

LONG LEARN ACTIVE LEARNING MATERIALS

FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN

LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

LOCAL LEARNING PROVIDERS

AND

**EVERYONE AND EVERY ORGANISATION WITH AN INTEREST IN CREATING STABLE,
VIBRANT AND PROSPEROUS LEARNING CITIES, TOWNS AND REGIONS**

Chapter 8, Session 8.2:

Internationalising Learning City Networks

‘cities and regions may be on the verge of becoming new city and region-states to rival in potential power the likes of Venice, Athens in their heyday, and many regions of Northern Germany before unification. And certainly government policies in many countries encourage more autonomy in the regions, a movement that can only increase as the concept of learning cities and regions advances’
From ‘Learning Cities. Learning Regions, Learning Communities – Lifelong Learning and Local Government’ (Norman Longworth)

LONG LEARN LIMITED – HELPING TO SHAPE A LEARNING FUTURE

Chapter 8, Session 8.2:

Internationalising Learning City Networks

Session outline: A number of Learning City Networks already exist. For example in the UK and Sweden and in Victoria Australia there are thriving and active learning city networks acting with the support of government. Some of the international networks that have existed for some time are now attaching a learning city strand to their work. However, while there are networks specific established for linking learning cities, these offer little beyond an annual conference get-together of members. This session therefore suggests how creative learning city networks can push forward the frontiers of what is possible and, through a series of assignments and exercises, enhances the learners' vision of the why, what, when, where, who and how of international networks.

Guidelines for using this Active Learning session

Goals

The creation of learning cities and regions is in all our interests. It promotes social stability, encourages wealth creation, and enables citizens to fulfil their potential, their dreams and their ambitions. It is a survival strategy for our future, and that of our children and grandchildren. But it won't happen unless all of us play our part in making it so. It won't be a simple transition process, to be put into practice by someone else in the local authority. That means that we all, especially local government managers, professionals and staff, need to know and understand more about what it is, why it's important and what the major issues and opportunities are. There are many of them. These sessions have been written to enable each of us to increase our understanding and knowledge of those issues and opportunities. Each one, and there are 57 of them, takes a different theme and offers the learner new insights.

Learning approach

This is an Active Learning session. Lifelong Learning has taught us that people learn best when they are actively involved in the learning. We have therefore given the ownership of the learning over to you, the learner. As well as presenting new concepts in the assignments and exercises, we draw upon your experience, creativity, imagination and knowledge so that you can better understand the subject matter, and will be better able and more motivated to act upon it. You may, or may not, have a learning leader to help organise the groups, and to bring several learners together into discussion groups and sessions. That will certainly make it easier. We all have different learning styles – but we can also all learn from each other. That is why this session, like all the others, recommends a mixture of individual, small group and large group work, so that ideas and experiences and understandings can be bounced around people. Above all you are urged to make this an enjoyable experience. Learning can be fun. It's up to you to make it so.

Learning Organisation

You will find that the session is divided into 2 main parts

- ✓ **The Learning Space:** A set of assignments that will unlock the brain and involve learners in practical discussions and exercises leading to a greater understanding of the issue
- ✓ **The Learning Kitbag:** A set of source learning materials that provide additional information, charts, diagrams, case studies etc to stimulate further insights.

While each session could be used individually as a self-learning module, it is preferable if there is a learning leader to organise small and large group discussions and to act as a focal point. This can be a departmental manager, a staff member appointed to perform that task, or a professional educator from inside or outside of the organisation. Assignments may be studied on site, or set as preparation for group discussions in the workplace or at a learning provider.

The whole course can be incorporated into a continuous professional development programme in the workplace, or taught separately at a school, college, community centre or university. It takes its provenance, and its inspiration, from the book:

Learning Cities, Learning Regions, Learning Communities – Lifelong Learning and Local Government
By Norman Longworth, published by Taylor and Francis ISBN 10 0 415 37175 9

Learners taking the course are recommended to obtain this book either from Amazon.com or from the publishers at http://www.taylorandfrancis.co.uk/shopping_cart/search/search.asp?search=longworth

Target Audiences

The session will be suitable for those who wish to improve their understanding of the session title's theme, in order to help influence the city, town or region's response to the realities of the 21st century. This includes:

- Elected representatives and Mayoral staff
- Managers, Professionals and staff from all departments in local government as part of a continuous development programme
- Community and Voluntary organisation leaders
- Educators at all levels in local and regional stakeholder organisations, including schools, universities, colleges and workplaces
- Industrialists and Business people as stakeholders in the local authority
- All Citizens with an interest in the development of their community
- Students in universities, adult education institutions and teacher training establishments

Further Reading

Learning Leaders wishing to update themselves on the subject matter of this module will find the following additional references useful.

- 'Lifelong Learning in Action – Transforming 21st century Education' by Longworth, (Taylor and Francis, Abingdon) http://www.taylorandfrancis.co.uk/shopping_cart/search/search.asp?search=longworth
- 'The Local and Regional Dimension of Lifelong Learning ' EC Policy Document found on <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/poledu/tels.pdf>

Ideas for treatment particular to this session: *For seminars and courses with several participants it is suggested that assignment 1 is completed as an exercise for individuals with the answers debated in open session afterwards, facilitated by a learning leader. Assignments 2 to 7 are specially designed to involve increasingly large groups of learners with frequent plenary discussions. completed in small groups of 2 or 3 people again with the results discussed after completion. Assignments 9 to 11 may be experienced either individually or in groups. The last assignment should provide the feedback that will enable you to improve the session next time round.*

For self-learning individuals all assignments will be individual efforts but try to find someone with whom you can discuss your answers and opinions either by email or face to face. In this way you can enrich the learning experience by experiencing other viewpoints.

The Learning Space

Assignment 0: These learning materials derive from, and extend, the concepts and ideas in ‘Learning Cities, Learning Regions, Learning Communities.’ Reading pages 166 to 172 and 184 to 188 of this valuable book before carrying out these assignments would provide an excellent introduction to the session, and strengthen learning.

Assignment 1: Let’s revise some of the issues learned in the last session and take them a little further. Please read the extract from ‘Lifelong Learning’ starting on Actionsheet 1 in the learning kitbag below and then write into the boxes below the major issues in each for you and how you would tackle them locally.

1. The March of Science and Technology

Local Solution

2. Changes in the Nature of Work

Local Solution

3. Global Demographics

Local Solution

4. The influence of television and the media

Local Solution

5. Global Environmental Imperatives

Local Solution

6. New Global Power Structures

Local Solution

Assignment 2: Discuss your answers with others

Assignment 3: Actionsheet 2 in the learning kitbag shows quotations from the book ‘Learning Cities, Learning Regions, Learning Communities’ In the spaces provided put in your own comments about how they affect your own city

Assignment 4: The who: How many organisations can you think of in your own city, which already have international links.

Organisation	Purpose of link

Assignment 5: The what: Look at the diagram on Actionsheet 3 (Normally carried out initially in twos – if doing this exercise alone create your own cities and stakeholders)

A: In the top left box above the circle, write down the name of your city or region

B: Ask your partner to write down the name of another similar developed city or region outside your own country but in your own continent in the top right box.

C: Between you decide on a stakeholder organisation in the development of a learning city – this may be taken from the list in the stakeholder exercises you did in session 6 1 – companies, schools, hospitals, churches, universities etc. Write it into one of the coloured circles.

D. You are both negotiators for the cities or regions you have chosen - in charge of deciding what one can fruitfully do for the other for mutual benefit. Write down 5 interactive possibilities for the stakeholder you have decided.

E. Now have a look at Actionsheet 4 in the learning kitbag and add 3 other possibilities that may have escaped you both

Assignment 10: The When A: What positive results would you hope for after the first year?

B: How long do you think the process will take? _____

Assignment 11: Discuss your answers and reactions to assignments 9 and 10 with others. Actionsheet 6 in the learning kitbag is provided to help in this if needed.

Assignment 12: This completes this session but not hopefully your need for knowledge on this important subject. You are invited to complete the diagram on the next page by ticking the relevant box.

LEARNING CITIES AND REGIONS FOR THE FUTURE - YOUR LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE

		High	Enough to get by	Not enough	None	Session
1	Consultation methods and levels					7.1, 7.2
2	Characteristics of a Learning Organisation					2.3
3	Your city as a learning organisation					2.4
4	Skills and competences for learning cities and regions					1.6
5	The city as an ideopolis					1.5
6	Learning Communities in all their senses					2.5
7	Smart cities, wired cities, slow cities					2.6
8	Learning Festivals for developing a learning culture					3.3
9	Learning Charters for demonstrating a city's commitment:					3.2
10	Leadership in the Learning City/Region:					3.4
11	Tools for measuring city and region performance					3.1,4.1,4.2, 4.3,4.4,4.5
12	Lifelong Learning as wealth creator					5.3, 1.5,2.3
13	Tools for activating learners – Personal Learning Audits					5.4,5.5,5.6, 5.7,5.8,5.9
14	Stakeholders in the Learning City/Region – Who? What?					6.1
14	Schools as Stakeholders in community, city and region					6.2, 8.4
15	Higher Education as a stakeholder in community, city and region					6.3
16	Business and Industry as stakeholders in community, city and region					6.4
17	Adult Education Colleges as stakeholders in the city					6.5, 8.5
18	Bringing Museums, Libraries, Archives and Galleries into the learning world					6.6
19	Family Learning					6.7
20	The power of partnerships					6.8
21	Using Technology in the learning city					7.3
22	Active citizenship and volunteering in the learning city					7.4
23	Mentoring in the learning city and region					7.5
24	Resources for the Learning City and region					7.6
25	Global roles and responsibilities for learning cities and regions					8.1
26	Internationalising Learning City Networks					8.2, 8.3
27	International projects as learning city stimulators					8.4, 8.5
28	Two-way profiting from international cooperation					8.6
29	Organisational issues in the learning city and region					9.2
30	Enabling issues in the learning city and region					9.3
31	Pedagogical issues for learning cities and regions					9.4
32	Practical Actions to become a learning city					9.1, 1.4
33	Learning Cities for Elected Representatives (Councillors					4.6
34	Individuals as learners					5.1,5.2,6.7
35	Change, society and the city/region					1.1, 1.2
36	Learning City Domains					1.3
37	Some Research results on Learning Cities and Regions					4.2,4.3, 4.4
38	Towards true Learning Societies					2.2
39	Defining Learning Cities and Regions					2.1

All sessions shown in the last column follow the progress of the book '[Learning Cities, Learning Regions, Learning Communities – Lifelong Learning and Local Government](#)' by Norman Longworth (Taylor and Francis – www.tandf.co.uk/books/) ISBN 10 0-415-37175-9, and add new dimensions. They are downloadable from www.longlearn.org.uk

Assignment 13: On the lines below please put your personal reactions to working on this session, based on how much you have learned, how much you have worked creatively and how your ideas have developed as a result.

Chapter 8, Session 2

The

LEARNING

KITBAG

Actionsheet 1: **Global Issues, Local Solutions. Six global paradigm changes with a Local Impact (extracts from Longworth: ‘Making Lifelong Learning Work – Learning Cities for a Learning Century’)**

1. The March of Science and Technology.

New applications of Science and Technology have created an unprecedented explosion of information and knowledge throughout the world. They offer a variety of new opportunities for organizational and personal growth and also stimulate a questioning of basic values, both of which have important implications for Lifelong Learning. At a basic level, Science and Technology has helped to improve material standards of living in many parts of the world. They have multiplied manifold the information and knowledge available to us and transformed our way of living, working and communicating.

The world has been compressed into a global communications laboratory. Satellites of all sizes and capabilities supervise the activities of the earth beings below; millions of mobile phones are linked together by myriads of communication towers in every part of the planet; insomniac multinational industries fling their multi-million messages of instant business and commerce across the ionosphere; torrential bitstreams of information flood the peaks and valleys of every nation and inundate the limits of our comprehension; vast databased armies of internet knowledge invade our computer screens. And through all of this nations seem to speak anything but peace unto nations.

At the same time the speed at which these changes have taken place has outstripped the capacity of many people to cope easily with it. The explosion of available information and the technology of handling it have made possible greater personal decision-making and, paradoxically through its sheer volume, reduced the likelihood of this being well-informed and balanced. It highlights the malaise of an under-educated public, out of touch with technological progress, fearful of new ideas and opportunities and uncertain of its ability to cope with change, and uneasy with the enormous moral implications of other technological advances, such as genetic engineering, environmental degradation, cloning, euthanasia, robotics and nuclear energy to mention but a few.

Cities and Regions are at the sharp end of this. They are where the people are, and where social structures constructed in other times break down. The new life skills, emphasising reflecting and thinking, studying and learning, cooperating, entrepreneurship and communicating, are not yet in the school, or even the adult, curriculum. And yet the opportunities are there to be grasped – distance education, multimedia, networking, collaborative learning, using the power of the internet for education, harnessing the technology to create the future, empowering people through world-wide networks, creating smart e-cities. All are becoming more crucial if they are to take best advantage of new technologies.

2. Changes in the Nature of Work

The migration of work in the advanced nations towards high added-value service industries, high skill occupations within the tertiary sector and high technology support systems is replacing traditional notions of work content in the developed world. It is the inevitable result of the flight of manufacturing industry to low-cost countries such as China and India and reflects an irreversible movement from the industrial society, predominantly concentrating on the manufacture of goods and products and using machines as an extension of the hands, to the information society, adding value by turning information into knowledge and services and using computers as an extension of the brain.

Most forecasts for skills needs show a massive reduction in the need for semi- and unskilled work and a consequent increase in the future demand for management, professional, technical and administrative people. At the same time the need to constantly retrain staff in both the public and private sectors predicated a vast increase in in-house education which cannot be satisfied by traditional teaching methods (self and small-group materials such as these are more appropriate). Large numbers of people are affected. Companies and public administrations, including education and health providers, are now ‘learning organisations’, each employee with his/her own set of continuous learning needs, targets and pressures. A constantly shifting industrial, administrative and business environment gives rise to the need for education systems to develop more self-sufficient, creative and flexible people who can adapt to needs as they change and yet who can, and must, apply themselves continuously to updating their skills and knowledge in order to remain in employment. As usual, educational and social structures and attitudes lag behind, and this gives local and regional government a mammoth obligation of public information.

3. Global demographics

The demographic time-bomb takes different forms in different parts of the world. In the western developed world and Japan, an ageing, more mobile, more multicultural and multi-ethnic society has the propensity to create high interracial and intergenerational social tensions. A reduced ability to invest in free welfare programmes is the result of a fall in the working, and an increase in the retired, populations. Already this phenomenon is causing divisions in the Anglo-Saxon part of that world, where attempts to reduce social service budgets, and to put a greater responsibility on individuals to make their own arrangements while in employment, is breaking down the concept of the welfare state. IRDAC, the European Industrial forecasting group, has suggested that 'The demographic evolution of the European population is such that the number of retirements has already overtaken new entrants into the workforce. The aging of the population will also mean that Europe will have to compete with countries which have a much younger workforce, will be more up to date and probably more highly qualified.'

At the same time populations in many developed countries have not only experienced a massive fall in their birth rates, but also many of their old people are staying healthy, or at least, alive, longer than ever before through improved health provision. However, if birth rates in the developed world are too low for comfort, those in the developing world are uncomfortably high. In the poorer parts of the world a massive population growth, helping to raise the present number of human beings on this very finite planet from 5 billion to 11 billion by the mid-twenty-first century, presents almost insoluble problems for the environment, food-production, education, social stability. Many of these new inhabitants of our planet are perhaps destined to live at subsistence level and below unless massive ameliorative projects are initiated.

In a sense, one problem solves the other. The shortage of workers in one part of the world can be solved by the surplus in the other. Some countries and regions have seen this and are implementing strategies to increase the number of immigrants. However, as cities and regions at the sharp end well know, this creates its own tensions in the form of inter-racial strife, provision of multicultural learning, ghettos and assimilation into society. To even begin to touch the problem, a change of mindset will need to take place, and new community developments will need to employ fundamental Lifelong Learning principles.

4. The influence of global television and other media.

Television has a enormously powerful effect on peoples' thoughts, opinions and actions. Where it is an instrument of propaganda, whether raw or subtle, it can take away a peoples' basic democratic right to understand truth and choose for themselves, reducing them to indiscriminating accessories of the regime. Where it is used purely as an instrument of entertainment it can, through trivialization and ignorance of real issues, have an equally insidious effect on the ability of people to make informed choices, turning them into mental vegetables. As an occasional, independent instrument of education it could reach the hearts and minds of whole populations and transform them into dynamic, well-educated and flexible Lifelong Learning societies. Few people are able to appreciate the difference.

TV, satellite and cable channels present to them continuously and ceaselessly the best, and the worst, of civilization's creative genius. In a hyper-democratic society, in which two-way communications technology can be, and is, used to obtain instant opinions on any subject from gun control to gynaecology, from eugenics to euthanasia, from bio-genetics to baseball teams, there is a special concern. Using technology in this way can be like putting a child in front of the control panel of a spaceship - a form of empowerment without the safety net of responsibility, knowledge or vision.

Globalization changes the nature of work and our perceptions of nationality. Television, which presents us nightly with images of nations, regions, organizations and people in the process of change, often violent, de-sensitises our brains and re-sensitises our emotions. We are all experiencing the information assault course. The real challenge lies in our ability to cope with this new mental invasion. Few of us have been given the skills and competencies to interpret the bombardment of ideas, facts, opinions and sensations into useful knowledge, or to turn it into insights. Without this ability, such an overload can desensitise, rather than enrich, us. The lifelong learning culture, which would encourage such skills as a basic requirement, advocates a new look at school curricula to address these issues.

Professional broadcasters and journalists, like teachers, have a responsibility to take into account the intellectual and cultural development of their audiences in the same way that professional doctors and nurses have to account for their long-term health interests. This means gently transforming what people want to listen to, watch or read from the trivialized, banal and often destructive to the informed, intelligent, positive and creative. Not an easy task,

and not one with which many would agree, but in this way they can contribute positively to developing the sort of Lifelong Learning culture each nation, each region and each person will have to nourish in order to survive.

These are global, national and local issues. At the local level particularly the opportunity exists to influence the media to participate in helping to build a strong learning community and to involve the people in sustaining it. There is evidence of progress in the positive use of television, and in many countries, regions and cities its effective use as a learning medium is already well under way. In the USA local educational TV channels abound in most states of the union; in Europe the BBC has a well-developed, increasingly regionalised, television service for schools, and the possibilities for a smart wired city to broadcast learning at community level is increasingly evident

5. Global Environmental Imperatives

The effective management of global and local environments is imperative to the survival of mankind on the planet. In the twentieth century, for the first time, mankind began to take out more from the planet's resources than it was putting back - more than the earth's ecosystems can tolerate for long. This is partly the result of a vastly increasing population and its demand for new artefacts, new reading materials, new energy sources. It is also the effect of the enormous increase in our technological capability, whether it be in extracting raw materials, fishing and farming, or manufacturing the goods and services required by a modern society. Nor, as we have seen, is this going to change very much. The population will continue to increase, and technology will continue to make demands on the earth's resources.

The depletion of the world's resources and the destruction of ecosystems cannot continue for much longer. It is a threat to survival, not just of human beings but also of all other species on the planet. Already global warming is being blamed for the increased intensity of hurricanes, droughts, floods, wind and sea current patterns. Sustainable development and the search for renewable energy sources is the very least that can be done from this point in time. Despite a continuous assault on individual consciences by environmentalists, complacency is still rife. Personal, governmental and corporate blindness and self-interest still have a disproportionate influence in relation to the application of intelligence in environmental affairs.

We have been conditioned to believe that there is always a technological fix - for the ozone layer, for the survival of animal species, for the renewal of trees and plants, for the maintenance of a higher and higher quality of life. At the same time we devastate this, the only nest we have. In this, there is no such fix. Further, we are all in this together. That which degrades and pollutes in one part of the world has its effect on the whole. The destruction of the rain forests affects the ozone content and hence the earth's atmosphere which we all breathe; the factory farming of fish by one country depletes the stock for us all; the emission of pollutants into the atmosphere by one inconsiderate nation kills trees in another country.

This is a serious learning for life problem and it comes down to local and regional government to implement it in both schools and adult education. The care and maintenance of our only planetary habitat starts in kindergarten and continues into late life wherever we may live. There is a crucial need to educate continually all the world's people in environmental matters as a basis for the survival of species on earth. National, local and regional government must remain inventive and innovative about how environmental information is kept constantly in the forefront of popular consciousness.

6. New global power structures.

Empires have broken down. Isolationism, fundamentalism, terrorism and nationalism are on the increase in many continents. They are perhaps the antithesis of our view of Lifelong Learning as the opening up of hearts and minds. The world has to come to terms with the desire to seek certainty in familiar national or religious structures. When some of them potentially control weapons of destruction, it becomes even more urgent to find a solution. Similarly the breakdown of primitive democratic structures in other, more undeveloped, parts of the planet such as those parts of Africa where unstable warlords rule, threatens to create a knock-on effect which eventually could engulf whole continents. The same is true of ancient hatreds in the Middle East and almost anywhere in this increasingly global village where there is potential conflict.

Solutions to these intractable problems have proved almost impossible to find, but one thing is certain – they will not be discovered through a retreat to national, regional and local laagers. That would only exacerbate the problem. An international cooperative effort to provide education and support programmes which re-build enduring democratic and economic infrastructures in these places is one defence against future aggression. An interesting

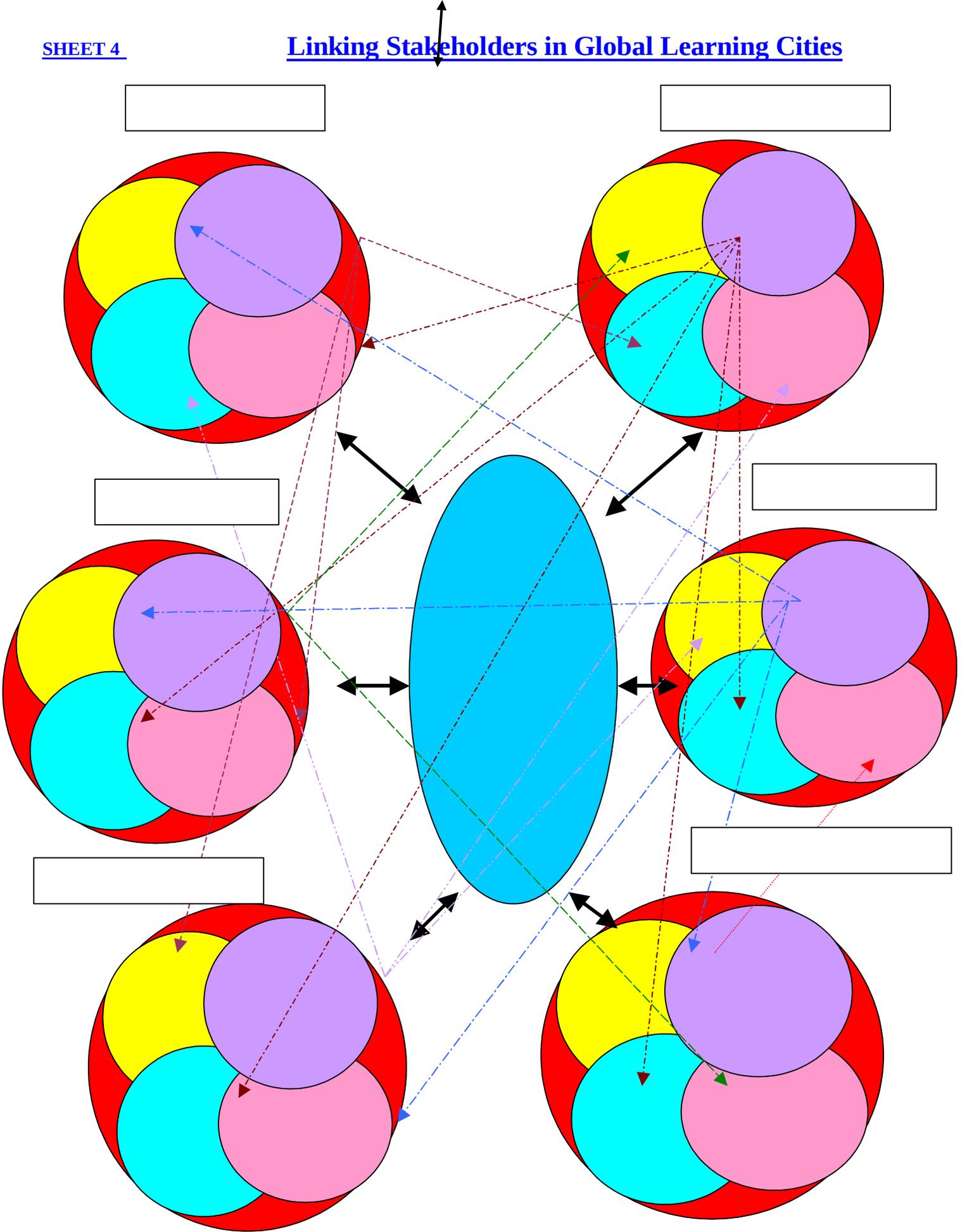
case could be made to use defence budgets in this more positive way. The programmes should have a Lifelong Learning base to give them a longer-term outcome. National and International Governmental Organisations, national and international funding organisations, and even multinational industries are spending vast sums of money to help steady a destabilised world, but the disease is almost a pandemic and the resources insufficient. One of the new sources of new social, human, financial and intellectual capital comes from the local and regional authorities and, through them, the people.

The enormous outpouring of sympathy, aid and goodwill from billions of people after the tsunami disaster of December 2004 shows just how far local citizens have come in their appreciation of the planet as a global entity in which we are all involved. International links, organised locally between cities and regions, an extension of the 'cityrings' in the PALLACE programme described in sessions 8.4 to 8.6, provide an excellent template for tapping into the finer qualities of human nature.

These six global issues throw down challenges to life in the twenty-first century which only a philosophy of Lifelong Learning, with its educational, social, economic, environmental, cultural and other rationales, a central unifying theme of most future development.,

Actionsheet 2: Extracts from Learning Cities, Learning Regions, Learning Communities

<p>there is another, more international, more extrovert, dimension to the learning city concept, notwithstanding ratepayers and other minimalist pressure groups to restrict its responsibilities to local issues. There is a sense in which cities and regions can play a much larger part on the national and global stage, often to their own medium and long term advantage</p>	
<p>The unprecedented emotional and financial response to the Boxing Day 2004 tsunami crisis by people of all ages, incomes and political persuasions is but one demonstration of the extent to which people have advanced in their perception of this planet as a global village, an integrated and holistic unity</p>	
<p>The willingness to interact with, and help provide for, others less fortunate than oneself is sometimes an on-off affair, difficult to argue against adherents of the ‘charity begins at home’ lobbies so prevalent in every city.</p>	
<p>as the 21st century progresses, the more participative components of lifelong learning concepts to develop and mobilize intellectual and human capital are gradually opening additional doors of perception in a larger number of citizens, while the technologies of email and the internet are breaking down the barriers to international understanding still further.</p>	
<p>cities and regions may be on the verge of becoming new city and region-states to rival in potential power the likes of Venice, Athens in their heyday, and many regions of Northern Germany before unification. And certainly government policies in many countries encourage more autonomy in the regions, a movement that can only increase as the concept of learning cities and regions advances</p>	
<p>many emerging regions transcend the physical and linguistic boundaries of nation states. <i>Transmanche</i> covers the area of Kent in the UK and the Pas de Calais in France; <i>Oresund</i>, links the Copenhagen area of Denmark with South Scania in Sweden and the links between Alsace-Lorraine and the Black Forest areas of Germany have resulted in a flourishing region around the city of Strasbourg. They are well on the way to becoming new region-states, powerful in their influence on global trade and comparatively rich.</p>	
<p>A Learning Region is an inclusive and democratic region. It will inform its citizens about the need for the journey and engage them in it not just as passengers but as activators and drivers’</p>	



Actionsheet 4

Stakeholders	Activities/Advantages
School to school	to open up the minds and understanding of young people, to break down stereotypes, to learn collaboratively from and with others, to involve them in creative mutual discussions about how pupils, parents and teachers can contribute to the growth of their cities as learning cities and how it is done elsewhere, to increase tolerance, understanding and awareness levels of the young people who will lead the next generation
University to University	in joint research and teaching to help communities grow, to exchange people, knowledge and ideas, to discuss creatively what their contribution might be to the construction of their city as a learning city, to develop new knowledge from which city managers can develop their strategies
Adult Education College to Adult Education College	to allow adults of all ages to make contact with each other, to act as telementors, to share courses, knowledge and experiences, to expand horizons, to exchange students and staff, to discuss how they can contribute to the growth of their city as a learning city
Business to business	to develop trade and commerce, to open up new possibilities for wealth creation and employment, to share training experiences and ideas, to exchange management knowledge and expertise and to create new markets
City Administration to City Administration	to share ideas on procedures, governance, finance, social, educational and environmental issues and how to create a learning city, to exchange officers, police, firemen and other personnel, to develop charters, to help each other out in times of crisis
Museum to museum, gallery to gallery	to exchange knowledge, artefacts, paintings and displays, to develop joint exhibitions and greater understanding of other cultures, to understand more about their roles in the creation of a learning city
Library to library	to share knowledge on procedures and methods, to make electronic information more available, to jointly develop displays about the learning city and what citizens can do to help create it
Hospital to hospital	to exchange knowledge, techniques and people in and out of times of crisis
Community Centre to Community Centre	To put people in touch with each other and link whole communities
People to people	to break down the stereotypes and build an awareness of other cultures, creeds and customs and their role in the building of a learning city

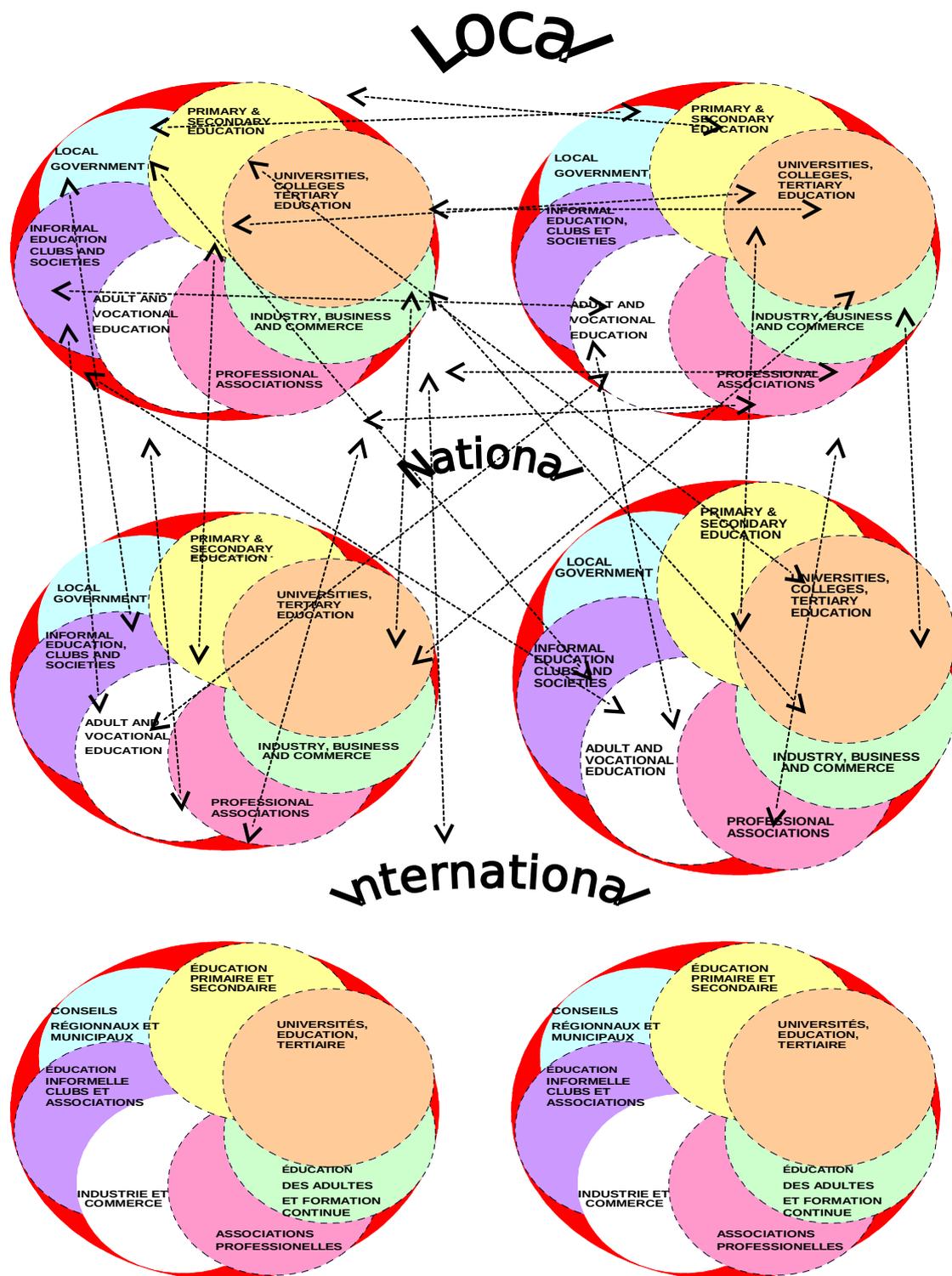
Edinburgh provides an example of the latter. The evocatively named ‘Cyber Grannies’ project is a collaborative venture between the Community Education Service and Craigmillar Community Information Services (CCIS). In the Jack Kane Community Centre a group of 3rd age pensioners used to meet together every Monday in order to share the pleasures of a lunch club. The conversation would be very much what any group of pensioners discuss when they get together – family, the excesses and the irresponsibility of the young, the parlous state of the world, the unfathomability of new-fangled technology and so on. Then everything changed. One young community officer had the bright ideas of taking along a couple of laptop computers to the lunch club, to add a new dimension and to dispel the ‘fear and mystery’ often expressed by our older generation about modern technology.

At first of course it did nothing of the sort. There was the usual reaction of ‘I’m too old for all this...’ and ‘I’ll never understand it’. But the officer persevered with great patience and showed them how they could easily communicate with pensioners from the USA and New Zealand on the ‘seniornets’ existing there. It soon became a case of ‘Well, if them foreigners can do it, so can we.’ The topics of electronic conversation gradually expanded to include food and drink, living habits, families, travel and many others. The next stage of their project explored ideas surrounding genealogy, reminiscence, and producing a worldwide recipe book. It became impossible to get the cybergrannies, as they had now become known, to eat their lunch, so eager were they to ‘meet’ their electronic friends from other places.

So successful was this experiment that it gave rise to other community centre networks such as ‘Komputer Kids’, ‘Digital Dads’, ‘Modem Mums’ and ‘technotots.’ Much cross-generational work takes place, increasing understanding and adding to family harmony.

There is no doubt that Craigmillar is creating the future in a very visible and exciting way, and that the participants in these projects are leading the way in a century in which communication is a prerogative, and a learning pathway, for everyone. Nor is it alone. Similar community based projects are spreading rapidly into other cities and towns around the planet.

Actionsheet 6 LEARNING COMMUNITIES NETWORKING INTO A LEARNING WORLD



MATERIALS ON LEARNING CITIES AND REGIONS FOR THE FUTURE – A REMINDER

	Topics	Sessions
1	Consultation methods and levels	7.1, 7.2
2	Characteristics of a Learning Organisation	2.3
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All sessions shown in the last column follow the progress of the book '**Learning Cities, Learning Regions, Learning Communities – Lifelong Learning and Local Government**' by Norman Longworth (Taylor and Francis – www.tandf.co.uk/books/) ISBN 10 0-415-37175-9, and add new dimensions. They are downloadable from www.longlearn.org.uk