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Learning Alliances : Scaling Up Innovations in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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Author(s)

Smits, S. Moriarty, Patrick Sijbesma, C.

Description / Abstract

This book brings together theory and practice to examine the challenges of widespread innovative change in a real-world setting. Learning alliances is a relatively new concept in development, particularly in the water sector. This state of the art report provides: a conceptual introduction to learning alliances; case studies of current practice in Latin America, South Africa and the Middle East; a critical reflection about lessons learnt, in regard to both practice and outcomes; and an analysis of remaining questions and uncertainties. The book is in the first place geared towards water sector professionals with an interest in strengthening the developmental impacts of research and innovation, the scaling up of innovative implementation practices, and new approaches for capacity development. It will also have a wider appeal for anyone with an interest in the practical application of learning methods, innovation and change. Massive efforts are put into developing innovative approaches that will rapidly increase access to sustainable water and sanitation services and deliver improved hygiene practices. These innovations often lead to local success, but most remain isolated. One of the main reasons is that innovations do not become institutionalised and sector institutions lack sufficient capacity to adapt promising innovations to changing circumstances and to support their longer-term development. Learning alliances have emerged at least partly in response to this blockage, to create a platform for joint learning and innovation. They provide a structure to link users of water and sanitation services, district or provincial level organisations with responsibility for service provision and support, and national policy makers. They aim to strengthen institutional capacity at all these levels to develop, support and scale up innovation.

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