Designing Inclusive Pathways with Young Adults

Learning and Development for a Better World

Judith Kearney, Lesley Wood and Richard Teare

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FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH

The Journey from Darkness to Light

The front cover is a photograph of an original painting by the young musician and artist Anna Harcourt. The painting was conceived, painted and donated by the artist as a tribute to the pioneering work undertaken by the people and organizations featured in this book.

The painting depicts the challenging journey that marginalized young adults can opt to take from exclusion and difficult personal circumstances to greater self-reliance and optimism for the future. The colors in the pathway reflect their different routes, and the many creative and innovative ways in which young people learn and overcome obstacles through self-directed development and lifelong action learning.

Lifelong Action Learning (LAL) is a universal process that works in all cultures, languages and contexts. As this book illustrates, young people learn with and from each other and by reflecting on their progress. Later, they pass on their learning to others in order to share their understanding of how to learn for life. The journey is unique to each young adult but resolve is strengthened by learning coach or mentor support and from journeying with others. These elements are integral to the dynamic nature of LAL pathways designed with young adults, and the notion that this ultimately contributes to a better world for all.

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Learning and Development for a Better World

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Cover image: The Journey from Darkness to Light, by Anna Harcourt

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SARONE OLE SENA

FOREWORD

How Inclusive Action Learning Pathways Contribute to a Better World

My journey from Maasai community living to university professor and back again to the village, with action learning and the Global University for Lifelong Learning

This year I am celebrating more than six decades of my own lifelong learning journey. I was born among the Maasai of Kenya in 1949. The Maasai's indigenous education (informal, non-formal and formal) allows children to learn the family traditions and customs as soon as they can understand them. Their mothers tell them stories, riddles and proverbs, which they then tell to each other. They live mainly on milk, with occasional meat dishes and vegetables, which their mothers and their older sisters obtain from their agricultural neighbors. At about four years old, both boys and girls have their two lower front teeth removed. This is a custom followed by many African peoples. It is said to be a precaution against tetanus, a disease which makes people clench their teeth so hard that they are unable to open their mouths. If two of the teeth have been removed, he or she can be fed through the gap. The disease is caused by an organism in the soil, particularly in places where cattle graze. At the same time, holes are pierced in the tops and lower lobes of their ears, and round sticks are pushed through the holes to widen them, so that their ear-lobes are long enough to hold big ornaments when children grow up. A boy, as soon as he is seven years of age, goes with his elder brothers or friends to learn how to herd cattle. He learns about the best places for grazing cattle, sheep and goats, how to look after calves and lambs in the bush, and to recognize his own family's livestock. His sister stays at home with her mother and female relations, helping to sweep the house, milk the cows, sheep and goats, cook, draw water, scrape and sew skins, and thread necklaces.

MAASAI ACTION LEARNING MEETS SCHOOL LEARNING

In 1955 when I was 6 years old, the elders selected me to attend the local school of Ololulunga in Narok County, Kenya. Before going to school, I was taught the above traditions and customs of the Maasai. The local school introduced myself and other children in my class to reading, arithmetic and writing. The language of instruction was KiMaasai and we lived in a Maasai village. School-going boys and girls at that time lived either with their biological parents or their foster parents in houses built

of mud-and-wattle, in a large enclosure. The houses in the enclosure are arranged in a special fashion. Each family has a gate in the thorn fence round the enclosure. The first wife's house is built on the right of the gate, and here she lives with her young children. If her husband marries a second wife, this wife builds her house on the left of the gate. A third wife lives on the right, behind the house of the first wife's house, and so on, the wives living alternately to the right and left of the opening in the thorn fence. This type of homestead is called enkang, and may have twenty or even more houses in it, in a circle. The livestock can be penned up in the middle of the enclosure at night time. During the night, and in times of danger, the gateway is filled in with brushwood to make a solid fence. Since one man may own 75 cows, the same number of sheep and goats, and a dozen or so donkeys, the enclosure can be full at night.

A Maasai house has very little furniture, for people who tend to move about do not acquire many possessions. There are cooking pots and a stool or two for sitting on. There is a low bed, made of hides and poles for the woman and another for her husband and his visitors. She has to leave room in her house for calves, and for a small fireplace. As there are no windows in the house, it takes time for eyes used to the sunlight to adjust to the dark interior.

Learning in the local school and in the Maasai village happened for me from classes 1 to 4. At the end of class 4, we sat a Common Entrance Examination (CEE). The exam focused on reading, mathematics and life skills within the context of the Maasai.

For example, we were asked to read a story of a Maasai boy who lost some of his father's sheep, and then to answer questions related to where the lost sheep might be found – are they in the bush, at the river, in an open grass area, or at home? I passed the CEE and was promoted to attend classes 5 to 8 at a more senior primary school outside the Maasai village. I attended this school between 1960 and 1964. Later, from 1965 to 1968, I proceeded to a high school which was situated across the road from my elementary school.

GOVERNMENT MAASAI SCHOOL (GMS) AND NAROK HIGH SCHOOL (NHS)

My upper primary and high school education combined theory with action learning. We planted our own vegetables, fruits, maize and wheat. We milked the school cows and had bee hives from which we collected honey. During holidays from the academic work of school, the boys in both schools (GMS and NHS), including me, went home during the April, August and December Kenyan holidays. At home, we engaged in Maasai youth action learning activities.

As 12 to 16 year olds, we went from village to village to ask the elders to form a new group for boys of our age. In 1962 when the elders decided that circumcision should take place, the boys in our group (some in school and some not at school) staged an ox-fighting contest, where they had to try to seize the horns of a black ox in a boys' ceremony called enkipaata. At the end of the fight the ox was killed and

small rings were made from its hide, which the boys wore for a few days. The boys also had to learn about their new role in life. From an elder, they learned how to treat women and elders, how to enter a house, the proper behavior when eating and drinking, how to raid cattle, and how to fight. After circumcision, those of us who were in school went back and the rest became warriors. Regardless of whether one was in school or not, we all learnt new behaviors. For example, as young circumcised youth we had to learn to stand aside if we met an elder on the path, and if an elder entered his house we had to give him a stool to sit on. We learnt to show great respect for others, and to greet everyone appropriately. And we made a contribution to community life in Maasailand by defending it from danger, by cutting poles for new homes and villages, by building thorn fences, and by helping with herding in dry and difficult seasons.

I HAD A DREAM THAT I WOULD STUDY IN CAMBRIDGE AND BECOME A PROFESSOR

In 1964, I had a dream that I would travel to study at the University of Cambridge in the UK, and become a university teacher. I was in class 8 at the Government Maasai School mentioned above. Sure enough, I was accepted into Cambridge 14 years later after pursuing diploma and degree education in Kenyan colleges. At Kenyan colleges I studied education, and wrote a book about the rites of passage and the action learning pathways of the Maasai. At Cambridge I read Anthropology and wrote a book on the action learning activities of the Laibon, a traditional hereditary leader much skilled in magical practices, who controlled the behavior and tactics of the moran (warriors), and indeed of the Maasai people.

When I left Cambridge in 1979 with a Master's degree, I flew to Canada to begin a doctorate in global community development. For my research, I wrote another book on Maasai education, focusing on indigenous action learning systems and the newly acquired skills in schooling. During my PhD, I was given many opportunities to teach at McGill and later at McMaster University where I obtained another degree in Maasai action learning health systems. I left Canada in 1993 to pursue a career in both academia and action learning after achieving both my dreams: to study at Cambridge, and to become a teacher in universities.

MY MIND IS DRAWN TO ACADEMIA, MY HEART TO ACTION LEARNING

As noted earlier, my lifelong action-learning journey began in 1955 and so as I press on with it, it is already a journey that has lasted for 60 years. The journey has enabled me to help Maasai adults blend their action with learning (1969), to write a book about honey collectors and their action learning pursuits (1970), to train Maasai villagers in electioneering (1974), to mentor a student on Maasai women's action learning (1976), to co-direct a film about the Maasai Olngesher Ceremony (1978), to write a booklet on Maasai Enkipaata (1978), to make a presentation at

FOREWORD

Temple University on Maasai group ranches and action learning (1981), to write a paper on Maasai Matonyok action learning projects (1982), to co-author a book on development and appropriate technology (1985), to present a paper on Maasai culture and action learning in Kisumu, Kenya (1987), to co-author a report on Kajiado education (traditional and schooling) (1989), and to write a book on community development: an appreciative and transformative approach (2000). In doing all of this, I was supported by the organizations and institutions I consulted with at the time. These include the Ministry of Education in Kenya, Mosoriot Teacher Training College, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), McMaster University, World Vision International, Kenyatta University, and INADES NGO in Kenya, just to mention a few. They all afforded me opportunities to pursue action learning – either by studying or teaching it. These activities touched my heart more than my mind about the transformational potential of action learning - where learning is followed by action or action is followed by learning; a praxis according to educator Paulo Freire of Brazil in his "Pedagogy of the Oppressed". Even as my heart was consumed by action learning, I kept my eye and mind on academia – perhaps above all so that I could feed my family. That is why I have four academic degrees from some of the best institutions in the world, and three action learning degrees from the best professional organizations: The European Theological Seminar, and the Global University for Lifelong Learning (GULL).

HOW IS GULL AND ITS ACTION LEARNING APPROACH CONTRIBUTING TO A BETTER WORLD?

Why is this book about designing inclusive pathways with young adults so important? I was fortunate that my own journey took me to the University of Cambridge – but only a very small number of young people from my background secure this lifechanging opportunity. In this book, Judith, Lesley and Richard draw on a wide range of applications to show how traditional knowledge and indigenous cultures (among other considerations) provide a starting point for a lifelong action-learning journey with GULL. The key word in the title of this book is 'Inclusive' - and GULL is committed to this – all young people can have an opportunity to participate and to be recognized for their action learning attainments. The phrase 'designing inclusive pathways with young adults' is equally important because GULL does not impose a curriculum – it aims to foster active, self-directed learning. To conclude, I should like to explain how I became involved with GULL. In 2008, Compassion International asked me to introduce action learning to their work in East Africa. I was their Director of Learning & Support at the time and I took up the challenge, bringing together Compassion Kenya, World Vision Kenya, Free Pentecostal Fellowship of Kenya and Tearfund. And that is when Richard Teare and I met. We found ourselves helping grassroots community-based organization staff and leaders to sharpen their community engagement. Since then, thousands of people in East Africa have been empowered through GULL to change themselves, and change others in the churches,

families and the villages and towns of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and elsewhere. With so many graduates of GULL, our dream is to foster a network movement that can reach the whole of Africa. Every human being has a God-given right to learning and so our vision centers on lifelong action learning for all. I hope that this book will inspire and encourage you to learn and to engage with GULL!

Sarone Ole Sena Council Chairman, University of Eldoret, Kenya Adjunct Professor, Southern Adventist University, Kenya Executive Director, University Goes to the Village Programme, Kenya Pro Chancellor for East Africa, Global University for Lifelong Learning, USA

Nairobi, Kenya, December 2014

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This work was partly funded by a grant from the National Research Foundation. Any opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and the NRF cannot be held liable for them in any way.

This book is dedicated to the people and organizations around the world who work to help secure a brighter future for marginalized young people.

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

This book offers a comprehensive understanding of problems faced by marginalized young adults and discusses ways of enabling them to make the changes needed to live a more fulfilling and sustainable life. It introduces very innovative methodologies and approaches in order to create learning and development opportunities so that young people can achieve their potential. The book uses interesting illustrations, guiding the reader through the challenges of a responsible approach to helping communities explore their own learning potential and create individuals who live 'lives of consequence'.

Levent Altinay, Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Business, Oxford Brookes University, UK

This book is an engaging and compelling text. I enjoyed the flow of ideas and the key messages of need and solution that the introduction and application chapters provide. The authors are articulate and convincing in their crafted messages – as well as being passionate. All in all, reading this book is time well spent and is both enjoyable and instructional.

Brendan Bartlett, Professor of Education, Institute of Learning Sciences Australia, Australian Catholic University

One of today's most pressing global problems is high unemployment of young people. The outcome is dependence on others for sustenance, leading to exploitation of our youth. This often destroys the lives of those being exploited and exacts a toll on society. In the worst cases, exploitation contributes to prostitution, child soldiers, suicide bombers and gang membership. This book presents real solutions that will help create a better world for many young adults, and thus a better world for all of us.

John Bowen, Dean and Barron Hilton Distinguished Chair, Hilton College, University of Houston, USA

This book will help both policy makers and those working with young people to change lives. It will also encourage those who find present approaches to be less successful than they would wish. Despite money and time being given in many developed countries, there are still high levels of youth unemployment, under achievement and marginalized young people. In under-developed areas of the world, many young people, particularly women, lead impoverished lives

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

with little expectation of fulfilled lives. Developing approaches to lifelong action learning with these young adults will provide hope for the future.

Emer Clarke, Formerly Area Director of the UK Learning and Skills Council (UK Government Education and Skills Agency) and Principal of a UK Further Education College

I enjoyed reading the book which articulates a timely topic. It has a novel approach, it is informative and has a compelling message: if we do not teach and educate our youth to address in a meaningful way the challenges they face, our whole future may be in danger.

Robertico Croes, Professor & Associate Director, Dick Pope Sr. Institute, Rosen College, University of Central Florida, USA

Critical thinking and analysis are the foundations of meaningful action and intervention in almost all educational challenges. The plight of millions of marginalized young people, world-wide, is clearly worsening as social and economic divisions increase and deepen. This book will well serve those who want to agitate for change and reform based on a belief in social justice and equality of access to learning and economic fairness for all young people.

David Davies, Professor Emeritus and Former Executive Dean, University of Derby, UK

This book is a valuable resource, an indispensable text and a must read for all those working with young people. What captured my attention most was the way in which this book illustrates how that access to purposeful learning and development can be provided to marginalized young people.

Eldrie Gouws, Professor, Department of Psychology of Education, University of South Africa

This book is a phenomenal contribution to our understanding about how to create non-traditional pathways for learning and development. It provides inspiring insights and demonstrates how youth can secure livelihoods for themselves and participate in economic growth. The application chapters focus on how real-life issues form the basis for solving problems. In turn, this leads to qualifications that recognize and affirm their efforts. Further, the experiences and achievements shared from different geographies can be replicated, so this approach is valuable. In summary, this book demonstrates how we can bring

much more happiness and peace around the globe using innovative learning and development pathways.

Vinnie Jauhari, Professor and Director, Institute for International Management and Technology, Gurgaon, India

The book reminded me of the TV program, 'The Apprentice'. It offers marginalized youth the opportunity to experience entrepreneurial success. It further acknowledges that current teaching and learning methodologies are not inclusive and marginalize many young people. It reminds us of the significance of multiple intelligences in learning. Lifelong action learning exposes youth to experiential learning by offering them opportunities to plan, implement and measure their productivity and success through their own business project with mentorship from an experienced business person.

Motlalepule Ruth Mampane, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, South Africa

I really enjoyed reading this book. It has a clear purpose and offers valuable content and I congratulate the authors on an important and timely effort. I am confident that it will assist many young adults in their quest for a better future. The book will not only assist marginalized young people but all of us globally in our efforts to build a better world.

Fevzi Okumus, Professor of Leadership and Strategic Management, Rosen College, University of Central Florida, USA

This book makes an original contribution to knowledge and improving practice in terms of enhancing the capabilities for lifelong learning for marginalized young people. Its originality lies in the inclusion of, and importance attached to, micro finance as a way of improving the economic prospects of young people. This is set in the context of lifelong action learning with its living methodology, focused on the values that contribute to the flourishing of humanity.

Jack Whitehead, Honorary Professor in Education, University of Cumbria, UK

This is a significant and far reaching contribution to research and development on the global problem of young adults' unemployment and lack of educational opportunities, especially in disadvantaged, remote and poverty-stricken communities in developing as well as developed countries. Lifelong action

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

learning (LAL) – as a philosophy, methodology, theory of learning and a facilitation process – is the suggested solution to this problem, convincingly argued and evidenced in this book with practical guidance on step-by-step pathways and examples. It is of interest to a wide audience of readers, including youth, parents, educators, non-profit organizations, and representatives of government and church organisations.

Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt, Co-author, 'Lifelong Action Learning for Community Development: Learning and Development for a Better World', Sense Publishers, 2013.

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