

IOP 'Physics for Development': Actions 2006-07

We have managed a number of worthwhile 'physics for development' projects over the last year, as outlined below, the first two arising out of the World Conference on Physics and Sustainable Development (WCPDS) in South Africa at the end of 2005. Following the recent retirement of Dr Peter Melville, 'physics for development' operations are now located in the Communications & External Relations directorate (Director: Dr Beth Taylor), with an international manager (Dr Dipali Chauhan) to take specific responsibility.

We organised a one-week course on 'Economic Development for Physicists from Developing Countries' held at ICTP in November 2007. This course, for physicists in developing countries, focussed on technology transfer and knowledge exchange and protecting and exploiting intellectual property. The training programme was well received and we have issued 1000 DVDs of recordings of the workshop for those who were unable to attend, and set up a new email discussion and support forum for participants. The next course is planned for 17-21 March 2008 with help from ICTP and the APS - and possible World Bank support.

The WCPDS also made recommendations on science education, and this led IOP to set up a website, *mobilescience.info* to increase participation and share ideas relating to outreach programmes around the world.

We are supporting physics in Africa specifically through a second year of the Rwanda physics teacher initiative (which has provided laboratory equipment and training); and have committed to a further (3rd) year and are looking at rolling the project out to other countries. We also provided some financial assistance to the African Institute of Mathematical Sciences – a very worthwhile small pan-African post-graduate training organisation (based in Cape Town), which is planned to be the model for a network across the continent. The South African government has recently announced funding for 3 years from April 2007 so the future of the Institute should now be secure.

We have also continued to support the international activities of the Lab in a Lorry project, which has recently toured around Angola.