

# REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH *matters*

19th Annual Report  
1 January – 31 December 2011



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# 1. This report

This is the 19th Annual Report of Reproductive Health Matters (RHM) for January through December 2011.

## 2. Global context

In 2010 and 2011, RHM moved into a new phase in terms of the type of issues we have begun to give attention to. The field of sexual and reproductive health and rights, although it remains 'sensitive' in certain ways, is being substantially altered due to certain aspects being mainstreamed within the Millennium Development Goals. Attention to "our issues" has also developed and expanded due to growing interest from and the active involvement of inter-governmental, governmental and non-governmental groups and organisations, not just in sexual and reproductive health per se but also from those working in human rights, civil and political rights, gender and development, and population policy. Maternal health and mortality in particular has begun to receive increased attention from those with big money to dispense and those wanting to spend big money. The field has also been affected by major shifts in where and to whom the available money is going, and by wider economic pressures, not least arising from the policies of global financial institutions and the growth of private health corporations and service providers, moving towards privatisation of health services and health systems.

In terms of indicators, there has been increasing evidence that progressive change and improvements are taking place, but also that there are many countries which have experienced little or no improvements, and others where the poorest quintiles of the population have experienced few improvements, where the gap in equity of access to the social determinants of health and health services has been shown to be a wide one. The journal in 2011 needs to be seen in this context.

## 3. RHM journal themes

RHM focused in 2011 on the following main themes in May and November:

### Privatisation in health systems in developing countries (May)

Papers were almost exclusively on Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, and included the following topics:

- Affordability of emergency obstetric and neonatal care at public hospitals in Madagascar;
- Where poor women are going for sexual and reproductive health care in Bangladesh;
- Poor standards of care in small, private hospitals providing maternity care in Maharashtra, India;
- Quality of reproductive health services at commune health stations in Viet Nam;
- Assessing public and private sector contributions in reproductive health financing and utilization for six sub-Saharan African countries;
- Trends and inequities in where women delivered their babies in 25 low-income countries;
- Equity of access to and utilization of reproductive health services in Thailand;
- Stigmatisation and commercialisation of abortion services in Poland; and
- Implications for access, equity and regulations of cross-border assisted reproduction care in Asia.

Among the non-theme papers, there were four papers on maternal mortality and morbidity issues in Nepal, Malawi and among immigrant women in the Netherlands, which reflected the growth of attention to this particular aspect of women's health and rights from almost all the perspectives

described above; two papers on condom social marketing; and two papers on sexual health, one among young people in Jharkhand, India and the other on sexual relations and childbearing decisions among HIV-discordant couples in South Africa and Tanzania.

## Repoliticising sexual and reproductive health and rights (November)

Most papers were substantially revised and more in-depth versions of papers presented at the Langkawi meeting of the same name in 2010, a number were new submissions on the theme; most were from a global perspective, and included the following topics:

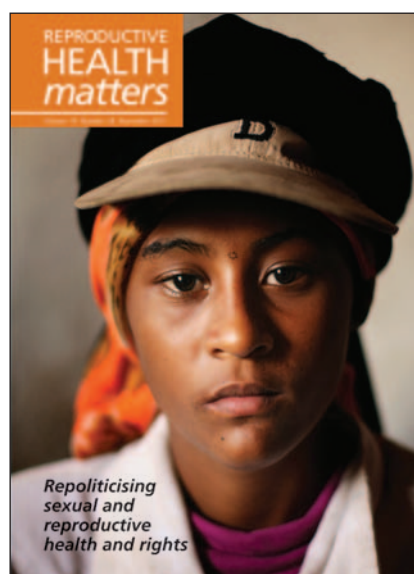
- Trends in the macroeconomic environment and sexual and reproductive health;
- Why reproductive health has stalled;
- The health MDGs and the need to move beyond the 'quick impact' model;
- Why sexual and reproductive health and rights have not been mainstreamed in public health education;
- Access to essential medicines for sexual and reproductive health care;
- Whether or not social franchises are contributing to universal access to reproductive health services in low-income countries;
- Sexual and reproductive rights at the United Nations as regards abortion and sexual rights;
- Sexual and reproductive rights and the human rights agenda;
- The impact of sexual and reproductive health development assistance; and
- Effective social justice advocacy: a theory-of-change framework for assessing progress.

There were also several papers focusing on these issues from a country-based and regional perspective, including in Latin America, in four Asian countries, at the Commission on the Status of Women and in Burkina Faso.

Both these journal issues have moved far beyond sexual and reproductive health as health issues only, and have wide-ranging implications for health policy and planning.



May 2011



November 2011

## 4. RHM in translation

The seven editorial teams for RHM in translation produced a varied set of editions of RHM articles, based on their advisory groups' recommendations of what would be most relevant for their country/region. As they have done from the beginning, the Chinese RHM group followed the theme of the English version six months later. The rest followed themes that had been published earlier and/or created their own sets of papers from several journal issues.

We contracted two new editorial teams that both began work in 2011, the Youth and Development Consultancy Institute/Etijah Foundation in Cairo for the Arabic RHM, and a new editorial team in Bobo-Dioulasso based at the Cellule de Recherche en Santé de la Reproduction (CRESAR).

The table below shows the language editions, their themes and distribution.

RHM in translation	Editorial team in:	Editions completed and being distributed, or in press, in 2011	Distributed to readers in:
Chinese	China	No. 35 Cosmetic surgery No. 36 Privatisation I No. 37 Privatisation II	Australia, China, Hong Kong, USA
Spanish	Peru	No. 6 Sexuality, human rights and sexual health	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, France, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Switzerland, Sweden, USA, Uruguay, Venezuela
Hindi	India	No. 5 Criminalisation	India
Portuguese	Brazil	No. 5 Cosmetic surgery, sexuality and body image	Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal
Russian	Russia	No. 4 Privatisation	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Lithuania, Russian Federation, Uzbekistan
Arabic	Egypt	No. 15 Privatisation, in press, due 2012. No. 16 Impact of political conflict on SRHR, in press, due 2012.	Algeria, Egypt, Emirates, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen
French	Burkina Faso	No. 3 Human resources, in press, due 2012.	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Guinea, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Togo, Mali, Niger, Chad, Senegal, USA, Switzerland, France

## Reports by the seven editorial teams

### *Chinese*

RHM 18(36) and 19(37) were translated into Chinese and 5,000 copies were distributed to institutions all over China, including hospitals, family planning clinics, universities, biological and social science research institutes, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as individual readers.

The edition can now be read and downloaded on these websites:

- China Population Information Research Center, Beijing:  
[www.cpirc.org.cn](http://www.cpirc.org.cn)
- National Research Institute for Family Planning, Beijing:  
[www.new.nrifp.org.cn](http://www.new.nrifp.org.cn)
- The training platform for Chinese family planning and reproductive health:  
<http://jsw.e-health.org.cn/jsw>
- The official website for sharing scientific data on population and reproductive health:  
<http://124.65.129.26/website/xuexiziyuan2b.html>



The editorial team included professors of sociology from the Academy of Social Sciences and a professor of epidemiology from the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, who helped to improve the quality of translation and review.

Some translated abstracts of RHM papers have been published in the Chinese Journal of Family Planning which has a circulation of over 30,000 and is distributed to almost every family planning service station in Chinese townships.

### *Hindi*

CREA has been producing RHM in Hindi annually since 2006 as part of its Information, Knowledge and Scholarship programme. RHM in Hindi is the only peer-reviewed journal in Hindi in India on sexual and reproductive health and rights. The aim of this project is to address the lack of knowledge and scholarship on the issues available to Hindi-speaking activists and organisations. Over the years, there has been a steadily increasing demand for the Hindi editions of RHM by grassroots organisations, civil society groups and universities in India.

The fifth issue, published in October 2011, was a compilation of seven articles on criminalisation, examining issues such as the impact of criminalisation on sexual and reproductive health and rights, state regulation of sexuality through various tools of criminalisation, as well as links between sexual violence, HIV/AIDS, and criminalisation.

CREA has tailored the dissemination plan for RHM Hindi to the theme of each edition.

The 2011 issue was distributed to 200 organisations specifically working on sex workers' rights, LGBT rights, HIV/AIDS issues, and young people, for whom the theme of criminalisation is important for their work. CREA displays and distributes all issues of RHM in Hindi at important national conferences, and uses the journal as resource material in its annual Hindi training on Sexuality, Gender and Rights and the Human Rights Institute in India. Participants in all training sessions receive free copies, which they take back to their resource centres. For the past two years, CREA has also been disseminating information regarding RHM in Hindi to over 7,000 people globally through its e-lists.





## Russian

500 copies of the fourth Russian edition of RHM were printed in April 2011. Seven articles from RHM 16(36), November 2010, were translated in full, as were the abstracts of seven further papers. Papers were selected on all three themes featured in that issue: privatisation, abortion law and policy and barriers to accessing services, and violence against women. Three hundred copies were distributed at the 'Reproductive Feature 21' conference in Moscow in 2011 and the remainder to individuals and organisations in Russia, Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

## Arabic

The Youth and Development Consultancy Institute/ETIJAH in Cairo took over publication of RHM in Arabic in 2011. The current political situation has greatly affected NGO activities in Egypt and there was a delay of around nine months to get the approval of the Egyptian government, which is mandatory, before they could start work. The transfer of the grant to the group was even slower than in the past for this reason. However, by the end of 2011 they had decided on the themes for the next two editions (intended for 2011 and 2012), had begun work on translation for them, and had everything else in place to start. The edition intended for 2011 (No. 15) will tackle privatisation of the health system and the edition for 2012 (No. 16) will contain papers on the impact of political conflict on sexual and reproductive health of women, taken from several RHM journal issues.

600 copies of each issue will be printed and distributed to institutions and individuals all over Egypt and several other Arabic countries. Two professors of Arabic literature from Ain Shams University and Helwan University, who work as Arabic language editors in the National Centre for Translation, were recruited in order to improve the quality of translation and editing. An expert from the Arabic Language Assembly was also consulted about new words introduced to the Arabic dictionary before adding them to the glossary of the Arabic journal. The Arabic translation of RHM will be featured on the websites of ETIJAH (<http://www.etijah.org>).

## French

Following the departure to a new post of the editor of the French language edition in 2010, RHM invited new proposals and received two excellent ones. We accepted the proposal of CRESAR (Cellule de Recherche en Santé de la Reproduction), a non-profit organisation promoting reproductive health and sexual rights in Burkina Faso, who had had the contract previously but under a new editor and editorial advisory board members. The new editor is a clinical epidemiologist working in the Centre MURAZ, a National Institute for Health Research in Bobo-Dioulasso. Good progress was made on No.3 of RHM in French, on the theme of human resources for sexual and reproductive health care, which was nearing completion at the end of 2011.



## Portuguese

The 2011 edition of RHM in Portuguese was devoted to cosmetic surgery, body image and sexuality, and included papers from RHM No.35 and 36 (2010) and No.37 (2011) in English. The electronic edition was posted in December 2011 on the website of the Coletivo Feminista Sexualidade e Saude, together with the previous translated editions in Portuguese, at: [http://www.mulheres.org.br/revistarhm/revista\\_rhm5/index.php](http://www.mulheres.org.br/revistarhm/revista_rhm5/index.php).

The number of printed copies was reduced from 1,000 to 600 in 2011 because of the increasing cost of postage. The launching of No.5 in São Paulo will be in March 2012, organised by the Coletivo and Gemas (Gender, Health & Motherhood) of the School of Public Health. A new strategy for electronic distribution to networks of activists, academics and policymakers is being developed.



## Spanish

In Lima, the Spanish language team published their sixth edition, on sexuality, sexual health and human rights, including articles published in RHM in English between 2006 and 2009. A thousand copies were printed and distributed to 868 individuals and institutions from 30 countries, both in Latin America and a small number in Europe. Significantly higher mailing costs than in the past and punitive changes in the exchange rate have constituted a problem for continuing distribution of this number to so many countries. The subscribers list was updated and new subscribers were recruited at the Advancing Sexualities Studies International Workshop in Lima, January 2011. Copies were also distributed at the 8th biennial meeting of the International Association for the Study of Sexuality, Culture and Society (IASSCS), in Madrid, Spain, in July 2011. Work on a new website has taken longer than expected but this will go live in 2012.



**Five of the seven editions of RHM in translation** are currently available online. Given the sharply rising costs of printing and distribution by mail, we surveyed the seven teams to see whether they thought it would be viable for these editions to become web-only. The situation differed from one language edition to another. For example, the Brazilian team reported that people increasingly expect to read journals online. The Arabic editor proposed reducing the print run and disseminating an electronic version more widely through a web page, a Facebook page and other means. The Hindi team felt that RHM in Hindi could not become a web-only version, at least for the foreseeable future, as lack of internet access was a major factor for the Hindi speaking population in India. Overall, although the cost advantages were clear, the majority of teams thought that they would lose part of their readership if these editions were no longer available in print. This will become part of a discussion in the June 2012 RHM editorial meeting, as the future of keeping the English language edition in print is also on the table.





## 5. RHM readers comments

*“The journal is really a treasure!”* (Rakesh Joyal, Population Council library, India)

*“We believe that the information regarding privatisation in RHM37 will benefit key stakeholders working with reproductive health in Thailand.”* (Dr Phusit Prakongsai, Director of International Health Policy Programme, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand)

*“I came across the Langkawi Report because it was in a reference in Rebecca Cook’s keynote speech for our conference, which will also be published in the Miami Law Review. So you see your work has transnational impact and it also shows our globalized world fosters connections between the reproductive rights community of scholars in the Americas and Europe.”* (Alma Beltran y Puga, Researcher into Gender and Human Rights, Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile)

*“It will be a great pleasure to receive copies of your journal (in Arabic, French and English), which we believe will give a high added value to our library and a great, accessible resource for people working in this field.”* (Ghida Anani, ABAAD Resource Center for Gender Equality, Lebanon)

*“I wanted to let you know that we are already finding your publication very interesting and useful in our work and would continue to update you on how this influences our work.”* (Ekaete Umoh, Family-Centred Initiative for Challenged Persons, Nigeria)

*“As a women’s organization [we are] involved in reproductive health matters too ... [and] we write articles for the newspapers as well as our magazine on these issues. Our reference guide is Reproductive Health Matters. Particularly after the end of war there are various issues we are facing with women. Teenage pregnancies have increased and that leads to illegal abortion, so we have started an awareness programme for school children over 13 years of age covering 104 schools, to teach them the consequences of teenage pregnancy. We take a gynaecologist with us as our resource person for this programme. Reproductive Health Matters gives current information to use in our programmes. We also translate and publish some important parts in our magazine.”* (Saroja Sivachandran, Sri Lanka)

*“How do I use the RHM journals? My duty as a university professor is three-tiered: teaching/training, research and extension/outreach. RHM helps me in all these areas. I teach the following courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels: research methodology; medical ethics; issues in social ethics; religion and health; women and religion; ethics; Christian theology in Africa; gender and development . For all these courses, RHM provide current information on sexual and reproductive health issues. My research interest is in gender and sexual/reproductive health. Of course, RHM provides me with findings in cutting-edge research on this subject. To act effectively at the community level in our globalised world, one needs to know what is happening in all corners of the globe. RHM thus informs my local action.”* (Eunice Kamaara, Kenya)

*“[While working on MCH programmes] reading RHM (and other stuff ..)... gave me a lot of support in that I felt affirmed in the approaches I wanted to take and could back up my advice to [national government] partners. I was very much involved in writing a variety of briefing papers for the Ministerial Task Force on Maternal Health in late 2008 and drew rather heavily on the relevant issue from 2007 to make the cases that needed to be made. Happily it had the desired effect... and the recommendations from that task force were appropriate for [the country]. Apart from that, I refer to back issues on a regular basis if writing reports/evaluations/advice for the Department of Health and partners here... We have been tasked with providing advice on several issues that have appeared in the journal (circumcision and HIV, task-shifting and human resource issues, cervical cancer screening options, privatisation concerns and*

*options, public-private partnerships) and RHM has had much to offer in rounding out my knowledge, and focusing my contextualised view for [local] purposes. Have used it a lot in teaching post-graduate doctors... They particularly find it of value as many of the articles direct their attention to low-resource environments and take a public health approach to the clinical problems they face on a daily basis. They have access to loads of 'western' obs&gynae journals, but we are trying to train them in SRH not just O&G. They realise they are not the only ones in the world with the issues they face and they find some creative ways to approach them... which is important as they will be the local decision-makers of the future. The other thing is the easy style in which most of the articles are presented... palatable, digestible but provocative for simple folks like me."*



## 6. RHM online

All the growth in journal subscriptions and reading of single journal articles globally in the past decade and more has been through the Internet. Elsevier has made RHM a fully web-based journal, and included it in various packages of journals that are sold to large institutions and accessed via ScienceDirect. This, in addition to an Elsevier–RHM website where our subscribers and others can read all back issues of the journal, or browse through abstracts, continues to increase our outreach through the web and our visibility in academic and governmental institutions worldwide. RHM retains full ownership of the journal and copyright in all articles and books.



### RHM's own website

## [www.rhmjournal.org.uk](http://www.rhmjournal.org.uk)

The RHM website was revised, updated and expanded in 2011, and navigation improved. Traffic to the website showed a steady increase through the year, with visitors from 154 countries. The top 10 countries were the USA, United Kingdom, India, Australia, Canada, Philippines, South Africa, Nigeria and Brazil. The maximum number of countries from which there were visitors in one month was 104, up from 88 in 2010.

The average number of visitors per month increased by 50% over 2010 figures and the total number of visits through the year was over 14,000. An increase in the number of visits in May and November 2011 suggests a surge of interest when the journal is published. However, an increased bounce rate and reduced time spent on the site may suggest that more fortuitous visitors are also finding RHM through the web.

Of the total 30,000 page views, 27% were of the home page. Half the visitors went on to other pages on the website. The second most popular page was the Call for Papers, which had nearly 2,000 views. Half of these came in the three-month period August-October surrounding the submission deadline for the May 2012 issue. Other pages for authors were also popular.

There were 4,520 views of pages in the news section and the number of views of the news section per month more than doubled over the course of the year, suggesting that visitors are increasingly finding this a useful source of information. An RSS feed allows people to receive the RHM news summaries, the numbers of which have been greatly expanded in 2011, direct to their RSS reader.

The first RHM video was of the editor talking about the cover of the cosmetic surgery journal, posted in 2011, followed several months later by a video of a London meeting on 'What it means to be pro-choice today' with three speakers, including the editor.

We have also added these new features: 'Paper of the month'; themed collections of RHM's papers, including 200 published papers on abortion, 84 on maternal mortality, 64 on violence and sexual violence and 87 on young people; links to all RHM editorials from 2001–2011; all press releases and links to mentions of RHM in the news; and all RHM's seminars and workshop reports.

## **Berer blog**

A blog by the RHM editor was set up on the RHM website, with the first blog posted in January 2011 and 13 others since then. The total number of views during 2011 was 1,432, with the busiest day seeing 42 individual visits to the blog on “Why is abortion –and particularly repeat abortion – still seen as a problem?” and the busiest month September with 238 views. All blogs have been cross-posted with the BMJ Guest Blog and with RH Reality Check, and three have been posted on the BMJ Blog. Most people found the blog via the RHM website, followed by Facebook and Twitter.

## **RHM at Elsevier**

### **[www.rhm-elsevier.com](http://www.rhm-elsevier.com)**

This is Elsevier’s website dedicated to RHM, and contains all current and back issues of the journal. The home page contains highlights of the most recent journal edition, a list of the five most-read articles (compiled quarterly), a link to RHM’s own website and more. All RHM’s subscribers, including group, personal and supported subscribers, can access full-text articles freely, using their subscriber number. For all other visitors, the tables of contents, editorials and abstracts of each paper are freely available, without a subscription. There are links to subscribe and to order back issues, and visitors can order a sample journal issue. In 2011, there were 81,830 page views on this website. Of a total of 33,988 visits, 30,081 were unique visitors and of those, 11,191 visited more than once.

## **RHM at ScienceDirect**

### **[www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/09688080](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/09688080)**

The full text of each issue of the journal and supplement is carried in ScienceDirect, a platform of some 2,000 Elsevier journals. All RHM back issues are available, and tables of contents and abstracts are freely accessible. RHM can be purchased as part of a package of journals through an institutional subscription. ScienceDirect contains two search engines in which RHM is indexed: Scopus, for searching and browsing abstracts and references, and giving coverage to citation counts available; and Scirus, a search engine for scientific information that searches journal sources online, at <[www.scirus.com/srsapp](http://www.scirus.com/srsapp)>.

## **HINARI**

### **[www.healthinternetnetwork.net](http://www.healthinternetnetwork.net)**

RHM is on the Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative (HINARI), providing free or nearly free access to more than 6,000 journals in biomedical and related social sciences to local, non-profit institutions in low-income and lower-middle-income developing countries. HINARI is one of the largest collections of biomedical and health literature. There are presently 3,400 institutions in 108 eligible countries, areas and territories registered for HINARI. In 2011, there were 2,271 full-text RHM articles downloaded from HINARI.

## **Jstor**

### **[www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org)**

This digital archive, open to participating libraries and other institutions, with back issues of RHM up to three years prior to the current issue, is being used increasingly.

## **7. Online indexes/databases that include the RHM journal**

Contemporary Women's Issues, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature, Current Awareness in Biomedicine, Current Contents, Excerpta Medica, EMBASE, Family and Society Studies Worldwide, Feminist Periodicals, Health Promotion Information, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences, Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex and Reproduction (website), Medline, Popline, Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS), PubMed, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Social Science Research Network, Social Sciences Citation Index, Sociological Abstracts .

## **8. Outreach and impact**

RHM's editorial policy from early on has been to promote laws, policies, research and services that meet the sexual and reproductive health needs of both women and men, and support women's right to decide whether, when and how to have children. The journal explores what is meant by these needs and their relationship to sexual and reproductive rights, and how these can best be met. We set ourselves the tasks of addressing fundamental concerns and dilemmas, acknowledging the multifaceted nature of problems and solutions, fostering increased communication and cooperation, new thinking and action, and new forms of consensus in the field.

Each year, we try to "measure" our success in these, difficult as that is when a publication and the network of people it includes are trying to cause a sea-change in thinking and action. To do this, we look at who our audience and authors are; how we give editorial support to them to produce new knowledge and information which we can disseminate; the extent of our coverage globally in doing so; how many subscriptions we have in all eight languages we publish in (both paid and supported by donor funding) and where these subscribers live and work. We also look at the extent of usage of RHM's articles on the ScienceDirect website, which is used by large institutions and represents a different readership base from our subscribers to the journal in print and online, who are primarily small organisations as well as key individuals in their fields. The 2010 survey of our readers, described in the 2010 annual report, was a major aid in obtaining some of this information. Lastly, the ISI impact factor is another means of measuring impact, based on the ratio of recent citations of RHM articles to the total number of recent citable articles.

### **ISI impact factor**

The 2010 impact factor for RHM was 1.268. This is the number of times 2009 and 2008 source items in RHM were cited in 2010, divided by the number of source articles published in RHM in 2009 and 2008. In 2009, the impact factor was 1.430. The five-year impact factor covering 2005 through 2009 was 1.437 in 2010 (In 2009, it was 1.429).

Importantly, RHM journal articles have longevity and stay relevant, which is shown in the fact that they are cited for a median of 6.1 years after they have been published. In 2009, by comparison, the median was 5.6 years.



## 9. Audience and authors

- national and international policymakers, agencies and donors in the field, health ministries and health departments, including heads of women's health, maternal and child health, family planning and STIs/HIV;
- reproductive health service providers, including obstetrician/gynaecologists, midwives, family planning providers and associations, and counsellors;
- researchers in a broad range of specialisms and disciplines, including the biomedical and social sciences, and in both non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and universities;
- women's sexual and reproductive health advocates, groups and organisations, and a broad range of other women's groups and organisations;
- NGOs focusing on health, population and related fields such as development and human rights;
- university and NGO libraries, and other resource and information centres;
- national and international professional associations, training courses, academics and their students, including in law, medicine, demography, public health, women's studies, social sciences, development, sexology, nursing and midwifery;
- newsletters, journals, journalists and authors in health-related fields.

## 10. Editorial support to authors and editors

RHM has had a long-standing editorial policy to provide editorial support to authors whose papers have important information to share but which need a great amount of work to bring them to a high standard of publication. Often this consists initially of detailed suggestions on how to improve a paper prior to any decision whether to peer review it. There are always two peer reviews per paper, and increasingly three as the subjects of papers have become increasingly complex. Following peer review the editor almost always offers her own detailed comments alongside the peer reviews and then helps further through detailed copyediting after the content of the paper has been finalised. This policy has served to support a larger pool of published authors, including young and inexperienced authors and those whose first language is not English, who may find it more difficult to get published in English. This has been particularly important for authors from developing countries. However, all papers go through the same selection process, and every paper must be of a high standard before it is accepted. Authors are asked to suggest two peer reviewers with expertise in their subject, at least one of whom should be from the country in question. The open review process, in which both reviewers' and authors' names are made known to each other, supports constructive peer reviews and the opportunity for exchange between authors and reviewers, even if the reviewer does not recommend publication.

*“Many thanks indeed. I agree with what you have suggested to add to the paper. I really learn a lot in the process of writing this paper with you being my mentor. I am really lucky! I am planning to write another paper about teenage mothers in the near future. I should be more aware of what I want to state and argue, and to substantiate the arguments with facts. It has been a great learning process to me. I must thank you again for it.”* (Shirley Hung, Hong Kong)

## 11. Author and regional coverage

RHM aims to maintain a balance between regions in its geographical focus and to address global issues broadly in the papers it publishes. The themes for each journal issue sometimes attract more submissions from one region and discipline than others, however. Within these parameters, the journal's policy is to focus more on developing countries because the problems are so much greater. However, it also regularly covers issues in developed countries, as these have international influence and raise different types of problems and challenges, and because reproductive health and rights can be highly problematic for women in developed countries too, especially poor and marginalised women. Furthermore, influences today are cross-regional, and solutions and models of excellence exist in all regions. Hence, our aim has always been for information from all regions to be shared globally.

In many international journals, papers about developing countries are commonly written by authors/researchers from developed countries. RHM's editorial policy almost since the beginning has been that preference should be given to papers about developing countries written by or in collaboration with authors from those countries. This policy has steadily increased the proportion of authors from developing countries published by RHM and of peer reviewers from developing countries as well. These proportions continue to compare very favourably to those of other international journals.

Authors receive a free, one-year subscription and peer reviewers are given a free copy of one journal issue, as thanks for their reviews. Many organisations continue to send information and publications in exchange for the journal, which are used in the editorial, the journal Round Up and in the RHM website news.

## 12. Contract with Elsevier

RHM's contract with Elsevier Ltd, begun in 2003, was renewed for the three years, 2011–2013. RHM has had a productive relationship with Elsevier Ltd since it started, which has been particularly beneficial for dissemination of journal articles online via ScienceDirect. Elsevier handles subscriptions, distribution, bulk orders, promotion at a few major conferences (such as the International Federation of Gynecologists and Obstetricians – FIGO), and commercial reprint permissions. They promote RHM alongside other women's and reproductive health journals in their stable such as *Contraception*, *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*, *Social Science and Medicine*, *Health Policy* and the *Lancet*. See below for further details.

## 13. Subscriptions, orders and distribution

Most paid subscriptions and orders continue to come from developed countries, while almost all subscriptions and orders from developing countries are free, supported by grants from RHM's donors. Supported subscribers are based in governments, health services, NGOs, women's health groups, libraries, universities, and a range of professional associations and institutions, almost all in developing countries. As in previous years, RHM's publications continue to reach organisations and individuals in 181 countries. Paid subscriptions to the print journal, both from organisations and individuals, have remained low, and have fallen every year, which is true for most journals as web usage has risen and budgets continue to be squeezed. Of our total subscribers, 82% are supported by grants, in line with our policy that the journal is mainly both by and for developing countries.

Each copy of the journal was read by many more than one person; according to our 2010 survey of subscribers, with an average of 11 readers per journal copy, we can estimate that in 2011, 4,043 subscriptions may have resulted in 45,000 people reading each print copy of the journal. In addition, there were nearly 227,000 journal articles downloaded through various web gateways, as shown below. Thus, RHM is reaching a very large and growing audience.

RHM in English Distribution 2011	Number of copies
<b>Print run</b>	
RHM19(37) May 2011	5,000
RHM19(38) Nov 2011	5,500
<b>Subscriptions – total</b>	<b>4,043</b>
Supported – individuals, groups and organisations from developing countries	3,465
UNFPA – global subscription	453
Paid subscriptions – print	125
Paid subscriptions – web only*	90
<b>Web usage</b>	
Articles downloaded	226,946

\*Most web-only subscriptions are from university libraries.

## 14. ScienceDirect entitled and active accounts

On ScienceDirect, there were 6,567 current institutional subscribers entitled to access RHM worldwide in 2011 (RHM was part of the package of journals they purchased), of which about 40% were in active accounts (accessing RHM articles on a monthly basis). Institutional account holders in 90 countries actively used RHM full-text articles from ScienceDirect in 2011, rising annually from 63 countries in 2007.

	2011	2010	2009	2008
Entitled accounts	6,567	6,033	5,924	3,445
Active accounts	2,641	2,558	2,395	1,864

### Number of full-text articles downloaded from ScienceDirect, Jstor and other gateways

Gateway	2011	2010	2009	2008
ScienceDirect	101,281	95,255	80,998	63,642
Jstor	114,477	117,208	not known	not known
All external gateways	8,839	7,921	6,496	10,133
HINARI and other developing country gateways	2,349	2,647	2,640	1,726
<b>Total downloads</b>	<b>226,946</b>	<b>223,031</b>	<b>90,134</b>	<b>75,501</b>

### 10 top active ScienceDirect accounts

In 2011, a total of 11,853 articles were downloaded by the following top 10 active ScienceDirect accounts:

- London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, UK
- Johns Hopkins University, USA
- Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Australia
- University of Queensland Library, Australia
- Harvard University, USA
- Australian National University Library, Australia
- University of Leeds, UK
- Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs, Republic of Korea
- Academic Yildiz Teknik University, Turkey
- University of California at Berkeley, USA

## 15. RHM promotion activities

With increasing use worldwide of the internet to find information, articles and journals, and because conference stands have become increasingly expensive, including costs of sending journals to display, RHM is putting more emphasis on flyers to promote the journal, both on the web and at conferences. Leaflets have been printed for each new issue, as well as back issues that are still in high demand, and as appropriate for specific conferences. Extensive distribution of back copies in the previous few years has also reduced our stock and we have begun to encourage readers and subscribers to access the journal online.

In 2011, we have prioritised promotion to individuals, training courses and workshops, and to policy-makers. For example, 30 copies of recent issues on privatisation and on maternal mortality were sent to the Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa (CARTA), which aims to strengthen doctoral training in public and population health. Through the Division of Reproductive Health of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 copies of the May 2011 issue were sent to Afghan health professionals working on the Afghan Safe Birth Project.

Overall, more than 500 copies of the 2011 journal issues and nearly 800 copies of back issues were distributed in 2011, and more than 2,000 print copies of the 2010 Langkawi Report were sent out by co-organisers RHM and ARROW, and many of the meeting participants. Recipients of the Langkawi report have included government ministries, international organisations, NGOs and SRHR activists. The report has also been widely distributed electronically, and is posted on the websites of RHM, ARROW and many of the meeting's participants.

RHM's board members have greatly helped to promote the journal by distributing brochures, leaflets, sample copies and CD-ROMs at conferences, courses, workshops and other events run by their organisations. Among these were the WHO World Conference on Social Determinants of Health in Brazil, the 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN in New York, and the General Discussion on women in conflict and post-conflict situations by CEDAW at the UN in New York.

RHM had stands at the following conferences in 2011:

- Population Footprints, London, UK
- Naming and Framing: The Making of Sexual (In)equality. International Association for the Study of Sexuality, Culture and Society, Madrid, Spain
- Current Choices, Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare, Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, London, UK

and sent materials to the following 40 other conferences, workshops and meetings:

- 4th Sexuality Institute, Coalition for Sexual & Bodily Rights, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 1st International Workshop on HIV & Women, Washington, DC, USA
- International Conference on African Same-Sex Sexualities and Gender Diversity, Pretoria, South Africa
- Health Inequalities – One Year from the Marmot Review, Westminster Health Forum, London, UK
- Say Yes, Say No, Say Maybe. Young People, Sex and Consent, Brook Conference, London, UK
- Towards Universal Health Coverage in Africa, African Health Economics and Policy Association, Dakar, Senegal
- HIV Capacity Building Partners Summit, AfriComNet, Nairobi, Kenya
- From Abortion Rights to Social Justice, Hampshire College, Amherst, USA
- Abortion Services: Developments and Obstacles, Royal Society of Medicine, London, UK
- Achieving the Millennium Development Goals, Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary



- Health Financing in Developing and Emerging Countries, Auvergne University, France
- Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare, Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, Annual Scientific Meeting, Liverpool, UK
- 1st HIV Social Sciences and the Humanities Conference, Durban, South Africa
- Forging the Future: Sexual Health in the 21st Century, World Association for Sexual Health, Glasgow, UK
- Global Flows, Human Rights, Sexual and Reproductive Health, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex University, Brighton, UK
- Women Creating a Safer World, 4th International Women's Summit, YWCA, Zurich, Switzerland
- Annual meeting, Reproductive Health Workers Group, Beirut, Lebanon
- Sexuality Leadership Development Fellowship, Lagos, Nigeria
- 6th Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, International AIDS Society, Rome, Italy
- Research Methods Course in Sexual and Reproductive Health, HIV and Gender-Based Violence, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Health and Wellbeing: the 21st Century Agenda, Royal Society for Public Health, London, UK
- Research, Capacity Building and Governance, Norwegian Medical Association, Oslo, Norway
- 11th International Woman and Health Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- Sex in the City, Australasian Sexual Health Conference, and HIV/AIDS Conference, Canberra, Australia
- Sexuality, AIDS & Religion, Oxford, UK
- 40th Anniversary Symposium, Our Bodies Ourselves, Boston, USA
- Moving the Agenda Forward, Sexual Violence Research Initiative Forum, Cape Town, South Africa
- Future Perspectives on Development Cooperation: Putting SRHR on the Right Track, Annual Conference, EuroNGOs, Warsaw, Poland
- 4th Research Meeting on Unwanted Pregnancy and Unsafe Abortion: Public Health Challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean, Mexico City, Mexico
- Claiming Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Asian & Pacific Societies, Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- Young People and Sexual Health in Europe: Promoting Education, Awareness and Access to Services, Brussels, Belgium
- Strategic Advocacy, Skills Sharing and Capacity Building event, MOSAIC Training, Service and Healing Centre for Women, Cape Town, South Africa
- Violence against Women in Peace and War, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Leicester, UK
- Research Day, Embassy of Denmark, Hanoi
- 2nd Latin American Legal Congress on Reproductive Rights, Costa Rica
- International Conference on Family Planning, Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population & Reproductive Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Senegal Ministry of Health & Prevention, Dakar, Senegal
- Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Emergencies, Royal Society of Medicine, London, UK
- International Conference on AIDS in Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- African Population: Past, Present & Future, 6th African Population Congress, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
- Health System Reform in Asia, Social Science & Medicine Conference, Hong Kong

## 16. Elsevier promotion activities

RHM features on the new specialty portal [www.obgynadvance.com](http://www.obgynadvance.com) which was launched by Elsevier in July 2011.



### Medical account cluster campaign

An email was sent in early February 2011 to librarians/purchasers of current medical institutional subscriptions to OB-GYN titles, to create awareness of all available journals in this specialty and encourage them to contact their sales representative for a quote to complete their current subscriptions.

### Conference promotion

RHM is included in conference promotion as part of the OB-GYN cluster as well as featuring on two cluster leaflets promoting Elsevier's social medicine portfolio.

RHM was promoted at an Elsevier exhibition booth at the following conferences:

- The Pregnancy Meeting – Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, San Francisco, USA
- 4th International Congress for Reproductive Medicine & Beyond, Madrid, Spain
- North American Society for Pediatric & Adolescent Gynecology, Chicago, USA
- American College of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Washington, DC, USA
- International Congress of Midwives, Triennial Congress, Durban, South Africa
- European Society of Human Reproduction & Embryology, Stockholm, Sweden
- American Society of Reproductive Medicine, Orlando, USA
- North American Forum on Family Planning, Washington, DC, USA

### Press release campaign

Elsevier continued to work with the RHM office on press releases for both journal issues and announced publication of new journal issues on the RHM-Elsevier homepage, their ScienceBlog, HighBeam Research and ScienceNews, the bi-weekly news magazine of the Society for Science & the Public.

### Readership

In order to maximise usage of RHM on ScienceDirect, Elsevier uses marketing systems and resources to drive subscribers and readers to its contents. Examples of these are search alerts, topic alerts and ScienceDirect Top 25 Hottest Article alerts. Authors are also notified by e-mail when their work is referenced in a newly published article on ScienceDirect and receive CiteAlert notifications if their article has been indexed by Scopus.

## 17. Social media and networking

RHM's social media project began in October 2010. As of 2011, we have had an active Facebook page, which promotes information in other languages as well as English, and has begun to see interaction from 'friends' and visitors. Our Twitter presence is becoming established, and the number of 'followers' has risen every month. Both Twitter and Facebook allow us to share links with a wider range of people online.

With the increasing number of links to and from these two sites, which increase our search engine ranking, RHM now shows up first on Google when the search term is 'reproductive health matters', seventh when the search term is 'reproductive health', and sixth when the search term is 'rhm'. Our Wikipedia page also helps with search engine rankings and web presence.

We began compiling e-mail addresses of all RHM's subscribers and sent out a message to the first list (c. 300 people) on how to access RHM online. We will continue this in 2012 in order to begin sending news to subscribers and all our contacts in the field.

To promote RHM online, we designed a flyer that was first distributed with the November 2011 issue of the journal.

We have begun a process of strengthening our relationship with the traditional media so that journal content starts to reach larger audiences. This began to bring some interest from journalists, e.g. from *Artsenkrant*, a Belgian newspaper for doctors. It has involved writing more –and more targeted –press releases, which in 2011 were on the criminalisation of abortion services in Poland, which effectively privatised them; cross-border assisted reproduction care in Asia (leading to an article being published on the BMJ news site); microbicides for HIV prevention; a response to the PIP breast implant scandal in Europe, which became a BMJ blog; and the impact of the MDGs. RHM's social media person was also invited to write a feature on maternal morbidity among ethnic minority women in the Netherlands, based on an RHM paper, for the *Holland Times*, a Dutch English language newspaper.

After several months of research and in consultation with colleagues in the field, in December 2011 we decided to take a year's contract with PRNewswire for the media communication system *MEDIAAtlas Gold*, which gives us access to contact information for journalists all over the world and the capacity to find more media contacts in areas where their database is less complete (e.g. sub-Saharan Africa). It also allows RHM to send out press releases in bulk or to a targeted group of contacts, with no limit on the number of releases or recipients.

Because we are a grantee of the MacArthur Foundation, we were given the chance to access some services from M4ID (Marketing for International Development) in Finland, a communications technology firm providing, e.g. social media training and advice. In November-December 2011, initial activities with them included advice on developing a social media and online activities strategy and how to improve RHM's Facebook page.

## 18. RHM donors meeting, Geneva, June 2011

Following the Policy and Coordination Committee (PCC), Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP) at WHO in Geneva, RHM organised a donor's meeting to present our current programme of work and activities and try to get some sense of the possibility of funding for the future.

The following donors attended the meeting: Elly Leemhuis-de Regt (Senior Adviser, SRHR, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Dr Joar Svanemyr (Senior Adviser, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Department for Global Health and AIDS, NORAD, Norway) Margaret Hempel/Lourdes Rivera (Ford Foundation), and Jeff Spieler (USAID).

The following RHM board members also attended the meeting: Berit Austveg (Chair, Trustees), Thérèse Delvaux (Editorial Advisory Board), Jane Cottingham (Editorial Advisory Board). Dr Korrie de Koning (Senior Adviser, Sexual, Reproductive Health and Rights, Royal Tropical Institute) also attended.

The RHM editor also met with three representatives of the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs, Belgium, who attended the HRP PCC, and at a different time, at the WHO RHR/HRP meeting on mid-level providers of medical abortion, talked with an anonymous donor.

## 19. Other activities of the editor

The editor chaired and participated in a meeting on mid-level providers of medical abortion, Department of Reproductive Health and Research/HRP, WHO, Geneva.

### Presentations:

- Sexual health and rights at London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine;
- RHM35 cosmetic surgery journal cover, Institute for Development Studies, Brighton;
- Re-asserting SRHR, Symposium in honour of Mahmoud Fathalla, University of Hasselt, Belgium;
- What it means to be pro-choice in Britain today, Voice for Choice public meeting.

### Attendance at the following meetings and conferences:

- Population Footprints, London;
- Policy and Coordination Committee, Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP) at WHO, Geneva;
- Steering Committee, International Consortium for Medical Abortion;
- Voice for Choice.

### Articles and blogs:

- two editorials for the RHM journal;
- co-authored a paper on the role of essential medicines and the pharmaceutical industry in SRHR, published in RHM38;
- a study on 'Repeat abortions – using evidence to address community needs' for a local consultation in London; and
- 15 blogs for the RHM website.

## 20. RHM staff, consultants, editors and boards 2011

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#### *Finance*

Paula Hajnal-Konyi

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Cassie Werber

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Lisette Silva

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#### *Website management*

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#### *Portuguese*

Simone Diniz

Ana Paula Portella

#### *Hindi*

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