



HSRC
Human Sciences
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DCES

Developmental, Capable
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Developmental, Capable and Ethical State

Making governance work

15th Edition



science & innovation

Department:
Science and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA




HSRC
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Reflections of the DIVISIONAL EXECUTIVE

Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller



Welcome once more to the heart of DCES's vibrant journey and collective achievements, summarised within the pages of our latest newsletter. In these contributions, we travel through inspiring narratives, ground-breaking research, and celebratory milestones that define our commitment to academic excellence and societal betterment.

This edition invites you to explore the personal and professional depths of remarkable individuals. From the promotion of Dr Tlou Ramoroka as Research Director to insightful interviews with distinguished figures such as Dr Simangele Dlamini to the stories of emerging talents like Itumeleng Mpho Gaseitsiwe, Gcina Mandela and Dr Ngqapheli Mchunu, each narrative unveils the diverse tapestry of experiences that shape our academic landscape.

Our dedication to nurturing future leaders is evident in the mentoring initiatives led by Prof Joleen Steyn Kotze, while the triumphant journeys of our award recipients resonate with the ethos of excellence ingrained in DCES.

Beyond the boundaries of our institution, we actively engage in global dialogues and conferences, as demonstrated by our participation in the Global Dynamics of Coal Mining and Just Transition to Hydrogen and Renewable Energy in SA and Africa; the DRM Conference in Mozambique and DCES presence at COP28 in Dubai. Through these engagements, we contribute to discussions on sustainable urban planning, just energy transition, and the human dimensions of climate change.

As we embark on this enriching journey through the pages of our newsletter, let us embrace the stories that echo our commitment to innovation, resilience, and impactful change-making.

We wish you a peaceful festive season and a blessed Christmastime.

See you in the new year!



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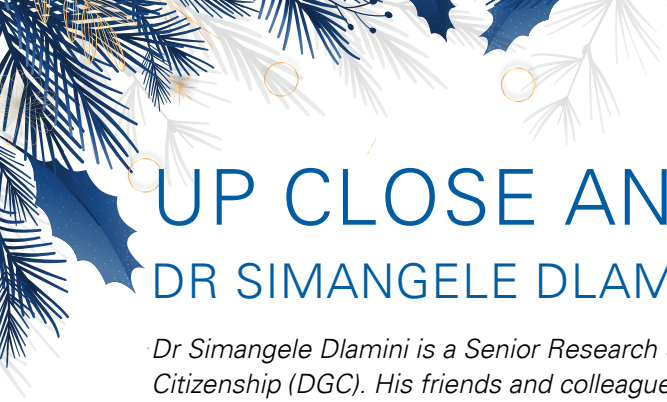


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UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

DR SIMANGELE DLAMINI



Dr Simangele Dlamini is a Senior Research Specialist at Democracy, Governance and Citizenship (DGC). His friends and colleagues call him Smanga for short.

How long have you worked at HSRC?

I joined the HSRC in 2018. I was working at the eResearch Knowledge Centre (eRKC) then, as a Principal Geospatial Analyst, and then I moved to DCES in March 2023 to occupy my current position.

What does your job entail?

I work on various projects within the division and generating new business. In terms of projects, I work with various teams within the unit, like the current ePPMOSA, Public Service Commission and IEC projects.

I liaise with various stakeholders, important for the effective delivery, and write project related reports, policy briefs and journal articles.

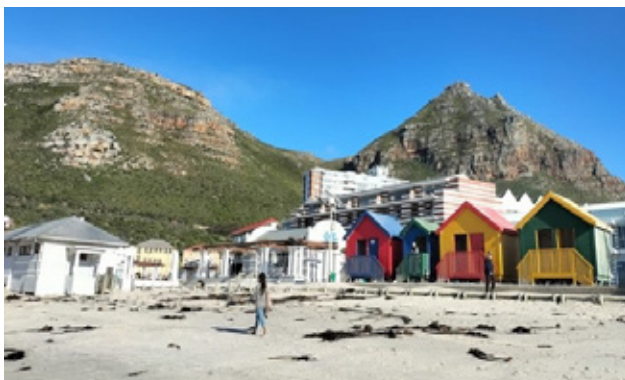
My job also entails identifying and responding to project proposals to ensure we have a steady income stream within the division. Participation in workshops and conferences is also key as it enables me to network with stakeholders and clients.

What do people ask you about your work?

The common question is 'what do you do at the HSRC?'. This is not an easy question, as you have to ensure that your answer is able to keep work flowing to the HSRC. So, you have to be strategic in how you word your answer, balancing what you do as a researcher and what the HSRC aims to achieve as an organisation.

What do you like most about your job?

What I like is getting paid for what I enjoy, which is research work and writing research articles. I also enjoy copy-editing, which is what I trained for at UCT, just to sharpen my skills in editing.



Muizenberg Beach in Cape Town

What does it mean to you being a Senior Research Specialist?

It means delivering work of a high quality to clients, and being able to write publishable articles and reports that make sense. It means balancing all the projects in your plate – and . having to work over weekends!

What is your typical day like?

I normally wake up at 6am, ensure that our three dogs are fed, then catch up on the early morning news, although I try to avoid the news these days as images of children being killed in some parts of the world nowadays are distressing.

I then check my calendar to see if there are meetings to prepare for. I draw up a to-do list for the day, then I start working.

At around 5pm I go to the gym (I collected equipment during COVID-19, so I have home equipment). Thereafter I start working again, which is usually on my research articles, or reading. Sometimes I join the kids as they watch TV soaps. If it's on Friday evening, I normally go for a drink at the nearby golf-club.

If I am on an excursion, I like spending time in the outdoors, particularly where there is a sea breeze.



Boating at Port Nolloth in the Northern Cape

Favourite memory from work?

My favourite memories from work are usually on work-related travel, as I actually like travelling, or going on adventure drives.

I enjoyed my trips to Trieste (Italy), Ljubljana (Slovenia), Zagreb (Croatia), and most recently Bangkok (Thailand). Bangkok takes the trophy here, as people there are on a different level altogether.



The old buildings of Trieste in Italy



Dr Dlamini has visited Bangkok in Thailand



Walking in the streets of Ljubljana in Slovenia

Tell us about your family.

I come from a large family, being sixth in a family of seven. Dr Dlamini's mother recently passed at the age of 93.

How did your parents influence you?

I drew most of my influence from my mother, who raised us as a single parent. Although she did not have a formal job, she ensured that we led a normal life, and that we attended school and university as we so wished.

Seeing a woman struggle to ensure that her children are well catered for brings even more respect.



Dr Dlamini's mother sadly passed away at the age of 93.

Who have been your strongest influences in life?

I cannot pinpoint one, as I have been influenced by different people at different stages of my life. When I was young I dreamt of being a teacher but when I grew older this changed completely, and I was inspired by people who were influential in their fields, such as politicians who fought for liberation and were jailed.

I thought it took too much to sacrifice one's life for others, and I marvelled at that.

When Barack Obama became President in America I also drew inspiration from him, considering the history of people of colour in America and the world over.

What led you to your career?

I started off my career as a teacher, then, after furthering my studies, I became a university lecturer. I thought the monetary rewards were not that great in academia. Then I joined Mintek, a mining research company, as a researcher and then KPMG, an audit and advisory company, as an environmental

audit manager. My transition from KPMG to being a researcher at the HSRC was smooth, since both these roles are rooted in research, which I enjoy.

What was your first impression of the HSRC?

Having joined from a more corporate, suit-and-tie culture my first impression was that people here were laissez-faire. I later realised they were engrossed in what they were doing, and that the pressure to deliver, publish and reach all the targets was intense!

I was able to adjust and quickly got into the swing of things. Colleagues at the eRKC were welcoming and warm, and that helped a great deal, just as I have been able to adjust at DCES.

What's your first memory of working here?

All the rejections I got when I tried to publish my first paper! I realised that it wasn't easy, but I had no choice but to soldier on.

There were indeed other memorable events at the HSRC, such as all the socials we had at the eRKC, and, of course, the ones we continue having at DCES!



Dr Dlamini enjoys the “memorable” social events held at the HSRC



DR RAMOROKA

APPOINTED RESEARCH DIRECTOR

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Dr Tlou Millicent Ramoroka on her remarkable journey at the HSRC. Dr Ramoroka steps into the role of Research Director effective from 1 December 2023, an appointment that is a testament to her outstanding contributions and leadership qualities. Her invaluable insights have greatly enriched our organisation.

Since joining us as a Chief Research Specialist in the DCES Peace and Sustainable Security Division (PaSS) in July 2021, Dr Ramoroka has continuously shown dedication, expertise and passion in her work. Her commitment to advancing research and fostering an environment of excellence has been truly inspiring.

Dr Ramoroka's relentless pursuit of knowledge, coupled with her visionary approach, has not only elevated the standards of our research but also had a positive impact on the community at large. Her unwavering dedication to the mission of the HSRC is an example for all of us. Her continued success and leadership will propel us further toward our shared goals of creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and impactful future.



GETTING TO KNOW

OUR MASTER'S RESEARCH TRAINEES

Gcina Malandela: Connecting the dots for smart urban planning



Gcina Malandela is a master's research trainee, with a BSc honours in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Witwatersrand. She is currently pursuing her master's degree in Development Planning at Wits.

With a background in GIS and Smart Mobility strategies, Gcina has worked in optimising workflows, analysing geospatial data and conducting end-user training. She has made significant contributions to the Smart Mobility Cluster at the CSIR and the Sustainable Human Settlements Department at the City of Johannesburg.

Gcina combines technical expertise with a deep commitment to enhancing and improving urban mobility and housing policies.

Originally from the coastal city of East London, she is passionate about advancing sustainable development, transport, land use, human settlements, GIS and data analytics.

Outside of her work hours, Gcina finds joy in spending time in nature, whether it's through invigorating hikes or jogging. She also loves to bake and read, and her most cherished book is *What Happened to You? Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing* by Bruce D Perry and Oprah Winfrey.

Itumeleng Mpho Gaseitsiwe: Navigating cultural currents



Meet Itumeleng Mpho Gaseitsiwe, a dynamic individual profoundly committed to African scholarship, cultural resilience, and community empowerment. Also known as Asafo, translating to Warrior Scholar in the Twi language of the Akan people, Itumeleng is more than a researcher. He sees himself as a passionate advocate for the preservation of indigenous knowledge, and a warrior against the impact of Euro-Christian colonialism on African ways of knowing.

Itumeleng served as the Project Manager for the Bakwadi Young Writers Development Programme, which makes a lasting impact by empowering youth with storytelling and creative writing skills. His project resulted in the publication of an anthology of short stories titled *Peo ya Setswana-Leroborobo la Khoviti: Tsoso ya Dinaane tsa bo Nkgono*. Published in 2021, this anthology provided a unique perspective on the challenges posed by COVID-19 in Setswana.

With a bachelor of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) from North West University, Itumeleng is now completing his master's in IKS. His research is a case study of the North West Dingaka Association and delves into how the association foregrounds the agency of Dingaka tsa Setso. He has presented his work at various conferences, advancing knowledge and understanding.

Itumeleng's journey with the HSRC began as a Presidential Youth Employment Initiative Intern during the challenging times of COVID-19, where he developed a deep appreciation for research ethics and online methodologies.

Having worked on the National Food and Nutrition Security Survey (NFNSS) as a fieldworker, Itumeleng returns to the HSRC as a master's research trainee in the Development, Capable, and Ethical State Unit. He believes this is the ideal platform to nurture his skills and contribute meaningfully to the HSRC goals.



MY PHD STORY

NGQAPHELI MCHUNU: THIS ONE IS FOR THE FUTURE

PhD trainee Ngqapheli Mchuni shares the long and difficult journey to obtain his doctorate, quoting Ryan Holiday, of *The Daily Stoic*: “To get where we want to go isn’t about brilliance, but continual effort”.



My academic path began in 2017 when I joined the HSRC for a two-year master’s internship. Upon conclusion, I had the chance to embark on a PhD journey while working as a PhD trainee. Naturally, I could not decline.

The decision to pursue a doctoral degree was shaped by the HSRC, as the presence of exceptional young scholars instilled the certainty, self-assurance, and faith necessary for such an undertaking.



“Achieving a work-life balance within the HSRC is impossible, and if you think this letter will share some tips on how to achieve that, I am sorry to be the bearer of bad news, it will not happen.”

I witnessed the successful completion of their PhDs by brilliant scholars like Professor Isaac Khambule, Dr Ncamisile Mbamo, and Dr Thobeka Zondi within the HSRC Doctoral internship framework. Their exemplary efforts bolstered my confidence to pursue a PhD.

Prof Charles and Prof Narnia were also indispensable and notable leaders. Professor Nicola de Jager, my extraordinary PhD supervisor, was truly amazing. I also reaped the rewards of exceptional mentoring from Dr Ben Roberts and Dr Steven Gordon, whose guidance greatly influenced my scholarly growth, alongside the ever-timely humour of Prof Jo and Adv Gary Pienaar, who possesses an infinite depth of wisdom and knowledge.

Dr Roberts influenced the decision to pursue my doctoral studies at Stellenbosch University was influenced by Dr Ben Roberts. After completing my undergraduate, honours and master’s degrees at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, I yearned for a fresh start and new beginnings.

“Change often elicits discomfort, yet it presents an opportunity for personal growth.”



Five guidelines

I have five guidelines for moving forward:

1. Step out of your comfort zone

Stepping out of the comfort-zone and studying towards a PhD requires one to embrace extreme discomfort, which is where the magic lies. Excessive comfort-zone adherence fosters complacency and inhibits the emergence of new ideas, affirming the adage “necessity is the mother of invention”.

The pursuit of a PhD will bring about discomfort, intensified when you add in the work pressures. The crucial element is to wholeheartedly embrace the discomfort, as it is vital for character development and equips you with the necessary tools for pursuing a PhD.

2. Find your tribe

Find your tribe because, given the inherently isolating nature of the PhD journey, it is vital to locate a community where you can find solace, engage in idea-sharing, experience moments of levity, and provide mutual support in times of hardship.

3. Be proactive

The labour-intensive nature of a PhD compels individuals to take proactive action, including actively seeking a supervisor. When it comes to scholarships and conference funding, anticipate a few rejections. However, keep applying, be relentless, you can get a million who say “no” but you only need one “yes”.

4. Show resilience

Despite the workload and academic demands, you must still face life directly. Life does not halt for your PhD; it continues and assesses your perseverance and determination.

5. Believe in yourself

Fear, doubt, uncertainty and occasionally complacency all subtly infiltrates your psyche. Even after spending years building it, you can swiftly lose self-belief. Therefore, protect yourself from any negative forces that may try to infiltrate your thoughts.

The Olympic example

I want you to mentally travel back in time to the 2012 Olympic Games in London, to the unforgettable Jamaican relay team comprising Nesta Carter, Michael Frater, Yohan Blake and, of course, Usain Bolt. They smashed the world record of 37.04 seconds that they had set only a year prior.

Their new record 36.84 seconds obliterated the 37 second barrier to set a new world record.

Now, how is this relevant to us? Well, it speaks to the importance of teamwork because although the journey is an individual one, it does not have to be a lonely one.

Secondly, it concerns excellence, as surrounding oneself with exceptional individuals propels one to surpass previously inconceivable standards. It helps to belong to a team of winners.

Keeping with the relay analogy, I took the baton from esteemed PhD trainees such as Prof Hope Magidimisha-Chipungu, Prof Isaac Khambule, Dr Kombi Sausi, Dr Steven Gordon, and Dr Thobeka Zondi, all of whom have achieved noteworthy accomplishments. These predecessors not only motivated me but also played a fundamental role in successful completion of my PhD in the DCES programme.

I now want to pass on the baton to a group of remarkable scholars who will be pursuing their PhDs, who include Clement Nchabeleng, Fanele Masinga, Noncedo Maphosho, Bathabile Nhleko, Caiphus Baloyi, Samantha Tshabalala, Tshegofatso Ramaphakela, Itumeleng Gaseitsiwe, Gcina Malandela, Dimpho Makitla, and Fezeke Katise.

Despite being at different junctures in your academic pursuits, the common weapon lies in the potential carried by each of you. Be relentless in your dedication to excellence. You are the upcoming generation of scholars, and I dedicate this letter to all of you, expressing my heartfelt wishes for the very best of luck.

Let my PhD success be seen as the motivation you may have needed to initiate your own journey. It is crucial to establish a culture of success and empower aspiring scholars to surpass their limits. There will be adversity, there will be sorrow, there will assuredly be dark days, but you possess the fortitude to endure all of that and achieve all that you aspire to.

Ultimately, as Robin Sharma once said,

“Rough seas make stronger sailors. Tough times build greater people”.

– Ngqapheli Mchuni

NURTURING FUTURE LEADERS

MENTORING AND COACHING EMERGING SCHOLARS

Prof Joleen Steyn Kotze describes her investment in mentoring and coaching emerging scholars, and what this means to her.



In 2021 I was given an opportunity to explore and pursue coaching. Through this I realised that while we support our interns with project work and conducting research, we also need to support our emerging scholars through a coaching process focussed on their goals and aspirations. And, as I am a bit of an overachiever, I decided that I wanted to fill this gap and pursue training in coaching.

Essentially, I wanted to be a recognised and accredited coach to fill the space of holistic development for our interns. Then I could focus on who they were as writers, what they wanted to achieve in life and work and how to get to the “ultimate” goal. This would include incorporating bigger picture goals into small daily habits to support success, and developing key strengths they have within themselves, and as a team.

I therefore applied for recognition as a coach through Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (Comensa). As a member, I am now recognised as a coach as I now hold a professional affiliation to this professional body. My studies and subsequent qualification are also endorsed and recognised through the Comensa membership. I will be able to earn continuing professional development (CPD) points in advancing my own personal and professional development within the coaching space through access to workshops and training.

I am now working towards formal credentialing (again, a slight overachiever). Credentialing will create coaching capacity within DCES to support excellence within the mentoring and coaching space through, for example, “mentor the Mentor”. I will be able to guide mentors on effective mentoring, as well as incorporating coaching practices to support our emergent and future scholars.

I am very excited about the future of mentoring and coaching within DCES, and we have an exciting plan for 2024! More importantly, we are building a strong reputation for quality coaching for our emerging scholars.



DEAN'S STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Bathabile Nhleko, a dedicated DCES intern, has been recognised with a prestigious Dean's Student Excellence Award from the University of Zululand. Bathabile was honoured for her outstanding Master's of Commerce (Economics) in the Department of Economics, Faculty of Commerce, Administration and Law at UZ.

Bathabile, your journey serves as an inspiration to all aspiring students, reminding us that with dedication and hard work, we can achieve great heights. Your commitment to your studies and your internship is truly admirable. We are proud to have such a talented and dedicated individual as part of DCES. Keep shining, Bathabile!

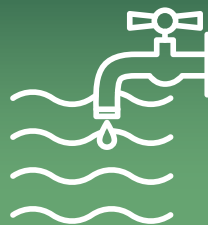
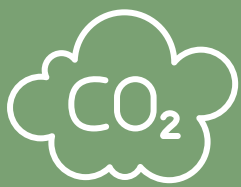
DEAN'S STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS FACULTY OF COMMERCE, ADMINISTRATION AND LAW

**Master of Commerce (Economics) with 76%
Department of Economics**

"If a man does not work, he shall not eat 2Thessalonians3:10 motivated my hardwork towards achieving a Master's Degree in Economics. I always knew that should I not labour there will be no reward to earn, there would be no lively progress in whom I intend to be in the near future. I perceive pursuing postgraduate degrees as strengthening one's competitiveness in the job market, especially in this trying economy. Mainly my gratitude goes to my supervisor Prof L. Kaseeram who stood with me and supported my journey."

BATHABILE S'THOBELE NOMBUISELO NHLEKO





COAL MINING AND JUST ENERGY TRANSITION CONFERENCE

HSRC BRICS RESEARCH CENTRE CO-HOSTS CONFERENCE



Photographs from the Global Dynamics of Coal Mining and Just Transition to Hydrogen and Renewable Energy in SA and Africa Conference

The HSRC BRICS Research Centre (BRC) and the South African Parliament co-hosted the Global Dynamics of Coal Mining and Just Transition to Hydrogen and Renewable Energy in SA and Africa Conference on 22 and 23 November at the Sheraton Hotel in Pretoria.

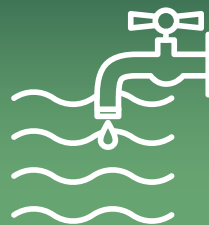
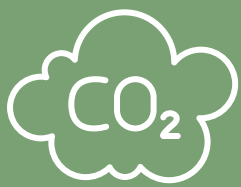
The conference addressed questions such as whether a global supply chain for hydrogen technologies and renewable energies can become a geo-economic benefit for African countries and, if so, how.

Delegates examined Power-to-X (PtX) processes, a transformation technology that converts electricity into carbon-neutral synthetic fuels, which can then be used in other sectors or be stored until needed. They also explored the role of global businesses, governments in the North and South (BRICS), trade unions and civil societies on just transition processes through SMME growth and value chains, inclusive economic growth and the facilitation of African Continental Free Trade Area objectives.

Coal is one of the most abundant and important energy resources in the world, playing a crucial role in defining the economy of a nation. Currently, more than 640 million people on the continent do not have electricity. South Africa serves as a departure point for this conference as it is the first African country to agree to a Just Energy Transition finance package with donor countries from the North.

The key outcome of the conference was a COP 28 Declaration co-signed by the HSRC and the University of Johannesburg. The Declaration was presented to SA Parliament COP 28 Delegate Whip Nqabisa Gantso for contribution towards COP28 representation and policy making.

The South African National Research Foundation and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of South Africa were key sponsors of this energy conference.



DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

CLIMATE CHANGE AND FUTURES IN AFRICA SERIES



The HSRC is working with partners to build a body of work on actions to be taken, or required, to avoid disasters. This includes initiatives such as conferences on Disaster and Risk Management (DRM) now carried out in African countries. The first conference, Investing in Disaster Management for Sustainable Development, was held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe in October 2022 and attracted more 120 participants from all over the world.

Since then, and with the input from the HSRC CEO Prof Sarah Mosoetsa, an overarching theme has been coined and all DRM conferences will be under the umbrella theme Climate Change and Futures in Africa Conference Series. The second DRM conference under this theme was Towards Local Solutions to Early Warning and Disaster Risk Reduction in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and Beyond, held from 8-10 November 2023 in Maputo, Mozambique.

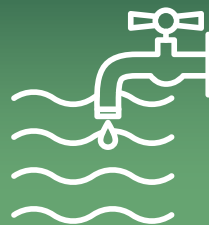
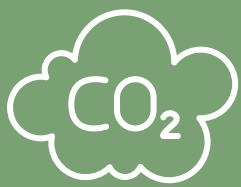
DRM conferences include case studies, papers, interviews, articles, presentations and a repository of news, initiatives and information about activities being undertaken by people around the world to stop disasters from happening. From now on they will be held biannually.

As social scientists at the HSRC, we are aware that the African continent continues to face a wide array of hazards and threats that can lead to disasters. Unfortunately, many of these hazards become disasters with lives lost, livelihoods and properties destroyed, and great harm done to nature. We can do something about this, as highlighted by the contributions made at the conference *Towards Local Solutions to Early Warning and Disaster Risk Reduction in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and Beyond*.

Stakeholders driving change

Universities participating at DRM conference included the University of Fort Hare; Walter Sisulu University; University of Free State (UFS); Midlands State University (MSU); Great Zimbabwe University (GZU); Durban University of Technology (DUT); University of South Africa (UNISA); University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and Eduardo Mondlane University (EMU).

Institutions and organisations included the World Food Programme, Global Network of Civil Society for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), IHE Delft Institute for Water Education, Netherlands; Institute of Natural Resources (INR); National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), and Instituto Nacional de Gestão e Redução do Risco de Desastres (INGD).



Presentations included case studies, research papers, and initiatives geared towards mitigating risks posed by climate-induced hazards such as cyclones, droughts and floods. This played a pivotal role in highlighting critical challenges faced by policymakers and societies across the SADC region, providing valuable insights into preventive measures and response mechanisms.

These contributions, coupled with robust discussions and keynote addresses, steered the conference towards fostering collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the formulation of strategic plans to combat climate-induced disasters effectively.

The issues that emerged are key challenges facing policymakers and societies in the SADC region and African continent. They give pointers on how countries can best be supported to avoid disasters and how to respond quickly should they occur.

Keynote speakers

Keynote speaker Prof Hillary Inyang spoke on *Climate Change-Induced Hazards and Framing of Resilient Systems in Developing Countries*. This touched on environmental and other stressors, their significant implications for human health, the environment and livelihoods of people in many developing countries. Planning, design and implementation of cost-effective measures is warranted to address these associated hazards and forestall disasters.

Socioeconomic and natural factors determine the vulnerability or resilience of any jurisdiction to climate-change-induced and other disasters. In developing countries, however, measures are often inadequate to address the negative impacts of global climate change. It is therefore important to analyse and evaluate the full range of potentially cost-effective measures. Prof Inyang's keynote focused on factors that control the frequency and severity of climate change-induced disasters and measures that can be designed and implemented to manage them in developing countries.

Keynote speaker Dr Kyla Briggs called for an enabling environment focusing on how international organisations can help the SADC region and African continent to develop an agenda that can be implemented, and with concrete targets. These organisations included UN agencies, think tanks, development banks, academics and others.

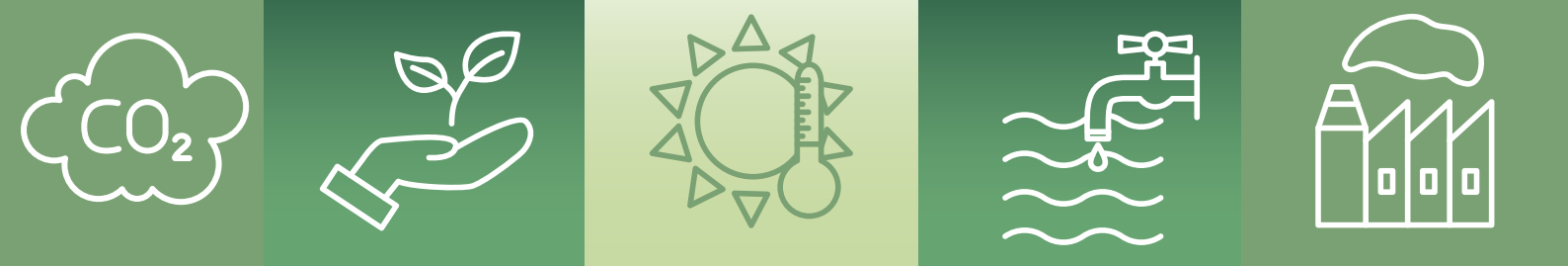
Other presenters shared findings from recent projects showing important new perspectives on what change needs to happen, and how that can occur.

The cost of climate inaction

Another interesting paper dealt with the costs of climate inaction for the SADC, providing estimates of loss and damage in this region for the next 20 years. These were obtained after analysing the impact of extreme weather over the two decades. The paper looked at how much of this could be attributed to climate change, and looked forward to what could feasibly happen in the next 20 years.

The panel discussion provided key aspects of avoiding disasters. For example, panellists outlined how to design and construct buildings that can withstand high winds and large discharges of water, and how to work with nature to reduce our vulnerability to natural hazards.





Conference resolutions centred on how partners can share data, such as using virtual platforms and local initiatives. Institutions for networking and collaboration were highly emphasised to share resources, exchange of ideas, knowledge and technologies related to early warning, adaptation and resilience building.

There was consensus that strategies have to be put in place to involve young people in DRM, through capacity building and research career workshops on scientific writing. The conference proceedings are to be published by an academic journal, and policy briefs will be produced and published by the HSRC press.

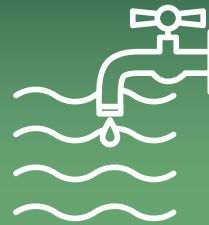
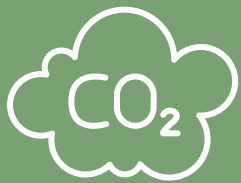
There was a resolve to publish conference proceedings and policy briefs, which signifies a commitment to disseminating knowledge, informing policies, and catalysing change in disaster management strategies within the SADC region and the broader African continent. The active involvement of these institutions underscores a collective effort towards fostering resilience and addressing vulnerabilities in the face of climatic challenges.

Best Poster Presentation

Yamkela Majikijela and Tshegofatso Ramaphakela shone at the DRM Conference, earning the title of Best Poster Presentation in a competitive pool. Their presentation not only showcased their expertise but also highlighted their commitment to advancing knowledge in disaster risk management.

Their poster presentation was titled Disaster Risk Reduction: Planning for Migration in Urban Areas. It highlighted the need to include migrants in urban planning and development to build resilient infrastructure and cities. The focus was on internal migration patterns, as well as push-and-pull factors that cause migration and how these can lead to the proliferation of informal settlements, as well as increased demand on infrastructure, services and urban poverty. Key recommendations included increasing rural investment and urban infrastructure, and for government to localise risk assessments due to increased population.





HSRC AT COP28 IN DUBAI

INVESTING IN EDUCATION, INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

The HSRC's Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller attended COP28 in Dubai to make two presentations, on the importance of the Just Energy Transition, and on green thinking and green education.

The negotiations at the Council of Parties are never easy and the side events are important in feeding into the dialogue at leadership level. What is clear, says Prof Bohler-Muller, is that the world must act to protect the planet for the sake of our children's futures. It is equally clear that negotiations are fraught and that a balance is needed between transitioning to renewable energy and ensuring that this is a fair, just, and equitable process. DCES will continue to contribute to research in this essential area affecting the lives of all citizens of the globe.

Just Energy Transition

Prof Bohler-Muller presented on the climate crisis, engaging in relevant and impactful research, on 8 December

COP28 ended on a high with an agreement to transition away from fossil fuels. We stand on the height of a crucial global transition towards renewable energy, and the eyes of the world are fixed on Africa.

At the heart of this transformation lies the concept of a Just Energy Transition (JET). It is a call for a shift away from fossil fuels, particularly coal, towards clean energy sources such as wind, solar and green hydrogen, while ensuring inclusivity and minimising negative impacts on vulnerable communities and workers.

This transition is urgent. The devastating consequences of climate change, further exacerbated by reliance on fossil fuels, demand immediate action.

While coal has historically fuelled economic development, its use comes at a steep price. Environmental pollution and health hazards, particularly in the mining sector, cast a shadow of unsustainability. The current energy crisis in South Africa, characterised by load shedding, highlights the risks associated with continued reliance on coal.

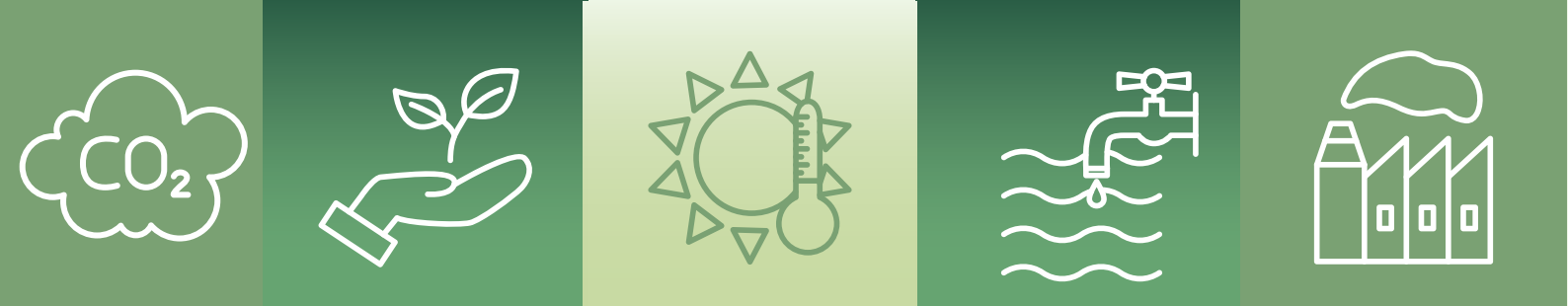
The shift towards renewable energy presents an opportunity to address both energy security and environmental concerns. Hydrogen, often dubbed the "green oil of the 21st century", offers a clean and sustainable alternative to fossil fuels.

The HSRC DCES research division recognises the critical role of understanding the human dimensions of climate change. We are dedicated to studying the impact of climate change on vulnerable communities, particularly rural and coastal populations.

As we embark on this transition, inclusivity must be our guiding principle. The mining communities, whose livelihoods are directly linked to coal, must be at the centre of our strategies. The JET Framework aims to mitigate potential negative impacts on workers, communities, and small businesses.

DCES is actively engaged in various initiatives to contribute towards the research agenda related to the climate crisis and to support the JET in Africa. We are:

- Conducting research on the human dimensions of climate change.
- Supporting the Presidential Climate Change Commission with data on public understanding of climate change and the JET.
- Hosting conferences on Disaster Risk Management, crucial for building resilience to climate change impacts.
- Participants in COP28 discussions and advocating for a just and inclusive transition.



The transition towards a sustainable energy future requires the active engagement of all stakeholders. Civil society, women, youth, children, trade unions, and local governments must play a vital role in shaping this process.

As we move forward, let us remain steadfast in our pursuit of equitable and inclusive solutions. Empowering vulnerable communities, ensuring job security, improving health outcomes, and amplifying local voices are cornerstones for a successful transition.

The questions we face are not merely intellectual pursuits; they hold the keys to unlocking economic resilience and sustainable growth for Africa. Our collective efforts have the potential to uplift millions out of poverty and set a precedent for a just and equitable energy future.

Schooling in the face of climate change

On 9 December, Prof Bohler-Muller presented a call for action on schooling in the face of climate change. Climate shocks and stresses disrupt education, hindering the right to quality schooling and jeopardising efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The 1% responsible for most emissions drive this crisis, with children and low-income communities bearing the brunt.

While floods and droughts make headlines, continuous stresses like poor air quality and extreme temperatures impact learning and attendance daily. Schools often lack resources to adapt, with under-resourced schools built in flood-prone areas suffering the most.

Investing in climate-proof schools is crucial. Education fosters adaptation, reduces climate risk, and cultivates environmental care. Yet, education rarely figures in climate justice policy, despite its potential to empower children and reduce overall climate risk.

It's time to bridge the gap between education and climate justice. We must:

- Prioritise climate-proofing schools to ensure education continuity and protect children's learning environments.
- Invest in resilient school infrastructure and resources to withstand extreme weather and environmental stresses.
- Integrate climate change education into the curriculum, empowering children to understand and address the crisis.
- Amplify children's voices in decision-making processes, ensuring their needs and perspectives are heard and acted upon.

Investing in children's education in the face of climate change is not just a choice, it's a moral imperative. We must act now to safeguard their right to quality schooling and build a future where education empowers them to be climate aware leaders.



SCIENCE FORUM SOUTH AFRICA 2023

The DCES division successfully hosted a session at the Science Forum South Africa 2023, delving into the complex and vital topic of “The Human Dimensions of Climate Change” on 7 December. The session attracted a diverse audience and sparked engaging discussions.

Expert speakers from various backgrounds discussed South African attitudes towards climate change, the vulnerability of communities to natural hazards, the potential of SMART agriculture to enhance food systems, and the challenges and opportunities posed by the energy transition. The session also explored ways to develop effective locality-based vulnerability measures and strategies for disaster planning and preparedness.

Insightful presentations and lively Q&A session generated valuable perspectives on the human dimensions of climate change in South Africa.



7 December 2023 || 13:30 - 15:00

Venue: CSIR ICC

Hosted by: Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) Developmental, Capable, and Ethical State (DCES)

The latest IPCC report has highlighted climate justice as a pivotal issue in the discourse on climate change. Join us in exploring the questions surrounding climate justice and the observed differential losses and damages due to climatic hazards across affected populations.

In alignment with the Department of Science and Innovation's Decadal Plan, the Developmental, Capable, and Ethical State (DCES) division at HSRC has been dedicated to researching the human dimensions of climate change. Discover tailor-made solutions for diverse South African contexts and learn about sectoral work, including DCES's empirical advancements using SMART technology to enhance food security.

Programme:

- Introductions: Moderator Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller
- Presentation 1: Human Dimensions of Climate Change: A Double-Edged Sword for Developing Countries: Mitigation, Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability in South Africa – findings from Phase I.
Prof Charles Hongoro / Dr Wilfred Lunga, HSRC
- Presentation 2: Climate Change Attitudes: Evidence from ward 6 Noodsburg, Ilembe District Municipality, South Africa.
Dr Thobeka Zondi, UCT
- Presentation 3: Generation of change? South African attitudes towards climate change in comparative perspective
Dr Ben Roberts / Dr Jare Struwig, HSRC
- Presentation 4: Potentialities of SMART agriculture in enhancing Food Systems in the context of climate change in South Africa
Dr Tlou Ramoroka, HSRC
- Presentation 5: Energy Transition Challenges in Developing Countries: Lessons from South Africa and other Countries
Prof Thanyani Madzivhandila UL

Explore the detailed program at:

<https://www.sfsa.co.za/programme/#toggle-id-50-closed>

Your participation will shape the dialogue on climate change and foster actionable solutions. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of the change.

RSVP: Ms Tshepiso Kekana (tkekana@hsrc.ac.za) and Ms Ithuteng Sekaledi (isekaledi@hsrc.ac.za)





ANNUAL HSRC AWARDS

On December 11, the HSRC held its annual awards ceremony to recognise the outstanding contributions of employees. The event was filled with moments of celebration and appreciation, honouring individuals for their dedication, talent and hard work.

The following DCES staff members were given long-service awards:

- Five years: Fhulufhelo Tshililo
- 10 years: Adv Gary Pienaar and Ithuteng Sekaledi
- 25 years: Dr Gregory Houston

Their commitment and dedication to the organisation have been instrumental in its success.

The HSRC also recognised the academic achievements of employees who completed their degrees over this time. Catherine Maidi received the Graduates 2022/3 award for completing her Master's of Commerce degree from Mancosa, showing her dedication to lifelong learning and professional development.

The prestigious CEO's Award was presented to Prof Charles Hongoro. This award recognises exceptional contributions to the HSRC's goals, such as fostering strong stakeholder relationships, demonstrating initiative and follow-through and embodying courageous leadership. Prof Hongoro's dedication and leadership have been instrumental in driving the HSRC forward and making significant contributions to its impact.

The HSRC Annual Awards ceremony is a powerful reminder of the exceptional talent and dedication of employees. By recognising their achievements, the HSRC motivates its staff to continue striving for excellence and to make a positive impact on society.



AU REVOIR TO COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS

GREG has been integral to the success of the HSRC for a remarkable 25 years. His diverse skill set is admirable and quite frankly working without him in our team is a terrifying thought. Our very own hardworking and humble Veteran! Thank you, Greg, for your invaluable contributions and the legacy you leave behind. You'll be missed, but your impact will resonate within these walls and within us for years to come.



For an entire decade, **GARY**, both an astute thinker and a gentleman, embodying the qualities of reliability and consideration has been with us as part of a powerful team. As our Advocate, Gary has tirelessly championed our causes, offering unwavering support and guidance. His commitment to excellence has left an indelible mark on each one of us as well as his talent to mentor. Thank you for your years of dedication, the countless challenges met with a smile, and the camaraderie that defined our time together.

TIM has been part of the HSRC journey for an impressive 19 years, during which his expertise and dedication have become synonymous with our success. Tim's knowledge of the ins and outs of everything is nothing short of awe-inspiring. Beyond his professional brilliance, Tim's role as a disability rights activist has inspired us to strive for inclusivity in everything we do. Tim your passion for making a positive impact leaves us with an example to emulate.



Thank you, Greg, Gary, and Tim, for your dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to excellence. You will be dearly missed, and your impact will resonate within HSRC DCES for years to come.

Wishing you all the success and fulfilment in your future endeavours.

SASAS throws a celebratory dinner for Thobeka's farewell



Announcements and Condolences

Happy birthday to the DCES researcher in the making. Congratulations to Kombi and his wife, Busi, on the arrival of their son, Ushindi Sausi (09/10/2023) .

Another one! Congrats on Gary's daughter, Kirsten's marriage on 16 December.

Smanga, our deepest condolences on the passing of your beloved mother. May her cherished memories bring you comfort during this difficult time.





Thanks for reading!

I hope what you read is interesting and informative. This newsletter can only tell so much, so if you would like to partner with us, comment or ask for more information, please feel free to contact me:

isekaledi@hsrc.ac.za


Or just complain about the weather. That's cool, too.
Until next quarter, many thanks!

Thuteng

Previous editions: <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/departments/dces/dces-newsletters>

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