



**EVALUATION
OF THE
MEDIA/MATERIALS CLEARINGHOUSE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Elisa Knebel

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The Population Technical Assistance Project
1101 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: (202) 898-9040
Fax: (202) 898-9057
admin@poptechproject.com

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ACRONYMS

AED	Academy for Educational Development
CA	Cooperating agency
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CHID	Combined Health Information Database
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
GH/PRH	Bureau for Global Health, Office of Population and Reproductive Health
HCMD	Health Communication Materials Database
HCMN	Health Communication Materials Network
HCP	Health Communication Partnership
HIPNet	Health Information and Publications Network
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome
IEC	Information, education, and communication
INFO	Information and Knowledge for Optimal Health Project (JHU/CCP)
IP	Internet protocol
JHU/CCP	Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs
M/MC	Media/Materials Clearinghouse (JHU/CCP)
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NLM	National Library of Medicine
NPIN	National Prevention Information Network (CDC)
PHIL	Public Health Image Library
PIP	Population Information Program
POPLINE®	Bibliographic database of family planning and related health and development issues (JHU/CCP)
REPROLINE	Reproductive Health Online (JHPIEGO)
RH Gateway	Reproductive Health Gateway (managed by INFO on behalf of HIPNet)
STD	Sexually transmitted disease
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

This report contains an external assessment of the Media/Materials Clearinghouse (M/MC) for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Bureau for Global Health, Office of Population and Reproductive Health (GH/PRH).

The M/MC is based at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs (JHU/CCP), in Baltimore, Maryland. Since 2002, the M/MC has been managed by the Health Communication Partnership (HCP), which is held by JHU/CCP and its partners, the Academy for Educational Development (AED), Save the Children Federation, Inc., the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, and Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

The mandate of the M/MC is to collect project materials, such as films, videos, posters, pamphlets, and other items designed to convey health messages, and to share these widely with the developing country health communication community, including USAID, cooperating agencies (CAs), and international donors.

Funding for the M/MC from USAID comes under USAID Population and Reproductive Health Strategic Objective 1. The purpose and objectives of this assessment, as noted in the scope of work (see appendix A) are to

- better understand the scope and usefulness of the M/MC's collection of information and
- explore how the M/MC can best serve the mandate of HCP.

The assessment examines the achievements and challenges of the M/MC in terms of its use, efficiency, satisfaction, and utility:

- **Use:** amount or extent to which the M/MC is accessed and contributed to by users
- **Efficiency:** the use of resources in providing the M/MC, whether the financial model provides for ongoing operations as well as growth, and whether the M/MC provides any duplication with any other services or organizations
- **Satisfaction:** how well the services and outputs of the M/MC satisfy users
- **Utility:** how well the M/MC met the needs of users, USAID, and HCP

The consultant reviewed the web-based M/MC information as well as key documents capturing historical data and usage statistics. Telephone and onsite interviews were conducted regarding the areas noted above. In total, 32 individuals were interviewed, which included USAID, M/MC, and HCP staffs; frequent users; partners; and donors. Additionally, a survey was conducted, of which 194 health communication professionals responded, 139 users and 54 nonusers (1 nonresponse on use).

The following section summarizes the assessment's key findings and conclusions and the principal recommendations for the future.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Use

- Survey respondents report high use of the M/MC.
- There is a steady number of submissions from CAs, international organizations, and others. Users report a desire to see that their items have been posted to the database.
- Use of the M/MC's online database has remained stagnant since January 2004 and likely decreased since mid-2003 (this figure is an estimate because web statistics are not reliable for this period). Evidence suggests that the lack of promotion, a weak brand/identity, and a hard-to-find web presence have contributed to this decline. Current web use does not match previous use of the M/MC when it was primarily a paper-based operation.

Efficiency

- The M/MC does not have sufficient funds to support mailing items to country resource centers nor individuals without charging them for the materials. It also does not have the funds to support its virtual presence nor its online community, the Health Communication Materials Network (HCMN).
- The M/MC is providing a unique collection and service to the health communication community. No other site is as comprehensive and accessible. Health communicators see the M/MC as the only place to provide a long-term, accessible place for preserving their projects' materials past the duration of the often short-term timeframe of projects.
- Without accurate statistics on the number of users and use of the materials, it is impossible to calculate cost-effectiveness.

Satisfaction

- Satisfaction with the quality, quantity, relevance, topics, and languages of the materials is extremely high among current users of the M/MC.
- Satisfaction with the customized information solutions provided by staff and the overall responsiveness of staff is very high. M/MC's ability to connect professionals to enable building collaborative partnerships is appreciated.
- Users are equally interested in the topics of HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, and the make up of the materials collection reflects this.

Utility

- Through the regular and extensive application by HCP staff, the M/MC is extremely valuable in supporting HCP's mission to develop the capacity of health communicators. However, M/MC's role as part of HCP's larger strategy is not clearly articulated in the HCP framework, nor are there measures by which to judge its performance.
- The M/MC is effectively serving USAID's mission of harnessing the development experience by actively creating partnerships with other organizations and individuals and making this experience widely accessible through the use of web-based tools.
- The materials are used in their original form for immediate use or are adapted when users design their own materials. Saving time and a desire not to redo work that has already been done were the two most frequently cited reasons for accessing the collection.
- The M/MC wishes to complement its comprehensive collection with a more dynamic presentation of materials to include lessons learned about their design, production, and impact, while also maintaining the most up-to-date and relevant collection possible.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Use

- The M/MC should explore adding a registration page to capture background information when users download items from the site and/or a shopping cart feature or cookie system in order to track which materials are downloaded. This will facilitate knowing the extent of use and which information and under which formats it is accessed.
- The M/MC needs to develop a marketing and branding strategy. Part of this process requires obtaining an address that is easy for users to remember. There is a need to remind former users and inform new users of the M/MC's services and the added value of the materials to their work.
- A new, easy-to-complete online submission form with an option for sending electronic file attachments as well as a revised paper submission form are needed. This will stimulate regular submissions and up-to-date collection.
- Incorporating accountability language on the submission of health communication materials to the M/MC into CAs' cooperative agreements and contracts would support exhaustive submission of materials.

Efficiency

- The M/MC needs financial support to ensure the continuity of its existing programs.
- The M/MC should investigate other CAs' experiences in recovering costs from charges for materials or annual organizational membership fees for the use of the database.
- In light of the need to reach those individuals who are not connected to the Internet, funding should be delegated to providing shipments of samples to resource centers that are likely to have the widest reach in sharing the materials in the field.

Satisfaction

- The M/MC should establish a feedback system to continually monitor satisfaction with the materials and the web site as well as the relevance of the collection to users' needs.
- The M/MC should clearly articulate criteria for the submission of materials.

Utility

- HCP management needs to clearly articulate how the M/MC fits into its strategic framework and assist in the development of indicators for monitoring.
- The M/MC should invest in actively engaging the HCMN and HCP staffs so that they become the channels through which to identify the lessons learned and best practices of its collection. The M/MC needs a paid, high-level leader/facilitator who will provide intensive support for HCMN.
- The M/MC should merge the HCMN site and the M/MC database as one to create a hub around the shared knowledge and community of practice. Forming partnerships with other similar sites or organizations should be explored to mitigate any redundancies.
- USAID/Washington and CA staffs should promote the products and resources of the M/MC when working with USAID Missions and in-country partners.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The M/MC needs to develop a monitoring and evaluation strategy that regularly monitors content, use, utility, and satisfaction, collecting only data specifically related to the mission of HCP and only that data that will be analyzed and reported. The M/MC should obtain whatever is necessary to allow for the automatic generation of accurate web usage statistics to its pages.

- In light of current staffing, at a minimum, the librarian should keep a monthly request log with the most essential information in tabular format and enter these data into the computer at the end of each month.



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1101 Vermont Ave., NW Suite 900 Washington, DC 20005 Phone: (202) 898-9040 Fax: (202) 898-9057 www.poptechproject.com