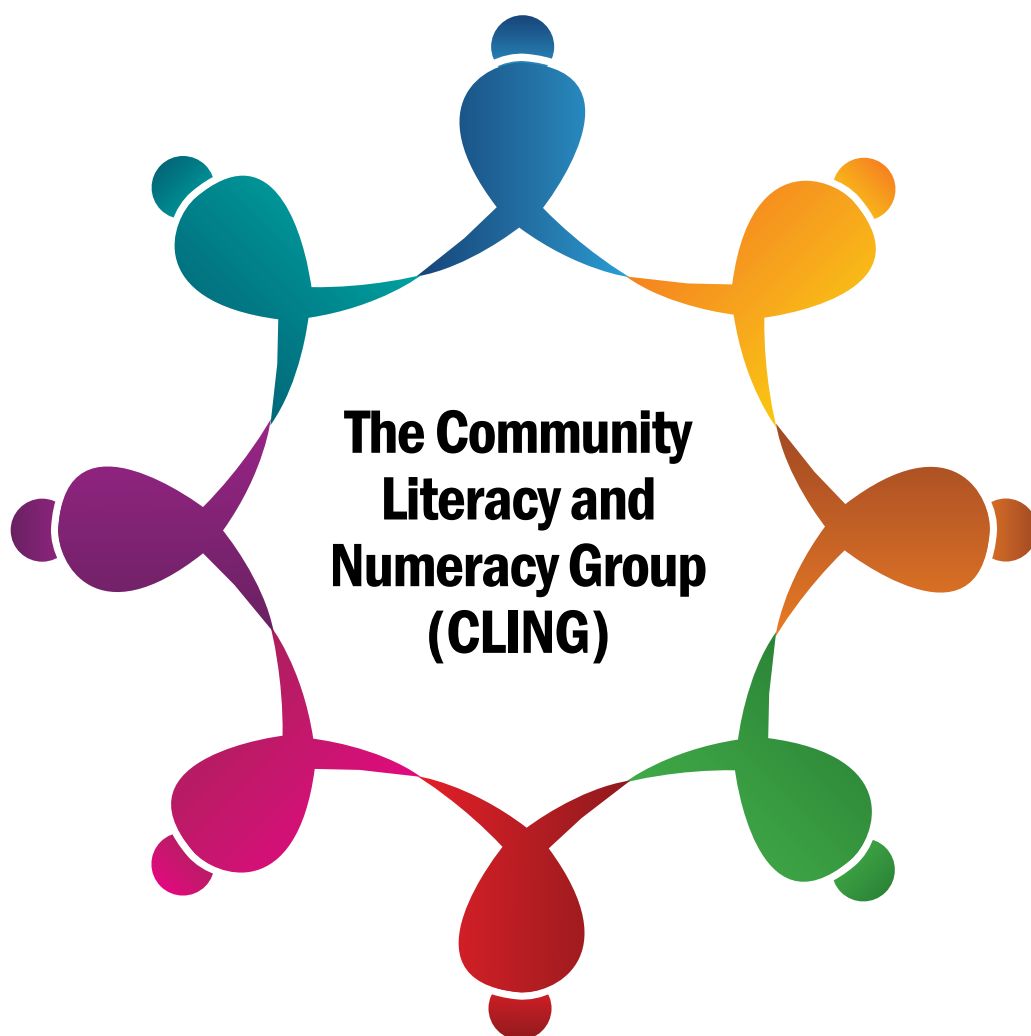




UMHLABA OMUTSHA UYAFUFUSA

REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION



**Education
Policy
Consortium**
TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

Umhlaba omutsha uyafufusa.

Reflections on community participation in education: *The Community Literacy and Numeracy Group (CLING)*

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And all the CLING members

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*'Poverty' and what it means for
children and their schooling*

Ngenye imini babuya namaphepha bathi mama sincede, sifundise ukufunda. Esikoleni bathe kufanele sifunde. Ndithi ndiyazulisa bathi no, no, sifundise ukuba intoni na ekweliphepha. Ungakulinge use eliphepha etoilet, sifundise! Ndide ndibafundisile.

One day they came home with papers and said Mom help us read, teach us. At school they said you must read. I would hesitate but they would insist, no, no teach us what's on this paper. Don't you dare take this paper to the toilet, Teach us. Then I would help them read.

Community member, Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014

***NOTE:** In this booklet, the terms 'poor' and 'poverty' mean materially-poor (that is, one has very little or no money) and hence people are pushed out of the 'mainstream' because of their material conditions. They are not poor in any other way – they think, feel, love, hate, argue, fight, have ideas and opinions, etc just like anyone else.

For most South Africans, the perception (or view) is that nothing has really changed in the last 20 years, except the right to vote and to be called 'free'.



South Africa remains the most unequal country in the world with the two richest South Africans (Johann Rupert and Nicky Oppenheimer, according to Forbes) having wealth equal to the poorest 50 percent (i.e. 26.5-million people) of the country, according to an Oxfam global (world) inequality report.

Like all other areas of life (whether one **colludes** or **resists**), education is deeply rooted within the **inequality** that is **capitalism**. The neoliberal capitalist **policies** that our 'democratic' government put into place over 20 years ago **dictate** what it is we do and do not do, and have and do not have. There are still two different systems of education – one for the rich and one for the poor. More than 75% of South African children are trapped in a **dysfunctional** schooling system that reproduces inequality – in other words, children remain the same – the same ones stay rich and the same ones stay poor. Very few poor children manage to escape from poverty. '**Access**' may have improved over the past 20 years, but that is where it begins and ends. Schooling is in crisis as the following stats show:

604	schools have no water
4 681	schools have an unreliable water supply
1 131	schools have no electricity
2 773	schools have an unreliable electricity supply
474	schools have no toilets
11 033	schools have pit latrines although the Norms and Standards state: 'Pit latrines and bucket toilets are not allowed at schools'.
16 146	schools have no computer centre
20 463	schools have no science lab

From: *State of infrastructure in South African schools.*

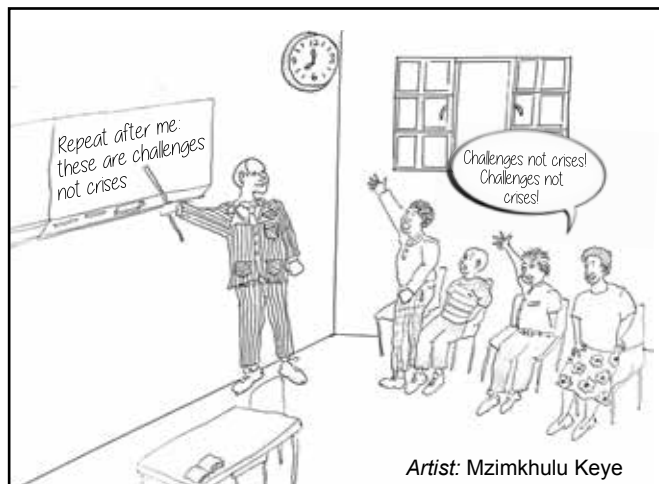
The Department of Basic Education's 2014 National Education Infrastructure Management Systems (NEIMS) Report

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

inequality	– not equal
injustice	– not fair, against what the law says is right
colludes	– agrees/goes along with
resists	– opposes/does not go along with
capitalism	– the global economic system which impacts on all areas of life
policies	– rules that govern things
dictate	– tell
dysfunctional	– something that does not work/it is broken
access	– admission/right to enter - more children attend school than before 1994
unreliable	– not all the time/on and off
infrastructure	– things like buildings and roads

CHALLENGES VERSUS CRISES – SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT SPEAK

The government tries to convince us that the schooling crisis is made up of ‘challenges’ which can be ‘solved’ quite easily, but we know too well that while middle class children attend school with a *Sofia the First*/*Ninja Turtles* backpack filled with books, stationery and a healthy meal in a matching lunchbox, poor and working class children have to deal with the following:



- Child-headed households
- Poverty
- Hunger and **malnutrition**
- Sickness
- No books, **inappropriate** books, **expensive** books
- Not enough libraries or no libraries
- **Overcrowding**
- Being taught in a language that is not their own
- Expensive and unreliable transport
- Teachers that are not valued or treated with the respect they deserve by society, teachers who are not paid enough and are generally unhappy
- No music, sports or extra mural activities
- **Emotional** difficulties
- Abuse
- Alcohol and drug problems

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

- malnutrition** – not enough food/not enough healthy food
- inappropriate** – not suitable, for example, they may be in a language not spoken by the children
- expensive** – cost too much money
- overcrowding** – too many children in one classroom
- emotional** – to do with feelings



Kwa-Masiza Hostel

Ingxaki ukuba uRhulumente kufanele angenelele, kufanele anikele ngencwadi. Kufanele anikele nangokutya, abantwana bezo-concentreta kakuhle.

A challenge is that there must be Government intervention, government must supply books. They must also provide feeding scheme so that the children can fully concentrate.

Community member, Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014

Into endifuna ukuyibuza kubaphathi besikole imalungana nendawo apho abantwana befundela khona, ngoba ndiyabona abantwana baninzi; kodwa indawo abafundela kuyo! Andiyithandi toe! Imdaka.

What I would like to ask from people who are responsible for the school is that the place where the children learn, because I see the children are many but the place where they learn I don't like, it's dirty.

Member of Working Class Coordinating Committee, Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014

Akunambani okutsho ukuthi angeke ngikhone kusebenzisa iLaptop, angeke ngisebenzise iprojector futhi angikwazi ukuthi amaleaner mawasebenzise i-internet ukwenza i-research.

There is no electricity which means I cannot even use my laptop, I cannot use my projector, and I cannot ask learners to use the internet to look up for things.

Teacher, Freedom Park, Gauteng 2014

Into endibona iyiyonangxaki ukuba abantwana abafundi ngokwanele. Nxa ndithi ngokwanele, nditsho into yokuba abafumani ixesha elanele lokufunda. Bafunda ixesha elifutshane ngoba abatyi nto, abanakutya abantwana. Kunzima ukubafundisa eight hours ngoba akunakutya kula crèche.

What I see as a challenge is that the children don't learn enough. When I say enough I mean they don't get enough time to learn. Now they are learning half of the time because the children don't have anything to eat, there is no food to eat. Now it's difficult to do eight hours because there is nothing to eat at that crèche.

Community member, Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014

So when I got here last year it was like yho yho eclassin eli one you've got fifty something, this year is even worse I've got sixty two learners in class. The only thing that nje ukuthi abantwana baningi eclassin baningi like abanye awubaboni nokuthi bakhona eclassini ubabona after a month or so after a term abanye kunokuphela iterm ungaz ukuthi umntana use classini lakho yabo.

The classes are overcrowded at this school, on my first day I went yoh! Yoh! In a class I have an average of 62 learners... classes are overcrowded. You only get to familiarise yourself with some learners after a month or so, others you can even go for a full term without even knowing they are in your class.

Teacher, Freedom Park, Gauteng, 2014



JOHANNESBURG

Johannesburg, my city.

Our city that is full of paved judas gold.

The good city that lies with dreams that comes here to die

Jo'burg, my city, here our birth is a lie.

We just rush to dies without living.

Just existing to keep the money belt spinning.

The walk of uncertainty swaggering to be in our city.

Our unrestricted hearts that treads the resolution of our city.

Jo'burg, my city, it mirrored with glass towers of the green
pastures of wealth that vaults with death.

Traffic flows in the sick vein of life as we tick with the external
time bomb of our city.

Only the wise come out winning and the rest feet first.

As pawns of evil hand or – aggressive city –

Jo'burg my city...

Bafana Khumalo

1. I want to have water
2. I want to have TV
3. I want to have Book
4. I want to have house
5. I want to have school Bag
6. I want to have pen
7. I want to have cup
8. I want to have bicycle

Zinhle Mbhedje



Listen to the voice of the reason

Listen to the voices

that are shouting out

Listen to what their saying

Their saying

stop.

Stop abusing

people emotionally, physically
and sexually

People are not animals.

Their human beings too.

Stop stabbing them with a needle

stop behaving like animals

you are people

thank you

Thapelo Motloun

Poems from 'We are the future reading club', 2012, Freedom Park

The global system has **marginalised** and **excluded** millions. Despite this, there are people, groups, organisations and communities all over the world doing many meaningful and valuable things *outside* of formal employment and learning spaces. These spaces have been created by ordinary people who refuse to give up and continue to show resilience and agency – people are showing strength and *doing* many things. They are involved in active struggle, mainly at the local level, and they work towards creating a truly democratic, **co-operative**, **sustainable**, just and community-focused world. And often, it is very hard to do this and it can even lead to injury or death.

These examples show us that people are doing things differently and often within hardship and struggle. They also show us that *possibilities for something better do exist*.



WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

marginalised	– pushed out
excluded	– left out/ignored
co-operative	– working together and not competing against each other
sustainable	– something that keeps going



a response
to the crisis

CLINGs (Community Literacy and Numeracy Groups)

The Community Literacy and Numeracy Groups are based in Freedom Park, Evaton North and Sebokeng (Kwa-Masiza Hostel) (Gauteng). The CLINGs were part of a five-year research project which has now ended (see more below). The Freedom Park and Evaton North CLINGs continue to work in their communities and a CLING was formed in Sebokeng after the research process ended. There is a newer fourth CLING in Evaton West which has connections to Evaton North. The CLINGs are small groups of concerned citizens from marginalised communities who are attempting to address educational failure through a focus on literacy and numeracy. The CLINGs may be small in size but their power should not be underestimated - we should not think that because they are small, they cannot make important changes. They act/‘do’ and push back against the failures they and their children are forced to live with. The CLINGs should be seen and understood as part of a larger effort to **reform** public education such as the students’ movement #feesmustfall and many others.



Evaton North facilitators receive stationery donated by Caring Women’s Forum



Freedom Park library and educational games



Children watering their vegetable garden,
Evaton North Reading Club

...sweeping national changes usually happen because people started organizing locally.

Collective action for social change, Page 288

Hope has never trickled down.
It has always sprung up.

Studs Terkel

EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Until I find
The little light:
Education.
The only answer.
Even if I can feel so happy
because I can smile,
nobody can fill the gap,
the gap that I have.

*Song by Julia Motentsheng Mamushi
(We are the future reading club, 2012)*



Grade 11 extra classes, Evaton North

The CLING Project started in 2006 (as part of the 3Rs Project - a research project into literacy and numeracy) in order to try to understand better and answer the question of why, despite moving state resource allocations (such as money) to schools **catering** for the predominantly 'black' poor, there had not been a significant improvement in the quality of education in these communities. The results from the Grade 3 and 6 numeracy and literacy **evaluations** showed that more than two-thirds of the learners failed to meet the required reading, writing and arithmetic levels (*Gauteng Department of Education, 2010*).

The CLING Project was based on an understanding that literacy is not just the process of learning the skills of reading and writing and maths, but a 'contribution to the liberation of man and his full development' (this comes from The Declaration of Persepolis, from the International Symposium for Literacy, held in Iran in 1975). This broader definition of literacy is about **critical consciousness**, participation in activities that lead to action and change for the better, and **emancipation**.

The CLING Project was located in five sites in the following provinces – Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Gauteng, and in both urban and rural communities. It was a multiple (many) case study aimed at understanding whether increased *community involvement* in schools could contribute to improved *literacy and numeracy* levels amongst children in primary schools. The research teams consisted of local community activists and Education Policy Consortium (EPC) researchers. Community Literacy and Numeracy Groups (CLINGs) were started in each of the sites by researchers – these groups are responsible for **enhancing** and supporting community mobilisation and participation in schooling and education through a focus on literacy and numeracy.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

reform	– fix/change/make better
catering	– providing
evaluations	– tests
critical consciousness	– awakening/awareness/knowing what is really going on and this often challenges power
emancipation	– true freedom/breaking from an oppressive system
enhancing	– increasing/making bigger

CLING is a **participatory action research** (PAR) project

- It is more than a method or way of doing something – it is a theory *in practice* in favour of the struggles of **oppressed** and marginalised groups (that is, it sides *with* the oppressed and marginalised). PAR is openly and clearly political in its position and in terms of whose interests it serves.
- It believes that those who have been oppressed and marginalised hold important *knowledge*. 'Outside' people (who may have degrees and may hold important positions) might actually know less than the people whose lives are affected by the issues - issues such as bad schooling, etc. PAR recognises that the people who are affected by the issues are the 'experts' in their knowledge of these issues, whether or not they have degrees, etc.
- It enables the people who are 'being researched' to *participate* as co-researchers. They *participate* in the entire process of the research from the construction of questions to the analysis of findings, etc.
- Besides emphasising participation, PAR also focuses on *action*. It tries to understand the world by attempting to *change* it, and it does this by working together (i.e. researchers and those affected by the issues who are co-researchers) and **reflecting** on what has happened.

This is how PAR has worked/works in CLING:

Project activities are **grounded** in an understanding of literacy and numeracy as **integral** to participatory citizenship and the development of democracy, and a recognition that the struggle for literacy and numeracy requires agency and active participation. In each location, community activists and EPC researchers **perform** community mapping and draw on local knowledge in order to raise awareness of the importance of literacy, and to mobilise community participation. Initially, the project focused on literacy and numeracy in schools, but this focus eventually **shifted** toward community spaces, leading to the establishment of shack libraries, afterschool classes, reading clubs and opportunities for adult basic education and early childhood development.

Community members have gained experience as producers of valuable knowledge, and an understanding of key structures and processes that **determine quality** of life. The project thus provides additional reason to insist that people in poor communities are capable of finding solutions to their problems, and that public policy should support them in using their knowledge, talents and skills to improve their lives.

From: Youth unemployment. Understanding causes and finding solutions. CERT booklet, page 24

The CLING Project can be explained as such:



The CLINGs are made up of researchers, facilitators and children from the various communities, supported by parents, teachers, some civil society organisations like non-governmental organisations (NGOs), some government and business people, other interested community members and the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) at the University of Johannesburg.

For a period of time, some funding was available for the project. Currently there is no funding and therefore the work is volunteer and **precarious**. Some of the community members have been volunteering for years. There are examples of facilitators who have left the CLING because they have found paying jobs. Some of these facilitators have returned to CLING when their jobs end (the majority of jobs are short-term/casual, such being the nature of the world of work).

Profile of a CLING facilitator:

- Mostly female
- All ages (some 'young', some 'older')
- Some without Matric (many study, attend short courses, workshops, etc)
- From the community where the learning happens.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

- oppressed** – dominated/controlled/ruled by others, such as men dominating women, 'whites' dominating 'blacks', rich people dominating poor people, etc
- reflecting** – thinking deeply about something
- grounded** – based/started
- integral** – very important/cannot do without it
- perform** – do
- shifted** – moved
- determine** – control/decide
- quality** – how good or bad something is
- precarious** – not certain, not secure – the work/job can stop at any time

DEMOCRACY is about:

active citizens who are aware of their rights and responsibilities; concerned about the welfare (well-being, health, safety) of others; take part in discussions and debates and are active ('do' things that strive for equality, justice and fairness)



How learning
happens



There are many theories (ideas) about learning and how it happens. Griff Foley (an adult educator) writes that he thinks the most interesting and **significant** learning occurs **informally** and **incidentally**, in people's everyday lives. And some of the most powerful learning happens as people struggle against oppression, as they struggle to make sense of what is happening to them and to work out ways of doing something about it. Learning within the CLINGs can be explained and understood in this way. People learn how to read and write, but also about *why* things are the way they are within their communities, and what they can do about these issues. Besides the *informal* and *incidental* learning, the CLINGs also participate in non-formal education (e.g. reading clubs; Kha Ri Gude Adult Mass Literacy Campaign) and formal education (e.g. **ETDP SETA** Level 5 Learnership in Development Practice).

The following diagram explains the differences between non-formal and formal education:

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION	FORMAL EDUCATION
Open to anyone – one's educational level does not matter.	Highly selective (only a few are chosen). Exclusionary (many are left out). Dependent on prior 'success' in educational terms (e.g. you have to pass one level in order to get to the next level).
<u>Content</u> (what you learn): Tends to be concrete (real). Connected to one's life and deals with real issues of concern. Changes if/when one's needs change.	<u>Content</u> : Based on a fixed body of compartmentalised (grouped according to so-called 'differences') knowledge which is more 'permanent' and less flexible. Impersonal and can be disconnected from the learner's life and needs (not connected to/has nothing to do with the learner's life/needs).
Knowledge and skills learnt can usually be applied (used) immediately.	Knowledge and skills learnt are usually to prepare one to use in the future
It is a continuing (ongoing) process. The learner can go back time and again for more. It is available in different forms.	Has a start and end point – it is terminal. The learner knows when s/he has finished. This is usually when s/he passes or fails some sort of assessment/test.
It is usually validated (measured) by the learner's experience of 'success'.	It is usually validated by external standards set by an educator or an external person or body (e.g. an exam).
It happens in a variety of settings within the community. It does not require a brick-and-mortar space.	The kind of building used is for one function – education. It is often 'outside' of the community or disconnected from it.

Adapted from: Rogers, A. 1992. *Adults learning for development*. London/New York and Reading: Cassell & Education for Development

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

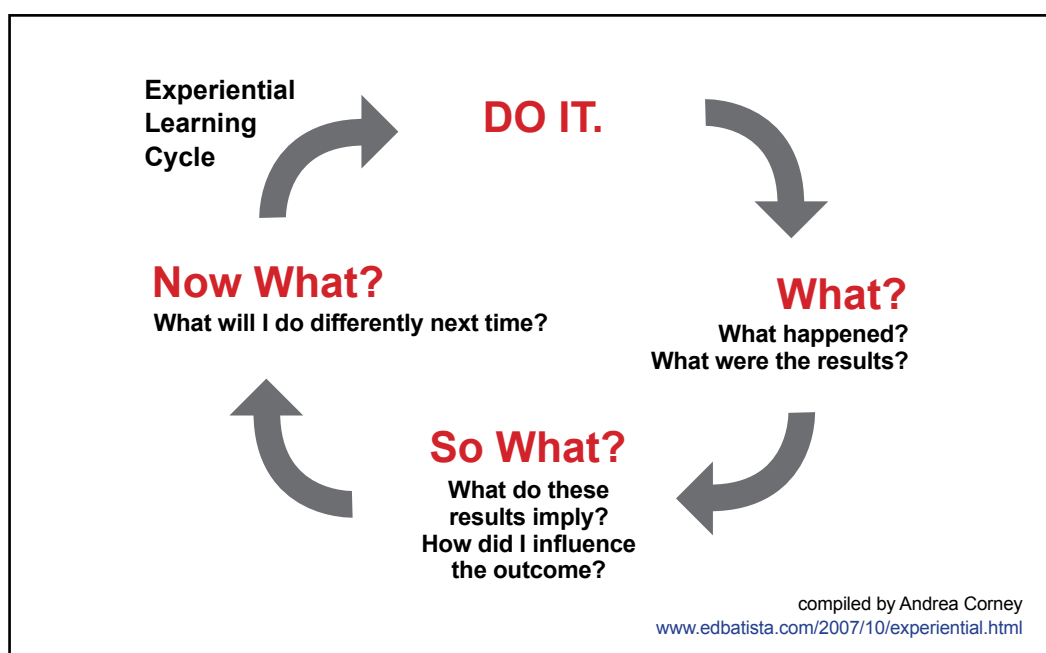
significant	– important
informally and incidentally	– the learning is not planned, like it is in a school. It just happens. Even though it 'just happens', it is valuable and meaningful learning
ETDP SETA	– Education Training Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
brick and mortar	– a formal building

CLING members meet regularly to discuss issues, reflect, and plan. In Freedom Park, the Abahlali group meet to discuss issues such as housing and land. In Sebokeng, the Working Class Coordinating Committee (Kwa-Masiza Hostel) meet to discuss issues affecting their community, particularly to do with poor service delivery. In these examples, learning is about the sharing of something (such as an issue or problem) that concerns self-organised members who are part of a specific context (for example a shared space/where people live). The members participate on an ongoing basis in order to deepen their knowledge about the issue or problem.

Learning is a *social* process (it is about more than one person) and knowledge is co-constructed (it is made *together*). It is not something given by an 'expert' to others who know nothing. Scholars such as Lave and Wenger (1991) call this a 'community of practice'.

The kind of learning that happens in a CLING space is not a once-off, like a workshop or a module at a university. It is a process (a cycle or spiral). Kolb and other scholars have written about this kind of learning and call it 'experiential learning'.

THIS IS HOW EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING HAPPENS:



- The learning starts with an *experience* of something concrete (real, happening).
- People/the learners then think about and discuss that experience – this is their *reflection*.
- People then link the experience with others who are experiencing something similar, and/or they link it with broader issues happening in the country and the world, and/or they link it with theories in order to make sense of and understand it better – this is their *analysis*.
- People act to try to change it – this is their *action*.

Learning within the CLING space happens as a result of direct participation in the events of life. It is learning related to struggle and it involves *action* - action is an integral part of the process of learning. This action can sometimes result in **victory** and sometimes in pain, suffering and loss. In February 2015 CLING held a protest in front of the gates of Freedom Park High School to demand sufficient and adequate education facilities and enough teachers for the newly-opened school. Learners were being squeezed into small classrooms with 90 learners to one educator! There was a shortage of textbooks, desks, chairs, and teachers. The Gauteng Department of Education responded to the protest and community demands – it hired 12 teachers and brought in eight mobile classrooms. This was a victory. Other demands still need to be met and so *the struggle (and learning) continues!*

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

victory – winning

Knowledge/theory (the ‘head’) is often separated from doing/practice (the ‘hands’) particularly in formal education. In non-formal learning spaces, such as with the CLINGs, these two parts are often inseparable. ‘Situated cognition’ is a theory that says that *knowing* cannot be separated from *doing*. It argues that all knowledge is *situated* or found in *activity* linked to social, cultural and physical contexts.

Very importantly, the kind of learning that happens in a CLING space is ‘transformative’. Everyone grows up with certain beliefs, values and **assumptions** and for many people they never question any of these, but rather just accept them as ‘the truth’. If you **critically reflect** on your beliefs, values, assumptions and way of seeing the world, you may change what you have always believed. If this happens, you undergo a *change or transformation*.

Over the years the CLINGs have managed to mobilise community members to support school reform and community education. With participation from community members, CLINGs put in place a number of

activities which support literacy and numeracy, including reading clubs, Saturday and afterschool classes, and libraries. The Evaton North CLING campaigned for, and succeeded in, setting up a shack library in the community.



Evaton West – read-aloud session

As shown by the CLING example, community participation in education is very important. Community members in poor and marginalised areas have much knowledge about their issues and are able to find solutions to their problems. They do it all the time, usually without much support or

resources. There needs to be more support and resources given to groups and initiatives like the CLINGs who are doing very good and important work – work which **highlights** the failings of an unfair system (in the CLING case, bad schooling for the poor).

The EPC research did not find scientific **evidence** to claim that the CLING project has made any impact in literacy and numeracy levels among the children (therefore one cannot say that literacy and numeracy have definitely improved). However, there is **anecdotal** evidence that says that learners who are part of the project generally perform better at school. Most parents are very happy with the role the CLINGs play.

Reasons why parents are happy with the CLINGs are:

- Poor and working class children often attend classes with too many children in them. In Freedom Park there is an average of 62 learners in a class and so it is almost impossible for a teacher to give as much attention to each child as s/he should.

The CLINGs provide this personal attention to the children.

- Some parents have little or no education themselves and cannot help their children with homework, some parents use drugs and alcohol and so cannot help their children as they should, while others work long hours and cannot always help their children because they get home late and have little or no time to assist with homework. A parent explains it as follows:

Umtanami ngumzekelo omhle ngoba ndiphangela ixesha elide, ndifike endlini ndikhathele, ndingakwazi nokunceda umtana ngomsebenzi wesikole, but ngoku noko ndiyabona inqubela phambili. Umsebenzi wakhe mhle and uwenza ndingamncedanga toe.

My child is a very good example, I work long hours and I cannot always help him with his school work because I'm always tired, but now even without my support I see an improved performance from him.

The CLINGs provide help and support to the children.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

assumptions	– things you think/believe to be true about something or about others
critically reflect	– think deeply about
highlights	– shows
evidence	– proof/something that says something is or is not
anecdotal	– something that someone may hear or experience but it is not proven (said to be definitely true) by facts

MOBILISATION is about:

a process of bringing people together so that they move to act.
It is usually associated with taking more immediate action while
'organising' is about building long-term capacity
(build size, ability, capability, etc) and power



THE CLINGS

The CLINGs are found in Freedom Park, Evaton North and Kwa-Masiza Hostel (Sebokeng). All areas share many similarities such as being poor and having high unemployment which affects the youth more and more every day. Residents who do have jobs are mostly not in permanent positions - they are precarious workers. In Freedom Park, some residents live off the dumping site nearby. In Evaton North, many unemployed females head their homes and do so using their children's social grant money. If they did not do this, they and their children would starve. Some residents (many of them youth) survive by gambling on street corners, robbing or selling drugs. There is no electricity, water supply or basic services to the Kwa-Masiza Hostel. There is also high illiteracy in all the areas.



FREEDOM PARK

Freedom Park is situated about 30 kilometres south of Johannesburg, close to Soweto. Freedom Park was set up as a result of informal settlements that sprung up around hostels that housed migrants working in the industrial area of Devland. Some backyard residents of Soweto also became part of the community. Since 1993 an increasing number of shack dwellers settled in the area. There were many struggles and resistance by community members against forced removals, and a steering committee was formed to **oversee** the development of Freedom Park. In 2000 the

first primary school was built and a second one in 2007. There is also now a high school in the area. After 2003 many RDP houses were constructed and Freedom Park is now recognised as a formal township.



EVATON NORTH

Evaton North is situated next to Evaton, a township north of Sebokeng in the Emfuleni region. It is about 40 kilometres from Johannesburg. It is an under-developed area with two primary schools, two high schools and one clinic. There is a combination of houses and shacks in the area.



KWA-MASIZA HOSTEL (SEBOKENG)

In 1977 the Iscor Hostel became the Kwa-Masiza Hostel – it housed Iscor employees (Iskor is now ArcelorMittal). After 1994, the hostel was opened to women and children as residents as they came to join their husbands and fathers. Many workers who live there got retrenched and faced eviction struggles. The number of residents at the hostel is less now than before – about 2 000 people live there (at one point there were about 6 000). A reason for this includes new RDP housing in and around Sebokeng, especially in Golden Gardens, which some people have moved to.

Another reason is the sanitation problem in Kwa-Masiza - sewage and water (from damaged pipes) runs around the hostel. This is a health risk.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CLINGs

FREEDOM PARK

In 2007 a community researcher, who was part of the EPC, began working with various interested groups/ organisations like schools, civil society groups, political parties, churches, government departments and businesses to bring the EPC project to the community of Freedom Park. In 2009 CLING was formally **launched**. The CLING has faced many difficulties, including **tensions** and **conflict** within the group because of the various members' political affiliations (i.e. members belonged to different political parties and could not always agree with each other). The project stopped between September 2009 and May 2010. In 2012 a group of mainly female youth **revived** the project. The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) through an Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) centre in the community made available stipends for CLING facilitators. However, the **stipends** lasted for a period of time only and were then stopped because they were 'for adult literacy only'. The facilitators became unpaid volunteers once again.

At first the Freedom Park CLING project worked with Grade R to Grade 9 learners. The project grew to include Freedom Park High School and adults. In 2012, CLING with the help of EPC researchers, produced a booklet titled 'We are the future reading club'.

This booklet contains the work of primary and high school learners and facilitators who are part of the CLING (some of this work can be found on pages 6 and 10 above). The Freedom Park library is housed within a container.

EVATON NORTH

In 2006 an Evaton North community activist, who was mapping the area, was directed to a crèche and then, through this crèche, to two more. Involvement of educators working in Early Childhood Development (ECD) is very important in helping with the growth and development of children's literacy and numeracy. Many meetings with other interested community members followed and the CLING was started with 15 people. The CLING soon found out that community members were struggling with not having a library in the area and it campaigned

for and succeeded in setting up a shack library which was formally launched on the 16 August 2008 at Magasela Primary School. The library is open to all community members. The CLING has designed different programmes to **engage** various groups, local schools, community-based organisations and institutions in and around Evaton North. These programmes focus on the community's educational needs and socio-economic issues facing community members.



KWA-MASIZA

In 2003, following evictions of retrenched workers at Kwa-Masiza Hostel, residents formed a structure called the Working Class Coordinating Committee (WCCC). The committee was involved in retrenched workers' rights, worker and adult education. In 2005 the ABET programme (which started in 2003) ended because of issues to do with stipends. The WCCC then set up an informal library in the hostel. In 2012, the WCCC, with the assistance of CERT, started a reading club and another CLING was formed! The idea of a reading club was to promote a culture of reading and to improve literacy levels in the community and surrounding areas. Ten facilitators volunteered at the time and used containers as their 'school'.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

oversee	– manage
launched	– started
tension and conflict	– not easy/not getting on/arguing/disagreeing
revived	– started again
stipends	– wages/money
engage	– involve

ORGANISATION is about:

building collective power and developing leaders who can sustain that power over the long-term. It is about holding people together who have gone beyond their differences to meet on equal terms and who work together towards a shared vision of how things should be



Evaton West library

CLING ACTIVITIES

As explained in Part Three (*How learning happens*), the education and learning that happens in a CLING space is non-formal and informal. There is no syllabus to follow and no outcomes to meet and be assessed. The education is responsive to what community members (adults and children) want and need. It is based on their issues and concerns, such as the Abahlali group who meet in Freedom Park to reflect on and discuss issues such as housing and land, and the WCCC who meet to discuss issues to do with workers' rights and other issues affecting their community (Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Sebokeng).

Numerous educational activities which involve both adults and children of all ages happen on a daily basis with all the CLINGs. Activities at each site vary. The kinds of activities include the following:

Libraries – all CLINGs have made their own libraries. In Freedom Park and Kwa-Masiza these are housed in containers. In Evaton North the library was in a shack and is now in a renovated change room in a stadium. Books have been and continue to get donated. Community and school libraries are very important for all CLINGs and they work to promote and campaign for this. According to Equal Education, only 8% of public schools in South Africa have functional libraries. These are almost entirely found in former model C schools. Approximately 20 000 schools are *without* libraries.

Homework Club – this happens after school and allows for learners to get more personalised attention (one-on-one) as they attend schools with overcrowded classes. It also helps those learners whose parents/caregivers are unable to assist them with their homework. Matric learners have also benefitted from the Homework Clubs.

Mina into endiyithandayo ngale project ukuba abantwana bethu ba ba-keep(a) busy, abahambi estratweni, uma bebuya eskoleni bazabenzela ama homeworks, nam andisasokoli apha endlini ukuthi ndenzele abantwana ama homeworks, bayancedakala, enye nenye bayanceda kuyo, yiyona nto endiyibonayo ukuthi ibetere ngayo le project.

What I like about the project is that it keeps our children busy, they don't roam around. When they come back from school it helps them with their homework even I no longer struggle to help my kids with homeworks because the project helps them.

Parent, Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014

Reading Club – this happens after school and on Saturday mornings. It not only helps learners with their reading, writing and **creativity** skills (children are encouraged to make up their *own* stories which helps to build **confidence**), but also promotes reading as *enjoyment*. Many children (and teachers) do not think that reading is something to be enjoyed. The Reading Club makes sure that children learn that reading can be and is fun! Children are divided into groups according to ages and they read stories and poetry, listen to stories, write, draw, sing, dance and play educational games.



Evaton North Reading Club – outdoor games



Evaton North Reading Club – drawings

- Firstly njengoba sikulemeko esikuyo, kulilungelo ukuba abantwana bafumane i-education beselula,
- ngoba le nansika le CLING elapha njengoba ise i-turn(e) ya indawo apho kufundiswelwa abantwana
- kuyo, abantwana abase lula, a taker a part or on behalf of ama-creches because apha ngaphakathi
- asinayo i-creche, so we are happy ngayo into yokubana mayibekhona so that a broad knowledge
- kubantwana abancane ibekhona, bathi besiya kuma creches okanye to standards ezithile njengo Sub
- A nezinye izi-tandard babe bene knowledge ethile abayifumeneyo it will help us a lot.
- *Firstly, as we are in this situation we are in, it's the child's right to get an education at an early age,*
- *because this thing, I mean this CLING as it has turned to a place to teach young children takes a part*
- *on behalf of crèches because here inside we do not have a crèche. So we are happy that it is here*
- *so that a broad knowledge to young children is there so that when they go to crèches or to certain*
- *standards, such as Sub A or other standards, there should be some knowledge that they should have*
- *received. It will help us a lot.*
- Community member and ex-councillor, Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014

Social problems are often picked up by facilitators at the Homework or Reading Clubs and they then try to assist the child(ren) as much as possible. So these clubs play an important role in this way too.

At any one time there are between 40 – 70 children present at the Homework and Reading Clubs. The number does not remain the same because children come and go and there are many reasons for this, such as in Sebokeng - the move of many residents from the Kwa-Masiza Hostel to Golden Gardens has made the distance to get to the hostel (Reading Club, etc) too far.

ECD Outreach – CLING has partnered with Nal'ibali – a national reading-for-enjoyment campaign with a focus on storytelling. Children of all ages need to read or be read to, including very young children and babies.

Adult Education classes – the Government's Mass Literacy Campaign - Kha Ri Gude.

There are many other activities that the CLINGs have been and are involved in, such as activities to do with arts and culture, crocheting and knitting, food gardening, physical exercises, toy libraries, etc.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

creativity – imagination/something you make up in your mind

confidence – feeling more sure of yourself/not shy

ACTIVISM is about:
some form of action/doing
fighting for the values in which one believes. It is central to community mobilisation,
organising and participation

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

There are many issues and problems that the CLINGs face, such as:

LACK OF ADEQUATE LEARNING SPACE AND RESOURCES

An 11 year old learner who attends the Kwa-Masiza Reading Club describes the club as such:

Umehluko kule reading club endikuyo kunezinto esifanele sizilungise ngaphambili kule reading club ndandikuyo kwakulungisiwe, ndafika sekwenziwe kwanto, sasindaweni ephephileyo, so nalena ndicinga ingalungiswa sibe sendaweni ephephileyo ngoba nendawo esihlala kuzo azilunganga, zindawo ezifanele ziqale zilungiswe, si paint(e), nditsho iincwadi zona zikhona asizidingi namaphepha nepeni, asizidingi kakhulu into esiyidingayo kakhulu kukulungiselwa isikole ne tafile nezitulo.

The difference in the reading club I am currently in and the previous one is that the current one has things that need to be fixed. The previous reading club I was attending I found things fixed, the place was safe. I think even this place can be fixed so we can be in a safe place. Even where we sit is no good. It's a place that we need to fix, paint. Problems are there. We don't really need papers and pens. What we really need is fixing of the school, tables and chairs.

Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014

All three CLINGs operate from inadequate spaces. In Freedom Park and at the Kwa-Masiza Hostel, the 'working and learning spaces' are containers and in Evaton North it was a shack and is now a renovated change room. None of the structures have electricity. The containers do not have water or toilets.

A Freedom Park facilitator describes it as such:

Zininzi iingxaki ezisijongileyo. Asinanxaso mali yokuqhuba inqubo zethu. Asinazindawo zangasese kwakunye namanzi acocekileyo wokusela. Sixhomekeke kubamelwane ngamanzi. Indawo yethu incinci ngoba ikwalilo nethala lencwadi ngelilixa ililo negumbi lokufundela.

There are a lot of challenges. We do not have financial support to run our programmes. We don't have toilets and access to water. We rely on our neighbour for water. Our place is small since we operate from a container. One part is used as a library yet we still have to work from there. There is no privacy.

Freedom Park, Gauteng, 2014

In the three sites the spaces are too small for all participants to fit comfortably and the containers are hot in summer and cold in winter. The hostel containers do not have chairs or tables and they are shared by others (such as a church group) which sometimes causes a problem if classes/meetings/gatherings happen at the same time.

A Kwa-Masiza facilitator describes the containers as follows:

Singama facilitator khona siyazama ngoba siya cleaner but kuyafana ku-useless uku cleaner kwethu ngoba indawo esisebenzela kuyo ivulekile nje, nabani uyazingenela enze into afuna ukuyenza, nomnye alahle amaphepha, so noba singenzani akusiyindawo yethu kahle hle ngoba ayi owner sithi sodwa, nomnye nomnye ofuna ukungena uyazingenela, so noba singathi siyazama ukuba si cleane kuyafana akho nto ezawutshintsha ngoba nefestile azikho zirhobhokile.

As facilitators we try but it remains the same. It's useless because the place is open, anybody can enter, one would throw papers around, so no matter what we do this place is not ours because it's not owned only by us. Anybody who wants to get in gets in so even if we can try to clean it will not change because the windows are broken.

Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014

Many learners need to look up things on the Internet, print documents and make copies of things and none of the CLINGs have these facilities. In this 'age of technology', **insufficient** resources, like computers, make it difficult for the CLINGs to help.

NO STIPENDS FOR VOLUNTEER FACILITATORS

Siya volontiya futhi asirholi. Noma sizama uku-rikrutha amavolontiya amatsha bagcina beyekile nabo ngoba akunamuntu ofuna ukusenza angarholi. Last of last year sasina namavolontiya ayi- twenty something manje sinamavolontiya ahu seven asele. Abantu abafuni ukuvolontiya bese bangatholi mali.

We are volunteers and we do not get paid. In as much as we try to recruit new volunteers we end up losing them because of these challenges. Last of last year we had 20 something volunteers now we only have seven left. People just don't want to volunteer without getting stipends.

Facilitator, Freedom Park, Gauteng, 2014

It is very difficult to keep volunteering for years without any form of pay and so, if a paying job comes about, a facilitator usually takes it. Often the facilitators return to CLING as the jobs may be short-term. This could **indicate** a strong commitment to the CLING work.

HUNGER/NO FEEDING SCHEME

Abantwana abaninzi babuya esikolweni belambile. Ngokomthetho kufuneka batye khonukuze bakwazi ukuzinza nokucinga. Kodwa ngoba singena nxaso sizifumana kulontlungu yokuzama ukunceda abantwana noba sibona ukuba balambile.

Most of the children come directly from school and they are usually hungry by the time they get here. Ideally we would have wanted to give them something to eat but we are forced to teach them on empty stomachs which affects their concentration levels. As facilitators we find ourselves hopeless since we cannot even offer them a snack to get them to concentrate again.

Facilitator, Freedom Park, Gauteng, 2014

i-challenges esinazo, we need i-intervention ka government in order to help abantwana bethu bakwazi into yokubana imfundo yabo ithuthuke. Xa ndisitsho njalo, kufanele ukuba kube ne supply-ment, yantoni? Yencwadi, kube ne supply-ment ya ntoni? Bakwazwi into yokubana i-feeding scheme yabantwana.

A challenge is that there must be government intervention. Government must supply books. They must also provide a feeding scheme so that the children can fully concentrate.

Community member, Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014

CLING facilitators have used their own money to buy refreshments (e.g. fruit and juice) for the children. Of course this is very difficult to do if you are not earning your own money. Freedom Park facilitators used some of their stipend money (which they no longer get) to buy refreshments for the children.

NOT ENOUGH SUPPORT

Support does not always mean monetary support but money/funding is very important for any project or programme. Over the years, the CLINGs have had working relationships and continue to have relationships with nearby school staff, civil society groups like NGOs, government people, business people and others. These relationships have sometimes been short-lived for various reasons, such as teachers leaving schools and being replaced by new teachers who do not know anything about the CLING. The Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) at the University of Johannesburg has had a long-term working relationship with the CLINGs and it continues to provide support (for example, CLING members attend CERT workshops; some CLING members were part of the Emerging Voices II Youth Research Learning Advocacy (YRLA) team (a project of the EPC looking at the post-school sector). Participants undertook research and attended writing workshops. Some of their writing has featured in the EV2 News (an EPC/CERT newsletter).

The CLINGs operate under difficult conditions which are mainly to do with not having money for resources as described above. Despite these difficult conditions, teaching and learning happens!

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

insufficient – not enough

indicate – show

RESILIENCE AND AGENCY are about:

the responses, coping strategies, strengths and actions of community members to their own felt problems and contexts. The ability of communities and individuals to engage in autonomously (independently/by themselves) generated activities to attempt to change and/or change the objective conditions in which they find themselves
- even though they might not do so with complete freedom

PLANS, HOPES AND DREAMS

The CLINGs have many plans, hopes and dreams, which include the following:

FREEDOM PARK

To:

- train community researchers to research livelihoods in Freedom Park
- do a refresher workshop on REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques). REFLECT is an approach to adult learning and social change
- secure stipends for about ten community educators
- start a feeding scheme for the afternoon classes
- set up food co-operatives
- have training on business management
- organise more cultural events to share its cultural activities such as drama, poetry, hip-hop, dance, etc.

EVATON NORTH

To:

- get a site with containers to be used as an working and learning space
- register facilitators for various courses to further develop their knowledge and skills
- open a skills centre where people can learn things such as baking and organic food gardening with a view to forming co-operatives; can complete Matric, etc
- start arts and cultural activities for children and outdoor activities
- develop a programme for those who fall within the NEET (not in education, employment, or training) group
- start a feeding scheme or soup kitchen with a focus on good nutrition
- start a community newsletter
- develop a shared-reading programme for children on the local community radio station
- source funding and donations (this CLING is a registered NPO).

KWA-MASIZA HOSTEL

To:

- recruit more facilitators
- register as a non-profit organisation (NPO). After registering as an NPO, it plans to fundraise for a bigger space, feeding scheme for the children, stationery, reading materials and stipends
- host an open day 'story-telling' event. It will invite parents, community-based organisations, NGOs, school staff, churches, education authorities and officials, and other interested groups and people. The event will serve as a marketing event and will welcome discussion and dialogue
- engage with the Department of Education in order to try to establish a joint literacy and numeracy programme in and around the Vaal
- engage more with local government to ensure that it gets local government's full support when it comes to issues of importance and common interest
- increase literacy levels in and around Kwa-Masiza by 50% by 2018. It is not only concerned about the children of Kwa-Masiza, but also of those in surrounding communities - it plans to have a working and learning space at a central place which other community members can also easily access.



What can we learn from
the CLINGs and what do
the CLINGs need?

What can we learn from the CLINGs?

From CLINGs, we have learned that:

- the kind of education is different to mainstream **institution**-based education in its purpose, what it is that is learned, and how it is learned. It is about the interests, issues and concerns of the community members. It is non-formal and informal, although sometimes it **intersects** with the formal (such as the ETDP SETA Level 5 Learnership in Development Practice which some CLING facilitators completed and in the many ways it helps children with their schoolwork). In South Africa, this kind of education is not valued as much as formal education is. Yet it is often more meaningful, relevant to learners' lives and of better quality than formal education.
- community participation in education is very important. Community members have knowledge about their own issues and they act to do something about the issues and to bring about change for the better. It makes sense for there to be active involvement of those closest to the issue or problem. There is more power and more 'voice' in a group than individually and more chance that things can change. Mobilising and organising are about *getting together* to work for the *common* good – it is anti-individual.
- good education/learning does not have to happen in a 'brick and mortar' place. It can and does happen in many different spaces and CLING is an example of one such space. Education/learning happens within the community, at the grassroots - it is deeply **intertwined** with and responsive to the issues and struggles that community members face. Learning within a CLING space is a good example of a 'college without a wall' – which is different to the government's idea of a Community College – which is a building similar to a Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college. The CLING allows us to imagine something different.
- community educators should be recognised, as they were for a short time in Freedom Park by the GDE in the form of stipends. In South Africa and elsewhere, there is much emphasis on professionalising all educators, but there are many examples (such as with the CLING) of educators and facilitators who have many years of experience (and some may also have certificates) who practise good quality teaching. This should be valued and recognised.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS MEAN?

institution	– like a school or a university
intersects	– meets/crosses
intertwined	– connected to/not separate from



PARTICIPATION is about:
people's involvement in what affects them by them
being able to influence control of initiatives (like a
project), decisions and resources (like money)

Evaton North Emergency Medical Services Campaign, 18 July 2014

What do the CLINGs need?

Government support is needed and it should be ongoing. It should come without the usual red tape and bureaucracy (official processes/paperwork/forms/documents - that often slow things down). Policies that value community education and participation should support this kind of work and resources should be available in order for the work to be done without hardship and struggle. No one should have to fight for water and a toilet.

Urhulumente makawuthathele ingqalelo umsebenzi esiwenzayo negalelo lwethu ekuphuhliseni intlalo- ntle yoluntu. Akunamfuneko yokumbongoza kulento, kufuneka abaze amehlo azibonele ngokwakhe lendima enyusa umgangatho wempilo. Uyakuthi akubaza amehlo abone intlungu yokungabinakut- ya, yokuxinana kumagumbi amancinci, nemfuneko yezakhiwo eziphangaleleyo. Akukho sempilweni ukubona ingxinano yabantwana kumagumbi amancinci. Amagosa ka Rhulumente kufuneka aqonde ubunzima bomntana ophuma endlini ekuseni, abesesikolweni imini yonke, emva koko aye nqo kwi CLING angakhange wabe kanti uyatya. Kufuneka sibaxelele ngezinzima, mhlazane bandwendwela imisebenzi yethu.

The government must recognise the work that we do and the role we play in improving lives. We do not need to approach them for this, they need to come out and see for themselves. They will obviously see that we are short of food, that we need bigger space. It is not healthy to keep children crammed up like this. Government officials will see for themselves that no child can be expected to leave home at 8am to go to school and spend the whole day at school, then after school come straight to the centre and knock off at 4pm still without any food. If government officials visited us, we need not tell them of these challenges, they will see for themselves.

Parents, teachers, CLING facilitators and community leaders, Freedom Park, Gauteng, 2014

Yabona abantwana abakwazi kufunda nokubhala kulapho ke i CLING ingena khona ngamafutshane senza into ibifanele ukwenziwa ngurhulumente ngoba kaloku otishala abaqwalaseli bonke abantwana ingakumbi abo bathatha kade, thina ke kwi CLING sijongana nabo bonke abantwana, yiyo lonto ndicinga ukuba u Rhulumente makaxhase i CLING nangemali ukwandisa umsebenzi ufikelele kumphakathi wonke.

You see these children cannot read or write until CLING comes in so basically CLING is playing a role that the government should be playing because while remedial teachers concentrate on helping only one child, a child who has problems, CLING helps all children regardless of their capabilities, so I feel the government should give them funds to expand their project.

SGB member, Freedom Park, Gauteng, 2014

Mandicacise ngokufutshane nje ndingazulisi, yonanto esiyindingayo eyokuba uRhulumente angenelele asincede apho sidinga khona uncdo.

Put very clearly, simply and to the point - this is what is needed: That's what we need, government intervention so that it can assist where assistance is needed.

Community member, Kwa-Masiza Hostel, Gauteng, 2014



Local Economic Development (LED) workshop in Freedom Park organised by CLING and CERT

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Evaton North
Freedom
Park
CLING
West
Kwa-Masiza
EN
EW
KM
FP



DE-RACIALISATION DID NOT CHANGE THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOL SYSTEM.

80% of parents in the 'bottom' part of the labour market send their children to so-called 'free' schools. These schools are more likely to be dysfunctional for various reasons such as a shortage of teachers and over-crowding in classrooms, broken infrastructure, not enough resources, etc.

By the time a child is nine, one can predict what her/his life chances are.

50% of 18-24 year olds in South Africa are unemployed. Your chances of landing in this group are high if you were

born into poverty, including attending a 'dysfunctional' school. It is predictive (that is, you can tell from early on that it is likely to happen) and has nothing to do with one's abilities or capabilities. 'Social mobility' applies to very few.

51% of children with four years of schooling in South Africa are illiterate in their Mother Tongue.

500 000 learners drop out by Grade 10.

Education for the majority of children is about - 'just functioning and getting by'.



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 Centre for Education Rights and Transformation	CERT The Centre for Education Rights and Transformation at the University of Johannesburg
 Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University FOR TRANSFORM	CIPSET The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
 NELSON MANDELA INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	NMI The Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development at the University of Fort Hare
 real CENTRE FOR RESEARCHING EDUCATION AND LABOUR	REAL The Centre for Researching Education and Labour at the University of the Witwatersrand
 Education Policy Consortium TRANSFORMING EDUCATION	EPC EPC Education Policy Consortium