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Social and Behavior Change Do's and Don'ts

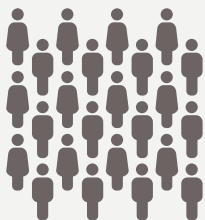
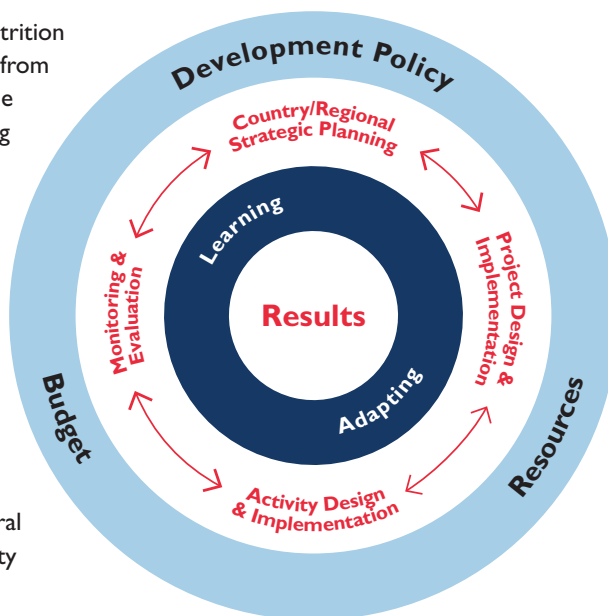
Getting It Right for Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Programming

Purpose of This Resource

Social and behavior change (SBC) interventions can help multi-sectoral nutrition programs succeed when the SBC is implemented at a high level of quality from the beginning of the program cycle to the end. This starts with securing the participation of stakeholders and staff and continues through implementing the program, monitoring its performance, and making needed changes. Effective SBC strategies are built from evidence that is gathered and discussed with a range of partners. This evidence—including data from secondary sources, formative research, and programming experiences—grounds a detailed SBC strategy and plan of action. High-quality SBC also relies on well-trained teams who understand the strategy and how to make it work in local settings.

How to Use This Resource

SBC practitioners and teams can use this resource to prepare SBC implementation plans, regularly check on implementation, and identify areas to adjust as needed to improve quality at every stage of multi-sectoral nutrition SBC. It highlights 1) what to do (elements that lead to high-quality multi-sectoral nutrition SBC), and 2) what not to do (problems to avoid).



MOBILIZE STAKEHOLDERS AND STAFF

✓ DO identify and engage relevant stakeholders across sectors.

- Generate commitment to the SBC strategy by keeping stakeholders engaged in strategy formation, implementation decisions, and planning.
- Help the implementing team and stakeholders define, understand, and review roles and responsibilities.

✗ DON'T wait to involve implementing partners and stakeholders.

- Ensure that the implementing team communicates openly and consults with stakeholders often.
- Regularly reflect with relevant stakeholders on progress, challenges, roles, and responsibilities.

✓ DO build staff ownership and skills.

- Break down the SBC strategy into clear, meaningful concepts that everyone can understand and feel they have a stake in.
- Create a common understanding among all staff about the content of the strategy and their roles in making it happen.
- Continue to refresh staff, and orient new staff, on the SBC strategy and key interpersonal communication skills.

✗ DON'T expect one person to do all of the SBC work.

- Assign a lead to each activity with clear roles and accountability.

✗ DON'T neglect ongoing training, support, and coaching for continual improvement.

- Continually assess and strengthen the team's SBC capacity by observing, asking about needed support, and providing supportive supervision.



DELIVER

✓ DO carefully sequence and align activities.

- Create an implementation tracker to help flag when activities are not happening so adjustments can be made.
- Integrate activities to maximize efficiencies for supplies and services and coordinate messaging to ensure that messages reinforce and amplify one another.
- Plan and implement a comprehensive communication strategy that uses a variety of channels and sequences topics in the most appropriate order.

✗ DON'T settle for generic activities, messages, and materials.

- Draw on formative and other research findings to incorporate local socio-cultural content.
- Ensure activities respond to the expressed needs and interests of participant groups, including influencers.
- Examine and address the separate needs and preferences of men and women, and girls and boys.

✓ DO plan to strengthen capacity through systematic quality improvement, re-training, and ongoing coaching.

- Provide intensive supportive supervision, including mentoring and modeling, 3 to 6 months after initial training.
- Provide feedback during regular check-ins with staff on program activities.
- Praise the efforts and continue to build essential capacities of field implementers and change agents over time.

✗ DON'T forget to engage the unique voices of grandmothers, adolescents, peer influencers, and other distinct social groups during implementation feedback opportunities.

- Take time to reflect on their feedback and use what they have shared to improve activities.

✓ DO make sure that the implementation team has all of the resources it needs to be successful.

- Follow up regularly to check on the status of resources, discuss needs, and find additional resources, if needed.

✗ DON'T assume that one training for change agents will result in quality implementation.

- Offer multiple capacity-strengthening activities that cover possible challenges, tools, and strategies.



MONITOR

✓ DO monitor implementation, including changes in behaviors and factors.

- Consult with participant groups regularly to understand what they are doing and why.
- Update program activities to stay relevant to the context and needs.
- Coordinate with other programs.

✗ DON'T ignore changes in context, participant groups, and behaviors.

- Respond to challenges and changes in behavior by reflecting on them with stakeholders and using other participatory processes for continual learning and adaptation.
- Review project inputs and impact to ensure appropriate gender considerations.

✓ DO set up a clear, user-friendly monitoring system.

- Set up forms for reporting progress and ensure staff use them effectively.
- Track how well implementation follows the plan.
- Record, analyze and react to data on reach, perceptions, and trends in behaviors and factors.
- Track and adjust programming to address unexpected and unintended effects.

✗ DON'T overlook the value of monitoring activities and analyzing and responding to data.

- Discuss monitoring data regularly to understand what they indicate and use them to adjust strategy and activities.
- Share data with stakeholders for continued quality improvement.
- Share progress with change agents at all levels to reflect, celebrate successes, and identify challenges.
- Make sure SBC activities and all other activities contribute to SBC outcomes.



ADAPT

✓ **DO** review and revise the SBC strategy, approaches, and activities.

- Engage the team in regular, systematic review of SBC strategy and activities using monitoring data to collectively improve strategies.
- Make dynamic changes to improve effectiveness and document them.

✗ **DON'T** ignore changes in context, participant groups, and behaviors.

- Brainstorm with partners and teams to revise and reignite stalling activities.
- Review research findings with a wide group to solve problems creatively and make needed adjustments.

Additional Resources

Food Security Network. 2015. *Enhancing Nutrition and Food Security during the First 1,000 Days through Gender-Sensitive Social and Behavior Change: A Technical Brief*. TOPS/CORE/Wi-HER for USAID. https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/Gender%20Sensitive%20SBC%20Tech%20Brief%20Final_0.pdf

High-Impact Practices (HIPs) in Family Planning. 2018. *Social and Behavior Change: A Critical Part of Effective Family Planning Programs*. Washington, DC: USAID. https://www.fphighimpactpractices.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/SBC_Overview.pdf

Packard, Mary. 2018. *Report on a Review of Social and Behavior Change Methods and Approaches within Food for Peace Development Food Security Activities*. Washington, DC: Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance III Project (FANTA)/FHI 360. <https://www.advancingnutrition.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/pa00thnm.pdf>

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). 2019. *Effective At-scale Nutrition Social and Behavior Change Communication: Technical Guidance Brief*. Washington, DC: USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/global-health/health-areas/nutrition/technical-areas/effective-scale-nutrition-social-and-behavior>



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