Research Dissemination: Why, who, what, how, and when?

SCHOOL for THINKTANKERS

On Think Tanks

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Why?

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Why have a dissemination strategy?

- It's not enough to just generate evidence
- You want your work to inform policy and practice (including learning loops)

... to ultimately have an impact on the citizens and planet etc.
- To keep your funders happy and ensure future funding

Who?

Who do you want to inform?

Academia/Researchers

Policymakers

Civil society

Opinion shapers

Media

Private/business sector

International organizations

Implementers

Further considerations on the Who:

*What do you want them to do?

Conduct a Stakeholder Mapping:

- Usual or unusual suspects
- Familiar or unfamiliar
- Interested or disinterested
- Pro or against
- Powerful/influential or less so

What and how?

"The nature of the 'think tank' is changing. We used to be able to influence policy by speaking directly to policymakers and policy-influential media outlets. But the rise of social media has increased the role of the public in policy change. This has (or should) radically alter the way in which think tanks engage with research and ideas. We now need to make sure we're going after all four target areas with big ideas about the world. As Robin Niblett, head of Chatham House, recently said, "think-tanks must consider whether it suffices to try to remain sources of objective debate and analysis, or if it is time, once again, for them to adopt a more proactive stance, being explicit about the principles that they believe should underpin peace and prosperity."

Considerations on the **How:**

- Start with the end of your theory of change
- Build your dissemination strategy into your theory of change
  - Considering your who –how is information consumed i.e. what type of product is best for each type of stakeholder

- Report
- Brief
- Peer-reviewed journal article
- How to Guide/Playbook
- Public event
- Workshop/roundtable
- 1:1 high level conversations
- Video
- Podcast
- Fact sheet
- Newsletter
- Blog post
- Testimony
- Fora via WhatsApp/SMS
- Website
- Database

Research Outputs

How to publicize?

Social media: Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook; WhatsApp, YouTube, Telegram, TikTok... (toolkit)
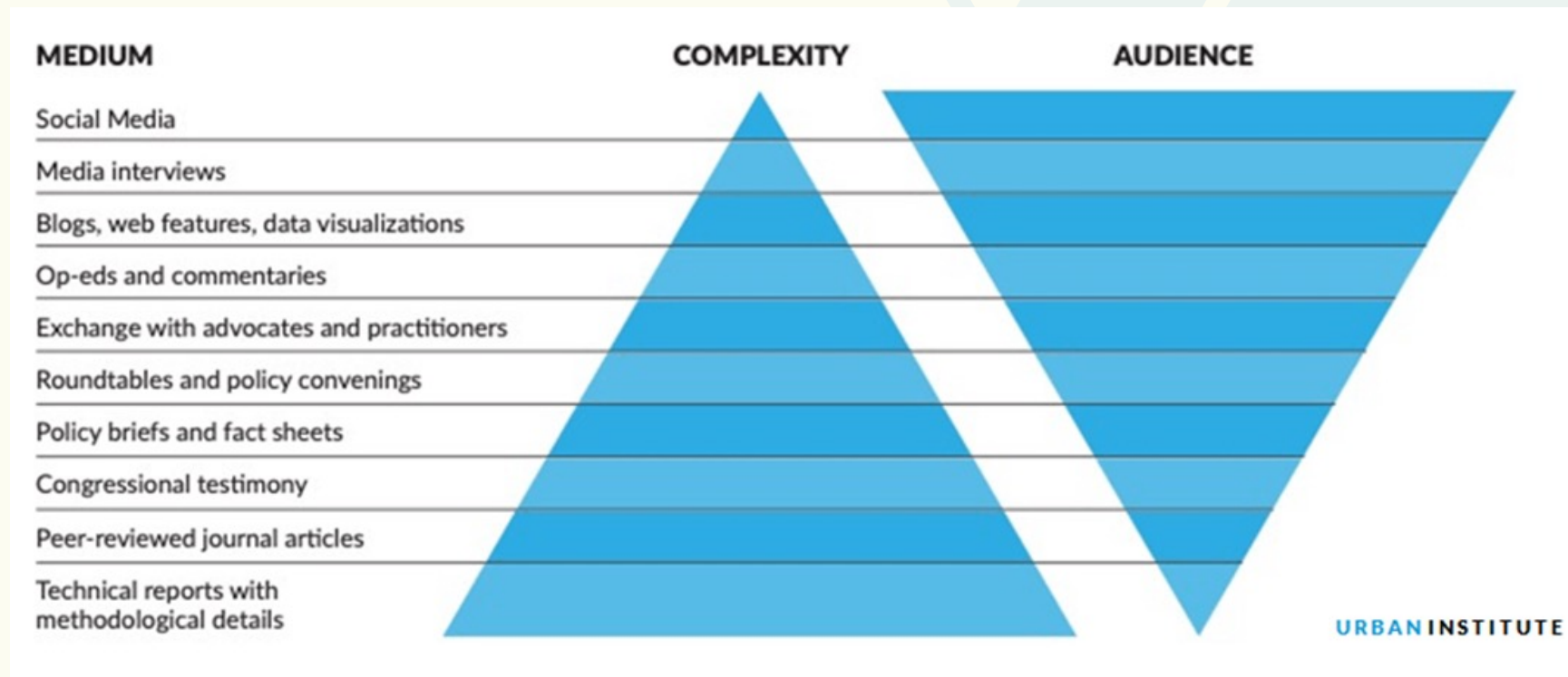
Media: Newspapers, magazines, radio

Academia/policy: think tank/university websites

Funders/policymakers: websites, blog series, newsletters

Public: own social media and word of mouth

Watchdogs/monitors: newsletters, tweets, blogs

COMMUNICATING RESEARCH REQUIRES A MULTI-LAYERED APPROACH

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| MEDIUM	COMPLEXITY	AUDIENCE
Social Media		
Media interviews		
Blogs, web features, data visualizations		
Op-eds and commentaries		
Exchange with advocates and practitioners		
Roundtables and policy convenings		
Policy briefs and fact sheets		
Congressional testimony		
Peer-reviewed journal articles		
Technical reports with methodological details		

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When?

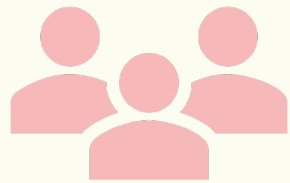# When should you disseminate?

- Before you know very much?
- Along the way?
- Once you have all the answers?

Disseminating at the start

- Helpful way to lay out your research question

- Plant a flag – hey we're researching this!
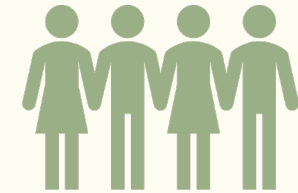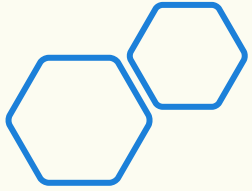
- Get input from stakeholders at the beginning
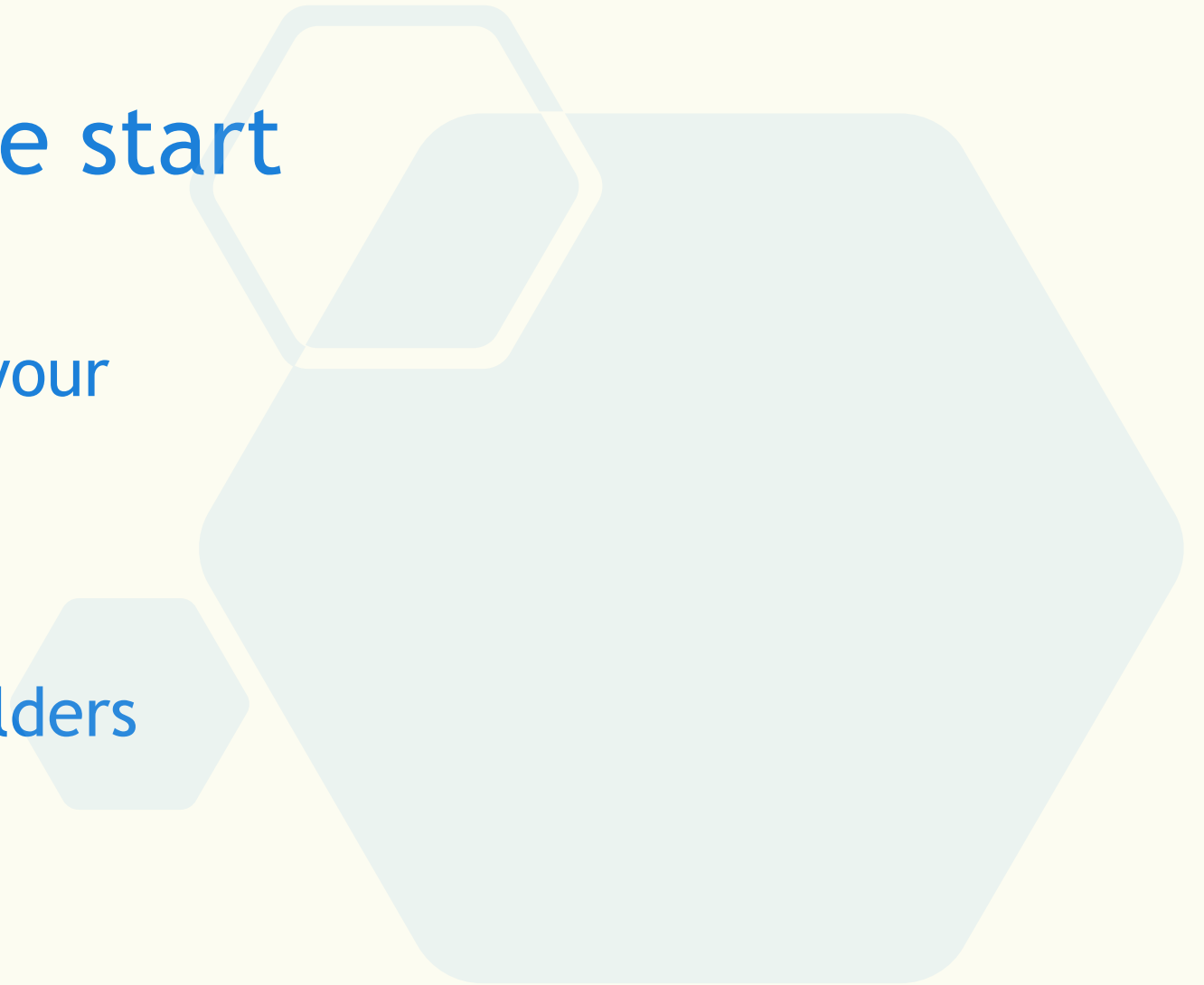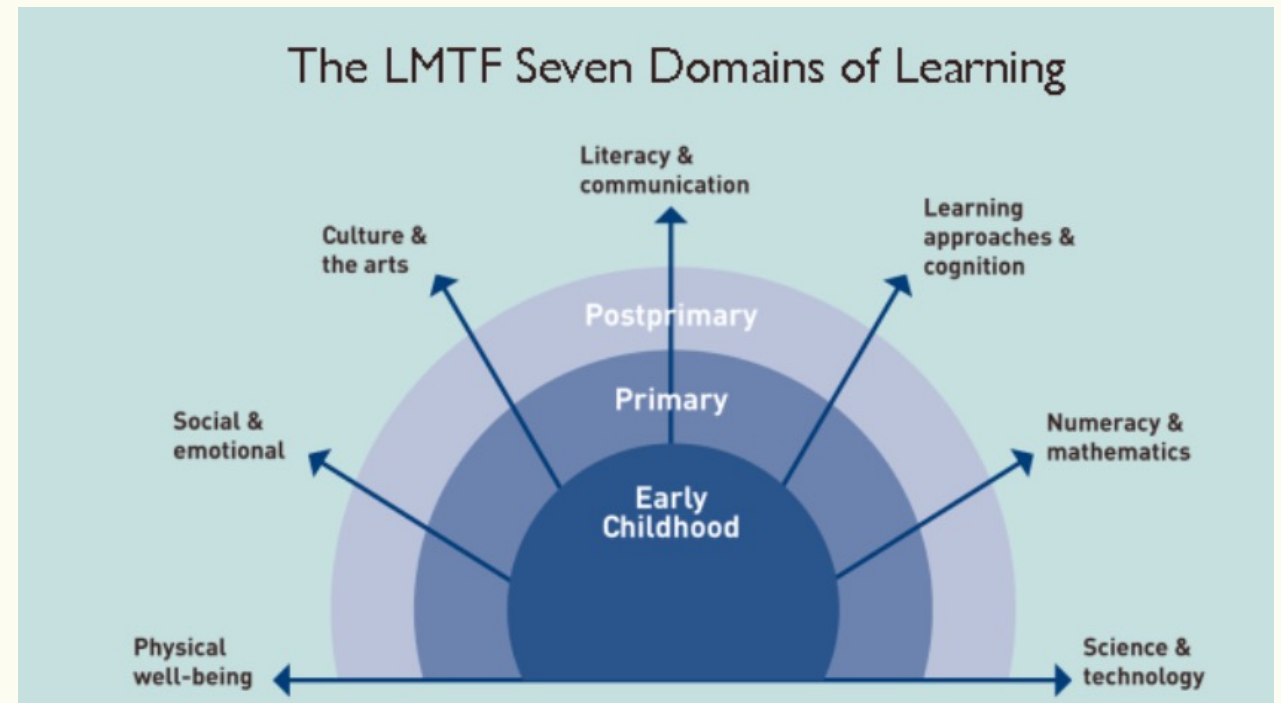
Engage in a consultative process: Example

Learning Metrics Task Force
- Led by CUE and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics aimed at improving learning outcomes for children and youth worldwide.
- 30 organizations in multistakeholder collaboration.
- 1,700 Consultations in 118 countries.

The LMTF Seven Domains of Learning

Partner with those who have presence on the ground:
Example

Real-time Scaling Labs

- Led by CUE in collaboration with local partners around the world

- Participatory, action research approach to document, learn from, and support ongoing efforts to scale education innovations

- Goal: generate more evidence and provide practical recommendations around the process of scaling and strengthen local scaling capacity

Create communities of practice: Example

The Global Education and ECD Costing Consortium (GEECC)

- Experts working to advance knowledge and capacity around costing Ed and ECD

- Monthly working session Zoom meetings

- Outputs:
  - Problem Statement and Theory of Change
  - Joint survey on existing costing tools
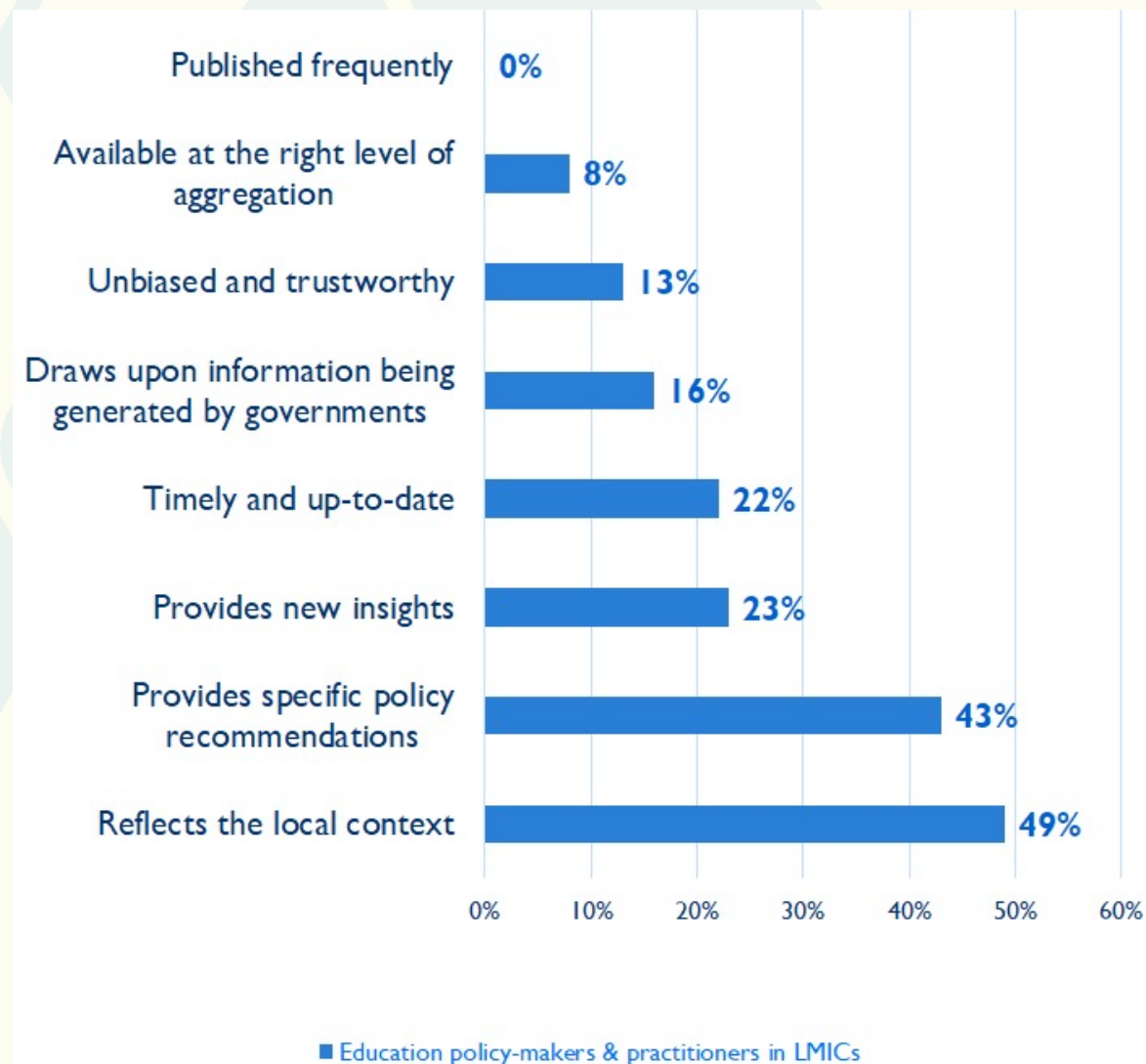 - Website with compiled resources

Summary

WHAT MAKES SOME SOURCES OF DATA AND ANALYSIS MORE HELPFUL TO EDUCATION DECISION-MAKERS?

The *2017 Listening to Leaders Survey* was sent via email to policymakers and practitioners knowledgeable about, or directly involved in, development policy initiatives at any point between 2010 and 2015, in 126 low- and middle-income countries.

Published frequently	0%
Available at the right level of aggregation	8%
Unbiased and trustworthy	13%
Draws upon information being generated by governments	16%
Timely and up-to-date	22%
Provides new insights	23%
Provides specific policy recommendations	43%
Reflects the local context	49%

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%   60%

■ Education policy-makers & practitioners in LMICs

Gracias a todxs!

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