Séamus Ó Tuama

LEARNING NEIGHBOURHOODS: LIFELONG LEARNING, COMMUNITY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN CORK LEARNING CITY

ABSTRACT

Cork Learning City is piloting a programme called Learning Neighbourhoods. *While it is an evolving model, it has potential for animating a culture of learning that is community based and with the prospect of giving ordinary citizens a chance to contribute both to broader issues at city level as well as to significant global debates of the day. The Learning Neighbourhood concept is essentially about collaboration and coalition building, extending networks and prioritising learning (horizontally and vertically) among and between generations and the positive leverage of all and every resource to enhance the process. It is a community building concept articulated through learning. Learning is not something abstract and removed from the practicalities of living. Learning encapsulates the four types of capital, human, social, identity, and cultural; it also extends to capacity building, resilience, and the challenges of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). This paper contextualises the theory and practice informing Learning Neighbourhoods.*

Keywords: *Learning Neighbourhoods, lifelong learning, community development*

## SOSESKE UČENJA: VSEŽIVLJENJSKO UČENJE, SKUPNOST IN TRAJNOSTNI RAZVOJ V UČEČEM SE MESTU CORK – POVZETEK

Učeče se mesto Cork poskusno izvaja program, imenovan Soseske učenja. *Čeprav je še v razvojni fazi, ima program zmožnost za spodbujanje kulture učenja, ki temelji na skupnosti in omogoča ljudem, da sodelujejo pri reševanju pomembnih vprašanj na mestni in globalni ravni. Zamisel soseske učenja temelji na sodelovanju in združevanju, na širjenju omrežij in dajanju prednosti učenju (horizontalno in vertikalno) tako znotraj posamezne generacije kot med njimi ter na učinkoviti uporabi prav vseh virov pri krepitvi tega procesa. Na takšen način se z učenjem gradi skupnost. To pa ni nekaj abstraktnega ali nekaj, kar bi bilo ločeno od vsakdanjega življenja. Učenje obsega štiri vrste kapitala, človeškega, družbenega, identitetnega in kulturnega, nanaša pa se tudi na področja krepitve zmogljivosti in odpornosti ter soočanja z izzivi, ki nam jih prinašajo cilji trajnostnega razvoja. Članek predstavlja teorijo in prakso, na podlagi katerih je oblikovan koncept sosesk učenja.*

Ključne besede: *soseske učenja, vseživljenjsko učenje, razvijanje skupnosti*

Séamus Ó Tuama, PhD, *Adult Continuing Education, University College Cork, acedirector@ucc.ie*

CONTEXTUALISING LEARNING NEIGHBOURHOODS: LIFELONG LEARNING AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

Lifelong learning literature appears at times to imply that learning is not only an end in itself, but perhaps the only end. On the other hand, much of the recent focus on human capital accumulation to counter poverty seems to lose sight of the wider individual and social benefits of learning. Community development, lifelong learning, and resilience are not social silos, they are all part of the common experience of living. The Learning Neighbourhoods model has the capacity to link each of these domains. Learning Neighbourhoods can build on existing networks, assess local needs, promote collaboration within the community, make city-wide connections and through the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) engage with other learning cities; they are about trust building with local government, about autonomous actions and responsibility taking. They are also intrinsically about learning together and individually. They champion the essential importance of learning, not just for the communities themselves but for city governments and other stakeholders. Learning Neighbourhoods adopt a notion of lifelong learning that is about community capacity building, resilience, and a broader understanding of the complexity of the world in which we live (Figure 1). They echo Kruper and Prins's (2016) view that community development inherently involves "adult education" (p. 360), while much of adult education also inherently involves community development.

Figure 1: Learning Neighbourhood + Community Approach
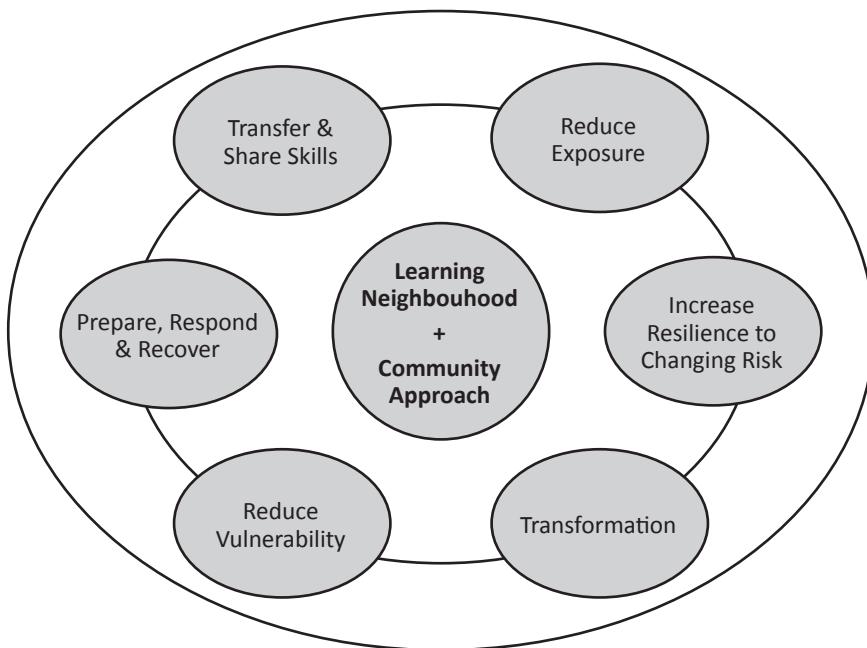
Source: Adapted from Archer, 2016.

A synergetic bond between community and learning is the bedrock of the Learning Neighbourhoods project in Cork City. It adopts "a community development approach to build trust, embeddedness and community ownership of the project" (O'Sullivan, Ó Tuama, & Kenny, 2017, p. 534). The idea of a "sustainable learning community" described by Kearney and Zuber-Skerritt (2019) in relation to the Samoan community in Logan City in Australia bears a remarkable similarity with the Learning Neighbourhoods model piloted in Cork City. They draw on Senge's (1990) learning organisation, which essentially "encourages members to draw from knowledge within the organization to strengthen their ability to think critically and creatively" (Kearney & Zuber-Skerritt, 2019, p. 402). In Senge's model learning is a continuous process, it is about a deep cultural shift in how we see the world. Putting the learning organisation theory into practice gives Senge a praxis perspective. In this praxis milieu there are

> spaces for generative conversations and concerted action […]. People can talk from their hearts and connect with one another in the spirit of dialogue […]. When people talk and listen to each other this way, they create a field of alignment that produces tremendous power to invent new realities. (Kofman & Senge, 1993, p. 16)

The concept is about "a shift that goes all the way to the core of our culture" (p. 22). This is part of the motivation in Learning Neighbourhoods. It is equally a critical aspect of community development that is aimed at transforming the lives of people in marginalised communities, but it also has to be the motivation of the entire planet as we grapple with the urgent and extremely complex challenges of the SDGs. The agility of conceptualising new futures is about how we get "frozen patterns of thought to be dissolved" (Kofman & Senge, 1993, p. 6). At a local level it's where people "act and interact as equals, expressing ideas and challenging themselves and each other to achieve shared goals […] [and] fosters an environment where people can learn to learn together, for the collective good and for themselves" (Kearney & Zuber-Skerritt, 2019, p. 402).

There is a strong resemblance between this definition and the working definition of the Learning Neighbourhoods adopted in Cork City as "an area that has an ongoing commitment to learning, providing inclusive and diverse learning opportunities for whole communities through partnership and collaboration" (O'Sullivan & Kenny, 2016, p. 2).

Learning Neighbourhoods conceptually draw on community building ideas. They are about the essential symbiosis between reflection, learning, and community development, as well as about denizens having both the capacity and opportunity to be involved in shaping sustainable futures locally and seeing this in a 'glocal' way. In this way community development and lifelong learning are a twin helix (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Twin Helix: Lifelong Learning and Community Development

Lifelong
Learning

Community
Development

Source: Author's own.

The indispensable link between learning and community is at the core of Learning Neighbourhoods, it is at the confluence of learning and knowing and place making. Naidoo (2001) develops this linkage in what she terms "lifelong community learning", which is an interweaving of community and learning "as a force for social change and development", emphasising that it is "an end-goal in and of itself as the development of a learning culture within communities" (p. 714). This coupling of community development and lifelong learning is especially important for communities on the margins to "conscientize, mobilize and empower them to take steps to change their socio-economic situation" (p. 715).

Community members individually and collectively can only contribute to making beneficial change if they have the tools to understand and engage with the critical issues that impact them. This is essential to Freire's ideas and is at the heart of the challenges we face today to allow people to be drivers in shaping their own futures, partners in creating futures not just for their neighbours but as part of the deeply pressing need for all of us to address unfolding global crises like those encapsulated in the SDGs. Freire's challenging of the teacher-student relationship is not only apposite in terms of appreciating what lifelong learning should mean, but is equally core to the idea of community development: "The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow" (Freire, 2009, p. 169). He is talking about real dialogue, challenging the idea of authority, and giving agency to all.

NEIGHBOURHOODS LED BY EQUAL NEIGHBOURS: NONDOMINATION AND ANTI-SUBORDINATION

In the literature we can find two different terms to describe very similar concepts. Bohman (2015) uses the term "nondomination", while Steil and Delgado (2019) use the term "anti-subordination". Both address persistent contexts of inequality, exclusion, and poverty, and the extent to which those directly impacted lack the sufficient means to engage in a meaningful way in the very decisions that impact their lives. The systemic environment is described by Steil and Delgado (2019) as "the durable categories of political, economic, and social inequality that characterize contemporary cities" (p. 39). For them anti-subordination would "enforce positive rights for those who have been historically subordinated" (p. 39). For Bohman (2015) nondomination, in the negative sense, is being able to "avoid the injustice of being subject to the will of others, while potentially, if not actually,

being able to exercise a minimum of control over one's own life" (p. 522). In the positive sense it's about people having "the communicative freedom to have influence over collective decisions that affect them" (p. 524).

Law and formal rights on their own cannot redress the essential imbalance, which is a key point in Bohman's critique. He speaks of "mutually granted communicative status" that is moving beyond the formality of rights alone, because even in well-functioning democracies with strong legal systems and rights regimes, some people are not mutually granted that status, "where speakers are silent because they do not have the standing to speak, much less to make claims concerning the extent of their freedom" (Bohman, 2015, p. 525). In the confluence of lifelong learning, community development, and city policy making, especially vis-à-vis communities, these are critical issues.

We can find many examples of domination and subordination in the everyday experiences of long-time resident, right-bearing citizens in our cities. But the situation is exasperated for some communities. These can include people who are homeless, or do not have secure tenure, or do not have a legal right to live in a state, or belong to an excluded group because of their status, economic standing, gender identity, religion, ethnicity or any number of other designations. It may not be feasible or safe for these people to articulate their objections to domination. The level of domination can vary across the political landscape. This is a highly complex issue, which cannot be fully articulated here. However, it is important to articulate it in the context of lifelong learning and community development, especially in bottom-up development where those directly affected have a meaningful voice in shaping the decisions that impact them. For learning cities this should involve access to lifelong learning opportunities for all, regardless, for instance, of their legal status. This is the context in which Cork Learning Neighbourhoods adopted the term denizen rather than citizen to describe people who live in a neighbourhood. In Cork as in many other cities there can be striking anomalies between the circumstances of neighbours, even neighbours who might share the same classroom. In terms of lifelong learning, a child who has lived virtually all their life in Ireland might be effectively prevented from entering higher education. Fleming, Loxley, and Finnegan (2017) point out that in Ireland there is a legal requirement that "Irish school goers who were born in non-EU countries but grew up in Ireland face very high foreign student fees " (p. 135).

Through processes of learning individuals and communities can gain knowledge of their situations and begin to make their voices heard around critical situations regarding the community in which they live. In terms of the development of those areas, it means that all the people have not just a say in the decisions, but a positive injunction that it is safe for them to speak. This is not an easy challenge: it may mean, for instance, that a city could be at odds with the national legislation when offering communicative freedom via democratic sanctuary in which people can speak freely and are encouraged to speak for themselves. Even in ostensibly open and democratic societies the emergence of neo-liberal economics and new public management has muddied the water. Steil and Delgado (2019), drawing on the work of Jane Jacobs and Susan Fainstein, propose a change of emphasis for city

governments to reverse the cultural shift "from managerial to entrepreneurial urban governance" (p. 40), advocating they take on board the views of those most directly impacted, placing justice ahead of efficiency, and recreating the commitment to public good and social supports. To some extent this is being addressed within the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC). In GNLC, cities, at governmental level, commit to promoting lifelong learning, engage in a dialogical approach, align to international best practice and promote the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that no one is left behind. In Cork, this commitment is taken very seriously, the Learning Neighbourhoods project is sponsored by the learning city, with very high visibility by city hall.

Learning Neighbourhoods are located at the nexus of balancing the interests of diverse actors as well as "addressing social and environmental justice, both internally and in relation to wider global concerns" (Bulkeley, Luque-Ayala, McFarlane, & MacLeod, 2018, p. 717). Creating a sustainable model for city autonomous governance means "NGOs, community organisations, social processes and city authorities all need enhanced capacities to collaborate" (p. 717), which is exactly the concept underpinning Learning Neighbourhoods. However, scaling up to city level is both an opportunity and a challenge. It brings a new modus operandi into the deliberative process, a greater diversity around the table, which enables a more inclusive dialogue. It speaks to what Bohman (2015) calls "one's standing as a knower" (p. 525), which is fundamental to the 2030 Agenda that no one is left behind. It is affirmed in the Cork Call to Action for Learning Cities (2017) that learning cities be a "driver for environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability and acknowledging the importance of involving all stakeholders in the process" (p. 2). Being a knower is about being recognised as an authentic autonomous person with a right to know your own world and being given the opportunity, without threat or prejudice, to express your point of view in make decisions on issues that affect you and your community. There is an element of this that rhymes too with Freire's (2009) concept of conscientisation, because we need to develop the knowledge and skills to know many things about the world in which we live.

ADULT EDUCATION: A KEY DIMENSION OF LEARNING NEIGHBOURHOODS

Learning Neighbourhoods are about promoting learning cultures that are lifelong and lifewide. A major component of lifelong learning is adult education, which enhances "educational equality, participation, catch-up learning and personal development" (Kil, Motschilnig, & Thöne-Geyer, 2012, p. 2) that emerges in formal, non-formal, and informal environments. Not only this, but adult educators are on the frontline in terms of facilitating learners to experience and understand the complex world we inhabit today. They "help their learners develop values, knowledge, and skills for collaboration and socially responsible interaction practices that span from the local to the global community" (Coryell, Sehin, & Peña, 2018, p. 180). This reflects an idea developed by Richard Sclove (1995) about developing a "democratic macrocommunity", which is creating links

between "non-parochial" small communities, like neighbourhoods. The idea is that although people are engaging locally, they are contextualising local issues and concerns not in isolation or totally oriented towards just solving the local, but understood in the context of global challenges and contributing even in a small way to addressing them. This approach fits perfectly with the UNESCO Learning City agenda, which does exactly that, and with the additional layer of local engagement like Learning Neighbourhoods, the reach is down to individuals, families, and local residents, and up to the world stage. Adult education according to Coryell, Sehin, and Peña (2018) is placing increasing emphasis on "employing cosmopolitanism as a theoretical lens in their work" (p. 180).

In taking stock of why adult education is a critically important dimension of lifelong learning and especially in the generation of learning cities, we need to acknowledge that the tradition places the learner very much in the centre: as Knox (2016) puts it, "participants have a transcendent experience that expands past their personal activities" (p. 1). It has an intrinsic value. Kil, Motschilnig, and Thöne-Geyer (2012) sum this up simply as: "Adult education constitutes a value per se. It provides an insight into world knowledge and enables own experiences to be confronted with acquisition processes" (p. 2). It is also operating on both the plane of lifelong and lifewide learning. Smilde (2010) used the term "biographical learning" to capture the meaning of lifewide learning as it "includes people's experiences, knowledge and self-reflections — in short everything people have learned throughout their lives and have absorbed into their biographies" (p. 186). In this sense learning has a chronological dimension to it (lifelong) but also a width in that it captures the full span of people's experiences. The word "expand" is significant as it captures the idea of width as the notion of it being both creative and transcendent. Evans (2013) pursues a similar theme, presenting it as an individual drawing on "accumulated, layered and multifarious biographical resources" which are effectively a "distillation of learning processes" (p. 18) that enable the individual to shape their own life and create a platform off which to extend their learning. Soylu and Yelken (2014) make concrete that "life-wide learning represents the fact that learning can take place in all fields of the life such as work, family, travelling, volunteering, etc." (p. 2703). In practice they see it as a process where learners draw on past experience and learning, and extend their learning through new learning opportunities, which could of course be in all the informal and formal contexts envisaged in their definition. Aleandri and Refrigeri (2012) elaborate the context as encompassing the range of non-formal and informal learning experiences as well as formal ones and critically make the point that lifewide learning systems must be characterised by being "flexible, to allow learners to enter and leave the system when it is necessary and appropriate" (p. 1243). In all of these discussions it is clear that adult education is a critical component in both lifelong and lifewide learning.

As pointed out by Carr, Balasubramanian, Atieno, and Onyango (2018), SDG4 is not particularly well framed in terms of lifelong learning as it lacks specifics and would seem to lean towards what they call a common sense definition where lifelong learning is a chronological process rather than one underpinned by a tradition of theory and practice. While

this lacuna exists in the drafting, it does not mask the complexity of the field. In practice lifelong learning assumes formal, non-formal, informal, and popular educational components, as well as blends of each of these, and while it includes all life stages, adult learning is particularly important beyond the formal education system and for ensuring inclusion and participation by those left behind by formal education. The *Benefits of Lifelong Learning* (BeLL) study across ten European countries concluded "that adult learners experience numerous benefits from liberal adult education" (BeLL, 2014, p. 3), as those surveyed reported better health, new social networks, wellbeing, and motivation to stay engaged in learning. Additionally, it found that "the lower the educational level of the respondent, the more positive changes" (p. 10) they reported. A very significant impact is the social inclusionary dividend which respondents reported. Younger learners saw their experiences as being "a 'stepping stone' into society, improving their sense of control over their life. For older participants, learning has a 'cushioning' effect, protecting them from age-related changes in their lives" (p. 10). Learners reported social cohesion benefits too in relation to their own networks, their workplaces and about one third reported positive changes "to work and career and to active citizenship" (p. 9). No single approach is a panacea for all societal challenges, but liberal adult education and learning has clear societal benefits.

Adult education, as Mayombe (2018) acknowledges, "equip[s] mature people with the knowledge required for active participation in the political, economic, and social life of their communities" (p. 399), which fits perfectly with the goals of Learning Neighbourhoods. Schuller (2010) identified three types of capital learners accumulate: "human capital, social capital and identity capital" (p. 110). I would include cultural capital, which Talcott Parsons (1977) identified as the "means to acquire minimum thresholds of cultural currency". All four types of capital are necessary for full participation in society (Figure 3). They directly benefit the individual and the wider community and are essential gains of a lifelong learning agenda. Human capital is the set of "skills, knowledge and learning that individuals can use in the job market" (Ó Tuama, 2016, p. 112). Social capital is essentially the networks, connections, and linkages which an individual can avail of in all aspects of their life. For Jelenc Krašovec and Kump (2009) the "basic ingredients of social capital are trust, networks, participation and norms of reciprocity" (p. 259). Identity capital "is a sort of validation of a person's social credentials or a reinforcement of identity and recognition" (Ó Tuama, 2016, p. 114).

On a broader societal level, addressing the SDGs requires us to imagine new futures, for people to be knowers; in short, we need what Granovetter (1983) described as "cognitive flexibility", which is a direct spin-off of engagement and learning. Johnco, Wuthrich, and Rapee (2013) define cognitive flexibility as

> the ability to shift cognitive set, thought or attention in order to perceive, process or respond to situations in a different way […] to produce diverse ideas, consider response alternatives and modify behaviour and cognition in response to changing environmental demands. (p. 577)

Figure 3: Education and Capital Accumulation
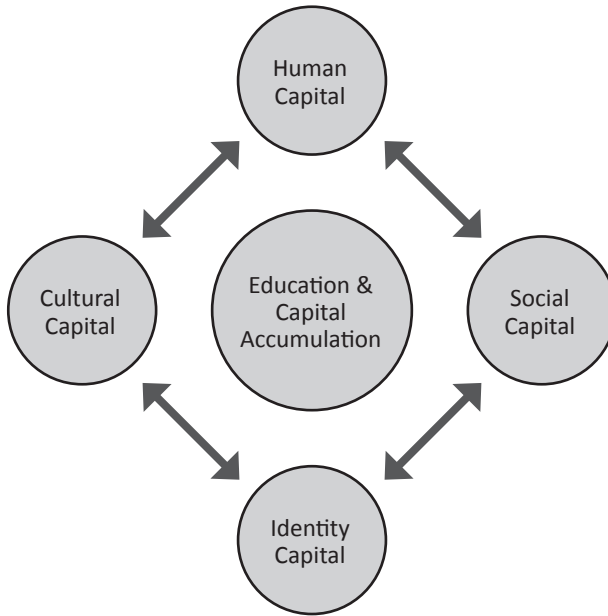
Source: Author's own.

Cognitive rigidity, Granovetter (1983) suggests, is symptomatic of "any set of people whose outlook is unusually provincial as the result of homogeneous contacts" (p. 205). The contemporary era is marked by an increase in stridently held views, the most obvious being ones related to religious fundamentalism and increases in xenophobic and nationalistic politics. These rigidities in thinking close off the possibility of considering "that the situation is novel and requires a new strategy" (Johnco, Wuthrich, & Rapee, 2013, p. 577). These closed worldviews are a luxury the world cannot afford in the light of significant global challenges like climate change and all the consequences that follow. Benhabib (2005) talks about this "rage against rationalization" which has generated "a plethora of cultural, as well as political and religious, fundamentalisms" (p. 754). What seems common to all of these political discourses is a lack of cognitive flexibility, an inability to perceive that we need to imagine new approaches that are more flexible, more inclusive and more optimistic of the future. Echoing these points, Brunkhorst (2005), contextualising what democracy means, deviates from a concept of democracy simply as "majority rule restrained by basic rights" to one which is about being free from domination and solving "social problems through democratic self-obligation" (p. 139). He speaks of the people as "a learning sovereign that exposes itself to a risky experimental practice of trial and error" (p. 140), but which also includes people who are excluded, including dissenting voices and marginalised and excluded minorities. This is a world not of command and control, but one driven organically through a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. It aligns with how Habermas (1990) describes the principles of discursive procedure, which

necessarily includes "all concerned", reciprocally recognises the equality of the views of everyone and in which those engaged have an openness to "complete reversibility" (p. 122) of the views which they brought to the table. In practice reaching these goals is inherently difficult, but what is practical is to set out a broad agenda for practice that sets out to include all perspectives, that has a mission to promote learning for and by all, that takes a non-parochial perspective and is built on a model of partnership, which includes residents, but also includes city governments, businesses, NGOs, schools, health services, police, and all relevant actors (individual and collective).

Learning Neighbourhoods are premised on those kinds of values, they champion local autonomy but they also include institutional partners, civil society groups and essentially should have room at the table for all who wish to have a voice. This approach is essential for social capital accumulation and what Granovetter (1974, 1983) describes as the strength of weak ties, which is essential to the capacity building of disadvantaged urban communities. What learning neighbourhoods should strive to achieve are not just binary or indeed multifaceted links, but an environment of networking and engaging. Jane Jacobs (1961) highlighted just those types of interweaving relationships that are necessary for effective urban communities. Her "hop-and-skip relationships" and "hop skip people" were catalysts for making this type of environment real. The number of such catalytic characters doesn't need to be huge because they "know unlikely people, and therefore eliminate the necessity for long chains of communication" (Jacobs, 1961, p. 135). There are significant differences between now and the 1960s, but some challenges are surprisingly similar. The idea of neighbourhood is about scale too. The layers of complexity in addressing contemporary challenges require advanced knowledge generation and highly specialised research and theory building. But it equally needs engagement outside of rarefied silos and real engagement with ordinary people, whose lives are impacted by climate, migration, crime, security, and the rapidity of change. The people who are most vulnerable and exposed to risk are very often the ones who "have the worst access to environmental goods and services (such as good quality housing, energy efficiency measures, green space, etc.) and who experience the poorest health and quality of life" (Eames & Egmose, 2011, p. 771). As the SDGs make very clear, sustainability is multifaceted, but two things tie all the goals together: the absolute need for learning throughout the life course and the need to imagine new futures (cognitive flexibility).

The *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* (2013) makes clear that sustainable development "requires fundamental changes in the way people think and act. Lifelong learning is a necessary part of making this change" (p. 4). The Mexico City Statement on Sustainable Learning Cities (2015) calls for "lifelong learning strategies that foster environmental stewardship" (p. 2). The Cork Call to Action for Learning Cities (2017) aspires to create "mindful learning cultures in our cities that foster global consciousness and citizenship through local action to implement the SDGs" (p. 1). That common theme is present with increasing urgency.

CONCLUSION

More people than in any previous time, by numbers and the percentage of the total population, live in cities today. More people are displaced and are migrating than in any previous period in history. Millions of people are living in inadequate housing, they have low levels of nutrition, poor education, and poor health care. We face a greater threat to human life now than in any previous era of human history. The pace and complexity of technological change are unprecedented. We are emerging into a new information driven period with unprecedented opportunities and challenges. We may be at the threshold of a new age or at the twilight of human history. The decisions we make in the next few years will determine our future like in no previous time. Who will make the brave decisions and when is critical. Certain cities and the people who live in those cities will be critical actors in shaping the future. The extent to which ordinary people can have a say in how they want to shape that future is paramount. Then United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, proclaimed: "Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family" (Annan, 1997, p. 3).

Learning Neighbourhoods is one of the capstone projects of Cork Learning City. It is established as a pilot concept that is applicable to the host city, but with potential for cities throughout UNESCO GNLC. This paper set out to place this model in a context which includes community development, lifelong learning, and resilience. It also placed discussion in the context of the global challenges addressed in the 2030 Agenda, which impacts locally as well as at a global level. Learning Neighbourhoods is premised on the idea that ordinary people should be what Bohman (2015) describes as knowers, people who can comprehend and contribute to finding solutions to contemporary problems that impact them. In this regard the knowers in a Learning Neighbourhoods context know that everyone in their locality is a neighbour, but they also know that problems cannot be solved solely locally, regionally, nationally or globally. It is a pilot project and it is too soon to draw definitive conclusions on its effectiveness. What this paper can offer is a praxis stocktake, placing the project in the context of the literature by way of both acknowledging the rationale for the project, but also setting some signposts to shape future practice and challenges. In learning cities, in neighbourhood projects like Learning Neighbourhoods, ordinary people have opportunities to learn, discuss, and formulate opinions on shaping the future.

The challenges we face are incredibly urgent and complex. We need to apply our collective thoughts on how we can save the planet and lift millions of people across the globe out of poverty. We need to formulate policy on the basis of the best available information, but for policy to succeed it needs the willing assent of the people it impacts. People can only truly give assent through discursive processes that are open and fair. To participate in a meaningful way, people need to have the tools to analyse, synthesize and criticise, as well as the confidence to give voice to their views. Discourse in the classroom and in the hair salon are important. We need informed active publics. The best way to build these publics is through opening channels of learning and discussion and through active collective listening by all of us. Learning Neighbourhoods is just one such experiment.

REFERENCES

Aleandri, G., & Refrigeri, L. (2012). Lifelong learning, training and education in globalized economic systems: Analysis and Perspectives. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *93*, 1242–1248.

Annan, K. (1997). *If Information and Knowledge are Central to Democracy, They are Conditions for Development.* Address to World Bank Conference 'Global Knowledge '97. Retrieved September 13, 2019, from https://www.un.org/press/en/1997/19970623.sgsm6268.html

Archer, D. (2016). Building urban climate resilience through community-driven approaches to development. *International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management, 8*(5), 654–669.

Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities. (2013). Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

BeLL. (2014). *Final Report*. Retrieved July 29, 2019, from http://www.bell-project.eu/cms/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Final-Report1.pdf

Benhabib, S. (2005). Beyond interventionism and indifference: Culture, deliberation and pluralism. *Philosophy and Social Criticism, 31*(7), 753–771.

Bohman, J. (2015). Domination, global harms, and the problem of silent citizenship: Toward a republican theory of global justice. *Citizenship Studies 19*(5), 520–534.

Brunkhorst, H. (2005). *Solidarity: From Civic Friendship to a Global Legal Community.* Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press.

Bulkeley, H., Luque-Ayala, A., McFarlane, C., & MacLeod, G. (2018). Enhancing urban autonomy: Towards a new political project for cities. *Urban Studies, 55*(4), 702–719.

Carr, A., Balasubramanian, K., Atieno, R., & Onyango, J. (2018). Lifelong learning to empowerment: Beyond formal education. *Distance Education, 39*(1), 69–86.

Cork Call to Action for Learning Cities. (2017). Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Coryell, J. E., Sehin, O., & Peña, C. (2018). Adult education through a cosmopolitanism lens: A review of the research literature. *Adult Education Quarterly, 68*(3), 179–196.

Eames, M., & Egmose, J. (2011). Community foresight for urban sustainability: Insights from the citizens science for sustainability (SuScit) project. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 78*(5), 769–784.

Evans, R. (2013). Learning and knowing: Narratives, memory and biographical knowledge in interview interaction. *European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults, 41*(1), 17–31.

Fleming, T., Loxley, A., & Finnegan, F. (2017). *Access and Participation in Irish Higher Education*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Freire, P. (2009). Chapter 2 from pedagogy of the oppressed. *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts*, *2*(2), 163–174.

Granovetter, M. (1974). Strength of weak ties - reply. *American Journal of Sociology, 80*(2), 527–529.

Granovetter, M. (1983). The strength of weak ties: A network theory revisited. *Sociological Theory*, *1*, 201–233.

Habermas, J. (1990). *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Jacobs, J. (1961). *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Vintage Books.

Jelenc Krašovec, S., & Kump, S. (2009). Adult learning activities, social networks and different neighbourhoods. *European Societies*, *11*(2), 257–282.

Johnco, C., Wuthrich, V. M., & Rapee, R. M. (2013). The role of cognitive flexibility in cognitive restructuring skill acquisition among older adults. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders 27*(6), 576–584.

Kearney, J., & Zuber Skerritt, O. (2019). From learning organization to learning community: Sustainability through lifelong learning. *The Learning Organization 19*(5), 400–413.

Kil, M., Motschilnig, R., & Thöne-Geyer, B. (2012). What Can Adult Education Accomplish? The Benefits of Adult Learning – The Approach, Measurement and Prospects. *Der Pädagogische Blick - Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Praxis in pädagogischen Berufen*, *20*(3), 164–175.

Knox, A. B. (2016). *Improving Professional Learning*. Sterling, Virginia: Stylus.

Kofman, F., & Senge, M. (1993). Communities of commitment: The heart of learning organizations. *Organizational Dynamics, 22*(2), 5–23.

Kruper, A. M., & Prins, E. (2016). Participation in adult education for community development: A critical discourse analysis of training for transformation. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 35*(4), 359–375.

Mayombe, C. (2018). From social exclusion to adult education and training for community development in South Africa. *Community Development, 49*(4), 398–414.

Mexico City Statement on Sustainable Learning Cities. (2015). Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Naidoo, S. (2001). Community Empowerment through Lifelong: Community Learning in Developing Countries. In D. Aspin, J. Chapman, M. Hatton, & Y. Sawano (Eds.), *International Handbook of Lifelong Learning* (pp. 713–732). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

O'Sullivan, S., & Kenny, L. (2016). Learning Neighbourhoods Pilot Programme. Retrieved September 13, 2019, from https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/studyatucc/adulted/LearningNeighbourhoodsPilotReview[5129].pdf

O'Sullivan, S., O'Tuama, S., & Kenny, L. (2017). Universities as key responders to education inequality. *Global Discourse, 7*(4), 527–538.

Ó Tuama, S. (2016). Adult education and reflexive activation: prioritizing recognition, respect, dignity and capital accumulation. *European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults*, *7*(1), 107–118.

Parsons, T. (1977). *Social Systems and the Evolution of Action Theory*. New York: Free Press.

Schuller, T. (2010). Building a Strategic Framework for Lifelong Learning: Insights from "Learning through Life". *Adult Learner: The Irish Journal of Adult and Community Education,* 105–118.

Sclove, R. E. (1995). *Democracy and Technology*. New York: Guildford Press.

Senge, P. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday.

Smilde, R. (2010). Lifelong and lifewide learning from a biographical perspective: transformation and transition when coping with performance anxiety. *International Journal of Community Music*, *3*(2), 185–201.

Soylu, B. A., & Yelken, T. Y. (2014). A new and dynamic phenomenon for higher education: Life-wide learning. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 116*, 2702–2706.

Steil, J. P., & Delgado, L. H. (2019). Limits of diversity: Jane Jacobs, the Just City, and anti-subordination. *Cities, 91*, 39–48.