

INTERVIEW

THE EMERGENCE OF SBCC

This issue of the *Journal* includes papers and issues that emerged from the second Social and Behaviour Change Communication Summit where 1,200 practitioners and researchers from more than 90 countries gathered. In this interview, Susan Krenn, Executive Director at the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Behaviour, provides background and insights on the 2018 Summit.

DevCom: How has SBCC evolved as a field of study and as a way of action?

Krenn: The roots of the SBCC field go back to the 50s' when the terminology of development communication emerged. In the 70s and 80s there was ongoing dialogue around the inclusion of participatory communication principles in this work. USAID, some of the UN agencies and others were beginning to fund large-scale communication Behaviour focusing on health, agriculture, literacy, and other development issues. At the time it as referred to as Information, Education, and Communication (IEC). At the same time, many national level and community-led initiatives, especially in the Latin American countries, were incorporating participatory communication to empower local communities. The terminology we now use to reflect this work, along with the increasing sophistication of the field has changed over time. We went from IEC to behaviour Change Communication (BCC), to Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC), reflecting more explicitly the critical and dynamic interaction between the sociocultural and structural environment, social norms, and individual Behaviour change. These shifts also reflect an increasing focus on other areas of social development beyond health.

Other language is sometimes used to describe SBCC, or related work that overlaps with it. For example, in their work, UNICEF refers to Communication for Development or C4D; others use media for development. At the heart of what we all do, however, is the use of communication and other approaches (community mobilisation, advocacy, human-centered design, etc.) to catalyse social and behaviour change to improve health and development outcomes.

There has been a growing appreciation among other development actors of the value of SBCC. It is becoming increasingly pervasive in development programming. Concurrently, we've also seen increasing recognition of the field as a profession, although there is much still to do on this front. But there is now Master's Degree programme that focuses on Health Communication, Communication for Development, and other aspects domestically and internationally.

DevCom: How did the 2016 and 2018 SBCC Summits come about?

Krenn: The first of the SBCC Summits took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2016. It was organised through Johns Hopkins Center for Communication programmes, together with other partners, as part of the USAID funded Health Communication Capacity (HC3) project. It was borne out of the idea that the field had grown to such an extent that SBCC practitioners needed a convening space where they could focus wholly on SBCC. In most international health and development gatherings, SBCC is sidelined to one track or just a few sessions. The response to the Addis Summit was very positive and reinforced how important it is for our community to have this as a way to network, share and learn, and contribute to the global dialogue and agenda setting. The enthusiasm we saw in Addis led to a commitment to convening an SBCC Summit every two years.

DevCom: And then on to 2018...

Krenn: Yes. To respond to the commitment for a biennial event, a more formal Secretariat was established to support the 2018 Summit. The Secretariat included UNICEF, The Soul City Institute for Social Justice, the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication programmes, the Communication Initiative and BBC Media Action, all of whom have a long history, a significant body of work in the SBCC space and represent different but complementary, aspects of the field.

The Secretariat, and the individuals and organisations who contributed to the planning and implementation of the Summit share a deep commitment to strengthening the field and to support the broad array of practitioners working in SBCC.

DevCom: It must have been both challenging and rewarding for the field to have a gathering of this size and diversity.

Krenn: The high level of interest in the Summit reflects the growing investment in and appreciation of the field. We had a great mix of participants in Nusa Dua, with 1,200 attendees representing over 450 organisations and 94 countries. Participants came from local NGOs (and CBOs/FBOs), government agencies, academia, multilateral, international NGOs, for-profits and donor agencies. The ability to bring people from a wide variety of sectors to a Summit like this helps to forge stronger connections among health, development and humanitarian work professionals, and to bridge silos between donors and practitioners, academics and practitioners. It also provides the space for us to engage in critical conversations within our community about the global forces shaping the field and, importantly how we can support and influence the SBCC field in this context.

DevCom: How do you think the 2018 SBCC Summit will impact the field going forward?

Krenn: In addition to convening the communities in Addis Ababa and Nusa Dua, the two Summits have sparked strategising and action around a global SBCC agenda. The Global Alliance for Social and Behaviour Change, which was inaugurated at the Summit, is one manifestation of this.

DevCom: And we have introduced the Global Alliance in this issue of the Journal...

Krenn: There is also a movement of independent organisations planning country-based and regionally oriented SBCC-focused events. It's very encouraging to see this level of commitment and energy emerging.

For those who couldn't go to Nusa Dua, the key content of the Summit is being shared at the country level, as well as continuing the discussion at the global level. The Communication Initiative (www.comminit.com/), and CCP, through Springboard (<https://healthcomspringboard.org/>), are contributing to this as are others. Members of the Global Alliance for Social and Behaviour Change will be tackling some specific issues including how SBCC can support the SDGs, and diving into a more systematic review of the evidence that will encourage mobilisation of SBCC interventions.

We're also eager to continue engagement with donors, both those who were with us at the Summit and others who might be interested in supporting SBCC. Furthermore, we'll be looking for ways to further broaden the linkages between health and other social and development issues. The Summits have provided a great jumping off point for all of this. The ongoing focus on SBCC in the next year or two across the community will set the stage for the next 2020 Summit, where we expect to see an even more diverse engagement of SBCC practitioners and researchers.

DevCom: Judging by the variety of cases of SBCC and Entertainment-Education, it appears that the movement is destined to spread far more widely...

Krenn: Inspiring and grounding all of this is the incredible array of locally driven, innovative and impactful SBCC programming being done on a daily basis – driven by thousands of organisations and individuals determined to make the world a better place.

DevCom: How does Entertainment-Education fit into SBCC?

Krenn: Entertainment-education (EE) has long been an effective and critical approach in the SBCC toolbox. Five international conferences have been dedicated to exploring trends and challenges in EE, with the last having taken place in New Delhi, India in 2012 with 400 attendees. While it was relatively novel when I started in the field, most SBCC programmes now includes an EE component. There's a

great article that explores the evolution of EE over two decades by Doug Storey and Suruchi Sood (citation below). As we began planning for the 2018 Summit, we felt it would be both practical and valuable to include this focus within the Summit, given the overlap of participants, interest in this topic and the magnitude of EE programming within SBCC. We polled the EE and SBCC communities to gauge their interest in having one event to explore What Works in both arenas and received a very positive response.

DevCom: Does the Summit help to move EE forward?

Krenn: There was an incredible array of SBCC work featuring EE at the Summit, with some really novel applications. Seeing what others are doing and hearing about the impact of these EE has hopefully inspired others to test out some new EE ideas. I also had some great conversations about the next generation of EE practitioners and how we might better harness the resources of the entertainment industry to support of our development agenda.

DevCom: Tell us how Johns Hopkins University's Center for Communication Behaviour supports the SBCC field, in addition to the Summit event?

Krenn: Since its founding as a Centre in 1988, CCP has been a leader in advancing the SBCC agenda through an implementation of Behaviour, advancing theory and research techniques, building capacity, and connecting the wider community.

In large part, this has been through USAID programmes, including seven global flagship projects that began in 1982. This includes three decades of impactful SBCC programming across over 60 countries and many programme areas including family planning, Ebola, HIV, malaria, safe motherhood, trachoma and gender equity among others.

CCP's country-based work has provided a strong platform for strengthening SBCC capacity among local stakeholders. CCP's systematic "P" process has been used the world over to guide the design, implementation and evaluation of SBCC Behaviour, enhancing the use of evidence and theory to drive effective programming. CCP has advanced SBCC through systematic research, development of new techniques to measure impact, contributed to the field through a rigorous evaluation of SBCC programmes and sharing that data with others through articles and other platforms. We've also contributed to the development of SBCC theory.

As a university-based Centre, our commitment to capacity strengthening has always been part of our ethos. We have helped establish and nurture independent organisations in 13 countries that have SBCC as their primary mission. Many of these are now direct grantees of USAID and other donors. In addition, we conduct a wide variety of workshops locally and internationally to strengthen leadership, advocacy, and SBCC skills among managers, practitioners and policymakers. This is often done in the context of project implementation, but we have also formally

trained more than 5,000 participants through our flagship workshop “Leadership in Strategic Communication”. A number of staff also teach related courses at the Bloomberg JHSPH.

Here is the citation for the Storey and Sood article I mentioned earlier: Storey, D., & Sood, S. (2013). Increasing equity, affirming the power of narrative and expanding dialogue: *The evolution of entertainment-education over two decades*. *Critical Arts*, 27(1), 9-35.