# Measuring the Impact of Community Engagement and Accountability

Engaging communities and being accountable to them are fundamental to successful humanitarian action. Given the challenges of growing needs and shrinking budgets, there is an urgent imperative to maximize impact and resource efficiency. To better prepare for the future, we must prioritize strengthening how we measure the influence of our work with communities, and leverage that evidence to inform investments, strengthen coordination, and improve lives.

This 8-step guide provides a practical structured approach to measuring how and to what extent community engagement and accountability approaches contribute to observed impacts. It provides evidence that enables:

- Accountability to communities, leadership, and donors.
- Evidence-based programme adaptation and focused investments
- Community-driven and locally led humanitarian outcomes and impacts

It summarizes a <u>comprehensive guide</u> developed by the IFRC, University of Geneva, and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in 2025.





This guide provides a **rapid process to track how community engagement** activities – such as community dialogue, digital engagement, or feedback management – lead to trust, safe and protective behaviours, and other measurable outcomes.

The approach applies in the context of public health, climate change adaptation, early warning systems, migration and displacement, and other humanitarian programmes.

# Steps to Measure the Impact of Community Engagement and Accountability

### STEP 1: Understand the Context & Intervention

What are the activities taking place? What external factors affect our work?

Example: High vaccine hesitancy due to social media rumours: Intervention: 6-week door-to-door dialogue campaign.

### STEP 2: Define Questions & Purpose

What impact do we want to measure? What question must we answer?

Example: Did the campaign lead to safe and protective behaviours among the target populations? Purpose: Secure Phase 2 funding.

### STEP 3: Map the Impact Framework Pathway (Theory of Change)

How do Activities →
Outputs → Results →
Outcomes connect?

Example: Community
Dialogue — Awareness and
interest in the vaccines—
Increased knowledge and
participation — Safe and
protective behaviours related
to higher uptake

# STEP 4: Select Indicators 8 Methods

What indicators show change? Which quantitative and qualitative methods will we use (survey, FGD, etc.)?

Example: % of individuals in the target community who report that they adopt recommended safe and protective behaviours compared to % before the dialogue campaign

# STEP 5: Prepare &

What existing data is available? Is our team trained on ethical and inclusive data collection? What tools and methods will we use?

Example: Liaise with the team (internal or external), train data collectors on effective and ethical survey interviews. Collect quantitative and qualitative data

# STEP 6: Analyse Findings vs Pathwa

Did results confirm the impact framework pathway? What barriers remain?

Example: Compile survey results and trianquilate with focus group discussions. Uptake rose, but lack of participation remains a barrier especially among vulnerable groups.

# STEP 7: Validate &

Are findings accurate and in line with the perspectives of the community and other stakeholders?

Example: Share results with health committees. Refine with local feedback.

# STEP 8: Close the Loop: Adapt &

How will evidence drive change or advocacy? What approaches and activities should be strengthened or scaled

Example: Advocate for Phase 2. Focus on dialogue but also capacity building among vulnerable groups.

## **Annexes:**

- 1. Community Engagement and Accountability Impact Framework
- 2. Annex 4: step-by-step worksheet
- 3. Impact framework tool & indicators
- 4. Community Engagement and Accountability Guide

# To find out more, contact:

- Alexandra Sicotte-Levesque: alexandra.sicottelevesque@ifrc.org
- Gefra Fulane: gefra.fulane@ifrc.org

# **IMPACT**

Ex: communities live healthy lives and and are resilient to shocks

# **OUTCOMES**

Ex: protective behaviors and trust in humanitarian actors

# INTERMEDIATE RESULTS

Ex: enhanced community capacity to respond effectively

# **OUTPUTS**

Ex: strengthening knowledge and skills in the communities

# **ACTIVITIES**

Ex: community dialogue, digital engagement, or feedback management

