



R. Danielle Chekaraou, MPH
rdchekaraou@gmail.com
+770.568.7274 (WhatsApp)
Skype: Uwargida

Questions and Answers from Webinar 1: Social and Behavior Change Essentials

Does knowledge necessarily lead to change in behavior?

For some people, knowledge is enough, but for many or most it is not. Some individuals have a higher level of self-efficacy than others and seek to identify and overcome (usually subconsciously) their barriers to practicing a particular behavior. You have to realize that some behaviors are also easier than others to adopt and sustain. Behaviors which are simple, must be done once, require little skill and require few resources are generally easier than those which are multi-step, must be repeated, or require some specialized skill or resource.

We can see this variance in what is currently happening with the Coronavirus pandemic.

Although information is out there (so in theory, knowledge is high), many individuals *do not trust* the information sources so even though they ‘know’ about the virus, they don’t ‘believe’ that information to be true which prevents them from taking precautionary actions.

You talked about the technical capacity and mindset of professionals in the field. What do you think needs to change for us to devote time/capacity effort for the dialoging, critical thinking etc.?

Absolutely! I do believe that comprehensive training for field workers must include training in dialoguing and communication skills. Negotiating behaviors is a huge part of helping people to move toward change and remain there when they encounter obstacles. I do a specialized training on this for field offices but there are resources available on line as well such as the very recently updated *Make Me A Change Agent: A Multisectoral Resource for Community Workers and Field Staff* available from: <https://www.fsnnetwork.org/make-me-change-agent-multisectoral-sbc-resource-community-workers-and-field-staff>

I believe that many people talk about ‘BCC’ or ‘SBCC’ and have great intentions of implementing it into their work but few have the broad knowledge base for successful implementation. Unfortunately, SBC is still grossly underfunded and experts are often not utilized due to budgetary constraints. Until program implementers truly understand that SBC is an ongoing process and not a ‘one off activity’ like printing shirts, posters, banners and hats, then programs will struggle to meet their objectives because funding will not be available in the budget.

I made a suggestion in the ‘next steps’ slide to contact an SBC professional and get an understanding of what must be budgeted. In this manner, your programs will have the finances to find the technical expertise to ensure successful research, planning, implementation as well as evaluation of SBC interventions.

How does SBC incorporate individual/ community perceptions to promote behaviour change?

Through both research and interpersonal dialogue individual and community perceptions can be revealed to inform program decisions. The next ANH Academy Webinar will be a great resource as the content will be focused on the most commonly used rapid research tool. That tool uses individual perceptions to form a collective idea and test it for statistical significance, and then in turn that information can be used for program planning and SBC interventions.

Another methodology and tools which I did not have time to discuss is the concept of *Design Thinking (Human Centered Design)* by IDEO. There are many valuable YouTube videos on using the methodology as well as their website. Some valuable information can be found from:

<https://www.ideo.com/> Consider taking their courses on Design Thinking.

Here is a good introduction to what it is: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0VX-aU_T8

Crash Course: <https://dschool.stanford.edu/resource...>

Here is a good example of it being put to use in the field:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuKwHgIApKo>

How can anthropologists be involved in SBC?

This professional field by its very nature is a core and critical component of the SBC field. Remember the *Principle of Change #1 People must have a reason for change*. If Anthropologists can help to identify what is being done and why it is being done, that gives program implementers a great basis for research and program planning. This is also the starting point we need in order to introduce change in culturally and morally appropriate ways. I believe that someone schooled in Anthropology would be fabulous at Human Centered Design. Check out the resources above and consider that as a specialization!

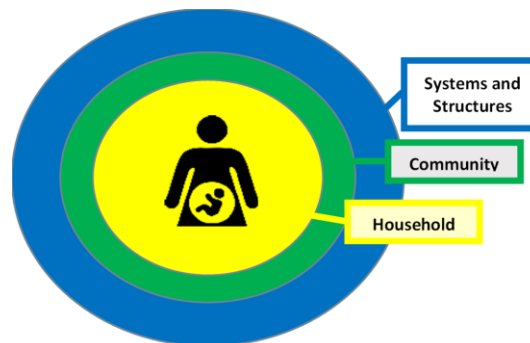
How do we promote dietary diversity among farmers? Dietary diversity or nutrition does not really have an immediate outcome. The farmer rather wants to sell the produce to earn money than eat.

I believe that this is where the Socio-Ecological Model comes into play. If you are going to promote crop diversity, then the program also must assist with creating the market for such crops. If everyone in a community is onboard with diversity, then promoting locally available variance will be much easier. Open dialogue with communities about value systems, markets and cost/benefit analysis must be done. Let’s say for example that the community wishes to increase diversity as a whole, then having some farmers produce some crops and others produce different ones means that they will create their own markets and this may be acceptable and favorable to

the farmer's group as a whole. Even though the long term benefit of good nutrition is not immediately visible, if they are focused on finances, you may be able to use an economic analysis to the cost of illness due to under/malnutrition and that might hit them in the value systems where economy lies. Implementing critical thinking skills is key. Ensure that you are offering enablers that are acceptable to the population. You cannot give a swimsuit to someone who wants a canoe! (Remember the Barrier Road exercise analogy). Remember that just because they are not growing it, does not mean that they are not eating it. I worked in an ag/nut project once and the goal was to get people to diversify. Instead, they decided to support a few local gardeners who would do vegetables and then trade for the staple food because they felt that they did not have the expertise for vegetable growing. Acknowledge that there may be other solutions. The behavior you want is *consumption* of the diverse foods – whether they grow it or not. This is where choosing the behaviors we promote is important. So, focus on them getting it (for the nutritional benefit). There may be other solutions when you discuss with the community.

Should SBC (1) target an individual, a community or a society? (2) attitude, knowledge or practice?

I would say, “All of the above” and “All of the above.”! Think about that Social-Ecological Model. No one lives alone. Everyone has influencers (people and factors) around them, both positive and negative. The goal is to create the environment where behaviors can be adopted and sustained.



Keep in mind my definition of SBCC:

Social and Behavior Change Communication is the *process* of *dialoguing* with a *Priority Group Member* in a *timed and targeted manner* to help reveal *barriers* and *enablers* using *critical thinking skills* to set in place a *supportive environment* where a new behavior can be *adopted* and *sustained* such that continued practice of the behavior leads to the *desired positive outcome*.

~R. Danielle Chekaraou, MPH

How do you think can food advertisement impact can be reduced on children? Where should the SBCC happen? At school, home, community?

I am not sure that I completely understand the question but if I am correctly interpreting it, then the question may relate to the desire to reduce the consumption of ‘junk foods’ among children. Advertisers are brilliant! They have been using these principles much longer than scientists! We have much to learn from them. In short, interventions must happen in every place (level) that we identify influence. So, for example when trying to get children to eat healthier, then of course parents (and the child depending upon the age) are the first points of intervention. But, when children spend a lot of time at school, then something must happen there as well. Are there women who sell treats by the schoolyard? Maybe you need to work with these women to make alternatives. Are the teachers providing a positive influence? Are there community members who prepare meals? What do local vendors sell who are on the path to and from school? What opportunity is being provided for children to access healthy alternatives? What motivations can the program offer to those vendors to change what they sell to the children? In this you can see that it requires a holistic approach. If vendors sell only candy, but not fruit, you will have a difficult time in any culture getting a child to choose a banana or apple over a piece of candy! My cautionary words are to remember Tenet #5. If you choose the wrong behavior to promote, then even increasing its adoption will not result in the impact you desire.” In that sense, you must evaluate:

1. Are children eating junk food and refusing food diversity during mealtimes?
2. What impact is the consumption having on the health indicators? (Are the children who eat the junk food that much different from those who do not? If the answer is ‘no’ then you really don’t need to spend your energy on changing that behavior.)
3. What impact should the program expect to see on the overall health of children if we do reduce junk food consumption? (Is the junk food the only (most important) source of the problem for example). If you are trying to reduce childhood obesity, but every meal made at home provides a child with 6 portions (1/2 cup (125g) X 6) of white rice, then maybe the bag of chips / crisps they buy on their way home from school once a week is not actually the biggest problem!

Are there some frameworks or processes which can be used to understand the true barriers to change?

The Designing for Behavior Change Framework is the one most commonly used in the professional circles I frequent. The Barrier Analysis Study which will be discussed in the 11 Aug Webinar feeds into that as well, but you may use other types of research to complete that framework. That resource is available for free from:

https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/designing_for_behavior_change_a_practical_field_guide.pdf

How SBCC is related to or different from the Theory of Planned Behavior?

In my opinion the Theory of Planned Behavior is best utilized where self-efficacy among a Priority Group is high. That is to say where people clearly have the skills, opportunities, and resources to do a particular behavior and where they are able to exhibit most of the control. It is incomplete for most of our purposes because it does not really take into account any of the external factors that influence behavior. Think of the story of Fatu in the Webinar. The TPB does not take into account the external controls, economic factors (such as access, affordability and so on), but rather it focuses on intent and control. For most of us that is not the situation we find in our program intervention areas.

So, as I mentioned, there are hundreds of SBCC theories, models and tools. I have chosen a few which have been widely utilized and tested across a variety of technical sectors in the development context. I believe are more informative and useful than the TPB in these contexts.

I sincerely hope that you found both the webinar *Social and Behavior Change Essentials* as well as these responses to be very helpful. I would like to thank the Agriculture, Nutrition and Health Academy as well as GIZ for asking me to be a part of this exciting Webinar Series. Kindly contact me if I can be of further assistance to you in your SBCC endeavors.



R. Danielle Chekaraou, MPH

Additional Recommended Resources:

Practical Guide To Conducting a Barrier Analysis:

https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00JMZW.pdf

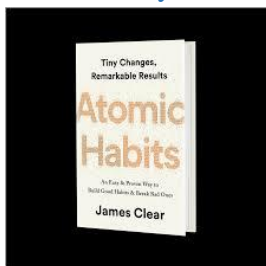
Behaviour Change Toolkit:

<https://www.behaviourchange.net/document/33-behaviour-change-toolkit>

Social and Behaviour Change: Insights and Practice:

<https://www.behaviourchange.net/document/240-social-and-behaviour-change-insights-and-practice>

Atomic Habits by James Clear



ACB of Behavior Change Theories by Michie and West

