



About This Action Learning Circle Kit. It is aimed at assisting communities' especially **rural** and remote areas, both nationally and internationally, to respond positively and practically to the challenges of globalisation by generating working and learning opportunities for people, particularly for marginalised youth and mature workers.

With increasing layoffs, globalisation, downsizing and the rural crisis, the following question is often asked: What can my community and I (little old me) do to help provide our youth and others needing to improve their incomes with local employment opportunities? With over half of the world's biggest economic entities no longer nation states, and with unemployment and underemployment endemic in many regional areas of Australia, new ways of working, and better ways of generating jobs are urgently needed. The learning circle adopts a practical self-help learning and action-based approach aimed at local economic systems development.

The learning circle comprises five topics. The questions below indicate the contents of each topic:

- Do you want to unlock what happens in our community economy so that you can help create (l)earning, that is, economic options for our, and our children's future? While you do an analysis of [y]our community economy this topic guides you through a process involving "what", "who", "when" and "where", to lead to community economic action. This topic takes a broad-brush approach to look at your community and what it comprises. See the Topic: **Unlocking Our Community Economy**
- Do you want to understand a community or local economy as a whole system? Do you may want to consider the "what" and "why" of your involvement with developing your community and its economy? This topic will help you to develop an understanding of some of the theoretical background to the Community Economic Development approach and how it applies to your own perspective. See the Topic: **Understanding Community Economic Development?**

- Do you want to have a go at building your role as a community entrepreneur and, in doing so, helping yourself and your community develop to be ready, willing and able to undertake community economic development actions? This topic concentrates on the “who” and “what” of developing economic action. It starts with yourself, builds to a collective learning circle perspective and then returns to you and the others who will take the actions you choose. See the Topic: **Building Our Entrepreneurial Community Economy**
- Do you want to find out how to fertilise your community’s ‘innovation’ soil, that is, “where” to plant and grow your community economic development plants? Understanding and being able to implement innovation processes is crucial for communities to develop actions that are at the cutting edge. Once fertile soil has been identified, you will need to find out how to prepare and care for the soil, select your tools and plant and nurture your crop in order to obtain a harvest. Community Economic Development actions, therefore, need to link with your personal and collective community needs today and for your children tomorrow. See the topic: **Developing Our Innovative Community Economy**
- **Do you want development and that is also ‘sustainable’?** This topic leads you to identify sustainability issues and assess possible actions to implement sustainable community economic development. It also provides an introduction to the Triple Bottom Line of economic, social and environmental sustainability and other dimensions of sustainability. See the topic: **Sustaining Our Community Economy**

Would you like to be involved?

A learning circle (up to 12 people) will generally meet at least each fortnight for a few months usually at a member’s house or a community setting. Actions are generally discussed and undertaken between meetings. Meeting facilitation is at the discretion of the group and can be one person or can change from meeting to meeting. Generally members commit to 6-8 meetings and associated actions.

Becoming involved could include being a critical friend, organising and running an action-learning circle, supporting or mentoring others interested in conducting a learning circle, and/or helping to promote and distribute the kits.

What does this Action Learning Circle publication entail?

The Learning Circle is published as a CD ROM with an introductory booklet. All materials are in ready to access and use format either as .pdf or .doc files. An internet connection is not required, however, the resource materials on the CD do include key web sites that can be accessed by the internet. In specific situations, upon request, the Learning Circle can be provided in hardcopy form.

Aimed at the Economic Bush Mechanic in all of us each topic (as described above) comprises 3 documents; the:

- (1) Topic Guide that leads the group through the process of learning, developing actions and implementation plans,
- (2) Background Information that provides extra supporting information to group participants who want more in depth perspectives, and
- (3) Record of Outcomes, Learning & Actions that provides a format to help the group keep records.

The Action Learning Circle kit is supplemented by further papers and materials. These are:

- **40 Steps to creating your prosperous small enterprise** (a workbook) by Paul Wildman
- **Community participation** strategies by Wendy Sarkissian
- Conducting a **Community Learning and Training Needs Assessment** by Paul Wildman & Helen Schwencke
- **Problem Solving & Decision-making Toolbox** by Paul Wildman & Jon Warner
- Building Capacities for Community Economic Development through **Community Transformation** by Rick Smyre 10pgs.
- Positive Community Futures through **Action Foresight**: a step-by-step approach by Jose Ramos 13pgs.
- **Local Government As A Proactive Partner In Community Economic Development?** by Jill Jordan 15pgs.
- Making Community Economic Development Plans Work through **Communities of Practice** by Richard Coutts and David Milstein 22pgs.

Bibliographic details: CD by: Paul Wildman & Helen Schwencke: revised edition 2008 (first edition 2003) published by: **Prosperity Press** paul@kalgrove.com (Paul Wildman) PO 73 Northgate Brisbane 4013 and **Community Learning Initiatives Inc.** cla@dovenetq.net.au (Helen Schwencke)

Contact details: For information about the contents please phone: 61-7-3266-7570 Mobile: 0412-027-818 (Paul Wildman paul@kalgrove.com) or Helen Schwencke on 07 3844 8069. Evaluation copies of some topics will be available by email from Community Learning Initiatives Inc.. email: cla@dovenetq.net.au , ph: +67 7 3844 8069

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