



Community Engagement and Accountability  
(CEA) Catalogue  
Americas, 2025

## MODULE 1

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# Community Engagement and Accountability

# GLOSSARY

**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

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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 Category 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 re-quired
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 re-quired
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.	 			
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.	 		  	
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.	 		  	
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.	 		  	
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.	 		  	

Tool	Summa	Community outreach	Required budget	NS Capacity	Time re-quired
Tool 15: Feed-back 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.





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.

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