



Community Engagement and Accountability
(CEA) Catalogue
Americas, 2025

MODULE 4

CEA Institutionalisation

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.

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



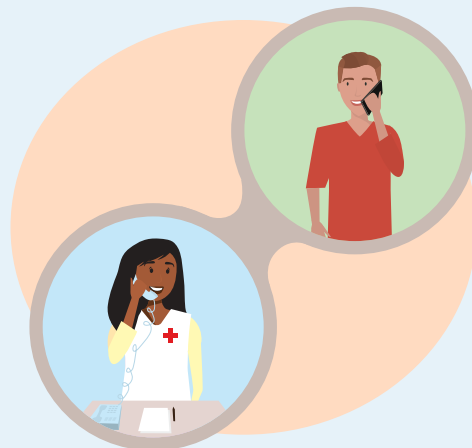
- 1 Strengthen community engagement and accountability understanding and capacity at all levels in the National Society



- 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

- 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**

5. 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 to help you.

6. See Module 6: Community Feedback Mechanisms (page 103 of the CEA Guide) for step-by-step guidance.



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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