Practice what you preach

Spreading the Word: Enhancing Research Dissemination Strategies
KAR R7127

Phase One Impact Survey Analysis Report

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Summary

*Spreading the Word: practical guidelines for research dissemination strategies* is the main output of Phase 1 of the DFID-funded ENGKAR project R7127, which aims to understand current thinking and approaches to dissemination of research as adopted by sector-based agencies both in the UK and internationally. This tracking report on the dissemination of Phase One findings is in accordance with the proposed outputs for Phase Two of the project.

The focus of this survey covers:
- the range of dissemination channels used for this publication;
- the appropriateness of dissemination channels for identified target audiences in terms of accessibility;
- the appropriateness, usefulness and comprehensibility of the content of the publication;
- an assessment of the level and nature of use made of this publication; and
- the value of the content to recipients.

The main findings and lessons learned fall into the categories of dissemination, content and format issues.

**Dissemination issues:**
- *Spreading the Word* had a limited distribution, with a substantial number of copies sent to a targeted audience. Wider targeted publicity could have extended its reach.
- Its availability was broadcast widely through a range of channels, by hard-copy and electronic formats and face-to-face. For future dissemination of similar outputs to similar audiences, it is useful to note that popular journals, listservers, the WEDC website and DFID newsletters were the preferred awareness-raising mechanisms.
- Cost limitations meant that the print run for the hard copy document was limited and it is now only available electronically. It is not possible to measure the number of times the document has been downloaded in either html or pdf format. The survey did not sufficiently measure the sort of knowledge-activating attributes used by the respondents.

**Content issues:**
- Measuring the utilisation and assimilation levels of content by respondents is problematic as these are not readily quantifiable factors. Users’ responses to open questions provide useful insight into this.
- Over 90 per cent of recipients had read part or all of the document. Uses included sharing ideas with colleagues and the community, and incorporating them into teaching/training activities.
- Non-use was attributed to factors such as duplication of existing resources and lack of time.
- Comments on content are very positive, with high levels of confirmation about the relevance, quality, originality and value of the publication.
- Negative comments related to areas of dissemination not covered, and an overly theoretical approach taken, which omitted some key literature.
- Interest and relevance are cited as the most common reason for using the publication. Clearly, greater accuracy in targeting of publications should result in a stronger likelihood of their being used; this may be more important with such research outputs that are to
have a very limited print run. For this reason it is important to research the audience, their information needs and appropriate dissemination methods for them to maximise reach.

- The point was made by users about the management of dissemination of information to disinterested groups. This important area of investigation was not addressed by *Spreading the Word*.
- Several criticisms were aimed at the content of *Spreading the Word*. The range of dissemination methods referred to was perhaps less broad than respondents’ experience, at both ends of the spectrum from highly technical to grass-roots methods.
- The content and style of *Spreading the Word* has the widest appeal to academics and those engaged in research. However, it does have a wider relevance to practitioners and could be reversioned with these in mind.

**Format issues:**

- It is useful to consider if a single output could be usefully produced in several different versions, linked directly to what is known about target audiences needs and preferences.
- Short, more visually attractive versions are likely to have the widest appeal and attract those who do not need the theory behind the advocated practice. Posters and synthesis notes are examples of this.
- In some outputs, it is also important to provide space for users to record their own experiences and comments. *Spreading the Word* would be improved by including some blank sheets or tables for users to note what is known about their user groups, which dissemination methods have been found to work, or space to highlight useful points to apply in their own practice.
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1.0 Background

*Spreading the Word: practical guidelines for research dissemination strategies* is the main output of Phase 1 of the DFID-funded ENGKAR project R7127. The purpose of the first phase of this research is to understand current thinking and approaches to dissemination of research as adopted by sector-based agencies both in the UK and internationally. This facilitated an initial analysis of common dissemination strategies used, the problems and constraints experienced, and factors that aid effective dissemination. This, in turn, is used to provide preliminary guidance for research contractors and DFID alike for the dissemination of research knowledge products.

*Spreading the Word* reviews the interim findings from Phase 1 and incorporates results from a review of relevant literature, case study analysis and interviews with key informants. A total of 32 documents are examined in the literature review and discussion is summarised according to relevant themes. Four selected case studies are presented to highlight both effective and less effective approaches to research dissemination, and the findings also draw on interviews with key research contractor staff involved in managing research projects for DFID and other donor agencies. Discussion of the key issues arising from analysis of these three activities is presented. The findings conclude with recommendations for Phase 2\(^1\) of the project.

This tracking report on the dissemination of Phase One findings is in accordance with the proposed outputs for Phase Two of the project.

1.1 Purpose of the impact study

A recent literature review carried out as part of Phase II of this project (Saywell, Woodfield and Cotton, 2000) highlights the aims and objectives of this particular impact study. The focus of the literature review was on the value of different dissemination pathways to different audiences and the indicators used to measure their impact, drawing on the experience of both development-related and other disciplines. It points to the importance of understanding the ‘user context’ of dissemination activities:

> “Whether development-related information is aimed directly at poor users or at intermediaries and members of NGOs, GOs and other development organisations, the need remains to choose material of appropriate content presented in suitable formats which should then be sent via useable media to the audiences targeted. Getting this right demands a review of the current state of need and the ‘information use environments’ (IUE’s) (Menou 1993) which might affect information transfer”

(Saywell, Woodfield and Cotton 2000 p. 9).

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\(^1\) Phase 2 of the project (commissioned March 2000) explores in detail three key elements:

- the needs of Southern-based information users with regard to the dissemination of research from DFID contractors;
- an understanding of the relative merits of different dissemination media;
- an exploration of the possible indicators of the impact of dissemination.
The focus of this survey covers:

- the range of dissemination channels used for this publication;
- the appropriateness of dissemination channels for identified target audiences in terms of accessibility;
- the appropriateness, usefulness and comprehensibility of the content of the publication;
- an assessment of the level and nature of use made of this publication;
- the value of the content to recipients.

This study took place approximately two years after the dissemination of the publication. It was not possible to allow a longer period of time to elapse between dissemination and evaluation, as recommended by Menou (2000) who advocates leaving a period of at least four years. This was due to the time constraints imposed by the project duration. It is argued that, nevertheless, valuable indicators and trends are still evident from this survey.
2.0 Methodology

2.1 The sample

The sample of the survey comprised the 105 recipients recorded in the dissemination log. Initially it was sent to 39 targeted recipients, including contributors and peer reviewers (July 1999), with subsequent distribution on demand to other sector contacts. Recipients’ contact details, their institution and position held were logged. 41 recipients (39 per cent) were located in the South and 64 (61 per cent) in the North.

For the purposes of this survey, recipients were categorised according to their position as either NGO, DFID, Resource Centre or academic personnel with an additional category for those who received multiple copies. Table 1 shows the spread of the sample across these categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple copies</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All 105 recipients were contacted in May 2000, initially by either email (or letter, if they had no email facility) and invited to take part in an evaluation of Spreading the Word. Of these, 38 (36 per cent) said they would like to participate and a copy of the questionnaire (see Annex for sample ‘academics’ questionnaire) was sent to them, depending on the category to which they had been assigned. 26 replies (from a total of 25 per cent of book recipients) were received by the end of June 2000. Six (23 per cent of returned questionnaires) were from the South and 20 (77 per cent) were from the North.

2.2 The questionnaire

Two useful models for the structure of the questionnaire were identified: one developed by McGrath (1999) as part of an analysis of the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of DFID Resource Centre and Centre for Health (CHI) staff; the other by Lia-Hoaberg, Schaffer and Strohstein (1999), which was based on recipients’ use and perceptions of public health nursing practice guidelines. Two different versions of the questionnaire were produced; one for NGO, DFID, research and academic personnel and another that included a question for those who requested multiple copies of the publication.

Questionnaires were sent by email, as both Word attachments and as full-text within the message. Only one of the 38 questionnaires was sent as hard copy. McGrath (1999) found that email is seen to be a useful facility, assuming that access is unproblematic, but attachments are viewed slightly less favourably. For this reason, email was chosen as the primary means of distributing the questionnaire although it was also attached as a Word document for those who preferred this option.

The questionnaire has four sections:
• **Access**
Heeks (1999) distinguishes between ‘overt resources’ (financial, technical, infrastructural), and ‘social resources’ (trust, motivation, knowledge, power). Deficits in these can threaten the effective functioning of the ICT information chain. To establish participants’ position vis-à-vis overt resources, the first set of questions asks about both the ease with which participants can access email and the Internet, and related to this, the use they make of these facilities.

• **Receipt**
The second section concerns the way in which respondents became aware of the publication and the format they received it in. However, users’ ‘knowledge activating attributes’ (Menou 2000, p.5) are not fully interrogated as the majority of the sample were sent the publication unsolicited.

• **Use**
NCDDR (1996) uses the overall goal of ‘utilisation’ as an indicator of value meaning that information should be ‘critically and thoroughly digested’ (p.11) and the new information absorbed into an individual’s understanding (even if this results in a rejection of the information disseminated). Similarly, Heeks (1999) identifies the main indicators of value as the impact on decision-making and action. However, the measurement of differences in decision-making capacity and assimilation of information by an individual is not easily quantifiable. The third section of the questionnaire asks respondents whether and in what ways they used the publication, and about any motivating or constraining factors that affected this use. In an additional section for those who received multiple copies, information was required about how these were distributed within the particular organisation.

• **Value**
The final section poses a set of open questions to assess the perceived general value of the publication and to identify any gaps in content or suggested improvements to content/format.
3.0 Results

The results are presented under the five key themes that were addressed in the questionnaire, as outlined in section 1.1.

3.1 General access to electronic information

The debate surrounding the value of electronically transmitted information and the use of ICTs in a global context is ongoing and is discussed in more detail in Saywell, Woodfield and Cotton (2000). Although there is great emphasis on the use of ICT as a tool to alleviate world poverty (World Bank 1998), clearly there is still a wide disparity in the provision of both overt and social prerequisites for such information transmission (Heeks 1999).

This survey showed that the majority of our sample had regular and reliable access to both email (92 per cent) and the Internet (81 per cent), with correspondingly high frequencies of use (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Email use (%)</th>
<th>Internet use (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were no reported problems associated with downloading the online version of *Spreading the Word*. Only 12 per cent of recipients printed the online version, compared with 65 per cent who received hard copy (23 per cent nil response to this question). Currently, the number of times the online full-text version of *Spreading the Word* is downloaded by a wider readership than those originally targeted is not measured.

3.2 Finding out about *Spreading the Word*

*Spreading the Word* was publicised through the following different outlets (both solicited and unsolicited) and included announcements, reviews and downloadable full-text versions of the document:

- ID21 research reporting service <http://www.id21.org/>
- IRC Source Bulletin, issue 22-23, (14/06/99)
- ELDIS homepage (23/06/00) <http://www.ids.ac.uk/eldis>
- ELDIS e-mail bulletin (05/08/99)
- <Water-and-san-applied-research@jiscmail.ac.uk> (then mailbase) listserver (05/07/99)
- <solid-waste-management@jiscmail.ac.uk> (then mailbase) listserver (17/07/99)
- Full text available at the WEDC website <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/cv/wedc/publications/stw.htm>
- Waterlines (date?)
- DFID Water Newsletter (date?)
- WEDC Bulletin 1999 (5,000 distribution worldwide)
- DFID internal network
• Full text version at EHP web site (July 1999) <http://www.crosslink.net/>
• DFID W4 Evaluation workshop (09/09/99)
• Appropriate Technology 26, 1, 1999, p.9
• BELLANET Information Dissemination List Digest (05/08/99)
• African Water Page listing under ‘documents’ section (01/12/99)
• ID21 news email bulletin 30 (08/09/99)
• One World Europe Think Tank on Investing in Knowledge <http://www.oneworld.org/thinktank/id/front.html>
• Contacts made at the GDN 1999 conference in Bonn, Germany.
• Presentation to participants at ITDG workshop on Knowledge and Information Systems for Improved Livelihoods (11/01/00)
• Presentation on research dissemination strategies at Nuffield Institute of Health (20/01/00)

Recipients were asked how they found out about this publication; whether it came to them unsolicited or not and in what format it was received. Half of the sample received the publication without requesting it, on the basis of interest in the subject attributed to them by the authors; about ten per cent received copies due to their involvement with and contributions to the study; the remainder requested a copy.

Table 3 shows that almost 70 per cent of the sample were sent a copy of the publication. It is difficult to disaggregate from this how many of these had also been made aware of it through some other method listed in the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Actual (%)</th>
<th>Preferred (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book sent directly by authors</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEDC newsletters</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEDC web site</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEDC conference</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID newsletter</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular journals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your organisation</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listservers</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preferred methods of publicity suggest that recipients would like greater awareness-raising services via popular journals, listservers, the WEDC website and DFID newsletters. The ID21 Development Research reporting service and the IRC Newsletter were also cited as effective publicity vehicles for this type of information.

3.3 Use of Spreading the Word
When asked about the ways in which they had used Spreading the Word, over 90 per cent of recipients had read the document, either in part (42 per cent) or in its entirety (50 per cent).
Knowledge sharing took many forms as detailed in Table 4. About a quarter of recipients applied the ideas in their work and the same number incorporated them into their teaching materials.

Examples of use include:

“Will use it when designing our own research dissemination strategies in the future and as a source of reference and ideas”

“Sent it on with recommendation to Friends of Earth Canada”

“Carried out a review of it as part of a literature survey I was doing for a research project and otherwise used it as reference material in the project”.

Tables 5 and 6 provide further detail about factors leading to use or non-use of materials. They suggest that for those who did use them, the main reasons were the relevance of the materials (81 per cent) and recipients’ interest in the topic (54 per cent). For those who read the publication but did not use it further, the most frequent factor that inhibited use was that it was seen to duplicate an existing resource. Some anticipated using it at a later stage. Time constraints were an additional factor restricting use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Recipient use of Spreading the Word</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read only</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed with colleagues</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared guidelines with others in the community</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used ideas in practice</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used for teaching / research</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Respondents could tick more than one option.
3.4 Content value

Recipients were asked to indicate their level of agreement with positive statements about content relevance to their interests, content quality, content originality and content usefulness. Over half of respondents agreed or agreed strongly with these statements. Less than four per cent disagreed or disagreed strongly with the statements. The highest levels of agreement were with the propositions that the content is relevant and that it provides guidance on research dissemination (see Table 7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree strongly (%)</th>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Neutral (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Disagree strongly (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content is relevant to my work/research</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of content is high</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It provides new information</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful guidance for dissemination of projects</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualitative data confirms the level of positive feedback received:

**Relevance:**

“There has been too much research which has not been disseminated already and we need to increase the priority and improve the methods of dissemination. The information is not getting to where it is valuable and there is duplication. I am keen to make research & dissemination more effective”.

“It was useful to compare the methods, analysis and outcomes from another sector and relate it to work I was doing”

**Content quality:**

“I wanted to read a concise, clear and thoughtful book and I’m pleased to say that they were fully met. Very refreshing, well done.”

“I had very high expectations of this publication because I know that WEDC do a great job in their dissemination work, considering it as a high priority. The publication met my expectations.”

“From what it set out to do, the document has delivered.”

“Keep up the good work, would like to meet with you and discuss on the subject some time.”

**New information:**

“Guidance for the developing theme of dissemination particularly in DFID projects- met. A structure around which to teach aspects of dissemination to Master’s level students – met.”

“Spreading the Word meets a real need.”
3.5 Suggested areas for improvement

However, not all feedback was positive. The three open questions invited respondents to describe in more detail any aspects of dissemination which were not adequately covered by Spreading the Word; whether they held any expectations of the publication in advance of it and if so, whether these were met; as well as any other general comments. Most of their comments related to content and format/style issues.

3.5.1 Content

The following are taken from the final open-ended questions:

**Content quality:**
“More in-depth discussion of issues. Bringing users of the research into perspective and not just the ‘production’ end.”

“I had assumed that the case studies would be field based, so was disappointed to find that they were mainly based on project documentation. I had also expected to find that the research team would include someone who was an expert/experienced in communication for development purposes of which dissemination of research results is part, this appears not to have been the case. I think the work would have been enriched by the literature theories and experience of communication (and communication media – mass and popular) in development and an understanding of the different paradigms of development and communication which inform the communication context within which people and projects operate. There is an extensive literature readily available on this work.”

“Page 23 notes the literature lacks depth in impact & evaluation of success - surely this is the starting point to find out about it.”

**New information:**
“I thought I will get new ideas – but I didn’t get any. Work based on some more original research not just the case studies.”

**Dissemination guidance:**
“I thought it would review the effectiveness of dissemination to date and consider reasons, then come up with innovative ideas to address shortfalls.”

“I imagined that there would be a lot of practical information on how to produce dissemination message and use of different media, which would be particularly useful for NGOs. However, even though I found the document useful and interesting, it was somewhat more theoretical and less practical than I expected it would have been. The output might have been constrained, though, by the ToR which concentrated on DFID funded research
dissemination which possibly limited its more wider application."

In summary, negative comments covered:

- a lack of originality and new research;
- insufficient reference to the body of available literature;
- insufficient focus on areas not covered by the literature;
- a lack of in-depth discussion of issues; and
- an overly theoretical approach.

Users felt the following necessary subject areas were omitted:

- dissemination via workshops, seminars and hands-on training;
- multimedia dissemination;
- dissemination targeting;
- dissemination to disinterested groups;
- new ICTs and their relevance to the poor;
- media and capacity required for gathering feedback from large number of people;
- time scale required for dissemination to various groups;
- greater case study details (rationale for dissemination media choice, impact and assessment);
- the link between research dissemination need and uptake;
- extension of ideas beyond DFID-related research and non-research dissemination; and
- inclusion of a glossary.

### 3.5.2 Format and style

The following comments referred specifically to issues of format and style:

“*It should have been on the pattern of ‘training type’ manual with binders, and extra large margin for writing notes.*”

“The book should be summarised in a poster format. I feel this is possible and more people will read it.”

“*Layout aspects of the book could be improved to facilitate reading. I find the grey boxes with the key points very good. The chapter ‘Literature Review’ is not very attractive. Parts of it could have been integrated into the introduction (e.g. Chapter 2.2) and may be a chapter on ‘Opportunities and Constraints) (chapter 2.3, 2.6, 2.7) and ‘Theory and Concepts’ (chapter 2.4, 2.5).*”

“Researchers like all the details but practitioners want to know the outcomes - so significant difference in the way information is written and presented.”
These comments suggest that different versions of the document are required for different audiences. In response to this, a Synthesis Note (four sides A4) has been produced by WEDC as part of Phase II of *Spreading the Word*. This outlines the main questions and issues raised by Phase I of the project and the lessons learned and is designed to address some of the same concerns (i.e. a condensed version for practitioners). This could easily be adapted to a single sheet poster. The facility to add personal notes is a valuable suggestion, as users could record their own experience of dissemination practice. Stylistic points include the need for greater integration of the separate parts of the document.
4.0 Lessons learned and conclusions

In an ideal world, the impact and uptake of all disseminated outputs should be subject to measurement and evaluation. This can cover many different facets:

- the methods used to publicise and announce the availability of a publication;
- whether the chosen dissemination pathways were effective;
- the appropriateness of content for different audiences’ information needs. This can include linguistic style and tone, document length, themes covered and focus (e.g. soft versus technical issues), the degree of analysis and discussion, the methodological basis of the material; and
- the appropriateness of format for different audiences’ particular needs. This includes all aspects of format and physical layout.

This impact survey analysis focuses on some of the issues that are seen to be most apposite to the dissemination of this publication and those which are highlighted within the publication itself, namely aspects of accessibility and comprehensibility to users.

Although *Spreading the Word* was generally well received, there are limitations in both its content and dissemination and consequent lessons to be learned from each of these, which might be usefully applied to subsequent similar activities.

4.1 Dissemination

- *Spreading the Word* had a limited distribution, with a substantial number of copies sent to a targeted audience. Wider targeted publicity could have extended its reach.
- Its availability was broadcast widely through a range of channels, by hard-copy and electronic formats and face-to-face. For future dissemination of similar outputs to similar audiences, it is useful to note that popular journals, listservers, the WEDC website and DFID newsletters were the preferred awareness-raising mechanisms.
- Cost limitations meant that the print run for the hard copy document was limited and it is now only available electronically. It is not possible to measure the number of times the document has been downloaded in either html or pdf format. The survey did not sufficiently measure the sort of knowledge-activating attributes used by the respondents.

4.2 Content

- Measuring the utilisation and assimilation levels of content by respondents is problematic as these are not readily quantifiable factors. Users’ responses to open questions provide useful insight into this.
- Interest and relevance are cited as the most common reason for using the publication. Clearly, greater accuracy in targeting of publications should result in a stronger likelihood of their being used; this may be more important with such research outputs that are to have a very limited print run. For this reason it is important to research who is the audience, their information needs and appropriate dissemination methods to maximise reach to them.
• The point was made by users about the management of dissemination of information to disinterested groups. This important area of investigation was not addressed by *Spreading the Word*.

• Several criticisms were aimed at the content of *Spreading the Word*. The range of dissemination methods referred to was perhaps less broad than respondents’ experience, at both ends of the spectrum from highly technical to grass-roots methods.

• The content and style of *Spreading the Word* has the widest appeal to academics and those engaged in research. However, it does have a wider relevance to practitioners and could be reversioned with these in mind.

4.3 Format

• An important consideration is whether a single output could be usefully produced in several different versions, linked directly to what is known about target audiences needs and preferences.

• Short, more visually attractive versions are likely to have the widest appeal and attract those who do not need the theory behind the advocated practice. Posters and synthesis notes are examples of this.

• In some outputs, it is also important to provide space for users to record their own experiences and comments. *Spreading the Word* would be improved by including some blank sheets or tables for users to note what is known about their user groups, which dissemination methods have been found to work, or space to highlight useful points to apply in their own practice.
5.0 References

<http://www.man.ac.uk/idpm/idpm_dp.htm#devinf_wp>


6.0 Annex
This aim of this survey is to provide feedback on the effectiveness of our research outputs. Your views are important to us and we would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to respond to the following questions. Please write clearly in black ink.

1. Name
2. Position
3. Main areas of responsibility
4. Organisation

Your access to and use of electronic resources
Questions 5 and 6 are to find out whether information might be usefully disseminated to you electronically, depending on your access and use of these media.

5. What kind of access do you have to:
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Problematic</th>
<th>Will have it within a year</th>
<th>Will not have it within a year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>[01]</td>
<td>[04]</td>
<td>[07]</td>
<td>[10]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>[02]</td>
<td>[05]</td>
<td>[08]</td>
<td>[11]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Of those you are able to access, how often do you use the following:
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>[01]</td>
<td>[04]</td>
<td>[07]</td>
<td>[10]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>[02]</td>
<td>[05]</td>
<td>[08]</td>
<td>[11]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How you acquired Spreading the Word
Questions 7 to 12 ask you about how you found out about Spreading the Word and how you acquired a copy of it.

7. How did you find out about Spreading the Word? Tick all those that apply
   
   Sent by authors
   WEDC newsletters
   WEDC web site
   WEDC conference
   DFID newsletter
   Popular journals (such as Waterlines)
   Your organisation
   Colleagues
   Listservers
   Other (please state)

8. How would you prefer documents such as this to be publicised? Tick all those that apply
   
   By authors
   WEDC newsletters
   WEDC web site
   WEDC conference
   DFID newsletter
   Popular journals (such as Waterlines)
   Listservers
   Other (please state)

9. Spreading the Word was sent to you: Tick one of the following
   
   Unsolicited
   Following a request made by you
   As a result of your contribution to it

10. When did you receive Spreading the Word? Please give approximate date
11. In what format did you receive Spreading the Word? Tick all those that apply

- Original paper copy
- Printed from the WWW

12. Did you experience any difficulties (such as problems accessing the web, long postal delays) in receiving Spreading the Word? If so, please give details.

**Your use of Spreading the Word**

Questions 13 to 17 ask you about the ways that you have used Spreading the Word

13. Since receiving Spreading the Word, what level of attention have you given it?

- Put it on the shelf unread
- Read some parts briefly
- Read the whole briefly
- Read some parts thoroughly
- Read the whole thoroughly

If you answered 'Put it on the shelf unread', to question 13, please answer the following question 14. If you did not, please go to question 15.

14. Why did you not read Spreading the Word? Tick all those that apply

- Lack of time
- I did not consider it to be relevant to my work
- Information overload
- Low priority given to it by colleagues
- Other (please state)

Go directly to question 23

15. In what ways have you actually used Spreading the Word? Tick all those that apply

- Read it only
- Discussed it with colleagues
- Shared the guidelines with others
- Used the ideas in practice
- Used it for teaching or research
- Other (please state)

If you ticked 'Read it only' to question 15, please answer question 16. If you did not, please go to question 17.

16. What factors constrained your further use of Spreading the Word? Tick all those that apply

- I did not consider it to be relevant to my work
- I already use similar guidelines /ideas
- In my practice
- I plan to use it at a later date
- It was not user friendly
- Time constraints
- Other (please state)

Go directly to question 18

17. What are your motivations for using Spreading the Word in the ways listed in
question 15? Tick all those that apply
The issues raised are interesting  [01]
The issues raised are relevant to my Work / research
It provided useful teaching/research materials
Other (please state)

Your views about Spreading the Word
This final section asks for your opinions about Spreading the Word

18. What is the most useful section of Spreading the Word for you? Tick one
Executive summary  [04]
Literature review  [05]
Case study analysis  [06]
Discussion and recommendations  [07]
Dissemination checklist questions (Table 3)  [08]
Planning a dissemination strategy (Table 4)  [09]
Dissemination pathways (Table 5)  [10]

19. What is the least useful section of Spreading the Word for you? Tick one
Executive summary  [04]
Literature review  [05]
Case study analysis  [06]
Discussion and recommendations  [07]
Dissemination checklist questions (Table 3)  [08]
Planning a dissemination strategy (Table 4)  [09]
Dissemination pathways (Table 5)  [10]

20. The following are statements about Spreading the Word. For each statement please say whether you agree strongly, agree, are neutral, disagree or disagree strongly with it about the sections you have read.
Tick the appropriate box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree strongly</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The content is relevant to my work / research</td>
<td>[01]</td>
<td>[05]</td>
<td>[09]</td>
<td>[13]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality of the content is high</td>
<td>[02]</td>
<td>[06]</td>
<td>[10]</td>
<td>[14]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It provides me with new information</td>
<td>[03]</td>
<td>[07]</td>
<td>[11]</td>
<td>[15]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It provides useful guidance for dissemination of projects</td>
<td>[04]</td>
<td>[08]</td>
<td>[12]</td>
<td>[16]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. Are there any aspects of dissemination, not covered by Spreading the Word, that you would like to have been included? If so, please give details.

22. Did you have any expectations of the content of Spreading the Word before you read it, and if so, what were they and did it match them?
23. Any other comments

Finally, please check that you have answered all the questions you can, and return the questionnaire in the envelope provided. We would like to thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

The Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) is one of the world's leading institutions concerned with education, training, research, and consultancy relating to the planning, provision, and management of infrastructure for development in low- and middle-income countries.

WEDC is devoted to activities that improve the health and well-being of people living in both rural areas and urban communities. We encourage the integration of technological, environmental, social, economic, and management inputs for effective and sustainable development.

WEDC has increased its range of activities, level of expertise and number of staff since it was founded in 1971. It now forms the core of the Institute of Development Engineering, established in 1995 to reflect the growth of new areas of professional interest which have broadened well beyond the boundaries of water and sanitation engineering.

Web site: http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/cv/wedc/intro.htm