

# **Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER)**



**Annual Report 2020**

# The Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER)

## Annual Report 2020



## Message from the Director

The team is very excited to present its first annual report for 2020, six months after the institute started embarking on its new journey with respect to its research focus. Among other things, in this report I am pleased to present ideas and the initial work done on four new key research areas of the institute. These areas are on: a) the use and management of environmental research (land and water), b) education and skills development, c) human and economic development, and d) research on international trade in goods and services, with a strong focus on African trade issues. This research work is necessary but also a very ambitious task, which means that the institute will have to develop the areas of research in a staggered manner, also owing to (non) available resources. It is also quite unfortunate that the ISER started embarking on this new research journey in the year of great global devastation, where new ways of doing business have had to be adopted suddenly. The Covid-19 pandemic has meant that almost all national research funding had to shift towards supporting the war against the pandemic in a declining economy. While we have no choice but spend our energies on this health crisis, we also have had to keep it in mind that hopefully, sooner rather than later, the war against the pandemic will be won and research life and focus will shift back to many other important areas of social and economic development.

Many of these important areas of social and economic research also contribute to our 2015 commitments to the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For example, our research area on the use and management of environmental resources responds and contributes directly to the achievement of at least four (4) of the seventeen (17) SDGs, namely, the goal to end poverty (Goal 1), the goal to end hunger, achieve food security and promote sustainable agriculture (Goal 2), the goal to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (Goal 6), and the goal to protect terrestrial ecosystems and halt biodiversity loss (Goal 15). Each one of the other research areas contribute to more SDGs, including the goals to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, the goal to ensure healthy lives and well-being, promote sustainable economic growth, and the promotion of global partnerships for sustainable development. This means that, if executed successfully, the new work of the ISER will have meaning on a global scale. This is very exciting for us and we are looking forward to making these positive contributions in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa and beyond the country's borders.

It is my hope that you will find this report useful and clear in outlining these research ideas and the operational efforts that are required to support their delivery. I would like to thank all Rhodes University staff, the ISER's Advisory Board members who are volunteering their precious time to steer the Institute in its new direction and the hard-working staff members, fellows and associates of the Institute. I wish each and every one of you a much better year in 2021.

Cyril Nhlanhla Mbatha

## How ISER's work relates to the Sustainable Development Goals

The research activities and focus areas of the ISER primarily support contributions towards the achievement of the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

<b>Research area</b>	<b>Sustainable Development Goal</b>
The use and management of environmental resources (land & water)	<b>Goal 1:</b> End poverty in all its forms <b>Goal 2:</b> End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture <b>Goal 6:</b> Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all <b>Goal 15:</b> Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Education and skills development	<b>Goal 4:</b> Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Human and economic development	<b>Goal 3:</b> Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages <b>Goal 8:</b> Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
International trade in goods and services	<b>Goal 17:</b> Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

## Table of Contents

Message from the Director.....	1
How ISER's work relates to the Sustainable Development Goals .....	2
CHAPTER 1 .....	5
VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS WITH VALUES .....	5
1. Introduction.....	5
2. The vision and mission statements of the ISER .....	5
3. The ISER team and research associates.....	7
The core team .....	7
ISER associates .....	10
CHAPTER 2.....	15
RESEARCH STRATEGY, OUTPUTS AND KEY ACTIVITIES.....	15
1. Introduction.....	15
2. The core business activities .....	15
3. Research generation.....	15
3.1 The current research implementation strategy .....	16
3.2 For books, book chapters and other articles .....	16
3.3 Report on 2020 research activities .....	17
3.4 Post Graduate student (M&D) supervision.....	19
3.4.1 Current research student supervision .....	20
3.5 Teaching of modules.....	21
3.6 Community engagement .....	22
3.7 Academic citizenship.....	22
3.8 The operational strategy to support the vision and mission .....	22
CHAPTER 3.....	24
SCHOLARLY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT .....	24
1. Introduction.....	24
2. ISER seminar series .....	24
2.1 Proposed seminars for 2021 include the following: .....	29
3. ISER working papers .....	30
3.1 Growing the working paper series .....	30
3.2 Digitising the working papers library .....	31
4. ISER 'Notes from the Field' .....	31
5. ISER policy briefs.....	31
CHAPTER 4.....	32
TRAINING WORKSHOP ENGAGEMENT.....	32
CHAPTER 5.....	33
CURRENT AND INITIATED PROJECTS .....	33
1. Current research projects.....	33
2. Research projects initiated or started in 2020 .....	33

3. Summary of operational projects in 2020.....	34
CHAPTER 6.....	36
PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS REPORT .....	36
1. Introduction.....	36
2. Key partners within Rhodes University .....	36
3. Key partners external to Rhodes University: .....	37
4. NGO and private business partnerships that have been initiated, mainly around research on environmental resources, include the following:.....	37
5. Pipeline Partnerships - under consideration and at different stages of negotiations:.....	37
6. Partnership plan going forward.....	38
CHAPTER 7.....	39
COMMUNICATIONS REPORT.....	39
1. Introduction.....	39
2. Communications and marketing objectives of the ISER .....	39
3. Communications and marketing strategy .....	39
4. ISER Channel Focus.....	40
5. ISER communications plan .....	40
6. Execution progress report .....	41
6.1 ISER Website .....	41
6.2 Media coverage results .....	42
6.3 Social media strategy .....	42
CHAPTER 8.....	44
A HISTORICAL REPORT FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF OF THE JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN STUDIES (JCAS) .....	44
1. Introduction.....	44
2. EDITORIAL, April 2012 .....	44
3. ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGES/CHANGES .....	46
4. A FEW HIGHLIGHTS.....	47
5. AFRICAN STUDIES COLLOQUIUM .....	48
6. CONCLUSION.....	49
APPENDICES: .....	51

# CHAPTER 1

## VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS WITH VALUES

### 1. Introduction

This 2020 ISER annual report presents managerial, operational and research activities that were presented for approval by the Advisory Board on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and had been initiated by the Director and the ISER team since 1 May 2020, when the new Director joined the institute. For example, the team conducted a number of workshops to develop and get approval for the Institute's new logos from Rhodes University, and to reimagine and evolve the ISER's new vision and mission statements - which are outlined more fully below. The director also worked with selected Rhodes University management personnel (i.e. the Dean of Humanities, DVC: Research and Innovation) and senior researchers across other research institutes (e.g. the Institute for Water Research and Environmental Learning Research Centre directors) to develop and get approval for the Terms of Reference and Guidelines for the functioning and appointment of the new Advisory Board, which held its first meeting since 2018 on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2020. The ISER team also worked on various operational strategies, including the ISER's scholarly engagement and communications and marketing branding strategies. These are all presented in this report. As the Director of the Institute, I hope the report is clear in presenting on these activities and new strategies to give an accurate picture of the direction the Institute will be steering towards in the coming years.

### 2. The vision and mission statements of the ISER

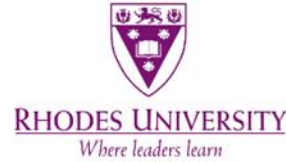
Firstly, I would like to present the exciting new vision and mission statements and organisational values that will be guiding the work of the institute as developed by the current team:

#### **OUR TAGLINE:**

*Leading research for Africa*

#### **OUR VISION:**

We strive to be a globally recognised centre of transformative social and economic research excellence that contributes towards a fairer, more just and equitable society through championing African-led enquiry, innovation and knowledge-sharing.



## **OUR MISSION:**

The ISER is a dynamic African hub of high quality and pioneering social and economic research that is opening gateways for community-rooted knowledge to be recognised and incorporated in policy and practice with a view to improving the natural environment and quality of human life.

## **OUR VALUES:**

### **Excellence in groundbreaking, ground-up, rigorous and multi-faceted research**

We strive to achieve excellent and effective results through policy-relevant, community-led research that can be practically applied. We are equitable, transformational and inclusive in our subjects and methods.

### **Social transformation and environmental sustainability**

We champion socio-economic justice for sustainable and improved livelihoods, ensuring equitable access and the preservation of bio-cultural diversity. Our research informs policy that recognises multiple and evolving values, including local natural resource stewardship, spatial justice and community sustainability. We provide platforms that promote diverse expressions and facilitate knowledge-sharing towards finding common ground.

### **Advancing and sharing Africa-led knowledge**

We create, connect and enable knowledge networks across South Africa and the African continent. We support dynamic socio-economic research, innovation and development that comes *from the continent* rather than *to the continent*.

### **Social commitment and community engagement**

The real value of what the ISER does depends upon the long-term, positive impact that we can make on the economic vitality of people, organisations, and communities through engaged and transformative research.

### **Innovation**

We are open to ideas that challenge conventional views and drive innovation. We believe that in order to stay relevant, we must constantly improve with society's changing needs to develop work that pushes forward the boundaries of research.





### **Accountability**

We are accountable to society, marginalised communities, the research community, Rhodes University, our funders, our respondents, and all stakeholders. We accept personal responsibility and accountability for our actions and results. We respond to the needs and expectations of our research partners with urgency, exercising good judgement in addressing changing circumstances.

### **Integrity**

We are driven by our commitment to enabling and assisting vulnerable groups to overcome poverty and improve quality of life, and not by personal gain or alliances with vested interests. We are honest, and act with integrity. We do not tolerate unethical behaviour; we challenge it as a matter of personal responsibility.

### **Respect, diversity and equality**

We treat our colleagues, partners, donors, research and community partners with fairness, respect and sensitivity. As part of this respect, we share co-engaged learning with all contributors. We value diversity and draw upon the different strengths, cultures, ideas, experience and talents of people.

### **Collaboration and partnership**

Collaboration with internal and external partners is necessary to increase the effectiveness and relevance of our work and research.

The above vision and mission statements should indicate our shared hope for reinventing the institute's focus on advancing research that is not only locally or provincially based, but also has great relevance to national and continental social and economic challenges. We believe that our shared values will guide in navigating the collective journey to achieve and execute our vision and mission, respectively.

## **3. The ISER team and research associates**

### **The core team**

Currently, the ISER is a small team, with big dreams, that is currently made up of four core staff members who are employed on a full-time basis. The following people make up the core ISER team:



**Financial administrator: Ms Gail Bint**

Gail completed her matric at Port Alfred High School. She worked in the finance industry for 18 years before joining the ISER in 2014. She does an incredible job of ensuring that the ISER's finances are used appropriately, recorded accordingly and reported on and presented every month, using international standards of accounting. Gail has a great sense of humour and is a pillar of strength for the Institute.



**General administrator: Mr Bulelani Mothlabane**

Bulelani Mothlabane was born in Grahamstown. After completing his matric in 2007 at Graeme College he studied towards a National Diploma in Tourism Management at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). After completing his diploma Bulelani worked at Makana Tourism from 2012 till 2014 as an Information Officer. He then was appointed the Administrative Assistant at ISER in 2014. Bulelani does an excellent administrative job in the office, on the ISER's webpage and other social media platforms of the Institute.



**Academic and research administrator: Ms Jamie Alexander**

Jamie Alexander does a great job as an Academic and Research Administrator for the ISER, supporting the Institute with academic and research projects including the Institute's Seminar Series, Working Paper Series, Academic Networking and other related projects.

Jamie has embarked on completing her PhD on sacred cultural landscapes and their application for bio-cultural diversity conservation. Her MA explored children's cultural environmental narratives and their role in the transmission of cultural connection to and protection of biodiversity. Her honour's thesis focused on tourism, crime and benefit in relation to the tourism industry in Vilankulo, Mozambique.

In the past, Jamie has worked as a social anthropologist and environmental consultant, being involved in assessing and mitigating the impact of numerous large-scale development projects in South Africa, Mozambique, Madagascar, Egypt and Kenya. She has also been involved in the interactive environmental arts-based

programmes of the Arkwork Collective and was one of the facilitators of the Arkwork Circus. This project was centred on vulnerable and at-risk youth and utilised arts-based education, drama and storytelling to enable participants to create community drama productions and artworks.

Jamie's research interests include sacred spaces, cultural landscapes, counter hegemonic mapping, cultural identity and belonging, environmental perceptions, local ecological knowledge, indigenous knowledge systems, cultural environmental narratives, bio-cultural diversity conservation, participatory learning processes and tourism.

**ISER Director: Prof Nhlanhla Cyril Mbatha**

Prof. C.N. Mbatha is the current Director of the Institute of the ISER, after acting as Dean and CEO at the Unisa School of Business Leadership until early 2020.



In 2015 he was the first Director of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) - Regional Leadership Centre in Southern Africa (RLCSA), an initiative by the former US President, Barack Obama. Prof. Mbatha was also Chief Research Manager and Head of the Labour Markets Research Unit (LMRU) at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) from 2012 to 2013, before becoming Head of Finance and Economics at Unisa's Business School.

Before joining Unisa in 2009 as an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics he was a Senior Lecturer at Rhodes University's Department of Economics and Economic History, where he taught undergraduate and post graduate courses in Environmental Economics, Public Finance, Microeconomics and Development Economics. At Unisa's Business School he taught macro and microeconomics for business leaders and managers. He actively conducts research on natural resources management, including research on South Africa's land and water laws, agricultural economics and land reform projects across the African continent. His other research interests include topics on the interface between labour markets and skills development. In the last 15 years he has been a senior research consultant on topics including public finances management, labour markets and further education and training,

international and regional trade integration for numerous government departments and research councils in South Africa, as well as for international donor organisations like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Botswana and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

**Senior Researcher  
(Vacant)**

This is a Council funded position that is currently unoccupied (refer to ISER Review Report for details). Since 2018/19, when the Neil Aggett Labour Studies Unit (NALSU) moved from the ISER to the department of Sociology, there has been some confusion around this position, which was then occupied by Dr Reynolds as the head of NALSU. Efforts are currently underway with Rhodes' HR, DVC and VC offices to formally clarify and set out the position in order to have a fully contributing Senior Researcher located at the ISER.

**ISER associates**

**Professor Emeritus Valerie Møller**



Professor Møller is a former Director of the ISER and Professor Emeritus at Rhodes University. She continues to be a member of the ISER team and contributes immensely to the operational work of the institute. We are grateful to Prof Møller for continuing to enthusiastically support the research programmes and operations of the ISER. The institute also benefits immensely from her collaborative quality of life studies that often bring visiting researchers, some of whom have ended up going on to develop their own collaborative studies within ISER.

Prof Møller was director of the ISER from 1998 to 2006. She was appointed to the ISER's new Quality of Life Studies chair at Rhodes in 2007. Before coming to the ISER, she headed the Quality of Life Research Unit at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa, in the 1990s. She grew up in the southern United States and Switzerland. A sociologist by training, she received her Ph.D. from the University of Zürich. She and her architect husband arrived in Africa in 1972 in a VW kombi and stayed. She has lived and worked in southern Africa since that time.

Together with South African colleagues, she initiated the South African Quality of Life (SAQoL) trends study that has tracked the personal well-being of South Africans from all walks of life since the early 1980s. In 1996 and 2004, together with Alex Michalos, editor of the leading international journal on quality-of-life, *Social Indicators Research*, she organised 'roving conferences' to promote social

indicators and quality-of-life research among South African scholars. The 2004 'Roving Conference' held at Rhodes University formed part of the University's Centenary celebrations.

Valerie Møller has published some 200 research articles, chapters in books, and research monographs covering a wide range of topics related to quality of life and well-being. She has edited and co-edited a number of Springer volumes on quality-of-life topics including two focusing on South African quality of life (published in 1997 and 2007).

She is an international Society for Quality of Life Studies (ISQOLS) *Distinguished* QoL Researcher in recognition of her lifetime achievements and accomplishments in quality-of-life studies. She hosted the ISQOLS 7th conference at Rhodes University in 2006, and served as ISQoL's President (2007–8). She serves on the boards of a number of quality-of-life journals and received the 1997 (with Lawrence Schlemmer) and 2013 Best *Social Indicator Research (SIR)* Paper awards. The 2013 Best *SIR* Paper reported on three decades of the SAQoL trends study.



**Honorary Research Associate and editorial support: Dr Samuel Dominic Sadian**

Dr Samuel Sadian studied Political and International Studies at Rhodes University up to Master's level. After working as a political researcher and academic editor, he did a PhD in Sociology at the University of Barcelona. His doctoral dissertation focussed on overcoming the conceptual and empirical shortcomings of narrowly productivistic approaches to modern social change in the humanities and social sciences, building on the work of Marshall Sahlins, Manuel Castells and Axel Honneth, among others. It portrays consumer practices as an essential dimension of struggles for recognition in material and symbolic circuits of market exchange, centralised redistribution and social reciprocity and develops an approach to consumption potentially applicable to a wide range of modern social settings, drawing on case studies from South Africa in the fields of housing, healing and clothing. His current research focuses on neoliberal and laissez-faire economic, social and political reforms in comparative perspective from the 1980s, considering also the manner in which these have been promoted in South Africa within academic institutions, think tanks, media outlets and platforms, and Third Way-style political parties in ways that appear problematic from an egalitarian critical perspective.

### **Communications and Marketing Strategist: Ms Tamaryn Brown**



Tamaryn does a fantastic job working with the ISER on a part time basis as a consultant supporting the ISER team in its communications, marketing and branding activities.

Tamaryn worked in communications for General Electric in London, Belgium and New York, before joining Ogilvy in South Africa. She co-founded Kaelo Engage, a consultancy focused on cause communications, including the successful CSI multi-platform series Kaelo-Stories of Hope. She joined Connect Media in 2010 (then Chillibush PR), which she now owns.

Tamaryn has gained extensive local and international experience in public relations, communications and sponsorship, working on both the client and agency side in various sectors, including hospitality and entertainment, property, FMCG, financial services, technology, automotive, mining, construction, logistics and renewable energy. She has extensive experience working within the public and educational sector, serving clients such as the Unisa Graduate School of Business Leadership (SBL) and the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA). Tamaryn has worked for Brand South Africa and the Industrial Development Corporation, and served as media liaison for Hyundai during their sponsorship throughout the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Tamaryn is passionate about cause-related work and development communications. Recent experience includes delivering integrated communications for KFC's Add Hope initiative, annual savings campaigns for the South African Savings Institute, CSI and cause-related marketing for Pandora, cause-related literacy campaigns for Pizza Hut across Africa and anti-tobacco campaigns for the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, a global NGO based in Washington.

She has a proven record in developing breakthrough strategies and managing integration of paid, earned, shared and owned platforms to build powerful brand stories.



**Chief Editor, Journal of Contemporary Studies: Professor Emeritus Fred Hendricks**

The ISER hosts the Journal of Contemporary African Studies and Professor Emeritus Fred Hendricks (former Dean of Humanities and international scholar) holds the position of the Chief Editor of the Journal. We are more than grateful to Prof Hendricks for his continued support for the broad African academic project and the ISER.



**Honorary Professor: Prof Yusuf Sayed: PhD (Bristol), MBA (Brighton)**



**Research Associate: Dr Steffen Otterbach**

Dr Otterbach is currently a post-doctoral researcher and lecturer at the Institute for Health Care and Public Management, University of Hohenheim, Stuttgart, Germany.

A long time ISER associate and a dynamic, vibrantly enjoyable visiting researcher, Dr Otterbach has collaborated most closely with Prof Møller and Prof Mike Rogan, producing a number of publications together.

His specialization is in empirical economics and his research focuses on the impact of working conditions (e.g. working time and mismatches between actual and desired working hours) on health and wellbeing. His research interests also include food security and nutrition aspects in developing countries.

**VISITING PROFESSORS**



**Prof Edward Webster: BA (Hons) (Rhodes), MA (Oxon), BPhil (York), PhD (Wits), LLD (Rhodes)**



**Prof Ben Fine:** BA, PPhil (Oxon) PhD (London)

Currently, the core team comprises of the people who are making the ISER work on a day to day basis, and at a strategic level. We are grateful to each and every one of them for re-establishing the ISER. We also have a list of our associates, which we are planning to grow in 2021 to support the execution of our overall strategy, as described in the coming chapters.

In the next chapter we present in more detail the research themes that are now formalised pillars of the Institute's research work and the strategy to be undertaken in growing and strengthening these research pillars.



## CHAPTER 2 RESEARCH STRATEGY, OUTPUTS AND KEY ACTIVITIES

### 1. Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the overall strategy devised for the ISER to build its key research areas. It provides an understanding of the strategic direction and the five-year vision that the ISER is undertaking starting from 2020. The chapter outlines the ISER's new research focus areas and includes an overview of some of its core activities, for example the research generation strategy, an outline of the scholarly and media efforts, highlights of network building, student supervision capacity, and finally the basic strategic plan to execute the institute's vision.

### 2. The core business activities

The list outlines the Institute's core business activities, with strategies for their execution laid out sequentially. Reports with further details on what has been performed for each activity are presented in the following chapters:

- a) Research generation and dissemination
- b) Scholarly public engagement
- c) Community engagement
- d) Continuous research network building
- e) Post graduate student (M&D) supervision
- f) Contribution in teaching modules in academic departments
- g) Academic citizenship
- h) Overall supporting strategy for building resources

The ISER has begun the process of actioning these areas of activities, although some of them are planned to only commence later in 2021. The reasons for this are made apparent in the specific parts of the report.

### 3. Research generation

Given the available expertise and experiences in the ISER, the institute plans to generate research mainly in the following four research focus areas:

Research area number	Short description
1	<b>THE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES</b> a. Land use and management reform b. Water use and management reform

2	EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
3	HUMAN AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
4	INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN GOODS AND SERVICES

These research areas are detailed more expansively on the ISER's vastly updated webpage. (<https://www.ru.ac.za/iser/research/>)

### 3.1 The current research implementation strategy

With the Institute's current resource constraints, all research areas above will not be able to receive equal attention from the start. Rather they will be gradually and sustainably developed as the Institute acquires more human resources. At the Advisory Board's first meeting in 2020, the Director presented the initial plan of hosting at least two multi-year projects per year. The plan is to house one project in two of the four identified research focus areas. To generate output from each project area, there will be focus on a minimum of at least two main academic/research outputs per year. The big research project outputs would in turn lead to various smaller outputs, including at least one working paper and two policy briefs. These outputs would then lead to at least two seminar presentations, and at least two or more media articles to support our communications and marketing strategies. This was accepted as the core map plan to drive the research activities of the Institute. With more human resources becoming available, the accepted plan is to then kickstart the development of the next area, which would then duplicate the research output and activities as described. Table 1 presents the blueprint plan for each multi-year project.

**Table 1: Academic research generation**

ACADEMIC RESEARCH GENERATION					
<b>Multi-year project 1</b>			<b>Multi-year project 2</b>		
Main research report per year			Main research report per year		
At least one academic article	At least one policy brief	At least one seminar discussion	At least one academic article	At least one policy brief	At least one seminar discussion
Dissemination through communications strategy:			Dissemination through communications strategy:		
a) At least two print media articles b) At least one broadcast discussion			a) At least two print media articles b) At least one broadcast discussion		

### 3.2 For books, book chapters and other articles

Outside of the multi-year research projects, at least one post-doctoral position will be made available with funds applied for from channels such as the NRF and Rhodes University's post doc funding programme. The post doc positions will be focussed around supporting the Institute's research generation and outputs. The post doc plan is to have at least a two-year post-doctoral fellowship that generates either a book or a series of book chapters or a series of journal or working papers (two per year and four in two years).

### 3.3 Report on 2020 research activities

#### Prof Mbatha

During 2020 (since May 2020) the ISER has managed to complete the following:

- a. One article was accepted for publication in 2020 by the DHET accredited S.A. Journal of Agricultural Extension (see Appendix attachment): Title: **Production and marketing strategies of livestock farmers in South Africa and Kenya: A comparative study**
- b. One conceptual policy brief was co-published under the ISER working papers/posters: Title: **The weak to strong state involvement and political accountability levels schema**
- c. Completed review for the South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences (SAJEMS) – Title: overall impact of mobile technology on agricultural production in Sub Saharan Africa.
- d. Print media articles:
  - i. 23 June 2020, The Business Day and African Farmers Review: Digital farming platforms hold the key to success for SA's emerging farmers
  - ii. 17 August 2020, Bizcommunity (revised): Digital small-scale models could help SA's pandemic-stricken farmers
- e. Broadcast media coverage:
  - iii. August 2020, Newzroom405: the effect of the pandemic on the unemployment and basic education
  - iv. October 2020, Kaya FM: the implications of the land expropriation Bill

#### Professor Emeritus Valerie Moller

Prof Moller continues to be an active research academic beyond retirement, and the ISER, which remains her academic home, is proud to present her 2020 research activities as follows:

- a) Academic activities in 2020 include:
  - i. Update of the **entry in the *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*** on 'South Africa' by Møller and Roberts.

- ii. **Preface** for a Springer Handbook on Active Ageing and Quality of Life.
  - iii. **Festschrift contribution** for the ‘Pope of Happiness – A Festschrift for Ruut Veenhoven’, ‘*Hamba kahle*, ‘go well’, from Africa.
  - iv. Submission of a **book manuscript** to Springer with my HSRC research partner: Valerie Møller and Benjamin Roberts, *Quality of Life and Human Well-Being in sub-Saharan Africa: Prospects for future happiness*. The book builds on and updates earlier chapters in an international Springer volume on the untold history of the pursuit of well-being and a regional chapter in the World Happiness Report 2017 on ‘Waiting for Happiness in Africa. We included updates related to living with Covid-19.
  - v. **Invited submission of an article** in the *Applied Research in QoL Studies* (ARQOL) pioneer series on the late Professor Lawrence Schlemmer’s role in launching South Africa’s Social Indicators Movement and applied QoL studies. Published:  
**Moller, V.** (2020) Lawrence Schlemmer - South African Pioneer of Social Indicators and Applied Quality of Life Research. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*. 2020 (2020). p.1-6.
  - vi. **Six peer reviews** for international QoL and social indicators journals (Social Indicators Research, Journal of Happiness Studies, Applied Research in QoL Studies), the Forum for Development Studies, the Gauteng City-Report Observatory, and the [Handbook of Labor, Human Resources and Population Economics](#) on topics related to: The role of democracy for QoL in sub-Saharan Africa, the capability approach in studying human well-being, inter and intra-household inequality in life satisfaction, ‘big data’ and QoL, and measuring multi-dimensional poverty in Botswana.
  - vii. Invited to **serve on the University of Neuchatel’s PhD jury** for a 1000-page thesis in Sociology on ‘Multi-dimensional poverty in upper-middle-income countries’ (October - December 2020). The thesis used StatsSA’s household survey as a main data source for comparison with three other middle-income countries.
  - viii. Media article: August 2020, Parent24: Active Aging and Quality of Life – mitigating against the pandemic
- b) Prof Moller’s plans for 2021
- i. **A journal article reporting Going to Nature for QoL in Eastern Cape African communities.** The survey data was collected by colleagues in Anthropology and Botany. The joint paper will build on earlier national studies of South Africans’ experience of coping during the best and worst times in their lives, the end-anchors of Bernheim’s ACSA measure of individual well-being. For our NRF SA-Algeria research cooperation, my HSRC colleague and I have reported on local and national South Africa’s best and worst times of life in several journal articles published by Springer.

- ii. **Possible application for research funding through the SA(NRF)-Swiss research co-operative programme to conduct a third wave of the Living in Grahamstown East/Rhini study**, building on the surveys of 1998 and 2007. Prospective research partners are my International-Society for-QoL-Studies colleague and his PhD candidate in Switzerland. If they express interest, they could apply their capability approach to measuring multi-dimensional poverty in Makhanda to provide systematic information useful for Community Engagement and other local community programmes.

#### **Visiting Professor Edward Webster**

- a) Webster Edward (2020): The Uberisation of work: the challenge of regulating platform capitalism. A commentary, International Review of Applied Economics, DOI: 10.1080/02692171.2020.1773647

#### **Honorary Professor Yusuf Sayed**

- a) Sayed Y, Salmon T and Balie L (2020). Embedding Inclusive Education in Teacher Professional Development in South Africa: Impact evaluation report on the Teaching for All project. Johannesburg: British Council Technical Research Report

#### **3.4 Post Graduate student (M&D) supervision**

The supervision of students is guided by the current ISER's research policy (attached in the Appendix). The policy outlines a registration process and procedures document in place for the admission and supervision of students as follows:

Master's and PhD students can register directly through the ISER. When ISER had enough academic members of staff (Mike Reynolds, Robbie van Niekerk, Laura Alfes and Mike Rogan), the ISER had a research committee that decided on student applications and assigned supervisors. The ISER Director approves applications on the system. The ISER Research Committee approved the research proposals of Master's and Doctoral students before those went to the Humanities Higher Degrees Committee or the Commerce Higher Degrees Committee for approval. This approval by a higher degrees committee is required before fieldwork can commence, as is the ethical clearance by the Rhodes University Ethical Standards Committee (RUESC).

Now that the ISER as an academic department or entity is too small (i.e. has too few academic members of staff), the ISER currently works through the research committee of other relevant departments which ISER has collaborative ties with, e.g. Economics to get its students' proposals approved for submission

to the faculty under which the department falls in the university. This can work especially well with students who are co-supervised between ISER and other Rhodes departments.

A person who wants to apply to do a Master's or PhD through the ISER has to apply on the university's online system and indicate that the ISER is the department to which they are applying. That application is then routed to the ISER Director for approval. The Director can get support and input from other RU discipline relevant academics to make a decision to accept or reject the student. As the ISER grows it will be closer to being able to host its own internal research committee.

Applying students can be asked to supply a writing sample and CV in addition to degree certificates, academic transcripts and the like to give more insight into the applicant's writing ability. ISER also has the right reserved to interview applicants if needed before making a decision.

### **3.4.1 Current research student supervision**

The ISER currently provides student research supervision or co-supervision across the university. The supervision is provided based on available supervisors. In 2020 supervision was provided to students registered in the department of Economics, Geography and Sociology. The supervision provided by Prof Mbatha from May 2020 is as follows:

- a) **Ms Nqobile Nzimande** – PhD in Environmental Water Pollution (co-supervisor with Prof Tally Palmer). Student has, however, switched over to mainstream Labour Economics under new supervision (NRF funding)
- b) **Mr Lesetja Mokonyama** – PhD in Geography Local Economic Development (main supervisor with Prof. Thembela Kepe). Student graduated with Masters from UFS and would need more developmental support working with projects in the field before being able to work on the proposal. (ISER funding)
- c) **Mr Vusimani Khubhayi** – Masters in Financial Markets. Proposed topic: Navigating towards Effective Financial Arrangements Under the New Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement. (Alan Gray Bursary funding secured for the student in 2021).
- d) **Mr Thomas Salmon** – PhD in Education. (Supervised by Prof. Heila Lotz-Sisitka and Prof Yusuf Sayed). Proposed topic: Teacher education and the roles of teachers as agents of social cohesion in South Africa.

The long-term strategic plan in this supervision is to develop the students to become experts in these areas to enable them to take intellectual and administrative leadership roles in ISER's research focus areas.

Other legacy students under the ISER registration records and supervised externally:

## ISER REGISTERED / SUPERVISED STUDENTS

Student no	Name	Degree	Year	Supervisor	Co-supervisor
13m6913	Mhlana, Siviwe	MA	3 (com- pleted)	Prof. M Rogan	N/A
14k5197	Kubhayi, Vusimani	Mcom	1	Prof. Nel	Prof. Mbatha
15m0098	Maritz, Gerit	PhD	6	Distinguished Prof. Mcleod	Dr J Reynolds
17H3828	Hala, Mike Msimazi	MA	4	Prof. J Peires	N/A
18n4015	Ndamase, Lazola	MA	3	Dr J Reynolds	N/A
19s0015	Salmon, Thomas	PhD	2	Prof Lotz-Sisitka	Prof Yusuf Sayed
20m0005	Mokonyane, Lesetja P.	PhD	1	Prof. Mbatha	Prof. Kepe
	Nzimande, Nqobile	PhD	1	Prof. Palmer	Prof. Mbatha

**Graduating** students under the ISER in 2020:

**13M6913 Siviwe Mhlana** (with distinction) supervision by Prof M Rogan.

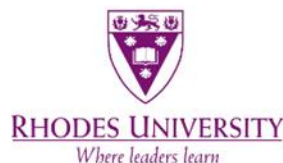
The records show that some research students are taking a long time to graduate. Ms Mhlana took more than 6 years since first registration before graduating with a Masters. The distinction was well deserved. Nevertheless, we need to look at supporting the students and supervisors for faster completion rates. A meeting with each of the supervisors would be a start in this process of coming up with a usable plan for support.

Another thing to consider is how the ISER can offer degrees and qualifications for those who are already working professionals, who may be in very demanding positions, e.g. in government or national organisations. Here the option for facilitated part time study can be considered. This is something that will be especially attractive to those who will be attending ISER workshops and research programmes in the future.

### 3.5 Teaching of modules

The ISER did not contribute to any module or course delivery in 2020. In the past, the last module from ISER was developed and offered to the Department of Political and International studies by the previous director, Prof van Niekerk.

The short-term plan is to modify some existing Economics modules from Prof Mbatha and for him to further develop at least one new module that will be offered to departments including Economics, Politics, and Environmental Science. Prof Mbatha's engagement and discussions with colleagues across the university have identified a need for teaching engaged quantitative methodologies to



humanities, environmental science and social science students. This leads to the possibility of also offering a series of workshops at post graduate level to students from across a number of academic disciplines within the university. Prof Mbatha's course module will be developed in 2021 with the intention of offering it in the second semester of 2021 or 2022 at the latest.

### **3.6 Community engagement**

The ISER plans to use the Institute as a launching pad for local community organisations and business initiatives. The aim is to offer the office space and mentorship to establish a hub for a promising local NGO or small business idea for a year or so while the entity finds its footing. This idea was presented to the Board and approved last year. The Rhodes University Research Office Director is now assisting ISER with ways to raise funds for the initiative. One of the plans is to submit a proposal to Arigo, an organization run to support start-ups by a Rhodes University alumni. The plan is to advertise in local media for the opportunity and to constitute a panel to select a winning proposal for the support once funds for the support are secured. The type of mentoring support will include an office within ISER, along with administrative support, networking opportunities with experts inside and outside the university, and setting up a mentorship relationship with scheduled consultation meetings for the year with an identified person who is best resourced to provide possible solutions and new business ideas to the mentee. The mentee will also participate in some of the ISER activities for exposure to possible skills acquisitions relevant to their business operations.

### **3.7 Academic citizenship**

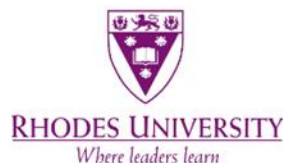
The ISER director participated at various academic and research committees across the university, including the boards of the faculties of humanities and commerce; the Senate and other committees or task teams set up for specific purposes by the Chairs of the faculty boards and Senate.

In 2020, some of the task teams included the VC's Mental Health Task Team during Covid-19 and the Dean of Humanities Examinations Committee. Outside academia, but within Rhodes University networks, the Director participated in teams including the Makhanda Circle of Unity Steering Committee and the Rhodes Business Enterprise task team, which is currently seeking to establish partnerships with a US based university.

### **3.8 The operational strategy to support the vision and mission**

The vision for the ISER is to have in place four fully functional research areas or units, each led by senior researchers to provide leadership and execute the requisite activities in the identified focus areas. For this, funds are required to hire human resources and to support research activity costs.





The initiated plan for building human resources is to train researchers internally by identifying postgraduate students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds in South Africa who can be groomed into playing the lead researcher roles. This process of targeting students is already underway, with, for example, a Financial Markets student (Mr Kubhayi) identified for training and development into a position to lead researcher in the *International Trade area*, with a focus on *African Trade issues*. Funds have been secured for the student to be supervised to complete the second year of his Masters degree research project in this area. The student was also chosen for his strong quantitative skills to provide skills support across other research areas (or units) and to train other students and researchers who come into the ISER in the years ahead.

The PhD geography student (Mr Mokonyama) was recruited and is being trained to ultimately lead the *Human and Economic Development area*.

The ISER also put out an application for a research Chair in Governance and Economics. If the application is successful, the Chair will lead the development and execution of the *Use and Management of Environmental Resources* area as soon as the Chair starts. Although the name of ISER director (Prof Mbatha) was put down in the application for the NRF in its initial phase, Dr Pearl Gola (Rhodes Water Toxicity PhD graduate) is being targeted to take over the Chair in the long run.

At the moment no one has yet been identified for mentorship to lead the area of *Education and Skills Development*. Nevertheless, a recent Economics of Education PhD graduate at Stellenbosch (Dr Hompashe), currently an academic staff member in the department of Economics at the University of Fort Hare, is being engaged as an ISER partner for growing this area. Dr Reddy might be able to help us mentor Dr Hompashe and possibly also help us solicit funding to develop this area.

The current vision of the ISER is to have the four research areas capacitated with leaders and functioning as independent research units. The time period, approach and process to developing each of these research areas will not be uniform. Ultimately the ISER will be looking to target calls for multi-year projects in the four areas sequentially. The immediate target for 2021 is to focus on developing the Environmental Resources Use and Management area (in Table 1) through initiated WRC funded projects.

## **CHAPTER 3 SCHOLARLY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

### **1. Introduction**

The ISER's research and engagement plan centres on the fulcrum of "Leading research for Africa". The institute's primary focus is to be a dynamic African hub promoting innovative social and economic research with a focus on knowledge sharing across multiple platforms and co-engaged participatory research which can contribute to improving livelihoods, wellbeing and social and environmental justice. Rather than being confined to an academic setting, ISER aims to elevate the discussion by creating platforms and incentive for the sharing of new research and the discussion of current debate and concerns, from participatory engagement to policy and economic development planning.

Researchers and practitioners whose work falls within these arenas have been invited to engage and share their work via webinars and online platforms, which are in turn designed to function as knowledge sharing platforms that can grow and synergise organically. There is a particular focus to support and promote African researchers, particularly women and vulnerable groups, to ensure that we are growing and supporting research networks by and for the continent, especially in arenas where these voices have been historically silenced and unheard.

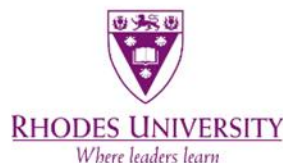
### **2. ISER seminar series**

The ISER seminar series has been designed around hosting seminars every two months, with additional seminars added in to respond to timely, seminal research as well as national and international events that relate directly to the institute's research fields. The seminars were focused around new and emerging research, for example engaged research, academic papers, chapters or books or theses, and other study reports relating to policy, governance and socio-economic development.

Due to Covid-19, the seminars took the form of webinars. Should the situation change the institute will look forward to being able to engage directly and face to face with research partners and collaborators. The online forum, however, lent itself to increased accessibility and dissemination of research, while also allowing digital records to be available for anyone to access in perpetuity.

The seminars were carefully designed to fit around other ISER events to ensure there is adequate time to devote to their planning and execution. With the increasing plethora of academic webinars we also needed to strive to avoid research fatigue and to avoid potential clashes with research partners' seminar series.

Each ISER webinar was planned and executed with a working group that is made up of ISER staff, our social media strategist, and the presenters and discussants for the seminar in question. This ensured



a smooth and engaged process that included email and whatsapp group updates and dry test runs and checks. ISER's seminar series in 2020 provided further avenues to grow our research partnerships, for example, co-hosting seminars with other departments at different universities and including collaboration with government and industry. Ultimately, the Institute aimed to ensure that participation in the seminar series was a vibrantly useful, comfortable and enjoyable experience for all participants.

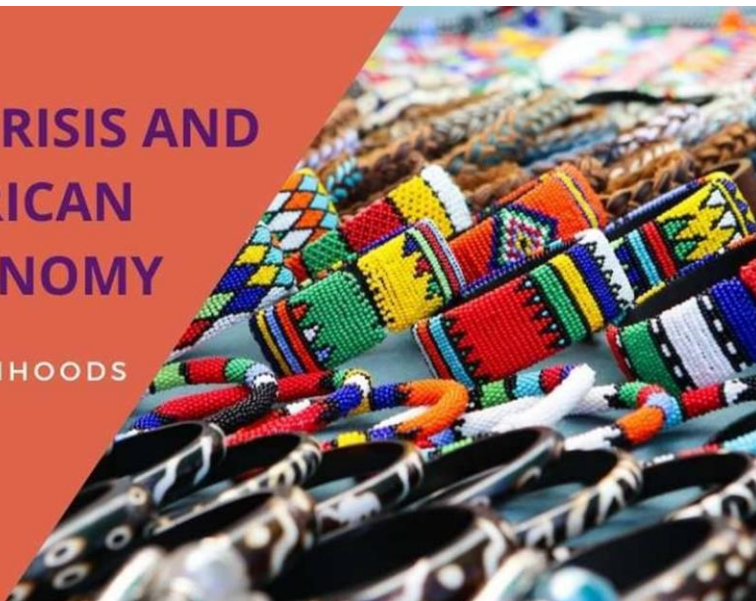
Webinars were chaired by Prof Mbatha and take the form of a discussant presenting their work, followed by a respondent, with time for questions and debate afterwards. Event invitations were mailed out to ISER's growing seminar participants list, which was amended and tailored for each seminar. The webinars were advertised via various social media platforms and listservs. In 2020 we had around 40-90 people registering, from academics to participants from the media, business, government and a mix of social organisations.

Webinars were hosted and recorded on Zoom, with related research disseminated via a variety of platforms as well as ISER's social media channels: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. Partnership with Connect Media allowed maximum coverage to specially selected interest groups and a wide dissemination strategy targeted around generating and growing the discussion. For example, the webinar on COVID-19 and the informal economy was shared across ISER's social media platforms, showcased in the University's communications newsfeed, and promoted via additional interviews with The Citizen, Newzroom Africa, Power FM, Channel Africa and Rhodes University. The collaborative paper the seminar was designed around was also shared across a wide variety of platforms allowing free and open research access: <https://cramsurvey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Rogan-Covid-crisis-and-the-South-African-informal-economy.pdf>

The following webinars were hosted in 2020:

# THE COVID-19 CRISIS AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN INFORMAL ECONOMY

'LOCKED OUT' OF LIVELIHOODS  
AND EMPLOYMENT



**The Covid-19 crisis and the South African informal economy *'Locked out' of livelihoods and employment***

20 August 2020

*Registrations: 100*

*Users: 112*

*Unique Views: 55*

During Women's Month, we discussed how the first wave of the National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) – Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey (CRAM) indicates that current Covid-19 disaster interventions need to be significantly scaled-up and far better targeted at protecting the more vulnerable informal sector workers, particularly women, who are currently bearing the greatest costs of the pandemic.

*Presenter:* Prof. Mike Rogan

Associate Professor in the Department of Economics and Economic History at Rhodes University

*Respondent:* Prof. Naledi Nomalanga Mkhize

Head of Department in the Department of History at the Nelson Mandela University



**Agricultural Value Chains and Intellectual Property Rights: The evolving sunflower plant breeders' rights (PBR) landscape in South Africa**

15 October 2020

*Registrations: 72*

*Users: 47*

*Unique Views: 28*

*Co-hosted with the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Fort Hare*

Increased investment in the agriculture and seed industry in South Africa has triggered significant debate around Intellectual Property rights. This webinar presented work that analysed the evolving landscape of sunflower plant breeders' rights in South Africa and discussed the critical collaboration and policy factors necessary to progress.

*Presenters: Dr Binganidzo Muchara and Dr Charity Nhemachena*

Department of Finance and Economics, Unisa Graduate School of Business Leadership (SBL)

*Respondent: Prof Michael Aliber*

Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Fort Hare



**Broadening the Landscape: Alternative views about why South Africa's Land Reform fails as a decolonising project**

12 November 2020

*Registrations: 156*

*Users: 90*

*Unique Views: 69*

This webinar considered how the most common critiques of land reform, including poor state capacity, lack of political support, limited budget, and so forth, are only manifestations of a deeper problem. These critiques limit debates and actions on land reform to the same platforms that were fundamental in colonization and apartheid. It is important to take a step back and broaden our diagnosis of the problem through understanding the broader concept of land and its meanings.

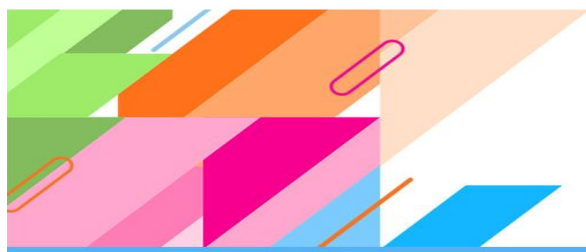
*Presenters:* Mr Siyabulela Manona, Department of Geography, Rhodes University; director of Phuhlisani NPC and LandNNES

Prof Thembela Kepe

Department of Geography, University of Toronto, and a Visiting Professor at Rhodes University.

*Respondent:* Prof Peliwe Mnguni

Associate Professor, Unisa Graduate School of Business Leadership (SBL)



**REGISTER  
NOW!**

Register today for our virtual Teaching for All  
M&E launch event

**FRIDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2020**  
**09:30 – 11:30**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: **PROFESSOR YUSUF SAYED**  
FACILITATOR: **MALAIKA MAHLATSI**

Registration compulsory



PROFESSOR YUSUF SAYED



MALAIKA MAHLATSI

## Embedding Inclusive Education in Teacher Professional Development in South Africa

11 December 2020

The ISER participated as one of many collaborating partners in a launch event hosted by the British Council to launch the final report produced through an ISER/British Council contract and led by ISER Honorary Prof. Sayed and ISER PhD student Mr Thomas Salmon.

### 2.1 Proposed seminars for 2021 include the following:

- Community-led engaged research (February 2020)
- City spaces and belonging (April 2020)
- The right skills for economic growth (June 2020 – link to Youth Day)
- Recognising livelihood rights for social, economic and environmental justice (August 2020 – link with Woman's month)
- Accountability and service delivery in health and education (October 2020)
- Quality of life, wellbeing and happiness (designed in collaboration with a book launch for Prof Moller's forthcoming book – 2021 – date determined by publishers)

### **3. ISER working papers**

ISER working papers have been designed as a means to share research findings, be they fieldwork findings, research reports, collaborative project findings, or pre-publication versions of articles, research reviews, book chapters or specialised project reports.

#### **3.1 Growing the working paper series**

For the last few years, the ISER Working Paper Series was run by the Neil Aggett Labour Studies Unit (NALSU), with work focusing on research around labour studies and social policy. The ISER's reinvigorated vision re-expands this arena, and the working paper series has been redesigned as a research sharing platform which will be working in conjunction with ISER's research partnerships with a strong focus on support for African researchers, emerging scholars, activists and practitioners working within ISER's key focus research areas.

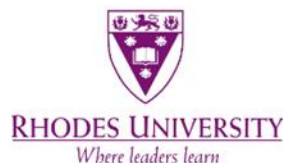
Collaboration and engagement within our various research networks and monitoring related publications, newsfeeds and ongoing discourse brings to light new potential collaborators. These may be top of their game experts who are too harried to share research findings outside of select academic spaces, young researchers focusing on academic workloads rather than research publication, or those whose work falls within industry or local governance rather than academia. In all cases our aim is to provide incentive and easily accessible platforms that encourage knowledge sharing and debate.

Young academics who have just submitted Masters and PhDs are particularly keen to explore publishing via the working paper series but may have some reservations around where to start and how to repackage their work for publication purposes. To this end, the Working Paper series has been designed to work alongside research collaboration and mentorship partnerships, for example with young scholars being partnered with more experienced colleagues who can provide insight and guidelines for publication strategies.

It also allows research avenues to begin exploring co-engaged ideas together, for example looking into new ways to analyse existing datasets, or collaborations such as this working poster on state accountability: [The weak to strong state involvement and political accountability levels schema](https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/iser/documents/docs/Working_poster_paper_1_-_2020_Mbatha_and_Mkhize_(2).pdf)  
[https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/iser/documents/docs/Working\\_poster\\_paper\\_1\\_-\\_2020\\_Mbatha\\_and\\_Mkhize\\_\(2\).pdf](https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/iser/documents/docs/Working_poster_paper_1_-_2020_Mbatha_and_Mkhize_(2).pdf)

To assist in the running of the working papers series a review committee was put together and we are very pleased to have some very senior academics to assist on this - including Prof Moller and Prof G





Antrobus. A number of young scholars have already benefited from the guidance provided by the committee, and their revised papers are expected to arrive in the early months of 2021.

### **3.2 Digitising the working papers library**

The ISER has a large library of Working Papers on a wide variety of topics covering many decades of socio-economic research. Some of these papers are available online, but the majority of the catalogue has been held in hard copy that interested parties could request via post/email. Revamping the ISER website allows these copies to be freely accessible digitally. Some rarer and earlier working papers still need to be digitised. This digitalisation project has been initiated in 2020. Working papers that are of particular interest relate to long-term research analysis around land use and administration, work on wellbeing and social indicators, work around bio-cultural diversity and ritual practices, and research relating to heritage, belonging and identity.

### **4. ISER 'Notes from the Field'**

The ISER has been actively working with emerging researchers to help them share their research findings. For example, with researchers who want to share initial data and fieldwork results, or those who are just beginning to consider ways to try and publish completed academic work. More substantial research and analysis can be considered as working papers, but sometimes data is too new, or too thin or too specialised to be considered as a working paper, and in this case we encourage publication as a short research note. Adding in different forms of media via the ISER's online platform is providing additional creative avenues, for example sharing pictures, artwork, soundbites, and promoting related community projects.

### **5. ISER policy briefs**

These will be initiated in 2021. The current plan is to have them based on the ISER's growing research partnerships and collaborations that host a variety of well-established scholars and experts as well as a growing contingent of practitioners and emerging academics. Research applications for policy are generally not well supported or taught outside of specific narrow fields. Where policy is engaged, there is still a need to ensure policy briefs are more widely debated and shared, particularly with the general public or those whom policies will impact most directly. The ISER aims to grow and encourage policy discussion through collaboration between experts and across disciplines. Some examples of this are in the arena of natural resource governance, where the institute will be exploring the interface between land and water governance, economic valuation of natural resources, wellbeing, and communal property rights and access.

## **CHAPTER 4 TRAINING WORKSHOP ENGAGEMENT**

Historically the ISER has hosted the Vuyisile Mini Winter School funded by the Fredirech Ebert Stiftung Foundation. This school specifically targeted trade unions. With the departure of NALSU, a Labour Research Unit from the ISER to sociology, this winter school would most appropriately be hosted by NALSU going forward.

To continue developing capacity in the province, the ISER plans to replace the Vuyisile Mini Winter School with the Survey Data Analyses workshop. This will focus on data analytical skills and research report writing skills training and will take place over three or four days. The data analysis training workshop is planned to take place from 12 June to 18 July 2021, during winter vacation at Rhodes University. Discussions with potential sponsors, including the Kagiso Trust, have been initiated. Prof. Mike Rogan of Economics Department has agreed to facilitate the workshop.

## CHAPTER 5 CURRENT AND INITIATED PROJECTS

The ISER's activities were not only research related, but as discussed previously, they relate to areas including community engagement, seminar or webinar organisation, training workshops, communications and branding, etc. Nevertheless, research projects generate third stream income for the university and the institute. Other projects, such as hosting of seminars, training or soliciting of working papers may require funds from the ISER coffers if there is no external sponsorship for them. While, these communications, marketing and branding activities require the ISER or its fellows to produce research for dissemination and public discussion on various platforms, the estimated brand awareness value in monetary terms that is created from these activities outweighs the spending of a maximum of R17 000 p.m. This is further illustrated in the communications report (Chapter 7). Below is the outline of ongoing and planned projects in 2020.

### 1. Current research projects

Project name	Output/s	Timeline	Funder/s	Partners	Submitted agreement approved - comments
British Council – Education project	Final report	Ended December 2020	British Council	CPUT	Agreement with Rhodes
Journal of African Contemporary Studies	Four issues plus two special issues	Ongoing	Taylor and Francis	NiSC publishers	Agreement with Rhodes
ISER BRAZZA – Moller V	Ongoing	Ongoing	NRF	None	Agreement with Rhodes

### 2. Research projects initiated or started in 2020

Project name	Output/s	Timeline	Potential funders	Partners	Submitted agreement approved - comments
Local municipality development	Inception, case-study, closing reports	Jan 2021 to December 2021	Eastern Cape Premier's office via DVC office	School of journalism on a separate budget	Under negotiations – funds already with DVC research
Water Research Commission: Ecological Infrastructure training	Signed contract, inception, needs assessment, review of knowledge,	Jan 2021- December 2022		Environmental Learning Research Centre (ELRC)	WRC approved – awaiting contract signing in December 2020

	materials development				
Makhoba / Matatiele area land claims project	Historical evaluation of current traditional land claim	Jan 2021- March 2021	Kokstad district municipality	Dr Milner Snell Ms Nicky McLeod (Enviros – Matatiele)	Under discussion with partners. Municipality requested quotation
WRC/NRF Chair in Governance & Economics of ecological infrastructure	Details in the application- attached	Possibly from mid-2021 to 2026 (renewal for 15 years)	WRC/NRF	Details in application attached	Only submitted

### 3. Summary of operational projects in 2020

Project name	Output/s	Timeline	Funders	Partners	Submitted agreement approved - comments
Webinar/ Seminar project	Minimum - Bimonthly (one every two months)	Ongoing bi-monthly	ISER funded	Networks by topic	N/A
Communications marketing and branding	Monthly deliverables – see strategic plan	Ongoing	ISER funded	Ms Tamaryn Brown	Pay as we go per deliverable
Training workshop	Once a year	Ongoing / once a year	Looking for funder	Rhodes Comms – Funding dept; Kagiso Trust	Proposed – under discussion
Community engagement	Yearlong hosting	Ongoing	Looking for funder Arigo Investment	Rhodes University	Proposed under discussion - favourable
Student supervision	5 Masters / 2 PhD per internal supervisors  External supervisors: 4 ISER registered students (1 PhD and 3 Masters) – refer ISER overall strategy report (Sec 8.2) Proposed for Potential NRF Chair	Ongoing	ISER Premier's office RU NRF/WRC	Premiers office NRF/WRC Rhodes	Rhodes Allan Grey signed for Masters Economics ISER funds currently assigned for PhD Post doc funding proposed to NRF/WRC

	1 Post Doc-RU funded 1 Post Doc – NRF funded				
Building networks and collaborations	Ongoing – see strategic plan for focus and targets per year: One new formal every two months At least three formal partners, one in SADC; EAC and ECOWAS in 2021	Ongoing	N/A	See strategic plan for current and pipeline partners	AABD Dr Simon Sigue

## CHAPTER 6 PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS REPORT

### 1. Introduction

Given the human resources size of the ISER, establishing working partnerships and collaborations with people and organisations, both within Rhodes university and externally, is critical for all core activities of the institute. These include partnerships we currently have, as well as new partnerships we are establishing to host seminars, solicit working papers, co-write journal articles, co-bid for projects, host training workshops and various other activities. This chapter presents a picture of current and initiated partnerships and collaborations in 2020.

### 2. Key partners within Rhodes University

Every person and every unit at Rhodes University is a potential ISER partner. However, given the new research focus of the institute, the ISER has established strong collaborative relationships with the following units and people:

- a) **The Institute of Water Research (Prof Tally Palmer):** This relationship is multifaceted and includes student co-supervision and research project management around water pollution in the ARUA consortium of Universities across Africa (Nigeria, Senegal, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa). A joint seminar presentation has been held across the two institutes in 2020 to broaden the academic scope for further collaborations.
- b) **The Environmental Learning Research Centre (ELRC) and its SARCHI Chair of Global Change and Social Learning Systems (Prof Heila Lotz-Sisitka):** The partnership resulted in the successful bid for a Water Research Commission project over the next two years. A strong relationship is proposed in the application for the NRF/WRC Chair in Governance and Economics for Ecological Infrastructure.
- c) **Rhodes Business School (Prof Tshidi Mohapelo):** Discussions were initiated with the school to explore a working collaborative relationship with Bowie State University in Baltimore, USA. This could be on joint teaching and joint research, among other possibilities.
- d) **The Department of Political and International Studies (Prof Sally Matthews):** The HoD of the department agreed to a partnership in the execution of the research in the NRF Chair specifically looking at issues on governance, for example traditional leadership around the management of natural resources.
- e) **Department of Economics and Economic History (Prof Hugo Nel/ Prof Jen Snowball):** The working relationship includes student co-supervision and the possibility of offering some modules to the department, as well as a research collaboration through the post-graduate programme in Environmental and Natural Resource Economics focus area. This will contribute to the proposed Chair's research activities.

- f) **Department of Environmental Science:** This relationship will be initiated properly in 2021.
- g) **School of Journalism (Prof Anthea Garman):** This relationship was initiated and exists through a joint project proposal on the Eastern Cape's Municipalities research. The Journalism School is looking at Media Freedom issues in the broader ISER project that considers the State's role in human and economic development. The conceptual framework for the research is here:

[https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/iser/documents/docs/Working\\_poster\\_paper\\_1\\_-2020\\_Mbatha\\_and\\_Mkhize\\_\(2\).pdf](https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/iser/documents/docs/Working_poster_paper_1_-2020_Mbatha_and_Mkhize_(2).pdf) .

### **3. Key partners external to Rhodes University:**

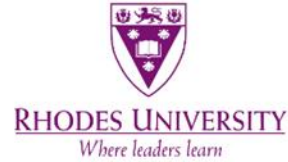
- a) **University of South Africa (Prof Thenjiwe Meyiwa):** A formalised relationship around the proposed NRF Chair is in place with the DVC Research at Unisa (Prof Meyiwa). We have established relationships in place with other entities at Unisa, the Unisa School of Business Leadership (SBL). Two joint webinars have been held with the SBL in 2020.
- b) **University of Fort Hare, Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension (Prof. Abyssinia Mushunje).** A joint University of Fort Hare / ISER Webinar was held in 2020 and the Department is a partner in the proposed research for the NRF Chair.

### **4. NGO and private business partnerships that have been initiated, mainly around research on environmental resources, include the following:**

- a) The Association for Water and Rural Development (AWARD) in the Limpopo province
- b) Creating Sustainable Value (CSV) in KwaZulu-Natal province
- c) The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)
- d) African Centre for Cities (Anton Cartwright)
- e) Duzi Umngeni Conservation Trust (DUCT)
- f) Connect Media Brand and Cause Communications

### **5. Pipeline Partnerships - under consideration and at different stages of negotiations:**

- a) **School of Business and Communication in Ghana/Accra (Dr Anand Agrawal).** Exploring teaching and research collaborations in Ghana and South Africa.



- b) **Human Sciences Research Council:** Especially in research collaborations in education and skills projects. There is also a high possibility of hosting joint events with Ben Roberts focusing on working with SASAS (South African Social Attitudes Survey).
- c) **Stronger ties with the Academy of African Business and Development (AABD)**
- d) **Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania, Morogoro**

## **6. Partnership plan going forward**

The ISER would like to establish more collaborative partnerships for conducting research on the continent, especially around issues of cross border trade. A geographical spread of at least one formal partnership in each of the three regions - SADC, EAC and ECOWAS - is the target for 2021.



## **CHAPTER 7 COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

### **1. Introduction**

The key performance area of the ISER team is to engage scholars, the public, policy makers on research evidence and discussions. Therefore, a communications and marketing strategy for these scholarly discussions is crucial. This chapter presents this strategy and the activities undertaken in 2020.

### **2. Communications and marketing objectives of the ISER**

**Build the ISER's reputation as a dynamic African hub of pioneering social and economic research, influencing policy and practice.**

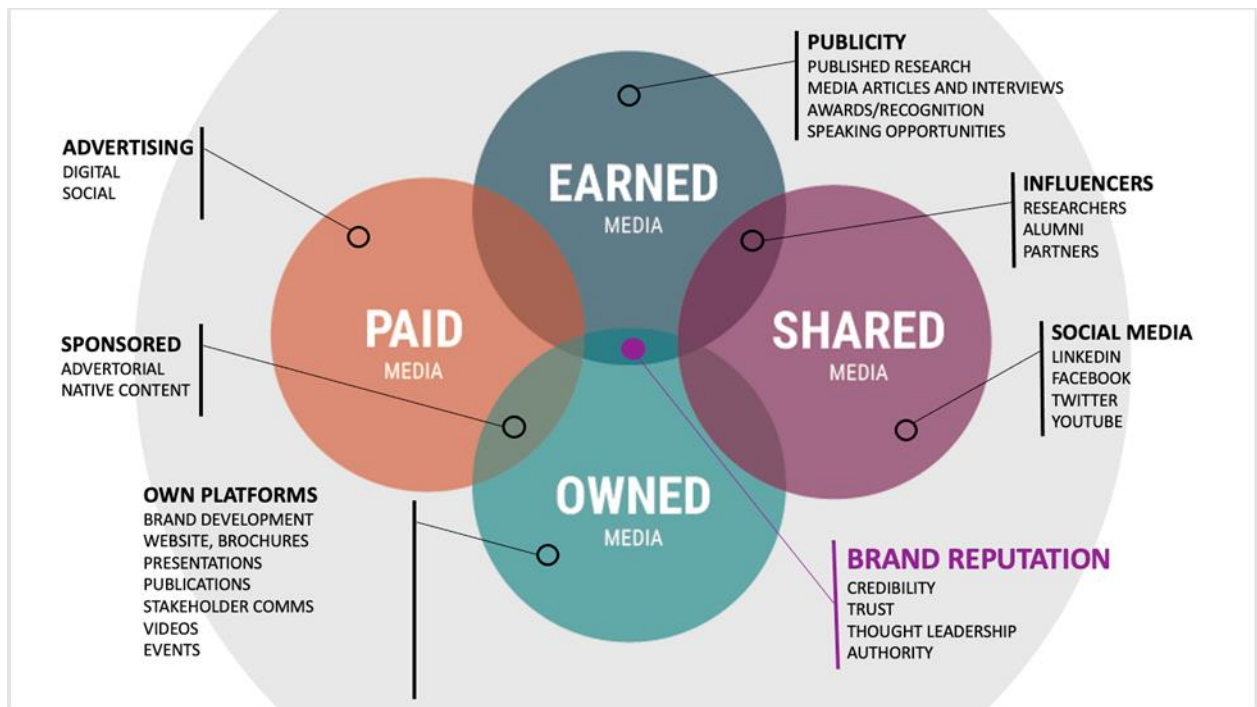
- a. Through building the ISER's research brand reputation, position the institute to:
- b. Attract donor funds
- c. Attract researchers to collaborate or join the ISER
- d. Position and present the ISER research outputs for practical applications in driving positive transformation, including through informing policy

### **3. Communications and marketing strategy**

**The objectives are met by:**

- a) Presenting the ISER with a cohesive and clear brand, mission, vision and values aligned with the values of Rhodes University
- b) Optimising ISER owned, earned, shared (social) and where relevant, channels to drive awareness and discussion
- c) Leveraging our key proof point - pioneering social and economic research - through these channels
- d) Profiling our research talent and partnerships
- e) Amplifying the voice of ISER in discussions relevant to our research focus areas

#### 4. ISER Channel Focus



#### 5. ISER communications plan

##### A. Brand development

- Facilitate the team's establishment of the ISER vision, mission and values
- Facilitate the development of the ISER logo and identity

##### B. Website

- Refresh structure and copy
- Fresh design elements
- Update research documents
- Profile team members and board

##### C. Marketing collateral

- Mailers to stakeholder database
- E-brochure explaining our ISER research focus
- ISER PPT and word templates for brand consistency

#### **D. Content profiling across channels including media**

##### **Papers/research reports from associated researchers, ISER events and news**

- a) Co- facilitated developing ISER logo, vision, mission and values statements
- b) Co-facilitated updating of the ISER webpage content with RU comms team
- c) Compiling mailer records though our webinar registrations
- d) Co- plans development of E-brochure explaining ISER research focus
- e) Plans ISER editorial calendar
- f) Co-publishes ISER new content or links across online platforms
- g) Co- developed ISER social media strategy
- h) Activated social media platforms

#### **E. Activate social media platforms**

- a) Develop social media strategy
- b) Optimise LinkedIn – researcher profile pages and ISER page
- c) Harness Facebook and share to Rhodes platforms
- d) Empower team as Facebook editors

#### **F. Seminars / Webinars**

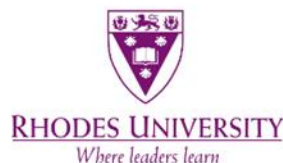
- a) Co facilitates partnership with other organisations for speakers
- b) Grow audiences
- c) Co-hosts online policy discussion seminars on ISER Zoom platforms

### **6. Execution progress report**

The communications team (Bulelani Mothlabane, Jamie Alexander and Tamaryn Brown) has done a great job in the last 7 months of 2020 on the following aspects of communications platforms.

#### **6.1 ISER Website**

Bulelani Mothlabane and Jamie Alexander have managed the ISER Website with the assistance of the Rhodes University Web Administrator and Tamaryn Brown. The homepage was completely revamped, and the website is now much more dynamic and interactive. The profiles of new ISER staff members and student were added under the “People” section. Profiles for Prof Cyril Nhlanhla Mbatha, Research Fellow Dr Samuel Sadian, PhD Intern Mr. Lesetja Mokonyama and Academic and Research



Administrator Ms. Jamie Alexander were added. The ISER Board Member profiles were also made available under this section.

The ISER's mission, vision, current focus and values is now also available under the *About the ISER* section. The *Research* section has been updated to show the research focus areas of the Institute.

The *Latest News* Section has become the most active section, which has all the ISER Webinars for 2020 and all articles written by ISER researchers.

New headings were added to the Quick links section namely *Other Research Initiatives, Collaborations, Workshops, The Board* and *Policy Briefs*. The ISER also worked closely with the Rhodes University Communications department who mirrored some of their content onto the ISER webpage. Our website has a fresh new look to it thanks to the team with great image quality from Jamie Alexander in particular.

## 6.2 Media coverage results

Media coverage can be translated into actual Rand units of worth and the following table does that given the documented media coverage the ISER has generated for Rhodes University using nationally available Anova records for data as evidence.

<b>MEDIA</b>	<b>AVE VALUE</b>	<b>PR VALUE</b>
Print	R243,045.00	R729,135.00
Online	R1,451,034.00	R4,353,102.00
Broadcast	R478,353.00	R1,435,059.00
	R2,172,432.00	R6,517,296.00

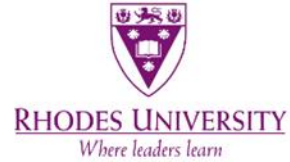
## 6.3 Social media strategy

The following social media platforms were created and used for the ISER at Rhodes University in 2020.

- a) Facebook: @RhodesISER
- b) Twitter: @RhodesISER
- c) LinkedIn: @RhodesISER
- d) YouTube: Rhodes ISER

These social media platforms have supported the ISER by:

- a) Building the ISER at Rhodes University brand awareness
- b) Promoting and extending the reach of ISER events



- c) Profiling areas of interest to trigger partnerships
- d) Fostering brand connections with current and prospective partners and researchers
- e) Sharing the many different “voices” of ISER research
- f) Sharing key conclusions of published research with data visualisations and infographics
- g) Becoming part of national discussions relevant to research areas
- h) Providing open-access versions of primary research and engage with audiences in discussion

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **A HISTORICAL REPORT FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF OF THE JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN STUDIES (JCAS)**

#### **1. Introduction**

This is a brief report on JCAS, starting with my initial Editorial when I took over as editor in 2012. I'm including this to demonstrate what my vision for the journal was at the time, which by and large has remained unchanged. In the nine years that I've edited JCAS, we've moved from a position of being starved of copy to being inundated with submissions. There is no doubt that the profile of the journal has been raised to new heights. In order to cope with this massive increase in volume, I've appointed a wide range of co-editors to assist with the editing (see the list of co-editors below). It is impossible to do this in any other way. In effect, we now have co-editors for three regions of the continent, West, East and southern Africa. North Africa remains a challenge for us and we're busy dealing with it. We've gone a long way towards addressing Roger Southall's (the outgoing editor) concern that JCAS was not sufficiently rooted on the continent with Nigeria and South Africa accounting for the overwhelming bulk of submissions. We still receive articles from the global North, and our subscriptions are still heavily weighted in the favour their institutions, but there is no doubt that there has been a fundamental shift towards continentally based scholarship.

#### **2. EDITORIAL, April 2012**

This is my first issue as editor of JCAS, a scholarly journal within the Institute of Social and Economic Research at Rhodes University. I was approached to be editor by both the ISER's former director, Greg Ruiters, as well as its current director, Robbie van Niekerk. I accepted after lengthy discussions with them on what might be an appropriate editorial strategy for the journal in light of the changes at the ISER and in response to broader national, continental and global challenges. We agreed that the outgoing editor, Roger Southall, had done an admirable job in establishing the intellectual credibility of the journal and we would like our readers and authors to share in our gratitude to him for this. Without Roger's attention to editorial detail as well as his administrative acumen the journal would not have acquired quite the readership and reputation that it currently enjoys. He is principally responsible for the journal's success, but Nova De Villiers, the journal administrator and copy editor, as well as Paul Maylam, the Book Reviews editor also need to be remembered for the roles they played. I am inheriting a journal on very firm foundations and I understand the challenge before me is how to build upon these in order take the journal to new heights. In discussions with Greg and Robbie we resolved that the manner in which we'll approach the task should come from my experience with the CODESRIA journal based in Dakar, Senegal, the *African Sociological Review*, which I founded and edited for 12 years from 1996 to 2007. I was ready for a new challenge. My basic approach to the work of an editor is that it is akin to that of a boxing promoter. In order for the journal to create an aura of expectation for the next issue, there needs to be a sense of intellectual battles on the go. These should not be contrived, merely

for the sake of argument. Instead, they should concern real debates about the future of our continent. Building on the reputation that JCAS has established, we are now in a position to extend the limits of our understanding by encouraging scholarly engagement about the concerns of our societies. If debates are to be the lifeblood of the journal, then we have an editorial responsibility to generate these around issues of major interest.

Roger's personal reflection published in this issue bemoans the fact that the journal is not sufficiently rooted on the continent. I agree, and I believe that a shift in focus towards continental concerns is absolutely vital for the health of the journal. The journal needs the imprint of a different character, one that is unmistakably African, promoting scholarship of relevance to its people. There is clearly a need to contribute towards the development of a self-referencing community of African scholars. JCAS is very well placed to play a vital role in this respect and as editor I am committed to this vision for the journal. This positionality suggests an approach to African scholarship as an intrinsic part of it, rather than being conditioned by a post-colonial sense of alterity. When Thandika Mkandawire took over the Directorship of UNRISD (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development) he was confronted by staff members who insisted that they had very real contacts with the grassroots in Africa. His retort, as communicated to me in conversation, was, 'That is not grassroots to me, it's my intellectual community'. This is obviously a story worth telling in fuller detail, but not in an editorial. Suffice to say that the JCAS will strive to be a part of this intellectual community, rather than view it from the outside, and we will work very hard to ensure that Africans and African societies are not merely objects of a northern gaze, often objectified as exotic and expected to behave in stereotypical ways. Instead, the emphasis will fall on a deep appreciation of African agency and consciousness with all their indeterminate possibilities.

Of course, this is not to deny the importance of the context of power, domination and, in some instances, even monopoly over intellectual production. On the contrary, recognising the pervasive relations of inequality in scholarship which mirror broader societal disparities at a global level, suggests a grasp of the complexities in the struggle for self-analysis and self-assertion in African scholarship. No doubt, this will be a long struggle since building a community of scholars is not something that can happen overnight, especially under conditions of post-colonial Africa and where universities have been very hard hit by globally imposed structural adjustment programmes. Our contribution in the journal has to be part of a broader struggle, connected in critical ways to others who are similarly committed to building the intellectual resources on the continent and for the continent. As editors we can encourage authors to submit articles, research reports, notes from the field, review articles, book reviews, important addresses and other genres of academic writing. We may also host debates around particular topics of interest, but we actually have very little control over the quality of the submissions we receive and the JCAS rejection rate currently stands at about 80%. Mindful of all the difficulties ahead, we still believe that there is scope for a turning point in the life of the journal.

This issue represents a transitional phase between Roger's editorship and mine as some of the articles have gone through a peer review process under his direction and I've done others. We estimate that this hand-over period will continue for the duration of 2012.

In this issue, we publish Roger's reflections on the evolution of JCAS from a localised publication to a journal of international repute following his editorship as well as the technological and electronic advances in the world of publishing. The journal has travelled very far away from the intentions of its initiators, but Roger is correct in pointing out that it still has a long journey ahead of it. As a practical contribution to the debate on the making of African Studies, we also publish an address delivered by Fantu Cheru during the Opening Ceremony of the European Conference on African Studies (ECAS4) held in Uppsala, Sweden in June 2011. Fantu raises a number of important issues which we will continue to grapple with in the pages of JCAS. He appears to corroborate Mkandawire's ([ 1], 29) pointed remark that, 'We are probably the only part of the world about which it is legitimate to publish without reference to local scholarship'. Of course, we need to do something about this. It is not merely a matter of the politics of knowledge production in African Studies, but also about ensuring that our debates and our scholarship are of such immediacy, relevance and quality that they simply cannot be ignored on the continent or globally.

### **3. ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGES/CHANGES**

When I took over as editor we did everything manually. I read hard copies of all the incoming papers and annotated them with the names of possible reviewers or I simply desk rejected them. Jamie Alexander, who was then the editorial administrator for JCAS, would contact the suggested peer reviewers, or the authors themselves in the event of a rejection. This worked well while we had so very few papers coming in, but we started to experience serious problems as the reputation and popularity of the journal grew, so much so, that we now receive submissions almost on a daily basis. The delays in getting papers published became unconscionable and our authors were obviously not pleased with the lack of efficient communication. In response I approached NISC located in Makhanda to take responsibility for the copy editing, proof reading and production management tasks, and specifically to use ScholarOne as the online management system for the journal. I have worked with NISC for quite a few years as the editor of the African Humanities Book Series and so I was well aware of the kind of service they provide. We have thus contracted them to do the following:

1. Copy editing of manuscripts accepted for publication by the Editor-in-Chief. Accepted manuscripts are uploaded from ScholarOne to CATS and "pre-edited" by T&F's suppliers ahead of copyediting.
2. Raising any queries that arise during the copy editing process that need to be addressed by the authors.



3. Sending edited manuscripts to T&F's service providers for typesetting.
4. Checking and proofreading of typeset manuscripts.
5. Responsibility for quality assurance ahead of final publication.
6. Sending final typeset articles to be published online.
7. Compiling individual issues for publication online and in print, including liaison with the Editor in Chief on the order of articles and with the typesetters on the cover, and the front and endmatter.
8. Dealing with any ad hoc publishing requirements, such as errata, corrigenda or retractions.

The arrangement with NISC has proven to be very fruitful, placing JCAS on a professional footing as far as its production management is concerned and it comes at a much-reduced cost from our previous administrative arrangement (roughly a third of the cost). Our communication with our authors, so vital for the reputation of any journal, is now sound and we are dealing with the backlog quite systematically. One of the major contributors to our backlog has historically been our Special Issues. In order to obviate this problem, we decided at a recent Editorial Board meeting to impose a moratorium on accepting any new proposals for Special Issues as we clear our decks.

I've worked very closely with Taylor and Francis in negotiating the transition to NISC. In any event, NISC has a very good reputation with T&F where our link person there is Eleanor Reinders, and it does help that she is a Rhodes University alumna.

#### **4. A FEW HIGHLIGHTS**

Between 2017 and 2019 JCAS received more than 171,000 full-text downloads, with downloads steadily increasing annually. Page views are significantly higher than full-text downloads. By September the journal had received 43 article downloads in 2020 YTD, which is 20% higher than downloads received in 2019 YTD.

These downloads come from 150 countries, 27 of which are African countries.

The most downloaded article is 'Botswana at 50: democratic deficit, elite corruption and poverty in the midst of plenty' by Monageng Mogalakwe et al., with 2,426 downloads.

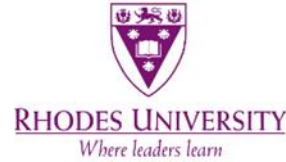
The top Altmetric scoring article was 'When are experiments corrupt?' by Nimi Hoffmann, with a score of 333.

There were 29 publications in 2019, 1 of which was Open Access.

There are 3000 institutions globally which have access to JCAS via sales and subscriptions.

University of London (SOAS) had the most downloads in 2019 (893).

Given the massive increase in submissions our rejection rate has gone up to close to 75%.



The journal is indexed in the following: Scopus, Web of Science (Emerging Sources Citation Index), Google Scholar, African Studies Abstracts Online, International Political Science Abstracts, CSA Abstracts (Political Science, Sociological and Social Planning categories).

## 5. AFRICAN STUDIES COLLOQUIUM

In collaboration with the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town as well as the African Humanities Book Series, we're organising a colloquium which brings together a scholarly discussion around the politics of knowledge in African Studies with the practicalities of publishing. We were hoping to host this meeting this year, but COVI-19 has compelled us to postpone it to next year. See the invitation letter below.

Dear.....

The Journal of Contemporary African Studies (JCAS) together with the African Humanities Book Series (AHP) and the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town are hosting a Colloquium on the issue of Global Knowledge Production in African Studies, specifically bringing together a scholarly discussion of its politics with the practical concerns of publishing. The event will take place at UCT on the *29th and 30th of March 2021*.

This follows a very successful Roundtable on the Flows and Blockages in African History published in Vol 37, no 1 of JCAS last year in which Steve Feierman debated the issue with Fred Kaijage, Oswald Masebo and Innocent Pikirayi. Fred Kaijage captured the issues at hand very well by referring to the asymmetry of power in the global scholarly community which he says is "...plagued by a world of knowledge exchange in which academic reviewers, journal editors and publishing houses located in the global North set the tone, define the terms of reference, dictate the idiom of the discourse and impose modes of conceptual thinking, while scholars in the global South continue to be at the receiving end". He goes on to say that "No degree of whining and complaining would bring us closer to a solution..." Instead, his attempt to provide a broader context for the global inequalities in knowledge production ends with a call for "a more inclusionary, more participatory system of academic publishing in which scholars from the global South, including Africa, will exert a positive impact on decision-making". He is basically saying that the editorial boards of journals as well as the entire peer reviewing processes for publishing manuscripts in African Studies should reflect a wider diversity of scholars from the global North and the South.

This colloquium responds to Kaijage's urgency in seeking solutions, rather than merely wallowing in futile complaint, by looking for ways in which we can embrace publishing outlets as an expression of a growing intellectual community in African Studies.

We would like to invite you to participate in this important discussion. If you are agreeable, please provide us with a short abstract of 250 to 400 words by 01<sup>st</sup> of September 2020. We will expect opinion pieces (not necessarily full papers, although these are also welcome) of between 2000 to 3000 words by 30th of November 2020 which will be published in the Journal of Contemporary African Studies.

*Please would you let us know by 14 August 2020, whether you'd like to participate.*

*Yours sincerely  
Adigun Agbaje  
Fred Hendricks  
Lungisile Ntsebeza*

It is extraordinarily difficult to plan an event of this nature under current conditions, but we're pressing ahead and while we'd much prefer a physical meeting, we might have to do it as a virtual conference depending on the circumstances at the time.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

JCAS stands at the threshold of becoming a premier African Studies journal if it is managed well during the next few years. The most important aspect of this management is the intellectual project it sets for itself as becoming a sought-after vehicle for scholarly expression on the continent, but the administration and management of the journal is also of vital importance in maintaining a reputation of professionalism and efficiency.

To access JCAS articles see: <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cjca20/current>

### **JCAS Chief Editor:**

Professor Emeritus Fred Hendricks

### **JCAS Co-Editors:**

Prof Adigun Agbaje - *Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria*

Prof Kirk Helliker - *Unit of Zimbabwean Studies, Rhodes University, South Africa*

Dr Nimi Hoffman - *Centre for International Education, University of Sussex, UK*

Prof Vito Laterza, *Department of Global Development and Planning, University of Agder, Norway*

Dr Godwin Murunga - *Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, Kenya*



Prof Francis Nyamnjoh – *Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cape Town, South Africa*

Prof Aymar Nyenyezi Bisoka - *Université Catholique de Louvain; University of Antwerp, Belgium*

Dr Lyn Ossome, *Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR), Makerere University, Uganda*

Dr Amma Panin – *Nuffield Centre for Experimental Social Sciences, Oxford University, UK*




Dr Ramola Ramtohul - *Department of Social Studies, University of Mauritius*

Dr Natasha Shivji, *Institute for Research in Intellectual Histories of Africa, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*

Dr Samaila Suleiman, *Department of History Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria*

Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso - *Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Babcock University, Nigeria*

## APPENDICES:

Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board	 Terms of Reference the ISER Board- lette
Guidelines for the appointment of Board members	 Guidelines for the ISER Board- letterhe
Profiles of Advisory Board Members	<a href="https://www.ru.ac.za/iser/sections/theboard/">https://www.ru.ac.za/iser/sections/theboard/</a>
The ISER Research Policy	 ISER Research Policy(Version 4)-Rev