

# DETA



distance education and teachers' training in africa

## CONFERENCE 2015

# PROCEEDINGS

## 20–24 July 2015

Mauritius Institute of Education

Réduit, Mauritius

Editor: Dr Folake Ruth Aluko  
Assistant Editor: Dr Hyleen Mariaye



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
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Mauritius Institute  
of Education

“The Future We Want”:

Teacher development for the transformation of education in diverse African contexts





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## **“THE FUTURE WE WANT”: TEACHER DEVELOPMENT FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION IN DIVERSE AFRICAN CONTEXTS**

Proceedings of the 6th biennial International Conference on Distance Education and Teachers’ Training in Africa (DETA) held at the Mauritius Institute of Education, Réduit, Mauritius

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The Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa (DETA) Conference strives to provide a platform for educationists in Africa to meet and deliberate on educational issues in Africa.

This document is also available online at [www.deta.up.ac.za](http://www.deta.up.ac.za)



## PROCEEDINGS POLICY

The *Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa Proceedings* is a Pan-African medium for articles of interest to researchers and practitioners in distance teacher education, and especially those presented during the Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa (DETA) conference. The publication is interdisciplinary in approach and its purpose is to provide practitioners who work within the African context the opportunity to disseminate original research and new developments within their field.

Due to the Pan-African nature of the conference, the editors have sought the professional support of an International Advisory Board made up of experts in the field of distance teacher education. These are mostly from African countries, but also include experts from the United Kingdom and the United States who have been involved in various projects on the continent. The consultant editors are also professionals in the same categories.

This is the fourth edition of this publication. Previous editions have, until now, existed as a repository on the conference website ([www.deta.up.ac.za](http://www.deta.up.ac.za)). These editions have been published biennially following the preceding conferences. From 2018, the editors plan to publish the publication twice a year as an in-house online journal. Further information on the new developments will be made available in due course.

The views expressed in the publication are those of the respective authors.

### OPEN ACCESS POLICY

The *Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa Proceedings* (with a possible name change to be communicated in due course) is housed at the Unit for Distance Education in the Faculty of Education of the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

### PEER-REVIEW PROCESS

All research articles submitted to the *Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa Proceedings* have undergone a rigorous peer-review process. The process involves initial editor screening, anonymized refereeing by at least two referees, and a final reading by a critical reader. The reviewers are requested to complete a brief written report, along with a score sheet of whether the article is suitable for publication in the Proceedings.

Authors are requested to submit a covering letter indicating that their paper has not been previously published or is under consideration for publication elsewhere.



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## **PREFACE TO THE DETA CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**

The sixth DETA conference, with the theme “The future we want”: teacher development for the transformation of education in diverse African contexts, was held in Mauritius in July 2015. It had the ambitious agenda of bringing together more than 200 delegates from more than 15 African countries to reflect on the future of education in Africa.

This target was largely met with 115 paper presentations by delegates from Botswana, Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States. The presentations considered the following subthemes:

1. Teaching children in diverse African contexts
2. Pedagogies that will achieve “the future we want” for education in Africa
3. The role and impact of technology on teacher development
4. Quality in education as a prerequisite to establish “the future we want” for education in Africa

DETA conferences have now become a unique and regular biennial event on the African academic calendar, offering a platform for practitioners and researchers in education to collectively reflect on how educational policies, while guided by local contexts, can be attuned to achieving a shared vision for the continent. It also focuses on how practices can be enhanced by learning from the experiences of others; and on how theories and models borrowed from the North can be challenged by more culturally sensitive perspectives developed from empirical data produced in a diversity of African contexts.

International educational targets also shape our contexts and protocols, which seek to bring about a common focus to solve perennial concerns in education, of which quality remains a priority. What the conference brought out unambiguously was the need to mobilise massive resources and willpower in order to guarantee access to an education that empowers individuals and communities to effect the necessary economic, social and political change. Countries cannot achieve this ambitious



social reconstruction project through education without including teachers, their training and quality in the equation. The correlation between innovation in educational practices and the work of the teacher scholar is well established, yet Africa lags behind in terms of its scholarly and research productions, despite the richness of its contexts.

Conferences such as DETA can not only add to the discourse, policies and practices in education, but also contribute to the development of the next generation of academics by initiating them into the rigour of the peer-review process. This document is a modest contribution to the publication landscape. While displaying the merits of ongoing research projects in schools and universities, it also signposts the challenges currently faced by African teacher scholars on the one hand, and institutions of higher learning on the other, in upscaling the quality of academic productions in teacher education.

Aware of the varied profiles of participants, the double-blind peer review process sought to be supportive and developmental by providing constructive comments to authors on structure, substance and form. Twenty drafts covering the conference subthemes were submitted. Of the 20 drafts received, 11 were provisionally accepted and returned to the authors for improvements. Eventually, four submissions were converted into shorter reports on creative and innovative educational projects or small-scale research, while the remaining six were retained in the more traditional article format.

The process of putting together *Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa Proceedings* indicated some critical areas for both reflection and concerted action for us as a community of scholars to be able to position Africa on the research and publication map. Converting postgraduate dissertation work into a conference presentation is a necessary rite of passage for emergent researchers and, judging from the corpus of dissertation-derived submissions, the sixth DETA Conference was no exception. Yet, it seems that more support is needed to facilitate this process for postgraduate students.

A common observation by the editors of this volume relates to the quality of empirical data presented in submissions for publication. While strong submissions

were received, they were worryingly scarce. Methodological awareness and rigour in writing in terms of attention to language, referencing and proper academic style are unequivocally on the decline for reasons that we can only, at this point, conjecture about. Yet, we look to the seventh edition of the conference proceedings with hope for a reversal of this trend.

Perhaps it is an ideal time to reflect on whether African scholars, through a virtual network of institutions of teacher education, could develop a coherent strategy to build capacity for academic writing as part of the professional development agenda of teachers and the induction of teacher educators. Currently, Africa accounts for less than 1% of all the research publications in the world. Most of these African publications are written by South Africans. We know this figure has to go up and be more evenly distributed across nations, and that all of this needs to happen fairly soon. Whether it will depends on our capacity to work together. This has prompted the organisers to include a session on research in support of quality teacher education in the preconference workshop that forms part of DETA 2017. This session includes a theme on getting from presentation to publication.

It is our hope that readers of these proceedings will be inspired by the engagement of authors in their practice as scholars and practitioners. We also hope that the authors will feel that value has been added to their thinking and writing through the submission of their papers and the peer-review process. It is also our expectation that students of education across faculties will be motivated to present their own research to a vibrant community, which DETA organisers have painstakingly created through years of dedicated service.

This volume also includes a book review of *Assuring institutional quality in open and distance learning (ODL) in the developing contexts*, edited by Aluko, Letseka and Pitsoe (2016).

Lastly, we are happy to bring to your attention that, from 2018, the conference proceedings will become an online in-house journal, *Distance Teacher Education Journal*, to be housed at the Unit for Distance Education in the University of Pretoria. We believe this is a route to opening access to its contents in support of making research more freely available. We plan to initially publish it twice a year, with a view to increasing the number of editions.

Dr Folake Ruth Aluko  
Dr Hyleen Mariaye



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Saide, Johannesburg, South Africa

*Assuring institutional quality in open and distance learning (ODL) in the developing context*  
Aluko, Folake Ruth, Letseka, Moeketsi and Victor, Pitsoe (eds), 2016.

