



Participate

Knowledge from the margins for post-2015

# Work with us

How people and organisations can catalyse sustainable change

*“We are trying our best to bring change but we can’t do it, and tackle wider social problems, alone. So we want you to work with us.”*

(Purent Oduor\*, Mathare, Nairobi, Spatial Collective 2013)



# Participate

Knowledge from the margins for **post-2015**

The *Participate* initiative is providing high quality evidence on the reality of poverty at ground level, bringing the perspectives of the poorest into the post-2015 debate. *Participate* aims to:

- Bring perspectives of those in poverty into decision-making processes;
- Embed participatory research in global policymaking;
- Use research with the poorest as the basis for advocacy with decision-makers;
- Ensure that marginalised people have a central role in holding decision-makers to account in the post-2015 process;
- Generate knowledge, understanding and relationships for the global public good.

*Participate* is co-convened by the Institute of Development Studies and the Beyond 2015 campaign, but the initiative is only possible because of the energy, expertise and vision of the numerous organisations who are funding and facilitating the participatory research; as well as each and every one of the research participants.

At the core of the *Participate* initiative is a Participatory Research Group (PRG) of 18 partners. This global synthesis report is based on the ongoing research of these organisations and is connected to their shared objectives of bringing knowledge from the margins into policymaking.

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Children in Nairobi used video to understand more about how people experience disability in their community.

# Key terms

The key terms defined below are those terms used throughout the report that could have ambiguous meanings or normative connotations. The definitions provided present *Participate's* understanding of the terms.

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Accountability</b>            | The concept of accountability describes the rights and responsibilities that exist between people and the institutions that affect their lives, including governments, civil society and the private sector. In practice, accountability can take a number of different forms, depending on the institution in question. In general, relationships of accountability have two important components – the right to be answered, and the obligation to provide a response; and the involvement of citizens in ensuring that action is taken, which includes mechanisms for redress. <sup>1</sup>  |
| <b>Agency</b>                    | The capacity of people to make choices and act on these. Agency can be contrasted with structure, which refers to the factors which constrain and limit people's capacity to act independently.   |
| <b>Capacity development</b>      | An approach to development that focuses on understanding the obstacles that inhibit people, organisations and institutions from realising their developmental goals, and enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve their goals. In line with more recent interpretations, which have moved away from an individualised idea of capacity development we emphasise the importance of enhancing collective and systemic capacity. <sup>2</sup>   |
| <b>Citizen</b>                   | A citizen is a person that has the right to have rights. Citizenship implies a relationship between a citizen, who can claim their rights; and a state, that has the obligation to respond to those claims. Substantive citizenship means that, in their daily lives, citizens have access to resources and employment and to the protection of their government – but also that they are treated with dignity. Citizens have rights under international law, but may be denied these rights by discriminatory national and local practices. <sup>3</sup>   |
| <b>Collective action</b>         | The process through which people come together, define shared goals, agree how to pursue these goals, and take action.  |
| <b>Community</b>                 | This concept refers to belonging, either to a geographical place such as a neighbourhood, or to a group which has come together around a particular identity, such as ethnicity, or another form of shared bonds and social ties.   |
| <b>Complexity/complex</b>        | A complexity-based analysis of change contrasts starkly with the dominant theories of change used by 'development actors' which are linear (intervention A will lead to outcome B). Complexity is characterised by multiple interacting processes where the outcome is emergent and not predictable. We distinguish complex processes of change from simple, complicated and chaotic processes. <sup>4</sup> In simple processes it is straightforward to see the relationship between cause and effect. In complicated processes this is often obscured because there is so much going on, and many factors contributing to change. Complex processes are emergent, and it is not possible to predict causality, although this may be discerned retrospectively. Chaotic processes are where there is no relationship between cause and effect at the level of the system. |
| <b>Critical mass</b>             | Critical mass occurs when enough people adopt an attitude or behaviour or action to mean that it has a significant impact within a system and becomes self sustaining.  |
| <b>Development aid paradigm</b>  | Dominant forms of international development aid are top-down and centrally-led processes, based on transfers from wealthy countries to poorer countries. The research in this report explicitly challenges this imbalance and the power relations intrinsic within it. The research in this report explicitly challenges this imbalance and the power relations intrinsic within it.  |
| <b>Development interventions</b> | We understand development in its widest sense. This means policies and initiatives at local, national, regional and global levels that support the most marginalised people and communities to have hope, dignity and a better quality of life. 'Interventions' refers to activities delivered at least in part by external agents. We include all organised efforts in this definition; by different levels of government, by local, national and international NGOs and agencies, and also collaborative efforts between the people of the area themselves and external actors.   |

<sup>1</sup> Dunn, A.; Newell, P. and Wheeler, J. (2006) *Making Accountability Count*, IDS Policy Briefing Issue 33, Brighton: IDS

<sup>2</sup> Oswald, K. and Clarke, P. (eds) 'Reflecting Collectively on Capacities for Change', *IDS Bulletin* 41.3, Brighton: IDS

<sup>3</sup> Gaventa, J. and Benequista, N. (2011) *Blurring the Boundaries: Citizen Action across States and Societies. A Summary of Findings from a Decade of Collaborative Research on Citizen Engagement*, Brighton: IDS, The Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability

<sup>4</sup> Snowden, D. (2000) 'Cynefin: a Sense of Time and Space, the Social Ecology of Knowledge Management', in C. Despres and D. Chauvel (eds), *Knowledge Horizons: The Present and the Promise of Knowledge Management*, Woburn: Butterworth Heinemann

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| <b>Dignity</b>                              | Dignity is a fundamental human value, the right to be valued, respected and treated ethically. Kant linked dignity to human agency, that one is only possible with the other. Following the position of ATD Fourth World, in this report we view dignity as underpinning all human rights and framing all development interventions.   |
| <b>Discrimination, discriminatory</b>       | Actions, policies and behaviours by individuals, groups and institutions which promote unequal opportunities and outcomes for wellbeing. Discrimination is perpetuated through many social, religious and cultural norms.  |
| <b>Equality</b>                             | All people have the same rights before the law. In order for equality to exist in society, discrimination needs to be eradicated.  |
| <b>Equity</b>                               | Equity relates to fairness of access to and distribution of resources. An equitable distribution, for example, might give more resources to disabled people (because they have additional needs) in order to achieve the same outcomes as other people.  |
| <b>Emergence</b>                            | Emergence is where one thing leads to another. With every iteration of change, new pathways open up and new choices emerge, so it is impossible to plan in advance. This process is amplified where many different processes are interacting.  |
| <b>Empowerment</b>                          | A multidimensional social process that enables people to have more control over their own lives. Empowerment fosters agency, which requires capacity at the personal level, and which has been highlighted in feminist theory. Empowerment is also linked to collective action and social transformation, which can be facilitated through processes of popular education. <sup>5</sup>  |
| <b>Extreme poverty</b>                      | We understand extreme poverty in terms of material poverty – a lack of food, income, housing and knowledge, which is accompanied by discrimination and the denial of fundamental rights (ATD Fourth World 2013).   |
| <b>Governance</b>                           | The process through which public institutions make decisions, and develop and implement policies and programmes. Participatory governance is an approach that aims to promote greater democratic engagement by enabling citizens to play an active role in the decision-making process.  |
| <b>Holistic</b>                             | A holistic analysis and a holistic response is one which looks beyond an issue, to the wider context within which it is situated, and the multiple factors that contribute to it. A holistic response to sanitation would not only look at the need for toilet facilities but also the security that a woman would need to feel in order to use these facilities. Similarly, an education strategy would have to not only look at making education services available, but also at the economic circumstances that might prevent families from using those services. |
| <b>Impossible choices</b>                   | These are the trade-offs that people in extreme poverty face because of their restricted access to resources. They are forced to choose between essential items or services that are considered to be basic needs and/or rights, for example between eating adequate food and sending a child to school.   |
| <b>Informal livelihoods</b>                 | Refers to livelihoods which are not protected by statutory laws or regulations. Such livelihoods can be flexible but lack security and those working in the informal 'sector' may be vulnerable to violence and extortion.   |
| <b>Intersectionalities</b>                  | Describe the relationship between multiple overlapping forms of discrimination where, for example, social injustice and inequalities are compounded and amplified as a result of being both a woman and a <i>dalit</i> (see definition below).   |
| <b>Marginalisation</b>                      | By this we mean the systematic exclusion of individuals and groups from resources and rights so that they are restricted to the margins of society. This exclusion is the result of discrimination.  |
| <b>Participation</b>                        | Participation is where people have the ability to influence the decisions which affect their lives. This will involve an explicit transformation of power relations, in terms of whose knowledge counts, and a renegotiation of the spaces that enable people to engage in public and political life.  |
| <b>Participatory approach to governance</b> | People who are marginalised through poverty and discrimination should have the right to participate in researching, planning, deciding, delivering and monitoring development initiatives. A participatory approach to governance is both an empowerment strategy and a means of ensuring that interventions are appropriate to the context.   |

<sup>5</sup> Freire, P. (1994) *Pedagogy of Hope*, New York: Continuum.

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Research participants in the Philippines explore the issues in their community using participatory tools.

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| <b>People-centred approach</b>                | This approach puts the wellbeing and livelihoods of people living in poverty and marginalisation before any other potential benefit of a development intervention, considers the potential long-term impact on people first, and ensures that they are collaborators in decision-making, policies and programmes.  |
| <b>Power dynamics</b>                         | Power operates in a dynamic way. While some interests can be marginalised from decision making, other strategies can increase inclusion. While there are many approaches to understanding power, the analysis and findings within this research connect to the following ideas. Gaventa's Power Cube <sup>6</sup> illustrates the dynamic relationship between three continuums: spaces (arenas of power); places (levels and places of engagement); and power – the degree of visibility of power. Foucault <sup>7</sup> articulates power as dispersed and pervasive, moving beyond politics to something that is central in people's everyday realities. It is something that both a necessary positive force and a source of repression and conformity in society. In this research, we are concerned with how people who are marginalised can transform power dynamics and their relationships so that their wellbeing is enhanced rather than damaged. |
| <b>Relational</b>                             | This term is linked to the definition of power dynamics. It suggests that people have more or less power and agency according to the nature of the relationships that they have, with their immediate family, neighbours, community and institutions around them.  |
| <b>Rights</b>                                 | Dignity, recognition and participation are considered to be fundamental rights, which are denied to people who live in extreme poverty and marginalisation. Rights become a tool for people to challenge discriminatory norms, practices and institutions. A human rights-based approach to development includes civil and political rights and freedoms, as well as economic, social and cultural rights.   |
| <b>Social change (positive social change)</b> | Social change is an 'alteration in the social order of a society'. In this case it is about changing social relationships such as discriminatory social norms. Social change usually comes about as a result either of collective action or of the combined effect of multiple individual actions and changes in attitudes and behaviour.  |
| <b>Social norms</b>                           | Social norms (including religious and cultural norms) are the usually unwritten values that guide how people conduct themselves in society. Norms are embedded in power relations, and so tend to privilege some groups and marginalise others.  |
| <b>Systemic</b>                               | A system describes the relationships between people, resources, institutions and the environment and so on. It includes power and communication flows. A system dynamic is the patterning of that set of relationships which incentivises particular actions or behaviours. In order to create sustainable change it is important not just to create change within the system, but also to change the system dynamic.  |
| <b>Unintended consequences</b>                | Unintended consequences are consequences that are different to those which were predicted from an intervention. For example the outcome of a humanitarian feeding programme might be to increase dependency, and reduce people's ability to survive, rather than increase it.  |
| <b>Voice</b>                                  | Voice refers to the formulation and articulation of people's views, preferences and ideas. Voice can take many forms including textual, dialogic and visual. Voices need to be expressed, but also to be heard. The aim of this initiative is to bring voices into spaces where they will be heard and acted upon.   |

<sup>6</sup> For more information visit: [www.powercube.net](http://www.powercube.net)

<sup>7</sup> Foucault, M. (1980) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, Brighton: Harvester.

# Glossary

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Activism</b>                             | Is the active participation or engagement in a particular sphere of activity; specifically the use of vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change.   |
| <b>Adivasi</b>                              | Is an umbrella term for a heterogeneous set of ethnic and tribal groups claimed to be the aboriginal population of India. They are considered a substantial minority group of the population.   |
| <b>Amangqina</b>                            | This is a popular snack in South Africa consisting of intestines.   |
| <b>Analytical framing</b>                   | In research, this is a process that describes building a conceptual system of definitions and categorisation of data.   |
| <b>Ancestral domain and ancestral lands</b> | These terms refer to territories, lands and coastal areas, the like occupied, possessed and utilised by individuals, families and clans who have been members of indigenous groups since time immemorial. These groups have continuous ownership of all the resources within these territories, except when interrupted by war or displacement. <sup>8</sup>  |
| <b>Basic social protection floor</b>        | Broadly, this is a nationally defined set of basic social security guarantees that should ensure as a minimum that, over the life cycle, all those in need have access to essential health care and to basic income security. These should be sufficient to secure effective access to goods and services defined as necessary at the national level. <sup>9</sup>  |
| <b>Boko Haram</b>                           | An Islamist militant group grounded in the strong opposition to anything Western. Boko Haram was founded as an indigenous group, turning itself into a militant group in 2009 and also supporting opposition to the Muslim establishment and the government of Nigeria.   |
| <b>Caste system</b>                         | Is a form of social organisation often found in South Asia, with strict rules characterised by hereditary transmission of a lifestyle which often includes an occupation, ritual status in a hierarchy, customary social interaction and inclusion or exclusion.  |
| <b>Child-led research</b>                   | Research that engages children in leading a research process. In this report the approach is participatory, where children determine the topic, decide on the research methods, collect and analyse the data and reflect upon the new knowledge they have built.  |
| <b>CityMakers</b>                           | Women, children and men who live in conditions of poverty in cities they help build and are often left out of development processes because of the stigma attached to their identities. CityMakers form a traditionally powerless part of the urban population. They are deprived not only of shelter and public spaces but also of a range of other services and entitlements. <sup>10</sup>   |
| <b>Civil society</b>                        | Communities of citizens characterised by common interests and collective activity, understood as that aspect of society concerned with and operating for the collective good. It is also understood as all social groups, networks, above the level of the family, which engage in voluntary collective action.   |
| <b>Collaborative</b>                        | This term means activities which are characterised by, based upon, or produced in collaboration.  |
| <b>Compounded effects</b>                   | Effects and/or consequences resulting from the combination of various elements.   |
| <b>Cultural norm (i.e. social norm)</b>     | A standard or pattern of social behaviour that is accepted in or expected of a cultural group.  |
| <b>Dalit (in India)</b>                     | A person who does not belong to one of the four Brahmin castes; specifically, a member of the scheduled castes, an 'untouchable'.   |
| <b>Devadāsī (in India):</b>                 | In Sanskrit <i>devadāsī</i> , literally means 'a female servant of a god'; is a girl 'dedicated' to worship and service of a deity or a temple for the rest of her life. The <i>devadāsī</i> practice of religious prostitution is known as <i>basivi</i> in Karnataka and <i>matangi</i> in Maharashtra.   |
| <b>Digital storytelling</b>                 | A learning, creating and sharing experience supported by technology, allowing participants to create their own short digital media production that allows people to share aspects of their life story. 'Media' may include the digital equivalent of film, animation, photos, audio recordings, or electronic files that individuals can use to tell a story or present an idea. The process of creating digital stories is as important, if not more important, as the end result. <sup>11</sup> |

<sup>8</sup> Definitions for ancestral domain and ancestral land adapted from the Republic Act No. 8371. (n.d.), Official Gazette, [www.gov.ph/1997/10/29/republic-act-no-8371/](http://www.gov.ph/1997/10/29/republic-act-no-8371/)

<sup>9</sup> As understood by the ILO: [www.ilo.org/secsoc/areas-of-work/policy-development-and-applied-research/social-protection-floor/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/secsoc/areas-of-work/policy-development-and-applied-research/social-protection-floor/lang-en/index.htm)

<sup>10</sup> Definition in Praxis (2013) *Voice for Change: CityMakers Seeking to Reclaim Cities They Build*, New Delhi: Praxis

<sup>11</sup> Definition adapted from the Center for Digital Storytelling (<http://storycenter.org/>), complemented by the principles established from PRG members working in this field.

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Economic migration</b>             | When people migrate from their place of birth/origin, in search of employment or economic opportunity.   |
| <b>Entitlements</b>                   | A guarantee of access to something, such as to welfare benefits, based on established rights or by legislation.  |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                      | The fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition.   |
| <b>Flying toilet</b>                  | Refers to the act of people defecating in plastic bags and discarding of them in public spaces, or over their rooftops to ensure they are far from their homes..   |
| <b>Ganta</b>                          | A measure of volume, not of weight, used throughout East Asia (e.g. in the Philippines). As such, the measuring instrument was not a scale but an object that could contain the volume, known as the <i>gantangan</i> . The <i>ganta</i> is approximately, but not quite, equal to one kilogram and was used primarily in measuring grains such as rice, or meat.  |
| <b>Indigenous</b>                     | Native or belonging naturally to a region. Indigenous people retain social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Spread across the world from the Arctic to the South Pacific, they are the descendants of those who inhabited a country or a geographical region at the time when people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived. <sup>12</sup>  |
| <b>Institution(al) discrimination</b> | the unjust and discriminatory mistreatment of an individual or group of individuals by organisations such as governments and corporations, financial institutions, public institutions, and other societal entities. Such discrimination is typically codified into the operating procedures, policies, laws, or objectives of such institutions.  |
| <b>Kwashiorkor</b>                    | A serious disease caused by low level of protein in diet, often affecting children. Its symptoms include an enlarged liver and fluid retention.  |
| <b>Linear</b>                         | Progressing from one stage to another in a single series of steps; sequential.   |
| <b>Livelihood</b>                     | A person's means of living, maintenance and sustenance.  |
| <b>Mutual aid</b>                     | A voluntary reciprocal exchange of resources and services for mutual benefit.  |
| <b>Narrative storytelling</b>         | The account of a series of events, facts, etc., given in order and with the establishing of connections between them; a narration, a story, an account.  |
| <b>Oppression</b>                     | Prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or exercise of authority, control, or power; tyranny; exploitation. The action of forcibly putting down or crushing; the repression or suppression of a person or thing.   |
| <b>Oral testimony</b>                 | In social research it refers to a personal testimony based on a specific topic where the individual influences the shape and content of the narration.   |
| <b>Out-migration</b>                  | The action of leaving one place to settle in another, especially in the same country.  |
| <b>Participatory video</b>            | A participatory visual method, through which people and communities can communicate their needs and perspectives. When working with marginalised groups it is an empowering process, enabling people to take action for solving their own problems and communicating this to decision-makers, their communities, families and wider public. It is an iteratively evolving group process, which engages participants in video recording and playback activities over a sustained time period. <sup>13</sup> |
| <b>Patronage</b>                      | The action of a patron in using money or influence to advance the interests of a person or cause. This can imply favour shown with an air or assumption of superiority.  |
| <b>Policy</b>                         | Is a principle or protocol to guide decisions. A policy is a statement of intent, and is implemented as a procedure or protocol.   |
| <b>Policymaker</b>                    | A person responsible for or involved in formulating policies, especially in politics.  |
| <b>Post-2015 debate</b>               | The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the United Nations (UN) in 2000 had a target date of 2015. After the year 2015, efforts to achieve a world of prosperity, equity, freedom, dignity and peace are set to continue. The UN is working with governments, civil society and other partners to develop a post-2015 global development agenda and this has been generating a worldwide debate.  |
| <b>Pro-poor</b>                       | Term used to express that it is in the best interests and benefit of people living in poverty.   |

<sup>12</sup> Definition taken from: [www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session\\_factsheet1.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Definition provided by Real Time ([www.real-time.org.uk](http://www.real-time.org.uk)) and complemented by the principles established from PRG members working with this method.



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|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Public service</b>          | Services provided by government to people living within its jurisdiction, either directly (through the public sector) or by financing private provision of services. The term is associated with democratised societies that certain services should be available to all, regardless of income.              |
| <b>Sex worker</b>              | A person who works in the sex industry.  |
| <b>Sexual minority</b>         | A group whose sexual identity, orientation or practices differ from the majority of the surrounding society. In this report used to refer to the LGBTIQ community and transgender people.  |
| <b>Solidarity</b>              | Refers to the unity of a group of people that produces or is based on common interests, objectives, and standards. It is often used to signify the ties in a society that bind people together.  |
| <b>Stakeholders</b>            | A person with an interest or concern in something, for example, ensuring the success of an organisation, business, social system, community, household, etc.   |
| <b>Stigma</b>                  | A mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, identity, quality, or person; social stigma refers to severe social disapproval of personal characteristics or beliefs that are against cultural norms.  |
| <b>Structural level</b>        | Those aspects of a system concerned with the formal laws and relations; also, the 'deep' social structures that hold a society together.   |
| <b>Tokenistic</b>              | Making merely a token effort or granting only minimal concessions, especially to minority or suppressed groups.  |
| <b>Visual research methods</b> | The use of visual images and technologies such as video, film, photography, art, drawing and sculpture in qualitative social research to both produce and represent knowledge.   |
| <b>Wasta</b>                   | Arabic word that loosely translates into 'nepotism' or 'clout' or 'who you know'. It refers to using one's connections and/or influence to get things done, including government transactions such as the quick renewal of a passport, waiving of traffic fines, and getting hired for or promoted in a job. |

<sup>14</sup> As explained by the United Nations: [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/beyond2015.shtml](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/beyond2015.shtml)

<sup>15</sup> Definition taken from: The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods <http://srmo.sagepub.com/view/the-sage-dictionary-of-social-research-methods/n222.xml>

## Acronyms

|                         |   |               |   |
|-------------------------|---|---------------|---|
| <b>ARV</b>              | Anti-retroviral   | <b>MEND</b>   | Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy, Occupied Palestinian Territories |
| <b>ATD Fourth World</b> | International Movement ATD (All Together In Dignity) Fourth World   | <b>NGO</b>    | Non-governmental organisation   |
| <b>CAFOD</b>            | The Catholic aid agency for England and Wales   | <b>OT</b>     | Oral testimony  |
| <b>CDS</b>              | Center for Development Services, Egypt  | <b>OWPSEE</b> | One World Platform for South East Europe Foundation                     |
| <b>EHRPBD</b>           | Promotion of Human Rights Persons with Disability in Bangladesh (project working for the development and for the rights of disabled people) | <b>PRG</b>    | Participatory Research Group  |
| <b>FFEC</b>             | Family for Every Child Coalition  | <b>RCA</b>    | Reality Check Approach  |
| <b>FGD</b>              | Focus group discussion  | <b>SLF</b>    | Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation, South Africa                        |
| <b>GCRN</b>             | Ghana Community Radio Network   | <b>TB</b>     | Tuberculosis  |
| <b>HEPS-Uganda</b>      | Coalition for Health Promotion and Social Development, Uganda   | <b>TFDC</b>   | Theatre for Development Centre, Nigeria                                 |
| <b>LGBTIQA</b>          | Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Tran-sexual/transgender, Intersex, Queer/Questioning and Ally  | <b>UAM</b>    | Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Xochimilco, Mexico                  |

Note: Full details of all the organisations in the *Participate* Participatory Research Group (PRG) can be found in Chapter 5 of this report.



## Executive summary

We sat together talking about what to communicate in the film when Doña Eugenia Zenteno looks at us doubtfully, as if thinking ‘should I disclose this to people that I just met yesterday?’ Then courageously starts:

*I, myself was abused by my former husband and his family... my mother-in-law kept me locked away for three days with very little food and water. I was pregnant and, despite that, he constantly beat me...I think it is a reality in our country, I know many women like this...*

We sit in stunned silence. It suddenly hit us; we knew that we had to focus on the issue of domestic violence towards women.

(anecdote told by a trainer at a Participate film workshop with indigenous people in Bolivia)<sup>1</sup>

Of the hundreds of stories captured by the *Participate* initiative, many were preceded like Eugenia’s, with a mix of mistrust and apprehension, and then began with the hope that the story might be heard. This report attempts to summarise what was learned from the rich tapestry of debates, opinions, lessons and life stories that were recorded, performed, written and recounted during the *Participate* initiative, but it cannot alone honour that trust.

*Participate*’s 18 partners have documented and shared the stories in myriad ways. Some chose techniques that involved multi-media, like participatory film-making and digital storytelling. Some opted for less technical but equally creative approaches that employed public theatre and art. Others held public forums, collected oral histories or organised youth-led research.

In 29 countries across the globe grassroots organisations, activists, and common people were trained in a wide range

of participatory research methods and given a mission to understand, from the perspectives of people living in the worst poverty and marginalisation, how their lives have changed, for better or for worse, and if anything can be done to ensure that future change be for the better.

The stories challenge our view of what is common to the experience of poverty and marginalisation, in that there is less in common than assumed by dominant forms of international assistance, but there is more in common than just a collection of parables about the importance of context.

Dominant forms of international assistance often ignore how social forces interact with institutional structures, with grave consequences for those in the margins. The target-based approach of the Millennium Development Goals aggravated this by incentivising development practitioners to prioritise those easiest to reach. In almost all of the research conducted, the very poorest and most marginalised have said that development policies have not met their expectations.

Yet the stories documented here exhibit identifiable patterns which point to a way of providing assistance that supports the agency of those who have suffered the gravest forms of deprivation and prejudice. Put simply, development cannot help the poorest without their help.

The very poorest not only suffer the shocks that result from structural issues – imperfect markets and political instability – but they also confront multiple and interconnected inequalities. They are more economically deprived, often with a combination of low incomes, insecure livelihoods, and few, if any, assets. They are often the subject of social discrimination on account of their identities. Further, the poorest commonly reside in harsh and inhospitable spaces, with adverse conditions like violence or environmental degradation that block the escape from poverty. These intersecting inequalities can turn their supposed benefactors into perpetrators, and solutions into problems.

<sup>1</sup> Eugenia’s story was shared within a participatory video process that brought together people from indigenous communities in Latin America to explore personal and shared experiences of poverty and marginalisation. The participants built on the knowledge they had gained from their participation in the research initiatives of COMPASS 2015 and ATD Fourth World. The film that was made, ‘Tu U Yo’ can be seen on Vimeo here: <http://vimeo.com/69311688>

The experiences reported by poor and marginalised groups of interactions with officials and service providers are largely negative. Among the many examples from *Participate* are the doctor who treats a transgender person like a guinea pig rather than a person in need of treatment (India), a teacher who denies a disabled child access to school in case other children are frightened (Bangladesh), the policeman who rapes the sex worker who seeks his protection on the grounds that she provides sex for a living (India) and the health official who will not allow gay and lesbian people to donate blood, presuming infection with disease (Montenegro).

Another salient commonality amongst the stories is how misfortune piles upon misfortune. It may start with a *trigger*, a factor that shifts people's lives onto a different path or trajectory. The triggers that sink people into extreme poverty can include the break-up of a marriage, an accident, death of a relative, illness, natural disaster, and spikes in food prices. Exposure to violence is also a significant trigger.

Many of the stories are also characterised by *tipping points*, which happen when influences accumulate and prompt a fundamental change for a community or group. Across the research in Ghana and Mexico, for example, outward migration from rural communities reaches a tipping point that makes life economically unviable for those left behind.

Finally, some reach a *breaking point*, where physical, mental or emotional strength collapses. The story of a woman from a South African township showed how the desperation, stigmatisation, sickness and loneliness of people living in poverty with HIV could lead to suicide, which may, in turn, become a trigger for her dependants.

The decisions that people living in poverty and marginalisation make are integral to the way in which change occurs. Still, individual agency is constrained by social norms, culture and power; the hardships that people face are often compounded by the views of the people around them. The research suggests that families and communities have to be transformed and democratised.

Indeed, when their closest networks are supportive, people's decisions and social relationships can enable them to move forwards rather than into further marginalisation. Street trade for some becomes an opportunity for entrepreneurship despite its risks. Where they are respectful and strengthening, family and community support structures are seen as central for people's wellbeing and broader development.

Local support structures, however, are rarely enough when ineffective institutions, vested interests, nepotism, power abuse and poor governance remain obstacles to addressing the underlying causes of extreme poverty and marginalisation. Institutions are failing to protect citizens and services are failing to reach people most in need. But this research demonstrates how people, even the poorest, are often part of the solution and not of the problem.

Poor and marginalised groups also talked about *rights* as a crucial means to achieving equality and dignity. For some, rights led to full recognition of their status as human beings

and citizens; for others, rights had a strong material dimension.

But even rights often have to be fought for before they become a real force for change, and the struggle is inevitably collective. Even before these movements claim victory, solidarity is critical to people's sense of wellbeing, and it is often through these collective processes that society becomes more inclusive, potentially 'tipping' the system.

This is not to idealise participatory approaches to development; we know that progress is seldom linear, and that setbacks and backlash occur. But there is little chance for international assistance or national and local development policies to benefit the poorest without their participation.

*Participate* makes the following recommendations for how policy and practice can reach out to those who have been left behind, based on principles from the research:

### **Rights, dignity, and equity**

- Give marginalised groups the opportunity to define the rights that matter most to them
- Target institutional discrimination, and ensure that government representatives and officials treat all people with respect
- Protect rights called for by the poorest and most marginalised within legal frameworks
- Prioritise investment in transformative education for all members of society
- Work within and with families and communities to challenge discriminatory social norms

### **Inclusion, solidarity, collective action**

- Support the capacity for self-organisation of marginalised groups
- Enable spaces for collective action to emerge and help these initiatives to connect to one another directly

### **Participation, accountability, and democratic institutions**

- Involve citizens in creating, monitoring and implementing policies
- Promote initiatives that build on local and indigenous knowledges
- Create opportunities for real dialogue between marginalised and excluded groups and authorities at the local, national, regional, and global levels

### **Services and policies which respond to the needs of the poorest**

- Introduce carefully considered quotas for the most marginalised to help address inequalities
- Prioritise development investment which starts with the needs of the poorest and most marginalised
- Ensure that programme success indicators are linked directly to positive impacts for the poorest and most marginalised
- Ensure that the poorest get access to, and control over, productive assets
- Recognise and support the 'informal' spaces people inhabit to survive
- Provide support to enable people to make the transitions from informal environments to more stable formal environments
- Invest in pro-poor infrastructure and utilities



## Chapter 1

# Introduction and analytical framing

Living in poverty, this family in Chennai, India face daily challenges to keep their livelihoods and home, often making difficult choices in the face of limited options.

PHOTOGRAPH: PRAXIS 2013A

The main focus of this report is to understand how positive change can happen from the perspectives of people living in greatest poverty and marginalisation and what can be done to promote this change. This report is based on participatory research with the poorest and most marginalised groups: it starts with their perspectives on their own situations and the problems they face, and moves to include their own analysis of why they face those problems and what they think can successfully address them. While there are success stories about how the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been achieved, these are not often the stories told by the poorest and most marginalised. In order to understand how people have been left behind by the approach of the MDGs we need to understand what prevents people from making the changes that they are calling for, and how they think that these obstacles can be overcome.

This report provides a synthesis of studies conducted by the *Participate* Participatory Research Group (PRG) in 29 countries, and attempts to identify and draw out the patterns of change that emerge across them from people's accounts of their own experiences of moving in or out of poverty and marginalisation. The *Participate* PRG is a network of organisations committed to bringing knowledge from the margins into decision-making at every level of society. In all 18 studies, PRG members conducted research using diverse participatory approaches, ranging from oral testimonies to Theatre for Development.<sup>1</sup>

The aim of this research, unlike that of parallel studies that have contributed to the post-2015 debate, is not to get a representative sample of the priorities of people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation, or even to map their poverty. The aim has been to get an in-depth understanding of how people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation experience change in their lives, and the different factors that contribute to either negative or positive change. Most of all, this research calls us to bear witness to the depth of insight and intelligence of people who face extremely difficult circumstances – and pay attention to what this can offer those who seek to promote development.

We now look at the analytical lenses for this report. First, we look at the dynamics of change, its triggers, obstacles and enabling factors. Second, in order to understand why it

is often so difficult for those living in poverty and marginalisation to sustain positive change, it is necessary to consider the inequalities that they face, and how these are multiple and are often overlapping and mutually reinforcing. Finally, in order to understand how inequalities can be shifted in order to lead to meaningful change, this report incorporates an analysis of power and agency – how people can catalyse change.

The analytical approach taken in the individual research reports and in this synthesis recognises that people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation can *act* and *make choices*, even when faced with extremely limited options.

## 1.1 Change

Change in this report refers to improvements or deteriorations in the lives of those most affected by injustice, poverty and exclusion. Change is dynamic, and improvements can be followed by setbacks and vice versa. At the same time, this report also considers change to be the result of the interaction between people and the contexts and social processes in which they live. Change is necessary at different levels – for individuals themselves; for families and communities; for cities, villages and towns; and for societies as a whole. In order for this to happen, changes implicate different social, economic, political and cultural processes. For example, policy reform can improve provision of education, but norms within the family may

Change is the focus of Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup> See Annex 1 for a methodology overview for this synthesis.

exclude a girl or disabled child from accessing this service and the hidden costs of education will exclude the poorest from school (CDS 2013; The Seed Institute 2013). As a result, meaningful change for those facing the worst poverty and marginalisation is complex, and policymakers must pay attention to the multiple barriers that people face.

We have observed various processes of change which impact on the lives of people and communities and have used these to structure our analysis: triggers, tipping points and breaking points, and amplifications and intersections, and their interaction with people's agency.

**Triggers** spiral people into a different life trajectory, such as the break-up of a marriage; death; severe illness; shocks such as a natural disaster or an accident, spikes in food prices which suddenly make livelihoods impossible; exposure to violence.

**Tipping points** and **breaking points** occur where a series of influences accumulate and prompt a sudden change for an individual community or group. These sorts of changes are often not predictable, as many small changes which seem to have little impact accumulate to produce a sudden big change. An example would be in rural Ghana: when the level of male migration out of a village reached a certain level, it made the village economically unviable for everyone who was left, forcing people into greater poverty (See Story 1 Madame Efua Baawa, p16). Similarly many micro changes in attitudes and behaviours can lead to sudden rapid positive change; for example, when education for girls is quickly established as a norm despite a long history of their exclusion.

The interaction between **people's own agency** and structural factors, such as those that create tipping points, is complex. However, patterns also emerge when considering this interaction: these include **amplifications** and **intersecting inequalities** (see Section 1.2).

Amplification is about the interconnectedness of issues, where one problem is compounded by another, or where one positive change leads to another. For example, where delays in public service provision have consequences for the wellbeing of a community, this can affect the poorest and most marginalised more strongly. In Kawempe slum in Uganda, delays in garbage collection cause community members to discard waste in close proximity to their homes which contaminates drinking water, increasing the risk of disease (HEPS-Uganda 2013). For those who are the poorest and most marginalised, discriminatory attitudes towards those living in poverty interact with other factors to further reduce their opportunities for agency. For example, marginality and exclusion often influence people's ability to make a living, forcing them into situations of insecurity, risk and deprivation (Restless Development-Uganda 2013; We Can Also Make a Change 2013).

People living in poverty and marginalisation are *actors* within these complex social processes; hence the decisions that they make are integral to the way in which we understand change. Their responses in the face of extreme hardship, and the choices that they make in navigating their

daily lives help us to understand patterns of change from the perspective of people's ability to act. First, there are examples of survival – a significant form of agency in the face of hardship and difficulty. Second, there are examples of resilience, which involves the ability to cope with the pressures and constraints people face (although not thrive). Strategies of resilience that go beyond bare survival include the resilience of immediate family and kin. Finally, there are examples of people becoming agents of change, not only in their own lives but also in the wider society in which they live. In these cases, people living in extreme marginalisation and poverty catalyse wider change.

It is important not only to look at how change can happen but how to ensure that it is sustainable. Sometimes communities can create positive changes but these will quickly be undermined by the underlying social dynamics. The example of 'Insecurity in Mathare' (Story 2, p18), from Spatial Collective (2013) shows that individual interventions may have little impact and may be subverted by the wider system. In this case, crime in the Mathare slum meant that street lights, put up as a local initiative, were vandalised. Examples like this show that *it is necessary to understand and respond to the underlying social dynamics as well as to the immediate problems facing the community*. Unless these issues are addressed it is impossible to get sustainable solutions to problems.

It is important to understand change because so many development interventions that are designed to improve the lives of those living in greatest poverty and marginalisation fail because they have an over-simplified view of how change happens. If we fail to understand that a young girl will not have access to education if her family has no dignified livelihood; or, that investments in community can take time before they reach a positive tipping point; or, that structural inequalities will be radically amplified by negative triggers, then we will continue to invest in initiatives which fail to reach those most in need.

## 1.2 Inequalities

While specific events can affect the dynamics of poverty and change, it is the multiple inequalities that are experienced by people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation that frustrate their efforts. Discrimination and stigma are defining features of their experience. Their stories offer an insight into the way that inequalities overlap and reinforce each other to reduce people's room to exercise their agency for positive change, and drive them into risky activities and no-win choices.

MDG indicators have focused on success stories; they fail to acknowledge the groups around the world who failed to progress or whose progress has been slow. Despite this omission, increasing concern with rising inequality has drawn attention to the inequalities and differences in wellbeing that exist even among those officially classified as poor. The individuals and groups who have participated in

The experience of living in extreme poverty and marginalisation, showing how inequalities affect people's lives, is the focus of Chapter 3



CDS 2013

For many, the political instability in Egypt means feelings of uncertainty and insecurity in the way they live their lives and the opportunities available to them.

this research process exemplify three different categories of inequality;<sup>2</sup> each profoundly detrimental to human wellbeing and societal development and often mutually reinforcing.

The first of these relates to *economic deprivation* of various kinds: income poverty, insecure livelihoods, asset deficits. This is the form of inequality that is most widely recognised in the mainstream literature on poverty, although our report deals mainly with those who are in extreme, rather than moderate, poverty. They are the subsistence farmers in Ghana, unemployed youth in Egypt, rural indigenous groups in Mexico, Bolivia and the Philippines, homeless families in India, landless peoples in Uganda, trafficked children in Ghana, and people in disaster-affected contexts such as Haiti.

The second form of inequality reflects *discrimination based on marginalised identities* and draws attention to the social norms and values in societies which position certain groups as less deserving of respect, lower down the social hierarchy, than others. Some of these identities are inherited and define a group's place in society across generations. Examples in the report include indigenous groups in Mexico, Bolivia and Philippines, *dalit* castes in India (the so-called 'Untouchables'), racial minorities in Brazil and Nigeria, people with disabilities in Bangladesh, transgender people in India, and sexual minority groups in

the Balkans. Others are marginalised because they do not fit into accepted norms either on grounds of what they do, as with sex workers, or how their difference from the norm is perceived, as with the LGBTIQ community, people with HIV/AIDS, disabled people. Still others are marginalised as a result of conflict, as with the Palestinians.

*Spatial inequality* is the third category that features frequently in this report. The adverse conditions that prevail in certain locations serve to disadvantage those who live and work in them, often constituting a major barrier to their ability to escape from poverty. Spatial disadvantage may result from difficult mountainous terrain, remote hard-to-reach rural areas, under-served urban slums or regions vulnerable to climate change. (See Story 4 Sara Mendoza, p19: Urban Growth in the Philippines).

While each of these categories of inequality is associated with particular forms of disadvantage, it is their intersection that explains the apparently intransigent nature of certain poverty traps, their persistence across the lifetime of individuals and even across generations. These intersections are not accidental or coincidental. As this report will show, they tend to go together. It is not simply the poor who live in disadvantaged locations but also those who are socially marginalised. Thus indigenous people are more likely than others to live in difficult mountainous terrain; *dalit* groups are more likely to live on the margins of settlements, far

<sup>2</sup>This section draws on Kabeer, N. (2010) 'Can the MDGs Provide a Pathway to Social Justice? The Challenge of Intersecting Inequalities', *IDS/Millennium Achievement Fund*, [www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/MDGreportwebsitesu2WVC.pdf](http://www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/MDGreportwebsitesu2WVC.pdf); and Kabeer, N.; Norton, A. and Shepherd, A. (eds) (forthcoming) 'Addressing Intersecting Inequalities Post-2015', London: ODI

from the drinking-water facilities but close to their landlord's liquor shop; unemployed youth are most likely to be found in crime-ridden urban settlements where they get drawn into gang warfare and drug dealing.

Gender and generation cut across these inequalities, differentiating the experiences of men and women, old and young, intensifying disadvantage. While most women are subject to certain forms of discrimination in most societies, the intersection of gender with inequalities associated with income, location, occupation and so on generally serves to intensify their disadvantage. Similarly, many societies may subscribe to the view that children 'should be seen, and not heard', but desperate poverty may transform them into commodities, sold by parents in order to survive; for example in the case of child prostitution in Ghana (Challenging Heights 2013).

Older people, on the other hand, used to be accorded great respect, but this is changing as old age becomes increasingly associated with dependency in societies without state pensions or social security.

We use the first-hand reports provided by members of these different groups to analyse how they experience inequality; how economic deficits, marginalised identities and location-based disadvantage mediate their access to resources, services, opportunities and justice; and the intensifications, reinforcements and amplifications of disadvantage associated with the intersection of these inequalities in the lives of many groups. We also trace how intersecting inequalities mediate the impact of changes that feature in the lives of people across the world. In the context of this report, these include the purposive change associated with development efforts as well as natural disasters, climate change, economic crisis and recession, conflict and so on. Throughout our analysis, we show how the impact of change, for better or worse, operates through the different elements that constitute the structures of inequality: through norms, values and behaviour, through livelihoods and assets, access to services, opportunities and justice; and through location, mobility and immobility.

### 1.3 Power and agency to catalyse change

The final area of analysis, which links together people's experiences of change with their experience of inequalities, is power and agency. It is power, and shifts in power, that ultimately enable people to move from survival to developing resilience to becoming active agents of change. This report refers to different dimensions of power.

#### 1.3.1 The power of citizens

At the centre of understanding how positive change happens is the way in which people living in extreme poverty strengthen their own power to act and respond to the events and circumstances around them. A citizen is a person recognised by their society as having the right to

Power and change are the focus of Chapter 4



PRAXIS 2013B

Roja, a transgender aspiring actress, explains how sexual minorities in India are denied their rights by being refused identity papers.

have rights. Formal citizenship can be used to exclude the poorest and most marginalised, such as by refusing identity papers to transsexuals in India, and denying Palestinian women formal identity papers required for the freedom of movement (Praxis 2013b; MEND 2013). However, we use *citizen* in this report to refer to people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation as political subjects – not only do they have rights, but they should have a role in shaping their societies.

The research shows how recognition and belonging are critical factors necessary for those living in extreme poverty to have a sense of their own power, and aspirations for change – this is the horizontal dimension of citizenship.<sup>3</sup> This is not to suggest that all uses of personal power will benefit them or their wider communities, but rather that unless there is personal power to meet it, change that comes from the outside in will not be sufficient to address the deep inequalities and barriers that people face within the community, from the state, and in their societies.

The research highlights the importance of the personal power of citizens, including their positive self-perception and sense of dignity. This kind of power is often built with the support and solidarity of others: informal support structures are fundamental for people's wellbeing and social

<sup>3</sup>Kabeer, N. (2005) 'The Search for Inclusive Citizenship: Meanings and Expressions in an Interconnected World', in N. Kabeer (ed.), *Inclusive Citizenship: Meanings and Expressions*, London: Zed Books



development, in particular when education, health or legal systems discriminate or are non-existent. For many who face marginalisation within the family or community because of their disability, sexuality, gender or age, support networks outside of their everyday environment can be a transforming source of personal power. Relationships and networks are also essential for providing people with access to material and emotional resources that enhance their power to mobilise for change.

### 1.3.2 The power of collective action

Working with others to affect change, or collective action, also strengthens opportunities to generate positive change at an individual level, where new knowledge impacts the way in which people see their life and opportunities. The experience of Hamis Waiswa, a young man in Uganda, shows us how the absence of networks can inhibit agency. Hamis has aspirations to put his energy into something concrete, positive and productive. However, there is little support or guidance, and alternative livelihood opportunities are secured through power and relationships. As a result, he experiences hopelessness and despair (Restless Development-Uganda 2013).

For Danijel in Montenegro (See Story 3, p18) there is a lack of formal support, guidance and comfort available to LGBTIQ people. But his story shows how you can find strength, agency and determination when supported by informal community networks. These examples highlight the linkages between personal and relational power, and how people's relationships within their families and wider communities can enable or undermine their feelings of empowerment, self-recognition, belonging and aspirations for change – critical factors that enable agency.

### 1.3.3 The power of accountable and democratic governments

The final dimension of power that mediates change is the power which permeates the relationships between people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation and the institutions that affect them – the 'vertical' dimension of citizenship.<sup>4</sup>

As outlined above, opportunities that enable people to participate in the public and political lives of their communities and to enact their agency are crucial. Accountable and inclusive institutions that respond to people's claims for rights are central to effectively addressing inequalities. A lack of transparency and accountability in politics contributes to poverty and marginalisation. When people are able to hold their governments to account and claim their rights, governments deliver better quality services. More accountable public and private institutions can respond more effectively to citizens' needs, and challenge the inequalities and discrimination that deepen poverty and exclusion. A clear message from this research is that when institutions listen to and work with people living in poverty, democratic societies are reinvigorated.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

This analysis of change, inequalities and power forms an analytical framework for this global research synthesis that is grounded in the realities of people living in poverty and marginalisation. The arguments that are presented here, and the messages that emerge from the report are built from the way in which people on the ground are articulating their experiences, and the drivers and barriers to change that are most pertinent in their lives. How and why change happens is critical for development policies that transform the lives of people who are poorest and most marginalised.

## How to navigate this report

### Chapter 1

Overview of key concepts and analytical framework used in the report, identifying salient patterns in the research findings.

### Chapter 2

Analysis of the patterns of change that the research has identified, supported by examples.

### Chapter 3

Analysis of what has emerged about the current context and people's experiences of extreme poverty and marginalisation that is relevant to understanding how change can happen, including the multiple inequalities people face.

### Chapter 4

Recommendations for policy and practice, based on principles and mechanisms of development articulated by those living in extreme poverty and marginalisation. The emphasis in this chapter is on what specifically can address extreme poverty and marginalisation (as opposed to poverty more generally, or general wellbeing).

### Chapter 5

Summaries of the 18 *Participate* PRG studies on which this synthesis is based, including main messages from the research and a description of the methodology used.



All people have a story to tell: these children in Nairobi, Kenya enjoy talking together and sharing their experiences.

THE SEED INSTITUTE 2013

# People's stories from the *Participate* research

The 18 research projects worked with participants to understand their life and presented them in a variety of ways (see Annex 1). A huge range of evocative stories were generated across the projects so choices had to be made about which full stories to include. We chose fourteen to illustrate more vividly the core arguments, but small illustrative stories are seeded throughout the text.

People's stories enable those living in poverty and marginalisation to express the underlying dynamics of poverty, exclusion and injustice that they experience – on their own terms. Analysis of these stories helps the reader to understand the reality of poverty and marginalisation and allows an exploration of the complex, context-specific influences on people's life trajectories. It also builds an understanding of the mechanisms and actions through which transformative social change can become a reality.

When engaging with these stories it is important to avoid over-simplifying our perceptions of people's life decisions. People are constantly negotiating complex trade-offs. Sometimes negative experiences trigger a spiral of decline, sometimes they can open up opportunities. The positive or negative outcome of people's choices is linked to a variety of interconnected factors (social positioning, their agency, the type of relationships and networks they navigate and the broader environment) some of which they have some control over and others which they don't. The stories illustrate this complexity.

## Methodology for building people's stories

- The way in which people's stories were built is important as the diverse approaches reflect the power of narrative in storytelling in its different forms;
- In some cases the methodology of the research enabled an empowering process of first person narrative storytelling, for example through digital storytelling;
- In others that first person story comes from a transcription of dialogue from the participatory research;
- In other examples the story was built through an exchange with a community researcher focusing specifically on processes and mechanisms of change;
- There are also stories that have been built from multiple voices and reflect collective issues discussed through participatory processes such as participatory video.

## Story 1 Madame Efua Baawa, Gomoa West District in Ghana (GCRN 2013)

Climate change has had devastating effects in rural areas and fishing villages pushing people who are poor into extreme poverty. There are economic, cultural and social impacts on people's lives.

**Efua Baawa is a subsistence farmer from Gomoa Dunkwa, a community in the Gomoa West District of the Central Region of Ghana. She is a single parent with children to take care of. She explains:**

*I started farming about twenty eight years ago with my husband and at the time things were really good. The rains came and they were enough to feed my crops. Whatever crops my husband and I sowed, they grew well. We were able to feed our family from our farm and were also able to take care of other necessities of our family ... everything has changed now, things have gone bad. These days the rains have stopped coming, the pattern of rainfall has changed. All the big trees on my farm are no more. The six ponds in this community have also all dried up, and my crops are not doing well anymore. The soil is now infested with insects and termites and no longer fertile. These are locusts feeding on my plant. This is what these pests are doing to me. In fact my livelihood has been destroyed and I can say that I am very poor.*

*Some twenty five years ago Dunkwa was virtually a forest. We had big trees. Species like Onyina, Odanta and Odum among others were found here. They gave us shade on our farms and made the soil very fertile. Today things are different. Some landowners gave concessions to timber contractors and they cut down all the trees in the community and we have no forest anymore. I think this is why the rains are not coming anymore like they used to. I also think*

*the absence of the trees is the cause of the high temperatures we are facing, causing pests to feed on our crops.*

*These conditions have affected me a great deal. Farming is no longer attractive. It is now difficult for me and other farmers in this community to make ends meet... Most of the young men and women have left this community. My husband also left me because he was frustrated. I think he should be working at the mines in Obuase. I am now left alone to take care of the children and my crops are not doing well... There are times I have to go to neighbours to beg for food before my children and I are able to eat something, and when I am able to harvest some crops I hide most of them from friends to save some for tomorrow... I have no money to pay school fees so the children stay at home ... The parents of those children [in the community] have all left the community to seek greener pastures elsewhere and have left the children in the care of their grandparents who are [too] old to go anywhere...our ponds are all dried up with weeds overgrown in them. If care is not taken our community will be like that. Our community will find itself in a state where all of us will migrate, leaving the community empty.*

GCRN 2013



Efua Baawa stands in front of her house with her family.

## Story 2 Insecurity in Mathare, Kenya (Spatial Collective 2013)

Social change is complex, and involves many interconnected factors. Single-dimension solutions are not enough to tackle wider social problems.

### TRANSCRIPT

Many people in Mathare are scared to go outside at night because of some threats such as mugging and rape. Women are scared to use the toilets in the night, that is why they use flying toilets, and this can lead to health problems, while older men are even scared to go out during the day time.

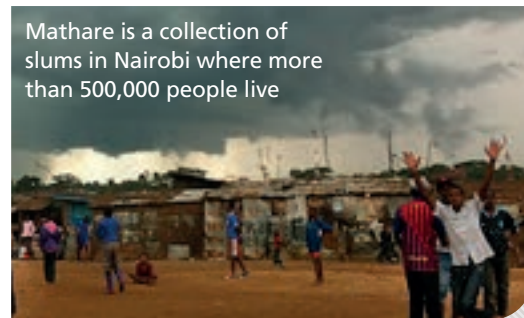
We decided to tackle the issue by trying to map all of the places that it took place. We discovered that the hotspot of violence were in the areas of no lights. We were pleased to see that security lights had been erected, small business have been set up, the security that was created is leading to benefits.

Small change can lead to improvements, but a few days later vandals came and destroyed the light. We were very disappointed and the mugging continued. You find that the security lights

which are here, people tamper with them and they end up having light during day time, it is now day time and the light is on. Most of the people who spoil the lights, maybe, they are the ones that commit the crimes around here.

We brought the community together to discuss the reasons for the vandalism. We are trying our best to bring change, but we can't tackle wider social problems alone. So we want you to work with us.

 View story here:  
<https://vimeo.com/73928316>



Mathare is a collection of slums in Nairobi where more than 500,000 people live

SPATIAL COLLECTIVE 2013

## Story 3 My Chosen Family by Danijel, Montenegro (OWPSEE 2013)

People with different sexual identities face discrimination and violence. However, strength, agency and determination can be found with the care and support of informal community networks.

### TRANSCRIPT

My name is Danijel, a lesbian and gay rights activist part of the association 'Queer Montenegro'. We have proposed the initiative to draft and adopt legal solutions that would lead to recognition of same-sex families in Montenegro; marking the beginning of the struggle for the right I don't have, for the family I have.

I was born in Podgorica, Montenegro. I was the smallest baby in the maternity home, the smallest child in kindergarten, the smallest and skinniest pupil in elementary school. I grew up with my mother and we have lived together until a couple of years ago.

When I started understanding my sexuality, the first thing I noticed was that all the boys around me liked girls, while I liked a boy. I knew I

should keep quiet about it and hide it, though I was at peace with it myself. That was not a problem itself, but the fact that I must hide it was a huge burden.

After I had come out to my friends as gay, I told my mother as well. That sparked the first serious issues in our relationship. Soon after the everyday insults she started attacking

me physically a couple of times. Instead of receiving support from her I got complete rejection. After a couple of years of us living together, one day I decided to leave our home and start a new life.

I was meeting more and more people who were like me, and with whom I share the need to make change and be accepted. My friends' support for my activism has been growing each day and we are thinking of starting an organisation that would directly advocate for our human rights. I have been thinking about making such a step for long time, but without the full support of my family I didn't have the strength to start it.

Everyone needs a place where they belong and a place where they return to everyday, and where someone who loves them waits for them at home. Now I have a new family which I chose, family made of all of my friends and the man that I love who's with me in every moment and ready to support me and to comfort me for the anxiety generated by my work. Thank you! That is the family I must fight for. At the moment I have no communication with my mother whatsoever. She doesn't want to hear of me because I have 'disgraced the family and Montenegro and all the people of this world'.

One period of my life has ended. A new life started on May 16.

 View story here:  
<https://vimeo.com/71498197>



Danijel's representation of his activism

OWPSEE 2013

## Story 4 Urban Growth in the Philippines by Sara Mendoza (ATD Fourth World 2013)

People living on streets and in slums are bearing the brunt of the quest for 'urban growth and development'. Pushed into extreme poverty and marginalisation, they have few options.

### Sara Mendoza, born in Santa Ana, Manila

*In 1993, I moved to live under a bridge on a rented house when I got married; four of my six children were all born here.*

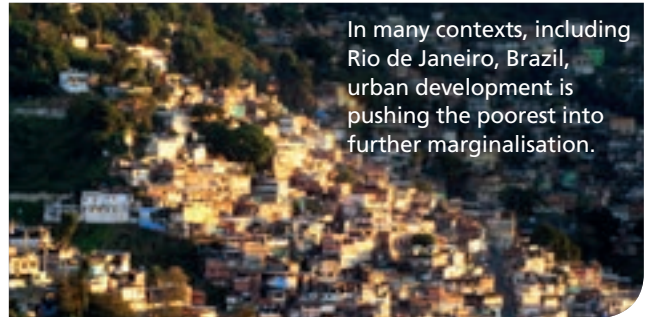
*...we lived a quite peaceful life here. But when the demolitions started in 2005, our life changed drastically. We were moved to PNR nearby (Philippine National Railways); we stayed there for a year. Then another demolition started in early 2006 and in July that same year we were moved to Cabuyao, Laguna Province (50km away from Manila). It was done during a typhoon signal number 2. Our things and us were transported with a truck with no roof and so we and our stuffs were all soaking wet.*

*When we arrived there, there was no house. It was just a piece of land that we have to clean and remove all the weeds and to build a house...When we were relocated, we were given 1,000 pesos (about USD \$25) by the government. Once we got to the area, an amount of 25,000 pesos were given to start building the house ... We had to wait 2 weeks before we had the money to build our house. In the end, we were not able to spend the money on making the floor of the house but on food because my husband could not work there, we were living already there and we have to eat to continue to live. During rainy season our area gets flooded and the houses are surrounded by rice fields. The soil of our house erodes during rainy season.*

*At the beginning my husband continued his work in Manila and rented a small place to live. He is blind, and is a masseur. In Manila he had regular customers for massage. I was staying in the relocation site and I would come from time to time to Manila. We talked if we would send the children to school in the province with me living there with the youngest children, while my husband would be living in Manila with one of our eldest who wanted to continue school there. But it was taking double expenses; with our budget of 200 pesos a day it is not enough. Sending money to the province was also not possible. To send 100 pesos there, the fee is 60 pesos.*

*So my husband decided to live altogether in the province and our daughter studying in Manila lived with a relative to continue school. But it was impossible for the kind of livelihood my husband has. We tried there but we couldn't get customers, we had no other source of income and no savings. So we tried to find other ways to earn a living. We tried to sell stuffs, we tried scavenging. We tried to import stuffs from there to sell in Manila and earned money through commission. We asked for alms, as we do sometimes here in Manila when needed, but there, there is no highway, no traffic.*

*Our weekly budget was really not enough with 5 children to feed and pay for all the other expenses like kerosene for light, water and wood for cooking. Electricity there was installed only after 1 year. For the first time in my life, we*



In many contexts, including Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, urban development is pushing the poorest into further marginalisation.

*starved; there was no food for my children. But we tried living there despite of hunger. We tried but we really couldn't survive living there.*

*I would like to say something on the schooling of my children; (except for one)...my other children really had to stop school for a whole year. I was not able to transfer them to a school in the province, because if we did so, the scholarship they received from Manila would be stopped permanently. We first tried for a year to see if it was possible for us to live in the province. When we came back to Manila, my children were all ashamed to go back to school. They ...were afraid to get teased or bullied because they were a year behind from them (so) I had to work hard to motivate them and to explain them how important education to get a better job when they grow up.*

*After a year, in 2008 we moved back to the bridge...our houses were gone. We were not allowed to build a house to live in. We rented instead something near the bridge, but the rent was 750 pesos a month and we couldn't continue. For example, with our income, we were setting aside 20 or 30 pesos everyday to pay the rent at the end of the month. Children needed 20 pesos each to go to school and they are 6 children!*

*As we are thinking of the future, we did not sell the house from the relocation site.... For me I want to keep the house. It's like an investment for my family. For us it is a once in a lifetime opportunity to own a piece of land ...my neighbour is living there taking care of the house because stealing stuff there is recurrent when no one lives in it ... there are many conditions and restrictions for this house we are paying. For example, if the house remains empty with no one living there or you are not able to pay for a certain number of months, they will take it back even if you already got the electricity and water installed.*

*In my opinion, the people who can stay there (in the relocation site) have a permanent job or have a member of the family working abroad. Some have capital to build a small store or a place in a nearby market. In short, there is constant income for the family. Unlike us, our income is very unstable. For them transferring their children from schools in Manila to the province is not a problem. They can continue sending their children to school because they have a stable financial situation.*



## Chapter 2

# Conceptualising change

Young women in Occupied Palestine face multiple barriers to their freedoms and opportunities for self-expression.

PHOTOGRAPH: MEND 2013

For development policies at all levels to be effective, far more needs to be understood about how and why change happens, and how change can be made sustainable. Development programmes and policies are often based on simple, linear understandings of change. But extreme poverty is characterised by complex and interconnected social processes.

In this chapter we draw upon the longer stories presented in this report in order to illustrate how change happens, because to understand change it is necessary to understand how life unfolds for people and how things impact over time.

## 2.1 Dynamic and interconnected social processes

Extreme poverty and marginalisation are complex social processes that connect at many social levels. In this section we use the concepts and patterns of change identified in Chapter 1 to explore the complexity that is demonstrated by the experiences and issues which emerged from the research.

### 2.1.1 Triggering change

Triggers are factors or events in the life of a person which move them into a different life trajectory to that which they would otherwise have had. While certain triggers can undermine possible change, others can prompt a positive change. Triggers which shock people into spirals of further poverty and marginalisation include natural disasters, violent conflict, a relative's deaths, accidents, eviction and

displacement. Confronted with these unexpected situations, people often choose to engage in livelihoods which involve risk such as mining, sex work and various forms of child labour. Triggers are highly significant as to how people navigate change, as once people are propelled into difficult situations it is often very hard to find ways out. In Hajiya Yola's story (See Story 5, p28), the loss of a husband triggers a decline in her wellbeing. Gendered roles within society leave women without a livelihood, familial support structures or a place to live. In this case, she is forced into risky work, with her children being exposed to the same risk when they become of working age; a situation that transmits poverty to the next generation. Support from the state is not available and she is criminalised because of her poverty, further limiting her capacity to change her situation (TFDC 2013).

Urban development often results in the displacement of the poorest communities, amplifying their marginalisation in society. This in turn can create a trigger that pulls people further into poverty. Shack-dwellers in the Philippines have their homes demolished several times a week by the local authorities. Participants in an ATD Fourth World seminar in Mauritius noted that '*social housing is often built using low-cost material... Rehousing schemes for poor families relocate families far from everything. They should be integrated into the life of villages and towns*' (ATD Fourth World 2013).

Sickness and accidents are often the triggers for long-term poverty. Loss of income through illness and payment for medicine, even in the context of universal health care, leads to the terrible burden of debt and debt repayments:

*My second daughter met with a major road accident two years back. A man on a motorbike rode over her legs while she was resting on the streets. She had to be*

COMPASS 2013



Young men in Uganda have aspirations to put their energy into something positive and productive to change their situation for the better.

*hospitalised for a whole year when different implants had to be laid in her leg to get her walking again. As we live on the streets, these kinds of accidents are common. Earlier it was my father's sickness that got us spiraling into poverty from which we have not been able to recover and now my daughter's accident. Last year when my daughter was in hospital I could not do any work, as I had to be with her round the clock looking after her. During this time my mother and I got indebted by more than Rs 40,000. Though we were in the government hospital, we spent at least Rs 22,000 on my daughter's treatment ... I had taken Rs 20,000 from two persons and I need to return back the money on a daily basis – Rs 200 every day.*

(Mary, a homeless CityMaker on the NSC Bose Road in Chennai, Praxis 2013a: 7)

Accidents are a major issue for people who are already marginalised through poverty and discrimination. Researchers with disabilities in Bangladesh explained that disability makes people more vulnerable so *'there is a higher risk of being injured or killed in a natural disaster for people with disabilities and older people, especially the poor'* (We Can Also Make a Change 2013). Many of the researcher's disabilities were caused by accidents in the first place. The accident is the trigger, but it is poverty, disability and old age which then spiral people into deeper poverty. Similarly, the trade-offs that force the poorest and most marginalised into risk prone work such as mining, working in the un-regulated garment industry, or sex work, make people much more vulnerable to accidents.

Exposure to violence and conflict is a significant trigger. For some, violence is a strategy to get access to resources, livelihoods and power, but for many it destroys the shaky foundations of survival. The research offers many examples of violence that trigger negative trajectories. Violent conflict over land in Mexico impacts on agricultural production and access to credit (Cortez-Ruiz 2013). In Nigeria people's livelihoods are disrupted by the Islamist militant group, Boko Haram, attacks (TFDC 2013). The impacts of violent conflict-related triggers are long term: *'its impact on education [was felt] long after the violence had ended. When people lose their savings through conflict they cannot afford to put their children through school'*. A local vicar in Uganda explains: *'we make progress, but then, every 10 years, something happens that brings us back to where we were or worse than before. All the work done, the efforts and sacrifices lost'* (COMPASS 2013: 29).

The Oneworld – Platform for South East Europe Foundation (OWPSEE) research reported organised violence targeted at sexual minorities in the Balkans. This purposeful violence not only limits people's mobility and ability to engage in the public life of their community; it is also psychologically harmful. This aggression can lead to personal break downs and a lack of belief in the self. ATD Fourth World's research shows how the stigmatisation of the poorest people can trigger deeper and more intense experiences of poverty:



CDS2013

Triggers are factors or events in the life of a person which move them into a different life trajectory.

*The worst thing about living in extreme poverty is the contempt that they treat you like you are worthless, that they look at you with disgust and fear and that they even treat you like an enemy. We and our children experience this every day, and it hurts us, humiliates us and makes us live in fear and shame.*

(Peruvian research seminar participant, ATD Fourth World 2013).

But triggers that promote positive trajectories can also occur at the family, community and national level; generating positive movement within and between these spaces. For example, sexual minority groups who are discriminated against within their families and communities have found that the breakdown of relationships in one space can open up opportunities to build new support structures with groups who recognise their rights and their value as human beings (OWPSEE 2013; Praxis 2013b). In other cases, family members or relatives were seen as triggering positive change; such as the story of Dalilah in Egypt (see Story 6, p29). Her elder sister provides Dalilah with the financial resources to continue her education, a support that allows this young woman to fight against the discriminatory norms that are preventing from continuing her studies (CDS 2013).

### 2.1.2 Tipping points and breaking points

Tipping points happen when a series of changes combine to reach a critical mass, and lead to a fundamental change of the whole situation for a particular community or group. Across the research, negative tipping points are seen around the effects of migration for rural communities in Ghana and Mexico. For example, in Ghanaian villages, when migration reaches a certain level, it makes life economically unviable for everyone who is left behind, pushing the whole community into greater poverty and vulnerability; as exemplified in the story of Madame Efua Baawa (See Story 1, p17). The men who are still in the



villages are not able to provide the necessary resources to support the family, so divorce is becoming more common:

*I have not divorced my wife but majority of people do divorce their wives because of poverty as a result of soil infertility which cannot guarantee their income status for housekeeping arrangements.*  
(Tainso, GCRN 2013)

These factors have gradually resulted in a complete disintegration of family life, changing the economic, social and cultural character of rural villages: *'Most homes are now broken as a result of joblessness and migration'* (Totope fishing village, GCRN 2013).

The following reflection by an indigenous Mexican person shows a deep understanding of how the combination of poor services, poor infrastructure, diminishing livelihoods, and migration results in abandoned and unproductive land. Communities are broken up and the ability of families to have dignified lives is constrained:

*We live in an area where we are marginalised, ... in the hospitals ... there is no medicine, there is nothing, ... the roads, if I invite you ... to know my ejido [community], [you need to go by] horse... we are abandoned ... it is the same with housing, drainage, health ... as peasants we have rights, but we do not get them ... and another thing, is how can we change things so that ... people do not leave their land, that they do not migrate, because many will go to the United States and will leave the land abandoned, or rented .... All this is needed to ensure families are happy, happy to have a better life with dignity.*  
(Indigenous Tamuin, San Luis Potosi, Cortez-Ruiz 2013)

The research also presents examples of gradual change that result in positive shifts in societal structures and norms. The Seed Institute (2013) documented a change in attitudes towards disabled children and their families in the 'Red soil' settlement, Kenya. The most important change was how families with disabled children are now better able to handle this issue; no longer feeling marginalised and stigmatised. Through a self-help and solidarity group – started by the leadership and determination of a mother of a son with a disability, Jacinta Karani – parents have created the space to talk about their shared challenges and also rely on a common credit fund for medicines. The role of Jacinta driving this change has been fundamental (see further discussion of people's agency and change in the following section); however, it is the perceptions towards disability across the wider community that is shifting.

This community researcher wants to feel a shift in the discriminatory social norms around disability in Bangladesh.



Changes to discriminatory norms are seen where mobilisation, awareness-raising campaigns and government policies can shift the perception of society and legislation towards a group. For example, in the case of LGBTIQA activism in the Balkans over the last ten years they acknowledge the societal gains they have achieved: *'Today, there are three organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina that work on LGBTIQA issues: the Sarajevo Open Centre, the Okvir Association from Sarajevo and the Banja Luka-based foundation.'* (Queer RE-ACT film available in Vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/74214538>). The actions and activities of those organisations are known to greater or lesser degree to the general public. An equally important factor of sexual minorities' activism in Bosnia Herzegovina is the existing, informal, individual activism (OWPSEE 2013). Progress has been made, but the struggle for this group continues.

A breaking point is the point at which physical, mental, or emotional strength gives way under stress. It can happen when people are confronted with a shock or a series of triggers that, coupled with lack of support and the closing down of spaces for agency, can produce desperate behaviours. The digital story of a woman from a South African township (Story 9, 'Inkedama (Orphan)' by Siphokazi, p41) explores how the compounded desperation, stigmatisation, sickness and loneliness frequently experienced by people living in poverty with HIV led to suicide. This had awful consequences for her beloved ones and the wider community (SLF 2013b).

### 2.1.3 Amplifications and intersections

Women in rural areas will often have a double burden of farming and taking care of the household, but the challenges of this are intensified in the context of HIV and AIDS, and discriminatory laws against women. The experience of Anna in Uganda shows how multiple influences amplify the barriers that limit her ability to live a good life. These barriers are further compounded by the breakup of family units as a side effect of violent conflict:

*I was given land by my late husband's family but now as a widow, the land has been grabbed away from me.*

*I now depend on only one patch of land where I can grow food. I just hire patches of land for growing food. That is what is hurting my life so much. And also someone like me who is living with HIV, all the time you worry about the education of your children. I'm not sure if I can manage to educate them, or whether I will die before they complete their education...*

*What prevents me from living well is taking care of orphans without anyone helping me. Because I am taking care of orphans of two families: my brother-in-law killed my sister and he also shot himself. He was a soldier and I do not know why he did that. So I am suffering with their children together with mine. I am the one educating them yet I am also a widow. All the time I do not find happiness in my family.*  
(COMPASS 2013)

The gendered patterns of land inheritance that have long been part of the structural discrimination that is faced by women is prevalent across the research, however when men migrate to the cities leaving the women behind, the crisis that women face is aggravated by the fact that they cannot own land (GCRN 2013).

Sometimes, government policies can amplify hardship rather than reduce it, because of how they interact with social norms. The Mexican government programme Oportunidades aims to improve the health, education and nutrition of families living in extreme poverty. Children receive scholarships for food, clothing and school materials; in return, mothers are required to attend classes on health issues, monthly appointments at the health clinic, and take part in health-related community activities. This mechanism is described as 'co-responsibility' for producing healthy families and communities. In practice however, it can create greater burdens when travelling to the clinics for the poorest and geographically isolated women, and overworked doctors who resort to abuse and inefficiency (Cortez-Ruiz 2013).

Natural disasters have long been a feature of countries such as the Philippines, but this research study shows how this has been radically amplified by unregulated logging activity: 'as many of those killed were crushed by logs left along the river bank by forestry companies, which were swept into houses when water levels rose.' The river reached unprecedented levels partly because deforestation in the surrounding area meant that the ground was unable to absorb large quantities of water (COMPASS 2013: 19).

It is clear from the research that there are multiple connections between the factors that influence change. Amplification can be seen when the effects of one issue are intensified by another. Whether these connections lead to positive or negative outcomes is linked to the actors involved, and their interests, as well as wider underlying influences that can enable or block change from taking place. This is shown in research in the slum of Kawempe, Kampala:

*When the vehicle to pick garbage delays, the people throw every waste including human waste on top of roofs and when it rains since water is expensive a jerry can at 200, they get this rainy water free from the roof and these consume disease.*  
(HEPS-Uganda 2013)

The Spatial Collective in Kenya documented the compound effects of crime in Mathare, which restricts people to certain spaces and behaviours. In this example the wider health impacts of this social context are also clear; where people are not able to access sanitation facilities at night they resort to defecating close to their homes or use 'flying toilets' to dispose of their waste, deteriorating the health of their environment (Spatial Collective 2013). To articulate processes of change as complex is not to say that they are hopeless. This research has also revealed how positive



CORTEZ RUIZ 2013

Women like Eduarda in Mexico, who are left behind when their husbands migrate, have to find ways to maintain a livelihood for their family.

influences and interventions can enhance people's agency. This is part of the story of Eduarda, whose husband migrated home to find work, whilst she managed to build a decent livelihood relying on her own determination. Later on, this was translated into a platform for training and knowledge sharing, so Eduarda saw the amplification of positive change in her life.

*What is important is training. When I started my training and meeting new people, people who have not formal basic education but who have a lot of experience (...) there is an exchange of ideas, and one learns with all this (...) After the Training the Fund gave us the credit, initially we were three families whom formed the group, now we are four ... When we prepare the soil we put in all that is needed to feed it (...) protecting its sustainability. This way we know how to do things here in our community and do not have to migrate (to the United States) to become slaves... I was not satisfied, I had cattle, but I had no land, so no food for the cattle. Then the government began a project on (sustainable) systems and I took the courses necessary as there were not a technician to come to apply (this technique)... After that, gradually I was enabled to face the struggle at the field, because I had that big challenge to face, because I wanted the father of my children to be here with me.*  
(San Luis Potosi, Mexico, Cortez-Ruiz 2013)

#### 2.1.3.1 Intersections of inequalities

While specific events can affect the dynamics of poverty and change, it is the multiple inequalities that are experienced by people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation that frustrate and undermine their efforts to take action. Notably the intersection of economic deprivation, discrimination based on marginalised identities and spatial inequalities deepens poverty and vulnerability. The Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy (MEND) identify four key issues that impact on people's lives in Palestine: displacement, segregation, discrimination and land appropriation. The interconnections between these

factors highlight how multiple exclusions can come to characterise the existence of people's lives, leaving feelings of isolation and worthlessness. These four issues result in the further marginalisation of already vulnerable community members such as women, children, the elderly and the disabled by reinforcing discriminatory norms. This is in turn underscored by poor governance which makes it difficult to address the structural drivers of the problems (MEND 2013). People who live in poverty and who are marginalised face multiple forms of discrimination every day of their lives. Participatory research in rural Mexico identifies gender inequality as the source of poverty, exclusion and denial of basic rights. Key issues for women living in poverty in Mexico are chronic violence, inefficient institutional programmes for poverty reduction, maternal mortality, and limited access to credit (Cortez-Ruiz 2013). In all settings, discriminatory attitudes towards those living in poverty interact with other factors to further reduce their opportunities for agency.

In South Africa, The Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation (SLF) work with people affected by HIV and drug-resistant TB shows how multiple and overlapping forms of marginalisation can compound the effects of health problems: this includes gender relations, stigma surrounding HIV, isolation, urban poverty, race and age. HIV/AIDS-related stigma ruptures social and community cohesion, isolating the ill and breaking down the informal

support structures that ensure people have the necessary material and emotional resources to live well. Stigma also prevents people from accessing treatment, attending clinics, or accepting help from health workers because this exposes people (SLF 2013b).

In many contexts, discriminatory norms intersect with livelihoods amplifying deprivation. Where customary norms or cultures deny women access to land people see few alternatives, in Uganda, *'both young men and young women noted these practices as unfair; however most youth felt that they cannot be challenged'* (Restless Development-Uganda 2013). Young people in Eastern Uganda struggle to find work, but *'youth with a disability are restricted by negative attitudes of prospective employers ... they are typically engaged in activities such as shoe selling, alcohol brewing and breaking stones'*. The work on disability in Bangladesh uncovered stories of personal determination to break through barriers, and a small number of educated disabled people were able to get government jobs through quotas, but most were driven to begging (We Can Also Make a Change 2013).

#### **2.1.4 People's agency and change**

The previous sections analysed change from the perspective of processes that *happen* to people. People living in extreme poverty and marginalisation are actors within these complex social processes; the decisions that they make are integral to



SLF 2013B

Orphaned children in South Africa living with HIV/AIDS have few support networks and face institutional barriers in their attempts to access their ARV treatment.

the way in which we understand change. Their responses in the face of extreme hardship and the choices that they make in navigating their daily lives help us to understand patterns of change from the perspective of people's ability to act.

This section explores the way people shape their own lives, the relationship with their families, communities, society, the authorities and institutions; that is, their agency.

#### 2.1.4.1 Survival

People living in poverty and marginalisation endure hardship through survival strategies that ensure they are able to access the minimal resources necessary to live on from day to day. The life story of Marie in Haiti (ATD Fourth World 2013, p19) shows that going through the shock of a devastating earthquake left her severely emotionally damaged; however, having access to health care allowed her to get back on track:

*After the 12 January, I was sick (mentally) for a long time. It was the 'shock' that hit me. I was laid up for nearly a year. I was incapable of going out. Then I got support to go to a health centre: I got treatment and progressively got better...*

Moreover, despite the hardship, she has been surviving and acknowledges this hasn't been easy:

*In 2011, I received 1500 Gourdes (USD 35) which allowed me to start again a little business. I looked at what I could sell and decided to buy plastic bags that I could resell at retail...those who sell wholesale refuse to give you credit, you have to have cash in hand to buy. Now, what I sell allows me to buy back the stock but that doesn't even give me enough to feed my children. My house is falling apart: when it rains, it's flooded. I don't have anything to repair it with. I carry on fighting to keep my little business going, but with what that brings in, it's becoming more and more difficult.*

In South Africa, street photographers felt that a picture of an elderly woman who collected bottles in a wheelbarrow (Patrick Manhica, community researcher) and a man collecting rubbish with his baby at the back (Beating all Odds, Develd Monyai, community researcher) well exemplified people surviving in difficult conditions (SLF 2013a).

#### 2.1.4.2 Impossible choices

People living in extreme poverty and marginalisation often survive despite limited agency; but they face impossible choices, possibly having to prioritise one basic need over the other, or even engaging in risky behaviour. When parents decide to prioritise their children's education, this can mean falling behind on the rent, or on food. For many, buying food may mean cutting back on clean water and soap, prompting other negative effects:

*It is impossible for someone to buy soap when he has no food. I cannot pay money for a latrine without food. I cannot buy a jerry can of water when I have no food. So we end up in dirty environment, poor hygiene and*



REEVES ZIKHALI SLF 2013A

Leaking sewage water along a footpath is dangerous, especially for this woman with a baby on her back.

*sanitation. This is where diseases come from. We drink unboiled water, survive on one cup of porridge, this can also make one sick. We end up suffering from cholera, kwashiorkor,<sup>1</sup> dysentery, malaria and HIV and generally carrying a poor health situation. All the time you're sick and you spend more, and then you cannot spend anymore. In most cases the poor die because we lack money to treat us and we die.*

(Slum-dweller, HEPS-Uganda 2013)

There were other examples of trade-offs that people have to make because the necessary support structures are not available or accessible to them, such as: taking care of a parent dying of an HIV/AIDS related illness versus going to school (SLF 2013b); parents staying at home to take care of a disabled child versus getting work (The Seed Institute 2013); pursuing a livelihood through informal street trading (and therefore generating an income for your family) but risking sanction and harassment by the state (SLF 2013a). People who are marginalised because of their sexual orientation as well as poverty face the impossible choice of denying their identity or facing stigmatisation. In Serbia, the choice was of staying 'in the closet' as a gay man or facing targeted violence as a consequence of exposing his identity (OWPSEE 2013).

#### 2.1.4.3 Resilience

People's decisions and social relationships can enable them to move forward rather than into further marginalisation. For example, street trading becomes an opportunity for entrepreneurship despite its risks (SLF 2013a). When these

<sup>1</sup>Serious disease caused by low level of protein in a child's diet.

informal spaces are closed down, some people like Teressia in Kenya (see Story 7, p30) will still find a way to cope, but for many others this will be the trigger that finally blocks any route towards business enterprise.

Under certain circumstances, people can actually make decisions that are harmful for them and their relatives. Young people in the Kamuli and Tororo Districts of Eastern Uganda struggle to find employment, and desperation is driving some into risky ventures such as smuggling and transactional sex (Restless Development-Uganda 2013). The research in Ghana (Challenging Heights 2013) and India (Praxis 2013b: 8) found examples of parents who allowed their teenage daughters to engage in sex work to support the family income or to continue a traditional family livelihood: Rupa was born into a family of *devadasis* and resisted taking up sex work. She managed to stay away from the profession while her grandmother was alive, but soon after her death, Rupa was forced into the same tradition. It was her grandmother's brother who *'used to point at my vagina and ask what's wrong with me because I was not entertaining customers. He used to say that my grandmother was good at sex work and I would be too.'*

#### 2.1.4.4 Relationships, agency and positive change

Agency is not straightforward since it is constrained by social norms, culture and power; hence, the decisions taken by individuals are also shaped by the context in which they live and how they relate with those closer to them. The story of Dalilah, in rural Egypt (see Story 6, p29), is a clear example of a young woman's aspirations being held back by gender; but being resilient and persevering has allowed her to carve out a space within these constraints and achieve gradual change. Whereas in Palestine, families and communities have been destroyed, and social networks damaged due to long-lasting conflict and political segregation; a situation leading to unhappiness, stress and insecurity (see Story 3, p18: Blue ID, Green ID, available in Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/73367899>).

These two cases show that the way people relate to their families and closest communities (horizontal), as well as to formal institutions and authorities (vertical), is also a critical factor for determining their capacity to act towards positive change. Familial and community support structures are fundamental for people's wellbeing and social development, in particular when the formal education, health, financial or legal systems discriminate against the poorest or are non-existent for those most marginalised. In the Philippines where government structures are seen by the local indigenous people as being weak in terms of defending their rights, it is the local institutions exemplified in the Tribal Council of Elders, the Women's Association, and the work of youth and children in the community, which are working together to affect change. An organiser of the Women's Association in the municipality of Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur says:

*Regarding our Ancestral Domain, we really want to support the males on taking actions for our ancestral domain especially that I am a part of the Ex-Com. On*

*behalf of women, I carried their ideas to the Timuay leaders and I've suggested re-organising the women for us to be united. Through that, we can give more support to the males. That would make us stronger.* (cf. Philippines KII with Day-in (pseudonym), COMPASS 2013: 9)

Contrastingly, in the research conducted with sexual minorities in the Balkans (OWPSEE 2013) and India (Praxis 2013b), families and closest community members were those violating them and hindering their feelings of empowerment, self-recognition, belonging and aspirations for change – critical factors that enable positive agency.

The story of Danijel in Montenegro (Story 3, p18) highlights the lack of formal (and family) support, guidance and comfort available to LGBTIQ people. It also shows how he has found his own strength, agency and determination when supported by informal community networks. Hence collective action becomes fundamental to access resources, mobilise for change and rights, and generate a sense of belonging. LGBTIQ activists see their groups as alternative families; spaces of solidarity, where courage and resilience is built: *'Through the shared roots of a problem we can ultimately achieve solidarity.'* Solidarity perceived as a means *'...to find a solution side by side'* (from the film: Queer Re-act).

## 2.2 Conclusion

There are two major patterns of change that people interact with along their own development trajectory:

- **Patterns of change that influence people** are shaped by external factors, namely structural and social drivers. Change doesn't happen in the simple linear ways that are often assumed by those planning development interventions. As we have seen, processes of change are complex, and this need to be understood if positive outcomes for the poorest and most marginalised are to be achieved.
- **Patterns of change that people influence** are shaped by people themselves and their own agency. Opportunities for people to participate and engage with the public and political lives of their communities and to enact their agency are crucial for navigating the complex and interlocking social processes that surround people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation. Where discriminatory norms and structures interact with inequalities, people are forced into trajectories that make them more vulnerable. Where this happens, their choices become extremely limited and their space for agency constrained.

A critical challenge for development is how to simultaneously address the complex needs of people living in extreme poverty, and how to not close down these spaces for agency. From this analysis we can see that locally driven actions, often generated in informal spaces, can be vibrant engines for social transformation. The following chapter will explore the experiences of extreme poverty and marginalisation from people's own perspectives.

## Story 5 'Why are People not Kind?' by Hajiya in Yola, Nigeria (TFDC 2013)

For the extremely poor and marginalised, who face discrimination on a daily basis, the promise of democracy seems empty.

Hajiya Aisha is a widow of about 56 years of age. She lives in Yola, Adamawa State in the North-East of Nigeria. She used to live in Zaria where, where her husband worked as a labourer. But, it is over ten years now since her husband died leaving her to care for six children. When her husband died she went to the brothers to discuss how they would take care of the children. The brothers told her that the children were none of their concern. She had to move back to her ancestral place in Yola, Adamawa State. She has lived there struggling to make ends meet and to take care of her children by doing any kind of menial job she finds – washing clothes, washing dishes and weeding grass for anyone who requires such services.

Hajiya has a strong dream of getting out of poverty. She knows that it will not happen through making money from the menial jobs she does, because she realises that would never make enough for her to live on, let alone investing surplus to raise extra income. For her the future and route of getting out of poverty is to secure education for her children. But there are many obstacles. To help her cope with the financial difficulties, Hajiya apprenticed her 15-year old daughter to work as waitress and dishwasher in a local food shop in Yola. That project was cut short in the unprecedented floods of 2012 that affected 26 states in Nigeria. Tragically her 15-year old daughter was swept away by flood waters. Her body was never found. In April 2013 after the state of emergency was declared in a number of states in the North-East, including Adamawa where the Boko Haram insurgency had been intense, her 31-year old daughter was caught in crossfire between soldiers and insurgents. The bullet hit her in the neck and she died instantly. She has left three young children for Hajiya to take care of and she laments: *'Why am I the one paying for the sins of these big men?'*

Hajiya is still resilient. She is a constant visitor to the Ahmadu Bello University campus in Zaria. She makes the trip from Yola to Zaria on a quarterly basis every year to raise funds to be able to pay her son's tuition fees at the

Polytechnic he has been accepted into in Zaria. Hajiya goes from person to person to tell her story. Any one who is moved would give her money. After the death of her daughter in the military 'accident', her trip to Zaria had a more urgent purpose of feeding her grandchildren. This time around she combined the strategy of going to ask a politician in Zaria for support. This is what she said:

*I keep coming back to Zaria because this is my husband's place. Yola is not seen as their ite to go and sit down in a place that was like a waiting room. I sat waiting for sometime. When the woman came in she came with a club and started to hit me all over! She was shouting and cursing me! I was shouting. But no one came to help. I knew I had to run out if I wanted to stay alive! I used all my strength and ran out, climbed the fence, which had wires on it. I didn't know about the injuries on my body until I ran away from the place.*

Hajiya was sobbing quietly when she concluded her story and asked: *'What did I do to them? Why are our own people not kind to the poor? Even if they will not give me anything, can't they show compassion? Ba ance mu na demokaradiya ba? (Do they not say we are in a democracy?)'*

Women in Nigeria are calling out for fair and just governance.



## Story 6 Right of Dreaming or Dreaming of Rights by Dalilah in Egypt (CDS 2013)

Women continue to face severe barriers to their wellbeing. There is a need to shift social norms which discriminate against women.

Born in 1996 in Mansoura village, Beni Swayf, Egypt, Dalilah is the youngest of her six siblings. Her family has limited means of income. Her father passed away a few years ago after fighting cancer that caused him to remain in bed. Her mother is a seasonal farmer. They have a cow donated from an NGO, and only her older brother received an education. Unlike many of her female peers and family members, she strived to join school. Her family refused to allow her because they could not afford the costs and thought that education was not important for her because in time she will become a housewife. *'I was so sad and I felt that none of my dreams will come true, but I was hopeful that God will help me.'*

Finally, the family allowed Dalilah to enter school after two years of persistence, and thanks to her elder sister who decided to drop out of middle school to work and support the expenses of her youngest sister's education.

*I finally entered school two years older than the school age, but I was so grateful for all my family members, school teachers' and others who supported me achieve that goal.*

*From day one at school, Dalilah achieved highly; however, her success was not smooth and she had to deal with obstacles related to her economic status and her gender. She explained that the school principal hindered her steps because he wanted his son to hold the first rank and not her.*

*To make me lose my self-confidence and admiration of my teachers and my colleagues, the school principal would come to my classroom and ask me advanced questions that are out of my curricula, then if I cannot answer them he turns to his son and asks him to get the right answer from him. Also, he would always tell me 'Do not dream big, you are a girl'. He once forged the examination results in a way that raised the grades of his son and lowered my grade. Luckily, some teachers who support me discovered and corrected that, but unfortunately the school principal did not receive any punishment as the teachers covered him by saying that it was an unintended mistake.*

He continued in other ways to hinder Dalilah. As he was a board member in the organisation her sister works in, he accused her of neglect and requested to fire her.

*'He thought that my sister's work was the main source of funding for my school expenses, so he*

*wanted to shut it so that I discontinued my education. But my sister was disciplined and did not allow him to fire her.'* Dalilah wanted to cover at least a part of her education expenses so that her household budget is not affected, so she started to prepare summaries of her school lessons: *'(...) I was happy to see my summaries helping many of my colleagues. I was also happy that my teachers did not oppose me.'* Dalilah finished her elementary school in first rank, winning a laptop from the Ministry of Education. She learned how to use the computer by herself. However, before starting middle school, her family told her that she would no longer be attending and arranged an engagement date for her. She received such news with disappointment and fear, explaining to her family that she does not think about marriage and she wants to continue her education. The response was simple: *'How come none of your siblings continued their education and you do!?'* She explained to her family the impact of education on the different aspects of her life, managing to convince them of the merits; however, the engagement was not postponed.

*I spent days and hours talking with my family and explaining to them how education will help me raise my children in a better way, and also find opportunities where I can earn money and have a better life.*

Her fiancé was against her continuing education. Although she wanted to break up with him, she found herself helpless and powerless to change her destiny. Dalilah then approached women in leadership in the local Community Development Association in her village. They met and convinced her fiancé to allow her to continue her education. However, he only allowed her to enrol in a vocational high school.

*I wanted to join the Thanaweyya Amma [general high school that leads to University] but he did not want me to. I think this is because if I do I will have a higher degree than his, and I do not think a man would allow his women to be better. So I did not discuss it with him because I also know that Thanaweyya Amma needs private tutors and there is no way we can afford that.*

The day this story was told Dalilah signed her Katb Kitaab (marriage contract without living together); she expressed hope that she will finish her vocational high school and convince her husband for them to both apply for university.

MEIND 2013



Young women like Dalilah feel trapped when their dreams and aspirations are not fulfilled.

## Story 7 Story of a Mother with a Disability by Teressia, Kenya (The Seed Institute 2013)

People living with severe hardship can also be drivers of change in their communities. Appropriate support structures are needed for their initiatives to have a wider impact.

Teressia's story starts with her childhood. This was a time in her life when she felt that she was looked down upon, her father used to say that she was a burden, a lifelong dependent. In time, her education was blocked and with it her opportunities.

*During our time people did not care about persons with disabilities. My sister and I sat for primary exams together, she was to take to high school but due to shortage of money I was left behind.*

As an adult, and a mother herself, Teressia faces new opportunities, but also challenges. She explains how government policy interventions have worked well for her. She remembers with nostalgia late Minister Maitha who set aside a section of the backstreet in Nairobi for hawkers to trade from.

*That place was good, the place was very nice. From there I was able to support my children and pay for care services, we lived well without problems.*

However, faced with the closure of these organised spaces for informal trading, and a breakdown in family relationships as a result of heavy alcohol abuse by her husband, Teressia's opportunities closed down around her.

*When the backstreet structures were brought down by the city council after Maitha died, I started experiencing many problems. My husband continued drinking and left the burden of family care to me yet I had no source of income. We were evicted by the landlord on several occasions and sometimes the children went to bed on an empty belly. I went to his place of work, a key cutting business place by the road side. Customers would come and make noise because he had lost their items, he was too [much of an] alcoholic to be productive.*

Teressia never sat back waiting for handouts, she sought ways to eke a decent livelihood for



Teressia smiles in her key-cutting stall; her only source of income.

herself and her family. A man who was selling things nearby advised her to watch over the husband's business. She would observe how her husband went about cutting the keys and practised whenever he was away until she gained the skills and took over the business, which she has done successfully.

The alcoholism problem has since worsened for the husband and many other men. Over 60 men and women whose lives have been wrecked by alcoholism sleep in an unfinished building in the area. Teressia's husband is one of them. His health has deteriorated badly. Teressia has since sought other women experiencing a similar problem. They have formed a self-help group which is mobilising the community to build a rehabilitation centre in response to the wide spread of the problem of alcoholism; they also want to access loans and grants to expand their businesses.

THE SEED INSTITUTE 2013

 View story here:  
<https://vimeo.com/73937159>



## Story 8 'Blue ID, Green ID' by Ikram, Occupied Palestinian territories (MEND 2013)

Discrimination and violence by governments is a cause of extreme marginalisation, and affects women more strongly. Without the right to mobility and a formal identity, women become invisible.

Ikram represents how her family is divided by the discriminatory ID card system in West Bank.



MEND 2013

Israel operates a coloured ID card system to differentiate between Palestinians living in the West Bank and those living in Jerusalem. People with green West Bank ID cards are not allowed on the opposite side of the Wall where Jerusalem is located without going through a complicated permit application process, which is rarely successful. Unless the family applies for 'family reunification' with Israel's Ministry of Interior – a costly and lengthy process, fraught with discriminatory guidelines – they will never be able to live together under the same roof, or visit each other freely.

Transcript of Participatory Video film

**Scene 1:** Dialogue between male and female family members living with a blue, and green ID

*Man: Oh yeah! What happened to the permit you applied for so you can come visit us in Jerusalem?*

*Woman: They turned it down. They said I need to apply for a card with a magnetic strip, then apply for a permit.*

*Man: My God! Can't families even visit each other? What is this?!*

*Woman: See! If I had a blue ID card like you, I wouldn't have to go through all this trouble! I wish we could go back in time to when we were always together.*

**Scene 2:** Second woman recounting her past freedoms

*Ah, the old days! I used to be able to go to Jerusalem. But unfortunately, I cannot go anymore. My mother is from Jerusalem [blue ID] and my father is from the West Bank [green ID]. When my mother had her first four children, she registered them in her ID card. When my sister, who is two years older than me, was born, Israel changed the law. Jerusalemites married to West Bankers could no longer register their children in their blue ID cards. So we were registered, my three sisters and I, in my father's ID card. When we were younger, we were always together. My older sister and I used to go to Jerusalem and play. We'd go places, take pictures.*

*Really, it's something... I really, really wish we could go back to when we were younger and get together like before. Right now they visit us; we can't go see them – even during holidays: we don't always get permits during the holidays.*

*So I don't know... our situation is so... even when my aunt passed away, I couldn't even go and wash her body, [traditional Muslim practice of washing the body and praying before burial] she was in Jerusalem and I am here.*

(This film was made in collaboration with: Haneen Mansour, Haiat Al-bess, Hiyam Al-bess, Kefah Al-Araj, Shar Abu Hmoud, Sumayya Abu Hmoud)

 View story here:  
<https://vimeo.com/73367899>



## Chapter 3

# Context and experiences of people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation

Street traders in Bolivia struggle daily to get a minimum income.

PHOTOGRAPH: ATD FOURTH WORLD 2013

The previous chapter looked at change from the perspective of people living in poverty and marginalisation. It analysed the triggers, tipping points, amplifications and intersecting inequalities that characterise the *dynamics of change* in people's lives, as well as the role that people's own individual and collective decisions have in bringing about change.

Chapter 3 has two parts. The first section examines the patterns in the contemporary context that emerge from the 18 reports as evidence of the multiple and intersecting inequalities experienced by people living in poverty *now*. We also note how the norms (which reflect power relations between different groups) that are practised in the family and in social, political and cultural institutions amplify these inequalities. In the second section, we draw more deeply on the stories of people's lived experience to understand how inequalities and power relations affect the dynamics of change.

### 3.1 The contemporary context

Some of the current problems and processes experienced by people living in poverty and marginalisation are new, and some are similar to those they faced at the turn of the millennium. This section shows how new phenomena, patterns, and structural drivers shape people's experience of extreme poverty and marginalisation.

#### 3.1.1 Increasing levels of uncertainty for the poorest

Life for the poorest is characterised by increasing uncertainty. For those who live in marginalised areas, the increasingly unpredictable climate has been 'devastating' (GCRN 2013), has 'added to the risks and hardships associated with farming, and has led to high indebtedness' (RCA Ghana 2013; see also Story 1, p17 of Madame Efua Baawa). In other countries uncertainty is characterised by steep rises in food prices, 'the drop in income from farming and the growth of casual and unreliable employment' (COMPASS 2013: 5). In urban settings, there is increasing precariousness as populations in informal settlements rise and sanitation is compromised (see Section 3.1.4). Changes to the structure of economies along with deteriorating livelihoods are pushing people into more and more risk-prone work – such as unregulated mining, sex work, gang-related livelihoods, and street trading, with young people particularly vulnerable to desperation and

behaviours that jeopardise their safety and security (Challenging Heights 2013; Restless Development-Uganda 2013; SLF 2013a). This is manifest in the research led by young people in Ghana, which identifies teenage pregnancy as a consequence of the extreme poverty and lack of opportunity that young people are facing (Challenging Heights 2013).

A number of the studies reported that 'people have seen their living conditions deteriorate over the past 15 years' (COMPASS 2013: 18). This movement into poverty is picked up in Ghana, where the GCRN research finds that 'all of the communities spoke of hunger as a new problem', and many 'did not regard themselves among the poor in the past' (GCRN 2013; RCA Ghana 2013). This feeling was echoed by young people in Egypt, who are experiencing hunger as a result of political turmoil: '*We've become hungry. I wish the revolution of the hungry won't be brought out by the hard circumstances we live in now*' (Gizan youth, Egypt, CDS 2013).

#### 3.1.2 Migration and the missing middle generation

Deepening poverty in rural areas drives economic migration (Cortez-Ruiz 2013; ATD Fourth World 2013; GCRN 2103; Praxis 2013a; COMPASS 2013). The impact on families and communities is dramatic: '*at the moment women are three times the number of men who are even young*' (OT, Gomoa

Dunkway, GCRN 2013). In many villages ‘women have effectively become single parents and bear the brunt of having to sustain themselves and their families’ (GCRN 2013). This in turn forces the women to leave to seek work, and some villages are now largely populated by children and grandparents. The Praxis research reflected on this phenomenon from the city. *‘We don’t have any agricultural land back home... most of the male members of our village migrate to urban centres in search of livelihood opportunities’* (Praxis 2013a). This is leading to *‘community bonds ruptured by the out-migration of men and youths’*. It is also leading to family break-up on a scale which is unprecedented.

### 3.1.3 Social norms: changing and unchanging

Changes in how families are living are impacting on intergenerational relationships and increasing the vulnerability of older people living in poverty. In countries where there is no welfare system, elderly relatives depend on their families but inequalities increasingly drive the middle generation into migrant working, leaving the elderly unsupported. In Bangladesh, many older people have been abandoned and where they remain in the family, abuse is widespread. The social norms that ensured respect for parents and older people have disintegrated. This story was typical of many that were recounted:

*I don’t have any money. I don’t get food, so I went to my daughter’s house and she gave me one roti and a cup of tea. After that I haven’t eaten anything, but I can’t tell anyone due to my shyness. If my daughters give me food, I eat, otherwise I go without food. My son is not taking care of me, that is the most sorrowful matter to me. He doesn’t even ask me how I am if I meet him in the road. Despite having a son I have to beg from others. Many people think that because I have a son I don’t need help.* (Saba, age 70, Cox Bazaar, We Can Also Make a Change 2013)

The Ghana Reality Check highlighted that ‘many were bemused by the fact that they have been abandoned by their children. They had not anticipated this as it did not happen in their parents’ time’ (RCA Ghana; 2013). Recounting the story of a man in the Ugandan slums who at 75 lived on his own in a flooded house the HEPS researchers reported that ‘his family dropped him’.



An elderly woman in Jordan faces isolation and despair as a result of her poverty.



For people living with HIV and related illnesses in South Africa, stigma continues to prevent people from revealing their status, leading to family break-down.

Many of the discriminatory social norms rooted in cultural and religious beliefs are *not* shifting, according to the experiences of marginalised people in this research. There is little improvement in the discrimination faced by women, people with disabilities, LGBTIQ people, and the urban poor. While improvements were reported in the COMPASS 2015 (2013) study around HIV stigma, in other examples it is clear that for people living with HIV and related illnesses, stigma continues to prevent people from revealing their status, and leads to breakdown of relationships and family ties. There are still insufficient structures in place to support children who are left without parents, some of whom are HIV positive themselves, ensuring that poverty and ill health is transmitted between generations (see Story 9, p41: *‘Inkedama (Orphan)’* SLF 2013b).

Despite being a priority in the MDGs, gendered discrimination continues to be experienced across the breadth and depth of the cases in this study. Lack of land ownership and access to livelihoods continue to drive women deeper into poverty and into activities that expose them to harm and exploitation in order to secure basic goods such as food and school materials (Challenging Heights 2013; CDS 2013; ATD Fourth World 2013; TFDC 2013; Restless Development-Uganda 2013; SLF 2013a) We Can Also Make a Change 2013; The Seed Institute 2013). Gender discrimination intersects with ethnicity and poverty to fuel global gender inequalities illustrated by the avoidable maternal mortalities that devastate families living in poverty and marginalisation (Cortez-Ruiz 2013). In Palestine, a patriarchal legal system means that women living in occupied territories are left without any formal identity documents and are unable to move around (MEND 2013).

SLF 2013B

### 3.1.4 The politics of urban development

Urban development and regeneration policies combine with the growing pressure on space and resulting hikes in property prices, to drive the continuing expansion of slums and informal settlements. The drive to demonstrate 'progress' leads to organised attempts by the state to sweep poverty out of sight (see Story 4 of Urban Growth in the Philippines, p19). Court orders are taken out to remove street traders, and police regularly engage in the harassment of informal businesses. This was expressed clearly by one of the street photographers in Ivory Park, Johannesburg in South Africa: *'We tried not to commit crime, but we always find ourselves against the law'* (SLF 2013a).

This further erodes the possibilities for the very poorest to eke out any sort of livelihoods *'if the government and the police succeed in stopping us from selling our goods we would lose our livelihoods'* (Praxis 2013a: 4). ATD activists in Guatemala describe a similar scenario: *'We used to sell on the railway line, but the Mayor decided to evict us in order to plant trees. There were about 300 vendors and my situation plummeted. It was informal work but we made a daily living. Perhaps it's to the Mayor's advantage to have trees but now I can't work like before'* (ATD Fourth World 2013).

Urban space is being carved up and there is a perception that there are more and more 'walls' between the rich and the poor. However, people living in poverty aspire to a different kind of society: a child participant in research in informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya expressed his view that: *'I do not want there to be boundaries between the rich and the poor because they bring enmity and people don't help one another'* (The Seed Institute 2013). One participant of the Praxis (2013a: 9) research in Chennai

talked about the industrial giant TVS and Employees State Insurance scheme *'(people) who keep taking our land and crushing us into this small space with their walls. The 'have nots' (urban poor) are despised and loathed by the 'haves' in cities, symbolising perhaps a new form of caste system'*.

Garbage and poor sanitation has led to endemic health problems for the poorest in the slums (HEPS-Uganda 2013); Praxis 2013a; ATD Fourth World 2013; Spatial Collective 2013; The Seed Institute 2013; SLF 2013a) (see Story 10, p41 – HEPS Community Health). A participant in a film made by community mappers in an informal settlement in Nairobi says:

*We live in the middle of raw sewer and open drainage. We are surrounded by storey buildings and sewer burst most of the time. It is very difficult when a customer comes, you feel like taking away the stock back into the house. It is more problem especially when you have a sick person since we have bad smell and flies all over the house. There is no happiness in living this kind of house.* (Spatial Collective 2013)

The health problems linked to sanitation, but also to infectious disease expose major failings in the health care system to respond to these problems (SLF 2013b).

'Informal' settlements – slums – don't officially exist, so don't qualify for services. No investment is made in places that the government expects to be used for urban 'development': *'because the government says we are to be moved out we are given no basic amenities or services, toilet, balwadis (crèches), water ... nothing is made available here'* (Praxis 2013a: 6). The limited sanitation facilities for those living in slums perpetuates feelings of insecurity and increases risk of violence and rape for those who have to travel far from their home to access facilities (see Story 2, p18 – Insecurity in Mathare).



SPATIAL COLLECTIVE 2013

Rubbish is a huge issue in Mathare slum, Kenya, due to the lack of appropriate services.



HEPS-UGANDA 2013

In informal settlements such as Katanga, Uganda, lack of security due to crime was one of the major problems identified by participants.

### 3.1.5 Insecurity and violence

Security was an issue in a number of studies. Young people in Egypt placed insecurity high on their list of challenges, mentioning the absence of security, distrust of the police, lack of respect from the police, high levels of police corruption and lack of follow-up and enforcement of the law (CDS 2013). Participants in Nigeria identified lack of security as driving migration and displacements (TFDC 2013). In informal settlements in Nairobi and the townships of Johannesburg, lack of security due to crime was one of the major problems identified by participants (The Seed Institute 2013; Spatial Collective 2013; SLF 2013a). In Palestine, insecurity prevents women in particular getting documents to travel even short distances (MEND 2013). In Johannesburg mothers and fathers have to take their children with them to work on the street because of the insecurity of the home environment (SLF 2013a).

For residents of Cape Town's townships, HIV and drug-resistant TB heighten insecurity, particularly for children, young people and the elderly. This is illustrated by Cebisa's story of an orphaned 12-year-old HIV positive boy who is left to live alone:

*I watch this boy going to the clinic on his own to fetch his medication. I was told he has dropped out of school because his peers teased him. I watch him being abused by the community members. Each and every day I observe this boy becoming more angry, more aggressive.* (Cebisa, research participant from SLF 2013b)

Finally, research with sexual minorities in India (Praxis 2013b) and the Balkans speaks about the violence targeted at people who openly declare their sexuality outside of heterosexual norms. They face harassment, beatings, and attacks:

*To attend a court hearing with fascist groups... I filled my bag with 6 kilos of evidence to prove various threats spoken in all sorts of media.*

(Marija DST, OWPSEE 2013)

## 3.2 Power and inequality

In this section, we consider how different kinds of power – structural, institutional, social and personal – compound the economic, identity-based and spatial inequalities (see Chapter 1) and mediate people's agency and access to the resources that they need. The ways in which these factors can open up possibilities and spaces for individual and collective agency are the focus of Chapter 4.

Two key groupings of structural and social drivers of poverty and marginalisation emerge from the studies.

- **Power and institutions:** Ineffective institutions and power in the form of vested interests, nepotism and poor or negligent governance prevent resources and opportunities from reaching those that need them most.
- **Discriminatory social norms:** Deeply entrenched social norms discriminate against people and keep them marginalised, eroding their self-worth, resilience and agency.

### 3.2.1 Power and institutions

#### 3.2.1.1 The abuse of power and injustice for citizens

People in poverty and marginalisation are faced with oppressive power every day. It is the primary source of injustice in our societies. The *Participate* research portrays many abuses of power which further marginalise people experiencing intersecting inequalities to keep them in poverty.

The COMPASS report describes four common abuses of power: political and personal patronage; the grabbing by

elites of the benefits of programmes; and corruption (COMPASS 2013).

COMPASS researchers documented many examples of political patronage:

*But we did not receive any amount, only one ganta of rice and a can of sardines. We did not even receive any noodles. The problem is where the money went? We cannot mention who received the money because we might get into trouble. It could be that after leaving our house we might receive threats ...yes, we are not of the same party. The house of our [government official] is just there. None of the medicines sent to him would reach us.* (Women's focus group, Binedayan, Philippines, COMPASS 2013: 43)

In Uganda, young people experience government programmes for agricultural livelihoods as 'either not present in their communities or, where they are present, they are corrupt and benefit only the well-connected youth ... support is often provided directly by politicians to particular youth rather than through structured programmes'. As a result, young people on the Uganda/Kenya border turn to 'smuggling, selling drugs, stealing, sports betting, gambling and transactional sex' (Restless Development-Uganda 2013).

Across the studies, participants recognised that power has a huge impact on their ability to access services. It was widely reported that services and support are diverted away from those that most need them and that 'strong political connections make a big difference to the provision of services'. Salomon, a 30-year-old man from a small isolated village in Ghana tells a typical story:

*I don't get any help in the village either. Only the big people in the village get help. They meet the big people who come from the town. But they often say that all they get is promises and nobody comes in the end... We heard last April that some development is supposed to be coming to the village, but nothing has happened. Two years ago the village was given six solar-powered street lights by people from the town. The big people in the village had a meeting and decided where they should go... they are all installed near their houses...* (RCA Ghana 2013)

Personal patronage can take the form of bribes or sex, knowing the right people or being from the right tribe (Restless Development-Uganda 2013; TFDC 2013). This abuse of power intersects with inequalities arising through marginalised identities, as the following examples demonstrate:

*Finding work here is not easy: or you need a 'sponsor' (parrain) or you have to give bribes (...) I had a daughter who had to pass her high-school exams. But I had to pay 7500 Gourdes to the school (about USD 175). There was a 'Cash for Work' scheme in my neighbourhood. But my daughters are beautiful young girls, and well, to find something to get by with and to pay the school, they*

*[the scheme leaders] asked them for sexual favours. They refused. Me, their mother, I went a bit further along to another place where there was a 'Cash for Work' programme. I thought that at my age, it would be more correct. (...) I asked to be enrolled. But the local people in charge – those who gave out the work – told me the same thing: to have work I had to sell my body.* (Mother, Haiti, ATD 2013)

Corruption and abuse of power within institutional systems mean that the marginalised have no access to justice, as the examples in Box 1 testify.

#### BOX 1

### Abuse of power and nepotism

- 'A group of 14 men raped me. I was lying in the road crying. A community leader took me to the hospital. I did not inform police for I know they would instead frame me' (Madhavi, a transsexual in India, Praxis 2013b: 3).
- Institutional injustice is regularly experienced by disabled women in Bangladesh, such as in the case of a disabled girl who was raped by a neighbour, who then bribed police to alter the report. The girl and her family were forced to flee their home as a result, making their poverty and marginalisation more extreme (We Can Also Make a Change 2013).
- In Nigeria, in the context of violent conflict (Boko Haram attacks) which is driving migration and fuelling mistrust between neighbours, the situation is compounded by corrupt practices and impunity of politicians who intimidate and brutalise their opponents, and embezzle public funds meant for social infrastructures (TFDC 2013).
- In the Philippines, indigenous leaders denounced attempts by mining companies to 'buy' leaders with offers of money and cars in their quest for access to land: 'someone (from the mining companies) offered me a personal car and cash... just to support them in their application for mining permit' (COMPASS 2013: 47). As well, *Participate* research highlights the unchecked impact of the activities of logging and mining companies on farmers' livelihoods and fishing communities in Ghana (GCRN 2013).
- In Occupied Palestinian territories, women discussed the difficulties in finding work without having 'the right connections' (*wasta*). The film centres on two applicants applying for a position in a government-run health clinic. The less experienced candidate was preferred over the qualified one because she had *wasta*. The film reveals perceptions that the government lacks transparency and promotes nepotism within its institutions (watch 'Wasta' here: <https://vimeo.com/73961956>, MEND 2013).

### 3.2.1.2 Structural power and development

Big urban infrastructure projects are often ruthlessly driven through in the name of development but actually at the expense of the poor. The Indian Praxis CityMakers report says that:

*Hundreds of slums are regularly bulldozed to pave the way for roads, flyovers, and the metro, [but] has any residential middle class locality ever faced the brunt of demolition for the sake of development?*

(Praxis 2013a: 13)

For the poorest and most marginalised, all ‘development’ brings is displacement of their homes and their livelihoods. The South African government authorities, for example, criminalise street trading (SLF 2013a). The story of Teressia (see Story 7, p30: Mother with a Disability) shows how the closing down of spaces for informal trade impact greatly on local traders (The Seed Institute 2013).

In Guatemala (ATD Fourth World 2013) and India (Praxis 2013a: 11) street vendors are literally taken away and dumped:

*People keep saying that these areas are going to be cleared up to make the area better. But that is not going to be better for us. We will have to start all over again. Over these years we have been able to assert because we have been continuously in this one place, but now we are being slowly squeezed out.*

(Praxis 2013a: 13).

As urban development drives the most vulnerable into slums or onto the street, the challenges for slum dwellers and homeless people multiply. They are denied citizenship rights because they lack an address and cannot get identity papers. They are then excluded from health care, education and credit.

Research by MEND in Occupied Palestinian territories clearly shows that the power of repressive institutions works to dismantle a sense of place and citizenship for people caught in an ongoing conflict. Israel leaves Palestinians with no choice but to live outside laws that discriminate against them:

*Every time we try to build – a house, an animal shelter – they [the Israeli army] come and demolish it. They give us a paper saying we are forbidden from building, each time with a different reason. This time they said because it was a nature reserve.*

(Nawal, Nabi Samuel, MEND 2013)

Furthermore, severe restrictions on movement force Palestinians to attempt to find work in Israel illegally. Without the right permit, they are detained by Israeli forces for ‘infiltration’:

*We went to the hearing for my son. They accused him of infiltrating Israel, but he just needed a job. The whole family went. He was sentenced and fined. But then they closed the checkpoint so we had to walk all the way back home. It took us hours.*

(Resident of Nabi Samuel, MEND 2013)

### 3.2.1.3 Institutions that fail people living in poverty

The failure of institutions to provide adequate services is a common experience across the research. Access to adequate health care and education is often denied to people in



BONGUMUSA NDLUVU, SLF 2013A

The criminalisation of street trade was clearly captured by this community photographer in Ivory Park, South Africa.

poverty; sometimes it's merely non-existent but in other cases, these services are there but not accessible for them.

The impact of this lack of access cannot be overestimated, as the Praxis research with slum dwellers shows, ‘denial of education leads to a chain of denials which is felt in all areas throughout life’ (Praxis 2013a: 6). The Ghana Reality Check research asks, what is the point of going to government facilities when they don't have nurses, teachers, medicines or books – ‘access to nothing is no access’ (RCA Ghana 2013). In many countries, staff are reluctant to work in the more remote rural villages or urban slums (Cortez-Ruiz 2013), making it difficult to deliver quality services. As one focus group in Uganda put it, ‘what are they learning? We are losing a generation if we run schools with three teachers’ (COMPASS 2013: 49).

The majority of the studies report how education and health services are inaccessible for many of the poorest, due to hidden costs and corruption which mean they are required to pay for materials, books, uniforms, medicines or access to doctors (ATD Fourth World 2013; Cortez-Ruiz 2013; CDS 2013; Restless Development-Uganda 2013, We Can Also Make a Change 2013): ‘I cannot get free drugs from local clinics. At times nurses from those same clinics would come and sell us the medication through the back door’ (Clara, 54, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe COMPASS 2013: 49). In Mexico (Cortez-Ruiz 2013) and Bolivia (ATD Fourth World 2013) indigenous people felt excluded from health services because of the contemptuous treatment they received (see Section 3.2.2 on stigma). SLF digital storytelling in South Africa has explored the relationship between people and health care in their communities, and identifies the challenges for staff as well as clients of overstretched health facilities:

*I'm one of the [health centre] staff. I know they are rude. I know we are rude. Sometimes, the [clinic] Sisters they don't know how to put their home stress at home. They come with a package [baggage] at work. And the package is so hard so they take it to the next person. Also the workload. The workload, it's too much. So it stress them, and they take their stress to the patients.* (Nokuthula, SLF DST workshop, Kenya)



While abuse of power is a common factor leading to institutional failure, there are also many examples of unintended consequences resulting from ill-informed policies that were designed with insufficient understanding of the complexity of poverty, and which have worsened the lives of the people they intended to support.

Infrastructure development projects can have huge negative impacts on people's livelihoods and wellbeing. In Ghana, a big irrigation dam was introduced in an area that, even without irrigation, was known as the vegetable basket of the region. Many of the farmers were women because vegetables are traditionally considered the appropriate crop for them to grow. With the dam, many were displaced and confined to small pockets of land barely enough for subsistence. The dam has not to date produced the irrigation expected. The positioning of the dam has also led to conflict between communities. A powerful image of the unintended consequences of the dam is the women who hitherto supplied the market of Bolgatanga, the regional capital with vegetables:

*To get something to eat, we are now reduced to sweeping the millet and other grains that spill over from the trader's sales at the market. We scoop them into bowls and hand them over to the traders. At the end of the day, it is the trader who decides how many of the swept grains we will get, if any.* (Radio Gurune, OT Alimatu Wureh, GCRN 2013)

During a community dialogue in Kampala, Uganda a resident of Katanga, the city's largest informal settlement was shocked to hear that 'the problem of floods came from the construction of Luvigi channel. The back flow of the water is why many houses have been left out due to flood' (HEPS-Uganda 2013). His response to this was:

*I expect that to construct these channels, these people planned first how it would affect the people. Did not they establish how they can ensure people are safe: because now these people left their houses, their children are sick because of floods? They would have first cared about how it would affect the people around before they carried out their construction.* (HEPS-Uganda 2013)

Loans and grants can have unintended consequences if the context is not properly researched together with the people that the programmes aim to benefit. Grants to fund treatment in South Africa end up in the hands of loan sharks; the distribution of ARVs leads to assaults as people are robbed for their medications (Efaverins) which are then sold on the black market as recreational drugs (SLF 2013b). Sometimes people attribute this to a lack of local knowledge, saying that NGOs should 'come on the ground more' (Youth, Restless Development-Uganda 2013). Dependency is also frequently cited as an issue. Even in relation to the Bolsa Familia cash transfers in Brazil participants commented: 'It's an aid, not a solution to our problems. Certainly to have a job would be better than to depend on aid' (Brazilian seminar participants, ATD Fourth World 2013).

### 3.2.2 Community social norms and discrimination

In this section, we look at the social norms which deepen discrimination, stigma and violence towards marginalised people. For certain marginalised groups, discrimination often starts within the household, and continues to the street, neighbourhood or village, and outwards into society.

Sexual minorities in the Balkans, for example, face complete rejection by their families in many cases when they become open about their sexuality; as explored in the story of Danijel (see Story 3, p18). Transgender people in India suffered terribly at the hands of their families: one said 'when my father got to know about my identity from outsiders he beat me up'; another had her hand burnt as a punishment; another said 'my brother has repeatedly told me that he would kill me because I was born like that' (Praxis 2013b: 7). In the Bangladesh research a recurring theme from disabled people was that once they got beyond the reach of their families things got better. Much of the sexual abuse of disabled women came from within the family. (We Can Also Make a Change 2013). These are the locations where stigmatising social norms are most vividly played out, and where the intersections of prejudice around gender, age, disability and sexuality are most keenly felt. Ghanaian teenagers who participated in the Challenging Heights research identified teenage pregnancy as their priority concern. Their analysis of why young teenage girls engage in sex identifies parental neglect and poverty: 'her mother doesn't have money to care for her so she must do that [engage in sex] to get money to take care of herself' (13-year-old boy, Challenging Heights 2013). They also criticise parents' rejection of their teenage daughters when they fall pregnant: 'parents should be arrested if they sack their daughter from the house because of her pregnancy because they are the main problem' (18-year-old boy, Challenging Heights 2013).<sup>1</sup>

Often there are formal legal frameworks to protect people from discrimination, but discriminatory attitudes in the community persist: 'the government started to build a house for us... but the inhabitants came and destroyed this house because they didn't want "Creoles" in their neighbourhood' (Mauritian participant, ATD Fourth World 2013).

A lot of the time, these attitudes are re-enforced by service providers. In order to get access to basic services, many of the participants in this research had to endure humiliation and stigmatisation from professionals, because of their poverty (all reports), their ethnicity (ATD Fourth World 2013; Cortez-Ruiz 2013), their religion (TFDC 2013) their gender (all reports), their sexual identity (OWPSEE 2013; Praxis 2013), and their disability (The Seed Institute 2013; We Can Also Make a Change 2013).

Bolivian indigenous women reported receiving insults from health care professionals such as 'Why did you give birth to so many children like a rabbit?' or 'Why didn't you shower, you pig?' (Workshop participants, La Paz, ATD Fourth World 2013). As a result of this treatment, although health care for children under five in Bolivia is free, many families in extreme poverty do not use the services and instead turn to traditional healers who do not humiliate them. Indigenous

<sup>1</sup> This statement reflects the perception of children in this particular community. However, teenage pregnancy is a complex problem with contrasting views. Research from the Reality Check Approach Ghana (2013) showed a different perception around this issue; adults believe the girls are keen on looking for the best partner and becoming 'adults' by not having to go to school any more.

BOX 2

## The impact of social norms

The story of Dalilah from Egypt reflects the constraints she has faced, being born a woman in poverty, by her own family, her community and the educational system in Egypt (see Story 6, p29: Dalilah, CDS Egypt).

In Guerrero, Mexico men have decision-making power over women:

*'When I was young my desire was to study, but my dad never let me go to school. He told me that as a woman I was not entitled to study as I had to be doing the work at home and what I needed was to get married. At 15, he forced me to marry with someone that I did not know even, and I did not agree. I suffered a lot with my husband, he beat me a lot, was very aggressive with me. He never let me go out without his permission, and did not want me to study... When I took lectures or workshops, he insulted me and beat me again...'* (Indigenous woman, Cortez-Ruiz 2013).

The gendered dimension of land inheritance was a strong pattern across the studies:

*When the husband dies, he leaves the land and property, but the husband's relatives grab the land and property from the widows and either send you out of the home or leave you with a small piece of land that cannot sustain you and the orphans* (Sylvia, Ongongoja, Uganda, COMPASS 2013: 27)

In Bangladesh, people with disabilities do not inherit land and home. It goes to their siblings. The family don't know about the law. They think that the person with a disability can't work or get married, so why should they inherit land. So they tend to deprive them and discourage them to get married. Because then they would need land. People with intellectual impairments are not allowed to own land legally. Women don't inherit land at all. Sons inherit land, so a widow doesn't inherit. They keep a small percentage, but poor families tend not to give their mothers anything (We Can Also Make a Change 2013).

In India, even in the case of job opportunities, Pragnya said, *'While the constitution guarantees the right to work, to all citizens of the country no matter what their sex, I was denied a job in several offices – I was rejected repeatedly because of this one reason – that I am a transgender. I didn't know what to do. So I resumed collection (begging) at shops even though I have a bachelor's degree'* (Praxis 2013a: 12).

women in Mexico do not attend health checks at clinics for the same reason (Cortez-Ruiz 2013):

*I took my daughter to a prenatal clinic ... but the doctor began to scold her because she married young and told my kid why didn't she marry at 30 or 40 years and have only one son ... we will not return to the clinic because we received very bad treatment, very inhumane.* (Chol indigenous woman, community reflection, Chiapas, Cortez-Ruiz 2013)

Gender-based discrimination intersects with poverty, disability and ethnicity with appalling tenacity. Participatory researchers in Bangladesh identified sexual violence against disabled women as one of the two most important priorities for disabled people involved in that research. Participants revealed story after story of rape, sexual harassment and abuse (We Can Also Make a Change 2013; Cortez-Ruiz 2013; Restless Development-Uganda 2013; ATD Fourth World 2013).

Disabled people, transgender people, the urban poor, women, widowers, orphans and increasingly older people are marginalised into ever more vulnerable and invisible spaces and behind the doors of families. There is a call for making visible these groups and their needs; as one transgender person in India put it, *'Government conducts a census of even wild animals, but not us (transgenders). No one cares'* (Praxis 2013b: 12). In many contexts, women too remain invisible as they are denied a role in the political sphere (TFDC 2013), or even formal documentation of their existence (MEND 2013).

## 3.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have presented the contextual factors that are increasingly having a negative impact on the lives of those living in hardship. Also, we have identified how abuse of power and ineffective institutions are deepening the hardship experienced by people living in poverty, and frustrating their efforts to use their agency for positive change. It is clear that institutions are failing to protect, and services are failing to reach, the people who are most in need. Secondly, we have explained how social norms can deepen inequalities by endorsing violence in the form of discrimination, stigmatisation and physical harm towards marginalised people. These norms affect how individuals behave in families, in groups, communities and institutions. They divert sources of power away from the marginalised, further limiting their opportunities for agency.

Yet this research also demonstrates how people struggle, often successfully, to improve their situations and give their children a better life. Much more attention, in terms of policies and interventions, needs to be paid to how to address underlying imbalances of power and discriminatory social norms, because it is clear that these are a major cause of extreme poverty and marginalisation.

Chapter 4 focuses on the principles for the development that people want that have emerged from the research, and the mechanisms that can achieve these principles. It identifies and draws out recommendations for policy and practice that specifically address the issues of extreme poverty and marginalisation described in this chapter.

## Story 9 'Inkedama (Orphan)' by Siphokazi, Cape Town, South Africa (SLF 2013b)

Fear of stigma and a lack of knowledge around illnesses such as HIV/AIDS can lead to death, and has impacts over generations. Awareness-raising and appropriate health care are essential for making a change.

### TRANSCRIPT

*My name is Siphokazi Nkungwana. I was living with my mother. I didn't have a brother or a sister. We were living in Gugulethu. My mother was a domestic worker. I called her sisi, as I would an older sister. It was just the two of us. There was no-one else. We used the train to get to work and school. I was 14 years old when my mother started getting sick. She didn't tell me what was wrong. No-one was telling me anything about my mother. Then one of her friends came and told me that they were attending the ARV clinic together. I was shocked. I didn't believe her. My mother was getting very sick. She was sleeping in the bed. For four days she only drank Lucozade. The neighbours came to see my mother. Relatives showed their sympathy to me. They didn't know the cause of her sickness. My cousin brothers were crying. I was crying. I didn't know who I was, or which room I was in. The people in the house were telling my mother 'go to the clinic', but she refused to go to the clinic. The visitors left. I climbed into my bed. I was in the same room as my mother, sisi Tamara; she also slept.*

SLF 2013B



Siphokazi grieves for her mother

*In the night I heard my mother. She was in pain, gasping for air, and crying. I woke up in the morning and my mother was quiet. I got up at the usual time. I saw her face and I lost hope. I placed her head back onto the pillow and went to school. It was*

*night-time when I got home from school. The neighbour told me that my mother had passed away. I saw a sign on that bed that my mother was no more.*

*That's where my life changed. I didn't have anyone. I was lonely. I would never again have a mother. The time we had wasn't enough. I feel that gap, but the bond is still there. My mother taught me many things in life, but she never told me anything about this disease.*

*On her birthday, I can't make tea for my mother or give her a card. On Mother's Day I can't surprise her with pictures or with a message – 'Mama I love you'. Thirteen years later I've seen no change for children like me. I wish someone could show them the way, comfort them and guide them. Show them not to give up and sleep around because they don't have their own places.*



View story here:  
<https://vimeo.com/70481515>

## Story 10 The Village Health Worker by Naava, Kampala (HEPS-Uganda 2013)

People's knowledge of their context and their own needs should be considered when aiming to improve service provision and infrastructure development in the poorest areas

### TRANSCRIPT

*I'm Naava, a resident of Makerere 2 parish, Kawempe Division. Makerere 2 parish has four zones, which are by the names: A,B,C,D. Some upper parts of the parish are surrounded by many hostels and the lower parts are slummy. In 2002, I began working as a health worker with Makerere Women's Development Association, in short MAWDA. Since then, I have approached many kinds of people with various diseases such as Malaria, HIV AIDS, STDs and other sorts of diseases. Some people live in flooded areas; others live near bushy areas and others near garbage areas. In bushy*

HEPS-UGANDA 2013



Girl and mother bear the brunt of constant flooding in Kawempe.

*areas Malaria is very common and in lower areas diseases like diarrhoea and dysentery are very common. Floods affect people in that their properties are taken away and this also affects their health. Some people like my neighbours run their businesses; however, when it rains the floods raise and wash away their property. This affects their businesses as no one can buy anything which is dirty or contaminated. We had an immunisation centre at Cityview primary school where we used to immunise children from... but due to the poor drainage system which was closed during the construction of Chimera road, the centre was demolished. Now we have to look for another centre which is free, where we can provide services to the community. The owner of the school used to help children through education, but she can no longer help them; she tried to approach Kampala City Council authority, Kawempe division but nothing has been done yet. As a VHT therefore I request to those concerned to give a hand in helping children and community members to have a better life.*



View story here:  
<https://vimeo.com/73315811>



## Chapter 4

# Strategies for change

Young people in Nairobi showed in a film their ideas for positive change.

PHOTOGRAPH: THE SEED INSTITUTE 2013

This chapter identifies the kinds of changes needed to ensure that people who live in extreme poverty or marginalisation have realistic and sustainable ways to develop the better lives that they want. Shared discussions with the *Participate* Participatory Research Group (PRG) led to the formulation of a set of principles based on the research, which should inform efforts to tackle poverty and marginalisation. The first set of principles addresses the human costs of poverty and marginalisation by focusing on empowering individuals and creating citizens. They spell out an approach based on the recognition of rights, with an emphasis on challenging discrimination, prioritising those people who live in extreme poverty or marginalisation, and promoting respect and dignity for all. The second set of principles deals with wider relational aspects, building solidarity and collective action to democratise the social relationships of family, community and society. The third set relates to the need for participatory processes to hold governments accountable to their marginalised citizens. The final set of principles relates to better access to high quality services for the most marginalised, and the changes in policies and approaches that are required for this to happen.

Using these guiding principles, this chapter draws on the lessons of the research for achieving the broad goals of empowering citizens and creating responsive governments and democratic societies, where the poorest can access the services and opportunities they require. We relate the principles to examples of mechanisms of change that emerged in the research, in order to draw out broader implications of what works and why for the poorest and most marginalised. These mechanisms map directly onto the three different types of power and agency articulated in Chapter 1: the power of citizens, the power of collective action, and the power of accountable and democratic governments. In making recommendations about how policies can support these mechanisms, we draw on the experiences of positive change which emerged across the research process. Box 3 (over page) summarises the mechanisms needed to implement the principles, and the detailed proposals for change and policy recommendations to make these mechanisms work.



COMPASS 2013

Indigenous women in Bolivia are working together to take action and change their situation.

**TABLE 1**

## Vision for the development people want

| <b>Mechanisms for change</b><br>Means by which principles can be realised   | <b>Principles for development</b><br>People's aspirations for how development should be   |
|---|---|
| Recognition of rights for all: build the power of citizens  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise an approach that recognises the rights of those living in extreme poverty and marginalisation</li> <li>• Focus on dignity and recognition</li> <li>• Focus on equity through addressing discriminatory norms</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Recommendations for policy and practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give marginalised groups the opportunity to define the rights that matter most to them</li> <li>• Target institutional discrimination, and ensure that government representatives and officials treat all people with respect</li> <li>• Protect rights called for by the poorest and most marginalised within legal frameworks</li> <li>• Prioritise investment in transformative education</li> <li>• Work with families and communities to challenge discriminatory social norms</li> </ul>   |   |
| Transform social relations to enable collective action: build the power of collective action  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on strengthening individuals, families and communities</li> <li>• Invest in community organisation and capacity development</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Recommendations for policy and practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the capacity for self-organisation of marginalised groups</li> <li>• Enable spaces for collective action to emerge and help these initiatives to connect to one another directly</li> </ul>  |   |
| Accountable and democratic governments: build the power of participatory governance   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a participatory approach to governance</li> <li>• Ensure accountable and inclusive institutions</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Recommendations for policy and practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve citizens in creating, monitoring and implementing policies</li> <li>• Promote initiatives that build on local and indigenous knowledges</li> <li>• Create opportunities for real dialogue between marginalised and excluded groups and authorities at the local, national, regional and global levels</li> </ul>   |   |
| Policies and services respond effectively to the poorest and most marginalised: governments and institutions change how they work   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the creation and provision of dignified livelihoods</li> <li>• Focus on the quality of services from the perspective the poorest and most marginalised</li> <li>• Take a holistic focus on the multiple, interrelated problems that characterise extreme poverty and marginalisation</li> <li>• Focus on building longer-term relationships</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Recommendations for policy and practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce carefully considered quotas for the most marginalised to address inequalities</li> <li>• Prioritise development investment which starts with the needs of the poorest and most marginalised</li> <li>• Ensure that programme success indicators are linked directly to positive impacts for the poorest and most marginalised</li> <li>• Ensure that the poorest get access to, and control over, productive assets</li> <li>• Recognise and support the 'informal' spaces people inhabit to survive</li> <li>• Provide support to enable people to make the transitions from informal environments to more stable formal environments</li> <li>• Invest in pro-poor infrastructure and utilities</li> </ul> |   |

While the principles set out here are likely to be shared by many sections of society, we are particularly interested in drawing out how they might appear from the perspective of poor and marginalised groups. There are no magic bullets for the achievement of these principles: they will involve a multiplicity of efforts carried out at many different levels: by individuals, families, communities and in the larger society. Woven into all these efforts must be the overarching goal of transforming the discriminatory social norms, values and practices which have served to reproduce inequalities over time – and the role of citizens themselves in that transformation.

The sections that follow articulate these proposals in more detail.

## 4.1 Recognition of rights for all

The concept of rights is central to any attempt to address the deep-rooted inequalities that define the experiences of those who participated in this research. Rights are inclusive: they assert the equal worth and dignity of all members of a society. They embody the principles of equity and non-discrimination. And they can play a central role in one of the key challenges for achieving a more inclusive society: the transformation of the discriminatory norms and values that have assigned lesser worth to some relative to others.

### 4.1.1 Prioritise an approach that recognises the rights and dignity of those living in extreme poverty

Many poor and marginalised groups in our research talked about rights as a crucial means to achieving equality and dignity in their societies. How they expressed the question of rights, and the rights they prioritised, reflected the deficits in their lives that they felt most keenly.

*And the counterpoint to this, is dignity [...] it should be a compass to show us the way. I have the right to dignity, I am entitled to everything that other people have. [...] Do not let anyone monitor us, do not let anyone do anything for us if we do not want it, if it's not within the laws that exist to defend us (seminar participant, ATD Fourth World, Brazil).*

For some, rights provided a pathway to full recognition of their status as human beings and citizens. In India, for instance, transgenders saw the principles of rights as a crucial response to discrimination and a demand for more equitable treatment; and CityMakers called for the right to a place in their society and formal recognition of their identity (Praxis 2013a,b). In the Balkans, rights for sexual minorities were at the forefront of how participants articulated their struggle to end discrimination (OWPSEE 2013). Disabled children in Nairobi, Kenya interpreted their invisibility to policymakers as a lack of respect for their rights (The Seed Institute 2013). Given the restrictions placed on their movements, it is not surprising that many in Palestine emphasised the right to mobility, while those in conflict situations talked about the right to safety (MEND 2013).

For others, rights also had a strong material dimension. For poor people in Bangladesh, rights were seen as abstractions

in the absence of the basic right to food (We can also make a change 2103). Young people in Ghana saw the right to education, food and shelter as central to a rights-based approach (Challenging Heights 2013). In all the research, participants describe their efforts to secure a livelihood, and their feelings of despair at the barriers that they face. Many call for access to *'dignified permanent work'* (RCA Ghana 2013; ATD Fourth World 2013).

However, access to livelihoods was not only about meeting basic needs but also about contributing to the community (SLF 2013a). One oral testimony from a woman in Ghana takes us to the heart of the issue:

*... years back my heart was like a white veil of a newly married woman because food was in abundance. I could share any food type I want with my friends, my family, and even send some to my father's house during festivals. But today it is not like that. I have no value because I don't have anything to share even with my immediate family. It makes me feel like I'm neglected. I'm like a dirty rag that no person will ever like to use and clean anything (OT, Atulibabiisi, GCRN 2013).*

The aspirations of wellbeing expressed by many poor people are 'often concrete and achievable within the realms of what is politically and economically feasible' (COMPASS 2013: 16). Sometimes these aspirations are expressed in terms of the immediate family, sometimes for the entire community.

The experiences of sexual minorities provides a graphic illustration of the violence inflicted by families and communities on those who do not conform to society's view of what is 'normal' – an example of the horizontal barriers between people. In the case of Danijel, it was a loving mother that rejected him when she found out he



RCA GHANA 2013

This young boy in Ghana needs to work loading charcoal to help support his family to secure a livelihood.

PRAXIS 2013A



Development that is effective will need to transform the discrimination, stigma, and inequalities that marginalised groups face including transgender people in India.

was gay, saying he had shamed his family, his community and his country. Gowrie in India was beaten and disowned by her father because her behaviour did not conform to what was expected of a 'boy' in her caste and culture. Amit hid his sexual orientation from his family and community for fear of his life. For Savitri's father, a son that smoked, drank and raped women was more acceptable than one who wanted to change his gender (Praxis 2013a).

Formal citizenship is based on legal equality of all citizens in the eyes of the state. However, for the poorest and most marginalised, lived experiences of citizenship (or its lack) come through the behaviour and attitudes of those responsible for representing the state and enforcing the law. The experiences reported in the research of interactions with officials and service providers are largely negative. A doctor who treats a transgender person like a guinea pig rather than a person in need of treatment (India), a teacher who denies a disabled child access to school in case other children are frightened (Bangladesh), the policeman who rapes the sex worker who seeks his protection on the grounds that she provides sex for a living (India), the health official who will not allow gay and lesbian people to donate blood because it is 'dirty' (Montenegro), are all actively denying citizenship to these people by failing to recognise their rights. The recognition of rights and dignity of those

living in marginalisation is central to substantive citizenship and to addressing poverty:

*Even when living in extreme poverty, people can have ideas. But if nobody acknowledges their ideas, they sink even deeper into poverty (Burkina Faso, ATD Fourth World 2013).*

#### 4.1.2 Focus on equity through addressing discriminatory norms

For many marginalised groups, access to services is a problem because of the appalling treatment they face. Effective development policies and programmes will need to raise awareness of the discrimination, stigma, and inequalities that people living in poverty and marginalisation experience. Professionals who provide services to people living in poverty must be better prepared to understand their realities and treat them with respect. Bolivian indigenous people asked that 'those studying to be doctors, that they be more humane, have a conscience, to be caring. We're people too, with hearts and feelings. We don't need them to greet us with hugs and kisses, but just to treat us like human beings, as they would wish to be treated' (Bolivia, ATD Fourth World 2013). This will require training to challenge prejudice and taboos: 'Civil society organisations can play an important role in addressing stigma and discrimination ... in partnership with those experiencing it daily' (ATD Fourth World 2013: 20).

This demand for public services that are based on recognition and delivered with respect is a recurring theme throughout the research. For example:

- Oneworld – Platform for South East Europe Foundation (OWPSEE) calls for recognition of the formal rights of sexual minorities, but also recognition of the legitimacy of their sexual identity by their families and societies
- Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy (MEND) calls for recognition of the formal rights of women to movement, livelihoods, work, etc., but also recognition of their situation by their local communities
- The Seed Institute calls for recognition of the realities faced by children with disabilities and their carers
- The Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation (SLF) calls for legal recognition of the legitimacy of informal street trading as a livelihood
- The perspectives and energies of young people have the power to shift discriminatory social norms, if they are listened to and supported (CDS 2013; Challenging Heights 2013; Restless Development-Uganda 2013; The Seed Institute 2013).

Perhaps the most important route for tackling discriminatory social norms is education – both formal and informal. Education providers can communicate powerful messages about how poor and marginalised people are perceived by the state. Training officials in the values of service to the whole community and recruiting more people from marginalised groups are ways that a sense of



citizenship can be strengthened.

The realisation of rights has two aspects. The first is being treated with greater dignity and given recognition. The second is having access to basic resources and services. The realisation of rights for all is necessary for substantive citizenship. The set of principles outlined in this section, which focus on rights, dignity, and equity, are essential for the power of citizens. When all people's rights are respected, the poorest and most marginalised are able to maintain a sense of their own self-worth and dignity, which provides a necessary foundation for moving past survival to being able to change the wider situation.

## Recommendations

- Give marginalised groups the opportunity to define the rights that matter most to them
- Target institutional discrimination, and ensure that government representatives and officials treat all people with respect/protect rights called for by the poorest and most marginalised within legal frameworks
- Prioritise investment in transformative approaches to education, such as popular education
- Work with families and communities to challenge discriminatory social norms

## 4.2 Transform social relations to enable collective action

While achieving the formal recognition of rights constitutes a critical milestone in defining citizenship, it does not imply that these rights will translate into concrete outcomes in people's lives, particularly the lives of marginalised groups. Rights have to be claimed – fought for actively, if necessary – before they become a real force for change. Such a struggle is unlikely to be achieved by individuals acting on their own. The struggle will have to be a collective one. Increasing interconnectedness demands collective decision-making at different levels through the transformation of 'poor people' into political subjects. This means transforming the wider social relations within which people are located, starting with their families and communities.

### 4.2.1 Strengthen and transform families and communities in order to enable solidarity and belonging

In many contexts, families and communities can be a source of solidarity and support for those who are ignored by the state and overlooked by the wider society. In the Ghana Community Radio Network (GCRN) research, for instance, the women were clear that the most important way to support positive change was to reinforce community:

*We are changing our ways to ensure that community life, community relationship and our way of life does not suffer because of changes in our income, yields and environment (Radio Builsa, Bachonsa, FG, Women, GCRN 2013).*



ATD FOURTH WORLD 2013

Domestic workers in Bolivia organise for action to demand their rights.

But for many individuals and groups, such as disabled people in Bangladesh, transgenders in India, people living with HIV in South Africa, and sexual minorities in the Balkans, families and communities are sites of oppression, violence and cruelty. We noted also some of the unspoken forms of discrimination within families, for example where parents withhold education from daughters (Cortez-Ruiz 2013; CDS 2013).

It is not surprising then that many of these groups seek to create their own communities and families, as the bonds of solidarity are critical to people's sense of wellbeing and security. This was eloquently articulated by Danijel who, rejected by his mother because of his sexual orientation, now lives with his 'chosen' family, one that he has created from those who care about him and support him:

*Everyone needs a place where they belong where they return to everyday, and where someone who loves them waits for them at home. Now I have a new family which I chose. A family made of all of my friends, and the man that I love who is with me in every moment and ready to support me and to comfort me (OWPSEE 2013).*

The research suggests that, from the perspective of many marginalised groups, families have to be transformed and communities have to be democratised if they are to accommodate difference and diversity and provide a sense of belonging and support to all their members.

#### 4.2.2 Invest in community organisation and capacity development

The research identifies various bottom-up approaches to bringing about change. What they share is the interest in creating a space for people to come together to reflect on

their problems and experiences and to take collective action to bring about change. It is collective learning that promises a more democratic and inclusive society, potentially 'tipping' entire systems. As a Brazilian participant explained:

*I tell you this: unity is strength. There doesn't have to be anyone in charge, all together we can be in charge because we are fighting for the same goal. If you are fighting for the same goal, then what happens? You'll use your wisdom and the others will use theirs. Because your knowledge is your knowledge. One learns from the other, one helping the other (ATD Fourth World 2013).*

Participants articulate a desire to do things for themselves while simultaneously recognising their need for support to achieve their vision of wellbeing. Often it is a request for basic services or access to productive assets, but with a strong emphasis on their own agency in achieving wellbeing. In Mexico, indigenous women are calling for centrally imposed conditions to be removed from the social programme *Oportunidades*, because 'we know how to organise to improve things, and the authorities should listen to us about support to be given to the communities. We know we have those capabilities' (Cortez-Ruiz 2013).

While the active involvement of marginalised groups and their strengthened capacity for self-organisation is important in these efforts, it is equally important that such efforts are widespread enough to bring about the social transformation that is needed. In India, CityMakers have come together through the research process to make claims for their rights despite their extreme marginalisation (Praxis 2013a). In Kenya, a group of mothers of disabled children has formed a network that is raising the profile of the issue of disability with local authorities (The Seed Institute 2013). In the Balkans, activists from sexual minorities are challenging discriminatory laws and organised violence by fascist groups (OWPSEE 2013).

Creating spaces for dialogue is important. Hearing from those who are not normally heard may be an important way to transform embedded social norms, which is another central aspect of tipping points that can lead to positive change. Child-led research in Ghana identified solutions to the issue of teenage pregnancy, involving challenging the cultural norm of older men having younger girlfriends, highlighting the importance of not using culture as an excuse for harmful practices (Challenging Heights 2013).

Participants in the Restless Development research called for inter-generational dialogue to help young people and their parents to understand the challenges of the contemporary context and work together to challenge social norms which hold them in poverty (Restless Development-Uganda 2013). OWPSEE is using individual and collective stories to try and open dialogue between estranged parents and children who are LGBTIQ (OWPSEE 2013).

The Spatial Collective created a community forum on sanitation through the research process, in which community representatives and leaders from Mathare met



Through becoming engaged in their community, young women in Jordan have the opportunity to articulate their aspirations for change.

CDS 2013



GCRN 2013

People in Ghana come together to discuss the issues that affect their lives and build plans to change their situation.

to screen the participatory video on sanitation and discuss what should be done as a response (Spatial Collective 2013).

In Ghana, where deforestation is endemic, people were clear that they needed to act themselves. In Sodzikiopie, Gomoa Dunka and Nadowli they declared that they would revive the forest, create tree planting committees and devote community land to forest growing (GCRN 2013):

*If we say because of illegal logging and indiscriminate bush fire we are not going to plant trees we will not be doing ourselves any good. The land will continue from bad to worse.*

Particularly notable was the inclusion of women in these initiatives. In Odumtia where women had been told that they could not comment on sand-winning because they could not own land, the community forum resolved to enact by-laws against sand-winning and formed a monitoring committee including women with the resolve that 'there should be gender balance in all leadership' (GCRN 2013). As inequalities are intersecting, often challenging one form of oppression can make others more visible – changing women's right to hold land in turn made it easier to call for gender balance in leadership.

The exposure of issues through participatory research processes can be a trigger for people to organise. In the Ugandan slums where the badly built drains which are causing flooding and disease to spread need to be repaired, through taking part in the research the people felt that they

could mobilise themselves and make repairs if they could get the tools (HEPS-Uganda 2013).

COMPASS reports that political mobilisation by indigenous people in the Philippines and Bolivia has helped to create platforms from which they are able to articulate their needs and defend their rights (COMPASS 2013). In Bolivia, such mobilisation put an indigenous person (President Evo Morales) in power and helped to construct new citizenship identities that recognise indigenous people.

Collective action is an important aspect of the way that power can be leveraged by the poorest and most marginalised to change their circumstances. The research provides many examples of the ways in which collective action generates positive change, and participants call for development to be focused on enabling spaces for these forms of collective action to emerge.

## Recommendations

- Support the capacity for self-organisation of marginalised groups
- Enable spaces for collective action to emerge and help these initiatives to connect to one another directly

### 4.3 Accountable and democratic governments

In order for the poorest and most marginalised to gain meaningful access to decision-making processes that affect them, more emphasis on participatory governance is needed. A participatory approach to governance is one that engages with local knowledge, strengthens people's voices, and enables people to influence decisions and hold decision-makers to account. While this approach could benefit many, in order for it to benefit those who are most excluded, processes of participatory governance must be targeted to ensure they are inclusive. This must link the collective action discussed above to the decision-making processes that affect people's lives.

#### 4.3.1 Promote a participatory approach to governance

A central desire articulated by the people who have participated in this research is to be able to play an active role in developing their own futures, and in shaping the policies and programmes that affect them. This needs to be at the heart of all development policy. People have spoken clearly about the need for context-specific support: they want to be part of identifying the solution with policymakers and practitioners, who they invite to come and talk to them about what their priorities are and what might work in their specific contexts (RCA Ghana 2013; Cortez-Ruiz 2013; Restless Development-Uganda 2013). Not only do the participants in the research call for the right

to participate in the decisions that affect them, their participation is essential to secure good outcomes.

Participation generates wider positive changes. It builds networks which reduce isolation (Restless Development-Uganda 2013). Participatory research in Mexico finds that:

Exclusion of people in poverty from participating and influencing decisions that affect their lives, increases their vulnerability and powerlessness; including them in the decision-making process is a condition for a sustainable, effective development (Cortez-Ruiz 2013).

Furthermore, it can help to address the corruption, inefficiencies and unintended consequences described in Chapter 3, that are so frequently experienced by the poor. Through enabling and guaranteeing the participation of marginalised people in governance, policymakers can work with people to address the inequalities and abuses of power they experience on an everyday basis. And as ATD Fourth World emphasise, 'participation should be encouraged through community solidarity and collaboration, never by imposing humiliating conditions on people or penalizing non-compliance' (ATD Fourth World 2013: 24). Policies and interventions could support people to form their own organisations, from which to engage with participatory processes.

There are examples in this research which point towards how more effective policies can be developed through collaborative approaches, which value local and indigenous



ATD FOURTH WORLD 2013

A clear message from research in Brazil is that policies can be more effective when local and indigenous knowledge is valued.

knowledge as well as modern technologies (Cortez Ruiz 2013; ATD Fourth World 2013). Collaboration and dialogue between different forms of knowledge and experience can save lives and create more effective and accessible services, for example in the field of community health workers (Cortez-Ruiz 2013; ATD Fourth World 2013; SLF 2013b). For example, collaboration between indigenous community midwives and professional health workers has developed in recent years through the Social Services at the Autonomous Metropolitan University of Mexico. Here they have established a dialogue between health professionals and community midwives, who are regarded as knowledgeable and their knowledge is valued and respected. The midwives support the doctor to monitor pregnancies and assist in labour, and this collaborative approach has meant that deaths have been avoided (Cortez-Ruiz 2013).

The inclusion of groups who usually do not normally have a say in decisions is crucial to better policies. Ghana Reality Check participants saw 'opportunities to participate in life and make a contribution to genuine local decision making' as key (RCA Ghana 2013). For participants in the drama performances conducted in Nigeria, involving people in poverty in governance would be a way to promote transparency and accountability and to make democracy meaningful (TFDC 2013). Young people in Uganda 'felt that their involvement would increase local ownership and programme quality by ensuring that activities are appropriate to the local context ... and build networks between youth and other community members' (Restless Development-Uganda 2013). When participation is truly inclusive it challenges the power imbalances that block accountability, and this can lead to tipping points that open the possibility for sustainable change.

What is needed is the acknowledgement by those in power that this collaboration is important, and the training of professionals to be able to work in this way:

*We wanted to discuss development [...], but the government is not prepared to do so, they turn it the other way round: 'The population is stupid, they don't how to discuss such things, they can't discuss public policies'. That's a lie. We don't need training for that. We know our needs, we know how to present them. But we do need technicians to make possible what has been discussed (Brazil, ATD Fourth World 2013).*

ATD Fourth World propose that sustainable development requires a paradigm shift in the field of knowledge, and that people living in poverty 'should be a new partner in building knowledge on development ... to shape a good governance capable of pooling the courage, the intelligence and the commitments of all' (ATD Fourth World 2013: 21).

### 4.3.2 Ensure accountable and inclusive institutions

Citizens must also be able to hold powerful institutions to account: democracy needs to be 'woken up' and citizens must demand accountability and an end to impunity and vested interests in politics. There are two sides to achieving

more accountable institutions: the participation of the most marginalised in setting policies, but also the involvement of citizens in holding authorities to account for those policies. This is expressed by workshop participants in Nigeria: 'Democracy has two voices: one determines what should be done, and the other holds elected officials to account' (TFDC 2013).

The research offers examples of some of the innovative forms of local engagement in policymaking processes, some conducted through the *Participate* process itself, undertaken by groups to draw government attention to their needs and problems. For instance, young researchers in Ghana questioned the way families and institutions respond to the problem of transactional sex and teenage pregnancy (Challenging Heights 2013). They also call for community leaders to 'do more to advocate for government services that target youth', and challenge NGOs to 'come on the ground' to ensure a better fit between skills development programmes and local needs (Restless Development-Uganda 2013). SLF used street photography to prompt a dialogue among local government officials on street life and challenge the repressive and criminalizing tactics of the police that undermine informal street trading (SLF 2013a).

The story of Isaac 'Kaka' (Story 12, p57) from the Spatial Collective shows how a waste management project opened up opportunities for systemic change through income generation and social development. It portrays the relevance of working collectively but also in partnership with local authorities in order to access resources. The youth in this story are socially aware and see their future as directly connected to the future of their community. Investing in community-led initiatives such as this has the potential not just to transform the environment but also the way young people see the world and the choices available. However, the ultimate success of initiatives such as Isaac's will depend on strong and accountable relationships with the local authority. Initiatives from the grass-roots must connect to institutions for change to be sustainable.

One example of bottom-up pressure creating a tipping point for change was related by an indigenous activist from Chiapas seeking to improve the way in which health services dealt with people from his/her community:

*My name is Urbano, I am a community health worker... I have a leadership role on health in the communities of Palenque... We [in the Assembly meeting in New Canah, municipality of Palenque, Chiapas] ...are talking a bit about maternal mortality, and why ... tragedies like that of Jovita who died, cannot be prevented ... we made a public complaint and then organised 63 communities in the municipality of Palenque. They all signed because people are tired of so much disappointment, abuse, and discrimination of indigenous people at the hospital... The complaint was made by 63 communities, involving some NGOs and the Human Rights Commission also accompanied us in following up the complaint, because*

*we were not going to power alone...[(they) helped us and we have accomplished something important. And from this achievement, healthcare is improved, there is adequate equipment in the hospital, the doctor responsible for the death of Mrs. Jovita was changed and they will also care for the 4 orphaned children of the deceased woman* (Urbano, indigenous Chol, community health promoter, Palenque, Chiapas, Communities Assembly, Cortez-Ruiz 2013).

## Recommendations

- Involve citizens in creating, monitoring and implementing policies
- Promote initiatives that build on local and indigenous knowledges
- Create opportunities for real dialogue between marginalised and excluded groups and authorities at the local, national, regional and global levels

### 4.4 Policies and services respond effectively to the poorest and most marginalised

More accountable governance should lead to improvements in the services and support for the poorest and most marginalised. This requires not only pressure from citizens, but significant changes in the way that governments, development agencies and other formal and informal institutions work.

Across the research the very poorest and most marginalised have said that development policies do not benefit them. The target-based approach of the MDGs incentivized development practitioners to prioritise the 'low hanging fruit'. Targets were met by bringing in the easiest to reach not the poorest. The research also shows that the poorest are often 'collateral damage' in the process of development for others. As we have seen in this report, extreme poverty and marginalisation are characterised by high levels of complexity which are not experienced in the same way by the general population. The only way not to leave them behind is to prioritise them. This involves providing policies and services that respond effectively to their needs.

#### 4.4.1 Focus on quality of services

Many of the research projects reported deep concerns about the quality of services available to the poorest. In Bangladesh for example it was clear that disabled children didn't get the same quality of education as other children, even when they were admitted to schools (We can also make a change 2013). The Ghana Reality Check work exposed deep dissatisfaction with schools which had no teachers and no books. Participants in the research expressed similar sentiments about health. They regretted the decline in training of traditional birth assistants who

would help in home deliveries and would come when needed and stay as long as necessary. Their perception was that good quality traditional practices had been taken away and replaced with services that were of poor quality and inappropriate (RCA Ghana 2013). Even where there is access to services, if the quality is poor or inappropriate, it does not constitute real access.

To improve the quality and reach of services, the research has suggested that professionals could work more closely with existing community capacity, knowledge and experience. For example, community health workers involved in SLF's digital storytelling process described how their personal experiences with HIV, drug-resistant TB and other communicable diseases has motivated them to provide public health education in their townships (See Story 14, p58 by Ingrid Dlakavu). As this education is provided by people with personal experience of the problems, they are better able to see how it can be used effectively to address the multiple, interconnected issues surrounding public health and communicable diseases.

Quality and appropriateness of infrastructure was also raised as an issue in the research. Transport infrastructure for instance can bring substantial positive change to rural communities where remoteness and isolation contribute to their marginalisation (Cortez-Ruiz 2013). Public services are inadequate in many places because few teachers and doctors are prepared to live in remote areas (RCA Ghana 2013; Cortez-Ruiz 2013), but improved transportation could make it easier to recruit and retain professional staff. Transportation can also affect producers' earnings, which are often reduced by the costs of transporting produce to the market (COMPASS 2013). Another example is the provision of utilities: young people in Ghana are unable to acquire computing skills, or to work in the trades they have been trained in (e.g. welding), because of the irregularity of electricity supply.

In urban contexts the issues centre on the informal nature of public services in many slum areas, and the lack of recognition of how the provision of public services through formal systems disproportionately disadvantages the poorest (Praxis 2013a; SLF 2013a; Spatial Collective 2013; The Seed Institute 2013). Rather than enforcing a system that is already discriminating against them, the people who live in the urban slums and on streets need policies that work in partnership with the informal systems that they have developed. Water and sanitation is a good example. In the SLF research we heard stories of flying toilets, failed and flooding drainage systems, and no refuse collection. Urban infrastructure projects characterised by privatised water services are not going to work for people who have no money to pay for water or sanitation, in dense urban locations where there is limited land. So if city governments are serious about eradicating extreme poverty, they have to accept these realities and help to develop pragmatic solutions. Support for urban forms of community-led total

<sup>1</sup> For further details on Community-Led Total Sanitation initiatives see [www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/](http://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/)

sanitation might be an example of the sort of policies that need to be pursued here.<sup>1</sup> Even simple policies like officially recognising the existence of slums open the way for citizens to demand rights to services.

#### 4.4.2 Prioritise the creation and provision of dignified livelihoods

*The first thing anyone needs is a job. We all need to be employed to fight poverty* (Mrs Bhebhe, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, COMPASS 2013: 6).

Livelihoods were a central concern for all of the research participants, and were directly connected to a sense of self-reliance. They are seen as the primary route to sustainable wellbeing. Participants in the HEPS research said, 'let people be given jobs ... being in position to attain or provide for himself what he wants, that makes change in his life.' For disabled people in Bangladesh and many other groups, livelihoods were a priority because they both provided the material means to survive and were a path to dignity and self respect where stigma and discrimination were widespread (We can also make the change 2013). The value attached to livelihoods takes on even greater significance when we consider the close correlation between stigmatised identities and stigmatised livelihoods. There were many examples of people who were socially marginalised or came from very poor families forced into sex work or begging, where they were vulnerable to violence and abuse.

The absence of options features frequently in these accounts. In Ghana, subsistence farmers, very often female and living in remote areas, are among the poorest

occupation group in Ghana. For many without education, there is little else available. Agriculture is seen as hard work with uncertain returns. The research reported that NGOs provide skills but little follow-up, and training does not lead to jobs because of lack of infrastructure (Restless Development-Uganda 2013).

The government-initiated Regional Indigenous Fund (RIF) in Mexico is valued by its members not solely because it provides training and access to resources: it has become a 'place where we can discuss about our rights, our identity, our world, of how we want our organisation ... we could add to the RIF's objectives "to promote respect and the rights of indigenous peoples"' (Indigenous Nahuatl board member RIF, Cortez-Ruiz 2013). It is also of note that with the RIF, the credit fund passes on to someone else in the community if the individual emigrates. This is an example of how initiatives should underpin livelihood strategies in rural areas (Cortez-Ruiz 2013).

In cities, evictions and restrictions on street trading are taking away the rights of many urban poor, who have few skills and no capital to make a living (Praxis 2013; ATD Fourth World 2013). In Kenya, on the other hand (The Seed Institute 2013), the designation of certain side streets of the city for hawkers to ply their trade, with special places reserved for disabled people, has created space for small informal traders who make up the bulk of the urban poor in many contexts. These examples suggest that better urban planning, with the designation of secure market sites and streets for vendors, could help to support marketing efforts of small traders as well as providing an important service to other poor people in the city (SLF 2013a).

Sexual minorities in India, which has a government policy of quotas for *dalit* and *adivasi* groups in public sector employment and education, would like to see such provisions extended to them, given the wall of prejudice that they encounter in their search for jobs (Praxis 2013b). The structure of this needs to be thought through carefully. Disabled people in Bangladesh for example complained that while there was a quota for them, it was shared with orphans, who were more likely to get the jobs. An innovative intervention in Bangladesh suggests that the private sector could contribute to efforts to equalise employment opportunities (We can make a change 2013). Here, it was reported that an NGO working with disabled groups persuaded owners of a number of garment factories, a major industry in the country, to provide jobs to disabled people. Twelve people were trained on a trial basis by the NGO and placed in factories. The scheme worked well and the organisation has now trained more than 300 disabled people as well as persuading the Garment Merchandise Export Association to introduce a 5 per cent quota for people with disabilities.

Some of the problems of finding 'decent work' can be traced to larger structural conditions, some of which are described in Chapter 3: growth strategies which have prioritised inflation control rather than employment generation; the increasing concentration of capital across a

REAL TIME/SPATIAL COLLECTIVE 2013



Informal forms of trading are central to the livelihood strategies of people living within the slums of Nairobi.



COMPASS 2013

People in the Philippines discuss their local realities and their understanding of the complex issues that impact their lives.

wide range of sectors; the concessions offered by states to mining companies which allow the latter to act with impunity towards local populations (COMPASS 2013). These will require change at the larger structural level if the problem is to be addressed. But there are various examples of lower-level actions that can be taken and that would expand livelihood options at the lower end of the income distribution. What people have said they need at this end is access to, and control over, productive assets, fairer prices for their labour and products, and support in finding markets (SLF 2013). Informal as well as formal employment needs to be recognised and supported and, as SLF participants argue (Story 11, p56), regulation of the street economy needs to be 'pro poor'.

In the research findings, the absence of the formal private sector as a partner in development is striking. The informal private sector is highly visible in the lives of the poor, with the benefits of flexibility and innovation, but also as a source of insecure livelihoods, usurious credit, and exploitative wages. The formal private sector is largely absent as a source of employment for people living in poverty and marginalisation. A larger and more responsible role for the private sector in addressing poverty through employment needs to be central to policy frameworks.

Livelihoods must therefore be a policy priority, since 'the

main concern from people living in poverty is for employment or access to productive assets that allow them to rebuild viable and sustainable livelihoods' (COMPASS 2013).

#### 4.4.3 Make sure development interventions are holistic

A strong message from this research is that a new agenda for development should 'leave no one behind' (ATD Fourth World 2013). For this to become a reality, the complexity of poverty and marginalisation needs to be properly addressed. The stories in section 1.4 provided insight into the complex interplay of social processes that increasingly characterise extreme poverty, and which restrict people's capacity to make positive change. Even when support of some kind is available, access to a service may be impossible without resolving other intersecting problems such as the cultural and religious norms that marginalise Hajiya Yola and her children and grandchildren in Nigeria (Story 5, p28), or Sara Mendoza and her family in the Philippines (Story 4, p19). The dynamic and interlocking nature of poverty and marginalisation is recognised by the people who experience it. A fourteen-year old boy's analysis of the issue of teenage pregnancy in Ghana identifies multi-level solutions which encompass education, employment, training, culture change and recourse to justice (Challenging Heights 2013).



The COMPASS research spells out the problem:

The worst situations of poverty identified are caused by intersecting multiple factors. Some have existed for decades (such as land inheritance practices, customary duty of care disproportionately burdening women, exploitative tenancy agreements) while others are 'new' (for example different family composition because of HIV and conflict, frequent droughts, rapidly changing international commodity prices). It is the interplay between these 'old' and 'new' factors that produces the worst situations of exclusion. To address the challenges presented by these complex situations, a comprehensive response that goes beyond sectoral approaches is needed (COMPASS 2013: 59).

Typically when agencies talk about holistic responses they propose better partnership, information sharing and integration of services. This is necessary, but it won't solve the problem. When we are talking about people living in extreme poverty with multiple deprivations and exclusions then we have to start with the person. If we look at the multiple interlocking discriminations (disability, poverty, powerlessness and gender) faced by a girl in Bangladesh (see Box 1 on page 37 about abuse of power and nepotism) we can see how impossible it would be to address the issues with any single service or programme. Extreme poverty requires community workers coordinating integrated responses on the ground, and local programmes tested against the realities of people's lives. The evidence of the research synthesised here suggests that top-down programmes have not understood these realities and continue to fail to address the complex problems of the poorest.

#### 4.4.4 Focus on building longer-term relationships

External development interventions also need to be based on longer-term relationships and investment in communities, not on short visits that set up short-term projects. This issue was present in many of the research findings. For some it is about looking after their environment and protecting their communities. The RIF in Mexico is a good example of how a credit fund can take a long-term perspective and support long-term community development as well as individual livelihoods:

*When the credit is given, we ask people to stay and work in their community [and not migrate]. For us in the future it is very important because if the family stays in the community, their children study, people work the land, then we think it is a successful experience (Indigenous mixteca, RIF 'Na Savi', Guerrero, Cortez-Ruiz 2013)*

Sustainable change requires sustained and long-term commitment. A number of the research participants highlighted the need to move away from projects that end after a few years, to longer-term relationships and programmes: 'if we support a disabled girl for two years, when we withdraw our funding everything stops ... So we need to make long term programmes rather than projects' (We Can Also Make a Change 2013). In Ghana, researchers called for 'sustainable and systemic change not projects' (GCRN 2103).

## Recommendations

- Introduce carefully considered quotas for the most marginalised to help address inequalities
- Prioritise development investment which starts with the needs of the poorest and most marginalised
- Ensure that programme success indicators are linked directly to positive impacts for the poorest and most marginalised
- Ensure that the poorest get access to, and control over, productive assets
- Recognise and support the 'informal' spaces which people have to inhabit to survive
- Provide support to enable people to make the transitions from informal environments to more stable formal environments
- Invest in pro-poor infrastructure and utilities (including in the informal spaces)

## 4.5 Conclusion: examples of change

To conclude this report, we return to the stories. These stories illustrate how people living in the most dire circumstances can catalyse change in their own lives and in the places where they live. We conclude with these stories not because they offer a recipe for positive change, but because they demonstrate the way people can find a way through the array of problems and obstacles they face. Although a positive outcome is far from guaranteed and working with people living in marginalisation does not have easily predictable results, these stories are a testament to the possibilities that exist. Under the right circumstances, and where there are accountable relationships between those in power and those living in marginalisation, people can catalyse sustainable change.

## Story 11 Business in the Community: Interest in Ivory Park, South Africa (SLF 2013a)

The eight photographers who carried out the research of 'Photovoice: Street Life in Ivory Park' explored through several images the challenges that people face when their livelihoods are carried out on the margins; a situation that frequently implies instability, lack of social security and

benefits, harassment and insecurity. However, they also wanted to show a diverse and dynamic side of the street economy, picturing strategies of adaptation, marketing, and innovation that happen in the public space and for the benefit of the wider community: business development in the community interest. All together the photos call for an appropriate, 'pro-poor' regulation of the street economy in order for these people to achieve their full potential. Strengthening businesses, providing support for those most vulnerable, training in skills and building safer communities, instead of criminalising street trade would be the way forward.



IDTV 2013

### Mobile

People don't only have stores at street corners. Some vendors move around with their goods, selling from door-to-door. This provides a good service to the community.

### Whistling

This young man is selling *amangqina* (tripe) in the morning hours. He whistles while walking down the street as a form of marketing to his customers.



PATRICK MAHINCA 2013



MICHAEL MOTHMANE 2013

### You can always get what you want on the streets

There is an enormous diversity in the variety of goods and services that can be found in the streets. From selling snacks for commuters and other local businesses (like Patrick and IDTV show); to bringing technological goods such as mobile chargers and cases (seen in Michael's picture) for the people living and working in Ivory Park.

## Story 12 Isaac Muasa Kaka in Kenya (Spatial Collective 2013)

Positive change from the bottom-up is possible when partnerships are in place with local authorities, service providers and the wider community.

*After we finished primary school our needs became more... our parents could not support us anymore so we needed to start working. We came together and tried to share ideas on how we can create employment for ourselves. We tried to tackle issues that were affecting our communities. There was waste everywhere, there were a lot of diseases, including cholera.*

*Since we were looking for a job to do...we made a decision to collect all of the garbage and put them in the right place. We talked to the members of the community and asked them to pay something small to buy polythene bags. It was hard at first to convince them, but they agreed because we were the only people doing something about the problem. With the help of the local city council we cleared one of the big heaps, and then we used to sleep there in order to make sure no one put garbage there. It was an election year and so we used that chance to get them (the local government) to help clear the garbage.*

*In 2000 the group registered with the social services so we could access public funds. Then we started doing other activities, not just garbage collection. We ensured employment for 26 members...The garbage collection also provided opportunities and networks for young people so the crime reduced as youths had different options. Soon enough we started doing recycling as well... We have a recycling machine, which means we can grind plastic and add value to it, which creates more employment. Through doing this we also gave*

*other youths an idea for collecting waste. Other groups formed and started projects. These groups came to us for advice and support...The majority of the young people in the slums are unemployed, and this can create a lot of problems in the community. If you create a space for them they utilise it.*

*By recycling the plastics...we want to come up with products that come from the materials. We would use the recyclable products to build products for the community that they can use at an affordable price. This would also create more employment for young people in the community and be a more sustainable solution that looks at more than one of the issues we are looking to the future. There has been a big challenge with the polythene bags, they take 400 years to degrade and so in the future they will have problems. So we have been coming up with different ways to collect the waste – we have been using big buckets that are reusable. We have been partnering with the city council to work for a clean community.*

*The partnership agreement is that there is a collection point where we can take the garbage. We pay them to take the rubbish from there 2000 shillings a month. The heap is now very big and they have not been collecting the garbage, they have to bring big tractors to remove the garbage. So the partnership has not been good, but we have been playing our part. We would love for there to be trucks for every ward and area, and that the trucks would come every time. This would make things easier by partnering.*



Isaac's efforts have translated into positive spaces for his community.

## Story 13 Boy with a Disability in Bangladesh

(We Can Also Make a Change 2013)

As well as providing income, work transforms the perception of people living with disabilities within their families and communities. Once people have a stable livelihood, they are in a position to 'give back' to their community.

*Once I lost all my hopes and expectations from life. I could not continue my study as my classmates and others used to mock my disability and teachers also did not care about me. My family stopped my study when I was in grade 8 as they were poor. I tried to do works with my father as a day labourer but I did not get payment. I used to feel ashamed of myself and hopeless as nobody thought of me as capable of doing any job. At one point I thought that I will be a burden in my family for my whole life.*

*At this time I met one of the development organisations (EHRPBD)<sup>1</sup> officers who saw my situation and talked to the principal of the school and assisted me to get admission to study again. I passed secondary school certificate course and I am continuing my study, I have received IGA (income generating activities) training as a tailor and got a sewing machine from the same organisation to set up*



Those most marginalised demand decent livelihood opportunities

PRAKAS 2013

*a tailoring shop and started my profession as a tailor in my village.*

*At the beginning people were not interested to give me any order and they had doubt of my work but when I proved my capability doing some and with the advocacy of EHRPBD*

*people I became successful in my profession. Now I feel to do something for the disabled people who are poor and marginalised and regarded as good for nothing like me in the society. I with EHRPBD assistance formed an organisation for the welfare of the marginalised people. I am now the secretary of that organisation (Disabled People's Organisation-DPO). Our organisation not only work for the disabled people we also try to help older people and widows, by linking government's support that allocated for our union. The livelihood support gave me a new identity in my family as well as in my society and I feel a complete human being of myself now.*

<sup>1</sup>EHRPBD is Promotion of Human Rights Persons with Disability in Bangladesh. It is a project working for the development and for the rights of disabled people. The organisation's name is Procheta from Kulaura Upazilla of Moulavibazar Zilla of Sylhet of Bangladesh. The project is funded by the Centre for Development (CDD) and European Union.

## Story 14 'To be an Example to the Community' by Ingrid Dlakavu, Cape Town, South Africa (SLF 2013b)

First-hand experience, knowledge and family support foster positive outcomes in the process of fighting a chronic illness.

### TRANSCRIPT

*In 2009, at 19 years old, I was diagnosed with TB (tuberculosis). I was attending Grade 9, Level 2, in College of Cape Town, Crawford Campus. By then, my son was 9 months old and being taken care of by my mother while I was at school. My son and I bonded in many ways, especially at breast feeding times. Almost half way through the year, I started coughing a lot, I lost my appetite. I got tired, restless, to the point of wanting to quit school. I lost concentration. Two weeks later in my illness I went to the clinic where I was tested for HIV, and my sputum tested for TB. I was to get my results two days later. I was nervous and scared because of waiting for 2 days to get those results. I knew that one can be cured, because back in 2005, my sister had TB, she took her medication and she was cured.*

*This made it easier to accept that I do have TB, as explained by the nursing sister at Delft CHC*



Awareness and action allowed Ingrid to overcome TB

SLF 2013B

*(Community Health Centre). Over a 6 month period I took my medication with the support of my family and close friends, even though I was often nauseous from taking those pills. But the bad thing about this was that I had to stop breast feeding my son. If I hadn't stopped he may have got TB, maybe died. I started to buy him NAN (formula milk) with the*

*(government) grant money. We coped, but we couldn't bond the same way due to my illness. This broke my heart. At this time I felt like a bad mother because of denying my son what I know he needed like every baby does. Three years later I am cured of TB and exposing myself to opportunities of learning more about this disease. I also pass my knowledge to my family and community, so that things can start to change for the better. Because when you know more, you do better...*

 View story here:  
<https://vimeo.com/71412864>



## Chapter 5

# Summaries of the 18 *Participate* PRG research projects

The *Participate* Participatory Research Group is a network of organisations committed to bringing knowledge from the margins into decision-making at every level of society. Across these 18 research projects, PRG members conducted research using diverse participatory methods, ranging from oral testimonies to theatre for development.

In this section we provide a summary of the main messages and a short methodology overview for each of the 18 pieces of research included in this report.

| Organisation  | Page | Organisation  | Page |
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| 8 Coalition for Health Promotion and Social Development Uganda          | 67   | 17 The Reality Check Approach   | 78   |
| 9 Praxis – Institute for Participatory Practices                        | 68   | <i>Please note:</i> African Monitor remains part of the PRG network. Because their research process is still underway, their findings are not reflected in this synthesis report. |      |

# Towards Sustainable Development that Leaves No One Behind: the Challenge of the Post-2015 Agenda

## International Movement ATD (All Together in Dignity) Fourth World

**COUNTRIES** BELGIUM, BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, BURKINA FASO, FRANCE, HAITI, GUATEMALA, MADAGASCAR, MAURITIUS, THE PHILIPPINES, PERU AND POLAND

### Main messages

#### Leave no one behind

Eliminate stigmatisation and discrimination based on gender, social origin or poverty. Reach out to the most impoverished population groups. Foster participatory development and service provision.

*Even when living in extreme poverty, people can have ideas. But if nobody acknowledges their ideas, they sink even deeper into poverty.*  
(Burkina Faso)

#### Introduce people living in poverty as a new partner in building knowledge on development

Create cooperation and new forms of shared knowledge between people living in poverty and mainstream society – academics, professionals and policymakers to increase their involvement.

*We are humans like them, we eat, we do everything like them. In this way we should think together and keep uniting as colleagues in order to have our rights respected.*  
(Bolivia)

#### Promote decent jobs, social protection and meeting the essential needs of all

Invest private and public funding to create decent jobs by meeting essential needs.

*If we don't have decent work, we can't access all the other things, like a good education, decent healthcare, and adequate food.* (Bolivia)  
If you lose your right to work, you risk losing very quickly your right to an adequate income, housing and so things, the domino pieces, begin falling very quickly. (Belgium)

#### Achieve education and training for all based on cooperation between all stakeholder

Remove hidden barriers on equity in education. Build cooperative forms of education in partnership with communities. Ensure high quality education with improved results for people in poverty.

*We need to teach children solidarity and collaboration instead of humiliation. We need investment in the training of teachers so children feel happy about going to school, including training on prioritising support for those children who find it hardest to learn.* (Bolivia)

#### Promote participatory good governance

Ensure that participation in governance is more than a consultation exercise, and that communities take part willingly.

*If you have the opportunity to sit together to exchange ideas, it enables you to change. If you have your own thoughts, and you add the thoughts of others, it helps you. It really changed me, to be together, sit together, it provokes a change. It's more than simply food.* (Burkina Faso)

### Methodological approach

#### Participatory action research through the Merging of Knowledge approach

Around 2,000 people, the majority of whom are living in poverty and extreme poverty, contributed to the participatory research. In each of the twelve countries, ATD Fourth World teams set up, with people living in extreme poverty, meetings grounded on the mutual trust built up over the years. The participants met and discussed development issues through weekly or monthly meetings, carrying out interviews, learning how to voice their concerns and building a collective knowledge, over periods spanning from six to twenty-four months.

ATD Fourth World also facilitated meetings between representatives of academia, NGOs, trade unions, civil servants, and officials from international organisations in order to prepare a dialogue with people living in extreme poverty based on tactfulness, openness and humility. These different groups were brought together through six seminars that took place in Belgium, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, France, Madagascar and Mauritius using the Merging of Knowledge<sup>1</sup> approach. Each seminar produced an analysis of specific issues related to the MDGs and a set of common recommendations for the post-2015 agenda. They were summed up and discussed during a synthesis seminar in June 2013.

### Organisation

The International Movement ATD (All Together in Dignity) Fourth World (ATD Fourth World) is a non-governmental organisation with no religious or political affiliation which engages with individuals and institutions to find solutions to eradicate extreme poverty. Working in partnership with people in poverty, ATD Fourth World's human rights-based approach focuses on supporting families and individuals through its grass-roots presence and involvement in disadvantaged communities, in both urban and rural areas, creating public awareness of extreme poverty and influencing policies to address it.

[www.atd-fourthworld.org](http://www.atd-fourthworld.org)



<sup>1</sup> For a detailed explanation of this methodology, visit: [www.atd-fourthworld.org/IMG/pdf/Guidelines\\_for\\_the\\_Merging\\_of\\_Knowledge\\_and\\_Practices.pdf](http://www.atd-fourthworld.org/IMG/pdf/Guidelines_for_the_Merging_of_Knowledge_and_Practices.pdf)

# Youth PARTICIPATE: Aspirations of Youth in Egypt

## Center for Development Services

COUNTRY EGYPT

### Main messages

Young participants in this research said that their priorities were:

#### Decent work that secures livelihoods

*'I wish I could find a job in my country'* (Dimsheer village, Minya) – Unemployment is a major challenge faced by youth. Finding decent work that matches young people's skills and capacity, even for someone who is educated, is difficult – *'I wish to see the education linked with the labour market'* (Bahabsheen village, Beni Suef).

Employment does not guarantee a reasonable standard of living as many do not earn enough to secure their livelihood and attain their basic needs – *'I wish I will quit borrowing money each month and my income will cover my life expenses'* (Imbaba, Giza).

#### Responsive government, quality public services and the rule of law upheld

*'We wish to feel that we are valued human beings when we visit the public hospitals'* (Imbaba, Giza); *'I hope I will find a desk to sit in my school'* (Minya City) – Egyptians call for a government that responds to their needs and provides access to quality public health and education services for all without discrimination. Many Egyptians live in fear dealing with crime, violence and harassment due to a breakdown of the public institution upholding the rule of law – *'I hope that I will be able to let my 10-year-old daughter out by herself instead of limiting her freedom and accompanying her whenever she goes out'* (Imbabe, Giza); *'I wish that drugs will be no more sold in our neighbourhood publicly'* (Imbaba, Giza). Day-to-day life is also affected by a lack of public services such as the availability of fire and ambulance services and an effective garbage collection system especially in the densely populated urban areas – *'I don't want to see the horrifying image of garbage again in the country'* (Bahabsheen village, Beni Suef).

#### Collective action and citizen collaboration in developing the country

*'Everyone has the responsibility to move the country forward'; 'Everyone should collaborate and participate in serving the country'* (Bahabsheen village, Beni Suef) – Youth and community members wish to actively participate in developing their country and indicate that there is a need for Egyptians themselves to work together to develop their own country – *'Community members know that problems won't be solved unless they start solving it themselves'* (Bahabsheen village, Beni Suef). However, many do not participate as they have limited understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens – *'Communities need to be aware about their rights and duties and the ways of expressing them'* (Imbabe, Giza).



Young researchers in Minya, Egypt used photography to explore the issues that were important in their community.

### Methodological approach

#### Youth-led participatory action research

This participatory action research initiative aimed to provide a reflection of the realities of youth and their communities through visual research methods. The research was carried out by five youth research teams, comprising 35 male and female marginalised youth from urban slum areas in Imbabe, Giza Governorate, and Al Tayeba in Minya City, as well as Dimsheer Village in the rural area in Minya governorate, and Bahabsheen village in the rural area of Beni Suef governorate, both in Upper Egypt.

The youth research teams worked through creative tools – such as their own photographic work, street art they created and films that they had made – to ignite discussion with youth and community members on the issues that affect them and their aspirations for change. The teams conducted informal street interviews in central places in their communities and organised group discussions to promote collective reflection. The use of the artwork developed by the research team provided a powerful tool to build knowledge and understanding about the issues youth face in their community and also contributed to ownership of the research by the team. Based on their findings each team designed and implemented community initiatives addressing the aspirations and needs of the community as identified through the research.

### Organisation

The Center for Development Services (CDS) supports and carries out participatory development interventions across Egypt and the Middle East that enable people and organisations to use their resources effectively to improve standards of living. Their youth-led research enables young people to reflect on the realities they face, and develops these reflections into a basis for action.

[www.cds-mena.org/site/index.php](http://www.cds-mena.org/site/index.php)



# COMPASS 2015

## Setting the Post-2015 Development Compass: Voices from the Ground

**CAFOD**

**COUNTRIES** BOLIVIA, PHILIPPINES, UGANDA AND ZIMBABWE

### Main messages

**The aspirations of wellbeing expressed by people living in poverty are often both concrete and achievable**

Participants put a strong emphasis on their own agency in achieving wellbeing – looking at other actors as partners or enablers of their efforts.

**While acknowledging improvements in the provision of key services, living conditions have deteriorated for many people who are marginalised or living in poverty.** Their livelihoods have been severely hampered by different factors and processes, some of them human-induced.

**The worst situations of poverty are often caused by multiple intersecting factors.**

**Gender is a major source of inequality, and an additional source of exclusion.**

**Changes in social norms have had concrete positive impacts on the lives of some of those most marginalised,** such as people living with HIV or indigenous peoples.

**Conflicts and disasters are capable of wiping out years of hard-won progress and have long-term consequences.** Conflict has unpredictable consequences, for example in its impact on education, long after the violence has ended.

**The main concern from people living in poverty is employment or access to productive assets that allow them to build viable and sustainable livelihoods, and achieve self-reliance.** Farming income is often insufficient and previously viable livelihoods are unable to guarantee dignified living conditions. The opportunities available to poor people are very different from those accessible to very poor people; hence, labour precariousness is a major negative influence for the poorest. The worst situations of poverty can drive choices that make it difficult to move out of poverty.

**Access to justice and governance is frequently controlled by economic power, patronage and politics**

Even when laws, such as the international framework for the rights of indigenous peoples, exist to protect rights, people living in poverty need support to use legal frameworks and mechanisms to access justice. Excluded groups see political participation as a strategy to improve their lives since most times they are excluded from decision-making processes that are controlled by those close to the political and economic power.

**Services available to people living in poverty are of poor quality, and the barriers that prevent them from accessing services are immense.** In rural areas, people make considerable efforts to send their children to school rather than work in the fields. They expect this investment to be worthwhile. Quality and relevance of what is taught is important. It is important to involve local communities in the design and planning of any improvements and collectively think of ways to mitigate negative side effects.

### Methodological approach

#### In-depth participatory research

This in-depth participatory research is grounded in the ongoing work of four NGOs with people who are marginalised or living in poverty. The research involved 1,420 participants in 56 communities, including: urban dwellers, indigenous communities, farmers, people affected by natural disasters and conflict, and children. The research explored people's experience of change over the last 15 years with a view to identifying the priorities, challenges, visions and aspirations of poor and marginalised people.

The approach to the research combines a participatory process with addressing key issues in the post-2015 policy discussion. Its relevance for policymaking processes was planned from the start through using key questions developed by policymakers as a foundation of discussion. The participatory nature of the research empowers participants to articulate the messages they want policymakers to hear.

### Organisation

CAFOD works with partners across the world to bring hope, compassion and solidarity to poor communities to end poverty and injustice. The COMPASS 2015 research partners are: UNITAS (Bolivia), a network of NGOs promoting grassroots participation in the analysis of public policies; Ecoweb (Philippines), which addresses the inter-linking challenges of poverty, social relations, the environment and poor governance; the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust (Zimbabwe) which promotes evidence-based policy formulation and dialogue on issues of sustainable human development; and the Justice and Peace Commission, Soroti Archdiocese (Uganda) which works on inter-community peace-building initiatives.

[www.cafod.org.uk/Policy-and-Research/Post-MDGs](http://www.cafod.org.uk/Policy-and-Research/Post-MDGs)

**CAFOD**  
Just one world



# ‘We Can Also Make a Change’: Piloting Participatory Research with People with Disabilities and Older People in Bangladesh

**ADD International, HelpAge International and Sightsavers**

**COUNTRY** BANGLADESH

## Main messages

**Livelihoods are crucial for disabled people who are systematically excluded from them. Livelihoods both provide a means of economic survival, and break down discriminatory social norms**

Exclusion is even worse for elderly disabled persons; their only option is begging: *‘I used to work, but since I broke my legs I have had to beg, otherwise I go without food...’* (Laboni, aged 70, Bhashantek slum).

The research shows lots of positive stories of how people have been helped into livelihoods and then get greater acceptance:

*No one believed in his capability but when he started working these things changed. Gradually one or two person gave him work and then observed that he had done the work well. The others also started to give him work and understood that he can also do this work...* (Nazrul Islam)

**Women who live with disabilities are highly vulnerable to sexual assault. Sexual violence towards disabled people is common and its elimination is regarded as one of the top priorities**

Having a visual, speech or intellectual impairment makes a woman particularly vulnerable as it is hard for her to identify and communicate who the perpetrator was. Most times it is a close relative or neighbour in a powerful position. The situation worsens if the family is very poor and powerless in the community:

*At the age of 16 she went to a jute field to bring wooden pieces. That time the son of a powerful chairman of the village raped her forcibly in the jute field. Then she went back to her home with a lot of pain and in bloody condition, and after she reached home she fell down. Her brother’s wife asked her what happened and she replied in a sign language that this boy raped her. After sometime she died.*

**People living in the inner city slums put land security even before food as a priority for interventions.**

In Bhashantek slum, nobody has their own land. They are living on government land. They are ‘floating’:

*I am living like a nest-less bird. I have debt. I have to survive by begging. I live on government land.* (Dewan, aged 66, Bhashantek slum)

Hence, people in the research prioritised land security as it brings stability which enables them to get the food they

need. Without this they will continue to lead a hand-to-mouth existence.

## Methodological approach

**Participatory action research with and by people with disabilities and older people**

A mixed approach of participatory research was used: peer research and collecting stories. Peer research is a form of participatory research. The researchers are people rooted within particular constituencies or communities. They are supported to generate research with their peers:

- **Community peer researchers:** people with disabilities and older people from two communities, Bhashantek slum in Dhaka, and rural Cox’s Bazar in South East Bangladesh.
- **Bangladesh NGO peer researchers:** people who work with people with disabilities and older people in local Bangladesh NGOs.

Peer researchers were asked to talk with ‘people like you’. Together, they identified peers within their communities or constituencies to collect stories from. They designed the story prompts, collected stories from their peers, and then collectively analysed them. Prompts were open-ended, and followed-up with questions about the story told. Prompts were used rather than interview questions in order for people to tell the stories *they* wanted to tell. This avoided pre-empting issues.

## Organisation

The ADD International, HelpAge International and Sightsavers Consortium of international and national partner organisations shares a goal of reducing the social, economic and political exclusion of older people, people with disabilities and people with mental health problems. Through the We Can Make a Change project, people with disabilities, older people and people with mental health issues in Bangladesh, are identifying the problems associated with exclusion and are undertaking a cycle of research and action to explore them.

[www.add.org.uk](http://www.add.org.uk)

[www.helpage.org](http://www.helpage.org)

[www.sightsavers.org](http://www.sightsavers.org)



# Child-led Research on 'Teenage Pregnancy' in Ghana

## Challenging Heights

COUNTRY GHANA

### Main messages

The child researchers' identification of **teenage pregnancy** as the topic they wanted to research reflects clearly that this is an issue of great impact and importance to the children and youth in their communities. In the research the children identified three main themes:

#### Lack of parental care and advice

The children identified that extreme poverty may cause girls to engage in sex to meet their basic needs. Poverty was also seen as leading to an inability to provide adequate care for some parents. If girls fall pregnant, they become at risk for further neglect and abandonment by their parents and family. A 15-year-old boy said: *'[Girls] engage in sex due to broken homes or lack of parental care and the parents might not give her the things she is supposed to get', and a 13-year-old boy said: '[a teenager might engage in sex] because her mother doesn't have money to care for her so she must do that to get money to take care of herself.'*

#### Lack of education on prevention of pregnancy

Children in the research identified that some girls do not have adequate education on how to avoid having sex or how to prevent pregnancy. The family are often not well equipped with basic knowledge on sex education and the menstrual cycle and so they are not able to share this knowledge with their children. This leads to potentially dangerous perceptions and misconceptions about sexual activity: A 16-year-old girl said: *'[My friends and I] know that condoms are bad because if you use them you will not be pregnant.'* The children saw being part of a school system as an important way of ensuring girls are in a supportive environment, and they are more likely to receive information and education about sexual and reproductive health. A teenage girl said: *'the government has to see to it that all girls are in school so that they will not engage themselves in teenage pregnancy.'*

#### Men must be held to account for underage pregnancies

The children felt strongly across the research that laws should be enforced against older men who are responsible for the pregnancy of underage girls. A 13-year-old boy expressed that *'the father of the baby can be prosecuted by law or he can be ashamed of his habit in the community. The man can be forced to marry the girl at his adult age.'* Many children felt that older men will not take on the responsibility of the child's wellbeing; a 14-year-old girl talked about the repercussions of this situation for the young mothers involved, saying: *'the boy who impregnates her can say that he is not responsible. This makes the girl helpless and sometimes even lose her life.'*



CHALLENGING HEIGHTS 2013

Children researchers in Ghana present their findings on the issue of teenage pregnancy and open up a discussion with their peers.

### Methodological approach

#### Child-led participatory research

This child-led research project has enabled the voices of marginalised children in Ghana to be heard in their communities and at the level of post-2015 policymaking. Through a participatory research process, children were supported by adult facilitators to express their views and knowledge on the issue of teenage pregnancy. The 14 children researchers worked with their peers to identify, explore and analyse this issue; this resulted in further questions that the children wanted to engage with and ideas of proposals on how to change the situation. The children communicated their findings to their peers using creative tools such as filming a 'news broadcast' and used this as a platform to raise awareness of their findings, and the issue more widely in their community.

### Organisation

Challenging Heights' mission is to ensure a secured, protected and dignified future and life for children and youth by promoting their rights, education, and health. They work with children, women, and marginalised communities in the coastal and farming communities of Ghana. CH is a member of the Family for Every Child coalition (FFEC) a global network that works towards a world where every child can grow up in a permanent, safe and caring family or be provided with quality alternative care where needed.

<http://challengingheights.org/>

[www.familyforeverychild.org](http://www.familyforeverychild.org)



# Climate Change By 12 Community Radio Stations in Ghana

## Ghana Community Radio Network

COUNTRY GHANA

### Main messages

#### Climate change has been devastating in rural areas and fishing villages; further pushing into poverty those already poor

Formerly self-sufficient, and in some cases even able to supply nearby markets, most communities find themselves with virtually no livelihoods. In some cases hunger and poverty have emerged, in others they have become entrenched:

*Our forefathers founded Totope ...about twenty years ago, everything was alright with me. I fished any time I wanted and had neighbours who cultivated potatoes. The situation changed. The sea advanced on our community and started destroying our property and now I cannot fish anymore and our farms have all been destroyed ...but where do I go? ...I cannot afford to settle anywhere else. I believe that the cause of our problem is climate change.*

Children are malnourished and prevented from schooling by harsh economic and environmental conditions, finding risky ways to fend for themselves:

*The climate change problem has brought poverty and hunger to the land. I cannot afford three square meals a day; our children's schooling ...we can't afford it. If we did not give our children better education ...They can become criminals in the future. (Bludu, South Tongu)*

Communities fear that they may eventually disappear:

*Very soon, our entire community will be washed away.*

#### Impacts have gone beyond material wellbeing, as social and cultural dynamics have negatively changed

Migration is the viable coping strategy. Men and youth migrate in search of alternative livelihoods, leaving behind women, children and the elderly:

*As a single parent fending for my four children and with the crops failing, life has become difficult for me to cope with. (Gomoa Dunkwa)*

Family dynamics have notably changed:

*If the man can no longer take the responsibilities, not deliberately, of the wife and children, it generates misunderstanding sometimes leading to divorce. (Tainso)*

Poverty and the inability to cope with changes have eroded the self-image at the individual and community level as now they have to fight for scant natural resources:

*The communal spirit in this community is gone. It is a situation of the survival of the fittest... (Tainso)*

*I have no value because I don't have anything to share even with my immediate family members. It makes me*

*feel like I'm neglected, I'm like a dirty rag that no person will ever like to use and clean anything. (Atulibabiisi)*

Furthermore, community rituals, which deepen cultural bonds, are not performed any more due to the lack of basic raw materials:

*As we depend on certain type of fishes and flowering trees in performing certain rituals, the climate change has affected those...*

(Afram Plains)

#### Climate change is perceived as a consequence of the actions and inactions of those in positions of power and not anything people on the ground did:

*The elders are made to understand that it's their action that has brought so much hardship to the community. (Oduntia)*

*The chiefs are selling all farm lands for personal gains. (Tainso)*

*I would want to blame the chiefs of this community. This is because they are the custodians of the land that can enact laws traditionally to protect the land but on the other hand they are a factor to the problem. Some of them have sold the land to timber contractors to log trees on the land... so they log all the big trees that call for rainfall forcing the climate and rainfall pattern to change. (Tainso)*

### Methodological approach

#### Participatory research and dialogue on climate change

This research was conducted across 16 rural communities in eight of the ten administrative regions of Ghana. Each radio station recorded Oral Testimonies (OTs) amongst community members who had been identified as particularly vulnerable. An OT is a personal testimony based on a specific topic where the individual influences the shape and content of the narration. This was followed by focus group discussions and outcomes presented at Community Fora. The station's lead researchers then came together in a three-day workshop to share and analyse their findings; representatives of another ten community radio initiatives then joined to finalise the conclusions of the research.

### Organisation

The Ghana Community Radio Network (GCRN) is an association of community radio stations broadcasting in local languages across rural communities nationally. It innovates through participatory approaches to enable local knowledge combined with the power of radio to build strong and engaged communities.

[www.ghanacommunityradio.org](http://www.ghanacommunityradio.org)



# 'I Want To Be Heard!'

## Experiences of Marginalisation and Poverty from the Perspective of Palestinian Women

### Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy

**COUNTRY** WEST BANK, OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

#### Main messages

In this research, four overarching issues emerged:

##### Forced displacement

Israel employs a number of methods to displace Palestinians. The most prevalent are the use of home demolitions and forced evictions, disrupting lives and entrenching poverty:

*Every time we try to build – a house, an animal shelter – they [the Israeli army] come and demolish it. They give us a paper saying we are forbidden from building, each time with a different reason. This time they said because it was a nature reserve.*

(Nawal, Nabi Samuel)

This situation also increases aid dependency. The severing of urban and metropolitan centres as a result of the Wall's construction only serves to fuel displacement and unequal access to basic services. The revocation of identity cards to enter Israel has also seen a sharp increase, leaving Palestinians statusless, vulnerable to deportation and permanent exile.

##### Segregation

The Palestinian movement in this area is controlled and restricted by a complex system of physical and administrative barriers, including the Wall, checkpoints, roadblocks, and a permit system. The resulting segregation has isolated family members and friends from one another. It has also vastly limited the opportunities of many community members with regard to work, education and health care: 'Even when my aunt passed away, I couldn't say goodbye to her. She was there [in Jerusalem] and I was here, unfortunately'

(Ikram, Al-Jib).

##### Discrimination

The complex restriction system is based on discriminatory procedures aimed at underscoring segregation. This is done by limiting the number of Palestinians with West Bank ID cards from entering Jerusalem or Israel. Faced with high unemployment and an inability to get a permit, many try to enter Israel illegally to work as labourers. They are detained and accused of 'infiltration' – a security offence. Israeli settlers living in close proximity to these communities do not go through the same system and are free to travel between the West Bank and Israel:

*We went to the hearing for my son. They accused him of infiltrating Israel, but he just needed a job. The whole family went. He was sentenced and fined...*

(Resident, Nabi Samuel)

##### Land appropriation

Most of the land has been allocated for the benefit of Israeli settlements, which receive preferential treatment at the expense of Palestinian communities, including with regard to access to land and resources, planning, construction, development of infrastructure, and law enforcement. This has stifled traditional farming practices and contributed to the high rate of unemployment:

*My house is encircled by the Wall. There is a gate in the middle that opens up to the main road to the Israeli settlement. My cousin wanted to use it. Why not? It's our land and that road was our land. The Israeli army caught him, broke his leg and then put him in jail.*

(Sahar, Al-Jib)

#### Methodological approach

##### Participatory video

The research was carried out with two groups of women in two communities, Al-Jib and Nabi Samuel, that are close geographically but distanced by the Wall. The goal was to compare and contrast marginalised women and find common denominators between them.

Both groups were trained in the techniques of Participatory Video, which involves a group shaping and creating their own film in an accessible way to explore issues and voice concerns. PV is empowering, as it enables people to take action to solve their own problems and communicate this to decision-makers and the public. The following steps were taken:

- 1 Introduction to PV
- 2 Thinking about their film
- 3 The Ideas Workshop to discuss issues that would be important to show to the world
- 4 Filming
- 5 Internal feedback and reflections on the film contents which informed key issues of the research process.

##### Organisation

Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy (MEND) works to promote active nonviolence and open media in East Jerusalem and throughout the West Bank. Acutely marginalised women from these contexts have made films that include their own voices, to communicate their experiences on issues that they think are important.

<http://mendonline.org/>



# Becoming Visible: Tackling the Urban Health Divide in Kawempe Slum in Uganda

## Coalition for Health Promotion and Social Development

COUNTRY UGANDA

### Main messages

#### Poverty, poor sanitation, floods and diseases were regarded as the biggest problems

There are a lack of garbage and human waste disposal mechanisms; moreover, the location of this settlement makes it vulnerable to severe flooding. Combined with poverty and scant health services, these factors leave people extremely vulnerable to disease: *'in most cases the poor people are always in dirty environments. That is why they get sick all of the time'*.

Those in extreme poverty cannot afford hygiene and health services: *'it's impossible for someone to buy soap when he has no food. I cannot buy a jerry can of water when I have no food'*, and are hardest to reach:

*Those who are well off are those near the road because for them they (rubbish collectors) ring a bell and that does not sound up to this way; yet Bwaise zone slopes almost up to Kyebando at the Katele zone market and there are no roads.*

#### One-sided solutions to tackle the complex and interconnected causes are not enough

Personal, community-level and structural changes are needed. People noted the importance of awareness-raising and education, as some inhabitants do not know about the relationship between poor sanitation and disease. So, they continue to use 'flying toilets', dump rubbish and drink contaminated water.

However, often people are pushed to continue with this behaviour as waste collection and clean drinking water provision are lacking. Some landlords do not provide houses with toilet facilities and those who do have a hard time finding how and where to dispose waste.

Several areas are very hard to reach so waste collection is non-existent:

*There [are] some tenants who cannot carry sacks (of waste) half a mile up to the road where the vehicle is and even you cannot tell the time the vehicle may come... there are no roads, therefore the landlords can do nothing apart from telling the members and tenants to pour garbage in those sacks.*  
(community dialogue)

#### 'Urban development' has had side-effects and unintended consequences, greatly affecting people

Construction of hostels, badly designed drainage channels, new roads, etc., has had a negative impact in the community. The newly built hostels dump their drainage towards Kawempe (more flooding and disease); whilst the

bad design and slow completion of a major drainage channel exacerbates the situation: *'I think if they finish constructing that large channel, maybe the problem will be solved.'* Finally, due to road construction the only immunisation centre in the slum has closed down, further narrowing people's health care options.

#### Relevance of health workers and volunteers in the community

The digital stories show the contribution that local volunteers and community health workers have in raising awareness about sanitation and disease, strengthening and/or creating local-level initiatives, and supporting those most excluded and marginalised, through the provision of emotional, material and psychological support.

#### Contradiction of the slum as a place for income-generation and looming opportunities, but also of hardship and marginalisation

Despite the hardship faced, people continue to migrate to Kawempe slum as it is located in a central location, near a big university and a high street. Hence, inhabitants can find a variety of livelihoods which is easier than living on the outskirts of town or in their home villages.

### Methodological approach

#### Arts-based and digital participatory action research

The community-based participatory research was carried out by people living in Kawempe slum using innovative participatory approaches such as photo-digital stories, Rivers of Life, and Participatory Theatre performances to try to show those core problems that are affecting their communities. Later on, the issues were presented to diverse audiences in five community dialogues and one key stakeholder meeting where people were able to share their views with local health authorities, health and community workers, and national media.

### Organisation

HEPS-Uganda is an acronym for Coalition for Health Promotion and Social Development. It is a health rights organisation that advocates for increased access to affordable essential medicines for poor and vulnerable people. Also, it focuses on empowering communities and engages in participatory research for advocacy to remove bottlenecks that hinder development to the poor and marginalised citizens in Uganda.

[www.heps.or.ug](http://www.heps.or.ug)



# Voices for Change in India

## Praxis – Institute for Participatory Practices

COUNTRY INDIA

### Report 1 Collective action for safe spaces by sex workers and sexual minorities in India

#### Main messages

##### Sexual minorities and sex workers face discrimination and stigma from the household to the national level

*Larger society makes a statement that these people deserve this treatment as they have deviated from the acceptable moral norms of society. For us (sex workers and sexual minorities), this is stigma.*

Livelihood opportunities are severely restricted for these groups:

*While the constitution guarantees the right to work, to all citizens of the country no matter what their sex, I was denied a job in several offices – I was rejected repeatedly...I am a transgender.*

Stigma is passed onto the next generation, a situation that perpetuates poverty and marginalisation: *'An eight year-old child of a sex worker had to drop out from school because the girl was continuously abused verbally by teachers as 'prostitute'' (Abhishek).*

##### The judicial, legal, educational and health systems do not respond to sexual minorities' and sex workers' demands; frequently violating their most basic rights.



Transgender researchers near Chennai, India share their proposals for change through a participatory video process.

Cases of abuse and violence from police, health workers and teachers were frequently reported. Moreover, transgenders are denied the right to marry and form a family:

*The government should ensure the right to property, to adopt kids, to marry, reservation (affirmative action) job opportunities etc. These rights must be provided for us by the state. Just the way there is reservation for women, there should be reservation for transgenders too.*

##### Collective action and informal peer-support groups are seen as crucial for advancing sex workers' and sexual minorities' rights

This has now become a space for the mutual support and interaction between transgenders from Dalit and dominant caste backgrounds – something that is taboo in the general community. It is today known as a CBO of, for and by the transgender community. Many come to us seeking refuge as families reject effeminate boys. We counsel them and ask if they are willing to make efforts towards being reintegrated with their families.

#### Methodological approach

##### Participatory video and in-depth case stories

The report is based on participatory research done with sexual minorities and sex workers in Tamil Nadu. It started with a compilation of case stories collected in the context of documentation of good practices of community-based organisations of female sex workers, transgender communities and men who have sex with men and their coping mechanisms to deal with crisis, denial of rights and stigma.

The rest of the process followed the same steps as the CityMakers research piece.

**Disclaimer:** the names of all community members quoted in this document have been changed to protect their identity.

#### Organisation

Praxis is a not-for-profit, autonomous, development organisation, committed to the democratisation of development processes. It is devoted to advocating for community-led development initiatives and governance practices that centralise the perspectives of marginalised groups. In order to do this, Praxis endeavours to identify opportunities and forums in which vulnerable and excluded groups are able to voice their concerns and aspirations in a meaningful way.

[www.praxisindia.org](http://www.praxisindia.org)





People living in informal settlements in India are relocated to inappropriate housing far from their communities.

## Report 2 CityMakers in India seeking to reclaim cities they build

### Main messages

**CityMakers in India are denied the right to identity, the right to state systems that protect them and services that truly respond to their needs, and the right to be treated equally.** While they recognised unemployment, addictions (drugs and alcohol), poverty, rising costs, homelessness, and no assets (i.e. savings) as their major concerns, these issues are consequences of major structural challenges linked to CityMakers not being treated as citizens, being discriminated against and stigmatised by society:

*We are denied our Pehchaan (identity)! Only if we have a house can we have an address. When we don't have a house, how can we present proof of residence?*

Despite being poor, CityMakers struggle to get equal access to entitlements and services:

*We even used the number on electricity or telephone posts that are close to where we are to serve as address markers and get the needed government issued identity cards...*  
(Neelawathi)

**CityMakers face stereotyping (i.e. criminalisation) and marginalisation, a situation increasingly resulting in ghettoisation due to 'urban development' initiatives**

*'There is clearly a wall between us and them', says Ram Lal from Delhi. 'People who live in jhuggis are treated as insects (keede makode)... those who live in big buildings are considered human beings. Aren't those who live in slums also human beings?'*  
(Sheela).

Relocation, displacement and eviction have become daily threats as urban development advances:

*Because we are dispensable, we can be evicted. So, slums that come in the way of the metro route can be demolished and the 'evictable' population can be pushed to the outskirts of the city.*

**A post-2015 development agenda must be inclusive and consider marginalised groups, such as CityMakers**

The post-2015 development agenda needs to focus primarily on structural and attitudinal changes. The urban poor in India have been treated as voiceless, 'second class citizens' in the cities that they have built.

Often, the issues of CityMakers are reduced to compartments of health, education, shelter and such other rights. *'We do not want any special provisions... we just want recognition... we want to be treated as citizens... with identity.'* (Mangal)

### Methodological approach

**Participatory video and in-depth case stories**

The voices and case studies collected for this research pertain to CityMakers in Chennai and Delhi.

- Community participants undertook a workshop and received guidance for scripting a participatory video and producing several films
- A process of collecting and collating case stories of CityMakers facing different problems and their views on the issues was undertaken
- Discussions were facilitated with community participants, using participatory research tools
- A draft report was presented to community participants for validation and addition of their concluding remarks.

[www.praxisindia.org](http://www.praxisindia.org)



# Youth Employment in Kamuli and Tororo, Uganda: Report on a Youth-led Assessment

## Restless Development

COUNTRY UGANDA

### Main messages

#### Livelihood activities available to youth are unsustainable

Of those that are earning an income, most are engaged in small-scale activities which provide little income and are largely unsustainable. Young people's efforts to earn a living are influenced by the limited local opportunities, as well as their skills and preference for quick returns to meet basic needs. Youth in rural areas are typically involved in agriculture; youth in semi-urban areas on the border are typically involved in activities such as portering and crossing goods. Most youth juggle multiple ventures. Overall, youth are willing to explore any opportunity. This includes risky activities such as drug-dealing, smuggling and transactional sex.

#### Livelihood options are restricted further for youth with marginalised identities

Women have to negotiate additional obstacles, particularly in relation to land access and ownership. Youth with disabilities face prejudice from prospective employers and those who are living with physical disabilities are restricted to work requiring limited mobility such as selling shoes and brewing local alcohol.

#### Youth have diverse aspirations

Youth are frustrated with their limited employment prospects and feel that their capacities are underutilised. Despite these challenges, many youth are hopeful that their prospects will improve. Youth aspire to white collar jobs or business success and have mixed views about agriculture. For some, agricultural work is hard, tiresome and dirty with small profits; 'a job for getting old and old people'. However, others see opportunities due to the high demand and readily available natural resources.

#### Structures to support youth must be strengthened

Most youth rely on support from family and friends to build a livelihood. This includes access to education and land, as well as general encouragement. Youth recognise the value of family business ventures but are concerned about potential disputes over management of income and outputs. Youth receive significant support from NGOs but follow-up is often lacking. Youth state that government services are generally absent or corrupt. Meanwhile, youth engagement with the private sector is limited. Some access financial support from Savings and Credit Cooperatives. Youth in semi-urban Tororo recognised the role of businesses in job creation although they felt that generally only a few youth were benefiting.

#### Youth participation will make interventions more effective

Youth are eager to participate in projects and programmes aimed at supporting them, not just as beneficiaries but as implementers. This includes being involved in project

design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Youth note that to be fully involved throughout these different stages will require training and ongoing support. They see it as an opportunity to build local support for projects and ensure that activities address young people's real needs and interests.

### Methodological approach

#### Youth-led participatory research

A team of eight young researchers undertook research in eight sub-counties across the two districts and focused on semi-urban and rural areas. The selected sub-counties were: Kitayunjwa and Nabwigulu in rural Kamuli; Kwapa, Mollo, Rubongi and Petta in rural Tororo; and Malaba and Osukuru in semi-urban Tororo.

The research was designed, led and analysed by the youth researchers who investigated issues of importance to their lives through focus group discussions. The research generated knowledge to act upon, and provided valuable insight for programme and policy planning:

*I have learnt that normally young people are excluded from originally being authors or designers of questions and doing the analysis and are often involved [only] in data collection. This process however gives me an opportunity to design the tools, implement or reach out and also analyse...this has been a rare opportunity where young people have been trusted, empowered to take responsibilities which are often left to experts...*  
(Research team member)

### Organisation

Restless Development is the global banner carrier for youth-led development and has supported youth-led programming in Uganda for over 15 years. They believe that young people can and must lead development. They work with young people to develop and pilot innovative, youth-led approaches to addressing the critical development challenges facing their communities and countries. They focus on three key areas: youth employment; youth civic participation; and youth sexual and reproductive health. All the work is designed and led by young people and in collaboration with the wider community, government, development partners and the private sector.

[www.restlessdevelopment.org](http://www.restlessdevelopment.org)





# Understanding, Sharing and Linking Visions, Dreams, Resources and Needs in an Informal Settlement in Mathare Valley, Kenya

## Spatial Collective

COUNTRY KENYA

### Main messages

#### Critical issue: violence and insecurity

The issue of insecurity in Mathare is characterised by political violence, clashes between ethnic groups, mugging, gender-based violence and fire risks. Poor urban planning and a lack of security lighting can lead to geographical hot spots where crime is persistent. For youth crime is one of the few livelihood opportunities: *'If you come along with lights, they will spoil it [the lights] because you are spoiling their meal, their livelihoods'*. Insecurity impacts all members of the community: *'everyone is a victim'*.

#### Critical issue: sanitation and a healthy environment

Sanitation in Mathare stems from poor drainage systems, open sewers and water shortages impacting the health and livelihoods of community members:

*We live in the middle of raw sewer and open drainage... it is very difficult when a customer comes, you feel like taking away the stock back into the house...when you have a sick person we have bad smell and flies all over the house. There is no happiness in living this kind of house.*

The researchers see environmental problems as being made worse by people who do not recognise their collective responsibility for maintaining a clean environment.

#### Issues are interconnected and so are solutions

Many of the issues that people face in Mathare are interconnected; the threat of rape and crime restricts people's access to toilet facilities at night so people will use *'flying toilets'* to dispose of their waste which impacts on sanitation issues. The high level of unemployment is linked to high levels of theft which is a livelihood strategy; furthermore, insecurity limits business trading after dark as security lighting is destroyed to enable further crime. As such, interventions must tackle both the immediate challenges that people face and wider underlying issues. Solutions must work at multiple levels in the community, for example to create employment and build community ownership over the solutions.

#### Communities can make change happen

The voice of the vulnerable must count for development to take place. Participants in a community forum assert that: *'community members living here must first come together and work together to live in a cleaner environment'*; another explained that unity is a tool to achieve better services: *'people living near open sewers need to unite. If 100 or 200 people unite with common aim of improving their community then they will achieve their objectives.'*

#### Policymakers must invest in relationships with communities

There is little effort to understand community experiences: *'officials rarely visit our community to see how we live. They don't understand us'*. The youth researchers feel that community films are a powerful tool for building understanding:

*We can show it to the relevant authorities. It can be good for them so they can take action. Most of them, they don't know how Mathare looks like. They have only heard about it.*

### Methodological approach

#### Youth-led participatory video

This research is grounded in the principle that communities possess the knowledge, resources and desire they need to address their most pressing needs (Oasis Game Methodology, Elos Institute, Brazil). The approach in this work has been to integrate the use of new technology with the principles of collaboration and experiential learning to achieve change in people's lives.

A group of eight young people from Mathare in their role as community researchers, used Participatory Video to enable themselves and the members of their community to raise their voices by creating their own films. The youth researchers moved through phases of reflection and action, both internally within their own group and externally with the community to explore the issues affecting people more widely, and potential ways to address them. The youth researchers took forward dialogue opportunities to influence decision-making and to further understand accountability and responsibility in relation to the issues and challenges that surfaced.

### Organisation

Spatial Collective is a social enterprise that uses Geographic Information Systems for community development. As part of Spatial Collective's research youth mobilisers in the Mathare slum, Nairobi are using participatory mapping and community visioning methods to understand how local residents see change happening.

[www.spatialcollective.com](http://www.spatialcollective.com)



# The World I Do Not Want

## The Seed Institute

COUNTRY KENYA

### Main messages

#### Existing special public and private education institutions are very few and very expensive

Participants felt that they did not benefit from the public common goods provided freely by the state. When plans were laid down for the provision of education and health care the needs of the population with disabilities are not taken into account. People are living far from health centres; the costs of travelling to facilities are high which is a major barrier to access. Even when people are able to access health centres, medicines are under-stocked and very expensive. Inclusive education structures are often not a reality in the lives of children with disabilities and even when they are able to attend school they face different forms of discrimination that limit their full participation; these include physical and social barriers.

#### Corruption as a driver of poverty

Children in the research stated that if a corrupt leader is elected then:

*They take our money and this brings more poverty in our community, because that money we were supposed to have to use in the construction of houses, they use it to sustain their stomachs so many people suffer as that corrupt leader benefits himself.*

#### Violence and especially domestic violence has culminated in dysfunctional families and those most affected are mothers and children

Violence in its different forms is an important issue that cuts across the lives of people living in poverty and marginalisation. This includes violence that affects community-level safety and security including violence connected to election periods. Violence against women was an important issue, with references made to physical and psychological violence including abuse driven by alcoholism. The research shows how poverty traps young women and girls in cycles of abuse and violence; where young women seek partners to support their income security, and their partners reject or exploit them if they fall pregnant.

#### Deforestation has led to inadequacy of clean drinking water; coupled with a lack of reforestation programmes, this has resulted in scarce water and food resources

Children are concerned about the way that they see people release waste carelessly into the drainage systems, and how they throw faeces outside of their houses. People are seen as having a responsibility in ensuring a clean and healthy environment. Children talk about the integral nature of the environment for people's lives and their wellbeing, and consequently that it should be protected.

#### Importance of informal support networks for raising awareness, sharing information, and working together to plan for action

The formation of a network for parents of children with disabilities provides solidarity for people both in terms of



THE SEED INSTITUTE 2013

Using creative tools such as video-making and drawing children in Nairobi share how they feel about the issues in their community.

financial support, and also social support for those that otherwise feel marginalised by society. Here, the parents and their children are creating a major shift in the way disability issues are understood and acknowledged in the community and local institutions. This is also emphasised in the story of Teressia (Story 7, p30) where she builds a community support network for those like her husband suffering from alcoholism. These examples also show the importance of strengthening people's individual agency in how they affect change in their lives.

### Methodological approach

#### Participatory research through creative methods and video

This research aimed to provide a platform for children and women across Nairobi's poorest communities to express their aspirations without fear using drawings, essay writing and film production.

Participatory Video (PV) was used: a set of techniques whereby a group shapes and creates their own film in an accessible way for exploring shared issues and voicing concerns. It can also help establish collaborative relationships within a group towards shared purpose as well as providing a way to communicate issues to an external audience.

One PV training was conducted with six vulnerable children from the Mwiki community; over three months, they became peer researchers to explore the difficulties faced by children with disabilities. Women living with alcoholics and underage mothers also used PV.

### Organisation

The Seed Institute works to inform, inspire, and mobilise community members to take action against poverty and inequality in slums and rural communities. The Seed Institute provides a platform for children across Nairobi's poorest communities to express their aspirations, without fear, using film and drawing.

[www.seedinstitute.com](http://www.seedinstitute.com)



# A Message to Democracy – Our Dreams

## The Theatre for Development Centre

COUNTRY NIGERIA

### Main messages

After twelve years of democratic rule in Nigeria, many Nigerians in both rural and urban centres have aspirations for good governance. For all the communities where the project took place, the main concern was not democracy in itself but how it has been practised in the country to advance the wellbeing of the people.

**Peace, security and stability were priority issues in the Northern States of Kaduna and Kano** where [militant Islamist group] Boko Haram attacks are prevalent. Violent conflict has meant suspicion and mistrust of neighbours and persons of different ethnic backgrounds. This has diminished cooperation and common action to improve the lives of ordinary citizens. Where communities are fractured corruption and impunity thrive. Impunity is a prevalent right from the electoral period, when opponents are intimidated and abused. The victims hardly have any fair hearing and those promoting the violence escape justice. People must have the means to hold their elected officials to account. Corruption and the embezzling of funds deplete investment in social infrastructures for the general public. In Kano, Kaduna and Katsina States, the complaints ranged from non-functioning primary schools and health facilities, to bad roads and youth unemployment.

**The marginalisation of women in the political sphere was also highlighted as a major barrier to effective governance in Kagoro and Zangon-Kataf (Kaduna State).** Men do not usually respect women in this sphere: they are mistreated and those women who follow their aspirations to contest political positions are bullied, harassed and excluded.

**In the rural and peri-urban settings of Benue State and Kogi State livelihood issues were of major concern.** People living in poverty face multiple barriers to building a secure livelihood. Road infrastructure is poor, meaning that it is difficult to access markets from the villages. As a result, middlemen exploit people who are isolated, reducing the income from their farm produce. Furthermore, water is a crisis because it is subject to seasonal weather conditions and the solution is deep water boreholes, which government has not provided.

### Methodological approach

#### Theatre for Development

The overall goal of the project is to increase transparency and accountability in governance in Nigeria. Community members, community-based organisations, women's associations, and officials of Local Government Areas in Benue, Kaduna, Katsina, Kano and Kogi States received training in Participatory Governance (PG) aimed at building their capacity to promote and explore the issue of transparent governance in their communities and states.

The research study within this *Participate* synthesis shares the findings from where PG trainees used Theatre for Development (TFD) as a participatory tool for engaging community members to have a dialogue on civic participation and responsibilities, identifying and analysing community needs, and planning collective actions.

TFD is a participatory theatre practice which allows communities to write their own stories and perform in a drama based on the messages that emerge from the storytelling process. It is a practice which operates from their perspectives, using their own language and idioms of expressions. In this way theatre is domesticated to specific needs, taken over and shaped by community people. What they seek to demystify is the expert syndrome which takes away agency from those at ground level that the programmes and projects are intended for.

### Organisation

The Theatre for Development Centre (TFDC) promotes social development by sharing the power of participatory development strategies with policy makers, civil society and researchers. Using public drama, stories and film, TFDC is working with 20 communities across Nigeria to increase transparency and accountability in governance.

[www.tfdc-ng.org](http://www.tfdc-ng.org)

TFDC 2013



Research in Nigeria is working across communities, civil society and local governments to understand good governance.



# Indigenous People's Experiences, Feelings, Anger and Hope: Reflections from México

**Cortez-Ruiz, C. – Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Xochimilco**

COUNTRY MEXICO

## Main messages

### Poverty is related to inequalities and expressed through institutional and infrastructure inefficiencies

Institutions and policies for poverty reduction, health and education systems, and legal frameworks are in place. However, none of them are able to respond to the poorest people:

*We live in an area where we are marginalised, ... in the hospitals ... there is no medicine, there is nothing, ... the roads, if I invite you ... to know my ejido [community], you need to go by horse... we are abandoned ... it is the same with housing, drainage, health ... as peasants we have rights, but we do not get them ...*

(San Luis Potosí)

### Gender continues to be an axis of discrimination, exploitation and abuse; limiting women's capacities to determine their own and their communities' development

Key issues for women living in poverty are chronic violence, inefficient social protection programmes, maternal mortality, and limited access to credit.

*When I was young my desire was to study, but my dad never let me go to school. He told me that as a woman I was not entitled to study as I had to be doing the work at home and what I needed was to get married. At 15, he forced me to marry with someone that I did not know even, and I did not agree. I suffered a lot with my husband, he beat me a lot, was very aggressive with me...*

(Indigenous woman, Guerrero, Mexico)

In isolated areas, the conditionality of the cash transfer programme Oportunidades has created travel burdens and abuses against women:

*Such violence is because we are indigenous, [because] we cannot speak Spanish, because we do not dress 'correctly'. We feel discriminated as they insult us every time we go to for a revision... When a woman becomes ill, she is not attended, she suffers discrimination. Women are forced to do the smear test, if they do not make it the doctor does not sign the license or recognise them in the Oportunidades programme, and their children will lose the scholarship...*

Women demand increasing their decision-making power within their families and towards positive change in their communities: *'...we know how to organise to improve things, and the authorities should listen to us about support to be given to the communities. We know we have those capabilities.'* (Indigenous community health worker, Palenque, Chiapas, interview)

### Discrimination and institutional violence towards the poorest and most marginalised continues to permeate the social and political system

People are discriminated against by decision-makers; their culture and traditions are perceived as obstacles for development. Exclusion increases their vulnerability and powerlessness. Meaningful inclusion in decision-making processes becomes essential for sustainable, effective development. Indigenous people call for a shift in power structures, and for their knowledge to be valued and taken into account. The government-initiated Regional Indigenous Fund (RIF) in Mexico is valued because it has become: *'[a] place where we can discuss about our rights, our identity, our world, of how we want our organisation ... we could add to the RIF's objectives "to promote respect and the rights of indigenous peoples"'* (Indigenous Nahuatl board member, RIF).

However, the new administration has decided to suspend the programme for certain funds, without taking into account their achievements and positive impacts.

## Methodological approach

### Participatory action research led by indigenous people

This research work was undertaken in regions largely inhabited by the indigenous population, which have the lowest levels of human development in Mexico. Three action research processes were used:

- 1 Undertaken with 30 Regional Indigenous Funds with the aim to gather participants' perspectives, their analysis and proposals around the funds, and to detect successful experiences (2011–12)
- 2 Issues around violence were explored in different states of Southern Mexico in collaboration with indigenous people (2010–12)
- 3 Exploring the Millennium Development Goals' framework impacts in different municipalities in the state of Chiapas (2013)

Some tools such as participatory drama and video were used to facilitate the collective reflection, learning and action process.

## Organisation

The Development Research Interdisciplinary Programme on Human Development at UAM focuses on the construction of social strategies for change. The programme works with community-based organisations and NGOs across the poorest regions of Mexico to collaborate with indigenous people to plan for alternatives for their own development.

[www.xoc.uam.mx/investigacion/piidhc](http://www.xoc.uam.mx/investigacion/piidhc)



# LGBTIQA Activism in the Western Balkans

## Oneworld – Platform for South East Europe Foundation

**COUNTRIES** ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, CROATIA, KOSOVO, MACEDONIA, MONTENEGRO, SERBIA

### Main messages

People expressed their personal and collective stories of being LGBTIQA activists in the Western Balkans: how do these communities perceive their fight and the sources of their hardship?

### **Discrimination, rejection, exclusion, isolation, lack of solidarity, trauma, violence, and alienation from families are recurrent topics across the research**

The nuclear family becomes the main source of oppression when parents ignore, judge, or are violent towards their children because of their sexual identity. People regard family acceptance and parental love as fundamental for their wellbeing: *'understanding, acceptance, and solidarity in family are very, very important.'* *'Love your child; love your child no matter what they are!'* There is a call for ending the traditional patriarchal family model and the embracement of new forms of families based on equality, love and solidarity: *'Solidarity turns totally invisible in patriarchal relations since it means destruction of all levels of patriarchy.'*

### **The personal is political: 'coming out' becomes an act of informal activism**

Hardship is experienced strongly at the personal level. The stories portray issues of lying about yourself, hiding away, fear, internal anxiety, pessimism and insecurity: *'I believe that one of the biggest problems is the "auto-homophobia".'* Activists perceive personal and community empowerment as fundamental for achieving change. They are aware that every 'coming out' is a political action; an act of informal activism: *'I think about my own authentic need to influence social processes.'*

### **Demands for creation of inclusive legal frameworks and achievement of rights**

The stories narrate the myriad of difficulties LGBTIQA people face in entering the legal system; a system that does not work in favour of excluded groups. Working on personal and community empowerment needs to happen alongside advocacy efforts towards the state: laws on discrimination, family composition, adoption, etc.

### **Changing social norms and gaining recognition through collective action**

Change is perceived as an evolving process; for it to be sustainable, creating, strengthening and expanding collectives is fundamental. LGBTIQA activists see their groups as families; that is spaces of solidarity, where courage and resilience is built: *'Through the shared roots of a problem we can ultimately achieve solidarity.'* Solidarity *'to find a solution side by side'*. Through activism, these groups have claimed the public space in order to challenge and confront social norms; always keeping in mind that the process starts from the personal.

### Methodological approach

The research was conducted through participatory audiovisual methods.

### Digital Storytelling (DST)

Digital storytelling for transformation is a learning, creating and sharing experience supported by technology, allowing participants to create their own short film containing voice, imagery, and music:

*working with nine amazing LGBTQA activists across the Balkans has inspired and connected us ... each digital story was a journey of learning about the needs, issues and challenges of each participant which created a space for visibility, impact and respect of each struggle depicted.*

Nine stories were created in two trainings, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### Participatory Video (PV)

PV is a set of techniques to involve a group in shaping and creating their own film in an accessible way for exploring shared issues and voice concerns. When working with marginalised groups it can be empowering, as PV enables people to take action to solve their own problems and communicate this to decision-makers and the public. DST trainings were followed by a PV training to build from individual stories to a collective experience: *'it has enabled us ... to portray and share the authentic everyday personal/political struggles of our LGBTIQA community through a powerful, innovative and creative process'*. Two films were produced.

### Organisation

Oneworld – Platform for South East Europe Foundation (OWPSEE) is a civil society organisation connecting communities from the Western Balkans for enabling their interaction on issues for positive social change, and working through visual methods to expose issues and build opportunities for action with extremely marginalised groups in the Western Balkans. OWPSEE shares values of diversity, critical vision, and the power of ICTs for creating open, affordable and civic platforms to connect regional, national and local audiences.

Okvir was a partner organisation in this research process; it advocates for promotion and protection of culture, identity and human rights of LGBTIQA people.

[www.oneworldsee.org](http://www.oneworldsee.org)



# Photovoice: Street Life in Ivory Park

## Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation

COUNTRY SOUTH AFRICA

### Main messages

Ivory Park is a large township in the City of Johannesburg. The landscape is densely settled, and the street is central to people's lives, providing space for business, social interaction and connecting the community to itself and the wider city.

**Survival in Ivory Park means finding creative forms of self-employment whilst simultaneously maintaining social responsibilities (including care for families). There are few formal jobs.** These daily negotiations of survival show how people are using their creativity, capacity and determination to build resilience in the pursuit of business under difficult conditions as shown in a photograph where an elderly 'woman is pushing a wheelbarrow in the morning, collecting bottles to survive' (Patrick Manhica, community researcher). The idea of resilience is deepened where people's life-sustaining strategies have been criminalised, adding the reality and risk of further shocks to their efforts to survive.

**Marginalised people, even the very poorest, aspire to a better life, one which is within the broader social and cultural context in which they live**

Material aspirations of wellbeing are often kept in check by the limitations of opportunities (lack of jobs, business opportunities), social capital constraints (deficiencies in skills or networks) and structural constraints, including in the case of Ivory Park the shortcoming of the state in providing services such as roads, water, sewerage.

**Entrepreneurship in the community is seen to have wider benefits**

*The guy in the back of the car is purchasing scrap and helping to clean up. There is no space in the car, so he stands in the back. This business helps to solve the rat problem.*

(Patrick Manhica, community researcher)

Local businesses are seen to make a difference in terms of investing in the future economy and infrastructure of the community, including employment opportunities. The research also explores the benefits that street trade brings to communities. The mobility of street businesses means people are close to goods and services, and local knowledge means that they are relevant and accessible to the needs of the wider community.

**There is a need to recognise the ambiguities of the street economy and how this influences individual and collective decision-making for people in Ivory Park.** The opportunities of the street market to grow business versus an inappropriate policy and legal environment which does not grant rights to these businesses pushes people into insecure territory for ensuring a livelihood. The rejection of municipal regulations that prohibit dumping versus the popular demand for municipal responsiveness to repair the sewerage system



DEVELD MONYAL SLF 2013A

A community photographer in Johannesburg shows the success of community entrepreneurship through this successful community kiosk.

reflects this ambiguity in terms of the community's response to inadequate service provision.

### Methodological approach

#### Photovoice

The project was done in collaboration with eight street photographers. Adapting a Photovoice approach, the project sought to record – through photographs – the social and economic dynamics of street life in Ivory Park and simultaneously empower the street photographers to raise awareness about the situation of the informal economy in a South African township context. During the month of April 2013, the photographers used their lens to capture photographs of everyday life on the streets of the township.

Each week the participants posted a selection of their photographs on a dedicated Facebook page; which provided a forum for commentary in response to particular photographs, debates, and reflection. At the end of this process, the project team re-engaged with the photographers in a further action learning process to comprehend meaning from their experience and photographs.

### Organisation

The Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation strengthens livelihoods and resilience among marginalised communities through conducting cutting edge research, participatory engagement and fostering innovative development. Creating partnerships with communities to build capacity in visual participatory processes that promote dialogue and engagement on invisible issues.

<http://livelihoods.org.za/>



# Engaging South African Youth and Women on the Theme of Tuberculosis and HIV using a Digital Storytelling Approach

## Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation

COUNTRY SOUTH AFRICA

### Main messages

The project has enabled people in South Africa to express their perspectives of living in a vulnerable township where poverty is multidimensional. They express how their situation is exacerbated by the ongoing transmission of infectious diseases that marginalise people from society.

**The multiple consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic continue to place a heavy burden on the poorest South African communities.** This is despite a diverse, nation-wide, HIV/AIDS awareness drive ongoing in South Africa for over ten years – including the popular Love Life campaign, an increase in the availability of counselling and testing services and the roll-out of free ARV therapy, especially through the non-governmental sector.

**HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB) have had a damaging impact on the support structures within the family and community that protect and enable people to live happy and healthy lives.** HIV/AIDS related stigma ruptures social and community cohesion, isolating people and breaking down the informal support structures that ensure safety and security in people's lives. Stigma also prevents people from accessing treatment, clinics and the support of community health workers because of the visibility that seeking these services implies. Stigma can also generate feelings of self-blame which can have long-term negative emotional, psychological and physical impacts on those living with TB and HIV, and their families. These psychological impacts are mirrored in orphaned children who are trying to reconcile the trauma of losing a parent, and rejection from the community as a result of this status.

**There is still inadequate support for people affected by or living with HIV/AIDS.** HIV relevant health service policies are not designed to address the complex needs of children, and service providers lack the relevant training and resources to support them and ensure their wellbeing. It is also apparent that grant-based social protection mechanisms are creating dependencies in communities, as policies and programmes are not taking into account the wider social and economic context in which people live.

**Knowledge, both formal and informal, is seen as important.** Education is helping people to access and share basic knowledge; however, closer assistance from care workers is also essential for providing one-on-one guidance and context-specific support. The increasing prevalence of drug-resistant TB in South Africa heightens the urgency to improve health services. The sharing of experiences of living

with infectious diseases can also support people to find answers to the challenges that they face by learning from others – positive examples where TB has been cured act as a source of encouragement.

### Methodological approach

#### Digital storytelling

The research was undertaken with seven participants from two townships in Cape Town that have high rates of TB, HIV and TB/HIV co-infection. Six out of the seven research participants were identified through a TB and HIV/AIDS prevention focus group (The Delft Community Help Campaign), comprising 20 members, that has been established through SLF as part of an ongoing community engagement initiative in the township of Delft supported by the USAID Tuberculosis Program South Africa.

The objective of the research was to better understand the direct personal impact that TB and/or HIV have on the lives of people living in poverty in South Africa, using the participatory methodology of digital storytelling. Digital storytelling is a learning, creating and sharing experience supported by technology, allowing participants to produce their own short film containing voice, imagery and music. Community members have created a series of digital stories, vividly depicting how TB and HIV have deeply affected their lives.

### Organisation

The Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation (SLF) strengthens livelihoods and resilience among marginalised communities through conducting cutting edge research, participatory engagement and fostering innovative development. Creating partnerships with communities to build capacity in visual participatory processes that promote dialogue and engagement on invisible issues enables SLF to empower communities as well as individuals with knowledge and understanding, practical ideas and self-belief for their social protection and advancement.

<http://livelihoods.org.za/>



# Ghana Reality Check Approach

## The Reality Check Approach

COUNTRY GHANA

### Main messages

#### People call for participation in decision-making and demand rights to information, accountability and service provider transparency

A man referring to agricultural subsidies said: *'We poor never get'*; whilst a woman described patronage: *'If you are not related to a politician then you do not get'*. People shared their frustrations with local government representatives *'...we voted for them but do not know what they are doing'* and others said *'they never give us feedback'*. People feel they have no influence on local decisions and distrust *'deals made between our chiefs and outsiders'*.

#### Decent employment or self-employment minimises the stress associated with the increasing instability of subsistence farming

Families are increasingly 'fed up with farming' and expressing it is an impossible choice:

*You are born into it. Without education you cannot do anything else but farming.*

*Farming is our only means for survival.... But we would rather have paid jobs.*

Farming is becoming too costly: *'You can lose your investment too easily'; 'only those farming on a large scale make a profit these days' due to the costs; 'only the rich can continue farming because they can afford the fertiliser'*, and the effects of climate change: *'rains do not come when they are supposed to...'*.

#### Access to nothing is no access. Local innovation is needed for access to education and health services

*What's the point of going to government facilities when they don't have nurses, teachers, medicines, books?*

Those few who had experienced government health facilities highlighted lack of resources:

*How can we be expected to travel on bad roads to the health centre when in labour? Then when we get there is nobody to look after us and no medicines?*

The strong motivation to go to school is frustrated by the lack of teachers and teacher absenteeism; a six year-old girl said: *'We go to school but only play as the teachers are not there'*. School feeding programmes were criticised: *'Why provide food if there are no teachers? ...children sit in the heat waiting for food, what is the point?'*

#### People call for meaningful context-specific education

Families are not seeing the benefits of educating their children: *'they leave home and get good jobs... but then...*

*forget us'* (old man). People say education needs to be pitched for different levels and abilities; also, it should be skills and vocation-oriented: *'What's the use of learning poetry for a farmer?'* (father).

Boys are less attracted to school than girls, they leave knowing that they can pick up work without an education: *'The teachers always say it's the boys who make trouble... I got beaten so much I don't go any more'* (boy 14).

#### Most people<sup>1</sup> do not see the value of family planning

*We do not listen to what the health workers are saying (about family planning) as we are not interested in hearing.*

*I enjoy giving birth.*  
(mother of 5)

A 20 year-old woman with three children said:

*My brother has six sets of twins and two others. That is fourteen. I want to be like him.*

### Methodological approach

#### Immersion through the Reality Check Approach

Immersion, living with households and joining in their lives, is at the core of this approach. This diminishes the distance between the researcher and the family; changing the power dynamics. It creates opportunities to experience firsthand people's difficulties and also provides the opportunity for detailed observation. It enables families to talk about their aspirations and frustrations openly.

This research was conducted with twenty families in six villages; all poorer households. Researchers stayed with each family for a minimum of four nights and engaged directly in household and farming activities. This was the first phase of at least three more interactions.

### Organisation

The Reality Check Approach (RCA) is a qualitative approach to feedback and evaluation which involves outsiders living with the most disadvantaged as groups often 'unheard' in conventional evaluations are privileged. Researchers listen to, observe and try to understand householders' perspectives and experiences. This is reported to policymakers in an effort to make policies responsive to the needs of the most poor.

<http://reality-check-approach.com/>



<sup>1</sup> This is the first time in all the RCAs conducted to date in Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia and Mozambique that young families did not say they wanted smaller families than their parents.



# Annex 1 Overview of methodological approach

**This section provides a general overview of the methodological approach taken to conduct the synthesis. A full research methodology document of the whole Participate research process will be published in due course.**

## Selection of the research

The research studies included in this synthesis were the result of a global call made in September 2012. We were very rigorous about which studies could be included. The criteria for selection were:

The research is not a one off. It is embedded in a longer term relationship, or it will be the foundation for a longer term relationship.

Participants will be centrally involved in identifying the key questions, and in making sense of the 'data', they won't only be participating in data collection.

Researchers will support participants to help ensure this involvement is meaningful, not tokenistic.

Participants will be invited to validate any findings, and have the ability to withdraw any of their contributions from the research.

Participants will be given feedback about what happens to their contributions and where possible what outcomes have emerged from the process.

Researchers will have an interest in critical reflection, documenting and sharing methodologies.

As well as meeting these criteria, we also tried to ensure that there was a mix of: geographical representation, including urban and rural areas; population groups, including children, older people, disabled people, sexual minorities, slum dwellers, rural farmers etc; and major emerging issues, for example climate change and conflict. While we achieved reasonable coverage, there were some significant omissions. There are a few important parts of the world that are not represented; notably China, Western Europe and North America. Also significant is the fact that, while some of the research addresses internal conflicts and revolts, none of the studies were carried out in a setting of large-scale violent conflict.

There were 18 projects selected for membership of the Participatory Research Group (PRG), altogether carrying out participatory research projects in 29 countries. Of the 18 projects, some are multi-country studies that look generically at extreme poverty and involve thousands of participants – these include the ATD Fourth World research and the CAFOD COMPASS 2015 project. Others are whole country studies focused on key issues or populations – such as the GCRN climate change research, the Nigeria governance research, and the Bangladesh disability and older people's research. Some are focused on gaining an in-depth understanding of a particular inner city slum such as the HEPS research in Uganda, the Spatial Collective research in Kenya, and the Praxis research in

India; or of local rural communities, eg. the Ghana Reality Check Approach research. Others are focused studies on life for specific groups: indigenous people (UAM-X), sexual minorities (Praxis, OWPSEE), and children and youth (The Seed Institute and Restless Development-Uganda). Each of these research projects speaks for itself. They have generated many general messages (which form the basis for this report), as well as important messages that are specific to the country and context.

## The steps of the research process

In the following ways, we took steps to minimise the risk of misinterpreting and/or using the research in a tokenistic manner, and to make sure the synthesis process was as participatory as possible, and collectively owned by the whole of the PRG.

- **Inception workshop (October 2012):** This workshop brought together all the PRG members to build the principles, aims and overarching re-search framings that would guide the work of the network across the following months.
- **Analytical framework development (January 2013):** An initial framework was developed for the elaboration of Participate's first synthesis report, *What Matters Most*, to distil messages from 84 participatory research studies published in the last seven years. This was shared with the PRG

in order to help structure their research findings prior to the Global Synthesis Workshop, and served as a starting point for the analysis.

- **GlobalSynthesis Workshop (May 2013):** The PRG network members came together to discuss, analyse and construct together a particular analytical framing to be used for this Global Synthesis Report.
- **Validation (July – September 2013):** Throughout the writing process, constant engagement was promoted with the PRG members. They were involved in giving feedback and comments to the way the report was being shaped. At this stage, we want to encourage the PRG members to share with the research participants this report, wherever this is possible. It is relevant for them to see one of the outcomes of their engagement with the participatory research processes.

## The framing of the research and the analytical lenses

The research was explicitly set up as an analysis of change. We wanted to know what changes people had experienced, and how those changes impacted on their lives. We felt that it was important to understand what triggered spirals of decline, and what enabled people to use their agency to survive, find resilience, and for some to find ways out of poverty and marginalisation. Rather than simply uncover more stories of poverty, what was critical was that we understood how change happened in people's lives, and through that, understand what sorts of interventions and activities actually seem to improve people's lives.

What was clear from the synthesis of previous studies (in the *What Matters Most* report) was that people living in poverty experience high levels of complexity, and that simple solutions do not create the changes that are necessary to unblock the steady narrowing of agency that characterises the life trajectories of the poorest and most marginalised. It was clear that we needed to understand the complex 'system dynamics' that people get drawn into. For example, we saw patterns in which economic crisis triggers poverty and drives people into risky work, which makes them more vulnerable to exploitation, accidents, health issues and so on, and leads them to

make even harsher decisions – further and further narrowing their choices. The underlying question for this research is: what do these negative dynamics look like, and what are the factors that break them, allowing new positive dynamics to be established? This has involved understanding the nature of change; the inequalities that people face; and the power and agency that people and institutions have to break spirals of decline.

## Participatory research

Participatory research comprises a range of methodological approaches and techniques, all of which have the objective of handing power from the researcher to research participants, who are often community members or community-based organisations. In participatory research, participants have control over the research agenda, the process and actions. Most importantly, people themselves are the ones who analyse and reflect on the information generated, in order to obtain the findings and conclusions of the research process.

Participatory research involves inquiry, but also action. People not only discuss their problems, they also think about possible solutions to them and actions which need to be taken. The organisations that are part of the PRG are also interested in influencing decision-making. The research they are conducting is aimed as much at impacting on local and national people's realities as well as the policy making process.

The research studies used a range of techniques. These included focus groups and multi stakeholder meetings, participatory inquiry, action research, oral testimonies and story collection as a foundation for collective analysis, photo-digital stories, photovoice, drawing and essay writing competitions, participatory video, and immersions (living with households and joining in their lives). In some of the projects people living in poverty were trained to be researchers themselves, using these participatory methods. Thus, some projects chose to promote child-led research supported by adult facilitators, or engaged community and NGO peer researchers.

(For more detail on the methodologies, see the Summaries of the 18 *Participate* PRG studies, which include a description of the methodology used. The full *Participate* methodology paper is forthcoming.)

## The validity of the research

As we have articulated above, the aim of this research has been to gain an in-depth understanding of how people living in extreme poverty and marginalisation see positive change happening in their lives;

what prevents it and what enables it. Most of all, this research calls us to bear witness to the depth of insight and intelligence of people who face extremely difficult circumstances, and to pay attention to what this can offer those who seek to promote development.

There are a number of features of this research that make it particularly appropriate for this task, in particular: open ended questions and stories; reach and depth of insight, and triangulation of findings.

### Open ended questions and stories

When researchers talked to individuals they asked them very open questions about their experiences or encouraged them to tell their stories. When group dialogues were facilitated they were focused on issues that people felt were important, not what organisations felt were important. This sort of inquiry brings a much greater depth of understanding about what actually matters most to people.

Understanding issues is not an entirely cognitive process. It involves the ability to see patterns amid complexity, the ability to see things holistically, and the ability to understand what is going on through the emotional connection made to the material. When a question is asked like 'what are the things that would improve your life' or 'what do you think the priorities for development are', the answers that come back are disconnected from life. When people tell their story, they tell you what is important.

We have found that the use of stories has other great benefits. People understand and recognise them, so untrained researchers are not afraid to analyse them, and stories can be told and remembered which allows blind researchers to engage with them effectively. Stories provide the basis for 'resonance testing'. Where someone tells a story and the energy level in a room rises as people tell other stories which resonate with that story then it quickly becomes apparent what is important to people, and where the patterns lie. Stories also represent a resource of 'real lives' against which policies and practices can be tested (for example, to test– 'if we did this then would it really benefit this woman?').

### Reach and depth of insight

People are often more likely to be open when it is 'people like them' (not professional researchers) who they are talking to. Peer research generates a higher level of trust and as a result a greater depth of insight is reached. Similarly, people are more likely to engage in research that generates action, either from themselves or others. Participatory techniques are interesting and colourful; they are much more likely to engage people.

The range of methods used by the PRG members allows for working with people who tend to be overlooked by other research methods as they sometimes don't figure in official statistics (such as transgender people and people living in the streets in India, or disabled people with no identity documents in Bangladesh). They may not have literacy skills, speak minority languages (indigenous groups), or live in areas that are hard to access through other research methods (such as Occupied Palestinian territories).

Both the 'reach' and the 'quality' of dialogue and insight from participatory processes is therefore typically much higher than that generated even by traditional qualitative work, and this helps to gain an in-depth understanding of the real social dynamics and complexities that the poorest and most marginalised people have to navigate.

### Triangulation of findings

Using multiple methods and engaging multiple communities offers a powerful way of triangulating. Where patterns can be identified across quite different studies they are likely to be more robust than where they have been generated through a single methodology. In the PRG research, for example, only one of the studies was focused on disability, but disability features significantly in more than eight of the studies, highlighting its significance. Similarly, the fact that persistent gender inequality appears across all of the studies, alerts us to the importance of the issue. However, if there had been a standard gender question across all of the studies there would be a real danger of the research framing itself biasing the answers.

Ultimately these methodologies are important because they put the power to analyse poverty and marginality into the hands of those who live in poverty and marginalisation. Their messages are not mediated by civil society or professional researchers: they are raw, deep and unusually insightful.

# Reference list for the Participatory Research Group (PRG)

All 18 reports will be available on the *Participate* website [www.participate2015.org/resources/](http://www.participate2015.org/resources/)

ATD Fourth World (2013) *Towards Sustainable Development that Leaves No One Behind: The Challenge of the Post-2015 Agenda*, Working Paper, Pierrelaye, France: ATD Fourth World

CDS (2013) *Youth PARTICIPATE: Aspirations of Youth in Egypt*, Egypt: Centre for Development Services (forthcoming)

Challenging Heights (2013) *Child-led Research on 'Teenage-Pregnancy' in Ghana*, Ghana: Challenging Heights and Family for Every Child (forthcoming)

COMPASS (2013) *Setting the Post-2015 Development Compass: Voices from the Ground*, London: CAFOD

Cortez-Ruiz, C. (2013) *Indigenous People's Experiences, Feelings, Anger and Hope: Reflections from México*, Mexico City: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Xochimilco (forthcoming)

GCRN (2013) *Climate Change By 12 Community Radio Stations in Ghana*, Ghana: Ghana Community Radio Network (forthcoming)

HEPS-Uganda (2013) *Becoming Visible: Tackling the Urban Health Divide in Kawempe Slum in Uganda*, Uganda: Coalition for Health Promotion and Development (forthcoming)

MEND (2013) *'I Want To Be Heard!' Experiences of Marginalisation and Poverty from the Perspective of Palestinian Women*, Occupied Palestinian Territories: Middle East Nonviolence Democracy (forthcoming)

OWPSEE (2013) *LGBTIQA Activism in the Western Balkans*, Bosnia and Herzegovina: Oneworld – Platform for South East Europe Foundation (forthcoming)

Praxis (2013a) *Voice for Change: Collective Action for Safe Spaces by Sex Workers and Sexual Minorities*, New Delhi: Praxis

Praxis (2013b) *Voice for Change: CityMakers Seeking to Reclaim Cities They Build*, New Delhi: Praxis

RCA Ghana (2013) *Ghana Reality Check Approach*, UK: Reality Check Approach (forthcoming)

Restless Development-Uganda (2013) *Youth Employment in Kamuli and Tororo Districts: Report on a Youth-Led Assessment*, Jinja, Uganda: Restless Development (forthcoming)

Spatial Collective (2013) *Understanding, Sharing and Linking Visions, Dreams, Resources and Needs in an Informal Settlement in Mathare Valley, Kenya*: Spatial Collective (forthcoming)

SLF (2013a) *Photovoice: Street Life in Ivory Park*, Johannesburg: Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation

SLF (2013b) *Engaging South African Youth and Women on the Theme of Tuberculosis and HIV using a Digital Storytelling Approach*, Cape Town: Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation (forthcoming)

The Seed Institute (2013) *The World I Do Not Want*, Kenya: The Seed Institute (forthcoming)

TFDC (2013) *A Message to Democracy – Our Dreams*, Nigeria: The Theatre for Development Centre (forthcoming)

We Can Also Make a Change (2013) *'We Can Also Make a Change': Piloting Participatory Research with People with Disabilities and Older People in Bangladesh*, Bangladesh: ADD International, HelpAge International and Sightsavers (forthcoming)

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PHOTOGRAPH: SPATIAL COLLECTIVE 2013



Participate

Knowledge from the margins for post-2015

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For more information:  [www.participate2015.org](http://www.participate2015.org)  [Participate@ids.ac.uk](mailto:Participate@ids.ac.uk)  [@participate2015](https://twitter.com/participate2015)



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