

SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AFRICA POLICY RESEARCH NETWORK (SEAPREN)



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From The Coordinators' Desk

The first months of the Southern and Eastern Africa Policy Research Network (SEAPREN) activities have seen the formation of the necessary coordinating committees that will ensure the smooth operation of the network activities. Additional donor funding has also boosted the capacity of the network to carry out more activities.

Network Meetings July 2003

The SEAPREN institutes convened in Gaborone from the 30th to 31st July for their annual SEAPREN meeting. The key issue discussed at the meeting was the launch of the cooperation with the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Bergen, Norway. The SEAPREN's Project Committee that screens project proposals also met during that period.

Launch of the CMI/SEAPREN Cooperation

The network received financial aid amounting to US\$400,000 from NORAD over a period of 3 years through the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) to fund activities of the network.

The annual meeting marked the launch of the CMI/SEAPREN cooperation. The cooperation programme will comprise of two joint research projects as well as three institutional management projects. Each of the five projects is to be carried out in all seven member countries in collaboration with CMI.

Upcoming Projects

Two of the SEAPREN projects are at the initial stages of implementation and will constitute the first collaborative activities of the CMI/SEAPREN programme. The projects under the Governance and Poverty titles will be carried out by all seven member institutes under the leadership of the Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU) and the Institute of Economic and Social Research (INESOR) in Zambia respectively.

Budgetary Processes and Economic Governance in Southern and Eastern Africa

While good governance is increasingly recognised as crucial for development, its economic dimension has remained on the sidelines. The planned study of 7 countries in Southern and Eastern Africa aims to contribute to the filling of this gap by mapping the budget processes and the institutions involved as an important element of economic governance. On this basis, the study will conduct four policy studies on crucial aspects of the budgeting

Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA),
Botswana

Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU), **South Africa**

Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF), **Tanzania**
Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU), **Namibia**

Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC), **Uganda**

Institute of Economic and Social Research (INESOR),
Zambia

Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR), **Kenya**

process that are supposed to improve economic governance in the field of budgets: the role of autonomous revenue agencies, medium-term expenditure frameworks, and the role of parliaments, non-state actors and the Auditor General in controlling the budget.

The study thereby aims to identify features of the policies, processes, institutions and organisations that embody 'best practises' and avoid fiscal corruption.

Comparative Analysis of Poverty Policies in Southern and Eastern Africa

Research on poverty and its alleviation has been carried out in all countries of the region. This research project will make use of the data generated for comparative work on poverty. All countries in the region are striving to reduce poverty. Some countries (Botswana, Namibia and South Africa) have a "home-grown" approach to poverty reduction, while others (Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) have been given certain guidelines by the World Bank, in the form of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). One aspect of the project proposed will be to analyse the differences between approaches to poverty reduction in the two groups of countries. An evaluation of the progress made, particularly comparing the two groups of countries, will help establish 'best practises' in poverty reduction policies.

Institutional Development

The network will further engage in institutional cooperation projects aimed at improving institutional management within the network. Three projects will be undertaken in collaboration with CMI.

The Network Communication project will include focusing on improving SEAPREN institutes' access to the most recent research results.

The second component will focus on the promotion of the SEAPREN network. The idea with this project is to market the pooled knowledge and consultancy services available in the region to the wider international community.

The third component will aim towards improving institutional efficiency among the member institutes. The SEAPREN meetings held so far have made it clear that member institutes have a variety of management problems that are often similar in nature, as are the methods used to solve them. This indicates that there are a number of areas where information exchange and learning processes on a detailed level would be beneficial.

Research Project Committee meeting July 2003

The SEAPREN Research Project Committee formed this year convened on the 31st July 2003. The committee consists of 8 members drawn from within SEAPREN (SEAPREN South and East, the Secretariat) as well as external institutions (the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa - COMESA, the Southern African Development Community - SADC, the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network - FANRPAN) and the Secretariat for Institutional Support of Economic Research in Africa [SISERA]). The aim of the Project Committee is to peruse the research project proposals submitted by the member institutes and to decide on the projects to be funded on the basis of policy relevance, promise to add value to existing academic discussions, prospects of achieving enhanced research skills and expertise in the region and competence of the proposed research team.

The Research Project Committee met to review the first two Research Proposals submitted under the SEAPREN Network, entitled "The efficiency and effectiveness of capacity building in economic policy making: A comparative study of Botswana, Namibia and South Africa" submitted by NEPRU, and "Quantifying Implicit Transaction Costs of Trade in East Africa" submitted by the Economic Policy Research Centre - Uganda (EPRC).

Workshop on monitoring Regional Integration

The Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU) in collaboration with the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation (KAF) hosted the 6th workshop on Monitoring Regional Integration in SADC on 21-22 June 2003 in Windhoek. The participants were policy researchers from Southern Africa and Europe.

The presentations at the workshop focused on economic, political and institutional aspects of integration. These included macro-economic trends, regional trade and investment patterns, the contribution of central banks to regional integration, the implications of the SACU Agreement, the Restructuring of SADC as well as the organs of SADC. Other aspects addressed were the issues of political development and the prospects for peace and development in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the future of aviation in Southern Africa, the legal aspects of sharing water resources in SADC and land reform in Southern Africa.

Regional integration has made some progress during the last decade; however there are still serious setbacks and institutional difficulties. It

is nonetheless a positive sign that problematic areas can be defined clearly, and addressed and discussed openly.

NEPRU and the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation took up the discussion of regional integration some years ago; the results have been published in the Yearbooks [2001](#) and [2002](#) ("Monitoring Regional Integration"). These two publications are available in bookshops, at the publisher Gamsberg Macmillan, or from NEPRU (www.nepru.org.na) and from the Foundation (kas@mweb.com.na).

The findings of this workshop will be published in another yearbook – the third in a row. It will be available late 2003.

Portrait of a Member Institute

Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU), University of Cape Town

The Development Policy Research Unit was formed in 1990 and is constituted as a research unit within the School of Economics at the University of Cape Town.

The Development Policy Research Unit's work is aimed at the achievement of more effective public policy industrial development in South and Southern Africa. In the last few years, the unit has deepened its research activities within the sphere of labour economics and labour market policy, and indeed will soon start to chart regional research within these niche fields. The mission of DPRU is to undertake internationally-recognized research that contributes to the quality and scope of such policy. The Unit undertakes this research in a manner that: maintains a close but constructively critical interaction with government and other interest groups; promotes the ability of government to absorb the research; builds the capacity for policy research in society as a whole, especially among historically disadvantaged groups. While the primary activity is to undertake long-term research projects, a number of other activities play a key role in the mission. These include: disseminating research results to government, the research community and the wider public; undertaking short-term research projects, where these are of strategic value; participating in the life of the university through teaching and extension activities; building relationships with other research organizations in South Africa, the Southern African region, and further afield; participating directly in the formulating, implementing and evaluating policy; and running training courses for policy-makers and implementers.

It has a staff complement of eight which is made up of a director, a deputy director, three researchers, an office manager, a publications manager and a secretary. At any given time, in addition to its internal research capacity,

research associates and visiting academics are contracted to undertake specific research tasks on projects for the unit. A list of these, as well as the most recent activities of the Development Policy Research Unit, is documented in its 2002 annual report, which can be downloaded from the website.

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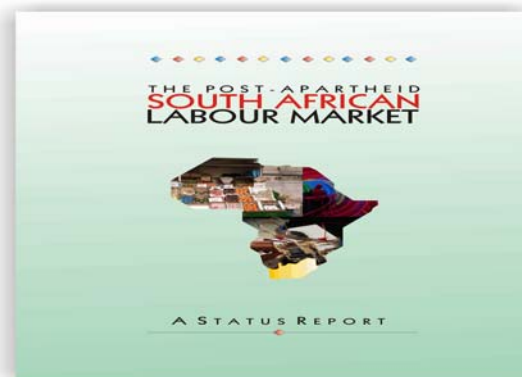
Website: <http://www.commerce.uct.ac.za/dpru>

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Interesting Publications on the Region

The Status Report on the Post-Apartheid South African Labour Market, prepared by Laura Poswell

The labour market often lies at the centre of South Africa's numerous economic growth and policy challenges. These relate to issues such as skills constraints, unemployment, emigration and the impact of HIV/AIDS. The aim of this publication is to collate and crystallise the key research that has been undertaken in these diverse areas.



Ultimately it is hoped that the publication will serve as a useful reference document for policy makers, unionists and other individuals and institutions interested in the detailed workings of the South African labour market. While clearly not exhaustive, this status report does attempt to cover a wide set of labour market issues.

The publication can be ordered from: The Administrator, The Development Policy Research Unit, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town 8001, South Africa, Email Lisl.Rassie@commerce.uct.ac.za at lrasie@commerce.uct.ac.za

Fighting Poverty: Labour Markets and Inequality in South Africa

By Haroon Bhorat, Murray Leibbrandt, Ingrid Woolard, Muzi Maziya & Servaas van der Berg

In this well-researched, comprehensive volume, the authors analyse new techniques to measure household inequality and poverty in South Africa, and the nature and functioning of vulnerability in the labour market; explore the links between labour market participation and household poverty and inequality; investigate current social and labour market policies, and examine the implications of current anti-poverty policies and strategies. Published by UCT Press, April 2001.



The publication can be ordered from: The Administrator, The Development Policy Research Unit, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town 8001, South Africa, Email [Lisl Rassie](mailto:Lisl.Rassie@commerce.uct.ac.za) at l_rassie@commerce.uct.ac.za

Portrait of a cooperating institution

Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI)

The Chr. Michelsen Institute is a private social science research foundation from Norway working on issues of development and human rights, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Balkans.

CMI is committed to a balance between applied and theoretical research. In the applied field, the aim is to provide research of high quality and knowledge that can assist policy formulation and decision-making processes and promote public debate on international development issues.

CMI can assist the preparation of development projects, programmes and strategies and can undertake evaluations. The staff members have gained substantial practical experience from long-term assignments in developing countries

and with international organizations. A particular strength of CMI is the multi-disciplinary approach. At present, about 40 researchers are employed by the Institute covering the core disciplines of economics, political science and anthropology, supplemented by sociology, geography and history.

Some of the main research projects are:

- Political institutions in Africa
- The role and experiences of the multilateral aid system
- Urbanisation and development in Africa
- Corruption and reform
- The role of producer services in economic development
- WTO/GATS and economic development: Key to the "new economy"?

The Institute receives a core grant from the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Funding for basic research projects is also provided by the Research Council of Norway. Additionally, the Institute does commissioned research for the ministries of foreign affairs and aid agencies of Norway and the other Nordic countries, for the UN system, the World Bank and various NGOs.

CMI plays an important role in development studies networks in Norway, in particular through the affiliation arrangements with the University of Bergen and the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration. CMI also has long-term collaborative agreements with research institutions and universities in various developing countries, such as South Africa, Namibia, Mali, Palestine and Malaysia. The forms of collaboration include research, staff exchange, teaching, information technology, library support, advanced training and publication.

In addition to contributing to scientific publications at home and abroad, the Institute publishes its own report and working paper series. CMI also publishes reports from conferences held at the Institute. Increasingly, its publications are accessible on the internet in pdf format on <http://www.cmi.no>

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We welcome any comments and / or suggestions you may have on any of the topics discussed, or on the newsletter as a whole. Please write to RosaE@nepu.org.na or fax to +264-61-277501