

# GOOD GOVERNANCE LEARNING NETWORK MEMBERS MEETING

## THE POTENTIAL OF WhatsApp AS A LEARNING TOOL



g g i n  
good governance learning network

**Newlands  
30 August 2018**

# WHAT IS WHATSAPP?

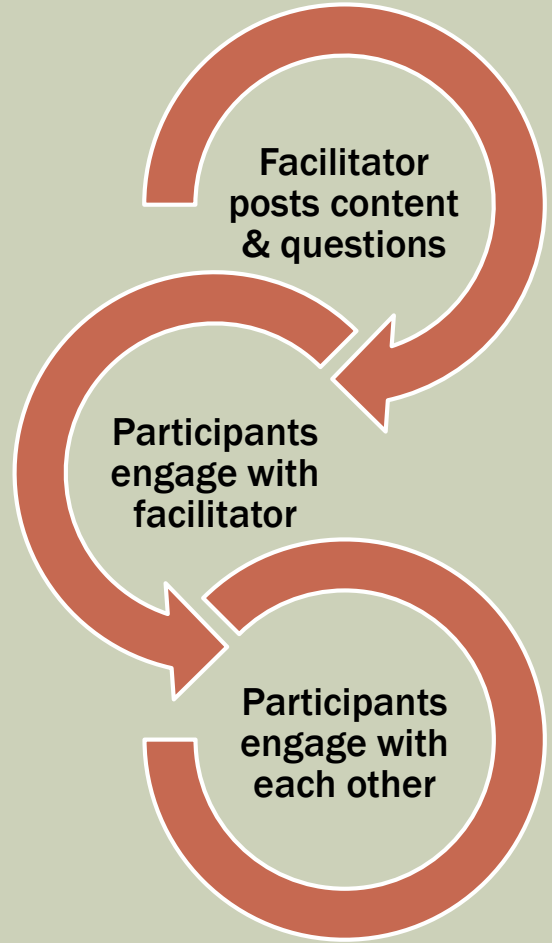
- A free message application
- Instant and convenient platform for transferring information
- It has the following collaborative features:
  - Multi-media: exchange videos, text messages, images and voice notes
  - Group chat: can support interaction for up to 50 group members
  - Unlimited message shares
  - Cross platform engagement possible: mobile devices, PCs, tablets etc
- Relatively low data usage
  - Video and image transfer requires more data
- These features make it suitable for networking, sharing & learning

# BENEFITS OF WHATSAPP AS A PLATFORM?

- Text, audio and visual = power combination
- A study by Marshal (2002) showed that people remember:
  - 10% of what they read
  - 20% of what they hear
  - 30% of what they see
  - 50% of what they hear and see
- The virtual space may be easier for some people to engage with
- Quick response times between group members
- WhatsApp is already widely used so learning to use the technology is generally not a major concern

# CASE STUDY: WHATSAPP FOR PEER SUPPORT & TRAINING TO MIDWIVES IN KENYA

- USAID funded pilot - K4Health
- Switched from web-based to WhatsApp



**USAID** LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE PROJECT  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

### Utilizing Mobile-based Peer Support Networks to Improve Midwifery Service Delivery

Integrating the Use of WhatsApp into the Leadership, Management & Governance (LMG) for Midwifery Managers Course

By: **Katia Murita**, Senior Project Associate, Management Science for Health  
**Madhusree Adnan, MA**, Project Assistant, Management Science for Health

[www.LMGforHealth.org](http://www.LMGforHealth.org)

### Is WhatsApp Suitable for Transmitting Learning Content?

Cassandra Mickish Gross  
Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs  
Knowledge for Health Project

Global Digital Health Forum  
December 6, 2017

# LESSONS LEARNT FROM CASE STUDY

## Most useful content

- Research articles
- Videos
- Discussion questions

*“That video makes understanding so easy”*  
(Group 2 participant)

## Platform participation

- 74% of participants active
- Pleasantries and greeting matter
- Participants respond to shorter resources a lot quicker

*“WhatsApp promotes interaction even for shy students”*  
(Lecturer)

## Recommendations

- Facilitation & group admin essential
- Provide a mix of resource types
- Fewer questions better
- Open-ended works well

## WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL CONS?

- Access to reliable Wi-Fi
- Message flooding and unmanaged activity flow
- Continuous focusing on mobile screen (eye-strain)
- Time-consuming engagement
- Risk of discussions going off-track
- Passive observers need to be drawn into the conversation
- Groups that are too large (>15) can become unmanageable

## SOME OF THESE ISSUES CAN BE MANAGED

- Need a dedicated group administrator / facilitator to
  - Work with members to set the learning programme
  - Co-ordinate group discussions
  - Share content and set guiding questions
- Groups not larger than 5-10
- Rules of engagement to be negotiated. For example
  - Agree on date and times for group interaction. Group activity limited to these times to prevent messaging at all hours of the day
  - Group facilitator will post content and get conversation going
  - Provide guidelines for the posting of videos and images

# HOW CAN IT WORK BEST?

- As with all virtual learning, it works best when its supplemented by:
  - Face-to-face engagement
  - Resource repository
  - Other online platforms (such as Facebook)
- The learning group to agree on a focus area within each theme
  - Members offer content (case studies, videos etc.) to the facilitator to be used in learning
- The administrator/facilitator to have a 'light touch'
- Collective commitment of members important
- Members can use text or voice to give inputs or respond
- GGLN Co-ordinator to support group facilitators
  - Groups to run more independently post-pilot phase



# NEXT STEPS FOR EACH THEMATIC LEARNING GROUP

- Clearly identify the primary objectives of learning group
  - Sharing information VS problem solving VS peer support VS learning a new skill
  - This will shape nature of content
- Each group to identify focus area (s) for the pilot phase
  - Set a curriculum of sorts
- Identify a group facilitator
- Discuss feasibility of WhatsApp as a platform
- Look at supplementing WhatsApp interaction (Facebook, Skype etc)
- Agree on time commitment

# COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

- Member comments, insights, questions

# LEARNING GROUPS ACTIVITY

- Select one of the three learning groups
- Each group to discuss the following four questions
  - What is the main objective of the learning group?
    - E.g. to provide peer support, learn a new skill, to collectively solve problems etc
  - What content area will you focus on for the pilot phase within your theme?
    - E.g. Within Informal Settlements, the group could choose to focus on gender transformation within UISP etc
  - How can you make WhatsApp work as a learning platform for your group?
    - How often will you 'meet' online in WhatsApp group?
    - When will you start – i.e. set up chat group & have your first online meeting?
    - What type of content will you use? – videos, articles etc.
    - Set at least one learning objective
    - Who is going to play facilitator role?

# KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION & SHARING – DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR LEARNING GROUP

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# UPGRADING INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS – DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR LEARNING GROUP

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# CIVIC BASED MONITORING– DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR LEARNING GROUP

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