

# What's the fourth sector up to?

## A fuzzy view of the ACE sector in Auckland, 2004

*A report prepared for the Auckland Adult Education Sector (ACE) and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) – October, 2004*

### TEN KEY FEATURES OF LIFELONG LEARNING

A pre-eminent education system that optimises lifelong learning will, through quality continuing education, recurrent training and community education activities and processes, provide relevant ongoing vocational training programmes and continuously accessible open and flexible learning opportunities. Key features of such a system will ideally include the following:

1. Professional guidance for communities of learners to identify their own education needs;
2. Recognition of prior learning - that is - valuing and giving credit to the reservoir of previous relevant learning experiences inherent in all adult learners;
3. Provision of new programmes and courses to cater for hitherto unrecognised learning needs;
4. Provision of open and flexible learning opportunities and course structures which allow learners access to non-traditional approaches and subject combinations;
5. Right of access to all learning opportunities and all learning providers with positive discrimination provision to ensure equality of learning opportunities for disadvantaged groups - women, ethnic minority groups, the unemployed, the disabled and the isolated;
6. Sharing responsibility for curriculum design, assessment and maintenance of standards with communities of interest including learners, industries and programme facilitators;
7. Redistribution of power and control - the devolution of decision making power from a central providing agency to local communities of learners in partnership with providers of learning opportunities;
8. Recognition by those involved in the provision of lifelong learning that they have to change in order to meet new responsibilities - especially those associated with accommodating to changing societal, technological and economic circumstances;
9. Provision of realistic levels of funding in order that effective long term planning and harnessing of new technology can lead to the most effective use of available resources to provide optimal learning experiences;
10. Deliberate inclusion of formative and summative evaluation and feedback activities for both single events and long term programmes so that better ways can be charted for future learning proceedings, even if this means the cessation of traditional activities and the demise of traditional structures.

*Jens J Hansen, 1987.*

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## Executive Summary

1. Early in this report we note that defining the terms lifelong learning and community is difficult because they overlap and also have elements of contradiction and paradox. We propose that lifelong learning is the sum of learning processes that an individual experiences from their creation until their demise but Community education, as thought of in New Zealand, can involve non-formal or incidental learning activities for groups or individuals and Gunn (1986) extended a taxonomy of adult learning to even include media learning. But although community education can involve individuals, the masses self-regulated learning or media generated learning, community education activities, more often than not, simply involve groups who have formed a community of learners. This is what Benseman, Findsen and Scott (1996) described as the fourth sector – the adult and community education sector known as ACE (Adult and Community Education) and mapping that sector has been the focus of this report.
2. Social mapping has previously been a valid concern for related fields of community endeavour such as recreation and sport and the volunteer and community services sector. In this report, we touch on antecedents to mapping the current adult and community education milieu and note that although the sector is fluid, there are benefits to describing key aspects of it. Mapping may be either macro in scale or micro in perspective and, done well, affords data that policy makers, planners and providers can employ. Data may be used to improve effectiveness which should be evaluated against policy imbedded criteria. Criteria can focus upon economic benefits and/or social factors.
3. This mapping project was initiated by adult and community education representatives from the Auckland region and was supported by the TEC. Specifically, the ACE networks of Auckland, North Shore and Waitakere wanted this exercise to happen. In rapid time, volunteer members of the ACE sector designed a survey but although feedback about the design of the survey was obtained from experts, a re-critiquing of the survey did not occur nor was it piloted in any way. Moreover, given the nature of this exercise, the survey form was not subjected to ethical scrutiny.
4. Ultimately, therefore, it was an untried version of the survey that was sent to sector representatives from the North Shore, Waitakere and Auckland. Completed forms were returned via network representatives and data were aggregated into Excel. This simple computer application was selected because it is widely available and the completed data-set can, therefore, be scrutinised in detail by interested people from the sector.
5. Excel was thus used to generate overall descriptive statistics but the data were seldom split by network district (i.e. Waitakere, Auckland, North Shore). They were not split because they did not lend themselves to this. Statistical inferences should not, therefore, be made because the data-set is not robust enough and in anyway, the nature of this exercise suggests that applying such procedures would be overkill at this level.

6. The developers of the final version of the research instrument did not appear to consider how best to analyse emergent data. As a consequence, data that emerged were often 'fuzzy'. However, it should be clearly noted that because the social sciences are probabilistic in nature, data are often messy and inconclusive be they quantitative or qualitative. Social science can be like that. Often.
7. But even though social science exercises may be imprecise, the fuzziness of findings can be reduced by accurately determining (right at the outset and with all the clarity that project instigators can muster) what the outcomes should be. Thus, for future exercises, it is essential that both the TEC and ACE clarify what they want to achieve before they commence data gathering activities. In other words, the intentions underpinning this kind of research must be carefully pre-aligned with intended data analysis outcomes. Equally, it is desirable that after these results have been scrutinised, sector representatives and the TEC liaise about the best way forward.
8. Amongst other things, this report touches upon issues and difficulties associated with mapping the breadth and depth of adult and community education within geographical sectors of Auckland. Notwithstanding complications that we encountered, we underscore that in our view, the TEC and the ACE sector are to be congratulated for venturing into this domain. The challenge of generating solid mapping data is substantial and resolving to undertake the challenge in the first place was commendable.
9. It is not proper to pre-present findings in detail in an executive summary but there is merit in truncating them. The remainder of this Executive Summary does that.
10. The sample ( $\Sigma N=133$ ) was not large and statistical procedures for testing sample representativeness were not completed. Statistical inferences were not, therefore, derived from these data.
11. A simple scan of the sample illustrates (yet again) the vast diversity that characterises the ACE sector.
12. Most respondents linked themselves to Waitakere (40%), slightly fewer to North Shore (38%) and the remainder identified with Auckland (22%). Some identified themselves as belonging to more than one network but geographical boundaries were unimportant insofar as network allegiance was concerned.
13. Organisations expressed allegiance to like organisations or to kindred agencies. Both qualitative and quantitative data indicated that agencies within the sector continue to interact with like agencies – i.e. homogeneity pervades.
14. An overwhelming majority of the sample (90%) reported that they had Internet access which means that communication to and from agencies has assumed an electronic dimension with obvious benefits accruing from this cheaper and faster medium. It also means that this medium can be tapped for networking and development purposes, a strategy that is already being developed by the TEC in tandem with the sector.

15. The study revealed that adult community education was the substance of seven out of eight respondents but it was not clear if agencies sampled wished to be seen as providers for children.
16. Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent, if any, they saw adult education as their principal or main focus. Although about half saw adult education as an important focal point for their organisation, an equivalent number did not. This appears to reflect an intersection between the voluntary sector and the adult and community education sector. Thus adult education serves and/or aids alternate organisational missions, and such alternates are thought by them to be more important (e.g. Schools, Red Cross, CCS).
17. Most alternate priorities were from the broad field of social services but the reliability of data must be viewed cautiously because respondents could answer by choosing a range of options. Undeniably, though, the intersection between the ACE sector and the voluntary sector is hugely important – especially given that the voluntary sector provides several billion dollars worth of service to New Zealand and given also that it is supported to the tune of about 2.5 billion dollars annually by government.
18. Most agencies (around 50%) offered a modest number of courses or programmes but one third of agencies sampled provided anywhere between fifty and one hundred courses/programmes per annum and almost 20% offer more than one hundred courses/programmes.
19. The data did not differentiate between a one-off courses and programmes comprising a series of courses but large provider agencies were encountered which could be described as *super*-providers because of the volume of their offerings.
20. There is a bi-modality of ACE providers in Auckland with most agencies offering adult and community education activities (despite often pursuing other imperatives) and a smaller number of agencies, mainly secondary schools, offering very many learning activities.
21. This bimodality gives rise to a range of philosophical and planning issues which the TEC and the ACE sector needs to address, perhaps by commissioning pertinent discussion papers.
22. It is contended that counting *bums on seats* needs to be undertaken in tandem with measuring perceptions of quality and presenting case studies that provide rich accounts of success such as those detailed in *Koia! Koia!* (2001)
23. In this study, reporting on the number of people taking part in learning activities per annum was not useful because of the huge span separating the smallest and largest numbers of participants per annum. Very many providers attract small numbers of learners and some few institutions attract very large numbers indeed. The statistics were bimodal and mainly demonstrated the folly of trying to measure chalk and cheese at the same time.

24. Attempting to identify cultural or genetic antecedents was an invalid and unethical exercise to undertake and produced unreliable results as many New Zealand residents have a complex ethnic whakapapa. Further, persons completing a survey on behalf of an ACE organisation cannot, and should not be asked to label and quantify ethnic or cultural groups that participate in the ACE sector. But even though describing who participates is important because successful affirmative action practices demand positive discrimination, providing reliable labelling estimates about participating groups was problematic for respondents.
25. Few ACE sector agencies have staff – and if they do, they don't have very many. In this study agencies ranged from very small through to large but an average of one and a half staffing positions for part-time staff was reported. The sector appears relatively bereft of workers most of whom are employed part-time. The overall impression is that few people work part-time in the sector and even less work full-time.
26. Employment conditions for those working in the field may be an issue to investigate because the consequences of under-resourcing agencies do not appear to have been monitored.
27. Surprisingly, there is a great deal of durability or resilience in the sector with many agencies having been in existence for nearly twenty years. We speculate that the permanency of many providers has made them almost iconoclastic, albeit that they remain small.
28. There is a clear and almost unanimous willingness to collaborate between agencies and across agencies but how effective collaborative processes currently are remains unknown. There appears to be a mandate, therefore, for the TEC to shore up networks within the sector.
29. Data were provided about frequently encountered ACE activities but these must be viewed with extreme caution because such data alone are insufficient to fully understand the sector. Policy, planning and provision must be informed by richer and broader data and the sector should identify who can't participate and why they cannot.
30. The TEC and the ACE sector should, therefore, collaborate to ensure that good data are gathered and used for policy development, strategic and operational planning, for providing equitable resource allocation, and for delivering quality assured programmes.
31. Overall, a strong case emerges for further research with the foci of investigations being jointly framed by the TEC and the ACE sector.
32. The qualitative data revealed that many respondents struggled with the survey but they were supportive of government (and the TEC) involving itself further in the ACE sector as they felt that current engagement was insufficient. They were supportive of the community hours that can be provided for ACE.

33. The qualitative feedback also yielded expressions of interest in participating in TEC networks, in continuing to receive tutor hours and in being able to extend provision to include weekends. Given changes that have occurred in work patterns within New Zealand, we reason that future research might investigate the provision of more flexible access for learners.
34. It is also proposed that further research be undertaken which might clarify the intersections that exist between the voluntary sector and the ACE sector with special reference to the manner in which the ACE sector provides a training and development platform for the voluntary sector. It is proposed that such an interdisciplinary study should be quantitative and qualitative in nature. It should be completed by a TEC formed team of researchers comprising one or more investigators who are familiar with economic research, one or more who are familiar with the ACE sector, and one or more who are familiar with the voluntary sector.
35. It is concluded that this exercise should be repeated in South Auckland but there needs to be careful and sustained consultation about intended outcomes, research/mapping objectives, the intended methodologies and methods, and the destiny of emergent reports. It is speculated that the Website that the TEC has encouraged the sector to use, can usefully be harnessed as a research tool – especially given that the majority of the sector who responded to this exercise have Internet access.

Dr Jens J. Hansen & Belinda M. R. Hansen, October, 2004

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## 1. Preamble

This report is about an exercise in mapping or pinpointing the breadth and depth of adult and community education within a selection of geographical sectors of the Auckland region. It is about a project that was initiated by the adult and community education sector of the Auckland region. It was subsequently undertaken by virtue of funding being made available from the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). The TEC is the Crown agency that was formed in 2003 which has been charged with assuming responsibility for nurturing, growing, preserving and managing almost everything that has to do with adult education in Aotearoa New Zealand. This is an especially important task within our bureaucratic spectra because there are now in New Zealand, as is the case in many western economies (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999), more adults who want to be catered for as learners than there are children who, often rather more reluctantly than their adult counterparts, trudge a weary and wary path in order to be taught within our schools.

Specifically, though, this exercise was mounted in order to begin to *map* the plethora of adult and community education (ACE) activities that occur within the Auckland region. But in all truthfulness, to map an amorphous turf such as adult and community education, a field that commands huge uptake and spans the broadest imaginable range of adults as learners, is rather like hunting the will-o-the-wisp or seeking to clutch the golden crock that purportedly sits at the end of a rainbow. It is a task riddled with complexity because this sector, this significant fourth sector, is fluid, dynamic and important. Indeed, in recent years, during which the ideology of the new right has held sway, its orb of economic and social influence has regularly been underestimated and the fourth sector has, therefore, tended to be overlooked. This has also been the case because, within our federal educational topography, the ACE sector has been, comparatively speaking, relatively meek and mild. Hence, it has been largely neglected in comparison to the other three quadrants of enterprise education.

This report, then, begins by briefly seeking to clarify a range of key terms that are germane to understanding the testimony herein and thereafter ponders “why *map* the ACE sector?” In order to better understand both the relevance and the difficulties associated with completing such an exercise, a brief account is given of some earlier adult education *mapping* activities and of prior thinking about the relevance of mapping the sector. This enables the multifaceted question to be posed of who might usefully design an adult education mapping exercise, for whom, for what purposes and with what effects?

But in order to address such matters, it has been necessary to be unashamedly reflexive; that is, it has been essential to be quite up-front about our beliefs as contributors to this exercise and as authors of this report. Necessarily, therefore, we have made a brief foray into the realm of

the politics of education, or more precisely, into developing an advocative set of reasons as to why an exercise such as this has relevance for an agency such as the TEC.

In proffering this, we are not seeking to be provocative, but rather, we are overtly putting onto an educational discussion plinth, some beliefs and values which, we would argue, give credence to an exercise such as this. Such thinking undoubtedly revives wisdoms that are no longer considered to be *savoir faire*. In the post-modern era it is savvier to advance the cause of specialised development and educational managerialism – it is more educationally profitable for an educational provider to support an instrumental learning regime that ostensibly can be aligned to helping our knowledge society to flourish. It is more resource attracting, therefore, to develop, offer and manage programmes in which learners emerge after having attained a recognised (unit) standard or qualification because that is a manifest outcome which shows they have become equipped, somehow, to become workers or producers of goods and services. Quite rightly, devotees of strategies that seek to grow quality assured training frameworks that forge quality assured trainees, contend that the economy will profit as a result and the ranks of welfare dependents will shrink as a consequence of these quality assured processes.

This emphasis on training and learning for a knowledge society tends to be in tension, but not necessarily at odds with community education. Our emphasis on the knowledge society renders as somewhat quaint and naïve, the ideal espousal that community education can and should be an agency of development. But the reality is that as well as being increasingly a commodity and rather less of a service, community education continues to be about building equity through capacity development. Moreover, community education continues to be justifiable because of its intrinsic values, and it is a valid enterprise simply because it can bring joy and a sense of accomplishment to participants.

Leaving aside such matters, this report also describes, rather scantily, the data gathering and data management procedures that were used. We also explain strategies employed for completing the descriptive analysis that was necessary in undertaking this study. Naturally, we also describe the findings discerned thus far and we discuss, again somewhat scantily, the possible implications of what we have discerned. Thereafter, we consider how we could repeat this exercise, only better and finally, we speculate about what, if any, overall conclusions can be drawn from this exercise.

## **2. Clarifying key terms**

The terms lifelong learning and community education are difficult to define because they have within them aspects of overlap and elements of contradiction and paradox. Lifelong learning

can be thought of as the sum of learning processes that an individual experiences from conception through to death. Richard Edwards (in Field, & Leicester (Eds.) pp.3 – 11) describes the notion as a populist term of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He notes, however, that there have been references to the importance of learning throughout life being appreciated by philosopher kings and their cadres of disciples in antiquitous days when Plato strode the earth. Edwards' review of the literature concludes that it, the concept of lifelong learning, is at once vague and embracing, fashionable yet regressive (compared to lifelong education); it is politically appealing but often policy vague. It is seen by some to be linked to vocational curriculum whilst enabling development and as such, it is both a commodity and a process. It is at best, as Edwards notes, a troubled concept. (Edwards, in Field & Leicester, 2000, p.5)

But as Rennie Johnston indicates, “‘community education’ and ‘lifelong learning’ have clear similarities”. (Johnston, in Field and Leicester, 2000, p.12) In a sense, though, and certainly within the New Zealand context, community education is usually considered to be a sub-process and sub-section of the broader construct of lifelong learning. Indeed, within New Zealand, lifelong learning is normatively considered to embrace all learning that transpires, formally, informally or incidentally, throughout the duration of a person's life.

Community education is also often described in New Zealand as involving non-formal or even incidental learning activities for groups or individuals<sup>1</sup>. But although community education can involve individuals or the masses and can involve self regulated learning or even media generated learning, these activities are, more often than not, perceived as involving groups of people. Participants simply form or join communities of learners within which they choose to learn together. The Koia! Koia! definition (2001, p. 10) is consistent with that notion but firmly posits the learning location as community.

These learning communities can be of short or long term duration and may, in some instances, assume central importance because they are felt to be deeply meaningful to participants. Alternatively, they may engender very little commitment because participants feel passé about the learning activity in which they are participating. But whatever their level of involvement and whatever their field of learning endeavour, participants retain the freedom to opt in or out at will. In a sense, therefore, community education is recreational. Participants learn because they want to, when they want to, for however long they want to and at whichever settings are appropriate. Community education is typically seen, therefore, as learning that occurs within a community setting, be that at a marae, the local hall, the outdoors, at an evening class held at a school, a farm

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<sup>1</sup> In the 1980s, Colin Gunn sought to redefine adult education and his taxonomy remains useful in that it provides a simple framework for categorising adult education activities. However, the complex model developed by Peter Jarvis (1987) is preferred by us as it is more comprehensive.

paddock, an art gallery, a gymnasium, a local community house, or even at the home of a local person.

Johnston describes lifelong learning as ubiquitous or as being everywhere and so it is – if only because wherever there are people, there are also learners. Likewise, community education in New Zealand is ubiquitous and yet it remains an amorphous phenomenon about which we know very little. We know little about it precisely because it is nebulous, fluid and dynamic.

That it is dynamic can be attributed to a range of factors – the shifting nature of activities in which learners take part, the flexible duration of activities, and the many and varied settings within which it takes place. This then, is the quarter that sometimes circumvents or bypasses the tertiary sector. Participants who have not participated in the hallowed halls of academia may leap-frog, or even ease themselves, directly into community education. But it is also the sector that can slake the thirst of those who have developed an appetite for recurrent learning, be they graduates of the secondary or the tertiary sector. It is, as Benseman, Findsen and Scott have noted, the fourth sector – the adult and community education sector which is otherwise known as ACE (Adult and Community Education).

Thoroughly investigating the processes of adult and community education, the many and varied processes that are at the core of the ACE sector, and the context within which those processes occur is a vexatious challenge that is clearly beyond the scope of this brief report. But it is appropriate to briefly examine the essence of the processes and equally, it is appropriate to note in passing some historical highlights from the sector concerning the challenges of mapping the sector because such highlights can illuminate the context of the sector<sup>2</sup>.

As eminent adult education theorist Peter Jarvis has noted, a *front end* model of education is no longer appropriate because in contemporary society, intentional learning extends well beyond school years. (Jarvis, 1995) That such learning can be spasmodic, continuous or even intermittently recurrent is not a matter to traverse here. Suffice it so note that formal education is still normatively perceived to be that which occurs within the primary, secondary and tertiary sector and such education is considered by most to mainly take place during childhood and early adulthood. This means that by the time an individual has matured (to perhaps become what R. S. Peters, refers to as an *educated person*) they will have passed through a hierarchically stepped structure that has sought to intentionally shape their learning across a range of curricula and learning domains.

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<sup>2</sup> It would be interesting but inappropriate to intentionally consider historical milestones for the field. However, some aspects of the history of adult and community education are mentioned in passing, especially within these footnotes. The is though, a need to pen a thorough account of the history of the sector and this should be undertaken before many of the luminaries who contributed to this field ‘shuffle off their mortal coil’.

When they have emerged or survived such a process, they may even have succeeded to such an extent that they become, as noted above, what Richard Peters<sup>3</sup> refers to as *educated persons*. The fact that other writers, such as Jarvis, have picked up on the basic concepts that Peters developed is testimony to the relevance of Peters then and now. But as Jarvis notes (1995, p. 17), Peters sees the educated person as an end-product and arrives at an understanding of that construct by highlighting the characteristics of being an uneducated individual. He, Peters, also distinguishes between training and education. He sees the former as being characterised by lower order cognitive skills whereas education, according to Peters, is about the matter (curricula), the manner (pedagogy) and higher order cognitive skills (currently thought to comprise evaluation and then synthesis).

But there is a problem here because clearly, as Tough (1979) noted, adults routinely undertake a range of learning activities or projects either whilst passing through, or well after completing their engagement with the first two or three sectors of education. Moreover, there is little doubt that any learning project that an adult undertakes can greatly impact upon them as an individual as is the case, for instance, when a parent learns to read so that they might share story reading with their children. The assumption here, as Jarvis notes, is that learning has occurred. But as he points out, in echoing Paul Hirst and Richard Peters (1970), learning might happen without the presence of teaching, as it does for instance, when a person nearly makes a serious mistake with a chainsaw or whilst they are driving. However, successful teaching seldom occurs without some form of learning taking place.

In the case of adults, the late Malcolm Knowles in particular argued that facilitation rather than teaching was a crucial dimension to achieving learning increments and outcomes. Equally, Knowles recognised that the reservoir of prior experiences which the adult had accrued constituted a crucial learning resource – and prior experience should, therefore, be drawn upon to ensure successful learning<sup>4</sup>. At the same time, the situational need, the arousing motivator which prompted the adult's wish to learn in the first place, was recognised by Knowles as another key determinant to successful adult learning.

Hence it is apparent that successful adult learning need not be confined to the crucible of formality and at the same time, it is evident that while learning success may be facilitated or merely augmented by the presence of a teacher, it can also occur without the presence of a teacher.

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<sup>3</sup> Peters visited his brother in Christchurch in the early 1970s and the principal author of this report was, for a semester, a student of this eminent educational philosopher. Hence, references are not cited herein as there is great deal of familiarity with the pros and cons of the arguments.

<sup>4</sup> The difficulty here, though, is that this implies that prior experience is a determinant of the quantum and quality of learning that takes place – it infers that the greater the depth of prior experience, the greater the learning and while prior experience is clearly important, that need not necessarily be the case. For instance, some learners who have considerable prior experience may find it very difficult to learn because the depth and breadth of their prior experience interferes with their capacity to transform.

Thus the adult and community education sector, the ACE sector, is not only amorphous in nature but is also characterised by capricious teaching and learning strategies which span formal learning through to incidental and informal learning and which can be either intentional and/or serendipitous. Some of these processes, however, have been increasingly categorised or conceptualised via terms such as *continuous learning* or *recurrent education*<sup>5</sup> and like the term community education, they can involve either proactive or reactive approaches to learning. So given the vagueness of this sector, the question again arises as to why on earth might we wish to *map* it? Why would we want to seek to describe the very nature and the extent to which the ACE sector exists in Aotearoa New Zealand, let alone the Auckland region?

### **3. Some earlier milestones of the ACE sector and prior attempts at mapping**

One approach to understanding the *raison d'être* for mapping the ACE sector is to investigate the antecedents to the current adult and community education milieu. Two avenues of exploration might be informative here.

First, it is useful to scrutinise and understand the rationale for and nature of earlier examples of social mapping<sup>6</sup>. Although social mapping as described within this report is pointedly focused upon the adult and community sector, social mapping has previously been a valid concern for related fields of community endeavour such as recreation and sport and also for the vast array of voluntary community services that knit together the social fabric of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Second, it is informative, but perhaps somewhat less so, to identify milestones that have impacted upon the ACE movement because landmark events inevitably sway the way in which development unfolds or recedes. In short, milestones or key events such as policies and/or budgets can alter the status quo in either a banal or subtle manner<sup>7</sup> and hence the lay of the landscape that is to be mapped also becomes revised even though it is kaleidoscopic in nature as Harré Hindmarsh (1996) noted.

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<sup>5</sup> Continuous learning is, as the name suggests, learning that is ongoing or unabated. While humans learn over the course of their lifetime, the reality is that they do not necessarily participate in intentional learning activities throughout their lifespan. Instead, they participate spasmodically, when they need to and hence learning tends to be recurrent rather than continuous.

<sup>6</sup> Social mapping involves gathering descriptive data from which a comprehensive account of activity locations, participation frequency and participant characteristics can be derived about a genus of social activity. Thus social mapping may enable investigators to assemble data about who does what, where, when and how often in community activities, or recreation and sport, or adult and community education.

<sup>7</sup> Although milestone events such as the introduction or removal of policies and subsidies impact upon the ACE sector, a true understanding of this fourth sector undoubtedly requires a concurrent examination of not only the landscape but also a critical interpretation of signal events. See Methven & Hansen (1997) and the example they cite of how the removal of subsidies from 'hobby classes' in the early 1970s by George Gair, considerably diminished female participation in ACE, especially in hobby classes.

The earliest of the mapping activities that we have been able to identify were prompted in the 1930s by the Hon. William Parry, who was, for a time, Minister of Education and also Minister for Physical Welfare and Recreation<sup>8</sup>. Given the comparative slowness of the more primitive transport systems that were in use at the time, it was no mean feat to convene two separate summit conferences in order to pave the best ways for forging ahead with development. And of course, knowing about the status quo, having information about what was happening, where, and when and how often, was apparently, a prerequisite for strategising how development might best occur. It seems, however, that the conference came before the mapping was done and to what extent it was done and how, let alone how successfully, is not known. But what did eventuate were a number of peripatetic professionals who moved around their set New Zealand geographical patches, initiating activities, building capacity and maintaining networks.

Amongst the very last of these was Roy Sheffield who worked for the then Department of Internal Affairs as a Physical Welfare and Recreation Officer until his retirement in the late 1960s. He, together with Nigel Langston and the late Bob Larkin, initiated the thrust to develop the community use of schools in Auckland and the four designated Auckland Community Schools continue to be important providers within the ACE sector.

Larkin, who had returned from Indiana University with a B.S. degree in community recreation, was, even though he did not at that time use the terminology, a champion of lifelong learning. He, together with Langston, mooted the idea that taxpayer facilities such as schools could and should be opened for community recreation education, and moreover, there were aspects of the then Education Act (S.201 of the 1964 Act<sup>9</sup>) and regulations (Primary School Extension regulations<sup>10</sup>) which allowed for this.

Larkin subsequently went on to mould the first iteration of the New Zealand Council for Recreation and Sport which sponsored, in 1974, the “Come Alive” campaign, a massive promotion which was geared towards lifting participation levels of New Zealanders in community activities. The campaign involved various luminaries such as Sir Murray Halberg, Sir Edmond Hillary and Valerie Young travelling around the country establishing committees that were to spearhead

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<sup>8</sup> The principal author was able to examine the original Parry Report into Physical Welfare and Recreation many years ago but has not seen the education equivalent.

<sup>9</sup> Jens Hansen worked with those people and retains the original letters from 1969 that were sent to him by Keith Holyoake, the then Prime Minister, Brian Talboys, the then Minister of Education and George Gair who was undersecretary to Talboys. But it was not until Labour’s Phil Amos became Minister that the Community Schools proposal became endorsed. At that point, Hansen became the founding Community School Organiser at Freyberg Memorial Community School, a position that Larkin held some years later. Langston, Hansen and Larkin were each involved with early mapping exercises because identifying the networks within the district was paramount to successfully being able to offer community education for all.

<sup>10</sup> Langston, with the help of Physical Education Advisor, the late Colin Spanhake, was able to successfully argue that extension classes should not just be for the gifted and talented as that was inequitable. Hence, these regulations enabled many community education activities to be offered that otherwise would have been the domain, were they to be offered at all, of the select few who had been assessed as being gifted and talented.

community activities for community development. Thus were born the Round the Bays Run, outdoor recreation expos, community leadership courses, recreation festivals (for trying things out), riding for the disabled, arts festivals and a myriad of other activities that realistically could be described as cohering with the kaleidoscope that is the fourth sector.

It was soon realised that in order to sustain the impetus of this popular movement, a mapping of who was doing what, where and when and for whom, would be required. Peter Millington, a psychiatric nurse who had worked as a Therapeutic Recreation Officer at Oakley Hospital (before it split into Oakley Forensic and Carrington Hospitals) was recruited. His task was to make contact with every agency that existed in the Auckland region, from Warkworth in the north through to Mercer in the south, and generate a manual, card-based data-set that would supply details about that organisation.

It was an impossible task but in the end, Peter had amassed a data collection which showed that there was approximately one fourth sector agency or recreation club or community development organisation per every twenty Aucklanders. And Aucklanders, it was found were a bunch of joiners with many people belonging to a multiplicity of agencies. Based in his cottage in Laingholm, Millington hand wrote all of these details onto cards and when the task had been completed, the matter of what to do with the data surfaced<sup>11</sup>.

It was resolved that the data-set should be sorted by district and would then be gifted to agencies within those districts. Thus information was given to the two Auckland City sponsored Citizens' Advice Bureaux and to a series of local authority libraries. The hope was that the data-sets would be extended, maintained and used. But they weren't. Instead, they languished for want of input and time. And the ever-changing kaleidoscopic snapshot that had captured the fourth sector at the time quickly became moribund.

During that period, the 1970s and 1980s, the Vienna born theorist, Ivan Illich was becoming widely read and his thinking about alternatives to schooling was becoming popular (as was Paulo Freire). In New Zealand, this spawned an interest in the development of learning exchanges and in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Wairarapa Community Activities Programme, with Gary Pollock as Director, developed a card based learning exchange which identified, or mapped, community learning agencies, individuals and potential learners from around the Wairarapa. Other learning exchanges of a similar nature were to follow. A comprehensive one was established by the Nelson Community Education Service which mapped learning activities and needs within that province; the various REAPS that were coming into being in rural New Zealand

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<sup>11</sup> This is known because Colin Kay, the Chair of the Come Alive Campaign, Jens Hansen, the Secretary of the Auckland Committee and Bob Larkin, were the supervisors of this project.

operated a range of learning exchanges which mapped providers and needs at local levels<sup>12</sup> and, in urban centres such as Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland, the WEAs developed and operated learning exchanges.

Each was paper based and extremely labour intensive. Both their development and maintenance were dependent, therefore, upon the goodwill of local volunteers. They did, however, afford a map of what was going on and if anyone had bothered at the time to aggregate the data from these sources, a useful snapshot of the fourth sector might well have been assembled. But that did not happen although the imperative of understanding what the field was about and what it was doing was once again raised when Jennie Harré Hindmarsh wrote about mapping the field in the 1990s. (Harré Hindmarsh, 1996)

Her mapping approach was to provide a broadly based commentary about learning opportunities provided and to generally discuss patterns of uptake and participation. She also critiqued enabling policies and commented about the inadequacy of funding for the sector. Her paper affords a bird's-eye macro scan and was not intended to detail matters in a micro manner. Notwithstanding this general overview, she does demonstrate that the sector was as complex then as it had been in the 1970s when Millington had sought to map specific community activities in Auckland.

Given that her approach was very broad and general, Harré Hindmarsh noted that voluntary community agencies involved in the fourth sector spanned, with varying degrees of involvement intensity, both local and national organisations, rural and urban contexts, school based and tertiary institutions and employment-based education<sup>13</sup>. Hers was by no means the first analysis of participant trends as a perusal of her list of references demonstrates. But whereas many others had pinpointed participant trends at an institutional or micro level (e.g. Boshier, 1970; Waghorne, 1975; Benseman, 1992; Gunn, 1993 to name some who were cited by Harré Hindmarsh), Harré Hindmarsh penned what amounted to a brief and valuable national scan. Notably, and in a manner that was consistent with other commentators, Harré Hindmarsh pointed out that the 1990s were characterised by a diminishing resource base for the sector and an ongoing debate about whether or not this sector should emphasise community development or the imperative of economic growth. She noted creeping credentialism and commented on those same ideological debates that remain pressing today – should the emphasis be on community or on economic development. Snippets from her conclusion are worth noting:

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<sup>12</sup> In the early 1980s, Westland REAP, for instance, operated a learning exchange at Rununga, Greymouth, Hokitika, Harihari, Whataroa, Franz Josef, Fox Glacier and Haast. But although these each mapped learning resource agencies and people as well as learning needs with varying degrees of accuracy, they each eventually lapsed for want of people who were willing and able to maintain the manually derived data-sets. See also the book by Shepherd & Hansen (2001) on the history of the REAPs in New Zealand.

<sup>13</sup> Her analysis was based upon a modification of Michael Law's (1987) categories of community education, institutional education and labour market education.

...“...the key issues and struggles remain constant... Whether involved in learning through marae, local or national community groups or voluntary organisations, schools, tertiary institutions or private training establishments or in the context of the paid workplace adult educators continue to be preoccupied both with gaining greater resources and resourcing to the contribution of the sector to the development of communities, the nation and individuals and with issues of inequities in provision and access. Like the kaleidoscope, the specifics of the patterns keep changing but the basic colours stay the same – the more things appear to change, the more they stay the same...”  
 (Harré Hindmarsh, in Benseman, Finsden & Scott (Eds.), 1996, p.75).

Now, here we are, mapping the sector again in the new millennium and under the auspices of the TEC.

#### **4. A case for mapping and some politic considerations**

Neither macro-mapping nor micro-mapping have been a serious consideration for many government departments in New Zealand and certainly not for agencies concerned with education (instead, there seems to have been a pre-occupation with shoring up management and accountability). And as noted above, a very short shelf-life has been a characteristic of earlier efforts at mapping the nature of social movements in New Zealand. Fecund data have become moribund almost at the point of gathering because they are, by their very nature, quite fickle. Hence, practical applications of mapping have languished for want of continued input. Applied applications such as learning exchanges have ceased to exist because data bases have not been maintained<sup>14</sup>. Planning, which has been informed as a consequence of community educators critically appraising maps of activities and discerning programme shortfalls undoubtedly still happens but it is speculated that the process is generally ad hoc and informal rather than systematic and formal. Much of this can be attributed to the imperative to offer courses that succeed in a competitive marketplace as opposed to facilitating learning that is responsive to perceived as well as expressed community development and learning needs. (Shepherd & Hansen, 2001) So why now map the sector, yet again?

A not unreasonable argument might go like this. First and foremost, it stands to reason that the TEC needs to know and understand those aspects of lifelong learning for which it has responsibility. Currently, that includes the ACE sector.

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<sup>14</sup> The only reference in an internet search that we could find to a learning exchange, had to do with teachers learning about IT skills. While CABs continue to be information brokers, learning exchanges, per se, are a thing of the past.

As noted above, the ACE sector provides a vast array of learning activities some of which are formal but most of which are non-formal. Yet others are informal and some can even be incidental. Notwithstanding the broad spectrum of coverage that the ACE sector provides, it remains, in comparison to other sectors of education, relatively under-funded. And because it concerns seemingly lower-level educational stakes, it is seldom accorded the same level of concern that is focused upon other sectors. Moreover, the sector itself is so fragmented that it seldom hooves into sight and it remains, therefore, mainly out of mind<sup>15</sup>.

In such an environment, the ACE sector must be assertive in order to obtain and sustain a fair share or it will continue to be neglected. It must champion and present itself as a legitimate dimension of lifelong learning and it must show itself to be a partner of equal importance to the formal tertiary institutions for whom the Tertiary education strategy was developed. In Australia, when the federal government recognised the social and economic importance of this sector, a federal report was commissioned and in New Zealand we might still learn from that exercise (see *“Come in Cinderella”*, 1983).

In New Zealand, many adult and community education activities are closely aligned to the voluntary services sector, a sector which is purported to be supported to the tune of 2.5 billion dollars per annum by the government<sup>16</sup>. Clearly, if the voluntary services sector and the ACE sector are even remotely aligned, and if the voluntary services sector is a multi-billion dollar endeavour, mapping existing and missing intersections between the two is essential. It is essential if the capacity of each is to be strengthened.

That said, the ACE sector also wants to know itself better. Not only are people within the sector keen to learn something about their depth and breadth, but also, a well conducted stock-take of provision patterns and of provision measures for demographic and cultural groupings<sup>17</sup> can enable useful needs assessments to unfold within service catchment areas. As a consequence, the ACE sector and the TEC might better jointly plan to provide more validly and effectively.

In short, this means that the TEC really does need to know about the fourth sector. It needs to know the make-up of this movement for which it has responsibility; it also needs to determine what needs to be developed in the field and what needs to be revised or even reviewed. And so does the field.

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<sup>15</sup> Clearly there are exceptions as for instance, the row over polytechnics providing non-credit earning courses and being paid hugely for doing so – e.g. Christchurch Polytechnic and the CD disk course.

<sup>16</sup> Kirsty Jones in a Radio New Zealand Insight programme (2/10/04) indicated this and noted that the voluntary sector claims that this is an inadequate level of funding. She also noted that a leading accountancy firm had appraised the financial value of the contribution of ten voluntary agencies as being in the vicinity of 1.7 million dollars per annum.

<sup>17</sup> ACE and the TEC should also marshal demographic trends as a persuader. The aging population of New Zealand is a burgeoning reality which means that learning for seniors is the reality of the future. And in that regard, Grey-power can be a potent political force if wound up

We earlier made the comment that the ACE sector often cries poor. But this does not mean a review prompted by a comprehensive mapping exercise should assume a deficit model. Since the earliest of times, educators have needed little prompting to cry poor – but bucketing ever-larger dollops of resources into education seldom, if ever, serves as an elixir – a magic cure-all for society’s educational malaise. Mapping the sector can at best, if completed comprehensively, assist with planning but educational planning and educational delivery, although ideally interlinked, are often estranged partners in the same overall family. Mapping the nature of the Fourth Sector is, therefore, an important thing to do ... providing it is done well! As a consequence, linking planners with providers becomes even more important.

## **5. The stimulus for this mapping exercise, and its design, stemmed from the ACE sector**

The ACE networks of the Auckland region (specifically the Auckland, North Shore and Waitakere networks, but not, at this stage, the Manukau network) wanted this mapping exercise to happen. They wanted it to happen quickly. TEC Auckland subsequently agreed to facilitate this project principally because they saw such an exercise as being consistent with their thrust of invigorating the sector as a predicate to helping it to strengthen its own capacity. The TEC Auckland Office had, therefore, mounted a series of network meetings and these were hosted in order to promote collaboration and development across the sector.

Accordingly, in rapid time, volunteer members of the ACE sector designed a survey. This was subsequently critiqued by two independent academics/researchers who were also familiar with the sector. Feedback was sought from these advisors not only about the approach but also about the survey design. Thus a process of critical peer review was initiated and comprehensive feedback ensued.

However, after the survey became redesigned, a re-critiquing of the survey did not occur. This was unfortunate and meant that the final version of the survey and the suggestions that had emerged from the critique of the initial survey design were incongruent. In fact, although the original design of the survey had been altered, the second revised version was, in many respects, more problematic. It contained typographical and numbering errors and it appears that those who designed the final instrument had few ideas about how the ensuing data could or should be processed. In short, the intended survey data did not inform the final instrument design. Nevertheless, the sector is to be congratulated for having advanced this exercise and despite design

difficulties, we are adamant that we do not want to criticize those who progressed the mapping survey<sup>18</sup>.

## 6. A brief overview of procedures

The sector designed and untried survey was sent to sector representatives from the North Shore, Waitakere and Auckland<sup>19</sup>. The administration of the distribution and the final design varied from network-to-network and the survey forms from each network were printed on separately coloured paper so that they could be colour coded by geographical area<sup>20</sup>.

There was, however, no sampling frame (or frames) to draw upon and so it is not possible to comment about the extent to which the achieved sample was representative. Indeed, it should be noted that although for the social scientist it is important to be able to determine whether or not an achieved sample is representative of the overall sampling universe from which it was derived, such commentary was not a concern for those who sponsored this exercise. In fact, sector representatives and the TEC indicated that one fundamental purpose of the exercise was simply to create a data-base of participants from the sector. Accordingly, as far as we know, records of to whom the survey was distributed were not kept but sector representatives hoped that a beginning would be made to developing a detailed database of agencies and contact people.

Given the nature of this exercise, the survey form was not subjected to ethical scrutiny. This is hardly surprising given the sparseness of the research landscape that attaches to this field within New Zealand. It is, after all, a patch that is mainly concerned with providing for learners as opposed to researching itself and theorising about itself. But if ethical guidelines were to be applied to this exercise, it is probable that the exercise would not have been challenged except for the survey item on ethnicity.

The completed forms were returned to the TEC and were passed onto the consulting researchers for processing. This involved numerical data from each of the networks being entered into a data-base that was developed to retain the data (Excel). Two questions that gave rise to qualitative commentary were transcribed into Microsoft word so that they can be, if necessary, introduced into a qualitative software application (QSR N6) for analysis.

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<sup>18</sup> Should the ACE sector or the TEC decide to either repeat or expand upon such an exercise in the future, we would counsel them to engage with researchers for the duration of the design and piloting stages. Typically, several versions of a questionnaire are needed even before an instrument is trialled. Careful attention to ensuring that data outcomes are clarified before an instrument is administered is also crucial.

<sup>19</sup> The instrument has not been used in Manukau but it appears likely that similar work will be undertaken in South Auckland.

<sup>20</sup> Regrettably, the Waitakere and Auckland colours were not different.

The analyses that were completed were very elementary. Overall descriptive statistics were generated using Excel but these data were seldom split by network district (i.e. Waitakere, Auckland, North Shore) because they did not lend themselves to this. It should be noted that the data are messy and inconclusive partially because such is the nature of social science and also because the survey design warranted further development. Nevertheless, a comprehensive list of contacts has been compiled and a set of ‘fuzzy’<sup>21</sup> descriptive statistics have emerged. But some trends can be discerned.

The overall data were initially prepared for presentation as a PowerPoint slide show to help showcase Adult Learners’ Week but subsequently this more detailed report was prepared. The format that has been used here involves the presentation of global/regional results and where it is appropriate, these have then been split by network district and reported accordingly, i.e. by network districts of Waitakere, Auckland, North Shore<sup>22</sup>. The data have not been split by any other variables and where implications have emerged, these have been discussed for the dataset as a whole rather than by district.

Clearly, however, it is desirable that representatives from each district extend their consideration of the data so that they might better scrutinise the ACE sector as it applies to their locale. Equally, it is desirable that when the results have been scrutinised, representatives of the sector participate in discussions with the TEC about the way forward. Specifically such discussions should canvas the parameters of what, if any work needs to be undertaken in the future and how best such work might be tackled.

Specifically, the work to be undertaken might involve a re-designed and considerably extended mapping activity which is professionally guided over an appropriate time-frame. Alternatively, future work might involve the preparation of a series of case studies and such an approach, it should be noted, is mainly qualitative in nature<sup>23</sup>. In a manner that is consistent with *Koia! Koia!* such case studies might usefully highlight issues that the sector and the TEC should be addressing. Indeed, that comment can be made that if the TEC is serious about undertaking community *engagement*, such a way forward should be obligatory and should be required by the Minister who has responsibility for the field.

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<sup>21</sup> The term fuzzy has been used to describe the data because only frequencies and percentages have been shown. The degree to which such descriptions are statistically robust (or significant) has not, however, been demonstrated.

<sup>22</sup> The findings pertaining to Rodney, from where some responses were received, were not reported and neither were findings from South Auckland reported.

<sup>23</sup> The reality is that both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research are needed. Quantitative surveys enable mainly descriptive data to be amalgamated and dissected according to selected specific variables. Such data can be used as indicators for planning and for financial and demographic forecasting. But qualitative approaches such as case studies are also needed as these harder-to-analyse data can be mined to yield rich exemplars of successful programmes, practices and outcomes whilst also revealing pressing issues and problem areas that the sector and the TEC need to address.

## 7. Findings

### 7.1 The Sample

The sample ( $\Sigma N=133$ ) for this mapping exercise is not large and statistical tests to determine whether or not the sample is representative were not feasible given the nature of the data collected<sup>24</sup>. There has not, therefore, been any attempt to generate statistical inferences from these data. Nevertheless, the sample is diverse as an eyeballing of the list of organisations reveals. This illustrates (yet again) the vast diversity that characterises the ACE sector.

Of those who identified themselves as belonging to one network, almost forty respondents perceived themselves as being a part of the Waitakere network ( $n=38$ , 40%)<sup>25</sup>, a slightly smaller number affiliated with the North Shore ( $n=36$ , 38%) and a still smaller number identified with Auckland ( $n=21$ , 22%). However, a number of respondents identified themselves as belonging to more than one network and some organisations did not respond to this question. Generally it appears that geographical boundaries were not seen as important insofar as network allegiance was concerned although the way in which the question was posed made it difficult to be definitive insofar as plotting allegiances was concerned. Table One, below, shows the networks identified with expressed as frequencies, fractions and percentages.

Table 1: Network Identification

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Fraction</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Waitakere</b>	50	50/79	63.3%
<b>Auckland</b>	37	37/79	46.83%
<b>North Shore</b>	44	44/54	81.48%
<b>Rodney</b>	15	15/54	27.77%
<b>NR</b>	96	96/266	36.09%

A number of qualitative comments amplified this matter of network allegiance and while these were mainly brief and often cryptic, the substance that emerged was that organisations expressed allegiance to like organisations or to kindred agencies. Thus arts providers felt aligned with other arts agencies, welfare providers were drawn together, sporting clubs interacted, etc. In short, the qualitative and quantitative data indicated that agencies within the sector continue to interact with like agencies – homogeneity pervades.

### 7.2 Internet Access

Participants were asked if they had Internet access and an overwhelming majority reported that they did. The data have not been split by network because there is little point in doing

<sup>24</sup> Nor was it considered necessary by those responsible for the survey design to determine how representative, if at all, the sample was.

<sup>25</sup> Percentages have been calculated from the sum of respondents for each question rather than from the sum of respondents,  $N=133$ , who participated in the overall study.

so. In fact, the implication is clear that communication to and from agencies has been facilitated by the presence of cyberspace and networking has, therefore, assumed an electronic dimension. There are obvious cost benefits here as communication via this medium is cheaper and faster. However, the contention that the Internet can be seen as a maximum diffusion, minimum impact medium warrants consideration.

Table 2: Internet Access

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Yes</b>	122	91.7%
<b>No</b>	9	6.8%
<b>No Response</b>	2	1.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	N= 133	100%

### 7.3 ACE providers

Table 3: Offering community education programmes for adults?

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Yes</b>	115	86.5%
<b>No</b>	18	13.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	N= 133	100%

The table above (Table 3) shows that adult community education was the substance of the seven out of eight respondents. Ironically, this begs the question of whether or not agencies also wanted to be seen as providers for children. The table below, Table 4 attracted a very low response rate (four out five either did not respond or said that they question was not applicable to them). It can be inferred, therefore, that the majority of respondents found this question to be superfluous given that they had already indicated their involvement in the field.

Table 4: Do you want to be a provider?

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Yes</b>	12	9.0%
<b>No</b>	16	12.0%
<b>N/A</b>	8	6.0%
<b>No Response</b>	97	73.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	N= 133	100%

### 7.4 Adult education as a main focus and alternate foci

This question required participants to respond to what is technically known as a thematic apperception scale. Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent, if any, they saw adult education as their principal or main focus. A difficulty with a scale such as the one employed here is that the data are ordinal which means that what one person perceives as representing *very much* (a main focus) might, in fact be equivalent to what another construes as *mostly* a main focus.

Hence, caution should be accorded interpretations that stem from such scales but a safe procedure, which is detailed in the next paragraph, typically involves aggregating data in order to better interpret them simply but crudely.

Table 5: Adult education as a main focus?

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage<sup>26</sup></b>
<b>Very Much</b>	47	35.3%
<b>Mostly</b>	20	15.0%
<b>Partly</b>	46	34.6%
<b>Not at all</b>	18	13.5%
<b>Other</b>	1	0.8%
<b>No Response</b>	1	0.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	133	100%

In the case of the data obtained in response to this question, it appears that about half of the organisations sampled saw adult education as constituting an important focal point for their organisation but importantly, an equivalent number did not. This infers that adult education, for about half of the organisations sampled across all three regions, was not perceived to be a primary function. This might well be consistent with the point raised in earlier discussion about the important intersection that exists between the voluntary sector and the adult and community education sector. The inference here is that adult education serves as a vehicle to an alternate organisational mission, and that alternate is perceived to be more important.

Two examples illustrate this. First, a secondary school which provides adult and community education might indicate that the provision of adult and community education is of secondary importance to the primary role of providing formal education for day-time students. And there is clearly merit in such reasoning.

Second, a service or welfare agency, such as Red Cross or St John, might perceive service delivery as the main focus of their organisation. Again, such reckoning has validity. However, it is reasonable to speculate that those responding on behalf of that organisation probably recognise that training and development are essential for their agency, even if such processes are of subordinate importance.

The data represented in Table 6 below indicate that there were, in fact, a range of alternate foci. Loosely speaking, all align to the broad field of social services. The data need to be viewed cautiously, however, as the category *social work*, which had by far the largest number of responses, might have been interpreted as nesting, or subsuming, other categories. Further,

<sup>26</sup> All percentages have been rounded and thus may not sum one hundred per cent.

respondents were able to select more than one category. Accordingly, it once again needs to be noted that little could be learnt from splitting data by district.

Table 6: Alternate main foci

<b>Other Main Foci</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Health</b>	21	15.8%
<b>Community Work</b>	41	30.8%
<b>Social Work</b>	24	18.0
<b>Religious</b>	15	11.3%
<b>Youth Work</b>	21	15.8%
<b>Child Education</b>	20	15.0%
<b>Other</b>		

Note:  $\sum N \neq 133$  because respondents could tick more than one option.

### 7.5 Number of classes/programmes/activities per annum?

Agency representatives were asked to provide information about the number of classes that they offered per annum. The data presented in the table below indicate that just over half of the agencies/organisations sampled provide between one 1 – 50 classes or programmes per annum. This indicate that most agencies tend to offer a modest number of courses or programmes but the fact must not be overlooked that one third of those sampled provide anywhere between fifty and one hundred courses/programmes per annum and almost one in five of the providing agencies offer more than one hundred courses/programmes.

Table 7: Classes/programmes per annum

<b>Classes p.a.</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>1 – 3</b>	18	13.5%
<b>4 – 10</b>	24	18.0%
<b>11 – 20</b>	18	13.5%
<b>21 – 50</b>	15	11.3%
<b>51 – 100</b>	18	13.5%
<b>100+</b>	25	18.8%
<b>N/A</b>	4	3.0%
<b>Varies</b>	1	0.8%
<b>No Response</b>	10	7.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	N= 133	100%

Four points need to be raised here. First, the data do not differentiate between a one-off course and a programme that may comprise a series of courses. Second, large provider agencies such as secondary schools and the Unitec Institute of Technology, can undoubtedly be described as *super*-providers, not necessarily on account of the quality of what they offer (that was not investigated here) but rather, they are *super* because of the sheer volume of their offerings. Third, and stemming from the previous point, it seems reasonable to suggest that there is a bi-modality of ACE providers in Auckland. On the one hand, there is a relatively large group of agencies who, sometimes in concert with pursuing other imperatives, offer adult and community education

activities. On the other hand, there are a smaller number of agencies, mainly secondary schools, which offer a very large number of learning activities indeed. Fourthly and finally, there was once again little point in splitting these data by district and network. In this instance, the story told by the aggregate of data is more informative than detailing very minor variations in provision patterns across districts which overlap in anyway.

For policy makers, though, this is an interesting finding. It is interesting because the policies and planning directions which are promulgated in the future can either bolster the role and importance of smaller providers, or reinforce the role and status of super-providers or intentionally seek to do both of these things<sup>27</sup>. This complex policy issue extends beyond our brief here but that said it seems apparent that this is a matter that warrants research, exploration and considerable discussion.

Indeed it is reasonable to suggest that research into the implications of future provision ideologies and strategies might usefully be commissioned by the TEC as might a series of pertinent discussion papers. We do not know to what extent, for instance, community agencies are dependent upon the largess of secondary schools (given that schools are currently expected to support community agencies by providing them with tutor hours)? Moreover, we remain largely uninformed about just how responsive to community needs present tutor hour allocations are and we know little about how effective such provisions have been with respect to prompting quality learning outcomes and kick-starting success stories? In fact, we really do not know just how adequate the current level of adult and community education provision is? To what extent does ACE truly support and grow the massively valuable voluntary sector? And how well does the ACE sector succeed in enabling second chance learning opportunities? Just how effective are we at providing for recreational learning within the lifelong learning journey and how open are we to facilitating learning programmes that will bring *joie d' vie* and continued well-being to our rapidly aging population?

## **7.6 Number of participating learners per annum**

Closely related to the number of classes/programmes offered is the matter of the number of participants. Interestingly, those who have studied this field have often shown a predilection for

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<sup>27</sup> Is small (and prolific) beautiful as Schumaker once argued, or are there advantages in developing fewer much larger provider agencies? Whatever route/s policy-makers adopt, two vexatious issues will tease their minds. The first issue has to do with building capacity by ensuring that professional adult and community education organisers appropriately lead the sector. Strategies for growing and developing effective adult and community education leaders, must, however, recognise that the spirit of the fourth sector continues to be rooted in amateurism and voluntarism. In keeping with this, the second issue has to do with the spread of provision. What the community would like to see, what various governments propose and what the TEC in its wisdom determines that it will fund should, ideally, align. In reality, alignment will be difficult and there are bound to be tensions between building a responsive suite of learning activities that effectively address community learning needs, and delivering learning activities efficiently.

amassing data that are tantamount to counting *bums on seats*<sup>28</sup>. It is contended that such measures, while doubtless interesting, need to be considered in tandem with other measures such as perceptions of quality (as determined by whatever evaluative criteria are validly justified), and accounts of successes (as were detailed in *Koia Koia*).

In this study, reporting the average (or mean) number of people taking part in learning activities per annum by institutions is not a useful statistic. This is so because a very large span occurred between the smallest to largest number of participants reported by providers.

To illustrate – it is statistically accurate to report that the average (mean) number of learners participating per provider agency per annum was 2,038 people<sup>29</sup>. But such a statistic is meaningless (or invalid) and only emerged because the range of participants spanned a minimum value of eight people and a maximum census of 53,000 (the guesstimated total of participants per annum reported by one responding agency). The standard deviation (SD), which represents the range of scores above and below the mean, and which accounts for approximately two thirds of reported scores or census numbers, came to 7, 340 people. Such a statistic is clearly nonsense<sup>30</sup>.

More meaningfully, it can be reported that the median (mid-point) census of learners per agency per annum was 500 people with the median for the lower quartile<sup>31</sup> of census numbers provided amounting to 92 learners, per institution, per annum. For the upper quartile the median was 1,350 learners and the inter-quartile range was 1,257 learners.

A straight forward interpretation is possible here despite the bevy of numbers. Quite simply, the reality seems to be that very many providers attract small numbers of learners and some few institutions attract very large numbers indeed. The statistics are clearly bimodal and demonstrate the folly of trying to measure chalk and cheese at the same time. However, the very fuzziness of such results, apart from attesting to the complexity of generating solid measures, also reinforces the case that was advanced in the previous subsection for the TEC commissioning research into this nebulous sector of education.

## 7.7 On Ethnicity, demography and ACE

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<sup>28</sup> Roger Boshier (1970, 1971) gathered data about participation rates in his analysis of clients within three adult education institutions; Roy Shuker provided detailed censuses of participation rates within the WEAs (1984); and John Dakin (1996) penned a history of the sector that provides numerous counts of participation rates. Interestingly, the Waitakere City Council, which funds a series of community houses that provide adult and community education, still requires a head count of people stepping into the premises as a condition of providing ongoing resources.

<sup>29</sup> Some might have been counted more than once because they participated more than once.

<sup>30</sup> A similar nonsensical finding was achieved many years ago when a survey of the recreation wishes conducted in Te Atatu by the Auckland Regional Authority established that a herd of 800 horses would be needed to cater for the riding desires of female students living within that peninsula.

<sup>31</sup> i.e. when all scores are sorted into four quadrants.

Identifying cultural or genetic antecedents within a multi-cultural nation is always going to be an unreliable exercise to undertake, especially when so many New Zealand residents can lay claim to a complex amalgam of ethnic whakapapa. Equally, accurately describing the ethnic composition of ACE learning communities is always going to be ethically problematic because it is an activity of labelling by speculation. More specifically, the assumption is highly contestable that a person who is completing a survey on behalf of an adult and/or community education organisation can reliably adjudge the extent to which a range of ethnic or cultural groups participate in their corner of the ACE sector.

But despite such difficulties, describing who participates remains an important challenge to address. Successful affirmative action practices demand that we first identify groups who warrant access to programmes that are founded upon positive discrimination. They then require that we determine to what extent, if any, affirmative opportunities should be developed and offered. Hence, a case can be made for attempting to describe not only the ethnicities of ACE participants, but also the demographic characteristics of participating groups.

In this exercise, respondents were asked to estimate the proportion of ethnic groups who participated in their organisation and they were also asked to estimate the proportion of participating social groups such as the beneficiaries, the unemployed and the elderly. Results were examined but are not reported here because they were, by and large uninformative. It was found that in this exercise, reporting totals and percentages was inappropriate because respondents could, and rightly did, report participants as belonging to more than one ethnic category. It was also found that providing guestimates about the nature of participating groups was problematic for respondents (many ignored this question). We contend that this item was ethically questionable.

Little emerged, therefore, from these data – they simply tended to reflect the proportionality of the ethnic make-up of that is multi-cultural Aotearoa New Zealand. They also, by and large, mirrored the age distribution of the population of this country although, for reasons that remain unclear, the elderly appeared to be under-nominated as participants within the sector. It is speculated that this apparent phenomenon should be investigated further but in an ethically approved manner.

### **7.8 Staffing and roles of those working in the sector**

One of the questions within the survey inquired about the number of staff who work within the sector. This matter, however, can give rise to confusion because there may not be clarity about just what a worker is. Is a worker the person who arranges the activities and courses; is the administrative assistant a worker; are tutors workers, or are they, as their title suggests tutors (and not facilitators); and just who and what is a professional in this field?

Specifically, two items about work and workers were included in this survey but the data that were gathered were not very informative because of the imprecision of the nomenclature that was attached to the question and because the bimodal nature of the results skewed the data awkwardly. The one item sought to determine how many part-time and full-time staff are involved in the sector and the second inquired about whether or not workers were 'professional'. Again, we note that the term professional is problematic if only because it is possible to classify a worker as professional simply because they are being paid, and it is also possible for a volunteer to behave as a professional in the delivery of services. (Later qualitative comments affirm this. See Section 7.11.)

In this study, an average of one and a half staffing positions for part-time staff was reported across the Waitakere, North Shore and Auckland survey catchment areas (mean = 1.54, SD = 1.64, range = 0 – 10) but the median (mid-point) that was reported amounted to one part-time worker. This indicates that the sector is relatively bereft of workers and where there are workers, they tend to be employed on a part-time basis<sup>32</sup>. In fact only 65 agencies across the three areas reported that they employed staff but there were also a number of agencies who reported that they did not know if part-time staff were employed. Overall, the impression is strong, however, that there are few people working within the sector. And overall, it seems, there are even fewer full-time workers in the sector.

Findings across those catchment areas indicated that full-time workers are few and far between. In all, only 23 agencies reported employing full-time adult and community education staff and the average staffing number was, again, very low (Mean=0.74, SD=1.09, range 0 – 5 workers reported)<sup>33</sup>.

In summary, the data suggest that few agencies in the ACE sector have staff – and if they do, they don't have very many. Consequences such as developing the capacities of those employed within the sector were not canvassed as a part of this study and neither were issues such as networking, supervision and working conditions. A qualitative study into the working circumstances of those who are engaged with the sector may be appropriate because clearly, such a project would explore that matter and others too.

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<sup>32</sup> It is a well known belief that a part-time worker who is employed for around 0.5 of a full-time equivalent position, almost invariably is believed to provide about 0.8 of effort in order to be able to complete job requirements in a professional manner. Although the authors of this report acknowledge that this belief is a popularist one, there are issues that flow from this. First, there are issues about whether or not an agency that employs people on a part-time basis is being a good employer. Are they, as we suspect is the case, expecting far too much from staff and not paying them their dues because they do not have the income stream to be able to do so? Moreover, are the employees, through largess and good will, protecting the sector from the reality that more personnel are needed? These are vexed questions that lie beyond the parameters of this report but they remain, nevertheless, important matters for the TEC and the sector to address.

<sup>33</sup> The median of zero was misleading because a number of respondents reported that their agency employed no-one.

The matter of how many people contribute as tutors in either a paid capacity or in a voluntary manner was explored. But as noted above, the interpretations that can be associated with the term professional can include a person who derives an income from the process of tutoring or a person who gives similar or equivalent services, in a professional manner, but without remuneration.

Whatever the interpretation, it was found that an average of 14.47 people were involved as tutors with agencies (SD=42.44, range = 0 – 230, Median = 2). Again, if the median (half-way statistic) is taken as being most indicative, the implication becomes obvious – the sector, while widespread tends to comprise agencies that operate on a small scale and some fewer agencies that employ or engage many tutors. In this study, the large numbers of people employed by very few agencies have skewed the data but this merely reinforces earlier commentary about the bimodal nature of agencies – many that are very small indeed and a few that are very large.

Interestingly, there was practically a mirror result with regard to agencies reporting on the involvement of others (non-tutors). It was found that an average of 14.56 people are involved in non-tutor roles (SD=62.25, Range 0 – 500 people, Median=2). Again, this reinforces the observation that agencies range from being very small through to large but overall, it should be noted that the data were not very robust.

### **7.9 The longevity of ACE providers and a willingness to work collaboratively**

The durability of agencies was explored. Responding agencies were asked to indicate for how long they had been in existence and it was found, perhaps surprisingly, that there is a great deal of durability or resilience in the sector. On average, agencies had been in operation for nearly twenty years (Mean=19.0 years; SD=4.0 years, Range 2- 70 years, Median=14.5 years). But as can be seen from the standard deviation, virtually two thirds had been offering their particular brand of adult and community education for between 15 – 23 years.

This suggests, and we acknowledge that we are being quite speculative in our interpretation here, that some member agencies from the sector have taken on the hallowed features of being icons. In short, although the data do not allow us to demonstrate this, we believe that those who offer services for the sector have a degree of permanency that makes them iconoclastic insofar as the lifelong learning landscape is concerned. They need not be large agencies and they need not be heavily in the public eye – they may, in fact be small and low key. And probably, in most instances they are.

The point to make is that we do not know about their nature, their aspirations and whether or not the thrust of their provision has morphed over time to keep up with whatever is seen by

consumers as fashionable. And neither do we know if adaptation is occasioned by an intention to be responsive or if it is precipitated by a continuous change of participating populations.

What we do suspect, however, is that parts of the sector are as entrenched as they are amorphous – they are as indelible a part of Aotearoa New Zealand as is rugby but are not as markedly present as is rugby if only because they remain, unlike rugby, largely the domain of amateurs. We concur with Peter McIntosh who wrote in the 1960s that “New Zealand’s amateur system is at once its greatest strength and weakness<sup>34</sup>” and suggest that his statement probably remains true today if only because durable ACE agencies, mainly staffed by volunteers, seem to be the norm. That those agencies mainly wish to improve their processes of collaboration is consistent with a sector seeking to improve its lot by improving the capacities of its army of amateurs – its vast number of volunteers. The table below indicates that the willingness to collaborate is strong but how effective collaborative processes currently are remains unknown. Again, finding out about such matters may be a fruitful activity for the sector to undertake and it is likely that such exploration would be qualitative in approach.

Table 8: Willingness to work collaboratively

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Yes/Very Interested</b>	89	66.9%
<b>Not Relevant</b>	35	26.3%
<b>No Response</b>	9	6.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	N= 133	100%

### 7.10 Interpreting data about frequently encountered ACE activities with caution...

While it is nearly always interesting for those who are involved with adult and community education to find out what is most likely to be encountered by way of community activities, such data alone are seldom sufficient to fully understand the sector. It is thus essential that policy, planning and provision be informed by richer and broader data. This means that policy makers and planners need to determine, with information and help from the leaders and providers of the sector, not only who is participating, how often and when – but also, just how committed such participants are to proffered activities<sup>35</sup>. And even more importantly, those who are providing for the sector must collaboratively establish who can’t participate and why they cannot. Only when they are armed with such full information can policy makers and planners, in tandem with leaders and providers from the sector, generate responsive mandates that inform the provision of adequate

<sup>34</sup> This quote was used by the late R.N. Larkin in his paper “Providing for Leisure”. The paper was widely distributed by the Community Activities section of the Auckland Regional Authority in the early 1970s.

<sup>35</sup> One instance that springs to mind is that once, many years ago, when a recreation survey was conducted in Te Atatu, it was discovered that horse riding was an activity that was likely to attract a high following (see also footnote # 30). The expressed popularity of this activity was such that experts even forecast that some 800 horses would be needed to cater for this army of would-be riders. What was not asked, was how involved those riders would be and what funding they had to support this expensive activity.

resource platforms. And only when mandates and resources have been arrived at collaboratively will agencies be able to effectively determine how best to appropriately provide for warranted activities. There is, therefore, a need for professional collaboration and investigations which probe beyond the surface of the fourth sector.

We need, consequently, to caution that simply providing a list of often encountered activities (such as that which appears below) might not be very informative. In short, we do not want readers to interpret these data as they would a league table. Quite simply, a list is not valid in isolation and anyway, there is no significant difference, in a statistical sense, between listed activities.

We stress instead that reliable understanding enlightens sound policy construction and such understanding is best achieved when it is informed by data that have been objectively gathered. Furthermore, planning typically manifests policy and the effectiveness of planning is also to a certain extent, contingent upon exemplory data having been gathered and carefully considered. Hence we reiterate the need for professional collaboration and for investigations being mounted which probe not just beyond the surface of the fourth sector but also below it. To that extent, the sector and the TEC might well consider sponsoring a range of investigative activities. And even though research has not yet featured highly as a priority for the TEC and the various networks that are to be found in the Auckland isthmus, it is our view that these research activities should be mounted sooner rather than later.

Table 9: Clusters of ACE activities

1	Recreation & Health	33/133
2	Personal Development	31/133
3	ESOL	32/133
4	Craft	28/133
5	Parenting	26/133
6	Computing & Business	24/133
7	Volunteer	23/133
8	Languages	23/133
9	Home Management	22/133
10	Literacy	20/133

### **7.11 Interpreting the qualitative data that respondents contributed**

This survey generated predominantly quantitative data which has meant that descriptive statistics comprising mainly frequency counts were generated with percentages calculated. But there were some opportunities for respondents to generate written commentary. Data that stem

from written commentary comprise words that need to be interpreted<sup>36</sup> which means that those data are qualitative.

But whereas even a fairly small body of quantitative data enables analysts to largely ensure that a degree of definitiveness is achieved, a small amount of qualitative data seldom enables a full picture to emerge for the qualitative analyst. Typically, therefore, qualitative researchers need to garner a great deal of corroborative evidence in order to be able to draw robust conclusions. Thus they need a relatively large volume of evidence<sup>37</sup> even though a myriad of words invariably means that data are messy and can be subjected to almost as many interpretations as there are words.

In the case of this study, the small body of data that was obtained data was transcribed to enable the data to reside in electronic form within a computer (in tandem with the Excel data-base that was established to store the quantitative data). Notably, the qualitative data from this study were prepared so that they could potentially, they can, if the occasion arises, be analysed using a software package called QSR N6<sup>38</sup>. This software enables sense to be made in a relatively short time-frame of large volumes of qualitative data but in this instance, because the body of data were so small, there was no call to engage this application.

In this mapping exercise, two questions only invited qualitative responses and the qualitative data that were forthcoming were, generally speaking, lean in volume and bereft of detail. One question asked respondents to self-assess whether or not they, or someone else from their organisation, were a professional adult and community leader<sup>39</sup>. In providing written responses to this question, forty-two respondents furnished a sum of only two pages of transcribed data which means, as noted above, that the corpus of data to be interpreted was lean.

The final question, which simply invited final comments, similarly elicited only two pages of data but this time from twenty-three respondents. Again, therefore, the point must be made that the qualitative data from this survey were lean in volume. But as noted, they were also lean in quality as is often the case when open ended questions are included within survey forms

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<sup>36</sup> The word '*interpret*' needs explanation. Although qualitative researchers do take account of the degree of regularity with which responses occur, they are more interested in discerning meanings than they are frequencies. Indeed, the exception to the rule may be hugely important even if the frequency is very low.

<sup>37</sup> The plan though, is not to gather a hugely unwieldy mass of data, but rather, to obtain a thorough body of focused data that addresses whatever issues are being investigated in a thorough manner whilst also allowing for other unanticipated discoveries to be further explored.

<sup>38</sup> QSR N6 is one of a suite of qualitative research applications that have been developed by Qualitative Solutions and Research, a Melbourne based company. The software is used extensively by academics and researchers throughout the world and enables researchers to work with non-numerical, non-structured data (i.e. qualitative data) which they then index, systematise in order to develop theory. They do this through iterative passes of data analysis. For further details about the software, contact the principal author who is an accredited trainer and software distributor for QSR.

<sup>39</sup> The use of the word 'leader' is interesting here. Presumably, because this is about the ACE sector, the word educator might have been just as appropriate if not more so.

that are administered for self-completion. Indeed, when respondents have to contend with a paucity of writing space and a cramped time-frame, data quality invariably suffers. For this study, there was little space in which to respond and the open ended question appeared as the final item within a survey that had taken many of the respondents a good deal of time to complete.

As noted above, the first open ended question asked whether or not respondents perceived either themselves or someone else from their organisation as a *professional* adult and community education *leader*? Respondents were also asked to explain why they had such a perception. Little focus was evident on working with women but the question posed was not about that. Some responded about youth, young mothers, the arts, literacy, La Leche, Pacific families and Maori families. Here is what they said:

Most of my work is Com Ed and we serve a very distinct sector of community – women. Work hard to provide something for all different types of women.

Engaged with youth under 16.

I have worked with at “Risk Youth” for eleven years and I have a very large extended whanau;

We operate under Te Poutama Painga – Quality assurance standards of Literacy of Aotearoa. We have also developed our own programme of Family Literacy in partnership with the Pacific Womens Group;

As a qualified Adult Educator, Maori woman that is particularly interested in support for local need and has participated in the collective networks nationally and locally and I believe I have still lots to offer;

I attempt to create opportunities in the arts that people of all ages can actively engage with. These opportunities embrace the philosophy of lifelong education for the learning society to enhance intrinsic qualities of life as well as empower people through learning new skills that relate to their lives in a changing world.

Both part time co-ordinators deal with our Adult Education programme besides co-ordinating all other activities and fulfilling management duties.

We employ 5 professional family workers/ counsellors/ social workers.

In a few instances, respondents aligned themselves with very specific programmes as the following responses reveal:

The NZ Federation of family Budgeting train people to be tutors. Tutors take twelve modular basic Training Course plus three hour on-going training modules;

La Leche League Leaders are internationally trained and accredited by LLL International;

A range of interpretations about being a professional was apparent. Teachers from schools saw themselves as professionals but elsewhere in the survey, they sometimes pointed out that the main role of their agency concerns the education of children. Some respondents felt that

the fact that they were being paid bestowed upon themselves a professional status. Others, however, saw the processes associated with adult and community education as being important – in other words, these respondents, who were volunteers, viewed their approach as professional. The following quotes illustrate these various views:

Leadership role in ACE at local, regional and national levels;

Very involved at both local and national level for a number of years and continue to be so;

I have been teacher Adult Education for 10 years I am the school principal;

Being a school, we are now a professional and community leader;

A little difficult to “blow one’s own trumpet” but gave this a lot of thought and decided as my entire “working life” is geared to ACE paid/unpaid I do see myself as a professional leader;

Programme provides courses against MOE criteria. Each course is evaluated. Suggestions are encouraged and actioned if necessary. Tutors references are checked and police checked if working with children and youth. Network with similar providers and keep abreast of current trends and research.

Some respondents were not clear about the intention behind the question. This quote illustrates that:

Not sure what you mean by this, we are professional (we get paid) in many ways we do lead?

Many referred to their experience and indicated that they had little formal training and this may indicate that the TEC, in building the capacity of the sector, needs to encourage the sector to provide continuing professional development for its membership:

Have relevant academic qualifications and ‘university of life’ experience. Treating and implementing and reporting on programmes in a professional manner;

Twenty five years involvement in education in various sectors. All advisors need to be leaders as we are Pacific people with a background in education as tutors or administrators BUT we do not have formal/prof. qualifications;

Yes, in most respects but I do not have training in adult education.

I know there may be people in my Tuvalu Community who can professionally educate my people. But that does not mean that we don’t need outside help.

It must be pointed out that although only a few respondents indicated that they had little formal training and nobody actually requested training, this issue illustrates precisely why, in qualitative research, analysts are likely seize upon exceptions rather than repeatable regularities. In short, these statements are important for those who want to build the capacity of the sector and they cohere with the priorities of the TEC insofar as building capacity is concerned.

By contrast to those who felt that they do not have formal qualifications, there were some who indicated that they had a great deal of experience and they also detailed the span of their work. They indicated that the sum of their qualifications and their range of work enabled them to readily self-classify as professionals:

I have worked in the field of adult education since 1989. I have a BEd (Adult Education). I have taught communication skills, adult literacy and ESOL in the field of adult education. I have been an MIT employee and worked as co-ordinator for the South Auckland Literacy Scheme and The South Auckland ESOL Home Tutor Service. I was on the Manukau Literacy Taskforce for three years.

A Community Learning Centre in School. Government funded position, with responsibility for community development and networking. Member of professional organisations plus deliver seminars, workshops, etc. occasionally. Support part-time colleagues.

Have extensive network within Pacific communities, Strong Educational Background. Believe in working collaboratively to strategise for meeting learner needs, Extensive experience in working with other crown agencies and have formed relationships within those sectors. Experience in working with MoE 6.5 yrs on ministry office's – to name but a few.

The theme of being a solo worker emerged often and the qualitative findings were consistent with the quantitative data that also explored staffing levels. In some instances, professional responsibilities were also described but little data was really evident (and neither had it been sought) about what it was, precisely that adult and community educators do. This may well be a facet that is worth exploring in a future exploration of the sector<sup>40</sup>:

As I am the only one working in Com. Ed. It must be yes;

We see ourselves more as community arts provider. I call myself an arts manager or a venue manager;

I am the Sole manager of the scheme.

Both our counsellors/teachers are highly qualified, good communicators and mature women of good standing;

The Project Help Life Skills System is what I developed and teach/support people who seek help for themselves or others (family/business colleagues etc.);

I am in sole charge of the programme and am responsible for tutor pay, programming, organising classes, etc.;

My job is to co-ordinate the whole programme - a very professional job;

There is a full-time community learning centre co-ordinator;

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<sup>40</sup> The book by Shepherd and Hansen on the REAPs in New Zealand (2001) provides a scan of the work of early Community Education Organisers but there has not really been any exploration of the role-sets of various adult and community educators since the reforms of the 1990s. Now that the TEC has been formed, such an appraisal may well be timely, if only to document what it is that the sector provides and to gauge what developmental needs might be present.

Our Co-ordinator is constantly evaluating and changing courses to meet the needs of the community;

It is my responsibility to keep up with development in the ACE sector and to ensure I pass this information to my tutors, employees and management board. It is also my responsibility to ensure our organization provides courses that our community wants.

Some respondents described the health of their agency and indicated their reliance upon key personnel. Others noted professional issues such as participation in continuing professional development:

We provide a consistent professional service within the community which even under extreme financial constraints over the years is still providing quality service after 30 years;

We are currently in a more secure position than we have ever been because of the efforts and skills of one person;

Participating in many networks and organisations including national organisations and have philosophy driving practise;

Been involved for six years. Attend all professional development days.

Another comment described the pending merger of a smaller agency with a very large one. For reasons of confidentiality, we have decided that the quote pertaining to this intended merger is not going to be exposed to the public arena. Suffice it to note that the important point which emerges is that this could be an indication of things to come. In this particular instance, a smaller agency that has served the educational and welfare interests of an ethnic minority for many years is joining onto<sup>41</sup> a high-school adult and community education programme and the move to do this is not questioned by us at all. The issue that arises, however, centres on how the cultural integrity of the small agency will be preserved as opposed to being assimilated<sup>42</sup> totally into the culture of the larger organisation.

As noted at the outset of this section, the second open-ended question that was included in the survey invited respondents to provide additional comments and in total, twenty-three people provided data that covered two pages only of print. Within the comments received, were those from a number of respondents who were apologetic for either not having understood aspects of the survey form or for having returned their data late.

One theme that emerged, and which has been discussed elsewhere within this report, was the gratitude (perhaps dependence) that some sectors expressed about being able to receive even a modicum of community hours. The single quote below illustrates this point most succinctly:

<sup>41</sup> Note that the term join onto has been used as opposed to joining with.

<sup>42</sup> The late Alistair Cook in one of his numerous "Letters from America" pointed out that assimilation is but a gentle form of cultural genocide.

This is the first year we have received funding from A.C.E. We received 60 community hours which is hardly adequate to requirements. We have voluntary run Te Reo classes for the past ten years. We would be keen to receive funding pool. This would help us better plan our year.

Another agency described the burgeoning need for extending their services. See how they reported this matter:

We have a huge demand from the public to provide weekend and evening classes. The cost of running these is prohibitive without sponsorship for tutor hours because the charge to the public would make it unacceptable. We provide an entry point with our gallery, to critically reflect on the issues that are raised through art exhibitions. We are then able to provide entry through art processes to the work and questions raised by the work creating a springboard for understanding and participating through making.

Some agencies noted that they provide a range of services and yet others indicated that they would like to participate in networking; still others said that they did not necessarily perceive themselves as belonging to the fourth sector and some commented that there remains a definite role for government to play in the provision of adult and community education. This smorgasbord of quotes illustrates the diversity of comments that were received:

Our requirements are slightly outside your parameters, we are grateful for help WACEA has for our tutor for our combined (Waitakere) Basic Training for volunteer workers;

Great to be contacted like this to link in more widely. We have a role to play as a Pacific peak body;

Our organization is a strong supporter of all forms of community ed. believing that it promotes empowerment, equity, critical thinking and active citizenship;

We are a community organisation contracting to Ministry of Health and Child Youth and Family Services. All the community education we provide is part of our daily work with Pacific communities and youth;

It is my view that a lot more local govt depts. should take an interest in what is happening in com. education i.e. (WINZ) and inform our local organisations of resources that could be applied for from their budgets that could help us provide for the beneficiaries we service.

Much of our education is informal and ad hoc;

Standardised courses offered and sharing resources and delivery techniques;

We offer our programmes to parents, grandparents and caregivers of children. Our interest is in child abuse prevention;

Some agencies indicated that they do not work independently and others found difficulties in completing the survey form. However, the overwhelming message to emerge was that, by and large, respondents were supportive of the efforts that the TEC and the sector are

making to facilitate networking. Accordingly, we would recommend that the sector continue to network and that the TEC sustain the supportive stance that it has assumed. Although we note that one agency indicated that it would be prepared to pay to join the TEC network, the reality is that the fourth sector remains, relatively speaking, financially lean although it undoubtedly offers a very rich cuisine of activities from which the community can select:

The Salvation Army network amongst themselves and other partnerships of their choosing in the community already;

Because of the nature and size of Unitec, many of the questions were difficult to answer.

This only captures about 50% of our work. Often is not course related but just as valuable. I hope the level of detail required doesn't put people off completing this form.

Sorry – not sure if we even fit the criteria – but have sent it on to the AVP co-ordinator.

We support Auckland Volunteer Centre and liaison (sic) with other groups. WADCOSS, Man Alive and others.

Sorry that I haven't filled out all of the areas as I am only new to this job – still don't understand all the questions. Also sorry for the lateness in returning this form.

Sorry if this seems very vague but at the moment we struggle to fill the classes though clients often come in to register but don't actually attend. I believe we offer some great courses but struggle with advertising. A book that advertises all courses on offer in places like CAB, WINZ, the Courts, schools, etc. would be great.

Information as an example of our programme attached. (*In fact, no attachment was supplied*)

This is the first time we've had contact with ACE.

Sorry I'm late (as ever). Hope I didn't stuff up your survey but I do believe us "odd sods" have a place in the sector! Cheers!

Keen to be a paying member of this network. How do we go about it?

## **8. Concluding comments and steps towards doing it all better**

It is appropriate to conclude this report by critically reflecting upon what the fourth sector really is up to and to what extent, if at all, its persona has altered over the long years of its existence. It is indisputable that the fourth sector has the potential to promote economic and social development. Some two and a half centuries ago, Nicolai Frederik Grundtvig, a Danish Lutheran priest who was disaffected with the trend towards speaking German that was occurring within the Danish Parliament, courts and bureaucracies, conceived of the folk high school movement. He perceived folk high schools as providing a language nest. They were a cultural portal to perpetuating the language – they were a strategy that used community education to sustain the

language status quo. Grundtvig's intention was to have ordinary people learn about ordinary things through a process of community education with adults and children learning together. The language of instruction was to be Danish.

In the process, he not only preserved the Danish Language, but also inspired, some two hundred years later, Miles Horton to develop the Highlander Center in the Appalachian Mountains in the USA. That centre became the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement that was embodied in the personage of the late Martin Luther King; that centre also provided a rendezvous at which Peter, Paul and Mary began their careers; and that venue was, in many, many ways, symbolic of the ACE sector at its very best.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the ACE sector, wittingly or otherwise, been quietly influential, albeit not on such a grand scale as Highlander. It has, for instance, cradled the kohanga reo movement, the language nest of Aotearoa. The impact of that nest on New Zealand is inestimable – kohunga have grown the Maori language and have infused a greater sense of awareness of Kitanga Maori amongst Pakeha. For workers, the WEAs have a long history of involvement that dates back to the Lyceum and Athenaeum Clubs which flourished at the turn of the last century<sup>43</sup>. There is also a rich history of communities using schools during out of school hours that dates back to 1935 to the original four at Fielding, Westport, Risingholme and Mt Eden. The ledger of successful adult literacy schemes that operate throughout our country remains impressive and the thirteen REAPs that work within rural New Zealand continue to provide in many varied ways. And although some players within the tertiary sector have recently proven themselves to be very adroit at exacting revenue from government<sup>44</sup>, there is also clear evidence that polytechnics, universities and colleges of education have entered the arena of providing for recurrent education in a serious manner. Clearly Wananga, who also provide community based learning activities as a pre-cursor to entering tertiary education, are now the fastest growing and very largest of all tertiary providers<sup>45</sup>. There is, in short, a complex mosaic of activity in the fourth sector in New Zealand. Understanding that mosaic is always going to prove to be very challenging indeed.

Mapping the sector, however, cannot possibly reveal the extent to which adult and community education impacts upon New Zealand but if data are gathered about the manner in which, and the extent to which, the fourth sector permeates the lives of New Zealanders, some form of appreciation will at least begin to emerge. And given changes that have occurred in work

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<sup>43</sup> That the Lange government tried to sink them without trace by withdrawing funds remains tragic but despite this, the WEAs continue to play an important role within the sector.

<sup>44</sup> They have done this by mounting adult and community education activities and using free courses to create revenue generating EFTS. The recent instance where the government called into question the practices of the Christchurch Polytechnic illustrates this.

<sup>45</sup> So large that the number of EFTS that are available for community education has been capped.

patterns within New Zealand, we reason that future research might also investigate the provision of more flexible access for learners. The Internet affords potential here.

Thus while it may be appealing for the sector and for the TEC to further a mapping exercise of the sector by engaging the Internet, some cautionary notes need to be sounded. The first of these proposes that those undertaking any form of mapping exercises should ensure that they are quite clear about their objectives and about how they might attend to dealing with data that may be gathered. To undertake any form of investigation without such forethought is almost certainly going to dent the effectiveness of the final outcomes.

The second note of caution is to propose that other research procedures should be used in tandem with the Internet if indeed the Internet is used for gathering mapping data. In fact, we suggest that in future, data should certainly be gathered at least partially by harnessing the Internet because, as this small study has revealed, some ninety per cent of all ACE agencies that were sampled have access to the Internet.

But what these data do not reveal, is the extent to which groups which are considered to be traditionally information poor, are able to access such technology. They did not, by and large, participate in this survey. It remains especially probable, in our view, that Pacific Island peoples from many districts will not have access to the Internet and similarly, it is probable that welfare beneficiaries will have a lesser level of Internet access than those who are in work<sup>46</sup>. Hence, alternative strategies should also be developed so that information poor agencies do not become left off the map. That means that fieldwork approaches to networking are needed and that an undue reliance upon the Internet as a tool for data gathering would be inappropriate. This also means that should this exercise be repeated in South Auckland, there will need to be careful and sustained consultation about intended outcomes, research/mapping objectives, the intended methodologies and methods, and the destiny of emergent reports keeping in mind that not everyone has access to the Internet.

The third cautionary note is to observe that irrespective of the strategies used to generate a snapshot of what is going on at the moment, a snapshot only ever captures and freezes a single point in time. Thus data gathered adhere solely to that time-point and, like a photograph, become very quickly obsolete. This means that if mapping data are to be used to inform plans for the sector at some future time, and a time delay has occurred, the data are likely to be less valid because changed circumstances will have quickly superseded them. In other words, policy makers, planners and programmers should ensure that the data they engage to assist their work are routinely

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<sup>46</sup> It must also be remembered that research completed in the latter part of the last century demonstrated that people who were out of work tended to have the lowest participation rates in education for leisure and in recreation activities generally.

updated. It is useful here to reiterate the quote that was derived from Jennie Harré Hindmarsh and which was cited earlier in this report. She said:

...“...the key issues and struggles remain constant... Whether involved in learning through marae, local or national community groups or voluntary organisations, schools, tertiary institutions or private training establishments or in the context of the paid workplace adult educators continue to be preoccupied both with gaining greater resources and resourcing to the contribution of the sector to the development of communities, the nation and individuals and with issues of inequities in provision and access. Like the kaleidoscope, the specifics of the patterns keep changing but the basic colours stay the same – the more things appear to change, the more they stay the same...”

(Harré Hindmarsh, in Benseman, Findsen & Scott (Eds.), 1996, p.75).

It must also be remembered that mapping exercises, if they are to be completed effectively, incur cost both in terms of time and resources. Governments have routinely proven themselves to be cautious when it comes to funding the ACE sector and the sector itself is indelibly voluntary. This means that time is of the essence and that includes busy volunteers. Mapping is likely, therefore, to slip down the priority list unless bold decisions are made at the outset.

Finally, in order to achieve a heightened level of awareness of the sector, a parallel form of research is also needed. A mixture of research strategies involving both quantitative and qualitative procedures should be drawn upon but more importantly, a well reasoned research agenda should be developed. We propose that further research should especially be undertaken which might clarify the intersections that exist between the voluntary sector and the ACE sector with particular reference to the manner in which the ACE sector provides a training and development platform for the voluntary sector. We further propose that such study should be interdisciplinary in nature and as we noted above, it should be both quantitative and qualitative in nature. In our view, it should be completed by a TEC formed team of researchers comprising one or more investigators who are familiar with economic research, one or more who are familiar with the ACE sector, and one or more who are familiar with the voluntary sector. Alternatively, as we noted earlier in this report, future work might involve the preparation of a series of qualitative case studies undertaken in a manner that is consistent with *Koia! Koia!* Such case studies should be framed so that they highlight issues that the sector and the TEC should be addressing. And again, as stated before, if the TEC is serious about undertaking community *engagement*, such a way forward should be obligatory and should be required by the Minister who has responsibility for the field.

Within this report, we have proposed a large number of items that might become included in such an investigation. It is now, rightfully, over to members of ACE to critique our suggestions and to make recommendations to the TEC about how best it might commence engagement with the fourth sector. Perhaps, to that end, the Internet website that has been sponsored by the TEC for bolstering networking should be accessed. To put your viewpoint about what should happen next

and to provide your feedback about this report, we suggest that you visit the website at <http://www.acenetworks.co.nz>

Dr Jens J. Hansen & Belinda M. R. Hansen, October, 2004

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<sup>47</sup> Not all works that were cited within the report made their way into this reference list. For instance, the Australian Federal Government report "Come in Cinderella" has not been included because our copy of the report is in storage. The paper by the later R.N Larkin ("Providing for Leisure") was not detailed as our copy has been archived. Similarly, the various books by R.S. Peters are not listed because, as was explained in an earlier footnote, the principal author is familiar with his work and neither, for similar reasons, were any of the citation details of works by Ivan Illich cited. Finally, the references to Boshier and various others who investigated either the history of the ACE sector in NZ or the patterns of participation were derived from Harré Hindmarsh's reference list the contents of which were not unknown.

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