



WESTERN CAPE
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP

10 YEARS OF PARTNERING AND COLLABORATION IN ACTION

Creating change, together

In celebration of ten years working as a collaborative intermediary organisation in the Western Cape economic development ecosystem and beyond, we look back on the many challenges faced and lessons learned, and forward to a new era of growth and change.



A flock of scavenging African sacred ibis take to the sky over Cape Town's Coastal Park landfill in Muizenberg, one of the city's last two operational landfills.



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Ashoek Adhikari

Chair of the EDP Board of Directors

Over the past decade, the EDP has established itself as a respected intermediary organisation using innovative collaborative methodologies in the Western Cape, improving the performance of the region's socio-economic development system. Our partnering solutions' success has been recognised, creating a demand for us to extend our reach locally and nationally.

South Africa continues to face enormous challenges with the capacity and capability of state and society, making it essential to build social cohesion and encourage a culture of participation and inclusion to meet future challenges. I believe the EDP and its practical ways of helping people collaborate will continue to play an important role in our country.

To commemorate the EDP's tenth anniversary, this publication reflects on the

challenges we've helped our partners address, the partnering tools we developed, and the many lessons learned. We've developed partnering implementation methods that go beyond abstract theory. We do partnering that solves problems.

I would like to thank current and past board members for their firm strategic guidance and governance oversight. I commend current and former EDP staff for their indispensable contribution to this organisation. To our partners who have trusted our guidance over the past decade, we appreciate your faith in our collaborative and adaptive approach. And to the Western Cape Government, City of Cape Town and many municipalities, your continued support and willingness to work the EDP way is invaluable and greatly appreciated.



Andrew Borraine

EDP CEO

It all started over a coffee in Doppio Zero in the Cape Town city centre in October 2010.

At the time, I was CEO of the Cape Town Partnership (CTP), a cross-sector urban regeneration partnership operating in Cape Town Central City since 1999. Alan Winde, then Western Cape Minister for Finance and Economic Development, was curious to see if the CTP approach could be applied more broadly to mobilising and organising stakeholders in the Western Cape (WC) economy. We agreed to give it a try.

In 2011, after twelve frantic months of activity, with advice from international experts like Prof. Greg Clark, and funding support from National Treasury's Technical Advisory Unit, the Western Cape Economic Development Partnership (EDP) was launched on 26 April 2012, with the City of Cape Town and the WC Government as the EDP's core funding partners. Former Cabinet

Minister Barbara Hogan was elected the first EDP Board chairperson.

The EDP has since convened and promoted a wide range of issue-based and area-based partnering processes with diverse stakeholders, promoting collaboration and collective impact in the WC economy. Not every initiative worked as it was envisioned, but each presented an opportunity to learn.

I would like to personally thank Premier Winde for believing in the power of relationships and creating space for doing things differently. I would also like to thank my EDP colleagues who work with integrity creating safe spaces for dialogue and joint action in low-trust environments. It has been an incredible journey of helping to make change, together.





Our Journey of Change

Established in 2012 to improve the performance of the Cape Town and Western Cape economic development system, the Western Cape Economic Development Partnership (EDP) is an independent, public benefit, not-for-profit collaborative intermediary organisation that assists different sectors to work together cohesively to solve complex societal issues and system challenges, to help develop the Western Cape and national economy and improve people's lives.

Using practical and inclusive partnering methodologies, refined over time, we guide stakeholders on their journey of change and help them address complex or 'stuck' problems. Initially, we sought to bring together a single partnership for the regional economy, however we discovered early on that this approach failed to address the needs of many diverse and competing interests. Instead, we refined our approach to convene and steer partnering processes within specific themes or systems such as water, safety and food, and to build collaborations across geographic areas such as neighbourhoods, precincts, municipalities or regions.

Today the EDP works closely with the three spheres of government in the Western Cape to provide whole-of-government collaboration and partnering solutions. This focuses on transversal alignment within the public sector, as well as relationships between government spheres. We also take a whole-of-society approach, connecting public, private, non-profit, community and knowledge sectors in partnering for action and change.

The EDP supports diverse stakeholders to harness each other's energy, knowledge and resources for collaborative impact and change through:

- Implementing partnering frameworks to facilitate inclusive stakeholder engagement and joint problem identification through systems thinking and analysis.
- Promoting knowledge-building activities and learning, supporting dialogues, learning networks and communities of practice.
- Building adaptive leadership capabilities.

Our vision for the future is to continue to act locally, while sharing our lessons nationally, as seen with the recently launched Changemaker Towns Network, a forum that supports local cross-sector partnerships in towns throughout South Africa.



The Role of Intermediary Organisations in Creating Change

In a developmental context, Collaborative Intermediary Organisations (CIOs) guide people and their organisations on journeys of change for the benefit of society. They are particularly effective in situations that have become polarised, when there is an absence of trust, and when stakeholders struggle to understand each other and work together. Intermediaries help partners agree on the root causes of the problem, identify a common agenda and language despite diverse perspectives, and convert dialogue into joint action.

Leading transition scholars Jan Rotmans and Derk Loorbach, of Erasmus University Rotterdam, define the role of effective intermediary organisations as “helping to unfreeze positions, create space, reconfigure system boundaries and relationships, and build capacity to organise innovative practices and find new solutions”.

Drawing on the EDP’s experience over the past ten years, we have learned that the intermediary role requires the ability to listen deeply, respect different voices and positions, evaluate contrary mindsets and world views, and balance competing interests and power relations in the system. Our work also requires an understanding of human social behaviour and institutional cultures to help stakeholders understand each other and work together. We build trust between stakeholders by inspiring joint-action and mutual accountability, all while continually assessing progress and adapting the approach as needed.

Effective intermediaries focus on ‘what’s strong’ rather than ‘what’s wrong’, highlight pockets of success through storytelling, and knit these stories together through knowledge-sharing networks and building communities of practice.

CIOs pay close attention to the ‘in between’, often contested spaces between different parties, and work to curate and facilitate spaces where stakeholders can iron out their concerns and create solutions that are bigger than the sum of those involved.



Partnering

Turning Challenges into Opportunities

The EDP's tenth anniversary has been an opportunity to reflect on the bigger picture. We remain convinced that collaboration and partnering has the potential to exponentially improve development outcomes and produce better results. Helping stakeholders work towards 'collective impact' includes doing more with less, a necessity in times of economic slow-down and shrinking resources.

The complex systemic challenges that face our country are of such a nature that they require the intervention of collaborative and adaptive approaches if they are to be set right. Our role is to take our partners on a journey of change using methodologies and practices that help to turn challenges into opportunities by forging new connections and new ways of responding.

Un-resolved complex problems

Many development challenges are persistent: violence and lack of safety, youth unemployment, childhood stunting, homelessness, and urban spatial fragmentation, to mention a few. These type of problems are characterised by low certainty and limited agreement, which makes conventional programming and delivery models less effective. The EDP assists partners to tackle these structural problems through a process of systems thinking, collaboration and continual learning and adaptation, approaches which are more suited to dealing with complex issues.

Poor implementation

Despite the many strategies, policies and plans, implementation is often lacking in post-1994 South Africa. Too often, public, private and voluntary resources are invested into parallel, misaligned and even competing projects. The EDP supports our partners to turn plans into action, by helping identify who needs to work together, and how to work together in practice, to achieve tangible results through action.

Declining state capacity

South Africa's state has been severely weakened over the last decade, through corruption and state capture along with a fractured political system and politicisation of many civil service appointments. The concept of good governance has been devalued by a culture of regulatory compliance which prioritises the following of rules and procedures to achieve clean audits over actual service delivery. There is little space or incentive for innovation and responsiveness within the state's inflexible systems and processes. Prof. William Gumede, Associate Professor, School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand defines state capacity as "the ability of the state to deliver its goals through coordinating its own efforts and partnering with non-state social actors – civil society, citizens and communities." The EDP uses this definition to focus on strengthening relationships between state and society as a way of building state capacity.

Disabling authorising environment

The public sector is often experienced as 'disabling' for those outside the state wanting to contribute to development, due to the rigid command-and-control attitudes and behaviours, steep hierarchies and siloed thinking entrenched in the state's bureaucratic environment. Creating an enabling environment means seeing the role of the state as an enabler of development not simply service deliverer. It also means viewing non-state initiatives as assets rather than threats to state authority. The EDP assists our partners inside and outside government to encourage and enable citizen voice and action, improve communication and relationships between the state and society, and create spaces for mutual experimentation and learning.

Sudden shocks and underlying stresses

The EDP itself was born out of the economic downturn following the 2008 global financial crisis. Enabling partners in different ecosystems to become more adaptive and resilient has thus become a core area of our work. A resilience approach means promoting adaptive leadership able to constantly interact with rapid and gradual change at the same time. The EDP has developed a practical 'connect, communicate, collaborate' approach to dealing with shocks in the system and now hosts the Futurecasting Cape Town dialogue series which aims to create city resilience against future shocks.

The timeline on pages 13-14 maps key moments in the EDP's response to crises.





The EDP Way

Our experience as a collaborative intermediary organisation has shown us that a partnering approach is just one of many tools needed to support stakeholders on their change journeys, and have since developed a range of approaches aimed at catalysing change.

Systems thinking and practice

Part of what makes development challenges complex is that they are part of living systems that constantly change. Understanding how to view problems within their connected systems is essential for planning and implementation in the face of complexity. Through our safety work, for example, we see how education, economic, environmental and social systems impact - and are impacted by - levels of crime and violence. The EDP's tools and processes are designed to support change-makers to better understand systemic issues and find leverage points for intervention.

Working at different scales

Our development context is also complex because change is required at many scales. Behavioural, institutional and cultural dynamics simultaneously impact and reinforce the socio-economic-environmental problems we are trying to address. Some issues, like safety, require us to work at the local level because patterns and causes of crime and violence differ between precincts. Other issues, like economic development, skills development, or tourism, require us to work at larger scales. The EDP's processes and methodology are designed to identify and facilitate the change required at these different physical scales.

Stimulating institutional culture change

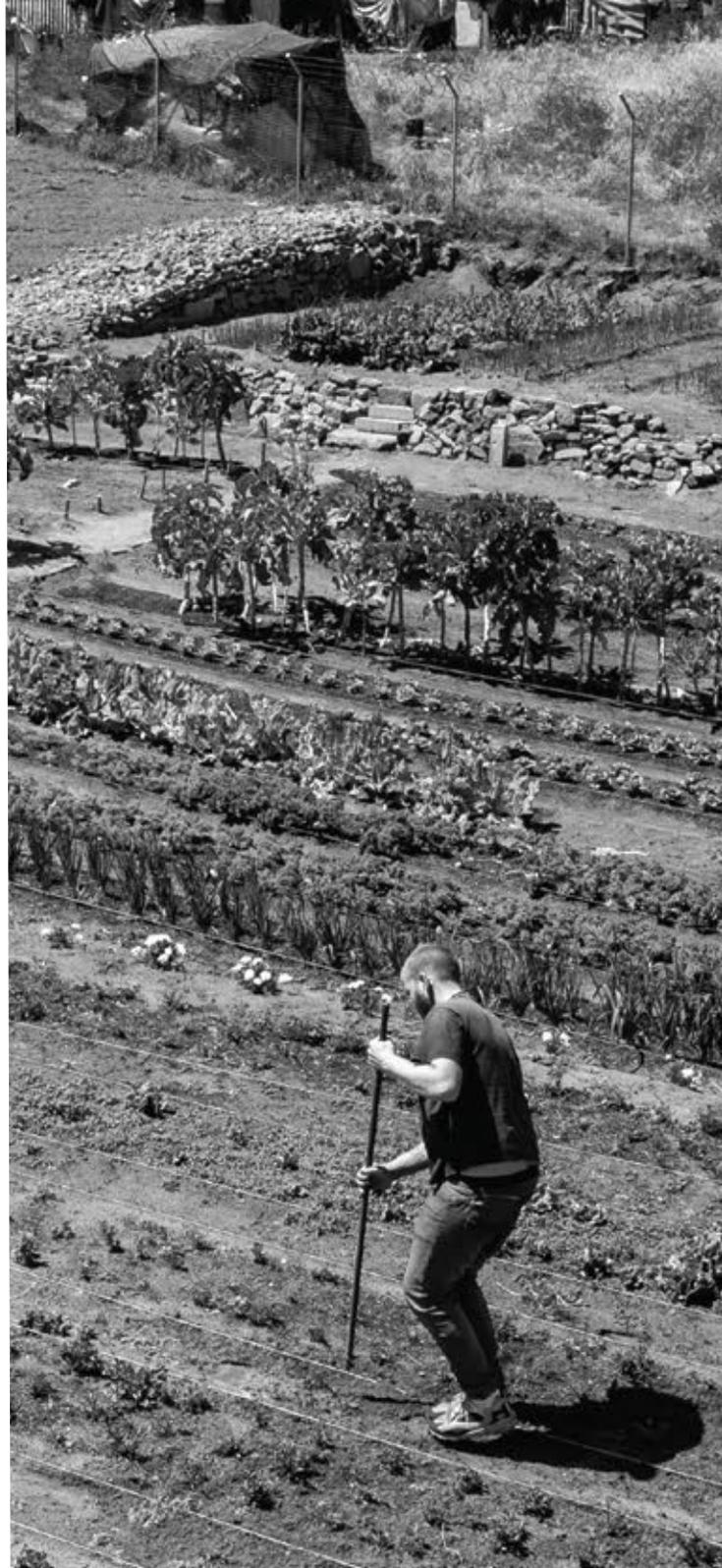
Many organisations and institutions continue to draw up elaborate strategies for change while ignoring how their own organisational culture may be preventing the change they want to see.

Organisational culture – which includes its vision, values, norms, systems, symbols, language, beliefs and habits - influences the way people interact, the resistance they will have to certain changes, and whether they share knowledge or not.

Culture eats strategy for breakfast

- Peter Senge

Dealing with organisational culture can be challenging because while some of the factors are explicit and acknowledged, much remains informal and unseen. The EDP has learned to identify and prioritise the relational issues between institutions in a system, and to understand the normative, cognitive and cultural codes which shape practices, attitudes and behaviours. These often receive the least attention but can cause the greatest resistance to change.



Engaging with formal and informal power

Top-down ‘authorising’ and bottom-up ‘mobilising’ environments are both necessary components of change. Each has strengths and weaknesses, and both need each other. The common goal is to improve their performance and find ways for them to connect with each other better. The EDP works within the ‘authorising’ environment to build adaptive leadership and management capabilities. Through projects such as the Western Cape Food Forum, the EDP has sought to strengthen the bottom-up mobilising environment through a call to ‘connect, communicate, collaborate’ to harness the power of many small initiatives, build social capital networks, improve capabilities to engage the public sector, and scale impact through learning and knowledge sharing.

Learning by doing

The EDP’s methodology encourages learning that is rooted in emergence, which emphasises continual learning and discovering, as opposed to set-in-stone formulas entrenched in many organisations, especially government. Emergence - making sense as progress is made - is a critical element of systems thinking and how we can change systems from within. People often discover that even without a clear plan, clarity and direction will emerge if they are not restricted to a master plan.

10 years, 10 Lessons:

Partnering for Effective Development Outcomes

Partnering and collaboration has been the EDP's core business over the past decade, and we have accumulated many different partnering lessons learnt through trial and error, listening to our partners, codifying our methodologies, and practicing the 'EDP way'. We share our top ten lessons as an intermediary organisation.

Lesson 1

Collaboration adds value

It is hard for one entity to deliver solutions to complex problems on its own. Combining energy and resources across sectors exponentially increases solving power and delivers collective impact. Realising this is the starting point of a partnering journey.

Lesson 2

Start with the system not the mandate

Look for systems - with their interdependencies and relationships, and patterns and cycles of recurring behaviour - not mandates. The challenge is that people don't work for a system but rather a department or organisation. People and organisations should be enabled to 'see' their place in the system behind their mandate.

Lesson 3

People need to feel safe to do things differently

Change making requires stakeholders to work closely together, step beyond mandates and act, despite uncertainties in the system, to create real change in society – a way of working that is characterised by experimentation and failure. A fear of failure and its potential consequences often prevent actors from experimenting and adapting. We encourage partners to change this by creating spaces within which stakeholders feel confident enough to innovate.

Lesson 4

Focus is key

Avoid attempting to cover too much ground too soon. Partnerships deliver results quicker and more effectively if they focus on specifics. Start by getting agreement on the problem, rather than the solution. Then determine who needs to work together to make things happen on this issue.

Lesson 5

We feel before we think

Human beings don't always start with what is logical, so evidence-based planning doesn't always work. In a partnering process, 'soft' issues of history, memory, identity, and culture often carry the same value as 'hard' data and information do, so don't shy away from these issues.

Lesson 6

Partnering is a verb, partnership a noun

Promote joint action (the verb) as soon as possible. A partnering process can get side-tracked if too much time is spent on debating governance arrangements and structures (the noun). Trust is best built by doing things together.

Lesson 7

Listen twice, talk once

Successful collaboration depends on an ability to listen openly and deeply to what others are saying. Even if you disagree with another's position or beliefs – listen for the message behind the statement. Talk to communicate, not dictate.

Lesson 8

Establish mutual goals

People don't have to agree on everything to collaborate. Start by getting agreement on a few common goals and steps to take together, despite possible differences, towards a shared vision. Effective partnering is based on encouraging win-win solutions, not win-lose negotiations, so encourage partners to take off their organisational hats.

Lesson 9

Unacknowledged power can disrupt collaboration

A neutral platform is essential if all partners are to engage meaningfully, especially if positions and levels of authority are unequal. This requires that both formal and informal power dynamics are acknowledged, so that they can be formally addressed through the governance platform supporting the collaboration. Perceptions of power dynamics can be disruptive if some partners feel that the process is unfair or that one voice is louder than others.

Lesson 10

Relationships are critical but require effort

We know collaboration is essential to meaningfully address development challenges, yet often ignore that relationships are the bedrock of impactful collaboration and need to be truly valued. Relationship building doesn't happen automatically either - it requires intentional effort. The most successful collaborations dedicate time and resources to building and maintaining relationships between partners.

Cultivating Resilience

Anticipating and Absorbing Shocks and Stressors

The EDP was born on the back of the 2008 global financial crisis, from which South Africa's economy was still reeling by 2012. Our aim is to support collaborative responses to systemic shocks, building resilient communities that can withstand and anticipate similar events through adaptive governance. This timeline highlights how we have worked with partners to respond to disruptive events over the last decade.



■ Event ■ EDP Response



August
Western Cape (WC) farmworkers protest unfair wage and employment practices. Strike action leads to property damages and protestor deaths

January
Farmworker protests continue as strikers close the N1 highway and police use rubber bullets against protesters

January - June
SA experiences 84 days of electricity load shedding, estimated to cost R13.72 billion in lost business revenue

February
Level 3 Water Restrictions implemented in Cape Town

May
Drought officially declared Cape Town's worst in a century

2012

November
The EDP initiates consultations with sector stakeholders to develop a process to resolve the issues facing the agricultural sector

2013

January
The Future of Agriculture and the Rural Economy (FARE) process is convened to find common ground for systemic change in a contested agricultural sector

2014

February
The FARE report on framing a common agenda for change and joint action in the agricultural sector is adopted by the Western Cape Government (WCG)

2015

November
The EDP facilitates an Energy Security Leadership Group to support the WCG Energy Security Game Changer, addressing energy security

2017

April
The EDP assists community stakeholders to work collectively to reduce water consumption under the slogan 'connect, communicate, and collaborate'

January

Level 6 Water restrictions implemented

March

Height of the WC water crisis - Day Zero looms

June

Day Zero indefinitely postponed

1 March

First COVID-19 case confirmed in South Africa

11 March

WHO declares COVID-19 as a global pandemic

27 March

President Cyril Ramaphosa announces a National 21-day hard lockdown

3 April

The hard lockdown is extended until end-April

October

Load shedding hits record levels, with power cuts named as SA's biggest threat to post-COVID-19 economic recovery

November

26th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change release The Glasgow Pact, asking countries to "revisit and strengthen" their targets by 2022 to realise the Paris Agreement temperature goal



January

Cape Town heatwave sets record temperatures

2018

January

The EDP, WWF and Green Cape collaborate to respond to the imminent water crisis, supporting the City of Cape Town's communications with citizens

March

Partnering facilitated between the WCG Dept of Environmental Affairs & Development Planning and the Breede-Gouritz Catchment Management Agency to improve catchment management

2020

April

Cape Town Together Community Action Network and WCG's Premier Winde identify food security & hunger as top priorities

April

The EDP and WC Food Relief Forum coordinate civil society, business, and government relief efforts in vulnerable communities

July

The EDP & the DG Murray Trust develop and implement a ground-breaking digital food voucher programme for community kitchens

June

The WC Food Forum looks at the wider food and nutrition system, balancing short-term interventions with long-term strategies to establish food security

2021

January - December

The EDP continues promoting cross-sector engagement to improve long-term water security, working with OECD, World Bank and South African stakeholders

January - December

The EDP widens its focus on long-term food and nutrition security through support to the WCG 'Nourish to Flourish' programme and CoCT's Food System Programme

March

The Futurecasting Cape Town dialogue series convened with CoCT to anticipate future crises and promote resilience. Topics include energy, post-COVID-19 work and future heat events

2022

January

The EDP facilitates engagements to inform the potential redevelopment of the decommissioned Athlone Power Station towards renewable, sustainable energy generation

January

Supporting the CT Carbon Neutral 2050 initiative, the EDP facilitates engagements to advance the City's Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plan to promote sustainable transport solutions

February

The Futurecasting Cape Town series looks at the impact of heatwaves on human health, climate projections and the local economy



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