June 2005
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'Learning Cape' Aspirations: the Idea of a Learning Region and the use of Indicators in a Middle Income Country

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Professor Shirley Walters

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Make every home, every shack or rickety structure a centre of learning. Nelson Mandela

Abstract

The Western Cape Province in South Africa aspires to being a learning province, called the Learning Cape. The case study locates developments historically, describes competing understandings of the Learning Cape, and analyses two strategies, which are illustrative of attempts to engage seriously with the concept. They are the Learning Cape Festival, which is in its fourth year, and the Learning Cape Indicators Project, which has drafted preliminary indicators. The strategies throw up many of the challenges and questions that confront the Learning Cape. The paper is a work in progress and the author writes as a participant observer, who has been closely involved in various aspects of the Learning Cape. There is very little literature available which discusses 'learning regions' in a middle-income country like South Africa. This paper aims to identify critical issues and questions within such a context.

1. Introduction

Key questions with which this paper will grapple are: can lower or middle-income countries become learning regions? Is lifelong learning suitable only for richer nations or regions? Is it possible for a province like the Western Cape Province in South Africa, which represents vast disparities between people who are rich and poor, black and white, to be a learning region? Is there any point in the Province aspiring to become a learning region?

These are real questions which confront those working on the ground in the Province on a daily basis. It is too early to give authoritative answers to these questions. Many people are immersed in complex social and institutional processes and attempting under difficult circumstances to imagine the province as a learning region. This paper is presented as a preliminary reflective dialogue, and a way of identifying some of the critical issues. I write as a participant observer, who has been closely involved in various aspects of the Learning Cape, including being invited to critique early drafts of the Provincial Government's White Paper on the Knowledge Economy[1], being commissioned to write a working paper on 'Developing the Learning Cape'[2], chairing the Learning Cape Festival's Steering Committee for the last 4 years, and undertaking research for the Learning Indicators Project[3].

The Western Cape Province is one of the nine provinces in South Africa. It aspires to being a learning province, called the Learning Cape. The case study locates the developments historically, describes the competing understandings of the Learning Cape, and analyses two strategies which are illustrative of attempts to engage seriously with the concept. They are the Learning Cape Festival, which is in its fourth year, and the Learning Cape Indicators Project, which has drafted preliminary indicators. The paper ends with a reflective dialogue.

2. A Learning Region and its Characteristics

I have argued elsewhere that there seem to be certain essential characteristics of a learning region. (Walters 2005a) One of these is to have a new understanding of the centrality for economic and social development of all forms of learning - informal, non-formal and formal - for people of all ages and in all sectors and spheres of family, community and work life. A second is to prioritise excellent education and training systems at all levels. A third is to provide frequently updated, easily accessible information and counselling services to enable citizens to optimise their learning opportunities. A fourth is to have world-class systems for collection, analysis, management and dissemination of information in order to monitor progress towards being a learning region. A fifth is the creation of social capital through partnerships and networks. This is summarised as follows:

- **education** - world-class education and training systems at all levels, with high participation rates;

- **partnerships and networking** - high levels of collaboration, networking and clustering within and across economic and knowledge sectors, especially around areas of innovation;

- **information** - world-class systems for collection, analysis, management and dissemination of information;

- **out of the silos** - a constant challenging of traditional knowledge categories to suit rapidly changing social and economic realities;

- **accessibility** - providing frequently updated, easily-accessible information and counselling services to enable citizens to maximize their learning opportunities;

- **lifelong learning valued** - high value placed on formal, non-formal and informal learning throughout life; that value is expressed in tangible improvements in the learner's employment and community situations;

- **social cohesion** - learning supports high levels of social cohesion (across social class, ethnicity, gender, ability, geography and age) within a society of limited social polarities.

There is an understanding that a learning region is a geographical area, which could be small or big, for example, a city, village, or province, which links lifelong learning with economic development to compete globally. It is a response to economic globalisation where informal, non-formal and formal learning are recognised as important, for people of all ages, to assist the processes of innovation that can lead to economic distinctiveness. The concept, 'learning region', is related to those of the 'knowledge economy', 'learning society', and 'information society'.

The European Commission has chosen lifelong learning as the overarching concept that, it is hoped, will weld together in one policy, active citizenship and the knowledge economy. The Europeans argue that they will not be able to move to a competitive knowledge economy if there is not a sufficient degree of social cohesion in Europe. Lifelong learning therefore needs to assist the processes of social inclusion and to enhance the prospects for innovation. Evidence of this thinking in Europe, Australia, Brazil, India, South Africa or North America has led to numerous towns, cities and regions declaring themselves learning towns, cities or regions. But what they mean by this varies.

Most of the countries developing the concept are high-income countries. However, in middle-income countries like Brazil, India and South Africa, the challenge is to interpret and develop the notion in contexts of widespread poverty and social polarisation. Some regions may emphasise high-end research and development for economic development, while others may also highlight the importance of social justice and equity as being integral to economic success.

Human, Social and Cultural Capital

Learning regions emphasise not only human capital, but also cultural and social capital. Traditionally, human resources have been approached from the point of view of reproducing and creating 'human capital'. The model is one of making sure to produce skilled people, as accurately as possible, to fulfil the needs of the economy. This remains a significant exercise, although a difficult one to carry out accurately, given variables such as HIV/Aids, fluctuating financial currencies and the migration of people.

Human capital focuses on the individual while social capital focuses on collective and social relationships. Cultural capital refers to the credentials and cultural assets embodied in individuals and their families, for example, the learning culture in many homes of middle class people that enhances children's participation in learning. Social capital highlights the networks, norms and trust that are necessary for individuals and institutions to achieve common objectives.

Key words that constantly recur in the literature of social capital are 'trust', 'community', 'partnerships' and 'networks'. An example of social systems, in which trust resulting from social homogeneity facilitates effective economic transactions, is the savings clubs in poor communities which allow the borrowing of money based on trust.

Social capital is a particularly important concept for the development of the learning region or society as it implies that trusting relationships are good for social cohesion and for economic success. A learning society is dependent on partnerships and collaborations of multiple kinds, both for economic development and for greater social cohesion.

Partnerships and Networks

The speed of global innovation is intense. Close relationships between different elements in the innovation nexus are required to keep pace. Partnerships and networks are required to make the most of the human capital available, and to enable collaboration between those working on similar knowledge areas in different institutions and environments. A constant challenging of traditional knowledge categories to suit rapidly changing social and economic realities is necessary as people are encouraged to move 'out of the silos'. Expressions of this come in the form of economic clusters or hubs, supported by government, business, and higher education, in exploring innovative strategies.

Just as the pace of global innovation is intense, so is the intensity of local need. The same principle of having to make the most of the human capital available, therefore, applies equally to networks around public sector provision and community development. These networks sometimes grow spontaneously, as meetings of people with similar interests, or simply by accident. However, there is evidence that it is possible to accelerate and focus the processes, for example through incentives, or by building capacity to enable people to engage across sectors, in partnership development and networking.

Lifelong Learning

Learning societies privilege learning but, often, concentrate on formal education and training. While this is essential, there is growing recognition (see for example Coffield 2000) that if an iceberg represents all learning, then the section above the surface of the water would be sufficient to cover formal learning, but the larger submerged part of the structure would be needed to convey the much greater importance of informal learning. This is particularly so in societies where formal schooling levels are low. It is in families, communities, through the media, in books, on the internet, and at workplaces that informal learning occurs. It is here where children and adults develop a culture of learning or not.

Through informal means people learn, for example, about informal trading, health, parenting, criminality, budgeting, fixing cars, or civic responsibility. It is in local communities, in townships and villages, on sport fields, through religious bodies, or in workplaces that values, skills and cultural practices are often acquired. A learning region therefore needs to be concerned to improve the informal learning cultures.

With this as the broad conceptual framework that is being used to understand a learning region, the next section will give the background to the Western Cape in the context of national debates, the history of the Learning Cape, and will begin to relate the profile of the region to the essential characteristics.

3. The Learning Cape

3.1 Situating the 'Learning Cape' within National Debates

The introduction to the White Paper of the Provincial Government Western Cape (PAWC 2001) "Preparing the Western Cape for the Knowledge Economy of the 21st Century", points succinctly to key political and economic debates in South Africa.

In today's world no country or region is untouched by the forces of globalisation and the rise of the knowledge economy. Such forces present obvious opportunities for wealth creation and the betterment of the human condition in those countries and regions that are well equipped to take advantage of them. But for those who are less well equipped, particularly in the developing world, globalisation can just as easily lead to growing poverty, inequality and marginalisation. The challenge facing countries such as South Africa is therefore how to channel the forces of globalisation for the elimination of poverty and the empowerment of people to lead fulfilling lives.

There is central concern about how South Africa engages with the global economy. There are different perspectives on the meaning of globalisation and how the South African government, civil society, and business should respond.

There is a considerable degree of contestation about the meaning of the concept of the knowledge economy and how it relates to South Africa. (This is elaborated in Walters 2005b) The debates on economic development, and the notion of the knowledge economy, most commonly relate to the tensions between globally dictated conditions for economic development on the one hand and the achievement of equity and redress on the other. An essential aspect is how far the South African state can act autonomously, outside the framework of globalisaton, to ensure redistribution and development.

Redistribution, development, growth and reconstruction are potent phrases in South African political debate. The central and defining policies of the government elected in 1994 have been the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994, followed, and partly superseded, by the Growth, Employment and Reconstruction Policy (GEAR) of 1996. The RDP was the popular, populist and

somewhat socialist social contract that the African National Congress (ANC) brought to the 1994 elections.

The far more stringent GEAR was, in part, a recognition of the need to move South Africa from an inward-looking, heavily protected economy to one that is able to compete efficiently in rapidly globalising markets. The government shifted to more conservative social and economic policies, for example, limited social spending to cut national debt, privatising state enterprises like telecommunications and transport, and cutting the number of state employees. Most analysts across the ideological spectrum recognise the neo-liberal character of the post-apartheid government's economic trajectory. (Daniel et al 2003; Mare 2003) In a government document (SA Government 2003), *Towards a 10-Year Review*, however, there is the assertion that the harsh, early GEAR years of 1997-2000 were a necessary route to stabilise resources for social support and redistributive policies and programmes.

In the course of the past decade, the analytical conception of South Africa has shifted discernibly from nation-building to global positioning. There have been few changes brought about by the transition from apartheid to democracy more dramatic than those to South Africa's international position. Apartheid South Africa was pilloried, and economically excluded, as the polecat of the world. Following the move to democracy, South Africa has not only rejoined the international state system as a full member, but it has in many ways become celebrated as a model for other states to follow. Schoeman (2003) explores the demands imposed upon, and the dilemmas faced by, the newly democratic South Africa as an 'emerging middle power'.

More radical challengers argue against the need to accept the inevitability of South Africa's ways of engaging with the global economy through current neo-liberal government policy and close collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions. For example, Bond (2000) and Saul (1997) are very critical of South Africa's trajectory of development since 1994. They argue that the South African government has succumbed to a form of technological determinism where 'there is no alternative' but to try to engage the global economy on the terms set by others. Their arguments relate to the imperative to find alternatives that channel the forces of globalisation for the elimination of poverty and the empowerment of people to lead fulfilling lives.

From the government's viewpoint, the logic of the linkage between a mitigated market economy, global engagement on its own terms, and deeper political and economic engagement with the rest of Africa are inextricably linked, (See State of the Nation Addresses of the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, 1998, 2003). The market economy is mitigated in the sense that fiscal stringency before 2000 has since then enabled rising social expenditure on services and grants to the most

impoverished, in addition to an ambitious programme of public works in the coming decade.

Unemployment is indeed the central problem in the lived experience of South Africans and in the analyses of economists at between 30% and 40%. The challenges for economic growth are varied, but one of the single greatest inhibitors, consistently advanced by analysts and economists of all political persuasions, is the central problem of "capacity" or "skills deficit". Therefore, the questions of human resource development and the potential role of information and communication technology (ICT) to increase South Africa's global competitiveness are central to the various understandings of South Africa in the knowledge economy and to interpretations of the 'knowledge society'.

South African debates about the 'knowledge society' were injected by the visit of the Castells and Carnoy in 2000. The debates were located within those of globalisation and the role of the State. They were highly politicised, as is to be expected in a newly democratised society like South Africa. The problems that Castells addressed were explained by Muller, Cloete and Badat (2001: vii). They were:

To understand the changing conditions for productive life in the wake of an informational technological revolution, one that leaves no state untouched. Castells endeavour is to explain the motor of this new mode (Castells writes in the tradition of) delineating changes in the mode of development, which is broader than the mode of production. Castells great innovation is to be more precise about post-industrialism, which he revealingly calls informationalism, that is the new dependence of productivity on the ability to deal with…knowledge based information.

Muller et al (2001: ix) point out that Castells identifies the new developmental fundamentals that are necessary as two sets of capacity: communications capacity and human resource capacity. The former refers to telecommunications infrastructure and information technology; the latter refers to the proportion of knowledgeable labour available.

The gulf of educational inequality, normal to South Africa, is especially noticeable in the ICT sector. Here a small minority have the physical connections and the computer literacy to access a broad set of ICT services, and indeed, to offer them. The majority has neither connections nor hardware. This is seen as a predictor of further exclusion in the future.

A major inhibiting factor to economic growth is seen as the cost of telecommunications. One indicator of the relative cost is that a university in South Africa pays 37.5 times as much for its bandwidth as does an average American university, despite price reductions by the monopoly provider, Telkom. The disparity is even more marked when compared with European institutions that are part of the Geant network. (Keats 2005)

From 1994 there was considerable rhetoric about the "information revolution," and something of a naïve hope that technology would enable shortcuts in HRD. Initiatives across the public sector were somewhat scattered and incoherent. The role of ICT in enabling South Africa to 'leap frog' development was one of the scenarios discussed within the Castells seminars. But the importance of information as the foundation of sustainable development to assist decision-making and monitoring of the environment has also been argued. (Schwabe 2002)

The importance of HRD and technology for South Africa to meet the new conditions for global competitiveness, are captured within the emerging HRD strategy and supported by the policy document entitled, An HRD Strategy for South Africa: *A nation at work for a better life for all*, launched in April 2001. HRD is seen as a cross-sectoral policy issue that is shaped by, and impacts on, a multitude of government policy domains including education and training, the labour market and macroeconomic, industrial and foreign trade policies. When combined or 'joined up' in an interlocking and self-reinforcing way, the basket of government policies yields the appropriate human and technological capability necessary for future national economic success. (Kraak 2003)

In summary, underpinning the explicit or implicit debates and discussions on the 'knowledge society' and 'knowledge economy' are the bigger questions of highly contested theories and approaches to economic and social development locally and globally. Amongst economists, politicians and sociologists, the concept of the 'learning society' is barely used. They refer rather to 'knowledge society' or 'information age'. For some, the knowledge society refers only to human capital formation at the high end. For others this is inadequate as the needs of the majority of people who are poor are primary. In the Western Cape, the use of the term 'learning society' is more common, perhaps because of the number of educationalists involved in the debates.

The 'knowledge society' concept is mainly used in relation to economic competitiveness and in relation to the potential for technology to position the country more favourably. The tensions between economic development, equity, redress and social justice are central to the debates on both the 'knowledge' and 'learning' societies.

The Learning Cape

Through the adoption of the economic development White Paper (PAWC 2001) the case is argued for an intimate relationship between economic development and learning within a learning region framework, coining the term Learning Cape, as one of four key pillars for economic and social development, developed after lengthy consultative processes. The White Paper sets out to address the 'twin challenges of increasing competitiveness and alleviating poverty in the global knowledge economy of the 21st century'.

The arguments presented for regional development strategies are similar in many ways to the economic development strategies in many parts of the world. There is increasing evidence of the correlation between economic development and the levels of education and training of the population. However, in a middle-income country like South Africa, with some of the most severe inequalities in the world, they argue that economic and social development cannot be separated; both are central considerations in a human resources strategy.

The development of the Learning Cape is an imaginative and ambitious goal. (DLL 2001) Since 2003 the White Paper has been superseded by another strategy, Ikapa Elihlumayo (PAWC 2004). While the language of the 'Learning Cape' is not used in the latest policies documents, it has continued through other government actions, which will be discussed later. The change in policy coincided with a change in provincial government, which meant change in political party leadership.

The retention of the concept of the Learning Cape can be seen in a task team report (PAWC 2003) to develop a framework for developing the human resource development strategy (HRDS). In this they critique the 'manpower planning' approach to HRDs by proposing to put the notion of the learning region at the centre, and they adopted the essential characteristics for a Learning Cape as elaborated earlier.

The Learning Cape concept and the preliminary moves being made to develop are in a systematic way is the most explicit and determined example of serious engagement with the notion of the learning society in South Africa. In the next section a profile of the socio-economic conditions in the Western Cape Province is presented in order to convey the extent of the challenges facing the region.

3.2 The Regional Context

The Western Cape is the second wealthiest province in South Africa. On the one hand, certain parts of the economy are fairly buoyant, like tourism, services for film, media, and IT, and the fruit and wine industry. On the other hand, 65% of people earn below US $200 per month, there is 24% unemployment, 30% of adults are illiterate, 75% of pre-schoolers do not have access to early childhood development opportunities, and the number of TB and HIV/Aids infected people is increasing rapidly. The disparities between rich and poor are among the most extreme in the world.

Population

In the 2001 census the population of the Western Cape was recorded as being over 4.5 million. This is 10% of the population of South Africa. It reflects a growth of 500 000 since the previous census in 1996, or an average 2.9% annual growth. The

annual average for South Africa in the same period was 2.1%. Many of the people came for the poorer provinces of Northern and Eastern Cape, and were attracted by perceived better job opportunities, more accessible and effective infrastructure and government services, as well as a superior quality of life.[4]

64% of the population live in the Cape Town metro area, an area covering 2% of the total size of the province[5].

Table 1: Population in % by population group

	S Africa	W Cape
Black African	79.0%	26.7%
Coloured	8.9%	53.9%
Asian/ Indian	2.5%	1.0%
White	9.6%	18.4%
Total	100%	100.0%

Source: Statistics SA Census 2001

The Western Cape is rated as the second richest province in South Africa, but the averaging of statistics masks the discrepancies and range that exist in the Province. The following data highlight some of these discrepancies.

Economic Sectors
The primary industries (agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining and quarrying) contribute 5.4% to the GDPR while secondary industries (manufacturing, construction, electricity and water) contribute 24.1%. The bulk of the GDPR, 61.6%, comes from tertiary industries (wholesale and retail, hotels, restaurants, transport, communication, finance real estate, general government services, community, social and personal services). Since 1995 the shares of the primary and secondary sectors have decreased from almost 35% to less than 30%.[6] Agriculture is the only primary sector category where there has been some growth in employment. The financial services have been the largest contributor to economic growth.

Work and Age

The population is relatively young, with 67.5%[7] of the W Cape population between 15 and 65 and therefore of working age.
Using a strict definition of unemployment, the percentage of people unemployed across all population groups is currently 26%. However the range of the unemployed is 41% for Black Africans and 6.9% for Whites, indicating the socio-economic polarities in the province[8]. In addition a disproportionately high 46% in

the age group 16 and 25 years is unemployed, although representing 17% of the employment market[9].

Of this youth unemployed group, 30% have either matriculation or a tertiary qualification, and 21% have spent more than three years searching for employment.[10]

There is also a racial dimension to the employment pattern[11]; recent research found that the majority of coloured (the old Apartheid racial classification) 19-year-olds had worked, the majority of white 17-year-olds had worked, but less than 30% of black African 22 year-olds had ever worked. The research found that most of the youth had worked part-time for 6-7 hours on one or two days per week. The jobs were usually that of waitress, baby-sitter, shop assistant, shelf-packer, newspaper delivery or odd jobs such as cutting grass.

Research conducted in 2004 by de Swardt[12] found that 67% of wage earners did not earn enough to push their household income above the poverty line.

Education and work

Table 2: Level of education amongst those aged 20+ in the W. Cape

Level of Schooling	2001 in %
No schooling	5.7%
Some Primary	15.2%
Completed Primary	7.9%
Some Secondary	36.5%
Grade 12	23.4%
Higher	11.2%
Total	**100%**

Source: Adapted from SER 2005:61, based on Statistics SA Census 2001

The 2001 census data indicated that virtually all school-going-age children are at school until at least the age of 15 or 16. There is then a dramatic drop in enrolment. It is currently estimated that only 45-52% of learners who enrol in grade 1 reach grade 12. The Western Cape grade 12 pass rate is 83%, but only 25% obtain a certificate enabling them to attend a higher education institution, with most of the latter coming from learners in predominantly white schools.[13]

The Department of Social Services estimates that only 22% of the 56, 416 [14] children who are under the age of five attend an early childhood centre. Many of these 600 centres have poor infrastructure, and are run by people not fully trained

to educate young children. The Department believes that this poor early experience of education compromises children's ability to perform in later years

National employment rates of new entrants into the labour market, including those with grade 12, was estimated in the Human Resources Development Review[15] as:

- 29 % of Black African new entrants will get jobs
- 50 % of coloured new entrants will get jobs
- 70 % of Indian new entrants will get jobs
- 75% of white new entrants will get jobsl

Poverty levels and social infrastructure

According to the 2001 Census, 42,4% of households in Western Cape had an annual income of less than R 19,200.

The Cape Provincial Social Services Department[16] paints a bleak picture of the extent of the problems with which they deal. They currently have 4,402 cases of child abuse on their books, know of 780 street children, and report that an average of 2,223 youth are arrested for crimes per month. In addition only 2% of the aged are in government subsidised old age facilities. They estimate a 12.4% incidence of HIV/Aids, with the highest level in the age group 25 -29.

The infant mortality rate for the province is 31/1,000 live births, which is below the national rate of 56/1,000. However the rate for the South Peninsula, a predominantly middle class area is 13/1,000 and for Khayelitsha, a working class area is 44/1,000 live births. The incidence of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome in the province is amongst the highest in the world and is estimated at over 40 /1,000.

According to their recent report the average social worker[17] serves 5,565 people, however in Khayelitsha the average is 1:17,316 and in Mitchell's Plein it is 1:14,237. The situation in rural areas appears more favourable than in these dense urban areas where there is an average closer to 1:5000. For example the average in Oudtshoorn is 1:4, 930 , Worcester 1: 5,877 and Caledon is 1:5,356. However these are the names of towns in rural areas, and social workers would be expected to serve people living in outlying areas close to these small towns. In reality, many people living in rural areas would seldom if ever meet a social worker.

From these figures, the class and race polarities are obvious. The levels of educational and social deprivation are extreme. In terms of the characteristics of a learning region, we can assume that with these extremities the attainment of social cohesion would be extremely difficult.

In terms of education and training provision in the Western Cape, the Province is relatively well endowed. It has four reputable higher education institutions in

greater Cape Town, consolidated Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges, a wide array of workplace learning opportunities, and civil society organisations. FET Colleges are a provincial competence. Their roles are being expanded presently to be able to respond more effectively to workplace needs. Higher Education is a national competence. Both the FET Colleges and Higher Education Institutions have been participating actively in the Learning Cape Festival, which is described in the following section.

4. Illustrative Strategies towards the Learning Cape

4.1 Learning Cape Festival

In October 2001 there was a proposal to the Provincial Department of Economic Development from the University of Western Cape that an annual Learning Cape Festival could contribute to the development of the concept and strategy of the Learning Cape. The proposal was canvassed amongst higher education, civil society, trade unions, business, local government, libraries, and the Department of Education. A Steering Committee made up of the range of social partners from government, trade unions, higher education, early childhood, schooling, adult basic education, NGOs, and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) was set up to run it. A series of theme groups was also established. Starting the month long festival on National Woman's Day, 9 August, and ending it on International Literacy Day, 8 September, it was hoped that some of the issues of the most marginalised citizens would be profiled in the festival.

Since then, there have been three month long, festivals in 2002, 2003, and 2004 with the fourth being planned for 2005. I will not attempt to do justice here to the depth, breadth and texture of the month's 500 or more activities, but will discuss some pockets of intense engagement which illustrate how the Festivals promoted various forms of learning, advocacy, networking and partnership building within and across sectors. (Walters and Etkind 2004)

The way in which one working class township used the Festival highlighted its strategic potential. Manenberg and Tambo Village are very poor, gang-dominated, residential areas. Two community workers involved in an urban renewal process decided to use the Festival as a way of furthering the achievements of the Clean Green and Safe Smart campaigns where residents had come together to undertake sustainable community projects which improved their quality of life. The community worker reported that in this conflict-ridden area, the month long Festival was fully supported, and was one of the only 'spaces' in the community to be free of conflict. He said that 'everyone could agree on the importance of building a lifelong learning culture'.

The festival initiated and profiled programmes on adult literacy, early childhood development, health, science (in partnership with higher education), small business

skills development, sports and recreation, and second chance learning. These programmes attempted to link learning to discussion and action on community and economic development. It demonstrated the meaning of lifelong learning in action. It encouraged residents to engage in learning for personal development. It drew residents into debates on what development should or could mean for them in their area. It mobilised resources for local citizens by bringing outside agencies into the area. It raised the profile of education and economic development projects, and it drew people into work-related skills programmes. It publicised local citizen actions in Manenberg and Tambo Village to the broader Cape Town community. Lifelong learning was presented as both a collective and individual good.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) also got involved. In 2002 the five HEIs organised a Higher Education and Regional Development Public Debate and Symposium. This was the first time that these HEIs had together engaged civil society, labour, business and government in debate on provincial economic and social development. This initiative led to a standing committee being established to create the link between higher education and the Learning Cape initiative. In 2003 broader based engagement and cooperation occurred amongst the five HEIs, which, generally, are in competition with one another. The leadership and members of community outreach projects discussed further the imperative for local engagement by the HEIs in social and economic development.

At the University of Western Cape, we run our own mini festival, the Learning Cape Indaba[18]. This draws in academic, administrative and technical staff and students into organising and participating in a range of about 50 learning events during the month, from learning to bake bread, to contemplating healthy living, to story-telling, to studying aspects of biotechnology. Collaborative events are also run with off campus groups, like a 'Recognition of Prior Learning in the Workplace' symposium which brought together 70 RPL specialists from HEIs, workplaces, trade unions, and vocational training providers. Another event, co-hosted with women's NGOs, was entitled, *Too scared to learn: the effects of violence and abuse on women and girls learning*. This brought together school teachers, counsellors, adult educators and early childhood educators from poor, working class areas, from government, and from education institutions[19].

A network of civil society organisations, the Adult Learners Forum, hosted an event which entertained and recognised 1,000 ABE learners from adult learning centres. Adults who cannot read and write are largely invisible in South African society. This event brought their issues to the fore through the media. It also affirmed and encouraged their active involvement in learning. In addition a network of libraries throughout the province opened their doors and took various initiatives, as did many other institutions through open days, and information services, all to inspire citizens, young and old, with the message that lifelong learning is an essential ingredient in economic, social and cultural development.

In 2003 the new Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) organised themselves in order to inform the public about 'learnerships'. The Further Education and Training sector also used the space for a series of informative seminars. The business sector however was barely involved.

Throughout the festivals, new partnerships were established and old ones strengthened with some government departments, private sector, NGOs, and HEIs. There was positive media coverage of Festival events, demonstrating 'from the bottom up', what good educational projects and programmes there are and what serious issues learners and educators face. The Festival succeeded in generating a degree of goodwill and energy of a wide range of people. The festivals were important first steps in popularising and giving content to the vision of a 'Learning Cape', particularly amongst some government departments, education and training providers, trade unions, NGOs, and SETAs.

The immediate challenge after the first three relatively successful festivals was how to move from an exciting innovation to deepen and develop the vision and reality of the 'Learning Cape'. The Learning Cape Festival was seen as a means to an end, not an end in itself. It needed to be nested within a much more extensive Learning Cape initiative which would be integral to building the human development base of the Province.

The Provincial Department of Economic Affairs, together with the Provincial Department of Education, influenced by their experiences of the LCF, helped establish a multi-stakeholder HRD Task Group, to construct a framework for a provincial Human Resources Development Strategy. This is part of a national HRDs initiative between the Departments of Labour and Education. The Steering Committee of the LCF and the theme groups made important contributions to the Task Group's work and the LCF was part of the HRD Task Group, with the explicit mandate to feed in from the LCF experience. The Task Group developed a framework for the HRDs within a learning province framework.

According to the HRD Framework (PAWC 2003):

Simply put, creating a learning province means, for example, that close linkages and partnerships must be developed and sustained amongst and between business, labour, civil society education and training providers and government in order to be responsive to the changing economic, social and demographic trends. It means that business, government, labour and the higher education sector co-research and develop innovative solutions to economic and social problems, It requires a heightened awareness of the importance of training in the workplace, which would imply that the amount of training has to increase dramatically from the current position where only about 20% of the workforce has received skills training.

In summary, using Coffield's (2000a) framework, the LCF has helped to move ideas of lifelong learning beyond 'romance', to 'evidence' and 'implementation'. It has been a very useful vehicle to raise awareness of the notion of a learning province and to propel government to move beyond a symbolic policy to one, which may

begin to be implemented. The LCF has profiled lifelong learning that is concerned with economic development and social equity and redress. This has been possible because of the particular socio-economic imperatives in the area, but also because of the composition of the Steering Committee. It has had fairly strong civil society and government representation, but weak participation from business.

The LCF has now reached a stage where there is a need to formalise an informal structure and to find a home for it which encompasses its multi-stakeholder form. At present what is called a Section 21 (not-for-profit) Company is being established, the Learning Cape Initiative (LCI). This has been agreed to through the Provincial Development Council (PDC), which brings together the four social partners, business, government, labour and civil society, in social dialogue on important socio-economic matters. A Provincial Growth and Development Summit has been held with the four partners in the last two years. One of the committees within the PDC is on HRD. This sponsored the proposal to set up the LCI, which will house the Learning Cape Festival.

The LCF has highlighted in important ways that to work out of silos takes practice. It requires people who can facilitate the processes, which key into important issues for the different sectors. It takes long-term vision and sustained commitment to working together. It is interesting to note that the City Development Strategies[20] have a timeframe of 30 years, which seems more realistic than the dominant short-term development cycles. It requires ongoing advocacy to motivate and to mobilise resources to support the activities. It has captured the imagination of many people and given hope that creating a learning region may be possible. It has enormous potential to be a vehicle for institutions and individuals to learn to behave differently. Trust has been built amongst a diverse set of practitioners and institutions. It is, however, very fragile, and requires constant vigilance in order that one sector or institution or individual does not dominate and so render others passive.

4.2 Indicators of Success for the Learning Cape?

 Recommendation 1 of the HRDs Framework Report (PAWC 2003:42), states about Benchmarks for a Learning Cape that:
it is necessary to set targets and develop indicators for measuring and monitoring progress towards the Learning Cape, which include socio-economic indicators and those relating to the quality of education and training. The indicators are to help stakeholder organizations, sectors and the learning province as a whole to measure and to monitor progress and performance. Monitoring would be done continuously with annual public accounting of progress reported to all stakeholders.

Influenced by this recommendation, the provincial Department of Economic Development (DED) set up a preliminary research and development project 'to develop Learning Cape Indicators'. Together with colleagues[21], I undertook a

limited, four month project. The project is not finalised yet but in the process several pertinent issues have been raised which will inform this discussion.

What is a learning indicator?

The task of the project was to develop 'learning' indicators, not indicators of 'education and training'. This is a crucial distinction. Education and training is inclined to refer to formal, institutional and credentialed forms of learning. It usually refers to what happens in schools, colleges, higher education institutions, or vocational training programmes. It may include some instances of non-formal learning – where people attend courses that do not lead to formalised certificates. This is typically included in the definition of education and training when it is provided in the workplace. But courses offered through the activities of civil society organisations and groups (such as in youth organisations, trade unions and political parties) may not be covered. Arts, music and sports classes or private tutoring to prepare for examinations are not commonly included.

Learning is broader. It explicitly includes formal and all non-formal learning and it also recognises informal or incidental learning in families, communities and at work. It includes learning through information technology, libraries, other cultural institutions, public media, or through experience.

A learning society privileges the notion of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is cross-sectoral. It is not limited to formal education - general, further, and higher education and training - but includes adult and community education as well as workplace-based learning. It also includes opportunities to access learning at other sites not conventionally seen as sites of learning. These include the media, libraries, social and, religious groups as well as electronically transmitted and stored data. Lifelong learning includes all types and levels of learning irrespective of content, form or location.

The learning society requires good quality formal education and training institutions, as the experience of initial informal and formal education will have lasting effects on people's abilities to be effective lifelong learners. But it also depends on the valuing of learning of informal and non-formal kinds at all four stages of the life cycle. Most often it is only the education of the young that is privileged in our society. Lifelong learning, from birth to death, for individuals and communities, is at the core of a learning region. It is the relationships of learning to economic and social development in all spheres, which are crucial. To capture this we drew on Belanger's (1994) work, which circumscribed three broad areas that are interlinked – they represent the life cycle and the learning contexts.

They are:
- initial learning
- adult learning
- diffuse learning environments.

Initial Learning includes non-formal learning of children from birth, and schooling at general and further educational levels.

Adult Learning includes ABET and higher and continuing education throughout adult life until death.

Diffuse Learning Environments are enhanced through the educational quality of libraries, the media, cultural activities, learning cultures in families, voluntary associations, and so on.

The approach which we adopted was to start with the characteristics, as described earlier, which reinforce the idea put forward by Premier Rassool in the 'Framework Agreement for Growth and Development and Social Dialogue' (Western Cape 2004) to entrench a 'culture of social dialogue' in the attainment of economic development and social cohesion. We accepted that in order to have a 'learning region' there is need of 'an excellent education and training system'

However, we did not subscribe to the view that there is a linear process whereby you first wait for the excellent formal system and then try to develop a broader informal and non-formal learning culture. There is ample evidence that an excellent formal system is not possible without facilitative learning cultures in families, in workplaces and in communities. But we did identify the formal education system as part of the bedrock of a learning region, and we identified a set of 'bedrock indicators' for which different parts of the formal education system are responsible. These act as a backdrop to the more specific, unique, Learning Cape indicators.

We also recognised that development of learning indicators was not a politically neutral process. As Duke (2004) points out, in the international literature on learning neighbourhoods, communities, cities, and regions, there are important differences of purpose and priority, as well as different ways of going about policy interventions. The commonest tension is between economic and social dimensions, also the tension between the individual and the collective. Economic purposes are sometimes interpreted and sought in individual terms such as job acquisition and reduced unemployment levels, or the acquisition and accreditation of skills thought necessary to gain employment and match labour market needs.

Another approach is to consider the economic character of a community in its locality and to look for indicators of rising prosperity such as employment, productivity, mobility of skilled labour and inward capital investment. In one case the individuals and their collective achievements are the focus of attention and the other focuses on the achievement of particular communities. Underpinning the particular approaches are understandings of economic and social development. Some stress the importance of social indicators like those of health and social welfare, while others will highlight specifically economic indicators. In all cases the

intention is to create a sufficient upward spiral to enable economic and social development.

What is the purpose of an indicator?[22]

We argued that the indicators should be framed to illuminate and guide, not to show up or punish. An indicator is a measure, for which we have data that helps quantify the achievement of a desired result. Indicators help answer the question'how would we know a result if we achieved it?'

Examples of indicators include: rates of preventable disease among children; reading and maths achievement scores; high school graduation rates; rates of teen pregnancy and drug use; and crime rates.

The two elements to note in this definition are:

- the pre-existence of a desired result: this may be explicit or implicit but it is what gives direction to shaping the indicators.
- the existence of data: some form of measurable data quantifies/describes a relationship with the desired result.

There is a variety of choices to be made when designing a set of social indicators. They are not elaborated here. Just to say that the relationship between the development of social indicators and the development of strategy can be strong or weak.

Interest groups produce some indicators as rallying points and challenges for government. Governments produce some as a specific aid in moving towards policy goals.

At their most noble, civic indicators are used as measuring systems to assist societies and communities towards a desired course, to clarify key issues and challenges, and to prioritise resources, especially spending. They do not just monitor progress; they help make it happen. (Reed 2000)

In the present case, we needed to develop indicators that show progress towards the vision of the Learning Cape or which highlight the obstacles that stand in the way. Our aim was to:

- establish targets and measures (indicators) that inform and track progress towards realising the strategic vision,
- enable the indicators to help to develop strategies.

Background research highlighted the fact that indicator construction is a social process. It requires consultation and is therefore slow. The process was seen as being able to be used to win supporters for the Learning Cape initiative and to

spread the discussion within the province on how to promote a learning region and learning communities.

Envisaged sites for developing indicators of the Learning Cape

Categories for indicators			
	Formal	Informal	Non-formal
Initial Learning	General Education Further Education	Family, friends, communities	Early Childhood Development
Adult Learning	ABET Workplace learning Higher Ed Trade union education	Family & friends, work colleagues, community organisations	Workplace Parenting Literacy Language Trade unions Government
Diffuse Learning Environments		Community events Media Libraries Arts& culture Internet	Civil society organisations - Faith-based - Environmental - Health

The methodology chosen suggested that 'data baskets' could be assembled in additional areas of need or interest in the future. It also opened the possibility for other parts of the provincial government, other spheres of government or organisations of civil society, to sponsor data baskets on other issues. This it was felt would assist in monitoring progress in other areas and contribute to broadening the impact of the Learning Cape.

A 'Learning Province' consists of learning communities and learning regions. Specific indicators needed to be identified that could be useful at the municipal and local level to trace progress in the areas envisaged for the project – and to inspire action for continuous improvement. Every sector potentially has its own form of indicators and measures to evaluate progress. The assumption was that what makes the Learning Cape indicators unique is the combination of indicators across the sectors, and how they relate to the summary of characteristics of a Learning Province.

The indicators?

Using the three organising categories of initial, adult and diffuse, a cluster of indicators was identified from the initial and adult categories that form the

foundation of a learning region. As the bedrock of learning, a positive assessment of these indicators is essential to the development of lifelong learning in the region. These indicators are mainly but not solely the responsibility of the Western Cape Education Department and National Department of Education. An illustrative sample of these is[23]:

Foundation (Bedrock) Indicators Initial Learning

1	Proportion of children 0-4 attending Early Childhood Development (ECD)
2	Proportion of children attending registered Grade R (reception) classes
3	Proportion of Grade 3, 6 and 9 learners who score above the target level for numeracy and literacy
4	Proportion of learners who enter the system in Grade 1 compared to the proportion of learners who exit the system in Grade 12 Retention of school children
5	Number of computers per learner in public schools

Adult Learning

10   Improvement in the throughput rate in Further Education and Training (FET) colleges

11   Improvement in the level of enrolment of ABET learners in Level 1-4 exams

12   Each of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) produces a 'social responsiveness' report, in which partnerships for innovation and development amongst the HEIs themselves and between them and specific sectors are identified and regularly reported to a HEI provincial structure.

Sources of data for the bedrock indicators are mostly available through statistics within the Department of Education. The bigger challenge was to imagine the indicators that would be more specific to the Learning Cape and less reflective of mainstream education.

Proposed Learning Cape Indicators

In order to decide on these indicators, the 'essential characteristics of a learning region' were used, with the three lifelong learning categories. Thirty-four indicators were developed and reflected against the characteristics. A sample of the indicators is given below.

Initial Learning

	Indicator
1	Effective functioning of an ECD inter-sectoral group in province
2	Proportion of children recognised as vulnerable
3	Use of school facilities for public events related to learning
4	Increase in the proportion and range of learners participating in Mathematic Olympiads

Adult Learning

	Indicator
1	Proportion of learners in FET colleges over 24 years
2	Increase in resourcing of ABET by province and workplace
3	All Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) produce reliable baseline provincial data identifying key inputs to and outputs from their workplace learning programmes
4	A rise in absolute numbers & proportion of employees in skilled categories of work & a fall in the numbers and proportion in the unskilled category'elementary occupations'.
5	Extent to which HEIs help to stimulate innovation and knowledge transfer between researchers and industry

Diffuse Learning Environments

	Indicator
1	Number of municipalities that actively promote involvement in the annual learning Cape Festival
2	The number of computers, in working order, that are in libraries and linked to the internet or searchable databases (excluding the library catalogue) per citizen
3	Percentage of educational programmes on local radio

4	Access to PITs (Public Information Terminals) in post offices and government offices and the extent of their use.

Attempting to decide on Learning Cape indicators opens a host of difficult issues. One of the challenges is to work with people coming out of different traditions and professional fields, with different and competing understandings.

To illustrate this I use a brief example of children under the age of 5[24].

The proposed indicators were:

1. proportion of children 0-4 attending an early childhood facility (ECD),

2. proportion of children recognised as vulnerable in terms of their weight, cognitive and physical development, HIV/Aids status or poverty level.

Given the scenario that less than 22% of the under 5 population currently attend an ECD facility and that 42 % of the households in the Western Cape have an annual income below $200, these seemed to be potentially useful indicators. The researchers argued that there was in all likelihood a relationship between improving socio-economic conditions and improving educational opportunities.

The initial response from one economist was that 'five-year-old children had nothing to do with the economy'. Another response was from the marginal ECD sector who were thrilled to have the connection between ECD and the socio-economic conditions recognised. Another was from a person in the Department of Social Services who stressed how important it was for the government to see the 'whole child' when developing policies for children.

Supporters of lifelong learning continually stressed the importance of early learning experiences in terms of developing lifelong learners who would eventually be able to contribute successfully to the economy and society more broadly. It was a working mother who most clearly pointed out the real benefit, in her view, of good early childhood education. It was to free her up to rejoin the workforce. The economists were persuaded on hearing this. The indicator was retained for the time being.

Another major concern related to the processes of development of the indicators. There had been an initial intention to produce the preliminary indicators through participatory processes, but this was short-circuited because of unfolding economic policy developments. In the midst of the process, there was pressure from the Department of Economic Development to make the indicators more obviously

connected to the emerging micro economic development strategy. So starting from a broad approach there were signals to narrow these.

The tensions described earlier, which reflect the national debates, were also apparent provincially. Certain economists began to ask for more conventional, internationally comparable, economic and human development data. Others could see the importance of trying to cover new developmental ground. The researchers began also to see the vastness of the project, which needed to establish legitimacy for new indicators for which there were no ready data. Leadership in the Department of Economic Development would not necessarily see their role as leading innovators thinking about the learning region and lifelong learning's role in it. This begs the question, where should a cross cutting project like this be housed? The indicators project is not yet final, and the use to which the indicators will be put is not clear.

Emerging questions

The Indicators Project raised many questions beyond the indicators themselves and their use. It raised the issue of the conceptual framework for understanding the learning region from a lifelong learning perspective. It posed questions of how to measure LLL and who is responsible for it – it seems both no-one and everyone simultaneously. It challenged the thinking and practices of government departments to move 'out of their silos' while illustrating the contests over turf that exist.

The different tiers of government, local, provincial and national, each have their own relationships to the State and the economy, with their own rules. It highlighted problems with available data and how this availability can pull the indicators towards formal Education and Training. Moving out of silos and into partnerships means that institutions have to confront these tensions. There is need for extensive social processes to change deeply entrenched behaviours. There needs to be a long-term commitment to building the vision and the practices of a learning region.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

Key questions posed at the outset were: can lower or middle-income countries become learning regions? Is lifelong learning not only suitable for richer nations or regions? Is it possible for a province like the Western Cape Province in South Africa, which represents vast disparities between people who are rich and poor, black and white, to be a learning region? Is there any point in the Province aspiring to become a learning region?

As I stated, these are real questions which confront those working on the ground in the Province on a daily basis. It is too early to give authoritative answers to these questions, as many people are immersed in complex social and institutional

processes where we are attempting under difficult circumstances to imagine the province as a learning region. I will enjoin these questions through a preliminary reflective dialogue with a colleague[25] as a way of bringing together some critical issues.

There are such wide disparities within our society, I cannot see in the foreseeable future how attainment of a learning region is possible, if we accept the 'essential characteristics' as spelt out.

A. I agree. If we look at the state of formal education and training, which is the bedrock of the learning region, we have a long way to go. The state of our data in order to monitor developments is also questionable. Then the enormous polarities around social class, race, gender, geography, which exacerbate violence and crime, don't make me optimistic that high degrees of social cohesion are likely any time soon. I reckon that, like real democracy itself, the Learning Cape will remain aspirational, something towards which to strive.

A. The framework of lifelong learning has been projected nationally within policy frameworks. It has been largely symbolic except for the important innovation of the National Qualifications Framework. The Learning Cape has provided the first structured space where a range of all social partners across the economy, government, and civil society are grappling with the meaning of lifelong learning. They are also trying to understand in preliminary ways what the relationships are between learning and the economy and society.

B. The Learning Cape presents the challenge of holding the space to discuss 'learning' rather than education and training. In South Africa, formal education is what most people associate with 'learning'. While there has been a long and vibrant history of social movement learning, the learning dimensions of activism within social movements are not readily recognised. Making social learning within informal settings visible is an important dimension of creating the Learning Province. However, it is very difficult to have social learning recognised when there is a strong push for accredited formal education and training, which is associated with work and social mobility.

A. Within the notion of the learning province is a range of theories of development. On the one hand you can have people highlighting the importance of social capital within a neo-liberal framework, as Mowbray (2005) pointed out. In this scenario people are being urged to volunteer, and to take on more and more community work while the government reduces its public spending in the social sector. There is a new social contract in the 'risk society' where individuals are being told to invest in education throughout their lives. If they fall by the wayside it is their fault.

B. In some societies, while investment in various aspects of education and training is decreasing, there is inflation in the discourse of lifelong learning (increasing inflation and decrease in investment). Therefore, does the discourse of the learning society create illusions? Is it not just reinforcing the individual and the market as being in charge of learning, and letting governments off the hook? Do we not need more individuals involved, but in a collective framework? Is the 'learning society' just a political slogan?

A. I think it depends on what notions of development are at play as to what can be achieved by whom. My own view is that participatory development, which involves grassroots organisations, is crucial. The citizens must be 'subjects' not 'objects'. The importance of levels of trust being built through partnerships and networks can be a way of building solidarity and support for poor communities. However, this is not to deny the power struggles and differences that inevitably do exist. There is high unemployment and poverty so the importance of economic growth and development is critical. This goes hand in hand with social development.

B. Who controls the learning region discourse is important. There will no doubt be ongoing contestations and these are essential if the notions are not going to be left to macro economists concerned with top down theories of global development. The discourse of the learning citizen within neo-liberalism is not concerned with the public good – the citizen is the 'innovative entrepreneur'.

A. The learning region, if it is to become a reality, must be built from the bottom up, cultivating sediments of resilience and ingenuity, which come through supporting learning relationships. Support from the top, in the form of resources, incentives, and recognition, is the other side of the coin, though.

B. When we think how difficult it is to solve economic and social problems within the silos of activities, the notion of 'joined-up' approaches seems essential. Also, with the complexities of the world it is easier for most people to relate to their local geographical spaces in which they live. Even though the local spaces are permeated by global influences, their impact can be more easily understood at the local level. This is one of the powerful aspects of the idea of a learning region for me - the connections between the local and the global, and vice versa, through local engagement.

A. While in our context the odds are stacked against attaining a learning society as imagined through the essential characteristics, the new forms of organising communities under new circumstances do cultivate hope and imagination (Brown 2002) to create new synergies to perhaps solve old problems in new ways.

B. Yes, it is important to recognise that universities, schools, businesses, trade unions, community organisations, libraries, do have webs of relationships already. These need to be recognised and enhanced. The very local organisations, like the schools, are pivotal but are also under great strain so need support from others around them. The leadership in these institutions often need support.

A. In thinking about the learning society and learning citizen, we need to have a long term framework, and we need to try to undo and avoid opposites – while it is important to recognise the odds stacked against particularly poor people, they are not only victims. The Learning Cape experiences do shine light on a range of creative, imaginative responses, which do give hope. I agree with Torres (2003) who argues against 'lifelong learning for the North and basic education for the South' – lifelong learning is critical in the attainment of social justice and economic development. Working with the issues at local level, within a geographical framework, brings the concepts within our grasp.

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Notes

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16 Western Cape Provincial Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation, February 2005:13-17

17 Includes social workers employed by community based service providers, funded posts, department posts, unfunded posts, but excludes social workers working privately or in facilities. Ibid:18

18 This is an isiXhosa word meaning a consultative meeting or festival.

19 Jenny Horsman facilitated this, drawing on her work, "Too scared to learn. Women, Violence and Education" (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, London 2000)

20 Zenobia Africa of ODA drew my attention to these strategies, and as she says, the CDS is long term; it stretches for 20 to 30 years rather than the 5 years of the Integrated Development Programme. It is a city plan, that allows communities, business, learning institutions and

government to develop a common set of goals for the city. Their realization requires not only working out of silo boundaries within the municipality, but exploring wider contacts with other organizations and institutions. For example: The Talent Plan developed by Ottawa to promote learning, education and knowledge industries and to attract people to the city both to learn and to employ skilled inhabitants.

21 Colleagues from the Organisation for Development in Africa (ODA) and Division for Lifelong Learning

22 This summary draws on Report 1 of the research "Towards developing and implementing lifelong learning policy: Indicators for a Learning Cape" developed for the Dept of Economic Development

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24 Thanks to Kathy Watters for bringing this example to my attention.

25 Some of the issues raised were inspired by the public discussion of learning communities held in February 2005 when Chris Duke visited Cape Town. A meeting in Prague of Euronet researchers in October 2004 triggered some others.

About the author

Shirley Walters has been Professor of Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Western Cape(UWC) for the last 17 years. She is the founding director of the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) that has become a vibrant and well recognised institute both nationally and internationally. CACE has been particularly well known for its flexible delivery strategies that have ensured that the education and training needs of rurally based students are met, and for its gender and anti-racism work. Over the last seven years it has been in partnership with the Ministry and Department of Education in the Northern Cape Province to provide support for ABET development.

In 1998 Shirley was seconded to the UWC's Vice Chancellor's Office to head the University Mission Initiative on Lifelong Learning. She is now the director of the new Division for Lifelong Learning, which works across the university to ensure that lifelong learning becomes an integral part of all UWC's practices. She has been invited to work in many parts of the world, including being a Distinguished Professor at the University of British Columbia, Canada.

In 2001 she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Linkoping, Sweden, for her contribution to the development of adult education internationally.

Shirley started her career as an adult educator in Namibia in 1973 where she established an adult education programme for the migrant workers on a diamond mine. Within a year there were over a thousand learners attending classes after work, learning to read and write or taking further qualifications. She says that that was a very formative period for her both educationally and politically.

She has published extensively over the years with two of her better known books being *Globalization, Adult Education And Training: Impacts And Issues,* 1997, and, with Linzi Manicom*, Gender In Popular Education: Methods For Empowerment*, 1996, both published by Zed Books, London, UK. She received her doctorate from the University of Cape Town in 1986.