

Why Invest in Social and Behavior Change for Family Planning and Reproductive Health?

A Resource Collection Guide for Country-Level Decision-Makers



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PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE: This guide was developed by Breakthrough ACTION to help country-level decision-makers address the challenges that they face in supporting and investing in social and behavior change (SBC) for family planning (FP) and reproductive health (RH).

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- Review the opportunities to see how you might enact them.
- Use the various resources to address challenges in investing in SBC for FP/RH.

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Collection Contents

The resources in this collection were identified to address specific needs and challenges faced by country-level decision-makers in investing and supporting SBC for FP/RH. The resources are categorized in the following themes representing specific opportunities to address the challenges identified. You will see these icons next to each opportunity identifying which set of resources respond to that opportunity and challenge.



Broaden view of SBC



Understand costing of SBC



Reach more audiences



Showcase SBC impact



Improve SBC measurement

Background

Twenty-six governments and other stakeholders have joined the global family planning movement (referred to as FP2030) and made formal commitments to advance rights-based FP. For governments, a commitment to FP2030 signifies investment in transformational progress for their citizens in alignment with national development goals and with the support of global partners. This commitment highlights the global health and development community's aim to ensure universal access to FP/RH information and services by 2030.¹ Accomplishing this goal depends on extraordinary and unprecedented cooperation, collaboration, and shared visioning among key stakeholders, including country-level decision-makers, donors, implementing partners, and others.

What is Social and Behavior Change (SBC)?

Social and behavior change (SBC) is a proven, cost-effective approach to achieving this FP/RH goal. SBC uses a deep understanding of human and societal behavior and evidence-based interventions to increase adoption of healthy behaviors and influence the social norms and structures underpinning those behaviors. SBC should be included as part of all FP/RH programs, particularly commitment to FP2030, for three key reasons:

- SBC has been shown to increase successful FP outcomes by creating an enabling environment, addressing harmful social norms, improving couples' communication, and increasing uptake of contraception.²
- SBC approaches complement and amplify service delivery investments and can be used before, during, and after service encounters to improve FP/RH outcomes. The field of SBC recognizes that factors beyond the biomedical model affect health and well-being at individual, household, community, and societal levels.
- SBC demonstrates a high return on investment in both the short term and long term.³

Donor Investment Context

Country-level decision-makers face challenges in supporting and investing in SBC for FP/RH. Because donors and implementing partners provide technical support to country-level decision-makers in developing their national plans and strategies, country-level decision-makers are often influenced by perceived and real donor priorities or the preferences of implementing partners. The interplay between these actors and how they influence each other cannot be ignored. Country-level decision-makers operate in complex environments constrained by limited funding and competing health priorities. Most health funding, including that for FP/RH, is supplied by donors and multilateral organizations. As a result, country-level decision-makers must balance their priorities with those of donors providing funds for specific interventions. Moreover, funding is often aligned with national plans and strategies, which traditionally reference SBC narrowly as demand generation activities for FP/RH services. This can make it challenging for country-level decision-makers to invest in SBC for FP/RH even when they see the need for and benefit of tailored SBC interventions. As one interview respondent stated,

¹ United Nations: Population Division. (n.d.). SDG Indicator 3.7.1 on contraceptive use. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/data/sdg-indicator-371-contraceptive-use>

² Rosen, J.E., Bellows, N., Bollinger, L., Plosky, W.D., & Weinberger, M. (2019). The business case for investing in social and behavior change for family planning. Population Council.

³ Ibid.

“Where SBC can help is to address myths and misconceptions among different populations, so it becomes difficult to increase uptake among communities who have a lot of myths and misconceptions. SBC can help understand the driving factors in each community. You cannot apply a blanket SBC intervention, but you need to adapt it to each unique community.”

— Country-level decision-maker interview respondent


Insights

The USAID-funded Breakthrough ACTION project conducted stakeholder interviews with country-level decision-makers from 10 different countries (Bangladesh, Burundi, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, and Togo) to understand their unique needs for and barriers to investing in SBC for FP/RH. This section presents the key challenges revealed from this process, as well as opportunities and resources for tackling these challenges.

1 CHALLENGE: Investments in FP/RH programs must align with national plans and strategies, which are written according to the health system building blocks and do not explicitly include SBC. As a result, SBC is often missing from or minimized in national strategies, making it difficult for country-level decision-makers to explicitly include SBC in their FP/RH investments.


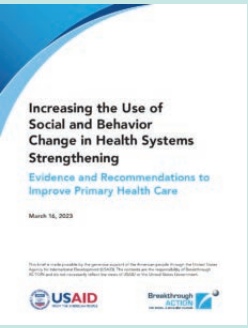


Opportunity: Learn about how increased investment in SBC for FP/RH can effectively strengthen the health system and existing service delivery investments by more effectively engaging communities and building trust in the health system, which in turn enhances health system performance and accountability.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	Circle of Care Model™ (French and Arabic)	<p>The Circle of Care Model™, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, is a framework for understanding how SBC interventions, particularly strategic communication, can be used along the service delivery continuum.</p>	<p>You can learn how SBC can be integrated across the service continuum (before, during, and after services). At each stage, three explicit areas are identified where SBC can be used to influence attitudes and behaviors among clients and providers for more effective service delivery programs. Meeting the needs of the intended audiences helps improve health outcomes, including FP/RH outcomes.</p>



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Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p><u>Elevating Social and Behavior Change as an Essential Component of Family Planning Programs</u></p>	<p>This commentary explores how an increased investment in SBC can help advance the achievement of global, regional, and national goals related to FP demand, access, and use.</p>	<p>You can use this commentary as an effective tool to learn about and advocate for the contribution of SBC to advancing global, regional, and national goals related to FP demand, access, and use.</p>
	<p><u>Increasing the Use of Social and Behavior Change in Health Systems Strengthening: Evidence and Recommendations to Improve Primary Health Care</u></p>	<p>This brief, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, summarizes findings from a literature review and technical consultations related to integrating SBC within health systems strengthening programming. It provides recommendations and identifies promising opportunities to increase the use of effective SBC in this programming.</p>	<p>You can use this resource to identify evidence for integrating SBC within health systems strengthening and follow the recommendations and promising opportunities to ensure investments effectively integrate SBC into this programming.</p>



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	<p><u>Social and Behavior Change and Health System Strengthening</u></p>	<p>This white paper, developed by USAID, highlights how SBC is a foundational and critical component of effective and sustainable health systems strengthening. Critical to the success of high-performing health systems is the bidirectional relationship of SBC and health systems strengthening. High-performing health systems enable all stakeholders, from clients to policymakers, to practice behaviors that support health. These collective behaviors reinforce and strengthen the health system.</p>	<p>You can use this resource to learn about how SBC can contribute to all three USAID health system priority outcomes: quality, equity, and resource optimization. Specifically, SBC can be used to address the underlying reasons for patient behavior and health system actor performance to improve the overall performance of the health system.</p>
	<p><u>Health System Strengthening: Evidence Gap Map</u></p>	<p>This evidence gap map, developed by the Local Health System Sustainability Project, catalogs research on the effects of health systems strengthening efforts on health system outcomes. The literature is organized around USAID’s Health System Strengthening Learning Agenda, which articulates six questions designed to spur learning about how to improve health system equity, quality, and resource optimization. These are the desired intermediate outcomes of USAID’s Vision for Health System Strengthening 2030. Question 6, which relates specifically to SBC, asks, “What are key behavioral outcomes of a functioning, integrated health system? In what ways can integrated health systems strengthening approaches explicitly include SBC?”</p>	<p>You can filter this resource by learning question on SBC and review the literature related to design; monitoring and evaluation; tools for SBC in health systems strengthening; health system drivers of behavior; and integrating SBC in health systems strengthening according to the desired intermediate outcomes of USAID’s Vision for Health System Strengthening 2030 (i.e., equity, quality, resource optimization, and resilience). This resource is particularly helpful for providing evidence specific to your country context according to these outcomes.</p>




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	<p><u>The 6 domains of behavior change: the missing health system building block</u></p>	<p>This <i>Global Health: Science and Practice</i> editorial outlines six domains of behavior and how each is important to improve health and achieve the ambitious global health goals of our generation.</p>	<p>You can learn about how behavior change can address traditional global health priorities (e.g., safe sexual practices), influence provider behavior, and promote care-seeking behaviors, client adherence, collaboration, pro-social behaviors, and policy and priority setting.</p>

2 CHALLENGE: Even when country-level decision-makers intend to invest in SBC, it can be difficult to do so because the costed implementation plan (CIP) process is overwhelming and burdensome, involving many questions and recommendations and requiring busy country-level decision-makers to do extra research. Tools are needed to make it easier for country-level decision-makers to incorporate SBC into CIPs and to include budgeting for SBC in other national strategies.


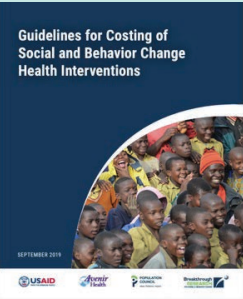
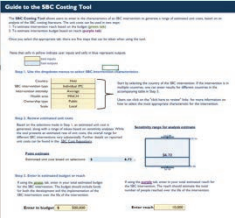


Opportunity: Learn more about how to effectively plan for and incorporate SBC, including budgeting for it, into the CIP process and other national strategies.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p>The SBC Checklist to Develop and Assess Costed Implementation Plans for Demand Creation (English French)</p>	<p>The SBC Checklist, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, can help governments, donors, and implementation planning teams strategically integrate best practices in SBC, with consideration of specific elements (e.g., gender and youth), into the CIP.</p>	<p>You can use the SBC checklist throughout the CIP development process, from engagement to launch. It can be used when analyzing the situation, defining strategies, planning activities, establishing the costs of implementation, monitoring, and evaluating. You can also use the SBC checklist during a CIP monitoring process to ensure SBC activities adhere to recommended practices and make revisions if needed.</p>




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Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p>The SBC Checklist to Develop and Assess Costed Implementation Plans for Demand Creation: User Guide (English French)</p>	<p>This user guide, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, provides step-by-step guidance on how governments, donors, and implementation planning teams can use the SBC Checklist to strategically integrate SBC best practices into CIPs.</p>	<p>You should familiarize yourself with the user guide before introducing the checklist as part of a workshop or in an extended meeting with all stakeholders involved in the assessment, development, or implementation of a CIP.</p>
	<p>Guidelines for Costing of Social and Behavior Change Health Interventions</p>	<p>This document, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH, provides a framework for estimating the cost of interventions for SBC to change health behaviors by addressing factors such as knowledge, attitudes, and norms.</p>	<p>You can use this framework to estimate and compare the costs of SBC interventions and identify which interventions would be most impactful to include in national strategies and plans.</p>
	<p>Creating a Social and Behavior Change Cost Repository and Costing Tool</p>	<p>Breakthrough RESEARCH has collated SBC cost data identified in the literature into an SBC Cost Repository. It is available as a filterable workbook of all identified SBC costs and includes an SBC costing tool.</p>	<p>You can use these resources to examine prior SBC cost findings for program planning, budgeting, and benchmarking. The SBC Costing Tool allows you to enter the characteristics of an SBC intervention to generate a range of estimated unit costs.</p>


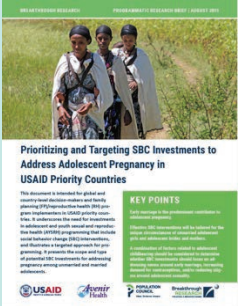


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Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<u>Investing in Social and Behavior Change: Understanding Costing</u>	This Knowledge SUCCESS blog post highlights Breakthrough RESEARCH's work, led by Avenir Health, on gathering, analyzing, and sharing evidence on the costs and impact of SBC interventions.	You can use this blog post to learn more about Breakthrough RESEARCH's approach to costing SBC interventions, which can be used for budgeting, planning, evaluating cost effectiveness and efficiency, and determining the best way to use limited resources.

3 CHALLENGE: Despite progress in increasing access and uptake of contraceptives in most countries, some groups (e.g., unmarried and married adolescents and youth) have been left out of current FP/RH programs or have experienced discrimination when accessing services. Countries will not be able to meet their FP2030 commitments and improve their economy and health without reaching these audiences.

Opportunity: Learn how tailored investments in SBC for FP/RH can enhance the effectiveness of other program approaches and reach specific audiences.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
 <p>Prioritizing and Targeting SBC Investments in Family Planning for Married Youth in USAID Priority Countries</p>	<p><u>Prioritizing and Targeting SBC Investments in Family Planning for Married Youth in USAID Priority Countries</u></p>	<p>This brief, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH and intended for country-level decision-makers in USAID priority countries, underscores the need for investments in SBC interventions in FP programming for married youth.</p>	<p>You can use this resource to prioritize and target SBC interventions for married youth. It will help identify potential investments based on levels of current use of modern contraception and the potential demand for modern contraception.</p>
 <p>Prioritizing and Targeting SBC Investments to Address Adolescent Pregnancy in USAID Priority Countries</p>	<p><u>Prioritizing and Targeting SBC Investments to Address Adolescent Pregnancy in USAID Priority Countries</u></p>	<p>This brief, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH and intended for country-level decision-makers in USAID priority countries, underscores the need for investments in SBC interventions in FP programming for unmarried and married adolescents.</p>	<p>You can use this resource to identify the scope and type of potential SBC investments for addressing teen pregnancy.</p>




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Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p><u>First-Time Parents and Young Married Couples: A Neglected Window of Opportunity for Family Planning Programs</u></p>	<p>This Breakthrough ACTION blog post highlights how youth FP efforts have traditionally missed youth who are married or parents and spotlights a growing body of resources and learnings on this population.</p>	<p>You can use this resource to identify resources and learnings on first-time parents and young married couples to inform the design of programming approaches.</p>
	<p><u>Using SBC to Enhance Programs to End Child, Early, and Forced Marriage</u></p>	<p>This series of briefs, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, proposes SBC approaches to strengthen the collective effort to reduce child, early, and forced marriage. Creative, multi-faceted, and innovative interventions will be required to address the factors contributing to the prevalence and impact of these marriages.</p>	<p>You can use these briefs to identify and replicate successful interventions conducted all over the world.</p>

4 CHALLENGE: Investments must be linked directly to the uptake of FP, and results must be quick. SBC works across multiple levels of the socio-ecological model (e.g., individuals, social networks, communities, and societies), making its direct impact on contraceptive uptake challenging to measure and quickly observe. It is therefore important to gain better understanding of the full potential of SBC interventions and how existing national-level data sources can be leveraged and improved to monitor and evaluate SBC for FP/RH programming.





Opportunity: Review the growing evidence base and compelling examples of impactful SBC for FP/RH interventions to inform future investments and interventions included in national plans and strategies.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	Behavior Change Impact: Family Planning Evidence Database	<p>The SBC for Family Planning Evidence Database, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, compiles and highlights key SBC for FP successes spanning 20 years (1995–2018). This database of over 280 articles describes interventions and studies in low- and middle-income countries addressing FP challenges through SBC approaches. Most articles are peer-reviewed, quantitative studies evaluating SBC interventions and showing a significant increase in FP method uptake. Many articles describe interventions using proven and promising high impact practices (HIPS), including mass media, community engagement, digital technologies, and interpersonal counseling.</p>	<p>You can use the database to learn about the evidence supporting key approaches, which can inform the design and allocation of future SBC for FP/RH investments.</p>



Opportunity: Review the growing evidence base and compelling examples of impactful SBC for FP/RH interventions to inform future investments and interventions included in national plans and strategies.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p><u>Family Planning Evidence Database Briefs</u></p>	<p>These briefs, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, highlight the evidence supporting the breadth of SBC’s impact on various FP/RH outcomes. They specifically highlight evidence supporting the Circle of Care model™, highlighting evidence of effective coordination among SBC and service delivery partners across the continuum of care, as well as other key approaches, such as reproductive empowerment interventions, social change interventions, and SBC interventions targeting youth sexual and reproductive health.</p>	<p>You can review the briefs to learn more about several evidence-based SBC for FP/RH interventions for enabling couples’ communication and increasing uptake of contraception, among other outcome indicators.</p>
	<p><u>Using Social and Behavior Change to Improve Family Planning Outcomes</u></p>	<p>This brief (and <u>short video</u>), developed by Breakthrough ACTION, highlights three reasons why SBC should be included in FP programs, using supporting examples from various programs.</p>	<p>You can use these resources for self-study and to advocate for SBC’s impact on FP/RH programs.</p>

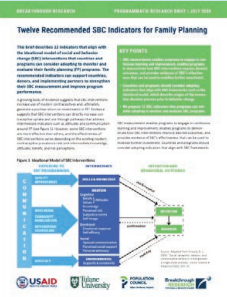
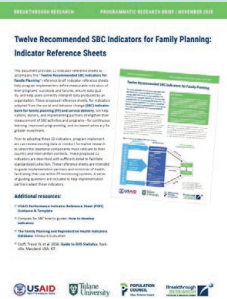


Opportunity: Review the growing evidence base and compelling examples of impactful SBC for FP/RH interventions to inform future investments and interventions included in national plans and strategies.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p><u>Utilisation du changement social et comportemental pour améliorer le bilan du planning familial in Afrique de'Ouest</u></p>	<p>This French brief (and <u>short video</u>), developed by Breakthrough ACTION, highlights three reasons why SBC should be included in family planning programs, using supporting examples from various programs.</p>	<p>You can use this resource for self-study as well as to advocate to colleagues about SBC's impact on FP/RH programs in Francophone West Africa, specifically.</p>


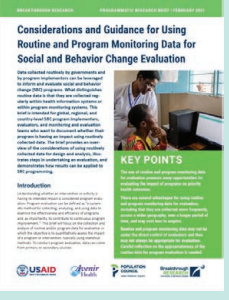


Opportunity: Incorporate standard SBC indicators for FP/RH into the national health management information systems, like DHIS2, or other more universally leveraged monitoring platforms.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p>Twelve Recommended SBC Indicators for Family Planning (English French)</p>	<p>This brief, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH, describes 12 SBC indicators for monitoring and evaluating FP programs to strengthen SBC measurement and improve program performance.</p>	<p>You can use and work with implementing partners to ensure these 12 SBC-related indicators are adapted and routinely monitored in FP investments.</p>
	<p>Twelve Recommended SBC Indicators for Family Planning: Indicator Reference Sheets (English French)</p>	<p>These SBC indicator reference sheets, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH, define measurable indicators of programs' successes and failures to ensure data quality and correct interpretation of data.</p>	<p>You can use the proposed reference sheets and request implementing partners also use them to strengthen their measurement of SBC activities and programs for continuous learning, improved programming, and increased advocacy for greater investment.</p>



Opportunity: Incorporate standard SBC indicators for FP/RH into the national health management information systems, like DHIS2, or other more universally leveraged monitoring platforms.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	Renforcement du suivi et de l'évaluation des changements sociaux et comportementaux pour le planning familial en Afrique de l'Ouest francophone (French English)	This brief, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH, summarizes findings from a mapping of FP investments and technical approaches. It provides recommendations to improve measurement of SBC for FP activities in West Africa.	You can use this to convene and coordinate with partners to facilitate the standardization of monitoring, evaluation, and learning plans, SBC indicators, and data collection methods and ensure data-informed programmatic learnings are shared.
	Considerations and Guidance for Using Routine and Program Monitoring Data for Social and Behavior Change Evaluation	This brief, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH, discusses using routinely collected data for design and analysis, illustrates steps in undertaking an evaluation, and demonstrates how results can be applied to SBC programming.	You can use this brief to identify how best to leverage routine data already collected in national health management information systems and by program implementers to monitor and evaluate SBC interventions.