

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

## A Resource Collection Guide for Donors



Photo credit: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images/Images of Empowerment

**PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE:** This guide was developed by Breakthrough ACTION to help donors address the challenges that they face in 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 the challenges that you face in investing in SBC for FP/RH.

This technical brief is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of Breakthrough ACTION and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.



## Collection Contents

The resources in this collection were identified to address specific needs and challenges faced by donors in investing in social and behavior change (SBC) for family planning and reproductive health (FP/RH). The resources are categorized in the following themes, representing a specific opportunity to address the challenges identified. You will see these icons next to each opportunity to see which set of resources respond to that opportunity and challenge.



**Broaden view of SBC**



**Align with existing guiding documents and goals**



**Showcase SBC impact**



**Improve SBC measurement**



**Showcase return on investment**

## Background

By 2030,<sup>1</sup> the global health and development community aims to ensure universal access to FP/RH information and services. Accomplishing this goal depends on extraordinary and unprecedented cooperation, collaboration, and shared visioning among key stakeholders, including donors, country-level decision-makers, implementing partners, and others.

## What is Social and Behavior Change (SBC)?

SBC is a proven, cost-effective approach to achieving this FP/RH goal. It is a discipline that 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. SBC should be included as part of all FP/RH programs for three key reasons:

- SBC has been shown to increase successful FP/RH outcomes by creating enabling environments for addressing harmful social norms, improving couples' communication, and increasing uptake of contraception.<sup>2</sup>
- 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.<sup>3</sup>

## Donor Investment Context

However, donors face real challenges in supporting and investing in SBC for FP/RH. Donors operate in a complex environment in which change and competing priorities are constant. Additionally, every donor is naturally inclined to support areas which are tied to their history and for which investment is not duplicative with other donors. This, at times, may make the connection between SBC and the donor's priorities and identity less clear, especially when there is a narrow view of how SBC could contribute to and address issues beyond community attitudes, beliefs, and norms. As one donor stated,

***“USAID, like all international agencies, has its own orientations ... its priorities are threefold: there is [maternal, newborn, and child health] MNCH, there is the fight against disease and non-communicable diseases such as malaria and HIV, and the third pillar is the strengthening of the health system ... In all the countries where USAID is present, interventions in the field of health go in that direction.”***

— Donor interview respondent

<sup>1</sup> 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>

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

# Insights

The USAID-funded Breakthrough ACTION project conducted interviews with representatives from country offices of government assistance agencies and private foundations to understand the needs and barriers donors face related to investing in SBC for FP/RH. This section presents the key challenges revealed from this process, opportunities for tackling these challenges, and resources designed to address donor needs and barriers.

**1 CHALLENGE: Investments in FP/RH programs must align with national strategies to ensure country ownership and likelihood of long-term sustainability. SBC is often not explicitly included in national strategies and, when it is, it is narrowly defined in terms of demand generation. This makes it difficult for donors 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
	<a href="#">Increasing the Use of Social and Behavior Change in Health Systems Strengthening: Evidence and Recommendations to Improve Primary Health Care</a>	This brief, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, summarizes findings from a literature review and technical consultations related to integrating SBC within health systems strengthening (HSS) programming and provides recommendations and identifies promising opportunities to increase the use of effective SBC in HSS programming.	You can use this resource to identify evidence for integrating SBC within HSS and follow the recommendations and promising opportunities to ensure investments effectively integrate SBC with HSS programming.




**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
	<p><a href="#"><u>Social and Behavior Change and Health System Strengthening</u></a></p>	<p>This white paper, developed by USAID, highlights how SBC is a foundational and critical component of effective and sustainable HSS programming. Critical to the success of high performing health systems is the bidirectional relationship of SBC and HSS: High performing health systems enable all stakeholders, from clients to policymakers, to practice behaviors that support health, while the collective practice of these behaviors reinforces and strengthens 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 as well as health system actor performance to improve the overall performance of the health system.</p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>The 6 domains of behavior change: the missing health system building block</u></a></p>	<p>This <i>Global Health: Science and Practice</i> editorial outlines 6 domains of behavior and how each is important to our efforts to improve health and achieve the ambitious global health goals of our generation.</p>	<p>You can learn how behavior change can be applied to address traditional global health priorities, such as safe sexual practices, and provider behavior as well as promote care-seeking behaviors, client adherence and collaboration, pro-social behaviors, and policy and priority setting.</p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>Think   BIG (Behavior Integration Guidance)</u></a></p>	<p>The Think   BIG (Behavior Integration Guidance) website is a suite of online tools and resources to help missions and other key stakeholders maximize health and development investments and achieve results by focusing on behaviors. It was developed by The Manoff Group, a JSI company.</p>	<p>You can use this resource to identify and analyze behaviors that impact your desired goal, access resources to guide you in developing your strategy and activity design and management, and locate tools to track progress on behavioral outcomes. In addition, you can learn about how several USAID Missions are applying a behavioral lens to their work from the examples provided.</p>





**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
	<p><a href="#">Circle of Care Model™ (French and Arabic)</a></p>	<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. The result is more effective service delivery programs that meet the needs of intended audiences and contribute to improved health outcomes, including FP/RH outcomes.</p>

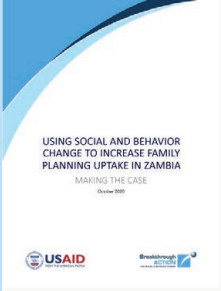


**Opportunity: Work with country-level decision-makers and implementing partners to make sure that SBC is included in national FP/RH strategies as an essential component of FP/RH programs.**

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<a href="#">Elevating Social and Behavior Change as an Essential Component of Family Planning Programs</a>	This commentary explores how an increased investment in SBC can help achieve global, regional, and national goals related to FP demand, access, and use. It was co-authored by staff of several donor agencies and highlights the donor communities' support of SBC for FP/RH.	You can use this commentary as an effective tool to learn about the contribution of SBC to advancing global, regional, and national goals related to FP demand, access, and use.
	The SBC Checklist and Guide to Develop and Assess Costed Implementation Plans for Demand Creation ( <a href="#">English</a>   <a href="#">French</a> )	The SBC Checklist, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, can help governments, donors, and implementation planning teams ensure strategic integration of best practices in SBC, with consideration of specific elements (e.g., gender and youth), into a costed implementation plan.	You can use the SBC checklist throughout the costed implementation plan development, from engagement to launch, to analyze, define strategies, plan activities, establish costs, monitor, and evaluate. You can also use the SBC checklist to monitor the costed implementation plan to ensure SBC activities comply with recommended practices and make revisions if needed.



**Opportunity: Work with country-level decision-makers and implementing partners to make sure that SBC is included in national FP/RH strategies as an essential component of FP/RH programs.**


Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p><a href="#"><u>Using Social and Behavior Change to Increase Family Planning Uptake in Zambia: Making the Case</u></a></p>	<p>This case study highlights how Breakthrough ACTION worked with partners in Zambia to advocate to policymakers to include specific SBC approaches in their next costing implementation plan.</p>	<p>You can learn about a real-life example of how specific SBC approaches were successfully included in Zambia's costing implementation plan.</p>



**2 CHALLENGE:** Investments in FP/RH programs must show a direct link to outcome indicators, such as increase in contraceptive uptake. Given that SBC for FP/RH programming targets multiple levels of the socio-ecological model (individuals, social networks, communities, and societies), SBC’s direct impact on contraceptive uptake can be challenging to measure and quickly observe. Changes in deeply entrenched structural and normative barriers, which are key contributors to contraceptive uptake, can take time to manifest. As a result, monitoring and evaluating SBC for FP/RH programs requires specialized skills, making it difficult for donors to explicitly include SBC in their FP/RH investments.





**Opportunity:** Review and familiarize yourself with the ever-growing evidence base and compelling examples of impactful SBC for FP/RH interventions to inform future investment designs.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<a href="#">Behavior Change Impact: Family Planning Evidence Database</a>	<p>The SBC for Family Planning Evidence Database, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, compiles and highlights key SBC for FP successes spanning over 20 years (1995-2018). This database presents a collection of over 280 articles describing interventions and studies in low-and- middle-income countries that address family planning challenges through SBC approaches. Most articles are peer-reviewed, quantitative studies that evaluate SBC interventions resulting in a significant increase in FP method uptake. Many of the articles describe interventions that use proven and promising <a href="#">High Impact Practices (HIPS)</a>, including <a href="#">mass media</a>, <a href="#">community engagement</a>, <a href="#">digital technologies</a> and interpersonal counseling.</p>	<p>You can use the database to learn about the evidence supporting key approaches, which can inform the design of future SBC for FP/RH investments.</p>




**Opportunity: Review and familiarize yourself with the ever-growing evidence base and compelling examples of impactful SBC for FP/RH interventions to inform future investment designs.**

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p><a href="#">Family Planning Evidence Database Briefs (English   French)</a></p>	<p>These briefs, developed by Breakthrough ACTION, highlight evidence supporting the breadth of SBC's impact on various FP/RH outcomes. They specifically highlight evidence supporting the Circle of Care model™ and showing 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 to improve couples' communication, increase uptake of contraception, and achieve other outcome indicators.</p>
	<p><a href="#">Using Social and Behavior Change to Improve Family Planning Outcomes</a></p>	<p>This brief (and <a href="#">short video</a>), 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 these resources for self-study and to share SBC's impact on FP/RH programs.</p>


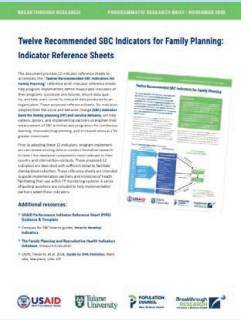


**Opportunity: Review and familiarize yourself with the ever-growing evidence base and compelling examples of impactful SBC for FP/RH interventions to inform future investment designs.**

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p><a href="#"><u>Utilisation du changement social et comportemental pour ameliorer le bilan du planning familial in Afrique de'Ouest</u></a></p>	<p>This French brief (and <a href="#"><u>short video</u></a>), 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 and to share SBC's impact on FP/RH programs in Francophone West Africa, specifically.</p>

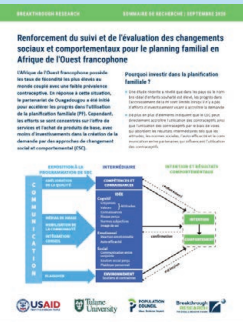
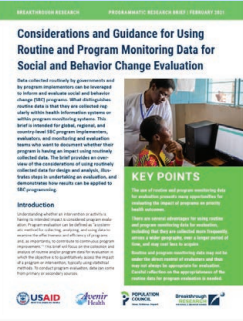


## Opportunity: Require standard SBC indicators for FP/RH in your investments.

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



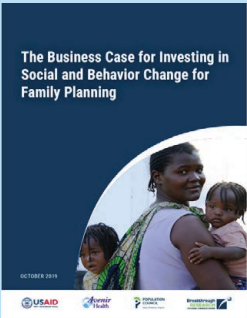
## Opportunity: Require standard SBC indicators for FP/RH in your investments.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p>Renforcement du suivi et de l'évaluation des changements sociaux et comportementaux pour le planning familial en Afrique de l'Ouest francophone (<a href="#">French</a>   <a href="#">English</a>)</p>	<p>This French 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.</p>	<p>You can use this to convene and coordinate monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) partners to facilitate the standardization of MEL plans, SBC indicators, and data collection methods, and ensure data-informed programmatic learnings are shared.</p>
	<p><a href="#">Considerations and Guidance for Using Routine and Program Monitoring Data for Social and Behavior Change Evaluation</a></p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>You can use this brief to better understand how data collected routinely by governments and program implementers can be leveraged to inform and evaluate SBC programs. You can also use routine data to identify additional data needed and to invest in project-specific surveys to collect SBC-relevant indicators outside of those available in large national surveys such as demographic and health surveys and performance, monitoring, and accountability surveys.</p>

**3 CHALLENGE:** Investments in FP/RH programs must show value for money and rapid success. Some donors may assume SBC for FP/RH interventions will be expensive, or they may not be familiar with SBC's return on investment. As a result, it is important to have a better understanding of the costs and benefits of SBC for FP/RH so that it is easier to invest in SBC for FP/RH interventions.

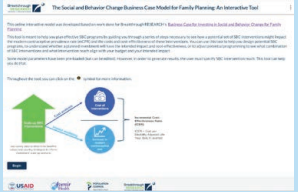


**Opportunity:** Learn about SBC's return on investment (ROI) and examples of what ROI looks like comparing different SBC approaches.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p><a href="#">The Business Case for Investing in Social and Behavior Change for Family Planning</a></p>	<p>Donors need evidence regarding the benefits and costs of SBC for FP/RH interventions before deciding whether and how much to invest in them. This business case, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH, presents an evidence-based approach to answering questions about the effectiveness, cost, cost-effectiveness, and return on investment of SBC for FP/RH.</p>	<p>You can use the benefits and cost evidence presented in this business case to select SBC for FP/RH interventions in which to invest.</p>

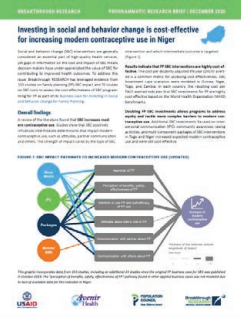



**Opportunity: Learn about SBC’s return on investment (ROI) and examples of what ROI looks like comparing different SBC approaches.**

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<p><a href="#">Exploring Pathways to Social and Behavior Change Impact</a></p>	<p>This interactive graphic, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH, explores the pathways through which mass media, interpersonal communication interventions, and packages of different types of SBC interventions can increase modern contraceptive use.</p>	<p>You can use this resource to explore the costs and pathways through which different SBC interventions can increase modern contraceptive use. This resource can facilitate conversations about the need to prioritize SBC investments based on existing attitudes, the effectiveness of the intervention, and how much the intervention is scaled up in a specific country context.</p>
	<p><a href="#">The Social and Behavior Change Business Case Model for Family Planning: An Interactive Tool</a></p>	<p>This tool, developed by Breakthrough RESEARCH, helps users plan effective SBC programs by guiding them through a series of steps to see how a potential set of SBC interventions might impact the modern contraceptive prevalence rate and the costs and cost-effectiveness of these interventions.</p>	<p>You can use this tool to design potential SBC investments, to understand whether a planned investment will have its intended impact and cost-effectiveness, or to adjust potential programming to identify what combination of SBC interventions align with your budget and your intended impact.</p>
	<p>Investing in Social and Behavior change is Cost-effective for Increasing Modern Contraceptive Use in Guinea <a href="#">(English   French)</a></p>	<p>This brief summarizes Breakthrough RESEARCH’s SBC Business Case model application of SBC cost-effectiveness and return on investment for FP in Guinea.</p>	<p>You can learn from this real-life example about the return on investment for SBC for FP in Guinea. This brief helps address concerns about the effectiveness of SBC and how it contributes to outputs and outcomes.</p>



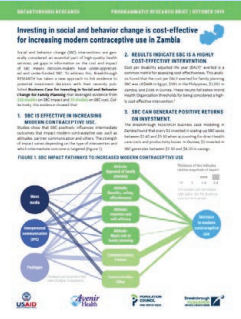
## Opportunity: Learn about SBC's return on investment (ROI) and examples of what ROI looks like comparing different SBC approaches.

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	Investing in Social and Behavior Change is Cost-effective for Increasing Modern Contraceptive Use in Niger ( <a href="#">English</a>   <a href="#">French</a> )	This brief summarizes Breakthrough RESEARCH's SBC Business Case model application of SBC cost-effectiveness and return on investment for FP in Niger.	You can learn from these real-life examples about the return on investment for SBC for family planning in Niger and Togo. These would be helpful in addressing concerns about the effectiveness of SBC and how it contributes to outputs and outcomes.
	Investing in Social and Behavior Change is Cost-effective for Increasing Modern Contraceptive Use in Togo ( <a href="#">English</a>   <a href="#">French</a> )	This brief summarizes Breakthrough RESEARCH's SBC Business Case model application of SBC cost-effectiveness and return on investment for FP in Togo.	





**Opportunity: Learn about SBC's return on investment (ROI) and examples of what ROI looks like comparing different SBC approaches.**

Resource	Title	Resource description	How to use this resource
	<a href="#"><u>Investing in Social and Behavior Change is Cost-effective for Increasing Modern Contraceptive Use in Zambia</u></a>	This brief summarizes Breakthrough RESEARCH's SBC Business Case model application of SBC cost-effectiveness and return on investment for FP in Zambia.	You can learn from this real-life example about the return on investment for SBC for FP in Zambia. This brief helps address concerns about the effectiveness of SBC and how it contributes to outputs and outcomes.