

### **NACI has a new unit, S&T and Innovation Indicators**

Science and Technology (S&T) Indicators are important in monitoring progress and enabling comparisons with other countries at similar stages of development. They also provide policy and decision-makers with a clearer understanding of the relationship between S&T and socio-economic development and consequently allow them to make further decisions regarding the state of S&T in the country.

To provide indicator statistics of high quality on a regular basis the Department of Science and Technology embarked on establishing a Science, Technology and Innovation Indicator System (ST&IIS) early in 2003. In order to achieve this, a unit, S&T Indicators, was established within the Department. Its mission was to undertake projects aimed at developing and disseminating science statistical indicators in support of science and technology.

The Unit has recently been transferred to the National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI). The Unit's three staff members will contribute to NACI's resources.

The Indicator unit has been engaged in a number of projects. This includes a National Research and Development Survey (R&D) 2001/02, which was commissioned by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Patent Statistics, Technological Balance of Payments (TBP) and the Innovation Survey. The R&D survey has been concluded, and the indicators derived from the survey will form part of the enquiries and consultations with respect to the functioning of the National System of Innovation.