

COMPLEXITIES, CAPACITIES, COMMUNITIES: Changing Development Narratives in Early Childhood Education, Care and Development

The term 'capacity building' has come into common usage in twenty-first century international development. While the term means different things to different people, it is often used to describe an infusion of knowledge or skills to help 'build' a government's or institution's ability to address key development challenges. However, like other well intentioned interventions from the industrialized West, such 'capacity building' can have destructive, as well as productive, impacts. This volume problematizes such activities and presents an alternative approach to promoting capacity in development contexts.

The volume starts with an exploration of the concept of capacity building and goes on to focus on two examples of capacity promotion for early childhood education, care and development (ECD). The First Nations Partnerships Program (FNPP), an innovative and successful post-secondary education program initiated in 1989 at the request of a large tribal council in northern Canada, led to 10 educational deliveries with diverse Indigenous communities over the subsequent two decades. The second program, launched in 1994 at the request of UNICEF headquarters, focuses on sub-Saharan Africa. While the program encompasses a range of capacity-promoting activities, the central vehicle for this ECD development work is the Early Childhood Development Virtual University (ECDVU), a program created in 2001 and now in transition to African universities.

This book describes approaches to capacity promotion that respond to the complexities and possibilities of communities—at local and country levels. These initiatives challenge established developmental narratives in ECD and international development, and in so doing provide alternative ways for scholars and practitioners in ECD, education, and the broad international development field to enhance capacities.



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COMPLEXITIES CAPACITIES COMMUNITIES

Changing Development Narratives in Early
Childhood Education, Care and Development



Alan Pence
Allison Benner

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COMMUNITIES:**
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in Early Childhood Education,
Care and Development

Alan Pence and Allison Benner

With chapter contributions by:
Fortidas Bakuza & Clarence Mwinuka,
and Foster Kholowa & Francis Chalamanda



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*This book is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Jean Cyril Dalais—
a tireless and eloquent advocate for the children of Africa.*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Alan Pence is UNESCO Chair for Early Childhood Education, Care and Development and Professor, School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria. He is the recipient of the International Education Leadership Award from the Canadian Bureau for International Education, the University of Victoria's inaugural Craigdarroch Research Award for "societal benefit", and a finalist for the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) Award. Dr. Pence is the founder of the First Nations Partnerships Program, an indigenous, community-based education and development program, and the Early Childhood Development Virtual University (ECDVU) an ECD capacity promoting program active in Africa since 2001. The author of over 130 articles and chapters, two of his books that relate closely to this volume are *Supporting Indigenous Children's Development* (with Ball, 2006), and *Africa's Future - Africa's Challenge: Early Childhood Care and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa* (edited with Garcia and Evans, 2008).

Allison Benner has over 20 years' experience as a writer, researcher, instructor, and curriculum designer in linguistics and early childhood. Her work includes studies of first language acquisition across cultures, child care and early learning policies and programs, and capacity-building and experiential learning in post-secondary education. Over the past two decades, Dr. Benner has collaborated with Dr. Pence on many capacity-promoting initiatives in the early childhood field, including writing and curriculum projects for the First Nations Partnership Programs and the Early Childhood Development Virtual University.