SARUA is a not-for-profit leadership association of the heads of the public universities in the 14 countries of the SADC Region. Its mission is to promote, strengthen and increase higher education, research and innovation through expanded inter-institutional collaboration and capacity-building initiatives throughout the Region. It promotes universities as major contributors towards building knowledge economies, national and regional socio-economic and cultural development, and for the eradication of poverty.

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Foreword

Good Governance of HIV and AIDS

HIV/AIDS is currently a major crisis for the Southern Africa region exerting a devastating toll on individuals, families, societies and economies in general. It is having an increasingly damaging impact on the region’s universities institutionally, in terms of new student enrolment, retention of staff and existing students, as well as research quality and capacity. There is also the external impact on unmet demand for graduates in the public and private sectors, especially for business and political leaders, teachers, medical professionals, senior civil servants, the judiciary, diplomats, the military and police.

Through commissioning and publishing this “HIV and AIDS Action Guide for Universities”, SARUA seeks to utilise the considerable amount of work already done by a number of universities in the region, consolidate international best practice, and to promote innovative approaches to HIV/AIDS management amongst its members to secure institutional stability and ensure the growth of higher education.

Managing the impact of HIV in a forward-looking, tolerant and inclusive framework should reflect the core qualities of our universities; innovation, independent thinking, and leadership.

We hope this Action Guide will be a useful tool in this process.

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Chief Executive Officer
SARUA

11 March 2008
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1 Introduction

Southern Africa is the epicentre of the global HIV epidemic\textsuperscript{1}, and countries in this region are being urged to take a multi-sectoral approach to the pandemic. Large and important institutions such as universities play a particularly crucial supporting role in this effort. A critical issue for universities is to prevent HIV infections among their students, who are usually in the age groups most vulnerable to HIV. However, universities are also increasingly being asked to provide care and support to infected students and staff. They also need to consider programmes to manage and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on their core purposes of teaching and research.

The Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) is interested in supporting universities throughout the region in developing appropriate HIV and AIDS responses. To this end SARUA has commissioned the development of this document, an Action Guide on HIV/AIDS for Universities. This concise planning tool helps to identify the minimum level of services and activities that should be present in all institutions, as well as to provide links to the wealth of information and service providers available on the topic.

The Action Guide explains the theory behind its recommendations, makes concrete suggestions and points the reader to other available resources. It can be used as a framework to develop an HIV and AIDS Action Plan for an individual university; or to plan a collaborative response by a group of universities in one geographical area.