The Evolution of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative: Lessons to Inform Future Programming

Prepared by the K4Health Project
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
Center for Communication Programs
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ON THE COVER: Assistant Commissioner for Social Welfare in Tanzania (seated at the right) joined the Essential Package eLearning Launch Event in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from September 10-12, 2013, noting that she believed the online learning methodology will enable the information on young vulnerable children to “spread like wildflowers”.

Photo credit: Colleen Farrell/Save the Children
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# Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAs</td>
<td>Cooperative Agencies (agencies receiving United States Government funding)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
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<td>EP</td>
<td>Essential Package</td>
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<td>GHeL</td>
<td>Global Health eLearning Center</td>
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<td>GHI</td>
<td>Global Health Initiative</td>
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<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geographic Information Systems</td>
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<td>IP</td>
<td>Implementing Partners</td>
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<td>JHU-CCP</td>
<td>Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Communication Programs</td>
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<td>K4Health</td>
<td>Knowledge for Health Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>MSH</td>
<td>Management Sciences for Health</td>
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<td>NGI</td>
<td>Next Generation Indicators</td>
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<td>OGAC</td>
<td>Office of the United States Global AIDS Coordinator</td>
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<td>PEPFAR</td>
<td>U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief</td>
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<td>SI</td>
<td>Strategic Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>USG</td>
<td>United States Government</td>
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Executive Summary

The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative began in 2007 under the guidance of the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator to provide technical and programmatic guidance to PEPFAR implementing partners. Using the existing USAID Global Health eLearning Center, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Communication Programs, along with over 75 experts from 32 organizations (including agencies within the U.S. Government), produced 20 online courses on a variety of topics, varying from monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to leadership and management to incorporation of young vulnerable children and other key populations into HIV/AIDS programs. Over 20,000 certificates were earned by learners from more than 145 countries.

The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative has evolved with the changing policy environment and latest evidence of what programs are working in the fight against HIV/AIDS. This evolution is demarcated by three distinct phases. The first phase focused on M&E-related courses for strategic information officers. The second phase focused on leadership and management content and HIV prevention programmatic guidance for key populations and young vulnerable children and their caregivers. Courses were developed for a much broader audience, including national government staff, program managers from implementing agencies, staff of local nongovernmental organizations and associations. In recent years, the third phase began with the focus on incorporating courses into and with face-to-face trainings to maximize learning and knowledge retention.

JHU∙CCP recommends the increased use of courses in conjunction with trainings in a variety of ways to complement and strengthen the learning experiences and outcomes of capacity building efforts of training organizations that primarily focus on face-to-face delivery. Specific recommendations include:

- All collaborators should continue to promote the eLearning courses as stand-alone trainings, as well as complements to face-to-face trainings, and as resources within a series of training materials;
- Collaborating agencies should design blended learning training events in monitoring and evaluation, leadership and management, and HIV prevention programs for vulnerable groups that incorporate the courses;
- Collaborating agencies should introduce local organizations to the K4Health Blended Learning Guide and support development of blended learning trainings;
- Collaborating agencies should incorporate the eLearning courses as a part of professional development plans.

This report provides an overview of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative, its evolution, and its results. Additionally, lessons learned from this Initiative and recommendations for the future use of the deliverables of this Initiative are presented.
SECTION I:
Overview of the Initiative

I.1 The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative

The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative, developed by the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC), is in response to the growing demand for information across countries implementing the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative offers an alternative to in-person trainings and allows PEPFAR to expand the reach, usefulness, and use of critical program guidance among staff, collaborators, partners, and stakeholders. It also contributes to meeting the diverse capacity building needs of U.S. Government (USG) staff, implementing partners, national governments, and HIV/AIDS program staff.

The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative contributes to the goals of the Global Health Initiative (GHI), which was created to support the training and retention of more than 140,000 new health care workers to strengthen health systems. The course content of several eLearning courses of the Initiative contributes to the GHI principles related to improved monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and strengthened country ownership. The Initiative also promotes innovation, as agency staff and implementing partners can use eLearning courses in addition to traditional trainings to increase the reach and impact of their capacity building efforts.

In addition, the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative ties directly into the goals of PEPFAR, specifically to “strengthen partner government capacity to lead the response to the [HIV/AIDS] epidemic and other health demands.” PEPFAR was initiated as an emergency response in 2003 but, in recent years, has been converted into a development initiative, which has resulted in programs to enhance country ownership by building and increasing capacity at the national, district, and local levels. The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative designed courses to contribute to PEPFAR’s new direction.

The PEPFAR eLearning initiative uses the Global Health eLearning (GHeL) Center, a platform that was developed in 2005 by the USAID Bureau for Global Health, through Management Sciences for Health (MSH), in response to requests from field staff for access to the latest program guidance on a variety of public health and development technical areas. The platform offers free, self-paced, Web-based courses with state-of-the-art technical content on key global health and development topics that serve as a practical resource for increasing global health and development knowledge.

1 http://www.pepfar.gov/about/strategy/index.htm
I.2 Goals of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative

The overall goals of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative are to:

• Provide critical and timely technical and programmatic guidance to PEPFAR implementing partners and national HIV/AIDS program staff around the world;

• Support PEPFAR-funded capacity building activities by incorporating eLearning as part of a blended learning approach with traditional face-to-face trainings; and

• Provide an easy-to-use and accessible platform where other PEPFAR-funded initiatives can also begin to develop courses.

To achieve its goals, the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative:

• Offers online, self-paced, distance learning courses;

• Tailors courses to be used as a complement to in-person trainings; and

• Hosts courses on the GHeL platform which was specifically designed to be used in low-bandwidth internet settings.

I.3 Actors and Roles

The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative has counted on the support of many institutions and subject matter experts. Key actors include:

United States Government Agencies
The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has funded the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative and is intimately involved in the development of the courses and the GHeL platform. Other agencies, such as OGAC and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have actively contributed as subject matter experts – specifically as course authors or technical reviewers – during course development.

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Communication Programs
The Knowledge for Health (K4Health) project, based at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Communication Programs (JHU∙CCP), was selected as the implementing agency of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative based on its experience managing and designing courses for the USAID GHeL Center since 2005.

As principal implementer, JHU∙CCP serves as the instructional design expert and course developer, ensuring that course content is focused on knowledge and comprehension levels and managing and tracking all stages of the course development process.
Collaborators
At its core, the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative is a collaborative partnership among key PEPFAR implementing agencies and partners, as well as other technical experts. The richness of course content arises from the combined knowledge, expertise, and lessons learned from USG agencies, national governments, universities, and international and local NGOs. Throughout the development process for each course, the eLearning team and the course developer seek country-level input in the creation and presentation of case studies, as well as in the review process.

Each GHeL course is authored by a subject matter expert or a team of experts, and is highly focused. Courses include concrete country examples and case studies to stimulate a learner’s thinking about translating knowledge into new contexts, such as ways in which s/he can use the principles covered in the course to solve problems in the field. At progress checkpoints throughout each course, learners test their knowledge of the subject matter. Upon completion of the course, which can typically be completed in two to three hours, learners take a final exam. If they score 85% or better on the exam, they can print or save a certificate of completion for that course.

Over 75 technical experts from more than 32 organizations have been consulted throughout the development process of the different courses in the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative. The following table lists all of the collaborating groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USG Agencies</th>
<th>Local NGOs and International NGO Project Field Offices</th>
<th>International NGOs and Projects</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>National Governments</th>
<th>Multilaterals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USAID General Counsel</td>
<td>MEASURE Evaluation, Guyana</td>
<td>Population Council</td>
<td>New York University</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Prevention, Senegal</td>
<td>UNAIDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID/South Africa</td>
<td>MEASURE Evaluation/ JSI, Cote d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Futures Group</td>
<td>Tulane University</td>
<td>Regional Office of Public Health, Bizerte, Tunisia</td>
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<tr>
<td>OGAC</td>
<td>TRAC Plus, Rwanda</td>
<td>ICF Macro</td>
<td>University of California, San Francisco Global Health Institute</td>
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<td>CDC</td>
<td>Save the Children, Malawi</td>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Defense</td>
<td>SAFE (Malawi)</td>
<td>Catholic Relief Services</td>
<td>University of Hartford</td>
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<td>Department of State, Humanitarian Information Unit</td>
<td>Pact, South Africa</td>
<td>Pact</td>
<td>Montfort College, Malawi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of State, Malawi</td>
<td>REPSI</td>
<td>CARE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Census, International Bureau</td>
<td>Kaijage Consultants for African Family Health</td>
<td>International AIDS Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military HIV/AIDS Research Program</td>
<td>MEASURE Evaluation</td>
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MEASURE Evaluation has been an integral partner and collaborator on this initiative. The organization is a technical expert in the field of M&E and the identification of data needs and the collection, analysis, and use of appropriate data to meet those needs. In 2007, K4Health and MEASURE Evaluation developed several M&E related eLearning courses as part of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative.
SECTION II: Evolution of the Initiative and Its Deliverables

The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative has evolved over the course of its implementation to encompass new policy priorities and recommendations from learners. The graphic below and the following sections explain this transition.

II.1 Phase I: Initiative Start Up and Evaluation

Between the start of the Initiative in 2007 and mid-December 2011, the focus of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative was on course development and adaption of the GHeL Platform. Courses were developed using an asynchronous model, meaning the courses can be taken individually and not in a class or cohort setting. The self-paced nature of courses nullifies geographic location and learners could take the courses whenever it is most convenient for them.

The initial courses that were developed focus on key M&E-related topics and on PEPFAR indicators. The target audience of the courses included strategic information (SI) generalists, M&E professionals, program managers, and public health professionals working at national and sub-national levels.

Pilot Testing of the Initiative

The first three courses of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative included:

- **Data Quality** (May 2010): helps learners to understand what data quality is, why it is important, and what programs can do to improve it.

- **HIV/AIDS Surveillance** (May 2010): provides an overview of HIV/AIDS surveillance and a basic understanding of its components.

- **M&E Frameworks for HIV/AIDS Programs** (May 2010): strengthens learners’ understanding of how to develop a M&E framework that can be used to organize and implement various components of an M&E system.

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2 Dates in parenthesis following each course title indicate when the particular course was published.
These courses were pilot-tested among a USG-only audience from May to August 2009. Participants responded with overwhelmingly positive feedback regarding the organization, efficiency, and relevancy of the courses. Overall findings included:

- 83% agreed that the content of the courses was relevant to their job or professional activities;
- 81% agreed that the knowledge learned from the course material would result in improvements to their work;
- 87% agreed that the courses encouraged their active participation and learning; and
- 90% agreed that they would recommend these courses to their colleagues.

**Continuation of Course Development**

Every SI officer and program manager working in the field of HIV/AIDS should have basic knowledge, comprehension, and skills in certain inter-related areas in order to plan and execute high quality surveillance, data collection, and analysis. JHU∙CCP, with USG agencies and collaborating agencies (CAs), continued to develop courses in key M&E areas including:

- **Data Use for Program Managers** (January 2011): provides learners with a systematic approach to planning for the use of data, specifically within the field of HIV/AIDS.
- **Economic Evaluation Basics** (January 2011): gives learners a basic understanding of the common methods used to conduct an economic evaluation and the role of economic evaluations in policy and program decision-making in the field of international public health.
- **Geographic Approaches to Global Health** (January 2011): acquaints learners with spatial data and the use of such data to enhance the decision-making process for health program implementation in resource-limited settings.
- **PEPFAR Next Generation Indicators Guidance** (January 2011): allows learners to gain a better understanding about the newest version of the Next Generation Indicators (NGI) Reference Guide and how the information contained in the guide can be used to report progress of PEPFAR programs within national monitoring and evaluation frameworks.
- **HIV/AIDS Legal Requirements**³ (mid-December 2011): provides learners with an overview of the legal requirements under US statutes applicable to US foreign assistance for HIV/AIDS activities.

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³ The HIV/AIDS Legal Requirements was removed from the website on June 21, 2013, for updating based on the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn the Policy Requirement of the Sex Trafficking and Prostitution statute. The Department of Justice and the PEPFAR implementing agencies are still reviewing the Supreme Court’s decision to determine what it means for PEPFAR programs. Once this process is completed, the course will be updated and republished.
The evolution of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative: lessons to inform future programming

The M&E-related courses, with the exception of the HIV/AIDS Legal Requirements course and the Mortality Surveillance Methods & Strategies course, are available to download in French, Portuguese, and Spanish from the GHeL website.

Evaluation of the GHeL and PEPFAR eLearning Platform

From its onset, the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative benefited from the established user base of the GHeL platform, which had approximately 60,000 registered users at the start of the Initiative and has now over 100,000. In 2010-2011, JHU∙CCP conducted an enhanced evaluation of the eLearning platform and the existing courses to improve courses and explore enhancements to the platform and other modes of delivering the course content. As a result, a number of improvements were made to the platform when it was redesigned and launched in March 2013. Some of the constructive feedback provided by learners included the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions Made by Learners</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners lack consistent and affordable access to internet; they requested downloadable or print copies of courses.</td>
<td>Over 500 CDs were made in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese and sent to key countries⁴. In addition, all of the courses are available to be printed in English on the website and can be downloaded as a PDF or iReader format⁵.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was a divergence of reflections related to scope: government officials liked that courses give a global perspective on problems; NGO workers requested more local examples.</td>
<td>The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative developed case studies as a part of each course. NGO workers agreed that they could adapt the case studies to their exact context, prior to the dissemination of the courses to community groups or with local leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many learners felt that the course evaluation and action plan were redundant.</td>
<td>JHU∙CCP reviewed the course evaluation and action plan and streamlined both, making them more distinct and focused on intended use of knowledge gain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The learners requested a combination of online courses and face-to-face trainings</td>
<td>JHU∙CCP developed the K4Health Blended Learning Guide to facilitate discussions with course authors on how to incorporate the GHeL and PEPFAR eLearning courses into blended learning interventions.</td>
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<td>Learners requested mentorship</td>
<td>Functionality to support a learning community that encourages more peer to peer exchange is being developed as part of the GHeL platform redesign. The rollout of this functionality is forthcoming.</td>
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⁴ See the Results section for the breakdown of countries that received CDs.
Courses that are available on the CDs include: Data Quality; Data Use for Program Managers; Economic Evaluation Basics; Geographic Approaches to Global Health; HIV/AIDS Legal Requirements; HIV/AIDS Surveillance; M&E Frameworks for HIV/AIDS Programs; Mortality Surveillance Methods & Strategies; and PEPFAR Next Generation Indicator Guidance

⁵ Courses in other languages can be downloaded as a PDF.
II.2 Phase II: Initiative Shifts to Respond to the Changing Policy Environment

Change in PEPFAR Policy
In 2011, PEPFAR published its Capacity Building Framework and changed course; instead of being centered on emergency response, PEPFAR became more focused on country ownership and sustainability.

Given this change and the different capacity building needs of national and local governments and partners, the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative added a series of courses entitled Dependency to Partnership that focused on effectively managing change for long-term programming success. The two courses that comprise this series include:

- **Dependency to Partnership: It’s About Change** (March 2013): This course explores the dimensions, psychology and dynamics of change needed to make foreign aid more effective.

- **Dependency to Partnership: Leading / Managing Change** (March 2013): This course is an introduction to the practices of leading and managing that underlie successful change; they are essential to foreign assistance programs that work.

These courses are also available to download in French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swahili from the GHeL website.

Change of Focus to Stress the Importance of Interventions Targeting Key Populations and Young Vulnerable Children
With the publication of the 2011 UNAIDS World AIDS Report, major strides were acknowledged in the fight against HIV and AIDS as new HIV infections continue to fall and more people than ever are being treated. “Yet, to be effective, the AIDS response must be transformed. We need to move from a short-term, piecemeal approach to a long-term strategic response with matching investment.” One of the high-impact, high-value strategies set forth by UNAIDS and by international partners was to focus on people at higher risk of HIV infection. As a result, the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative developed three courses focused on key populations:

- **Designing HIV Programs for Key Populations** (May 2013): This course provides field staff and country partners guidance on best practices for HIV prevention programming with key populations.

- **M&E Guidelines for Sex Workers, Men who Have Sex with Men, and Transgender Populations—National Level** (May 2013): This course addresses the unique monitoring and evaluation needs of settings where HIV affects sex workers, men who have sex with men, and transgender people.

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M&E Guidelines for Sex Workers, Men who Have Sex with Men, and Transgender Populations—Service Delivery Level (September 2013): This course helps learners apply the Operational Guidelines for Monitoring and Evaluation of HIV Programmes for Sex Workers, Men who have Sex with Men, and Transgender People (Volume 2) to strengthen HIV service delivery for these populations.

In 2012, the United States Government released its Action Plan of Children in Adversity: A Framework for International Assistance (2012-2017). The Plan, developed by the Departments of State, Agriculture, Defense, Health and Human Services, Labor, USAID, and Peace Corps, aimed to build strong beginnings, put family care first, and protect children. PEPFAR announced its complete alignment to and support for this Plan. Given the intensified focus on children and their needs, the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative developed and launched, in collaboration with Save the Children, CARE, and several other CAs, a six-course Certificate Program on Early Childhood Development (ECD) in the context of HIV and AIDS. The Certificate Program provides learners with a more comprehensive learning experience related to ECD for young vulnerable children and their caregivers. The Certificate Program was unveiled during an in-country Essential Package (EP) eLearning Launch Event in Tanzania from September 10-12, 2013.

The Certificate Program includes the following courses:

- **Course 1: Introduction to ECD** (September 2013): The course explains how children develop, how HIV impacts the developmental trajectory of young children, and how, in the absence of intervention, children can suffer life-long consequences.

- **Course 2: Integrated Early Childhood Development Programming for Young Vulnerable Children** (September 2013): This course provides participants with an understanding of the importance of providing integrated care for young, vulnerable children, particularly in the context of HIV and discusses components and key steps of integrated ECD programming.

- **Course 3: Improving the Lives of Young Vulnerable Children and their Caregivers** (September 2013): This course introduces learners to the EP’s essential tools, the building blocks, and why the monitoring and evaluation targets three different levels of intervention—child well-being, caregiver well-being, and care giving environment.

- **Course 4: Special Considerations for Highly Vulnerable Children and their Caregivers** (September 2013): This course explores the role of “shocks” in the development of young children, which can lead to developmental delays.

- **Course 5: Creating an Enabling Environment for Young Vulnerable Children and Their Caregivers** (September 2013): This course explores policy considerations related to programming for young vulnerable children and their caregivers.

- **Course 6: M&E of Holistic ECD Programs** (September 2013): The course explores the three levels of M&E set forth in the EP and promotes a shared M&E agenda for programs targeting young vulnerable children.
II.3 Phase III: Leveraging Established Courses through Blended Learning

As mentioned earlier, the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative courses were initially designed in an asynchronous way, meaning that learners could take them at their own pace. In order to leverage current courses and incorporate lessons learned from the 2010-2011 evaluation, JHU∙CCP has worked with several institutions to incorporate the eLearning courses into face-to-face trainings (one of the most common examples of a blended learning approach). eLearning courses can be used as a pre-training tool, during face-to-face trainings, and/or as follow-up to review key concepts. Using the PEPFAR asynchronous courses prior to face-to-face courses helps provide learners with a common understanding of concepts prior to attending a training, which then allows the face-to-face training facilitators to spend more time on skills development, the application of tools, and hands-on demonstrations.

JHU∙CCP designed a Blended Learning Guide as well as supported two different organizations with the integration of eLearning courses as a part of their strategic capacity building efforts.

Blended Learning Guide
To support the integration of the eLearning courses with face-to-face trainings, in March 2013, JHU∙CCP developed and published the K4Health Blended Learning Guide. The guide aims to assist trainers on how to incorporate the PEPFAR and GHeL courses into their capacity building portfolios and thus to enhance the impact of their trainings. The Guide, available on the GHeL website, has also been translated into French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swahili. The Guide has been actively promoted, including in the following ways:

- Presentation of the Guide in the K4Health e-newsletter and a number of blog posts.
- Presentation at a facilitated, in-person discussion session at the Knowledge Management Share Fair in April 2013.
- Panel presentation made at InterAction’s Forum in April 2013.
- As a part of a facilitated online forum (i.e., LeaderNet seminar) in June 2013. Over the 3-day period, 275 participants logged on from 56 countries and shared 308 posts. This interest and participation is more typical of 5-day LeaderNet seminar—per the experience of MSH’s AIDSTAR Project.
- As a part of facilitated discussions with over 160 field staff who participated in the CCP World Wide Meeting in June 2013.
- Presentation at a webinar titled, “Using KM to Improve Trainings,” as part of a series of lunchtime webinars held by the Global Health knowledge Collaborative in July 2013.

Case Study #1 on Blended Learning: MEASURE Evaluation
The Geographic Approaches to Global Health course from the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative was used as a prerequisite to a 2011 face-to-face Geographic Information Systems (GIS) training workshop that was conducted in Kigali, Rwanda. The training was organized by MEASURE Evaluation in collaboration with Monitoring and

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7 http://www.k4health.org/blog/post/blended-learning-new-way-train-health-workers
8 A blog posting of the participation of K4Health staff can be found at http://usaidlearninglab.org/library/k4health-blended-learning-guide
9 A blog was posted on this event and can be found at: http://www.k4health.org/blog/post/interaction-forum-2013-do-infographics-count-elearning
Evaluation Management Systems, and supported by USAID in collaboration with the National AIDS Control Commission. The eLearning course provided workshop attendees with an introduction to spatial data and its role in decision making.

Requiring workshop participants to complete the eLearning course prior to the face-to-face training meant that MEASURE Evaluation trainers did not have to spend as much time on the basic concepts. It also meant that the trainers were at least guaranteed that all participants had at minimum the same basic level of knowledge at the start of the course. This allowed the MEASURE Evaluation trainers to focus more on teaching the skills to produce GIS maps, how to interpret maps, and how to effectively use spatial data during the face-to-face workshop. Combining eLearning courses with face-to-face training events provides a great opportunity for reinforcing concepts, thus allowing more time to delve into complex materials and to further develop skills.

Case Study #2 on Blended Learning: Save the Children

The six courses that comprise the ECD Certificate Program were launched as part of a blended learning training event in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in September 2013. Participants included staff from implementing agencies involved in existing ECD programs, staff of national governments responsible for ECD and vulnerable children, staff of USG agencies addressing the needs of young children, and social workers across low- and middle-income countries, specifically from Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Nigeria, Kenya, and Uganda.

The three-day training created a blended learning environment in which participants completed the ECD eLearning courses while partaking in dynamic face-to-face activities. All the courses and discussions were designed to enhance the quality and effectiveness of ongoing programming and shine a spotlight on new ways to support the health and well-being of young vulnerable children and their caregivers. The event physically connected a target group of learners from multiple countries to promote peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange, and provided the target audience with the opportunity to interact with instructors to promote a facilitated learning experience. Targeted presentations led the eLearning launch into Learning Lab sessions where participants worked to successfully complete each of the six eLearning courses on site amongst roundtables and directed discussions on current ECD strategies and policies. In addition, the participants of this launch event formed a community of practice that will allow them to continue sharing and learning from one another once they return to their workplace and begin to incorporate the EP materials and tools, introduced in the eLearning courses, into their programs. This ongoing support through an online community of practice will not only ensure continued learning but also enhance the use of the EP tools through sharing lessons learned from implementation.
SECTION III:

Results of the Initiative

III.1 General Results

The success of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative is measured by the successful completion of courses (certificates earned), reach of the courses, the continued demand for new courses, learner feedback, and the number of partners that collaborate to develop courses and implement blended learning activities. The following sections provide information on these metrics.

Number of Learners and Certificates Earned:

A total of 20,690 certificates have been awarded for the successful completion of the PEPFAR eLearning courses as of August 31, 2013. The graphic on the right depicts the total number of certificates earned as a portion of the total number of “unique visitors” who have visited the PEPFAR eLearning courses. “Unique visitors” refer to learners who have started at least one quiz within one of the PEPFAR eLearning courses (including those learners who continued on to successfully complete course final exam). The color scheme reflects the years of course publication. We only have the number of certificates earned for the HIV/AIDS Legal Requirements course since it was archived on June 21 after the Supreme Court’s ruling on the Prostitution clause. The six ECD courses and the M&E Guidelines for Sex Workers, Men who Have Sex with Men, & Transgender Populations—Service Delivery Level course were published in September 2013 and are therefore not depicted in the graph.

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**Geographic Reach:**
The 20,690 certificates were earned by learners from more than 145 countries. The top 10 countries represented by learners earning certificates for successful completion of the PEPFAR eLearning courses are depicted in the map below.

![Top 10 Countries of PEPFAR eLearning Course Learners](image)

**Number of CDs Distributed and Reach:**
Per the requests from SI Liaisons in 17 PEPFAR priority countries, JHU∙CCP distributed more than 500 CD-ROMs. As a result of these requests, the PEPFAR courses were distributed and built into trainings in the countries listed at the right.

JHU∙CCP is currently in the process of distributing 500 additional CDs of the M&E-related translated courses in each language (French, Portuguese, and Spanish) to local NGOs and partners identified by the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative collaborators.

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As mentioned, starting in 2010, JHU∙CCP completed an evaluation of GHeL and PEPFAR courses. The results of the evaluation indicated that, while the GHeL platform did a good job of capturing learners’ satisfaction with courses through its end of course evaluation, it fell short in measuring the application (Level 3) of knowledge gained from courses according to the Kirkpatrick Scale (illustrated in the graphic to the left).

To respond to this shortcoming, JHU∙CCP undertook in-depth interviews with successful completers of the eLearning courses to understand not only the knowledge gained by the learners but also their application of the knowledge. The results of the interviews included the following:

- Many respondents expressed a desire to integrate, or had already integrated, courses directly into training of staff, updating knowledge of health workers, etc.;
- Respondents claimed that they would integrate knowledge gained from the courses into developing, updating, implementing and evaluating programs;
- Respondents claimed they were going to use information gained in presentations for technical meetings and conferences;
- Respondents also wanted to develop handouts (often using self-translated text) for distribution to health and social workers.

Below are some illustrative examples as to how learners plan to use the knowledge obtained from the PEPFAR eLearning courses to strengthen their daily work by:

- **Improving the regional HIV/AIDS program implementation monitoring system and see the impact of the interventions in this aspect.** – Learner from Ethiopia.
- **Building capacity of service providers in HIV care & treatment sites in conducting DQAs and utilizing the findings for improvement.** – Learner from Kenya.
- **It will help us initiate HIV/AIDS case surveillance and strengthen the already existing one.** – Learner from Kenya.
- **The information has helped me streamline the timely reporting especially for those districts that have not been reporting timely…Am proud to say that all districts at the moment observe this deadline.** PEPFAR, INGO.
- **…I took out all the updates that were there, I integrate them into the existing program that we are using to train our health workers. And we can see that we have improved quite a bit the training we conduct.** USAID-LIC, GHeL.
LESSONS LEARNED

The PEPFAR eLearning Initiative has had several key accomplishments. Most notably has been the development of 20 high quality, relevant, and accessible eLearning courses, by a broad range of subject matter experts from a variety of organizations. The courses have also been used in blended learning interventions at the field level and a number of the courses have been translated into French, Portuguese, and Spanish to facilitate the incorporation of the content into local capacity building activities.

In looking back at the past 5 years of implementation, the success of this Initiative can be attributed to the following key aspects of the project:

- **Sound and systematic M&E:** Structured M&E was critical to monitoring and evaluating course usefulness and use. Quarterly analysis of M&E data for published courses was used to inform subsequent course development as well as inform USAID and other stakeholders on the progress of the courses which, in turn, helped advocate for and promote the Initiative with other actors. The data were also used to improve the learner’s experience in an online environment. For example, the results from the GHeL evaluation led to improvements on the GHeL platform, specifically offline reading features, blended learning approaches, links to more training opportunities and learner-to-learner engagement. As well, after the launch in Tanzania of the ECD Certificate Program, the course authors used data from the final exams and the feedback from the learners to revise the course content, where appropriate, to make it more easily understandable for learners 1) whose English is a second language, 2) who are new to ECD concepts, and 3) who are new to eLearning and computers in general.

- **Champions who recognize the value added of an eLearning approach:** As with most activities, having buy-in from key stakeholders is critical to achieving results. During the course of the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative, the program team was fortunate to have advocates within USAID and other CAs that not only believed in the benefits and evidence supporting eLearning, but also in the value of the Initiative as a mode of delivering new information and reinforcing knowledge gained. Using M&E data collected, JHU-CCP supported the advocates to promote the benefits of eLearning and the investment of committing personnel time as subject matter experts involved in the course development process, by providing data that spoke to the reach and the use of the courses.
• **Collaborative course development:** Although achieving a collaborative environment for course development can be a challenge, it is critical to ensuring that course content was accurate and of the highest quality. Collaboration with a wide array of actors also promoted the inclusion of content that ensured the applicability of the courses to learners from a variety of backgrounds and contexts. Timely feedback, agreement on a common approach, and setting aside organizational preferences were challenges that had to be overcome during the PEPFAR eLearning course development process. However, the collaborative approach was a success as it brought different stakeholders together and provided them with an opportunity to present individual organizational examples related to a common, agreed-upon organizing framework. JHU∙CCP also shared M&E data with the course authors, which created a way to engage them around strategies for incorporating the course content into their other planned capacity building activities.

• **Involvement of the right staff and stakeholders at the right time:** Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of course development partnerships was possibly both the biggest challenge and the greatest success of the entire Initiative. Not every group involved in the process had the same skills: for example, not everyone was familiar with online learning, writing for the Web, or content synthesis. Establishing roles and responsibilities for all parties involved from the beginning stages of course development was critical to addressing these differences in skill sets and ensuring that all parties were actively engaged in a manner that worked best for them given the skill sets and availability of the contributors.

• **Recognition of involvement in the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative:** Creating a sound and engaging eLearning course took a considerable time investment that many did not realize. JHU∙CCP found it was vitally important to recognize the various collaborators’ involvement in the process, both in acknowledgements on the courses themselves, as well as in all promotional material.
SECTION V.

Recommendations for Incorporation in Future Programming

As discussed in this report, the PEPFAR eLearning Initiative has undergone several significant changes over its five-year implementation period: going from a strictly Internet-based asynchronous learning tool for SI and M&E officers to a tool used to strengthen the capacity of national stakeholders (both governmental and nongovernmental) in a blended learning environment.

As presented throughout the report, the offered courses have been adapted based on the needs and feedback of the learners. The Initiative currently offers 20 courses on various subject matters: from M&E, to management and leadership, to the incorporation of young vulnerable children and other key populations in program activities. These courses can easily be leveraged and used by other CAs to inform and enhance their capacity building efforts.

The courses have great value for a wide array of audiences and in a variety of settings, as depicted in the graphic to the right. The recent examples of their use combined with face-to-face trainings illustrate this point, as the courses allowed all participants in the trainings to arrive with a similar level of knowledge and trainers could concentrate on more complex concepts. The eLearning courses should also be used as a refresher after a face-to-face training to remind attendees of key concepts that they learned. Learning should not cease simply after a training event; for most attendees, there is a desire for more learning opportunities, especially if they do not have the immediate opportunity to put into practice what they have learned on the job. Even when attendees have the opportunity to put into action what they have learned, they value continued learning support opportunities to delve deeper into a particular topic and learn from others doing similar work.

JHU-CCP is currently supporting MEASURE Evaluation, who chair the inter-agency taskforce that developed the Operational Guidelines for Monitoring & Evaluation of HIV Programmes for Sex Workers, Men who have Sex with Men, and Transgender People and led the adaptation of the guidelines into two new

Examples of Ways to Incorporate eLearning into a Blended Learning Intervention

- Pre-training: Achieve a certain level of knowledge prior to face-to-face (FTF) training
- Training: Test and reinforce concepts during a FTF training
- Follow-up training: Serve as refresher courses; demonstrate how much knowledge of a topic has improved since a FTF training
PEPFAR eLearning courses, to organize and facilitate an online discussion forum on the new guidelines. The courses will be highly recommended as prerequisites with key sessions referred to for additional learning. The discussion is currently being planned for late 2013.

Above and beyond this discussion forum, JHU-CCP has the following suggestions and recommendations for the continued use of the developed courses:

- All collaborators, especially USAID, should continue to promote the eLearning courses and their translations as part of a blended learning approach, as stand-alone courses, and as resources within as part of training materials (e.g., they can be used as part of USAID’s regional SOTAs);

- CAs that currently provide face-to-face trainings on M&E, leadership and management, and HIV prevention programs for key populations and young vulnerable children and their caregivers should design training events similar to the ECD launch event in Tanzania;

- CAs who are working to build the capacity of other local organizations on a particular global health or development area should introduce the local organizations to the Blended Learning Guide and help them to design blended learning cascade trainings;

- Finally, the published eLearning courses can be promoted by organizations through their human resource systems, specifically as part of professional development plans and opportunities.
The evolution of the PEPFAR learning initiative: lessons to inform future programming
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