused investment is necessary.

DECENTRALISATION IN RURAL DISTRICTS

What progress has been made in decentralising mental healthcare in a rural district in South Africa, and how has decentralisation affected the allocation of resources?

To be effective, integrated primary mental healthcare also needs measures for prevention and mental health promotion, and access to care for common mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression...

The decentralisation of mental health demands much more than simply taking patients out of mental health institutions (de-institutionalisation). It should include community-based rehabilitation programmes that help patients live in the community. To be effective, integrated primary mental healthcare also needs measures for prevention and mental health promotion, and access to care for common mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression, for children and adolescents as well.

In the study site located in the northern KwaZulu-Natal magisterial sub-district of Hlabisa (with a population of approximately 168 500 people), decentralisation focused on emergency management of psychiatric patients and ongoing drug treatment of patients with chronic but stabilised mental disorders. The mental health budget was not enough to cover promotion and prevention programmes, community-based rehabilitation or the costs of training primary healthcare staff in mental healthcare.

STUDY FINDINGS

A key finding was that the district lacked specialist mental health staff, having no psychiatrist and only one psychologist: this falls far below the suggested targets for middle-income countries. Further, due to staff shortages, the technical adviser for mental health was required to manage other programmes.

Nurses at the primary healthcare clinic level complained about lack of support and time to adequately assess, manage and refer patients with common mental health disorders.

Another finding suggested that while there were more psychiatric nurses than the suggested target, overall staff shortages meant they had to work in general healthcare as well as mental health. Nurses at the primary healthcare clinic level complained about lack of support and time to adequately assess, manage and refer patients with common mental health disorders.

The research also showed that the scope of community rehabilitation programmes was limited to using general community health workers to help psychiatric patients take their medication properly. And although two-thirds of the service users interviewed reported using both traditional and Western medicine, there was little interaction between the two systems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers call for more resources to be earmarked for mental healthcare, and stress the need for more efficient use of existing resources. They suggest that policy-makers expand the role of mental health professionals, such as clinical psychologists, to play a training and consultant liaison role to help staff at primary healthcare level.

Other recommendations include:

- fund more trained community-based workers dedicated to mental health;
- employ psychological counsellors to provide a referral service for people with common mental health disorders as well as support and supervise community-level workers;
- set aside resources for mental health services alongside measures to address the human resource crisis within the general healthcare service; and
- fund training for both traditional and Western practitioners to exchange understandings and treatment of mental illness, and establish mutual referral systems.

The researchers call for more resources to be earmarked for mental healthcare, and stress the need for more efficient use of existing resources.

racism

cuts both ways

In 1995 the Springboks won the world rugby tournament, and in 1996 Bafana Bafana won the African Cup of Nations in soccer. Nelson Mandela was then the State President and honorary captain of both teams. He was also the champion of reconciliation, social cohesion and nation-building. As a country and as people we seemed to be working hard to realise the ideals of a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society. Alas! Fifteen years thereafter, we are retreating into the dark days. The race card is played willy nilly, and by all, as if there was never a watershed election in 1994.

In their rejection of white racism, many of the formerly oppressed epitomise the very racism that has harmed their dignity and sense of worth.

RACISM AS ESCAPISM

President Jacob Zuma is rightly calling for an indaba on morals in an endeavour to be inclusive as we craft a common future, and take collective responsibility for it. This will be a presidential project led by a team appointed on a fixed-term delivery contract. My contention is that this will also come to naught, as did the African Renaissance movement initiated by former President Mbeki, and the Moral Regeneration movement that was led by Zuma himself while he was deputy president of the country. Two reasons can help to explain the failure of these noble initiatives. First, the notorious policy of cadre deployment was invoked when appointments to office were made. Second, racist categories under the cloak of transformation influenced thoughts and actions, even in these honorable movements.

This debate can be taken a step further so as to include black racism as escapism. All too often the black oppressed of Africa, in an attempt to affirm themselves, do so in the negative. In their rejection of white racism, many of the formerly oppressed epitomise the very racism that has harmed their dignity and sense of worth. Racism is racism, it knows no colour and cuts both ways. As fellow human beings we must affirm ourselves in the universal sense. This ultimately implies respect for oneself and fellow human persons.

For decades now our continent has been rocked at its very foundations. Racism has tainted with blood the very soil we walk on. Unfortunately in our fight for freedom, the quest for power has all too often prevailed, and we have become victims of our own greed. Corruption is rampant and manifests in various forms. We can no longer use the excuses of apartheid and white racism to justify our own mistakes. Again I want to state that true liberation is far more than political control, and public office should never be used as a vehicle for self enrichment. Freedom implies liberation of the human soul in the universal order of things.

LEARNING TO LOVE

Seen in this context we still have a long way to go before we can truly say we are free. We must commit ourselves to overcoming this fatal disease, namely, racism as escapism. We should no longer compare ourselves to the man next door but rather to the ultimate goal we set ourselves. Maybe then we will stop judging each other and start helping and encouraging each other as fellow South Africans, beyond petty politics and self-destructive power struggles. Let our relationships, no matter how small the circle, be genuine, and in keeping with the spirit of Eric Fromm when he states in his book entitled *To Have or To Be*, 'I have a great love for you, is meaningless. Love is not a thing that one can have, but a process, an inner activity that one is the subject of. I can love, I can be in love, but in loving, I have nothing. In fact, the less I have, the more I can love.'

...we still have a long way to go before we can truly say we are free. We must commit ourselves to overcoming this fatal disease, namely, racism as escapism.

Our beloved country is crying for redemption from corruption, moral decay and racism. All initiatives like the indaba on morals and the lifestyle audits seeking to achieve this noble goal should be embraced and supported. Above all, we should remember that the integrity of the process is as important as the outcome. Any attempt, perceived or real, at manipulating the outcome will render all exercises redundant.

Professor Joseph Lesiba Teffo is a research director in the research programme on Democracy and Governance.

A SOCIAL POLICY
Framework
FOR AFRICA

IDENTIFYING THE CHALLENGES

The African Union Commission (AUC) asked the HSRC to formulate a Social Policy Framework with a brief that it should be comprehensive, analytical and clearly reflect Africa's key social development challenges and suggest strategies to effectively address them. ZITHA MOKOMANE, who led the HSRC team, reports.

In the last decade, Africa has made significant strides in certain areas of social and economic development. But despite this progress, the general developmental crisis in Africa has not been fundamentally altered. African countries continue to fall at the bottom of any list measuring social development and economic activity.

It is against this background that the ministers present at the First Session of the African Union (AU) Labour and Social Affairs Commission in 2003 requested the AU Commission (AUC) to develop a Social Policy Framework for the continent.

African countries continue to fall at the bottom of any list measuring social development and economic activity.

KEY AFRICAN ISSUES

A first step was to draw upon the strategic objectives of the AUC's social programme, and the various human and social policy blueprints adopted by African countries under the auspices of the Organisation of African Unity, the AU, the Economic Commission for Africa, and other United Nations agencies.

This exercise led to the identification of 16 key thematic issues to address in the quest for sustainable development, namely population and development; labour and employment; health; social protection; HIV and AIDS, TB, malaria and other infectious diseases; migration; education; agriculture, food and nutrition; the family; children, adolescents and youth; ageing; disability; gender equality and women's empowerment; indigenous culture; urban development; and environmental sustainability.

In addition, another five issues were identified as also deserving attention in Africa: drug abuse and crime; sport; civil strife and conflict situations; the impact of globalisation and trade liberalisation; and foreign debt.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

The principle of social protection was given prominence, and the broad range of recommended actions – outlined to guide member states in formulating and implementing their own social policies – all fall under a social protection framework.

The recommended actions not only include social or income security measures, but also an integrated policy approach that has a strong developmental focus on job creation, equitable and accessible health services, quality education, social welfare and other services. To this end, the Social Policy Framework for Africa takes forward the commitments made by a number of African governments who adopted the Livingstone and Yaounde Calls for Action on Social Protection in 2006 to ensure that marginalised groups across the continent benefit from increased investment in social development and expanded social protection schemes.

Overall, the framework acknowledges that while economic growth is a necessary condition of social development, it is not exclusively or sufficiently able to address the challenges posed by the multi-faceted socioeconomic and political forces that together generate Africa's development challenges. The framework therefore recognises social development both as a goal in its own right, and as a means of creating the conditions for sustainable and inclusive growth.

IMPLEMENTATION

To ensure that the framework is implemented and has maximum impact, its concluding section outlines the key roles and responsibilities of the main stakeholders, specifically AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities, the AUC, other AU organs, development partners and civil-society organisations.

As a reflection of countries' commitment to accelerating human-centred and sustainable social development on the continent, the Social Policy Framework for Africa was adopted by AU ministers responsible for social development at their first ever conference held in Windhoek, Namibia in October 2008, and was endorsed by the AU Executive Council of Ministers and Assembly of Heads of States and Governments in Addis Ababa at the end of January 2009.

Copies of the Social Policy Framework for Africa are available at www.africa-union.org/

Dr Zitha Makomane is an African research fellow in the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development programme

Understanding the role and value of subsistence farming

At first glance South Africa's black farming sector appears to contribute minimally to the economy. But an estimated more than 4 million black adults rely on subsistence production to supplement their household food supply, despite the low input nature of this production. MICHAEL ALIBER and TIM HART make a case for greater support for subsistence farming.

The South African agricultural sector is dualistic in nature. On the one hand, it comprises a vibrant, highly capitalised, mainly white commercial sector, of about 40 000 commercial farm units (Stats SA, 2009). On the other hand, there are about 4 to 4.5 million blacks involved in farming at some scale, of whom about 93 to 95% do so mainly for subsistence purposes, and the rest are mainly commercially oriented smallholders.

There are about 4 to 4.5 million blacks involved in farming at some scale, of whom about 93 to 95% do so mainly for subsistence purposes.

Although the dualistic nature of the agricultural sector reflects South Africa's abiding land inequities (marginally improved through the land reform programme), and although there is a genuine need to give black smallholders opportunities to grow and compete, the contention is that subsistence production deserves more respect and support than it presently receives. This research therefore aimed to contribute to a better understanding of the role of subsistence agriculture in South Africa.

CONTRIBUTION AND COMPLEXITIES

For the purpose of this paper we used Statistics South Africa's Labour Force Survey Trends of the extrapolated number of black (African and coloured) South Africans who engage in agriculture, according to their stated 'main reason' for farming, depicted in Figure 1.

Broadly, we take 'subsistence producers' to include those who produce food primarily for consumption in their own households, whether as a 'main source' or 'extra source'.

Land holdings in the former homelands are generally very small and the majority of rural inhabitants in the former homelands are women, children and the aged who reside on land more for social security purposes than for agricultural production. It is estimated that arable land in the former homelands is between 11 and 16% of the total arable area of the country, though the extent to which it is cultivated varies from year to year.

The contention is that subsistence production deserves more respect and support than it presently receives.
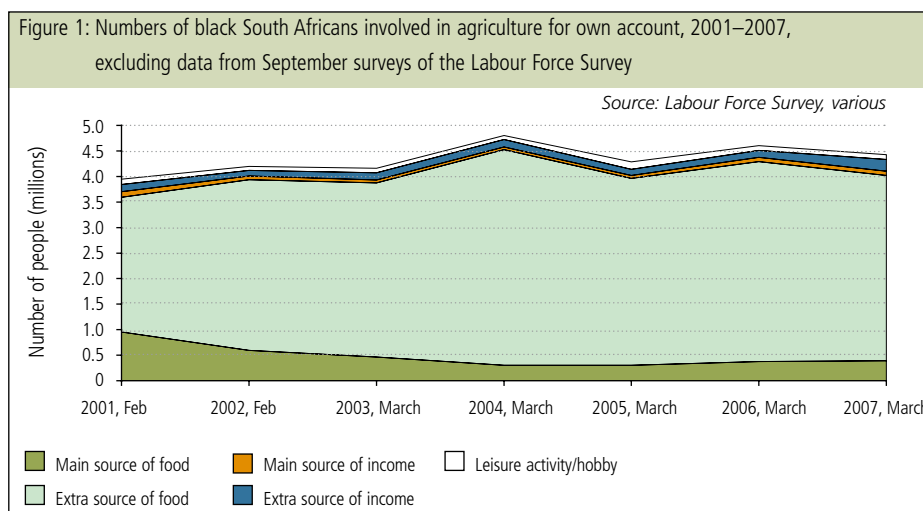
As implied by Figure 1, most people engaged in subsistence-level agriculture in South Africa diversify their income and livelihood sources, i.e. agriculture is part of their diversification strategy. Own farming generally does not provide the bulk of their diet, however it can usefully defray the grocery bill, and enhance household nutrition.

SUBSISTING AND NUTRITION

A recent study reported that while income is the most important determinant of household food security in two villages in the Waterberg District Municipality, Limpopo Province, food obtained from various types of

Figure 1: Numbers of black South Africans involved in agriculture for own account, 2001–2007, excluding data from September surveys of the Labour Force Survey

Source: Labour Force Survey, various

Legend:
- Main source of food
- Extra source of food
- Main source of income
- Extra source of income
- Leisure activity/hobby

dry land agriculture contributed significantly to household nutrition. The study argues that without farming, the food security of these households would be reduced, especially for the ultra-poor. This study also noted that small-scale irrigated vegetable production has the potential to substantially increase the amount of vitamins A and C available to such households.

Most people engaged in subsistence-level agriculture in South Africa diversify their income and livelihood sources, i.e. agriculture is part of their diversification strategy.

A case study conducted on subsistence farming in Mopani District Municipality in Limpopo Province, which formed part of the research for this article, showed that 95% of households engaged in some agricultural activity, though for the majority of residents agriculture was not a source of cash income; 83% of those who cultivated crops did so to provide an extra source of food for the household, whereas 95% noted that African vegetables are important to their annual food supply. The leaves of these plants are generally higher in macro- and micro-nutrient content than cabbage, the most common 'exotic' leafy vegetable consumed.

The study argues that without farming, the food security of these households would be reduced, especially for the ultra-poor.

WHO FARMS?

About 60% of those involved in farming are women. Figure 2 provides a breakdown according to the main reason for farming, and shows that women are dominant amongst those who produce for a main source as well as an extra source of food. Insofar as women outnumber men as subsistence producers, this is consistent with the prevalent stereotype of homeland agriculture. What is perhaps surprising is that commercially oriented black farmers are equally likely to be women as men.

TRANSITIONS INTO AND OUT OF FARMING

Advantage was taken of the fact that the March 2006 and March 2007 Labour Force Surveys have in common about 21 000 households, meaning that we were able to construct a panel data set in which we could observe the pattern of entry into and exit out of farming. The analysis confirmed that there is considerable movement into and out of agriculture, and into and out of agriculture for different reasons.
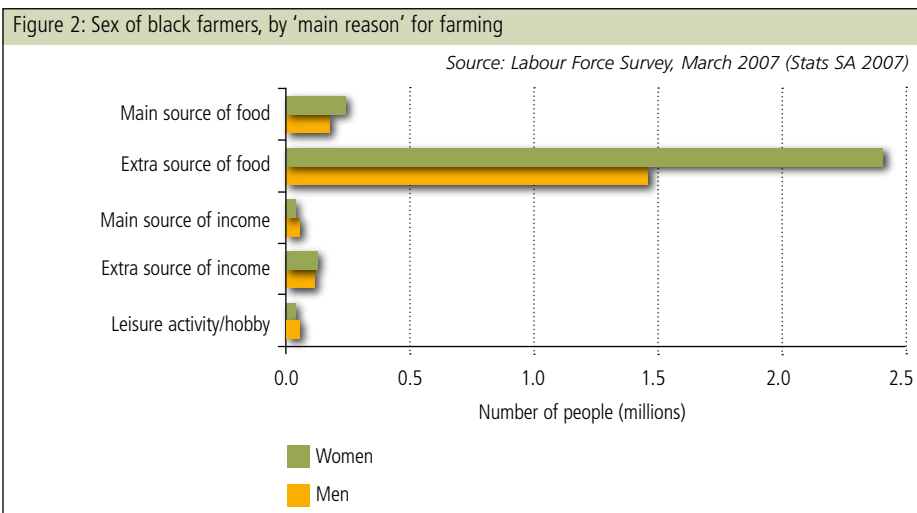
The analysis was taken further to identify the

Figure 2: Sex of black farmers, by 'main reason' for farming

Source: Labour Force Survey, March 2007 (Stats SA 2007)

average incomes and average income changes associated with different transitions and non-transitions. (Note that blank cells are those for which there were too few observations relating to that particular transition/non-transition from which to generalise.) Table 1 for example shows that those who depended on farming as a main source of food in both periods had an average income of R96 per month, though they did enjoy a 44% income improvement from the one period to the next. By contrast, those who produced to secure an extra source of food in both periods had an average income of R241. In other words, farming as a main source of food is a sign of extreme poverty, thus the observed reduction in the number of people belonging to this sub-group (see Figure 1) is almost certainly a positive development.

Together with the observations related above in terms of the scale of the subsistence sector and the predominance of women in it, it appears that the subsistence sector is large, complex, and indeed merits greater support. Such support should be based on the local context, build on and, where appropriate, improve existing local practices, while addressing various existing threats to this type of production.

This is a condensed version of an article that appeared in *Agrekon*, 48(4) (December 2009).

Insofar as women outnumber men as subsistence producers, this is consistent with the prevalent stereotype of homeland agriculture. What is perhaps surprising is that commercially oriented black farmers are equally likely to be women as men.

Table 1: Average per capita monthly wage/salary income in 2006, and average percentage change in per capital wage/salary income 2006–07

		2007					
		Main source of food	Extra source of food	Main source of income	Extra source of income	Leisure	Did not farm
2006	Main source of food	R96 [+44.4%]	R133 [+23.8%]				R254 [+41.4%]
	Extra source of food	R309 [−24.1%]	R241 [+9.0%]	R166 [+19.2%]	R235 [+41.3%]	R687 [+3.5%]	R393 [+18.1%]
	Main source of income		R260 [+26.1%]				R831 [−41.7%]
	Extra source of income	R418 [−14.4%]					R474 [+52.5%]
	Leisure		R622 [+30.8%]				R992 [+23.5%]
	Did not farm	R333 [+20.8%]	R382 [+15.7%]	R258 [+24.7%]	R663 [+26.4%]	R1,290 [+21.5%]	R937 [+22.7%]

Michael Aliber is a senior researcher at the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape, and Tim Hart is a senior research manager at the Human Science Research Council's Centre for Poverty, Employment and Growth (CPEG).

TEACH
the parents well

Parents' participation in their children's school activities is an important facet of successful education. Children gain better scores and improve in academic achievement when their parents work hand-in-hand with the school. RONNIE MMOTLANE, LOLITA WINNAAR and MBITHI WA KIVILU did a survey on who the parents are that get involved in their children's schools.

Children's educational experience is enhanced when parents get involved in the education of their children, creating a partnership between the school and the home of the child. Specifically, parents' participation in activities at their children's schools not only elevates the cultural identity of their children, but also facilitates their socialisation, attitudes and behaviour towards those around them.

Our main objective in this study was to investigate the extent to which personal traits predict parents' participation in activities of their children's schools.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

Low parental participation in activities of the school has been detected in South African black schools. In our study, parental participation implied that parents get involved, participate and attend their children's school meetings, sport activities, leisure activities and social activities. In broader terms, parental participation implies that parents fulfil the mandate of being responsible for their children and participating in school activities.

Participation in activities at their children's schools not only elevates the cultural identity of their children, but also facilitates their socialisation, attitudes and behaviour towards those around them.

Factors that influence parental participation are multidimensional; however, few studies have made the effort to integrate these factors, or explain how they affect parental participation.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

For our study we developed questionnaires to measure respondents' attitudes, beliefs and opinions about participation in activities of their children's school. These were used in face-to-face interviews with 1 364 participants who had at least one child in school.

Low parental participation in activities of the school has been detected in South African black schools.

Apart from biographical information, respondents were asked to respond to the question of how often they participated in the activities of their children's school on a four-point scale of: very often=1, often=2, sometimes=3, and almost never=4, and further divided into high participation (very often and often=1) and low participation (almost never and sometimes=0).

PROFILE OF SURVEY PARENTS

Of the 1 364 parents selected for analysis, 30% (n=954) were female and 70% (n=410) male, with a small minority (4%) between 16–24 years old, 20% between 25–34 years, 43% between 35–49 years and 33% in the 50+ year-old age group.

Fifty-six percent were black Africans, 15% coloureds, 15% were Asians and 14% white.

Respondents were equally distributed among the three categories of Living Standards Measure (LSM), with 33% in the low and medium categories respectively, and 34% in the high LSM group.

Parents who were married were 1.4 times more likely to participate in schooling activities than those who were never married, and this group were also more likely to participate than a single parent.

Overall, respondents' age category, marital status, gender and LSM were the only predictors that had a significant influence on levels of participation in activities of their children's school.

Participants in the 16–24 years age group had the lowest chance of participating in their children's schooling, the middle age category of 35–49 years were 1.5 times more likely than those in the 50+ category to participate in their children's schooling activities, whereas respondents in the 25–34 years category were 1.3 times more likely than those in the 50+ category to participate.

Parents who were married were 1.4 times more likely to participate in schooling activities than those who were never married. This group were also more likely to participate than a single parent. Females were also more likely to participate in school activities.

It was also clear that the lower the LMS category of parents, the less they are likely to participate in their children's school activities.

a role in this regard, but the fact that men were more likely to be employed than women is considered to be a factor.

The finding that respondents in the high LSM are more likely to participate than those in the low and medium LSM is also consistent with existing literature which suggests that socioeconomic class determines parental participation.

One suggestion that emerges from these findings is that there is a need to increase parental participation in order to improve on children's education.

The study has also shown that married couples are more likely to participate in their children's school activities than those who have never married. Marital status of parents signifies not only changes in the fertility and marriage patterns among South Africans, but is a significant predictor of the level of parental participation, a finding also consistent with research elsewhere.

Whereas the focus was traditionally put on socioeconomic status rather than any other personal characteristics as the most significant variable predictor, the results in our study show that multiple factors have an impact on parental participation.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

One suggestion that emerges from these findings is that there is a need to increase parental participation in order to improve on children's education. This means an increase in parent participation, direct impact programmes, and interventions aimed at enhancing relationships between parents, pupils and teachers other than their governance. Making parents more aware of the need to improve their children's education not only increases their participation in their children's schools, but can also promote and improve the image of schools and the standard of education in general.

This article is based on research published in the *South African Journal of Education,* 29:527–540.

Ronnie Mmotlane is a junior researcher at the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), Lolita Winnaar is a chief programmer in Centre for Socio-Economic Surveys (CSES) at the HSRC, and Dr Mbithi wa Kivilu is the director of CSES.

NOT SO DIFFERENT, AFTER ALL

The results of this study are consistent with international research findings, namely that mothers are more involved in their children's lives than fathers; and married fathers are less likely to be involved in their children's education than fathers in single-parent families. When fathers are separated from their spouses, they are also most likely to withdraw their involvement from their children. Although some of the fathers measured in this study showed permanent involvement, the tendency for low participation in other groups still showed father involvement as a problem.

In this study we did not formulate a hypothesis to test differences between age groups, we found that parents who were within the ages 35–49 were more likely than the younger age group to participate in their children's schooling. Race did not seem to play

I KNEW I COULD MAKE IT

Access into higher-education learning for adults has always been difficult, as recognition of learning acquired formally and informally is not commonly practised in our country's higher-education institutions, as is the case in the USA, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. JULIA MOTAUNG and CHARLES HONGORO use a case study to demonstrate an acceptable way of assessing prior learning.

Formally known as recognition of prior learning (RPL), it is a way of measuring and assessing life-long learning required for a specific qualification, and awarding credits for such learning if it meets the requirements of the qualification.

Learning occurs in all kinds of situations, whether formal, informal or non-formal. Many adults, defined here as 25 years and older, may have acquired a great deal of learning in various settings. But because they have not had the opportunity to show what they know in the formal education system, they are excluded from certain jobs, promotion on the job and from further education and training opportunities, all of which require 'certificates'.

The committee concluded that Richard demonstrated the requirements commensurate with the exit-level outcomes of honours level, which are a demonstration of a sound knowledge base and critical understanding of curriculum instruction design and development issues.

The problem has always been identifying what candidates know and can do; matching their skills, knowledge and experience to specific standards and the associated assessment criteria of a qualification; assessing candidates against those standards; and crediting them for skills, knowledge and experience built up throughout their lives.

CASE STUDY OF PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

The faculty of education of the University of Pretoria, which we studied for this purpose, makes use of two main forms of prior learning assessment: portfolio assessment and a 1-hour interview conducted with RPL candidates to determine whether they meet entry-level requirements of the targeted programme.

The programme manager for a particular RPL application compiles a set of criteria for the RPL committee to be used during assessment. For example, if a candidate wishes exemption from the BEd (Hons) programme for admission into a master's degree programme, the interview and portfolio assessment will focus on the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the outcomes expected at level 7 of the
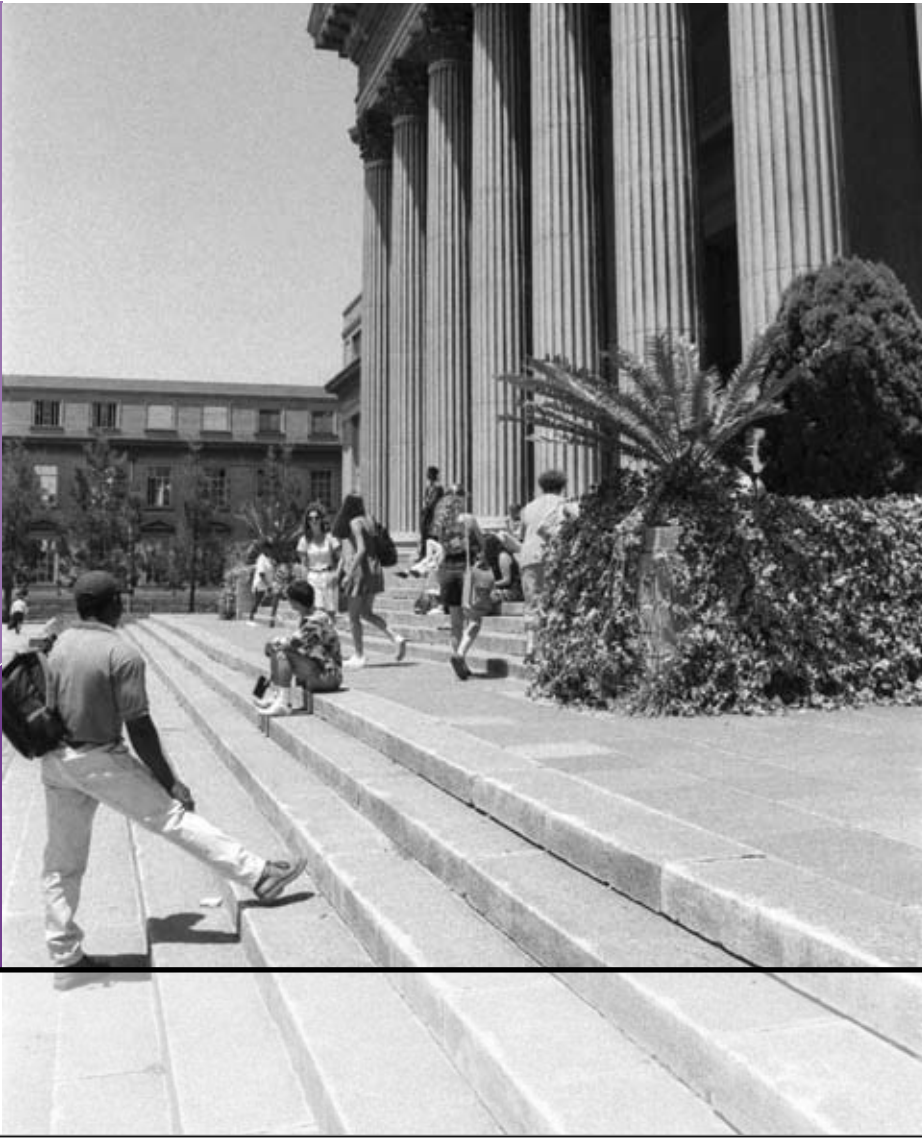
national qualification's framework.

The head of department in the faculty, in liaison with the programme manager, then compiles a report based on the outcomes of the RPL committee and tables it at the first faculty board meeting. Such a report usually contains the applicant's formal application, copies of their academic qualifications, transcripts of the candidate's academic records, copies of testimonials, recommendations by the head of department, programme manager and external subject specialist and a global percentage reflecting the candidate's command of the field of specialisation.

The dean of the faculty and the school chair designate will present the decision of the faculty board at a senate meeting, which makes a final decision on each RPL application. Faculty administration will then be informed of the outcomes of the assessment and then inform the candidate, usually in writing. No students register into a programme while the outcomes of the RPL applications are pending.

RICHARD ZEEMAN'S PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

In the following case study, the candidate was not

cal understanding of curriculum instruction design and development issues. The recommendation was for him to complete one of the BEd (Hons) research modules in qualitative research. The executive committee of the senate of the university endorsed the decision of the faculty board to admit him into the MEd programme in 2006, just a few months after the start of the first semester.

One of the many benefits of RPL is that deserving candidates can attain their educational goals within a shorter period of time.

LESSONS LEARNT

Any institution of higher learning intending to implement the national RPL policy, released in 2002, needs to have a well-developed process of prior learning assessment. RPL assessors and RPL candidates should know exactly what needs to be done from start to finish. There should be an attempt by all those involved in the process to adhere to the institutional procedure and process for prior-learning assessment, to ensure credibility and integrity of assessment results.

The programme manager should be the first line in the gate-keeping process to determine if the RPL learner's portfolio and oral interview demonstrates learning and not just experience, a critical aspect of RPL. In this case, a high premium was placed by RPL assessors on recognising and crediting learning and not just experience, in line with international standards for prior-learning assessment.

Richard had a high level of confidence in his knowledge, skills and attributes when he approached the university to assess comparability of his prior learning with what goes on in lecture rooms. It came as no surprise that his prior learning was indeed equivalent with exit level criteria for the BEd honours degree, hence his admission into MEd programmes without the paper qualification.

Needless to say, there may be many adults in our communities with equivalent higher-education learning, but without the RPL service being offered in higher-education institutions, they may end up registering at these institutions and repeating what they already know – a total waste of time and money towards improving one's qualifications and skills. One of the many benefits of RPL is that deserving candidates can attain their educational goals within a shorter period of time.

in possession of the required BEd (Hons) degree to be admitted into an MEd programme. He held a BA degree, received in 1994, and a higher-education diploma, obtained in 1999.

But because they have not had the opportunity to show what they know in the formal education system, they are excluded from certain jobs, promotion on the job and from further education and training opportunities, all of which require 'certificates'.

Apart from having attempted the MPhil qualification, he also has numerous attendance and completion qualifications for short learning programmes such as project management, supervision and management skills, and leadership training. Richard submitted his application for RPL in 2005. He then appeared before the RPL committee of the faculty on 19 April 2006 where he went through an oral examination. There were three RPL committee members involved in this particular assessment pro-

cess, namely, the head of department, programme manager and the external consultant and specialist in the field of curriculum studies.

The interview focused on a thorough discussion to determine why Richard wanted exemption from the BEd (Hons) programme, his subject knowledge of his field of specialisation, general understanding of educational research as methodology, and the foci and procedures for his proposed research at master's level. The faculty RPL committee also assessed Richard's portfolio and found that he had a profound understanding of his field of specialisation and educational research. The proposal he tabled for his envisaged masters studies indicated good intellectual clarity and understanding of the problems encountered in practice.

The committee concluded that Richard demonstrated the requirements commensurate with the exit-level outcomes of honours level, which are a demonstration of a sound knowledge base and criti-

Dr Julia Motaung is a research specialist and Professor Charles Hongoro a director in the Policy Analysis and Capacity Enhancement (PACE) programme.

FROM HSRC PRESS

www.hsrcpress.ac.za

THE ZUMA ADMINISTRATION: CRITICAL CHALLENGES

Kwandiwe Kondlo & Mashupye H Maserumule (eds)
This collection of essays from varying perspectives, *The Zuma Administration: Critical Challenges*, rigorously engages with the issues facing the new South African government. The contributors provide a view into the future and explore the responsibilities that the Zuma administration must take on. The monograph seeks to stimulate debate and thinking, to challenge entrenched views and perceptions and to break new ground. Interpreting the dynamics since the birth of democracy in South Africa in1994, through the era of the Mbeki administration and the transition to the Zuma administration, it provides fresh perspectives on the questions of land reform, rural development, service delivery, intergovernmental relations, and poverty reduction in South Africa. Steering clear of biography, the book deals with the micro-mechanics of governance. It is written for policy-makers, scholars in the field of administration and governance and everyone with an interest in the political economy and public administration of South Africa.

The issues that this book deals with are high on the research agenda of the Human Sciences Research Council's Democracy and Governance research programme and are in line with its pursuit of informing policy development in South Africa.
Soft cover, 160pp, ISBN 978-07969-2316-5, R150.00, 2010

AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN A DIGITAL AGE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE COMPUTING

Don Osborn
With increasing numbers of computers and the diffusion of the internet around the world, localisation of the technology and the content it carries into the many languages people speak is becoming an ever more important area for discussion and action. Localisation, simply put, includes translation and cultural adaptation of user interfaces and software applications, as well as the creation and translation of internet content in diverse languages. It is essential in making information and communication technology more accessible to the populations of the poorer countries, increasing its relevance to their lives, needs, and aspirations, and ultimately in bridging the 'digital divide'.

Localisation is a new and growing field of inquiry. This book identifies issues, concerns, priorities, and lines of research and is intended as a baseline study in defining localisation in Africa and how it is important for development and education in the long term. Techies, geeks, P2P experts, etc., as well as researchers and development organisations, this book is for you.
Soft cover, 176pp, ISBN 978-07969-2249-6, R130.00, 2010

### PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH IN SCARCE-RESOURCE CONTEXTS: EMERGING EVIDENCE AND PRACTICE

Inge Petersen, Arvin Bhana, Alan J Flisher, Leslie Swartz & Linda Richter (eds)
Promoting mental health demands actions that improve resilience in individuals, families and communities, and ensure health-enhancing policy and legislative frameworks. These actions are at the heart of human development and can assist in improving social and economic prospects for people in low-to-middle income countries.

This book provides a conceptual and theoretical base for the application of mental health promotion and the prevention of mental disorders in low-resource settings – offering examples of evidence-based programmes. With contributions from a range of experts, this is a key text for students and practitioners, as well as for policy-makers and planners, in mental and public health.
Soft cover, 256pp, ISBN 978-07969-2303-5, R160.00, 2010
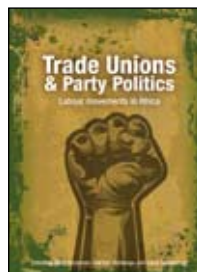
### TRADE UNIONS AND PARTY POLITICS: LABOUR MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA

Björn Beckman, Sakhela Buhlungu & Lloyd Sachikonye (eds)
In much of Africa, people look to trade unions for leadership, especially at times of economic downturn. Although Africa's wage-workers are relatively few in comparison to those in the informal economy, their experience of organisation and mass mobilisation and their position in the modern economy give them a strategic role in the politics of democratisation and development.

This volume examines the political role of trade unions in seven African countries and the various ways in which they seek to influence political parties and the state. Whereas some, like the Nigeria Labour Congress, push for a political party of their own, others, such as Cosatu in South Africa, opt to engage with the power struggles in the ruling party. In Namibia and Uganda unions have been incorporated by a one-party dominated state while in Ghana, unions insist on being autonomous. There is also a move towards autonomy in Senegal, despite the plurality of unions with party affiliations. In the case of Zimbabwe, unions took the lead in creating an alternative alliance in opposition to a repressive state. *Trade Unions and Party Politics* provides a finely tuned critique of the impact achieved by these strategies, within the context of both the unique forces shaping them and the looming shadow of the new global economy.

With contributions by established researchers, all of them engaged scholars and seasoned labour activists in the countries studied, the volume makes a major contribution to understanding the dilemmas facing unions in contemporary Africa. While examining the relationship of trade unions to party politics, the contributions also provide new insights into the relationship of trade-union action to the politics of national liberation, a theme that has not received sufficient attention in the existing literature.
Soft cover, 224pp, ISBN 978-07969-2306-6, R180.00, 2010
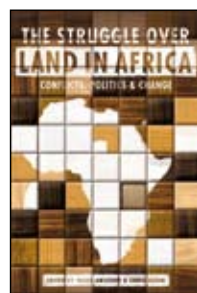
THE STRUGGLE OVER LAND IN AFRICA: CONFLICTS, POLITICS AND CHANGE

Ward Anseeuw & Chris Alden (eds)
Conflicts over land are frequent across the African continent, ranging from local disputes amongst urban squatters to large-scale challenges to the prevailing political order. Loaded with economic, symbolic and emotional significance, land is often at the epicentre of violence and, concurrently, of any attempts to develop sustainable solutions to conflicts.

The Struggle over Land in Africa compellingly analyses the role of land as a place and source of conflict, especially in relation to policy issues, crisis management and post-war/post-conflict reconstruction. While highlighting the diverse and critical nature of land disputes in Africa, the book draws attention to the complex root causes of these disputes – a complexity that is often neglected – and to the challenges they present for governance of both state and market. By adopting a continental perspective, the various chapters compare responses to internal crises across a range of African countries and regions.

With authors from the academic, diplomatic, political and civil sectors, this book is the essential reference on the debate about land issues in Africa.
Soft cover, 280pp, ISBN 978-07969-2322-6, R280.00, 2010

HOW TO CONTACT US