IASC Inter-Agency Standing Committee

IASC STANDARDS FOR COLLECTIVE FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

Principles and Standards for Collective Management of Community Feedback

IASC Task Force 2 on Accountability to Affected People

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Endorsed by IASC Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG)

Contents

Background

The IASC Standards for Collective Feedback Mechanisms comprises the elements listed below, which are all available on the IASC portal together with supporting resources and examples:

- The IASC Standards for Collective Feedback Mechanisms: An Introduction
- Principles and Standards for Collective Management of Community Feedback
- The Annexes:
  1. The *Template Logbook* for community feedback (with corresponding guidance found in this document)
  2. The example analytical framework
  3. The template action tracker
  4. The glossary (found at the end of this document)

These standards are founded on years of consultations with a range of actors on the common challenges experienced in how community feedback is managed (gathered, processed, analyzed, and used) to inform response programming. A comparison and review of these with existing resources – including strategic documents, guidance documents, standard operating procedures (SOPs), feedback data, reports, tools, and templates – allowed us to define the key concepts in community feedback and the processes supporting a collective feedback mechanism at different levels. The workstream of the IASC Task Force 2 on AAP dedicated to this area of work (co-led by UNHCR, IFRC, UNICEF and WFP) developed and socialized the standards further, working with multiple countries across five regions to ensure its relevance to both leadership and practitioners working in the community feedback space. The standards are well-aligned with other inter-agency frameworks and standards such as:

- The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability
- The IASC Commitments on Accountability to Affected People and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
- The IASC Definition & Principles of a Victim/Survivor Centred Approach
- The IASC Inter-Agency Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Referral Procedures (IA SEA RP)
- The IASC Collective Accountability to Affected People (AAP) Framework and associated Operational Guidance
- The IASC Operational Guidance on Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action and Guidance Note on Data Responsibility and AAP in Humanitarian Action
- The IASC Guidance on Gender and Inclusion[1]

The package will continue to evolve based on feedback and findings from colleagues in the field. It will be reviewed every two years to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate.

1 This includes but is not limited to: the IASC Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action, the IASC Guidelines for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

Description of contents

The IASC Standards for Collective Feedback Mechanisms support collective approaches to community feedback management by providing actors a means to aligning individual, joint, and inter-agency approaches to documenting, sharing, analyzing, and acting on feedback data and findings to strengthen AAP in a response. The standards encourage actors to employ protection principles when establishing and implementing feedback mechanisms that promote meaningful participation of crisis-affected people, ensure safety and access to all regardless of age, gender and diverse characteristics, while respecting the principles of do no harm, non-discrimination, and data privacy.

THE PRINCIPLES

These are the overarching statements that guide people responsible for mainstreaming accountability standards in activities and operations. Each principle follows a stage of the feedback cycle and is part of a full ecosystem of response adaptation. Commitment to the operational guiding principles ensures a common intention is set among different actors in the collective. It involves establishing a common terminology and approach around community feedback and its management. The glossary of terms at the end of this document can be adapted as a first step in setting the foundations for collective work in this area.

THE STANDARDS

These are the minimum actions under the five principles and are for the attention of practitioners setting up and managing mechanisms for feedback, both at agency level and in inter-agency settings. Individual agencies should verify that their own standards meet those set out in the package. Between agencies and at the collective level, the standards can help establish a baseline understanding between various response actors on what different avenues for feedback exist, what purpose they serve in achieving common objectives and how this links to response planning. They also support a coordinated approach to communicating around the feedback process, managing, and referring feedback between each other, and making decisions based on feedback findings. The response-level structures for coordination and decision-making determine how these elements are discussed and operationalized to suit context-specific needs.

THE ANNEXES

1. **The *Template Logbook* for community feedback:** This template includes the minimum information and standard classification that must be used to document community feedback across various channels and can be adapted to suit different forms of feedback data collection. The *Template Logbook* is an excel template intended for adaptation and provides:
    - Names and descriptions for the minimum data points required to support safe and efficient sharing of community feedback for referral and response, and to support common thematic analysis of feedback in addition to monitoring of a feedback mechanism’s performance with respect to honoring established protocols for individual loop closure.
    - Standard categories for classifying community feedback, along with recommendations for further sub-categorization of these main categories, to support analysis and discussion for potential inter-operability of different digital solutions supporting feedback management, where this is desired and appropriate.

2. **The example analytical framework:** This is an example of how different sources of information can be considered together with available community feedback data to support constructive use of formal and informal (or structured and unstructured) information in building a complete picture of needs for the response. This can feed into the formulation of recommendations and actions to adjust programs, re-prioritize, or re-allocate resources as needed.

3. **The template action tracker:** This template should be used to record suggested actions and adaptations and feed them into key decision-making and review processes in the response. This tool can serve a variety of purposes at different levels, including for review and adjustment of the collective mechanism itself. It enables a clear line of sight between findings obtained through community feedback, operational feedback from different kinds of response actors and community-facing teams, and the operational and programmatic decisions that are made in response to them.

4. **The glossary:** Complementary to the three adaptable resources listed above, the list of terms are intended to support technical roles in aligning different approaches for collecting, analyzing, and tracking actions taken in response to community feedback at different levels (individual, joint, and collective).

What is a Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM), and what does it do for humanitarian response?

A CFM is any system established to support inclusive two-way communication between communities and humanitarian response actors, with the goal of ensuring the information exchanged with communities feeds into how different response operations are designed, implemented, and improved*.

What does community feedback look like?

Community feedback is information generated by community members – individuals and groups, adults, and children. Feedback can include questions, suggestions, observations, beliefs, concerns, complaints, and statements of thanks. It can be proactively gathered, received, or encountered directly from community members and groups or through the field teams and community-facing staff and volunteers that interact with them on a day-to-day basis.

Who implements a CFM?

A community feedback mechanism can go by many names. It can be set up locally by communities or by individual agencies, in a joint approach by two or more agencies, and can exist at the collective level to support the priorities of clusters, inter-cluster coordination, and response-level decision-making structures. What is important is that a CFM can perform its functions, and for this it needs three basic elements.

A CFM should have three elements

Diverse channels for inclusive two-way communication	Protocols and tools for feedback management	A structure and process for making decisions
A feedback channel is any modality through which feedback can be shared, captured, and received. They can be face-to-face or remote, formal or informal, and designed for individual and/or group feedback. A combination that meets the preferences and needs of different groups will improve accessibility of the CFM.	The protocols and tools for feedback management and response determine how community feedback is managed by everyone involved, including how feedback information is gathered, stored, acted on, analysed and used to support the intended objectives of the CFM.	The ways in which decisions and adjustments are made depends on the context of the emergency and the response plan in place. Communities and actors involved in the response should be part of the structure and feed into a process for decision-making and adjustment.

See the glossary for more detailed definitions.

The community feedback cycle

The community feedback cycle is a simple way to visualise how feedback is gathered, processed, and used to inform decisions, creating a "feedback loop".

It aims to continuously adapt, meet the changing needs of all the stakeholders (i.e. individuals, groups, and the community at large, actors involved in the response, the staff, and volunteers), and contribute to the collective goals to strengthen programming and systems for feedback at the level of the response.

Although the cycle is commonly broken down into discrete and numbered stages, there are often many overlapping and concurrent processes taking place. While individual agencies have worked to standardise approaches across their own country operations, challenges remain in harmonising these approaches at the collective level to support common objectives for the response overall.

Why is a collective approach to managing community feedback important?

1. **Communities see all response actors as a single entity.**
When we communicate and gather feedback from communities in a consistent way, we show that we are unified in our mandate to listen and respond to their needs. Aligning our approaches will improve how we understand who we are reaching, make sure feedback reaches the right people in positions to act and respond appropriately, and consider broader trends together for adapting our programmes in a holistic way.
2. **We are a diverse response community.**
There is an abundance of rich but decentralized information we can harness about the needs, perceptions, and experiences of the communities we serve. If we consider and optimize all the different ways we interface with communities - especially the channels we know they prefer and trust – we can more confidently interpret and triangulate feedback together with other information to meet both strategic and operational decision-making needs.
3. **Being able to adapt together is the best strategy for resource scarcity.**
A CFM that is designed, tracked, and monitored to response plan objectives will be able to adapt quickly to changes, use available resources and capacities efficiently, and deliver on our common commitment to accountability to affected people.

1	**Review and Prepare the CFM**	If we collectively define and agree on how linking our systems for feedback can help us achieve goals for the response, we create a foundation for adapting together that builds on the efforts already underway – and the resources we already have – to strengthen our individual systems and programmes.
2	**Acknowledge and Document Feedback**	If we are consistent and coordinated in how we communicate with communities, we build trust and send the message we are unified in our goals and intentions. **By using the Template Logbook to align how we talk about and document community feedback**, we improve our ability to analyse and use feedback coming through all channels to serve the purposes of agencies and the collective.
3	**Triage and Respond**	If we agree on who is best positioned to address different types of feedback, and the general rules for making sure feedback reaches them, we ensure that anyone providing feedback through any channel – especially those with very specific needs or reporting serious issues – are responded to as quickly, safely, and effectively as possible.
4	**Share and Explore Data and Findings**	If we bring together community feedback data and findings from our different sources into an **analytical framework, we can interpret it together with other information** that supports planning, implementation, and evaluation of programmes. We can base recommendations and actions on a more transparent and balanced picture of needs.
5	**Act and Adapt**	If we systematically track our actions and how we address persistent challenges together, we can be more confident in our decisions, share this with communities, and better advocate and influence models for resourcing humanitarian interventions.

Supporting localisation

If we ensure community-facing teams, feedback personnel and the local partners who implement and encounter feedback are regularly engaged at the collective level to share their findings, feedback on decisions, and reinforce key messages with communities, we can build practical systems that can have real impact where it matters the most.

Linking trend analysis and advocacy for better resource management

How a CFM is structured and performs depends on the regulatory frameworks, available resources, and technologies chosen to support its functioning.

Talking about these things as a community of response actors can allow us to better leverage our different contributions, engage with donors, prioritise, and advocate for the things we need to achieve our common goals.

IASC Standards for Collective Feedback Mechanisms

The IASC Standards for Collective Feedback Mechanisms can help local NGO, INGOs, UN, Red cross and civil society organisations and other actors involved in emergency responses to better link their different systems for listening and responding to affected communities. By aligning approaches to collecting, sharing, analysing, and responding to community feedback data, they can make more systematic use of community feedback in programming cycles to serve a set of common objectives for a response.

The standards are primarily intended to guide collective approaches to community feedback and inter-agency initiatives on the response level. However, it should also be applied to support multi-channel feedback mechanisms of a single organization and facilitate sharing feedback data with other organizations for joint implementation and decision-making.

1	**Operational Guiding Principle #1**	We define and agree on the objectives, functional roles, and key responsibilities for the CFM at the collective level. We establish common performance indicators to support oversight, monitoring and adaptation of the processes and tools that link the different systems for gathering, sharing, and actioning community feedback together.	**Six minimum standards cover:** • Linking collective approaches to feedback to common objectives and response planning • Defining who and what is needed to support the CFM • Indicators for measuring collective performance
2	**Operational Guiding Principle #2**	We ensure communities are aware of and can access channels available to ask questions and provide feedback and understand their rights in the feedback process. When feedback is provided, we systematically and safely gather it through all channels for centralized management and handle it in accordance with relevant guidelines for data responsibility.	**Four minimum standards cover:** • What needs to be communicated to communities to ensure they know how and where to provide feedback • How we document feedback in a standardised way and classify feedback for action and analysis according to the template logbook for community feedback.
3	**Operational Guiding Principle #3**	We manage feedback according to its sensitivity and criticality. Where appropriate, we safely refer feedback to those in a position to responsibly handle, escalate and address them in an appropriate and timely manner to support action and individual loop closure.	**Six minimum standards cover:** • Equipping channels to flag feedback that is sensitive or critical, and handle it according to relevant protocols • How we keep track of and respond to individual feedback
4	**Operational Guiding Principle #4**	We collate, thematically explore, and draw findings from feedback data in a way that responsibly and effectively meets the information needs of different stakeholders to feed into the formulation of recommendations and actions for decision-makers at various organizational levels.	**Five minimum standards cover:** • How to prepare and represent feedback data to meet intended uses responsbibly and transparently • The discussion and contextualisation of findings using an analytical framework.
5	**Operational Guiding Principle #5**	We discuss and track the recommendations and actions taken in response to findings from community feedback, and we ensure our programs and strategies for meeting the needs of communities are reviewed and adapted accordingly.	**Four minimum standards cover:** • Different wanys to maintain and review the protocols established to support decision-making and adapation • Tracking actions taken to address feedback over time ensuring these are communicated back to communities

Operational Guiding Principle # 1

We define and agree on the objectives, functional roles, and key responsibilities for the community feedback mechanism (CFM) at the collective level. We establish common performance indicators to support oversight, monitoring, and adaptation of the processes and tools that link the different systems for gathering, sharing, and actioning community feedback together.

Terms defined in the glossary are underlined in blue and linked below.

We set collective intentions and establish foundations.	Notes
Define how a collective strategy for the meaningful engagement of affected communities is supported by bringing together different planned and existing systems for feedback (including agency, joint- and/or inter-agency where they exist), ensuring there are clear links to response plan outcomes and supporting activities.	Defining how different systems for feedback can contribute to a collective strategy provides a strong foundation for a collective mechanism that supports common objectives for the response.
Define specific measurable objectives and associated performance indicators for the CFM and include them in monitoring frameworks and strategic plans. The indicators should allow for the monitoring of the core functions of the CFM: • Performance of different feedback channels and tools to facilitate an inclusive two-way information exchange with the communities. • Performance of the processes for documenting, referring, and responding to feedback to close the loop with individuals and communities. • Performance of the supply of information to the decision-making processes intended to support coordination and evidence-driven adjustment to programs.	Within any body performing this oversight, different stakeholders (including affected people, technical sectors and implementing partners, and local actors in the response community where possible) are engaged and represented to ensure feedback data feeds into decision-making processes and decisions are communicated back to communities.
Define specific protocols that establish: • The purposes for which community feedback is gathered and processed, including for communicating with communities, feedback management and accountability, and trend monitoring, analysis, and advocacy. • The pathways and procedures for performing and coordinating feedback management, which outline the different standard actions to be taken by all the different feedback systems depending on the type of feedback encountered. These will be multiple and should be defined by the appropriate authority, e.g. the pathways and procedures for feedback relating to food assistance should be defined by the actors coordinating these activities at the level of response. • The means and frequency of reporting on community feedback findings and action taken in response. This includes how the different systems of feedback link together to regularly report on what information is coming in, what may be missing, and what can be done to improve existing processes. • The means and frequency for monitoring adherence to the protocols and periodic measurement of performance outlined above.	These protocols should be supported by data sharing agreements, information sharing protocols or equivalent instruments (such as a memorandum of understanding) for the sharing of feedback data and information between different units and organizations to ensure they adhere to international standards, national laws (where applicable), and internal policies for data protection and privacy.

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We review and prepare our feedback mechanism.	Notes
1.1. Ensure the minimum core functional roles are established and resourced. Consider which roles should be responsible for: • Gathering community feedback and performing loop closure activities as needed, such as community-facing staff, volunteers and monitors, hotline operators, feedback desk agents, focus group moderators, and other relevant facilitators. • Feedback management, including for receiving, verifying, actioning, and reporting on the status of referrals and loop closure. • Collating and preparing community feedback data for further processing. • Processing and analyzing the data to meet intended uses. • Sharing, tracking, and reporting on findings and decisions made in response to them. • Overseeing CFM operations, performing quality control, and ensuring regular and ad-hoc adjustments are made to procedural documents, tools, and or systems supporting core functions and roles. • Coordinating any of the above activities with the different stakeholders interacting with the CFM. This includes working with the necessary stakeholders in defiing the parameters for standard protocols, establishing, and reviewing feedback management procedures, providing inputs for service mapping and referral systems, and specifying the information needs and outputs for decision-making and adjustment.	These roles may have dedicated staff, or the corresponding responsibilities may be distributed among different staff members, depending on the organization and the resourcing model. Irrespective of how they are allocated, the roles outlined here covering these responsibilities are the minimum required to support CFM functioning (at any level).
1.2. Ensure basic capacity requirements for community-facing staff (including those with responsibilities listed in 1.4) are met by: • Ensuring community-facing staff and those likely to encounter community feedback understand the community context, and ensuring that team composition adequately represents the target community in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, and language abilities. • Providing onboarding training or orientation to ensure familiarity with: (a) program specificities, such as who is involved in assistance delivery and how response activities are carried out (b) the principles and means of operationalizing accountability to affected populations, and the role of CFMs in achieving that (c) the different modalities for interaction and collection of feedback, and the techniques required for these (such as active listening, handling sensitive feedback, dissatisfied or distressed feedback providers) (d) the feedback management process, including procedures for data collection, referral and loop closure. • Providing additional thematic trainings, refreshers, and updates of relevance to the feedback process and/or supporting tools (including for standard messaging, referral, or specific feedback case management) as needed and these needs discussed during regular meetings.	Additional training should be sought on the following topics for specialized knowledge beyond feedback management and response procedures: • Principles of protection, including for child protection and safeguarding, gender-based violence, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and other key thematic areas. • Psychological first aid. • Language training. • Awareness raising and strategies for the prevention of work-related stress and trauma (such as vicarious trauma).

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We review and prepare our feedback mechanism.	Notes
1.3. Ensure that the protocols established in 1.3 are translated into responsibilities within tailored standard operating procedures (SOPs) for each of the core functional roles. This allows for the monitoring and adaptation of the feedback mechanism and ensures that: • Feedback channels are functional and equipped for two-way communication, and there is periodic review of the processes and tools for data collection, storage, transfer, and overall management, including for user-controlled visibility and access to feedback data. • Protocols for feedback management and loop closure are adhered to, and are reinforced by SOPs for responding to feedback, handling, and referring feedback tickets of a specific nature (including highly sensitive ones), and that standard timelines and responsibilities for individual loop closure are upheld. • Appropriate and timely reporting of feedback data and findings satisfy the requirements of decision-makers, and the performance of the mechanism is adequately measured at different levels.	Example (PSEA): Feedback collectors are required as aid workers to report any known or suspected allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in line with the victim/survivor-centered approach and be aware of their organizational policy. For detailed guidance on how to handle SEA complaints, refer to the Inter-Agency SEA Referral Procedures.

Operational Guiding Principle # 2

We ensure communities are aware of and can access channels available to ask questions and provide feedback and understand their rights in the feedback process. When feedback is provided, we systematically and safely gather it through all channels for centralized management and handle it in accordance with relevant guidelines for data responsibility.

Terms defined in the glossary are underlined and linked below.

We confirm communities know how to provide feedback.	Notes
2.1. Ensure communities are informed of and understand their rights and entitlements to provide and receive a response to feedback, including: • The available communication channels for doing so, and the general feedback process for different kinds of issues that groups and individuals may wish to raise. • What to expect in terms of a response (and the timelines for this) when they provide feedback, and that response may be challenging in certain circumstances or not feasible (for example, if feedback providers wish to remain anonymous or cannot be contacted). • The process for following up on feedback previously provided, updating, or withdrawing feedback, and expressing dissatisfaction with the feedback process if applicable. Alternative means of receiving updates on actions taken to address broader issues raised by the community, through dedicated channels (for example, radio, messaging, or community meetings and postings), should be clearly communicated and made accessible to different community groups.	Sensitization activities and communication campaigns need to adequately cover community knowledge in these areas, with regular monitoring to identify further needs. No matter the channel or means of providing feedback, communities need to be notified that their feedback will be recorded if this is being done.
2.2. Ensure that feedback providers have been informed of and understand their rights as data subjects before recording consent and finalizing any feedback ticket: • Why their information may need to be recorded or shared to address their feedback, with whom it may be shared, and for how long it may be retained. • What the potential risks of doing so (and not doing so) entail for the feedback process and for getting a response. • What their options are for this, including their right to withdraw from the feedback process if desired. In case consent cannot be obtained at all, actors should weigh the “do-no-harm” principle against the protection mandate of their organization to decide if a feedback comment will be documented and processed.	

Operational Guiding Principle # 2

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Terms defined in the glossary are underlined and linked below.

We systematically and safely gather community feedback.

2.3. Ensure the different communication channels, systems, and technology used to gather, record and store feedback data are designed to:

- Reflect and adapt to the communication needs and preferences expressed by communities.
- Appropriately and securely handle all forms of potential feedback, including sensitive and/or critical feedback.
- Effectively handle requests from feedback providers who wish to know what feedback data has been recorded and why, to update their feedback data, or to discuss options for having their data removed from feedback databases (and potentially other repositories for data if appropriate and feasible).

2.4. Ensure feedback data gathered across different feedback channels and systems can be collated and analyzed by requiring all organizations collecting feedback to systematically document information according to the standard template logbook on:

- Where feedback data is coming from (the communication channel and administrative area).
- What information is gathered at the time feedback is received (details and nature of the feedback, to the level that is relevant and appropriate).
- What actions are taken to address the feedback, immediately upon receipt and later as follow up for the closure of open and referred tickets (if applicable).

Detailed descriptions for required, recommended, and optional data fields, as well as the considerations for their documentation can be found in the standard Template Logbook. The logbook includes a standard feedback taxonomy that can be used as a coding frame.

Operational Guiding Principle # 3

We manage feedback according to its sensitivity and criticality. Where appropriate, we safely refer feedback to those in a position to responsibly handle, escalate and address them in an appropriate and timely manner to support action and individual loop closure.

Terms defined in the glossary are underlined and linked below.

We prioritize the safety and protection of feedback providers.	Notes
3.1. Ensure that all feedback channels are equipped to flag feedback as sensitive, urgent, or requiring immediate action and trigger the appropriate action by the correct authority in line with established protocols for feedback management.	Apply privacy-by-design approaches that support data minimization throughout the data management cycle, and ensure sensitive data will be stored, transferred, or exchanged in a manner that minimizes risk of exposure.
3.2. Ensure that only people with the required access authorization can view recorded data and information that is flagged as sensitive or potentially harmful, in line with the IASC Operational Guidance on Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action, as well as the standards contained in the relevant information sharing instruments and established SOPs.	

We ensure timely action and individual loop closure.	
3.3. Ensure feedback is responded to as quickly as possible and in line with the timelines we share with communities and individual feedback providers. This includes for feedback tickets that have been referred through the established referral system. If feedback is received that has no pre-defined process, define and update the standard protocol documents, established SOPs, and ensure these changes are communicated with community-facing staff, field teams and other personnel supporting the community feedback mechanism.	Appropriate and timely response to feedback may not always require feedback to be recorded. The requirements for recording should become clear by thinking about the conditions for actioning different types of feedback and what this means for different kinds of feedback channels.
3.4. Ensure a unique ID is systematically assigned for the tracking of recorded feedback tickets. Record the details of the feedback to support referral and loop closure in accordance with: • The pre-defined protocols for feedback management. • The principles of information security and personal data protection honoring the approach to minimize identifiable information and respect the privacy of feedback providers. • The preferences of the feedback provider where this information is provided.	

Operational Guiding Principle # 3

We manage feedback according to its sensitivity and criticality. Where appropriate, we safely refer feedback to those in a position to responsibly handle, escalate and address them in an appropriate and timely manner to support action and individual loop closure.

Terms defined in the glossary are underlined and linked below.

We ensure timely action and individual loop closure.

3.5. Ensure feedback and the tools used to manage it are managed centrally so that:

- Service mapping and referral pathways are easily maintained and can be disseminated through the different systems for feedback when updated.
- Feedback data can be tracked, meaning the different places it may be stored or be transferred are known.

Where centralized management is not possible, regularly collate feedback, complete with individual status at a specific date, to meet needs for follow-up on open feedback tickets in addition to regular reporting and performance oversight. Similarly, feedback management tools should be systematically updated and shared as needed to ensure consistency across channels and systems.

3.6. Ensure quality control activities are implemented to monitor how procedures have been followed for the documentation, categorization, prioritization, and follow-up/closure of feedback. This supports the identification of sensitization and training needs for different stakeholders involved in feedback management.

For example, community-facing staff and teams may be able to answer questions about humanitarian activities on-the-spot. It may be impractical to record feedback unless it requires a specific action; it may be more appropriate to share a daily summary for this type of feedback. Also, if a critical piece of feedback is encountered in the field, recording may be skipped altogether in favor of acting immediately. This may mean more effort might be needed to ensure feedbackis not forgotten or overlooked.

Conversely, hotlines receiving any kind of feedback will likely record all feedback and assign tickets that are either closed immediately or left open for referral or other action, and as a result be easier to monitor and control.

Operational Guiding Principle # 4

We collate, thematically explore, and draw findings from feedback data in a way that responsibly and effectively meets the information needs of different stakeholders to feed into the formulation of recommendations and actions for decision-makers at various organizational levels.

Terms defined in the glossary are underlined and linked below.

We collate and prepare feedback data responsibly.	Notes
4.1. Ensure individual datasets are coded before aggregating and sharing with identified stakeholders for further analysis. Do this according to the parameters determined in the protocols and SOPs for reporting, which cover the requirements, process, and regularity of sharing this data.	A coding frame for community feedback is provided with the standard template logbook to guide this work for all kinds of documented feedback.
4.2. Ensure feedback data is anonymized before sharing aggregated feedback datasets, and exclude identifying or redundant information (for example, by using statistical disclosure control where identifying variables are removed or modified).	
4.3. Ensure disaggregated data is explained to ensure data on gender, age, disability, and other diversity information is contextualized within the data available to the feedback mechanism rather than generalized to groups in the population.	
We explore and draw findings from community feedback together.	
4.4. Ensuring feedback trends and findings are triangulated and interpreted using other information available on the response (such as needs assessment/monitoring data, security incidents, survey findings, etc.) and make them available for use in broader analysis processes that feed into decision-making at programmatic and strategic levels.	An example analytical framework for understanding community feedback in your context can provide a holistic framing that brings together different kinds of information to support this triangulation and analysis.
4.5. Ensure feedback trends and findings are shared and discussed at sector and inter-agency levels. This includes any analysis, actions taken in response, strategies for community engagement and/or any of the processes that support collective action and coordinated decision-making.	Any data relating to a potential allegations of SEA can only be analyzed by PSEA specialists, following data protection and confidentiality principles.

Operational Guiding Principle # 5

We discuss and track the recommendations and actions taken in response to findings from community feedback, and we ensure our programs and strategies for meeting the needs of communities are reviewed and adapted accordingly.

Terms defined in the glossary are underlined and linked below.

We maintain and review the protocols established to support decision-making and adaptation.	Notes
5.1. Ensure continuous integration by inter-agency coordination leadership and structures (including sectoral and inter-sectoral) within regular programming discussions and processes, including for: • Defining what information is needed, and when, to systematically include feedback from communities into their regular planning processes, and adapt their programs. • Triangulating and interpreting community feedback findings together with other programmatic data. • Formulating and documenting recommended actions and adaptations systematically over time. • Disseminating information with other relevant stakeholders to strengthen sensitization at the collective level. • Actively contributing to, and regularly reviewing, the processes and common feedback management tools used to support the objectives and functions of the feedback mechanism overall.	This will need to be checked with OCHA and be aligned with key messages for leadership, which will include explaining and linking to the template action tracker.
5.2. Ensure regular monitoring and periodic review of the different information sources used to measure performance for the mechanism at the collective level by identifying: • How the feedback channels for two-way communication are meeting or missing the needs of different groups in the community. • Weaknesses in coordination of feedback management and how the conditions and protocols can be reinforced further (for example, through advocacy, additional resource allocation, or training). • Information gaps and how these can be filled by additional data collection or research exercises planned or being undertaken for other complementary purposes.	Supplementing measurement of the common indicators with direct feedback and suggestions for improvement from the different stakeholder groups interacting with the feedback mechanism can strengthen this process.

We adapt and learn as a response community, together with the communities we serve.

5.3. Report back to the community on findings, decisions, and the rationale for actions, seek validation, and reinforce these with community-facing staff. To achieve this:

- Discuss key trends in community feedback and how and why they have been addressed.
- Communicate information updates regarding programs or the feedback process and reflect these changes in established SOPs and supporting tools.
- Ensure these are understood, and that any remaining questions and concerns are addressed or can be in the future through the established channels for feedback.

5.4. Publish reports on collective findings, recommendations and actions taken in response to community feedback on public platforms that are commonly used for sharing humanitarian information and resources to support transparency, facilitate inter-agency coordination, and strengthen accountability in the response community.

Annex: Template Logbook – How to use

Introduction

This document describes the *Template Logbook*, a tool for implementing the *Operational Guiding Principles and Data Standards*. This how-to-use guidance will help practitioners working with community feedback mechanisms (CFMs) in its contextual application and adaptation to meet individual, joint/inter-agency, and collective needs for documenting and classifying community feedback.

The *Template Logbook* provides a framework for documenting and using community feedback and is a core tool for feedback management. Complete with a taxonomy that can be used to classify feedback for action, it primarily supports the enactment of Standard 2.4 of the *Operational Guiding Principles and Standards*.

We systematically and safely gather community feedback by:

2.4 Ensuring feedback data gathered across different feedback channels and systems can be collated and analysed together by requiring all organisations collecting feedback to systematically document the same type of information on:

- Where feedback data is coming from (the communication channel and administrative area),
- What information is gathered at the time feedback is received (details and nature of the feedback, to the level that is relevant and appropriate),
- What actions are taken to address the feedback, immediately upon receipt and later as follow up for the closure of open and referred tickets (if applicable).

Documenting community feedback in this way has implications for other activities that organizations may undertake to strengthen community feedback mechanisms (CFMs) at multiple levels and can reinforce or facilitate the achievement of several other standards as well.

In addition to the above, using the *Template Logbook* to document community feedback also enables:

1. A simple and common approach to understanding and managing feedback based on its characteristics and a standard definition for feedback categories and other data fields, building on the foundations that are established under the first Operational Guiding Principle.

2. A safe and efficient sharing of community feedback for referral and response of individual feedback tickets, with the option to identify and 'tag' feedback as either sensitive and/or critical to ensure the appropriate actions are taken in accordance with Operational Guiding Principle 3.

3. A structured analysis of feedback information coming from various sources – whether formal or informal–together with other response information that supports response-level decision-making as outlined in Operational Guiding Principle 4.

4. The tracking of decisions and actions in response to community feedback, and the adaptation of programs and strategies for meeting the needs of communities and working towards common objectives for the response, in accordance with Operational Guiding Principle 5.

General considerations for feedback management

The following considerations are relevant to individuals, such as feedback managers and team leaders, or units responsible for the following tasks:

- Preparing community-facing staff, field teams, and CFM teams to collect community feedback.
- Examining feedback requiring action, referring feedback tickets, and following up for purposes of tracking and loop closure.
- Performing quality control and monitoring adherence to standard protocols.
- Preparing feedback (summaries or datasets) for reporting, analysis, and action.
- The Template Logbook requires users to understand and apply several important terms.

Figure 1: Differences between some of the terms used for feedback management.

"Feedback" vs. "Feedback ticket"	"Response" vs. "Loop (or ticket) closure/resolution"	"Protocol" vs. "Procedure" for feedback management
Feedback refers broadly to the information and insights generated by community members in any setting (whether proactively gathered or passively encountered). When a piece of feedback is recorded, we have created a feedback ticket. These can be open for further action or closed (either because action cannot be taken, or it has been taken, with this decision being communicated to the satisfaction of the individual providing feedback to qualify as resolved).	A response to feedback is always given to acknowledge that feedback and to either: • Answer it in a satisfactory way immediately, which can be done for certain questions or issues, or • Indicate how and when the individual providing feedback will have their issue resolved. Feedback can be resolved without creating a ticket, but we should aim to resolve all feedback for which a ticket is created.	The standards for how feedback is responded to, the conditions for creating a feedback ticket, and the steps that should be followed to ensure resolution of open feedback tickets are all components of a protocol for feedback management that can exist for individual, joint/inter-agency, and collective mechanisms for feedback. Standard operating procedures can help individuals who play a role in feedback management translate these protocols into distinct actions as part of their usual responsibilities.

These definitions are relevant for understanding links between the documentation of community feedback as articulated in Standard 2.4 and the broader feedback cycle and corresponding standards:

Standard 3.3: Community-facing staff and field teams should prioritize immediate **response** (and where possible, **resolution**) to **feedback** where this is appropriate. If it is unrealistic to record individual feedback (for example, where primary activities are not feedback-focused), it is important to share observations at specified periods about which questions, concerns or issues recur and/or have an impact on discriminated/marginalized groups.

Standard 3.4: If responsibilities for gathering feedback are part of the staff and teams' core responsibilities, and if individual feedback is encountered that requires further action, the feedback should be recorded, and a **ticket** created as soon as possible. Alternatively, the provider should be re-directed to an appropriate channel according to the correct **protocol for feedback management**.

Standards 1.6 and 3.6: To ensure protocols are adhered to, the necessary steps and considerations should be integrated into the relevant **SOPs** to support staff responsibilities, whether their roles are primarily as part of a formal feedback channel or not.

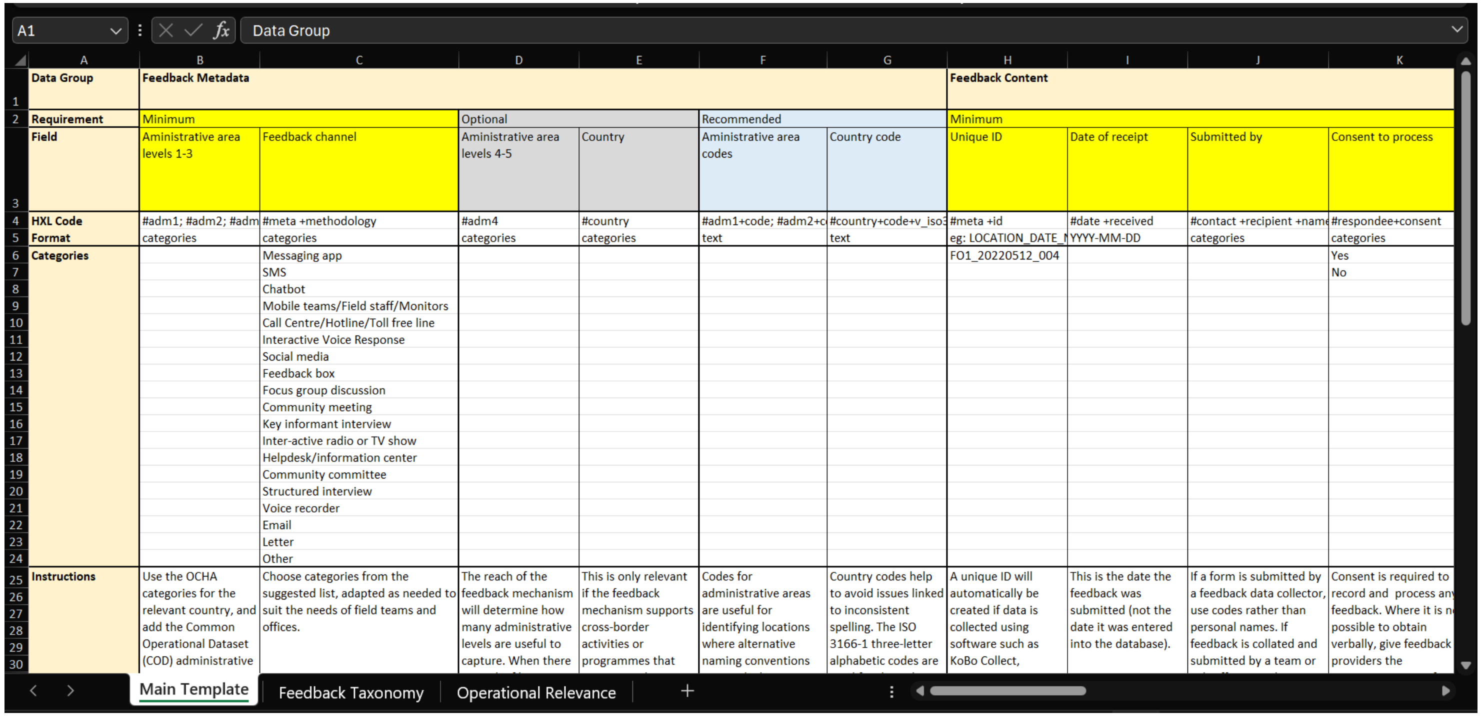
Description of the Template Logbook

What is the Template Logbook?

The *Template Logbook* is a spreadsheet containing fields for documentation of community feedback that allows adaptation to the use case and according to the operational set-up for the different channels for feedback. It is not intended as a ready-to-use form for recording community feedback, but rather a guide containing the relevant data points, their characteristics, and categories for application.

How the template is applied and reflected in the processes and tools used for feedback documentation and tracking will vary depending on the feedback channel, technology chosen, and more. Some of this will be explored in the sections that follow. Figure 2 shows a screenshot of the *Template Logbook* for reference. It contains three tabs, which are numbered and explained below.

Figure 2: Screenshot showing one of three tabs in the Template Logbook



Data Group	Feedback Metadata						Feedback Content			
Requirement	Minimum		Optional		Recommended		Minimum			
Field	Aministrative area levels 1-3	Feedback channel	Aministrative area levels 4-5	Country	Aministrative area codes	Country code	Unique ID	Date of receipt	Submitted by	Consent to process
HXL Code	#adm1; #adm2; #adm	#meta +methodology	#adm4	#country	#adm1+code; #adm2+c	#country+code+v_iso3	#meta +id	#date +received	#contact +recipient +name	#respondee+consent
Format	categories	categories	categories	categories	text	text	eg: LOCATION_DATE_N	YYYY-MM-DD	categories	categories
Categories		Messaging app					FO1_20220512_004			Yes
		SMS								No
		Chatbot								
		Mobile teams/Field staff/Monitors								
		Call Centre/Hotline/Toll free line								
		Interactive Voice Response								
		Social media								
		Feedback box								
		Focus group discussion								
		Community meeting								
		Key informant interview								
		Inter-active radio or TV show								
		Helpdesk/information center								
		Community committee								
		Structured interview								
		Voice recorder								
		Email								
		Letter								
		Other								
Instructions	Use the OCHA categories for the relevant country, and add the Common Operational Dataset (COD) administrative	Choose categories from the suggested list, adapted as needed to suit the needs of field teams and offices.	The reach of the feedback mechanism will determine how many administrative levels are useful to capture. When there	This is only relevant if the feedback mechanism supports cross-border activities or programmes that	Codes for administrative areas are useful for identifying locations where alternative naming conventions	Country codes help to avoid issues linked to inconsistent spelling. The ISO 3166-1 three-letter alphabetic codes are	A unique ID will automatically be created if data is collected using software such as KoBo Collect,	This is the date the feedback was submitted (not the date it was entered into the database).	If a form is submitted by a feedback data collector, use codes rather than personal names. If feedback is collated and submitted by a team or	Consent is required to record and process any feedback. Where it is n possible to obtain verbally, give feedback providers the

The first tab: Main Template

The first tab is the main template and includes all the minimum, optional, and recommended fields to satisfy the necessary requirements for documentation of feedback to satisfy Standard 2.4.

- The yellow fields must be documented to meet minimum standards.
- The grey tabs are optional and should be documented only if appropriate to do so.
- The light blue fields are recommended and can be used to enhance standards for documentation in cases where a mechanism possesses additional capacity.

The categories for documentation are illustrated in Figure 3 together with the minimum, optional, and recommended fields. Color codes, data field instructions, formatting considerations, and HXL tags for optional upload to HDX can be found in the Template Logbook document.

Figure 3: Document categories

Documentation category	Description	Minimum fields		Optional fields	Recommended fields
Feedback metadata	Information about the source of feedback that tells us where and through which channel feedback is received.	• Basic location data: Administrative areas 1 and 2 • Feedback channel		• Detailed location data: Administrative areas 3 and 4 • Country name	• Location codes • Country codes
Feedback content	Information relating to the characteristics of feedback (including the type of feedback and information about the feedback provider, if appropriate). Where possible, information exchanged should be verified with feedback providers to confirm the details are accurate and they are fully aware of the feedback process.	• Unique ID • Date of receipt • Submitted by • Consent to process • Age range • Sex • Language of interaction	• Feedback comment • Operational relevance • Broad feedback category • Sensitivity • Criticality	• Name of feedback provider • Contact details • Preferences for communication	• Provided independently or with assistance • If with assistance, reasons for why • Diversity factor • Specific feedback content categories
Feedback follow up, tracking, and resolution	Information about the protocols followed and the process of referral and response should be regularly updated and tagged for purposes of supporting monitoring, analysis, advocacy, and improving communication with communities.	• Protocol followed • Date of referral • Current case status • Date of case closure		• Acknowledgement and response • Key quote	• Thematic relevance

The minimum requirements for documentation as outlined above and in Standard 2.4 should be applied irrespective of the type of channel through which feedback is received. For fields that may not always have a determined value, category options have been provided that can be used to indicate this.

In general, contextually appropriate categories should be chosen to meet pre-identified information needs specific to the program(s) and activities supported; however, correspondence to the above should be established to meet minimum standards for collective purposes.

The second tab: Feedback Taxonomy

The feedback taxonomy provides common categories and definitions for classifying community feedback, along with recommendations for further sub-categorization of these main categories. It is intended to support discussion for how feedback classification and documentation can reinforce protocols and enable safe and efficient sharing of feedback for feedback management, in addition to informing analysis and serving a useful purpose for decision-making at multiple levels.

- The definitions for the broad content categories are of primary relevance as they can facilitate a conversation around standardization across different systems and mechanisms for feedback to serve response-level objectives.
- Adoption of, or mapping of existing categories to, the broad content categories in the standard taxonomy can support a standard approach not just to classifying feedback, but also to actioning it. It can be used as a framework for the development of protocols for feedback management, and therefore a means to consider how the mechanism is performing (with respect to access/coverage of feedback issues, protocol adherence, and loop closure).
- Consideration of the recommended sub-categories can further support analysis and discussion for potential interoperability of different digital solutions supporting feedback management, where this is desired and appropriate. The degree to which the different channels, systems and mechanisms for feedback adopt the same level of categorization will determine how well they are linked and can serve objectives for the response.

It is important to note that all tools used for feedback management, including their protocols, are integrated – this means that the way we document feedback should inform what is done with it, and vice versa. Reference documents or common tools for feedback data collection and categorization, standard messaging, service mapping, and feedback management should align, and be maintained in accordance with **Standard 5.1.**

The third tab: Operational Relevance

The operational relevance tab provides a standard list of categories (with definitions) that can be used to populate the corresponding field in the main template. This field is important not only in providing a high-level view of the general type of intervention the feedback concerns, but it is usually indicative of which group of stakeholders are best placed to address the feedback if it requires referral. Depending on the scope of the CFM, the main technical sectors of a humanitarian response can be used. If the scope is more limited, use project or activity names.

Any standard operating procedures developed for the documentation, referral, and reporting of community feedback should reflect the requirements indicated in the common protocols established under Standard 1.3 and as specified under Standard 1.4.

Considerations for application of the Template Logbook

Documenting individual and group feedback

Systematic documentation of both individual and group feedback ensures a range of feedback information from different modalities can be analyzed together. This can be done in either digital or in hard copy (and digitally transcribed later). Examples of these can be found together with the *Template Logbook* in the IASC resource library.

1. **Documenting group feedback:** Selection of the option "Mixed group of people" under the fields *Age Range* and *Sex* in the *Template Logbook* is appropriate for documenting feedback during focus group discussions, community meetings, and other group-centered community mobilization activities. Where possible, general distributions should be noted, especially if raised feedback is relevant to a specific diversity factor. Community-facing staff and field teams encountering community feedback during their regular activities can also use this method for recording the main questions/issues received. These kinds of insights can complement formal feedback captured through other more structured channels.
2. **Documenting individual feedback**: Individual feedback documentation is common for formal feedback channels where feedback can be collected in a more structured way, such as helpdesks, hotlines, e-mail, messaging applications, and feedback boxes. It can also be integrated with other data collection tools used during household visits and key informant interviews. Even in informal or group feedback settings, individual feedback tickets are created because they require a specific response. The conditions and requirements for this should be clearly outlined in the relevant standard operating procedures (SOPs) for community-facing roles. Should recording of the feedback ticket be inappropriate, impractical, or outside the primary responsibilities of the individual receiving the feedback, feedback providers should be re-directed as needed to an appropriate channel to have their individual feedback addressed.

Documenting feedback informally and sharing observations and feedback summaries

Even in cases where formal feedback documentation is not possible, it is necessary to prepare community-facing staff and field teams with basic knowledge of frequently asked questions, and the protocols and responses for different kinds of feedback in accordance with standards 1.5, 1.6 and 3.1. They should know what to do, and what things to take note of, if encountered feedback requires swift or specialized action. The standards for documentation are still feasibly employed and the example forms provided with the logbook can be printed and used for this purpose.

Where non-face-to-face channels exist (such as hotlines, helpdesks, or other dedicated avenues) and field teams are not tasked with formally recording, transcribing, or sharing feedback in any form (digital or otherwise), they must be encouraged to share their observations and suggestions regarding community feedback trends in a manner consistent with their ways of working (for example, verbally during team meetings). This ensures that this knowledge can still feed into analysis and triangulation exercises under standards 3.4 and 3.5.

The participation of response partners that implement response activities in collective discussions around community feedback is crucial to ensuring the relevance and use of the common tools for feedback management. This not only ensures that the feedback process and information available to communities is understood by all and consistently communicated, but it also ensures that knowledge obtained from direct interactions with community members remains a central source of information irrespective of the level of digital capacity of the community-based structures or local actors in any given response.

Annex: GLOSSARY

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Analytical frameworks are models that aim to guide and facilitate sense making and understanding.[2] Communities and their diverse feedback are complex, multi-faceted, and multi-dimensional, and understanding them requires a structured and consistent approach. The analytical framework offered in this package can be adapted to any context, offering a logical way to analyze, triangulate, and discuss feedback data with the relevant stakeholders.

CLOSING THE FEEDBACK LOOP

The process of communicating to feedback providers and communities what has been done in response to their feedback. It is essential to explain and discuss how the feedback was taken into account, what was feasible to do (or not), and the rationale behind these decisions.

CODING FEEDBACK DATA

Coding is a technique used to attach qualitative data to subjects or classes to reduce data to a form in which they can be tracked and analyzed more easily. Coding helps capture key points that can be used as the basis for further analysis and to identify themes in community feedback data without losing meaning. Codes can be analyzed quantitatively or qualitatively, and/or help to identify relationships and patterns in the data.[3]

CODING FRAME AND CODEBOOK

A coding frame is a guiding scheme for organizing open feedback comments. It provides an overview of the categories, codes, and criteria used to classify community feedback. It is supported by a codebook, which describes the categories and codes, and gives example feedback comments. The coding frame and codebook ensure that everyone involved in the coding and analysis process has the same understanding of the coding process. The feedback taxonomy in the *Template Logbook* can be used as a coding frame.

2 See: Chataigner, Patrice (2017): *Analytical Framework Review Report*.
3 ICRC (2017): *Acquiring and analyzing data in support of evidence-based decisions*, p.201.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community feedback is information generated by community members – adults and children – and can include any type of information, such as questions, suggestions, observations, beliefs, concerns, complaints[4] and statements of thanks. Community feedback can therefore be positive, neutral, or negative information. It can be received through any kind of feedback channel, both formal or informal ones, be structured or unstructured, received directly by the stakeholder who will use and act on the information, or indirectly via intermediary stakeholders. Community feedback provides response actors with insights about the needs, perceptions and experiences of different individuals and groups, including in relation to response activities and services, and the behavior or organizations' staff members.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK MECHANISM (CFM)

Systems to manage feedback shared by communities, such as questions, suggestions, observations, beliefs, concerns, complaints, and statements of appreciation – including feedback that is sensitive and/or critical and requires specialized or urgent response[5]. In addition to supporting the timely and appropriate resolution of individual feedback, a CFM facilitates the use of insights and findings from community feedback to inform the strategic and operational decisions that underpin accountability to affected people (AAP) in an operation. This includes avoiding and mitigating risks to different groups in the community and ensuring programming safely and effectively meets their needs.
(CFM definition continued)

All CFMs are comprised of:

- Appropriate, safe, and accessible channels for feedback communication that have been tailored to the context, respecting the different needs and preferences of various groups in the community,
- Processes and tools, whether analogue or digital, for securely and effectively gathering, referring, and responding to community feedback,

4 In practice, using the word complaint in the context of a feedback mechanism can sometimes discourage children and/or adults from reporting their feedback, as it implies the need for evidence or a level of certainty. We recommend consulting different groups in the community to determine the appropriate terminology to ensure any safeguarding concerns are addressed.
5 Please see the definition for Community Feedback just above for more information.

- Processes and tools for analyzing and using findings and insights from community feedback to inform adjustments and make improvements,
- The coordination structures and resources required to maintain CFM functions, oversee performance, and ensure the necessary targeted or collective actions are taken to meet the objectives of the CFM

DATA ANONYMIZATION

Process by which personal data is irreversibly altered, either by removing or modifying the identifying variables, in such a way that the person that provided the data can no longer be identified directly or indirectly.[6]

DATA AGGREGATION

The compiling of information from different sources or databases with intent to prepare these combined datasets for data processing.

DATA CATEGORIZATION

The process of grouping data into categories according to specific criteria, which usually means that these data have something in common, such as a similar value (in the case of quantitative data) or a similar feature (in the case of qualitative data). Categories can be overlapping or non-overlapping, and a piece of data may be categorized in several different ways, depending on the analyst's perspective.[7]

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is the process of documenting community feedback in a systematic way. Solutions for data collection can be low-tech (that is, paper documentation and no internet) or high-tech (that is, involving software and devices that require wireless internet- or cloud-based storage).

DATA DISAGGREGATION

Statistical reports that are separated according to criteria. For the humanitarian sector this is most commonly sex and age.[8]

DATA MINIMIZATION

The objective of ensuring that only the minimum amount of data is processed to achieve the objective and purposes for which the data were collected.[9]

6 The Centre for Humanitarian Data: *Glossary*. https://centre.humdata.org/glossary/
7 ICRC (2017): *Acquiring and analyzing data in support of evidence-based decisions*, p.208.
8 Sphere (2018): *Sphere Glossary*
9 31 ICRC, Handbook on Data Protection in Humanitarian Action (2020), https://www.icrc.org/en/data-protection-humanitarian-actionhandbook.

DATA RESPONSIBILITY	The safe, ethical, and effective management of personal and non-personal data for operational response.
DATA SHARING AGREEMENT (DSA)	Agreement that establishes the terms and conditions that govern the sharing of personal data or sensitive non-personal data. It is primarily used for data sharing between two parties and typically established at the country level. In accordance with data protection frameworks, signing a DSA is required for the sharing of personal data.[10]
DATA STORAGE	The process of retaining data (in most cases, digital data). For feedback data, this means the locations where feedback is safely kept at each stage of its life cycle, including where it goes just after it is collected, where it exists during and after processing, as well as – to a certain degree – where it is distributed to.
DATA TRANSFER	Sharing data privately with partners or making it available publicly for open access.[11]
ESCALATION	The process of bringing feedback to the attention of stakeholder(s) with more authority or decision-making power, for the purposes of appropriately addressing information that is critical and/or sensitive.
FEEDBACK REFERRAL	The transfer of information connected to a feedback ticket to a focal point with the necessary resources and expertise to resolve it. A referral could include information about the feedback provider, interaction(s), feedback content, and response actions. It is important to note that the term "referral" has different meaning depending on how it is used. See: Referral system and referral pathway definitions below.
FEEDBACK CHANNEL	A modality through which community insights can be shared, captured, and received. Every channel will have its own set of characteristics that determine how accessible it is to specific individuals and groups in a community; a combination of channels will enhance accessibility of the feedback mechanism.

10 IASC (2021): *Guidance on Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action,* p. 29.
11 The Centre for Humanitarian Data (2019): *Data responsibility guidelines*, p. 20.

FEEDBACK MANAGEMENT

Refers to how we collect, store, process, address, analyze and use feedback in a secure, efficient, and effective way. It includes defining the purposes, processes, and solutions for the intended uses of community feedback, which inform the targeted of collective actions for:

1. The resolution of individual feedback and improvement of the feedback process for communities. Processes for developing and adjusting channels for communication, tools[12] for feedback management, and any technologies associated with these are included here.
2. The improvement of the quality and effectiveness of operations and the management of potential risks to different groups in the community. Processes for deriving insights and findings from aggregating, analyzing and triangulating community feedback to inform decision making for preparing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating activities and programs are a part of this.

FEEDBACK SENSITIVITY AND CRITICALITY

Feedback sensitivity concerns information that should be protected from access or disclosure due to it being information that can put the person sharing it, or other people liked to it, at risk. Feedback criticality relates to the importance of feedback information that may require a time-sensitive or escalated response process. Both sensitivity and criticality require care[13] when handling. They also require classification parameters that determine the standard course of action or response (see feedback escalation above). Although sensitive feedback items are often also critical ones, it is possible that feedback may be non-sensitive but still require urgent action.

FEEDBACK RECORD

The entire portfolio for that feedback, including the interaction(s), feedback details, and response actions connected to a specific instance of feedback.

12 Tools for feedback management include standardized forms and software for feedback documentation, repositories for standard messaging, activity/service directories, referral pathways and reporting platforms, and the standard operating procedures (SOPs) that support their maintenance and use.
13 Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2021). *Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Contexts. Operational Guidance, p.30.*

FEEDBACK TICKET

A record of feedback that requires further action (such as referral) to be resolved. Note that not all feedback will need to be recorded, and not all feedback records will lead to the creation of a ticket, but some forms of feedback may create multiple tickets depending on the range of issues it contains. Additionally, a ticket may require multiple interactions between feedback data collectors and the individual providing feedback before it can be closed (and reported as such).

FEEDBACK (TICKET) CLOSURE OR RESOLUTION

The action that takes place when no further intervention is required to resolve an individual piece of feedback. A ticket may be closed due to a) it being outside of the scope of a CFM, b) it being resolved using feedback management tools (repository of key messaging/talking points, redirection to partner services in the standard directory, or through application of the referral system) or c) the individual withdrawing or no longer wishing to proceed.

FEEDBACK INTERPRETATION

The process of looking across themes and narratives in the feedback data and working out what it all means. It is sometimes referred to as a second level analysis.[14] The process of interpreting community feedback data necessitates the involvement of diverse stakeholders with knowledge of the context and operational realities, including diverse representatives of the community, and must not be conducted by the feedback team alone.

INFORMATION SECURITY

The protection of information and information systems from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction in order to provide confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information.[15]

INFORMATION SHARING PROTOCOL (ISP)

The foundation for a collective approach to responsible information and data exchange. While typically established at the system-wide level, ISPs may also be established at the cluster/sector and organization level as needed.[16]

14 See: UNICEF Social Science Analysis Cell (2020): *CASS Methodology Guide* and INTRAC (2017): *Qualitative analysis*.
15 ISO/IEC Information Technology Task Force (ITTF) ISO/IEC 27000:2018
16 IASC (2021): *Information Sharing Protocol.*

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

A legal document which sets the agreed terms, conditions, and operational rules for a non-final agreement between agencies. This can sometimes be a donor requirement where an application for funds includes an explicit non-financial collaboration with partnering organizations. The MoU demonstrates the organizations have consulted and coordinated the responsibilities of their grant activities.

PERSONAL DATA

(Also referred to as personal information, personal identifiable information). Any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ("data subject"). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier, or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural, or social identity of that natural person.[17]

PRIVACY BY DESIGN

Equivalent to the practice of data protection through (technology) design. This means that privacy is considered at the initial design stages and throughout the complete development process for any system intended to process personal data. Behind this is the thought that data protection in data processing procedures is best adhered to when it is already integrated in the technology when created.[18]

PROTOCOL

A system of rules that explain the correct conduct and procedures to be followed in formally defined situations. In general, a protocol dictates what needs to be done, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) outline and document how this is carried out through responsibilities linked to functional roles. For a CFM implemented at any level (individual, joint/inter-agency, or collective), protocols and their corresponding SOPs must exist for feedback management, reporting, decision-making, and adaptation.

QUALITY CONTROL

A process with the objective of preventing and identifying errors, both human and technological, from impeding the effectiveness of the CFM. In addition, the process maintains the relevant feedback tools and processes, and preserves the trust of CFM stakeholders through the activities.

17 OCHA (2019): *Data Responsibility Guidelines*, p.49.
18 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

REFERRAL PATHWAYS

Flexible mechanisms that safely link feedback providers requiring specialized services (e.g., health, psychosocial support, case management, safety/security) to the appropriate service provider. Referral pathways are specific to the kind of feedback and can involve responsible parties at multiple levels (such as project/activity, sub-national, and national).

REFERRAL SYSTEM/MECHANISM

Enables the needs or gaps identified through community feedback to be comprehensively managed using resources beyond those offered by a single feedback channel or mechanism. It ensures different professional sectors communicate and work together, in a safe and efficient manner, to provide the communities and individuals sharing feedback with an appropriate (and sometimes multisectoral) response and/or services. A mechanism for referral comprises the protocols for feedback management and the channels/focal persons at various levels of representation across the professional sectors (project, organizational, national, and sub-national) responsible for their execution.

SERVICE MAPPING

A process where information about services and the actors that provide them are mapped for purposes of ensuring this information is consistently communicated to communities. A service map or repository should be centrally managed as it requires frequent updating and dissemination through the different pathways and channels used to communicate with communities, including community-facing staff and CFM teams. As an essential tool for feedback management, it should be fully aligned with the coverage of operational activities and the categories used to classify feedback in the *Template Logbook*.

STANDARD MESSAGING

Agreed information and responses that promote consistent messaging about issues that don't require contextual responses. Any resource or repository for standard messaging should be centrally managed as it requires frequent updating and dissemination through the different pathways and channels used to communicate with communities, including community-facing staff and CFM teams. As an essential tool for feedback management, it should be fully aligned with the categories used to classify feedback in the *Template Logbook*. For each of the specific feedback categories used in feedback documentation, a standard message should exist; if there is none, then there is an information gap, and a ticket should be created to address this. A standard message may be accompanied by instructions on how the individual processing the feedback should flag the case for escalation or referral depending on **sensitivity or criticality.**

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPS)

A set of detailed instructions that help the different roles supporting the functioning of the feedback mechanism carry out established protocols and therefore their functional responsibilities. The objective of establishing SOPs is to achieve efficiency, quality outputs, and uniformity of performance, while reducing miscommunication and failure to document compliance with the minimum requirements.

STATISTICAL DISCLOSURE CONTROL (SDC)

Technique used in statistics to assess and lower the risk of a person or organization being re-identified from the results of an analysis of survey or administrative data, or in the release of microdata.[19]

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (SEA)

Particular forms of gender-based violence[20] committed by aid workers.

- Sexual exploitation: Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
- Sexual abuse: The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. All sexual activity with a child is considered sexual abuse.[21]

TEMPLATE LOGBOOK (WITH TAXONOMY)

A tool to ensure that minimum data points exist for any feedback that is documented across various channels, systems, and mechanisms for feedback, and supports a standardized approach to categorizing this feedback, to serve the following purposes:

19 The Centre for Humanitarian Data (2019) *Guidance Note on Statistical Disclosure Control*
20 For the full list and definitions of SEA and related terms, refer to page 14 of the IASC (2023): Inter-Agency SEA Referral Procedures.
21 Secretary-General's Bulletin: Special Measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13), Section 1.

- To understand the full nature of feedback information, including where feedback is coming from, what it is about, and how it is actioned.
- To lay the foundations for a common analysis of shared minimum data points.
- To prepare different feedback systems and mechanisms supported with different technological and digital solutions for conversations around inter-operability.

Together with the service mapping and standard messaging tools, the *Template Logbook* is an essential tool for feedback management and should evolve and be adapted according to the needs of the response context.

TRIANGULATION

The process of combining or comparing several sources and/or observations on a given topic, with the aim of increasing confidence in the result by decreasing the bias associated with "one side of the story". The end goal of triangulation is to reveal converging results, complementary results, and contradictions.[22]

VALIDATION

The process of discussing the interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations arising out of the data analysis with those who shared their feedback. Feedback providers are asked if they agree with the findings, and to correct things that might not have been interpreted correctly. Validation is especially relevant if the feedback providers were not involved in the interpretation and development of conclusions, which is the ideal scenario.

22 Flick, Uwe (2009): *An introduction to Qualitative Research.*