

INDEHELA-EDUCATION: EDUCATION FOR INFORMATICS DEVELOPMENT FOR HEALTH IN AFRICA

Coordinator: University of Eastern Finland, School of Computing, HIS R&D Unit, Finland (Former University of Kuopio, Kuopio and Joensuu merged in the beginning of 2010) **UEF**

Partners: Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Faculty of Informatics and Design, South Africa, **CPUT**

Eduardo Mondlane University, Dept. of Maths and Informatics, Mozambique, **UEM**

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Study area: Health Care Information Systems



What are the main aims of your network?

This network is related to two topics, which are closely intertwined: Service Design and Health Information Systems. Our objective is to combine the strengths and competences of the partner universities, curriculum development collaboration and intensive course facilities. The aim is for existing education needs to be developed so that students will learn how to apply ICT in healthcare and public administration in a way that leads to improved services.

The aim is in line with the ICT and the Information Society policy of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (2005), where the principal objective is to make ICT available in developing countries, but not as information technology development as an end itself. It is no use to have highest technology, if it does not truly serve the community.

What kind of activities are there in your network?

We are offering the students coming to Finland an opportunity to take courses, which are not available in their home universities. They can also participate to UniPID virtual studies during this project. The most important thing for students from Finland is to get familiar with different communities and ICT contexts, but they may also participate our international projects, and of course, take courses and/or work on their theses for their degree.

As for teacher visits the emphasis is on supervising students, workshops with students, lectures, and developing and strengthening international networks in education.

What sort of successes and challenges have you encountered during your project?

The cooperation between teachers and administrative people has started beautifully, thanks for the former history in cooperation. Furthermore, we are happy about cooperation with other NSS-PHEN, which increases the resources of both the networks.

We've experienced difficulties getting course information from southern partners, which leads to difficulties getting Finnish students to take part in an exchange due to the lack of information about what they can study during the exchange. Also, the advertising for the students should have been more effective from the beginning. Now, when we have better information material, we have had a larger amount of applications from students.

Coordinating NSS project takes quite a lot of time, and most of the people responsible for the NSS network program have many other responsibilities as well; sometimes communication can be tangled. The problem with the NSS funding is the lack of money specifically for the administration.

Your advice to forthcoming networks

Face-to-Face meetings in the beginning of the project! Once you have met the people you are cooperating with, it is so much easier to work together.

