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About the Presenter:

Patricia Flederman currently supports a South African Qualifications Authority initiative to provide a national, equity-driven service, based on her research recommendations (see www.iccdpp.org). She began addressing the question of priorities for a careers guidance service in a middle-income country as Director of the Careers Research and Information Centre during apartheid South Africa. Her systemic, integrated and gender disaggregated approach is informed by her experiences in international development including: Project Director of a USAID Malawi girls' education reform project; Careers Guidance Consultant/Ministry of Education/Liberia; Head Student Support Services, University of Natal; Consultant to various USAID projects in Central Europe; and Multi-cultural/Diversity Facilitator to London investment banks, JPMorgan Chase and Citibank. She has two Masters Degrees: an MSc. (Educational Studies) from the University of Surrey, UK, and an M.A. (Human and Organisational Systems) in partial fulfillment of a Ph.D. from the Fielding Graduate University, US.

Title of Paper: **Reflecting on 30 years of attempting a relevant national careers guidance service in South Africa:
A call for broadening the parameters**

Abstract:

Race-based segregation of the labour market and education in apartheid South Africa obviously had fundamental political implications for the practice of careers guidance. Today, the development challenges in South Africa as a middle income African country, still bearing an apartheid and colonial legacy impact any career guidance initiative. This paper traces previous and contemporary strategies to develop a career development approach in South Africa that is responsive and relevant to the reality of people's lives—a reality in marked contrast to the societies in which traditional careers guidance theories emerged.



In reflecting on the major challenges that confront a South African careers guidance service design, traditional psychological parameters are found to be wholly inadequate. The paper suggests some parameters for an interdisciplinary approach that both takes account of the systemic linkages within which individuals in a society engage and that embraces social equity as a core imperative. This approach is illustrated in part by describing the newly-launched career guidance helpline managed by SAQA (the South African Qualifications Framework).

These issues and perspectives are shared as a possible contribution to broader discussions of careers guidance in developing country and international contexts. Furthermore, questions are raised about how we might need to be thinking of ourselves as career development policy makers, planners and practitioners if we are to forge responsive career guidance services for the majority in a world of change, massive hardship, and ingenuity.