

**ABSTRACT
PARALLEL WORKING SESSION**

UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT & INNOVATION

Piyushi Kotecha
Chief Executive Officer
Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA)

Addressing the digital divide in the Southern African Universities

The digital divide globally is most aptly captured in the title of the ACU 2008 Conference “Dazzling technologies: Seismic shifts in Higher Education in a Fast-Changing and Unequal World”.

Current Southern African perspectives tend to focus on basic network infrastructure, but this is an insufficient paradigm for developing countries. Next Generation Networks (NGN) provide new opportunities on bandwidth availability and mobility which are just as important for Southern African academics as for their international colleagues. What are the constraints and possibilities for the developing countries? What are the enabling conditions, policies, resources and benchmarks that are available to African higher education?

This paper will explore some of the constraints and possibilities for the developing countries that have emerged in the African context but in the Southern African context in particular. It will also attempt to look at some successful case studies from the South for a comparative dimension.