

# Don't Talk to Strangers? Maybe Mom was Wrong: a Longitudinal Investigation on Social Capital and Community Driven Development in East Africa

**Daniela Baeza Breinbauer**

LSE Enterprise

By reframing community driven development, this study aims to causally evaluate the following hypotheses: i) that community driven development projects act as social anchors and are inherent catalysts of social capital, ii) and social capital flows follow a specific path in generation of generalised trust. Employing an innovative multi-level analytical framework this study simultaneously assesses behavioral as well as perceptual measures. Aided by fixed effects regression analyses on a unique panel data sample from East Africa this

investigation finds significant results for both hypotheses. At the individual level, findings suggest increases in three of four aggregated social capital components where increased levels of trust prove a significant relationship with project participation. Increased levels of trust then follow a specific path in generation. The findings suggest the importance of social anchors as mediums from which individuals can identify, embrace, and exist as an overall community identity in order to generate social capital (Gaertner, 1999).