



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Maternal and Child  
Survival Program



Photo: Jpriege/Kate Holt



## SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATION

Beyond simply delivering a message, Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) is the systematic application of theory-based, research-driven communication strategies to address individual level change and change within broader environmental and structural levels. As USAID's flagship global program in maternal, newborn and child health, MCSP has the opportunity to reach women and their families throughout Asia and Africa with contextualized SBCC approaches at both facility and community levels.

Across our priority countries, our SBCC work focuses on three major objectives:

### I. Implement strategic, evidence-based SBCC activities at the country level

We are strengthening national community health worker systems and mobilizing communities to address structural and cultural barriers. USAID's flagship Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP)'s efforts also address provider behavior and improve the quality of client-health provider interactions, while bolstering linkages between communities and health facilities. Through use of the community action cycle, group-based dialogue and learning approaches, information and communication technologies, quality improvement approaches, and engagement of community champions, we are improving quality of care and cultivating an enabling environment for optimal practices and use of reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (RMNCH) services and gender equity initiatives.

## KEY FACTS

- SBCC approaches improve breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices (UNICEF)
- Exposure to health communication programs contributes to increased family planning use, in some cases by more than 150% (Boulay et al)
- Effective communication is a critical component of quality of care at childbirth (WHO)
- Improved interpersonal communication by health care workers yields greater: client satisfaction; treatment compliance; diagnoses accuracy; outcomes; perceptions of quality of care; and service use (WHO)

## 2. Contribute to the evidence base at country and global levels

MCSP works to advance global learning on evidence-based approaches for promoting RMNCH SBCC. For example, a study in Tanzania is exploring sociocultural and environmental cues to birth spacing and optimal nutritional behaviors. It will test the use of innovative communication approaches for influencing nutrition and family planning perceptions and practices among women, their family members, village leaders, and health providers.

## 3. Collaborate and coordinate with SBCC partners globally and at the partner level

Finally, MCSP works closely with SBCC partners and leverages the expertise of bilateral and global awards focused on SBCC.



**Photo:** A nurse holds an antenatal class at Sinza hospital in Dar Salaam, Tanzania (Kate Holt/MCHIP and Jhpiego)

## ABOUT MCSP

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The Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP) is a global, USAID Cooperative Agreement to introduce and support high-impact health interventions with a focus on 25 high-priority countries with the ultimate goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths within a generation. The Program is focused on ensuring that all women, newborns and children most in need have equitable access to quality health care services to save lives.

MCSP supports programming in maternal, newborn and child health, immunization, family planning and reproductive health, nutrition, health systems strengthening, water/sanitation/hygiene, malaria, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and pediatric HIV care and treatment.

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