

Developing and Supporting Centers of Excellence for Social and Behavior Change Communication at Tertiary Institutions

December 2012

How can capacity in social and behavior change communication (SBCC) be built and sustained? One approach adopted by C-Change¹ is to establish and support university-based programs. Investing the time and resources to develop Centers of Excellence (COEs) with universities can achieve long-term and sustainable programs.

In contrast to many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, and training institutes, most universities have a stable human and financial resource base. Therefore, once a course or program in SBCC has been incorporated into curricula, it should have a long shelf life. To capitalize on these advantages, C-Change established COEs in universities in four countries. This case study documents C-Change's experience with the development of and continued support to COEs in South Africa, Albania, Guatemala, and Nigeria.

Background

A key strength of COEs is their ability to tailor the content and delivery of SBCC curricula to suit local needs and context.

¹ Ohio University was the lead C-Change partner in the development and support of COEs.

This case study includes distinct SBCC curricula offered by:

- the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, in a Master of Public Health program
- the University of Tirana in Albania, at the master's level in the Social Sciences Department
- the University of Calabar and the Cross River State University of Technology in Nigeria, at the undergraduate and graduate levels in departments of communication and through short courses for professionals.
- the Universidad del Valle in Guatemala developed an SBCC curriculum for undergraduate classrooms on three regional campuses, weekend short courses, and a six-week online course for working professionals.

Each COE delivers SBCC education in the manner best suited to the needs of the students and professionals in the communities it serves.

C-Change's approach to developing and supporting COEs was to build on existing capacity at universities and focused on strengthening individual and institutional technical competencies in SBCC to meet local and regional demands. The creation of COEs was part of a larger capacity strengthening strategy that also involved the development and dissemination of several tools and resources.

Assessment of Needs and Criteria for Centers of Excellence

Before developing COEs, C-Change conducted capacity assessments and a review of institutions of higher learning in several countries to identify opportunities for universities to increase the effectiveness of SBCC interventions. From this assessment and review, C-Change developed a list of broad criteria for the establishment of COEs. Each COE did not have to meet all the criteria, but they served as a guiding tool for the selection and consideration of potential COEs.

Summary of Criteria for the Establishment of Centers of Excellence

Each partner institution of higher learning should have interest in, and the ability to:

- Establish post-graduate curricula through new courses and/or merging curricula in a relevant department
- Offer short courses, workshops, and/or online learning modules
- Train and/or mentor other institutions and facilitate exchanges
- Undertake scholarly and applied research
- Hold events on research and best practices
- Promote networking, the exchange of information on communication, and collaborative projects
- Contribute to health and development communication projects in the region
- Offer small grants to nongovernmental organizations for capacity strengthening activities
- Provide Web-based resources to document best practices and to promote dialog
- Translate key texts into regional languages and facilitate access to key literature and knowledge in the field

The General Process of Developing COEs

The process for developing and approving new courses and programs and leveraging resources can be lengthy and bureaucratic, especially as many universities take a market-oriented approach to higher education. As a result, C-Change followed a general process that was tailored to each university (see Figure 1), beginning with collaborating with universities to conduct assessments and research to identify the universities. Once the universities were identified, core faculty and resources were mobilized, competency based outcomes and curriculum were developed. Finally, students were recruited and courses were implemented, with courses being evaluated and revised on an ongoing basis. Throughout the entire process, collaboration and joint decision-making between the university and C-Change occurred.



Figure 1. General process for establishing centers of excellence

This general process for establishing a COE, which can be broken down into stages as illustrated in Figure 1, provides a road map for introducing an SBCC curriculum. In practice, however, introducing and integrating SBCC in university curricula is neither a clear nor unidirectional process, because of the various stakeholders involved, national or institutional systems for curricular approval, and specific training and resources needed by each university. Each university supported by C-Change undertook similar yet distinct processes to develop and launch its own COE.

South Africa: University of the Witwatersrand

“Starting the Master of Public Health program two years ago, I had lots of practical experience—but now I have the added benefit of knowing the principles and theory behind the practice.”

- **University of the Witwatersrand SBCC/MPH student**

The COE at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg offered SBCC short courses and a concentration in SBCC within the Master of Public Health program.² This is the first COE C-Change helped to develop and support.³ Between 2009 and mid-2012, participants from 25 countries representing government bodies, U.N. agencies, NGOs, and donor and research institutions have enrolled in short courses. Students from seven African countries have enrolled in the MPH program in SBCC.

² More information on the COE at Wits is available at: <http://c-changeprogram.org/sites/default/files/C-Change-Poster-Spotlight-on-Wits.pdf>.

³ C-Change’s experience developing and supporting the COE at Wits is the most extensive, as it is the first and longest operational COE under the project.

Assessment of Need and Identification of Institution

In late 2008 and early 2009, colleagues from Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication (SCI),⁴ a C-Change partner, identified the need for sustained and accredited training among NGOs in southern Africa. SCI initiated a meeting with Wits to discuss a partnership to develop an academic program in health communication.

The proposed program would address the identified gap of training needs of practitioners, professionalization of SBCC, and promoting a greater recognition of SBCC’s value in Africa. To ensure a rigorous academic approach, the program would be located within a university. SCI provided a direct link to community that enhanced the relevance and application of theoretical concepts and principles within the SBCC field of study. The long-standing research and training collaboration between WSPH and SCI facilitated the joint development of the SBCC curriculum, and SCI mobilized funding⁵ to further support the establishment of the COE.

Development of a Center of Excellence

The process of developing the COE was launched with the appointment of a senior lecturer at Wits and an initial meeting of C-Change partners, including the Academy for Educational Development (now FHI 360), Ohio University, and SCI, to explore the vision of this initiative and management structures.

A consultative meeting was held in May 2009, with the participation of 16 academics and SBCC practitioners from 10 institutions and five countries. The purpose was to reflect on existing training interventions in SBCC with a focus on Africa, define SBCC competencies relevant to the African context by building on the process

⁴ More information on SCI is available at: <http://www.soulcity.org.za/>.

⁵ Funding was received from the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and USAID through C-Change.

undertaken at meetings held in Bellagio, Italy, and Ica, Peru,⁶ and then draw on these competencies as a basis for curriculum development.

By the end of this meeting, an advisory board was created, and learning outcomes and outlines of a curriculum for a new field of study in SBCC and six master’s level courses were submitted for institutional review by the University Faculties of Health Sciences, Humanities, and the Senate. Revisions were made to the learning outcomes and curriculum based on feedback from these bodies and the advisory board that met for the first time in December 2009. Roskilde University, Denmark, and Ohio University led the development of a Communication, Media and Society course, which was piloted in December 2009 as a short course attended by 18 participants.

The MPH in SBCC was advertised, primarily through SCI networks and the Communication Initiative in 2009. Wits received more than 80 applications from SBCC practitioners for the 14 available places. The first cohort of 14 students from seven African countries began in January 2010.

Implementation and Results



Figure 2. MPH 2012 cohort and staff

MPH in SBCC and short courses. The course work component of the MPH degree was offered over two

⁶ 2001 Delphi Survey on Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes: a map of competencies in communication for social change developed from a meeting in Bellagio, Italy; and competencies in health communication developed from a meeting in Ica, Peru.

years of part-time or one year of full-time study, with students completing a research report as a requirement.

The curriculum (see Table 1) sought to develop critical SBCC competencies (knowledge, skills, and values). Short courses often overlapped with MPH courses, with classes typically containing both MPH students and short course participants. Wits’ block-release modality (one week of face-to-face teaching and learning, and 60 hours of self-study) enabled experienced practitioners to enroll in the MPH program or short courses while continuing to work, allowing students and participants to immediately apply new skills in their work places – contributing to the goal of professionalization of SBCC.

Course Name	Developed	First Implemented
Introduction to SBCC*	2009	2009
Introduction to Health Promotion	2009	2010
Applying Social and Behaviour Change Theory to Practice	2009	2010
Planning and Implementing SBCC	2009	2010
SBCC Approaches	2009	2010
Communication, Media and Society**	2009	2009
Research, Monitoring and Evaluation for SBCC	2009	2010
Entertainment Education	2011	2011

* Short course only. All other course offered as MPH and short courses.
 ** Developed and initially implemented by staff from Ohio University and Roskilde University.

Community of practice. The COE hosted a collaborative virtual learning platform, an “SBCC community of practice,” to support affiliated practitioners and encourage them to share experiences and gain new insights into the field.

Study tour host and SBCC mentors. Wits hosted study tours with several universities interested in developing COEs in SBCC, which included faculty from the designated COEs in Albania and Nigeria (see next sections) and a university in Tanzania. The interdisciplinary nature of SBCC was represented by the range of schools and departments including public health, social sciences, and media and communication. These study tours allowed Wits and the visiting universities to network and share lessons learned on the development and operation of a COE.

Next Steps

The COE at Wits continues to operate. It has identified two areas for future effort: 1) Building a research program, including publishing student and faculty research, and 2) Continued support for institutions that are committed to developing curricula in SBCC.

Albania: University of Tirana

“I would be very glad to practice these strategies one day in any future work, or maybe to build some social change campaigns on my own.”

- **University of Tirana SBCC student**

Beginning in 2010, with the strong support of University of Tirana (UOT) authorities at the department, faculty, and vice-chancellor level, C-Change supported the process of developing a COE that offered a master’s degree in SBCC through the Social Sciences Department.

This two-year program comprised 13–14 courses.⁷ SBCC-specific courses used the *C-Modules*,⁸ other resources from C-Change’s training package, and syllabi from SBCC courses offered by the Wits COE. The first cohort of master’s students consisted of young, recent graduates who earned bachelor’s degrees in social policy and mid-career practitioners from civil society organizations.

Assessment of Need and Identification of Institution

C-Change conducted an assessment of potential universities in Albania for development of a COE. UOT was selected based on its structural strengths, strong research capabilities, and staff’s previous involvement in a peer education program for social and behavioral changes in reproductive health. UOT faculty members had a strong academic background in the social sciences, but gaps in knowledge of communication, development, and health were identified. After obtaining buy-in from university leadership, the partnership with UOT was supported by USAID through C-Change and FORECAST/Albania.

Development of the Center of Excellence

To address the knowledge gaps identified in the assessment, C-Change conducted a series of workshops, orientation meetings, and short courses.

Cross-COE exchanges. Key lecturers, the Head of Department, and the Dean of UOT participated in international visits to the COE at Wits in July 2010 and to Malmö University in March 2011. These visits allowed them to learn from the experiences of an

⁷ The number of courses required is determined by the Ministry of Education.

⁸ The *C-Modules: a learning package for SBCC*, is designed for facilitated, face-to-face workshops with program staff of small and medium-sized health and development organizations with varying levels of experience in planning or implementing SBCC programs. The *C-Modules* and other components of the toolkit are available at <http://c-changeprogram.org/focus-areas/capacity-strengthening/SBCC-Toolkit>.

established COE and from one of the leading European master's programs (the Master of Arts in Communication for Development at Malmö University).⁹ Exchanges with faculty from Roskilde University's media and communication master's programs, as well as visits to WHO Euro, Danish Development Assistance, and a series of NGOs, also provided useful references for the UOT team during the COE development process. As the center was developed, a joint three-day seminar with Malmö University's MA program was held in Tirana in November 2011, with participation and presentations by local NGOs and COE/UOT staff. Some Malmö University staff and students traveled to Tirana while others participated online.

Supporting the development of an SBCC curriculum.

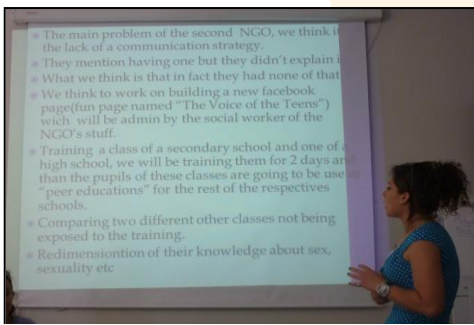


Figure 3. Marcela Nertida of UOT presents her communication strategy during an SBCC short course for faculty.

C-Change partnered with FORECAST/Albania to conduct an SBCC course for 15 faculty members of the UOT Social Sciences Department and five staff from NGOs working in Albanian communities. This training provided the participants with insight and understanding of key schools of thought, theories, and concepts of SBCC and connections between theory and designing, facilitating, and monitoring and evaluation of SBCC strategies. An additional two days were added to this workshop to assist UOT in the development of the master's program. The syllabi developed were translated into Albanian by

faculty members and sent to the Ministry of Education for approval.

A second workshop was held for the same faculty members of the Social Sciences Department with a focus on research and systematic monitoring and evaluation. C-Change supported the strengthening of research capacity in the Social Sciences Department, with faculty developing a research training course.

Implementation and Results

The COE continued developing a network with relevant local institutions in a variety of ways.

- UOT faculty collaborated with several groups and began building their own network.
- The recruitment of students for the master's program strengthened ties between the university and civil society organizations where SBCC competencies are needed. The first cohort of students represented NGOs such as SOS Children's Villages (a community-based Christian organization), Save the Children, and an organization working with the Roma community in Albania.
- Visits to Albanian civil society organizations were built into some of the courses, further strengthening contacts and potential collaborations. This networking will be fundamental for the future of the master's program in terms of identifying research sites and topics, broadening the recruitment base, and linking students to potential job opportunities in SBCC.

The second cohort of master's students began in October 2012.

⁹ More information on Malmö University is available at: <http://wpmu.mah.se/comdev>.

In December 2012, USAID/Albania presented a certificate to UOT for its work developing and sustaining the Center of Excellence.¹⁰

Thank you to the University of Tirana’s Faculty of Social Work and Social Policy for recognizing today USAID’s contribution towards the newly established Center of Excellence and Master’s Program on Behavior Change and Communication. This program will encourage healthy lifestyles for young Albanians.

- **USAID/Albania**

Next Steps

UOT faculty and master’s students have expressed a strong interest in increased international networking and exchange and in improving student mobility between institutions. Consideration is being given to exploring joint degrees with European institutions such as the Ørecomm Centre of Communication and Glocal Change.¹¹ UOT is planning to submit a grant application to Tempus, the European Union program that funds partnerships and projects to modernize higher education, in early 2013.

Guatemala: Universidad del Valle

“A great strength of the course was being able to follow it online—it made it possible for each of us to take the course according to our own schedules.”

- **Course participant, Universidad del Valle online SBCC course**

The COE at the Universidad del Valle in Guatemala (UVG) offered SBCC material embedded in several undergraduate courses in departments including

¹⁰ Video of the presentation is available at:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=542176792477692>.

¹¹ Ørecomm Centre of Communication and Glocal Change is a bi-national research platform at Roskilde University, Denmark, and Malmö University, Sweden.

Education, Community Development, and Management at the main campus in Guatemala City and two regional campuses. The COE at UVG is unique for collaborating with C-Change Guatemala to adapt and translate the content of the *C-Modules* to the country context and issues faced by local SBCC and development practitioners and organizations. In addition, UVG offered “Introduction to SBCC” short courses (six days spread over three weekends) on two regional campuses and has piloted a six-week online course for 28 working professionals with facilitation from faculty from its three campuses.

Assessment of Need and Identification of Institution

In 2010, C-Change met with six universities in Guatemala to explore opportunities for partnership in the development of a Center of Excellence. As a result of these discussions, a memorandum of understanding between FHI 360/C-Change and UVG was signed. As a first step, an assessment of UVG’s capacity to provide technical support and other resources for online and classroom instruction was conducted. The COE in Guatemala decided to combine both face-to-face and online learning.

Regional exchange. In June 2011, faculty and leaders from the COE visited the campus of the Universidad del Norte (UniNorte) in Barranquilla, Colombia, the regional university leader in offering social and behavior change courses. The success and quality of UniNorte’s SBCC master’s program and the university’s entrepreneurial spirit offered a model for UVG to follow in developing the COE. The relationship was also beneficial to UniNorte, with UVG hosting the C-Change Guatemala SBCC Spanish-language community of practice website.¹²

Memorandums of understanding between UVG and USAID, and UVG and UniNorte, are currently under review in UVG’s legal department. The successful

¹² See <http://www.comunicacionparaelcambio.org/>.

implementation of these memorandums will be critical to ensure that UVG has the appropriate amount of financial and technical support to achieve the continue developing a COE.

Development of the Center of Excellence



Figure 4. UVG faculty during an SBCC workshop

UVG faculty trained by C-Change in SBCC embedded content from the *C-Modules* into their existing undergraduate face-to-face classes. For example, the content on formative research and analysis is incorporated in a management course offered at UVG’s Altiplano campus. In addition, selections from the entire curriculum are used in the Project Planning courses offered in UVG’s Education Department.

A pilot course was offered in May/June 2012 on UVG’s existing course management Web platform, “Sakai,”¹³ to train a small cadre of “online SBCC facilitators” so

¹³ The Sakai platform is an “asynchronous” platform, meaning it has no “live” functions such as chat or conference. Participants accessed course materials on the site itself and participated in forums that allowed non-simultaneous exchanges with their peers and facilitators.

that UVG could continue offering online SBCC courses to a broader public.

The online pilot course had three “e-modules,” with each one designed to be completed in two weeks. Each e-module contained selected key sections adapted from the face-to-face C-Modules and exercises to allow for online interaction. The course was designed for “learning by doing”—that is, for UVG faculty to learn online facilitation of SBCC content through a facilitation practicum. This practicum consisted of a one-day training of facilitators and facilitation of one of the e-modules by the participants.

After the facilitators were trained, the course was offered to working professions in mid-2012 at no cost to the participants. The first cohort of 28 participants took the course for six weeks in 2012. After the first cohort completed the course, and participant feedback, facilitator experience and feedback, and observations and suggestions of the course designers were collected, the course was redesigned by UVG faculty.

Next Steps

The COE is in the process of publicizing the SBCC community of practice website.¹⁴ The purpose of this community of practice website is to motivate a critical mass of practitioners and academics working in social change-related communication and development to contribute to the knowledge base of SBCC in Guatemala and Latin America.

Results of a market study, conducted by C-Change, and the 2013 Center of Excellence Plan have been presented to and approved by UVG. UVG has committed to facilitating the revised online SBCC course with the face-to-face components in January 2013. It is expected the course will gain the interest and attention of individuals and institutions working on development issues who

¹⁴ The community of practice www.comunicacionparaelcambio.org was formerly managed by C-Change and it is now housed on the UVG server.

may not have previously benefited from SBCC training. The relatively low cost, and ability to offer the course to a wide range of participants despite geographical distance and varying work or study schedules, position the course for success.¹⁵

UVG's plan for 2013 is to implement four additional online SBCC course with the face-to-face components offered as a post-graduate certification in SBCC in the Continuing Education Department. In 2014 UVG will develop a master's degree program in SBCC, and in 2015, develop a portfolio of services offered by the university that includes formal SBCC training and SBCC research. Sustainability of the COE will depend on future demand, the quality of the redesigned course, the quality of facilitation, and continued support from UVG leadership.

Nigeria: University of Calabar and Cross River State University of Technology

"NACA is in full support of this process. We look forward to a time when we will indeed have certified SBCC resource persons nationwide, and I dare say it won't be long."

- ***Uduak Daniel, NACA's Prevention Focal Person (2011)***

C-Change collaborated with two universities in Nigeria to develop a Center of Excellence at the University of Calabar (UNICAL) and the Cross River State University of Technology (CRUTECH). As a result, both universities offered SBCC courses at the undergraduate level, with UNICAL also offering graduate-level courses. The courses were offered within the communications departments. UNICAL has a focus on media and theater,

and CRUTECH has a focus on mass media. The two universities complement each other with their differing student populations, with CRUTECH catering to more technically-oriented students (e.g., media production) and UNICAL catering to researchers, communication generalists, theater professionals, and future development workers.

The two universities have agreed to collaborate on SBCC-related courses through syllabus sharing, guest lectures, and joint refresher trainings, and on the design and delivery of the country's first SBCC short course (to be offered in March 2013). Both universities will invite health and development experts, including USAID staff, as guest lecturers to offer applied health communication expertise to address cross-cutting aspects of the field.

Assessment of Need and Identification of Institution

In early 2011, C-Change conducted introductory and planning visits with tertiary institutions to discuss key aspects of developing COEs in Kogi and Cross River states. The meetings included the participation of both faculty and academic authorities from the tertiary institutions, USAID, and the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), with the deputy vice-chancellors of the University of Abuja and Cross River State University, and deans of academic units attending the meeting.

Participating institutions were introduced to the key components and content of C-Change's capacity strengthening toolkit. Participating institutions agreed to a site visit and assessment of current capacity. After the initial assessments, UNICAL and CRUTECH indicated interest and commitment to introduce master's-level SBCC programs in their institutions.

¹⁵ For more information on e-learning, see C-Change's case study *Use of E-Learning to Improve Knowledge and Application of Social and Behavior Change Communication* available at: <http://www.c-changeprogram.org/resources/e-learning-case-study>.

Development of the Center of Excellence

The first step C-Change undertook in Nigeria with UNICAL and CRUTECH was a six-day SBCC training facilitated by faculty from Ohio University and the Wits COE. Seven university representatives participated, including the deans of the departments that planned to house the SBCC programs. Representatives from NACA and the National University Commission (NUC) also joined various sessions. This training was followed by a meeting with senior administrators to discuss the details of courses to be offered and to identify any external support they would require to implement these master's programs.



Figure 5. COE/Nigeria faculty meet with COE/South Africa colleagues in Johannesburg.

Additional training activities to support the development of the COE were conducted. Core faculty of the two universities participated in a short course offered by Wits on research, monitoring, and evaluation of SBCC interventions, which showcased a new teaching format—the short course with application activities in the community. In addition, a follow-on workshop on SBCC curriculum development was conducted by Ohio University and Wits faculty. This workshop focused on the strategic placement of SBCC courses within existing curricula and the creation and revision of SBCC-related syllabi. Lastly, a two-day workshop on SBCC and modeling of several in-class SBCC-related activities for

UNICAL and CRUTECH faculty was conducted for those who did not benefit from previous C-Change trainings.

Implementation and Results

The Federal Ministry of Education approved the SBCC curricula at both institutions, and the first courses were launched in May/June 2012. The COE in Nigeria is jointly housed in two universities, UNICAL and CRUTECH, with both offering SBCC courses at the undergraduate level, and UNICAL also offering graduate-level courses.

Next Steps

Faculty from the COE are now focusing on the design and delivery of an SBCC short course for Nigerian working professionals, tentatively scheduled for March 2013. This is modeled on the SBCC short courses currently offered by the Wits COE. In addition, a curriculum evaluation and revisions will be conducted in 2013.

In a recent meeting (December 2012) with the Vice Chancellor of Kogi State University (KSU) in Anyigba, he indicated strong interests to partner with C-Change to initiate a master's level SBCC course within the Mass Communication Department. Selected faculty from KSU will participate in an introductory SBCC training in Abuja in January 2013. Additional and tailored training will be offered to KSU faculty, with UNICAL and CRUTECH colleagues serving as mentors.

Overarching Lessons Learned

Identifying the institution

The national and/or regional reputation of an institution for teaching and research is crucial to the success of integrating SBCC into existing curricula, not only by leveraging resources but also in providing the institutional credibility needed for a COE. In addition, within a given institution, it is important to identify the

departments where faculty and administrators will support development of SBCC curricula. To a significant degree, the disciplinary home of a COE—communication, social science, public health, education, or community development, for example—will shape the curriculum and the composition of the student body.

Identifying the core faculty and resources

For sustainability, core faculty and supporters should be full-time faculty with long-term contracts or tenure. Enlisting the support of key department and university administrators, even if they do not actively participate in the program, is crucial because they are responsible for allocating human and financial resources.

In addition, faculty need to know that their investment of time and effort in SBCC curricula will benefit not only their departments and institutions but themselves, through professional development, opportunities to conduct and publish research, and networking with colleagues from other universities. The need to enhance research competencies was particularly noted in the case of UOT, where several faculty are undertaking PhD programs.

An ongoing challenge for the COEs is access to SBCC-related content. To address this, in Nigeria, Ohio University has provided the faculty who attended the SBCC training with USB drives with hundreds of articles on SBCC-related research, strategy, theories, and case studies. In addition, UVG in Guatemala has developed an online community of practice that houses SBCC resources.

Developing competency-based learning outcomes

Faculty who use didactic and lecture-based pedagogies may need additional guidance and support in designing syllabi and curricula where content and assessment are linked to competencies. This need was identified with UNICAL and CRUTECH faculty, who had limited

experience in curriculum design. Universities such as Wits and UVG, which have more experience in offering short, competency-based courses for professionals, needed less support in this area. As with the entire process of developing COEs, it is important to adapt and tailor the process and technical inputs based on the faculty's and university's needs.

Recruiting participants/students

Recruitment and marketing techniques vary depending on whether the COE is trying to attract students (at the bachelor's or master's level), development professionals from government, NGOs, and/or civil society organizations, or both groups. Admission criteria for academic programs depend on university and/or national standards and vary among countries. In general, targeted Internet and social media marketing can be effective recruitment tools for both groups. As demonstrated by the Wits and UOT experiences, SBCC programs can be successful attracting mid-career professionals while also including students who recently completed undergraduate education.

Developing and piloting competency-based curriculum and pedagogy

The system for developing curricula varies widely—from a lengthy and detailed research and consultative process involving university and external stakeholders (as used at Wits) to the top-down decision-making process used in Nigeria, where the Ministry of Education mandates curricula. Because the process for institutional approval can be lengthy and bureaucratic, universities that do not want to invest significant resources in programs before testing to see if a market exists may choose more simple approaches. For example, UVG decided to develop short online courses and embedded SBCC content in existing undergraduate courses.

Delivering, monitoring, and evaluating courses

All four COEs are still in a testing stage on both academic and professional SBCC courses, therefore it is too early to draw any clear lessons based on sound monitoring and evaluation practices. Only the Wits COE has been offering academic and short courses long enough to provide data, and the Nigeria COE has a curricula evaluation planned for 2013. In addition, a review of each COE focusing on academic quality and procedures and where and how graduates are using their skills and knowledge should be planned.

Conclusion and Recommendations

C-Change and its university partners have supported the countries where SBCC training was not previously institutionalized, consistent, or sustainable. While the general inputs in terms of provided resources and training have been similar in all cases, the outcomes—the strengths and offerings of each COE—remain diverse:

- The COE in South Africa has recruited its third cohort of master's students and has offered training and hospitality to peers seeking models and inspiration.

- The COE in Albania has benefitted from regional partnerships within Europe, outside the existing COE circle.
- The COE in Guatemala has been a pioneer in SBCC online learning in Central America and is currently the only institution offering SBCC-related courses in Spanish online. (The Pontificia Universita Gregoriana in Rome has offered SBCC-related courses in Spanish in the past but appears to have ceased online training offerings as of July 4, 2012).
- The COE in Nigeria is a crucial resource for social change communicators and development professionals and is offering affordable SBCC training to working professionals in the region.

With ongoing collaboration between COEs and other institutions strong in SBCC, and with some years of experience under their belts, each of the Centers of Excellence can continue to grow and provide linkages and support to potential and new COEs. The potential of future expansion notwithstanding, it is clear that the current offering of SBCC courses in sustainable institutions of higher learning is now greater in number, and more regionally and linguistically diverse, as a result

Karen Greiner, Nicola Christofides, Thomas Tufte, and Emily Bockh prepared this case study.

This publication is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under Cooperative Agreement No. GPO-A-00-07-0004-00. It was produced by C-Change, managed by FHI 360, a project to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of social and behavior change communication (SBCC) as an integral part of development efforts in health, environment, civil society, and other sectors.