



## **Career Development Training, Certification, Supervision and Professionalization: Case Examples from Four Countries**

**Roberta Neault**

Yorkville University, Canada

**Jane Artess**

University of Derby, UK

**Hsiu-Lan Shelley Tien**

National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei, Taiwan

**Sareena Hopkins**

Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF), Canada

**Gideon Arulmani**

The Promise Foundation, India

### **Abstract**

The career development sector is professionalizing internationally, through training, certifications, and an abundance of opportunities to learn from colleagues at conferences and international symposia. However, there are significant differences in how the profession is developing in different parts of the world; the notion of “career” is recognized as culture-bound and, perhaps, inconceivable to many individuals. In this paper, career development educators from four countries in Asia, North America, and Europe share case examples of the career development sector’s evolution in their regions. Together, they represent institutions and training programs from the public and private sectors, in both formal and informal settings. Several of the authors have been influential in introducing and customizing career development practitioner competency frameworks and training for practitioners from diverse backgrounds to meet certification requirements. Together they examine how professionalizing the delivery of career development services has emerged in their regions, the variety of training opportunities available along a continuum from preparation for practice to reflection of practice, the diversity of standards and certifications in the career development sector, and the early stages of addressing the need for training and equipping supervisors and leaders. The authors advocate a “both/and” approach to professionalization, grounded in local research that surfaces felt needs and then customizing training, resources, and standards that incorporate relevant elements from international sources.

**Keywords:** career development, certification, competency frameworks, livelihood, professional standards, supervision, training

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Roberta Neault, email: [roberta@lifestrategies.ca](mailto:roberta@lifestrategies.ca)

Work has always been a part of human existence. However, the notion of “career” is a somewhat new variation in human engagement with work. Hence, the professionalization of career guidance and counselling is relatively recent. Historically the notion of career has its origins in a Western, individualistic, industrialized setting, and is fostered by a work ethic that values freedom of choice. However, global forces have carried career development services to many other cultural and economic locations (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2004). It seems, therefore, that the manifestation of career can be seen in two broad contexts: where the notion of career is indigenous and where it is, in many respects, culturally unfamiliar or even unknown (Arulmani, Bakshi, Leong, & Watts, 2014). The fact remains, however, that the idea of career has become more universal over the last decade. Therefore, the need for the development of systems that would optimize individuals’ engagement with the world of work has also become more strongly felt.

The formal, structured career development research and services that have been available in some parts of the world for many years, rest mainly on Western epistemologies (Bezanson, Hopkins, & Neault, 2016; Van Norman, Shepard, & Mani, 2014). However, there is an increasing recognition that imposing an approach developed in one location risks being culturally inappropriate or irrelevant in another. Ideally, if an intervention is to be meaningful, it must derive its content from the cultural preparedness of the audience for whom it is intended. For example, the cultural preparedness of a certain group might be such that the inclusion of family and community might enhance the effectiveness of the career guidance process. Such culturally mediated factors are particularly important to consider in the training and equipping of career practitioners. Although only a sampling of four countries’ experiences are offered here, they provide a good overview of the diversity of international approaches to

professionalizing the delivery of career development services through training, certification, supervision, and ongoing professional development. The countries included are Canada, the United Kingdom, Taiwan, and India.

### **Professionalizing the Delivery of Career Development Services**

Several case examples illustrate the similarities and differences in professionalizing the delivery of career development services throughout the world. In some countries, the earliest steps towards professionalization were taken more than a century ago. In others, although traditional approaches to supporting the transition to the workplace are deeply rooted, conceptualizing career development as a professional practice has been relatively recent.

#### **Canada**

The Canadian career development profession was built along two distinct but intersecting tracks. On the one hand, its theoretical underpinnings were rooted in psychology and educational counselling; on the other hand, its scope of practice and identity has also been built on a foundation of community capacity building, skill-building, and advocacy for the unemployed. As a result, a clear professional identity has been slow to form.

By the early 1990s, career development research and training was emerging and, by the late 1990s, the first provincial professional association for career development practitioners was formed. In 2009, the Canadian Council for Career Development (3CD), formerly the Canadian Council of Career Development Associations, was formed to promote professional identity and provide coordination on priority issues such as training, certification, and the role of the field vis-à-vis policymakers, researchers, governments, employers, and the public.

## United Kingdom

In the UK, career development practice has been a well-established profession since the start of the 20th century. Successive policy directives and statutes have seen responsibility for delivery of career services for young people transfer between central government departments such as the Juvenile Employment Service and local government Education Departments, to semi-autonomous public-private sector companies delivering the Connexions Service (Peck, 2004). The focus of the profession was the support of young people's progression from education into employment, further education, and occupational training.

Despite several attempts to stimulate a market for careers work with adults, including a very successful telephone service, it was not until the recent establishment of the government-funded National Careers Service (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2012) that career development services targeted at adults emerged in England. Had the NCS been introduced as a continuation of services for young people, the sought-after "all age" career development service which is provided in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales might have become a reality for England. Instead it was introduced in parallel with a shift in responsibility for delivery of career education and guidance services for young people from state-run services to schools and colleges, thus fragmenting delivery structures and stratifying the work of the profession.

## Taiwan

Taiwan's government has put emphasis on the nation's cultural and economic development and, as a result, career development services for individuals are seen as important for the country's development. It has been more than 60 years since career development services in the school system were first offered, with a primary focus on helping students find a job before or after they

graduate. More recently, however, the focus of career services has shifted to encouraging people to think about the purpose and meaning of life across the life span. The role of training, certification, supervision, and continuing education for professional career practitioners and their supervisors has thus become increasingly important.

The Taiwan Guidance and Counseling Association (TGCA) and Taiwan Career Development and Consultation Association (TCDC) are leading associations that emphasize the importance of career counselling for youth. They are often consulted by the government for advice and assistance in setting policy frameworks. Career development leadership in Taiwan is also provided by private companies with emphasis on career guidance, supervision, test development, and career inventory publications. For example, the Psychological Assessment Corporation (PAC) (USA) cooperated with professional scholars and translated materials published by the National Career Development Association (NCDA) (USA).

## India and Other Developing Countries: Acknowledging Cultural Preparedness

Although career development is only recently emerging as a sector and profession in many parts of the world, there has been a long history of culture through an enduring process, preparing individuals and groups to engage with work in specific ways (Arulmani, 2014). In India, for example, formal career guidance as it is practiced in the countries described above is barely present. All societies have their own culturally congruent ways of facilitating the transition of their young into the world of work. However, large-scale, macro forces such as industrialization, modernization, colonization, Westernization, and globalisation have significantly influenced and formed human orientations to work.

What "career" means and how the individual connects with career, however, can vary from one cultural and economic

environment to another. In one setting, the focus of career guidance may be to help an individual discover whether he/she should take up law, business studies, or product design. In another, it may be to help individuals gain skills to manage their traditional, rural occupation more efficiently and in a more contemporary manner (Arulmani et al., 2014). An acultural, culturally apathetic, or culturally alien intervention runs the risk of being ineffective and can debilitate or negate existing frameworks and ways of living. Yet, more often than not, models and methods of guidance and counselling are imported from other cultural locations and

impositions of culturally unfamiliar definitions of career are becoming increasingly common.

Although formal training for career practitioners is beginning to be introduced in several developing countries, to be culturally resonant it is vital that contexts and circumstances are allowed to define the meaning of career and career development. Box 1 presents key ideas that could be kept in mind if the felt need is to undergird the development of interventions, in countries where the service is emerging for the first time.

### Box 1

#### Allowing Felt Needs to Inform the Development of Career Guidance Interventions

- Understand the social structure of that location. For example, pre-existing orientations to work and career in a particular cultural location may place the onus of career decision-making upon the father of the young person whose career is under discussion, rather than the young person him or herself.
- Understand the economic condition of that location. It may be that a certain community has a pre-industrial orientation to work (e.g., rural-agrarian communities), while another community may be post-industrial in its orientation (e.g., Westernised, urban communities).
- Identify culturally grounded methods of guidance prevalent in that cultural location. For example, in certain locations cultural practices may have valorised certain figures as “counsellors” (e.g., a religious head, a community leader, a political figure).

### Training Opportunities

Specific training for career practitioners is relatively recent and access to training differs internationally and even within countries. Historically, training has been relatively informal, comprising “in-house” on-the-job training, supplemented with professional development workshops. However, more recently in some countries, certificate-level training has become both required and widely available, and a few places offer diploma and degree programs for career counsellors and career practitioners. Advanced education at a Master’s or Doctoral level, however, is still relatively rare across the globe. In the following

sections, brief examples from Canada, the UK, Taiwan, and India illustrate some of the different approaches to training career development practitioners.

#### Canada

Training within the career development sector falls into two broad categories in Canada. Professional preparation for career *counsellors* consists of graduate training in counselling and specialized training in career development; training for career development *practitioners* may be offered via public and private providers and post-secondary institutions at the certificate and undergraduate levels. In francophone regions of Canada, there are post-

secondary training programs specifically for career *counsellors* but such training remains limited in English-speaking Canada.

Across the country, access to training for career development practitioners differs by region; in a few provinces and territories, such training is sponsored by government, resulting in widespread uptake and customization that is closely aligned to cultural and labour market realities. In other regions, however, specialized training is neither required nor sponsored, so availability and uptake are limited. Key challenges in training provision within Canada include: keeping pace with radical labour market changes, demand-side realities, and their socioeconomic impact; consistency in training quality and access; linking practice to research and policy priorities; leadership development; and ensuring training adequately reflects the culture of practitioners and their clients. Within Canada, several programs have been pre-approved by various provincial career development associations as well as endorsed as meeting the requirements for such international certifications as the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance's (IAEVG) Educational and Vocational Guidance Practitioner (EVGP) and the Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF), administered by the Center for Credentialing in Education (CCE).

### United Kingdom

Within the UK, qualifications and training for the profession are overseen by the Career Development Institute (CDI) which both manages the UK Register of Career Development Professionals and is the awarding body for the pre-service postgraduate Qualification in Career Guidance/Development delivered by universities. The CDI also affiliates the competency-based, in-service Level 4 and Level 6 Diplomas in Career Information and Advice, Career Guidance and Development, and the Career Guidance Theory Certificate delivered by a wide range of training providers. The CDI has

developed the interactive Career Development Sector Development Pathway (Career Development Institute, 2016a) which maps the training routes available and appropriate to the career development role undertaken or aspired to (e.g., specialist practitioner, senior manager).

A wide range of Master's and postgraduate qualifications are available at universities for those seeking higher level qualifications and include focus on themes such as career coaching, research, and occupational psychology. Some qualifications have been developed to respond to particular occupational sectors (e.g., careers in medicine) and to sub-groups of professionals (e.g., career educators in schools, information and guidance advisers in higher education). Within the UK, there are subtly different training arrangements in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Table 1 (p. 10) summarises initial training qualifications for each of the UK countries (Johnson & Neary, 2016). Additionally, the CDI delivers a range of short Continuing Professional Development courses and training events.

A key challenge in the UK is financing participation in training; recent government policy has been to shift the responsibility for meeting the cost of further/higher education from the state to the student/learner, and fewer employers now provide traineeships or bursaries. A strength of how the career development profession is organized in the UK is that it enables effective responses to local, socioeconomic needs. For example, transferring responsibility for careers education in young people to schools/colleges in England has spawned a range of new career-related services. However, access to those services has been described as a "postcode lottery" (Donnelly, 2016, para. 10) and the training required to support career professionals' roles has to be flexible enough to cope with a wide range of career service delivery mechanisms.



## Taiwan

Generally, training opportunities in Taiwan are provided through cooperation amongst government, universities/college/high school staff, and non-profit or for-profit professional organizations. Professional associations, with members comprising both scholars and practitioners, play a key role in the training process. Usually, the government financially supports the training programs, and training organizations, including universities, provide the materials and training curriculum.

Currently in Taiwan there are four main programs available to individuals who want to get career development licenses, each program provided by a different organization: the Chinese Guidance and Counseling Association (CGCA); Taiwan Career Development and Consultation Association (TCDCA); Psychological Assessment Corporation (PAC); and the Chinese Cultural University, Continuing Education Department (CCU). Of the four programs, the NCDA-CDA program offered by the PAC is the most widely accessed; most trainees are graduates from universities in Taiwan and China.

After initial training and certification, career practitioners in Taiwan participate in continuing education programs in both career and counselling topics. Some of this professional development is funded by the government and offered through the university at no cost to practitioners. Both the university and the Ministry of Science and Technology also provide support to career practitioners at the university/college level to attend international conferences on career issues (e.g., NCDA, Asia Pacific Career Development Association [APCDA], IAEVG). In some cases, practitioners invest in their own professional development by paying to attend career workshops in Taiwan and around the world.

## India

Although training for career guidance services is just making an appearance in India, guidance and counselling were recognised as important services in India from as early as 1938 when the Acharya Narendra Dev Committee underlined the importance of counselling and guidance in education (Jayapalan, 2005). Subsequently, various commissions from the early 1950s made strong recommendations for the formalisation of counselling services at a national level. Bhatnagar (1997), in her review, pointed out that counselling and guidance thrived and grew in India during the 1960s – 70s. Strangely however, the same vigour was not seen between the late eighties and nineties and interest in guidance and counselling diminished. The recent past, however, has seen a significant increase in the demand for counselling services at the national level. For example, strong recommendations have been made for policy action to support counselling services for adolescents (Report of the Working Group on Adolescence for the 10th Five Year Plan, 2001). Counselling was also identified as an essential service by the national framework curriculum review in 2005 (Position Paper of the National Focus Group on Work and Education, 2005). The strongest attention toward counselling has emerged from the school sector. During its 2001 national conference, the Central Board for Secondary Education (one of the largest education Boards in the country), resolved that it would be mandatory for all of its schools to have trained school counsellors.

Training opportunities for guidance and counselling have become available over the last few years that range from full-time post-graduate degree programs to certificates and diplomas. Post-graduate degrees in counselling are offered by a small number of university departments of psychology, education, and social work. The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT, Government of India) offers a

postgraduate diploma in Guidance and Counselling. Private organizations offer postgraduate diplomas and certificates in specific branches of counselling. The length of these programs range between short 10-day certificates and diplomas to full-time 2-year postgraduate courses. It must be noted, however, that training in career counselling is embedded within these broader programs that focus on counselling in general. In a master's program in counselling, education, or social work, career counselling may at best be a paper or a topic within the overall fabric of counselling. Full master's degrees in career guidance are few and far between. Some steps have been taken to ameliorate this; they are described in the following sections.

### **Standards and Certifications**

To further professionalize career services, and to benchmark training to ensure reasonable consistency, some countries have developed standards and guidelines for career development practitioners and established certification programs to recognize various levels of competency or expertise within the sector. The following examples from Canada, the UK, Taiwan, and India illustrate different approaches to standards and certifications within this sector in four contexts.

#### **Canada**

In 1996, a National Assembly on professional standards for career development practice was convened. Following an extensive pan-Canadian consultation, the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (S & Gs) were officially launched, defining the competencies career development practitioners need in order to practice effectively and ethically. These competencies continue to be used extensively in Canada in shaping professional training/development programs and certification (Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners, n.d.). In the province of Quebec, "career counsellor" has been a protected title since 1956

(L'Ordre des conseillers et conseillère d'orientation du Québec, n.d.), with licensing required to practice. Other provinces are at various stages of licensure for counsellors and psychotherapists, but this is not specific to career counsellors. Voluntary certification for career development practitioners was originally launched in 2005 in the province of Alberta and is now in place in five Canadian provinces and emergent in several others; coordination by the national council, 3CD, has helped to facilitate this. While most require a combination of education and experience, one provincial certification is fully competency-based. Although a common national certification baseline requirement has been adopted, ongoing challenges include awareness and perceived value of certification by practitioners, government funders, employers, and the public.

#### **United Kingdom**

The National Occupation Standards in Career Development provide a common language for describing the skills, knowledge, and understanding required for each of the roles (Career Development Institute, 2016b). CDI maintains the profession's Code of Ethics and actively stimulates the recording of continuing professional development at the individual practitioner level as a requirement of inclusion in the UK Register of Career Development Professionals. Work is currently being undertaken by the CDI to develop a "blueprint" of learning outcomes for professional roles in the career development sector which can be used to inform any of the qualifications at Level 6 or above (see Table 1).

#### **Taiwan**

In Taiwan, each of the training organizations provides their own training standards and corresponding certifications. For example, the Psychological Assessment Corporation (PAC) set up criteria for each level of career practitioner, resulting in four levels of training and certification: Career Development Professional (CDP), Career

Development Advisor (CDA), Career Development Instructor (CDI), and Master CDI. The extent and duration of training varies: for CDP, the standard includes getting enough credit hours on career

theories and providing two case examples; training can be completed in 18-24 hours within 3 days. The CDA program, on the other hand, includes 120 hours of training on career topics and helping skills (such

**Table 1**  
**Initial training in the UK by country**

England	Scotland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post Graduate Diploma/Master in Career Guidance/Development + CDI awarded Qualification in Career Guidance /Development and a range of Post Graduate Diploma/Master in Career Coaching/Management/Career Education, Information, Advice and Guidance in HE etc.</li> <li>• Work-based Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post Graduate Diploma/Master in Career Guidance and Development + CDI awarded Qualification in Career Guidance and Development.</li> </ul>
Wales	Northern Ireland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QCF Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development or Post Graduate Diploma/Qualification in Career Guidance or National Vocational Qualification Level 4 in Advice and Guidance + QCF units.</li> <li>• QCF Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post Graduate Diploma in Career Guidance.</li> <li>• No requirement for the CDI-awarded Qualification in Career Guidance.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Johnson & Neary, 2016.

as career theories, counselling relationship, administering and interpreting tests, and evaluation skills). Role play and case reports under supervision are also included. Going into more depth, the CDI training adds materials on special topics related to career and teaching methods. Finally, Master CDI training includes advanced training on supervision skills and developing training materials.

There are increasing opportunities for individuals throughout Taiwan to specialize and get licensed/certified as a career practitioner; review of completed training and recommendations for certification are, in some cases, completed by a professional association (e.g., the APCDA reviews training and provides certification for PAC graduates). The

certification review process is mainly based on the trainee’s learning report. For the CDP, the report includes application of career theories and self-reflection, sometimes including a self-report summary. For the CDA level, the expanded assessment requires two case reports with a focus on administering assessment tools and the career counselling process. For the CDI and Master levels, learning evaluation includes a focus on psychological testing and completion of advanced learning reports.

**India**

In India, some courses require students to obtain internship experiences in organizations that deliver career counselling services. In addition to facing



written examinations, a common requirement is for students to submit detailed case reports of a prescribed number of clients they have seen. Although career guidance training provision within a framework of standards is not yet common in India, the following case study illustrates an attempt in this direction.

Work Orientations and Responses to Career Choices – An Indian Regional Survey (WORCC-IRS) was perhaps the first large scale survey undertaken to understand orientations to work and career in India (Arulmani & Nag-Arulmani, 2005). The survey used a mixed-methods approach with a nationally representative sample of approximately 25,000 individuals (male and female, rural and urban) from low, middle, and high socioeconomic status backgrounds. The findings of the survey were then discussed at a National Consultation on Career Psychology, attended by those who were professionally engaged in matters related to the welfare of children and youth as well as students and young people for whom the exercise had been undertaken. Twelve recommendations emerged from this consultation, forming the “principles” upon which a comprehensive career guidance program – the *Jiva* Approach to career guidance – was developed for the Indian context (Arulmani, 2010; see also [www.jivacareer.org](http://www.jivacareer.org)). An important outcome of this effort was the development of a 50-hour certificate in Basic Skills for Career Guidance. This includes pre-course assignments, an 8-day contact certificate course, and a post-course fieldwork assignment. Successful candidates receive a “license” to practice career guidance using the *Jiva* method. The license is renewable every 2 years and is based on submission of field reports and endorsements from clients. Licence holders receive opportunities for continuing professional development during the 2-year period.

A further example is the formation of the Indian Association for Career and Livelihood Planning (IACLP), which is a professional association founded with the

intention of creating a fraternity of professionals and facilitating the delivery of services related to career guidance and livelihood planning, of the highest quality, by competent and recognised professionals. One of the objectives of the IACLP is to establish quality standards and benchmarks for best practice in the delivery of career development services and to establish a certification system for the delivery of career development services.

### Supervision

Even in regions where standards, training, and certification for career practitioners are in place there is inconsistent training for supervisors available. There is also limited access to supervision for individuals new to the field or those interested in strengthening or deepening their skill sets. Funders, employers, and practitioners would benefit greatly from an expansion of training opportunities for supervisors, managers, and leaders in the field. Given the evolving role of career development practitioners and their potential contribution to policy, research, labour market efficiencies, and the socioeconomic health of individuals and their communities, creative models to proactively identify and nurture supervisors and other emergent leaders are needed.

### Canada

Supervision and continuing professional development is an area of significant weakness in Canada. The constellation of skills, experience, integration, consolidation, and extension needed for supervisors and leaders is not well articulated and not elaborated into training and professional development. Some progress has been made in this regard with the US-based NCDPA's publication of *Clinical Supervision of Career Development Practitioners: Practical Strategies* (Hoppin & Goodman, 2014), with some Canadian input. Based on this resource, NCDPA offers 45-hour training in clinical supervision for career

counsellors and other practitioners, but there is currently nothing similar that has been customized for Canada. A small step forward was taken in 2016, with a 4-part webinar series on leadership within the career development sector, co-sponsored by the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC) and the British Columbia Career Development Association.

### United Kingdom

Supervision of career practitioners in the UK takes the form of line management in which organizational as well as personal goals are considered and planned for. Professional supervision arrangements are generally not formalised as they are in therapeutic, psychodynamic forms of counselling, whereas career education and guidance practice are not thought to be as personally stressful or professionally risky. Nonetheless a wide range of professional development opportunities are provided by employers, universities, and the CDI. Line managers, senior colleagues, and experienced practitioners responsible for supervision often look to Master's or Doctoral programs in topics such as career education, career coaching, or career guidance to extend knowledge or professional standing. They might also be encouraged to take higher qualifications unrelated to careers work (e.g., Master of Business Administration) due to the organizational nature of their role.

### Taiwan

In Taiwan, individuals who complete higher level training may be expected to supervise the lower level trainees. Peer supervision is also encouraged. During the training process, instructors serve as supervisors for the case study assignment; both individual and group supervision are used within the training program.

### India

In India, the idea of supervision in the field of career guidance training is

quite new. Going back to the certificate in Basic Skills for Career Guidance offered through the Jiva programme, the course is presently being integrated into the formats expected by the Indian University Grants Commission. Accordingly, trainees receive about 20 hours of in-field supervision.

### Conclusion

These case examples from Canada, the UK, Taiwan, and India barely scratch the surface in examining the professionalization of career service providers across settings and regions. In some cases, training was formalized long after the profession was established. In other cases, training has shaped career services within a country. As illustrated throughout this paper, there appears to be a continuum of training opportunities for career practitioners. In Taiwan and India, the training serves as entry-to-practice. In Canada, career practitioners tend to enter the sector after training and/or experience in another profession; training, for them, often occurs while they are already working within the sector. In the UK, perhaps because professional training is relatively well-established, entry-to-practice/pre-entry training is found alongside work-based routes to professional qualification and extensive continuing professional development; indeed, even pre-entry qualifications require the demonstration of practical, professional competences as part of the assessment regime.

In an increasingly globalized world, it is important to consider the relative pros and cons of having many different and distinct standards, training programs, and certification systems for the field of career development. While elusive at the time of writing this paper, a common system with appropriate country/regional tailoring is enticing in terms of promoting a stronger professional identity within the field and increasing the visibility, clarity, and perceived professionalism of our field by those external to it. Although it can be dangerous to import policies, standards, certification, and training programs from

one jurisdiction into another, the Jiva model (Arulmani, 2010) illustrates that there can be advantages in taking a “both/and” approach by conducting local research, surfacing “felt needs,” and building customized local resources that incorporate relevant components from

international systems and standards. One way to conceptualise the place of training in any particular country might be to locate it along a continuum, with training as a *reflection of professional practice* at one end, and training as a *preparation for professional practice* at the other.

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#### About the authors

*Dr Roberta Neault*, is Associate Dean, Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, Yorkville University, Canada and President, Life Strategies Ltd., Canada.

*Jane Artess, M.Ed (Post-compulsory Education)*, is Principal Research Fellow at the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS), College of Education, University of Derby, UK.

*Dr. Hsiu-Lan Shelley Tien*, is Professor and Department Head, Department of Educational Psychology and Counseling, National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan.

*Dr. Gideon Arulmani*, is Director, The Promise Foundation, Bangalore, India; Visiting Senior Lecturer, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK.; Visiting Professor, Martin Luther University, India; and an international development consultant.

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