

## Disaster Management Training and Education Centre for Africa

### September 2015 Newsletter

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### 10 years of excellence!

Our ten year celebrations are drawing to a close—and what a magnificent year it was! In this newsletter we review some of the centenary workshops as well as other significant events that happened since the last edition. It was a busy and fruitful year, with a couple of more highlights that will feature before all Dimtectors go on a well deserved break.

We urge all our students to put in a good last effort, and not get into the holiday mood too soon. You've all worked hard until now, and owe it to yourselves to exit on a high note. Be assured of the support of the DiMTEC staff to ensure that you are able to give it your best shot. And a big applause to our staff who not only see to your needs, but also elevated DiMTEC to it's current level of excellence. You are much appreciated!

### DMISA Scientific Think Tank attendees

During September 2015, DMISA held it's annual conference in the coastal town of Hartenbos. It was well attended and proofed to be a collection of top expertise, as was expected. More detail on the outcome and topic discussed will follow in the next DiMTEC newsletter to be available in November—be sure not to miss that edition! Below is a picture of DiMTEC staff and international scientist during attending the DMISA Think Tank.



## CENTENARY WORKSHOPS

### Working with nature to build resilient communities

Mr Belle from DiMTEC organised a one day workshop on Disaster and the Environment on the 29 July 2015 at Villa Bali Hotel in Bloemfontein, South Africa. The theme of the workshop was “Working with nature to build resilient communities”. The workshop was attended by about thirty delegates from diverse background but who have a role to play in disaster and environmental management.

Guest speakers at the workshop included:

Dr Anthony Turton—Environmental Advisor | Speaker | Author & visiting professor at UFS-CEM  
Mr. Motlhale Tshepho—Senior Manager at the Johannesburg City Disaster Management Centre  
Ms Nozi Mabafokeng Nkoe—Chief Director: Environmental Quality & Protection, FS  
Mr. Monde Walaza—Director: Policy and planning at FS DETEA

The workshop was also greased by the following keynote speakers:

Dr. Andries Jordaan—Director of UFS-DiMTEC  
Prof. Miatland Seaman—immediate Ex-Director of UFS-CEM  
Prof. Dusan Sakulski—Disaster Adviser to the Premier's Office  
Dr. Oliver Fuo—Environmental law expert from UFS

During the general panel discussion on burning issues on DRR and the environment, key issues were

discussed, including:

The new A2R UN approach: Anticipate, Absorb and Restructure with greater emphasis on Resilience | Acid mine drainage | Implementing research results | Unsustainable development resulting in disasters | Climate change | Funding | Trained and skilled staff | Risk assessment | Ecosystem-based approaches to reduce disaster risk.

Disaster managers are challenged to think the unthinkable, especially under the present situation of climate change. A lot still needs to be done regarding training and effective utilising of disaster management departments, with an emphasis on building resilience.



*Above: Andries Jordaan, Motlhale Tshepho, Anthony Turton, Johannes Belle*

### MHI Regulations and the Disaster Management Act

On 30 August 2015, Mr Alfonso Niemand, PhD student at DiMTEC, facilitated a workshop in Bloemfontein themed: A critical evaluation of commonalities and exclusions between the major hazard installations (MHI) Regulations and the Disaster Management Act in South Africa.

The workshop was attended by a strong selection of private sector and government officials with expertise in MHI and disaster management. Among the experts were delegates from DiMTEC, Ekurhuleni Emergency Services, Department of Labour, eThekweni Municipality Disaster

Management, eThekweni Municipality Emergency Services, Aurecon Group and TotalGaz.

Keynote speakers included Dr Jordaan from DiMTEC and Dusan Sakulski from the Office of the Premier, Free State.

The workshop deliberated both natural and human-induced disaster, highlighting the critical importance of communicating with communities before, during and after a disaster that is currently prohibited by the National Key Point Act.



## CENTENARY WORKSHOPS

This is a legislation gap that needs to be addressed. Communities need to be educated about the risks posed by possible disasters with regards to preparedness, emergency response and recovery activities. Education of communities, are however, hampered due to high levels of illiteracy. Unfortunately, public information meetings does not serve the purpose intended.

Further topics arising from the workshop included: Transportation of hazardous materials | Working with tribal authorities | The Land Development Act of 2013 | Illegal land invasion | Communication with and liaison between stakeholders | Funding | Insurance.

A large part of the discussions centred on legislation with the conclusive argument that there are too many pieces of legislation in South Africa trying to govern the same safety issues.



*Above: Some of the workshop delegates*

## Media and Humanitarian workers

On 25 August 2015, Olivia Kunguma from DiMTEC facilitated a workshop in Durban themed: Building resilient communities through media and communication. The workshop was well attended and proved to be just what the humanitarian workers as well as media officials needed. Attendees included disaster managers, human development advisors, academics, emergency responders, journalists, corporates and police officers.

The following presentation formed part of the workshop discussions:

- *South Durban basin: A classic socio-economic and environmental hotspot* by Mr Chris Skinner.
- *Crisis communication management is an integral part of business continuity management* by Mr Dante Mashile
- *Practical experience on response to displaced persons: Xenophobic attacks in the KZN Province* by Mr Sibongiseni Ngema
- *Climate change and media* by Mr Troy Govender

From the discussions following the presentation, the unreliable nature, but also the usefulness of social media during disasters were highlighted. Media representatives indicated that social media is a handy source of information when pressed for deadline. But if

the information cannot be confirmed, it will be published as a rumour. Press releases by humanitarian workers are often not preferred because it is used as a marketing tool instead of providing information.

Conclusively, it was emphasised that humanitarian workers should have sound relationship with the media. Furthermore, media and communication should be made part of all disaster management activities, from risk reduction to disaster response. Attendees requested the continuation of the UFS-DiMTEC workshop to allow annual dialogue between media officials and humanitarian workers throughout South Africa.



*Above: Andries Jordaan, Sibongiseni Ngema, Troy Govender, Olivia Kunguma, Chris Skinner, Alice Ncube, Dante Mashile*

## CENTENARY WORKSHOPS

### Index-based insurance for the agricultural sector

A workshop titled “Global Resilience through Insurance and Index-Based Risk Transfer Products (IBRTP)” was organized as part of DiMTEC's 10th year celebration.

The United Nations identified climate resilience as a major focus for future development to ensure a safer world for all. Tailor-made insurance and financial products should address the needs of the most vulnerable. Recent research done by DiMTEC on the vulnerability of communal and commercial farmers to external shocks, highlighted the importance of insurance as an important disaster risk transfer tool. Insurance is generally unavailable to most vulnerable groups such as communal farmers, small-holder farmers and new commercial farmers. Therefore DiMTEC invited the insurance industry and other experts to a workshop with the purpose of investigating the development of risk transfer products, especially for drought.

Mr Bertus Kruger from Agriseker and Mr Johan vd Berg from SANTAM and other experts attended the workshop facilitated by Dr Jordaan from DiMTEC. Delegates agreed on the need for risk transfer products that address the needs of the most vulnerable. The private sector delegates confirmed their commitment toward the development of such products provided that Government actively support the initiative.

Delegates agreed on the following:

- Establishing a UFS-DiMTEC lead research team to investigate the feasibility of index insurance products.
- Mobilising government support to develop risk transfer products for the most vulnerable.
- Initiate forum discussions on risk transfer products.
- Promote collaboration between private sector, government and research institutions with the focus on resilience building through financial and insurance products.
- Participation in COP 21 preparatory discussions in order to foster climate resilience through risk transfer products.



*Above: Andries Jordaan Johan van den Bergh, Bertus Kruger, Henk Vermeulen*

## International relations

### European visits

Recently, Dr Jordaan visited several European cities to share his expertise, further relationships and negotiate research collaborations. Together with Prof Francesco Zecca from the University of Sapienza, a visit was also paid to the University of Perugia. Areas of collaboration was identified.

Dr Jordaan also presented a paper at the Interdisciplinary Social Sciences conference in Split, Croatia, on social vulnerabilities of small-holder farmers to drought. Furthermore, ideas on flood and earthquake modeling were exchanged with the Vice-Rector at the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia.

Meetings with civil engineers who developed disaster risk and response models for floods and earthquakes, Prof Primuz Banovec and Mr Mathej Cerik, and the civil protection authorities in Slovenia and northern Italy were fruitful. Dr Jordaan visited the disaster management centre in northern Italy where the latest technology was demonstrated. This centre serves as a standby for the national centre in Rome and also serves as a regional centre for Slovenia.

The trip was concluded with a stop at the European Commission Joint Research Centre in Northern Italy.

## International relations

### UFS-DiMTEC in Oslo Norway

Mr. Johanes Belle, a lecturer and researcher from UFS-DiMTEC, attended the 2015 International Environmental Emergencies Forum (EEF) in Oslo, Norway from 1 to 3 June 2015. This biannual international event was jointly organized by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). The Forum brought together experts from all over the world on environmental emergencies to share experiences, network and map the way forward to better address environmental emergencies which are increasing in magnitude, intensity and frequency. During the Forum, the Green Star Award was conferred on three deserving winners.



*Above: Mr. JA Belle from UFS-DiMTEC in Norway.*

### UN workshop on climate resilience

During June 2015, DiMTEC director, Dr Andries Jordaan, was one of 23 experts – including scientist, academics, private, NGO and government officials – on the United Nation's expert committee at a workshop on climate resilience in Genève, Switzerland. The UN-secretary, Ban Ki Moon, invited Dr Jordaan to participate in this workshop as preparation for COP 21 later this year. "I have learnt a lot at the workshop," Dr Jordaan said, "and it was good to note that what we have been teaching our students for years is indeed the latest trend. The focus is much more on resilience than on vulnerability. Research showed us that it is better to focus on the positive. Even the poorest communities have the means to become more resilient against any disaster."



*Above: Janoz Pasztor (Assisted Secretary General on Climate Change, Office of UN Secretary General) James Obrinsky (former President MSF), Andries Jordaan (UFS-DiMTEC), Rosalind Cornforth (Head Forecaster UK Meteorological Service)*

### What's on?

**SolarPACES 2015—Concentrating Solar Power and Chemical Energy Systems** 13-16 October 2015 – Cape Town, South Africa: <http://www.solarpaces2015.solarpaces.org/>

**IDRiM 2015 Conference** 28-30 October 2015 – Scope Convention Centre, New Delhi, India: <http://www.idrim2015.org>

**2015 IIER 16th International Conference on Natural Science and Environment (ICNSE-2015)** 1 November 2015, Cape Town, South Africa: [http://theiier.org/Conference/South\\_Africa/1/ICNSE/](http://theiier.org/Conference/South_Africa/1/ICNSE/)

**THEIIEER-30th International Conference on Natural Science and Environment** 29 November 2015, Abuja, Nigeria: <http://theiier.org/Conference/Nigeria/1/ICNSE/>

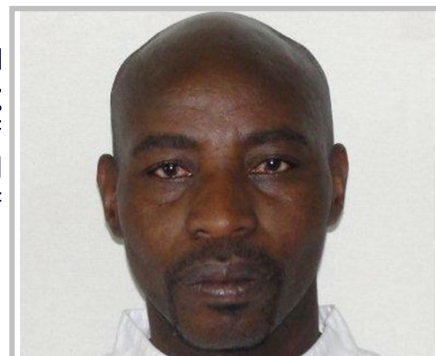


## DiMTEC alumni

### Pios Ncube

*Below: Mr. Pios Ncube*

Mr. Pios Ncube obtained his Masters Degree from DiMTEC in 2007. He is currently an Adviser—Early Warning Systems and Disaster Risk Management for the United Nations, with his focus on the establishment of multi-hazard early warning systems and the National Disaster Risk Management Policy for the government of the Republic of South Sudan. One of his career highlights was guiding and delivering a National Disaster Management Policy for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in year 2010.



Ncube believes that the integration of theory and practice is priceless and would like to give the following advice to DiMTEC students: “There is a big difference between knowing the price of things, and knowing the value of things. In the end, you will come to realize that the best days are the days when you do not need anything special to make you smile; so educate yourself to be happy and not necessarily to be rich. The whole world is on stand-by to conspire and collaborate with you to achieve greater heights.

### Olive Chisola-Darris

*Below: Olive Chisola-Darris*

Ms Olive Chisola-Darris graduated with a Master Degree from DiMTEC in 2012. She is the Regional Coordinator for the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit, Office of the Vice President, Zambia. She deals with disaster mitigation, response, and preparedness.



“My work also entails participation in policy review, formulation and implementation of disaster management through coordination with various stakeholders. Effective coordination is key to achieving success with any programme in relation to Disaster Management. And experience taught me that it is critical to remember the ‘Right to Life with Dignity’ for all people affected by disasters. A Disaster Management Practitioner should have passion for vulnerable people and cities.

### Simanga B. Ndebele

*Below: Simanga B. Ndebele*

Mr Simanga Ndebele obtained a Post Graduate Diploma in Disaster Management from DiMTEC in 2014 and is currently busy with his Master’s Degree. As a Programme Co-ordinator for WFP-funded (World Food Programme) projects, his current field of expertise is humanitarian emergency response. “I manage the implementation of a drought recovery response programme, mainly centred on in kind food distributions and cash transfers to vulnerable households whose livelihoods have been affected by drought in Zimbabwe.”



One of the lessons he learnt in emergency humanitarian work, is that you only achieve by means of teamwork, and seeing the best in others regardless of background or context. For DiMTEC students, he has the following message: “Dimtec is a real game changer in this field of humanitarian emergencies; the content is valuable as the course merges both theoretical and practical applications. Its major strength is the multiplicity of subjects from different, so armed with a DiMTEC qualification—the sky is the limit on what you can achieve.”

## DiMTEC alumni

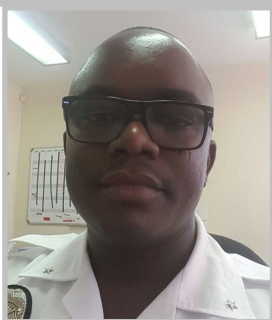
### Jonathan Lukusa Tshimwanga

*Below: Jonathan L. Tshimwanga*

Dr Tshimwanga completed his Master Degree at DIMTEC in 2015. He is a medical doctor at the Ministry of Health in Lesotho and also volunteers at the Disaster Management Authority. He credits DiMTEC for learning to be disciplined, cautious and respectful to planet earth and has the following advice for current students: "Try to apply what you learn in your daily lives, study hard and never give up. As Thomas A. Edison said: *'Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.'* Therefore I urge you to do your best, but also take breaks, meet with friends, sleep and rest well. Eat healthy and avoid junk food. Drink enough water and pray. Remember, you are not at DiMTEC by chance—you acted on a calling.



## Congratulations to some of our top students!



**FN Atshipara**  
Master's student  
Station Officer, Windhoek  
Emergency Services



**BR Robertson**  
Advanced Dip student  
Personal Assistant



**S Lubanga**  
Advanced Dip student  
Chief Forester: Fire Advisor  
Dept of Agriculture and  
Forestry and Fisheries



**MD Tawodzera**  
Master's student  
Ministry of Health  
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## Alice's corner: International migration—human coping and adaptation

I am busy with my PhD studies and, God willing, will complete it in the near future. My thematic areas are gender and women; coping and adaptation; human migration and security; and sustainable livelihoods. As part of the series on my thematic contribution, I will begin with international migration and human security. Human mobility is a reality. Globalisation and migration, which is as old as humanity, punctuates modern society. People's aspirations for a better life, and to an extent livelihood acquisition in the face of various exogenous depriving forces, drive mobility. Livelihoods are threatened by natural and man-made hazards like conflict and wars, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and recently the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Arab states, and North Africa.

People have always migrated to adapt to, or escape from difficulties and disasters, or by curiosity and dreams of a better life. What has brought particular attention to international migration in recent years is the scale and complexity of movements. It affects almost all countries around the world, catalysed by information flow speed, transportation options, and the increasing awareness of countless developmental opportunities and challenges that mobility offers to migrants, their families, communities and societies. Women participation during migration as a survival strategy, redefine women's role in the society and became a research interest.

International migration is no longer an individual country concern, but a global issue that calls for United Nations proactivity. Hosting migrants, short or long term, requires proper planning. Like Ban Ki- Moon said on the International migrant's day that:



"Migration is a reality of the 21st century. It is essential that we conduct an open debate on this important subject. Let us make migration work for the benefit of migrants and countries alike. We owe this to the millions of migrants who, through their courage, vitality and dreams, help make our societies more prosperous, resilient and diverse".

Migration must be part of the development agenda in all countries and policy makers should consider migration as part of their plans. In South Africa, it may be prudent that IDPs include migration issues. Due to globalisation and global change, migrants are found all over the world. The coping and adaptation capabilities and resilience capacity of these international migrants can be explored by seeking to answer the questions: Is it the various coping and adaptation mechanisms the migrant women bring from their home countries that enable them to make it in host countries, despite the various challenges they encounter? Is it the individual migrant's reaction to the migration related changes, which determine his/her personal wellbeing in a host country?

# Because We Can



