About University of KwaZulu-Natal

The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) came into existence in January 2004 as a result of the merger of the University of Natal and the University of Durban-Westville. As such it is a flagship of the new national higher education landscape. It has approximately 37,000 students, which makes it one of the largest residential universities in SA and of these some 26% are in postgraduate programs. UKZN sees its research enterprise as fundamental to its initiative of significantly taking up its output of doctoral graduates.

The School of Development Studies (SDS), established in 1954, specialises in critical, interdisciplinary analysis of development theory, policy and practice. It is a leading research centre in South Africa, and holds an international reputation for the quality of its work and the intellectual rigour with which it applies academic skills to policy challenges. The School draws on the specialist knowledge of its researchers, who are nationally and internationally recognised experts in their fields.

The SDS at UKZN offers one of the "leading masters programs in development studies" and is the third oldest Development Studies institute in the world. As such, the School ranks among the institutions in this discipline that set the international benchmark. With 14 permanent academic staff, two national chairs, over 30 contract research staff, more than 100 registered Masters Students and 20 PhDs, the School has the largest conglomeration of capacity in Development Studies in South Africa.

The SDS has previous experience and capacity in working with donor-funded multi-institution networks such as SIRCA. Within the South African Research Chair Initiative (SARChI), there is a dedicated project administrator and manager which have administration and coordination capacity and experience. Furthermore, UKZN has a Research Office which assists with all current grants and contracts. SDS has been a partner and research lead for collaborative partners from around the world and funded by various bodies such as European Union, IDRC, and the South African government at all levels to name a few.

The SDS has been building a research portfolio in the area of ICTD with such projects such as IDRC-funded PICTURE Africa (Poverty & ICTs Systems in Urban and Rural East Africa) and CLIQ (Community-based Learning, ICTs and Quality-of-life). The School also offers a seminar, Poverty & ICTs within the

Poverty & Inequality graduate course. The SIRCA program fits within the research work being done within the School particularly in building capacity to do innovative ICTD research on poverty indicator development and impact evaluation. More specific questions could include creating a networked or open society, and investigating the enabling (or disabling) new ways of organising and collaborating which change poverty reduction. SIRCA would strengthen the School's work on building African scholarship through UKZN's involvement in studies throughout the continent, developing South-South learning and facilitating the identification of best-practices.

In complementing SIRCA's previous outreach work, the School will adopt some of those SIRCA outreach strategies as well as utilizing own existing structures for communication. Some of those strategies include its dynamic SDS website, UKZN website, email lists of young Africa ICTD scholars, IDRC's previous Acacia network, and Development Studies networks.

Through its contact with at least 17 ICTD research network leaders (and its partners) within the Africa region and further contacts with international institutions and networks such as the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI), and African Development Bank, the School has long established links through its past and current collaboration on its research projects and teaching programs. As such, SDS contacts with existing networks throughout the world and Africa will be an asset to the African hub of the SIRCA program.

About Instituto de Estudios Peruanos (Institute of Peruvian Studies – IEP)

The IEP focuses on researching, teaching and disseminating social studies about Peru and other Latin American countries. The Institute aims to contribute to Peru's economic development with equity, the strengthening of its democratic institutions and the development of greater awareness of rich and historical cultural diversity. Established in 1964, the Institute has close cooperative relationships with various governmental organizations, such as: the Ministry of Education, PROMPERU, Central Bank, National Council for Sciences and Technology, and PETROPERU. The Institute's researchers are organized in four areas: anthropology; sociology and political science; economics; and history.

IEP is the administration institution of the DIRSI network, which focuses on research on ICT regulation to promote inclusion of the poor and marginalized peoples of Latin America into the Information Society. Established in 2005, with

support from IDRC, DIRSI has produced several studies which have impacted the public policy debate in Latin America. As administrative node, IEP has hosted the network coordinator and administrator, who served as liaisons to researchers from Latin America and the Caribbean. Of particular relevance are the four rounds of DIRSI's Young Researchers Competition Program, which awarded 3 scholarships in each round to young researchers from all over the region (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Uruguay). All these researchers were tutored by DIRSI members from other countries, relying on Internet-based communications, and their papers were blind-refereed by other researchers. IEP plans to rely on the DIRSI network to mobilize senior researchers to serve as referees, mentors and resource people in general. The IEP's large database and frequent update of the region's knowledge mapping is a strong asset that has been committed to SIRCA's development.

IEP is committed to further young researchers' interests. Besides hosting DIRSI and their activities, the Institute regularly call for proposals from young researchers, to support research efforts, by integrating them into their activities.

Prof. Julian May, Professor and Research Chair at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa has been identified as the Coordinator for the Program in Africa. Prof. May holds the South African Research Chair Initiative (SARChI) in Applied Poverty Reduction Assessment (funded by SA National Research Foundation), and has significant experience in policy, monitoring and evaluation systems as well as poverty and inequality, agrarian reform, and impact assessment methodologies. He is a permanent member of staff, has a PhD in Development Studies and is a development economist with 25 years experience in sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian Ocean islands. He has specialised in development of knowledge generation systems which impact economic and social policies. This includes the development of poverty monitoring systems in Lesotho, Namibia, the Maldives and Mauritius, impact assessments of social grants and land reform in South Africa.

He was a lead researcher in the first Growth and Development Strategy for KZN, drafted the first Poverty and Inequality Report for the Office of the Deputy President and is currently a consultant to Statistics South Africa for the 2008/9 Living Conditions Survey which will be released in late 2010.