

# Notes on Contributors

**Jody Aked** was lead researcher for the Valuing Volunteering project in the Philippines. She has over 12 years' experience of applying behavioural science research to improve people's lives and is currently a doctoral researcher in the Participation Cluster at IDS. In her work with organisations such as the New Economics Foundation she uses wellbeing insights, systems thinking, social network mapping tools and action research to support change in communities and workplaces. Her PhD is exploring the qualities of social relationships that create and sustain momentum in social and environmental change efforts.

**Danny Burns** leads the Participation Cluster at IDS. He was previously Professor of Social and Organisational Learning at the University of the West of England and Co-Director of the SOLAR Action Research Centre. He was a senior lecturer in the School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol, Director of the Tenant Participation Advisory Service for Scotland, and Director of the Decentralisation Research and Information Centre, London. He is currently facilitating community-based research on peace in Northern Myanmar and co-leads research with communities in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to support resistance to slavery and bonded labour. Danny co-directed the VSO Valuing Volunteering research. He was lead author on *The Role of Volunteering in Sustainable Development* (IDS and VSO 2015), author of *Systemic Action Research: A Strategy for Whole System Change* (Policy Press 2007) and with Stuart Worsley, *Navigating Complexity in International Development: Facilitating Sustainable Change at Scale* (Practical Action Publishing 2015).

**Elizabeth Hacker** is a researcher and facilitator based in Nepal. She was lead researcher for the Valuing Volunteering project in Nepal, where she used participatory approaches to investigate the impact of volunteering on alleviating poverty. Elizabeth has worked with different communities, including research on the education challenges that indigenous communities face in Nepal's Far Western region. Elizabeth has extensive experience of using participatory research tools in diverse contexts. She is currently using digital storytelling to research indigenous understandings of wellbeing in

Kenya, India and South America, and working with Kathmandu University using digital storytelling to help earthquake-affected communities reflect on their experiences.

**Jo Howard** is a Research Fellow with the Participation Cluster at IDS. She has a particular interest in developing participatory approaches to improving development practice and research. She has worked with a number of international and UK-based NGOs and donors, and her research focuses on citizen participation and accountability, governance, social inclusion and citizenship, as well as organisational change and participatory practice. Previously, she was a Research Fellow at the University of the West of England, and managed an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) in Central America.

**Simon Lewis** served as the lead researcher for the Valuing Volunteering project in Kenya from 2012–14. He currently works for VSO developing the evidence base for volunteerism's role in reducing poverty and devising innovative approaches for more effectively utilising volunteers in development interventions. Prior to this, Simon worked in policy and strategy in UK local and regional government as well as for a UK Member of Parliament and held a teaching post at Durham University. He holds a PhD in applied social sciences from Durham University and has an undergraduate degree in geography.

**Erika Lopez Franco** is a researcher and practitioner who advocates for the meaningful participation of citizens, particularly those most marginalised, in development policies, programmes and research processes. She coordinated the Participate\* research studies, supporting network members in methods innovation, design and implementation, and cross-linking findings for diverse publications. Erika has written on how people in poverty and marginalisation engage in accountability relationships with governments, the private sector and fellow citizens in challenging contexts. Erika also works on action learning for organisational change with small community-based organisations (CBOs),

international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) such as VSO, and bilateral donors.

**Alexandra Picken** is an international development researcher with seven years' experience. She has an MSc in International Social Development Practice, and solid experience in learning, reflection and documenting practices, utilising this to inform policy and programmatic aims. Alexandra has designed and managed research and evaluation projects in the UK and internationally, in Africa and most recently, Mozambique where she was a lead researcher and project manager for the Valuing Volunteering project. Alexandra currently works as a monitoring and evidence adviser for HelpAge International.

**Thea Shahrokh** is a researcher focusing on issues of gender, citizenship, participation and violence. Her research specialises in qualitative and participatory methodologies with a critical

approach to enable engagement with people living in poverty, marginalisation and on intersecting issues of inequality. Her current research is on spaces for citizen-led accountability and the role of collective action in claims to citizenship identity. She has co-led the coordination of Participate.\* Thea was a VSO volunteer in Guyana, working as an advocacy adviser on volunteering in development focusing on youth agency and engagement.

**Katie Turner** is Lead Advisor on Volunteering for Development at VSO. Katie project managed the Valuing Volunteering research and contributed to the published global report. Prior to this she worked in a variety of advocacy and campaign roles with a focus on disability issues in the UK and overseas. This included a two-year volunteer placement with VSO in India as Advocacy Advisor for a Delhi-based NGO, Score Foundation.

#### **Note**

\* The Participate initiative provides high quality evidence on the reality of poverty at ground level, bringing the perspectives of the poorest into the post-2015 debate ([www.ids.ac.uk/participate](http://www.ids.ac.uk/participate)).