

# **Extending the Frontiers of Social Research and Knowledge Production in Africa Information Brochure about CODESRIA and its Activities**

## **CODESRIA's Founding Principles**

The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) was established in 1973. It was born of the will of African social scientists, and of all those engaged in social research in Africa, to develop scientific capacities and tools that would further the cohesion, well-being and development of African societies. This principle underscores the sense of active commitment that was at the origin of the Council and which fired its founders. It was considered to be meaningful only if a conscious effort was made to foster a pan-African community of scholars active in and connected to the continent. It also called for the nurturing and all-round protection of the intellectual freedom of members of the African academy. The accent which was placed on the autonomy of scholars in the articulation of the mission of the Council was defined from the outset as critical to its *raison d'être*. Against the backdrop of newly gained political independence, African researchers were challenged to articulate and pursue their intellectual concerns with all the energies and sense of scholarly engagement that they could muster, doing this in a manner which encouraged professionalism, academic integrity, service to the peoples of the continent and freedom of thought. The people and government of Senegal offered the organisation a home base from which to strive to achieve its mandate; they continue, through their hospitality, to uphold the social and historical value of independent African intellectual production as represented by the Council.

Since its founding, CODESRIA has developed numerous scientific activities and tools whose value and impact are universally recognised. High-quality documents, including books, reference works, monographs, working papers, journals and periodicals are published by the Council and disseminated widely. Intellectual and programmatic themes around which the Council's research, training and publications agendas are structured have been developed, and numerous national, regional and international research programmes are undertaken as regular, abiding features of the work programme. Skilled individuals have been brought together through CODESRIA's programmes to form an increasingly diverse and productive intellectual community which not only challenges but also transcends the fragmenting effects of the colonial heritage. Scientific data banks have been established and put at the disposal of the research community. Hundreds of highly original doctoral theses have been sponsored and brought to completion under the auspices of CODESRIA's programmes. Because of these efforts, Africa's intellectual capacity has been enormously strengthened and the production of knowledge about Africa by Africans has grown in quality, volume and exposure.

In an environment marked by isolation and scientific marginalisation, extremely precarious material conditions, political repression, a debilitating brain drain and lack of academic freedom, CODESRIA, more than any other pan-African non-governmental organisation, has helped to nurture, develop and sustain a productive, highly motivated community of social science researchers in Africa. Several decades of uninterrupted service to the community of African scholars makes CODESRIA one of the oldest African institutions in existence. It owes this distinction to the dedication of its founders and constituents, to the loyalty of its donor partners, and to its ability to adapt and respond to the changing circumstances of the African continent within the context of an accelerated process of globalisation.

## **CODESRIA'S Mandate**

CODESRIA's principal objectives, as spelt out in its Charter, include the facilitation of multidisciplinary research, the promotion of research-based publishing, the building of capacity amongst African researchers at all levels through a strong training programme, the promotion of the principle of academic freedom, and the creation of multiple fora for the exchange of views and information amongst African researchers. CODESRIA challenges the fragmentation of research and knowledge through the creation of thematic research networks that cut across regional, disciplinary and linguistic barriers. It encourages the African social research community to strive for the achievement of a more holistic understanding of the historical and contemporaneous experiences of the continent through multidisciplinary interventions that draw on a variety of traditions and approaches, integrate gender perspectives, and tap into the insights of different generations of scholars. In this sense, the Council can also be seen as playing a critical role in promoting a dialogue among the disciplines, the four generations of African social researchers, and male and female scholars. Furthermore, the Council is mandated to support the strengthening of the institutional basis of knowledge production by developing programmes of collaboration with other centres of social research in Africa whether they are national or (sub-) regional, university-based or independent.

In encouraging collaborative work among African scholars through the various research networks which it promotes, and through the training and publishing activities it undertakes, the Council is required and strives to be open to all the contending theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches represented in the African academy. Conscious efforts are also made to tackle the obstacles that stand in the way of an increased participation by women and younger scholars in the activities of the Council, these efforts being reflective of the determination of the Council to achieve a greater gender balance in its work and a genuine inter-generational dialogue in the African academy. As the pioneer and leading pan-African social research organisation, the Council bears the historical responsibility of not only giving voice and visibility to the intellectual production of African scholars but also serving as a voice for African scholars in the international arena.

Grants and fellowships facilitate the pursuit of intellectual excellence at the Masters, doctoral and post-doctoral levels. Research results are disseminated through a range of publications including books, journals, monographs and working papers. The CODESRIA web-site ([www.codesria.org](http://www.codesria.org)) offers regularly-updated information on past, present and future activities of the Council. The web-site is also increasingly becoming a forum for the publication of various research articles. CODESRIA collaborates with and supports other regional and sub-regional research institutions. True to the wishes and aspirations of its founding members, the Council's activities remain organically tied to the needs and concerns of the universities and centres of advanced research. Similarly, the vast majority of participants in the programmes initiated and/or supported by the Council are drawn from African universities and research centres. CODESRIA's funding comes from donations made by African governments which are so inclined, contributions requested from bilateral aid agencies and private foundations, the fees collected annually from members, and revenues from the sale of the publications produced by the Council.

### **How CODESRIA is Structured**

The basic structure of CODESRIA is spelt out in the Council's Charter. Three broad organs are specified in the Charter. They include the General Assembly which is the supreme governing organ of the Council; the Executive Committee which is the governing organ charged with supervising the

implementation of the work of Council between the triennial General Assembly of members; and the Executive Secretariat which is responsible for the day-to-day management of the affairs of the Council.

The General Assembly comprises all African social research institutes and faculties as well, as well as individual researchers with full institutional or individual membership rights. When it convenes for its sessions, the Assembly, as the highest decision-making organ of the Council, determines the broad parameter's of the organisation's intellectual orientation, including the priority research areas and programmes to which attention should be paid. The Assembly meets every three years and elects the Executive Committee, including the President and Vice President of the Committee. Associate membership is open to non-African researchers and research institutions; associate members are welcome to observe the proceedings of the General Assembly, although, unlike the full members, they may not vote or be voted for during the administrative session(s) of the Assembly.

The Executive Committee, a collegiate body, appoints the Council's high level Secretariat staff. Meeting two to three times a year, the Committee reviews the budget, work programme and activities of the Council. It also oversees the execution of CODESRIA's research agenda, ensuring that the agenda is as faithful as possible to the broad orientations set out by or emanating from the General Assembly. The Executive Committee is responsible to the General Assembly to which it submits a report every three years. Membership of the Executive Committee is drawn from all the sub-regions of Africa on the basis of equality of representation.

The Secretariat, headed by the Executive Secretary, is based in Dakar, Senegal. The Secretariat implements the intellectual agenda ratified by the General Assembly, as approved by the Executive Committee after elaboration by Secretariat staff. In developing the scientific agenda of the Council, both the Executive Committee and the Secretariat draw on the support of the members of the CODESRIA Scientific Committee, a body made up of eminent African scholars with a distinguished track record of contributions to social research. The Secretariat is structured into three scientific departments: Research and Documentation; Publications and Communication; Training and Grants. There is also a Department of Administration and Finance which offers support services to the scientific departments. Each department is led by a senior programme officer recruited by the Executive Committee; the work of the senior programme officers and all other members of staff of the Secretariat is supervised by the Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary also plays an intellectual leadership role, raises funds for the financing of the Council's activities, signs all contracts on behalf of the Council and undertakes representational duties on behalf of the African social research community.

## **How CODESRIA Strives to Achieve its Mandate**

### ***The Formulation of the Priority Research Agenda***

CODESRIA's research priorities are defined by the General Assembly which meets every three years. These research priorities emerge from the structured debates which take place during the scientific sessions of the Assembly. In the course of the debates, participants identify issues and themes which they deem pertinent to an understanding of Africa and the world. They also take stock of the state of the various disciplines; trends in theory and methodology; the conditions under which knowledge production in Africa, as well as the wider international system is taking place; and the challenges which all of these pose for the African academy. The priority research agenda which emerges may translate into the retention of some of the themes already adopted, their wholesale replacement with new themes or simply the addition of a few new ones. It is important to underscore the point that the choices which are made always, invariably, take full account of the evolution of the African and global contexts, as well as that of social science disciplines and methods.

The research themes emerging from the deliberations of the General Assembly are developed in a manner which promotes the production of innovative knowledge, encourages creative reflection, and facilitates the development of fresh methodological and epistemological insights. In other words, the formulation of the priorities set for the Council by the General Assembly into a research agenda is anchored on CODESRIA's founding goals of encouraging the critical evaluation of the theoretical basis, as well as the conceptual and methodological frameworks used in the social sciences, promoting multi-disciplinary approaches and integrating gender analysis into the work of African scholars. The expected result is the production of theoretical and empirical knowledge that deals with and accounts for African realities, grounded in a democratic and Pan African commitment.

Working in collaboration with the Executive Committee and the Secretariat, the CODESRIA Scientific Committee takes on the role of assisting with the refinement of the priority research agenda of the Council. This it does through proposals for a possible reformulation, merger and hierarchisation of the themes selected to serve as the core of the Council's research agenda based on the priorities identified by the General Assembly.

## **How CODESRIA Facilitates and Supports Research**

The Council's Research and Documentation Programme comprises four different elements, namely, the Core Research Activities integral to and derived from its Charter mandate; Policy Oriented Research Projects; Collaborative Research Projects; and the support services offered by the CODESRIA Information and Documentation Centre (CODICE). The wide array of CODESRIA's core research activities are structured around and organised into the National, Multinational and Trans-national Working Groups, as well as the Comparative Research Networks. The Core Research Activities remain the main framework for the Council's intervention in the African Social Science community. As to the Policy Oriented Research projects, they serve as an important basis for the operationalisation of research findings in favour of policy actors/actresses and civil society organisations. Collaborative research projects are undertaken from time to time in cooperation with other research organisations within and/or outside Africa, as well as with other partners such as the United Nations and its family of agencies and organisations. CODICE plays a critical role in supporting the research agenda of the Council through the provision of bibliographic and related services.

## **Core Research Activities**

### ***The Multinational Working Group (MWG)***

The Multinational Working Group (MWG) is CODESRIA's oldest and most frequently used mode of research organisation. It has become the Council's most important instrument for mobilising the research community around a specific problem on a pan-African scale. Participation in the MWGs is also drawn from the African Diaspora. Comprising 20 – 30 researchers from various disciplines and different African countries, an MWG is always constituted around one of the priority themes emerging from the deliberations of the General Assembly. Through the MWGs, an effort is made to realise one of the main objectives of the Council, namely, the promotion of multi-disciplinary research which transcends linguistic, geographical, gender and generational barriers and whose great contribution derives from the innovative thinking which is produced, as well as the fresh theoretical and empirical insights gained

An MWG is led by one or more co-ordinators with established and acknowledged expertise in the field of research for which the network is being established. Generally, the launching of an MWG is preceded by the production of a working paper that is published under the CODESRIA Working Paper

Series, commonly known as the 'Green Books'. Once constituted, the members of the MWG will be required to participate in a methodology workshop on the basis of a research proposal assessed and recommended for selection by an independent panel of scholars. Each MWG works out the fine details of its research agenda/time-table; in general, most MWGs have a life span of two to three years. Once the members of the MWG have completed their work, a final research seminar is convened at which they will be required to present their findings for discussion. The results of the work of the MWG are published in the CODESRIA Monograph Series and/or the CODESRIA Book Series.

### ***The National Working Groups (NWG)***

Unlike the MWGs, which are CODESRIA's direct offshoots and which are always multinational in composition, the National Working Groups are constituted as autonomous initiatives coming from members of the research community based in any African country or interested in studying any aspect of a particular country. The participants in an NWG identify the area of research that is of interest to them and formulate their research problematic through a proposal which also sets out their priorities. In this sense, the NWGs are developed and supported on the basis of a perceived national need. Initiators of proposals for the establishment of an NWG are always encouraged to pay attention to the Council's abiding commitment to the goal of transcending disciplinary, gender and generational barriers to knowledge production. The autonomy of the NWG is considered an essential factor for its success; it is also integral to the Council's strategy for enhancing national research capacity and interdisciplinary contacts at the national level. Proposals for the constitution of NWGs are received on a continuing basis by the CODESRIA Secretariat and assessed through an independent process involving scholars with knowledge of the country and issue to be covered. Each NWG is encouraged to hold a methodological workshop involving all of its members, and a mid-term review workshop to assess the progress made by each of the participants in the work of the group. The average life span of an NWG is 18 months.

### ***The Trans National Working Groups (TWGs)***

TWGs were introduced as a key innovation in the scientific agenda of the Council. They are a direct response to the increasingly globalised world in which the production of knowledge and information about Africa is taking place. The TWG is conceived as a vehicle for promoting and sustaining dialogue between African and non-African researchers around a selected theme of common scholarly interest. It stems, in part, from the convergence of research concerns and interests between African and non-African scholars, particularly those from CODESRIA and one or several of its partner research institutions in Asia and Latin America. In addition to encouraging a sustained dialogue between African and non-African researchers, the TWG serves the objective of bringing African perspectives into the wider global reflection on Africa itself, the wider international system, and the social sciences. It confers the distinct advantage of encouraging a first hand understanding by Africans of non-African experiences through direct scientific interaction with non-African scholars. Conversely, the TWGs offer non-African scholars an opportunity to reflect on all aspects of the historical and contemporary experiences of Africa beyond the tendentious interpretations to which they are too frequently exposed. Finally, the TWGs offer African researchers a framework for participating in and contributing to the promotion of international comparative approaches in social research and knowledge production.

### ***The Comparative Research Network (CRNs)***

The CRNs also form part of the research programme innovations recently introduced by the Council. They are designed to foster and enhance comparative research in Africa at the national, sub-regional and continental levels around a specific theme. Such a vehicle is deemed particularly necessary on account of the huge toll on the capacity for comparative research exacted by the prolonged crises in the African higher education system. In contributing to the revival and sustenance of comparative thinking, the Council also hopes to strengthen the African contribution to the comparative studies literature on the African experience. Proposals for the constitution of CRNs are received by the Secretariat on a continuing basis. Researchers are encouraged to initiate proposals for the establishment of CRNs within the broad intellectual agenda being pursued by the Council. The proposals are required to identify the coordinator(s) and members of the network, the comparative question which they seek to explore, and the time frame within which they hope to realise their objectives. (Those wishing to propose CRNs are encouraged to observe an 18-month time frame for the initiation and completion of the study).

### ***The Child and Youth Studies Programme***

African populations are young. Indeed, from the demographic point of view, Africa is today the most “youthful” continent in the world. Those aged 18 and below form the majority of the population in most countries. The ‘problematic’ of the child and the youth pervades all aspects of the contemporary Africa livelihood in ways and on a scale not previously experienced. The need for the exploration of this development, and in so doing enhancing the capacity in the African academic community to tackle the child and youth question explains the decision of the Council to upgrade its existing Child and Youth Studies Programme into the category of Core Research Activities. This way, it is hoped not only to elevate the Programme to the higher status which it deserves but also to overcome the highly fragmented state of social research on children and the youth with a view to contributing to the emergence of a vibrant, networked community of African researchers working on the theme. The overriding concern is to achieve the protection of rights and interests of children and youth through research.

### ***The Gender Programme***

Strengthening gender research and analysis is one of the key mandates of CODESRIA. The Council’s Gender research programme dates back to 1983 and has developed since then into one of the flagships of the organisation, backed up by a training programme, the various fellowships awarded by the Council, and the publications activities which are undertaken. The Gender Programme, as a core CODESRIA activity, is both mainstreamed into all aspects of the Council’s work and also given a special status designed to ensure the visibility of gender analysis and research beyond the mainstream. Within the Secretariat, a Gender Co-ordinating Unit has been established under the leadership of the Executive Secretary. The Unit is responsible for monitoring and co-ordinating all of the gender programmes housed in the different departments of the Council.

## **Policy Oriented Research**

Right from the outset, CODESRIA’s work, which involves an engagement with research questions that touch on the lives and livelihood experiences/prospects of the peoples of Africa, has always been of interest to policy intellectuals, in addition to the specific policy challenges which it poses. Over the years, the Council has attempted to foster interaction with the African and wider international policy community. Such interaction has offered useful avenues for bringing the results of research to the policy community and feeding the reactions of policy intellectuals into the research process.

At any one point in time, there are usually a number of Policy Oriented Research activities going on in the Secretariat. The majority of these are *ad hoc* in nature, designed as short and quick interventions for the achievement of a specific objective. But a few others are long-term in nature and involve the mobilisation of a pan-African network of researchers and policy makers in a joint endeavour. Some of the enduring ones which have also become synonymous with the Council's profile as a leading pan-African institution for knowledge production are:

### ***The Working Group on Education and Finance***

This programme forms part of the collaboration between CODESRIA and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). CODESRIA was identified as the host for the ADEA Working Group on Education and Finance. In agreeing to take on this responsibility, the Council integrated the concerns of the Working Group into its own overall educational research strategy. The Working Group on Education and Finance is mandated, among other things, to help African ministries of education and finance to formulate and implement sound educational policies and budgets; open up channels of communication between both ministries for the sake of the advancement of the educational sector; and disseminate best practices in the financing of education in Africa. The Working Group also seeks to improve educational planning, financing and management in Africa by strengthening the capacities of education and finance ministries to plan, allocate, and administer existing resources. In the face of economic crises, dwindling resources and an ever-growing demand for education, CODESRIA's participation in and promotion of this programme offers the researchers and policy makers whom it mobilises an opportunity to develop new skills and techniques that will allow Africa's education planners and economists to more effectively manage their existing funds and develop innovative approaches for tapping previously untapped human and financial resources.

The Working Group's members included Ministries of Education and Finance, development agencies, research institutions and NGOs. The Canadian International Development Agency, (CIDA) acts as lead funding agency for the network, while CODESRIA is responsible for the development, co-ordination and implementation of the working group's activities. Its strategy is to conduct country case studies, establish resource centres, hold regional workshops and develop practical reports and training materials to build national capacities in education financing and management. Because the working group cuts across governments and individual country contexts, it will enable education and finance personnel to identify their options and make decisions that will impact on the quality and access of education in their countries.

### ***Academic Freedom and Human Rights***

Over the years, African scholars have been confronted with serious restrictions to their freedom of research. The prolonged economic crises which have confronted African countries since the early 1980s, most of the solutions proposed for tackling the crises, the attack on the educational sector within the framework of economic crises and structural adjustment, and the poor human rights record of most African governments have, in combination, taken a huge toll on the academy, academic freedom and human rights. One of the key Charter mandates of CODESRIA is the promotion and protection of the academic freedom and human rights of researchers. This mandate provides the context for the initiation and development of the Academic Freedom Programme in 1994 as a specific and special area of attention. The programme was developed in response to the need for the protection of the right to free scientific inquiry as the socio-economic, political and research environments became less and less accommodating of research. Its objectives are to promote the freedom of research, liberty of thought and the protection of human rights in the academy.

Through its network of researchers based in African universities across the continent, the programme monitors and reports on the status of academic freedom in Africa. It seeks to promote the growth of academic freedom in Africa by supporting local initiatives to this end and encouraging dialogue and consultations between academics, university authorities, the state, civil society and donors. A legal defence fund is maintained to assist university lecturers and other researchers who are the victims of repression. The programme is also able to provide temporary relief to researchers in distress.

Since the launching of the programme, some 20 national and regional conferences and consultations on academic freedom have been held across the different regions of Africa, with participation at each of the meetings organised ranging from 40 to 100. Such meetings serve to publicise the importance of intellectual freedom and have proved an apt tool in eroding the barriers between the state and the intellectual. The programme also publishes a *State of Academic Freedom in Africa* report. Furthermore, several books have been published on national-level experiences, thematic questions and sectoral issues, including the experiences of women researchers in the academy, the citizenship of intellectuals, the challenges of university autonomy, and the peer review system in the academy.

As a result of the programme's varied activities, CODESRIA has been granted an observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. CODESRIA is also member of the Steering Committee for the *International Network for the Defence of Scholars at Risk*, and has very close links with human rights and democracy movements on the continent.

### ***The Economic Research Programme***

Although CODESRIA has, since its founding, maintained a tradition of studying African and global economic problems – indeed, the institution was initially known as the Council for the Development of Social and Economic Research in Africa before a decision was made to re-name it Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa - it was still considered appropriate to launch a specific programme dedicated exclusively to focusing attention on Africa's economic condition. This was all the more so as the continent appeared to be caught in a state of permanent economic crises which, moreover, seemed to defy all the solutions that were applied. Thus it was that in 1997, a programme for the advancement of research on African economies and for the renewal of development-oriented economic traditions in Africa was launched. This way, the Council also hopes to stimulate African economic research and debates on the trends in Economics and in the economies of the countries of the continent. Furthermore, through the programme, CODESRIA is intent on fostering the development of a new generation of African economists capable of producing internationally competitive knowledge that is both responsive to African conditions and needs, as well as to the requirements of different African policy communities for variety in the options and choices available to them. Underpinning the CODESRIA initiative is the assumption that the economy cannot be studied separately and independently from social and political questions. Thus, the programme combines the critical reflection on the economy, politics and society that characterised the first generation of economic research at CODESRIA with the conceptual and methodological puzzles associated with the challenges of re-thinking African development to lay the foundations for a new tradition of economic research in Africa.

### **Collaborative Research Projects**

As a pioneer and leading pan-African social research institution, CODESRIA is, from time to time, called upon by various agencies and organisations within the United Nations system, and by other partner institutions within and outside Africa to collaborate on specific research projects aimed at studying issues and trends tied to their activities and relevant to CODESRIA's mission. Activities of

this nature are categorised under the Collaborative Research Projects of the Council. The Council's participation in such collaborative endeavours offers one more avenue for ensuring that the African research community is present and represented in the major debates which take place about Africa and the wider international system. Several such activities are usually going on at the any one time in the Secretariat and for varying lengths of time.

### **CODESRIA's Research Documentation Service**

Set up in 1983, the CODESRIA Documentation and Information Centre (CODICE), collects processes and disseminates information pertaining to the social sciences. It provides documentary support and information to CODESRIA research programmes, African researchers, African universities, research and training institutes as well as to African governments and their agencies. CODICE exchanges publications with several local, regional and international organisations, across Africa, the Third World, Europe and the Americas. CODICE also co-operates with a number of social science information services. As part of this co-operation, CODICE is a member of numerous networks.

CODICE maintains a rich documentary collection of Social Science information and research findings. These comprise books and periodicals as well as numerous reference works, including CD ROMs, reports, conference papers, newspaper clippings, theses and dissertations. CODICE also generates several databases which are regularly updated. These include the bibliographic database; the Database of African Social Scientists; Database of Research and Training Institutes in Africa; and the data base of periodicals.

The Centre provides a variety of services. These include information searches through databases and the Internet; compilation of thematic bibliographies and press dossiers; documentary loan and provision of photocopies. It also refers users to numerous other appropriate information services. CODICE generates a regularly updated Catalogue of CODESRIA Sponsored Theses and Dissertations, an annual Index of African Social Science Periodical Articles. It also publishes a comprehensive list of CODESRIA conferences and a Directory of CODESRIA Publications. Lists of Acquisitions and of Current Contents are available.

CODICE caters to CODESRIA Working Groups, laureates of Small Grants for Theses Writing and those of the CODESRIA Institutes on Governance, Gender and Child and Youth Studies, and researchers involved in diverse CODESRIA research programmes. CODICE is also at the service of CODESRIA personnel, students and lecturers of African universities, training and research institutes, and visiting researchers from institutions within or outside Africa.

### **The Dissemination of CODESRIA Research Results**

The CODESRIA Publishing programme was conceived as an outlet for the findings and ideas generated from CODESRIA's research networks, seminars, conferences and other scientific activities. As one of CODESRIA's primary objectives is the promotion of research-based publishing, and given the disturbing deterioration of African university presses, this priority has become more urgent and crucial than ever before. The Publications and Communication Department oversees the quality of all CODESRIA publications and appoints editors for the journals. CODESRIA publishes in Arabic, English, French and Portuguese.

### **What does CODESRIA Publish?**

CODESRIA publishes five bilingual and multilingual journals, with a combined total of well over 1000 published articles to date, excluding reviews. The journals are:

*Africa Development / Afrique et développement ;*  
*African Sociological Review / Revue africaine de sociologie ;*  
*African Journal of International Affairs / Revue africaine des relations internationales ;*  
*Afrika Zamani;*  
*Identity, Culture and Politics: an Afro-Asian Dialogue.*

In addition, the Council also publishes a quarterly bulletin, the *CODESRIA Bulletin/Bulletin du CODESRIA*, which serves as a lively debating forum around new ideas and questions central to the quest for better understanding African experiences. The *Bulletin* is published in English, French, Arabic, and, effective from 2003, Portuguese. It is also available on-line on the CODESRIA web site. Furthermore, in collaboration with the Arab Research Centre based in Cairo, Egypt, the Council produces an African Studies Series published in Arabic under the title *Afro-Arab Selections*. Plans are presently at an advanced stage to launch an *African Journal of Higher Education* which will go into circulation during the second half of 2003. Similarly, in 2003, the much-anticipated *Africa Review of Books* which the Council has been working on will be launched. The editorial policy and direction of the journals published by the Council are reviewed regularly by the Council through the newly introduced *Annual Conference of the Editors of CODESRIA Journals*. The inaugural session of the Conference took place in 2001. The conference serves as a forum for the sharing of experiences, the discussion of new trends in journal publishing, the streamlining of strategies, and a discussion on the state of knowledge production on the continent. Furthermore, as part of the Council's effort to map the content and direction of African scholarly reflections, the Council launched a project, known as *African Voices*, designed to take critical stock of the perspectives developed by researchers on different questions as reflected on the pages of the *CODESRIA Bulletin* and the various journals published by the Council.

Since 1973, CODESRIA has produced some 250 published works. These can be found in the Monographs/ Monographies; the Green Book Series/ Livres verts; the "State of the Literature"/ Etat de la littérature; the New Path Series / Nouvelles pistes and the Réseau de politiques économiques. The CODESRIA Book Series boasts over 100 books published since 1981 when it was launched. A host of Reference works, including the *Index of African Social Science Periodical Articles*, the *Register of Development Research Projects in Africa*, the *Directory of Development Research and Training Institutes in Africa* and a CD ROM - *Social Sciences & Aids in Africa* have been produced by the Council. Within the framework of the Civil Society programme which the Council managed in collaboration with the UNDP, a newsletter known as the *Civic Agenda* was produced. .

CODESRIA's role in providing a platform for African social science research is tremendous: e.g. between 1982 and 1992, five top social science journals in the north published only 233 articles by African authors. Within the same period, one single CODESRIA journal, *Africa Development*, published 246 articles. 229 of these articles are from African authors. CODESRIA remains the leading academic institution in Africa that publishes in English, French, Arabic and Portuguese, the most widely used languages in academic discourse on the continent today. The Council has also published authors from every region in Africa.

The publications programme of the Council has been very successful not only in projecting the output of African scholars but, equally importantly too, in contributing path-breaking works. This is attested to by the range of award-winning publications which have been produced under the CODESRIA Book Series. The more prominent and recent ones include:

*Modern Economic History of Africa*, by P.T. Zeleza: Noma Award for Publishing in Africa;  
*La Nette des Autres*, edited by J. Ki-Zerbo: Prix Rencontre de la Communauté européenne ;  
*Manufacturing African Studies and Crises* by P.T. Zeleza: Honourable Mention, Noma Award;  
*Index of African Social Science Periodical Articles*, CODESRIA: Canover Porter Prize ; and  
*Sénégal: Trajectoires d'un Etat (1960-1990)*, Ed. MC Diop: Honourable Mention Prix Rencontre de la Communauté européenne.

A vigorous dissemination drive ensures that research produced by Africans and on Africa is within the reach of both African and non-African readers. The Council operates a policy of distributing free copies of all its publications to research institutes and libraries in Africa and the developing world. It also subsidises the cost of its publications which are marketed in Africa. In addition, it offers free copies of its publications to review outlets. A regular dissemination exercise is undertaken by the Council at which selected titles from its recent publications list are presented to a critical audience made up of scholars, policy makers, students, journalists and representatives of international organisations. CODESRIA was one of several publishers in Africa which teamed up to form the African Books Collective (ABC) based in Oxford, UK. ABC handles most of the European distribution of CODESRIA publications. There is also a marketing arrangement with Karthala, based in Paris, France, for the distribution in France and the Francophone world of CODESRIA publications produced in French. Co-publishing arrangements exist with a number of publishers such as Karthala and Africa World Press. CODESRIA supports and participates in the African Journal Distribution Project (AJSDP) and the African Publishers Network (APNET). CODESRIA publications and staff are represented at and support book fairs and other fora gathering practitioners in the book trade in Africa and the world, such as the Zimbabwe Book Fair, the Dakar Book Fair, the Abuja Book Fair, the Cairo Book Fair, and the Frankfurt Book Fair.

CODESRIA prides itself on going the extra mile in assuring the quality of the works which it publishes, given its influence on how African scholarly research is perceived and accepted. Thus, all articles published in its journals undergo a double-blind peer review process; all contributions and books published are either products of CODESRIA co-ordinated research with clear scientific and methodological guidance mechanisms or unsolicited manuscripts from seasoned scholars subjected to the double-blind peer review. By co-ordinating its publications production process from Africa, CODESRIA is one of the few leading social science organisations in Africa actually building capacity in the publishing sector. Members of staff undergo constant training and the updating of their skills; they gain practical hands-on experience by engaging with the realities of the publishing world and are capable of contributing to the growing crop of professionals in the publishing sector in Africa. CODESRIA takes pride in these publishing achievements, against the backdrop of a process of globalisation that makes ever more apparent, the development gap between publishing in Africa and publishing in the North

## **CODESRIA's Contribution to the Building of Research Capacity in Africa**

CODESRIA has responded to the training needs of African researchers by building a formidable training programme. Activities which it has developed and promoted for this purpose range from the

award of small grants for thesis writing in African universities and the organisation of a number of annual, theme-specific 'summer institutes' to the funding of methodological training sessions, the award of advanced research fellowships, the convening of an Annual Social Science Campus, the launching of an initiative on the Intellectual History of Africa, and a textbook project. Through these programmes, the Council attempts at one and the same time to accommodate and cater for the needs and interests of young and upcoming researchers, mid-career scholars and the most senior and experienced members of the African academy. Thus although the different training activities undertaken by the Council are tailored to serve the needs of specific sections of the social research community, they also constitute an important element in the effort to mobilise all the social research constituencies active on the continent.

In 1996, all the training programmes of the Council were regrouped into one specific department, the Department of Training and Grants. The objective of the training activities remain the same however, namely, to respond creatively and speedily to the training needs of African researchers while encouraging innovation and experimentation in the development of new activities designed to cater to the ever-changing terrain of social research on the continent and in the wider international system. The point should also be underscored that the development of the research capacity interventions of the Council are closely tied to the changing context of teaching and learning in African universities. Programmes are developed to fill observed gaps, strengthen new, interesting trends, and encourage innovation and originality.

### ***The Small Grants Programme***

Initiated in 1988, the Small Grants Programme for Thesis Writing in African Institutions aims to enable the continued development of social science research in Africa by providing graduate researchers with the basic requirements they need to carry out their field-work. CODESRIA not only awards financial grants for fieldwork, but also, provides the laureates with bibliographies, textbooks, and journals. The Council also offers support in research methods and methodology.

The programme covers the whole of Africa. Whereas the programme receives about 600 applications annually, only an average of 70 - 100 bursaries are awarded, making it one of the most subscribed programmes of the Council that is in need of further expansion. It has enabled hundreds of African researchers registered in African universities to obtain their post-graduate degrees.

### ***CODESRIA Prize for Doctoral Theses***

This programme is a new CODESRIA initiative launched in 2002 and designed to encourage post-graduate research in Africa by offering three prizes annually for the best theses produced within Africa. Beneficiaries of the CODESRIA Small Grants Programme are encouraged to participate in the competition for the award of the prizes but the initiative is not limited to them as all postgraduate students involved in social research are encouraged to enter the competition. The award process is managed by an independent jury of eminent scholars.

### ***The Advanced Research Fellowships Programme***

This programme has been run under different names by the Council since the early 1990s. It is designed to promote research and reflection at an advanced level. The target group of scholars are usually those in the early post-doctoral stages of their academic careers, although it is not uncommon for senior scholars to compete too for the awards on offer. The fellowship is designed to provide the beneficiaries with an opportunity to initiate new research programmes or carry further existing research

concerns. In this sense, the programme is aimed at creating and sustaining a community of highly skilled intellectuals whose work is or has the potentiality of being at the cutting edge of social research and knowledge production.

### ***Methodological Workshops***

The laureates of the Small Grants Programme enjoy a training session in the form of regional methodology workshops for graduate students. These workshops are designed to equip the younger generation of researchers involved with the latest research tools and materials which they need for their research. They also provide an opportunity for the laureates to tap into the experience of proven researchers in their fields from within and beyond the continent. The interaction which this programme offers older and younger scholars not only promotes a structured system of 'mentoring' but also encourages an inter-generational and multidisciplinary dialogue. As an off-shoot of this programme, the Council, for a period of time, organised a separate *Summer School in Quantitative Methods* which attracted the participation of young postgraduate students. The School was phased out in 2002 and its curriculum integrated into the regular methodological workshops held for winners of the grants awarded for thesis writing.

### ***The Governance Institute***

This intensive annual summer Institute on Governance aims to promote an exchange of experiences among researchers, activists, decision-makers, etc. around a particular theme of direct relevance to the governance of Africa. It was initiated in 1992 when the inaugural session was held in Dakar, Senegal. The Institute is targeted at mid-career scholars and professionals and participation is designed consciously to cut across diverse disciplines and linguistic zones. CODESRIA provides grants to cover the cost of the participation of the laureates admitted into the Institute. The Council is responsible for the selection of a renowned expert in the field to serve as Director of each session. Similarly, the Council selects renowned specialists in the field of governance to serve as resource persons for the Institute. Each year, the Institute brings together 15 laureates, five resource persons and a director.

The Governance Institute is an exemplary tool in the creation of a new generation of researchers in issues pertaining to governance. It is also crucial to the realisation of the Council's goal of forging new networks between scholars, activists and decision-makers. The output of the laureates and resource persons are published by the Council in order to bring the issues debated to the attention of a wider audience of scholars and policy makers.

### ***The Gender Institute***

The Gender Institute was launched in 1996 as an important research capacity-building and sensitisation segment of the CODESRIA Gender Programme. It seeks to contribute towards broadening awareness on gender issues, the conscious integration of gender analysis into African social research, and the incorporation of gender into social science research methods. It is structured along the same lines as the Governance Institute and draws multi-disciplinary participation from across the entire African continent. The Gender Institute has become a landmark activity within the framework of CODESRIA's Gender Programme. Important debates have been defined and launched since the inauguration of the Institute. The output flowing from the proceedings of the Institute are published within the CODESRIA publications programme.

### ***The Child and Youth Studies Institute***

This is the newest of the CODESRIA annual institutes. It was launched in 2002 when the inaugural session was held in Dakar, Senegal. The Institute is a direct offshoot of the Council's Child and Youth Studies Programme. It is designed to assist in building, sustaining and sustaining capacity in Africa in the analysis and understanding of all aspects of the child and youth question in Africa. Through the work of the Institute, the Council also hopes to contribute to the emergence of a critical mass of scholars and policy intellectuals in Africa who are not only networked with one another but are also able to make substantial contributions to theoretical, conceptual, and methodological discussions about children and the youth, and the formulation of innovative policy interventions attuned to the history, context and realities of the countries and peoples of Africa.

### ***The Humanities Institute***

The Humanities Institute of CODESRIA is the principal vehicle of the Council's Humanities Programme. The Institute was launched in 1997 and is located at the University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana. In addition to being the very first CODESRIA annual institute to be located outside of the Council's headquarters, it also enjoys the distinction of being the first Humanities Institute to be established in Africa. It was set up at a time when the need was felt not only for a more structured CODESRIA Humanities programme but also a structured forum for an intensified dialogue between the Social Sciences and the Humanities. Unlike the Governance, Gender and Child and Youth Studies institutes, the participants in the Humanities Institute are generally more experienced scholars drawn from different disciplinary and professional backgrounds and incorporating scholars as well as practitioners. Through the Institute, an attempt is made to combat the isolation and fragmentation of research in the humanities and to sustain a network of scholars and practitioners.

### ***The Textbook Programme***

The programme for the production of textbooks is part of CODESRIA's contribution to the production and dissemination of pedagogical tools that will play an important role not only in assuaging the book famine in African higher education but also contributing to the renewal and updating of the teaching curriculum of universities. The programme also seeks, in a small way, to assist the academy in addressing the question of the quality and relevance of instructional materials used in African universities and centres of advanced learning. Through the programme, some of the most experienced and acknowledged African scholars are offered an opportunity to put their knowledge at the disposal of African students throughout the continent and beyond. CODESRIA collaborates closely with African universities and professional associations for the realisation of the objectives of this crucial programme.

### ***The Annual Social Science Campus***

This is a new programme which was inaugurated in 2002 to serve as an annual forum for advanced multidisciplinary and inter-generational research dialogue around a specific theme. Participation in the Campus is subject to the submission of a research paper containing ideas or proposals for fresh, innovative work or the substantive extension of work that is already in progress connected to the theme of the Campus. In this sense, the Campus is conceived as a framework for serious reflection and debate and every effort is made to attract the participation of some of Africa's most advanced thinkers on the particular theme for any given year. The proceedings of the Campus are managed by a designated Co-ordinator who elaborates the programme of presentation and debates among the participants. The

output of each Campus is published under a new CODESRIA series known as the *Annals of the CODESRIA Annual Social Science Campus*.

### ***The Distinguished CODESRIA Annual Lecture Series***

This is also a new CODESRIA programme initiative under which, annually, a distinguished African scholar is identified to undertake a lecture tour of the continent to deliver lectures on a chosen theme mutually agreed between the scholar and the Council. Through this initiative, the Council attempts to bring some of the continent's most interesting thinkers to audiences in different parts of the continent, including members of the academy – particularly the younger generation of scholars – who may otherwise not have an opportunity to interact first hand with such icons of the African social research community. The programme is also designed to offer the distinguished lecturer a unique and diversified feedback into his/her work. Each lecturer identified will be offered an opportunity to deliver up to five lectures spread across East, West, Central, North and Southern Africa.

### ***The Intellectual History of Africa/African Encyclopaedia Project***

This programme emerged out of an initiative designed to valorise the numerous post-graduate theses held at CODESRIA and flowing directly from the Small Grants for Thesis Writing which the Council has awarded over the years. As a result of the Small Grants programme, CODESRIA has become home to one of the biggest and most diversified collections of post-graduate African theses coming from all corners of the continent and covering virtually all the disciplines of the social sciences and the humanities. The project will attempt to bring the arguments developed in the theses to a wider audience, doing so under thematic umbrellas that will highlight the fresh ideas that seem to emerge and encourage debate. Also within the project, a theme-based encyclopaedia project is being undertaken drawing on commissioned contributions from African researchers.

## **CODESRIA and the Policy Process**

### ***The CODESRIA Policy Dialogue Series***

In 2002, the Council introduced a new programme – the Policy Dialogue Series – designed to serve as a platform for interaction between the African research and policy communities. The Dialogue is programmed as a quarterly exercise organised around a specific theme. In addition to researchers, government officials, civil society activists, representatives of professional associations and other interest groups, and representatives of international organisations/agencies. Research results flowing from the activities of networks supported by the Council are fed into the dialogue both as a way of bringing the output of the African scholarly community to the continent's policy makers and shapers but also for the purpose of informing the debates that are held. For the researcher, the Dialogue represents an important opportunity to get a feedback into their work from the policy community. The CODESRIA Policy Dialogue Series is an activity located in the Training and Grants Department.

## **How CODESRIA serves its membership**

CODESRIA is an institution in the service of a community of scholars. The Council's Charter provides for full membership rights to individual African researchers and African research institutions. Associate membership is available to non-African, both individuals and institutions. Membership forms are available for all those wishing to be registered as members of the Council. For individuals, the annual membership fee is presently fixed at USD30 while for institutions, it is USD500. In addition to being informed about all CODESRIA activities, members receive the CODESRIA Bulletin, the Council's annual report, and a discount on all publications issued by the Council.

As part of the constant effort to enhance the quality of service to members, the Secretariat decided in 2001 to create the post of a Membership Services Assistant charged with ensuring prompt and effective attention to the queries and needs of all members. The Council's strategic Plan Document for the period 2002 – 2005 also sets out the Secretariat's determination to ensure that:

- i) A major drive is made to increase the size of the membership of the Council in line with the recommendations of the Governance Reform Committee;
- ii) A web-based culture of accountability to the membership is developed not only with regard to activities which take place in the Secretariat but also through the posting on the web site of the Council's annual report;
- iii) The Outreach programme of the Council is revamped in order to ensure that members are kept fully abreast of its work, this programme being developed in a manner that ensures that it has a strong scientific component as well;
- iv) The structure of the CODESRIA General Assembly is revamped in order to enhance the effectiveness of accountability to the membership;
- v) A data base of researchers and research institutions that are active in CODESRIA networks is compiled and made available both in hard copies and electronically; and
- vi) The capacity of the Codesria Documentation and Information Centre (CODICE) to service the scientific needs of the members and all those who take an active part the organisation's research networks is strengthened.

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