

# Learning about Analysing Networks to Support Development Work?

## Description

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Simon Batchelor, IDS Practice Paper in Brief. July 2011. [Available as pdf](#)

Introduction Everyone seems to be talking about networks. Networks and the analysis of networks is now big business. However, in the development sector, analysis of networks remains weak.

This paper presents four cases where social network analysis (SNA) was used in a development programme. It focuses not so much on the organisational qualities of networks nor on the virtual networks facilitated by software, but on the analysis of connectivity in real world networks. Most of the cases are unintentional networks. What literature there is on network analysis within the development sector tends to focus on intentional networks and their quality. Our experience suggests there is considerable benefit to examining and understanding the linkages in unintentional networks, and this is a key part of this Practice Paper.

The four cases illustrate how social network analysis can

• Identify investments in training, and enable effective targeting of capacity building.

• Analyse a policy environment for linkages between people, and enable targeted interventions.

• Analyse an emerging policy environment, and stimulate linkages between different converging sectors.

• Look back on and understand the flow of ideas, thereby learning about enabling an environment for innovation.

These cases, while not directly from the intermediary sector, potentially inform our work with the intermediary sector.

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## Category

1. Uncategorized

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