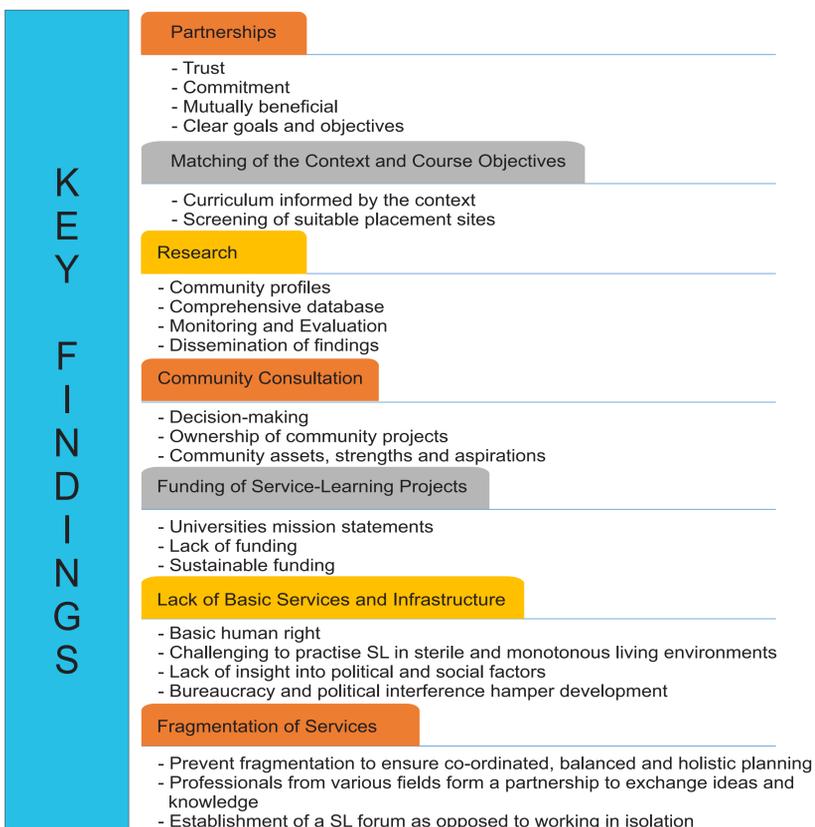
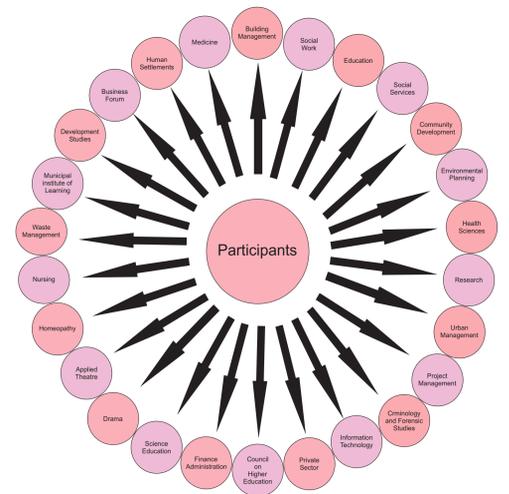
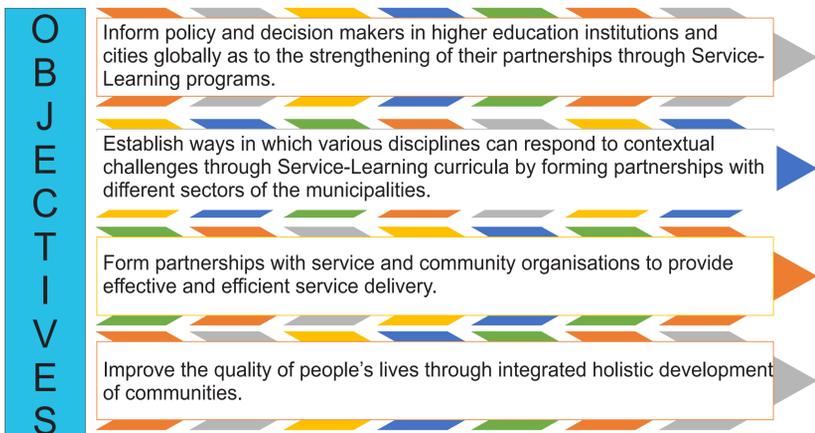


- Bisini Naidoo is a PhD candidate at the University of South Africa. Her doctoral study focuses on: *“Multidisciplinary Partnerships between Higher Education Institutions and Learning Cities through Service-Learning Programmes”*.
- Bisini has widespread multi-sectoral networking and research experience in urban, rural and deep-rural contexts. Her academic experience includes community development and other methods of social work practice.
- Bisini has an interest in the integrated development of communities and believes that through Service-Learning, collaborative partnerships with learning cities can foster societal transformation.

Introduction

- Policy and legislation in South Africa together with its commitment to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) aim to ensure that all South Africans attain a decent standard of living through the elimination of poverty and the reduction of inequality.
- In responding to the social injustices and contextual issues, South Africa has adopted a social developmental approach, with policy promoting human rights and an integrated service delivery model.
- Traditionally, university-learning in South Africa was classroom-based. Through the political transformation process of addressing the social injustices of the apartheid legacy came the introduction of mandated Service-Learning (SL) programmes, a pedagogical strategy that links students with communities through the academic curriculum. SL partnerships thus serves as a vehicle through which higher education institutions are committed to connecting with their surrounding communities, thereby responding to contextual challenges.
- Higher education through their SL programmes, and learning cities, share key features of the SDG's. However, there is no framework for developing and strengthening collaborative partnerships between higher education institutions and cities in order to achieve these goals.

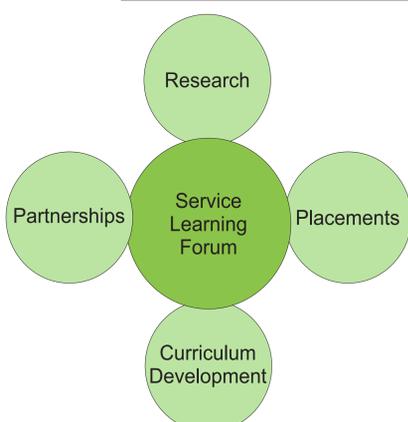


GLOBAL IMPERATIVES

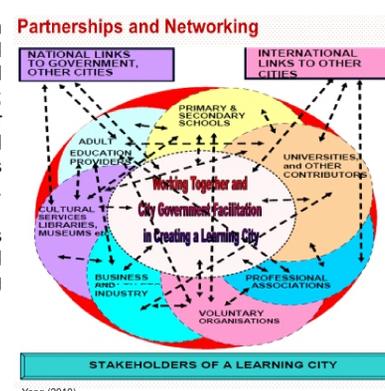
Sustainable Cities and Communities	- Inform participatory approaches in integrating economic, sectoral, social, environmental and fiscal strategies - Manage urban migration - Ensure balanced urban planning across communities to provide growth, equality and empowerment
Good Health and Well-Being	- Creation of healthy cities - Quality of life improved through a developmental approach
Quality Education	- Promote learning from basic to higher education - Enhance quality and excellence in learning - Use modern learning technologies - Foster a culture of life-long learning and revitalise learning in families and communities
Clean Water and Sanitation	- Access to basic services such as clean water and sanitation as an integral part of the planning and implementation of human settlements
Decent Work and Economic Growth	- Access to employment opportunities - Conducive working conditions is an integral part of the development of learning cities
Reduced Inequalities	Guided by the Social Justice Theory: - Address the imbalances of the past through the inclusion of marginalised communities in decisions on matters that affect them - Ensure an equitable distribution of resources
Partnership and Goal	Enable South Africa to engage globally and strengthen international partnerships through close alignment with: - Talloires Network on Service-Learning - PASCAL for the promotion of Learning Cities

Conclusion

- The concept ENGAGEMENT emerged very strongly as a recommendation from the findings of the study.
- Learning city strategies, as well as SL objectives, address the most immediate issues of high unemployment, social deprivation and other socio-economic challenges.
- The building of social capital through collaboration is vital.
- A multi-stakeholder Service-Learning Forum (SLF) formed with development agents from university sites, service and community partners.



- Universities contribute to the creation of learning cities through commissioned research; participation in meaningful partnerships with various stakeholders; encourage students and staff to volunteer their skills, creativity and knowledge; and make university facilities and resources available for learning city initiatives.
- University-government partnerships improve community services and provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment for students.



- University curricula must be relevant to contribute to the transformation of society by producing graduates who can make a contribution beyond their respective academic disciplines, thereby playing a major role in the advancement of communities.
- In meeting the global challenge higher education institutions should offer support to all structures of society, in order to foster learning city initiatives, through the formation of multidisciplinary SL partnerships.

References

Yang, J. (2010). Building learning cities as a strategy for promoting lifelong learning. Pilot Workshop on Developing Capacity for Establishing Lifelong Learning systems in UNESCO Member states 22 November - 3 December 2010, Hamburg, Germany. Retrieved on 14 February 2015 from http://uil.unesco.org/fileadmin/workshops/en/pilot_cb/pres_ref/Day%2005/2.%20jin%20Yang.pdf