

Professor Angela Little retired from the Institute last December, after 23 years of service. What are her fondest memories of the IOE? What does the future hold in store for her? **Annie Lahellec** found out more.

When was your first contact with the IOE?

It was in 1972. I knew of the Institute's reputation for work on education in developing countries and I wanted to engage in postgraduate study, after teaching mathematics with Voluntary Service Overseas in Nigeria.

When were you appointed to the Institute?

I was offered the Chair of Education, with special reference to developing countries, in 1986. At the time, there were around 13 professors and I was the fourth female professor to be appointed – the youngest female professor in the history of the entire University of London.

Do you remember your first IOE research students?

I remember working with Haikima Arshidin on access to education among ethnic minorities in Xinjiang Province, with Akesbi Izzedine on vocational training and labour market access in Morocco, with Baela Jamil on access to public and private schools in Pakistan and with Miriam Mgijima on education innovation in Lesotho. I will forget neither them, nor my other research students. Most of them currently hold senior positions worldwide in universities, United Nations organisations, DFID, Foundations and NGOs. I feel very proud to have played some small part in their lives and their careers.

What were your feelings when you retired last December?

The Oxford English Dictionary tells us that retirement is the act of falling back, of retreating or receding; the act of withdrawing into seclusion; the act of disappearing from sight. I do not feel in the slightest 'withdrawn', even though the daily tide of emails to and from the IOE is receding.

What I am feeling right now – and relishing – is a luxury of time in which to research, write, give and attend seminars, travel and work in the field, as well as more time to spend with family and friends, and on simpler pursuits such as reading, gardening, walking, music, good films and just 'being'.

How are you keeping your connection with the IOE?

As Professor Emerita, I continue to promote the work of the Institute in whatever ways I can, from wherever I am in the world. I work with four

research students and I maintain my contact with alumni. May this continue long into the future.

And what are your hopes for the future?

This question is about me but let me share a few of my thoughts about the future of the field of Education and International Development. The Institute's work in Education and International Development stretches as far back as 1927 (see edc75y.ioe.ac.uk). Countries around the world may be getting gradually richer but inequalities between and within countries in many corners of the globe are increasing. The economic, political and cultural interconnectedness

and dependencies between the richest and the poorest countries is

now a characteristic of most countries, rich and poor, with a colonial heritage or not. The position of China and India in relation to the West on the one hand and to South on the other are setting the tone for international relations in the rest of this century.

Learning from developing countries was the theme of my inaugural lecture in 1988. We are better at listening and learning – but the need for that listening and learning in the 21st century has increased, not diminished. There is much work to do in Education and International Development and, among the global IOE network of alumni and staff, there is an enormous amount of talent, capability and commitment for it to be done.