



Integrate Gender into Program Positioning and Messages

Activity 7.2: Designing the Right Messages

Objectives:

- Learn about SBCC message design.
- Understand the importance of designing messages that are well-thought-out and simple, memorable, easily understood, culturally appropriate and meaningful to the audience.
- Develop messages that consider both the current and desired attitudes and behaviors. Think about the different gender dynamics, and the possible unintended consequences, and apply them to message design.

Preparation:

Review the **key concepts** and **background research** to be sure your team has a good understanding of **behavior change and gender** and is aware of the gender-related social and behavioral determinants. Review the existing research and information gathered during your situation and audience analysis to be able to identify the underlying conditions and causes that exist in relation to your health problem.

Gather the following program documents to help you go through this activity:

- Current strategy or marketing plan
- Formative research results (if available)
- Monitoring and evaluation results (if available)
- Information and results from previous exercises
- Other programmatic documents
- Activity Template (see below)

Relevant resources from the I-Kit

Be sure you have enough copies of any templates, handouts or resources needed for this activity. Consider printing the **Gender-Related Social and Behavioral Determinants Handout** from the step page to use as reference during the activity.

Expected Outcome:

Key messages specific to gender transformation or the gender-related social and behavioral determinants of the problem.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to guide you on how to design a message strategy that will to move your audience from their current behaviors to the desired behaviors. The activity will examine the potential consequences of how messages are phrased and the resulting changes in behavior.

Introduction:

Message design is the process of connecting insights about the priority audience with key information the audience needs to know in order to make the change the program desires. Successful, well-designed messages are simple, memorable, easily understood, culturally appropriate and meaningful to the audience. Their design stems from a clear creative brief that outlines what the communication intervention aims to achieve. In social and behavior change communication, a message is a statement containing key points of information that a program wants to communicate to an audience to encourage behavior change. Because your messages are the main way that you will communicate with your audience, it is important to ensure that they are gender transformative. Gender transformative messages are not only those messages that help you to achieve your vision but also consider the gender-related social and behavioral determinants.

To develop gender transformative messaging, you cannot stop at message development, rather you need to take additional steps to critically examine your messages and their impact beyond reaching the desired behavior. Gender transformative messages should be framed in a way that:

- Considers the gender-related social determinants
- Avoids any unintended consequences
- Does not reinforce harmful gender stereotypes or norms
- Strives for gender transformation

Instructions to complete this activity:

When SBCC materials and interventions carry well-designed messages that are closely linked to audience needs and the communication objectives, they will more effectively persuade the

priority audience to change or adopt new behaviors.

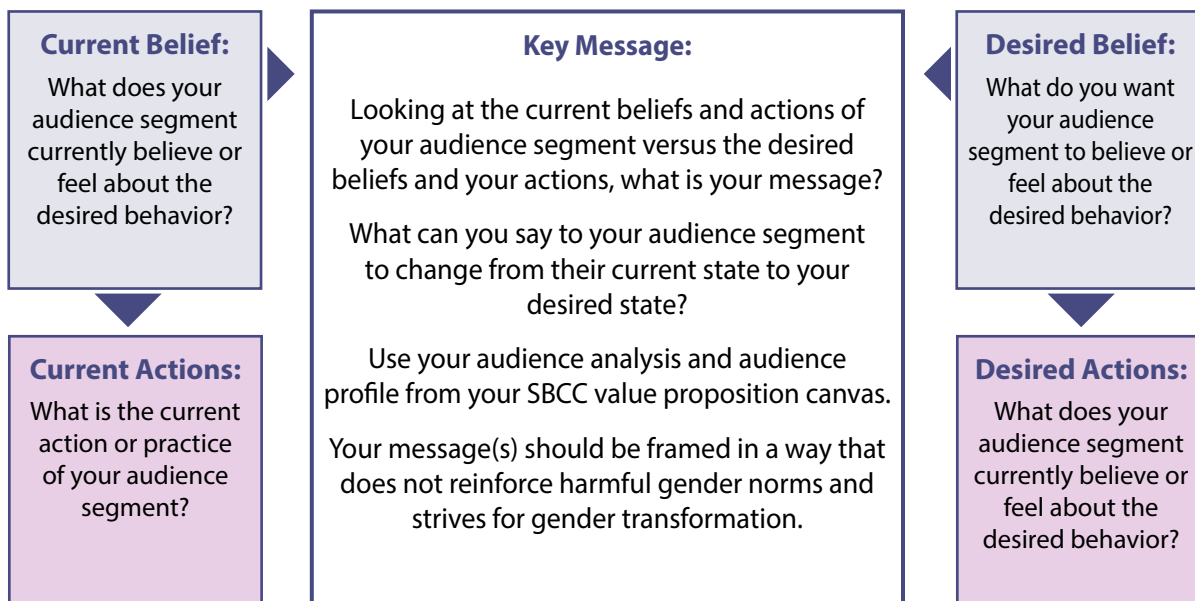
Key Steps:

1. Before revising your messages, critically review your current messages. Determine if they:

Simple	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are easy to understand
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are short; less is more. Stick to only what is relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid jargon
Audience Centric	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are designed based on the audience's stage of change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Address the audience's values, norms and beliefs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Address the audience's needs and priorities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider the tone that most appeals to the audience
Concise and Flexible	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do not present every detail
<input type="checkbox"/>	Allow audiences to use their own thought process
Achievable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Include specific suggestions on the actions the audience can take
Gender Transformative	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider the gender-related social determinants
<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid any unintended consequences
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do not reinforce harmful gender norms
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strive for gender transformation

2. To adapt your existing messages or develop new messages (and their support statements), list the current beliefs and actions or practices of your audience segment. Use the information you collected during your situation analysis and audience profiles. Do not forget to consider your revised gender transformative vision, situation analysis, and audience journey and personas.
- What does your audience segment currently believe or feel about the desired behavior?
 - What is the current action or practice of your audience segment? Think about and list the desired beliefs and actions.
 - What do you want your audience segment to believe or feel about the desired behavior?
 - What is the desired action or practice you want your audience segment to do?
 - How has your new gender analysis reshaped the answers to these questions?
3. Look at the current beliefs and actions of your audience segment versus the desired beliefs and actions. What is your message?

- What can you say to your audience segment to change from their current state to your desired state?
- How should this differ for men and women based on gender norms and expectations?
- Use your audience analysis and audience profile for your SBCC value proposition canvas.



4. Consider each level of the socio-ecological model when developing your messages. One message will not fit all and you may need to develop different key messages based on the audience. What resonates with a married woman may not resonate with a government official at the policy level.

Audience Segment	What they Need to Know	Key Communication Messages
Primary Audience		
Example: Pregnant Mothers – First Baby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we offer them • How to access our services • Where to go for advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We provide useful, practical information and support • We are trustworthy and reliable • We put users first and value their opinions
Primary Audience		
Example: Political Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we want to see changed in policy terms • Our strong evidence base and supporter base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a strong evidence base and our calls are grounded in robust evidence • We have a good knowledge of the policy environment • We are a well-respected, authoritative organization

This activity was adapted using the following resources:

Advocacy and Leadership Center, 2010.



Template 7.2.1: Develop the Right Messages

Current Belief:

What does your audience segment currently believe or feel about the desired behavior?

Key Message:

Looking at the current beliefs and actions of your audience segment versus the desired beliefs and your actions, what is your message?

What can you say to your audience segment to change from their current state to your desired state?

Use your audience analysis and audience profile from your SBCC value proposition canvas.

Your message(s) should be framed in a way that does not reinforce harmful gender norms and strives for gender transformation.

Desired Belief:

What do you want your audience segment to believe or feel about the desired behavior?

Current Actions:

What is the current action or practice of your audience segment?

Desired Actions:

What does your audience segment currently believe or feel about the desired behavior?