The five USAID priority regions in Ghana are tremendously diverse in terms of geography, socioeconomic and educational levels, languages (more than 250 languages and dialects are spoken in the country), and religion—with predominantly Christian communities in the south and Muslim communities in the north. Effective reach and relevance of SBCC strategies requires not only broadcasting by regional stations in local languages, but creation of properly targeted materials. This means that capacity for managing systematic SBCC must also be available at the regional level. During the life of the project, Communicate for Health gave priority to all these issues.

As part of its efforts to address regional perspectives and needs, Communicate for Health conducted two collaborative workshops to discuss region-specific audience research and design creative materials that would address identified social and behavioral barriers and benefits in key health areas. Both workshops engaged multiple private sector design partners, regional health promotion officers (RHPOs), technical focal persons for malaria and nutrition, representatives of local media houses, USAID implementing partners (IPs), and other regional stakeholders to produce GoodLife materials for their areas of the country.

Both workshops featured intensive SBCC capacity building experiences for participants while strengthening networks for sustainable regional collaboration.

Success Story

Media Development and Capacity Building in Action

It gave me a deeper insight into materials production and also served as a smooth beginning for the review of the WASH for Health SBCC materials by the GHS SBCC–Technical Review Committee.

Mr. Edward Thompson, SBCC specialist, WASH for Health and workshop participant
CREATIVE DESIGN AND PRODUCTION IN THE NORTH—MATERIALS DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

The first major regional event, a ten-day Materials Design and Development Workshop was held in Tamale (capital of the Northern Region) in February of 2017. The 50 participants included RHPOs, community and public health nurses, radio journalists and implementing partners¹ from the Northern, Upper East, and Upper West regions.

An international consultant co-led the workshop with support from staff of the HPD and Communicate for Health and its partners—Creative Storm Networks, Ghana Community Radio Network (GCRN), Pro-link/Infinity 970 and Mullen Lowe.

The goal was to strengthen participants’ SBCC theoretical and technical skills while producing original media materials. Sessions focused on the review of available formative research including Action Media reports for caretakers with a child under five years and pregnant couples, creative briefs, script writing, materials design, and media production and pretesting. The workshop also included field work and production in a local radio station.

Participants produced a range of creative briefs and materials covering various GoodLife health themes—including early and exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding, early antenatal care, maternal nutrition, institutional delivery, newborn care, family planning, malaria prevention and

¹ USAID IPs included Systems for Health, WASH for Health, SPRING, Resilience in Northern Ghana (RING), and People for Health.
treatment, use of latrines, and handwashing with soap. They developed five 60-second YouTube videos/TV spots in English and four in Dagbani; 41 radio spots in English, Dagbani, or Gurune; and 14 posters. Out of these, twenty-four radio spots on various health themes were finalized for broadcast in multiple languages and two posters selected for printing and inclusion in the GoodLife poster series. Although not all of the materials made it to final production, the learning process involved, camaraderie created and strong working relationships forged among people from different backgrounds and experiences—government, NGOs, media, and creative firms—representing the national and regional and district levels from the north made the experience a memorable one for many. It also enabled regional health promotion staff to articulate and prioritize their needs and seek partnerships and financial support directly in their areas.

**GOODLIFE RADIO DRAMA SERIES DESIGN WORKSHOP**

Communicate for Health’s partner, Pro-Link/Infinity970, planned and facilitated a second capacity building and materials production workshop in December of 2018 in Ho, Volta region. Like the workshop in Tamale, the four-day GoodLife Radio Drama Series Production Workshop had a dual goal: capacity building and actual media production. It provided an opportunity to utilize recent audience research in the northern and southern belts of the country carried out with the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and HPD on health behaviors and their determinants among the different Life Stage audiences.

The workshop brought together HPD, GHS technical staff, RHPOs, USAID IPs, radio producers, and two professional script writers who led the process of developing two entertaining radio drama series tailored, respectively, for the northern and southern belts of the country. The highly participatory workshop produced concepts and synopses for six full episodes (entitled the “GoodLife Radio Drama Series”) for both regions of the country. Each of the six-episode series feature the project’s key health areas—FP, malaria, MCH, WASH, and nutrition.

Attendees included 22 staff from the GHS—technical experts in different health areas as well as health promotion professionals—three staff from community radio stations, 13 staff from Communicate for Health and its partners, and the scriptwriters.

The workshop put special emphasis on the evidence base for message design and collaborative development. The Communicate for Health senior M&E advisor helped focus on issues relevant to audiences in the northern and southern belts by presenting results of the recent focus groups in the regions. Participants worked in groups to segment priority and secondary audiences for the different

*One of the main script writers – Yoofi Brew, engaging participants in the development of radio drama series.*
health issues. The professional script writers led the teams through the process of designing message content, generating concepts and characters, and outlining stories. The six northern scripts were pretested by participants assembled by Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre (NORSAAC).

Participants found the scripts to be educational, entertaining, and culturally appropriate for the region. Final productions will air on regional radio stations for at least six weeks before the end of the project and are expected serve as discussion starters on health issues during various health promotion activities including moderated radio call in programs, meetings with women’s groups, and other events.

PARTICIPANT REFLECTIONS
In an evaluation of the workshop process and outcomes, participants gave the overall experience a score of 8.3 out of a possible 10 points, indicating a high level of learning and satisfaction. Some said the workshop was the first time they had the opportunity to work on each step of material development—from a creative brief to actual production. Many appreciated the opportunity to review audience research for their particular areas.

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2 NORSAAC is an empowerment for change organization committed to women and young people in Ghana’s Northern region.