

Lifelong Learning for Poverty Eradication

Wapula N. Raditloaneng • Morgen Chawawa

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with contribution by Prof. Preece

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Wapula N. Raditloaneng
Department of Adult Education Faculty
of Education
University of Botswana
Gaborone
Botswana

Morgen Chawawa
Botho University
Gaborone
Botswana

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Preface

This book grew out of discussions and work done by the authors in their different capacities for 9 years on various forms of research 2004 and 2013. We are grateful to many colleagues who informed the book and offered suggestions through related conferences, partnerships with Kellogg Foundation, British Academy and the Implementing the Third Mission of Universities in Africa partners for collaborative action research work which culminated in case studies that gave us an opportunity to write this book. We are especially indebted to Professors Julia Preece of the University of Kwa Zulu Natal, Idouw Biao of Adult Education, University of Botswana, and another colleague from UNISA, Professor Peter Dzvimbo who provided guidance and editorial work to make this book what it is for the readers.

Whether or not “Lifelong learning, poverty and community engagement” becomes a new global reality and whether lifelong learning proves to be an active strategy for poverty reduction and university community engagement remain central questions. The authors simply documented what they existentially experienced during the 8 year period which informed the book.

There are no easy answers and there is much contestation and debate ahead because lifelong learning is not uniform; learning is a very personal and internal process which is never the same for different learners. The sense that learners make out of their experiences is not the same. How poverty is defined determined strategies to tackle it. Some of the poor are better able to make a breakthrough for a transition to non- poverty than others, while some remain poor and destitute despite efforts they make to rid themselves off poverty in their individual, family and wider collective lives.

Community service and engagement is also practiced differently and targets different aspects of human and community life. Community engagement strategies are human and therefore infested with human error. However, the struggle towards lifelong learning, and fighting poverty through community engagement continues within Botswana’s national boundaries, African and global contexts.

General Introduction

This book is divided into fourteen thematical chapters packaged in three parts: Lifelong learning, poverty eradication and community development through engagement as common concepts used to describe varieties of learning from the cradle to the grave.

It portrays an African stance in relation to key concepts and how these are contextualized in Africa, using Botswana as a contact point. The San is a unique group to study because, though historically recognized as one of the first indigenous groups in Southern Africa, it was previously left out in development. However, through the partnership between Kellogg and Ba Isago University, the San community of D'Kar was given an opportunity to benefit from the three year partnership that provided training and guidance in successful entrepreneurship.

In Chapter One, of Part A, the writers argue that lifelong learning is very wide in scope. Africans have and continue to be lifelong learners even before the advent of recorded literature and research on Lifelong learning. Oral traditions passed on from generation to generation through Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) have served Africans as well in articulating their own stories of lifelong learning, poverty reduction, community development and engagement for social justice.

Lifelong learning includes formal, informal and non formal programs of learning, grounded on Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). Part one explores lifelong learning in four chapters by focusing on its meaning, scope, interconnection with poverty and entrepreneurship skills development training as some of the requisite poverty eradication tools.

In Chapter Two, Lifelong learning, poverty, community development and engagement are portrayed as the present and future of Africa where the past has failed the continent in terms of promoting best practice. Lifelong learning is discussed as one of the most celebrated tools of poverty eradication. The chapter further discusses the poverty situation in Botswana through community development and university engagement to bridge the ivory tower gap.

In Chapter three, the author focuses on Botswana's National Poverty Eradication policy, strategies and programmes. Botswana has a very elaborate poverty eradication policy and strategies peddled by the Office of the President, and supported by international development partners and non- state actors since about five years ago.

Past efforts to reduce poverty which were found to be obsolete were replaced with new initiatives to reduce poverty by 2015. While the goal is not wholly achieved, a few success stories are discussed, hence there is a ray of hope at the end of a dark tunnel.

In Chapter Four, lifelong learning is regarded as very important for sustainable entrepreneurship development. Through lifelong learning, diverse communities can develop new ways of tackling environmental problems, environmental conservation and sustainable development.

Part Two builds on Part One by providing the human dimensions of poverty, with a special focus on the San.

Chapter Five in Part Two builds on to preceding chapters by discussing the interface of lifelong learning and small business development training with a special focus on the D'Kar community of Gantsi in Botswana.

Chapter Six focuses on sustainable environmental issues, MDGs, and poverty reduction. Chapter Seven discusses poverty with a special focus on poverty as generally a global problem that hard hits on the San community who were studied to inform this book. Furthermore, the section explores women's empowerment in business and management skills in Chapter Eight.

Chapter Nine discusses the inventive role of entrepreneurship training in the journey against poverty within the San community in D'kar, in partnership with Ba-Isago and Kellogg Foundation.

The Kellogg Foundation Guidelines as very crucial in the Ba-Isago-Kellogg Foundation are discussed in Chapter 10 as very crucial in the Zooming Approach case studied as promoting best practice in Community service and engagement for poverty reduction and ultimately, eradication.

Part Three carves the way forward in terms of promoting community development with current university community development and engagement initiatives. The book contents draws extensively on four African Universities and the work of Kellogg Foundation within the San Community of D'kar which served as one of the two case studies of best practice in community service and engagement.

The significance of Chapter Eleven in Part three of this book is that it illuminates current strategies and programs geared towards community development and engagement by African universities, and their impact on promoting equity and social justice.

In the past, universities have been ivory towers totally isolated from the recurrent work of communities in their neighborhoods.

In Chapter Twelve, the authors discuss Capacity Building for sustainable development in D'Kar. The chapter gives highlights of some of the actual activities that were undertaken by community members as part of Capacity building for sustainable development. The chapter gives highlights of three key actors in capacity building, and some of the actual activities that were undertaken by community members as part of capacity building for sustainable development. The Dutch Reformed Church, NGOs including Kellogg Foundation, and women as key actors are cited as examples of capacity building within the San community of D'kar.

The chapter further illuminates the work and impact of NGOs over the last ten years in D'kar San Community through the KURU Family of Organizations. Kuru Development Trust was founded as a multipurpose development institution and registered officially with the Botswana Government as a charitable organization in 1986 after lengthy discussions with people in western Botswana and other parts of southern Africa. The chapter further makes a link between capacity building and sustainable development.

Chapter Thirteen is on Building Partnerships for Sustainable Community Development: This chapter uses examples of non-state actors partnerships with the San and Government of Botswana Departments that were invited to inform the people of Dkar on some of the social services and economic empowerment programmes that were available for the people. The ultimate goal of building sustainable partnerships is to capacity building to eradicate poverty for sustainable development.

Chapter Fourteen pools together all the conclusions drawn in each of the individual chapters to carve the way forward. Through the third mission of universities, (community service and engagement) is an empowering lifelong learning process to equip the poor with the requisite skills to rid themselves of poverty.

Although the book focuses on the D'Kar community of Botswana, authors cited examples of best practice in community service and engagement in four African countries that were part of the recipients of the Mobilizing Regional Capacity Initiative (MRCI) of the Association of African Universities (AAU) and the Department of International Finance Development (DIFD) eighteen months collaborative research award of 2010-2011.

The qualitative case studies methodology for collecting information to inform all the three parts of this book can be traced back to the last seven years beginning 2006 to date, when the authors engaged in various programmes on poverty reduction in Botswana. A qualitative methodology, as adapted for the book includes, amongst others, case studies on non-formal education programmes of poverty reduction, post literacy programmes in two Botswana Districts on poverty reduction, a pilot case study of the poor in Lentsweletau and Lobatse, community service and engagement projects by four African universities, and Ba Isago university/Kellogg Foundation projects in D'Kar and the ITMUA project.

The Ba-Isago/Kellogg Foundation project is particularly important in that it sought to create a new entrepreneurship mindset to poverty reduction in the remote area of D'Kart. All the projects studied entailed making sense of the assumptions by interviewing poor people in the urban and rural areas, training and retraining of the poor to make a transition from poverty to non-poverty, and working with extension workers during the annual Basic Extension Skills Training Course (BEST) hosted by the Department of Adult Education of the University of Botswana in June 2007.

This book is a must read for all African universities, adult educators, Policy Maker, Economic development practitioners, community development and engagement practitioners, educators from all walks of life and researchers on Long life learning and poverty reduction through Community development and engagement.

Book Methodology

Methodology that Informed the Book

This book is a by-product of the authors' 8 years of research on various projects since 2004 to 2011.

- a. The authors' role in the first ever international conference on Adult Education and poverty reduction- A global priority" hosted by the University of Botswana Department of Adult Education. The conference generated a lot of data on conceptualising the different dimensions of human and gender-based poverty.
- b. The authors' research on poverty and poverty alleviating projects in two Botswana districts in 2006. This research, sponsored by the University of Botswana Office of Research and Development, provided an inventory of successful poverty reduction programmes, factors that contribute to success and why some projects collapsed.
- c. The British Academy African Partnership Initiative (BAAP) research project on poverty and non- formal education from 2006 to 2007 in partnership with the universities of Glasgow where the lead team leader resided, Botswana, Malawi, Nigeria and Lesotho. The research sought to link the role of small scale non formal education projects on poverty reduction in the five countries. The partnership case studies were all consolidated into a book but some data sets outside the cases studied remained unused because of book space constraints. This has been used to inform parts A and B of the book on lifelong learning and poverty.
- d. The Implementing the Third Mission of Universities in Africa (ITMUA) research project within the four universities in Botswana, Malawi, Nigeria and Lesotho built on experiences of the BAAP to focus on yet another solid regional collaborative research on Implementing the Third Mission of Universities in Africa from January 2010 to August 2011. Cases studied during the duration of the project were consolidated into a book while the processes involved in the cases remained without book space. The third part of the book (Part C) is a consolidation of what actually went on during the life of the Ba-Isago/Kellogg Foundation project in terms of the practice of community development and engagement.

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About the Authors

Dr. Morgen Chawawa is the Research Manager at Botho University, Botswana. He was the Director of a Community Development and University Engagement Project in Ghanzi District, Botswana funded by the Kellogg Foundation Project, in partnership with BA ISAGO University College, Gaborone, Botswana until 2012 when the project ended. Dr Chawawa is a graduate of Georgia State University, Georgia, USA and Immanuel Theological Seminary, Georgia, USA. He taught Political Science at DeKalb College, Atlanta, Georgia, USA for six years. Dr. Chawawa was a civil servant in the Government of Zimbabwe, where he worked as District Administrator in the Ministry of Local Government, Urban and Rural Development and Town Clerk for the City of Mutare in Zimbabwe. He was lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe and Chair of the Department of Educational Management, Zimbabwe Open University.

Gaborone, Botswana

Prof Wapula Nelly Raditloaneng serves as an Associate Professor in the Department of Adult Education, University of Botswana, Main Campus, Gaborone. Prof. Raditloaneng is an interdisciplinary Sociologist, an adult and health educator with a wealth of more than thirty two years of professional experience. She holds a Doctor of Education in Adult and Continuing Education from the Pennsylvania State University, University Park Campus. Her areas of research, publications and activism include poverty, gender issues, and lifelong learning. Her recent publications related to this book are a co-authored book chapter on The importance of women’s leadership programmes in developing a sustainable economy. In Inman and Robinson’s book, *University engagement and environmental sustainability* (2014). (Publisher, Manchester University Press. She also authored a book review (2012) of *Transitions and learning through the life course*, (publisher, International Journal of Lifelong Learning) edited by Ecclestone, Biesta and Hurghes (2010). In November 2014, she published another book review of “The knowledge economy and lifelong learning, a critical reader”, with *International Review of Education*, DOI 10.1007/s11159-014-9427-z.

Gaborone, Botswana