



The Operations Research Society of South Africa



Category II Recognition Award

(To a current member of ORSSA for a single, outstanding achievement with respect to the practice of OR on a national level)

Sheetal Prakash Silal

Citation. *By Theodor Stewart, on behalf of the Executive Committee of ORSSA.*

In 2002, Sheetal Prakash Silal enrolled for a bachelor's degree in actuarial science at the University of Cape Town (UCT). After obtaining this degree in 2006, she was appointed as junior research fellow in the School of Public Health and Family Medicines at UCT, and simultaneously enrolled for a master's degree in statistical sciences at the same institution. She obtained this master's degree in 2009 based on a thesis titled A simulation model of antimalarial drug resistance. Thereafter, she joined the Department of Statistical Sciences at UCT as a lecturer in 2010, obtaining her PhD there in 2014 based on a thesis titled A Mathematical modelling approach for the elimination of malaria in Mpumalanga.

Silal is currently a senior lecturer at the Department of Statistical Sciences at UCT and heads up the university's Modelling and Simulation Hub (MASHA). She is also an Honorary Visiting Research Fellow in Tropical Disease Modelling at the Nuffield Department of Medicine, Oxford University and a Research Associate at the South African DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in Epidemiological Modelling and Analysis (SACEMA) at Stellenbosch University, Cape Town, South Africa.

Under her leadership, the MASHA group has carried out highly significant practical modelling work on the modelling of the spread of malaria. In South Africa, this modelling work led directly to an increased allocation of R319m to the malaria elimination programme over two years. But she has also contributed to related studies in Zimbabwe, Ghana and the Asia-Pacific region.

The impact of the malaria studies was undoubtedly a main reason for the invitation to her (and her MASHA team) to participate in the SA COVID-19 Modelling Consortium which directly advises the South African Government at Presidential/Cabinet level. In this way, she has had direct influence on national policy.

For her significant role and service to the profession of operations research, Sheetal Prakash Silal is, on this 21st day of October 2020, duly awarded a Category II ORSSA Recognition Award. I call on the President to confer the award.