Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Catalogue
Americas, 2025

MODULE 2

Programs and projects

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.

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.

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

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.