



South
Africa
Netherlands Research
Programme on
Alternatives in
Development



PHASE 2
2003 - 2007

**SANPAD
THEMES CONFERENCE
DOCUMENT**

SUMMARY

SOUTH–AFRICA NETHERLANDS RESEARCH PROGRAMME FOR ALTERNATIVES IN DEVELOPMENT (SANPAD)

SANPAD (The South Africa-Netherlands Research Programme on Alternatives in Development) is a unique collaborative research programme that has been financed by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1997. SANPAD funds high-quality, collaborative research by South African researchers in association with Dutch researchers. In Phase 2 SANPAD will fund research projects under the following themes:

1. New Approaches to Economic Development
2. Social Development and the Quality of Life
3. Natural Resources and their Governance
4. Poverty Reduction
5. Democracy, Government and Civil Society
6. Culture, Identity and Society

SANPAD will finance research projects that have a social development- and policy-related content that may be multi-disciplinary and cross-thematic and with a special focus on poverty reduction. Details of the sub-themes are explained in the Programme Document.

The general SANPAD objectives are

1. to stimulate and promote quality research
2. to produce research outputs intended and useful for development purposes
3. to promote co-operation between Netherlands (NL) and South African (SA) researchers, and between institutions within South Africa (SA) and
4. to develop research capacity and a culture conducive to research, aimed particularly at researchers from historically disadvantaged communities.

TO REALISE THE ABOVE OBJECTIVES, SANPAD FOCUSES ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. Funding and Supporting Research Projects.

Through an annual call for proposals, SANPAD conducts a process of reviewing and selecting research proposals. Thereafter, the programme funds the approved research projects, monitors the projects, enables co-operation amongst South African higher education institutions and South African and Dutch researchers within the respective projects, and reports on finances and progress.

SANPAD may provide discretionary assistance for (re)formulating research project proposals. The decision suggesting reformulation is made by the Joint Committee of SANPAD. Reformulation usually entails the assistance of senior researchers in South Africa and the Netherlands and other relevant bodies that may add value to the reformulation of the proposal for resubmission for funding. The reformulation process generally takes the form of workshops.

SANPAD may also provide discretionary assistance for pre-proposal workshops. Funding for pre-proposal workshops is generally granted to first-time project leaders from the designated groups, and to researchers who require further exploration of ideas that they believe may evolve into a full proposal. The application for a pre-proposal workshop must be accompanied by a letter of motivation identifying the reasons why a full proposal cannot be submitted, a proposed list of participants in line with the SANPAD policy on collaboration, and a proposed budget for such a workshop in keeping with SANPAD policy on funding such workshops.

2. Developing Research Capacity
 - * through the participation of historically disadvantaged and/or inexperienced researchers within the projects
 - * through the Research Capacity Initiative (RCI), which is an intensive research methodology course which is offered over seven weeks during the period of a year. The RCI is aimed at developing research capacity particularly amongst historically disadvantaged and/or inexperienced researchers within a SANPAD funded project, and
 - * through the stimulation of research co-operation between SA and NL researchers, and South African researchers across institutions.

For the management of these activities SANPAD has an **organizational structure** consisting of in SA a National Board (SA NB) and in the Netherlands (NL) a National Committee (NL NC), as well as, in both countries, a Secretariat. The SANPAD Joint Committee (JC), consists of members of the SA NB and NL NC, and meets twice annually to take policy-related decisions. SANPAD NL also has an Advisory Council (AC). The committees and council are composed of people from different stakeholder and non-stakeholder groups, representing perspectives and capacities needed both in SA and NL.

The Programme Document sets out the policy, funding strategy and administrative operations for the Second Phase (2003-2007).

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PREFACE

The launch of the second phase of SANPAD comes at a time when several changes are taking place in the Higher Education Sector in South Africa and when South Africa has set itself a trajectory for social development. These developments have a number of implications for the development of human resources and Research and Development in South Africa and SANPAD in its second phase of operation in South Africa attempts to respond to these developments by setting itself the following objectives:

- To subsidize, stimulate and promote quality research
- To produce research outputs for development purposes
- To promote co-operation between Netherlands and South African researchers, and between institutions within South Africa, thereby responding in part to the notion of the internationalization of Higher Education
- To develop research capacity and a culture conducive to research, aimed particularly at researchers from the historically disadvantaged communities

An external review of SANPAD Phase 1 (1997-2002), commissioned by the Netherlands Government, revealed that SANPAD had established a respected position among development-oriented researchers and policy makers in South Africa. In its second phase of operation in South Africa (2003 – 2008), SANPAD plans to pursue its objectives in line with the goals set out in the National Plan for Higher Education (2001) and the White Paper: 1.27. To this end, SANPAD will finance research and research capacity initiatives that will contribute toward:

- Increasing the output of postgraduates, particularly at masters and doctoral level
- Increasing research outputs and influencing the implementation of research results
- Sustaining existing research capacity through various non-project initiatives
- Encouraging and facilitating collaboration and partnerships in research and postgraduate training at the local, national and international level

SANPAD recognizes the value and importance of research in all its forms and functions, the role of research and researchers as vehicles that will assist to deepen South Africa's democracy, and the role of research in improving the quality of life for all South Africans. It is against this background that the themes conference was planned and initiated.

SANPAD is especially thankful to all those scholars, thinkers, researchers and research administrators who participated and gave of their time so generously for deliberations at this conference.

Dr ANSHU PADAYACHEE (*Director*)

Dr PAUL HOEBINK (*Chairperson - Joint Committee of SANPAD*)

13-14 MAY 2003

1. INTRODUCTION



The changes in the landscape of higher education in South Africa, higher education policy and funding, South Africa's human resources strategy and the research and development strategy in South Africa, call for an urgent review of the themes under which SANPAD allocates and disperses grants to higher education institutions. During Phase 1 of SANPAD'S operation in South Africa it was able to fund some 81 research projects and implemented a research capacity initiative that accommodated 135 masters and doctoral candidates from 35 South African universities and technikons. Annexure 1 outlines the programme of events at the two day conference held at the Royal Hotel in Durban, South Africa, on 13-14 May 2003. The conference was attended by 142 delegates (Annexure 2) from South Africa and the Netherlands.

The conference began with a showcasing of some of the funded projects, and delegates were provided with a CD detailing all projects funded by SANPAD in Phase 1. The showcase was officially launched by the Deputy Mayor of Ethekewini/Durban, who, in welcoming the delegates to the City of Durban, commended SANPAD on its initiative in contributing towards the Social Development Strategy of South Africa. He added that this Programme responded directly to the NEPAD proposals and the principles of the African Renaissance as articulated by President Thabo Mbeki. In planning for the Themes Conference, cognizance had been taken of the South African policy changes and transformation plans for higher education in South Africa. Recommendations emanating from the evaluation reports on SANPAD commissioned by the Netherlands Government and the Joint Committee of SANPAD, had also influenced the agenda for the conference.

Phase 2 of SANPAD was officially launched by the Provincial Minister of Education (MEC) in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), Mr. Narend Singh, at a Gala Banquet held on 13 May 2003, during which the MEC reiterated comments made by the Deputy Mayor of the City of Durban. He too focused his address on the important role SANPAD was playing in meeting the developmental challenges facing South Africa. The entertainment for the "launch" and banquet was provided by artists in the field of music and dance from the various higher education institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. The theme of the evening highlighted the collaboration between South African and Dutch artists and set the tone for the themes conference that was to follow.

The decision to host a project leader's workshop concurrently with the showcasing event, prior to the themes conference, was taken in an attempt to broaden the consultative process in the determination of the themes for Phase 2. The project leaders' workshop served an important role in identifying the successes and problem areas experienced in Phase 1 and indicated areas that needed review and revision for Phase 2 operations.



2. PROJECT LEADERS' WORKSHOP

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The rationale and purpose of this meeting lay in the issues raised during the RCI Steering Committee meeting held in the Netherlands in April 2003:

1. in the review documents of the SANPAD Programme Phase 1- by Mohamed and Mouton
2. during the development of the Programme document for Phase 2 and
3. by policy changes taking place in SA Higher Education.

As a result, the workshop focused specifically on the following areas within the programme that need to be reviewed:

- Links between projects and RCI
- Assessment of RCI candidates
- Liaison between Project leaders and RCI presenters, and
- The RCI curriculum

Among those who attended the workshop were

- Project leaders from Phase 1 projects
- Presenters on the RCI programme
- Project reviewers
- Members of the Ceres partnership
- Members of the SA and the NL Committees, and
- Members of the SA and Netherlands secretariats

Dr Paul Hoebink opened the workshop by providing a brief historical context of SANPAD and its future, followed by Prof. Johann Mouton who placed SANPAD's work in the framework of South Africa's Research and Development (R&D) strategy. He pointed out that the existing curriculum for the RCI had been developed jointly by himself and Prof. dr Ton Dietz, the Ceres partner in the SANPAD RCI Programme. Having had the experience of teaching on the RCI programme he suggested several issues that needed to be discussed during the course of the workshop. They were as follows:

1. The selection of candidates, which had sometimes been problematic. A critical issue was how best to involve project leaders in the screening process.
2. Project leaders' perception of the link between projects and the RCI.
3. The causes for the relatively high drop-out rate in the programme.

Dr. Anshu Padayachee, co-chair of this session, also raised the issue of the assessment of RCI candidates and included the accreditation of the RCI programme. She explained that these two issues had implications for

1. the instructions given in the call for proposals
2. the review process and continuous assessment of annual reports and final reports, and
3. the quality of outputs

2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE RCI PROGRAMME:

2.2.1 The recommendations flowing out of the discussion were:

- SANPAD should involve the project leaders, presenters and research supervisors in the assessment of the RCI candidates. This would provide additional information in assessing the candidates and avoid the bias in self evaluation alone.
- A meeting between project leaders and RCI presenters should be organised annually, as a non-project activity, to avoid the conflict that could arise if presenters gave advice on research methodology, or on a specific project or dissertation, that differs from the advice of supervisors or project leaders.
- The RCI programme had not been marketed well in the past and the selection process would be made easier if there were effective marketing and if project leaders were involved in the selection process.
- It would be necessary to review the extent to which the SANPAD RCI programme overlapped with similar programmes offered by the universities and by other funding agencies (e.g. the NRF and the Ford Foundation).
- A review of the RCI curriculum should urgently be considered in the light of SANPAD's move to obtain accreditation for the programme. In addition, the RCI curriculum should be aligned to the requirements of SAQA, the New Academic Policy, and the level of proficiency of the candidates it plans to target.
- In designing the RCI curriculum, it would be important to recognise the differences between research at technikons and research at universities and a workshop to review these differences and their consequences would be a priority.
- The length of the RCI residential programme and time of year during which the programme was offered should urgently be reviewed, given that SANPAD did not have a leave replacement funding component within its policy. The Programme should therefore be aligned to the academic calendars of SA institutions so as to create acceptance of the programme and lower the drop-out and absenteeism rates.
- The time allocated for the statistics module needed to be reviewed.
- Institutions from which the RCI candidates come should enter into contracts with SANPAD so as to prevent any unnecessary waste of funds if candidates do not present themselves for the RCI programme. This would also assist in ensuring that the programme was managed more effectively.
- A presenter panel should be selected, ensuring that the presenters are both good researchers and supervisors on the one hand and particularly good teachers on the other. In this regard, the selection of the Dutch presenters should focus on their ability to teach second language





learners, their understanding of the SA Higher Education landscape and the cultural context in which they were working. A workshop to consider these issues was critical prior to the commencement of the next RCI programme (2004).

- The method of assessment of the RCI candidates should comply with the SAQA assessment criteria and ideally should be continuous. The use of the SANPAD web page and e-learning methods to maintain candidate-presenter contact and monitor and assess candidate progress should be considered when designing the new programme. One of the specific outcomes of the programme should be either a final proposal for a PhD or for a research project.

2.3 PROJECT-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Training in project management for project leaders would enhance the evaluation process as well as the outcomes of the project.
- Building supervisor capacity should be considered as an urgent non-project activity to be undertaken by SANPAD.
- Encouraging supervisor participation in the projects either as team members or as non-team observers might be productive.
- Ensuring that RCI candidates were included in projects should become a criterion for project approval and funding. This principle was already enshrined in the objectives listed in the Programme Document.
- SANPAD should be marketed more effectively, and visits to institutions were necessary in order to clarify the application process and to describe non-project activities and the RCI programme.
- SANPAD should consider funding conference participation by young researchers as an RCI component to be provided for in the budgets of all SANPAD-funded research projects.
- The roles and functions of the NL partners/collaborators in the projects needed to be reviewed and the choice of collaborators should not be vested solely in the SANPAD NL secretariat. It was recommended that the names and CV's of three possible collaborators be presented to the SA secretariat and that project teams select collaborators on the basis of their needs – e.g. data analysis skills, methodology skills etc. It was also suggested that collaborators should not be involved in more than two SANPAD projects at a time.
- A carefully selected project review panel should be established. The review panel should comprise respected researchers from South Africa and the Netherlands. Reviewers should be used to add value to the review process.

- The value of a project for South Africa should be given priority when funding decisions were to be made. Other important factors to be taken into consideration were the extent to which a project would contribute to the existing knowledge base, and the extent to which the research would be ground-breaking.
- The establishment of a project review panel including Netherlands and South African researchers, who were required to provide independent reviews of projects, would enrich the process of evaluating proposals for research projects to be conducted in South Africa by South Africans. The comments of all the members of the panel could be taken into account in arriving at funding decisions.

2.4 PRESENTATION BY PROF. TON DIETZ - THE CERES PROGRAMME AND ITS LINK WITH SANPAD:

Prof. dr Ton Dietz (CERES) was invited to discuss CERES and its philosophy and involvement in the RCI. He went on to make several recommendations that he thought the workshop should take into consideration during the process of developing the RCI curriculum for students from disadvantaged communities in South Africa. He proposed:

- A focus on practical methodology
- RCI training below Ph.D. level, even without Dutch partners' involvement
- A possible change of focus to programmes tailor-made for different groups and even different regions

Finally the session concluded with a presentation by Drs Nelke van der Lans on the new project review form to be used by SANPAD. The new form is aligned to the requirements in the application form, the annual report, and the final reports (see Annexure 3).

She pointed out that:

- Phase 2 has a clear focus on outcomes and the dissemination of research results. Further, it was brought to the attention of the workshop that the NL Ministry has requested copies of research reports, publications, and videos, etc. of the funded projects.
- Hence provision was made in the budget for a special workshop on dissemination strategies in the initial stages of Phase 2, to accommodate this objective and the request of the Ministry.
- The financial management of projects would be more structured and more stringent than in the past, and the influence and impact of the research on development and/or policy would feature prominently in the evaluation of projects.

The workshop closed with a firm commitment from the SA secretariat to provide the participants in the workshop with an opportunity to make further inputs to the recommendations made at this workshop. The Programme Director indicated that the conference report would be made available to all participants in this workshop and the themes conference by the end of June 2003 for any further input. The document would be put onto the SANPAD web page once complete.





SESSION 1: CHAIRPERSON: Dr Anshu Padayachee

The chair welcomed the delegates to the themes conference and expressed SANPAD'S delight at having the Mayor of Ethekweni / Durban Municipality to welcome the delegates to the city and to open the themes conference officially, a duty which he performed through delivering the following address.

THE MAYOR'S ADDRESS

(Included verbatim)

"You are most welcome into this city, this conferencing city, a city that is playing quite an [pivotal] role in allowing itself to be a venue for discussion about what this beautiful continent should do to uplift itself and to ensure that it takes its rightful place in the affairs of the world. You are aware that such august occasions like the racism conference or anti-racism conference took place here. The African Union launch was here in this city. Even the Aids discussion, The World Aids Conference took place here. We are therefore honored that today we are hosting the South Africa Netherlands Research Programme for Alternative Development.

I would like to highlight just one or two issues about our past in this country, in so far as social development is concerned and research in particular. When we, particularly, the African people were under apartheid, one of the policies of our previous government was to ensure that we did not get into the natural sciences and therefore every tertiary institution that was out there would provide for us social sciences. I went to the University of Zululand and I was told in no uncertain terms that if I wanted to get a particular certificate it can only be in human sciences. If you went to try your BSc, the Dean will tell you that he allows only 30 persons per year and only 5 will pass at the end of the year and that is it. You can't change that. Therefore if you want to get your certificate as soon as possible, within the determined time, which was 3 years, go elsewhere, get your document for whatever it's worth and disappear as soon as you can. It is therefore, against that background that I will expect most of our Africans in South Africa, and the formally colonized countries of this continent to be really a little bit more advanced in social research because of that kind of a background. But also because that background, forced us to be very socially aware and our conscience was very high. Hence, we all were forced because of circumstances to be politicians. You had to be aware of your situation as an individual, as a people, as a race group, as a tribal group, whatever. Yes we became politicians, we all became activists, we all ensured that we participated in order to be free from the social ills of the day, which were mainly oppression, discrimination and everything else that was there. One would therefore expect by now that because of that kind of a background you would have as many social scientists from this particular company of people as possible.

I hope that is the case, although by sheer presence today of the delegates, that doesn't indicate quite clearly to me that that is the case. One would hope that this organisation

will ensure that a lot of doctors and social scientists out there are part and parcel of this wonderful initiative, which I believe will address the new problems that we have. We do not have much of political problems, they are still there, but they are not as intense as they were before. We now are faced with the real social problems, some of them which are not man engineered, problems of social diseases, problems of ignorance, illiteracy, problems of various systems, problems of conflicting cultural approaches to life and even problems of class distinction and class discrimination. One would hope therefore that this organisation in partnership with our friends, the friends of the liberation movement of South Africa and Netherlands, will begin to address these problems. We still have, nine years after democracy in this country, a lot that has to be done with racial discrimination, gender discrimination and so on and so forth.

With those words, once again, welcome to Durban, enjoy yourselves and may this conference be one of those successful ones that we have had in this city.”

RESPONSE TO MAYOR’S ADDRESS - Prof. Paul Hoebink - Chairperson of the Joint Committee of SANPAD:

In responding to the Mayor’s challenge for SANPAD, Prof. Paul Hoebink assured the Mayor that in the coming 5 years SANPAD would accelerate its capacity building and would intensify its focus on the dissemination of policy-related research. Prof. Hoebink thanked the Mayor for his welcoming address .

ADDRESS OF THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF ARTS, CULTURE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY - SOUTH AFRICA - MS BUYELWA SONJICA.

Due to unexpected circumstances the Minister was unable to deliver her opening address and requested that her message be communicated to all the delegates.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE AIMS AND THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE, AND AN OUTLINE OF THE PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED TO ATTAIN THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE - CHAIRPERSON

Dr Padayachee introduced Prof. Mouton and explained that SANPAD had commissioned Prof. Mouton to conduct a study on the relevance of the current themes for its second phase of funding (Annexure 4- full report of themes review). She reiterated that this conference was an attempt to broaden the consultation process in finalising the proposed new themes that SANPAD would adopt in its second phase of funding. The conference would proceed as follows:

1. Prof. Mouton would present the findings of his study.
2. The delegates would then be given the opportunity to pose questions to Prof. Mouton in respect of his findings.
3. The delegates would form groups to discuss the following specific issues:
 - The continuation of the thematic approach to funding research in South Africa
 - The relevance of the existing themes for research in South Africa
 - The appropriateness of the new themes for Phase 2 funding for research and





- The solutions to specific questions raised in Prof. Mouton's presentation
- 4. The rapporteur of the session (Prof. de la Rey) would provide a summary of the discussions.
- 5. Recommendations for the themes for Phase 2 would be made.

After the conference:

1. A conference report would be compiled
2. The report would be forwarded to the conference delegates for any further input
3. The themes would then be presented to the South African Board of SANPAD and the Joint Committee of SANPAD for approval in October 2003, and
4. A summary of the final Programme Document for Phase 2 (2003-2007) would be circulated to all the Stakeholders as a guideline document for project research and the RCI.

This conference would therefore afford SANPAD the benefit of engaging with the report by Prof. Mouton, hearing the debate on the above issues, and obtaining the opinions of South Africa's leading social and human scientists present at the conference, on the issue of the themes to be adopted in the second phase of its operation in South Africa. Prof. Mouton was invited to present his report on the review of the SANPAD themes.

A PowerPoint presentation of the summary of Prof. Mouton's report followed. (Appendix 5)

Some central questions and comments raised by delegates in respect of the presentation are captured, verbatim, below:

- "Why was the take-up rate so low amongst black researchers in particular, because currently, for instance, the traditional HDI is not very useful because of the sheer demographics of some of the institutions in terms of their complement and also the shocking statistics that you gave of the 70/30% black white academic split?"
- "Why was the issue of social and national identity afforded the lowest position in the order of research themes?"
- "We have traditionally looked at our sector as the higher education sector, somewhat divorced except for some commentators and researchers from the rest of society. We haven't seized on the imperative that this is the glue that makes the society work because we train the people that people our institutions at different levels. And also I would like to go a little further and suggest that whilst it's fine to have some of these targeted, if we are not very careful in how we place these conditions on, for example, empowerment, I try to avoid the use of 'capacity' because it sounds like some of us are empty vessels needing the capacity from some of the others around in order to develop."
- "The issue of empowerment is non-negotiable to our constitution and not an issue that we should be intellectually engaging on saying that we need to make it operational that if we don't put conditions and we don't monitor those conditions what we will do is

enhance the opportunity for tokenism and lack of enablement and we can come unstuck. So we need to actually have a very realistic upfront discussion about the issue of capacity and who are we capacitating and how we're going to do it and I would urge that we have a common understanding of that imperative so that we can then move accordingly, rather than merely set a target to say the principal investigator should have a full investigation etc. and you will find that the disadvantage continues."

- "It's been suggested that one area, national resources shall be excluded as a theme because there was no response. Perhaps the correct constituencies were not consulted."
- "There's an issue around health. HIV/AIDS is critical to development, why has this aspect of health that has a serious implication for development been ignored in your analysis?"
- "I find it fascinating and confusing that the study suggests dropping the theme on natural resources, I really want to strongly urge you to reconsider."
- "Does SANPAD have a capacity for building research capacity at the technikon? So is there some special project? If SANPAD wants to make a contribution in 25 years time, then perhaps we should think of a sort of radical cut on what you've done. We should think of one group who in our social research we could make a huge difference in their lives that is the issue of children. We should look at the 0 to 5 or the 0 to 8 because in the globalising society and the way our competitors are driving us, this is the group that is falling through the cracks and this is the group that in 25 years time are going to need a whole lot of answers in their lives."
- "One of the issues that were discussed with various people last night is the disparity that you mention between the HDI's and HIV/Aids and the feeling that I got was that those who came from the HDI's submitted their proposals but for some reason they did not meet the standard that was required by SANPAD. I'm beginning to understand that you do have criteria that have been enunciated. But after taking the analogy of the CHE where they are now sending out evaluators to appraise those public institutions and private institutions the evaluators are being trained in terms of interpretation of the criteria that they have set. I am wondering whether when applications have been received or where people indicate that they wish to apply for SANPAD grants, that some kind of training be given to those researchers. I mean we are all researchers, we have the knowledge of research and the language of research but in order to ensure that the criteria that has been stipulated by SANPAD and that some type of training be given to those researchers before they submit those applications."
- "I want to make a request that when people are motivating for research funding that they be allowed to indicate whether they are working on such multi-disciplinary integrated projects. Otherwise people will apply in more than one category rather than indicating in which category they are really integrated. I've got a second request as well. Most of us are reporting back to a constituency and I want to know if your presentation is available in a hard copy so we can circulate it amongst our colleagues. If it is, then you can just indicate the website we can get it or otherwise if we can collect a copy from you later. Thank you."





- “I am deeply concerned about the fact that many people here hardly know anything about the RCI programme. I’m asking Johann and the SANPAD Board could we not integrate, from the start, any applications for funding and RCI so that the building of confidence and expertise of young researchers can actually be part of the programme itself.
- “And then also another person asked if I could mention shouldn’t we have trans border issue.”
- “Thank you for your very good presentation. As natural scientists we’re fairly vocal already and I am going to add my voice to that. We sense a high-jacking of the SANPAD programme from the social scientists. Out of commitment I have started working on food security and I am very glad to have the support from social scientists. In a country where 30% of rural people suffer hunger and another 25% come into contact with these people. In the Eastern Cape they put 3 items on the table. In the Western Cape they put 13 items on average. KwaZulu-Natal they put 8 items which is a national average for these people, the items including sugar, salt and mealie meal. You realise that food security and farming systems are very important. At the moment no one has signed anything for food security support and I was hoping that SANPAD would see about giving some support for these areas.”

Prof. Mouton’s Responses to questions and comments:

“I need to make two statements.

First, I should just reiterate that I am not a member of SANPAD’s South African committee. So a number of comments, suggestions and questions are about policy matters that need to be addressed by the joint committee rather than here. So please just keep in mind that I was asked to do this in my individual capacity.

Secondly, I was also asked to do this within six weeks towards the end of last year. No decision has been taken about these recommendations – for instance whether or not the natural resource theme should be excluded. So the status of the report is that it is a discussion document. The joint committee will take this and other recommendations into account, and so the reason for this meeting is to allow you to engage with the recommendations before they reach the joint committee. You are not bound, as I understand it, by the contents of the report. This is just an input to the discussion.

With regard to other questions, a recurring issue has been that of capacity building, and yesterday afternoon we had a dedicated discussion for about two hours on the RCI and its relationship to the project. I don’t want to repeat that discussion as the research capacity initiative (RCI) is being addressed and reviewed separately. So research capacity is already high up on SANPAD’s agenda, and the integration of funded projects with the RCI is a critical matter.



Secondly, there was a specific question as to whether or not the RCI has the capacity to build research capacity in the technikons, and I think that this, again, is a question that the joint committee has to respond to.

Thirdly, there is no question that the views that I have tried to represent in this report are predominantly the views of academics. In turn, it could be argued that they are predominantly the views of a specific group of academics. I would not go so far as to claim that they represent the views of all the academics in the country.

The fourth comment I would like to make is that I am not going to respond to specific proposals and suggestions from the floor about what we should prioritize – for instance, children or food security – because that is the point of the round table discussions that will follow.

There are other issues, of a racial and policy nature, that I would urge you to raise in the discussions because some of our recommendations are about things that you would wish to research.

Regarding ‘take up’ and success rates in research projects, we are actually undertaking a project regarding these matters.

I have made notes of all the comments and questions and I will have one more opportunity at the end of the day to respond. In the interest of time, I would suggest that we concentrate on the three issues that we have decided to put to you during the round-table discussions.”

ROUND - TABLE DISCUSSIONS:

The three issues that the delegates were asked to consider in the round-table discussions were as follows:

- Refinement/articulation/additions within the themes. The groups were also requested to comment on the usefulness of the levels of analysis within the domain cluster.
- The nature of the research to be funded. (strategic/knowledge-generating M&E/longitudinal surveys/explanatory/utilization-focused)
- Any other domain cluster which should be considered.

In addition, and after some discussion on the number of themes that SANPAD should consider for research funding, the delegates agreed on nine themes that were considered to be important for the discussions.

The round-table themes and the Chairpersons who facilitated the discussions are listed below:

THEME	CHAIRPERSON
1. Economic Development	Prof. E. Webster
2. Social Development/Social Fabric	Dr S. Cooper
3. Governance for Democracy	Prof. P. Vale
4. Culture, Identity and a New Society	Prof. N. Baijnath
5. Health: Social Issues	Prof. N. Jinabhai
6. Education and Development	Dr J. Reddy
7. Knowledge Society	Mr R. Maharaj
8. Poverty Alleviation	Prof. Khoapa
9. Natural Resource Management	Prof. F. Reickenburg



A summary of the outcomes of the discussion in each of the round-table groups follows.

1. Economic Development:

This discussion group started by identifying eight new issues for the research cluster:

1. The mismatch between labour-market needs and skills-development practices; and a need to articulate skills development with the research cluster in education and social development because they have considerable areas of overlap.
2. The impact of trading relations on innovation.
3. Prioritizing the concept of globalization rather than simply treating it as something to do with competitiveness, which is the way it was presented in the review document.
4. The inclusion of issues around privatization and inflation.
5. A focus on the legal framework required in the labor law market.
6. The question of employment equity and the gap in management training, particularly at the senior and middle level.
7. A focus on alternative notions of entrepreneurship, the gendered nation, on entrepreneurship in the small, informal sector, and on implications for alternatives such as co-operatives.
8. The need to look at e-commerce and to articulate that with the knowledge society.

The second question focused on the nature of the research. The group emphasized the accountability of research findings and the need to make sure that there was an ongoing monitoring of the impact of research.

The group also raised the question about the long-term commitment of the Netherlands government to the programme.

The final point made by the group was that they did not feel that poverty should be included under the theme of economic development. The issues of poverty are much broader than is often perceived and the question of the importance of SANPAD as a forum to explore alternatives to development needed to be spelt out and dealt with quite distinctly.

2. Governance for Democracy

This group considered three issues.

Firstly they were of the opinion that the suggested list of themes seemed to be acceptable, given the needs of South Africa. The group also considered what else could be included but finally focused on democracy and government and tried to highlight some of the issues which they thought were important.

They agreed that economic development should remain a separate theme. The question of the social fabric brought into the discussion the question of morality. They were also of the opinion that an issue deserving urgent consideration was the social impact of health. There was a minor discussion as to whether or not the health issue should be focused only on Aids but the feeling in the meeting was that that would be too narrow. They felt strongly about the change of the theme to “Governance and Democracy” and



maintained that this theme should focus on “Governance, Delivery and Democracy” as this would include services, delivery and government accountability. The group perceived government as being poor on delivering on its promises and objectives and felt that this was a research area that needed attention so as to establish why this was the case. They saw fit to leave education and development as a theme although a good deal of research is currently focusing on this area. There was a suggestion that this should include capacity building in the area of life-long learning. There was support for retaining the “Culture and Identity in Society” theme for Phase 2.

They added two new overall themes, namely, “Natural Resources” and “Livelihood”, which they thought was something that should be inserted in the discussion. They raised the pertinent issue of children, and accepted that children should be a ‘catch-all’ theme that cut across all the other themes.

In their view, a number of crosscutting questions exist, such as poverty, which could not be considered as an individual theme. There was lively discussion on the impact of research on policy and the need to deliver on policy.

Their discussion on democracy, delivery and governance focused on the descriptors. They were of the opinion that questions of transformation in the public service was not enough. The real feeling was that one of the factors that had not yet changed sufficiently (and that needs to be changed if society is to progress) was the whole question of public service.

On the issue of how to look at the research over the long and short terms, the group had a specific suggestion for SANPAD, namely that funds should be set aside to allow each project to undertake an evaluation of its work two or three years after completion so as to assess levels of impact.

3. Culture, Identity and Society

The discussion began with a general discussion and then focused on the critical issues at hand.

The discussion group felt that the theme of development should permeate all themes.

The second point they made was to argue that it is important to engage in socially relevant research. Therefore applied research should be retained and funded as it responds directly to the problems within society and offers practical solutions to societal problems. They recommended that SANPAD should firstly establish what kind of knowledge production the universities and technikons are involved in, using existing data resources where possible.

Thirdly, the group felt that in determining criteria for goal-evaluation, representivity should be given attention.

A further point made was that SANPAD should give special attention to visiting the technikons and helping researchers develop good proposals.



The group members were of the opinion that SANPAD might have a negative bias in respect of the arts. Whilst the group felt that there should be greater emphasis on the social sciences rather than arts, they felt strongly that focus on both the social sciences and the arts should continue.

The group had difficulty in defining the concept of culture. An extensive discussion ensued and what emerged was that SANPAD should maintain a multidisciplinary understanding of the concept but give special attention to difference and diversity in culture.

The group thought about the nature of research and recommended that SANPAD focus on new approaches and new methodologies in research. The group emphasized that SANPAD should guard against being restrictive and rigid in categorizing and placing projects.

Strong recommendations from this group included that it was important

- to fund social science, arts, and natural science research
- to promote multidisciplinary, multi-level, and integrated approaches to research, and
- to attend to issues relating to the African Renaissance, heritage and public history as well as multi-lingualism, multi-culturalism, cultural rights, media representation and African identity in a global context.

4. Health and Social Issues

The group supported SANPAD in ensuring that health remained an independent theme. They concluded, for instance, that many factors have an impact on the environment, which ultimately has serious consequences for health. The group focused on government's planned health spending. The group took an optimistic approach to health since it cuts across a whole spectrum of disciplines including health economics, management services, education and development, traditional and alternative medicine, and behavioural and cultural issues. Also, issues relating to food security that affect health and social conditions gave rise to a debate around the availability of natural resources. In relation to programmatic research the group felt that a "life-cycle" approach is important. So while a focus on children was obviously essential the group made the point that it is just as important to focus on the aged and the disabled so that health needs in all phases of the human life cycle are given the attention they deserve.

Also debated was the fact that health research projects are, by nature, often long-term. They also tend to require maintenance after their completion. It was thought to be undesirable to divorce research from issues of implementation, and from the needs of the communities that had participated in the research programmes. Within the SANPAD context it was apparent that a focus on research for development was essential. The issues that the group felt to be most challenging were

- the kind of centres of excellence that exist and
- long-term funding and the kind of exit strategies that could be developed to ensure that research communities are treated fairly after the conclusion of a research project.

1. Education & Development

The group started the discussion with a brief assessment of the gender distribution within the room, of those who had been allocated the task of chairing the round table discussions, and of those who had been allocated the inscribing of the discussion.

The group began its substantive discussion by setting out of the kinds of principles that might guide theme selection. Certain themes in themselves send out messages that have a political impact about what is going to be valued in research. The group thought it important for SANPAD to support the things that need to be researched and that are not necessarily being supported by other funding agencies.

This group came up with a number of sub-themes. Important amongst these was the role of the further education and training – or technical college – sector in development since it seems to have become the Cinderella of the educational system but is obviously vitally important in improving people's skills in ways that might lead to direct employment.

However, the question of how to resuscitate and develop teacher education in the face of a huge crisis, particularly in the face of HIV/Aids, became the central discussion topic of this group. The group also gave attention to the impact of HIV/Aids on the education system at all levels.

The group thought that a policy and strategy for implementation, particularly in the restructuring of the higher education system would contribute to meeting the development goals. The leadership crisis in regard to this restructuring process and in taking the education agenda forward appeared to be a priority in the higher education sector.

The questions of education and poverty were also discussed, as were other issues:

- leadership and management;
- organizational changes in the schooling system, and particularly what might be used to correct what appeared to be a dysfunctional system in many areas;
- poverty and the impact of HIV/Aids on children, with parents and teachers dying;
- ways in which the curriculum might be used in preparing children to deal with some of the tremendous demands they will face and;
- the relationship between private providers of education and development.

SANPAD should insist that collaboration across institutions should be built into proposals, particularly in order to involve technicians in SANPAD-sponsored research projects.

A suggestion was made that SANPAD should provide sufficient funding for post-graduate students to engage in studying full-time, and it was thought that this was one way in which the demographics of institutions could be significantly changed, along with the demographics of research. Finally, SANPAD should monitor the implementation of research findings.





6. Knowledge Society

This group started its discussion with Social and Cultural issues and went on to suggest that the way the themes have been formulated should be reviewed, given that society cuts across all the themes. This, they believed, would accommodate the changes taking place in society.

The recent (February 2003) report by Francesco Sagati, who made a valuable input in articulation of this theme, was referred to in the discussion. The three main issues discussed by the group focused on Sagati's input, namely

1. Rapid change, and documentation of the causes of change, which were important for the purpose of the diagnosis and articulation of responses. There was a dearth of such data, and when available the data could be described as "soft data" e.g. research and development indicators.
2. The dual nature of the knowledge society, linked with global developments (frontiers of research and innovation, competitiveness) and orientation towards developments in South Africa and communities. The potential of technikons to play a key role in bridging the gap with communities and the world of work should not be underestimated. They were now creating pockets of research of international standard.
3. The heterogeneity of knowledge. Rather than think of knowledge transfer (from full to empty vessels) it was necessary to see knowledge as a carrier, albeit of varying nature and credentials. The same could be said for a knowledge society. This made it possible to look at the contrast between traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge with fresh eyes. During the course of the discussion, the view was expressed that field science was again becoming important. A promising combination that could be highlighted in this theme was that of natural resources and their management.

In discussing the education and development theme, the group maintained that the shift to outcomes-based education was welcome even though it could lead to the growth of a new bureaucracy. It was argued that higher education institutions were becoming more "porous" and less exclusive.

7. Poverty Alleviation

This group felt strongly that it was necessary for the theme to be studied as a separate issue. A central issue picked up during the discussions was the ongoing need to focus on explanatory research.

Poverty alleviation activities should focus on:

- the training of post-graduate students
- the use of technology adapted for use in poverty alleviation, for example relevant technology used in the media.

The group looked specifically at the cost of success, especially for women. The question raised was "Does SANPAD have a strategy for legitimizing small and simple research proposals?" It was thought that SANPAD should make more visits to HDI's and technikons in order to encourage their participation in research activities.

The discussion in this group also focused on the paucity of black researchers in South Africa and on the development of a strategy to find effective ways of speeding up an increase in their numbers.

The final recommendation of the members was that they felt strongly about the themes as they stand at the moment, and felt that they should remain as they were, including poverty alleviation as a separate theme.

8. Social Development

The group members agreed that this area is important and ought to remain a theme. It was felt that it should be expanded to include the psycho-social dimension of development and there was a very strong feeling that the issues under discussion actually went to the heart of the South African condition. Without this phenomenon being dealt with in our society we were likely to experience, once again, such problems as the “lost generation.”

The group resolved that research should not be limited to researchers coming from the higher education sector, but opened up to other institutions and NGOs to increase research competition and to encourage diversity in the kinds of research undertaken. Linked to this was the question of the application of research findings. NGO’s had the necessary applied knowledge and could add value to development research of all kinds. This was very much the global trend and SA needed to use expertise found within the NGOs especially for participant research. SANPAD should encourage partnerships between NGOs and higher education institutions by funding projects in HE that form partnerships with relevant NGOs.

A lively discussion on surveys and longitudinal versus “time slice” research approaches ensued. There was also a feeling that the nature and form of support for masters and doctoral students should be reconsidered.

At the heart of the discussions was agreement about the need to emphasise the inter-disciplinary nature of research in this theme, with the crosscutting of various disciplines helping to provide answers to common research questions.

9. Natural Resources Management

This group asserted that if natural resources were excluded from SANPAD’s portfolio of themes, this would significantly detract from SANPAD’s contribution to alternative development in South Africa. Several reasons were put forward in support of this viewpoint. The most important of these was the essential link that ties together natural resources with food security, tourism, commerce, social integration, health, water resources, and the sustainability of the quality of life.

The group supported the notion of a multi-disciplinary approach to research, placing emphasis on the need for open research approaches, and the need to distinguish between natural resources on the one hand and the natural sciences on the other. Also emphasised was the interdependence of South Africa and its neighbours in the use of natural resources.





Social and economic conditions were inalienably linked to natural resources and so it was essential to have a funding source for projects that deal with natural resources but that adopt multi-disciplinary research principles and methods that embrace social and economic factors.

The group noted that the observation that the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) funds research is incorrect. The ARC was itself looking for funding and had major problems in raising the research funds that it needed.

The group also considered the nature of research relevant to this theme, and a very strong point was made that research, teaching, and implementation must be combined. Very few people focus on the implementation of research findings, and this has considerable social implications. Appropriate training that takes account of the links between research, teaching and application could result in a new school of specialist scientists capable of making and strengthening this approach. This would play an essential role in ensuring that social development took place at a faster pace.

The last point made by the group was that funding was needed to provide continuity and sustainability in the community and to provide for longer research periods so as to ensure the sustainability of programmes.

SUMMING UP / FINAL RESPONSE BY PROF. DE LA REY

Prof. de la Rey started her review of the group outcomes by posing this question: “What should SANPAD and its Joint Committee focus on, when deliberating on the themes it will fund in the next five years?” In answering the question, she pointed to some of the major issues had emerged from the various discussions.

First was the duration of the SANPAD project. Clarity was needed as to whether SANPAD represented a short-term intervention or a long-term, sustained attempt to ensure the implementation of alternative approaches to development.

A second, related issue was what would happen to projects requiring on-going support if SANPAD were not funded beyond its second phase. Prof. de la Rey indicated that this was a really important question since SANPAD encouraged relationships with, and practical outcomes for, stakeholders such as communities. So the consequences of researchers abruptly ending their work, without considering the implications for those with whom they were working, would have to be addressed by the Joint Committee.

A third issue, raised several times, was that of strategies for the dissemination of research findings. Among present strategies was the project show-casing that formed part of the two-day conference. But defining criteria for effective dissemination during Phase 2 was essential, since SANPAD would almost certainly be looking for dissemination strategies that varied from the conventional, if the goal of social development was to be addressed.

A fourth important issue was that of the need for an evaluation of the impact that SANPAD-funded projects have in South African society. The possibility of having post-project reviews

and evaluations had been raised, and they could be very valuable, especially if, once again, appropriate criteria were defined as the basis for undertaking the assessment.

The fifth issue, the development of research capacity, or “empowerment”, was equally critical. The idea of supporting research internships had been mentioned and this was something that SANPAD should begin to consider.

Sixthly, the possibility that SANPAD might consider a more explicit approach to institutional-level capacity development was worth mentioning, along with the possibility that the programme might identify two funding tracks along sectoral lines – one for technikons and the other for universities.

A seventh point was that there seemed to be consensus that SANPAD should adopt a multi-disciplinary focus as opposed to a focus contained within individual disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. The focus on social development in the broadest sense was the correct one, and required that no particular discipline should be favoured. Instead, multi-disciplinary projects should be encouraged, and project appraisal criteria developed that facilitated the acceptance of good proposals of this nature.

Finally, consensus was also evident on the need to retain a focus on alternatives, whether those alternatives were in terms of intervention strategy, of theory or of method and methodology.

Prof. de le Rey then went on to look at some of the broader questions that had emerged from the group discussions.

The first of these was “Where does research begin and where does it end?” Prof de le Rey indicated that this is an important question if an initiative such as SANPAD expects to have an impact on communities or policy development. It is also a question that has implications for the ambit of responsibility faced by project leaders, and for the manner in which SANPAD projects will be supported financially.

The second question had to do with SANPAD’s continued support for team research, including a team or project leader, as opposed to funding research entities such as centres of excellence or research units. The latter had not been an option in the past, but could, perhaps, be considered for Phase 2.

The third broad issue was that of the criteria set for the appraisal of project applications. There was a line of reasoning suggesting that, in evaluating project proposals, (and possibly project performance) there was a need for a balance between a focus on knowledge generation and the application or use of that knowledge. A related point was made about the role of teaching, and of extension activities in projects funded by SANPAD. Raising these issues suggested that SANPAD might wish to review what it expected from research project collaboration between institutions.





RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THEMES FOR PHASE 2

The recommendations that finally emerged from the conference, to be placed before the national committees and the Joint Committee, were as follows:

- SANPAD should maintain its thematic approach to funding research in SA.
- SANPAD should keep its emphasis on the social sciences and humanities, but fund some natural science and engineering proposals provided they are fully integrated with social science research ventures.

The following themes should be considered as those to be funded individually, with the themes of “Social Development” and “The Knowledge Society” cutting across the others. (It was argued that although “Poverty Alleviation” and “Education and Development” could also be considered crosscutting themes, these two deserved to be given individual focus as they are priorities on South Africa’s development agenda.):

1. Poverty alleviation
 2. Natural resources
 3. Health
 4. Culture, identity and society
 5. Governance for Democracy
 6. Economic empowerment
 7. Education and development
- Collaboration between universities, technikons and NGO’s should be given urgent consideration if capacity building is an important objective.
 - The impact of research outcomes should be an urgent priority when considering the funding of research proposals.
 - Assistance should be provided to previously disadvantaged researchers in proposal writing and project management.
 - Special emphasis should be placed on leadership training in view of the changing landscape of higher education.
 - SANPAD should explore the nature, extent and type of funding provided by other research grant-makers, so as to prevent unnecessary duplication, and should plan to help fill gaps in the funding of research in South Africa.
 - The evaluation of research proposals should give consideration to the above points and to the issue of the designated groups in South Africa.
 - Special attention should be given to research capacity building in the technikon sector since universities and technikons are alike considered to be higher education institutions with different focuses and different capacities.
 - Inter-disciplinary research should be given priority as various government policies focus on multi-disciplinary solutions to the development issues in South Africa.
 - Research directed at ensuring the implementation of findings, and exploratory and knowledge-production research that will benefit social development and the quality of life of South Africans, should be given priority.
 - The issue of collaboration should be clearly spelled out in the Programme Document so as

to promote real collaboration.

- An impact-assessment tool should be developed, in order to measure both the impact and the sustainability of programme outcomes.



CONCLUSION

The deliberations and recommendations at the themes conference provided the basis from which the South African National Board and the SANPAD Joint Committee will make a final determination on themes and priorities for Phase 2 of the Programme.

It became clear from the discussions that higher education institutions could no longer exist in isolation in their attempt to achieve national goals and priorities of social development. The discussions highlighted the fact that the institutions, individually and collectively, and in partnerships with their international peers, with NGOs and with business and commerce, had to respond to the needs of the wider public for the dissemination of knowledge and skills.

The intention of the new objectives for higher education include not only the provision of skills and the re-skilling of future leaders in South Africa, along with the critical element of knowledge production, but also of finding solutions to problems at the individual, local and national levels. The conference discussion also drew attention to the fact that even though South Africa is passing through a “knowledge revolution,” it must remain focused on the four key principles of quality, access, equity and accountability for its research and development programmes, in its quest to establish alternatives in development. These are essential elements of an effective participatory democracy and for South Africa as an emerging democracy.

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