



Sourcing Information and Media Content

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Sourcing Information and Media Content

Once the information needs of your community have been identified through your needs assessment you will find there is a demand for wide ranging topics, which could be anything from living with a healthy diet to improving the local crop, or mother and child health to children's educational future.

Your CMC will need to prioritise the needs, then tap various sources of information to respond to community demands. The first step is to be aware of how to access reliable sources of information.

Information sources are varied in their form – printed word via email, Internet, radio and TV; traditional word via word-of-mouth, telephone or face-to-face communication. Each medium has its own strengths and limitations and you will be able to use each medium to your advantage.

Print, radio, TV, audio, and video information sources are so vast and varied that a whole book could be written on that subject alone. This chapter attempts to prepare you in categorizing sources of information that you can later explore for specific topics of interest to your CMC. The following sections will also help you visualize how to get the source and wherever possible, how to get the source for free.

Information available in print

Print information is very wide ranging and appears in many forms, e.g., books, newspapers, journals, manuscripts, maps, manuals, letters, and more. Printed material offers a wealth of information and provides readers with the potential to learn, understand, explore and investigate topics that are of concern to them. CMCs depend on printed material as an information-sharing tool and as a source that enriches radio broadcast.

You can add a service at very little cost to your CMC by putting out on display a local newspaper or two for public reading (some centres pin them up on the wall so that they can be shared). Some CMCs host a community newspaper, produced by a local journalist using the CMC facilities.





Start developing a list when you learn of new sources, especially those that are free. Encourage staff members and volunteers to add to these lists too:

- *Lists of books on topics relevant to your CMC and the community*
- *List of publishers*
- *Booksellers in your country*
- *Lists of journals and magazines*
- *Lists of newsletters – local, national and international.*
- *Other sources of print material*

How can you get it?

It all depends on your needs and the services you have access to. If there is a **local or district library**, the librarian will be able to tell you about relevant books and journals and may even conduct an Internet search for specific material that is found in institutions and universities around the world.

You can ask a **bookseller** to send you a catalogue from which to place an order. You can also **subscribe to a publisher**.

Most organizations publish **newsletters** that contain useful and relevant information. You can request different organizations to include you in their distribution mailing list and receive copies at no cost.

It is worthwhile exploring sources of printed information from within your community. **Documents, letters, and manuscripts** related to the development of your community or interest group may be a valuable resource to your CMC.

What you have to pay for?

Any order you place with a publisher or bookseller has to be paid for. Plan to budget for subscriptions and book orders.

Available free

Books and journals are expensive but sometimes you can find them for free on the Internet or by contacting the publishers directly. Some publishers provide a free 'reference' publication to non-profit organizations. Do not hesitate to ask for free publications — if you don't ask you will never know!

Printable information via email & the Internet

Finding the *Web gateways, documents, pages or sites* you want on the Internet can be easy or seem impossibly difficult. This is in part due to the sheer size of the World Wide Web (WWW), currently estimated to contain 3 billion documents. It is also because the WWW is not indexed in any standard vocabulary. Unlike a library's catalogues, in which you can use standardized subject headings to find books, you are always guessing what words will be in the *pages* when searching for information on the Internet.

Internet websites will often provide a *link* or *portal* that will lead you to a website that contains additional or related information. Search engines make it easy to identify websites that contain the type of information you are looking for, e.g. Google, Yahoo, Lycos.

Printed material via the Internet	Printed information that can be found using the Internet	Available for you to use in radio shows and as a reference at the CMC
e-Books	Books are available over the Internet for downloading. Some free and some at a cost	Can download/print out
Journals	Journals are available over the Internet for downloading. Some free and some at a cost	Can download/print out
Newspapers	Newspapers from around the world	Available for reading online (mostly free), printing out, and searching archives (often at a cost)



How can you get it?

It is often difficult to know where to go to get these resources. A good first step is to consult portals – that gather information about websites and information – one of the best for development communications is Communications Initiative www.cominit.org, and there are also good sites that list newspapers around the world. Other portals include the World Bank’s global gateway and UN sites.

Portals can give you a searchable database of organisations’ websites, e.g., One World’s www.oneworld.net is an important source of information and links to over 2000 non-governmental organizations around the world. It is classified by 80 development and human rights topics, as well as by country and language.

Books and journals that are online – and available for either reading online or downloading – are a growing phenomenon, but not always easy to find out about. Communications Initiative has some links to publications.

Once you have found the website that gives you the information that you are looking for you can print pages from it, or save the pages to your computer.

Electronic mail lists are another powerful tool for sharing information – for both receiving and sending out what you have to say. You can easily open a free email account to receive and send information from your CMC, e.g., Yahoo, Hotmail.

Text content delivered to you by email	Printable information that comes directly to your email inbox	Available for you to use in radio shows and as a reference at the CMC
Newsletters	Various information sheets	Subscribe, print out
Newswire	Bulletins that can be read out on radio, and can be kept for reference	Subscribe, print out
Newsgroups & list servers	Email groups that you can join and contribute emails to	Subscribe

The types of printable information above can then be downloaded to your computer or printed from your email account. You will also be able to contribute to online discussions by using email.

How can you get it?

First open an email account. Then conduct a search using the search engines and the portals to find the appropriate material you can subscribe to. Also, make a request for your name to be included in a list server that distributes material that is relevant to your CMC.

The newswires are tailored for broadcasters and give news updates on specific issues that can be read on air. AMARC has begun a news agency service and there are many newswires produced on topics such as the environment. Contact organisations that you have an interest in to see if they have a newswire service.

Once you have found a newsletter, newswire or newsgroup that you want to receive regularly, you can subscribe – usually at no cost. Just follow the instructions that will appear on the screen; often it simply means sending them an email with ‘subscribe’ in the subject line.



Available free

Most newsletters are free and nearly every email list and newsgroup is as well. Check to see if there is a cost attached to the newswire services because this is a product that you will be using on the radio.

Radio, TV, audio and video material

Audio & visual	Radio/audio and TV/video material that you can listen to or view	Available for listening, and sometimes for re-broadcasting
Radio & TV listings	List of radio stations broadcasting in that week/month.	Printed in newspapers and also available online.
Radio & TV broadcasts	Traditional on-air broadcasts in your area – FM, MW, AM and satellite.	Requires a radio with a tape deck or TV with VCR to record broadcasts. Check issues of copyright before you re-broadcast.
Radio, audio cassette CD, video or DVD programmes	Often from NGOs or international broadcasters; sometimes with accompanying printed scripts.	Order or subscribe to receive by post. Check copyright clearance for re-broadcasting.

How can you get it?

Depending on your local context, you may find that ordering copies of broadcast programmes is not as easy as ordering print material. If you want a copy of a programme that was broadcast on radio or TV, you should make a note of when it was aired and then formally contact the broadcaster requesting a copy to be sent to you. This will often entail a cost. The same procedure may apply to pre-produced programmes. In receiving the material, you may be asked to cover postal charges — yet another consideration for your budget.

Available free

Often international broadcasters and international organisations will welcome your request for free sources because it is in their interest to distribute their programmes as widely as possible. Find out about the content produced by national or local producers, such as NGOs in your country, and then contact them directly.

Getting and sharing information through CD

The CD is capable of carrying a huge amount of information. For many organisations – both commercial and non-profit – this is a cost-effective way of getting information to you.

The advantage of a CD is that you can look up the information swiftly and efficiently at your convenience. It allows both text and pictures to be shown in a wide variety of ways and gives you several innovative and interactive features. Creating CDs is beyond the point of this book, however further reference can be made to publications such as Mind Mapping (UNESCO, 2002) or the Multi Media Training Kit (www.ltrainOnline.org).

Interactive text and visuals available on CD	Where to find them
A whole library of reference books can be available on a CD	Request from publisher
Information on development themes	Request from organisation
Training material and self-learning courses	Request from training organisation

A lot of material, especially on health, education and development issues are available free from the producers.

How to get and share information through CDs

Greenstone is a suite of software for building and distributing digital library collections that aim to 'empower' users to build their own digital libraries. It provides a powerful way of organising text and images in electronic format for publishing on CD-Rom or the Internet. The major advantages over the traditional Web based format are compression of information and both full text and library catalogue type searching.

Greenstone is produced by the New Zealand Digital Library Project at the University of Waikato, and developed and distributed in cooperation with UNESCO and the Human Info NGO.

It is an open-source, multilingual software issued under the terms of the GNU General Public License. (See <http://www.greenstone.org/english/home.html>).

Teaching literacy through CDs

In India, the Tata Consultancy Services software group has created a CD to teach adult illiterates how to read and write with basic skills, even in the absence of a skilled teacher.

The CD uses animated graphics and a voice-over to explain how individual alphabets combine to give structure and meaning to various words, using puppets as the motif in the teaching process.

Lessons are tailored to fit different languages and even dialects. They focus on reading, and are based on the theories of cognition, language and communication.

Accompanying voiceover reinforces the learner's ability to grasp the lessons easily, and repetition strengthens what is learned.

The multimedia format ensures that the pronunciation of the words/letters is taught accurately through the system, rather than being left to individual teachers. This is particularly useful for languages (like Tamil in South India) where the same letter can be pronounced differently, based on the context. http://www.tataliteracy.com/how_it_works.htm





Accessing audio and video online

The Internet also gives you access to audio and video from around the world. You can use audio online as an instructive example of how other people have tackled a subject. Having access to radio scripts is also very useful as you can reuse these in your own context, adapting them to what makes sense for your own community.

Audio & video online	Audio programmes, interviews, public service announcements, other formats	Available to listen to (and adapt the ideas); also often to download and re-broadcast
Portals for audio	'Gateways' that direct you to available audio online.	Free online
Online databases	Libraries of audio pieces that are available online	Mostly free online for listening, some charge for downloading.
Internet radio listings	Websites that list online radio stations so you can find them.	Free online
Internet radio stations	Broadcasts from radio stations around the world, live-streaming, i.e. not archived but like an ordinary broadcast	Free online
Scripts	Scripts that accompany audio online, in various languages.	Free to read and print out.
Online video	Video clips and productions that can be viewed online.	Requires a high speed Internet connection, as this is streaming media.

How can you get it?

There are many portals that can direct you to databases of online broadcasters who wish to share content and exchange information and programmes that you can download and re-broadcast, assuming you already have the required software to do this.

Many larger broadcasters have their own online audio databases. Some allow you to download the programmes while others are only for listening. The BBC site is a rich source of content on a range of issues.

For online radio stations – and there are many – the best route is to search either by name of the station, or search for sites that list online radio stations around the world.

For online video there is the challenge of connectivity, because viewing the material requires a high speed Internet connection. But if you have that, there is a wealth of video content that is available – either as entire programmes or clips. Often you may be able to order a copy of the video from the site where you viewed it. Some sites give you access to a mosaic of video clips from organisations and independent producers according to development themes, as well as alternative perspectives on mainstream news.



Available free

Listening or viewing multimedia content online is generally free. Downloading is free from most non-government organisations, but may carry a cost if coming from international broadcasters.

Ready to broadcast material

The farmradio.org website offers information that would be of interest to rural audiences, in an easily translatable radio format.

It does so by sharing well-researched information in the form of 'radio scripts'. These are available for broadcast free-to-air in developing countries in the language that the broadcaster chooses.

Scripts are regularly available via the Internet at http://www.farmradio.org/english/published_scripts.html

Using the telephone

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are not only the Internet, but also include all the services of the traditional fixed landline phone and the mobile phone. Mobile phones have given users the opportunity to send and receive text messages, which is a developing medium for the exchange of all sorts of information – from market prices to sports results and job listings. The traditional telephone is also a very essential medium for exchange of information. It is often the most powerful way that you can link with other people and share information.

Telephone: fixed land line or mobile	Information from people with whom you are in direct contact via mobile or landline telephones	Information that is current and can be used in radio broadcasts or at the CMC
Mobile texts, formal	SMS messages on specific topics	Subscribe to text service
Mobile texts, informal	SMS messages from contacts or local reporters in the field	Requires only mobile phones
Telephone interviews	Interviews with local or national/international persons on a specific topic.	Live or pre-recorded for radio broadcasts
Basic telephone calls	Informative telephone calls	For basic information or can feature in a phone-in show, live or pre-recorded

How do you get it?

For specific mobile text services you need to subscribe by contacting the mobile service provider or organisation that is providing the service. There are increasing numbers of business and non-profit services that are being developed; keep an eye out for what may be available in your area.

Getting information from individuals is another matter, and often you need only share mobile phone numbers. This is a good way of gathering information from rural areas, or from associates in other cities or countries.

Traditional telephone interviews are well established within broadcasting.



The most obvious, but sometimes overlooked, source of information is from people around you. Local knowledge and opinion is a rich and rewarding source for any CMC. Gather this information - do questionnaires, record interviews - and build a resource bank of this knowledge for your community to benefit from and add to.

Available free

You will have to pay for all telephone connections. Commercial mobile text services generally cost, but the non-profit ones are generally free.

Word of mouth information

Often the information you require is there in your community already – all it requires from you is face-to-face information gathering.

Mode of info collection	Methods used	Form of info collected
Recording interviews	Credited interviews with specific persons – community leaders and ordinary people, politicians, doctors, experts, others	Can be in the radio studio, live or pre-recorded; or could be in the field using recording equipment
Conducting questionnaires	Gathering information from people in the community using set questions, which you can then analyse and compare	Questionnaires or keeping notes
Vox pops (Latin phrase for voice of the people)	Unaccredited comment from the public	Audio or video recording for use in broadcasts
Focus groups and meetings	Gathering a group of people together to ask them about an issue/topic	Record or take notes of responses

Gathering and sharing your own content

Local content is as diverse as your community – it could be knowledge about traditional medicine and agriculture, or community views on social, economic and political issues.

Your CMC, as a centre of local and international knowledge sharing, is the ideal place to focus on local content. There are a number of innovative projects that are focusing on this area and looking at how ICTs can support the gathering and sharing of local content.

Take a look at some of the developing work on this subject:

- www.openknowledge.net - the site for the Open Knowledge Network project; go to the 'workspace' section for background information, or to www.dgroups.org/groups/okn.
- www.iicd.org/ks - interesting paper on 'collecting and propagating local development content'; go to the knowledge sharing section, click on Publications, and scroll down.

Creating your own content and data base



“Let’s face it, 99 percent of existing web pages (and we are talking of many millions duplicating almost every year), is irrelevant to 99 percent of the population of the world. One of every one hundred pages may be interest and use to a rural woman of India or a factory worker in Mexico.

The most successful Internet-connectivity projects are those that manage to create their own mini-web with appropriate contents for the local population. Otherwise, a CMC, regardless of its origin or funding, becomes just another cyber cafe used by the standard young consumer who uses the interactive games, chatting with friends (who are sometimes seated in the same room), or researching information for a copy-and-paste homework.

Developing local content implies researching on local priorities and subjects. The mini-web content should be able to respond to local problems. It should also reflect the local culture and identity, and contribute to strengthen it.”

Alfonso Gumucio Dagron
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Copyright issues

Print

Most books and journals are copyright protected, meaning, in theory, that no part can be copied for use. However, most authors or publishers are often happy for part of the book to be photocopied so long as you use it only for information gathering, rather than any commercial purpose.

If you quote from any publication or material, don’t forget to quote the author and the source.



You also have – most importantly – people. You and our neighbours who can produce information and share information, often without even thinking about it; by talking, telephoning, recording and broadcasting. All this combined presents a powerful example of media convergence.

Audio and video

If you intend to re-broadcast any audio or video content you need to make sure that the producers have no objection. Call, email or write to them and tell them what you intend; they may sometimes request that you send them a copy of the final broadcast programme, or at least tell them when it was broadcast.

This will not be necessary explicitly for rebroadcast material that is sent to you or is available for download.

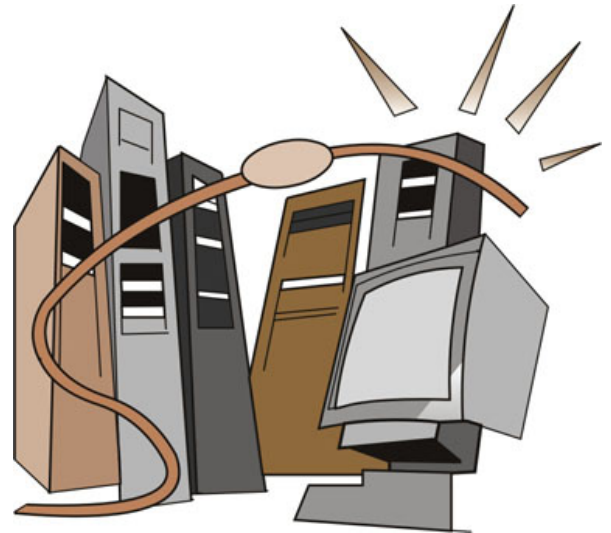
Media convergence

Your CMC is a great example of how media convergence is happening. You will probably have all the available types of media at your disposal – books and printed material, audio online, audiocassette or mini-disc, and videos. You will have a computer that uses CDs but also gives you access to email and the Internet. You may have a broadcasting studio with all the radio equipment that is necessary to broadcast to your listeners.

Innovative media formats: radio browsing

Ours is a fast-changing world. Apart from the wealth of media sources and modes that exist, there are also new ways of using all these resources that are being developed – combining one or two to create a new way of investigating and sharing information. The 'old' media (print, books, magazines, radio) are combining with the 'new' (Internet, email, mailing lists) to bring together a whole new set of possibilities.

One example of this is radio browsing – combining the strength and popularity of traditional broadcasting with the innovation of Internet information gathering.



Campaigning and advocacy on development issues

Many organisations and communities wish to collaborate in gathering and sharing information around a specific campaign. Using this strategy, they can focus the issue powerfully and create a larger audience.

If you are a broadcaster, contact local organisations about planned campaigns in your area that you can link to, and use the services of local experts for programmes. Campaigners need publicity, so this could be an ideal partnership.

Where to find campaign information

The UN list of days is a useful peg for scheduling campaigns; for example, you can plan in advance to focus on children on Children's Day, women on Women's Day and HIV/AIDS on World Aids Day. See the UN website for the list of days.

Development organisations also have campaign sections on their sites with thematic and campaign links, background info, available audio and interested member contacts; these are good places to go and find the relevant and current background information.



eNRICH – a software for rural communities

eNRICH is a customisable browser that enables communities to quickly build their own gateway and provides interactivity with and among communities.

It enables easy access to authentic information and encourages local content production.

This generic ICT web browser, developed by National Informatics Centre in India, can:

- Act as a one stop solution for the information and communication needs of communities
- Be easily customised in local languages and content
- Encourage community members to produce their own local content
- Allow easy access to relevant and authenticated information
- Enable efficient communication within and among communities.

eNRICH provides two interfaces

Community Browser User Interface – used by community members and divided into the following sections:

- Information resources
- Local database
- Communication Services
- Services
- Opinion poll
- Bulletin board
- Learning Zone

Desk Manager User Interface – a browser-based site administration and analysis tool for the Manager of the site.

For more information, see the CD Rom with this Handbook.

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<http://enrich.nic.in/>

Radio Browsing at Kothmale Community Radio

An experimental UNESCO project using radio as the interface between rural communities and the Internet was launched in early 1999 in Sri Lanka.

One of the main features of the project is the community radio broadcasts on the Internet. A daily two-hour interactive programme allowed listeners to request (by live telephone requests or post) specific information from the Internet. The presenters got the required information from websites and interpreted the information from these sites in the local language, thus overcoming a common barrier to the Internet - a poor understanding of English.

Chanuka Wategama

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A video on demonstration and training in radio browsing is included in the CD at the back of this Handbook.



CD Rom made for and by women in Uganda

Developed by International Women's Tribune Centre and women of Nakaseke CMC in Uganda, the CD uses speech interface and a simple point-and-click technique. The software utilised is a browser programme, therefore giving the women a sense of how to access information on the Internet.

The women who use the programme click on text and graphics and hear a voice speaking in their own local language, Luganda. It has empowered the women who are now expanding their ability to make money and experimenting with new small businesses.

Women travel from all over Uganda to be taken through the programme by the Nakaseke women. Very few of these women have had the opportunity to finish more than one or two years of primary school. However, they are beginning to recognise words as they follow the spoken text.

Anastasia, only partially literate and aged 73, has made the spreading of the information in the CD programme her life's mission. She walks over the hills of rural Uganda with a donated laptop in a backpack, searching out isolated women in their houses and villages and going through the programme with them. Nakaseke CMC has undertaken to recharge the laptop battery each night, and to provide companion security for her.

Anne S. Walker

International Women's Tribune Centre, Australia.

Email: annewalker@iwtc.org

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Multimedia Training Kit <http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/mmtk/index.shtml>

Interworld Radio www.interworldradio.org

AMARC www.amarc.org

OneWorld TV www.oneworld.net/tv and OneWorld Radio www.oneworld.net/radio

Indymedia www.indymedia.org

BBC www.bbc.co.uk

UNICEF www.unicef.org

United Nations International Days <http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/infoserv/db/days.shtml>

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