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## Engaging development - learning for a better future?

- the world view of development education

Colm Regan and Scott Sinclair

*If the world's population was reduced to a village of 100 people, there would be:*

	<b>60 Asians</b>		<b>14 Africans</b>
	<b>12 Europeans</b>		<b>8 Latin Americans</b>
	<b>5 North Americans</b>		<b>1 from Oceania</b>
	<b>19 Muslims</b>		<b>32 Christians</b>
	<b>13 Hindus</b>		<b>16 would live on less than \$1 a day</b>
	<b>37 would live on less than \$2 a day</b>		<b>80 would live in sub-standard housing</b>
	<b>60 would live in a city</b>		<b>33 would lack access to a safe water supply</b>
	<b>24 would have no electricity</b>		<b>1 would be HIV positive</b>
	<b>10 would be older than 60 years of age</b>		<b>27 would be younger than 15 years of age</b>
	<b>67 would be illiterate</b>		<b>7 would have an internet connection</b>
	<b>50 would be malnourished</b>		<b>1 would have a university degree</b>

***There can be no overstating the truth that all forms of intolerance and discrimination are born in the human mind, and it is there that change is needed if tolerance is to be built and discrimination eliminated.'***

- Abdelfattah Amor, Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance UN Commission on Human Rights

This chapter explores some key dimensions of the importance and relevance of development education as part of the dynamic of change domestically and internationally. This is done in the context of the ideas, realities and arguments offered in the two previous chapters.

Current debates about both education and about development graphically illustrate that both concepts and the key ideas and philosophies that underpin them are contested – and strongly so. Thinking about development education has to relate to both development and to education - all three have an interrelated history.

Our enquiry begins with that story before considering the ideas of Brazilian popular educator Paulo Freire and their significance to thinking about development education in the context of contemporary learning and the challenges of our aspirations for a better, more just, future.

The chapter then briefly reviews the two ideas - 'development' and 'education' and poses a number of questions about the relationship between the two and the nature of learning and teaching. These questions and debates are then applied to thinking about the process of change, firstly in British society and then in South African society. The role of development education in engaging with the debate on public awareness of, and engagement with, development issues is also explored and the chapter concludes with an overview of the various different dimensions of development education.

## **Exploring the idea of development education**

Development education as a particular term and construct evolved in the early 1970s in response to the work of aid agencies and in particular the work of some NGOs that saw the need for a 'domestic' dimension to their work apart from fundraising. NGOs such as Oxfam in the UK, Trócaire in Ireland and Development and Peace in Canada, began to

see their work as encompassing not just emergency related work or project aid overseas. At this time they also became more concerned about development as such and the need for political change internationally in support of that development.

Central to this shift of emphasis among some agencies was the recognition that awareness raising and education around development issues was pivotal to the realisation of their overall objective – human development with justice. Their perspective was also echoed by many international organisations and structures within the UN as well as by some individual government aid and development co-operation organisations. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the need for public education on issues such as human rights and peace had been highlighted by many organisations in the context of the UN and the need to promote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its attendant covenants etc.

UNESCO, in particular, took a lead on the need for development education, defining its core objective as being:

***"...to enable people to participate in the development of their community, their nation and the world as a whole. Such participation implies a critical awareness of local, national and international situations based on an understanding of social, economic and political processes."***

The dominant view was (and in some senses still is) that people were (are) ignorant of development issues (and/or not particularly interested in them) and what they needed was information about them so that they could give their support - most often in the form of cash.

Development education was also seen to be necessary in order to generate public support for various official aid programmes – a view that continues to the present. Extended 'ownership' of, and participation in, development by the 'public' in

the West was not seen to be central. Development remained the preserve of professionals and the role of the 'public' was essentially a support role. This situation remains much the same today.

Images of unremitting misery and disaster, presentations of widespread and generalised poverty and hunger and the constant depiction of whole peoples as being 'victims' of development became (and remain) the stock in trade of many organisations. They appealed successfully to peoples' generosity. This, in turn, became a key driver to the work. In this context, the profiling of particular organisations and charities and their work, even in classroom materials for the youngest of children, was (and too often still is) seen to be at the core of 'development education'.

The contrast between models of popular participation in development efforts in many Third World countries stand in stark contrast to the model of popular participation in 'developed' countries. Even among many of the most 'progressive' development and human rights organisations, primacy is given to fund-raising and agency-determined campaigning rather than to raising the debate and encouraging public discussion and engagement.

As experience grew in development education it became clear that such dominant images and institutionalised assumptions were problematic. It became clear that there was a danger that some organisations, motivated by the value of their work, drifted into a vested interest in presenting selected 'misinformation' about the Third World. This had (and still has) significant implications for learning about the underlying issues. If there is a trend towards always emphasising the direst of situations, always declaring emergencies without necessarily presenting them in context, and presenting an overall image that nothing ever changes for the better, then it helps form a very powerful image. That image, in turn, fuels assumptions that make it difficult to question what is really going on or to consider (or even present) other perspectives on a given situation - something that is counter to the aspirations of development education.

The issues are complex, especially those that underpin development and underdevelopment and how we present them has been a major concern of

those of us who have put this book together. For example, in Chapter 1, we have deliberately highlighted the positive improvements that have taken place, even among the poorest and most marginalised of people alongside the fundamental and ongoing problems yet remaining. In Chapters **5 and 10**, we have sought to portray people as architects of their own development and not just as its victims. And, overall, we have sought to present our analysis of development in human rights and justice terms rather than in terms of charity, social welfare or 'assistance'. The implications of the table on **page 19** are that we should be building our vision of the possible future(s) on the recognition and knowledge that things do change and have changed.

In this sense, much of the history of development education has been one of seeking to challenge 'fatalistic' and 'deterministic' views of development. Overall, there has been a general movement from seeing development education as a matter of information, to make up an information deficit in the 'west', to seeing education as the very fuel for the engine of development both in the 'west' and in the 'Third World'.

### In summary then, development education...

- **is an educational response** to issues of development, human rights, justice and world citizenship
- **presents an international development and human rights perspective** within education here and in other parts of the world;
- **promotes the voices and viewpoints of those who are excluded** from an equal share in the benefits of human development internationally;
- **is an opportunity to link and compare development issues and challenges** here with those elsewhere throughout the world;
- **provides opportunities for people to reflect on their international roles and responsibilities** with regard to issues of equality and justice in human development;
- **is an opportunity to be active** in writing a new story for human development

As a result of such debates, and of the necessity to address the educational needs of learners in an increasingly 'globalised society' (another contested idea), development education has come to recognise more fully the role, the rights and the entitlements of citizens here in the 'developed' world as much as those in the 'developing' world. There is a greater recognition of the inter-related nature of issues in different parts of the world, the need for international responses, and a sense of "shared futures". It is now no longer possible to divorce 'development there' from 'development here'.

Development education has come to appreciate that we, in 'the West', just as much as any place in the Third World, need

to ask the question 'what kind of development'? ... and what kind of education do we need to fuel it?

Such questions are at the very heart of this book, *80:20 Development in an Unequal World*. Each of the chapters seeks to raise questions about the nature of development and our part in it. Issues, for example, about arms versus aid, gender, popular power, migration, HIV/AIDS, culture and identity etc. - all present questions for us individually, for our communities and our countries as well as for "the Third World". Issues about participation, sustainable development and democracy are springing up as pressing citizenship issues all over the world and not just 'here' or 'there'.

## Development education: 3 key challenges

### Challenge 1: education for world citizenship

'These difficult questions (of inequality and injustice internationally) lie at the heart of the work that is now needed...education for world democracy, for human rights and for sustainable human development is no longer an option. Education has a central role to play, especially if we are to build a widespread understanding and ownership of this (development) agenda...there is also an imperative to develop and describe a 'new story' of the human condition and of where we are going in the future. Education around such a new story is not simply about what we teach but also about how and whom we teach.'

- *Development Education Commission, 1999*

### Challenge 2: world development

'The world today has more opportunities for people than 20, 50 or 100 years ago. Child death rates have fallen by half since 1965 and a child born today can expect to live a decade longer than a child born then. In developing countries, the combined primary and secondary (school) enrolment ratio has more than

doubled...adult literacy rates have also risen from 48% in 1970 to 72% in 1997. Most states are now independent and more than 70% of the world's people live under fairly pluralist democratic regimes...The world is more prosperous, with average per capita incomes having more than tripled as global GDP increased ninefold...But these trends mask great unevenness...poverty is everywhere...nearly 1.3 billion people do not have access to clean water, one in seven children of primary school age is out of school, about 840 million are malnourished and an estimated 1.3 billion people live on incomes of less than £1 a day...'

- *UNDP, Human Development Report, 1999*

### Challenge 3: listening to other world views

'My major concern about the way Third World issues and countries are portrayed in the European media is that most often our people appear as victims - of hunger, disease, poverty, corruption. There is little effort made to portray the people as active participants and subjects in their society, despite their poor conditions.'

- *Luis Hernandez, Mexico City*

## Paulo Freire, 1921-1997 – some fundamental ideas and a basis for development education

The name most closely associated with the intrinsic link between education and development, especially in circumstances of inequality, is without question Paulo Freire. His influence on both education and development (and, therefore, development education) has been profound. In contrast to much orthodox educational theory and practice, Freire was clear that education is ideological and that teachers cannot but take a stand on vital ethical issues.

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... I cannot be a teacher if I do not perceive with ever greater clarity that my practice demands of me a definition about where I stand. A break with what is not right ethically. I must choose between one thing and another thing. I cannot be a teacher and be in favour of everyone and everything. I cannot be in favour merely of people, humanity, vague phrases far from the concrete nature of educative practice. Mass hunger and unemployment, side by side with opulence, are not the result of destiny, as certain reactionary circles would have us believe, claiming that people suffer because they can do nothing about the situation...

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Paulo Freire's work has permeated all aspects of education not only in his own native Brazil but also throughout Latin America and beyond. Freire fiercely promoted the right and the responsibility (and, for him, the inevitability) of education to be 'political' and firmly rooted in social, political and economic realities. At the same time, education should remain firmly educational – in opposition to the imposition of the political agendas of both left and right.

As with so many other aspects of social and political education, development education has been significantly influenced by Paulo Freire – particularly as regards the interface between a 'political' commitment to challenging injustice and inequality and the need for teaching and learning which puts the learner at the centre of the process.

On the next two pages, we outline nine key ideas from Freire's *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy and Civic Courage*, 1998, to highlight some of the values and principles that underpin development education.

### A Note on Paulo Freire

Freire was born in Recife, Brazil and, as a child in the late 1920's, became familiar with poverty and hunger – an experience that clearly shaped and influenced his later life and thinking. He studied law but also philosophy and language, particularly its psychology and this also strongly influenced his work. He never practised law but worked as a teacher in secondary schools, teaching Portuguese.

In 1946, Freire was appointed Director of the Department of Education and Culture of the State of Pernambuco and, during this time, he worked extensively with the illiterate poor and began to develop and use a radical and political form of adult education especially literacy (in Brazil, literacy was a requirement for voting in presidential elections).

In 1961 he was appointed director of the Department of Cultural Extension of Recife University and, in 1962, he had the first opportunity to apply his philosophy and methodology of education when 300 sugarcane workers were taught to read and write in just 45 days. In response to this experiment, the Brazilian government approved the creation of

thousands of what were called 'cultural circles' throughout Brazil. The 1964 military coup put an end to such approaches and Freire was imprisoned for a brief period of months, followed by exile in Bolivia and then Chile for five years where Freire worked for the Christian Democratic Agrarian Reform Movement.

In 1967, Freire published his first book, *Education as the Practice of Freedom* and, in 1969, Freire became a visiting professor at Harvard University. His most famous book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, was published a year earlier but was not published in Brazil until 1974.

Freire went on to work in Cambridge, in Geneva, and also became an adviser on educational reform in former Portuguese colonies in Africa, particularly Guinea Bissau and Mozambique. In 1979, he returned to Brazil, joined the Workers' Party in the city of Sao Paulo and became a supervisor for its adult literacy project and after the municipal election of the PT, Freire was appointed Secretary of Education for São Paulo.

Freire died on May 2nd, 1997



## **Paulo Freire**

### **– some fundamental ideas**

#### **Conviction that change is possible, we can do something...**

'...I am not angry with people who think pessimistically. But I am sad because for me they have lost their place in history. There is a lot of fatalism around us. An immobilising ideology of fatalism...which insists that we can do nothing to change the march of social-historical and cultural reality because that is how the world is anyway...

'... Reality, however, is not inexorable or unchangeable. It happens to be this just as it could well be something else. And if we so-called progressive thinkers want it to be something else, we have to struggle. I confess that I would feel extremely sad, even desolated, and without any meaning for my presence in the world if there were strong and convincing reasons for saying that human existence is ultimately deterministic...'

#### **Ethics should always remain at the core of our thinking and our work**

'... I am not impartial or objective, not a fixed observer of facts and happenings...that did not prevent me, however, from holding always a rigorously ethical position. Whoever really observes does so from a given point of view. And this does not necessarily mean that the observer's position is erroneous. It is an error when one becomes dogmatic about one's point of view and ignores the fact that, even if one is certain about his or her point of view, it does not mean that one's position is always ethically grounded...

...I am speaking of a universal human ethic...not afraid to condemn the exploitation of labour and the manipulation that makes a rumour into truth and truth into a mere rumour. To condemn the fabrication of illusions, in which the unprepared become hopelessly trapped and the weak and the defenceless are destroyed...a universal human ethic...which calls us out of and beyond ourselves...'

#### **Joy and Hope**

'... Hope is an indispensable seasoning in our human, historical experience. Without it, instead of history we would have pure determinism. History exists only where time is problematised and not simply a given. A future that is inexorable is a denial of history... In my view, it is therefore an enormous contradiction that an open-minded person who does not fear what is new, who is upset by injustice, who is hurt by discrimination, who struggles against impunity, and who refuses cynical and immobilising fatalism should not be full of critical hope...'

#### **The need to respect the autonomy and knowledge of the learner**

'... Why not establish an "intimate" connection between knowledge considered basic to any school curriculum and knowledge that is the fruit of the lived experience of these students as individuals?... To act in front of students as if the truth belongs only to the teacher is not only preposterous but also false... Respect for the autonomy and dignity of every person is an ethical imperative and not a favour that we may or may not concede to each other...

'... It's impossible to talk of respect for students, for the dignity that is in the process of coming to be, for the identities that are in the process of construction, without taking into consideration the conditions in which they are living and the importance of the knowledge derived from life experience, which they bring with them to school. I can in no way underestimate such knowledge. Or what is worse, ridicule it...'

#### **There is no teaching without learning**

'...critical reflection on practice is a requirement of the relationship between theory and practice. Otherwise theory becomes simply 'blah, blah, blah' and practice, pure activism...

...to teach is not to transfer knowledge but to create the possibilities for the production or construction of knowledge...although the teachers or the students are not the same, the person in charge of education is being formed or re-formed as he/she teaches, and the person who is taught forms him/herself in this process. In this sense, teaching is not about transferring knowledge or contents. Nor is it an act whereby a creator subject gives shape, style, or soul to an indecisive and complacent body...'

## Teaching is not just about transferring knowledge

'... If we have any serious regard for what it means to be human, the teaching of contents cannot be separated from the moral formation of the learners... that to know how to teach is to create possibilities for the construction and production of knowledge rather than to be engaged simply in a game of transferring knowledge. When I enter a classroom I should be someone who is open to new ideas, open to questions, and open to the curiosities of the students as well as their inhibitions...'

## Education is ideological

'... No one can be in the world, with the world, and with others and maintain a posture of neutrality. I cannot be in the world de-contextualised, simply observing life... In essence, my position has to be of a person who wants or refuses to change. I cannot deny or hide my posture, but I also cannot deny others the right to reject it. In the name of the respect I should have toward my students, I do not see why I should omit or hide my political stance by proclaiming a neutral position that does not exist. On the contrary, my role as a teacher is to assent to the students' right to compare, to choose, to rupture, to decide...'

## Education is a form of intervention in the world

'... Recognising that precisely because we are constantly in the process of becoming and, therefore, are capable of observing, comparing, evaluating, choosing, deciding, intervening, breaking with, and making options, we are ethical beings, capable of transgressing our ethical grounding...'

'... I cannot be a teacher if I do not perceive with ever greater clarity that my practice demands of me a definition about where I stand. A break with what is not right ethically. I must choose between one thing and another thing. I cannot be a teacher and be in favour of everyone and everything. I cannot be in favour merely of people, humanity, vague phrases far from the concrete nature of educative practice. Mass hunger and unemployment, side by side with opulence, are not the result of destiny, as certain reactionary circles would have us believe, claiming that people suffer because they can do nothing about the situation...'

Source: Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy and Civic Courage*, 1998, Rowman and Littlefield, Maryland. This was his last book published following his death in 1997.

## Being aware of the reality of our 'presence' in the world

'...our being in the world is far more than just 'being'. It is a 'presence', a 'presence' that is relational to the world and to others. A 'presence' that, in recognising another presence as 'not I', recognises its own self. A 'presence' that can reflect upon itself, that knows itself as presence, that can intervene, can transform, can speak of what it does, but that can also take stock of, compare, evaluate, give value to, decide, break with, and dream...'

'...Insofar as I am a conscious presence in the world, I cannot hope to escape my ethical responsibility for my action in the world...'



## Two intertwined ideas

It is obvious that the two ideas 'development' and 'education' are conceptually intertwined and it may be useful to consider different dimensions of each in order to review and clarify for ourselves where we choose to stand and why. We invite you to engage with that debate and to consider how that debate might reflect the principles proposed by Freire.

Contrary to the arguments and beliefs of many involved in the development, aid and communications sectors, people in the West remain highly interested and motivated by ideas of international equality and human rights and there is compelling evidence that international development is becoming a significant public issue, albeit on the public's own terms rather than those of the development elite. This in itself is a vital motivation to further enquiry and education.

It is our contention that the greater problem is the lack of realistic opportunities for citizens to become appropriately involved. Increasingly the trend seems to be that both NGOs and governments prescribe selective and simplified messages, often linked to heavy branding of a government department or an NGO. Such messages are often presented with such certainty that they might have the effect of reducing long-term awareness and understanding as well as disconnecting such understandings in the field of development from other aspects of interdependence.

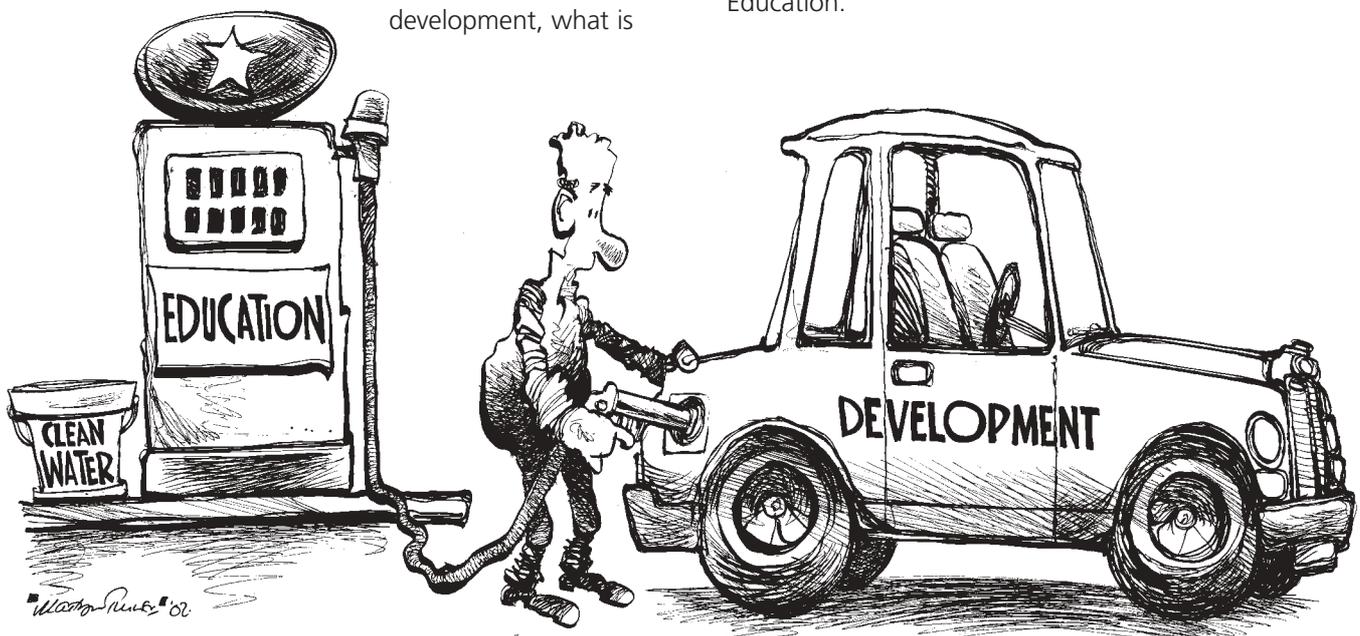
Third World perspectives help raise questions about many fundamental contradictions and hypocrisies about what is said about development, what is

done about it and how that fits (or not) with other policies and actions. Recent research by Davies, Harber and Yamashita (2005) *Global Citizenship Education: The Needs of Teachers and Learners* has added to the evidence of young peoples' interest and motivation but this reality comes up against an establishment agenda that disconnects concern about Africa from policies relating to Iraq and the Middle East.

The growing awareness of a global agenda is clear when it comes to the issue of climate change and its potential impact. Understanding the global scale and our part in it is vital – it is clear that this is equally the case with development. We, in common with people in all parts of the world, are realising locally that there is a need to respond to the challenge and to start making plans and taking action for sustainable development. We will be affected by the actions (or non actions) of others as they will be affected by what we do.

Finally, in this debate we need to consider attitudes – reflecting on our own attitudes and assumptions is important as well as understanding how they may influence how we interpret other information - they are a vital part of the learning dynamic. However, values cannot be prescribed, they can only be nurtured, debated and proposed. As Julius Nyerere noted "You cannot develop people, you must allow people to develop themselves". We argue that this is also the case in education.

The chart on the opposite page offers some core development ideas and, secondly, some core education ideas that underpin Development Education.



## Core development ideas in Development Education

- Development that sees the world only in dichotomised terms is not development [e.g. a 'developed' west and 'underdeveloped' rest or a 'rich' world, 'poor world'].
- Development is not simply about economic development or about aid or development co-operation, it's about the whole story – human development.
- Development [and underdevelopment] happens "here" as well as "there" – we need to understand both as well as their connections and interactions.
- Development decisions are not the preserve of elites, whoever they are – there is an unavoidable necessity for democratic ownership of the agenda.
- A human rights perspective on development highlights peoples' rights or entitlements and their responsibilities – people have the right and the responsibility to own and challenge the agenda.
- Aid, by definition, can never solve the problem; more fundamental change is needed and development education is a basic ingredient of that.
- The images used in media reporting and in development fundraising only portray a part of the reality ... and, far too often, only the negative realities.
- Development is a dynamic, ongoing world phenomenon.
- People throughout the world are highly interested in basic rights and positive development for all people internationally.

## Core education ideas in Development Education

- Education that presents one view of the world is not education.
- There is a fundamental commonality in the human experience anywhere in the world ... understanding this commonality is vital to exploring difference and seeing issues of injustice in context.
- Education priorities should reflect our educational needs in the context of change [in knowledge, technology, awareness e.g. of the global nature of environmental systems] and of the increasingly interdependent globalised society in which we live.
- We need to develop our skills in dealing with the issues, making choices and contributing to change. Skills that focus on analysis and thinking things through for ourselves. Skills that enable our participation.
- 'Education' can be a negative experience – de-skilling and reducing our capacity for participation. The positive value of education cannot be assumed.
- Education should offer us experiences of democracy and insight into democratic ways.
- Education can help us work on our own dispositions to change and to see the dynamic nature of the world and how we can contribute.
- Participation brings with it responsibilities which affect both individual 'everyday' choices and our part in society coming to terms with what is going on in the world.
- People throughout the world are highly interested in contributing to development ... and motivated to learn.

Development Educators also have a tendency to prescribe particular views of development or to advocate [market?] “correct things to think”, for example about fair trade, debt cancellation or the value of aid. These are important matters and have much learning potential but there could be a danger that by presenting them with such certainty that far from opening up minds to new possibilities and change that the effect is one of institutionalisation and closing down thinking. This is certainly worth debating.

The *Development Education Commission* produced a document *Essential Learning for everyone*. We guess that’s us too! They proposed the need to raise debates about learning frameworks. In doing this they were not only discussing schools and other educational institutions but the nature of “a learning organisation”. These matters are also important to business, trade unions, third sector organisations, community groups, the media and the state itself. They are in effect about the relationship between education and development ... education and change.

They were appropriately tentative but suggested the need to aspire to:

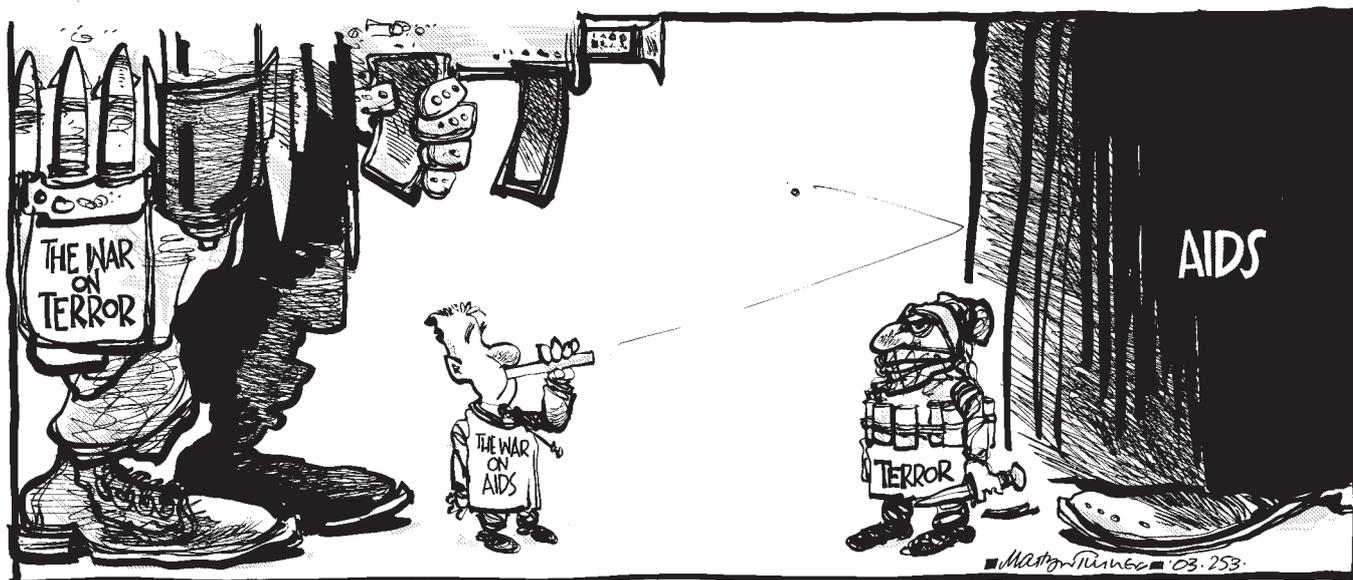
- building on core **dispositions and values** which provide a basis for clarifying underlying principles ... and responding to change;
- engaging **ideas and understandings** and build **capabilities and skills** that are part of lifelong learning;

- identifying essential **experiences** which motivate enquiry, stimulate creativity and provide a context for action.

Such a framework highlights the need for organisational clarity about dispositions and values. Institutions [of all types] need the means to debate and review such ideas. They also need collective skills to maintain the principles involved, yet be able to respond to change.

The other core challenge determined by the dynamic of contemporary change, is the need to move away from knowledge centred approaches. The scope of knowledge is rapidly increasing, we are gaining new understandings, new technologies and access to considerable information. There is a need for everyone to have access to complex understandings that effect their everyday social, economic and political life. Many of the issues raised by climate change, for example, are complex, yet they need be made accessible to all. The creativity needed to engage requires more than “knowing it”. It is about the skills for life-long learning.

Linked to this is the need to move away from the notion of using the education system to ‘manufacture’ pre-determined attitudes, whoever is attempting to do the ‘manufacturing’. The process has to be more dynamic, more inclusive and more democratic.



## Development: Interrogating the future

### Who Decides?

*What UN structures will be established to enable effective decision making at a global level?*

*Will there be strong regional alliances and less conflict?*

*Will the EU be more outward or inward looking?*

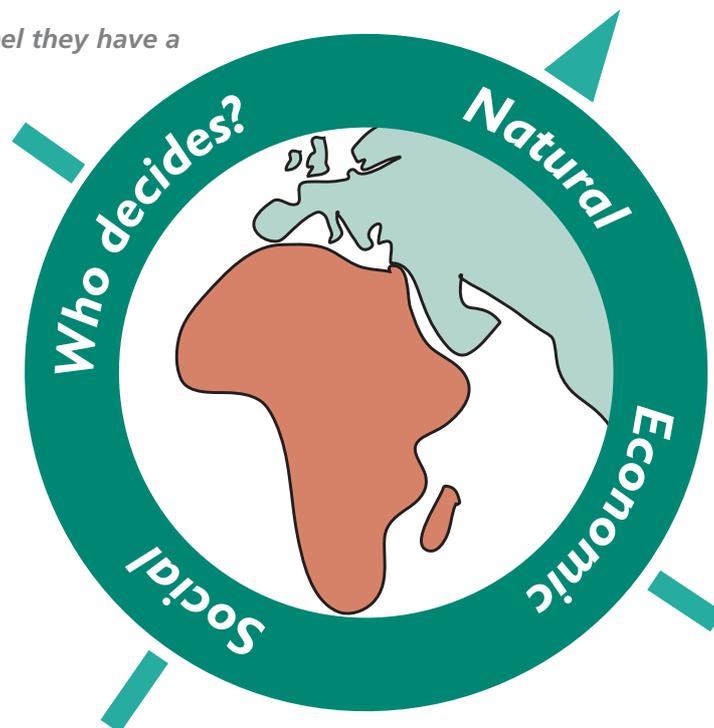
*Will people feel they have a say?*

### Natural

*Will international agreements on environmental protection and sustainable development be effective?*

*Will there be significant climate change and how will this affect peoples' development priorities in different parts of the world?*

*Will local, small scale farmers be able to protect their crops and their livelihoods?*



### Social

*Will international agreements on Basic Needs, the Right to Development and Human Rights be effective in delivering human development?*

*What development priorities will people have for their own communities? Will these be valued?*

*Will people be able to maintain their identities and cultures in a more globalised society?*

### Economic

*Will international agreements on trade, investment and the behaviour of transnational companies be effective?*

*Will development priorities be dominated by a few powerful international companies?*

*Will small scale business and farming be sustained?*

*Will there be jobs North and South?*

The Development Compass Rose (used above to explore the future of Development internationally) has been developed by Tide~Global Learning, Birmingham.

## Public 'attitudes' and development assistance

For many decades now, debates have continued around the levels of interest in and support for aid and development programmes, especially those delivered by governments. Opinion polls are regularly carried out to 'measure' levels of public support and the 'public' is then declared to be 'more' or 'less' in favour of government aid programmes. Lazy use of these polls regularly leads to calls for more 'public information' campaigns to 'inform' the taxpayers of the positive impact and benefits of such programmes - the assumption being that if the public knew more about the programme, they would be more supportive or, in some cases, less hostile.

In recent years, the very simplistic and one dimensional view of the public in the developed world has been challenged by a variety of commentators and campaigners who recognise the key role to be played by that public in building the development movement. These commentators have come from:

- within the development and development education movement - concerned about what has been labelled the 'democratic deficit' within development assistance and about the lack of real and meaningful opportunities for taxpayers to engage with development assistance and development
- from campaigners seeking to find new and more effective ways to engage with the public and to challenge the elitist dominance of 'experts' from NGO, state or academic interests
- from educators who recognise the complexity of behavioural change and who recognise that simplistic information provision is not an effective means
- from some media analysts and communications groups who seek to challenge current dominant media approaches and methods.

One of the most interesting commentators on this key debate has been Daniel Yankelovich, a US commentator and analyst on social values and public policy – in ***Coming to Public Judgement: Making Democracy Work in a Complex World***, he

compares and contrasts the environmental, women's and development movements in terms of their engagement with the public. His arguments are fundamental to the future role of development education as regards the broader development debate.

Yankelovich notes that people come to any issue '*with a lifetime of prejudice, convictions, personal experience, information and misinformation*' – this often leads to a set of '*public resistances*' that information alone (especially that coming from the top 'downwards') cannot address. Such resistances include:

- preoccupation with troubling domestic issues
- suspicion of leaders' priorities
- a conviction that money is being wasted etc.

He argues that we need to counter such logical concerns by, for example:

- providing positive reasons for wanting development assistance to succeed, a combination of national and personal interest and altruism e.g. mutual well-being and the security of future generations
- make explicit the ways in which domestic and overseas development concerns can be made compatible – stress the positive linkages
- aid must produce credible results – there are many to highlight and we must be honest and transparent about the failures, ongoing challenges as well as the successes
- by avoiding abstract terms and language (e.g. 'development' itself, 'empowerment' etc.)
- changing the process of communication with the public – ending 'one-way' communication and by building a strategy of genuine dialogue and opportunities for public engagement.

Examining the women's, environmental and development movements, Yankelovich identifies a number of key ingredients that need to be taken into account:

**Time variability** - the environmental movement made significant progress after a period of some 30 years of consciousness-raising but, for AIDS, the process took less than a decade. North-South charity dates from the days of the anti-slavery movement, some 200 years ago, and has gone through various 'starving babies' phases in, for example, the Congo a century ago, China half a century ago, in Biafra, Ethiopia, Somalia and Rwanda – *'little seems to have changed'*. While the 'more complex development movement' is much younger – roughly 35 or 40 years old – it is old enough to have made more headway than it has to date.

**Cogency of events:** *'Nothing advances consciousness raising as powerfully as events that dramatise the issue'*. All too often, the events that dramatise development are usually portrayed in the media as a series of disconnected tragedies, having little to do with each other or with the North. 'Blame' is apportioned to mismanagement, corruption or natural events. This has led to "simple" solutions and temporary measures - unpredictable aid programmes, peacekeeping and charity.

**Publicity:** In order to arouse concern for action, people must be aware of the issue - messages must be clear and unambiguous, and quantity is an essential feature, both in getting the message across and in reinforcing it. Where quantity is concerned, public messages on development are virtually non-existent compared with the bad news provided by the media and self-serving fund-raising of NGOs.

**Perceived relevance to self:** the women's movement has 'proved' *direct relevance* to a large majority of people in the North - people understand it in clear, personal terms. In the case of AIDS and some environmental issues, personal relevance has been fundamental to a readiness to grapple with solutions. Sometimes development is marketed in self-interest terms or from that of a "global village" but it remains distant from the lives of most people in the North.

**Credibility:** Lack of credibility is a serious impediment, a great many opinion polls show that governments have especially low credibility where development assistance is concerned. Although NGOs survive on public donations, the giving public is not the same as the entire public. Questions about the credibility of NGOs as a source of information show that they too have credibility problems.

**Concreteness and clarity:** Development messages from the media, from NGOs and from government agencies are confusing, self-serving, contradictory and, more often than not, negative. Although Yankelovich is writing about public understanding of global warming, his argument resonates re development - *"An inherently abstract and difficult issue has been made even more abstract and difficult by treating it in a fragmented way with confusing and misleading semantics."*

Yankelovich makes an important distinction which needs to be noted – that between public support for government efforts and for development assistance in general, the two are not the same and should not be equated. He comments:

*'If there were greater cogency and clarity of the development effort within aid programmes, and less emphasis on the commercial and political interests that characterise so many, perhaps credibility would rise. In short, the problem is rather more fundamental than choosing the right words and images in order to "sell" development assistance, as it is now practised, to the public.'*

Finally, Yankelovich offers a model of public education that *'takes a more realistic view of what is required to achieve high-quality public opinion on any complex issue'*.

For additional information on this debate, see, for example Daniel Yankelovich (1991) *Coming to Public Judgement: Making Democracy Work in a Complex World*, Syracuse University Press; Ian Smillie (1995) *The Alms Bazaar: altruism under fire – non-profit organisations and international development*; David Korten (1990) *Getting to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*, Kumarian Press and Colm Foy and Henny Helmich (eds) (1996) *Public Support for International Development*, OECD.

## Ubuntu – 10 fundamental values from South Africa

Public attitudes to education are also key to development. For example, in post-1994 South Africa, governments have examined the structures and practices of the education system, reviewing its contribution to the aims of preparing its people for citizenship and nationhood, whilst celebrating the

rich diversity and heritage of the country. At least one clear-cut conclusion has been reached – **“education does not exist simply to serve the market, but to serve society.”**

**Source:** *‘The Transformation of South African Society Requires Education to be Rooted in 10 Fundamental Values’*, quoted in *Towards Ubuntu, Critical Teacher Education and Citizenship*, 2002, DEC, Birmingham.

Fundamental Value	Educational Context
<b>1. Democracy</b>	Empowerment of population to exercise democratic rights; provision of skills to participate, think critically and act responsibly.
<b>2. Social Justice &amp; Equity</b>	Access to education is the most important resource in addressing poverty – only then will liberty be achieved. Reconciliation requires social justice to address past injustices – education for all is an essential element of social justice.
<b>3. Equality</b>	Access for all to an education provision that does not discriminate on any grounds. Equality in the treatment of all, by all.
<b>4. Non-Sexism &amp; Non-Racism</b>	Regardless of race or gender, learners to be afforded the same opportunities and the same degrees of security.
<b>5. Ubuntu (human dignity)</b>	Mutual understanding and active appreciation of the value of human differences.
<b>6. Open Society</b>	Participation rather than observation; empowerment to think and act; a culture of dialogue and debate.
<b>7. Accountability (Responsibility)</b>	Power and responsibility for all involved in education – learners, educators, managers, parents, etc.
<b>8. Rule of Law</b>	Rules within which learners, educators, managers, parents, etc operate – including the law of the land.
<b>9. Respect</b>	Precondition for communication, teamwork and efficacy – schools require mutual respect between all partners.
<b>10. Reconciliation</b>	Accepting individuals through learning about each other, valuing differences and diversity.

## Reading