

# Social Cohesion and Integration

The Social Cohesion and Integration (SCI) research programme investigates the social fabric of our lives in the areas of the arts, sports, media, religion, social aspects of science and the public discourse.

Started on 1 November 2002, SCI conducts research on:

- excellence and leadership in the arts and sport
- the political economy of our cultural industries
- editorial and ownership trends in the South African media
- the social cohesion and political economy of our religious communities
- the cultural and political history of South Africa
- the historical, ethical, legal, biomedical and biotechnological implications of the human genome sequencing project for research and development in Africa

SCI emerged out of a context where focusing on moral regeneration as a central concern of our society is as important as responding to the call by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) for a greater engagement of the social sciences and humanities in the implications of science and technology in the development of Africa. Currently in SCI there is a staff complement of four, with one vacancy remaining.

## **Current and recently completed projects**

Africa Human Genome Initiative (AHGI): SCI initiated a collaborative research project on the ethical, legal, educational, biomedical and biotechnological implications of the human genome sequencing project for research and development in Africa. It is a partnership between the HSRC, Academy of Science of South Africa and the Sustainability (formerly Spier) Institute.

A first product of the AHGI, *Science, evolution and schooling*, is an account of the history and current status of Darwinism and the teaching of human biology at South African schools. It was published by the HSRC in June 2002.

An edited collection, *Science, evolution and schooling: Reflections & debates*, is based on the *Science and evolution in the fullness of life* colloquium that was held in June 2002. It will be published by the HSRC and available in September 2002.

Another project, on *Genetics, African history and archaeology*, involves geneticists, archaeologists, paleo-anthropologists, historians and linguists. It investigates the implications of DNA-based genomic research findings for an understanding of the origins, diffusion and naming of human populations in Africa.

Spirit of the nation: Reflections on South Africa's educational ethos is an edited collection of the proceedings of SAAMTREK: *Values, education and democracy in the 21st century* and it will be published in August 2002. The conference was held on 22-24 February 2001.

Jack Simons, South African scholar 1905-1996: An edited collection of the published and unpublished essays of the late Prof. Jack Simons, including exchanges with Joe Slovo over the nature of the South African transition. It will be available from November 2002.

Ali Fataar and the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM): Invested with biographical and political history, this account of Dr Ali Fataar, long-time leader of the NEUM of South Africa, was told to Trevor Oosterwyk. It will be published by the HSRC and will be available December 2002.



Living legends in the performing arts is a project that consists of biographical research conducted on South Africans who excel in the domain of the arts. The results are then published monthly as a page in the daily titles of a major newspaper chain.

Eye for cultural diversity and heritage: Commissioned by DACST, this is an analysis of South Africa's cultural diversity and its impact on trade and commercial exchange.

Social cohesion and globalisation: Co-ordinated by Prof. D Chidester in association with National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), this is a research-framing project on South African social, cultural and economic efforts to find new forms of cohesion in the face of the challenges facing South Africa and the seductions of globalisation.

Petrol Station 5 Security is a pilot project that examines how to improve the safety, security and working conditions of attendants at South Africa's petrol stations. It is co-ordinated by Dr Wilmot James in association with the Nelson Mandela Foundation, Institute for Security Studies and the Community Chest (Western Cape).

### **Future developments**

Living legends in sports: As a continuation of the living legends biographical research programme, this will now extend to South Africans who excel in the domain of sports. Results will be published monthly as a page in the daily titles of a major newspaper chain.

International Conference on the Human Genome and Africa, March 2003:

Under the AHGI, a major international research conference is scheduled for March 2003, comprising five research workshops, namely, Genetics and History, Ethics and Law, Education, Pathogen Genomics, and Biotechnology. Convenors of the workshops are Dr H Soodyall (University of the Witwatersrand), Prof. D Chidester (HSRC), Prof. L Chisholm (HSRC), Prof. Wieland Gevers (University of Cape Town) and Prof. Mark Swilling (Sustainability Institute).

History 2004 is a book project that gives an account of the history of the South African people in the light of the last decade of democracy. It is written by Michael Morris, in association with Jonathan Shapiro and Prof. W Nasson of the University of Cape Town. The Ministry of Education commissioned the project.

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