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The right to be heard

Report of the Commission on Poverty,
Participation and Power

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with the UK Coalition Against Poverty



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Why don't more people experiencing poverty vote? Or take part in consultations? Why don't they participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives? The Commission on Poverty, Participation and Power has been looking for answers. It found that - despite the declared commitment of the UK government - too many experiences of participation without the power to bring about change have left people in poverty highly sceptical.

This was no ordinary Commission. It consisted of half grassroots and half public life representatives. And it built on **Voices for Change**, a two-year consultation with local groups across the UK to identify barriers which prevent people living in poverty participating in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

Listen hear reveals the stark divide between policy makers and the people they claim to represent. It highlights the radical changes needed to make sure that participation does not just echo back the voices of those in power. And it argues that without these changes, policies to tackle poverty and revitalise democracy will not succeed.

Listen hear is important reading for all those involved in anti-poverty and regeneration work, including community groups, voluntary organisations, local authorities, the devolved administrations, public authorities and central government - and of course, above all, people experiencing poverty themselves.

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The UK Coalition Against Poverty (UKCAP) believes that poverty must be eradicated. Our key aims are to improve anti-poverty policies by linking policy-makers with people who have direct experience of poverty, and to campaign for more systematic and holistic anti-poverty strategies and policies. For a free copy of the summary of *Listen hear*, contact UKCAP, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD. For up-to-date information, please check the following website: www.church-poverty.org.uk

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