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## Application for Status as IRDR International Centre of Excellence

**Submission by:**

**The Periperi U<sup>1</sup> Consortium**

**from RADAR, Stellenbosch University**



**(Periperi U Secretariat)**



**15 May, 2014**

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<sup>1</sup> Periperi U stands for 'Partners Enhancing Resilience for People Exposed to Risks', with a focus on collective university action

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## 1. Consortium Overview

### 1.1. Background

**Periperi U** is an established African partnership that has systematically and successfully advanced disaster risk scholarship across Africa.<sup>2</sup> It represents a stable and self-organising consortium of eleven African higher education institutions (HEIs) that spans the continent, and is committed to disaster risk-related scholarship that simultaneously addresses local needs and advances global understanding of complex risks. ([www.riskreductionafrica.org](http://www.riskreductionafrica.org)). RADAR, the Research Alliance for Disaster and Risk Reduction (formerly the Disaster Mitigation for Sustainable Livelihoods Programme or DiMP at Stellenbosch University in South Africa currently serves as the Periperi U secretariat.<sup>3</sup>

The consortium members are listed below:

Partner	Country	Focal Person	Email
University of Science and Technology, Houari Boumediene (USTHB)	Algeria	Prof. Djillali Benouar	<a href="mailto:dbenouar@gmail.com">dbenouar@gmail.com</a>
Bahir Dar University (BDU)	Ethiopia	Mr Tarekegn Ayalew	<a href="mailto:tarekegnayalew@yahoo.com">tarekegnayalew@yahoo.com</a>
University of Ghana (UG)	Ghana	Prof. Jacob Songsore Dr Osman Alhassan	<a href="mailto:songsore@ug.edu.gh">songsore@ug.edu.gh</a> <a href="mailto:aosman@ug.edu.gh">aosman@ug.edu.gh</a>
Moi University	Kenya	Dr Diana Menya	<a href="mailto:dianamenya@gmail.com">dianamenya@gmail.com</a>
University of Antananarivo (Tàna)	Madagascar	Dr Mahefasoa Randrianalijaona	<a href="mailto:randrianalijaona@gmail.com">randrianalijaona@gmail.com</a>
Technical University of Mozambique (UDM)	Mozambique	Prof. Rui Carlos Maia	<a href="mailto:Damaia.rui59@gmail.com">Damaia.rui59@gmail.com</a>
Ahmadu Bello University (ABU)	Nigeria	Prof. Edwin Iguisi	<a href="mailto:ediguisi@gmail.com">ediguisi@gmail.com</a>
Gaston Berger University (GBU)	Senegal	Dr Mateugue Diack	<a href="mailto:mateugue.diack@ugb.edu.sn">mateugue.diack@ugb.edu.sn</a>
Stellenbosch University (SU)	South Africa	Dr Ailsa Holloway Trish Zweig	<a href="mailto:ailsaholloway@sun.ac.za">ailsaholloway@sun.ac.za</a> <a href="mailto:patriciazweig@sun.ac.za">patriciazweig@sun.ac.za</a>
Ardhi University	Tanzania	Prof. Gabriel Kassenga	<a href="mailto:kassengagr@yahoo.com">kassengagr@yahoo.com</a>
Makerere University	Uganda	Dr Chris Orach	<a href="mailto:cgorach@musph.ac.ug">cgorach@musph.ac.ug</a>

### 1.2. Brief History

#### History

Established in 2006, with an initial partnership of five higher education and research institutions and support from USAID, the consortium has grown to eleven universities, from ‘Algiers to Antananarivo’, with institutions located in Algeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. Periperi U now actively engages

<sup>2</sup> Periperi U stands for *Partners Enhancing Resilience for People Exposed to Risks*

<sup>3</sup> <http://riskreductionafrica.org/en/rra-ddr-per/rra-periperi-partners/55>

more than 80 academic professionals in eleven countries working together as colleagues in a socially responsive enterprise that mobilises human capital to reduce disaster risks.

This collective effort is now practically reflected in the introduction of twenty applied undergraduate and postgraduate programmes/modules within Africa that are generating 'new' applied disaster risk reduction professionals. It is also indicated by the provision of regular, accessible short disaster-related short-courses, in local languages, that in 2013 reached nearly 500 government and civil society practitioners. It is further evidenced by more than 100 pieces of commissioned and academic research in 2013 alone on local disaster risks. Not only have these improved the knowledge base for local disaster risk management planning in the eleven participating countries – they have also contributed to an accumulating body of continental and global disaster risk knowledge (see Periperi U's 2013 Annual Report that accompanies this submission)

More significantly, Periperi U's work at local and national levels, as well as across the continent, has helped to reframe Africa's self-view on its disaster risk research and educational capacity, shifting from an entrenched history of aid dependency to awareness of emerging local agency and capability (see Annex 2).

#### Commitment to African disaster risk-related scholarship and capacity-building

From its inception, the Periperi U consortium committed itself to bridging the historic divide between Africa's institutions of higher learning and the practice fields of disaster risk reduction and humanitarian action. Consortium members are unequivocal that the disaster risk domain constitutes an applied field of core scholarship and practice in an African context. They also recognise that strengthened educational capacity to reduce local risks in Africa constitutes an underpinning requirement of social and economic development – especially in countries that face recurrent threats. The partners all acknowledge an urgency to build strategic and technically competent human capital to better understand and manage naturally triggered and human-induced risks. These imperatives have been the driving force behind the consortium's achievements in making accessible, socially responsive disaster risk education, training, research and community outreach.

### **1.3. Vision, Mission and Objectives**

A core element of the Periperi U partnership has been its 're-visioning' of the role of contemporary scholarship in the disaster risk domain, as this applies in Africa. Since its establishment in 2006, Periperi U has applied itself explicitly to the mission of *promoting sustainable development in Africa through applied scholarship, advocacy and strategic partnerships in disaster risk reduction*.

It has worked towards this goal by actively harnessing the core elements of contemporary scholarship – *teaching and learning, research and social responsiveness* (also known as 'outreach' or community interaction') *to collegially generate robust and relevant disaster risk-related capacity-building, research and outreach programmes across the continent*. In this context, Periperi U's explicit support for international partnerships aligns closely with the thrust of the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk Programme which seeks to address the challenges of natural and human-induced environmental hazards.

### **1.4. Status/ Institutional Affiliation**

**Periperi U** is a university consortium, comprising eleven African higher education institutions.

#### 1.4.1. Periperi U solutions to past HEI constraints to disaster risk reduction research and capacity-building

Historically, the disaster risk reduction domain has been difficult to address within institutions of higher learning, due to its cross-disciplinary and applied character. As new disaster risk-related teaching and learning programmes begin to emerge in Africa and elsewhere, it is clear that they require a supportive institutional structure that enables disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary engagement. Periperi U has sought to address these challenges through a collegial governance model that provides scope for its members to develop teaching, learning, research and outreach activities that relate to their specific risk reduction priorities and institutional environments – and to exchange this expertise. The consortium members comprise respected higher education institutions with robust internal governance structures and strong links to other intercontinental and international partnerships. This model mobilizes the strengths of decentralized governance, and allows for rapid decision-making. Additionally, the consortium’s long experience in managing external funds at both partner and secretariat levels is reflected in strong compliance with internal and external audit requirements. These are underwritten by individual contractual agreements between individual partner institutions and the coordinating partner, Stellenbosch University.

#### 1.4.2. Internal institutional structures across consortium partners

The specific institutional location of Periperi U activities varies across the partnership – reflecting the diversity of disciplines involved the partnership. These are reflected in Table 1 below.

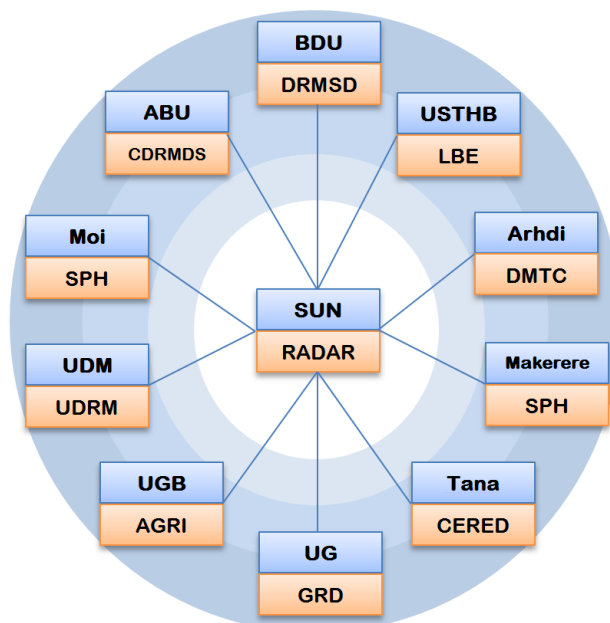
**Table 1: Specific institutional location of Periperi U activities**

Partner	DRR expertise	Unit/programme
University of Science and Technology, Houari Boumediene (USTHB)	Seismic engineering	Built Environment and Research laboratory
Bahir Dar University (BDU)	Agriculture and Environmental Science	Dept of Disaster Risk Management & Sustainable Development
University of Ghana (UG)	Urban studies	Dept of Geography and Resource Development
Moi University	Community Health/Public Health	Dept of Epidemiology and Nutrition
University of Antananarivo (Tàna)	Development Economics	Centre d’Etudes et de Recherches Economiques pour le Développement (CERED)
Technical University of Mozambique (UDM)	Environmental Engineering	Unit for Disaster Risk Management
Ahmadu Bello University (ABU)	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment	Center for Disaster Risk Management and Development Studies, Ahmadu Bello University (CDRMDS)
Gaston Berger University (GBU)	Food Security	UFR de Sciences Agronomiques, d’Aquaculture et de Technologies Alimentaires
Stellenbosch University (SU)	Integrated disaster risk research methods	Research Alliance for Disaster and Risk Reduction
Ardhi University	Disaster management and urban planning	Disaster Management Training Centre
Makerere University	Public health, community health,	Dept of Community Health and

	displaced people	Behavioural Sciences
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### 1.4.3. Organogram of Partnership

Figure 1: Organogram showing Periperi U structure



#### Key

University name		Centre/ department name		Country
BDU	Bahir Dar University	DRMSD	Dept. of Disaster Risk Management & Sustainable Development	Ethiopia
USTHB	University of Science and Technology – Houari Boumediene	LBE	Built Environment Research Laboratory	Algeria
Arhdi	Ardhi University	DMTC	Disaster Management Training Centre	Tanzania
Makerere	Makerere University	SPH	School Public Health	Uganda
Tana	University of Antananarivo	CERED	Centre d’Etudes et de Recherches Economiques pour le Développement	Madagascar
UG	University of Ghana	GDRD	Dept. of Geography and Resource Development	Ghana
UGB	University of Gaston Berger	AGRI	UFR de Sciences Agronomiques, d’Aquaculture et de Technologies Alimentaires	Senegal
UDM	Technical University of Mozambique	UDRM	Unit of Disaster Risk Management	Mozambique
Moi	Moi University	SPH	School Public Health	Kenya
ABU	Ahmadu Bello University	CDRMDS	Centre for Disaster Risk Management and Development Studies	Nigeria
SUN	University of Stellenbosch	RADAR	Research Alliance for Disaster and Risk Reduction	South Africa

### 1.4.4. Role of Periperi U Secretariat: Stellenbosch University- RADAR

While central university oversight for Periperi U is ensured through the Vice-Rector for Research and Innovation with the Postgraduate & International Office (PGIO) and the Division for Research Development (DRD), Periperi U’s day-to-day operations are supported by RADAR, the Research Alliance for Disaster and Risk Reduction. In this context, RADAR will act as the operational secretariat for the IRDR International Centre of Excellence, through its support to Periperi U consortium members.

## **2. Periperi U Programmes**

### **2.1. Periperi U's Academic Programmes:**

In addition to their substantial short course training output, since 2006, Periperi U Consortium members have developed disaster risk curricula that build on robust disciplinary foundations, but advance cross-disciplinary knowledge. This approach has resulted in either implementation of or planning for disaster-risk related undergraduate and post-graduate programmes in eleven African countries. Today there is a wide range of relevant cross-disciplinary disaster risk academic programmes across the continent in diverse disciplines, including engineering, urban planning, economics, environmental science and public health.<sup>9</sup> (For an indication of the range of undergraduate and post graduate courses offered in 2013, see the Periperi U 2013 annual report that accompanies this submission)

### **2.2. Research and Publications – a Periperi U priority**

One of Periperi U's leading priorities has been to strengthen national and local risk management through robust, applied disaster risk research. This has taken diverse forms, including postgraduate studies, commissioned research and dedicated faculty projects. These efforts have generated a wealth of information on previously under-researched and poorly understood risks within Africa. Tables 5, 6 and 8 in the accompanying annual report provide a snapshot of these studies and highlight this previously untapped continental capability to generate context-specific risk research on topics as wide-ranging as seismic vulnerability, climate change adaptation and urban fire.

Increasingly, disaster risk-related research is commissioned by local and national authorities, nongovernmental organisations and international agencies, with findings being channelled directly into development planning processes. The active engagement of Africa's higher education institutions in disaster risk research has supported a surge forward in locally available knowledge to inform risk management.

## **3. Operational capacity**

### **3.1. Internal institutional capacity**

Periperi U's involvement in continent-wide capacity-building and research, along with its support to many African academic networks is enabled by effective internal coordination mechanisms and highly skilled staff across all levels of the partnership. Formal and non-formal capacity building programmes are offered in Amharic, Arabic, Afrikaans, English, French, Kiswahili, Malagasy and Portuguese. However, community-based training and research are undertaken across a multiplicity of local and regional languages and dialects.

Periperi U's progress also underlines the importance of its 'internal champions' in each of the participating universities. This is characterised by their professional stature and intellectual creativity as well as social conscience and compassion. On one hand, they have strategically integrated risk reduction into their formal academic programmes, and crafted more socially responsive short

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<sup>9</sup> The consortium members are; University of Science & Technology Houari Boumediene (USTHB) Algeria, University of Bahir Dar Ethiopia, University of Ghana Ghana, Moi University Kenya, University of Antananarivo Madagascar, Technical University of Mozambique (UDM) Mozambique, Ahmadu Bello University Nigeria, University of Gaston Berger Senegal, Stellenbosch University South Africa, Ardhi University Tanzania, and Makerere, University Uganda.

courses for local professionals and practitioners. In addition, they have generously provided each other with a platform for collegial support. This has been especially necessary for overcoming institutional obstacles associated with introducing the disaster risk domain as a legitimate focus for contemporary scholarship.

### 3.2. Resource mobilisation and funding

With specific reference to resource mobilization, since 2008, Periperi U has generated funding agreements valued at approximately USD 7 million for activities across the consortium. In the past year, approximately **USD one million**, has been disbursed across the partnership in support of disaster risk reduction capacity-building and research across Africa. Although current USAID/OFDA financial commitments to the partnership are in place until 2016, USAID/OFDA has indicated willingness to receive a follow-on proposal by June 2015. This will be accompanied by the provisional results of a project evaluation soon to commence in 2014.

Periperi U partners offer excellent facilities and equipment, including libraries, e-learning classrooms, computer labs and other information technology capabilities. In addition, several of its members have videoconferencing capabilities.

## 4. Argument for Consideration of the Periperi U Consortium to be an IRDR International Centre of Excellence

A central attribute in Periperi U's success has been its capacity to mobilise across the continent, and for consortium members to learn from the experience of other colleagues. Not only has this enabled new formal and non-formal disaster risk-related programmes to 'jump-start' quickly. It has also generated a continental architecture for an almost seamless transfer of disaster-risk related knowledge across languages, disciplines and national borders (an independent evaluation of the Periperi U Phase II initiative may be viewed on-line at [riskreductionafrica.org](http://riskreductionafrica.org)<sup>15</sup>).

**At continental-scale**, the consortium members have explicitly committed themselves to **continent-wide disaster risk scholarship**, evidenced by their mutual support and collegial engagement in Periperi U. Similar institutional commitments have been made and acted on with respect to **interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary** disaster risk-related capacity building, despite the partnership's diverse disciplinary perspectives.

At the level of **individual institutions**, Periperi U partners have demonstrated capability to innovate, introduce and sustainably integrate disaster risk reduction into the core domains of scholarship – teaching, learning, research and community outreach/social responsiveness. This has proved a powerful force for 'mainstreaming' developmental disaster risk reduction into policy and practice. Periperi U's expression of interest to participate collegially in a network of partners committed to cross-disciplinary disaster risk reduction is underpinned by its **cross-platform structure and flat governance model**. It is also underwritten by effective administrative and financial management systems that comply with international audit requirements and donor reporting.

It would indeed be an honour for Periperi U to deepen its engagement with the IRDR through this crucial initiative. The Consortium, supported through its proposed secretariat at Stellenbosch

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<sup>15</sup> [http://www.riskreductionafrica.org/en/component/docman/doc\\_download/178-phase-ii-evaluation-report](http://www.riskreductionafrica.org/en/component/docman/doc_download/178-phase-ii-evaluation-report)



University, is committed to strengthening academic collaboration and capacity building across Africa and beyond. The IRDR Science Committee may rest assured that no efforts will be spared should Periperi U be granted the opportunity to become an IRDR International Centre of Excellence.

## Annexures

**Annex 1: Periperi U Programme for the Scientific, Technical and Academic Communities in Disaster Risk Reduction - 5<sup>th</sup> African Regional Platform, Abuja Nigeria 13 – 16 May 2014**



**Scientific, Technical and Academic Communities in Disaster Risk Reduction  
(5<sup>th</sup> African Regional Platform, Abuja, Nigeria)  
Sokoto Room, Transcorp Hilton Hotel – 13 - 16 May, 2014: 0900-1230hrs**

## Co-Chairs:

**Professor Djillali Benouar (University of Science and Technology, Houari Boumediene, Algeria\*)<sup>19</sup>**

**Professor Mateugue Diack (Gaston Berger University, Saint Louis, Senegal\*)**

Time	Topic	Speaker
0900-0910	Welcome, session overview and focus	Professor Mateugue Diack*, GBU
0910-0925	Framing the role of STAC in advancing disaster risk reduction in Africa	Professor Djillali Benouar* (USTHB, IRDR Scientific Committee)
<b>0925–1010 - Panel I : Focus on Scientific Contributions</b>		
0925-0935	Update on global conversations related to science, technology and academic engagement related to disaster risk reduction and introduction to speakers	Dr Virginia Murray, Vice-Chair UNISDR Science and Technical Advisory Group (STAG)
0935-0945	Africa Climate Futures: implications for disaster risk (conclusion of the IPCC report AR5 Group II).	Filipe Lucio (Head, Global Framework for Climate Services, WMO)
0945-0955	Insight on our health futures: implications for DRM	Dr Tarande Manzila, WHO AFRO
0955-1010	Questions and Discussion - Plenary	Dr Virginia Murray
<b>1010-1130 - Panel II: Focus on Technological Innovations &amp; DRM</b>		
1010-1015	Introduction to the panel	Dr Osman Alhassan, University of Ghana*

<sup>19</sup> Member of IRDR Scientific Committee

1015-1030	Agricultural innovations to advance food security	Professor Mateugue Diack, Gaston Berger University, Senegal*
1030-1040	GIS applications for managing urban risk: GIS mapping of road traffic accidents in Accra	George Gumah, University of Ghana* (post-graduate research)
<b>1040-1110</b>	<b>Tea/coffee</b>	
<b>1110</b>	<b>Technological Innovations continued</b>	
1110-1120	Use of mobile phone technology for disaster risk reduction: experience from Kenya	Elijah Muli, Disaster Management Advisor, Kenya Red Cross
1120-1130	Questions and Discussion - Plenary	Dr Osman Alhassan, University of Ghana*
<b>1130-1215 - Panel III: Focus on Educational Innovations to advance Risk Reduction</b>		
1130-1135	Introduction to the panel	Dr Diana Menya, Moi University* Kenya
1135-1145	Introducing the CILSS Masters Programme	Dr Ibrahim Lumumba IDI-ISSA Deputy Executive Secretary Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS)
1145-1155	Capacity building and skills development for risk reduction in Madagascar	Dr Mahefa Randrianalijaona, University of Antananarivo, Madagascar*
1155-1205	Assessment of Flood Risk in Gwagwalada, Nigeria,	Sunday Andorbe Amama, Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria* (post-graduate research)
1205-1215	Questions and Discussion – Plenary	Dr Diana Menya, Moi University
1215-1230	Plenary discussion on issues to be taken forward from the STAC.	Professors Benouar and Diack

\*Periperi U partner

**Annex 2. Statement from the Scientific, Technical and Academic Communities in Disaster Risk Reduction - 5<sup>th</sup> African Regional Platform, Abuja Nigeria 13 – 16 May 2014**



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



**Statement from the Scientific, Technical and Academic Communities  
in Disaster Risk Reduction  
(5<sup>th</sup> African Regional Platform, Abuja, Nigeria)**

**Overview**

The Science, Technology and Academic Communities consultative session was convened by the Periperi U (Partners Enhancing Resilience for People Exposed to Risks) Consortium, with the participation of approximately 60 delegates. Those attending represented a diverse and inclusive range of disaster risk-related disciplines, professions and related practice fields, drawn from across the continent and beyond.

**We acknowledge that:**

1. Africa faces a diverse range of increasingly complex and interlinked risks that have potential to undermine its development potential, and that require enhanced human resource capacity to address.
2. Scientific knowledge related to DRR includes natural, social, health and engineering sciences as well as other bodies of knowledge and should be used to address “real world” disaster risk-related problems at local, sub-national, national, regional and continental scales.
3. There are emerging successes in the use of appropriate technologies to protect lives and build resilience to recurrent threats (including agricultural innovations, mobile phone and other accessible technologies).
4. Africa’s Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) constitute key resources for strengthening disaster risk-related science, technology and increasingly play crucial roles in advancing relevant risk knowledge, research and skilled capacity in the management of current and future risks.
5. Opportunities are also expanding for improving the exchange of risk knowledge and collaboration across the continent and internationally.
6. Despite evidence of progress in disaster risk-related capacity building and expanding risk-research capability in many countries, there are highly vulnerable areas that remain under-resourced (for instance, in Central Africa and francophonic African countries).

**Therefore, we call for:**

1. Urgency to systematically advance skilled human resources in disaster risk management at local, sub-national, national and regional scales, through greater engagement with the continent’s institutions of higher learning.
2. Urgency to systematically support expansion and resourcing of existing academic networks to build and strengthen human capacity, for example, through consortia and partnerships

such as Periperi U. Furthermore, there is need for more active engagement of other science partners including health and agriculture that are vital in managing disaster risks.

3. Regional academic networks that strive towards greater integration and cooperative research. It would be favourable to establish one African academic research community; this would bring African academics closer to share findings and adopt best practices.
4. The establishment of an African Science Advisory Committee to advise on the programmes and activities in HEIs for DRR/DRM; and,
5. The establishment of an International Science Advisory Mechanism for DRR to strengthen resilience.
6. Commitment to providing evidence based information to strengthen practice, leadership and governance in DRR.

### **Conclusion**

We would like to emphasise the urgency for skilled human resources in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) at local, sub-national, national and regional scales and need for greater engagement with the continent's institutions of higher learning to address DRM capacity gaps. This recognises crucial roles increasingly played by many African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in advancing relevant risk knowledge, research and skilled capacity in the management of current and future risks.