



Strength in Diversity

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A Framing Document



“Together, we can unleash the transformational power of Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) to address the challenges facing the global community today.”

- 2018 Summit Declaration

Summit Overview

The Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) community has the ability to unleash transformational change around some of the world's most pressing challenges, including poverty, gender equality, protecting the planet and ensuring that all people enjoy health, peace and prosperity.

At the **2020 SBCC Summit**, we will harness this power as people from across the globe come together to examine the most recent evidence and innovations, build on our diverse methodologies, debate our way forward and highlight successes and challenges. We will explore the vast potential and diversity of our field -- across disciplines, development priorities and geographies, and in tandem with other development actors -- to accelerate action towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Together, we will imagine and chart a path towards a future where our collective strength is magnified to address issues ranging from migration to Ebola, from gender discrimination and violence to infant mortality, from malaria to the climate crisis and access to justice.

In 2016, the International SBCC Summit brought together the global community of SBCC organizations, practitioners and researchers to advance the field of behavior change and celebrate the multidisciplinary nature of our work. In 2018, this momentum continued as 1,200 participants from 93 countries came together to assess “what works,” advance SBCC as a field and accelerate development impact.

The [2018 Summit Declaration](#) articulated a set of common principles with a call to action for governments, donors and others to embrace, institutionalize and invest in SBCC. It called on the SBCC community to work together to inform, engage and empower individuals, households and communities to demand and participate in change and in improving their own lives.

In 2020, we will reflect on our response to that call to action, find ways for better collaboration, and identify what more we can do to address the most pressing issues of our time.

The SBCCField

Standing on a foundation of evidence, SBCC has evolved over many decades, applying and evolving best practices and fostering innovative models. It draws from an array of disciplines, including communication, psychology, anthropology, sociology, media development, neuroscience, behavioral economics, human centered design, market science, community engagement, participatory media, social marketing and advocacy. There is significant strength in this diversity as it is applied to tackle the complexity of health and development challenges. What is common across SBCC disciplines is the science - a focus on theories, systems-thinking, a rigorous application of our approaches and a commitment to use evidence-based practices and embrace innovation.

The 2020 Summit Vision

Diversity brings strength, but can also bring challenges. As a field, we have explored how these disciplines fit together. What is the strength of each? How do they overlap and how do they enhance each other? How do we bring new groups, not steeped in SBCC, to the table and into the conversation? And how do we better collaborate to find solutions?

The **2020 Summit** will strengthen connections across diverse but complementary approaches by asking where we converge, where we diverge, where we stand together and where we share common purpose. It will examine how we can leverage our diversity to bring the best thinking, talent and expertise to address the world's most pressing development challenges in the context of the SDGs and the social movements and global trends that are shaping our societies.

The Summit will do this by:

- Shining a light on the latest trends and innovations, with an eye on how they can accelerate and scale-up SBCC impact
- Identifying effective strategies and new lines of action, especially around social inclusion, voice and participation
- Creating a platform for debate and discussion and critical review of SBCC programming
- Advancing research, monitoring and evaluation methodologies
- Building partnerships within the SBCC community and with other development actors for greater collective action
- Identifying commonalities and points of distinction among different disciplines
- Engaging the youth to find new and innovative solutions

Conference Themes

The **2020 Summit** will be organized around three central themes; catalyzing transformational change, future forward, and connecting the dots. Each of these themes will come to life through the stories, experiences and knowledge of powerful stakeholders and motivated innovators.

1) Catalyzing transformational change on agendas of urgency

We live in an ever-changing world. A world where what we know today will be different tomorrow. With this rapid pace of change, adaptability, innovation and transformation is needed. Using the SDGs as our north star, this theme will look at how we can accelerate change in the urgent, interconnected areas of:

- Climate crisis and global heating
- Gender equality
- Community engagement and citizen action
- Health access and equity
- Humanitarian action

Within this theme, sessions will focus on:

Identifying underpinning catalysts – and barriers – for change. How has SBCC been applied to tackle racial and socioeconomic disparities, and broader political influences that impact health and development? How can SBCC foster resilience against the backdrop of emergencies and upheaval? How do dimensions of power and rights impact both the root problems and adoption of solutions?

Learning lessons and expanding the boundaries of SBCC. SBCC has the potential to cut across barriers and silos, bringing diverse partners together to solve complex problems. Addressing these challenges and leveraging opportunities will require a coordinated and diverse multi-sectoral response that engages communities, youth, private companies, governments, development partners, as well as new actors to embrace and champion SBCC. How can we engage with policy makers, donors, governments and other decisions makers to better integrate and scale SBCC approaches? What new skills sets, organizational structures, and ways of thinking are needed?

Linking SBCC to structural determinants and solutions. How can SBCC create linkages to structural solutions in ways that strengthen the overall response? What transformations are needed in leadership, at all levels, that can support this connection?

Supporting social movements and social justice initiatives. Long-lasting social change is most often brought about by triggers and moments that lead populations to demand and create catalytic change. What role does SBCC play in supporting and sparking these movements for positive development outcomes? How do we ensure that those most impacted shape and lead the change?

Nurturing new voices for change and building participatory dialogue, particularly young people. How do we elevate the voice of marginalized groups in agenda setting, particularly of youth? 1.8 billion young people do not all look, think or speak the same way. How can we ensure that young people, in all their diversity, take a leadership role in agenda-setting? How do we nurture trust, engagement and true partnership with youth and other marginalized voices?

2) *Future Forward*

The ways in which the world communicates about development and social change issues are evolving rapidly in an increasingly interconnected and mediated world. In this context, informed and engaged participation in social and behavior change, and public discourse more broadly, is essential.

Through this theme, we will look at where the field is now and how SBCC is poised for the future in these new contexts. Sessions will focus on:

Understanding and engaging with evolving digital and technological innovations. The pace of change in development and adoption of new technology is rapid. How can innovations such as augmented and virtual reality be mobilized to enhance our work in immersive storytelling? What are the potentials -- or possible pitfalls -- of artificial intelligence, 5G, and other technologies on the horizon for building participatory and democratic processes? How can new technologies be leveraged to improve coordination and collaboration?

Developing and promoting a code of ethics for the SBCC field. All development work must be ethically based. What ethics guide the SBCC field? How can we ensure we are accountable to each other and the communities we work with?

Identifying new theories, frameworks and methodologies. As a field, SBCC is constantly evolving. How can we ensure that we are continually learning and adapting our practices based on evidence? What new methodologies can be used to understand and quantify social impact? How can we share these advances with the SBCC community, policy makers and development actors more broadly?

Countering negative opposition, disinformation and fake news. The media landscape is rapidly evolving and can be used at many levels to spread misinformation and cause harm to critical health and development issues, whether it is rejecting the fact of the climate crisis, disseminating false information about vaccines, or provoking alarm about inflated migration statistics. How can SBCC build people's ability to access accurate information and build digital literacy to ensure they can identify and dismiss misinformation? What challenges do we face in establishing trust amongst our audiences when we compete in the same media landscape?

3) *Connecting the Dots*

Reflecting on the strength and diversity of the SBCC constituency, this theme will explore ways to further increase collaboration, skills sharing and capacity building and creative collective action within the field across different sectors, geographies and disciplines as well as across different stakeholders (donors, government, academic, practitioners, private sector, networks, etc.) and across generations (youth). The private sector is investing billions in the development sector. Academia is cultivating some of the newest and most innovative research both in terms of methods used and data being unearthed to better understand and inform programming. Public interest and advocacy groups are building expertise to find solutions that promote just and equitable livelihoods. Public health practitioners are exploring and implementing programs to bring about transformational change and to reach those groups who are most marginalized. And governments, private foundations and donors are investing in and developing policies and strategies to help guide better health programming for sustainable change. By bringing these people together – connecting the dots – real change is possible.

Through this theme, sessions will explore:

Optimizing our strengths for greater impact. Given demands of ever-pressing health and development challenges, there is a clear need for increased coordination and collaboration. How can we work together as members of a diverse field to set shared agendas that maximize resources and outcomes? How can our collective strength be used to strengthen our “brand” and advocate for increased investment in SBCC?

Connecting with new partners. Entrepreneurs across the globe are increasingly interested in pursuing social enterprise for good, mixing market-driven strategies with a pursuit for social and environmental impact. Likewise, there are a myriad of social movement and activist networks also working to advance social change. Both are tackling some of the toughest development problems, from poverty-reduction to gender equality. What can we learn from their business and activism models? How can we advocate for inclusion of SBCC in their strategies? How can we establish partnerships that influence and inspire transformational change?

Collective action. To foster connectivity and collective action, we will explore partnerships and engagement within our field and with non-traditional actors. How can we best build the supportive tissue that binds us and bolsters joint efforts? What tools do we have to facilitate coordinated action for collective impact? How can we leverage a digital marketplace of tools that support this work?

Strength in Diversity

While taking on the challenges and unknowns alone is daunting, the opportunities and results when we come together are enormous. Hence, the **SBCC Summit 2020**. Each theme, and the learnings within, offers distinct benefits. But the strongest benefits will result from synergies between the three and the personal contacts and connections made among participants. Some of the brightest and most innovative minds from a diverse set of fields will come together as one to review the latest science, explore policies and strategies, learn from each other, and take away what works, that will transform how we each do business.

The **SBCC Summit 2020** will be an exhilarating and engaging event, a learning and exchange experience that is essential and not-to-be missed for anyone working to harness the power of SBCC and development to achieve the ambitious SDG targets.