Closing Plenary – Summary of key insights on Theme 1: "What works?"

Claudia Canepa, Oxfam

Hello. I am Claudia Canepa and I manage Oxfam's Knowledge Hub on Women's Economic Empowerment in Agriculture. It has been a pleasure to have co-led the Summit Insights Team for Theme 1 of the conference on "What works?" along with Doug Storey from John's Hopkins University. The insights that I will share with you now are a compilation of ideas that many people who attended this summit have shared with us through our Open sessions, polls, and rapporteurs who attended presentations in this summit. Many thanks to all those who were actively involved in this collective reflection process.

So "What works?? What we found when reflecting on this question is that we ourselves needed to define what we mean by what works?

Are we talking about reach in terms of the number of people reached? Are we talking about changes in personal attitudes, social norms or behaviours or the wider legal or policy environment? Cost effectiveness? Sustainability of impact? Is it ethical?

But in the end – once we are explicit on what we mean by success - the key question we need to answer is: *Did the strategy reach the objective that it set out to achieve?*

There were a lot of exciting examples of successful strategies shared in this conference – I will share with you here a few to give you a flavour of what has trickled up:

- Using Interpersonal communication with wider social marketing strategies increases contraceptive prevalence rate significantly
- Community based participatory videos where content was locally produced and disseminated through a local facilitator engaging in conversations around the videos were seen to be ten times more impactful than formal trainings in terms of increasing adoption of desired behaviours and sustaining these behaviours over time.
- Behavioural economics - Nudging (simple visual tools) is a cost effective and impactful approach to getting people to behave in certain ways, but only where the behaviours already exist and need a bit of reinforcement and where there are no negative sanctions (for instance this would work for handwashing but not for ending child marriage for instance)
- Targeting weaker norms that represent the low hanging fruit- a finding from the Testa campaign aimed at increasing HIV testing among men where instead of trying to shift the more difficult norms around the fear of stigma they focused on positive norms around men who are tested being seen as being responsible citizens. Often, focusing on moth the low hanging fruit and the more sticky norms simultaneously has the most impact.
- The importance of knowing who your allies are informed by audience research and targeting the campaign around them. For example, the Brothers for life campaign on male circumcision found that female partners have a lot of influence on their male partners behaviours and made a video depicting women in a salon talking about how their man is getting about to get an "upgrade" and bringing the Zing into their relationship.
- Human centered design – design with this methodology is very effective – the process itself can create powerful change, but we need to increase our efforts to measure and communicate the effectiveness of the interventions themselves (beyond the design process).
- Shifting norms around agricultural practices – the change is very dramatic 47% behavior change!

Some ideas of what is not working -

- Sustainability – we often don't know what happens after the intervention ends. Change does not stick.

- What we are calling participatory, is community consultative – not truly community driven or setting of priorities.

    But a caveat on this is that - when thinking of what works or does not work – we need to take into account how much time is required. We are often dismissing approaches because they don't work within limited timeframes. You cannot switch on or off social change.

Some emerging areas of impact for the SBCC field that were underrepresented in this conference:

- Bullying
- Agriculture
- Economic inclusion, including women's economic empowerment
- Environment
- Stigma related to abortion

Keep this in your radar and engage with colleagues working in this area – there are important opportunities there for innovation through cross-sectoral collaboration. And let's work together to build the evidence base of what works in these emerging areas.

In term of how to better share evidence, the question is whose evidence counts and who is talking to whom? We need to bridge silos that currently exist (silos between academia and practitioners, quantitative and qualitative information, and silos between different sectors or approaches). We also need to be cognisant of the power differentials between different types of knowing and promote evidence that is typically undervalued, such as knowledge from communities and social movements (the human rights agenda which values process not just outcomes).

Many of you have shared with us your experiences this week of getting out of your siloes. Let's commit to continue to do this and reach out to others that think differently from us. Let's commit to having the difficult conversations.

And to help us better communicate with one another – we need to continue our efforts to develop a common language. To facilitate this, some of you have asked for a typology of interventions used across organisations or some sort of framework. We can look into these ideas. But the fundamental cultural commitment to get out of our siloes is key.

It is also imperative that we get together and determine the ethical implications of our work and develop some sort of code of conduct or other guidance in this regard.

I will end with a key take away: We have a lot of evidence that SBCC programmes work (particularly in Health communications). We know SBCC approaches work. When something does not work, the key question we need to be asking ourselves is why did it not work (what was it about the context, or other factors) because we know that these approaches work. There are many ways in which

things can go wrong (logistics, supply side behaviour, MIS system, supervision system) – and we need to be better at identifying and communicating that.