



International Association of Public Health Logisticians

International Association of Public Health Logisticians:

**Laying the Foundation
for a Successful
Online Community of Practice**

BACKGROUND

Supply Chain Management:

- Key Contraceptive Security element
- Ensures contraceptive and RH product availability and choice
- Strengthening the supply chain requires human resources

Limited forums exist where supply chain professionals in developing countries can find:

- Technical expertise and resources
- Examples of innovative problem solving
- Opportunities for professional growth

Using a Community of Practice (CoP) to Address the Gaps

- Addresses need for ongoing opportunities to learn, share information and experiences, and network
- Formal or informal
- Takes place face-to-face or virtually

CoP: Bringing Three Components Together

- Domain
- Practice
- Community

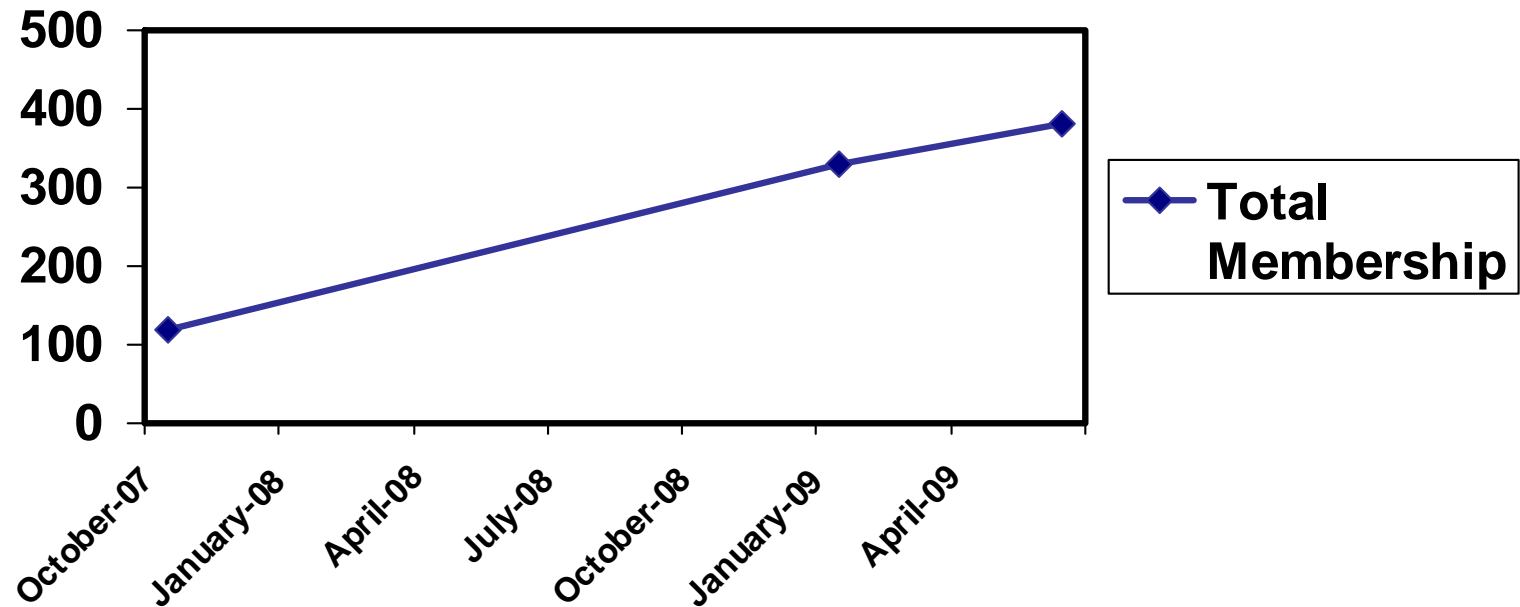
Bringing the IAPHL into Being

- USAID | DELIVER PROJECT invited potential members to join in Spring 2007
- Developed a mission statement
- Identified specific activities to nurture community

IAPHL's Mission

- promote existing ties among colleagues
- facilitate the growth of new ones
- create an environment for technical exchange and professional growth in public health supply chain management.

IAPHL's Success as a Virtual CoP



Members as Practitioners

- Network
- Share their local and regional experiences
- Improve each member's contribution toward commodity security

Challenges

- Where to host
- Recruiting members
- Member use of online tools
- Member “ownership” and online participation

Creating a Virtual Community

Implementing Best Practices (IBP)
Information Gateway used to:

- Communicate via a Listserv
- Access past postings and resources

Actively Promoting Community

Participate in online discussions on:

- donor collaboration
- new resources on post shipment testing of condoms
- how members improved their logistics knowledge
- measuring supply chain performance

Actively Promoting Community

IAPHL encouraged and supported countries with 10 or more members to:

- organize social or technical round table events
- promote face-to-face interaction
- supplement online involvement
- form country chapters

Identifying Member Needs

IAPHL conducted a survey in January 2009 to:

- assess member satisfaction with its activities to date
- identify member needs and barriers to online participation

Member Survey Results

IAPHL members highly value:

- Experiences and best practices shared
- Discussions on current issues
- 95% reported that IAPHL had moderately or greatly increased their knowledge and/or awareness of SCM and access to best practices

The IAPHL Today

- 453 members from 65 countries
- 419 contributions from 38 different countries

Successes and Best Practices

- Member initiated discussions
- Members supporting other members
- Members list IAPHL on their resumes
- Membership continues to grow by word of mouth

Conclusions

- Virtual CoP addresses need for professional networking and sharing opportunities
- Technology brings international professionals together
- Greater and more substantive participation results from membership



IAPHL

International Association of Public Health Logisticians

THANK YOU