COUNTERING CORRUPTION THROUGH SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE (SBC)

The **USAID Anti-Corruption Task Force** commissioned research on how social and behavior change (SBC) approaches address social norms and behaviors related to corruption and where SBC approaches can be used to improve current and future anti-corruption activities. This summary offers key take-aways from that research. More information and context can be found in the full findings and recommendations report.[1]

METHODOLOGY

A preliminary and final assessment of potential case studies identified a set of anti-corruption initiatives that utilized social and behavior change approaches.

The assessment showed a lack of anti-corruption activities incorporating full SBC frameworks; however, the following five case studies were identified as incorporating important SBC elements (pictured right).

Mexico, Anti-Impunity and Gender Equality Initiative: This initiative is the work of a coalition of civil society organizations aimed at transforming social norms away from the acceptance of corruption and impunity through **SBCC**.

Guatemala, International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG): CICIG was an international commission established to investigate and prosecute serious crimes in Guatemala as an effort to mitigate the wide-scale impunity of government officers and security forces that utilized SBC elements, including **SBCC** and **stakeholder-centric design.**

Moldova, Maia Sandu and the Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS) Campaigns: This case study follows the campaigns of Maia Sandu, the current president of Moldova, and her party, the Party of Action of Solidarity, when they achieved unexpected success in 2020 and 2021 in the context of an anti-corruption focus utilizing SBC elements focused on **shifting norms** and **hope-based narratives.**

Tanzania, Addressing Bribery in the Health Sector: This case study reviews an SBC approach to an anti-corruption intervention aimed at reducing the behaviors of gift-giving and reciprocity in Tanzania's health care sector including **social nudges** and **shifting enablers.**

Malawi, Construction Transparency Initiative (CoST): CoST Malawi is the local chapter of an international transparency initiative and model that aims to engage public awareness and activate public oversight of public procurement and infrastructure spending that utilizes SBC elements, including **influencer activation** and **demonstration of change.**

The case studies reviewed in this study demonstrate that while SBC is a nascent and under-utilized approach to anti-corruption efforts, **there is strong potential for incorporating SBC elements into existing and upcoming anti-corruption interventions** to support more effective efforts to change policies, behaviors, drivers, enablers, and norms that drive corruption or bolster anti-corruption efforts.

KEY DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

Social and behavior change (SBC) is the application of theory-based approaches to address the factors that drive or enable behaviors at the individual, community, and/or societal levels.

Social and behavior change communication (SBCC) is the strategic use of communications to influence norms, perceptions, knowledge, and action.

Social norms are the mutual expectations held by members of a group about the right way to behave in a particular situation.

Social nudges encourage or suggest change in people's behavior while still giving them the freedom to make their own decisions.

Enablers are the conditions that allow or create greater ease for actions and behaviors to occur.

Drivers are the factors that cause or motivate patterns of behavior.

[1] *For a comprehensive review of each case study, and the findings and recommendations produced through their analysis, please see Countering Corruption Through Social and Behavior Change (SBC): Final Analysis Report*

RECOMMENDATIONS: Activity designers may consider the following opportunities for incorporating SBC elements into anti-corruption work:

General SBC Guidance	Specific SBC Tools and Tactics
Apply Full SBC Approaches and Rigorous Evaluations. Very few examples of comprehensive SBC anti-corruption initiatives are being implemented to date. Activity designers can increase the scale and frequency of SBC elements in anti-corruption efforts, and more comprehensively evaluate their impact on social norms and behaviors.	**Utilize Social and Behavior Change Communication.** SBCC is a communications strategy that incorporates evidence-based findings to influence norms, beliefs, perceptions, awareness, and actions. This can ensure a communications strategy that is best tailored to the priority stakeholder groups being addressed. *See the **anti-impunity in Mexico** and **Moldova Maia Sandu** case studies for examples of SBCC strategies.*
Prioritize Social Norms. Anti-corruption initiatives should include formative research mapping the social norms connected to corruption. Monitoring changes in attitudes and norms should be conducted to assess programmatic impact. *See **Guatemala CICIG** and **Moldova Maia Sandu** case studies for examples of social norm engagement in use*	**Demonstrate Change and Difference.** By providing tangible demonstrations of difference and change, anti-corruption initiatives can increase optimism and hope about the possibility of real change, and reinforce activation of stakeholders, changes in behaviors, and shifts in perceptions and norms. *See the **Moldova Maia Sandu** and **CoST Malawi** case studies for examples of positive demonstration of change narratives.*
Incorporate Stakeholder-Centric Design. SBC planners can more effectively engage and activate key stakeholders through formative research that identifies the factors driving the norms and behaviors implementers are seeking to address. *See **Guatemala CICIG** and **Tanzania gift-giving** case studies for positive examples of stakeholder-centric design.*	**Develop Hope-Based Narratives.** Hope-based narratives are orchestrated and organic positive stories that make people believe change is possible, and encourage behaviors that are more likely to bring that change about. As a result, people are more likely to be receptive to engaging with key issues. *See the **anti-impunity in Mexico** and **Moldova Maia Sandu** case studies for examples of hope-based narratives in use.*
Build Resiliency. Resiliency-building for anti-corruption initiatives is necessary to mitigate attempts to discredit or counter anti-corruption efforts and to prepare to counter potential backlash. Resiliency can be increased through the intentional development of infrastructure, networks, and policies to ensure the ability of a movement to withstand backlash or scandals. *See the **Guatemala CICIG** and **anti-impunity in Mexico** case studies for examples of this gap.*	**Activate Influencers and Messengers.** Implementers should engage in stakeholder mapping and other formative research to identify the messengers and influencers (individuals, institutions, and/or organizations) with the most trust, reach, and potential efficacy influencing the priority stakeholder segments. *See the **anti-impunity in Mexico** and **CoST Malawi** case studies for examples of successful influencer activation.* **Analyze Response to Anti-Corruption Messages.** Addressing corruption can be a galvanizing issue and can also be experienced with a sense of fatigue and wariness around anti-corruption promises. Planners should conduct an assessment of the public reaction to messaging around corruption and gauge whether centering an anti-corruption messaging or focusing on other benefits of addressing corruption might be more persuasive. *See the **Moldova Maia Sandu** and **Tanzania gift-giving** case studies for contrasting examples of this messaging strategy.*