

HSRC International Brief

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CEO participates in research priority setting in the US



Dr Olive Shisana, CEO of the HSRC, attended a consultation on Public Health Evaluation (PHE) at the National Institute of Health, Bethesda, Maryland on 25 and 26 February. The

purpose of the meeting was to inform the direction of the PHE program for 2009 and beyond, including priority setting for new applied research to guide the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Other goals of the meeting included identifying existing resources, types of PEPFAR projects, different methodologies and general improvement for the better evaluation of PEPFAR projects.

South Africa meets S&T counterparts in US

The first meeting of the Joint Commission on Science and Technology under the US-South Africa Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement took place in February 2008, in Massachusetts and Washington DC. The meeting was organised by the US Department of State.

The South African delegation was led by Dr Phil Mjwara of the SA Department of Science and Technology. The HSRC was represented by Dr Olive Shisana and Ms Bridgette Prince, head of International Liaison of the HSRC, who participated in the meetings as part of this bilateral delegation, and more specifically in those with the US Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institute for Health.

Dozens of new collaborations were agreed upon, among others to establish geospatial and earth observation joint working groups, focusing on global change, sustainable development, energy, and health. A separate energy efficiency and renewable energy group will be formed to translate applied research into solving energy problems.

A health group will be formed to seek new collaborations in health sciences and biotechnology and to refocus on chronic diseases, such as diabetes, cancer, and malnutrition. Dr Shisana and the HSRC will be participating in the health group to ensure that pressing health issues for South Africa enjoy priority.

From L to R: Janette Yu-Shears, US Dept Health and Human Services; Bridgette Prince, HSRC; Samuel Adeniyi-Jones, Africa Region Health and Human Services; Olive Shisana, HSRC; Shahul Ebrahim, US Mission to the African Union; Ali Dhansay, Medical Research Council



HSRC meets with US institutions

Dr Olive Shisana and Ms Bridgette Prince held several meetings in February 2008 with institutions in the US with which the HSRC has previously built relationships established after a visit in 2006.

Meetings included the George Washington University, Family Health International, the Higher Education for Development, the US Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, the World Bank, the National Science Foundation, and Africare in Washington.

The main purpose of the visits was to:

- have follow-up meetings with institutions visited in 2006;
- meet with institutions with which collaboration has been initiated, or with the purpose to establishing collaborations and partnerships;
- participate in bilateral meetings with the South African Department of Science and Technology (DST).

A step forward in cooperation with NEPAD

A meeting between the HSRC and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has decided on the next steps in the relationship established between the two organisations by way of an MoU. Dr Olive Shisana led the South African delegation who met with Dr Eric Buch, the health representative of NEPAD. They agreed to hold three-monthly operational meetings. NEPAD will also prepare and submit a letter of support for the application of the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance (SAHARA), to the Wellcome Trust. The programme on the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health and SAHARA will work on an HIV/AIDS mainstreaming manual. NEPAD will be a co-organiser of the 2009 SAHARA conference and will bring key continental players to this conference that attracts participants from across Africa.

South Africa meets Iran to discuss S&T

The third Science and Technology Committee meeting between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of South Africa took place in Tehran from 20- 24 January 2008. The HSRC, represented by Mr Suren Pillay, led the discussions on the social sciences and humanities from the South African side.

The meeting with Shahid Behesti University, with whom the HSRC has signed an memorandum of understanding (MoU), reiterated the following areas for joint collaboration:

- student and faculty exchange;
- fellowships for graduate study between the two countries;
- joint research projects;
- modalities for collaboration with Tabiat Modares University, and
- collaboration with the University's Centre for African Studies.

The Centre focuses on conducting research on African issues, developing training programmes on Africa relevant to Iranian organisations, and organising national and international scientific conferences and seminars on a variety of African issues.

It was agreed that Tarbiat Modares would host South African scholars interested in furthering research in these areas.

From L to R: Khaya Sishuba (DST), Suren Pillay (HSRC), Bethuel Sehlapelo (DST, Head of Delegation), Ndumiso Cingo & Prins Nevhutalu (Tshwane Univ), Stefanus Greyling (CSIR)



Spelman College collaborates with Capacity Development

Olivia Scriven, senior advisor for Academic Development at Spelman College in the US, spent four days in March 2008 at the HSRC's offices in Pretoria, following an invitation extended by the Capacity Development Unit. She conducted a seminar on Strengthening the Infrastructure to Secure External Funds to Develop Individual and Institutional Research Capacity.

She met with key staff members and engaged with capacity development needs at the HSRC, focusing on training possibilities and exploring an exchange programme between the two institutions. Models of accessing long-term sustainable funding were also discussed. Spelman College and the HSRC will formalise this collaboration in an agreement between the two institutions.

HSRC meets with US institutions

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Where collaboration has already been initiated, such as with the George Washington University, discussions focussed on formalising joint efforts through a formal agreement.

A follow-up meeting with the National Science Foundation looked at concrete proposals for collaboration in the area of education. This will be taken forward by the HSRC's programme on Education, Science and Skills Development and the National Quality Education Initiative.

Other research programmes within the HSRC will follow up on other the relationships established by the CEO.

Innovation outlook for Africa

The HSRC's Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII), plays a leading role in developing innovation policy capability among the member states of the African Union.

In March 2008, 18 member states participated in an African Union/NEPAD Training Workshop on Science and Technology indicators that was jointly presented by Fred Gault, Chairperson of the OECD, national experts on S&T indicators, and Professor Michael Kahn, Head of CeSTII.

Other presenters included Ernesto Fernandez-Polcuch of UNESCO's Institute for Statistics and Bitrina Diyamett of the Tanzanian Commission on Science and Technology.

The Training Workshop is the first concrete expression toward implementing an important goal of the AU's Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology, namely to produce the African Innovation Outlook.

This overview of African achievement will be based on country surveys of research and development (R&D) and on innovation that provide the data for construction of a set of standard S&T indicators.

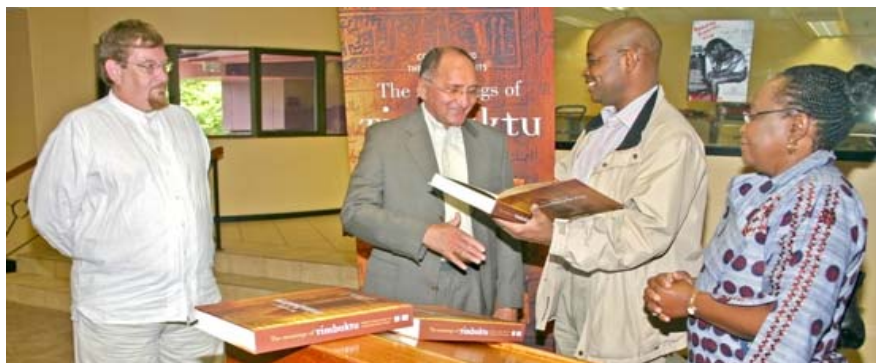
HSRC and CODESRIA strengthen working relationship

HSRC and CODESRIA further consolidated their working relationship, including the development of joint projects, during a 3rd working committee meeting on the 14 and 15 February at the HSRC's offices in Pretoria. An MoU was signed between the two organisations in November 2006.

This meeting also provided the opportunity for the HSRC and CODESRIA to host a preview of a co-published volume, *The Meanings of Timbuktu*. This project was funded by the South African Department of Arts and Culture and the Ministry in the Presidency and represents the first output from the MoU.

The volume, authored by leading international scholars, probes the true 'meanings' of Timbuktu within the context of the intellectual history of West Africa in particular, and of the African continent in general.

Dr Shamil Jeppie, co-editor of *The Meanings of Timbuktu* and senior lecturer in Historical Studies at UCT, noted that these manuscripts indicate that Africa had a rich legacy of written history, long before western colonisers set foot on the African continent. Dr Jeppie thanked the HSRC Press for producing an aesthetically pleasing book of high quality.



Dr Graham Dominy, chief director of the National Archives in the South African Department of Arts and Culture and Professor Anver Saloojee, special advisor to Minister Essop Pahad, Presidency of South Africa, received the copies on behalf of their Departments. HSRC CEO Dr Olive Shisana and the executive secretary of Codesria, Professor Adebayo Olukoshi, look on.

The 10th International Gathering on Globalization and Development Problems

The HSRC was represented by Diana Sanchez from Democracy and Governance (D&G) at this event, which was held in Havana, Cuba. The gathering brings together economists, sociologists, political and other social scientists and representatives of regional and international organisations. It aims to explore possible solutions to the developmental problems we face.

Six Economics Nobel laureates and two Peace Nobel laureates honored the event with their participation, together with academics and researchers from universities around the world, representatives of multi-lateral organisations, UN agencies and the presidents and ministers of some Latin American governments.

The event saw a wide range of views expressed, from Fidel Castro's reflections on the challenges of globalisation to on global capital from economists such as Robert Mundell, the Economics Nobel laureate.

Ms Sanchez presented the paper "Sudáfrica en África, entre el compañerismo y la dominación". The visit was also used by D&G to establish relations with two Cuban organisations, the Center for the Study of Africa and the Middle East, and the Center for the Study of America.

Science and technology in Africa



What might NEPAD Science and Technology do to populate the African Innovation outlook by end 2009? This question was addressed by Professor Michael Kahn in a discussion following his presentation of a paper on measuring R&D in South Africa and in selected South African Development Community (SADC) countries. He was invited to produce the paper by UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), following the issue of call for proposals.

Prof. Kahn also addressed the UIS in Montreal, Canada. His paper was titled: Issues in implementing Frascati Manual-based surveys.

Research collaborations

Some thirty donors, researchers and policy analysts, working in the field of research on development, met for a two-day conference in Geneva to discuss international collaboration in the social sciences, looking at research and development agendas, funding policies and partnerships. The conference was supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The country spread included Zambia, Palestine, UAE, South Africa, USA, Canada, UK, Netherlands, France, Germany, Jordan, Mexico, Switzerland and Australia.

Professor Michael Kahn, executive director of the Knowledge Systems unit, attended the conference.

Child poverty experts visit CYFSD

Professor Jonathan Bradshaw, a leading child poverty expert in Britain and Europe at the University of York, and colleague Dr Karen Bloor, paid a month's visit to the CYFSD programme.

Dr Bradshaw, Professor of Social Policy in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of York in the UK, associate director of the Social Policy Research Unit and director of the Family Budget Unit at York, is also a special adviser to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee Inquiry into Child Poverty. He has recently compiled two reports on the situation of children in the UK, and is currently working on the development of a local level index of child wellbeing.

Dr Bradshaw's research synchronises well with CYFSD research on child indicators and local area deprivation indices. He is also assisting with capacity development (particularly statistical analysis) of CYFSD interns.

Dr Bloor is a senior research fellow in the Department of Health Sciences at the University of York and a health economist who specialises in the study of health service delivery in the UK. She has offered to assist colleagues and interns with statistical consulting while in Cape Town.

Dr Bloor and Prof. Jonathan Bradshaw at the HSRC's offices



Queen honours HSRC research fellow

Queen Elizabeth II of England has honoured Professor Michael Noble, a research fellow at the HSRC's Child, Youth, Family and Social Development (CYFSD) research programme by making him a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of his research on poverty and deprivation.

Prof. Noble, a South African citizen, is based at the Social Policy, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University of Oxford, and is a director of both the Centre for Analysis of South African Social Policy (CASASP) and of the Social Disadvantage Research Centre.



He is currently working with the South African government's Department of Social Development to develop the evidence base for pro-poor policy. His major research interests are in the areas of poverty and social exclusion and income maintenance policy.

Professor Noble has produced ward-level provincial indices of multiple deprivation in South Africa, together with the HSRC and Statistics South Africa.

He has also recently produced a municipality-level South African index of multiple deprivation for children together with the HSRC.

Oxford appoints HSRC executive director as honorary research associate

Professor Linda Richter of CYFSD has been appointed as honorary research associate with the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Oxford. This will enable Prof. Richter to work with Dr Alan Stein, Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Oxford, to develop a programme of work related to children affected by HIV in sub-Saharan Africa. This appointment will run until 31 December 2012.

HSRC staff out and about



PROFESSOR LEICKNESS SIMBAYI of the HSRC's Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health (SAHA) attended the extraordinary meeting of SADC's

HIV and AIDS Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) as a new member in Gaborone, Botswana. The meeting's objectives were:

- To agree on the process, timeframe and support required for the review of the Strategic Framework and its instruments.
- To endorse the Surveillance Harmonisation Framework, the Framework and Action Plan on Effective Partnerships between NAAs, Civil Society Organisations, and the Framework for HIV and AIDS Funds Harmonization, Alignment and Absorption.
- To provide input and technical guidance on the SADC Regional HIV and AIDS Research Agenda and a discussion paper on the economical impact of HIV and AIDS, TB and malaria.

Spotlight on access to research data in Africa

Cost-effective access to digital data resulting from publicly-funded research was one of the topics highlighted at the first African Curation Conference, held in Pretoria in February 2008. The conference was organised under the auspices of three science councils, namely the HSRC, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the National Research Foundation, as well as the University of Pretoria and the Academy of Science of South Africa.

The exchange of ideas, knowledge and data is fundamental for human progress and part of the core of values of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). To this end, the governments of South Africa, China, Israel and Russia, as well as 30 OECD countries, have adopted a declaration on open access to research data resulting from public funding.

On the first day of the conference, international speakers, mainly from the UK, the European Union and the USA, shared ideas while looking at new roles and opportunities. The South African Minister of Science and Technology, Mr Mosibudi Mangena, spoke about the implications of the OECD declaration for African and on the South African policy on research data and information management.

Day two of the conference interrogated the curation of African digital content and practices in specific science domains, a continent where the infrastructure to provide access to research data is still largely underdeveloped. Proceedings included discussion on a formalised network of African data and information curation centres.

HSRC staff out and about

PROFESSOR THOMAS REHLE of the HSRC's research programme on the Social Aspect of HIV/AIDS and Health (SAHA) attended the SADC Technical Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS in Livingstone, Zambia. The meeting discussed and provided guidance on documents that have been prepared by the SADC Secretariat for the Fourth Forum meeting of the National AIDS Authorities (NAA) and the SADC Ministers Special Meeting on HIV and AIDS, which took place at the end of October and early November 2007. The following documents were discussed:

- An analysis paper on the coordination, harmonisation, alignment and utilisation of HIV and AIDS fund coordination (NAA meeting)
- A status report on partnership arrangements and mechanisms between the AIDS authorities and civil society organisations (NAA meeting).
- A progress report on the implementation of the Maseru Declaration (and other declarations), as well as the challenges of tracking, monitoring and reporting (Minister's special conference).
- The regional HIV prevention strategy and action plan, the M&E capacity building plan; MIS guidelines; and HIV and AIDS indicator guidelines.
- The SADC regional HIV and AIDS priorities for 2008/09.



Dr Agü

DR VINCENT AGÜ, Director of the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance, and DR GEOFFREY SETSWE, the regional director of SAHARA Southern Africa, attended a workshop in Botswana to review the Southern African Development Community (SADC) HIV and AIDS research agenda. The agenda will guide the 14 SADC member states, researchers and stakeholders in prioritising and harmonising HIV/AIDS research.



Dr Setswe

HSRC staff out and about



DR ZITHA MOKOMANE of the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development (CYFSD) visited the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Department of

Social Affairs of the African Union. She held consultations and discussions on the tasks required and expected output in the development of the African Social Policy Framework.

The visit at the AU headquarters included meetings with the Commissioner for Social Affairs, the department's reproductive health expert and the head of AIDS Watch Africa.



DR PETER KAGWANJA of the Democracy and Governance programme attended a brainstorming workshop on bridging the gap between research

and policy in post-conflict transition in Africa at the Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden. He presented a paper entitled, From power sharing to state building, conceptual pillars of the African Union conflict reconstruction policy.

Dr Kagwanja was also the main speaker at a round table discussion on the Kenya elections, and counter-terrorism at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Safari Club, Nairobi, Kenya.



PROF. LINDA RICHTER of CYFSD was invited to address the 23rd Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum deliberative session on Children and HIV/AIDS in

Malawi. She was also asked to provide technical support to the 23rd SADC Parliament in Blantyre.