

Highlights



The projects and programmes highlighted here affirm the HSRC's role in the National System of Innovation in providing "social science that makes a difference". The activities associated with these projects and programmes also illustrate the HSRC's new strategic commitment to research excellence, to contracts that are responsive to user needs, to partner institution outreach and to performance orientation.

Assessing educational provision

- On behalf of USAID the Research Triangle Institute contracted the HSRC to participate in the Assessment Modelling Initiative over the next two years.
- A further long-term international project is the Monitoring Learning Achievement Study in Africa commissioned by UNESCO/UNICEF. The HSRC provided technical assistance for assessing the life skills, literacy and numeracy performance of participating Grade 4 learners from 12 African countries, and presented the results at the world conference on Education for All held in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000.
- UNICEF also contracted the HSRC to assist the Ministry of Education in Eritrea in developing a national assessment system and in devising a training programme for ministry officials.
- Work continued on the Quality Learning Project, a five-year school improvement study funded by the South African Business Trust and commissioned by the Joint Education Trust. The main objectives are to ensure the effective management of district schools selected from each province and to inculcate appropriate teaching methods at the 500 high schools involved.

Developing human resources and education

- The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) awarded the HSRC R5 million per annum for three years for a research programme to integrate databases and evaluate trends in educational supply and labour market demands.
- In October 2000 the South African Cabinet appointed the HSRC as the principal agency for undertaking and managing the research for its proposed Human Resource Development Strategy, led by the Departments of Education and Labour.
- The Joint Education Trust awarded the HSRC a major contract to investigate the responsiveness of technical colleges to the labour market.

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- A labour market analysis for South African public further education and training colleges in all the provinces was conducted for the National Business Initiative. Issues dealt with included economic and employment trends, skills needs and training provision.
- In a study commissioned by the Mining Qualifications Authority and German Technical Co-operation, the HSRC analysed the current supply of skills and future skills needs in the mining and minerals sector.
- The Department of Education commissioned the HSRC to develop a Further Education and Training Management Information System in electronic and hard copy format.
- Dr Ben Ngubane, Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, announced the results of the second stage of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study of school learners on 5 December 2000. The HSRC conducts the South African component of the study.

Promoting democracy through surveys

- At the request of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) the HSRC conducted a pre-election survey during November 2000 to guide the IEC's final voter education strategy and campaign for the local government election held on 5 December 2000.
- The IEC also commissioned the HSRC to conduct an exit poll on the day of the election. The results were broadcast live by the SABC.

Enhancing governance

- Written by leading scholars in the field under the editorship of three HSRC staff members, the publication *Democracy and governance review: Mandela's legacy, 1994-1999* offers an independent assessment of the country's transition to democracy.
- On the eve of the National Women's Day celebrations (9 August 2000), Ms Brigitte Mabandla (Deputy Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology) and Dr Rob Adam, Director-General of the same department, took part in a function to launch *Women marching into the 21st century*, a book compiled and published by the HSRC.
- The personal memoirs of Raymond Mhlaba, a stalwart of the South African liberation movement, were published jointly by the Robben Island Museum and the HSRC in March 2001.

Analysing social issues

- An assessment of the social impact of gambling in South Africa was undertaken for the National Gambling Board





Delegates from the National Science Foundation during their visit to the HSRC seen here with HSRC and NRF staff members.

early in 2000. The research, published jointly by the Board and the HSRC, reflects the views of stakeholders and contains policy recommendations.

- HSRC researchers helped create a database from information provided by the Road Accident Fund, and are currently analysing the data for the Road Accident Fund Commission appointed by Pres. Thabo Mbeki.

Promoting health care and quality of life

- The HSRC secured a two-year contract from the Department of Social Development to analyse the effect of HIV infection and AIDS mortality on South Africa's population structure.
- Together with the Medical Research Council, the HSRC won two tenders from the Department of Health to study the impact of primary health care on the health status of South Africans, and the implications of HIV/AIDS for the country's health sector.

Working towards sustainability in rural and urban development

- In conjunction with the British government's Department for International Development, the HSRC established a Southern African Regional Poverty Network in February 2001 aimed at strengthening links between stakeholders concerned with poverty issues.
- Following the flood damage in South Africa early in 2000, the Command Centre for Flood Relief and Emergency Reconstruction commissioned the HSRC to evaluate emergency reconstruction programmes in four affected provinces.
- The HSRC completed a preliminary survey on the processes, causes and impact of internal migration in South Africa. Research on cross-border migration from three neighbouring countries to South Africa was also conducted.
- The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism appointed the HSRC and the CSIR as consultants to develop a core set of indicators on the "state of the environment".

Forging international links

- Delegates from the USA-based National Science Foundation, led by Deputy Director Dr Joseph Bordogna, visited the HSRC in August 2000. Ideas on research collaboration were explored.
- The HSRC collaborated with France and India in a three-nation study on spatial restructuring and reorganisation.
- Prof. Michael Young of the Institute of Education, University of London, delivered the keynote address at a round table discussion hosted by the HSRC on the development and implementation of education policy in South Africa over the past ten years.

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Gen. Siphwe Nyanda, Chief of the SANDF (third from the left), was the guest speaker at the HSRC's Public Policy Seminar Series.

- From 8 to 10 November 2000 the HSRC, together with the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), the French Africa Institute and the National Research Foundation (NRF), held a workshop on the impact of globalisation on the world of work. It was attended by some 80 delegates from South Africa, France and neighbouring African countries, including Namibia and Zimbabwe.

- Prof. Gordon F. De Jong from Pennsylvania State University in the USA spent some time at the HSRC during December 2000 doing research on the causes of internal migration in South Africa.

- Ms Clare Short, British cabinet minister responsible for international development, opened her official tour of South Africa with an address at the HSRC on 12 February 2001. She outlined her government's vision of making globalisation work to the advantage of the world's poor.

- The HSRC was part of a DACST delegation that visited Nigeria in March 2001 to explore the feasibility of establishing bilateral relations. The visit has led to co-operation with the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, notably in the area of HIV/AIDS-related research.

- The HSRC programme co-ordinator of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) joined DACST study trips to China and India on traditional knowledge and government approaches to IKS issues such as commercialisation, protection and community participation.

- The HSRC, together with other South African science councils, participated in EXPO 2000 in Germany (from June to October), funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs. The HSRC was responsible for a major exhibit reflecting the EXPO 2000 theme of humankind-nature-technology.

Facilitating public lectures and seminars

- Seven seminars were presented as part of the HSRC's Democracy and Governance Public Policy Seminar Series, which promotes interaction between government departments, the diplomatic corps and research institutions. Guest speakers included the Ministers of Public Service and Administration and Trade and Industry, the President of the Constitutional Court, the Chief Electoral Officer of the IEC, and the Chief of the South African National Defence Force.

- Distinguished experts from England, Botswana and South Africa on refugees, the role of intellectuals, governance and regional integration, read papers as part of the HSRC's Sam Nolutshungu Memorial Lecture Series, which engages critical thinkers in academic debate on African affairs.