

# PRODDER

development role players throughout Southern Africa acknowledge that the availability of information on the region's development, as well as the development issues confronting the region, are crucial to enhance and support the development process in Southern Africa.

The Programme for Development Research (PRODDER) was founded in 1987 and has grown into a dynamic Southern African development information medium, compiling and producing a range of development information products and services.

Beneficiaries of PRODDER's work include government departments; NGOs and CBOs; local and international development funding agencies; embassies; United Nations agencies; universities; research institutions; libraries; resource centres, and private sector/business organisations.

The programme's main activity during 2000/01 was the compilation of *PRODDER: The South African development directory 2001*, released in November 2000 as the tenth edition of the directory. The publication's objective is to support the South African development process by providing a comprehensive overview of the activities of the country's development role players.

Covering more than 2 550 development organisations active throughout the country, the directory is the most comprehensive publication of its kind. It is divided into nine provincial sections with each organisation classified according to 68 keywords, e.g. adult basic education, early childhood development, poverty relief, and voter education. The publication is enhanced by the inclusion of GIS maps indicating the spatial distribution of organisations working on inter alia HIV/AIDS, gender and rural issues.

A more extensive version of the PRODDER directory is available on the internet at <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/prodder.html>. Additional categories of information such as the mission statement and activities of development organisations are provided to subscribers.

PRODDER continued to compile two electronic development newsletters on a weekly basis: *e-PRODDER-mail*, focusing primarily on Southern African development issues; and *e-CIVICUS*, compiled on behalf of CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation (based in Washington, DC) and concentrating primarily on international development issues.

PRODDER also continued updating the "Database of South African training and capacity-building providers", which is available on the internet as a subscription-based information service.



# *Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)*

The important cross-cutting theme of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and gender occurs in each of the HSRC's New Priority Areas (NPAs). IKS constitutes an integral part of the African Renaissance agenda, covering inter alia the reconnection of science to society; the development and economic empowerment of rural communities; the restoration of dignity to African societies; human rights and justice, and the strengthening of ethical conduct in formal research and teaching institutions.

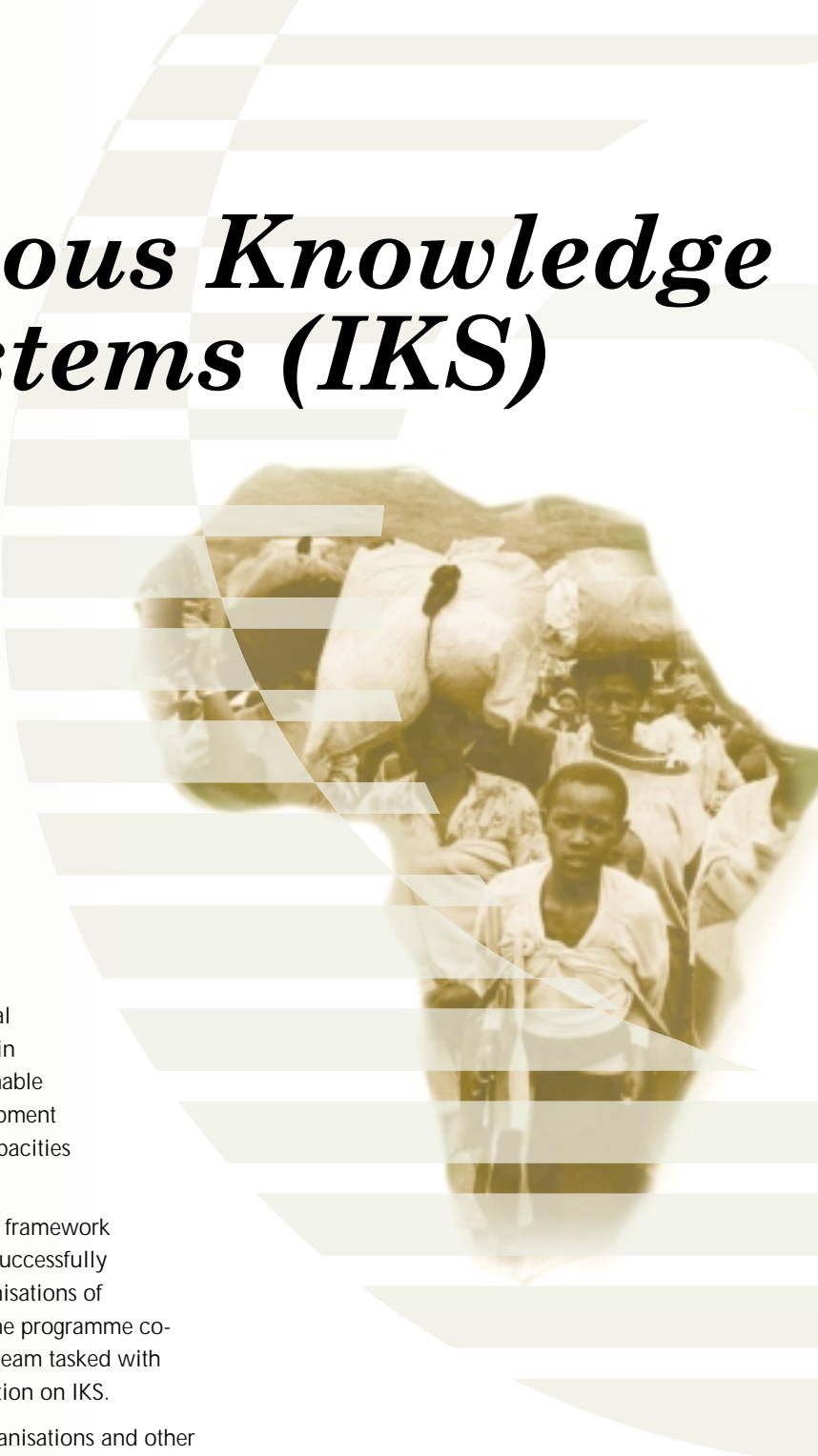
Some two years ago the HSRC launched an IKS programme to facilitate the development of community-conscious scientists across the social and natural sciences, to help reshape curricula in South African universities, and to promote sustainable human development by linking national development strategies to local knowledge, expertise, and capacities existing in rural communities.

In 2000/01 the conceptual and methodological framework document drafted by the IKS programme was successfully presented to the Committee of Heads of Organisations of Research and Technology (COHORT), while the programme co-ordinator was appointed head of the DACST team tasked with preparing the first national policy and legislation on IKS.

Links with science councils, community organisations and other stakeholders were strengthened. Seminars arranged at universities and technikons in KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Province resulted in the establishment of working groups that will consider the mainstreaming of IKS in different faculties. Contact was also established with local communities in KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Province in co-operation with the Medical Research Council.

Contributions on IKS made for COHORT included work on a framework and strategy document, as well as a code of conduct and protocols governing research institutions' dealings with indigenous knowledge.

As an invited member of the DACST ministerial task team on IKS, the programme co-ordinator undertook study trips to China and India. Apart from reading a paper at a seminar in Beijing, she visited institutions responsible for the propagation of Chinese traditional knowledge in the areas of food, medicine,





crafts and intellectual property rights. In India she gave particular attention to government approaches to aspects of IKS such as promotion, commercialisation, protection, legal frameworks and community participation. Reports on these two visits will be released during 2001.

The IKS programme also began to make inputs to various NPA projects on assessment, values, education and environmental issues. Three articles on IKS were published in international journals.

In addition to IKS, a background document on gender issues was prepared at the request of the Deputy Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology for tabling at the first national workshop of the reference group for Women in Science and Technology. The document has since been officially adopted by DACST and placed on its website. An article on gender equality was included in the Commission for Gender Equality's newsletter for 2000.

The programme will continue to provide leadership in research paradigms and to make inputs on IKS theory in South Africa and regionally. Issues that will receive attention include the identification of community resources – and especially traditional healers – for dealing with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and the protection of intellectual property rights of local communities.

## ENQUIRIES

**Mike de Klerk**

Acting Co-ordinator: IKS

Tel: +27 12 302 2469

Fax: +27 12 326 5362

E-mail: [mdeklerk@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:mdeklerk@hsrc.ac.za)