

# STI Strategies for Poor, Socially Excluded and Marginalized Communities

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# The purpose of Science, Technology & Innovation is to serve people...



- to serve poor, socially excluded and marginalized communities
- to lead towards more equitable development

# **“Leave no one behind” means that everyone’s needs must be met**

- not that everyone has identical technology
- not that everyone is brought into the same project of globalization



# The key to working effectively on behalf of poor, socially excluded and marginalized communities



- let people articulate their own needs
- let people set their own development agenda

# IfE's Field Hearings take input from poor, socially excluded and marginalized communities

- *Initiative for Equality* (IfE) is a global network of advocates for greater equality
- our Field Hearings are conducted by local civil society partners, in local language
- over 109 Field Hearings in 27 countries thus far
- mainly in Africa and Asia; also Europe and North America; currently recruiting in Latin America
- 34 earlier reports published in collection “Waiting To Be Heard”
- 75 new reports in progress



# What do people tell us that they want?



# 1. They want to participate in developing the ideas and making the decisions!



- Community members tell us that they have no influence over political and economic decisions

## 2. They want to be the ones to get the contracts for development projects.

- Community members tell us that contracts for development go to those who are well-off, not to those in need of jobs





### 3. They want education.



- Every community talked about this
- They want it so their children will have a better future.
- They also want it so that infrastructure and environmental problems are addressed based on best practices.

## 4. They want improvements to the public infrastructure.

- Roads, drainage, lighting, sanitation



SOIL, a non-profit in Haiti helps people to build and use composting toilets.

## 5. They want more and better communications.

- Cell phones with strong signal
- Internet; laptops or smartphones
- Radio: call-in shows so they can express themselves as well as listen (e.g. Gram Vaani)



## **A note on IT for political participation:**

- Donors, academics and activists interested in promoting democracy decided that mobile phone apps could help:
  - instant polls
  - citizen monitoring of bad actions
  - feedback on policies & programs
- Recent academic studies and feedback from activists in the field call this into question
- There is no “app for democracy” – it takes on-the-ground organizing and vertically integrated advocacy

**6. They want health problems addressed without expensive technology & medicine.**





## 7. They want agricultural productivity problems solved without expensive technology.



- Oil-based fertilizers too expensive
- Pesticides and herbicides make farmers and their children sick
- Patented seeds cannot be freely used by farmers

## 8. They want environmental problems solved without expensive technology.

- Pollution from industry
- Pollution from poor sanitation
- Pollution from agricultural runoff
- Pollution from inadequate methods of lighting and cooking



## **9. They are very aware of changing weather patterns, but don't mention "climate change."**

- Most farmers told us the weather is changing in detrimental ways.
- They do not understand the magnitude of the problem.
- They are all thinking about how to adapt.
- Some are adapting well with no outside help.
- The farmers need to be driving the decisions on adaptation, based on traditional knowledge and shared information with other farmers.

# Floating farms in Bangladesh, as water levels rise.





## 10. They want to continue meeting, discussing, sharing ideas, and planning for the future.





# Thank you!

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