



# Guidelines for Developing Home-Based Reminder Materials

Helping Families  
Save Sick Children



# **Guidelines for Developing Home-Based Reminder Materials**

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## **Helping Families Save Sick Children**

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Copies of the Guidelines are available in print and CD-ROM from:

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Top left and lower right: Melissa May  
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The children in the cover photos are healthy children.

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# PREFACE

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**T**hese guidelines reflect the experiences and lessons learned from a global project that developed communication materials to improve the health of young children. Project HOPE undertook the “Mothers Reminder Material” (MRM) initiative with the CHANGE and BASICS II projects to enhance the performance of existing child survival programs in nine countries (Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ghana, Guatemala, Malawi, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Peru and Uzbekistan). The aim of this project was to develop materials to help mothers and other caregivers know when they need to seek immediate medical care for a sick child.

The guidelines present practical, easy-to-use methods for creating effective materials and take you step-by-step through the processes needed to plan, research, design, test, produce, distribute and evaluate reminder materials. The appendices contain resources and templates for everything from organizing a workshop, hiring consultants and testing materials, to soliciting production bids from printers, to guidelines for acquainting families with the use of the material.\*

The primary audience for these guidelines is Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) country staff working in child survival programs in developing countries. Although it is hoped that the document may be useful to a much wider audience, where it addresses “you,” the authors have PVO staff in mind.

Clearly, this is not the first set of guidelines on developing effective health education materials.<sup>1</sup> However, this document is distinct in that it focuses specifically on developing home-based reminder materials and is aimed at PVO country staff.

The basic organization is as follows: After the introductory discussions, the steps in the MRM development process are described in chronological order. Each section briefly explains the step’s purpose and recommended procedures. Tools, resources and summaries of actual field experience are found in boxes throughout the text as well as in appendices. Also included are comments from the field gathered in 2003 by Project HOPE.

It should be noted that although these guidelines are based on experiences in nine countries, they most heavily reflect the activities and results in Nicaragua, Malawi, and Ghana, the countries with which the primary authors worked most closely. The authors apologize for possibly omitting equally innovative and interesting ideas and lessons from the other country experiences.

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\* This document uses a “MRM” or a “material” interchangeably to refer to a “Mothers Reminder Material.”

<sup>1</sup> For example, see:

- HealthCom Project. HealthCom Communication Toolbox. Washington, D.C.: Academy for Educational Development, 1995.
- O’Sullivan, G.A., J.A. Yonker, W. Morgan, and A.P. Merritt. A Field Guide to Designing a Health Communication Strategy. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs, March 2003. Can be downloaded at <http://www.jhuccp.org/pubs/fg/index.shtml>
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute. Making Health Communication Programs Work. Bethesda, MD, September 2002. Can be downloaded at <http://cancer.gov/pinkbook>
- Younger, E., S. Wittet, C. Hooks, and H. Lasher. Immunization and Child Health Materials Development Guide. Seattle: Bill and Melinda Gates Children’s Vaccine Program/PATH, 2001. Can be downloaded at [http://www.childredivaccine.org/html/ip\\_clinical.htm](http://www.childredivaccine.org/html/ip_clinical.htm)

# ACRONYMS

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ARI	Acute Respiratory Infections
CHW	Community Health Worker ( <i>brigadista</i> in Nicaragua)
C-IMCI	Community-Based Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
CS	Child Survival
IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
MOH	Ministry of Health
MRM	Mothers Reminder Material
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

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