

Promoting healthy couples' communication to improve reproductive health outcomes

March 14, 2023



Maria Carrasco, USAID Moderator

Maria is a behavioral scientist with 15 years of experience designing, implementing, and managing capacity building and public health programs. Maria has experience providing technical assistance to and managing large public health projects in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and has been a behavioral sciences consultant for the World Bank, UNFPA, and Pact. She has lived and worked in Ecuador, Peru, Malawi, and Mozambique. In her current role at USAID, she works on the High Impact Practices (HIPs) in Family Planning (FP). Maria received her BS in Economics from Truman State University, her Master of Public Policy from Duke University and her Master of Public Health (MPH) and PhD from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.



Today's Agenda

- Opening and Welcome
Maria Carrasco, USAID
- SBC Overview
- Couples' Communication Overview
Robert Ainslie, JHU
- Implementation Perspective
Esete Getachew, JHU-Ethiopia
- Questions & Answers
Moderator
- Closing
Moderator



Before we Begin



Webinar will be recorded



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What are the High Impact Practices (HIPs)?



Evidence-based
family planning
practices



Vetted by experts
against specific
criteria



Documented in
an easy-to-use
format

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HIGH IMPACT
PRACTICES

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HIP Categories

HIP briefs are grouped into three primary categories:

Enabling Environment

Address systemic barriers that affect an individual's ability to access family planning information & services.

Service Delivery

Improve the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality of family planning services.

Social and Behavioral Change

Influence knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, and social norms associated with family planning.

Enhancements

Approaches used in conjunction with HIPs to maximize the impact of HIP implementation or increase the reach.



HIP Briefs

HIP briefs define the *practice* and summarize evidence of *impact* and experiential learning from implementing.

Service Delivery

Vouchers
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

FP & Immunization
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Drug Shops and Pharmacies
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Social Franchising
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Postabortion Family Planning
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Social Marketing
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Mobile Outreach Services
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Community Health Workers
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Immediate Postpartum Family Planning
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Enabling Environment

Supply Chain Management
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Policy
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Educating Girls
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Lead and Manage
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Commitment
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Domestic Public Financing
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Social and Behavior Change

Community Group Engagement
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Digital Health for SBC
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Mass Media
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

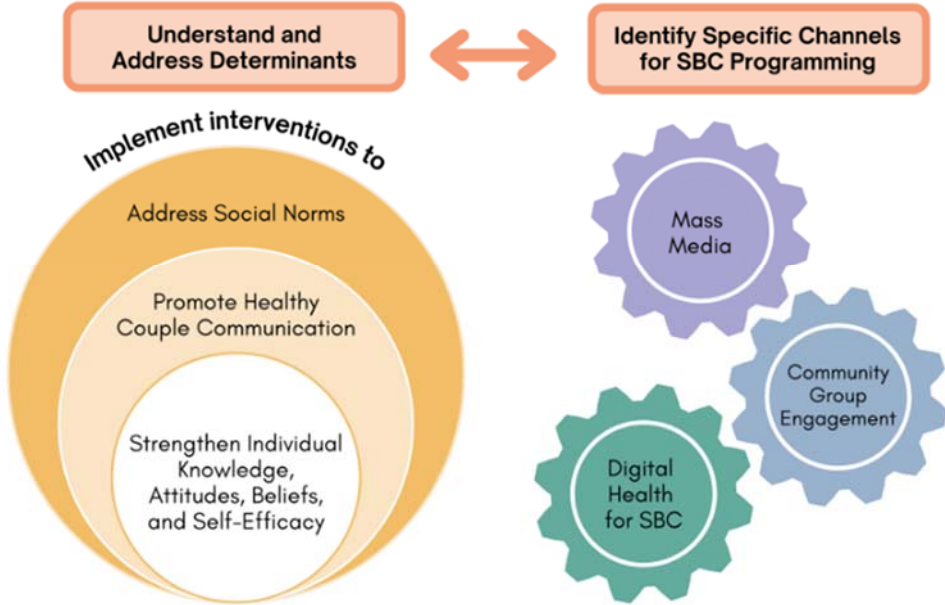
HIP Enhancements

Adolescent Services
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Digital Health for Systems
What is the practice?
What is the evidence of impact?
What is the experiential learning?

Social and Behavior Change Overview Brief

Framework for SBC HIPs



Promoting healthy couples' communication to improve reproductive health outcomes



Social and Behavior Change

Promoting healthy couples' communication to improve reproductive health outcomes

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Today's Panelists



Robert Ainslie
Johns Hopkins CCP



Esete Getachew
Johns Hopkins CCP Ethiopia



Robert Ainslie, JH-CCP

Robert Chapman Ainslie has over 30 years of experience working in Social and Behavior Change programming. Currently Mr. Ainslie is a Senior Program Officer II for the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs, based in Baltimore, USA working on programs in Africa, SE Asia and Latin America. Throughout his career his focus has been on Social and Behavior Change having worked on projects in Indonesia, Mozambique, Haiti, Nicaragua, Brazil, Guatemala, Cambodia and Tanzania for Family Planning/reproductive health, malaria, water and sanitation/hygiene improvement, youth, vector control, youth, and maternal child health programs.





Promoting healthy couples' communication to improve reproductive health outcomes

Robert Ainslie
March 14, 2023



SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE

PROVEN

Promoting healthy couples' communication to improve reproductive health outcomes

What is the proven high-impact practice in family planning? Implement interventions demonstrated to encourage couples to discuss family planning/reproductive health and make equitable, joint decisions to reach fertility intentions.



Why is this practice important?

- **All couples can benefit from improved couples' communication.**
- **Healthy couples' communication can increase uptake of modern contraception and help couples achieve their fertility intentions.**
- **Promoting healthy couples' communication can also impact gender equality.**

What is the evidence that promoting healthy couples' communication is high impact?

TABLE 01.

Selected findings with evidence informed interventions for healthy couples' communication that has increased uptake of modern contraception.

SBC INTERVENTION	COUPLE COMMUNICATION	CONTRACEPTIVE UPTAKE	GBV/GENDER EQUALITY
India (Raj et al., 2016) ²¹			
The CHARM intervention entailed three family planning and gender equity (FP+GE) counseling sessions for men and couples. Trained male village health care providers delivered the counseling sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Women in the intervention group were more likely to report contraceptive communication at 9-month follow-up compared to the control group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Women in the intervention group were more likely to report modern contraceptive use at 9 and 18-month follow-up compared to the control group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Women in the intervention group were less likely to report sexual IPV at 18-month follow-up. ✓ Men in the intervention group were less likely than those in the control to report attitudes accepting of sexual and physical IPV at 18-month follow-up.
Malawi (Shattuck et al., 2011; Hartmann et al., 2012) ^{5,40}			
Peer counseling with male motivators provided information on modern FP options and local facilities offering these methods. Motivators facilitated discussions exploring "how rigid gender roles can lead to negative outcomes, challenging the notion that a large family is a sign of virility" (pg. 1090).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Frequency of discussing FP with one's wife was positively associated with family planning uptake. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase in contraceptive use in the intervention group compared to the comparison group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Men facilitated contraceptive use of their partners. ✓ Women reported an increase in shared decision-making.
Nigeria (Do et al., 2020) ³⁶			

How do we do it

Studies show SBC efforts to improve couples' communication has resulted in uptake of modern contraceptives – through

- Counseling sessions with couples
- Reaching men through trained peer educators
- Participatory small group discussions
- Mass media
- TV ads
- Serial radio dramas and
- Trained staff

Tips from implementation experience

- Important to address gender and power dynamics, including gender-based violence -understand the context before developing the appropriate interventions
- Ensure that interventions "do no harm" to undermine women's autonomy -
- Find creative and culturally appropriate ways to address women's and men's skills and perceived self -efficacy to communicate with their partners effectively
- Identify and provide opportunities for respected couples in the community to model and talk about their healthy communication habits

Priority research questions to answer

- Do digital platforms successfully increase healthy couples' communication
- What programs and policies prepare adolescents to engage on couples' communication
- What are the steps required to minimize potential negative impacts of couples' communication such as violence and reproductive coercion



Thank You

Esete Getachew, JH-CCP Ethiopia

Esete Getachew has 12 years of experience in Social and Behavior Change (SBCC) and gender related work. Currently she is the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Deputy Lead for Breakthrough ACTION project and Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs. Esete has been working at CCP Ethiopia office since 2010 on different projects including HIV/AIDS and Maternal and Newborn Child Health. Her areas of expertise include developing gender integration strategies, SBCC material development, mass media and community level interventions with an emphasis on improving women's health and addressing gender inequitable norms. Esete is a graduate of Addis Ababa University with MA in Gender studies.





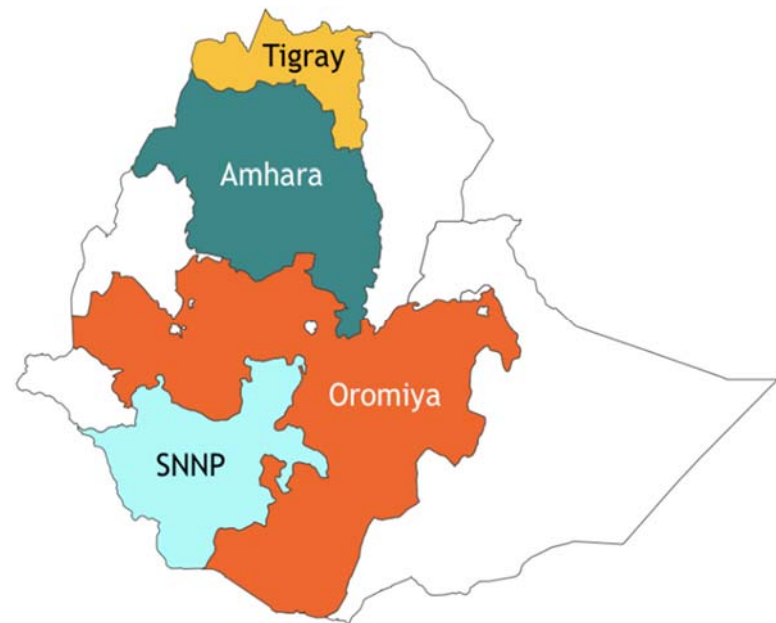
JOHNS HOPKINS
Center for Communication
Programs

Promoting Health Couples' Communication

Experience of Communication for Health Project
Esete Getachew - March 14, 2023

Background

- Communication for Health Project
- Five-year **integrated** SBCC program focusing multiple health areas: ***RMNCH, PMTCT, Nutrition, Malaria, TB & WASH***



10 out of 16 health behaviors were related to gender

Current use FP

4 or more ANC visits

Early registration for ANC

Institutional delivery

HIV test during pregnancy

Early initiation of BF

Minimum diet diversity

Minimum acceptable diet

Immunization (penta 3)

Handwashing - critical times

Handwashing station

Toilet use (open defecation)

Use of LLIN women 15-49

Use of LLIN <5y children

Early fever treatment

Family health card

Gender equitable men scale adopted for women used to measure gender norms

Domestic chores and daily life (5 items)	partner violence (6 items)	sexual relationships (7 items)	reproductive health and disease prevention (3 items)
Household roles and responsibilities	Describes the power relation in the family	Norms around sexual rights, the right type & time for sex	Women's role on timing pregnancy and number of children
<i><u>e.g.</u> A man should have the final word about decisions in his home.</i>	<i><u>e.g.</u> There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten</i>	<i><u>e.g.</u> A woman should not initiate sex.</i>	<i><u>e.g.</u> It is a woman's responsibility to avoid pregnancy</i>

Source: <https://www.c-changeprogram.org/content/gender-scales-compendium/>



Domestic chores and daily life subscale

Women's decision role, male engagement and couple communication associated with four behaviors

- to use modern contraceptives
- go for early ANC care
- opt for HIV testing
- use a long-lasting insecticide treated bed net



Promoting Couples' Communication

- Modeling healthy relationships and couples' communication through mass media – weekly radio program
- Using mobile application to enhance partner engagement - Hulu Betiena Mobile application
- Job aids for Health Extension Workers to support couple communication

Weekly Radio Program

Fictional serial drama and real-life stories

- Changing the narratives of women
- Promoting couple communication
- Promoting Male engagement
- Challenging gender norms



Using mobile application to enhance partner engagement

- Promote health behaviors
- Appeal to both men and women
- Tips for partners/husbands



Job aids for Health Extension Workers

Stimulate discussion and joint decision-making during house-to-house visits



Percent equitable gender norms

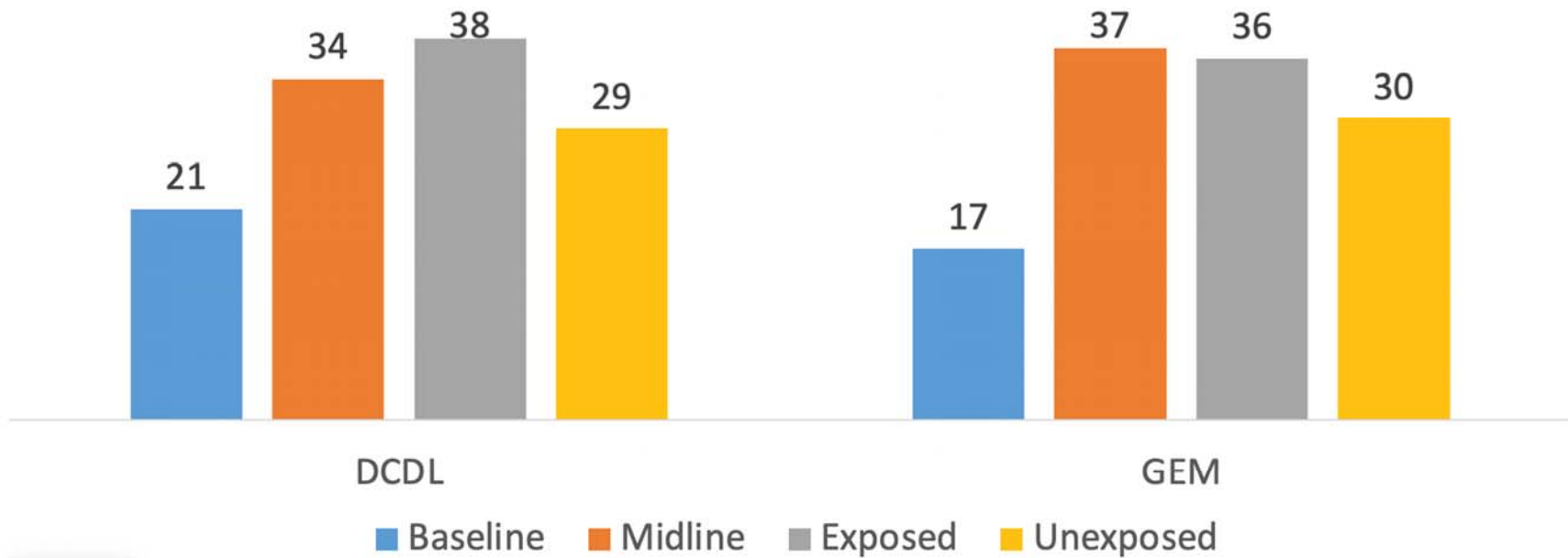


Chart Area



The midterm finding indicated gains on health behaviors

- 4 Plus ANC
- FP use
- Institutional delivery
- PNC
- PMTCT
- Household handwashing facility



Thank You

Questions & Answers



Before we close

Presentation and Recording available here:

<https://www.fphighimpactpractices.org/couples-communication-to-improve-reproductive-health-outcomes-webinar/>



For more information, please visit:

- High Impact Practices: www.fphighimpactpractices.org
- Promoting healthy couples' communication: <https://www.fphighimpactpractices.org/briefs/couple-communication/>



**Thank you for your
participation today!**

