



A SELECTION OF HSRC KEY PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS: 1 OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2012

Organizational developments

The HSRC had its annual Strategic Planning Lekgotla on 16 November 2012. . The Lekgotla provided inputs towards updating the rolling five-year Strategic Plan for the period 2013/14 until 2017/18, and refining the objectives and performance targets that would be detailed in the HSRC's 2013/14 Annual Performance Plan.

This strategic planning Lekgotla was preceded on 5 October by an information-sharing meeting involving senior research leaders as well as board members of the HSRC and Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA), focusing on the "Africa focus" research agendas of the two institutions.

During this period the HSRC, AISA and DST also continued to engage on matters relevant to the planned incorporation of AISA into the HSRC.

Meetings with Ministers, government departments and Parliament

An HSRC delegation led by the CEO presented the 2011/12 Annual Report to the Portfolio Committee on Science and Technology, on 17 October 2012. The report was well received and the HSRC was congratulated for having no matter of emphasis. The matter of AISA was also raised by the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, and discussions included constructive exchange of information on the relevant decision-making and legislative processes.

The HSRC was invited by the Standing Committee on Appropriations to comment on the 2012 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS). On 31 October 2012, CEO and senior research staff presented to the Committee specifically in relation to Education (*What can be done to improve the delivery of school infrastructure and quality education?*); Health (*What can be done to ensure that the health system is ready for the implementation of the National Health Insurance?*); Job creation (*Which areas of Government's core delivery mandate can realize the most jobs? How can these be unlocked?*); Rural Development (*How can expenditure be improved to attain the best outcomes with regard to rural development?*) and Infrastructure (*What can be done to ensure the overall effectiveness of Government's Infrastructure Delivery Programme?*) The Committee appreciated the presentations and subsequent discussions made.

The South African Cabinet has identified the need for a BRICS Think Tank to serve as part of the overall South African Government's Strategy. South Africa is the latest member to join BRICS and is the only one among BRICS countries that does not have a dedicated Think Tank on BRICS, meaning that it is not able to contribute to discussions based on informed scientific analysis. As a result, the need was identified to create a dedicated South African BRICS Think Tank that will in the first instance support that attainment of the key deliverables projected for South Africa's hosting of the Fifth BRICS Summit. DIRCO has asked the HSRC to prepare a



concept note to place the Think Tank at the HSRC and also to prepare a draft consortium agreement among the five country Think Tanks.

The main aim of the South African BRICS Think Tank would be to determine the role of the BRICS countries in the global economy and political arena and how South Africa could add value thereto. It will further act as a centre for developing the strategy for the research work and publishing activities on BRICS of academic institutions across South Africa, as deemed appropriate.

At its meeting of the 22nd November 2012, the HSRC Board considered and approved the development of the concept paper for the HSRC to incubate the Think Tank. The Board also approved that the CEO accepts an invitation from DIRCO to serve on the Advisory Committee of the BRICS Academic Forum.

The first draft of the concept paper has been submitted to DIRCO and the process is ongoing.

A selection of important events and deliverables

On 11 December 2012: the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2011 results were launched. These results were made public by the HSRC in conjunction with the Department of Basic Education and University of Pretoria – the latter being responsible for the companion international PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study). The results of this independent international assessment study of the mathematics and science knowledge of Grade 9 learners, released by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) showed that, for the first time since 1995, the national average mathematics score of Grade 9 learners had improved in public schools. However there is still an uphill road to travel, with South Africa still performing lower than its international counterparts.

The DST Science and Government Cluster Policy Workshops

1 November 2012, DST Science Seminar entitled “Linking the South African System of Innovation with the Rest of Africa: Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities”

2 November 2012, DST Government Cluster Policy Workshop and a Science Seminar entitled “Exploring the opportunities of an Africa based System of Innovation.”

5 November 2012, DST Science Seminar “Preserving and Providing Access to South African Social Science and Humanities Research Data”

6-7 December 2012, DST Science Seminar “Practical aspects of implementing a single payer NHI (National Health Insurance) universal coverage: International Experiences”



HSRC Social Science Seminar Series

The following provides an overview of the social science seminars that were held in the period under review. Presentations covered topics currently on the HSRC's research agenda.

Date	Seminar title	Presenter(s)	Institutional affiliation of presenter(s)
3 October 2012	Where are the grassroots located in Africa's infrastructure development drive?	Ms. Namhla Mniki-Mangaliso, Director of African Monitor; Mr. Adama Deen , HEAD: Regional Integration and Infrastructure, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency	African Monitor; NEPAD
9 October 2012	So, where do you think you come from? Genetic Heritage and Reconstructing the Past through DNA	Prof Himla Soodyall, Human Genomic Diversity and Disease Research Unit, NHLS and Wits University	NHLS, WITS University
23 October 2012	Social networks in job searching.	Dr Paulo Santos, the Department of Economics at Monash University Australia	Monash University
31 October 2012.	Alternative Development Paradigms Through The Lens Of The Young and Discontent.	Lizzy Mabotja, Hlokomang Mangqalaza, Fezile Mdluli, and Molemo Ramphalile (Human Sciences Research Council)	HSRC staff
9 November 2012	How are poor communities building their own futures? Barriers and triggers to participation.	Melani Prinsloo, Founder: Centre for Democratising Information (CDI)	CDI
26 November 2012.	Annual HSRC 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children Seminar A Gender Toolkit: E-Technology In Rising To The Challenge Of Gender-Based Violence.	Keynote Speaker: Jen Thorpe, Freelance Feminist Writer and Researcher. Discussants: Dr Benita Moolman (HSD), Dr Nadia Sanger (HSD); Meredith Evans and Dr Fiona Guerra (Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Canada)	
29 November 2012.	Recent advances in using socially perceived necessities to measure poverty.	Prof Dave Gordon, Director, Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research, University of Bristol, UK	University of Bristol, UK



International networking and collaboration

Representatives from the German Research Foundation (DFG) visited to the HSRC on 1 October 2012 to explore possibilities for collaboration. Dr. Manfred Nießen and Mr Christoph Mühlberg met with the CEO, the Director of International Liaison, Prof Chitiga-Mabugu, Dr Vijay Reddy and Dr Bohler-Muller. The engagement provided the research programmes the opportunity to present their key priorities and research areas.

The CEO, Prof Chitiga-Mabugu and Director International Liaison met with Mr Asad Alam, Country Director of the World Bank, on 3 October 2012 to discuss possible collaboration and future partnership. Subsequent to that meeting, the HSRC has been invited to collaborate with them in organizing a workshop on “Innovating in Design: Evidence for Impact in Health”, to be held in Cape Town, December 10-14, 2012.

The CEO and HSRC researchers visited the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) in Beijing on 7 November 2012, to discuss progress on an HSRC-CASS Cooperative Research Proposal focusing on ***Chinese Presence in South Africa & South African Presence in China: Across seven seas: Chinese in South Africa - a pilot study.***

Emphasis was placed on progress to date for the joint activities and to explore any new opportunities going forward.

On 8 November 2012 the CEO chaired an International Social Science Council (ISSC) - CASS Workshop in Beijing on “Promoting comparative social research in the global South”. The meeting was also attended by HSRC researcher Ben Roberts, who provided an overview of cross-national attitudes surveys.

A Joint science and technology meeting took place in Cairo, Egypt on 26-29 November 2012. It was attended by DST officials and representatives from various South African institutions.

The South African delegation comprised the following representatives:

- Ms Mmampei Chaba: Chief Director (Multilateral Cooperation and Africa)-Leader of delegation
- Mr Kaizer Moroka: Deputy Director (Space Science)
- Mr Xolani Makhoba: Deputy Director (Emerging Research Areas)
- Mr Funda Mpanza: Deputy Director (Africa Cooperation)
- Mr Michael Nxumalo: Programme Officer (NRF)
- Ms Chikane: Director (Meraka-CSIR)
- Ms Shanaaz Suffla (University of South Africa)
- Prof Arvin Bhana (Human Sciences Research Council)



A Brief introduction to Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) by Prof Arvin Bhana from the HSRC covered applied research, advice and policy formulation administered by the institution.

A delegation from the National Institute of Education Sciences (NIES), China, visited the HSRC on 4 December 2012. NIES is the research arm of the Ministry of Education and the only national-level comprehensive education research institution in China. The delegation was headed by NIES Vice President, Ms. SHI Xilin. NIES indicated that they would be keen to pursue opportunities for formal engagement and collaboration with the HSRC. They value international engagement and comparative studies in education. They already had friendly relations formalised with international institutions (e.g. UNESCO, World Bank) and country-specific institutions in countries such as Egypt, Russia and Brazil.

The new Director of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), Prof Pavel Kabat visited the country on the 1 to 5 December 2012 to attend the official opening of the South African Young Scientists Summer Program, under the auspices of IIASA, on the 2 December 2012 at the University of Free State.

The Director, through DST, requested to pay a courtesy visit to the HSRC during his stay in South Africa and met with Dr Udesch Pillay and senior research staff on 4 December 2012.

The HSRC hosted Prof Jean-Luc Maurer, a professor in development studies at the Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies on 7 December in Cape Town. The main purpose of the meeting was to explore his mandate, which was to consolidate and develop the academic partnership programme with universities in so-called emerging countries of the Global South. Senior researchers, Drs Peter Jacobs (Economic Performance and Development), Greg Houston (Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery) and Glenda Kruss (Education and Skills Development) presented their work and respective research programmes to him.

Morehouse School of Medicine Policy Training

The overall goal of this partnership is to enhance the health and social policy analysis capacity of researchers in the HSRC. Fourteen HSRC staff attended the 3-day training which took place from 26th to 28th November 2012.

New Books Published by HSRC Press

Five book titles were published during the reporting period, of which one was edited by an HSRC team:



- *Academic interaction with social partners: Investigating the contribution of universities to economic and social development* edited by Glenda Kruss, Mariette Visser, Mogau Aphane and Genevieve Haupt.
- *Community, self and identity: Educating South African university students for citizenship* edited by Brenda Leibowitz, Leslie Swartz, Vivienne Bozalek, Ronelle Carolissen, Lindsey Nicholls and Poul Rohleder. The book was launched during the HELTASA Conference at SU in November 2012.
- *Development of competition law and economics in South Africa* edited by Kasturi Moodaliyar and Simon Roberts.
- *Finding Place and keeping pace: Exploring meaningful and equitable learning in South African schools* edited by Shireen Motala, Veerle Dieltiens and Yusuf Sayed. To be launched at SAREA in January 2013.
- *Medicine and the politics of knowledge* edited by Susan Levine.

Contracts signed with Government Departments from October to December 2012

Funder	HSRC research Programme	Project title	Total grant	Duration of contract
Dept of Science & Technology	DGSD	Conducting SA Social Attitudes Surveys	R 1 800 000-00	10 months
Dept of Energy	DGSD	South African Social Attitudes Client Survey	R 1 801 200-00	12 months
Dept of Science & Technology	ESD	Community-University Partnership Programme	R 499 445-40	7 months
Dept of Social Development	HSD	An investigation of the nature and extent of substance abuse in Mpumalanga Province	R 828 096-00	10 months

MOU's signed for the period October to December 2012

Collaborative MOU's were signed with the following entities:

University of Fort Hare, European Union, University of Limpopo and Johns Hopkins University.