

Recent Publications

Margaret Haughey

This issue contains information on a number of reports.

Roberts, J., & Associates. (1998). *Tertiary Distance Learning in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington, DC: ADEA Working Group on Higher Education, The World Bank (384 pp).

This directory of institutions active in distance learning in Sub-Saharan Africa was commissioned by the Association for Development of Education in Africa's Working Group on Higher Education (ADEA/WGHE). It was completed by Roberts and Associates. The directory is based on three sources: surveys of existing tertiary level programs completed by Peter Kinyanjui and Reginé Thomas for the Secrétariat d'État à la Coopération and the Commonwealth of Learning in 1997; presented papers and discussions at the WGHE meeting in Senegal in October 1997; and selected literature searches.

This document provides information on distance learning in Africa in two formats. First, there is a general report of the survey data. This is followed by a discussion of major policy issues, best practices, strengths, successes, and limitations of distance learning. Second, there are summaries of country and institutional profiles, each on a single page.

Africa can trace its distance education roots back to 1873 and the founding of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. Today it continues to develop new institutions dedicated to distance learning such as the Open University of Tanzania (1994), the Centre National de Télé-Enseignement in Madagascar (1992), and the proposed Francophone Virtual University. This document contains information on 563 programs or courses offered by 125 institutions in 36 countries. The authors caution that these figures are conservative because one survey's response rate was low and additional information had to be gathered from supplementary sources. Yet although this report suffers from the major shortcomings of directories—a short-currency shelf life and incomplete information—it is nonetheless particularly useful not only because it includes an analysis of the information, but also because there is no other currently available comprehensive source. The book also provides a useful list of print and Web resources concerning distance learning in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Roberts, J., & Associates. (1999). *Professional Development and Learning Technologies*. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services (234 pp.). Available on the Internet at <http://olt-bta.hdrc-drhc.gc.ca>.

This report was commissioned by the Canadian Alliance of Education and Training

Organizations, the Office of Learning Technologies, and the Human Resources Partnerships Directorate, HRDC. Secondary literature sources were used to identify the professional development needs of planners and practitioners, to provide an analysis of issues and trends, and to describe criteria or assessment tools to identify best practices. In addition, the findings of a national survey on the professional development activities of 46 planners, practitioners, and policy-makers are reported.

The report on the professional development needs of planners and practitioners found that although there was a lot of information in some sectors, there was relatively little available about others. There are separate sections for school, colleges, universities, career colleges, the community, and private sectors. Overall, the authors found strong similarities, common issues—time, resources, and access—and much activity with a lot of professional development opportunities available.

The report is a useful resource for those considering offering workshops on learning technologies. It provides advice about tailoring activities to the specifics of the organization or sector involved, contains useful resources for those planning workshops, and has a comprehensive list of Web and print resources, as well as a list of selected conferences, professional development activities, and formal study programs and courses.

Carroll, J. (May 1997). *Wired for learning: Why teachers must harness the power of the Internet.*

Caruso, J.C., (June 1997). *Educational and training needs, preferences, and barriers: A survey of Northern Ontario residents.*

Herbert, W.S. (May 1997). *Videoconferencing using satellite and terrestrial technology to deliver education and training at a distance.*

Jean-Louis, M. (July 1997). *Technology, education & Development: Creating conditions for success.*

Knight, D. (October 1996). *Learning and cost-effectiveness of instructional technologies: a proposed research and evaluation agenda.*

New publications from Contact North/Contact Nord

Contact North/Contact Nord, Canada's largest distance education network, provides local access to secondary school and postsecondary courses and programs, in English and French, to more than 9,000 learners throughout Northern Ontario, particularly to those in remote communities, Francophones, and Aboriginal peoples. The Centre of Distance Education for Secondary Schools has five foci: a registration and coordination secretariat, professional development series, a curriculum enhancement program, program and course enrichment activities, and a technologies in education awards program.

Contact North/Contact Nord operates over 145 sites in over 100 communities covering 712,952 square kilometres. It has been in operation since 1987, and in June 1997 the organization moved from being a government department to a free-standing nonprofit corporation. They also commission and publish research reports on various aspects of distance learning.

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