

Interviews with the poor point to importance of social networks

by Hanna Gillies
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A **new report** from the Participate Initiative emphasises the importance of social networks in development and the need to listen to the perspectives of the most marginalised.

Participate is an initiative to bring knowledge and research from the margins to the post-2015 development debate, co-convened by the **Institute of Development Studies** and the **Beyond 2015** civil society campaign.

Interviews with hundreds of marginalised people across 29 countries confirm that the poor suffer from multiple interconnected inequalities.

The report highlights the complex relationship between social networks and formal institutions and the need for development organisations to recognise this before implementing new programs or technologies. In developing countries, institutions often fail to protect and provide services to citizens and the poor continue to rely on their social networks for support. If this is not recognised, development projects can have unintended consequences—in one example, **mobile money technology** intended to boost savings actually did the opposite because of expectations from families and social networks.

The project also gathered information through **participatory filmmaking** and the films are available online.

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Link:

<https://devpolicy.org/interviews-with-the-poor-point-to-importance-of-social-networks-20130924/>