



# Effective communication for maximum impact: how do CSOs learn?

Bronwyn Powell, Melita Grant, Janina Murta, Juliet Willetts



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# CSO Learning for Impact

## Research questions

1. How do CSOs learn and improve WASH programming and practice to align with evidence-based approaches?
2. What materials, formats and communications mechanisms are **most preferred** in influencing CSO learning?
3. What materials, formats and communication mechanisms are **most effective** and innovative in improving CSO WASH program in alignment with good practice?



# Methodology

- Literature review (>50 academic and grey sources of literature consulted)
- Literature review mapped against research questions
- Survey questions designed (one for CSOs; and one for other stakeholders)
- 60 CSOs responded to online survey
- 22 other stakeholders responded to online survey
- In total, over 100 WASH sector practitioners were involved in the research
- 14 CSO reps interviewed, and 6 other stakeholders

# 1. Peer to peer learning



Image sources: <http://sanitationandwaterforall.org>



Image source: ISF-UTS

**68%**  
'Discussions within  
organisation very  
important'

## 2. Time for reflection



**77%** (CSOs)

M&E reports are  
routinely analysed  
and used

Image source: <http://leadershiptraq.com>

# 3. LEADERSHIP

72%

'Leaders support and encourage learning culture'

*"Our CEO emphasises his support for transparency, and accountability but encourages learning from failure. When something doesn't go according to plan, it's managed without finger pointing" (CSO participant)*



## 4. K&L in work-plans

READING

ALLIANCES

MENTORING

80%

K&L in work plans

60%

Funded for K&L

60%

Choose their K&L opportunities

CONFERENCES

TRAINING

EVALUATIONS

## 5. Time and funding



*'We're not stuck for resources  
– we're stuck for filtering and  
time" (CSO Participant)*



# 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

*“Monitoring data is often considered donor-driven and may lack meaning for the partners – [it] requires commitment to training and ongoing support for staff to understand M&E information and incorporate into implementation.”*

*(non-CSO respondent)*



40%

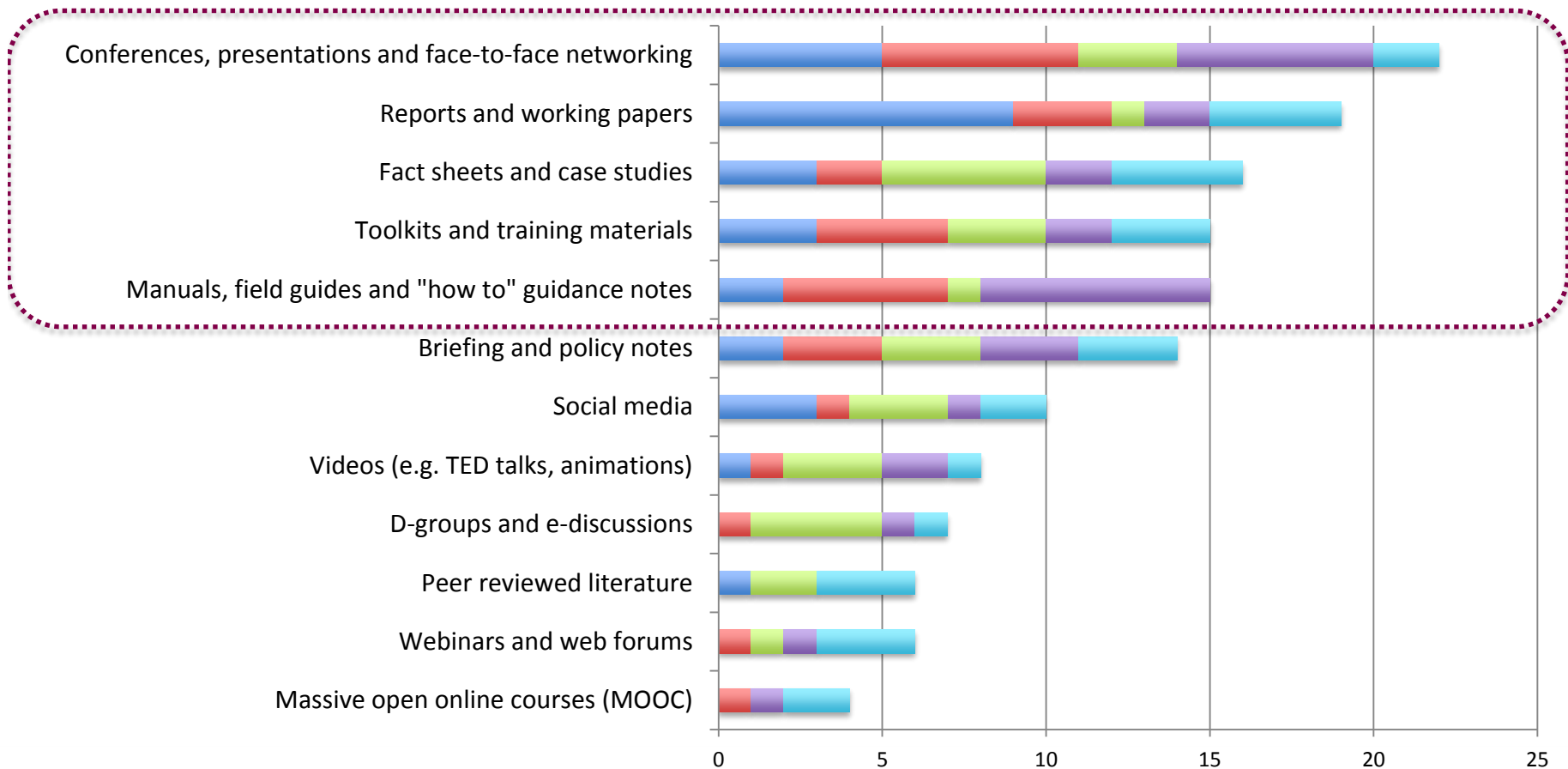
M&E is not at all used effectively for continuous improvement in the WASH CSOs that we work with

# Key themes (summary)

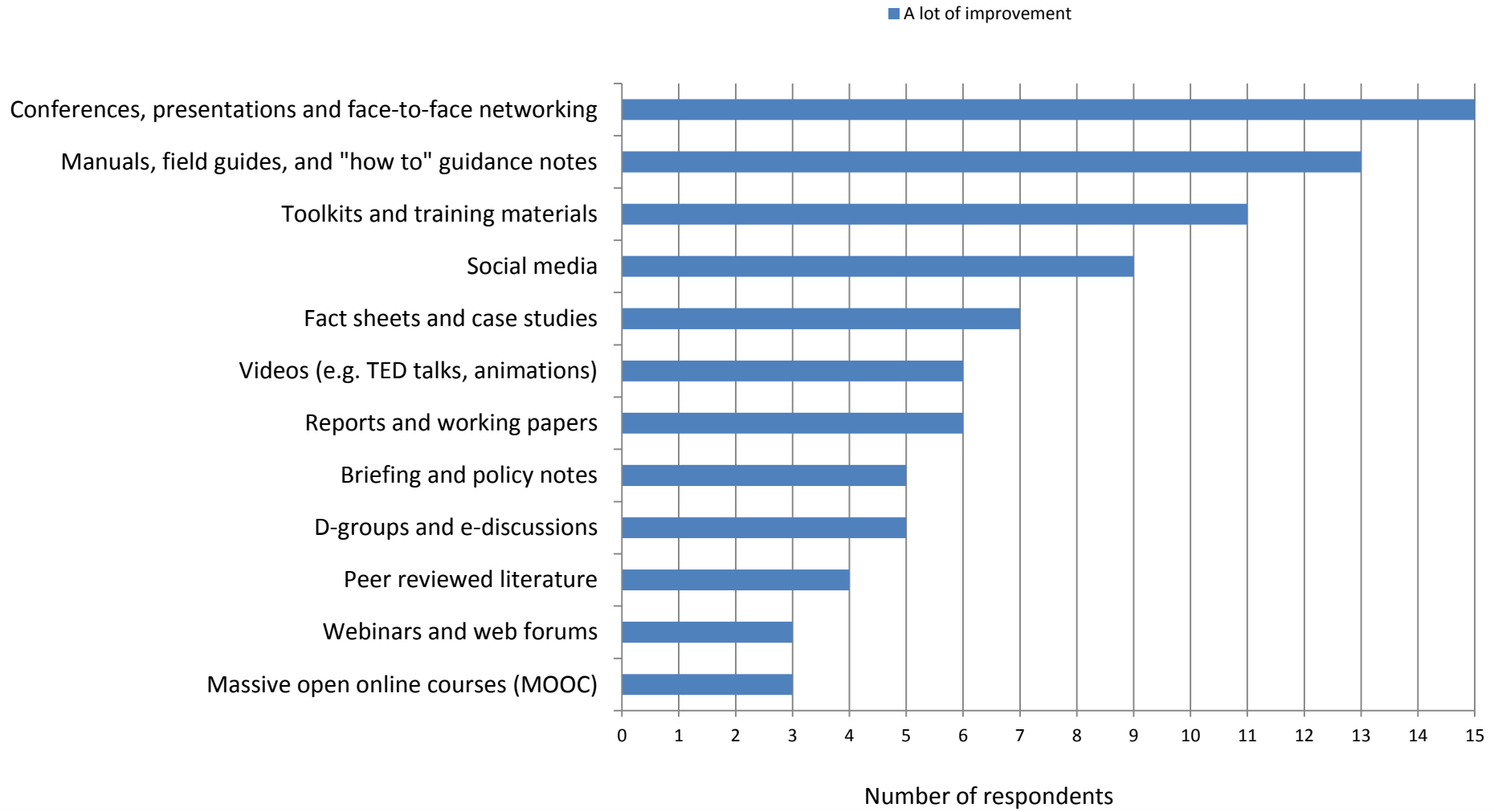
1. Opportunities for **peer-to-peer learning**
2. Time for **reflection processes**
3. **Leadership** driving a learning culture
4. Knowledge and learning duties identified in **work-plans**
5. Adequate **resources** (time and funding)
6. Effective **M&E** feedback loops

# Preferred types of communication

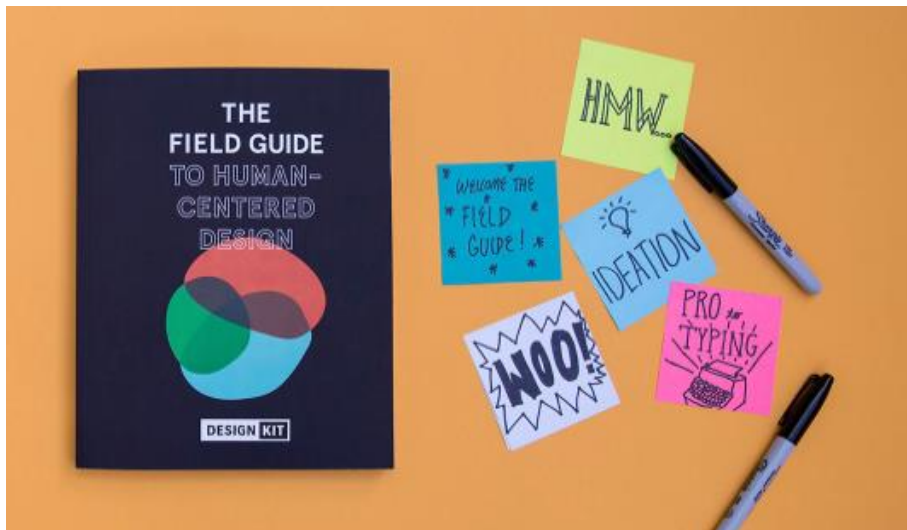
■ First choice   
 ■ Second choice   
 ■ Third choice   
 ■ Fourth choice   
 ■ Fifth choice



# Types of communication perceived to have led to the greatest level of improved practice



# Examples



<https://www.ideo.com/work/human-centered-design-toolkit/>

**UNICEF**  
Sanitation Marketing Learning Series

**GUIDANCE NOTE 1**

**Situation Analysis: How do I know if Sanitation Marketing will work in my country?**  
Mimi Jenkins and Danielle Padi

In this Guidance Note you will learn:

- How Sanitation Marketing (SanMark) and CATS complement each other, and some important operational differences between the two approaches
- How to identify favorable market conditions where Sanitation Marketing has the highest likelihood of success
- Some key roles for local government in the early planning stages for Sanitation Marketing
- Three steps for deciding whether and where to start your Sanitation Marketing initiative

**1. SanMark Can Build on the Strengths of CATS Approaches**  
In over 50 countries, UNICEF is engaged in Community Approaches to Total Sanitation (CATS) to eliminate open defecation. CATS has dramatically increased community awareness of sanitation and triggered new demand for building and using a latrine. As people become motivated to change their sanitation behaviors, they must have access to durable, affordable sanitation solutions. Sanitation Marketing uses market-based approaches to stimulate market demand and private sector supply that can, under the right conditions, address this need for sustained local supply of affordable, desirable sanitation products and services.

**2. SanMark Helps Link Demand and Supply**  
Sanitation Marketing aims to increase sustained access to and use of improved sanitation among low-income populations. SanMark increases **consumer** demand for improved sanitation (see GN2: Consumer behavior) and encourages household investment in durable, hygienic latrines. At the same time, the approach catalyzes the market by helping local businesses to expand the private supply of affordable, desirable sanitation products and services (see GN 3 Supply Chain and Business Models and GN4 Private Sector Development ).

SanMark focuses on households as consumers. It takes a user-focused or user-centered approach to designing latrine products (see GN5: Getting the product 'right' that people want and can afford, and helps local businesses to **profitably** produce and sell them (see GN4: Business models for supplying latrines). SanMark promotes local demand for new sanitation products using commercial and social marketing techniques to address the 4Ps of marketing – product, price, place and promotion (see GN7: Demand promotion and marketing). The SanMark approach ensures that local governments play key roles in facilitating, regulating and monitoring the new sanitation market (see GN6: Enabling environment) so that suppliers can continue to grow their businesses and reach more consumers long after initial market facilitation activities are finished.

unite for children

<http://www.sanitationmarketing.com/sanitation-marketing-blog/sanmark-learning-series#.VwrL3LR4FiE>

# Take home messages

## CSOs developing a learning culture:

- Leaders - important
- Resources - actively identified and budgeted
- K&L opportunities need to be provided from field to HQ
- Greater focus on M&E feedback loops

## CSOs producing materials:

- Traditional forms - still relevant
- Face to face learning - valued
- Guidance materials – preferred, but require clarity and adaptation
- Online formats – use a variety to accommodate range of preferences



Image source: UN Water

# Group activity

- 1) How would you describe your organisation's learning culture?
- 2) What plans do you have for capturing and sharing lessons in your project? Do the research findings shared here affect your plans?
- 3) How can you/your organisation help you partners and change agents learn?