Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Catalogue

Americas, 2025

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IFRC

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network. We support the local action of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in more than 191 countries, bringing together more than 16 million volunteers for the good of humanity.

CEA (Community Engagement and Accountability): An approach that promotes the inclusion of communities in all phases of a project or response, ensuring that their voices, needs, and rights are considered.

CEA policy: Formal document that establishes an organization's commitments to community engagement, including key roles, responsibilities, and principles.

Checklist: A practical tool that allows for verification that key CEA elements have been considered in a program, emergency, or institutional process.

Code of Conduct: A set of principles and standards of behavior that staff and volunteers must follow in their interaction with communities and during their humanitarian work.

Context analysis: Process of gathering and evaluating information about a community or situation to understand its characteristics, dynamics, and needs before designing an intervention.

Emergencies: Critical situations that require an immediate humanitarian response, such as disasters or social crises, where specific CEA tools adapted to the urgency are applied.

Feedback kit: A tool that allows for the collection, analysis, and response to community comments and opinions in a structured and responsible manner.

Feedback: Opinions, comments, or suggestions that the community shares about an organization's actions, used to improve the quality and relevance of the work.

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross. Humanitarian organization that is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

IFRC: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. It is the world's largest humanitarian network. We support the local action of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in more than 191 countries, bringing together more than 16 million volunteers for the good of humanity.

Institutionalization of CEA: Systematic integration of community engagement and accountability into the structure, policies, strategies, and operations of a National Society.

Logical framework: A planning tool that defines objectives, results, activities, and indicators for a program or project, facilitating its monitoring and evaluation.

Minimum actions: Set of essential activities that must be integrated to ensure effective community engagement in programs, projects, or emergencies.

Needs assessment: Process to identify the priorities, resources, problems, and aspirations of a community before implementing a program or intervention.

NS (National Society): Red Cross or Red Crescent organization that operates within a specific country as part of the International Movement.

Programs and projects: Medium- or long-term interventions that seek to generate sustainable positive change in communities.

Training: Training sessions designed to strengthen the capacities of staff and volunteers in CEA and other key areas.

Work plan: Document that organizes and schedules activities, responsibilities, and resources needed to implement actions. In this case, CEA.

01 INTRODUCTION
AND DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) not only builds trust and acceptance in communities, but also empowers them as actors in their own development.

These actions not only ensure more effective and sustainable responses, but also build resilience by inspiring communities to replicate and lead their own initiatives.

This catalogue has been designed to be a practical and accessible guide for our National Society staff and volunteers, with the aim of facilitating their work and strengthening their connection with the communities we serve. In its pages, they will find tools that are editable and adaptable to different contexts:

• **Programmes and projects:** for long-term initiatives.

• **Emergencies:** specific resources for rapid response in critical situations.

• **Institucionalisation:** approaches to integrating CEA into the organisational culture.

• **Trainings:** materials to strengthen capacities in CEA and other key areas.

For each tool, we offer five key recommendations to guide its implementation and adaptation:

a. Level of community outreach (first time, already experienced).

b. Required budget (low, medium, high).

c. National Society (NS) Capacity in that field (experienced, medium experienced, inexperienced).

d. Type of actions (minimum or advanced actions).

e. Required time (low, medium, high).

Based on the experience of IFRC's Americas team, this document aims to be an inspiration and practical support so that every action we take is truly aligned with the needs, dreams and capacities of the communities we work with.

1.1 Community Engagement and Accountability: An Essential Approach

Community Engagement and Accountability is an approach that places communities at the centre of our work, recognising them as key partners in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and activities. Its main purpose is to ensure that communities are heard, involved and respected at every stage of the process.

Key benefits of the CEA approach:

Building trust: Establish relationships based on transparency and mutual respect.

Relevance and sustainability: Programmes designed with community input are more effective and long-lasting.

Community resilience: Empower communities to lead their own development processes.

The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is committed to the implementation of CEA and stresses the importance of working 'with' communities, not just 'for' them. These commitments guide our actions towards true partnership and sustainability.

1.1 Toolkit

Are you familiar with CEA tools? Maybe you have heard about them, but you haven't seen them in depth. In this catalogue we are going to explain them all and let you know in which contexts you can use them:

To download the tools you can go to this link.

Tool Catefory Symbology		
Community outreach	First time	
	Already experienced	
Required budget	Low	
	Medium	
	High	
National Society Capacity	No experience	
	Medium experience	
	Experienced	
Time required	Low	
	Medium	
	High	

1.2 CEA Toolkit

Tool	Summary	Community outreach	Required budget	NS Capacity	Time required
Tool 1: CEA briefing for leadership	A short PPT session for senior management explaining what CEA is and the benefits it can have for organisational reputation, funding and partnerships, efficiency, quality and financial sustainability.	✋	🟢	☰	◔
Tool 2: CEA Policy Template	A template to help you develop a CEA Policy, with guidance on what should be included in each section and some content to help you get started. A CEA Policy sets out what the organisation is committed to and the roles and responsibilities of different departments.	🤝	🟢	☰	◑
Tool 3: Self-assessment and planning workshop for CEA	This tool provides facilitator notes, worksheets and PowerPoint slides for delivering a one-day CEA self-assessment and planning workshop. This workshop can be added to the three-day CEA training with the aim of developing a clear action plan on how the National Society can strengthen CEA institutionally and within programmes and operations.	✋ 🤝	🟡	☰	◑
Tool 4: Template CEA strategy	A template to help you develop a CEA Strategy, with guidance on what should be included in each section and some content to help you get started. A strategy sets out how the organisation will strengthen CEA in the coming years.	✋ 🤝	🟢	☰ ☰	◑
Tool 5: Template CEA workplan	A template to help you develop an annual CEA work plan, including a logical framework and activity plan, with examples of outcomes, outputs, activities, indicators and timelines.	✋ 🤝	🟡	— ☰ ☰	◔

Tool	Summary	Community outreach	Required budget	NS Capacity	Time re-quired
Tool 6: CEA budgeting template	CEA budget template, with guidance on what should be included and how to calculate costs.	🖐🤝	🟡	▬ ═ ≡	◔
Tool 7: Monitoring and Evaluation of CEA	A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation tool for CEA, including indicators, questions, verification means and suggested targets for monitoring CEA at the institutional level and within emergency programmes and operations. Each tab includes priority indicators, and a wider selection of options if needed. There is also a tab with indicators for IFRC, ICRC and Partner National Societies to monitor CEA levels within their own organisation, the quality of CEA support provided to National Societies, and global indicators to measure progress against minimum CEA commitments. There is also a tab with questions and response options for baseline surveys and evaluations.	🖐🤝	🟡	▬ ═ ≡	◑
Tool 8: CEA Job Descriptions	It includes examples of CEA responsibilities that can be added to job descriptions, examples of specific CEA job descriptions, CEA competencies and job profiles for CEA emergencies.	🤝	🟢	═ ≡	◔
Tool 9: CEA briefing session for new staff and volunteers	A briefing document template that can be given to new staff that explains what CEA is, the minimum commitments and actions, CEA's activities and contacts in the country or region, and where people can get more information and resources.	🖐🤝	🟢	═ ≡	◔

Tool	Summary	Community outreach	Required budget	NS Capacity	Time required
Tool 10: Code of Conduct briefing	A briefing for new staff and volunteers on the Code of Conduct and what it means for their behaviour in the communities, including an overview of safeguarding policies such as prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, safeguarding of children, among others.	(hand icons)	🟢 (green)	≡ (high)	◔ (low)
Tool 11: CEA checklist for plans	A simple checklist for programme managers, sectors, department heads and Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting staff to use to assess whether a programme plan has sufficiently included CEA.	(hand icons)	🟢 (green)	— ═ ≡ (medium/high)	◕ (medium)
Tool 12: CEA Case Study Template	A template and a guide for writing a CEA case study documenting the CEA approaches or activities implemented, the impact they had and the lessons learned.	(hand icons)	🟡 (yellow)	— ═ ≡ (medium/high)	◕ (high)
Tool 13: CEA in assessments	An outline of the type of data that should be collected for CEA during an assessment, including collection methods, priority questions to include in assessment surveys, data collection tips and secondary data sources. The tool also indicates what data should be collected during each phase of an emergency response and provides guidance on how to analyse community participation data using the IFRC analysis framework.	(hand icons)	🟡 (yellow)	— ═ ≡ (medium)	◕ (high)
Tool 14: Question and answer sheet for volunteers	A simple FAQ sheet to hand out to volunteers to help them respond accurately to community members' questions.	(hand icons)	🟢 (green)	— ═ ≡ (medium)	◔ (low)

Tool	Summary	Community outreach	Required budget	NS Capacity	Time required
Tool 15: Feedback Kit	It provides the guidance and tools needed to systematically use community feedback to improve programmes, operations and work in general. It includes the first steps in establishing a basic feedback mechanism, as well as guidance on how to conduct community perception surveys, how to analyse qualitative feedback comments, how to handle sensitive feedback and ensure that all feedback is handled responsibly.	✋ 🤝	🟢 🟡 🔴	— = ≡	◕
Tool 16: FGD Guide	Guidance on how to conduct an effective focus group discussion, including organisation and roles and responsibilities, and questions to help plan and monitor community engagement approaches.	✋ 🤝	🟢	=	◑
Tool 17: Community Meetings Tool	Guidance on how to conduct an effective community meeting, including organisation, how to document questions and answers, and potential challenges and how to mitigate them.	✋ 🤝	🟢	— = ≡	◑
Tool 18: Participatory approaches to selection criteria	Practical guidance on different participatory approaches and techniques for agreeing selection criteria with the community and identifying who should receive assistance, including do-no-harm considerations.	✋ 🤝	🟡	— = ≡	◑
Tool 19: Communication Channel Matrix	Describes the advantages and disadvantages of different communication channels, including which channels are most appropriate for each type of activity and tips on how to use them.	✋ 🤝	🟢 🟡 🔴	— = ≡	◑

Tool	Summary	Community outreach	Required budget	NS Capacity	Time re-quired
Tool 20: Exit Strategy Guide	Guidance on the involvement of communities in the planning of programme closures, including ensuring that they are well informed, can participate in decisions about what happens next and have the opportunity to give feedback, comment or ask questions.	✋🤝	🟢🟡	▬ ═ ≡	◔
Tool 21: Behaviour change and RCCE resources	Provides an overview and links to behaviour change resources produced across the Movement for programmes and responses to epidemics such as Ebola, COVID-19 and Zika. This includes behaviour change programme guides, examples of behaviour change plans, training packages, guidance on the use of tools such as radio and mobile cinema, feedback and perception survey guides and templates, and guidance notes on issues such as combating mistrust or vaccine hesitancy.	✋🤝	🟢🟡	▬ ═ ≡	◑
Tool 22: Developing a CEA emergency plan	Guidance and a template to prepare a CEA strategy and work plan for emergency response operations. Data from this plan can feed into the overall emergency action plan for the response.	✋🤝	🟢🟡	▬ ═ ≡	◔ ◕
Tool 23: SOP for CEA in Emergencies	Summary of the main tasks and responsibilities of CEA staff and delegates working in emergency operations, including timelines for actions and who is responsible.	✋🤝	🟢🟡	▬ ═ ≡	◔
Tool 24: CEA checklist for sectors and functions	Guidance on practical actions that staff from different sectors should take to ensure a good level of participation throughout the different phases of an emergency response.	✋🤝	🟢🟡	▬ ═ ≡	◔

Tool	Summary	Community outreach	Required budget	NS Capacity	Time re-quired
Tool 25: CEA in emergencies briefing	A briefing on CEA for staff joining an emergency response operation, including why we need communities to be involved during an emergency, and the roles and responsibilities of all staff in strengthening CEA during a response.	🖐️ 🤝	🟢	≡	◔

We advise you to use IFRC's CEA tools as an essential part of your interventions. These tools enable you to establish effective dialogue with communities, ensuring that their voices are heard and their needs are truly addressed. They also build trust, transparency and community empowerment, helping you to create more inclusive and culturally adapted humanitarian responses. By integrating them into your work, you will improve not only the effectiveness of your actions, but also the respectful and collaborative relationship with the people you serve.

Uruguay Red Cross,2023

02 Programs and projects

This module covers the 14 minimum actions for integrating community engagement throughout the programme cycle, from needs assessment to final evaluation. Practical guidance is provided on how to deliver each action, with links to supporting tools.

These actions can be integrated into any type of programme/project within any technical sector and can be used as a checklist to ensure that there is a good level of community engagement and accountability.

IMPORTANT

a) Not all of the 14 actions will be new, most National Societies are already implementing many of them in their programmes and projects. Use this guide to compare what is already being done and identify where community involvement could be improved.

b) All community data should be collected, stored and used ethically, securely (storing the information safely) and with informed consent (informing the community why we are collecting their information, how it will be used, how long it will take them to participate, their right to confidentiality and to withdraw). This includes needs assessments, feedback mechanisms, monitoring and evaluations.

To learn more about this topic we recommend you read from page 38 of the CEA Guide.

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1 To do so, they can follow the National Society's data protection policy, consult the ICRC's data protection manual, or refer to the IFRC's data protection policy.

Minimum actions for community engagement and accountability in programmes

1 **Needs assessment and context analysis**

1. Search for existing information about the community
2. Involve the community in planning the assessment
3. Brief or train volunteers on the purpose of the assessment and how to communicate clearly and honestly
4. Take time to understand the context, people's needs and capacities
5. Include questions about how best to engage communities in needs assessments

2 **Planning and design**

6. Community members and key stakeholders must be involved in planning the programme, including men, women, boys and girls and marginalized or at-risk groups
7. Cross-check plans with the community and other stakeholders before implementing to make sure they match needs and expectations
8. Include community engagement and accountability activities and indicators in programme plans and budget, outlining how information will be shared, community participation supported, and feedback managed

3 **Implementation and monitoring**

9. Regularly share information about the programme with community members, using the best approaches to reach different groups
10. Enable active community participation in managing and guiding the programme, including marginalized and at risk groups
11. Collect, analyse and respond to community feedback, ensuring people know how they can ask questions, make suggestions or raise concerns about the programme
12. Review and adjust programme activities and approaches regularly based on community feedback and monitoring data

4 **Evaluation and learning**

13. Involve communities in planning the evaluation and discussing the findings
14. Ask community members if they are satisfied with the programme, how it was delivered and what could be improved

2.1 Which CEA tools can help me in my program and/or project?

2.1.1 Needs assesment and context analysis

Minimum Action 1: Search for existing information on the community.
- **Tool** (13)

Minimum Action 2: Involve the community in planning the assesment.
- **Tools** (13) (14)

Minimum Action 3: Brief or train volunteers on the purpose of the assessment and how to communicate clearly and honestly.
- **Tools** (10) (14)

Minimum Action 4: Take time to understand the context, people's needs and capacities.

Minimum Action 5: Include questions about how best to engage communities in needs assessments.
- **Tools** (13) (16)

2.1.2 Planning and Design

Minimum Action 6: Community members and key stakeholders must be involved in planning the programme, including men, women, boys and girls, and marginalised or at-risk groups.
- **Tools** (16) (17) (18)

Minimum Action 7: Cross-check plans with the community and other stakeholders before implementating to make sure that they match needs and expectations.
- **Tool** (17)

Minimum Action 8: Include community engagement and accountability activities and indicators in programme plans and budget, describing how information will be shared,

community participation supported and feedback managed.
- **Tools** (5) (6) (7)

2.1.3 Implementation and monitoring

Minimum Action 9: Regularly share information about the programme with community members, using the best approaches to reach different groups.
- **Tools** (19) (7) (14)

Minimum Action 10: Enable active community participation in managing and guiding the programme, including marginalised and at-risk groups.
- **Tools** (16) (17) (20)

Minimum Action 11: Collect, analyse and respond to community feedback, , ensuring that people know how they can ask questions, make suggestions or raise concerns about the programme.
- **Tool** (15)

Minimum Action 12: Review and adjust programme activities and approaches regularly based on community feedback and monitoring data.
- **Tools** (7) (15) (16) (17)

2.1.4 Evaluation and learning

Minimum Action 13: Involve communities in planning the evaluation and discussing the findings.
- **Tools** (7) (17) (19)

Minimum Action 14: Ask community members if they are satisfied with the programme, how it was delivered and what could be improved.
- **Tools** (7) (16)

03 Emergencies

Despite the increased urgency and complexity, it remains important, necessary and possible to involve communities in emergency response operations. Unfortunately, there are many examples of operations that have gone wrong because they have not sufficiently involved local people, from relief items being sold in markets, to volunteers and staff being attacked and even killed, because of community fear and misunderstanding. Within the emergency phase we have 10 minimum CEA actions.

To learn more about this topic we recommend you read from page 74 of the CEA Guide.

To download the toolkit you can go to this link.

Corallo Brothers, IFRC, 2023

Ten actions to engage communities during emergency response operations

1 Community engagement is integrated across the response

Minimum
- Brief staff and volunteers on CEA
- Discuss CEA in operational meetings
- Identify a CEA focal point

Advanced
- Train staff and volunteers on CEA

Emergency Assessment

2 Understand community needs, capacities, and context

Minimum
- Secondary data review
- Rapid needs and context analysis

Advanced
- Detailed needs and context analysis
- Interagency joint assessments

Planning the response

4 Discuss response plans with communities and key stakeholders

Minimum
- Discuss response plans and ways of working
- Coordinate internally and externally to avoid causing frustration in communities

Advanced
- Use participatory planning approaches
- Cross-check plans with communities before implementing

3 Carry out the assessment with transparency and respect for the community

Minimum
- Discuss assessment plans with community representatives
- Introduce the National Society and explain the assessment purpose
- Brief staff and volunteers on the assessment purpose and process

Advanced
- Train staff and volunteers on communication and feedback
- Coordinate with external partners
- Verify assessment findings with communities

5 Discuss and agree selection criteria and distribution processes with communities

Minimum
- Explain selection criteria and targeting
- Respond to questions and complaints
- Discuss distribution processes

Advanced
- Agree selection criteria together
- Use community-based targeting
- Plan distributions with the community

6 Include community engagement and accountability activities and indicators in response plans and budgets
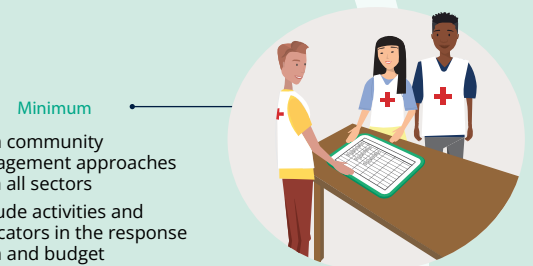
Minimum
- Plan community engagement approaches with all sectors
- Include activities and indicators in the response plan and budget

During the response

8 Support community participation in making decisions about the response

Minimum
- Involve the community in key decisions

Advanced
- Enable active community participation
- Plan the exit with communities

7 Regularly share information about the response with the community

Minimum
- Keep sharing information about the response
- Communicate exit plans clearly

Advanced
- Check communication approaches are effective

9 Listen to community feedback and use it to guide the response
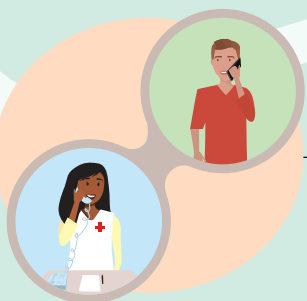
Minimum
- Establish a simple feedback mechanism
- Check the operation is meeting people's needs
- Monitor for unintended consequences
- Act on feedback and monitoring data

Advanced
- Improve the feedback mechanism
- Discuss feedback with partners
- Monitor community engagement approaches
- Collect case studies of feedback being used

Evaluating and learning

10 Include the community in the evaluation

Minimum
- Evaluate community satisfaction
- Share evaluation findings internally

Advanced
- Communities help plan the evaluation
- Organise a community-led evaluation
- Discuss findings with communities
- Discuss findings with partners

3.1 How do I apply CEA in an emergency?

3.1 At all stages of the response

Minimum Action 1: Community engagement is integrated across the response.

At a minimum level (when capacity, time and resources are limited)

• Brief staff and volunteers on CEA.
  ◦ **Tools** 10 24 25
• Discuss CEA in operational meetings.
  ◦ **Tool** 23
• Identify a CEA focal point.
  ◦ **Tool** 8

At an advanced level (when there is more capacity, time and resources)

• Train staff and volunteers in CEA (for more information on workshops go to space #5 'Trainings').

3.1.2 Emergency assessment

Minimum action 2: Understand community needs, capacities, and context.

At a minimum level (when capacity, time and resources are limited)

• Secondary data review: Save time and resources and reduce assessment fatigue in communities by checking information the National Society already has on affected areas. For example, previous programme or operation.

• Rapid needs and context analysis.
  ◦ **Tool** 13

At an advanced level (when there is more capacity, time and resources)

• Detailed needs and context analysis: Expand the rapid needs and context analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the situation[1].

• Interagency joint assessments: In large emergencies, it may be possible to conduct a joint needs and context analysis with other agencies. This can save time and resources and reduce assessment fatigue in communities.

3.1.3 Plan the response

Minimum action 3: Conduct the evaluation with transparency and respect for the community.

At a minimum level (when capacity, time and resources are limited)

• Discuss assessment plans with community representatives.
  ◦ **Tools** 13 17
• Introduce the National Society and explain the assessment purpose.
  ◦ **Tool** 14
• Brief staff and volunteers on assessment purporse and process.
  ◦ **Tool** 10

At an advanced level (when there is more capacity, time and resources)

• Train staff and volunteers in communication and feedback.
• Coordinate with external partners.
• Verify assessment findings with communities.

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2 *See page 46 of the CEA Guide for further guidance on context analysis.*

Minimum Action 4: Discuss response plans with communities and key stakeholders

At a minimum level (when capacity, time and resources are limited)

• Discuss response plans with and ways of working.
  ◦ **Tools** 17 20
• Ask communities how they want the National Society to work with them.
  ◦ **Tools** 15 16
• Coordinate internally and externally to avoid causing confusion in communities.
  ◦ **Tool** 24

At an advanced level (when there is more capacity, time and resources)

• Use participatory planning approaches: Use participatory planning approaches such as community workshops and meetings, people-centred design, vulnerability capacity assessments or activities such as ranking, decision trees, mapping, etc.[23]
• Cross-check plans with communities before implementing.
  ◦ **Tool** 17

Minimum Action 5: Discuss and agree selection criteria and distribution processes with communities.

At a minimum level (when capacity, time and resources are limited)

• Explain the selection criteria and targeting.
  ◦ **Tools** 18 19
• Respond to questions and complaints.
  ◦ **Tool** 15
• Discuss distribution processes.
  ◦ **Tool** 24

At an advanced level (when there is more capacity, time and resources)

• Agree selection criteria together.
  ◦ **Tool** 18
• Use community-based targeting: Depending on the context, it may be possible to carry out targeting with the participation of the whole community.
• Plan distributions with the community.
  ◦ **Tool** 24

Minimum action 6: Include community engagement and accountability activities and indicators in response plans and budgets.

At a minimum level (when capacity, time and resources are limited)

• Plan community engagement approaches with all sectors.
  ◦ **Tools** 22 24
• Include activities and indicators in the response plan and budget.
  ◦ **Tool** 7

3.1.4 During the response

Minimum Action 7: Regularly share information about the response with the community.

At a minimum level (when capacity, time and resources are limited)

• Keep sharing information on the response.
  ◦ **Tools** 19 14
• Communicate exit plans clearly.
  ◦ **Tool** 20

At an advanced level (when there is more capacity, time and resources)

• Check communication approaches are effective.
  ◦ **Tools** 7 19

Minimum Action 8: Support community participation in making decisions about the response.

At a minimum level (when capacity, time and resources are limited)

• Involve the community in key decisions.
  ◦ **Tools** 16 17

At an advanced level (when there is more capacity, time and resources)

• Enable active community participation.
• Plan the exit with communities.
  ◦ **Tool** 20

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3 See page 52 of the CEA Guide to learn more about participatory planning.

Minimum Action 9: Listen to community feedback and use it to guide the response.

At a minimum level *(when capacity, time and resources are limited)*

• Establish a simple feedback mechanism. [4]
   ◦ **Tools** (7) (15) (16) (24)
• Check that the operation meets people's needs.
   ◦ **Tools** (7) (16) (24)
• Monitor for unintended consequences: Monitor the impact the response is having on the wider community to ensure that there are no unintended negative consequences that could harm people. For example, putting marginalised groups at greater risk through targeting criteria processes or destabilising local markets through food distribution.
• Act on the feedback and monitoring data.
   ◦ **Tool** (15)

At an advanced level *(when there is more capacity, time and resources)*

• Improve the feedback mechanism.
   ◦ **Tools** (7) (15) (16)
• Discuss feedback with partners.
   ◦ **Tool** (24)
• Monitor community engagement approaches.
   ◦ **Tool** (7)
• Collect case studies of feedback being used.
   ◦ **Tool** (12)

3.5 Evaluating and learning

Minimum Action 10: Include the community in the evaluation

At a minimum level *(when capacity, time and resources are limited)*

• Evaluate community satisfaction.
   ◦ **Tools** (7) (16)

• Share evaluation findings internally: Share evaluation results with your colleagues so that others can benefit from lessons learned and avoid repeating mistakes.

At an advanced level *(when there is more capacity, time and resources)*

• Communities help plan the evaluation: Ask community representatives and members how best to conduct the assessment.
• Organise a community-led evaluation: Have the community lead and carry out the assessment process themselves.
• Discuss findingswith communities.
   ◦ **Tool** (19)
• Discuss findings with partners: Share evaluation results with external partners to ensure that others can benefit from lessons learned and avoid repeating mistakes.

Panama Red Cross, 2025

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4 *Module 6, page 103, of the CEA Guide provides detailed guidance on reporting mechanisms.*

04 Institutionalisation

Institutionalising community engagement and accountability to the community means making it part of the organisation's DNA, or business as usual. It means integrating community engagement into strategies, policies, plans and working methods until it becomes a predictable and systematic part of all activities, at every stage of the programme or disaster response cycle.

To achieve this, the National Society must make strengthening accountability to communities an organizational priority, with adequate funding, staff time and leadership support. The actions outlined below are not the responsibility of a single person (i.e. the community engagement and accountability officer), but the entire National Society must work together to achieve this.

To learn more about this topic we recommend you read from page 24 of the CEA Guide.

To download the toolkit you can go to this link.

Corallo Brothers, IFRC, 2023

# Minimum actions to institutionalize community engagement and accountability
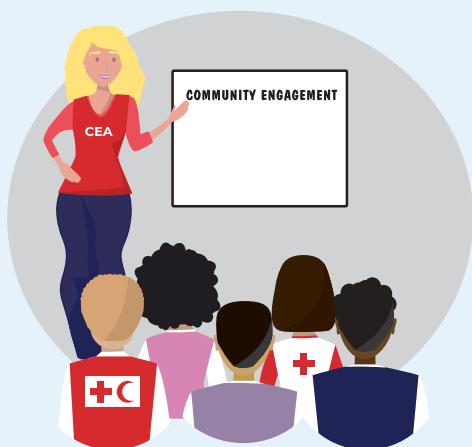
1 Strengthen community engagement and accountability understanding and capacity at all levels in the National Society

2 Allocate resources, including funding and staff, to strengthen and institutionalize community engagement and accountability

3 Integrate community engagement and accountability into all National Society strategies, values, plans, policies and tools so it becomes a standard way of working for all staff and volunteers
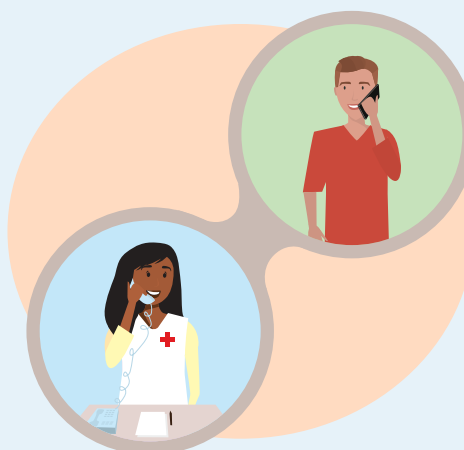
4 Establish a community feedback mechanism for the National Society, with processes for managing sensitive complaints

4.1 How can I make CEA part of the DNA of my National Society?

Minimum Action 1: Strengthen community engagement and accountability understanding and capacity at all levels in the National Society

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• Get leaders involved.
- **Tool** (1)
• Develop a policy of community engagement and accountability to the community.
- **Tool** (2)
• Develop a community engagement and community accountability strategy or plan.
- **Tools** (3) (4) (5) (6)
• Adopt key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure how the National Society is accountable to communities.
- **Tool** (7)
• Train staff and volunteers on community engagement and accountability: All staff, from volunteer to head of department, need the understanding, knowledge and skills to engage communities effectively in their work. For inspiration on workshops, check out the 'Trainings' space.

Minimum Action 2: Allocate resources, including funds and staff, to strengthen and institutionalize community engagement and accountability.

• Allocate core funds to institutionalise community engagement and accountability to the community.
- **Tool** (6)
• Identify staff to lead community engagement and accountability.
- **Tool** (8)

Minimum action 3: Integrate community engagement accountability into all National Society strategies, values, plans, policies and tools so it becomes a standard way of working for all staff and volunteers.

•Include commitments to community engagement in the National Society's mission statements, by-laws, core values, organisational strategy and policies.[5]
• Integrate community engagement and accountability into the National Society's annual plans, budgets and technical sectors' plans, tools and guidelines.
- **Tools** (5) (7)
• Include expectations of community engagement and accountability in staff and volunteer job descriptions, presentations and evaluation processes.
- **Tools** (8) (9) (10)
• Include community engagement and accountability in the Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting processes.
- **Tools** (7) (11) (12) (15)

Minimum Action 4: Establish a community feedback mechanism for the National Society, with processes for managing sensitive complaints.

• Establish a feedback mechanism.[6]
- **Tool** (15)

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05 Trainings

Staff and volunteer training is essential to effectively implement community engagement and accountability. This section documents the basic CEA trainings, and complements them with tailor-made approaches adapted to the needs of each National Society.

IMPORTANT

In the Americas, we adopt the principle of 'CEA inside CEA', ensuring that our trainings are tailored to the specific needs of each National Society. This is achieved through prior consultations with National Societies, where we identify their contexts, priorities and available resources. In addition, all CEA workshops are developed using innovative teaching methodologies, which include practical dynamics. In addition, we promote spaces for participants to come together, such as integration activities and cultural evenings, with the aim of strengthening collaboration among colleagues and forming support networks that will last over time.

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7 Add transparency, participation, and responsiveness to the National Society's values, mission statement, or statutes. Use the Movement-wide Commitments for CEA on page 21 of the CEA Guide as a guide.
8 See Module 6: Community Feedback Mechanisms (page 103 of the CEA Guide) for step-by-step guidance.

Corallo Brothers, IFRC, 2022

5.1 How can I specialize in CEA?

Training course	Objective	Target	Training duration
Three-day training programme on CEA	For staff of National Societies, IFRC, ICRC and Partner National Societies who want to strengthen CEA in their institutional programmes, operations and ways of working. Content: • Purpose and benefits of CEA. • How to integrate CEA into the programme cycle. • CEA in emergency operations Institutionalizing CEA.	Those responsible for programme and operations planning and management. For example, senior management, sector heads, programme managers, disaster response managers, PMER, PGI, organisational development managers, branch managers.	Three days. Option for senior managers to join the first half-day introductory CEA session. A fourth day can be added for a self-assessment and planning workshop.
Community engagement training for branch staff and volunteers	Support branch staff and volunteers to improve levels of community engagement t in their work. Content: • What is community engagement and why is it important? • Communicating with communities. • Community participation. • Community feedback and complaints.	Branch staff and volunteers, programme assistants. Anyone involved in the implementation of programmes and operations, but not in their planning or management.	Two days
Emergency CEA training courses	It covers the basic aspects that all sectors need to be aware of in order to achieve a good level of CEA within an emergency response operation. Content: • Approaches to CEA and how they contribute to and support response operations. • Minimum actions to integrate CEA into each sector's operations. Resources and support available to support CEA in emergencies.	All sectors involved in the planning and execution of emergency response operations. E.g. health, disaster management, WASH, shelter, relief, food security and livelihoods, cash, branch managers.	Available in a one-day or three-hour version.

Training course	Objective	Target	Training duration
One-hour introduction to CEA	A basic introduction to CEA, its role in supporting quality programming, and the minimum actions to integrate it into our work.	Awareness-raising session for staff and senior volunteers.	One hour
CEA briefing session for senior leadership	A short PPT session for senior management explaining what CEA is and the benefits it can have for organisational reputation, funding and partnerships, efficiency, quality and financial sustainability.	Senior officials of the Movement, including secretaries general, directors, heads of sectors and departments, and board and governance.	30-60 minutes Hidden slides that can be included depending on the time available.
Training on communication skills and feedback	To help community volunteers improve their communication skills and manage difficult questions or situations in the community. Content: • Why it is important to engage communities well. • Fundamental principles and how they apply to our work with communities. • Communication skills. • How to respond to community feedback and comments.	Volunteers working with communities	One day
CEA's 'Trainer of Trainers' (ToT) and Evidence-Based Humanitarian Decision Making workshops	Specialised training for volunteers and staff, forming a CEA Network for in-country work. Content: • Learning CEA in all its phases, in emergencies, projects and institutionalisation. • Apply feedback tools. • Analyse qualitative and quantitative data. • Present findings visually and persuasively to leaders and coordinators to improve decision-making.	CEA Trainee Network	3-5 days depending on whether the National Society requests a simulation during the space for better learning.

Scan the QR code or click here to download the **Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Guide.**

Scan the QR code or click here to download the **Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Toolkit.**

IFRC

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network. We support the local action of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in more than 191 countries, bringing together more than 16 million volunteers for the good of humanity.