



**Southern African Regional Universities Association**

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**Dialogue, Exchange and Networking Calendar of Events, 2010**  
*"Emerging Responses to Building the Regional Higher Education Sector"*

**February 2010**



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## Introduction

SARUA is pleased to share with you the *Dialogue, Exchange and Networking Calendar of Events* for 2010. We see these events as a major platform through which we seek to build an organised regional higher education community that can share knowledge, facilities and experiences and, ultimately, develop collaborative programmes of regional interest. These events recognise that thinking and conversing together is a necessary condition for acting together and building collaboration across the region.

The dialogue events further contribute significantly to SARUA's strategic focus of : (1) developing a regional identify for higher education, (2) enhancing Regional Higher Education collaboration; (3) supporting Regional Higher Education leadership capacity development; (4) building a more enabling Higher Education policy environment in the region; and (5) contributing to the development of a sustainable and effective SARUA organisation.

We have taken into account the lessons learnt during the events held in 2009 and incorporated these into the design of the series of events for this year. We aim to include a broader range of leadership constituencies including senior University Executives and Government Officials, in addition to the dialogue events aimed at Vice Chancellors.

The themes for each of the events have been shaped by two key considerations. Firstly, the body of knowledge based on the research undertaken by SARUA over the last three years, has enabled us to frame the key issues and possible strategic responses in a number areas. Secondly, the interaction with our membership has influenced the agenda for the year in substantial ways. Moreover, the theme of "*Emerging Responses to Building the Regional Higher Education Sector*" around which the specific theme for each event has been organised, has been formulated in response to the insight that our work is shifting from identifying the challenges we face to formulating appropriate responses for the region, which are imbued with a regional character.

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## Vice Chancellor Dialogue Events

The Vice Chancellor Dialogue events are aimed at the top level leadership of the Higher Education sector in the region. These events provide the opportunity for VC's to engage with each other on matters of mutual interest and in this way encourage the development and strengthening of new and existing relationships that stretch beyond the limits of the physical and geographic boundaries that separate universities in the region. Two Vice Chancellor Dialogue Events are planned for the year:

	The Normalization of the Higher Education Sector in Zimbabwe – A Response by the Higher Education Sector in the Region	Scenarios for Southern African Higher Education Development, 2025
<b>Theme</b>	SARUA is responding to a unique request from the Higher Education sector in Zimbabwe to facilitate a discussion on exploring possibilities and strategies for normalising the sector in Zimbabwe. Such a conversation offers significant opportunities for collective action and learning lessons that may be relevant to Higher Education in the region at a systemic level.	The event will be the final stage of a scenario planning exercise which seeks to develop long term possible and plausible futures for Higher Education in the region. The event will be held immediately prior to the Triennial General Meeting (TGM). Since the TGM is focused on reviewing the progress made in the last three years and considering SARUA's future plans, it will serve as a useful setting for considering, in more detail, various scenarios for the sector in Southern Africa.
<b>Date</b>	23 – 24 April 2010	20 – 21 October 2010 VC Dialogue 22 October 2010 Triennial General Meeting (TGM)
<b>Venue</b>	Cape Town, South Africa	Mauritius

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## Senior Executive Focus Events

Senior Executive Focus Events are aimed at specific groups of senior and executive management based on professional domains or communities of interests, and are intended to promote dialogue and engagement on high impact systemic issues of mutual concern. The primary aim of these events is to contribute to the development of communities of practice across the region around specific issues with potential for galvanising members into collaborative action.

	The Research, Science and Technology, and Innovation System in Southern Africa: Position and Prospects	Innovative Funding and Financial Management Practices in Higher Education Institutions in Southern Africa	Progress and Prospects for Higher Education Research and Education Communication Infrastructure
<b>Group</b>	Research Portfolio Senior Executives	Finance Portfolio Senior Executives	ICT Portfolio Senior Executives
<b>Theme</b>	SARUA has undertaken several studies aimed at characterising and mapping research productivity and describing the Science, Technology and Innovation System in the region. A discussion of the findings will form the basis for developing plans to enhance the system	Higher Education Institutions in the region remain under considerable financial pressure due to a broad range of challenges. The need for finding innovative practices that could generate additional funding streams as well establishing effective spending mechanisms and approaches are therefore, of major concern to institutions in the region.	The demand for Internet access, and the associated information and communication infrastructure in Universities, has grown significantly over the last decade. Many initiatives have been launched in efforts to address the demand. A review of the progress made and the prospects for further improving access is timely.
<b>Date</b>	11 April 2010	6 August 2010	6 August 2010
<b>Venue</b>	Cape Town, South Africa	Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



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## Senior Government Officials Dialogue Event

During this year, we will initiate a research study on policy and policy reform in Higher Education in the region with the aim of establishing the key policy goals, instruments and reform measures currently (and planned) being undertaken in SADC. The outcome of the research will provide the platform for discussing the policy objectives and priorities of governments in the region with Senior Government Officials. This exchange will involve sharing with government the many evidence based policy issues that have emerged from our research, while at the same time learning about the policy measures governments have put in place to address these issues. It will provide the basis for a Senior Government, Officials Dialogue Event on ***Revitalising Higher Education in SADC: Policy Priorities and Reform.***