

the previous research. They found that the primary cause of the limited understanding was that HIV, and issues relating to it, were often considered too taboo to discuss comprehensively. The other major problem was that most of the education on this topic was being taught through television advertising, billboards, and other mass-media campaigns, which meant people were only receiving bits and pieces of information.

In late 2005, Piya and her team used research-based design to create new educational materials and worked with local partners in India to help distribute them. As soon as the animated software was posted online, Piya's team started receiving requests from individuals and governments who were interested in bringing this model to more countries. "We realized fairly quickly that educating large populations about a topic that was considered taboo would be challenging. We began by identifying optimal local partners and worked toward creating an effective, culturally appropriate education," Piya said.

Very shortly after the initial release, Piya's team decided to spin the endeavor into an independent nonprofit out of Stanford University. They also decided to use Creative Commons licenses on the materials.

Given their educational mission, TeachAIDS had an obvious interest in seeing the materials as widely shared as possible. But they also needed to preserve the integrity of the medical information in the content. They chose the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs license (CC BY-NC-ND), which essentially gives the public the right to distribute only verbatim copies of the content, and for noncommercial purposes. "We wanted attribution for TeachAIDS, and we couldn't stand by derivatives without vetting them," the cofounder and chair Shuman Ghosemajumder said. "It was almost a no-brainer to go with a CC license because it was a plug-and-play solution to this exact problem. It has allowed us to scale our materials safely and quickly worldwide while preserving our content and protecting us at the same time."

Choosing a license that does not allow adaptation of the content was an outgrowth of the careful precision with which TeachAIDS crafts their content. The organization invests heavily in research and testing to determine the best method of conveying the information. "Creating high-quality content is what matters most to us," Piya said. "Research drives everything we do."

One important finding was that people accept the message best when it comes from familiar voices they trust and admire. To achieve this, TeachAIDS researches cultural icons that would best resonate with their target audiences and recruits them to donate their likenesses and voices for use in the animated software. The celebrities involved vary for each localized version of the materials.

Localization is probably the single-most important aspect of the way TeachAIDS creates its content. While each regional version builds from the same core scientific materials, they pour a lot of resources into customizing the content for a particular population. Because they use a CC license that does not allow the public to adapt the content, TeachAIDS retains careful control over the localization process. The content is translated into the local language, but there are also changes in substance and format to reflect cultural differences. This process results in minor changes, like choosing different idioms based on the local language, and significant changes, like creating gendered versions for places where people are more likely to accept information from someone of the same gender.

The localization process relies heavily on volunteers. Their volunteer base is deeply committed to the cause, and the organization has had better luck controlling the quality of the materials when they tap volunteers instead of using paid translators. For quality control, TeachAIDS has three separate volunteer teams translate the materials from English to the local language and customize the content based on local customs and norms. Those three versions are then analyzed and combined into a single master translation. TeachAIDS has ad-