

USAID Field Assessment of PHN Publications

Proposed Scope of Work

DRAFT 8/6/02

Summary. The following scope of work calls for an external evaluation team to visit four developing countries to examine how USAID-funded publications are received and utilized by key organizations working to improve reproductive health. The evaluation responds to concerns expressed by senior staff in USAID's Global Health Bureau about the effectiveness of reports and publications in meeting developing-country audiences' information needs and achieving the Bureau's strategic objectives. This draft has been prepared by a subgroup of the Population and Health Materials Working Group (PHMWG) for discussion in the working group and among USAID staff.

Objective. To assess whether and how USAID-funded PHN publications are received, absorbed, adapted, and applied for improving policies, programs, and practice in the field.

Evaluation Methods. The principal evaluation method will be structured interviews with individuals or groups of staff working in selected developing country institutions. An external evaluation team (e.g., 2-3 health and communications experts) contracted through PopTech or another third-party organization such as Healthlink, UK (which specializes in information dissemination), should conduct the interviews and synthesize the responses for USAID and the PHMWG. The interviews would require about 10-day visits to each country.

The consultants would work collaboratively with members of the PHMWG and USAID staff to select countries and institutions to be contacted and to finalize the proposed list of questions. After reaching agreement on the scope of work, the team would send an introductory letter and list of questions to the directors (or key contact persons) of selected institutions requesting their participation in an interview. While a small number of organizations may wish respond to the questions by email, we anticipate that the bulk of the information will be gathered through face-to-face interviews. These interviews would allow for greater probing and depth than could be gleaned from written questionnaires.

Proposed Countries. The criteria for selecting countries include the following:

- USAID priority countries
- Regional representation (LAC, anglophone Africa, francophone Africa, and Asia)
- Health systems undergoing changes such as decentralization
- Service providers and decisionmakers working in remote areas
- Countries at different levels of income/development, and having different levels of contraceptive use.

We recommend including four countries with this range of attributes. A tentative list from which USAID staff and the team might select includes Nigeria, Ghana, India, Nepal, Philippines, Guatemala, Senegal, Mali, and Egypt.

Institutions To Be Contacted. To cover the breadth of audiences that USAID-funded agencies serve, the following types of organizations should be contacted. To the extent possible, the team should contact organizations both in the capital city AND at least one relatively remote district or township.

- Ministries of Health, Planning, and Population/Youth/Sports (depending on the country) and the national population commission or similar body
- Major service providers, both governmental and nongovernmental (including IPPF affiliates and religious organizations)
- Major NGOs, including population and health advocacy groups, women's groups and youth groups
- USAID mission
- Cooperating agencies' and other donors' field offices
- Media organizations
- District or local-level health officers; grass-roots NGOs

Members of the PHMWG will provide country mailing lists to the evaluation team so that the consultants can review overlaps among the lists and select organizations to contact. After making initial contacts in country, e.g., with the USAID mission or Ministry of Health, additional organizations may be identified that are not on CAs' mailing lists. The team may wish to contact these groups to discuss their information needs and how they are/could be met.

Key Questions. The interviews should begin with open-ended questions that explore information use from the respondents' perspective. These open-ended questions can be followed by prompted questions to explore use of information on specific topics of concern to USAID.

Audience profile and types of materials received

- Describe your organization's mission (if necessary) and your major job responsibilities
- What materials (journals, reports, or other publications) do you receive on reproductive health and family planning?
- How and from where do you receive them? Can you identify the source(s)? How regularly do you receive them?

Use of information and results of use

- Which materials do you regularly read or refer to?
- Which ones have you used in your work? Why? When?
- Give specific examples of how you have used these materials (Examples may include teaching, training, reference/library, citing in reports or presentations, and program and policy development. See also longer list of categories of use.)
- Have particular materials made important contributions to your work?

- What about these materials made them useful?
- Did you or your organization make decisions or changes based on the information contained in these materials? Describe these.

Adaptation and dissemination of information

- How do you share information on new developments in RH within your organization (seminars, newsletters, etc.)?
- How many people see or use the information?
- Have you adapted the materials in anyway? Have you translated or summarized the information?
- Do you have a system/procedure for incorporating new information or practices into your plans, programs, or services?
- Have you disseminated the information to other groups or audiences?

Strengths/weaknesses and ways to strengthen materials

- What do you like most and least about the materials you receive? Characterize their strengths and weaknesses. (Checklist could be prepared for consultants.)
- What suggestions do you have for making the materials you receive more useful and relevant to your own work? To your program staff, providers, or constituents?

Information needs and how/from where audiences seek info

- What information do you need that you are *not* getting from the publications you receive?
- Where do you look for reproductive health information when you need it?
- Do you look for reproductive health information on the Internet? Do you read or receive journals/reports on-line?

[Follow up with focused questions on specific materials or topics of concern to USAID. Examples include: MAQ, gender, sustainability, dual protection. Ask respondents if they received the information, used it, why or why not, etc.]

Final report. The team should synthesize responses from the field and report back to both USAID and the PHMWG. The PHMWG could schedule a special briefing with the team at which working group members could discuss lessons learned and develop recommendations for improving publications and dissemination efforts.

Drafting team:

Lori Ashford, PRB

Heather Davis, JSI

Willow Gerber, PATH

Stephen Goldstein, JHU

Stephanie Joyce, Population Council

Celeste Marin, Population Council

Beth Robinson, FHI