

HSRC International Brief

Vol. 3 No. 3 September 2009

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HSRC researchers on the move



Prof. Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya
 Maryland.

Professor Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya of the HSRC's Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health programme was nominated by WHO collaborators on the study on ageing and health (SAGE) to attend the Summer Institute on Ageing and Health Research in Queenstown,

The National Institute on Ageing (NIA) funded the study, which took place from 11 - 17 July 2009. Of the 38 participants selected through a competitive process she was the only African candidate to attend the 2009 institute. The rest of the participants were from different research and academic institutions in the US.

The aim of the Institute is to create networking opportunities among scholars in the field of ageing and health; improve the conduct of ageing and health research by critiquing innovative research methodologies; identify relevant research questions /areas of investigation; model research that cuts across disciplines and encourage team approaches to complex questions relevant to ageing and health research; and to provide relevant information, materials and mechanisms relevant to NIH funding.

The developmental role of the universities in the South

From 3 to 5 August 2009, researchers from twelve countries met at the HSRC for a workshop on the developmental role of the university in the South. The workshop was the culmination of two-and-a-half years of research funded by the IDRC under its RoKS (Research on Knowledge Systems) programme.

The project is part of the Catch-Up network chaired by Professor Richard Nelson of Columbia University. The main aim of the workshop was to develop a comparative book on the nature of university-firm interaction in the context of systems of innovation in Africa (South Africa, Nigeria, Uganda), Latin America (Brazil, Argentina, Costa Rica and Mexico) and Asia (Korea, China, India, Malaysia and Thailand). A public presentation, as part of the HSRC seminar series, provided the opportunity for engagement with local higher education, and science and technology researchers and policy-makers.



From left: Glenda Kruss, HSRC; Keun Lee, South Korea; Jo Lorentzen, HSRC; Feri Gwata, HSRC; John Adeoti, Nigeria; Il-haam Petersen, HSRC; Jong Hak Eun, China

RESEARCHER GETS FELLOWSHIP AWARDED

Dr Nadia Sanger from the Democracy and Governance (D&G) programme was selected by the Institute for Development Studies fellowship (IDS) at the University of Sussex in Brighton, UK, to participate in a study on heteronormativity, masculinities, power and social change, where she spent two weeks working on the project.

She is now in the process of writing a paper on the subject to be published towards the end of this year under the title *Talking silence: heterosexist violence, media narratives and development.*

The outcome will be a peer-reviewed IDS publication.



Policy dialogue hosted



Mr Bert Koenders and Mr Derek Hanekom

As part of the ongoing work on the developmental state initiative, the HSRC in collaboration with the Netherlands Embassy, hosted a policy dialogue workshop on Enhancing State Capacity through Partnerships: Lessons of the Netherlands' Experience for South Africa. It was attended by more than 70

participants consisting of South African government officials, including Deputy Minister of Science and Technology, Derek Hanekom; the Deputy Head of the Policy Coordination and Advisory Services, Mr Alan Hirsch; leaders of business and trade unions; academics; representatives of the Netherlands government trade delegation to South Africa; Mr Bert Koenders, Minister for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands; and members of the Netherlands Embassy in South Africa, more notably Ambassador Rob de Vos.

Dr Omano Edigheji of the HSRC and Ambassador Rob de Vos welcomed participants to the dialogue and set out

its objectives which were:

- (a) To create space for critical reflection and constructive dialogue among South African policy-makers on their experiences in the democratic period (post -1994) of partnerships between the state, business, trade unions and civil society, and to propose how to ensure effective partnerships.
- (b) To facilitate sharing of experiences between South African and Dutch policy-makers on partnerships between governments and non-state actors in both countries.
- (c) To explore possible lessons that South Africa can draw from the successful Dutch experience of partnership between the state and its social partners.

HSRC and CODESRIA holds 6th institutional review meeting

The CEO and key staff members attended the 6th review meeting in Dakar on 1 and 2 September. Members of the HSRC consisted of Drs Olive Shisana, Kwandi Kondlo, Thobeka Mda, Omano Edigheji and Darlene Miller, and Ms Bridgette Prince and Mr Garry Rosenberg. These meetings take place twice a year and are used to review all current collaboration projects and to look at possible joint initiatives going forward.

The opportunity was also used for the CEO and the Head of International Liaison to visit the newly appointed South Africa Ambassador to Senegal, Mr Segogwane Sam Kotane and Councillor Mohamed Cassimjee.



Omano Edigheji, Kunle Oyediran, Bridgette Prince, Marie Ndiaye, Thobeka Mda, Olive Shisana, Ebrima Sall, Pinkie Mekgwe, Kwandi Kondlo, Darlene Miller, Garry Rosenberg and Bernard Lututala

Hosting of Cooperation in Science and Technology networking programme (COST)



Julia Stamm, Bridgette Prince and Glenda Kruss

Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) launched the new reciprocal agreement between Europe and South Africa. A high-level delegation from Europe visited South Africa recently to launch this agreement, which will enable South Africans to participate in the COST networking programme.

The HSRC met with Dr Julia Stamm, the Science Officer for the programme on Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health (ISCH), which is based in Brussels.

Dr Stamm presented the new agreement to key researchers from the HSRC and gave an overview of opportunities open to South African researchers and scholars. In return, the HSRC shared an overview of our research priorities, current research and possible opportunities to engage with Europe.

ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

Japan scholar meets with SAHA on collaboration project

Professor Karl Peltzer and Ms Allanise Cloete from the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health (SAHA) research unit met with Professor Munakata, the Dean of the Graduate School of Comprehensive Human Sciences at the University of Tsukuba, from 17 - 21 August. Prof. Munakata has been instrumental in addressing HIV/AIDS issues in Japan during the early 1990s and is well respected throughout the country for his HIV/AIDS campaigns and academic honours.

The team put together a collaborative research proposal in response to a call by a joint research funding scheme aimed at the promotion of international partnerships between scientists in South Africa and Japan. This initiative is jointly administered by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Collaboration between SAHA and the University of Tsukuba is based upon Prof. Munakata's previous work on HIV/AIDS and his current research foci on mental health and HIV/AIDS.

The proposed research collaboration following the week's consultation is entitled *HIV and AIDS control initiative in South Africa: combination prevention and behaviour change for all towards an AIDS free generation*. If the application for funding is successful they aim to address HIV/AIDS in the high-prevalence provinces of South Africa, using a multisectoral approach. This approach is not only innovative but has been



recommended by the National Strategic Plan for STIs and HIV/AIDS 2007-2011 of South Africa (NSP) in order to curb the further spread of HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

Foreign embassy visits

The CEO's office, under the leadership of the Head of International Liaison with the assistance of colleagues from the Department of Science and Technology, is undertaking a series of meetings with foreign embassies based in South Africa. The team met with embassies of Germany, Japan and Russia to explore possible opportunities for collaboration. These meetings will be expanded to include several more and will be an opportunity for the sharing of information as well as introducing the work of the HSRC to enable bridging the gap between HSRC and researchers based in those countries.



Christa van Zyl (Business Development, HSRC), Maja Clausen (German Embassy), Thomas Laemer-Gamp (DST), Moratabatho Sefora (DST), Tanya Frolich (Germany Embassy), Bridgette Prince (International Liaison, HSRC) and Karen Bruns (Press, HSRC)



Yusuke Nakanishi (Japanese Embassy), Yohei Miyauchi (Japanese Embassy), Bonghi Mkhize (DST), Bridgette Prince (International Liaison, HSRC), Karen Bruns (Press, HSRC) and Christa van Zyl (Business Development, HSRC)

Participation in conferences, workshops, meetings and events

The Pathogenesis Conference

The Pathogenesis Conference, which is the world's largest open scientific conference on HIV/AIDS focusing on pathogenesis, treatment and prevention, took place in Cape Town, South Africa from 19-22 July 2009.

The HSRC utilised this opportunity to showcase and display our reports and research outputs in the area of HIV/AIDS at an exhibition space.

We also hosted a satellite session which focussed on Paediatric HIV surveillance and prevention, chaired by Prof Leickness Simbayi, the executive director of the Social Aspects of HIV

/AIDS and Health research programme. Topics covered included the current status of HIV surveillance in children: gaps and future directions; the risk environment of HIV among children, focussing on paediatric HIV in South Africa, spanning 2002 - 2008; and the integration of PMTCT and paediatric HIV services into maternal child health.



Thurma Goldman, Olive Shisana, Mary Lou Lindegren and Arvin Bhana at the HSRC's satellite session

WHO Working Group Meeting



Prof. Thomas Rehle

Professor Thomas Rehle from the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health research programme hosted the WHO Working Group Meeting on HIV Incidence Assays with the World Health Organisation (WHO). Since 2006, a series of formal and informal meetings have taken place to discuss progress towards a validation protocol for existing and future HIV incidence assays.

In 2008, WHO convened two meetings of experts (in Geneva and in Mexico City) to further the agenda. A draft protocol

for validation of HIV assays has been developed by the HIV Incidence Working Group. An outcome of the last meeting held in Mexico City was a submission of a funding proposal by Family Health International (FHI) to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for continued financial support for this area of work. WHO, as part of the steering committee, organised specific technical working groups on statistical approaches and the assays' development pathway to contribute to the wider discussion on the application of HIV incidence.

The meeting's objectives were the following:

- to review the outcome of the market analysis for HIV incidence assays;

- to finalise the assays' requirements for each of the testing objectives of HIV incidence assays;
- to review and finalise the statistical methods for the estimation of HIV incidence using HIV incidence assays;
- to review and finalise the statistical approaches required for each step of the assays' development pathway and for field validation of HIV incidence assays for each testing objective; and
- to review and discuss guidance documents and information that will be disseminated on the WHO web pages.

Upcoming events

Education



Prof. Linda Chisholm

Professor Linda Chisholm from the Education, Science and Skills Development (ESSD) research programme will be travelling to the ILO -UNESCO in Paris for the 10th Session of a Committee of Experts on Teachers (CEART) meeting, which takes place from 28 September to 3 October.

At this meeting a number of working groups will produce working reports on various aspects relating to the condition of teachers internationally which forms part of the research work undertaken in this particular unit. Professor Chisholm's current research focuses on teacher supply and demand, teacher education and development, and skills training and development with a special focus on further education and training colleges.

The social determinants of health



Prof. Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya

Professor Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya, a director in the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health research programme, was invited to attend the National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention's Global Summit on Training and Education to take place in October in Atlanta, Georgia, at the CDC Global Communications Center.

The national forum is working on implementing recommendations within a public health action plan to prevent heart disease and stroke. In line with Prof. Phaswana-Mafuya's focus on diabetes she will also be presenting two posters at the International Diabetes Federation's World Diabetes Congress in Montreal, Canada.

Sabbatical exchanges



Prof. Leickness Simbayi

Professor Leickness Simbayi, Executive Director for the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health programme, will be departing for Switzerland on sabbatical leave on 30 September and will return on 30 December 2009.

He has been awarded an exchange grant entitled HIV/AIDS, stigma, global health, medical anthropology and cultural epidemiology, from the Swiss South African Joint Research Programme (SSAJRP) which will fund his living expenses whilst in Basel.

His visit will advance the aims of a Swiss-South African research partnership programme, in which the University of Basel and the Swiss Tropical Institute are the leading house and the associate leading house respectively. He will be working in the capacity of visiting professor from the Centre of African Studies and will participate in the Swiss Tropical Institutes' academic programme for the three months.

Forging closer links with China



Dr Mark Orkin, former CEO of the HSRC and Prof. Wang Luolin at the signing of the agreement on 11 December 2002

Dr Olive Shisana, CEO, will lead a delegation to Beijing, China, in October for talks with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) to take forward an agreement on research collaboration and academic exchanges, signed on 11 December 2002.

The main purpose of the agreement was to exchange academic publications and research materials, exchange research, visitors (including senior scholars and researchers) and delegations for study. It was also agreed that the two organisations would conduct lecturing tours, hold bilateral academic discussions through conferences, seminars, symposia and workshops and encourage joint research projects.

The cooperation has now reached a level where three research projects have been identified for joint undertaking, which will form the main part of the discussion as well as a review of the collaboration agreement.