

# Building and Monitoring Behavior Change Skills for Multi-Sectoral Interventions to Improve Community Health

Authors: Nicole Weber (PRO-WASH), Abby Love (SCALE), Alexandra Blumenstock (SCALE), and Meraz Rahman (Hellen Keller Intl)  
PRO-WASH: Practices Operations and Research in WASH (Save the Children) | SCALE: Strengthening Capacity in Agriculture, Livelihoods and Environment (Mercy Corps)

## INTRODUCTION

- Strong communication, facilitation, and negotiation skills are critical for effective multi-sectoral interventions to improve community health.
- Many social and behavior change (SBC) approaches exist and managers recognize the importance of building these skills.
- However, few organizations systemically monitor and report on their training activities, beyond process indicators such as number trained.<sup>1</sup>
- PRO-WASH and SCALE (both USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)-funded capacity strengthening and learning awards) designed a systematic monitoring plan for trainings.
- This plan is based on the Kirkpatrick Evaluation Model (Figure 1).<sup>2</sup>
- We collected, analyzed, and used monitoring data to adapt and improve capacity strengthening efforts.
- In this poster, we present key results, lessons learned, and recommendations. from applying the monitoring plan.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE TRAINING

From 2019-2021, PRO-WASH/SCALE trained 263 participants working on multi-sectoral food security projects in six countries during 10 training sessions (Figure 2). All trainings lasted 4-5 days and included core lessons on communication, facilitation, negotiation, and additional modules designed in response to participants' learning needs/resource assessments and manager input. Participants were primarily from the agriculture, livelihoods, WASH, health, and nutrition sectors. As shown in Figure 2, the training modality was in-person, hybrid, or remote.

The training used an adapted version of the Make Me a Change Agent: A Multisectoral SBC Resource for Community Workers and Field Staff (Box 3).<sup>3</sup> This guide was originally developed under The TOPS Program by the CORE Group SBC Working Group, and the FSN Network SBC Task Force. The adapted guide includes sector-specific examples, role-plays, exercises, and additional lessons to support the Training of Trainers. SCALE/PRO-WASH carried out pilot testing in three countries.

## METHODS

This poster focuses on results from applying Kirkpatrick Levels 3-4 (Figure 1). Participant surveys included questions on the application of specific knowledge/skills from the training; barriers and enablers to applying the skills and to training others on the content; suggested improvements to the training; and individual perceptions of quality of their work and self efficacy to train others on the content. Interviews with managers included questions related to perceptions of the training content and perceived changes in how staff are carrying out project activities. Training results are available for 9 sessions.

Figure 1: Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Participant surveys were administered at 3 or 6 months post-training via email and Google Forms.

Skype interviews with program management were conducted at 6 or 9 months post-training using open-ended questions.

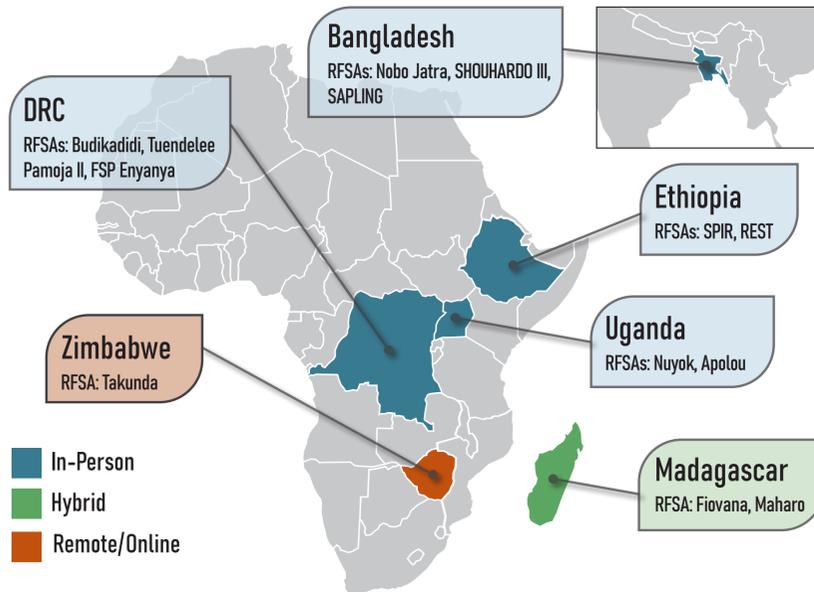
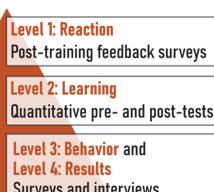


Figure 2: Map of where partners were trained in MMCA by PRO-WASH/SCALE. RFSAs stands for Resilience Food Security Activity.

**Box 1.** In interviews, managers noted the importance of staff having sufficient time to practice MMCA skills. Suggestions included adding a field practice session into the training and/or a field-based refresher where participants practice some of the more challenging skills, such as small doable actions and storytelling/testimonials.

**Box 2.** Post-training monitoring provided insights into the target audience for MMCA. Managers felt they needed to be briefed on MMCA, but that the primary audience for the training should be program staff who interact directly with community members.

## RESULTS

For the 9 trainings where we conducted post-training monitoring, there was a 51% overall response rate. Of the survey respondents: **93% strongly agreed/agreed that the quality of their work had improved** and **96% strongly agreed/agreed they were confident in their ability to train others on MMCA**, as a result of the training.

Figure 3 shows the top 6 main factors that helped participants apply what they had learned from the training. Relevance of knowledge/skills to my job was the most important factor (84%).

Figure 3: What helped you apply what you learned at the training? (n=9 trainings; 121 respondents)

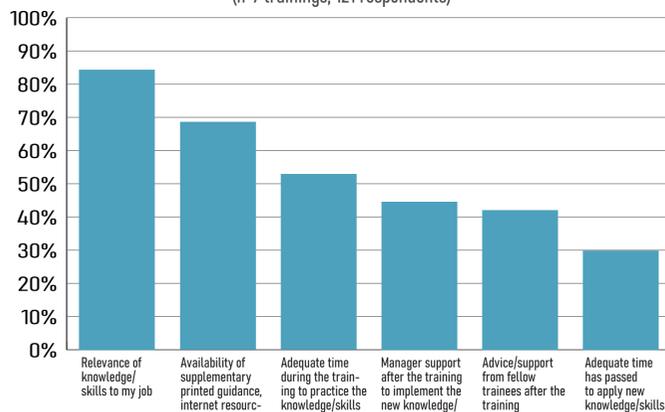
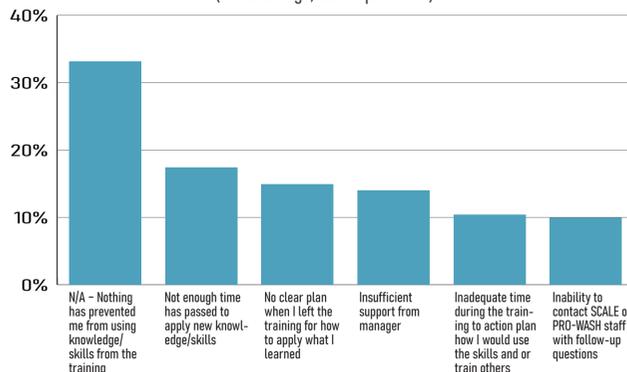


Figure 4 shows the top 6 main barriers participants faced in applying what they had learned from the training. The biggest barriers were not enough time had passed since the training (17%) and no clear plan on how to apply what I learned (15%).

Figure 4: What prevented you from applying what you learned in the training? (n=9 trainings; 121 respondents)



Managers gave feedback on the training (Boxes 1 and 2). In post-training monitoring conducted during COVID-19, participants noted that skills learned were useful to build trust and negotiate behavior change during pandemic response activities.

### References

1. Crocker, J., Shields, K. F., Venkataraman, V., Saywell, D., & Bartram, J. (2016). Building capacity for water, sanitation, and hygiene programming: Training evaluation theory applied to CLTS management training in Kenya. *Social science & medicine* (1982), 166, 66-76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2016.08.008>
2. Kirkpatrick Partners. (n.d.). The Kirkpatrick Model. <https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/Our-Philosophy/The-Kirkpatrick-Model>
3. The FSN Network and CORE Group. 2015. Make Me a Change Agent: A Multisectoral SBC Resource for Community Workers and Field Staff. Washington, DC: The TOPS Program. [https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/Make%20me%20a%20Change%20Agent\\_508%20Final.pdf](https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/Make%20me%20a%20Change%20Agent_508%20Final.pdf)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Build in time and resources at program start-up to develop a post-training monitoring plan as part of a capacity strengthening strategy. This helps practitioners monitor outcomes and support adaptive management and the effective use of project resources.
- Send participants simple, short, automated surveys after events. Additionally, use qualitative approaches to collect deeper insights and to interpret quantitative data and determine actions.

## CONCLUSIONS

Capacity strengthening activities are a large component of many multi-sectoral interventions. Systematically conducting post-training monitoring can improve training quality and inform future learning needs. Findings from the evaluations were used to:

- revise and enhance training materials;
- engage program management, encouraging follow-up support and adjusted work plans;
- leverage local and regional expertise.

**Box 3.** This free resource consists of a pilot-tested training package and online course that organizations can use to strengthen SBC skills among their WASH, agriculture, livelihoods, and natural resource management staff to support multi-sectoral interventions in community health. For the guide, lessons learned, and tips for using the guide, scan the QR code below or visit [www.fsnnetwork.org/resource/MMCA](http://www.fsnnetwork.org/resource/MMCA).

Free course available on DisasterReady (English & French): <https://tinyurl.com/MMCA4WASHAG>

SCAN TO VISIT OUR MMCA WEB-PAGE!

