Complexity-Aware Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
for Social and Behavior Change Interventions

CHECKLIST
CORE Group’s Social and Behavior Change (SBC) Working Group has developed a set of complexity-aware tools designed to help design and evaluate SBC-focused interventions. Tools in this set include:

1. **An advocacy booklet** to help guide communication with donors and to help build fluency in communicating how to monitor and evaluate SBC interventions
2. **A core set of indicators** related to adaptation, learning, and collaboration that can be used in proposals and work plans
3. **A checklist** intended to help in the consistency and completeness of documenting SBC interventions.

**Complexity is a key factor—perhaps the key factor—in social and behavior change (SBC) programming.**

Complexity affects most SBC interventions through:

- **Contextual complexity**: the fact that the environment and implementation process itself shape outcomes of an intervention.
- **Temporal complexity**: interventions evolve over time as target population and implementers change behaviors, and come to new understandings, and programmatic environments shift in response to new constraints, opportunities and priorities.
- **Interpretive complexity**: as interventions are social activities, practitioners should acknowledge that every stakeholder understands the intervention partially and differently and has a unique perspective.
### Checklist

**Telling the story of the role complexity plays in a project’s ability to achieve expected and sustained outcomes**

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| **Contextual** | - External factors like the project site setting, macroeconomic conditions, and policies.  
- Internal factors like project duration, budget, activities, and capacities.  
- Number, type, and importance of expected and unexpected outcomes identified by stakeholders. | The context in which SBC interventions are implemented and the implementation process itself contributes to SBC outcomes. | • Landscape and situational analyses  
• Formative research  
• Information may already exist  
  - Project proposal  
  - Published and grey literature  
  - Quarterly and annual reports |
| **Temporal**    | - Ways in which the intervention(s) work(ed) in reality, any adaptations made, and the reasons for the adaptations.  
- The project’s response to external shocks and environmental shifts (e.g., new policies, program funding, new stakeholders, instability, etc.).  
- Community and individual behavior change over the duration of the project. | Changes or effects of project implementation over time, as individuals and communities are increasingly exposed or engaged in activities, contribute to SBC outcomes. | • Process and performance monitoring  
• Adaptive management processes and tools  
• Implementer consultations/ feedback loops with stakeholders and participants  
• Observation of real-life context and /or community sentinel surveillance  
• Most Significant Change  
• Outcome Harvesting |
| **Interpretive** | - The nature of the partnerships relevant to the program (e.g., strong, weak, conflicted, collaborative).  
- The methodological lens used and any alternative understandings about the drivers of normative and behavior change.  
- The participatory decision-making process between implementers, staff, participants, and key stakeholders. | Differences in individual or group perspectives, how each views and reacts to project implementation, and opportunities for dialogue between stakeholders contribute to SBC outcomes. | |

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**Checklist to Use to Capture and Document the Complexity of SBC Interventions**
Depending on your role, there are various ways this checklist can be used:

**Donors**
- Request and invest in documentation of the complexity experienced by implementers to support your own learning agenda.
- Allocate adequate resources toward tracking efforts to enable adaptive management that is reality-tested.

**SBC Practitioners**
- Learn from the differences and nuances that emerge during implementation and write-up and share results.
- Collaborate with monitoring, evaluation and learning colleagues to strategically use portions of the checklist to document key evidence of the complexity to help answer learning questions.
- Allocate adequate resources toward tracking efforts to enable adaptive management that is reality-tested.

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Practitioners**
- Collaborate with SBC practitioners to strategically use portions of the checklist to document key evidence of the complexity to help answer learning questions.
- Allocate adequate resources toward tracking efforts to enable adaptive management that is reality-tested.

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