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**Annual Report 2008/09**

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# About Isandla Institute

Isandla Institute engages in cutting edge research, knowledge sharing, development of alternative frameworks and methodologies, and advocacy to support urban development and transformation.

In 2009, Isandla Institute celebrates its tenth anniversary and will be looking back on a rich tapestry of work, which includes policy analysis, research and evaluation, empirical case study research, strategy formulation, institutional assessments and capacity building support, information dissemination and other activities with a wide range of actors and stakeholders, including the non-profit sector, government (local, provincial and national), academic institutions and urban professionals.

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# Message from the Chairperson

The future is always full of possibilities. The question is whether these possibilities can be utilised and taken advantage of in one's interest - in the case of Isandla Institute, in the interest of pursuing more equitable and democratic urban settlements.

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**a** related question that Isandla Institute continuously reflects on is: What does this mean for our positioning? Put differently, where do we situate ourselves in relation to other development stakeholders and relevant processes? Being a lean organisation, how do we ensure that we

arrange our resources and capacity in such a way so as to maximise the potential for change and transformation? There are no easy answers to these questions.

2008 proved to be both exciting and challenging as rapid political changes opened up certain possibilities, foreclosed others, prematurely terminated some possibilities while leaving other possibilities unrealised.

As an organisation with a particular institutional interest in local government, Isandla Institute found itself (naively, perhaps) surprised by the depth and extent of the impact of the national political transition on local government and, to a certain extent, its work. Isandla Institute also takes stock of the service delivery protests. While some local governments regularly provide examples of excellence, responsiveness and innovation in their work, there is also widespread disenchantment with local government – in particular, negative feedback about service delivery rollout and responsiveness of councillors.

Against this, Isandla Institute's interventions – its submissions, research reports, training activities – over the years stack up as an influence in a positive direction. It has not only been a better voice for more effective delivery and better engagement of communities; it has proposed



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strategies, methodologies and instruments for achieving these. There are many reasons – structural, political, social and most importantly, institutional – why both common sense solutions and cutting edge innovations have often not been harnessed and exploited, especially among smaller municipalities. Isandla Institute will continue to be an advocate for effective democratic governance, progressive improvements in delivery, responsive institutions and social cohesion. It will continue to be a ready partner to local governments seeking well researched, viable and resource effective solutions.

In the period ahead, we are likely to experience the impacts of other external forces, namely the global

economic downturn and its manifestations and impacts in South Africa. We are mindful that the donor community, including some of Isandla Institute's most loyal partners and supporters over the years, has not been left unscathed. This will undoubtedly have ripple effects on civil society organisations in South Africa and their financial wellbeing.

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In the year ahead Isandla Institute will celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is with confidence that we reflect on the past decade, results achieved and the body of knowledge and expertise developed. Over the years, Isandla Institute has aspired to remain fresh and innovative, even as it seeks to tackle 'old' problems like urban poverty, social exclusion and spatial segregation. During this year, the organisation pursued novel audiovisual media to pursue its objectives and produced the documentary *PoCityVity: A story of survival and belonging*.





It is this desire to remain fresh and relevant, even (or perhaps especially) in a context of external uncertainty, that makes the work of the Board of Directors interesting and valuable. In 2008, we welcomed two new board members into our midst. Ashoek Adhikari brings a wealth of insights and expertise, not least of which is legal finesse, that will undoubtedly add value to the organisation. Lechesa Tsenoli, a veteran of local governance and participatory democracy, is equally valued for his understanding of matters related to government and governance. With a sense of regret, we parted ways with Sue Parnell, who has been involved with Isandla Institute since the early days 10 years ago. Over the years, the organisation has benefited from her expertise, energy, commitment and support.

On behalf of the Board, I wish to extend my appreciation to the donors for their continued support to Isandla Institute, as well as to staff for their hard work and loyalty in the year that has passed. May they continue to bring their passion and skills to bear on the work of Isandla Institute, in the interest of further advancing the right to the city.

Frank Meintjies

# Director's Report

In reflecting on the 2008/09 financial year, four words come to mind: **politics, purpose, people and partnerships.**

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**a**s far as politics are concerned, 2008 was undoubtedly a year of political turmoil, which to a large extent fuelled institutional paralysis. The (forced) resignation of former President Mbeki in September 2008 was obviously not the beginning of this turmoil, but it undoubtedly served to unnerve many South Africans, within and outside of the ruling party. Isandla Institute certainly felt the effects of the political upheaval as tremors reverberated across government departments, provincial administrations and municipalities. As a minimum, being preoccupied with making sense of

the new reality meant that few had the time, energy and possibly the courage to tread new, potentially contentious, areas of work. Others were simply not interested in supporting the work initiated by their predecessors, who were considered political rivals, regardless of party affiliation. It is regrettable and sad when petty politics and personality clashes stifle initiative, reason and leadership.

One of the positively anticipated changes was the lifting of the silence around HIV/AIDS. Certainly, through Minister Barbara Hogan the South African government reflected a level of positive assertiveness on HIV/AIDS not witnessed before. This has undoubtedly strengthened the health-oriented response to the epidemic and reinvigorated AIDS activism. As Isandla Institute's interest is in promoting a broader conceptualisation of HIV/AIDS, one that locates HIV/AIDS at the centre of settlement planning and development, we are still waiting to see evidence of the necessary paradigm shift that will propel a more holistic response to the epidemic.

In some instances, the political and/or bureaucratic paralysis preceded the demise of President Mbeki and his administration, suggesting that opposing political and ideological forces were fighting for supremacy. The



review of local government, initiated in late 2007 by the then Department of Provincial and Local Government under the leadership of former Minister Sydney Mufamadi, has still not seen the light of day, despite alleged repeated efforts by the department to resuscitate it.

Likewise, the long-awaited revision of the urban development framework has been stalled as a result of shifting political forces and interests. The process, initiated following the 2006 update of the National Spatial Development Plan, has primarily been an internal government policy process, with little if any public engagement or broader process of consultation. Following the 'Polokwane moment', the rural agenda has gained ascendancy within the ruling party, making it

ideologically no longer palatable to pursue an explicit urban agenda – at least not before the rural agenda was more clearly defined and elevated.

As an organisation that purposefully seeks to be adaptive, responsive and supportive of internal change agents, dynamics in the external (in this case, particularly political and institutional) environment do impact on Isandla Institute's work and activities. Our programmes are instilled with a strong sense of purpose and it is the organisation's ambition to make a qualitative, meaningful difference by shifting paradigms and advancing a human-rights based practice through collaborative engagement. This is by no means an easy ambition. Our HIV/AIDS in the City programme, for example, has first-hand experience of how challenging it is to move from changed

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mindsets to a fundamental shift in institutional perspectives and approaches, in policy as well as practical orientation.

While we are cognisant that a strong sense of ambition and purpose guides our work and strategic choices, we simultaneously present our capabilities and results with modesty. After all, Isandla Institute is a small organisation, with limited resources and capacity. This makes it even more pertinent to be reflective and continuously review our intentions, work and results – all of this, it goes without saying, within a dynamic environment.

Our relatively small footprint as an organisation adds a pragmatic reason to Isandla Institute's belief in the value of working collaboratively and in partnership with other organisations. In the period reporting on here, the HIV/AIDS in the City programme actively pursued partnerships with the Department of Provincial and





Local Government (dplg) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) to co-host a national conference on good practice and lessons from municipalities in pursuing an integrated response to HIV/AIDS and local planning and development. The intention was to inspire more innovative and comprehensive local government responses to HIV/AIDS by profiling such examples and lessons and by publicly acknowledging good practice through a national awards ceremony. Unfortunately, the partnerships did not materialise as the organisations approached were unable to commit the necessary capacity and time. Other examples of a collaborative approach, also in the HIV/AIDS in the City programme, include the partnership with the Western Cape branch of the South African Planning Institute to co-host a dialogue for planners on HIV/AIDS and human settlements and the joint project with the Centre for Municipal Research and Advice to develop an HIV/AIDS strategy for the Greater Thubutse Municipality.

Both the Land and Local Government programmes pursued partnership projects that did not materialise. The Land Programme found itself presented with an opportunity to work with the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), but due to reasons internal to COHRE the project was halted. In the case of the Local

Government programme, Isandla Institute sought to renew the very successful partnership with Strategies for Change in coordinating and facilitating the second Governance Summer School. The inaugural Governance Summer School in 2008 was a flagship project of the Western Cape Department of Local Government and Housing, in partnership with its Eastern and Northern

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Cape counterparts. Due to shifting political interests in the course of 2008, the Department eventually decided to withdraw the tender and not to pursue the second GSS.

Towards the end of the reporting period, both programmes were presented with opportunities for partnerships that proved more successful. The Local Government programme has embarked on a joint initiative with the Citizenship Development Research Centre, an international network of researchers and activists focusing

on citizenship, participation and accountability, to co-host an international workshop for pioneers in participatory local development, which is due to take place in Cape Town in November 2009. Similarly, the Land programme started a project in partnership with PDG on behalf of the South African Cities Network (SACN), exploring how municipal rates policies can be utilised to advance the access of the urban poor to land, although implementation only takes place in the next reporting period.

Finally, the Development Dialogues project, now in its fourth year, continues to be co-hosted with the Open Society Foundation for South Africa.

Networks and networking are equally important as partnerships. The HIV/AIDS in Local Government Learning Network (Halogen), which Isandla Institute has coordinated since its inception in 2006, shifted its identity from a loose network of like-minded researchers and organisations (including the dplg and SALGA) to a more



inclusive and more conscious knowledge sharing and learning network.

By late 2008 the Good Governance Learning Network (GGLN) went through a difficult time as the appointed host of the network experienced a capacity crisis. Isandla Institute's belief in networking on collaborative development, combined with the recognition that a vibrant civil society sector (which itself is networked and collaborative in its orientation) is an essential feature of a healthy democracy propelled it to make itself available to host the GGLN until the end of the grant period in 2009. Being the Secretariat of the GGLN, recently confirmed for the next three-year period, has been a very valuable learning experience as it provides Isandla Institute with a bird's eye view into peer organisations that are committed to deepened local democracy and equitable development.

Returning to the theme of partnerships, it goes without saying that partnerships with organisations supporting Isandla Institute's mission and ambition by providing much-needed financial resources are vital to our continued existence. We are deeply appreciative of the continued support from the CS Mott Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, GTZ's Local Government Support Programme and the Open Society Foundation

for South Africa. In Isandla Institute's experience, these organisations demonstrate a true commitment to partnership, trusting Isandla Institute to use its discretion in making allocation decisions.

Last but by no means least, it is the people that make Isandla Institute and enable its mission and intentions to become real. I am grateful to Letitia Manter, Stacey-Leigh Joseph, Terence Smith and our more recent addition Bonginkosi Masiwa for their commitment, enthusiasm, team spirit and professionalism.

I am also indebted to the Board of Directors who, as a collective and individually, have continued to provide invaluable support and wisdom to the organisation and to me personally. Particular mention ought to be made of Sue Parnell, who resigned from the Board in January 2009 after 10 years of active service. Her voice, cheerfulness and wealth of knowledge will be sorely missed, although we are grateful that the relationship will not be severed, merely reconfigured.

As we celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009, it is our collective commitment to continue advancing the right to the city to the best of our abilities.

Mirjam van Donk

# Vision and Purpose

Isandla Institute's mission is to act as a public interest think-tank with a primary focus on fostering just, equitable and democratic urban settlements.

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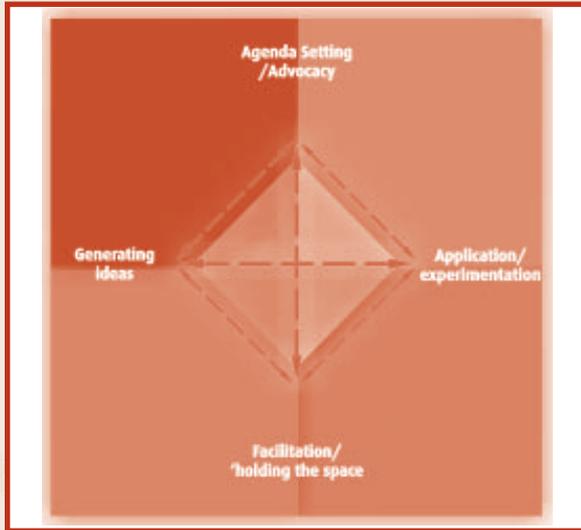
**t**his is advanced through innovative research and advocacy interventions. Isandla Institute's development practice dictates that it functions as an experimental 'hot house' where policy ideas about the reduction of urban inequality, poverty, racism and social exclusion are nurtured. By design, Isandla Institute works with multiple partners to guarantee that new ideas are disseminated, tested and remoulded so as to succeed in solving problems in the 'real' world. At the same time, Isandla Institute

works closely with academic institutions to ensure that its applied policy focus is rooted in robust knowledge systems.

Conceptually, our work revolves around 'the right to the city' and, more particularly, how poor people in South Africa can claim and enjoy that right. While this conceptualisation undoubtedly demands strong, progressive civil society action and engagement with the state, Isandla Institute's efforts are mostly oriented towards the role of the state in this regard (for example, with respect to policy, planning, programmes, institutional orientation and organisational capabilities). More specifically, our programmes share a particular interest in, and focus on, the developmental local state and its roles, responsibilities and overall functioning within a system of intergovernmental relations.

The diagram below summarises Isandla Institute's approach in relation to the four core programmatic areas of work that the organisation engages in (i.e. Land, Culture, HIV/AIDS and Local Government).

As the diagram depicts, Isandla Institute views itself as a think tank, one that generates ideas on the basis of research and an understanding of the context



(i.e. knowledge-based). It also recognises the importance of the practical application of knowledge and ideas, experimentation and the development of appropriate methodologies, processes, tools and instruments, particularly for development professionals (especially those working in the public sector). On the basis of the generation of ideas and the application of knowledge/ ideas, the organisation engages in two activities/ processes: on the one hand, it engages in the facilitation of engagement between stakeholders. Isandla Institute sees its role as ‘holding the space’, where meaningful reflection, debate and engagement can happen. On the other hand, the organisation engages in advocacy and agenda setting. All these processes are inter-connected and mutually reinforcing.



# Programmes

Since its inception in late 1998, Isandla Institute has rapidly established itself as a leading policy organisation in the field of local government and urban development.

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**i**ts work has mainly centred around two sets of intervention: policy research and evaluation, and policy and strategy formulation.

Poverty reduction has been at the core of Isandla Institute's mission. More specifically, this ambition has translated into various thematic foci of the organisation's programmes and interventions.

Isandla Institute's work revolves around four thematic areas: land, culture, HIV/AIDS and developmental local government.

## Isandla Institute's programmes and projects

- Contribute to land use planning and management systems that enhance the right to the city for current and future residents, with particular reference to spatial integration, social inclusion, poverty reduction, equity and redistribution, environmental sustainability and urban efficiency;
- Promote a clear and coherent cultural perspective to urban planning that will ultimately lead to positive changes with respect to the current realities of exclusion and racism in the city;
- Promote an understanding of the developmental dimensions of HIV and AIDS in the urban context and provide the intellectual and strategic tools to develop an appropriate, comprehensive response by the developmental state;
- Contribute to the consolidation of developmental local government in South Africa, based on an enhanced understanding of the successes, challenges and opportunities in this regard; and,

- Contribute to public dialogue, knowledge sharing and building partnerships for development.

## HIV/AIDS in the City

The HIV/AIDS in the City programme seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the specific factors in particular urban localities, specifically urban informal settlements, that contribute to the spread of HIV and that influence the coping capabilities of individuals, communities and local government institutions when affected by HIV/AIDS. The notion of sustainable and integrated human settlements provides a useful lens to further unpack the developmental dimensions and implications of HIV/AIDS, and to strategically locate HIV/AIDS responses at the centre of development.

The programme has identified local government as having a key role to play by virtue of its legal mandate and responsibilities to provide democratic and accountable government, ensure sustainable service provision, promote social and economic development, promote a safe and healthy environment and enhance community involvement in local governance. Local government is also responsible for overcoming and addressing the fragmented and divided apartheid city by contributing to

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the development of sustainable and integrated human settlements.

### Objectives

The objectives of the HIV/AIDS in the City programme are:

- To engage in policy research and advocacy to ensure an effective response to HIV/AIDS in urban planning and development (particularly through the lens of sustainable human settlements) that engages with the developmental dimensions of the epidemic (i.e. vulnerability reduction, impact mitigation, and strengthening of capabilities and organisational systems);
- To support local government in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS, with particular reference to sustainable human settlements planning, development and management;

- To facilitate and maintain networks and partnerships with relevant organisations and individuals; and,
- To raise awareness on the developmental dimensions and implications of HIV/AIDS among urban planning professionals and the general public.

## Outcomes

### PoCityVity: A story of survival and belonging

In 2008, one of the most exciting projects, both for the Programme and the organisation, resulted in the production of Isandla Institute's documentary titled *PoCityVity: A story of survival and belonging*. Visual images and personal stories can convey certain messages in much more powerful ways than

presentations by professionals. The intention was to produce a short (10-12 minute) video on HIV/AIDS and the built environment, to be used as an audiovisual tool during workshops, presentations and lectures. The material generated was so rich that it proved

difficult to compress all the information into less than 25 minutes. The DVD is a proud product of the programme, yet again illustrating that the programme is innovative and cutting edge.

*PoCityVity* was officially launched in Cape Town on 21 August, followed by a launch in Gauteng in November. Speaking at the Cape Town launch, Zackie Achmat commended Isandla Institute on both the content and the medium. He recognised that the response to HIV/AIDS needs to be embedded in all sectors and that the video provides a valuable tool and talking point for this message. The documentary has generated a fair amount of media interest, resulting in interviews on national TV and radio stations and publicity in print media.

The documentary is meant to be used in workshops, lectures and other public engagements to facilitate discussion about HIV/AIDS and what constitutes an



appropriate response, particularly for planners and other built environment professionals. Isandla Institute has made effective use of the documentary to date, showing it to a variety of audiences, including policy makers, planners, municipal health officials, HIV Coordinators, regional (Africa) affiliates of Shack Dwellers International and researchers and other stakeholders affiliated to the HIV/AIDS and Local Government Learning Network (Halogen).

### **Municipal case study: Pilot of the Guide on HIV/AIDS and Sustainable Settlements**

In 2007, Isandla Institute produced the document *HIV/AIDS and Sustainable Human Settlements Development in South Africa: An Introductory Guide for Municipal Practitioners*. It intended to pilot the Guide in one municipality in 2008 and document lessons learned from this process for broader dissemination. Following a stakeholder dialogue on the Guide with senior housing officials and IDP managers from various urban municipalities across the country (in February 2008), the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro (Port Elizabeth) expressed interest and commitment in the pilot. However, it proved impossible to finalise and implement the pilot, in large part due to the political turbulence that characterised much of 2008 before and after the resignation of

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then-President Thabo Mbeki, which did not leave municipalities unaffected.

During the first quarter of 2009, it was decided to prioritise the pilot of the Guide as one of the main projects for the HIV/AIDS in the City Programme in 2009. Thus, the Programme engaged in more detailed conceptualisation and planning for the pilot, which is likely to be implemented in the second and third quarter of 2009.

### **Municipal workshops**

Municipalities, and in particular municipal planners, IDP managers and housing officials, are a key target group for the HIV/AIDS in the City Programme. The main objective of the engagement with municipalities (and other local government stakeholders) is to support local government in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS, with particular

reference to human settlements planning, development and management. To achieve this, the Programme has sought to facilitate a number of municipal workshops and presentations in the period under review, including with the City of Johannesburg and the City of Cape Town. However, the political turbulence that characterised most of the year seemed to stifle new initiatives in

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municipalities. As a result, the Programme struggled to get firm commitments from municipalities that had previously expressed in principle interest in hosting such a workshop, like Ekurhuleni and Mangaung.

A different kind of municipal engagement emerged when the Centre for Municipal Research and Advice (CMRA) approached Isandla Institute with the request to part-

ner on the process of developing a HIV/AIDS strategy for the Local AIDS Council of the Greater Thubatse Municipality. The process took place between November 2008 and March 2009, culminating in the adoption of the strategy.

### **Stakeholder consultations**

The Programme also identifies planners and other built environment professionals in private practice as well as NGOs and research institutions as key actors in shaping the urban built environment. Thus, it seeks to facilitate at least two consultations per annum to engage relevant stakeholder on its work on sustainable human settlements. In the period under review, five such events took place including engagements with ARG Design, a small yet influential firm of architects and urban design specialists based in Cape Town, members of the Western Cape branch of the South African Planning Institute (SAPI), and the Northern District Town Planning Division of the City of Cape Town. The programme also convened a city-wide dialogue with planners in public and private practice in Cape Town, which was addressed by Professor Rodney Harber. Lastly, in February 2009, the Social Change Assistance Trust (SCAT) invited Isandla Institute to provide an input on how organisations working on HIV/AIDS can effectively engage with local government and what

the links are between HIV/AIDS and local government service delivery at its seminar on HIV prevention models. Notwithstanding SCAT's rural focus, this was a good opportunity to extend our networks and to raise more awareness around the linkages between HIV/AIDS and local government.

## Halogen

In 2008, the HIV/AIDS and Local Government Research Network was renamed the HIV/AIDS and Local Government Learning Network (Halogen) to denote a shift in approach and participants. The approach now involves hosting four learning events per annum, which are open to Halogen members (mainly organisations with a research interest in HIV/AIDS and local government, but also involved in programmatic and/or strategic support, as well as the dplg - recently renamed the Department for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs - and SALGA), municipal practitioners and other relevant experts (depending on the theme). Since its inception in 2006, Isandla Institute acts as the coordinator of the network.

During the period under review, learning events reflected on the following themes:

- *Local AIDS Councils: How can they be more effective?*
- *Vulnerability in the context of HIV/AIDS*
- *Mainstreaming local government responses to HIV/AIDS: The role of technical support agencies*
- *The challenges and dilemmas of intergovernmental and inter sectoral coordination for a municipal HIV/AIDS response*



The latter event, combined with a one-day strategic planning session, was hosted by Isandla Institute in November 2008, while other events were hosted by SALGA/CMRA, MRC and the dplg respectively.

A website has been developed where relevant material related to Halogen (including an annual report) and its activities is posted ([www.halogen.org.za](http://www.halogen.org.za)).

## **National conference/seminar**

During the period under review the Programme engaged the Department of Provincial and Local Government (dplg) with the proposal to jointly host a conference on municipal good practice and lessons in integrating HIV/AIDS into planning and service delivery. An important component of the proposed conference was an awards ceremony to recognise good practice in this regard and to inspire municipalities to follow suit. Unfortunately, it proved unfeasible to secure the desired partnership, with the dplg (and subsequently SALGA) being unable to commit largely due to capacity constraints. It was eventually decided to postpone the national conference to February 2010.

## **Policy development**

Further evidence that the programme is gaining profile and a credible reputation can be found in the request from the Gauteng Department of Housing to assist in the development of a housing policy on HIV/AIDS (or, alternatively, advise on what an appropriate response would entail). In July 2008, Isandla Institute submitted a proposal to this effect, which has a strong focus on putting in place a consultative process around the development of such a policy. Subsequent engagements with the Department suggested that there was a keen

interest in the proposal, but again the political dynamics and uncertainties characterising most of 2008 seem to have stalled a final decision on this.

The Transformation Unit in the national Department of Housing (now the Department of Human Settlements) requested a meeting in March 2009 to discuss our work on HIV/AIDS and sustainable human settlements. Isandla Institute was asked to provide content and strategic support towards a national summit (50-60 people) on HIV/AIDS in Housing, which is meant to culminate into a national strategic framework. This work clearly represents a strategic opportunity for Isandla Institute to make a meaningful impact on national policy development, in which the intended process with the province of Gauteng could be absorbed.

## **Papers, articles and lectures**

In an effort to raise awareness on the developmental dimensions and implications of HIV/AIDS among urban planning professionals and the general public, the Programme sets out to write articles and papers and to present conference papers and lectures.

The Policy Researcher produced articles for the July issue of *Isandla Development Communiqué*, the November

issue of *Delivery* and co-authored an article for the Community Law Centre's *Local Government Bulletin* (November issue). Furthermore, the Policy Researcher and Director co-authored a paper for the international journal *Open House*, which was published in the November/December issue.

The Policy Researcher also presented a paper at the 2008 Conference of the South African Planning Institute (SAPI), which took place in April, and subsequently received the award for best paper in the category/session 'Confronting current challenges'. Such recognition of Isandla Institute's work on HIV/AIDS and sustainable human settlements is obviously encouraging.

The Programme also delivers academic lectures in an effort to reach upcoming urban professionals and young researchers. For the past four years, the Programme delivers a module in the urban planning Masters programme at UCT. In August 2008 the Director gave a lecture on HIV/AIDS and urban food (in)security at UCT, followed by a module to mid-career professionals who attended the Spring School for Planners at the University of Pretoria in September.

## Other

A number of other initiatives and processes attest to Isandla Institute's profile and expertise on HIV/AIDS in the urban context. For example, the UK Department for International Development (DfID) has approached Isandla Institute to discuss its approach to HIV/AIDS in the context of DfID's review of its health programme in South Africa. DfID currently provides a significant amount of support to HIV/AIDS programmes via the Health Ministry, but is interested in expanding the focus of its support programmes to HIV/AIDS beyond health. Our work on HIV/AIDS and sustainable human settlements proved particularly appealing and initial indications are that our approach is helping to shape the new approach. While this is unlikely to result in direct programme support for the HIV/AIDS Programme, it is encouraging that our work may well influence the shape and content of DfID's future programme.

The Director currently serves on the Benchmark Advisory Committee of the Centre for Municipal Research and Advice (CMRA). The purpose of the 2-year benchmarking project is to document good practice on HIV/AIDS mainstreaming by municipalities and to share these good examples and lessons learned amongst participating municipalities (and beyond).

## Land

Post-apartheid urban spatial planning has not managed to overcome the legacy of apartheid planning, tending to perpetuate and reinforce forms of inequality, separation and urban sprawl. The Land programme is designed to contribute to land use planning and management systems that enhance the right to the city for current and future residents, with particular reference to spatial integration, social inclusion, poverty reduction, equity and redistribution, environmental sustainability and urban efficiency. The programme addresses this through advocacy for access to urban land for the poor as both a means and a precondition for realising the right to the city.

## Objectives

Isandla Institute's Land programme is designed to:

- Promote planning frameworks that enhance the right to the city for current and future residents;
- Contribute to land use planning and management systems that enhance spatial integration, social inclusion, poverty reduction, equity and redistribution, environmental sustainability and urban efficiency; and,
- Examine urban land restitution and access to urban land for the poor as both a means and a precondition for realising the right to the city.

## Outcomes

Isandla Institute initially hoped to pursue its Land programme through a partnership with Urban LandMark, which would allow the organisation to appoint a Policy Researcher: Urban Land. Unfortunately, the partnership did not materialise, which delayed the appointment of the Policy Researcher. Despite this, Isandla Institute has pursued its interest in enhancing access to urban land for the poor and bringing about more integrated and equitable cities through a variety of initiatives and activities.

## Municipal perspectives on Informal Land Markets

Isandla Institute conducted the project *Municipal perspectives on informal land markets* for ULM, which culminated in a set of proposals for further conceptualisation, advocacy and technical support in the City of Cape Town. However, due to a change in ULM's operational focus, the proposals could not be implemented. In February 2009 ULM approached Isandla Institute once again, this time with the request to submit a proposal for a project on how municipal rates policy can be used to make urban land markets work better for the poor. Isandla Institute submitted a proposal, which included a review of existing policies and instruments,



an assessment of current practice in a number of municipalities, a review of global practice and a round table discussion with key stakeholders. Unfortunately, ULM deprioritised the work on municipal rates policy, which meant that the project could not be implemented. Fortunately, the South African Cities Network (SACN) also expressed interest in the project and has requested Isandla Institute to implement a scaled down version of the original proposal, aimed at its members, in the period May-August 2009.

*The Department seeks to develop policy guidelines that will ultimately make housing allocation in the province more consistent, fair and transparent.*

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Another opportunity to pursue this objective arose when the international NGO Centre of Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) contacted Isandla Institute in June 2008 with the request to consider co-partnering on a research project on housing in Cape Town. However, before the proposal could be considered by COHRE, the international Deputy Director who had initiated the approach to Isandla Institute unexpectedly left the organisation. As

a result, the proposal was never discussed within COHRE and the project could not take off.

Towards the end of 2008 the Director was invited by the Western Cape Department of Housing to serve on a reference group on municipal housing allocation. The purpose of the reference group is to help guide research and policy development regarding municipal housing allocation in the province. Recent research conducted by the Department revealed that there is no uniform approach to housing allocation in municipalities across the province. Current practice brings to light the tensions embedded in national policy between housing allocation on the basis of beneficiary waiting lists and approaches targeting communities for housing allocation (e.g. through upgrading, relocation, etc.). This reality raises complex questions related to administrative justice, fairness and transparency, amongst others. The Department seeks to develop policy guidelines that will ultimately make housing allocation in the province more consistent, fair and transparent.

### **The tipping point: Urban development in Africa**

The World Institute for Development Economics Research of the United Nations University (UNU-WIDER)

asked Isandla Institute to coordinate the logistics for the regional workshop 'Beyond the Tipping Point: African Development in an Urban World', which took place on 26-28 June 2008 in Cape Town. This was a regional (Africa) event within the context of a global project, directed by Jo Beall, Ravi Kanbur and Basudeb Guha-Khasnobis. The workshop brought together about 40 researchers and practitioners from across the world. Prior to the request to coordinate the logistics for the event, the Director had submitted an abstract which was selected for presentation. She presented on '*Claiming a foothold in the city: Urban land markets and the poor in South Africa*', drawing largely on the 2007 study conducted by Isandla Institute (in partnership with Stephen Berrisford Consulting) for Urban LandMark. The event provided a good opportunity to profile Isandla Institute and network with leading academics and researchers working on (South) Africa.

### **Sudnet Africa**

Attesting to the fact that Isandla Institute is recognised for combining

expertise in urban development with strong logistical and events management competencies, the organisation was approached to coordinate another regional event in February 2009. On 17-19 February 2009, UN-Habitat, SIDA and the African Centre for Cities hosted the Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net) Workshop in Cape Town. The purpose of the event was to discuss the role and functioning of SUD-Net, a global knowledge network on sustainable urban development initiated by UN-Habitat, and to establish SUD-Net Africa. The workshop was attended by

just over 40 participants from nine (largely Anglophone) African countries, representing municipalities, planning institutions and associations, NGOs and academic institutions. It culminated in the formal launch of the African chapter of SUD-Net. Like the UNU-Wider workshop, this event created an opportunity for Isandla Institute not only to demonstrate its logistical coordination abilities, but also, and importantly, to learn from and network with other regional stakeholders.



## Local Government

The Local Government programme seeks to contribute to the consolidation of developmental local government in South Africa. It is known for its dynamic contribution to an enhanced understanding of the successes and challenges in operationalising the notion of 'developmental local government'. The programme seeks to address this in two ways: by developing, sharing and promoting cutting edge insights and ideas on the purpose and realities of developmental local government in South Africa and, secondly, by creating spaces for reflection, consultation and learning for local government practitioners and researchers.

### Objectives

Isandla Institute's Local Government programme aims:

- To create spaces for reflection, consultation and learning on the purpose and realities of local government in South Africa, with specific reference to urban local governance and planning, for local government practitioners and researchers; and,
- To develop, share and promote cutting edge insights and ideas on the purpose and realities of developmental local government in South Africa, which

includes seeking opportunities for direct engagement with the local government review process.

### Outcomes

The key projects and activities that have contributed to this programme include the Governance Summer School and the Good Governance Learning Network (GGLN) (with the possibility of a stronger regional focus through LogoLink).

### Governance Summer School

The inaugural Governance Summer School (GSS) took place between 24-28 March 2008. The GSS, which brought about 150 senior municipal and provincial government leaders from the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape for a week-long intensive programme of learning, reflection and facilitation, was a flagship project of the Western Cape Department for Local Government, hosted in partnership with its Eastern and Northern Cape counterparts. Isandla Institute was responsible for the conceptualization, coordination and implementation of the GSS. While the event took place at the end of the 2008 financial year, the project spilled over into the 2009 financial year as a number of products and processes were completed in subsequent

months. These include a report, a case study of leadership in Mquma Municipality, an audio-visual record of the plenary presentations at the GSS and a 10-minute summary/promotional video of the event.

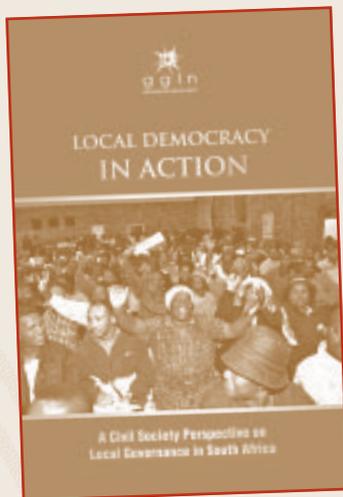
Participants rated the event very highly, both as a space for self-reflection and learning and as an opportunity for networking. This allowed the three provincial departments to agree to continue the partnership through the hosting of an annual GSS. In July 2008, the Western Cape Department issued a tender for the conceptualisation, coordination and implementation of the second GSS, to be held in 2009. For undisclosed reasons, the Department decided to reissue the tender after the closing date for proposals. Isandla Institute resubmitted its proposal in September. In the intervening period, the national turmoil within the ruling party had come to a head in the Western Cape resulting in the resignation of the Premier. His perceived political allies, including the MEC for Local Government and Housing, the political driver for the GSS, were subsequently stripped of their duties. In December, the Department decided to cancel the tender. The Eastern Cape Department of Local Government initially appeared interested to take over the responsibility for hosting the 2009 GSS, but to date nothing has come of it. It

appears that the political uncertainty characterising the period until the national and provincial government elections in May 2009 has led to the shelving of the project.

In anticipation of a favourable decision to coordinate the 2009 GSS, Isandla Institute began the process of recruiting a Policy Researcher for the Local Government Programme. In spite of the GSS falling away, the leadership theme is still considered appropriate for Isandla Institute, particularly if one accepts the critical importance of leadership (at all levels and in all sectors) for accelerated service delivery, equitable local development and good governance. The importance of leadership in local government has also been recognised by national stakeholders, like the dplg, SALGA and the GTZ, as a missing ingredient in current policy and support programmes. Currently, the Local Government Programme is in the process of further conceptualising its approach, which will inform future work.

### **Good Governance Learning Network**

Bonginkosi Masiwa joined Isandla Institute as Policy Researcher: Local Government on 1 January 2009. His arrival coincided with a crisis affecting the Good Governance Learning Network (GGLN), a national network



of organisations working on local governance. In December 2008, the then-host of the GGLN (the Foundation for Contemporary Research, FCR), indicated that it no longer had the capacity to continue hosting the GGLN. In January 2009, the responsibility to host the GGLN in the interim period (until December 2009) was awarded to Isandla Institute. More recently,

in July 2009, Isandla Institute was announced as the host of the organisation for the new grant period (2010-2012).

By hosting the GGLN Secretariat, Isandla Institute hopes to play a meaningful role in supporting and strengthening the network and the quality of exchange amongst members. It also allows Isandla Institute to gain much better insight into the work of other member organisations, which opens up opportunities for collaboration. In a more indirect and unexpected

way, it has also opened possibilities for regional networking and engagement, through LogoLink.

### **Logolink**

LogoLink is an international network of organisations and practitioners working on participatory local democracy. It was initiated nearly 10 years ago by the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) in Brighton. The international secretariat moved to Polis in Brazil in 2006. Previously, FCR also hosted LogoLink Southern Africa by virtue of it hosting the GGLN. With the GGLN Secretariat moving to Isandla Institute, Isandla Institute will also take over the coordination of LogoLink Southern Africa.

### **Other**

The Director served on the panel of national adjudicators for the VUNA Awards for Municipal Excellence 2008 by invitation of the Minister for Provincial and Local Government, This was the second year the Director was asked to serve on the adjudication panel. The panel has given the Department for Provincial and Local Government detailed feedback on how to improve the scoring and adjudication process to ensure better and more fair results.

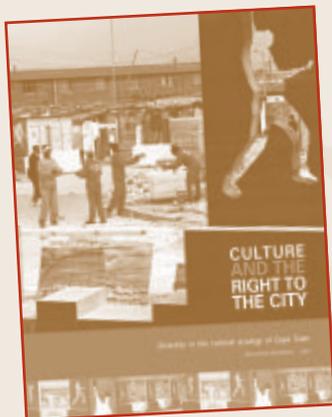
## Culture

The culture programme's interest lies in the role of culture in urban regeneration and the contribution that a cultural perspective can make towards social inclusion and inequality. A key challenge of urban planning and development which the programme seeks to address is to ensure that the urban interventions contribute to a vibrant cultural life and an enhanced sense of identity and belonging.

## Objectives

Isandla Institute's Culture programme aims:

- To conceptualise and promote a coherent cultural perspective to urban planning, with particular reference to Cape Town, aimed at enhancing social inclusion and cultural justice and overcoming entrenched racism; and,
- To develop an informed and constructive critique of current cultural pro-



*A key challenge of urban planning and development which the programme seeks to address is to ensure that the urban interventions contribute to a vibrant cultural life and an enhanced sense of identity and belonging.*



grammes and interventions, with particular reference to Cape Town, in relation to the international and local context around culture and urban social change.

## Outcomes

In the period under review, the organisation was faced with a funding gap to support all its intended programmes and activities. Thus, at a strategic planning discussion in May 2008, the Board of Directors decided that the Culture in the City Programme would receive the least priority. This decision was arrived at based on an assessment of the funding environment (i.e. to what extent it would be realistic to secure sustained funding for specific programmes) and an assessment of past work



and organisational profile in relation to the programmatic areas, amongst others. In addition, the Cape Town Partnership had recently initiated a similar programme (employing the Contract Researcher who had done the initial work on culture for Isandla Institute in 2007), which made it less pressing for Isandla Institute to position itself as a leading actor in this regard.

In 2007 Isandla Institute conducted research on culture as a (undervalued and underutilised) tool for urban regeneration. This included an assessment of the current cultural environment in Cape Town and documenting nearly 50 case studies of local, national and international cultural activities and organisations. In 2008, the research and findings were published in the discussion paper *Culture and the Right to the City: Diversity in the Cultural Ecology of Cape Town*. The report presents a coherent argument for a more comprehensive approach to culture in urban regeneration and is a valuable resource on innovative practice in communities.

*The purpose of the meeting was to create a space for leading development professionals in the city to debate and reflect on this very painful episode in South Africa's recent history.*



In June 2008 Isandla Institute hosted a Round Table on the topic *Whose right is it anyway? Communal violence and deprivation in the land of plenty*. This was in response to the xenophobic attacks that erupted in urban areas across South Africa in May 2008, which shocked the country. The purpose of the meeting was to create a space for leading development professionals in the city to debate and reflect on this very painful episode in South Africa's recent history.

## Holding the space

"Holding the space" is a phrase that sums up Isandla Institute's broader engagement initiatives and it infuses and characterises all its programmes. It also has a wider application, as it is about bringing stakeholders together and creating a platform for discussion, enlightenment and engagement. Isandla Institute aims to infuse new ideas into the conversation by bringing its networks and partnerships together. It is not just networking for the sake of it... it is an attempt to influence the content of the debate by infusing those networks with ideas and learning.

A number of programmes and initiatives fall into this wider category.

### Development Dialogues:

The Development Dialogues project, initiated in 2005, gained further momentum as the frequency increased to five events per annum. These public debates on topical development issues are co-hosted with the Open Society Foundation for South Africa, which provides funding for the project. Each Development Dialogue is reflected in a monograph, which captures the reflections of the panellists and the main discussion points. The monograph

is published in hard copy and on our website. In addition, Isandla Institute commissions an op-ed article on the discussion which is disseminated to the media.

The following Development Dialogues were convened in the reporting period:

- *The War Against Poverty: Changing Tactics or Business as Usual?*  
Date: 17 April 2008  
Speakers: Elroy Paulus & Michael Aliber
- *Waterwise: Advancing life, equity and sustainable resource use*  
Date: 12 June 08  
Speakers: Sipho Mosai & Laila Smith
- *Gender transformation: Is there a role for men?*  
Date: 7 August 2008  
Speakers: Yvette Abrahams, Mbuyiselo Botha & Robert Morrell
- *Speaking truth to power: Politics and jurisprudence in a young democracy*  
Date: 6 November 2008  
Speakers: Rhoda Kadalie, Dennis Davis & Somadoda Fikeni

- *The shape of things to come: Does the development state need a planning ministry?*

Date: 2 April 2009 (postponed from 19 March to accommodate speakers)

Speakers: Omano Edigheji & Jeremy Cronin

### **Academic teaching and publishing:**

Isandla Institute has a track record of feeding its policy and practice into academic teaching and publishing. Over the years, linkages have been established with UCT, the University of Stellenbosch and the University of the Witwatersrand and the organisation has participated in courses for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Academic teaching and publishing is an important aspect of Isandla Institute's work and identity.

### **Isandla Development Communiqué:**

The monthly e-newsletter Isandla Development Communiqué serves as a key source of information about Isandla Institute's work. It is also used to stimulate reflection and debate on critical development issues and trends.

### **Website:**

The website, which is due to be relaunched in Septem-

ber 2009, serves as an important tool for the dissemination of Isandla Institute's work and policy ideas.

### **Project and Events Management:**

Due to its logistical strengths and developmental focus, Isandla

Institute is often contracted by government, local and international organisations to coordinate projects or organise events of a developmental nature (i.e. conferences, seminars and workshops). During the period under review, The World Institute for Development Economics Research of the United Nations University (UNU-WIDER) asked Isandla Institute to coordinate the logistics for the regional workshop 'Beyond the Tipping Point: African Development in an Urban World', which took place on 26-28 June 2008 in Cape Town. The organisation was approached to coordinate the Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net) Workshop in February 2009 in Cape Town, on behalf of UN-Habitat, SIDA and the African Centre for Cities.



# Staff



**Mirjam van Donk**  
Director



**Stacey-Leigh Joseph**  
Policy Researcher: HIV/AIDS in  
the City



**Letitia Manter**  
Senior Administrator



**Bonginkosi Masiwa**  
Policy Researcher: Local  
Government / Interim GGLN  
Coordinator (since January 2009)



**Terence Smith**  
Contract Researcher  
(until September 2008)

**Azwihangwisi  
Netshikulwe**

Azwihangwisi was an  
intern between August  
and November 2008.

# Board of Directors

The Board of Directors plays a very important role in guiding the organisation, providing oversight and supporting the Director.

During the reporting period, two additional members were brought onto the Board of Directors, while one long-standing member resigned after nearly ten years of service. Ashoek Adhikari, a lawyer by training and currently heading up the legal department of a large media consortium in South Africa, joined the Board in July, effectively taking up the space left by Khaya Ngema who resigned in the first quarter of 2008. Lechesa Tsenoli, long-standing Member of Parliament with particular interest in local government, filled the space vacated by Sue Parnell in January 2009.



**Frank Meintjies**  
Chairperson



**Ashoek Adhikari**  
(since July 2008)



**Mokena Makeka**



**Edgar Pieterse**

**Lechesa Tsenoli**  
(since January 2009)



**Sue Parnell**  
(until January 2009)



**Sinazo Sibisi**

## Board bios

**Frank Meintjies** is a co-founder of Isandla Institute. He has worked in trade unions, government and management consulting. He is currently working as manager of a grants programme in Soul City. With an M.SC in Urban Development Planning, he has maintained an interest in research and studies around human settlements with a focus on informal settlements, as well as topics such as participation, democratic governance and inclusion.

**Ashoek Adhikari** is currently a General Manager responsible for Corporate and Legal Services and Innovation at Media24. He is an attorney by profession and previously practised in Cape Town for his own account. He left practice and took up various positions in The Provincial Government of the Western Cape in the portfolios of environmental and cultural affairs, social services and poverty alleviation and as the Chief Operating Officer in the Office of the Premier. He has remained active in the governance of the legal profession, and is currently the chairperson of the audit and risk committee of the Attorneys Fidelity Fund and is a member of the Joint Oversight Committee for the attorneys profession.

**Mokena Makeka** founded Makeka Design Laboratory in 2002, literally months after graduating with a distinction in architecture. In 2004 he received their first major



commission – to design a series of railway SAPS stations. When the first of these to reach completion, Retreat Station, was opened, two national ministers attended and the police station was acknowledged as a leading example in architectural design. In 2007, this project received the CIA award of merit. Current prestigious works include MDL's appointment as the coordinating architect for phase one on the Cape Town Station Revitalisation Project and the new Public Transport Shared Services Centre for the Department of Transport.

**Edgar Pieterse** is holder of the NRF Research Chair in Urban Policy. He directs the African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town. He has just published: *The African Cities Reader* (Chimurenga publishers) after his recent works: *City Futures: Confronting the Crisis of Urban Development*, (Zed Books, 2008) and *Consolidating Developmental Local Government* (UCT Press, 2008) last year. He previously published: *Voices of the Transition: The Politics, Poetics and Practices of Development in South Africa* (Heinemann Publishers, 2004) and *Democratising Local Government: the South African Experiment* (UCT Press, 2002), in addition to numerous journal articles on topics ranging across: urban social movements, urban culture, local economic development, planning theory and African urbanism. Edgar Pieterse is a founder member of Isandla Institute. He also serves on

the Boards of Magnet Theatre, the Sustainability Institute and the Cape Town Partnership.

**Sue Parnell** is a Professor of urban geography in the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science at the University of Cape Town (UCT). She is the Director of the Cape Town City Lab, an initiative of the African Centre for Cities at UCT.

**Solomon Lechesa Tsenoli**, MP has a long track record of political activism, with an active interest in local government. He was a member of the first democratic parliament, between 1994 and 1999, after which he was the MEC for Local Government in the Free State Province (1999-2004). In 2004 he returned to the National Assembly and became the Chair of the Portfolio Committee on Arts and Culture. In 2005 he became the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Provincial and Local Government. He was reappointed to this position after the 2009 elections.

**Sinazo Sibisi** has been involved in development work as a politician, an executive level official and consultant. Between January 2005 and October 2007, she was a Director with Deloitte Southern Africa. In November 2007, she was appointed as the Chief Investment Officer for the LED initiative with the Development Bank of Southern Africa, where she subsequently became Divisional Executive for Planning, a position she still holds.

# Financials

(Registration number 1999/012979/08)

## BALANCE SHEET At 31 March 2009

	Note	2009 R	2008 R
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Fixed assets	2	33 242	47 307
<b>Current assets</b>			
Trade and other receivables		2 409 545	2 976 781
Taxation		1 096 213	86 908
Cash and cash equivalents		6 816	-
		1 306 516	2 889 873
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>2 442 787</b>	<b>3 024 088</b>
<b>Equity and liabilities</b>			
<b>Capital and reserves</b>			
Reserves		667 065	543 530
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Director's loan	3	16 845	16 845
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables		1 758 877	2 463 713
Deferred Income		131 963	920 198
		1 626 914	1 543 515
<b>TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>		<b>2 442 787</b>	<b>3 024 088</b>

## Detailed Income Statement for the year ended 31 March 2009

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
	R	R
<b>GRANT FUNDING</b>		
CS Mott Foundation	358,361	248,519
Good Governance Learning Network		12,629
GTZ	182,589	
Open Society Foundation for South Africa	239,781	410,176
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	406,142	465,107
South African Cities Network		40,000
Spier - Africa Centre	30,793	75,000
SudNet	523,186	
UNU-Wider	175,666	
Urban LandMark	93,798	
USAID		231,530
	2,010,317	1,482,961
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>		
Conference Fee Income	300	24,645
Consultancy Income		12,281
Department of Provincial & Local Government	89,488	227,701
Interest Income	156,080	70,998
Local Government & Housing - Western Cape	341,235	643,439
Local Government - Western Cape		143,599
Provincial Government - Western Cape		103,415
Royalty Income		803
Sundry Income	60,625	28,600
Urban Landmark		533,508
	647,728	1,788,989
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,658,045</b>	<b>3,271,950</b>

The full Auditors report is available from Isandla Institute.

**EXPENDITURE**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
Accounting Fees	19,956	810
Administration	185,366	199,309
Audit Fees	20,894	11,500
Bank Service Charges	5,255	7,048
Computer Expenses	956	-
Communications	735	-
Contracted Services	273,087	1,721,889
Core Support Programmes	945	6,138
Culture	-	21,589
Depreciation	14,065	11,827
Development Dialogues	155,923	134,153
Developmental Local State	-	1,600
Equipment	8,527	9,004
Furniture	7,571	3,497
HIV/AIDS in the City	200,345	315,983
Incidentals	4,850	1,375
Interest	31,624	1,457
Internet Costs	-	789
Org. Development & Processes	14,530	13,380
Other Direct Cost	11,978	48,111
Other Funded Projects	682,514	144,698
Postage	554	5,444
Printing & Stationery	1,093	-
Publications & Media	1,779	5,000
Repairs & Maintenance	169	250
Staff & Other Services	876,738	764,822
Travel	15,057	36,120
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2,534,511</b>	<b>3,465,793</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>123,535</b>	<b>-193,843</b>



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[www.isandla.org.za](http://www.isandla.org.za)