Consider Gender and Social Inclusion in Your SBC Programs

What is the purpose of this checklist?

This checklist spans an SBC program life cycle and includes considerations for design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation phases. It is intended to help SBC actors respond to the needs of vulnerable populations, relative to context

Key definitions

Social inclusion: A state in which all individuals and communities, regardless of background and identity, fully participate in and benefit from societal life, including economic, social, political, and cultural processes and institutions[1].

Vulnerable populations: Groups and individuals that may be unable to fully participate in and benefit from society. Characteristics of members of these populations may include sex, gender, age, disability, refugee or displaced person status, sexual orientation or gender identity, statelessness, health, poverty, language, and ethnic identity. Vulnerable people may hold one or more of these identities[2-4].

Who is this checklist for?
This checklist is for practitioners who want to make their SBC programs more inclusive, relevant, and potentially transformative for all participants.

When should you use the checklist?
Use this checklist before beginning SBC program design, and continue to use it throughout implementation, monitoring, and evaluation stages to ensure you are advancing gender and social inclusion as key principles in your work. You can also use this checklist for programs that are already being implemented, to monitor for gender and social inclusion and adjust SBC programming, as needed.

What should you do before using this checklist?
Before you start, determine your program setting and make a list of the audiences you aim to engage with your SBC programming. Then, work with your team to determine vulnerable population segments within these audiences. While you may already be familiar with your setting, speaking with stakeholders and others doing work in the focal community can be helpful. As you go through the checklist, keep in mind each audience segment you have worked to identify.

How do you use this checklist?
This checklist is organized by each step of a typical SBC program cycle. Review the entire checklist before you start. For each box, consider how it might apply at the individual, social, and structural levels within your setting. Then, keeping your setting and the vulnerable populations you've identified in mind, use the checklist to assess your program by answering **"YES" "NO"** or **"PARTLY"** for each question, as it applies to your program. You may also want to use it as you create toolkits and activities for your program to make sure these materials advance gender and social inclusion.

Pre-Design. Have you...

Identified potential risks to communities and staff from planned SBC programming?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ **Partly**

Identified mitigation strategies for safety concerns for communities and staff?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ **Partly**

Made plans to establish connections with duty bearers to promote services that are inclusive and responsive to vulnerable populations?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ **Partly**

Design. Have you...

Conducted assessments to understand and address key barriers and facilitators that affect adoption of behavior or social change promoted by your program?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ **Partly**

Considered how vulnerable populations are impacted differently for the behavior or social change promoted by your program?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ **Partly**

Considered the factors that influence actions or decisions by vulnerable populations for the behavior or social change promoted by your program?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ **Partly**

Identified and connected with individuals and organizations that influence actions or decision-making for different vulnerable populations for the behavior or social change promoted by your program?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ **Partly**

Conducted assessments to understand and leverage existing equitable social norms and community structures relevant to the behavior or social change promoted by your program?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ **Partly**

Identified existing policies and laws (formal and informal) and understood how their implementation may impact vulnerable populations for the behavior or social change promoted by your program?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ **Partly**

Design/Implementation. Have you...

Identified and utilized communication channels or sources that are appropriate and accessible to different audiences, such as men and boys, women and girls, and other vulnerable populations?

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ Partly

Assessed and addressed challenges vulnerable populations may face in accessing your program? This includes considering each different communication channel, program formats and approaches, and places where your SBC program is delivered.

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ Partly

Ensured SBC activities and messages are sensitive to the unique needs of members of each vulnerable populations you have defined? This may include considering low-literacy options and avoiding stigmatizing language.

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ Partly

Addressed inequitable gender norms and unequal power relations that may prevent behavior or social change promoted by your program?

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ Partly

Monitoring. Have you...

Planned to monitor changes in factors relevant to the behavior or social change promoted by your program? Consider that these changes will play out at the individual, social, and structural levels of your setting.

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ Partly

Planned to monitor and address unintended consequences (like backlash to programming from powerful groups) and ensure SBC activities and messages do not reinforce violence, stereotypes, harmful beliefs and cultural practices, or have legal ramifications?

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ Partly

Planned to monitor and document the implementation of SBC activities and messages to understand what is, and is not working?

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ Partly

Evaluation and Learning. Have you...

Planned to utilize lessons from monitoring to inform ongoing learning and adjustments in your SBC activities and messages?

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ Partly

Planned to share lessons on what is, and is not working for various populations with relevant stakeholders?

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ Partly

How do you integrate your results into your programming?

Consider and discuss with your team if you can adjust your planned SBC programming to change some of your 'no' answers to 'yes' or 'partly'. Then, use the checklist and the tips below to develop a plan of action to move your SBC program to be more inclusive.

The following tips are practical steps that may help SBC practitioners to integrate findings from this checklist into their work:

1. Identify gender and social inclusion focal points on SBC program teams.

2. Incorporate findings from or conduct a gender and social inclusion assessment and analysis as part of your SBC program.

3. Explicitly budget resources for gender and social inclusion approaches and activities, as well as monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

4. Conduct a mapping of relevant partners and stakeholders for gender and social inclusion work, and coordinate with them for SBC program design and capacity-strengthening activities.

5. Develop or strengthen referral systems for vulnerable populations in your setting: for example, for gender-based violence.

6. Identify gender and social inclusion-related technical assistance and capacity strengthening needs and provide support to meet these needs.

7. Incorporate gender and social inclusion-related objectives and indicators into the performance monitoring plan, as well as disaggregating individual-level data by age and sex, as well as gender identify and disability status as relevant.

8. Report and disseminate key gender and social inclusion metrics from research and program monitoring.

9. Meaningfully involve vulnerable populations in your SBC program design, implementation, monitoring, and evalution.

1. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Leaving no one behind: the imperative of inclusive development - reporting on the world social situation 2016. United Nations; 2016.
2. United Nations [Internet]. Fight racism. Vulnerable groups: who are they? 2022; New York: United Nations 2022 [cited 2023] Available from: https://www.un.org/en/fight-racism/vulnerable-groups.
3. Kuran, C.H.A., Morsut C, Kruke BI, Krüger M, Segnestam L, Orru K, et al., Vulnerability and vulnerable groups from an intersectionality perspective. Int J of Disaster Risk Reduction. 2020; 50: p. 101826.
4. Carter, B., Roelen, K., Enfield S. and Avis, W. K4D Emerging issues report 18: Social protection topic guide. Revised edition. Brighton (UK): Institute of Development Studies; 2019.