

## HRH GLOBAL RESOURCE CENTER: A TOOL FOR RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

### BACKGROUND

The global health workforce shortage hinders health service delivery, including treatment and prevention programs for tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS, as well as vaccination programs and prenatal care. Health worker migration, poor human resources for health (HRH) management, and attrition due to HIV infection in health workers are among the key factors driving this crisis. Increasing HRH planners' access to state-of-the-art research, data, and tools is a vital component of the response to the health workforce crisis.

CapacityPlus's HRH Global Resource Center (GRC) (<http://www.hrresourcecenter.org>) is a digital library dedicated to HRH issues in developing countries. The GRC provides HRH planners and practitioners with access to high-quality information needed to make smarter health workforce decisions to achieve national health objectives and support healthy communities. An average of 50,000 visitors from 172 countries use the GRC each month. A significant percentage of users are in the 57 countries cited by the World Health Organization as facing a health worker crisis.

### SERVING INFORMATION NEEDS IN LOW-BANDWIDTH SETTINGS

The GRC helps HRH practitioners quickly identify resources to meet their needs from a comprehensive collection of free and low-cost resources. The GRC was designed to assist a broad spectrum of users, while taking into consideration the technological requirements of HRH practitioners in developing countries. Users can browse resources by subject, geographic focus, or resource type, and conduct targeted searches, even in areas with low bandwidth.

In some countries, access to the Internet is an issue. To help, the GRC can provide CDs with selected resources to users who have limited or no connectivity. For example, the site's librarian created a CD for use by HRH leaders in Southern Sudan to support the design of a national HRH policy and training plan. In an area of Nigeria, with Internet access so limited that only one physical resource center serves a rural population of 250,000 people as well as over 10 health and educational institutions, the GRC helps in-country staff provide their users with up-to-date health journals and information.

### UPDATED COLLECTION AND USER FOCUS

The GRC is continually updated as its staff monitors publications and other online resources for new additions. The site receives a steady stream of suggestions from external users and CapacityPlus staff, and adds new resources each month based on this input. Ensuring that HRH resources make it into the collection quickly and focusing on user needs are key elements of the site's success. All users can rate resources, which allows others to quickly identify the most

popular resources and helps the GRC's staff understand better the diverse needs of current users.

The GRC Tutorial helps users learn to navigate the website easily and effectively through three short videos. Module 1 provides an introduction to the collection and its special features, Module 2 demonstrates how to locate information by navigating the menus and topic areas, and Module 3 teaches users to conduct simple and advanced keyword searches. In addition, the GRC offers personalized librarian support to all users, and supports HRH knowledge-sharing in offline environments by hosting documents for organizations that do not have their own websites.

## COUNTRY INTEGRATION

In several countries, the GRC has provided specific information and data for national and district-level programs. In Bangladesh, the GRC assisted the Ministry of Health with data needed for a community health initiative. A district-level nongovernmental organization in India uses resources from the GRC to strengthen its programs to address HIV/AIDS and health system strengthening. Also, in 2008 the GRC was integrated into the Uganda Ministry of Health Knowledge Management Portal to provide tailored HRH resources to advance the Ministry's work.

## HRH GLOBAL RESOURCE CENTER SERVICES

The GRC supports HRH stakeholders and decision-makers by providing essential HRH information, including:

- The largest digital library of Open Access HRH resources
- HRH news, interviews, newsletters, and spotlights on critical HRH issues of the day
- Personalized librarian support for finding resources
- Support for HRH projects and publications through online hosting services and special collections for organizations without a web presence
- Video tutorials on how to use the GRC
- Selected subject guides to introduce important HRH topics.