

Strengthening relationships between businesses and their customers may help WASH-focused social enterprises achieve their business and social change goals.

Leveraging business relationships and discussion networks to promote WASH products and services at community level

Kumoji, EK¹, Cassaniti, J¹., Ohkubo, S¹., Kaufman, S¹. and Rariewa, F¹. (2024). Characteristics, information needs, and discussion patterns among customers of WASH-focused social enterprises: An influence mapping and network analysis study. ¹Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs, Baltimore, Maryland.

BACKGROUND

There is little evidence on the role of community networks in promoting interest in WASH services in low- and middle-income markets.

OBJECTIVES

Explore community networks and key influencers for accelerating the diffusion of information about WASH services and behaviors.

METHODS

The study was conducted in Wa Municipality, Northern Ghana in 2023. Participants were business clients and their discussion networks. Qualitative Influence Mapping was conducted with XX community members, and a quantitative survey among 513 clients and their discussion network captured through snowball sampling. Data was analyzed using DataMuse mapping and Social network analysis.

RESULTS

- Influence Mapping: 30 individuals
- Network Analysis: 513 individuals, mostly from urban areas (68%). Business clients (11%) initiated the snowball. 1004 referrals were made by the sample (Fig 5)
- Women named 31 community actors for WASH (Fig 1), and 5 had high influence and connections (Fig 2)
- Men named 31 community actors for WASH (Fig 3), and 3 had high influence and connections (Fig 4)
- A vibrant WASH discussion network existed with discussions occurring in clusters with a central node that expanded the network and propagated the discussions (Fig 6)
- Discussions were reciprocal (Fig 7), propagated among same sex lines (Fig 8), and were clustered by discussant type i.e., participants had more discussions on WASH with individuals who were like them (Fig 9 & 10)
- Business clients had the largest discussion reach within the network (Fig 11)
- More toilets were purchased through discussions compared to washing stations (Table 1 & Fig 12)

CONCLUSIONS

Community members are interested in discussions about WASH and are comfortable talking about WASH with individuals like them. Business clients may be important influencers for leveraging WASH discussions and purchases among community members, to advance business goals.

Fig 1. Net-Map of actors and linkages identified by the women's group

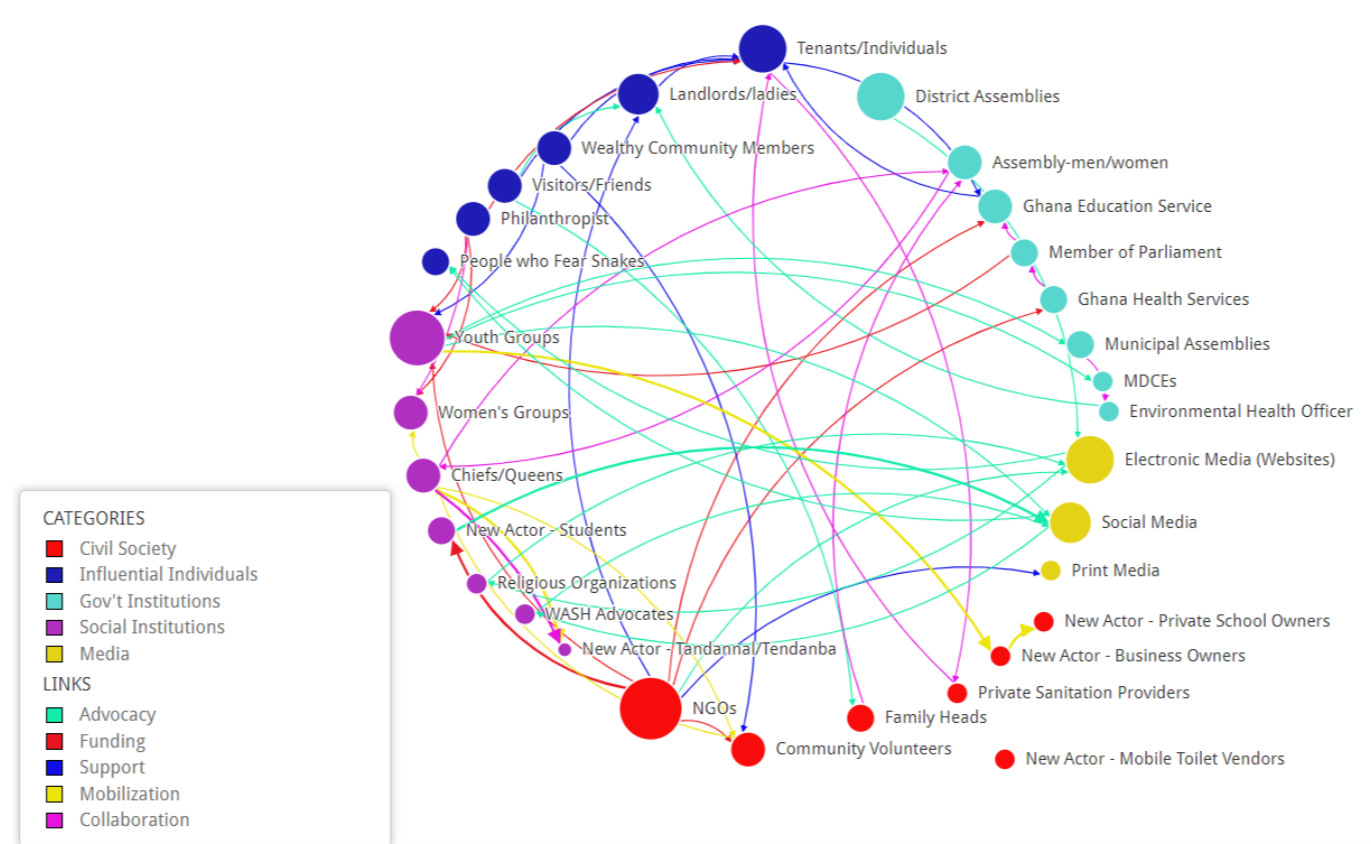


Fig 2. Influence-connection matrix of developed from data from women's group

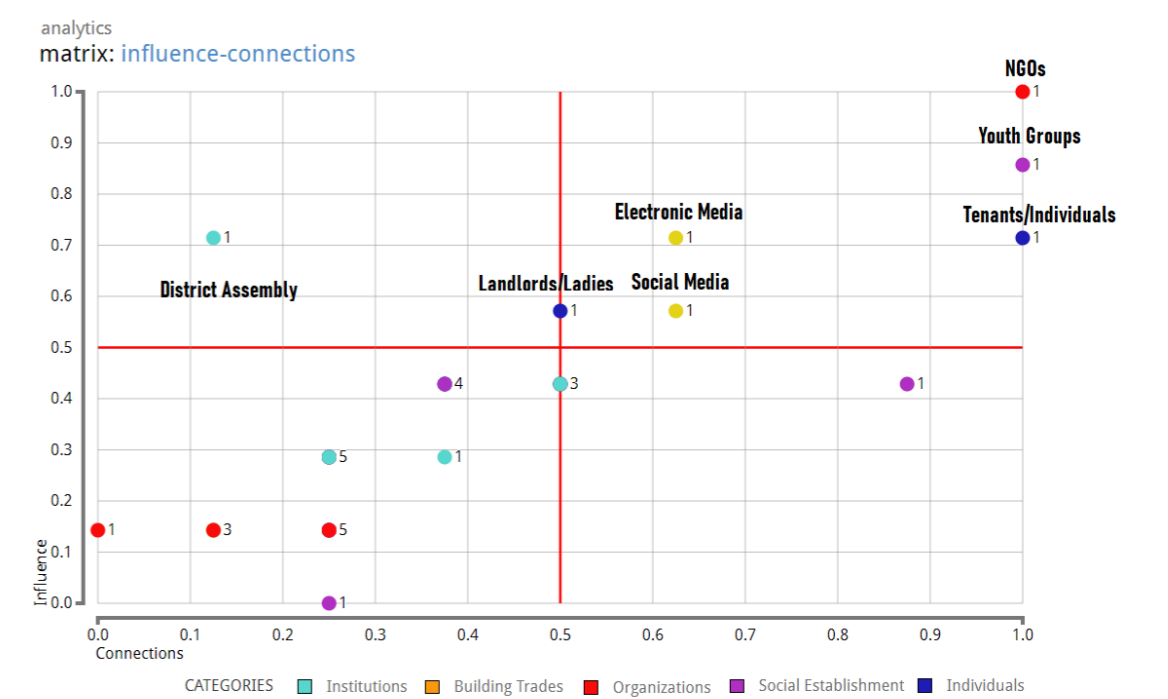


Fig 3. Net-Map of actors and linkages identified by the men's group

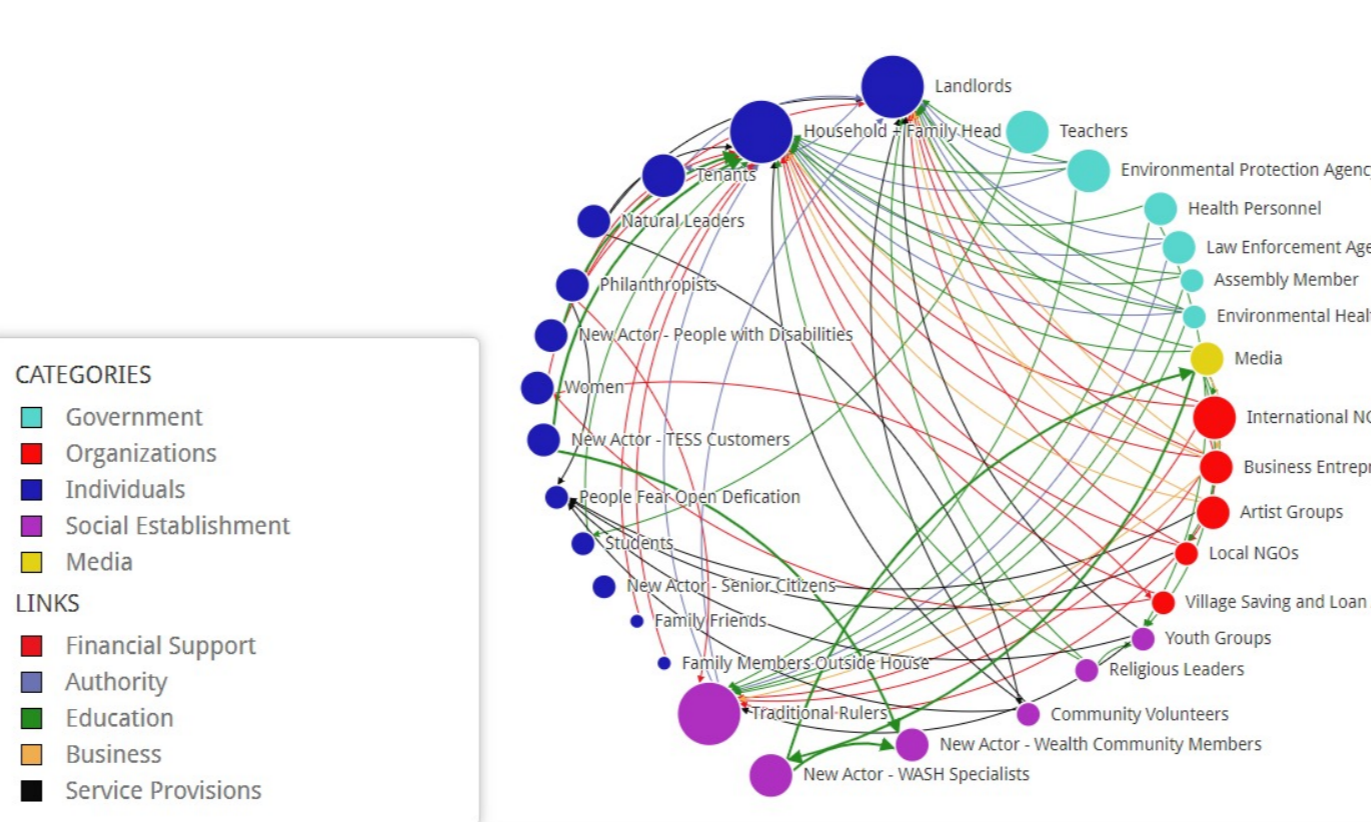


Fig 4. Influence-connection matrix of developed from data from men's group

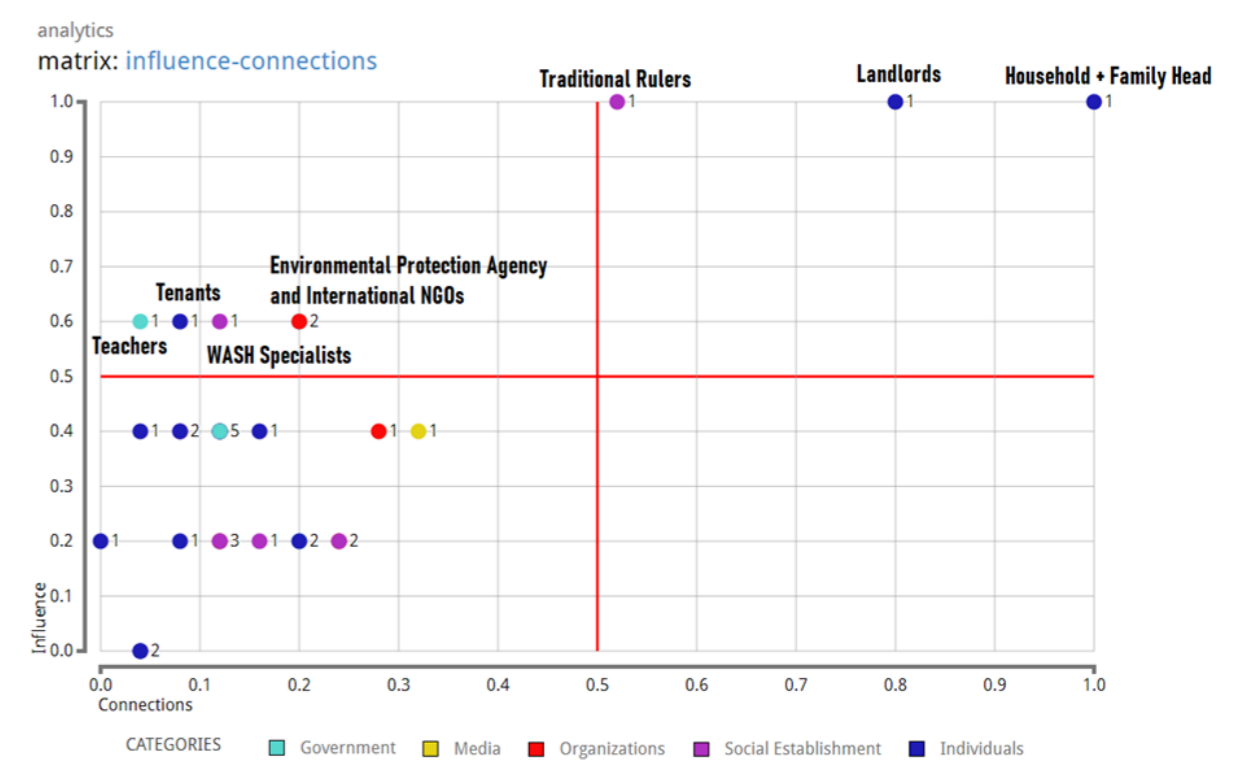


Fig 5. Linear visualization of the WASH-related discussions

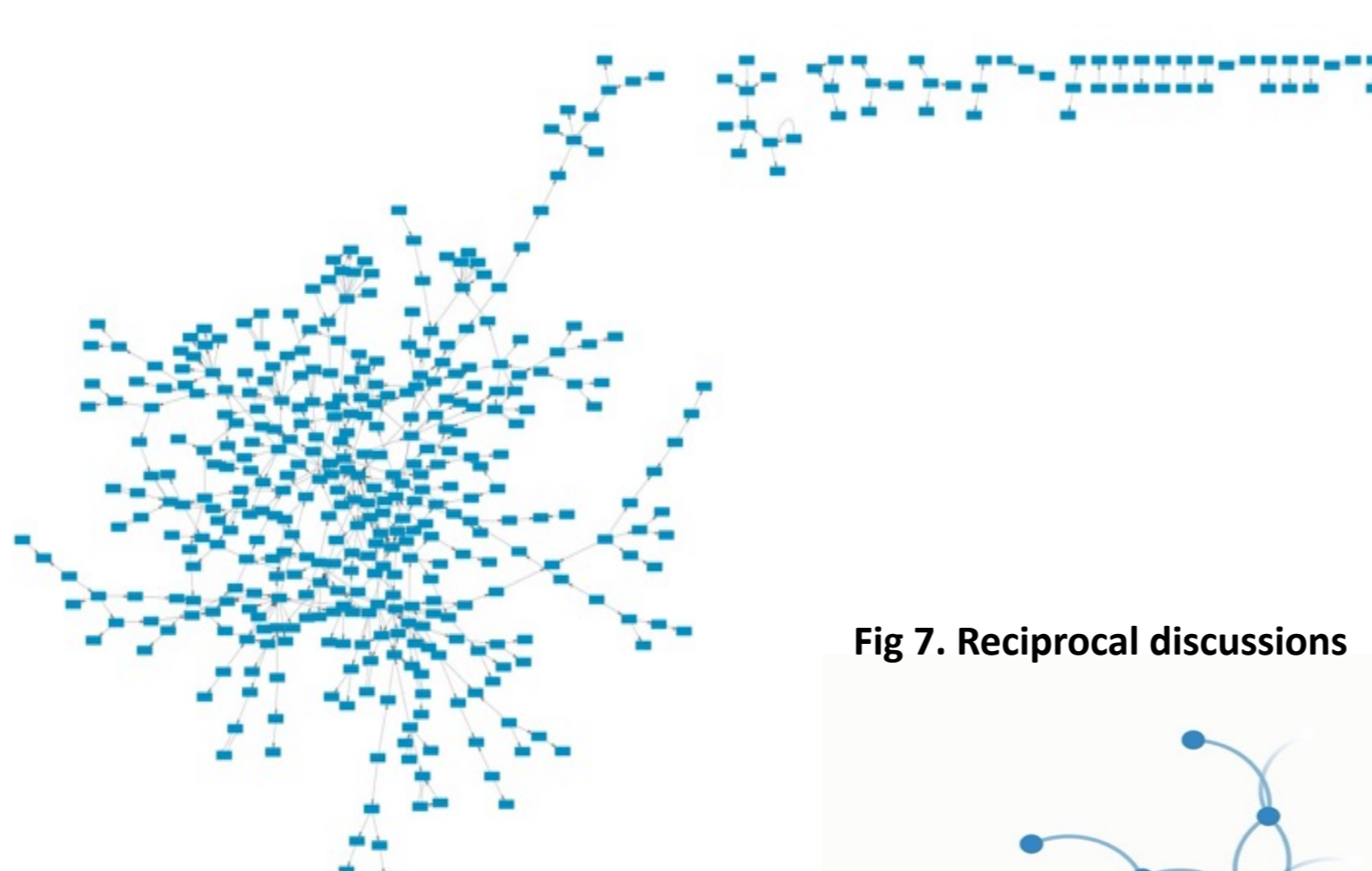


Fig 6. Discussion network clusters and bridges

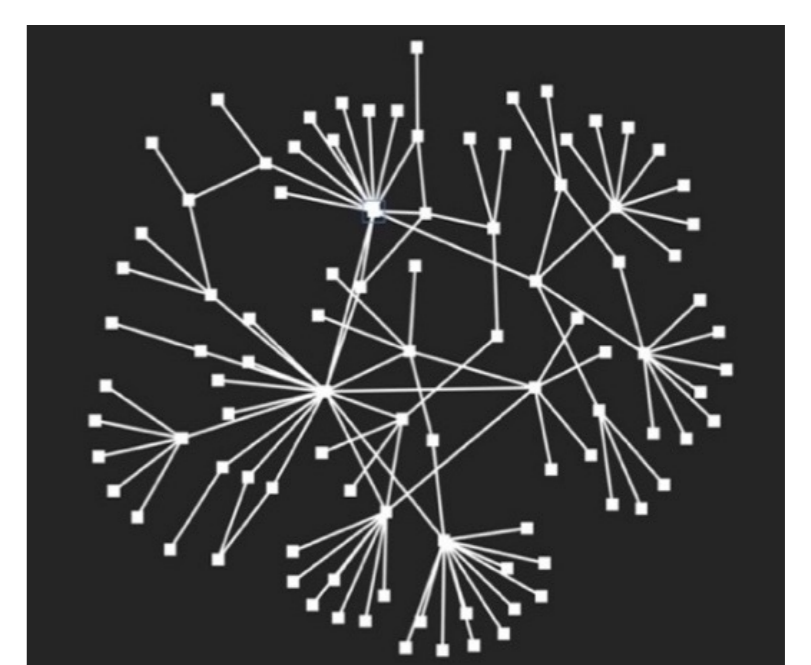


Fig 7. Reciprocal discussions



Fig 8. discussions propagating with same sex

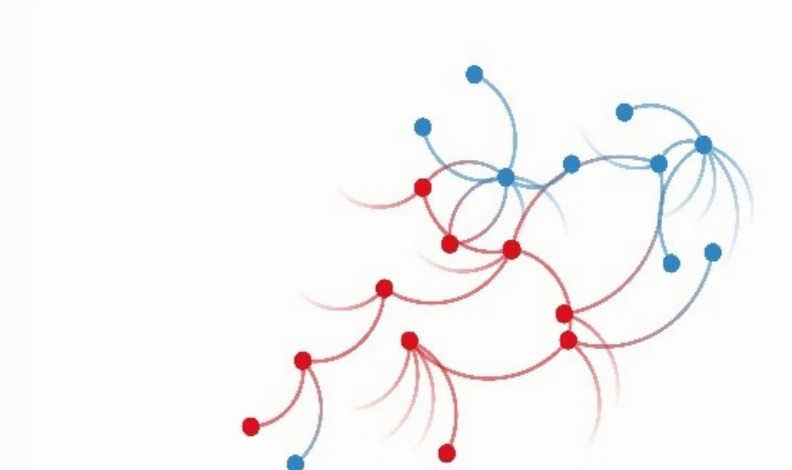


Fig 9. Preference for discussion by reach, by discussant type

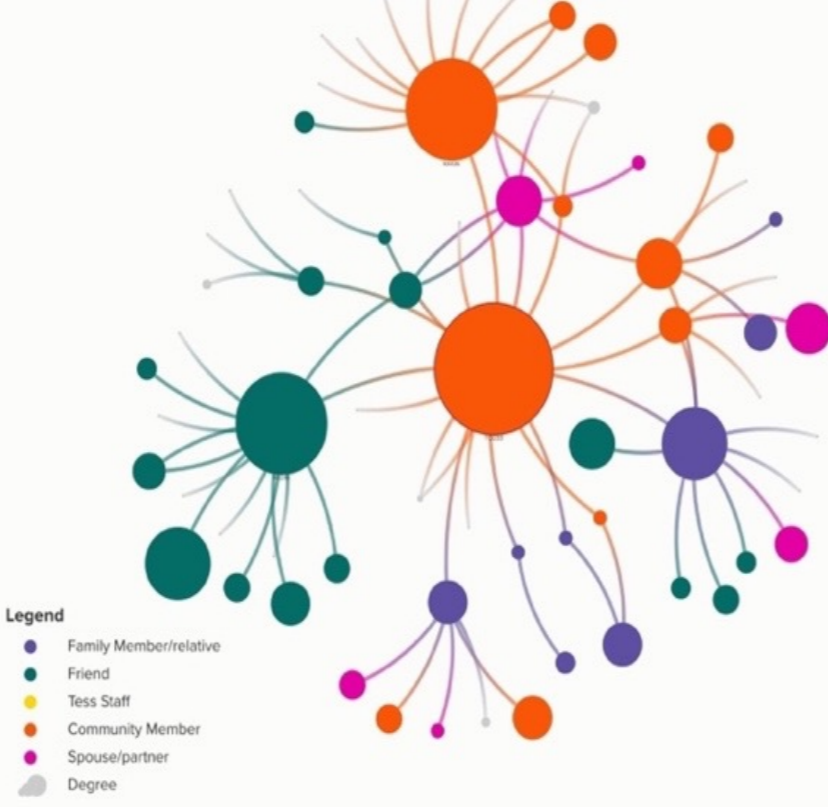


Fig 10. Same sex discussion about need

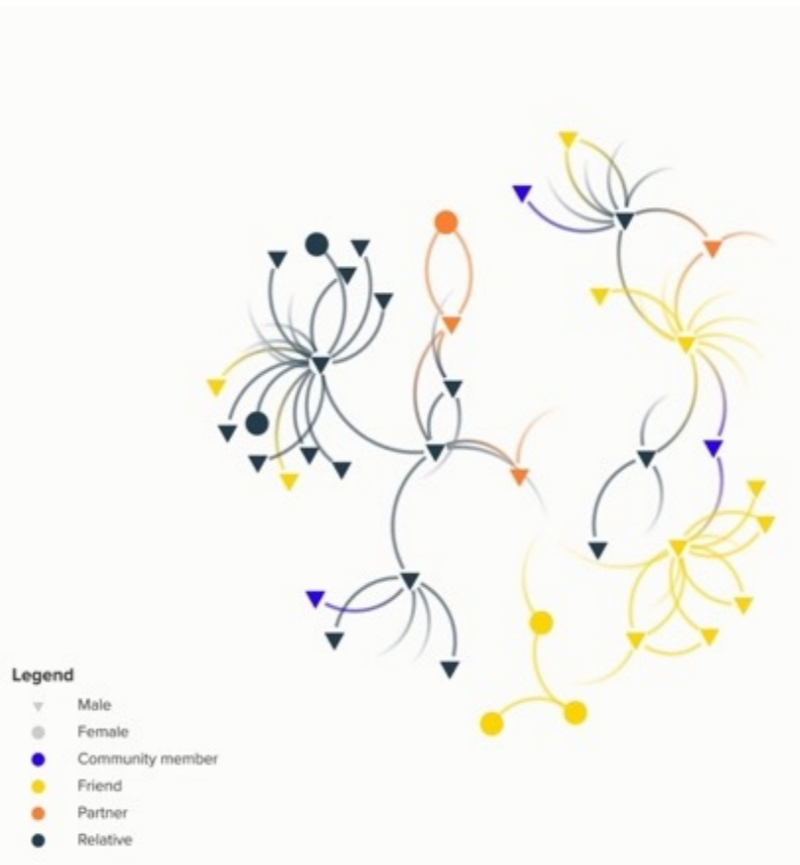


Fig 11. Discussion by business client versus referred individual

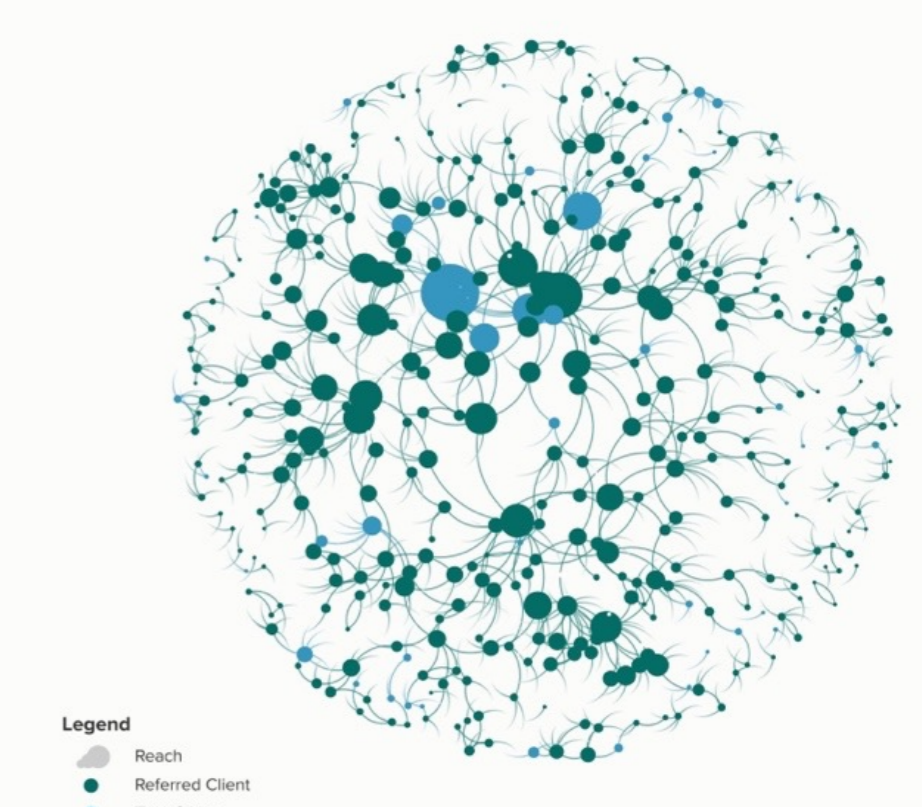


Table 1. Discussion and purchase of toilets and washing stations

PURCHASED A TOILET		Toilet		Washing Station		N	%
		n	%	n	%		
Residence	Urban	87	34.9	20	20.0	107	30.7
	Suburban	45	37.2	14	32.6	59	36.0
Marital Status	Married	99	37.1	23	23.3	122	33.0
	Not Married	33	80.9	11	27.5	44	67.6
HoH	Yes	95	37.4	7	29.2	102	36.7
TOTAL		132	35.7	34	23.8	166	32.4

Fig 12. Discussion and purchase of toilets and washing stations

