GUIDE FOR MMTK MATERIALS DEVELOPERS

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Introduction

The Multimedia Training Kit (MMTK) provides trainers in telecentres, community media organizations, civil society organizations and the development sector with a set of modular training materials on information communications technologies: http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/mmtk/

The MMTK materials are intended, in the first instance, for *mediated* use by trainers in face-to-face workshops rather than for self-instruction by learners. While some MMTK components should also be able to serve as stand-alone information resources for end-users, they are not intended as fully elaborated self-instructional resources.

This guide provides an overview of the MMTK format and notes key issues for materials developers to take into account.

Modular format and basic terminology

The MMTK uses a flexible modular structure.

A **unit** is the content taught in a single session, for example, "Introduction to Databases" or "Editing for Radio". Sessions are generally 3-4 hours long – in other words, half a day – but they can be longer or shorter depending on the nature of the topic.

A **module** is a comprehensive set of units on a topic (for example, "Databases" or "Radio Content Production").

The modular format has two aims:

o   To provide basic elements which trainers can use to build up ("mix and match") workshops to suit their particular contexts and target audiences.

o   To simplify the process of updating materials and contributing new resources to the MMTK.

Certain components (such as trainers' notes and a handout for trainees) *must* be included with each unit; other elements (such as slide presentations) are optional but encouraged.

Components and templates

MS Office and OpenOffice.org templates for all MMTK components can be downloaded from
http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/mmtk/Templates.zip

Materials developers are required to use these templates and follow the styles they contain (for information on installing templates in MS Word and OpenOffice.org Writer see Appendix II).

Compulsory components

Each MMTK unit *must* contain the following components, as separate files[1]:

Trainers' notes mmtk_trainers_notes.dot mmtk_trainers_notes.stw	Session plan and guidelines for trainers: objectives, timings, equipment etc. See the template for more detail.
Handout for trainees mmtk_trainers_notes.dot mmtk_trainers_notes.stw	Core content for the unit. The handout must contain the basic information (skills, knowledge) needed to master the unit - "core skills and facts". Exercises, references etc. must be presented separately.
List of additional resources mmtk_additional_resources.dot mmtk_additional_resources.stw	List of references and additional resources relating to the topic.
Exercises mmtk_exercises.dot mmtk_exercises.stw	For handing out to trainees. Instructions to trainers should be included in the *trainers' notes*, not in the exercise sheet.
Glossary mmtk_glossary.dot mmtk_glossary.stw	In principle *each* MMTK unit should include a glossary of terms. In practice, if it makes more sense to develop a combined glossary for a group of units, do so.

Copyright statement
1. mmtk_copyright.dot
   mmtk_copyright.stw
2. mmtk_copyright_noncommercial.dot
   mmtk_copyright_noncommercial.stw
	Standard templates based on Creative Commons licenses.
	(1) permits both non-commercial and commercial reuse, modification and distribution. (2) permits only non-commercial reuse, modification and distribution [other license versions must be negotiated with the MMTK project].

Workshop evaluation form mmtk_workshop_evaluation.dot mmtk_workshop_evaluation.stw	To be completed by *trainees* and returned to the trainer. The template offers a very basic generic evaluation form; developers are encouraged but not required to add unit-specific questions.
Materials evaluation form mmtk_materials_evaluation.dot mmtk_materials_evaluation.stw	To be completed by *trainers* using the materials and returned to the MMTK project. Developers are encouraged but not required to add unit-specific questions.

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[1] The suffix .dot denotes an MS Word template; .stw an OpenOffice.org Writer template.

Optional components

Slides
mmtk.pot (MS PowerPoint)
mmtk.sti (OpenOffice.org Impress)

MS PowerPoint and OpenOffice.org Impress slides are optional. If they are included they must make use of the "notes" feature.

Case studies and examples
mmtk_case_studies.dot
mmtk_case_studies.stw

The inclusion of case studies/examples of how tools are being used is strongly encouraged. The aim is to build up a bank of case studies for use in different contexts – for example "how telecentre X uses a database for tracking users"; "how women's group Y uses a database for cataloguing resources on women's health" etc.

Assessment tools
mmtk_assessment_tools.dot
mmtk_assessment_tools.stw

This template should be used for both pre- and post-workshop skills assessment instruments. Pre-workshop skills tests can be developed to check that trainees meet any workshop prerequisites; post-workshop assessments can be developed to test whether learning objectives have been achieved.

Miscellaneous
mmtk_miscellaneous.dot
mmtk_miscellaneous.stw

Use this template for any other resources types to be included with the unit.

Reusability and articulation between units

Where possible, separate tool-specific, context-specific, and generic components in order to facilitate reuse, updating, and "mixing and matching of components".

Generic content examples: e.g. Database concepts; searching the Internet.
Tool-specific content: e.g. MS Access queries; using Google.
Context-specific: e.g. Databases for community resource centres; finding online resources on preventing violence against women.

o   Keeping repetition to a minimum makes information easier to update. For example, if three units on MS Word, OpenOffice.org Writer and WordPerfect each include a basic introduction to word processing, any changes to this introduction will have to be reflected in at least three different documents. If the generic introductory information is presented as a stand-alone unit, changes/updates need only be made in one place.

o   Separating generic and tool and context-specific components means that trainers can easily combine materials from different units to meet their needs without the need for substantial re-editing.

Know your audience

Trainers

Trainers in telecentres, community media organizations, civil society organizations and the development sector are the primary audience for the MMTK.

MMTK trainers range from subject experts with extensive training experience to staff in community organizations who find themselves needing to fill a training gap while still learning themselves. Most trainers have at least secondary-level education, but may not be experienced trainers or experts in the topics they are presenting.

The MMTK does not aim to provide a fully elaborated, step-by-step guide to running workshops. Rather, it offers basic building blocks from which trainers can build up their own workshops.

When we develop materials and session plans for *our own* workshops, much of the structure and narrative may remain in our heads. We know what we're going to say, so we don't bother to put it all down on paper.

Writing materials for *other* trainers to use requires us to be more explicit in our planning; session plans for other trainers need to include more detail than session plans for our own use.

The trainers' notes template is intended to equip trainers with the *minimum* of information they need in order to present the unit in a face-to-face workshop. MMTK authors are encouraged to provide additional support through, for example, slide presentations which use the "notes" feature, or extended guides to presenting the workshop.

Trainees

Because the MMTK covers a wide range of topics there is no "typical MMTK trainee". Developers should consider the potential range of target audiences for the particular units they are working on.

Language issues

MMTK users are found all over the world! With this in mind

o   Use clear, simple language.
o   Avoid narrowly culture-specific slang, colloquialisms and examples (this does not mean your writing has to be *dull*).
o   Be sensitive to the fact that many trainers and trainees using the MMTK materials are not first-language English speakers.
o   Use gender inclusive language (for example, use "s/he" instead of "he" and "their" instead of "his").
o   Make sure glossaries include all key terms used in the unit.
o   Spell out all acronyms in full the first time they are used.

Formulating learning objectives

Learning objectives are essentially a "roadmap" which shows trainers and learners where they are heading – and helps them know when they have arrived. Because the MMTK covers many different types of learning, ranging from technical skills to organizational planning, the formula for writing MMTK learning objectives cannot be set in stone. Learning objectives should follow broadly the following format, but this will vary according to the nature of a particular topic:

By the end of this unit the trainee will be able to:

Action word	e.g. "create" or "record"
Item	e.g. "an MS Access database" or "a sound clip"
Condition	e.g. "from scratch" or "using a pre-existing file"

Learning objectives should

o   Be formulated as what *trainees* will know or be able to do at the end of the unit.

No: "Teach participants database planning skills".
Yes: "Participants will be able to plan a simple database".

o   Have single skills/knowledge outcomes:

No: "Participants will know MS Access basics".
Yes: "Participants will be able to
?   Create a database from scratch.
?   Create a new table.
?   Set up a basic query.
?   Run an existing query.

o   Relate to either the "knowledge" or "skills" learning domain. For example,

By the end of the session participants will
?   Have a basic understanding of three techniques for usability testing.
?   Be able to create a basic survey instrument.

o   As far as possible be observable/measurable.

General points to be aware of

Formatting and layout

The MMTK format is intended to strip formatting and layout down to a minimum to make it easier for users to adapt the materials.

o   Keep fancy formatting and layout to a minimum.
o   Use tables instead of text boxes. Text boxes create too many difficulties for users who need to edit or adapt the document.

Bandwidth, printing and file size

o   Many users can print only in black-and-white. If you use coloured text and illustrations, make sure that they print out just as well in black-and-white.
o   Limit the use of shading in tables etc.

Sensitivity to open source

Although in practice most MMTK materials are in MS Word format, and some focus on Microsoft products, the MMTK initiative is committed to promoting the use – where appropriate – of open source tools. We don't expect MMTK authors to avoid proprietary software altogether, but where possible list open source alternatives and/or use generic descriptions. For example, when listing software requirements for a workshop specify "MS Word installed on all computers" *only if* MS Word is an essential part of the workshop. If the requirement is just for word processing software, say "word processing software" or "word processing software such as OpenOffice.org Writer or MS Word".

It's a small step, but it's a start!

Proofreading, editing and stylistic issues

Final drafts of MMTK materials are checked by a copy editor before being released. However, materials developers are expected to

o   Run a spell check on materials before submitting them.
o   Double check all references/URLs.
o   Ensure that diagrams/graphics/screenshots correspond to their descriptions.
o   Ensure that sources used are acknowledged.

Information about MMTK copyright

The MMTK materials are released under one of the Creative Commons licenses: http://www.creativecommons.org/.

The Attribution-ShareAlike License – which permits free non-commercial and commercial use, redistribution, and modification of the materials - is preferred, but different license terms may in exceptional cases be negotiated with individual developers.

Appendix I: "Thematic" units

The guidelines outlined in the body of this document apply to *all* MMTK materials. There are a number of additional guidelines relating to the development of materials in the "thematic" content production category (e.g. "HIV/AIDS, "Gender" etc).

The thematic modules are intended as collections of resources around particular themes. While the focus of all materials is broadly on content production, there is no single target audience for these materials: some will be of quite general interest, while others may be aimed specifically at community resource centres, or at journalists, or other groupings.

At the beginning of the MMTK initiative, it was thought that each thematic module should eventually contain the following individual units:

o   What is "theme X"? - the background, the issues, the main trends.
o   "Theme X" and figures: tracking statistics, breaking down statistics, presenting statistics.
o   "Theme X" and policy - international and national policies, regulatory issues...
o   Identifying sources (including Internet sources) on "Theme X" (aimed at general audience).
o   Topic-specific reporting issues on "Theme X", including language (neutrality, appropriateness etc.), ethical guidelines, terminology...(aimed at community media practitioners).
o   Information needs assessment on Theme X" (to articulate with generic information needs assessment units).
o   Involving communities in producing content on "Theme X" (to articulate with general "community" units).
o   Developing resource collections on Theme X" (to articulate with generic CMC resource collection unit).

Materials developers working on "thematic" MMTK topics should take this list as a broad guideline. However, the list of units is not exhaustive, and is still somewhat experimental – we have not yet had a chance to test the breakdown comprehensively. If you will be working on "thematic" materials, please double-check the requirements before starting work, and feel free to suggest additions or modifications to the unit listings.

Appendix II: Installing and using templates

MS Word 97

1) Extract the zipped files to the directory in which your MS Office templates are stored. This is usually

C:\Windows\Application Data\MicrosoftOffice\Templates

2) Open MS Word and create a new document for the MMTK component you are working on:

Choose **File > New** and select the template corresponding to the MMTK component you want to create.

For example, to create an MMTK handout, select the template named mmtk_handout.

MS Word 2002

1) Extract the zipped files to the directory in which your MS Office templates are stored. This is usually

C:\Documents and Settings\User Name\Application Data\Microsoft\Templates

2) Open MS Word and create a new document for the MMTK component you are working on:

Choose **File > New > New from Template > General Templates** and select the template corresponding to the MMTK component you want to create.

For example, to create an MMTK handout, select the template named mmtk_handout.

OpenOffice.org 1.0

1) Extract the zipped files to the directory in which your OpenOffice.org templates are stored. This is usually

C:\Program Files\OpenOffice.org\share\template\english

2) Open OpenOffice.org Writer and create a new document for the MMTK component you are working on:

Choose **File > New > Templates and Documents**

Double-click on the **Default** folder and select the template corresponding to the MMTK component you want to create.

For example, to create an MMTK handout, select the template named mmtk_handout.