Less Is More: The Importance of Prioritizing Behaviors

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Session Outline and Objectives

• Share USAID’s perspective on the importance of behavior prioritization for successful SBC
• Describe a tool to aid partners in prioritizing behaviors
• Share partner experiences in testing the tool in a USAID BHA-funded program in Haiti and a USAID Global Health-funded program in Mozambique
• Outline key takeaways
That moment when you have too much stuff to do

That you decide to take a nap instead
Where to start?

BIG TASK

SMALL TASK
Learning from Experience

- USAID is committed to applying SBC best practices to programs.
- 2 reviews of 16 USAID/Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) -funded projects (2015-2020) indicated that:
  - programs with many behavioral objectives were more likely to face problems with *implementation quality* or focus on *sustained change*.
  - programs with fewer behaviors (8-10) achieved greater quality of implementation.
Steps in the SBC Process

1. Prioritize behaviors tied to project objectives and outcomes
2. Conduct formative research and learning activities
3. Analyze findings to refine logic pathways in TOC
4. Develop SBC strategy (or plan) and refine project activities
5. Implement and monitor strategy
We can do anything, but we cannot do everything.

Community Action Groups (CAG) implement community development plans inclusively and transparently

Community members plan and implement disaster risk migration activities for their community

Traditional leaders facilitate effective coordination between local government and communities

Community members, including youth, women, vulnerable groups participate in CV processes

Traditional leaders practice inclusive leadership

Traditional leaders facilitate access to safety nets

Leaders plan and prioritize resources at the ward level

Community members give feedback to local leaders

Household members share decision making

Community members demand services from leaders

Local authorities fund hazard preparedness and responses

Local authorities establish and use a two-way information flow for communities early warning info

Community action groups use communal resources optimally to maximize inclusive community benefits

Men, women, and youth prioritize collective action, including community safety net provision

Traditional leaders promote the protection and sustainable use of natural resources

Watershed Cluster Steering Committees coordinate natural resources

AMCs manage assets in a transparent and accountable manner

Farmers use grazing land management practices

Households practice sustainable forest management

Gov support Watershed Committees and CAGs in the Watershed Management Process

Group leaders implement Asset Management Committees

Community demand for gov. accountability in watershed management

Watershed Cluster Steering Groups plan and prioritize infrastructure and conservation works

Gov/CAGs prioritize and participate in watershed management planning

Gov/CAGs fund water infrastructure

Gov prioritize NRM investment

Gov/ CAGs share and use data to inform two-way communication

Gov/ CAGs improve catchment area protection for water availability

Gov enforcement water user group bylaws

Gov/ CAGs maintain water infrastructure

Gov/ CAGs improve wildlife management

Community members reduction in negative water, soil, plant use (harmful mining and deforestation practices, open defecation) practices

VS&L members invest income in VS&L groups

Farmers dip livestock to control tick-borne diseases

Farmers provide livestock with adequate water in dry season

Farmers use mechanized conservation agriculture technologies

Women, men, youth diversify sources of income

Women, youth join the workforce

Women, men, youth entrepreneurs start a small business

Farmers use good food storage practices

Farmers improve sales of crops and livestock

Men working outside send greater remittances (to fund community init.)

Women, youth apply for external capital through loans, grants

Households preserve food to mitigate shortages

WRA eat an adequate quantity and variety of nutritious foods

Caregivers feed CU5 an adequate quantity and variety of foods

Households discuss health and nutrition

Households buy nutrient-dense foods (e.g. ASF & F&V)
We can do anything, but we cannot do everything. Less is more!

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Watershed Cluster Steering Committees coordinate and monitor natural resources.

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Households practice sustainable forest management.

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Farmers dip livestock to control tick-borne diseases.

Farmers provide livestock with adequate water in the dry season.

Farmers use mechanized conservation agriculture technologies.

WRA eat an adequate quantity and variety of nutrient-rich foods.

Caregivers feed CU5 an adequate quantity and variety of nutrient-rich foods.

Household members construct and use latrines.
Behavior Prioritization Tool

Apply 3 criteria in step-wise process:

1. Scientific evidence to achieve outcome
2. Feasibility to change
3. Program / stakeholder fit
User Testing of the Process

We refined the tool based on user-testing.

• **Time:** The process may take < one week or months.

• **Application:** Partners used the process to gain consensus for priorities with stakeholders, design formative research, and refine theories of change.

• **Challenges and changes:**
  – Each team wants their sector fully covered - a work in progress and USAID/BHA is strengthening guidance to emphasize the benefits.
  – Concerns with limited focus - more consensus and buy-in is done within project and with other stakeholders.
Experience in Mozambique

• Transform Nutrition, a health and nutrition project, prioritized 14 behaviors in health, nutrition, ECD, WASH, and agriculture.
  — Started with 31 then teams analyzed together to reach:
    • caregivers: 8
    • girls: 3
    • households: 3
  — Pressures led to adding more.

• With USAID observation and support, now re-focusing on 6 key behaviors for greater emphasis and impact.
Experience in Haiti

- A new BHA resilience food security project in Haiti, Ayiti pi Djamn, covers multiple sectors: natural resource management, health, nutrition, WASH and livelihoods.

- With BHA facilitation in the first year:
  - Technical teams translated intermediate outcomes/outcomes from the theory of change into 20 behaviors.
  - Further prioritized through internal discussions and facilitated sessions.
  - Expect to refine after formative research.
Prioritizing behaviors in the design phase is an evidence-informed step for quality SBC.

- There are unique challenges and opportunities from the donor and the implementing partner perspective.

Changes in how donors structure program awards and how and implementers design are important contributions to advance the field.

USAID made changes to support partners in the following ways:
- Modified language in RFAs and program resources to include behavior prioritization as a key milestone
- Increased engagement with implementing partners during year 1.
- Prepared resources for partners with their inputs.
USAID Advancing Nutrition is the Agency’s flagship multi-sectoral nutrition project, addressing the root causes of malnutrition to save lives and enhance long-term health and development.

This presentation was produced for the U. S. Agency for International Development. It was prepared under the terms of contract 7200AA18C00070 awarded to JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. The contents are the responsibility of JSI and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the U.S. Government.