



Prof Cheryl-Ann Potgieter

Gender and Development (G&D)

Gender equality is the destination; gender mainstreaming the strategic path

G&D is responsible for mainstreaming gender within the HSRC, an approach which seeks to institutionalise equality by embedding gender-sensitive practices and norms in the structures, processes and environment of public policy in all work within the organisation.

The unit reviews, strengthens and develops potential solutions to social problems posed by gender. Gender is related to other forms of power relations, roles and identities in a developing society. A critical function of this unit is to assist, advise and work with researchers, policymakers and civil society organisations to use gender analytical tools to ensure that all our researchers adopt a gender lens in understanding social phenomena.

To further this aim, the Women's and Gender Studies Department of the University of the Western Cape (UWC) was contracted in January 2007 to provide gender mainstreaming training for HSRC staff. Over a period of

six weeks, 134 participants were trained and preliminary feedback suggests a positive response to the training. The unit will be developing new modules to reinforce future training in the new financial year.

Over and above the more directed service offering of gender mainstreaming training, the unit is active in advocacy, for example supporting and participating in the 16 Days of Activism; and intellectual engagement in the design and delivery of appropriately themed research, seminars, public lectures and conferences.

The unit's current focus areas of research are: gender and the science system; gender, development and transport; gender, sexuality and masculinity and capacity development, transformation and gender.

Completed projects

Women in industrial science, engineering and technology (SET)

This project assessed women working in these areas, identifying factors that contribute or inhibit women with a SET background and gaps in gender representivity in the workplace. The sample consisted of 27 companies across the JSE, private, small, medium and micro-sized enterprises (SMMEs), and state owned sectors. Qualitative and quantitative data was gathered through in-depth interviews, a gender representation survey questionnaire and a questionnaire for SET women in the company. Findings indicated that women continue to be under-represented in the SET sector and specifically in the industrial context.

South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID)

This report, commissioned by SAWID, collected contributions by women's organisations to the African Peer

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Review Mechanism (APRM). A standard APRM questionnaire was reworked to capture data according to four categories: democracy and good political governance; corporate governance and management; sustainable and financial development; and socio-economic development. The report was submitted as a self-assessment of women's organisations and a contribution to the *South African Country Report*.

Gender audit of Biotechnology Regional Innovation Centres (BRICs)

An audit of the gender responsiveness of BRICs projects focused on gender mainstreaming and assessed gender bias which could assist in developing gender-sensitive indicators. It also monitored progress in human capital development and the expected improvement in the quality of life of South Africans through the development of a strong biotechnology sector. The audit was completed in partnership with Innovations Networks, a black owned company with specialist knowledge of South Africa's National System of Innovation.

Comprehensive and individual reports were submitted to the respective BRICs, including LifeLab (East Coast Biotechnology Regional Innovation Centre Trust), National Bioinformatics Network, SASTA (South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement), Biopad (Biotechnology Partnership and Development), Plantbio and Cape Biotech.

Briefing document on the Civil Unions Bill

In a joint project with the Durban Lesbian & Gay Community & Health Centre, the unit drafted and submitted a well-researched briefing document supporting the adoption of the Civil Unions Bill. The report was discussed (among other



HSRC staff on a gender mainstreaming course

submissions) during a Parliamentary hearing in August 2006.

Impact of research

- Research work on gender and transport, conducted by the unit, had an immediate impact in respect of the availability of non-motorised transport in the Eastern Cape, as was evident from the implementation by the SA National Roads Agency Limited (in conjunction with the national Department of Transport). The research also contributed to the building of rural access roads, walkways for women and low-level bridges in areas of Port St Johns, Lusikisiki and Bizana.
- A significant national development was the formal adoption by the SA Parliament of the Civil Unions Bill, which provides legislation and a policy framework for same-sex couples to formalise and legalise their unions. The unit's joint submission to Parliament demonstrates, to some extent, a positive impact in terms of policy change.

G&D



Prof. Cheryl-Ann Potgieter of G&D and Prof. Shirley Zinn, HR Director, Nedbank at the Women's Day seminar

Ongoing projects

Impact of gender policies and interventions on educators

An assessment of the impact of gender policies and interventions on the commitment of educators and their attitudes towards gender equality – with specific reference to the access and participation in science and maths education of girls (Millennium Development Goal 3) – is at the fieldwork stage. A comprehensive report will be available in October 2007. The project is funded by the Department of Science and Technology.

Roundtable on 'corrective rape' of black lesbians

A roundtable facilitated a dialogue on violence against black lesbians during the 16 Days of Activism in December 2006. Its objective was to stimulate debate in the media and to assist in developing information that could be distributed to interest groups, such as schools, religious institutions and policymakers. A manuscript based on the roundtable discussions will be published in 2007. The roundtable, funded by the Foundation for Human Rights, was held in collaboration with the Durban Lesbian & Gay Community & Health Centre.

Future developments

Important new initiatives will be implemented during 2007/08. The unit is keen to strengthen an applied humanities focus in its broad research and policy work in the following areas:

- Sexuality and pedagogics in higher education (HE) in South Africa, which would address a national survey and analysis of curricula that focuses on sexuality education within HE institutions;
- New evidence-based research on same-sex sexuality, particularly work with men who have sex with men (MSM) and women who have sex with women (WSW). An international conference on gender, same-sex sexuality and HIV/AIDS is planned for May 2007. The conference aims to review research strategies on homosexuality pertaining to same-sex sexual practices in general, and as it relates to HIV/AIDS; identify research needs and priorities and explore challenges and potential solutions to research on same-sex sexual practices and HIV/AIDS;

Facts 'n Figures

In Flagstaff, women spend 29 hours, 20 minutes per week on average fetching water

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applied humanities focus and the idea is to seek ways of understanding how such rights are challenged, resisted and understood in appropriate comparative work;

- Women, gender and technology to investigate how women access technological developments, especially in the information, communication and technology sector;
- A study on black masculinities to include case studies of anti-sexist black men to investigate perceptions, stigma and prejudice. The research seeks to identify how black masculinities are being shaped, understood and constructed in a changing South African context, including black economic empowerment, sexuality, HIV/AIDS, and the workplace; and
- Preliminary consultative work to explore research questions that could influence policy and the eradication of human trafficking in South Africa and elsewhere.

- Gender and poverty reduction, with a view to understanding how marginalised and vulnerable groups (women and children) are targeted within national programmatic work and policy;
- Gender, water and sustainable development, which will focus on user involvement in the provision of water systems, water management in a pro-poor agenda, and identify research gaps to improve access, affordability and ultimately poverty reduction;
- A gender and crime project seeking to address the impact of crime on women and children, identify issues related to crimes of a sexual nature and find appropriate models to combat and curb such crime. It will also aim at influencing policy in partnership with key organisations/ individuals working in these areas;
- Seeking funding to commence work on gender and human rights and how it impacts on women, men and children in comparative studies. This project has an

Specialist researcher 2006/07

Professor Patrick Chiroro

PhD, Durham University, UK

Gender transformation in the science, engineering and technology (SET) sector, gender and HIV/AIDS, social constructions of masculinity and sexuality, psychology in legal contexts, monitoring and evaluation



Professor Vasu Reddy

Acting Director (from 1 April 2007)

PhD, University of KwaZulu-Natal

Discursive histories of sexualities and identities, social and cultural aspects of HIV/AIDS, critical gender studies, African feminism, service provision in a development context

