2023 CLA CASE COMPETITION

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Case Title:

A CLA Approach to Meaningfully Engage FP/RH Programs Online

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Organization:

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Summary:

People working in family planning and reproductive health are inundated with information on a daily basis and overwhelmed with how to get through it all. This means that high-quality technical information may not make it into the hands of people who could use it to improve health and well-being and save lives. Knowledge SUCCESS is a knowledge management project funded by USAID's Office of Population and Reproductive Health. We regularly monitor analytics to check whether people are using our resources, make adjustments to our dissemination approaches, and gather relevant insights for our regional activities and development of new resources. This analytics monitoring led to some surprising insights and resulted in ground-breaking new content and adjustments to our work. We have adapted our design of interactive content experiences, debuted regional "hub" pages on our website, created a new format for webinar recaps, and increased the amount of resources dedicated to French translations.

Our mandate is to help people find, share, and use knowledge. Websites, emails, and online tools are essential aspects of our work. Analytics monitoring helped us confirm that we are reaching our intended audiences in a meaningful way. Users from USAID PRH Priority Family Planning Countries represent 47.4 percent of our website traffic. A KS.org post about Kenya's Pharmacist Training Package, published nearly two years by Jhpiego Kenya staff, receives more than 40 percent of its pageviews from Kenya and is the #5 Google search result for "kenya pharmacist training."

1. **WHAT: What is the general context in which the case takes place? What organizational or development challenge(s) or opportunities prompted you to collaborate, learn, and/or adapt?**

The family planning and reproductive health (FP/RH) community is global. Projects and organizations rely on email and websites to share information about webinars, workshops, new publications, updates to existing resources, and other events with individuals working in different regions, settings, and time zones. Much of this information is exceptionally relevant to their work and, if applied, could lead to improved programs and services. The COVID-19 pandemic led to an explosion of content being shared online as offices shut down and remote work commenced. People working in FP/RH were inundated with information on a daily basis and overwhelmed with how to get through it all. and in many cases, simply gave up trying to go through everything. This meant that high-quality technical information wasn't making it into the hands of people who could use it to improve health and well-being and save lives.

Knowledge SUCCESS is a knowledge management (KM) project supported by USAID's Office of Population and Reproductive Health. Our mission is making it easier for FP/RH professionals to find relevant technical information, share it with others, and use it in their programs. We use websites, emails, and social media to reach people with technical information. Knowledge SUCCESS has regularly monitored analytics to check whether people are using our resources, make adjustments to our dissemination approaches, and gather relevant insights for our regional activities and development of new resources. This analytics monitoring led to some surprising insights and resulted in ground-breaking new content and adjustments to our work.

2. **What two CLA Sub-Components are most clearly reflected in your case?**

Internal Collaboration

Adaptive Management

3. **HOW: What steps did you take to apply CLA approaches to address the challenge or opportunity described above?**

Our project started in 2019. Initially, our approach to web analytics focused on basic indicators. We monitored how many users visited our website ("number of users"), where they were located ("location"), what they looked at ("pageviews"), and how long they stayed ("session length"). Our goal in the first year of Knowledge SUCCESS was to increase meaningful visits to the website by people in USAID family planning (FP) priority countries and holistically, these indicators gave a sense of how we measured against this goal.

We also looked at the distribution of mobile vs. desktop website traffic. This became important in 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic shifted the work environments for nearly everyone involved in FP/RH programs. Between March and November 2020, the proportion of users on mobile devices fell from a typical 45–50 percent of KS.org website traffic to 19 percent. Prior to this shift, we designed content to be mobile-first. In 2020, we began to offer richer, more interactive technical content (for example, What Works in Family Planning and Reproductive Health) aimed at larger screens, featuring more information than would have been digestible on a phone.

A 2021 Knowledge SUCCESS survey and follow-up qualitative research reinforced two findings we learned early on in the project: 1) People felt overwhelmed by the amount of information available to them, and wanted help sorting through it; and 2) People wanted technical information shared in ways that were relevant to their location and context. We adapted our analytics approach to look at variations in regional knowledge needs and behaviors, focusing on new indicators, including language. This led to the creation of regional email newsletters and a new homepage design featuring Knowledge Hubs for East Africa, West Africa, and Asia. These hubs enable KS.org visitors to quickly find technical content relevant to their specific context and emphasize the kinds of content our regional audiences have asked for.

Other concrete examples of this collaborative adaptation process included our redesign of the 20 Essential Resources collections and development of time-stamped webinar recaps. The first two collections in the 20 Essential Resources series, introduced in April 2020, were multi-page interactive experiences that required users to click through content. Analytics showed significant drop-off between pages, so we switched to a new format that uses one easily-scrollable page. This resulted in users spending more time and exploring more resources in each collection.

We use time-stamped links in webinar recap posts because our analytics monitoring showed that people weren't watching our webinar recordings. This seemingly simple innovation to help readers quickly find the segments most important to them has led to tremendous engagement: For some Connecting Conversations sessions, the recaps received four times as many views as the YouTube recordings and five times as many views as there were live participants in the webinar. Our team eventually developed a guide for time-stamped webinar recaps.

We've also had some failures. Analytics showed that our That One Thing newsletter—which features one FP/RH resource to focus on for the week—was tremendously popular among readers, and we decided to try a spin-off: And Another Thing. Targeted at people who "crave information and resources," And Another Thing included a weekly list of 3-5 resources that our team felt were useful, relevant, and timely. Based on low page views and clicks, we made the decision to discontinue the series. We shared what we learned in a blog post on failure.

4. **RESULTS: Choose one of the following questions to answer.**

We know you may have answers in mind for both questions; However please choose one to highlight as part of this case story

Please Choose A Question

As a KM project, our mandate is to help people find, share, and use knowledge. Our website, emails, and online tools are essential aspects of our work. Analytics monitoring helps us confirm that we are truly reaching our intended audiences in a meaningful way. In Year 3 of our project cycle, users from USAID FP priority countries represented 27.2 percent of our website traffic; by Year 5, this has increased to 47.4 percent.

We learned from co-creation workshops held in Year 1 of our project cycle that most people working in FP/RH go to a search engine first to find information they need, so we optimized our website content for search engines. Analytics tells us this strategy is not only making it easier for people working in USAID FP priority countries to find information, but is also extending the “lifetime” of blog posts that contain relevant technical knowledge. For example, a KS.org post about Kenya’s Pharmacist Training Package, published in November 2021 by Jhpiego Kenya staff, received more than 40 percent of its pageviews from Kenya and is the #5 Google search result in Africa for “kenya pharmacist training.”

Our analytics monitoring also confirmed the huge demand for French content among FP/RH programs. In November 2020, we added a French version of That One Thing. Since then, 49 percent of That One Thing pageviews have been of its French versions. Having hard data showing that French translations are used gives evidence not only to our project, but also others, that translation efforts are worthwhile.

5. **ENABLING CONDITIONS: How have enabling conditions - resources (time/money/staff), organizational culture, or business/work processes - influenced your results? How would you advise others to navigate any challenges you may have faced?**

Two major conditions enabled our success: leadership support and a collaborative team culture. Our USAID management team has consistently supported our analytics monitoring and this has been crucial, because regular monitoring over time gradually builds expertise in what “normal” web traffic looks like for a website. Without a sense of typical audience behaviors, we would not easily notice anomalies when they occur. It is the anomalies (like falling mobile traffic or variations in engagement) that hold the key to adaptation. The whole Knowledge SUCCESS team—worldwide—is enthusiastically bought into the difference analytics can make in better meeting audiences’ knowledge needs.

Challenges include competing priorities and changes to the Google Analytics system. Our analytics monitoring is only part of one staff member’s portfolio, which means that other priorities can sometimes overtake the analytics work. The best way we have found to mitigate this is to put analytics-related deliverables into a project’s work plan. Knowledge SUCCESS’s work plan includes quarterly analytics presentations to USAID, which raises its visibility and prioritization.

We use Google Analytics, which has been the industry standard since 2005 in no small part because it is free to use. However, using a free system means not being fully in control of our data. Google Analytics 4, which will take over in July 2023, is oriented toward different indicators that are more appropriate to businesses. We are looking at low-cost alternatives that allow us to continue monitoring regional groupings and behaviors. Our recommendation for projects in a similar situation is to make sure your teams and management understand that whatever system you use for analytics has limitations, and sometimes changes will happen.