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**National HIV/AIDS/STI/TB Council
Information, Education and Communication/
Behaviour Change Communication
Technical Working Group**

Final Assessment Report

October 2014

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1. Introduction

The Communications Support for Health (CSH) project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has been mandated to strengthen the capacity of the National Health Promotion Technical Working Group (TWG). The National Health Promotion TWG is convened by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Community Development and Maternal and Child Health (MCDMCH), the HIV/AIDS information, education and communication/behaviour change communication (IEC/BCC) TWG convened by the National HIV/AIDS/STI/TB Council (NAC), and the National Malaria IEC/BCC TWG convened by the National Malaria Control Centre (NMCC). In 2010, CSH conducted institutional assessments that included a baseline evaluation of the functioning of the IEC/BCC TWGs placed at the MOH,¹ NAC, and NMCC. The baseline evaluation of the TWGs revealed the need for strengthening TWG capacity to contribute to the review and development of evidence-based IEC/BCC tools. As of 2010, the IEC/BCC TWG had not held any formal meetings to review IEC/BCC campaigns and had not reviewed any IEC/BCC campaigns using standard guidelines. Although the MOH, NMCC, and NAC reported having a role in IEC/BCC materials development, none of the health promotion staff had training in formative research or the development of IEC/BCC materials. The MOH, NAC, and NMCC also proved not to be actively coordinating TWG meetings. Although the MOH had a national TWG, it did not meet on a regular basis and did not have any selection criteria for TWG members. The NMCC TWG did not meet regularly, while the NAC developed campaign materials through a Prevention Theme Group and other ad hoc committees that would be meet as needed.

Based on the findings of the baseline evaluation, CSH in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) reviewed and updated the Terms of Reference (TOR) and selection criteria for members of each TWG. In addition, CSH and GRZ developed guidelines for pre-testing and evaluating communication materials. CSH has also provided capacity-building support to TWG members by providing training to all members in behaviour-centred programming (BCP), which includes materials development, pre-testing and evaluation, and introduction of the CSH-developed gender analysis and strategy. A midline evaluation in 2012 showed a revival of the TWGs. The TWGs had reviewed three non-routine and seven routine campaigns, close to reaching the project target of 12 campaigns. The TWGs had also convened 20 meetings on a quarterly basis, as well as ad hoc meetings to review campaign materials.

¹ The MCDMCH was formed in Zambia in 2013. The MOH National Health Promotion TWG was merged with those also serving in the MCDMCH in 2013; thus, the baseline assessment reflects that of the National Health Promotion Unit within the MOH in 2010.

To help measure progress towards the project efforts in strengthening the Government line agencies' BCP TWGs, CSH conducted a final assessment with the members of the three TWGs that focused on documenting the key successes and changes made from CSH support to the TWGs, assessing what capacity areas still need to be built and the future plans for each of the TWGs. The assessment was implemented using a focus group discussion with the TWG members. A semi-structured discussion guide was developed to lead the focus group discussions. This report documents findings from the NAC BCP TWG capacity assessment.

1.1. Objectives of the Assessment

1.1.1. Main Objective

The main objective of the assessment exercise was to assess how the CSH project's support has affected the functioning of the NAC IEC/BCC TWG since 2012, when the project started supporting the TWGs.

1.1.2. Specific Objectives

Specifically, the assessment sought to

- Assess how well the NAC IEC/BCC TWG is functioning (e.g., Is the TWG meeting on a regular basis? What is the participation of the different TWG members? Are they fulfilling/achieving the TORs?);
- Assess how useful the TWG materials (e.g., TOR and guidelines for pre-testing and evaluating communication materials) have been in carrying out the work of the TWG;
- Assess the perceived usefulness of the TWG in contributing to the development of IEC/BCC materials;
- Investigate how the IEC/BCC capacity of the individual TWG members changed over the course of CSH's support;
- Determine the plans of the TWG at the end of the CSH project; and
- Find out what needs to be improved to further enhance the capacity of the TWG and its members.

2. Methodology

CSH conducted a focus group discussion with 11 key members of the NAC IEC/BCC TWG for the assessment. The focus group discussion was held immediately following one of the TWG's quarterly meetings. CSH Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RME) staff members facilitated the discussion using a facilitator guide developed around the above research questions. To better ensure objective responses to the questions that were posed to the TWG, the seconded CSH–NAC BCC advisor was asked not to respond to the questions, but to simply observe the discussion. The RME team analysed the results of the assessment using a notes-based analysis, and wrote this report. Upon finalisation of the report, the RME team will also facilitate a presentation of the results to the TWG members, focusing on the effect of CSH support and next steps for moving forward with the TWG when the CSH project ends.

The assessment was conducted at NAC Headquarters in Lusaka on 19 September 2014, and lasted for approximately three and a half hours.

2.1. Key TWG Capacity Assessment Areas

The findings from the assessment are organised around the key research areas: functioning of the NAC BCP TWG; usefulness of the CSH-developed materials for the TWG; perceived usefulness of the TWG; perceived changes due to the capacity-building efforts of individual TWG members; future plans of the TWG; and areas for improvement to enhance the capacity of the TWG and its members.

3. Findings

3.1. Functioning of the NAC BCP TWG

The TWG consists of members from 15 organisations and is led by a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, and a Secretariat. Currently, these positions are held by the Ministry of Education, the Media Institute of Southern Africa, and the NAC, respectively. Members in leadership positions are elected to serve for a two-year period. The main role of members in these positions has been to provide overall leadership to the TWG, as well as facilitate and organise the TWG quarterly meetings, organise the work of the TWG, and as necessary establish ad hoc committees or task groups to perform specific tasks.

The TWG members expressed satisfaction with the overall structure and leadership of the group and thought that it has been functioning well. Furthermore, they reported that the TWG is better organised now that the leadership of the TWG is by institution, rather than individuals. This has allowed better continuity when individual members leave their jobs, as institutions are able to reassign the role to other people within that organisation.

Members reported that the TWG has been following its mandate, as outlined in their TORs, by holding quarterly meetings to review and pre-test IEC/BCC materials developed by partner organisations or NAC. Furthermore, the TWG meets in between quarterly meetings on an as-needed basis to review IEC/BCC materials. Overall, the majority of the organisations have actively participated in the TWG, with a minimum of 13 organisations represented at the meetings; only two organisations have been less active. Furthermore, due to its success at the national level, the TWG worked to establish subnational TWGs at the provincial and district levels to review and approve of IEC/BCC materials.

Members reported that financial and material support received from the CSH project has helped to ensure that the TWG functions well.

“From 2012 when CSH developed and handed the TWG the TORs document as well as some guidelines for reviewing and pre-testing IEC/BCC material, the TWG has met consistently on a quarterly basis and ever since, there is no quarter that passed without the TWG successfully meeting to look at various issues brought before it. We have reviewed materials, approved and referred some for adjustment to ensure they are in line with standards set for HIV/AIDS communications materials that have been set. We ensure that language is appropriate to the setting as well as targeted audiences. CSH has also helped NAC meet financial and other logistical costs of successfully hosting TWG at various locations. In my view, the TWG has fulfilled its mandate as prescribed by the TORs and guideline documents handed to it,” said the TWG Acting Chairperson.

The TWG members noted that the last-minute scheduling of meetings poses a challenge, as members have insufficient notice to attend meetings. This was often due to delays in procuring a venue for the meeting or other logistical issues. Some members felt this affected member participation.

3.2. Usefulness of CSH-Developed Materials

In order to guide and strengthen the functioning of the TWG, CSH developed two guidance documents. These include the TORs for the TWG and guidelines for pre-testing and reviewing IEC/BCC materials and interventions. Members were asked how useful they have found these guidance documents as they carry out the work under the TWG.

Members expressed that the two guidance documents have been useful in guiding the work of the TWG. The TORs document has provided guidance to the leadership of the TWG by explicitly outlining the roles of the members as well as the overall mandate of the TWG. Before the TORs were formulated, members felt that the work of the TWG was vague and lacked direction. One member stated, *“The TORs document has acted as a guide to the TWG members as they clearly state the role of this grouping in the HIV/AIDS IEC/BCC arena. Now new members of the TWG do not struggle to understand our job as a TWG, thanks to the TORs document CSH formulated.”*

Members also said that with the TORs, it is now easier to bring on and orient new members to the TWG. One member remarked, *“[T]his document has also helped us as coordinators in that it guides us regarding when the TWG should meet and what the agenda should be like based on the stipulated functions of the TWG in the TORs document. We are very grateful to CSH for thinking of developing this document. I personally feel leading a grouping without clearly stated TORs is like being employed with a job description, and work becomes very difficult in this situation because you don’t know what you get up to do; shooting in the dark, as others may call it.”*

Members thought that the guidelines for reviewing and pre-testing IEC/BCC materials have allowed these materials to be reviewed in a systematic, detailed, and objective way, essentially providing a step-by-step review process. Furthermore, members added that having the guidelines has sped up the process for reviewing the materials. One member of the TWG remarked, *“These guidelines for reviewing materials have made the TWGs work less tedious because now when materials are brought for review before this group, the members know exactly the key areas to look out for in those materials. Therefore, the time taken to review materials has greatly reduced. The guidelines provide a step-by-step methodology of reviewing materials and interventions in a very detailed, objective, and systematic way.”*

Another member added, *“With these guidelines, I feel our criticism of certain materials is not seen as malicious, because we provided constructive criticism and that can be seen in the comments that we make on the materials. And because of this, even United Nations agencies like UNICEF and IOM have been bringing their materials for review. At the beginning, they never had confidence in this committee, and they would give their materials to senior NAC staff for quicker approval, but because NAC Management trusts this committee, those materials ended up at the TWG for review and if found wanting in some aspects, they would be returned to the authors for revision and brought back to the TWG for consideration again. Now you will find that a lot of UN materials come here for review.”*

When members were asked for suggested improvements to the guidance document, they recommended that the documents be updated to incorporate guidelines for reviewing IEC/BCC materials specifically developed for people with disabilities. TWG members felt that the guidelines do not address how people with vision and hearing impairments can review IEC/BCC materials.

3.3. Perceived Usefulness of the TWG

The majority of the members expressed that they felt the work of the TWG was very useful, not only to NAC as an organisation but also to the organisations that they represent. The creation of the TWG has provided a forum where IEC/BCC practitioners and professionals from various organisations are able to interact and share their diverse knowledge and experiences and where synergies can be created.

Members felt that the quality of communication materials being produced and distributed has greatly improved due to the TWG review process. A number of organisations reported that they have brought their materials to the TWG for review before being produced in mass quantities for distribution to the targeted audience. One TWG member expressed, *“I would personally and confidently submit that in the past two years, the TWG has done great work in terms of fulfilling the role of reviewing materials that are brought before it for consideration. Quite a number of organisations have confidence in this TWG based on the number of materials being brought for review. We have provided constructive criticism to materials that come here and at the end of it, materials that pass through the committee have much better quality than those that do not come through the committee. I will give an example of organisations like UNICEF and IOM; they have been bringing their brochures, documentaries, and videos for review by this TWG. This was not the case before CSH provided us with the guidelines and TORs. The confidence in the TWG is growing.”*

However, some members expressed that the lack of a legal mandate to compile and review all communication materials on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment before their production and circulation is an issue. Members provided examples of incorrect messages on HIV being distributed, such as there being a cure for HIV, despite the existence of the TWG. Thus, members saw these examples as a limitation of the TWG, since they are unable to stop the production or distribution of these types of messages or materials.

3.4. Capacity Building of TWG Members

Another key area of the assessment was to document how the IEC/BCC technical capacity of the TWG members has improved or changed since CSH began providing support in 2012. TWG members reported that their understanding of IEC/BCC issues has been greatly enhanced through their interaction with other IEC/BCC practitioners on the TWG and through the process of reviewing communication materials together as a group. One member reported, *“[B]efore I joined the TWG, I used to think it is fine to have one poster with more than one message being*

communicated on it. But now, and of my interacting with other practitioners in the TWG and also after going through the process of reviewing IEC/BCC interventions for various organisations at TWG meetings, I have come to understand that a poster should just carry one message to be effective. This knowledge and experience in benefiting my organisation very immensely in that the quality of IEC/BCC materials we develop has improved. In the long run, our target audiences have benefited from our materials.”

Another member added, *“Being a member of this TWG has helped me to increase my scope of IEC/BCC interventions. I have personally never thought about [or] considered the people with hearing or sight impairment. Now, because of the presence of someone coming from the disability sector in the TWG, I now always think about people with disabilities as we develop materials or implement activities.”*

Additionally, members felt that the trainings offered by CSH on BCP and formative research have greatly improved their knowledge of IEC/BCC and research. One member said, *“This TWG has greatly benefited me personally and NZP+ as an organisation because of trainings in behaviour change programming as well as formative research trainings that were accorded to us as members of the NAC BCP TWG. As a result of these trainings, our capacity to develop and review IEC/BCC materials has greatly been enhanced and we are able to provide very good guidance on development of IEC/BCC materials as well as review of the materials being developed and used out there. So from the review work that we have done on behalf of NAC, I would say this TWG is very useful.”*

None of the members expressed a need for CSH to provide additional training or capacity building, other than refresher courses, to further develop any skills or knowledge that would help them better contribute to the development and review of IEC/BCC activities. Members did express that new members joining the TWG should receive the provided formative research and BCP trainings. One member said, *“[B]ut it is also important to bring to your attention that some of the members that received these trainings are no longer members of this committee and new ones have come in, and you [CSH] may consider providing additional training to cover the new members and refresh the old members.”*

3.5. Plans for the Future of the TWG

The assessment also looked at the plans the TWG has going forward to enhance the functionality of the grouping, sustain activities, and increase its relevance to NAC and the partner organisations beyond the life of the CSH project. Additionally, areas for improvement for the TWG were assessed.

TWG members expressed uncertainty at the possibility of the TWG continuing to meet and conduct its activities due to the lack of financial resources for procuring a venue and accompanying logistics to hold the meetings, all of which had been covered by the CSH project. The Secretariat led by NAC also expressed concern with being able to secure funding for the TWG moving forward. However, members did agree on the importance and usefulness of the TWG, and therefore the TWG leadership explained its plan to meet with senior management

within NAC to discuss possible mechanisms for sustaining the meetings and functionality of the group.

Overall, the members felt that the guidance documents developed with CSH support were useful and that they would continue to make use of these documents. For the TORs specifically, members stated that they would continue to meet and function as prescribed in the document. Members did not have any specific requests for adjustments that needed to be made currently, but they did state that in the future as the need arises, the group could meet to discuss and update the document accordingly to fit their needs. Similarly, the members did not feel the guidelines for pre-testing and reviewing IEC/BCC materials and interventions needed revisions. There was a suggestion to consider incorporating some guidance for pre-testing and reviewing IEC/BCC materials specifically targeted for audiences that are disabled. Some members expressed that this is currently a limitation of the guidelines.

When asked if there were any additional documents the TWG planned to develop to assist or improve the functioning of the TWG, members expressed the usefulness of developing and operationalising a monitoring and evaluation framework for partners of the TWG to report on their related HIV/AIDS IEC/BCC activities. The framework could be used to guide members to regularly report on and discuss the implementation of their IEC/BCC activities in a systematic manner.

Lastly, members also discussed the importance of the TWG seeking legal authority to regulate HIV/AIDS-related IEC/BCC activities. As mentioned previously, members expressed concern about some of the messaging in HIV/AIDS communication materials. Thus, members would like to see the TWG have more authority over the production and distribution of IEC/BCC materials.

4. Key Successes and Challenges

The following were the key successes identified during the assessment:

1. Since 2012, when CSH support to the TWG began, the IEC/BCC TWG has consistently met on a quarterly basis and fulfilled its mandate of reviewing IEC/BCC-related materials.
2. Membership within the TWG has not only improved from the revamping of the TWG in 2012, but the majority of members have also actively participated in the group through their participation in meetings and other events organised by the TWG.
3. The number of IEC/BCC materials that have been brought before the TWG for consideration and review has increased greatly since 2012. This is likely due to organisations perceiving the review process to be beneficial and resulting in improved quality of IEC/BCC materials.
4. The TORs and guidelines for pre-testing and reviewing IEC/BCC materials and interventions have been very useful and helped guide the work of the TWG. Members expressed that the TORs have helped facilitate the adoption of new members into the TWG and that the guidelines have provided the TWG with a step-by-step process for reviewing IEC/BCC materials objectively and in a timely manner.
5. Both the trainings provided by CSH and the interaction of the different members within the TWG have helped improve the technical capacity of members in IEC/BCC design. Most members have participated in the formative research and BCP trainings offered by CSH.
6. Overall, members feel the TWG has an important mandate and would like to see it continue to meet and provide support for reviewing IEC/BCC HIV/AIDS-related materials.

The following were the key challenges and constraints identified:

1. NAC does not have the resources to support the continued functioning of the TWG. Thus, members are uncertain about if and how the TWG will continue beyond the life of the CSH project.
2. NAC has a lack of legal regulatory authority to review and approve all HIV/AIDS-related communication materials.
3. Partner organisations lack a framework for monitoring IEC/BCC materials and interventions. Members feel it is important to regularly monitor and discuss the progress of IEC/BCC activities to ensure that quality and standards are being met.

5. Conclusion

Overall since 2012, the functioning of the HIV/AIDS IEC/BCC TWG has greatly improved. From the assessment, CSH support has evidently helped to clarify the mandate of the TWG and the different roles and responsibilities of the individual members, has provided guidance and training to members on how they can fulfil their role of developing and reviewing high-quality IEC/BCC materials, and has allowed the group to come together on a regular basis to review IEC/BCC materials. Furthermore, members see the TWG's role in the review of IEC/BCC materials as very important, particularly in being able to improve the quality of HIV/AIDS-related communication materials and interventions in Zambia. The primary challenge noted in the assessment was identifying and securing the necessary resources to sustain the TWG after the CSH project ends.

Annex 1: NAC BCP TWG Capacity Assessment Programme Agenda

Date: 19 September 2014

Venue: NAC Headquarters, Lusaka

Time	Activity	Facilitator
08:30 – 09:00	Arrival and Registration of NAC BCP TWG Members	TWG Chair
09:00 – 09:30	Introductions/Welcome Remarks	Mr. Harvey Ngwale/All
09:30 – 09:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Meeting Objectives • Introduction to NAC BCP TWG Capacity Assessment 	Mr. Collins Muntanga
09:45 – 10:15	Functioning of the NAC BCP TWG	Mr. Collins Muntanga
10:15 – 10:30	Usefulness of CSH-Developed Materials	Mr. Collins Muntanga
10:30 – 10:45	Perceived Usefulness of the TWG	Mr. Collins Muntanga
10:45 – 11:15	Capacity Building of TWG Members	Mr. Collins Muntanga
11:15 – 11:30	Plans for the Future of the TWG	Mr. Collins Muntanga
11:30 – 12:15	Areas for Improvement	Mr. Collins Muntanga
12:15 – 12:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing Remarks • Way Forward • Lunch 	Mr. Collins Muntanga/ Mr. Harvey Ngwale

Annex 2: Participants in the Capacity Assessment

#	Name	Designation
1	Rita C. Kalamatila	NAC BCC Officer
2	Annel Sakala	Communications Specialist, Afya Mzuri
3	Pamela Chama	Head of Communications Department, SFH PRISM
4	Emelda Mwendapole	BCC Intern, NAC
5	Clementina Mwape	Zambia Health Education and Communications Trust
6	Mpo Siyandwa	BCC Intern, NAC
7	Harvey Ngwale	Programme Officer, ZAMBART, Acting TWG Chairperson
8	Eunice Masi	PACA, NAC
9	Estella Mbewe	Programme Officer, NZP+
10	Gibson Mizinga	PTMEO, NAC
11	David Dube	NAC BCC Advisor

Capacity Assessment Facilitators

#	Name	Designation
1	Collins Muntanga	Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor
2	Victor Peleka	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist