

Grey Lit Repositories: Tools for NGOs Involved in Global Public Health Activities

**June Crowe, Sr. Researcher
and**

Gail Hodge, Sr. Information Scientist



**INFORMATION
INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATES (IIA)**

www.iiaweb.com

Outline

- Information International and public health research
- Importance of NGOs and Grey Lit
- Problems encountered
- Benefits and challenges involving use of grey lit repositories
- Repository models and examples
- Conclusion



Iia: an information management, systems, and technology company

- Founded in 1988
- Small, woman-owned
- Headquartered in Oak Ridge, Tennessee
- 180 employees across the U.S., France, and the United Kingdom



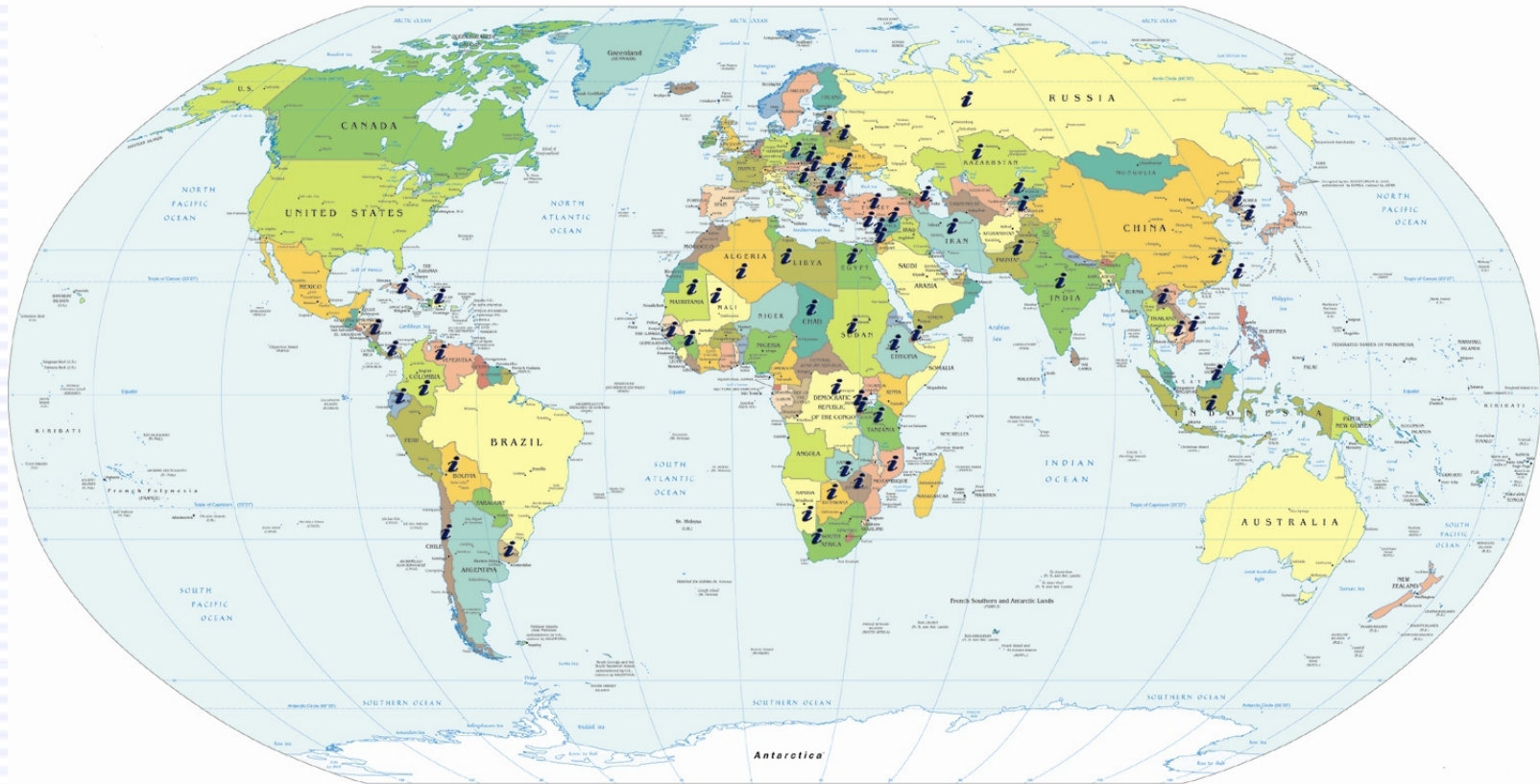
15th Anniversary, 2003



Ila's Public Health Research

- Open Source Information Research Services since 1998
- Involves status of medical capabilities in developing countries
- Need for increased efficiency, reliable sources, and well-documented references

Map of Over 60 Country Assessments Studies Developed by Iia



Importance of Grey Lit from Public Health NGOs

- NGOs and their information products are key to public health in developing countries

Pakistan Healthcare Facilities

Facility Type	Public Sector	Private Sector	Totals
Hospitals	906	626	1,532
Dispensaries	4,590	340	4,930
Rural Health Centers	550		550
Basic Health Units	5,308		5,308
MCH Centers (Maternal/Child Centers)	862	300 (maternity homes)	1,162
TB Clinics	285		285
Totals	12,501	1,266	13,767

- Grey lit from NGOs is often difficult to find



Possible Solution: Repository

- Digital collection that captures and preserves the intellectual output of an institution, agency or organization
- Benefits
 - Data collection and coordination
 - Could support the building of health capacity in developing countries
 - Knowledge management tool for NGOs



Challenges & Barriers to Repository Implementation

- NGO organizational structure
- Policies for collection development
- Funding and politics
 - Funding often targeted toward the main mission and not to information management
 - Competition for funding among NGOs



Repository Models

- PubMed Central - <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov>
- Dspace at MIT - <https://dspace.mit.edu/index.jsp>
- Greenstone – <http://www.greenstone.org>
- Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers – (ALPSP)
-<http://www.alpssp.org/default.htm>
- Google Scholar - <http://scholar.google.com/>



Observations about Models

- Software is available for basic development
 - most is open source
- Submission and/or harvesting approaches for capturing grey lit need to be considered
- Consistent approach to metadata is important
- Multi-lingual interfaces are needed



Examples

- USAID - www.usaid.gov
- Global Health Council - www.globalhealth.org
- British Library of Development Studies - BLDS - <http://blds.ids.ac.uk/blds/>
- Human Info NGO - <http://humaninfo.org>
- World Health Organization (WHO) - <http://www.who.int/en/>



Observations of Examples

- Most are searchable by geographic area and have project reports
- Some are subject oriented; i.e., Human Info NGO, Global Health Council
- BLDS – Library collects in many areas; documents not always free nor current
- Mega sites like the WHO have vast resources and pointers to documents
- None of the organizations really serve as a “one stop shop” for NGO health documents



Conclusion

- Grey lit from NGOs is a vital component of public health and medical care information, particularly in developing countries
- Public health NGOs would benefit by having one or more repositories of grey literature
- Relevant repository models exist
- There are significant barriers and challenges
- There are significant benefits to public health research community and to people world-wide

