

INDEPTH/ WITS Scientific and Leadership Development Initiative

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Background



INDEPTH identified the need:

- To develop the next generation of Scientific Leadership in INDEPTH sites and the Public Health Research Community in developing countries.
- To optimise the use of DSS data by local scientists.



INDEPTH proposed an implementation strategy:

- Postgraduate course in Population-based Field Epidemiology
- Partnership with a selected university
- Develop capability and infrastructure in selected INDEPTH learning sites
- Partnerships for course development, DSS site attachment and funding.

MSc in Population-based Field Epidemiology



- Offered since January 2005
- 18 months full-time programme
- 12 months for course work at Wits and Agincourt, a study DSS site
- 6 months for field attachment
- Minimum requirements – 4 years bachelor degree and relevant work experience
- Competitive selection

Design of MSc programme



| | Jan - May | June | July - Sept | Oct- Dec | Jan - June |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------|---|--|--|
| Coursework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Orientation •Basic coursework | Midterm exam | Advanced coursework | Final exam in October | |
| Research protocol development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Protocol development •Meeting with site supervisors | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Submit protocol to Wits assessor group and ethic committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Protocol approval | |
| Field attachment training | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Orientation •Conduct research •Service learning •Submit report |

Curriculum structure:



- Five arms:
 - Epidemiology
 - Biostatistics and Data Management
 - Demography and other Social Sciences
 - Relational data and management of DSS data
 - Leadership

Curriculum cont....



- Integrated field component:
 - Course work at Agincourt DSS
 - Assignment of demography module
 - Research project at DSS learning site
 - Management and leadership internship at DSS learning site

Teaching room at Agincourt DSS



Field trip at Agincourt





Uniqueness of course:

- Substantial field based training at DSS sites
- Mixed mode of teaching
- Develop expert skills in dbase management
- Integrate quantitative and qualitative training methods
- Nurture scientific leadership among young developing-country researchers with initial focus on Africa

Teaching room with data server at Agincourt office (Tintswalo)



Coursework evaluation



- 20 modules in total for five disciplinary arms
- Students' evaluation: (on the structure and content of the course)
 - “The course content is relevant, useful and rich”;
 - “Focused on how to conduct good research and working in a health research institution”
 - “It is more focused and addresses what we expect in the work environment”;
 - “The mix of demography, biostatistics and epidemiology in this course gives a broad perspective and admirable exposure. Such exposure gives a wide opening in formulating informed future areas of specialization”.
 - “Too many modules for a year”;
 - “Introduction to management theory and practice is not useful to my work”;

The role of DSS learning sites:



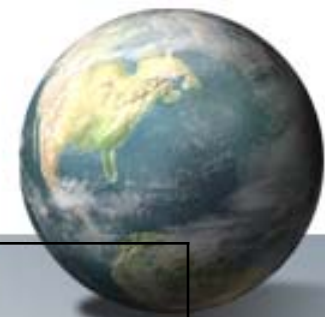
- Three learning sites:
 - Navrongo HRC (Ghana)
 - Ifakara HRC (Tanzania)
 - African Center (KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa)
- Supervise research project
- Provide guided internship for leadership training

Requirements for DSS learning sites



- Capacity and availability of senior researcher/s for supervising student's research and mentoring
- Availability of data for student's research
- Facilities for student – such as accommodation, office, computer, internet, in-house library, transport
- Administrative support

Number of applicants and enrolment for Wits Masters programme



| | 2005 | | 2006 | | 2007 | |
|---|----------|------------|----------|------------|----------|-------------|
| | n | % | n | % | N | % |
| Total Applicants | 21 | | 20 | | 20 | |
| Met Wits entry criteria and offered a place | 8 | 8/21 (38%) | 9 | 9/20 (45%) | 11 | 11/20 (55%) |
| Applicants from DSS | 11 | 11/21(52%) | 9 | 9/20 (45%) | 11 | 11/20(55%) |
| Accepted DSS applicants | 5 | | 7 | | 9 | |
| INDEPTH sponsored | 5 | 5/5 (100%) | 6 | 6/7 (86%) | 5 | 5/9 (55%) |
| INDEPTH sponsored students withdraw | 1 | | 0 | | 1 | |
| INDEPTH funded students | 4 | | 6 | | 4 | |
| TDR and other sponsored students | 1 | | 2 | | 2 | |
| Total enrolled students | 5 | | 8 | | 6 | |

Institutions, number of eligible students and students who took up the course (in *italic*) by year



| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|--|--|--|
| 8/ 5 students | 9/ 8 students | 11/ 6 students |
| Navrongo DSS, (1/1) Ghana | Navrongo DSS, (3/2) Ghana | Navrongo DSS, (2/1) Ghana |
| Kintampo DSS (2/1) Ghana | | Kintampo DSS, (1/1) Ghana |
| | | Dodowa DSS, (1/1) Ghana |
| Kisumu DSS, (1/1) Kenya | Kisumu, (1/1) Kenya | Kisumu, (2/1) Kenya |
| African Population and Health Research Centre, (1/1) Kenya | African Population and Health Research Centre(1/1) Kenya | |
| | Vadu DSS (1/1) India | Papua New Guinea DSS (1/1) |
| | Fila Bavi DSS (1/1) Vietnam | Chililab (1/0) Vietnam |
| Public Health Department, Tropical Diseases Research Centre, Ndola, Zambia (1/1) | Biomedical research and training Institute. Harare, (1/1) Zimbabwe | Hanoi, School of Public Health/ Chililab (1/0) Vietnam |
| Red Cross Society, Ibadan, (1/0) Nigeria | National Commission for Social Action, Makeni, (1/1) Sierra Leone | University of Calabar,(2/1) Nigeria |
| Nairobi, (1/0) Kenya | | |

Completion by year of intake



| Year | Intake | Timely completion for course work | Timely Completion of thesis | Late completion of thesis | Graduated |
|------|--------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 2005 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 2006 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 2 | seven are waiting for examiners report on research thesis and will graduate in December2007 |
| 2007 | 6 | On-going - | | | |

Building Alumni



Discussion



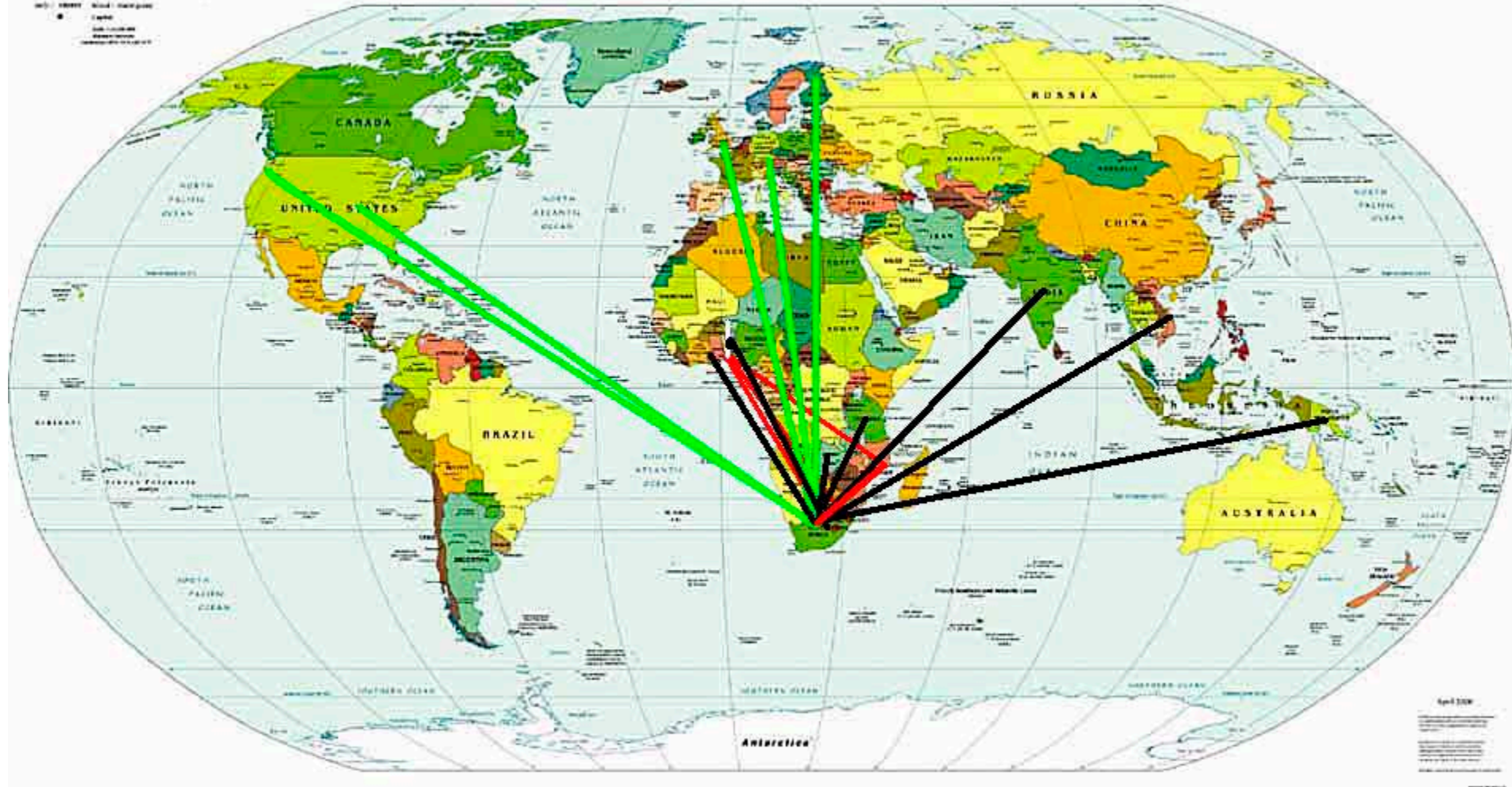
- programme has so far achieved its goals
- the curriculum of all coursework and the integrated field attachment component were fully developed and tested
- programme established a strong relationship between the WSPH and the three learning DSS sites
- South to South as well as South to North linkages for capacity building in research and scientific leadership were strengthened

South-South and South-North Links



Political Map of the World, April 2000

LEGEND
INDEPENDENT STATE
DEPENDENCY OR AREA OF SPECIAL INTEREST
WALL / FENCE / GUARD
CANYON
SALT FLATS
UNDESIGNATED AREA



Progress



- one student presented his research paper at the 2006 AGM conference
- two papers and four posters presented at the 2007 AGM
- site supervisors of all three learning DSS sites were appointed as honorary staff members of WSPH
- the number of co-supervisors from the learning DSS sites for student research was increased
- Dr Cornelius Debpuur from Navrongo was nominated for the exchange staff programme by the Association of African Universities/DAAD

Challenges



- have not trained as many students as anticipated
- the programme is very staff time intensive from both an academic and administrative point of view
- to make the course more cost effective, recruit a larger number of students from a bigger range of DSS sites from different countries
- will require a larger number of field placement DSS sites to be involved or that existing sites take a larger group of students

Sustainability issue



- Recruit sufficient number of students to sustain the academic programme at Wits
- We need to secure funding to sustain the programme in Africa , e.g.
 - To increase number of fellowships
 - To support the programme cost (Wits/DSS staff annual meeting etc)
 - To further invest in the digital lecture hall to offer a vehicle for an ongoing training based in DSS sites
 - Re-entry research grants for recent graduates.

Evaluation of the programme by the DSS site leaders at AGM (2007)



- 74% (25 out of 34 DSS) replied.
- 68% of the DSS said they need this training
- the number of students need to be trained ranges from 1 to 15 per site
- However, 80% (20 DSS) said they had problems to send students mainly because of not having suitable candidates; eligible staff are essential for running DSS and English language proficiency
- 13 DSS (including Asia DSS and Africa Francophone DSS) said they are willing to be one of the learning sites

Application for 2008 academic year



- Extended closing date - end of September 2007
- Visit the website www.wits.ac.za/publichealth
- Motivation letter from the candidate
- Two referees
- Application form for Wits accommodation
- Send directly to Post graduate office and to
- Also send cc to khin.tint@wits.ac.za or lawrence.mpinga@wits.ac.za