CLIENT-RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING CORE RESOURCE MANUAL

Guidelines for IRC staff to implement the 8 Client-Responsive Actions

April 2018

What is Client-Responsive Programming?

Programming is client-responsive when we design and implement in a way that takes into account the views of our intended and direct clients. This requires that we systematically, deliberately and regularly listen to and collect the diverse perspectives of our clients. We must also analyse and use their feedback to make decisions and to plan for, or course correct, our programming. Client-Responsive programming entails us communicating and explaining to our clients how their feedback has (or has not) informed our programmatic decisions.

What is the purpose of this Resource Manual?

The purpose of the Client-Responsiveness Core Resource Manual is to provide Guidance and Tools for IRC Country Teams and those who are supporting them (TA's and RMACs and AMU/ GPP/ Grants on Business Development) to design and implement projects that are responsive to our clients. It provides general advice and practical tips, as well as templates and frameworks, to carrying out the "8 Client Responsiveness Actions" in order to collect and use the perspectives of our clients at different phases of the programme cycle.

Definitions:

	Client	A person or institution for whom the IRC provides, or intends to provide, assistance or services. We make a distinction between intended clients, direct clients and indirect clients.
	Intended Client	A person or institution who is targeted by planned or existing IRC aid / services (*e.g. eligible people living in a programme catchment area*)
	Direct Client	A person or institution who is receiving the IRC aid and / or services (*e.g. patients in an IRC clinic*)
	Indirect Client	People and other institutions who are not directly receiving assistance from the IRC, but who are connected to people or institution which are, and therefore might potentially also benefit in some way from the IRC's provision of assistance to those people/ institutions (e.g. families and dependants of IRC's direct clients)

Why is Client-Responsive Programming Important for the IRC?

Placing people affected by crisis at the centre of our decisions about what aid to deliver, to whom, where, when, how and why will make our assistance more:

Effective	Successful for achieving the results and change clients wants to see
Relevant	Suitable in meeting clients 'priority needs and expectations
Appropriate	Right for the clients in the context and situation they are living in
Accountable	Responsible to our clients, affected communities and other key stakeholders for the decisions and actions we take

What is the Client-Responsive Programming Approach?

This is the IRC's methodology for delivering Client-Responsive Programming. The Approach comprises two main elements:

- **8 Client-Responsiveness Actions:** Eight Actions which we implement in order to collect and use the perspectives of our clients at the different phases of the programme cycle: Design, Start-up, Implementation and Close-out.
- **8 Client-Responsiveness Enablers:** The Eight internal and external operating conditions which enable the Actions to be effective in delivering Client-Responsive Programming.

Delivering Client-Responsive Programming at the IRC

The Eight Actions

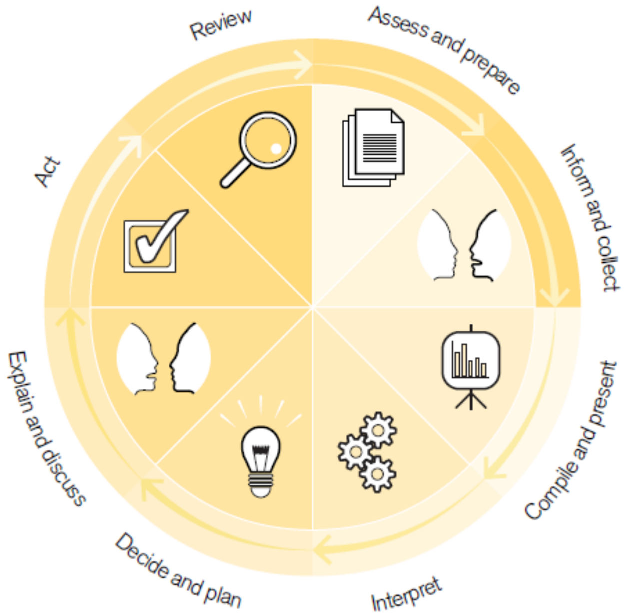
1. **Assessing and preparing the design of feedback channels appropriate to the context and clients,** and putting in place the operational requirements
2. **Informing clients about the purpose of feedback collection** and how we will respond to it, as well as the process of collecting their feedback
3. **Compiling and presenting the feedback data** which has been collected
4. **Interpreting the data**
5. **Deciding and planning what actions and decisions to take** in response to the feedback
6. **Explaining and discussing those decisions** with our clients
7. **Acting** upon those decisions
8. **Reviewing and monitoring progress and impact** of the action upon clients.

The Eight Enablers

A. **Defining roles and responsibilities**
B. **Data management**
C. **Defining internal and external systems and pathways**
D. **Leadership**
E. **Resourcing Client-Responsive Programming**
F. **Managing risks**
G. **Internal and partner organisations development and capacity building**
H. **Coordination and collective actions.**

The Eight Actions to Implement the Feedback Cycle

The feedback cycle



ACTION 1: Assess and Prepare

- ✓ Select the channels you will use to collect feedback: Identify your clients and the information you want to collect from them taking into account the different barriers different groups of clients (women and girls, vulnerable groups and persons with special needs) can face accessing information and/or providing feedback.
- ✓ Design your Feedback Channel Plan including timeframes, frequency and person/ unit responsible for each identified feedback channel.
- ✓ Draft your Survey, Focus Group Discussion and/or Individual interview questionnaires
- ✓ Set up your internal systems (plan and budget for data collection, recording, referral pathways, communicating the IRC response to clients)
- ✓ Develop operational protocols for reactive feedback channels (suggestion boxes, hotlines,…)
- ✓ Define roles and responsibilities
- ✓ Set up internal and external referral pathways

ACTION 2: Inform and Collect

- ✓ Inform your clients about how their perspective will be collected for what purpose
- ✓ Inform your clients by when they can expect an answer
- ✓ Inform your clients / ask your client how they would like to receive the IRC response
- ✓ Ensure client consent before collecting feedback
- ✓ Collect client feedback through multiple channels
- ✓ Allow anonymous feedback
- ✓ Acknowledge feedback was received (reactive channels)
- ✓

ACTION 3: Compile and Present

- ✓ Compile results from surveys, FGD, interviews
- ✓ Record and compile feedback received from reactive channels
- ✓ Share and record open feedback
- ✓ Classify and assign priority level
- ✓ Refer feedback to staff with relevant authority to act and respond

ACTION 4: Interpret

- ✓ Compare with other type of data
- ✓ Discuss with team/ front-line staff and other stakeholders
- ✓ Pay attention and make sense of contradictory feedback

ACTION 5: Decide and Plan

- ✓ Consult and involve staff and stakeholders
- ✓ Document feedback case management and decision process

ACTION 6: Explain and Discuss

- ✓ Who will implement the action
- ✓ How and by when this should be done
- ✓ Who, how and by when the IRC response will be communicated to the client

ACTION 7: Act

- ✓ Act upon the decision that was taken

ACTION 8: Review

- ✓ Periodically review the performance of the feedback cycle
- ✓ Take perspectives from clients, partners and other stakeholders
- ✓ Gauge level of clients' satisfaction regarding the decisions and actions taken by the IRC as a result of their feedback

Type	Page	Title	Description
Tool 1	7	Selection and Design of Feedback Channels	Supports teams to identify their clients, decide on the information they want to collect and select the appropriate feedback channels
	23	Annex 1: IRC Core Feedback Themes	Provide the core themes or key topics that country teams needs to collect feedback on at each phase of the project
	26	Annex 2: Designing Clients Questionnaires	Provide guidance (what to avoid, what to seek to) to design client questionnaires as well as illustrative questions for survey, focus group discussions and individual interviews for all Core Feedback Themes
	41	Annex 3: Template for Designing Feedback Channels	Provide a template to record the decisions made (after using Tool 1) about the Selection and Design of the Feedback Channels that a project/ programme or country team will use to collect feedback from clients.
Tool 2	42	Feedback Registry	Provides a template to document and manage individual pieces of feedback from the time it is received to the time the IRC provides the response to the client
	42	Feedback Recording and Classification Guidance	Supports teams to use the Feedback Registry and to classify feedback per category and to define priority levels.
Tool 3	47	Feedback Logbook	Provides a template for teams to record and manage feedback received by staff on an ad hoc basis through their routine interactions with clients.
Tool 4	49	Feedback Data Visualisation Template	To be available in September 2018 – Supports teams to present feedback data in a way which can facilitate effective and efficient feedback data.
Guidance 1	50	A Quick Guide for IRC Proposal Writing	Provides guidance to support teams (and those in AMU and GPP advising them on business development) to integrate Client-Responsiveness into their proposals and to meet specific donors' accountability and participation requirements
Guidance 2	57	Communicating Client Feedback	Provides guidance on how to communicate client feedback within your team and how to refer feedback internally or externally if you cannot respond or act on it
Guidance 3	65	Interpreting Client Feedback and Making Decisions about How to Respond	Supports teams to understand how to interpret client feedback (including when it is contradictory to other feedback or data) and provides guidance on how to respond to clients
Guidance 4	71	Closing the Loop	Provides a range of options for teams to communicate their response to feedback to clients. Outlines the strengths, weakness, and appropriateness of each option in diverse operational and cultural contexts

Tool 1:
Selecting and Designing Feedback Channels

What is the purpose of this resource?

This tool is intended to help you to identify and design the channels (methods) through which you will collect feedback from your clients / intended clients. It aims at supporting teams to identify their clients, decide on the information they want to collect and select the appropriate feedback channels.

The Guidance includes:
[Annex 1: The Core Feedback Themes]
[Annex 2: Writing Questions to Proactively Collect Client Feedback]
[Annex 3: Template for Designing Feedback Channels]

How should this resource be used?

This Guidance leads you through a series of questions to help select your feedback channels. We recommend you identify a facilitator (either from outside your team or within) to help you to think through the process. Notes and specified resources (the annexes) have been included to help guide your response. Annex 3 of this Guidance includes a table to help to you assess the feasibility and relevance of the different feedback channels depending on your context and operational environment.

Selecting your Feedback Channels

The questions below will help you to select the Feedback Channels that are more appropriate to your clients, context and to the type of information you want to collect. We would recommend that you go through those questions together with your team – including your field staff, who may have a better understanding of your clients and context.

Question 1: Who are your clients?

a. Identify your direct and intended clients

You should list of all your direct and indirect clients using the definitions below

Client	A person or institution for whom the IRC provides, or intends to provide, assistance or services. We make a distinction between intended clients, direct clients and indirect clients.
Intended Client	A person or institution who is targeted by planned or existing IRC aid / services (*e.g. eligible people living in a programme catchment area*)
Direct Client	A person or institution who is receiving the IRC aid and / or services (*e.g. patients in an IRC clinic*)

b. Identify your indirect clients

Make a list of all your indirect clients using the definition below

Indirect Client	People and other institutions who are not directly receiving assistance from the IRC, but who are connected to people or institution which are, and therefore

might potentially also benefit in some way from the IRC's provision of assistance to those people/ institutions (e.g. families and dependants of IRC's direct clients)

c. Identify applicable sub-groups amongst your direct clients and indirect clients

You should list all the sub-groups you can identify for each of your direct and indirect clients

Even among the same group of direct client, like refugees living in a particular settlement, you should be able to identify different sub-groups (e.g. gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, language, and so on). This will help you ensure that you include those sub-categories into your client questionnaires (and are thus able to disaggregate the responses you receive for each sub-group). This will also help you to identify the specific barriers (language, literacy, access to technology, etc.) that some of those sub-group may face in accessing information from the IRC or to providing feedback via reactive feedback channels (see table under section 2.c below). Within the main clients groups that you have identified, also think about whether you can break down these groups further. This would allow you to:

- Select the most appropriate channel to communicate with that sub-group and through which to collect their feedback;
- Disaggregate the data to provide you with more representative information on your clients' perspectives (i.e. data disaggregated by age, sex, ethnic / social background, or factors which make them particularly vulnerable).

d. Consider whether there are other people in the community you wish to consult (non-clients)

You should list the other people or organisation you want to collect feedback from.

Beyond your clients, there will be other people or institutions you will wish to collect. Consider whether there are other people in the community your project serves who are not intended to directly or indirectly benefit, but who you may wish to consult whose views you wish to also collect (e.g. elders, local authorities, other organisation representatives etc.) Asking the village elders for their feedback will help you strengthen the relationship with the community. You may also want to consult other state or non-state organisations which are providing similar type of services to avoid duplication and ensure proper coordination.

Question 2: What feedback do you want to collect from your clients?

a. What feedback are you currently collecting?

You should identify the main gaps you have in the feedback data you are already collecting

TIP Think about the feedback you are currently collecting from your clients. Some questions to ask yourselves about the data include:

- Is it actually "feedback" data (i.e. does the data reflect the perceptions, preferences, aspirations and expectations of clients?) or is the data more factual (i.e. does it give you information on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of clients?)
- Is the data up to date?
- Does the data reflect feedback from all the groups you identified?
- Does the data give you a comprehensive picture of everything that you want to know from clients?
- Is the data useful to you and are you able to act upon it?
- Do you have both qualitative information and quantitative information?

If you have more than one "no", this might suggest that you have gaps in your existing data

Use the **Core Feedback Themes** to check if you're collecting feedback on all the Core Feedback Themes at the different phases of the project cycle

b. What additional feedback do you want to collect?

You should think about the additional information you want to collect

Think about what feedback you want to collect from your clients going forward. Looking at the feedback you are already collecting and comparing this with the Core Feedback Themes, you may realise that you are not collecting information from all core themes at the different phases of the project.

Use the **Core Feedback Themes** to identify and plan the themes for which you will ask clients for their feedback at the different phases of the project cycle

Question 3: Which channels do you want to use to collect client feedback?

a. Proactive and Reactive Feedback Channels

Proactive Feedback Channels are mechanisms through which the IRC is actively soliciting feedback from clients, for example: a survey, a focus group discussion, an individual interview, etc. This means that we choose the clients and stakeholders to whom we want to ask questions and that we control the questions we are asking and timing of when the information is collected.

- The strength of proactive channels is that the information we are collecting is more actionable, nuanced and easier to interpret.
- The weakness is that the information we are collecting is limited to the questions we are asking (issues that the IRC is already interested in). We may miss broader trend and other important trends. Proactive channels also don't provide a channel for communicating with the IRC and asking questions or lodging complaints.

Reactive feedback channels are mechanisms that the IRC provide to its clients and other stakeholders to communicate with us – at the time and subject they choose. This includes, for example: suggestions boxes, hotlines, email addresses, office walk-in, etc.

- The strength is that clients can raise concerns as they arise about whatever concerns *them,* at a time which they choose
- The weakness is that it is often seen only as a complaints mechanism. Systematically recording feedback and ensuring that we are providing a response also requires time, resources and a good data management system and referral pathways. See Guidance 2: Communicating Client Feedback

b. Which channels (methods) are you currently using to collect client feedback?

You should identify the channels you want to/ can keep and the channels you want to/ can change

Some questions to ask yourselves about the feedback channels / methods:

- Do you generally feel happy with how easy and time efficient the channel is to implement?
- Do you generally feel that the channel is providing you with relevant, reliable and actionable information?
- Can the feedback channel be safely and easily accessed by all your client groups (and sub-groups)?
- Are you able to change any of your existing feedback channels? Or is there some information you are collecting through this channel that you need to collect to report to a donor, the authorities, etc.?

c. What feedback channels your clients would prefer?

You should ask your clients how they would most like to provide you with feedback

This is going to be the best way to ensure that the feedback channel is used. Note that different groups or sub-groups may have different preferences, and you should try and accommodate the preferences of as many people as possible. In particular, ensure that vulnerable groups or those marginalised in the community have access to a feedback channel that they feel comfortable with. People with more power / dominant voices will be better able to find ways to share their feedback with you.

For examples of questions you can ask, refer to Annex 2: Writing Questions to Proactively Collect Client Feedback (illustrative questions for engagement preference at the Start-up phase)

d. What Feedback Channels are feasible for you to implement?

You should assess the feasibility to implement each proactive and each reactive feedback channel

Depending on your context (access to clients, access to technology) and your operational environment (project length, budget, human resources), it may be feasible or not to implement certain feedback channels.

Use the table below to assess the feasibility to implement each proactive feedback channel

The table below highlights the feasibility of implementing the different proactive channels depending on your context and operational environment (the fact that you have a lot or very little time, amount of resources available, level of access to your clients, etc.). Please circle the cell that correspond to the availability of each of the required resources you have at your disposal for each of the feedback channels listed in the table (see example for the first column in the table below). To analyse the feasibility of each feedback channel, look at the number of "Yes", "Maybe", "Probably not" and "No" that you have in each column.

- If you have one or more "No": You will not be able to implement this feedback channel in your context
- If you have one or more "Probably not": It may not be feasible for you to implement this particular feedback channel unless you consider specific mitigation measures (for instance conducting a survey through SMS or phone calls if you don't have physical access to your clients)
- If you have one or more "Maybe": It should be feasible for you to implement this feedback channel, however you may have to adapt the number or frequency of collecting feedback through this channel based on your context and operational constrains
- The more "yes" you have, the easiest and more feasible it will be for you to implement this feedback channel.

Requirements		Proactive channels feasibility					
	Availability	Survey	FGD	Individual interview	Community meeting	Local radio	Stakeholders group
Time	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Probably not
	Low level	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Probably not	No
Financial resources	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Low level	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	No	Maybe
Human resources and capacity	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Probably not
	Low level	Maybe	Probably not	Probably not	Probably not	Probably not	No

Requirements		Proactive channels feasibility					
	Availability	**Survey**	**FGD**	**Individual interview**	**Community meeting**	**Local radio**	**Stakeholders group**
Access to clients	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Yes	Maybe
	Low level	Probably not	Probably not	Probably not	No	Yes	Maybe
Access to technology	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Low level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Use the table below to assess the feasibility to implement each reactive feedback channel

The table below highlights the feasibility of implementing the different proactive channels depending on your context and operational environment (the fact that you have a lot or very little time, amount of resources available, level of access to your clients, etc.). Please circle the cell that correspond to the availability of each of the required resources you have at your disposal for each of the feedback channels listed in the table (see example for the first column in the table below).
To analyse the feasibility of each feedback channel, look at the number of "Yes", "Maybe", "Probably not" and "No" that you have in each column.

- If you have one or more "No": You will not be able to implement this feedback channel in your context
- If you have one or more "Probably not": It may not be feasible for you to implement this particular feedback channel unless you consider specific mitigation measures (for instance conducting a survey through SMS or phone calls if you don't have physical access to your clients)
- If you have one or more "Maybe": It should be feasible for you to implement this feedback channel, however you may have to adapt the number or frequency of collecting feedback through this channel based on your context and operational constrains
- The more "yes" you have, the easiest and more feasible it will be for you to implement this feedback channel.

Requirements		Reactive Feedback Channels				
	Availability	**Suggestion boxes**	**Toll-free Hotlines**	**Office walk-in hours**	**SMS lines**	**Social Media**
Time	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Low level	Yes	No	Yes	No	Maybe
Financial resources	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Yes

Requirements		Reactive Feedback Channels				
	Availability	Suggestion boxes	Toll-free Hotlines	Office walk-in hours	SMS lines	Social Media
	Low level	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Human resources and capacity	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Low level	Yes	No	Maybe	Probably not	Probably not
Access to clients	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Yes
	Low level	Maybe	Yes	Probably not	Yes	Yes
Access to technology	High level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Moderate level	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
	Low level	Yes	Probably not	Yes	Probably not	No

e. Select your Feedback Channels

You should select the feedback channels that are most appropriate to your context and clients

Taking into account the assessment you have just conducted under the previous section, list the Feedback channels that are feasible to implement in your context.

TIP Identify a combination of channels which are appropriate for your client groups
Some clients may not be able to use particular feedback channels. For example, if working in divided communities, the minority groups may not be able to express themselves in public forums. In many societies, women are prevented from expressing themselves in public or in the presence of men. Consider literacy levels, which would cut off access to feedback mechanisms like surveys or suggestion boxes. Select your channels so that the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in society will be able to use them.

TIP Identify a combination of channels which can complement each other and which provide a mix of quantitative and qualitative data
You should identify feedback channels which can provide you with a mix of quantitative and qualitative data. You may also consider using more than one feedback channel so that you can compare and contrast data collected through multiple courses. For example, you may select a survey which obtains primarily quantitative data, together with a focus group discussion, which obtains mainly qualitative data, having both explore the same themes.

Use the table below to select at least one proactive channel, taking into account the strengths and weakness of each one.

You can use the last column to record whether you believe this channel is appropriate or not in your context/ operational environment. You can also use this column to note any comments regarding the risks of exclusion of certain clients groups, for example, or specific appropriateness to collect information from certain groups of clients or other stakeholders.

Examples	Strengths	Weaknesses	Best Practice	Appropriateness (Yes/No/Not sure) (provide comments if needs be)
Surveys	✓ Information can be collected rapidly ✓ Can reach a broad sample ✓ Provide quantitative Data ✓ Results easy to disaggregate ✓ Results easy to interpret ✓ Can be done frequently	- Require access to clients (unless conducted by a third party or by phone/ sms, etc.) - Limited in the amount of qualitative data it provides	1) Ask a max of 10-12 questions 2) Focus on using closed questions, as this will aid quick analysis 2) Test the survey with a small number of clients before use 3) Inform clients about the IRC, the project and how the survey results will be used 4) Do not prompt clients' answers, but be available to clarify questions if needed 5) Include an option for the client to say that they do not want to answer, or do not know 6) Provide an option for clients to share feedback on another issue which has not been covered in the survey 7) Immediately flag any issues of concern to a supervisor trained to deal with them, e.g. feedback relating to possible harm to a client or another person or a code of conduct violation 8) Consider having the survey administered by a third party for verification purposes, or to collect feedback on sensitive issues 9) Report back to clients regarding survey results, what you will do to respond and why	
Focus Group Discussions	✓ Information can be collected rapidly ✓ Very good to collect qualitative information (for example to	- Require access to clients (unless conducted by a third party) - Some people may not feel comfortable	1) Use data and findings from other feedback channels as a prompt for discussion so that you're not starting the FGD "cold" 2) Inform clients about the IRC, the project and how the survey results will be used 3) Ensure that the person administering the	

Examples	Strengths	Weaknesses	Best Practice	Appropriateness (Yes/No/Not sure) (provide comments if needs be)
	complement information collected through a survey) ✓ Good to collect views from specific groups on specific subjects (e.g. issues or challenges emerging from survey results for example).	expressing themselves in a group - People may not share sensitive information - Require facilitation skills	FGD is briefed about the project, so they know how to interpret the feedback which is being shared and can effectively prompt deeper discussion 4) Allow the clients to share feedback which isn't directly on the "agenda", but make sure that the discussion is broadly kept on topic 5) Split FGDs into appropriate sub-groups of your clients in a way that clients will feel most comfortable sharing their views (e.g. men / women, younger women / older women). Pay specific attention to ensuring that vulnerable groups feel comfortable in the group that they are in 6) Immediately flag any issues of concern to a supervisor trained to deal with them (e.g. feedback relating to possible harm to a client or another person or a code of conduct violation) 7) Report back to clients what the survey results showed, and what you will do to respond and why	
Individual Interviews	✓ Good to collect feedback from people in position of power ✓ Good for collecting feedback from other stakeholders (non-IRC clients) ✓ Allow discussions about sensitive subjects ✓ Allow to collect very specific qualitative feedback	- Time consuming, (which means that you probably cannot run many individual interviews) - Requires good facilitation skills to administer well.	1) Be clear about why you are conducting an individual interviews (as opposed to a FGD, for instance) 2) Tailor the questions to those objectives/ information you want to collect 3) Ask a max of 10-12 questions 4) Inform the interviewee about the IRC, the project and how the interview results will be used 3) Ensure that the person conducting the interview is familiar with the project, knows how to interpret the feedback which is being shared and can effectively prompt deeper discussion 4) Allow the interviewee to share feedback	

Examples	Strengths	Weaknesses	Best Practice	Appropriateness (Yes/No/Not sure) (provide comments if needs be)
			which isn't directly on the "agenda", but ensure the discussion is broadly kept on topic 5) Immediately flag any issues of concern to a supervisor trained to deal with them (e.g. feedback relating to possible harm to a client or another person or a code of conduct violation) 6) Report back to interviewee on how the interview was use to inform IRC programming	
Community Meetings	✓ Give opportunity for a diverse mix of people to provide their feedback ✓ Good for building general rapport with clients and communities ✓ Provide qualitative information	- Can be quite unstructured, and more difficult to obtain actionable, relevant information. - Some people may not feel comfortable expressing themselves in a group - People may not share sensitive information - Some people may not be able to attend (access, livelihood or family activity)	1) Explain and discuss the objective of the community meeting 2) Discuss and agree on the best time/ location for the meeting to take place 3) Ensure the community is aware of the time/location of the meeting 4) Inform clients about the IRC, the project and how the survey results will be used 5) Ensure that the person conducting the meeting is familiar with the project and knows how to interpret the feedback which is being shared and can effectively prompt deeper discussion 6) Allow the clients to share feedback which isn't directly on the "agenda", but ensure the discussion is broadly kept on topic 7) Prompt participation/ answers from vulnerable groups 8) Immediately flag any issues of concern to a supervisor trained to deal with them (e.g. feedback relating to possible harm to a client or another person or a code of conduct violation) 9) Report back to the community on how the views shared in the meeting have/will inform IRC programming	

Examples	Strengths	Weaknesses	Best Practice	Appropriateness (Yes/No/Not sure) (provide comments if needs be)
Local radio	✓ Widely accessible (and sometime on the only "remote" mean for engaging with people living in isolated areas) ✓ Provide opportunity to inform large number of people about the IRC and its programmes ✓ Allow to engage clients in a two-ways communication (radio call-in) and can therefore also be used as a reactive feedback channel.	- Comes generally at a (high) cost - Only allow clients/ people having access to a phone/ network to call in/ make suggestions	1) Be clear about the objective and the message(s) you want to relay through the radio 2) Make arrangements for people to call-in during the radio broadcast 3) Respond to the questions and/or explain how the suggestions and complains will be treated	
Stakeholder Reference Groups	✓ Good for bringing together key representatives of your client group and other stakeholders to participate in key decisions about the project. ✓ Can be a useful source of information to validate or explain feedback obtained through other channels.	- Risk of the group only representing the views of more powerful members of society and using the channel for their own gains. - Require clear Terms of Reference and meaningful purpose to be efficient	1) Clearly define the role and terms of reference of the stakeholders group 2) Discuss and agree on its size and composition (limit number of members and maximise the number of different client groups / other stakeholders represented) 3) Set up a clear schedule and agenda for the stakeholders meetings 4) Define and agree on how suggestions should be agreed upon (e.g. consensus, majority, etc.) 5) Explain how and by who suggestions will be treated 6) Provide a feedback to the stakeholders group regarding how their suggestions were treated and how it has influenced the IRC programming.	

Use the table below to select at least one proactive channel, taking into account the strengths and weakness of each one.

You can use the last column to record if you think this channel is appropriate or not in your context/ operational environment. You can also use this column to note any comment regarding for example risks of exclusion of certain clients groups or specific appropriateness to collect information from certain groups of clients or other stakeholders.

Examples	Strengths	Weaknesses	Best Practice	Appropriateness (Yes, No, Not sure) (provide comments if needs be)
Suggestion boxes	✓ Easy and cheap to set up ✓ Can operate without electricity and / mobile network coverage ✓ No cost for the client to use	- Excludes people who can't write. - Lack confidentiality (depending on where the boxes are located and for clients to be seen using them). - Risk restricting access (clients living far away/ having challenges accessing the boxes)	1) Explain to the clients how to use the suggestion boxes (e.g. to ask questions/ make recommendations/ make a complaint / provide positive feedback, etc.) 2) Explain / discuss with clients the process for opening the boxes (frequency, person responsible) and allow clients and members of the community to participate 3) Explain / discuss how and by whom the suggestions will be reviewed and how and when responses to the feedback will be provided to the clients 4) Pay a specific attention and engage clients to identify the best locations for the boxes (to avoid access or confidentiality challenges) 5) Ensure that suggestions are treated confidentially and in a manner that ensure the protection of clients	
Toll-free hotlines	✓ Allows clients who can't write to provide feedback ✓ Allows a two-way communication between IRC and the client (and therefore the opportunity for staff to clarify / better understand the	- Risks excluding clients without access to a phone or network - Risks of receiving lots of "spam" calls - Risks limiting access of clients to provide feedback to hotline opening hours/ days.	1) Explain to the clients how to use the hotline (e.g. to ask questions/ make recommendations/ make a complaint / provide positive feedback etc.) and when (if not a 24/7 service) 2) Explain / discuss how and by whom the suggestions will be reviewed and how and when responses to the feedback will be provided to the clients	

Examples	Strengths	Weaknesses	Best Practice	Appropriateness (Yes, No, Not sure) (provide comments if needs be)
	feedback being provided by the client) ✓ Confidential and accessible (as long as clients have a phone and network coverage) ✓ No cost for the client to use	- Challenge of having to deal with multiple languages/ operators - Risks having to deal with multiple mobile companies/networks costs (operator, hotline monthly fees, etc.) - Generally expensive to set up and to operate (communication and operator costs)		
Walk-in office hours	✓ Allows clients who can't write to make suggestions. ✓ Allows a two-way communication between IRC and the client (and therefore the opportunity for staff to clarify / better understand the feedback being provided by the client).	- Unlikely be used by clients who want to make a confidential suggestion / complaint. - Risk excluding clients living far way/ having challenges to access the office. - Restricts access to certain working hours	1) Explain when and for what clients can walk-in to the office 2) Identify and communicate the name(s) of the staff clients can come to meet with 3) Explain how this may influence the IRC way of working	

Examples	Strengths	Weaknesses	Best Practice	Appropriateness (Yes, No, Not sure) (provide comments if needs be)
SMS lines	✓ Confidential ✓ Accessible (as long as clients have a phone and network coverage) ✓ No cost for the client to use ✓ SMS lines generally also allow sending bulk SMS messages (and provide a useful channel for the IRC to send information to clients)	- Excludes clients who can't write. - Risks excluding clients without access to a phone or network - Risk having lots of "spam" SMS - Risks having to deal with multiple mobile companies/networks - Cost (hotline monthly fees, maintenance, etc). - Information may not be particularly actionable if the client hasn't explained their feedback well in the SMS.	1) Explain to the clients how to use the hotline (e.g. to ask questions/ make recommendations/ make a complaint / provide positive feedback etc.) and when (if not a 24/7 service) 2) Explain / discuss how and by whom the suggestions will be reviewed and how and when responses to the feedback will be provided to the clients	
Social Media	✓ Accessible and confidential (as long as clients have access to a smartphone/internet) ✓ Attractive mean of communication, particularly for youth and clients living in urban areas ✓ No specific costs for clients (as long as they have internet access)	- Risks excluding a potentially large number of clients (as requires access to smartphone, internet, social media savviness, etc.) - Lack confidentiality	1) Explain to the clients how to use social media (e.g. to ask questions/ make recommendations/ make a complaint / provide positive feedback etc.) 2) Explain / discuss how and by whom the suggestions will be reviewed and how and when responses to the feedback will be provided to the clients	

Designing your Feedback Channels

You should finalise the design of your feedback channels

Use the template in Annex 3 to design your Feedback Channels

1. **List all the feedback channels you have selected** (listed under question 3.f) into the second column (Channel)

2. **Indicate who are the clients and client sub-groups you will be collecting feedback from with each channel**. Ensure that all direct and intended clients (listed under question 1.a), indirect clients (listed under question 1.b), all clients sub-groups (listed under question 1.c) and other people you want to collect feedback from (listed under question 1.d) are all included in your table in the third and fourth columns.

3. **Indicate what Core Feedback Themes you will collect information on** in the fifth column (refer to Annex 1: The IRC Core Feedback Theme)

4. **Indicate how often you will administer each feedback channel** into the frequency column.

TIP: How to determine the frequency of your proactive channels?
The frequency of proactive feedback collection (such as surveys and focus group discussions) should be determined based on the particular operating context. A number of factors influence that decision:

- *The fluidity of the context***:** in protracted crisis situations, the priority needs and preferences of the IRC's clients aren't likely to change as often as they would in more dynamic, emergency contexts. Thus, client perspectives and the client group who we are consulting are also less likely to change frequently. The less often clients' perspectives are likely to change, the less often teams need to consult them for their views. However, programme leadership and country programme management should be careful that this does not serve as an excuse for not consulting clients for their feedback on a regular basis.

- *The frequency of changes to IRC programming or operations:* in some contexts the IRC has been implementing a very similar programme over a long period of time; in other contexts our programming is new and continually changing under new grants and with new staff (who may interact differently with clients). In cases of more stable programming, clients' perspectives are less likely to change as frequently as with more changing programming and operations. As above, the less often clients' perspectives are likely to change, the less often we need to consult them. See above also for the word of caution!

- *The closeness of the relationship between the IRC team and clients***:** much feedback is obtained through routine interactions between staff and clients in the course of delivering services. If the team have developed a close and open relationship with clients through such activities, it may be that a formalised proactive feedback collection is not needed as often as in cases where the team has a more distant or less close relationship with clients. However, teams should still consult clients periodically even if they consider the relationship to be good, as it may be that precisely because of this closeness that clients would feel less inclined to give open and honest feedback directly to those staff members.

- *The team's capacity to act upon feedback received***:** various factors may constrain the team's ability to act upon the feedback received, including the external context which cannot be changed frequently and quickly (e.g. having less control over their budget as a sub to another organisation acting as prime on a grant).

5. Indicate the time when you are planning to administer your proactive feedback channels

Here you need to consider any potential dependency that you would need to take into account in planning the timing of administrating your different proactive feedback channels. For example, you may want to structure the questions and target groups of your Focus Group Discussions based on issues emerging from the results of a client survey. In that case, you would need to plan the FGD at a time when you know the results of the survey will be available (and have been analysed).

6. Indicate who will be responsible to administer each feedback channel

Here you may consider having some proactive feedback channels administered by IRC staff and others administered by a third party (enumerators, partner organisation, etc.). There is always a bias when clients are asked about their satisfaction or opinion about the aid and service they receive by staff working for that same organisation. People may provide responses that are "over positives" for many reasons (cultural inappropriateness to complain about aid or services received, fear of being excluded, etc.)

Illustrated example of Feedback Channel Design:

Channel #	**Channel (specify)**	**Client Group type**	**Client Group (Specify)**	**Client sub-group (Specify)**	**Core Feedback Themes (Specify)**	**Frequency**	**Timing (Specify if relevant)**	**Who is responsible to administer the Channel**
1	Survey	Direct Client #1	Women and girls receiving pre-natal care at the health facility	Girls (14-18)	All core themes (Start-up, implementation and close-out phases)	Every 6 months	January/ July	Staff
				Women (19 upwards)				
		Direct Client #2	Women receiving health information messages during outreach campaign	Girls (14-18)				
				Women (19 upwards)				
2	FGD	Direct Client #1	Women and girls receiving pre-natal care at the health facility	Girls (14-18)	Key topics surfacing from survey	Every 6 months	February/August	Third party
				Women (19 upwards)				

Channel #	**Channel (specify)**	**Client Group type**	**Client Group (Specify)**	**Client sub-group (Specify)**	**Core Feedback Themes (Specify)**	**Frequency**	**Timing (Specify if relevant)**	**Who is responsible to administer the Channel**
		Direct Client #2	Women receiving health information messages during outreach campaign	Girls (14-18)	Key topics surfacing from survey			
				Women (19 upwards)				
3	Community meetings	Intended Clients	Women and girls in reproductive age in settlement A and B	N/A	Priority needs and outcome, access and impact	Annually	February	Staff
		Indirect Clients	Relatives of women and girls receiving pre-natal care at the health facility	Husbands	Relevance and impact			
				Mothers				
4	Individual Interviews	Non Clients	Local authorities	Chiefs	Priority needs, relevance, impact	Annually	March	Technical Coordinator
				Religious leaders				
5	Suggestion Box	All	N/A	N/A	N/A	Continuous	N/A	M&E Officer
6	Hotline	All	N/A	N/A	N/A	Continuous	N/A	Hotline operator

Tool 1 / Annex 1:
IRC Core Feedback Themes

What is the purpose of this Resource?

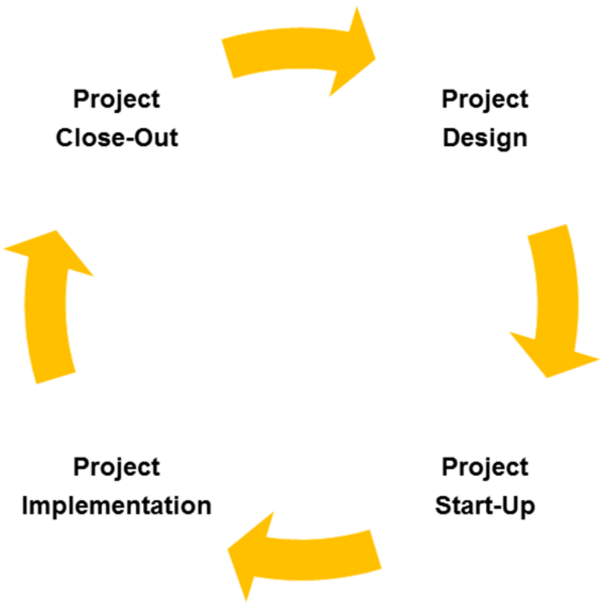
The aim of the Core Feedback Themes are to provide a list of the key topics that all IRC country teams should be collecting and interpreting client feedback on, organised by the four stages of the project life cycle. Reference to the Core Feedback Themes ensures that feedback from clients is collected, disaggregated and interpreted in a comprehensive and consistent manner across all IRC sectors and locations. It also ensures that data is comparable, trackable and aggregable over time and across projects, programmes and countries.

How should this resource be used?

This resource is intended to support teams to design questions which they will ask through proactive feedback collection channels. Proactive feedback collection channels include surveys, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The resource also provides a framework to compile and interpret client data (collected proactively or reactively) in a consistent and comparable manner.

Team members should proactively collect feedback at the mid-point for projects of 12 months, and at least once every year for longer projects. It is also critical to ensure that the perspectives of women and girls, minorities, and vulnerable groups are captured across all contexts, and that feedback data from those different groups are disaggregated so that the nuances in their perspectives can be reflected in programmatic decision making.

The tables below highlights and describes the themes for which all IRC country teams should be consistently collecting client feedback. The themes are specified for each of the four project life cycle stages. Country teams should ask questions about <u>all</u> themes specified at for each particular phase of the project.



Design		
Theme	**Description**	**Who needs to know?**
Priority Needs and Outcomes	Clients' perspectives on what their priority needs are and how they would like their lives to improve with respect to a certain area which the IRC is considering programming	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team; the relevant Technical Advisors and the Grants Unit
Preferred Responses	Clients' preferences for the type of services that they would like to receive to address those needs	Always inform the Programme Teame; the relevant Technical Advisors and the Grants Unit

Start-up		
Theme	**Description**	**Who needs to know?**
Engagement Preferences	Clients' preferences about how they would like to communicate with the IRC and / or partners and participate in decision making during the upcoming project	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team and the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, and, if relevant, the Accountability focal point.

Implementation		
Theme	**Description**	**Who needs to know?**
Relevance	Whether clients think that the service is relevant to their priority needs	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team; the relevant Technical Advisors and the Grants Unit
Quality	Whether clients think that the quality of the service meets their expectations	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team; the relevant Technical Advisors and the Grants Unit
Impact	Whether clients think that the service will have the impact that they want to see upon their lives	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team and the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, and, if relevant, the Accountability focal point.
Access, Safety and Fair Treatment	Whether clients think that they are able to access the service without barriers, whether they feel safe when accessing the service and / or think that the aid is provided fairly (on the basis of need and without discrimination)	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team; the relevant Technical Advisors and, if necessary or relevant, the Grants Unit
Respectful and Dignified Treatment	Whether clients think that the service is being delivered by the IRC (and / or partners, if applicable) in a respectful and dignified way	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team and the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and if necessary the relevant Technical Advisor
Voice and Empowerment	Whether clients think that they have an ability to influence relevant programming decisions made by the IRC's (and / or partners, if applicable)	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team and the Monitoring and Evaluation

	and whether they are being empowered to meet their own needs	Unit and, if necessary, the relevant Technical Advisor

Close-Out		
Theme	**Description**	**Who needs to know?**
Relevance	Whether clients thought that the service was relevant to their priority needs and what type of services they would want to receive in the future	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team; the relevant Technical Advisors and the Grants Unit
Quality	Whether clients thought that the quality of the service met their expectations	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team; the relevant Technical Advisors and the Grants Unit
Impact	Whether clients thought that the service had the impact that they wanted to see upon their lives and whether they need any additional aid to achieving this	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team and the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, and, if relevant, the Accountability focal point.
Access, Safety and Fair Treatment	Whether clients thought that they were able to access the service without barriers, whether they felt safe when accessing the service and / or thought that the aid was provided fairly (on the basis of need and without discrimination)	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team; the relevant Technical Advisors and, if necessary or relevant, the Grants Unit
Respectful and Dignified Treatment	Whether clients thought that the service was being delivered by the IRC (and / or partners, if applicable) in a respectful and dignified way	Always inform the In Country Programme Team and the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and, if necessary, the relevant Technical Advisor
Voice and Empowerment	Whether clients thought that they had an ability to influence relevant programming decisions made by the IRC (and / or partners, if applicable) and whether they have been empowered to meet their own needs	Always inform the In-Country Programme Team and the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and, if necessary, the relevant Technical Advisor

Tool 1 / Annex 2:
Writing Questions to Proactively Collect Client Feedback

What is the purpose of this Resource?

The aim of this Guidance is to help IRC country teams determine the key things to avoid (and what to seek instead!) when designing questions to use in proactive feedback channels. It also provides a list of illustrative questions for client surveys, focus group discussions and individual interviews, and further advice on how teams could adapt those questions to their own context.

Key Considerations in Question Design

Table 1: What to avoid and what to seek?

Avoid:	Example	Seek:	Example	Rationale
11 or more questions	"Question 32: Do you think there are any people in this camp who cannot access the IRC health clinic?"	A maximum of 10 questions	"Question 8, which is the last one in this survey: Do you think there are any people in this camp who cannot access the IRC health clinic?"	Research shows that after about 8-10 questions, respondents' attention span drops significantly. We want to avoid undue burden upon clients and maximise efficiency for staff
Leading questions	"Why are you so happy and pleased with the consultation at the IRC health clinic you just received?"	Neutrally formulated questions	"Were you satisfied with the quality of the consultation at the IRC health clinic you just received?"	We want to ask questions in as neutral way as possible, so clients can feel free to answer in any way that they want
Questions with multiple components	"How do you rate the quality, relevance, and impact of the GBV awareness-raising sessions? And do you think that those services are provided in a respectful and dignified way?"	Questions with single components	"Do you think the GBV awareness raising sessions are provided in a respectful and dignified way"	We want to ask simple, clear questions which clients can respond to one at a time. If a question has multiple components, it will not be so clear to the person administering the survey what part of the question they are responding to.

Avoid:	Example	Seek:	Example	Rationale
Referring to multiple services at the same time	"How do you consider the impact of IRC services provided in this camp?"	Questions referring to a specific service	"Do the IRC sanitation awareness sessions increase your knowledge and understanding about how to protect the health of yourself and your family?"	We want to obtain information which is specific to the particular service we're delivering, so we can know clients views on that service. Asking clients generally about their views of IRC services more broadly is unlikely to produce actionable information
Confusing the format of questions suited to one type of channel compared to another	Survey: "People in this camp tell us that they're dissatisfied with the services available in the health clinic. Why do you think that is?" Focus Group Discussion: "Do the services provided at the health clinic address the priority health needs of yourself and your family?"	Choosing the right format of questions for the channel you're using	Survey: "Do the services provided at the health clinic address the priority health needs of yourself and your family?" Focus Group Discussion: "People in this camp tell us that they're dissatisfied with the services available in the health clinic. Why do you think that is?"	In order to get the best results from the feedback channel, the question needs to be worded in a way that is appropriate to that feedback channel. Surveys are great for closed questions, or where we want a single answer provided to an open question. Whereas in a focus group discussion we want to use the question to prompt discussion.
Mismatching question and answer formats	Question: "How satisfied are you with the quality of the sanitation awareness raising sessions?" Answer: "Yes, No, Maybe"	Check that you answer format corresponds with the question	Question: "How satisfied are you with the quality of the sanitation awareness raising sessions?" Answer: 5 = very good 4 = good 3 = satisfactory 2 = poor 1 = very poor	We risk clients trying to interpret the answer options in a way that we had not intended, or feeling confused and less willing to participate in the feedback channel. We risk invalidating the data
Not providing people with an option to say that they don't know, are unsure, or don't want to answer	Question: "Does the GBV counselling service meet the needs of all women in this camp that need it?" Answer: "Yes or No"	Check that you provide an option for people to not answer a certain question	Question: "Does the GBV counselling service meet the needs of all women in this camp that need it?" Answer: "Yes, No, Unsure, Prefer not to answer"	We risk clients feeling uncomfortable with participating in the feedback channel. We risk invalidating the data if a client chooses an answer option which doesn’t fully represent the way they feel, because they receive no other

Avoid:	Example	Seek:	Example	Rationale
				option which more accurately reflects their views

Table 2: Open versus Closed Questions

Format	Example Questions	Example Feedback Channel	Example Answer Format	Pros	Cons
Closed Questions	How would you rate the quality of the service?	Survey	Likert scale: 5 = very good 4 = good 3 = satisfactory 2 = poor 1 = very poor	Provides us with data which can be quantified, and therefore it can be (1) tracked over time; (2) aggregated to provide country or regional management with data from across multiple programmes; (3) compared to other projects / programmes Relatively easy and quick to administer. Reduces likelihood of bias of interpretation by the person administering the feedback channel	Doesn't provide us with in-depth understanding of the reasons behind the feedback, or how clients would like to see it addressed The data needs to be carefully contextualised to avoid misinterpretation
	Did the quality of the service meet your expectations?	Self-administered feedback form	Yes (score 1) No (score 0) Unsure (do not score)		
Open Questions	Please explain why the quality of the service did not meet your expectations	Survey	Answer: …..	Provides us with more nuanced understanding of the reasons behind feedback and how clients would like to	Requires more time and skill to administer Higher likelihood that the person administering the

	Our recent survey showed that number of people in this camp felt that the service quality didn't meet their expectations. Why do you think that is?	Focus group discussion	Answer: …..	see it addressed	channel might misinterpret the feedback data

Illustrative Questions

The tables below present a number of illustrative questions to help staff design client surveys, focus group discussions and interviews at the different phases of the project cycle. This includes illustrative questions for different sectors and advices on how this can be adapted to different contexts.

We would recommend that you ask many close/ multiple choice type of questions to ease and quicken the analysis of the data you are collecting. However, asking follow-up "open" questions to understand why your clients are providing this or that type of answer can be very useful to interpret client feedback and inform our decisions.
You can adapt this balance of "close' versus "open" questions in your survey depending on the level of information that you need as well as the time and human resources that you have available.

Design Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
Survey	**Priority Needs and Outcomes**	**The IRC is designing a project to provide legal services in your community. Among those services, which one would be your priority?** □ Birth Registration □ Legal status counselling □ Legal status representation □ Legal advices on other matters (please specify) **What specific groups/ categories of people within your community are especially in need for this type of service?** □ Girls	You could complete the text under brackets in the following sentence: **The IRC is designing a project to [*state the objective*] serving [*specify target group]*. Among those services, which one would be your priority?** □ [*State type of service #1*] □ [*State type of service #2*] □ [*State type of service 31*] □ Other (please specify) You would only ask this question if the target group of your project is wide/ flexible. You may also want to adapt the possible responses to different sub-groups of your

Design Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
		□ Women □ Boys □ Men □ Refugees □ Specific minority groups □ People with disabilities □ Other, please specify	intended clients. For instance, if your project is only targeting Refugees under 35, you may ask: **Among the Refugees under 35 years of age living in [*specify the location*], who are the specific groups who are especially in needs if this type of service?** □ Girls below 15 □ Adolescent Girls between 13 and 17 □ Women between 18 and 35 □ Boys below 15 □ Adolescent Boys between 13 and 17 □ Men between 18 and 35 □ Specific minority groups – Please specify □ People with disabilities □ Other, please specify
	Preferred Responses	**Among the services below, what are you top priority needs?** **ERD/ Livelihood** □ Vocational trainings □ Apprenticeship □ Literacy and numeracy training □ Business plan development and support □ Other (please specify) **Health** □ Health information □ Maternal Care □ Paediatric Care □ General/ out-patient medical care □ In-patient Medical care □ Other (please specify)	List as possible responses only the type of services that your project could offer. We recommend that you add an option to respond “other” to record any other service that client would want to receive. If the IRC cannot offer this service, you may try to refer this person to another organisation who can provide it.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Design Phase</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><th>Channel</th><th>Core Feedback Theme</th><th>Question and Answer</th><th>Tips to adapt this to your context</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>(if applicable) What would be your preferred way to receive this type of service/ support?
□ Direct delivery (by IRC)
□ Delivery through a partner organisation (please specify which one)
□ In-kind aid
□ Cash for asset/ cash for work
□ Unconditional cash
□ Cash voucher</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Focus Group Discussion or Individual Interviews</td><td>Priority Needs and Outcomes</td><td>Open Questions:
• What are your top priority needs?
• Who are the group/ categories of people in your community who are the more in needs of assistance?
• How do you expect the IRC/ this project to help you and your community?
• How do you expect this intervention to improve your life?</td><td rowspan="2">Individual Interviews are generally a useful channel to collect feedback from key informants. They could be your direct or indirect clients, or other people or institutions representatives (local authorities, religious leaders, other public institutions or NGOs). You would need to adapt the questions to the information you are interested to collect from them.

Individual interviews are particularly useful at the design phase to collect the perspectives of community leaders or relevant ministries/ authorities about the priority needs and preferred responses. This will also allow you to identify any gap that may exist in terms of aid/ service provision and to avoid duplication.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Preferred Responses</td><td>Open Questions:
• What types of services or support would better help you meet your priority needs?
• Where would you prefer to access those services?
• How would like those services/ aid to be provided (directly by the IRC or through a partner organisation/ in-kind or through cash/ voucher)?</td></tr>
</table>

Start-up Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
Survey	**Engagement Preferences**	**How (through which channel) would you prefer to receive information on this project?** □ Community meetings □ Local radio □ Billboards □ Leaflet and brochures □ SMS □ Email □ Social media □ Through IRC staff □ Through community volunteers □ Through local leaders □ Other – please specify **If you wanted to make a suggestion or to provide a feedback to the IRC, how would you like to do this?** □ Personally at IRC office □ Personally with field staff □ Calling IRC phone line □ Via SMS or WhatsApp □ Through Social media □ Through email □ Through a suggestion box □ Through community leaders □ Other – please specify **How would you like to receive the answer?** □ Personally at IRC office □ Personally with field staff □ Calling IRC phone line □ Via SMS or WhatsApp □ Through Social media □ Through email	List as possible responses only the channels that are appropriate to your context and that you know having the resources to implement.

Start-up Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
		□ Through a suggestion box □ Through community leaders □ Other – please specify **What channels would you prefer to use if you wanted to report a sensitive information (allegation of corruption or abuse for example)?** □ Personally at IRC office □ Personally with field staff □ Calling IRC phone line □ Via SMS or WhatsApp □ Through Social media □ Through email □ Through a suggestion box □ Through community leaders □ Other – please specify □ I would not want to report it – Please explain	
Focus Group Discussion or Individual Interviews	**Engagement Preferences**	**Open Questions:** • Will everybody in your community be able to access the information provided by the IRC through (list the communication channels identified)? If not, which specific groups would not be able to access this information? What can be done to facilitate access to information for this group of people? • Will everybody in your community be able to provide a feedback to the IRC through *[list the feedback channels identified]?* If not what specific groups are likely no to be able to lodge a feedback? What can be done to help this specific group to provide feedback to the IRC? • Will everybody in your community be able to report a sensitive complaint to the IRC using the *[list the different channels identified]* If not what specific groups are likely no to be able to	Individual Interviews are generally a useful channel to collect feedback from Key Informants. They could be your direct or indirect clients, or other people or institutions representatives (local authorities, religious leaders, other public institutions or NGOs). You would need to adapt the questions to the information you are interested to collect from them. Conducting Individual Interviews with leaders from different communities/ religions/ women organisations representatives, etc. could prove to be really useful at the start-up phase of a project to understand the barriers that certain groups may have to access information or to communicate with the IRC.

Start-up Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
		lodge a sensitive complaint? What can be done to help this specific group to provide sensitive feedback to the IRC?	

Implementation and Close-Out[1] Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
Survey	**Relevance**	**Among the different services provided by the IRC, which one is the more relevant to you?** **ERD/ Livelihoods** □ Vocational trainings □ Apprenticeship □ Literacy and numeracy training □ Business Plans development and support **Health** □ Health information □ Maternal Care □ Paediatric Care □ General/ Out-patient medical care □ In Patient Medical care **How relevant to you are the different services below provided by the IRC?** **ERD/ Livelihood** □ Vocational trainings □ Apprenticeship □ Literacy and numeracy training □ Business Plans development and support	List as possible responses the services that your project/ programme or the IRC is providing in this location. You could also ask your clients about the relevance of different delivery mechanism (in-kind, voucher, cash) or implementation models (directly by the IRC, through a partner organisation) to meet their needs You could complete the text under brackets in the following sentence: **How relevant to you are the different services below provided by the IRC?** *State type of service #1*] □ Not at all □ Not very much □ Somewhat satisfied □ Mostly satisfied □ Completely satisfied

[1] The illustrative questions are drafted for the implementation phase. Most of the questions can also be asked at the Close-Out phase of the project but may be rephrased in the past tense.

Implementation and Close-Out[1] Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
		□ Cash grant **Health** □ Health information □ Maternal Care □ Paediatric Care □ General/ Out-patient medical care □ In Patient Medical care □ Not at all □ Not very much □ Somewhat satisfied □ Mostly satisfied □ Completely satisfied	[*State type of service #2*] □ Not at all □ Not very much □ Somewhat satisfied □ Mostly satisfied □ Completely satisfied [*State type of service 31*] □ Not at all □ Not very much □ Somewhat satisfied □ Mostly satisfied □ Completely satisfied
Survey	**Quality**	**How satisfied are you about the quality of the different services below provided by the IRC?** **ERD/ Livelihood** □ Vocational trainings □ Apprenticeship □ Literacy and numeracy training □ Business Plans development and support □ Cash grant **Health** □ Health information □ Maternal Care □ Paediatric Care □ General/ Out-patient medical care □ In Patient Medical care □ Not at all	Depending on the type of services you are providing, you can include additional questions to assess the level of your clients' satisfaction around issues such as the timeliness, cleanliness, friendliness, quality of the information, quality of the product/ in-kind aid or the level of competence of the trainers

Implementation and Close-Out[1] Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
		□ Not very much □ Somewhat satisfied □ Mostly satisfied □ Completely satisfied **How satisfied are you by the quality of the information and advices you received from the IRC staff?** □ Not at all □ Not very much □ Somewhat satisfied □ Mostly satisfied □ Completely satisfied	
Survey	**Impact**	**Do you think that the service you received from the IRC will help you live without aid in the future?** □ Yes □ No □ Don't want to answer **Do you think that the service you received from the IRC will improve your quality of life in the future?** □ Yes □ No □ Don't want to answer	The notion of impact may be difficult to translate or to be understood by clients. Engage with your field/ local staff to find the best way to convey this notion in way that is appropriate to your context/ your client group.
Survey	**Access, Safety and Fair Treatment**	**Was it easy for you to get to the location/ access the IRC service?** □ Yes □ No □ Don't want to answer	In certain contexts, issues of access, safety and exclusion could be predominant and represent a main barrier for clients to access the IRC services. Liaise with your Protection Team to develop the questions and involve them in the analysis of the data collected.

Implementation and Close-Out[1] Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
		How comfortable and safe did you feel when coming to the location/ to access the IRC services? □ Not at all □ Not very much □ Somewhat □ Mostly □ Completely □ Don't want to answer **Do you know of any category of people in your community who would be entitled to receive IRC services but doesn't?** □ Yes – Please specify who and why. □ No □ Don't want to answer	Most of those questions can be follow-up by "open" questions that could give you important information about why the client is providing this type of response. For example you may want to ask clients who are answering that it was not easy to access the IRC services, why this was the case. The same could apply to clients who said that they did not feel safe when coming to the location of IRC services.
Survey	**Respectful and Dignified Treatment**	**Do you think that the IRC staff treated you and/or other people with respect?** □ Yes □ No □ Don't want to answer **Health** **How satisfied are you by the friendliness and the respect that the health personnel demonstrated at the facility?** □ Not at all □ Not very much □ Somewhat □ Mostly □ Completely □ Don't want to answer **How satisfied are you by the level of privacy during the time you spent with the health care provider?**	Responses to this question in particular (but to all other questions as well) may be biased if asked by an IRC staff member. Clients may be shy or not feel comfortable responding that they are not satisfied by the way they are treated by IRC staff or may fear repercussions. Consider recruiting independent enumerators to conduct the client survey to reduced potential positive bias in the responses you will get. It might also be interesting to compare the responses you obtain from your clients when surveys are conducted by IRC staff and when they are conducted by external enumerators and analyse discrepancies.

Implementation and Close-Out[1] Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
		□ Not at all □ Not very much □ Somewhat □ Mostly □ Completely □ Don't want to answer	
Survey	**Voice and Empowerment**	**Do you think that the IRC takes people's views into account when implementing this project?** □ Not at all □ Not very much □ Somewhat □ Mostly □ Completely □ Don't want to answer **How satisfied are you about the type of channels in place for clients to give their feedback or lodge a complaint to the IRC?** □ Yes □ No □ Don't want to answer **Have you already used one of those channels to provide feedback/ or lodge a complaint to the IRC?** □ Yes □ No □ Don't want to answer **If yes, through what channel?** □ Hotline □ Suggestion box □ SMS □ Email	You would only list as potential responses the list of feedback channels that were available in your programme/project/ location.

Implementation and Close-Out[1] Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	**Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
		□ Office walk-in □ Social media □ Other, please specify □ □ **Have you received a response from the IRC as a response to your feedback?** □ Yes □ No □ Don't want to answer □ □ **If Yes: Were you satisfied by the response you received from the IRC?** □ Yes □ No □ Don't want to answer	

Implementation and Close-Out[2] Phase			
Channel	**Core Feedback Theme**	□ **Question and Answer**	**Tips to adapt this to your context**
Focus Group Discussion or Individual Interviews	**Relevance**	**Open Questions:** • What other type of services would you want to receive from the IRC? • Why are those other type of service relevant to you/ your community?	You would only ask such questions about Access, Safety and Fair Treatment, Respectful and Dignified Treatment and Voice and Empowerment if and to clients groups who seem to have indicated a level of dissatisfaction.
	Quality	**Open Questions:** • What can be done to improve the quality of this particular service?	

[2] The illustrative questions are drafted for the implementation phase. Most of the questions can also be asked at the Close-Out phase of the project but may be rephrased in the past tense.

		• What are the most important criteria that determine the quality of the service? (For example timeliness, cleanliness, friendliness, quality of the information, quality of the product/ in-kind aid, competence of the trainers, etc.)	Individual Interviews are generally a useful channel to collect feedback from Key Informants. They could be your direct or indirect clients, or other people or institutions representatives (local authorities, religious leaders, other public institutions or NGOs). You would need to adapt the questions to the information you are interested to collect from them. As such, not all the Core Feedback Themes may be relevant (e.g. questions on Quality or Respectful and Dignified Treatment would often not apply).
	Impact	**Open Questions:** • What else could the IRC do to increase the impact its services will have for community?	
	Access, Safety and Fair Treatment	**Open Questions:** • Why was it difficult for you to access the IRC services? • What can be done to ease your access to the IRC services?	
	Respectful and Dignified Treatment	**Open Questions:** • Why are you not generally satisfied about the way you are treated by IRC staff? • What do you think can be done to improve this?	
	Voice and Empowerment	**Open Questions:** • What can the IRC do to communicate better with its clients? • Are there any additional channels that the IRC should consider for clients to share their feedback? • Is there any additional recommendation you would give to the IRC to improve the quality and efficiency of its client feedback mechanism? • What else can the IRC do to involve clients in the decision making process?	

Tool 1 / Annex 3:
Template for Designing Feedback Channels

Channel #	**Channel (specify)**	**Client Group type**	**Client Group (Specify)**	**Client sub-group (Specify)**	**Core Feedback Themes (Specify)**	**Frequency**	**Timing (Specify if relevant)**	**Who is responsible to administer the Channel**
1	[Insert type of Feedback Channel]	[Insert type of client #1]	[Insert description of Client group#1]	[Insert description of Client sub-group#1]	[Insert selected Core Themes]	[Insert Frequency]	[Specify time]	[Specify person responsible]
				[Insert description of Client sub-group#2]				
		[Insert type of client #2]	[Insert description of Client group#2]	[Insert description of Client sub-group#1]				
				[Insert description of Client sub-group#2]				

Tool 2:
Feedback Registry and Feedback Recording and Classification

Access the Excel Template of the Feedback Registry

What is the purpose of this Resource?

This guidance aims at helping IRC staff to record and classify feedback (complaints, compliments, questions, requests etc.) that they received from their clients through an open or reactive feedback channel (Suggestion Box, SMS, hotline etc.). It details and explains the feedback data that needs to be recorded and provides a framework for the management and documentation of each client feedback from the time it is received to the time the IRC provide a response to the client.

How should it be used?

This guidance details all the information that needs to be recorded in the Feedback Registry of the Client-Responsiveness Resource Kit. It describes the type of data that staff designated as “client feedback focal points” need to record important information about the client and the feedback received. It also provides a framework for staff to categorise the different type of feedback received, to assign different priority levels and to record the type of response that the IRC is expected to provide to that feedback. It also serves as a case management tool, allowing teams to record the type of response or action that was taken as a result of a client feedback, the time it took the IRC to respond and the clients’ level of satisfaction with the response provided.

How to record client feedback into the Feedback Registry Tool (Tool #2)?

1. **Feedback Registration details**
   - 1.1. Feedback serial number: This is a unique number that is given to each piece of feedback received. It will help the classification and case management of the feedback received;
   - 1.2. Date: Indicate the date the feedback was received / recorded;
   - 1.3. Name of registrar: Indicate the name of the IRC staff member who recorded the feedback;
   - 1.4. Status of the Feedback: Indicate if the feedback has been *actioned* (meaning a response has been provided to the client and the case is closed), is *under review*,(meaning you are currently looking at it and are yet to decide what action to take) or has been *referred externally* (to another organisation, meaning that the case management of this feedback is no longer within IRC’s responsibility), or if this is a *random or junk message* (a message with no meaning or no relation to humanitarian services that can be discarded).

2. **Client Information**
   - 2.1. Name of client (if known): Indicate the name of the client if you know it;
   - 2.2. Request to remain anonymous: Indicate if the client expressed that he / she wanted to remain anonymous (select between, yes, no, not sure). It is important to inform our clients that if they want to receive an individual response to their feedback, they can choose to remain anonymous but that we would need to know how and through whom we could provide our response. For this to be possible, they would need to provide us with the name and contact of a representative or proxy (this could be another member of the community, an organisation etc.) to whom the IRC can communicate its response;
   - 2.3. Gender: This gives you 3 options (male / female / unknown)

2.4. Age: For ease of data analysis, it is preferable to use age brackets (e.g. 17 and below, 18-35, 36-65, 66 and above). These brackets should be adapted to your specific programme / context;
2.5. Nationality: If relevant to your context or programme, indicate the nationality of the client;
2.6. Ethnic or socio-economic group: If relevant to your context or programme, indicate the ethnic or socio-economic status of the client;

2.7. Type of client: Indicate if the feedback has been lodged by:

- *A Direct Client*: A person or institution (e.g. partner organisations, government institutions) who is receiving the IRC aid and / or services. Examples include: patients in IRC clinics; staff of government and non-government organisations who IRC is training, supporting or equipping; people receiving cash assistance from the IRC;
- *An Intended Client*: A person or institution who is targeted by planned or existing IRC aid / services). Examples include: people who are living in the catchment area of IRC programmes and meet the eligibility criteria to receive aid or use IRC services. Staff of government and non-government organisations who are working in specific sector and in the catchment area of IRC's intended programmes and who we are considering training, supporting or equipping;
- *An Indirect Client:* People and other institutions who are not directly receiving assistance from the IRC, but who are connected to people or institution which are, and therefore might potentially also benefit in some way from the IRC's provision of assistance to those people/ institutions . Examples include: families and dependants of IRC's direct clients (e.g. husbands or children of a woman participating in a livelihoods skill-development programme, who may also benefit from the additional income that the woman is able to earn as a result of participating in the training programme. A partner organisation of, or another department within an institution which is directly targeted by the aid and services provided by the IRC, who may also benefit in some extent from the organisational capacity development support services provided by the IRC;
- *Other*: People and institutions who are not receiving and who are not connected to people or institutions which are receiving assistance from the IRC.

3. Contact details

3.1. Client preferred channel for a response: Indicate the preferred means of communication for the client to receive a response from the IRC. This could include different options, for instance: in person, by phone, by email, by SMS, through a third party, other;
3.2. Client telephone number: If known, please indicate the phone number of the client or his / her proxy / representative;
3.3. Client email address: If known, please indicate the email address of the client or his / her proxy / representative;
3.4. Additional information: Indicate any additional information that may be required to contact the client.

4. Feedback General Information

4.1. Feedback channel: Indicate the channel through which the feedback was received (Hotline, SMS, Office Walk-in etc.)
4.2. Date to which the feedback relates: If the feedback relates to a specific event or incident, indicate when this happened;
4.3. Location to which the feedback relates: If the feedback relates to a specific location, indicate the specific location;
4.4. Sector: Indicate which sector the feedback relates to (Health, Education, ERD etc.)
4.5. Feedback summary: Record a short description of the content of the feedback.

5. Case Management

Classification

5.1. Feedback Category: Indicate the category of the feedback received (see table 1 below);
5.2. Feedback Priority: Assign a level of priority for the feedback received (see table 2 below);

Referral

5.3. Internal Referral completed: Indicate if the feedback was referred internally (within the IRC);
5.4. External Referral needed: Indicate if the feedback needs to be referred externally (e.g. to another organisation);
5.5. Referred to (name and position): Indicate the name and the position of the person you are referring the feedback to;

Response required

5.6. Date of the decision: Indicate the date the decision was made about what action to take or what response to give;
5.7. Type of response required: Indicate the type of response that is required from the IRC (see table 3). This is informed by the decision that was made on how to respond to the feedback.

6. Closing the Loop

6.1. Closing date: Indicate the date when the response / action taken by the IRC was communicated to the client or his / her representative
6.2. Action taken: Record the type of decision and action that was taken by the IRC in response to the feedback received.
6.3. Name of staff: Indicate the name of the staff who communicated the IRC response to the client or his / her representative;
6.4. Number of days between the date the feedback was given and the date the response was given to the client: Indicate the duration from the time the feedback was received to the time the response was communicated to the client;

Table 1: Feedback Categories

Category	Type of category	Explanation
1	Request for information	Information request about the type of aid and service available at the IRC, the location or timing of a specific service or activity, questions about targeting or registration criteria etc.
2	Request for assistance	Request to be included into one of the IRC aid or service provision programmes
3	Programmatic complaint – minor dissatisfaction	Complaint about aid entitlement which the client believes is missing or delayed, the timing or location of IRC services, attitude or timelines of IRC staff and partners
4	Programmatic complaint – major dissatisfaction	Complaint about lack of access to aid distribution or service location, exclusion of a minority / vulnerable group, extortion of aid by a third party, refusal by IRC staff to listen or acknowledge a complaint or inability of a client to reach the feedback hotline
5	Breach of the IRC Code of Conduct	Allegations of child abuse, sexual exploitation, demand by a staff for payment to receive aid, theft or fraud committed by a member of staff, or threat received from a staff
6	Allegations of abuse or exploitation against non IRC staff or representative	Allegations of child abuse, sexual exploitation, theft or fraud committed by a someone who is not a staff or partner of the IRC (other member of the community, armed group, official, other organisations, etc)
7	General feedback / other	Opinions, compliments, comments, ideas, suggestions, expectation and spam

Table 2: Feedback priority

Priority	Priority level	Explanation
1	Critical	Feedback referring to a breach of code of conduct and / or any kind of allegation of abuse and exploitation against IRC and non IRC staff
2	High	Feedback that either 1) indicates a risk for a client, 2) affects a large number of people, 3) requests a timely response / action, 4) risks affecting the IRC reputation
3	Medium	Routine enquiry, request or complaint
4	Low	Feedback that doesn’t require an individual response / action and that is not time-bound

Table 3: Type of response / action to be provided by the IRC

Response	Type of response	Explanation
1	Send an apology	Acknowledgment of a fault or error, expression of a regret
2	Corrective decision / action	Making change in a programmatic decision or action (e.g. inclusion of a client into a programme, changing the time or location for service delivery)
3	Provide an explanation	Providing additional information for a decision or an action taken by the IRC
4	External referral	Request that is outside the scope or power of influence of the IRC but that falls under the mandate of another organisation for which we have a point of contact
5	Provide goods / services	Providing goods or services that were not received by our clients
6	Provide information	Answer a question or a request for information
7	Change policy	Change of rule or guidelines at country level
9	Drop the request / complaint	Request or complaint that is out of the scope or power of influence of the IRC and for which we have no point of contact in another organisation that would have the mandate to respond (no referral possible). Clients should still be informed, when possible, that we are unable to handle their request or to refer it to anyone.
10	Other	Any other type of response – please specify

Tool 3:
Feedback Logbook

What is the purpose of this Resource?

The purpose of this logbook is to support IRC staff, especially those at the front-line of our operations and in regular contact with our clients, to record the feedback, comments, questions or complaints that clients have shared with them in the course of implementing the project.

This logbook can also be used by staff to record and share direct observations made during field work / a field visit that could be useful to for programmatic or strategic decision making.

How should it be used?

Staff should fill the following information into the logbook:

Table 1: Administrative Information

1. The date when the feedback or observation was made;
2. The name of the staff who recorded the feedback;
3. The location where the feedback was received or where the observation was made;
4. The name of the sector that the feedback or observation is related to;
5. The name of the project to which the feedback or observation is related to;
6. The name of the client or community group who gave the feedback (if available and as long as there were no requests from the clients / community group to remain anonymous);
7. A means of contact should also be recorded, if possible, to provide a response to the client / community group;

Table 2: Feedback

8. A short description of a) the feedback received from an individual or a group of direct or indirect clients or b) a direct observation the team member made during field work / a field visit. A short description of the feedback received or the observation made should be recorded in column 2 or 3 of the logbook.

Table 3: Feedback Referral & Follow-Up

9. Feedback shared/ referred: Indicate (yes or no) if the feedback was referred to someone or shared during a meeting or other event.
10. If yes, indicate with who or during which meeting/event the feedback was referred/ shared: Indicate the name of the staff to whom the feedback was referred to or the name of the meeting/ event during which the feedback was shared. The date when the feedback or observation was referred / shared;
11. Action / Follow up needed: Indicate if the feedback requires an action or decision by the IRC and whether a response needs to be provided to the client / community group;
12. Recorded into the Feedback Registry: If the feedback requires an action or decision by the IRC, it should be formally recorded into the feedback registry (Tool #2 of the Resource Kit).

Reference #: IRCK/ERD/00001

Table 1: Administrative Information

1. Date *when the feedback or observation was made*	
2. Name of staff member *who recorded the feedback*	
3. Location *where the feedback was received or where the observation was made*	
4. Sector *that the feedback or observation is related to*	
5. Project *to which the feedback or observation is related to*	
6. Name of the client / community group *who gave the feedback*	
7. Means of contact *to provide a response to the client*	

Table 2: Feedback

8. Description of the feedback or observation made

Table 3: Feedback Referral & Follow-Up

9. Feedback referred or shared	☐ Yes	☐ No
10. If yes, indicate **with whom or during which meeting/event the feedback was referred/ shared**		
11. Date when the feedback was referred/ shared		
12. Action / follow-up needed	☐ Yes	☐ No
13. Recorded in the Feedback Registry	☐ Yes	☐ No

Tool 4: Feedback Data Visualization Template

…. Will be available in September 2018

Guidance 1:
A Quick Guide for IRC Proposal Writing

I. Applicability

What's this for?
This guidance note is intended to support country teams (and those in AMU and GPP advising them on business development) in integrating Client-Responsiveness into their proposals.

Why use it?
Many of IRC's major donors have requirements that their grant applicants must demonstrate how the proposed project promotes accountability and participation: integrating Client-Responsiveness will thus improve competitiveness of the proposal, as well as contribute to its broader effectiveness and relevance.

How to use it?
The prompts below are designed to help you to draft a coherent and comprehensive response to questions from your donors about how you are involving clients and being accountable towards them. We have also provided a few further tips for you to consider when drafting your proposal narratives, budgets and work-plans.

II. Donor Questions and How to Respond to Them

Typical Donor Question 1: Explain how beneficiaries have been involved in the design of the action

Advice on how to respond:

- Describe **how you have developed an understanding of your intended clients' perspectives**, in terms of: what *they* see as their priority needs, what the outcomes are that *they* would most like to see, and what preferences *they* have for how IRC should respond to address their needs. Examples of sources of information may include (but are not limited to):
    - Feedback data from past projects
    - Reports from other agencies or the government on client preferences, aspirations and expectations;
    - New information about client perspectives that you have specifically collected to inform the design of the project through, e.g.: focus group discussions, key informant interviews or surveys.
- Describe **how you have sought to understand differences in perspectives** between men and women, people of different ages, and people of different nationalities or ethnic or social backgrounds including minority and / or vulnerable groups.
- Demonstrate **how the perspectives of your intended clients have informed the design of the project**: in what way did their perspectives influence your interpretation of the Theory of Change and the donor Call for Proposals? How are their perspectives reflected in the design?
- Describe **how you have or will explain to clients how their feedback has influenced the design of the project**, and how you will communicate back to them about whether the planned project is funded.

Further Tips:

- You may see the target group referred to by the donor as “beneficiaries”, “communities”, “affected people” or similar. IRC uses the word “client” as it conveys our belief that the people we serve have the right to influence the decisions which affect them and the level of respect we have for them and their perspectives.
- A needs assessment isn’t necessarily evidence of beneficiaries being involved in the action, unless you have asked them about their opinions on which are their priority needs and outcomes and their preferences for the type of aid and services that they want to receive to address those needs

Typical Donor Question 2: Explain how beneficiary feedback will inform the implementation of the action

Advice on how to respond:

- Describe **how you will select the channels / mechanisms through which you will collect client feedback** during the implementation of the project. Specifically, describe how you will ask clients for their perspectives about how they would prefer to communicate with IRC and share their feedback or a sensitive information or complaints. (FYI: IRC’s Client Responsiveness Team has a tool which can help you to make this selection).
- Describe **which proactive methods / channels you will use (or expect to use after consultation with clients) to collect client feedback** (e.g. focus group discussions, surveys, key informant interviews etc.); whose feedback you will collect through that channel (you may use different channels for different groups of people); and how often you will administer that feedback channel (we advise you proactively collect feedback at least at the mid-term of a 12 month project, and at least yearly for longer projects).
- Describe **which reactive methods / channels you will use (or expect to use, after consultation with clients) to collect feedback** (e.g. suggestions boxes, hotlines, open office hours etc.). Such methods of feedback collection are useful to identify challenges and to mitigate risks in programming, but not a sufficient method on their own of obtaining actionable client feedback.
- Describe **how you will enable staff to share the feedback that they hear from clients day-to-day** with the rest of the team and the team leader / decision makers (e.g. through team meetings, a whiteboard in the team room, log books etc.)
- Describe **how you will review and take decisions about how to respond to feedback** (e.g. recording and aggregating feedback data from reactive channels and ad hoc feedback heard by staff and reviewing it at the monthly management meeting; holding a specific meeting every quarter or six-months to review feedback collected through proactive channels). You should make reference to how you will record your decisions and the agreed plan of action for how to respond. If you will involve the clients in the decision-making process, explain how you will do this.
- Describe **how you will explain to clients how their feedback influenced the implementation of the project**.

III. Designing for success: Additional advice

- Be careful not to equate monitoring with collecting client feedback.
    - In routine project monitoring we may often ask clients for factual information (whether they have received a service, for example); this differs from cases in which we are asking them for their perspective (whether they thought that the service was of good quality or relevant, for example).

  - Quite often we monitor our projects to confirm whether our activities have been implemented as planned, and whether we have reached pre-selected indicators that signal progress towards the outcomes that *we* have selected. Essentially, we are looking for evidence that our project is meeting our expectations of success. Under our commitment to Client-Responsiveness, we want to check whether our projects and programmes are meeting our *clients'* expectations and vision of success.

- Ensure that you build the following into your proposal, to enable you to collect and use client feedback during the course of the project:
  - **Identify who will be responsible for ensuring Client-Responsiveness** (this should usually be the Programme Coordinator, or similar position responsible for making decisions about how the programme is designed and run); and who else will play a role in supporting Client-Responsiveness (for example, Monitoring and Evaluation staff can play a role in helping to collect and manage data). Reflect these responsibilities in organisation-charts you share with the donor, and in job descriptions once the project is set up. Ensure that you have staff funded to perform these functions. Those who are looking for a more-advanced approach to Client-Responsiveness might consider staffing a Client-Responsiveness Manager: someone responsible for overseeing the process of collecting and using feedback and for acting as a community liaison.
  - **Build in financial resources and flexibility into your budgets.** This doesn't have to be much! But think about what resources you will need to proactively collect feedback during the project (an external data collection firm? Vehicle use? Tablets?), and to manage your reactive channels (communication costs, such as line rental or call charges). You will also benefit from ensuring that you have built flexibility into your budget to allow you to easily adapt the project based on client feedback which you have decided to act upon.
  - **Identify in your workplan when you will proactively collect feedback and when you will review it.** This can be a really helpful way of tangibly showing your donors what you will do to involve clients and hold yourselves accountable to them. It also helps ensure that Client-Responsiveness is integrated into the project, and not an after-thought.
  - **Consider building in indicators on Client-Responsiveness into your logframe.** We recommend three indicators for the whole project, which might read something like the following.

    The first two measure your degree of Responsiveness:

    (1) ***% of routine project / grant review meetings at which client feedback is reviewed and used to inform programming decisions*** (Means of Verification: Decision Tracker records); and

    (2) ***% incidents of client feedback that are responded to within the agreed, appropriate timeframe*** (Means of Verification: reactive feedback response records; for reference, see Tool 2 Guidance for timelines within which to respond to feedback of different priority classifications).

    The third indicator measures the degree of Client Satisfaction:

    (3) ***% of clients who responded favourably (satisfied / very satisfied) about IRC's performance against the IRC Core Feedback Themes*** (Means of Verification: proactive feedback collection records).

    The Core Feedback Themes are a set of standardised themes to structure feedback collection and management: Tool 1/Annex 1 - IRC Core Feedback Themes

IV. Drafting the Budget: Resource Considerations for Client-Responsiveness

1. Staffing

Resources Considerations for:	What to consider
Designing Feedback Channels	Consider staff time to collect information about client engagement preferences (clients' preferred channels to provide feedback) – See Core Feedback Themes Include time for all staff to attend the workshop/ meeting to Select and Design the Feedback Channels (see Tool 1) that the team will use to collect client feedback during the project start-up/ implementation and close-out phases. Depending on the complexity/ length of the project/ programme, this may take between half a day for single sector/ location project or up to 2 days for multi-sector/ multi-location projects.
Implementing Proactive Feedback Channels*	Include staff time (including M&E, Technical Coordinator and relevant other staff members) to design the questions for all proactive channels selected. This could take between half a day to up to 2-3 days, depending on the number of proactive channels selected and the complexity of the project. Include staff time (M&E or project staff) to collect feedback from clients (this may be reduced if the team uses external enumerators). Include staff time (M&E or project staff) to record all data collected (this may be reduced if data is collected through mobile/ tablets)
Implementing Reactive Feedback Channels*	Include staff time (including M&E, Technical Coordinator and relevant other staff members) to write the operating protocols for all reactive feedback channels selected. This could take between half a day to up to 2-3 days, depending on the number of proactive channels selected and the complexity of the project. Include staff time to record and manage feedback received through all reactive channels (See Tool 2: Feedback Registry) If you choose to set up a hotline, you should budget for phone operator(s).
Data Interpretation	Include staff time (M&E or project staff) to present all data collected (this may be reduced if data is collected through mobile/ tablets). Include team management and staff time to interpret client feedback received through the different channels and to make decisions about how to respond.
Closing the Loop (Responding the Client Feedback)	Include team management and staff time to make adaptations to programme activities and take corrective measures requested by clients Include staff time (M&E or project staff) to communicate the IRC response to clients (see Closing the Loop Guidance)

Review (Monitoring and learning)	Consider staff time to review (e.g. every 6 or 12 months) the implementation of their feedback cycle

*See Definition page

2. Technical support

Resources Considerations for:	What to consider
Designing Feedback Channels	Depending on the capacity of the team and the complexity of the project, consider budgeting for a technical advisor's time to facilitate the Selection and Design of Feedback Channels meeting/ workshop. This would require up to 5 days (excluding travel) for complex projects
Implementing Proactive Feedback Channels*	Depending on the capacity of the team and the complexity of the project, consider budgeting for a technical advisor's time to review the questionnaires.
Implementing Reactive Feedback Channels*	N/A
Data Interpretation	Consider requesting TA support on data presentation/ disaggregation and assist with interpretation and decision making.
Closing the Loop (Responding the Client Feedback)	N/A
Review (Monitoring and learning)	Consider budgeting/ requesting for TA support for any important review meeting

3. Consultancies and Contracts

Resources Considerations for:	What to consider
Designing Feedback Channels	Consider budgeting for enumerators to collect information about client engagement preferences Depending on the capacity of the team and the complexity of the project, consider budgeting for a consultant to facilitate the Selection and Design of Feedback Channels workshop. This would require up to 5 days (excluding travel) for complex projects.
Implementing Proactive Feedback Channels*	Consider budgeting for enumerators to conduct the surveys, Focus Group Discussions, etc.
Implementing Reactive Feedback Channels*	N/A

Data Interpretation	Consider budgeting for a consultant to provide support on data presentation/ disaggregation and assist with interpretation and decision making
Closing the Loop (Responding the Client Feedback)	N/A
Review (Monitoring and learning)	Consider budgeting for a consultant to support/ facilitate any important review meetings

4. Travel

Resources Considerations for:	**What to consider**
Designing Feedback Channels	Consider staff (or enumerators) travel costs for collecting information about client engagement preferences Budget for staff (and TA/ consultant if needs be) travel costs (including transport, lodging, visas and per diems) to attend the Feedback Channels and Selection and Design workshop
Implementing Proactive Feedback Channels*	Consider staff (or enumerators) travel costs for collecting client feedback
Implementing Reactive Feedback Channels*	N/A
Data Interpretation	Consider budgeting travel costs for staff, clients or other stakeholders to attend data interpretation and/or decision-making meetings.
Closing the Loop (Responding the Client Feedback)	Consider budgeting for staff travel costs to communicate the response to clients
Review (Monitoring and learning)	Consider budgeting travel costs for staff, clients or other stakeholders to attend the review meeting.

5. Equipment

Resources Considerations for:	**What to consider**
Designing Feedback Channels	Consider budgeting for tablets or smartphones and associated costs for collecting client feedback (through in-app surveys and other types of questionnaires)
Implementing Proactive Feedback Channels*	As per above
Implementing Reactive Feedback Channels*	Budget for the specific equipment needed for the reactive channels selected (e.g. box or carpenter to build your suggestions boxes + transport/ installation in site or cost for Hotline installation and communication costs, etc.).

Data Interpretation	N/A
Closing the Loop (Responding the Client Feedback)	Consider budgeting for any equipment or communication cost you may need (poster, SMS, radio spots, etc.) you may be required to communicate the response to large groups of clients.
Review (Monitoring and learning)	N/A

6. Other Activity Costs

Resources Considerations for:	**What to consider**
Designing Feedback Channels	If necessary budget for Feedback Channel Selection and Design workshop, including venue and lunch.
Implementing Proactive Feedback Channels*	N/A
Implementing Reactive Feedback Channels*	If you choose to set up a Stakeholders Reference Group, you should consider budgeting for the meeting and venue-related costs.
Data Interpretation	If necessary budget for data interpretation and/or decision-making workshop, including venue and lunch.
Closing the Loop (Responding the Client Feedback)	Consider budgeting for a small contingency budget-line for “minor” adaptations decided as a result of client feedback. More significant course correction may require re-aligning the project implementation plan and budget.
Review (Monitoring and learning)	If necessary budget for review workshop, including venue and lunch

Guidance 2:
Communicating Client Feedback

I. Applicability

This Guidance provides advice for country teams on how to communicate client feedback to others within or external to the IRC. There are three main points in the Feedback Cycle in which they would communicate client feedback:

<u>The following types of communication exchange immediately follow Action 2: Inform and Collect</u>

<u>Scenario:</u> An IRC staff member in Team X has received a piece of client feedback (e.g. through an informal conversation with a client in the course of implementing her routine activities). She makes a decision about whom to communicate that feedback to. Her options are:

A. Someone within Team X who is responsible for recording and compiling all the feedback that Team X receives (e.g. requests for information, general or non-urgent, non-sensitive feedback).
- ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section III / Reporting Feedback.***

B. Someone within Team X who has appropriate level of authority to interpret and decide how to act upon the feedback. She would refer feedback directly to this person (rather than to the person responsible for recording and compiling the feedback for Team X) when the feedback is urgent, but non-sensitive (e.g. if a client had lodged a serious complaint about the quality of the services).
- ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section V / Referrals*** *(Referral Type: Internal / Routine).*

C. Someone in the IRC's Ethics and Compliance Unit. She would refer feedback directly to this Unit (rather than to the person responsible for recording and compiling the feedback for Team X) when the feedback is sensitive (e.g. if the feedback alleged a Code of Conduct Violation by the IRC or one of its partners).
- ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section V / Referrals*** *(Referral Type: Internal / Sensitive).*

<u>The following types of communication exchange are part of and immediately follow Action 3: Compile and Present</u>

<u>Scenario:</u> The IRC staff member responsible for compiling and presenting the client feedback for Team X has to communicate the feedback to someone who has the responsibility to analyse, interpret and decide how to respond to it. He decides who to communicate that feedback to. His options are:

A. Someone within Team X who has decision making authority (e.g. the Programme Manager or Programme Coordinator, as agreed within the team). He would communicate the feedback to that person for all routine decisions within the remit of Team X.
- ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section IV / Feedback Presentation.***

B. Someone in another IRC team (e.g. IRC Team Y), or in another organisation. He would communicate the feedback to either of those teams when the feedback falls outside of the remit of Team X, but falls within the remit of Team Y or another organisation.
- ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section V / Referrals*** *(Referral Type: Internal / Routine).*

C. Someone in the IRC's Ethics and Compliance Unit. He would refer feedback directly to this Unit (rather than to the person responsible for recording and compiling the feedback for Team X) when the feedback is sensitive (e.g. if the feedback alleged a Code of Conduct Violation by the IRC or one of its partners).

➢ ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section V / Referrals** (Referral Type: Internal / Sensitive).*

Alternatively, the IRC staff may also decide not to communicate that feedback to anyone, if the feedback:

A. Does not require a response (e.g. if it is a general compliment or if the message is spam). In this case, the feedback is acknowledged but no further action is taken.

➢ ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section V / Referrals** (Referral Type: Non-Referral / Not Necessary).*

B. Cannot be acted upon or referred (e.g. if the IRC staff member, after consultation with his colleagues / supervisor, decides that there is no one appropriate to whom to communicate the feedback).

C. ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section V / Referrals** (Referral Type: Non-Referral / Not Possible).*

<u>The following types of communication exchange are part of Action 6: Act</u>

<u>Scenario:</u> The IRC staff member responsible for interpreting and deciding how to respond to client feedback for Team X has reviewed the feedback and decided that Team X cannot or should not respond to that feedback. She makes a decision about whom to communicate that feedback to. Her options are:

A. Someone in another IRC team (e.g. IRC Team Y). He would communicate the feedback to that team when the feedback falls outside of the remit of Team X, but falls within the remit of Team Y.

➢ ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section V / Referrals** (Referral Type: Internal / Routine).*

B. Someone in another organisation. He would communicate the feedback when it falls outside of the remit of the IRC (either Team X or any of our other teams), but falls within the remit of another organisation.

➢ ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section V / Referrals** (Referral Type: External).*

C. Someone in the IRC's Ethics and Compliance Unit. He would refer feedback directly to this Unit (rather than to the person responsible for recording and compiling the feedback for Team X) when the feedback is sensitive (e.g. if the feedback alleged a Code of Conduct Violation by the IRC or one of its partners).

➢ ***Advice on this type of communication is provided in Section V / Referrals** (Referral Type: Internal /Sensitive).*

II. Reporting Feedback: Ensuring Feedback is Effectively Documented

Feedback cannot be shared in a systematic way if it isn't documented. Develop a system to document and store feedback so that people who need to see it can access it. Ensure that certain kinds of feedback are kept confidential. Proper feedback documentation starts at the field level, so the following section offers guidance for the person receiving the feedback from the client:

Type of Feedback	Description	Tips and Advice on How to Share Clients' Feedback
Open Feedback	Feedback shared with staff in an ad-hoc manner during daily interactions in the field or in the office.	• **Record what you hear from clients**. When you are working with clients, write down the feedback they share with you, even when it may initially seem irrelevant. Document feedback using the IRC Feedback Logbook. This helps to remember what your clients have

		said and makes sharing the information with others much easier. • **Don't be afraid to share negative feedback.** It is not easy to share negative feedback with your colleagues or partners. But learning from mistakes is essential so that you and others are less likely to repeat them. Think about sharing negative feedback in a constructive way. Documenting such feedback helps to track issues that arise and their frequency.
Formal Feedback	Feedback shared through established feedback channels	• **Analysis of feedback can be done in a team with results recorded to inform further actions.** Feedback submitted through established channels is most often processed using feedback registries, spreadsheets and logbooks. This raw data is important but needs to be analysed and summarised before presenting it to the program management and decision-makers. Making sense of contradictory viewpoints, producing trends analysis and overviews can greatly improve utilisation of accumulated feedback in decision-making. Disaggregate your data by relevant categories (geographic region, gender, age, etc.) to achieve a more nuanced understanding of our client's perspectives.

Further resources for the person receiving the feedback from the client:
- Handling Negative Feedback Guidance

Further resources for the person recording the feedback:
- Tool 2: Feedback Registry
- Tool 2: Feedback Recording and Classification Guidance
- Tool 3: Feedback Logbook

III. Feedback Presentation: Ensuring Feedback Can be Effectively Interpreted

Feedback is only helpful if people use it. This is why it is very important to take time and care to present feedback in a way that is accessible, easy to read, and compelling. This will look different in every organization. Below are helpful tips to make your presentation of feedback effective:

Task	Description and Rationale	Tips and Advice
Ask the management team	To ensure that client feedback data is available on time and in a format that can inform decision making, it is critical to ask the Management Team (or whoever is receiving feedback) when and how they want to receive a summary of client feedback	• Ask the programme leads and senior management how frequently they want to receive summaries of client feedback and in what format. Frequency may vary for sensitive and non-sensitive feedback.
Link the feedback data with M&E data	Feedback information, when gathered regularly, systematically recorded, and analysed, is a form of data that allows trends analysis over time. It complements M&E data and can reinforce or contradict it. It is important to link the collection, analysis,	• Sit down with the M&E team to understand what data have already been collected and where there are overlaps with the feedback data. Can the data be brought together easily? Explore how additional feedback can be

Task	Description and Rationale	Tips and Advice
	presentation, and interpretation of M&E data and client feedback to support decision-making at all stages of the project cycle.	gathered during scheduled monitoring visits. • Discuss what capacity already exists in storing and retrieving client feedback, in analysing feedback, and sharing it internally and externally with relevant stakeholders. • Identify the type of technical support that the M&E team can offer for data analysis, data storage and retrieval, and reporting to management.
Use a simple summary template	Present client feedback in a format that is easy for managers to understand and use for decision making.	• Use a simple summary template to share feedback trends with charts generated from the Feedback Registry. Include the total number of feedback entries received with percentages for feedback entries that have been acted upon / responded to. Include % of feedback entries "under review" and "referred" if management wants to see these figures. • Breakdown feedback data by age, gender, or other relevant categories to interpret feedback from different client groups.
Include qualitative analysis	Client satisfaction data should be presented with qualitative analysis that complements the charts. This can help decision-makers understand the who, why, and how questions behind the quantitative data you may be presenting.	• If recent survey data is showing that 25% of the clients are not satisfied with the service quality, add a box that explains what else the clients have said, why, and what can be improved. If the group reporting dissatisfaction shares certain characteristics (gender, age, location), provide an analysis of why they may find the service not meeting their needs and realities. • If M&E data is showing similar or contradictory information, include it with a note explaining the similarity or difference. • It isn't necessary to include every single client testimony – that will overwhelm decision-makers. Instead, you can select key testimonies and pieces of feedback that you feel represent the broader trends being reported.
Include reports on actions taken	Adding a section that talks about actions taken as a result of feedback can help "close the loop"	• Include concrete examples for illustration so that management can receive examples of actions

Task	Description and Rationale	Tips and Advice
as a result of feedback	internally and remind decision-makers about how client feedback plays an important role in practical, operational decision-making. It may also help hold them accountable to decisions they have taken in the past based on client feedback and help ensure follow-up	taken as a result of feedback; feedback referred to other organisations, as well as examples of decisions made by the IRC as a result of client feedback that have been communicated back to clients. • Include a section on "Management Attention Needed" if there are repeated complaints about a specific issue. Include possible implications if action is not taken – these could be prepared jointly with the program team.
Use multiple channels	Use different channels for sharing and presenting client feedback to management.	A few examples of channels for communicating feedback include: • Emails with attached summaries • Visual dashboards • Individual verbal briefings • Collective updates during meetings
Present data to inform decision making at key decision points	Present client data at key decision-making points to inform strategic, programmatic, and operational levels decisions	• Schedule feedback review and reflection sessions to coincide with key decision-making points and timeframes in the programme cycle and strategy development. • Provide summaries of relevant feedback and complaints when management is reviewing staffing levels, vendor and partner selection, programme expansion, and other operational-level assessments and decisions. • Sensitive complaints documented in the Feedback Registry should be used to assess adherence by staff to the Code of Conduct and for risk mitigation.

Further resources for the person interpreting the feedback and making a decision on how to respond:

- Guidance 3: Interpreting and Making Decisions about how to Respond to Feedback
- Tool 4: Feedback Data Dashboard (under development)

IV. Referrals: Transferring Responsibility to Handle the Feedback to Others

Because the IRC functions as a team, feedback often needs to be passed onto, or "referred", to other people who may be in a better position to analyse and take decisions based on that feedback. Referrals can happen at multiple points in the feedback cycle. A referral process will look differently depending on the size/complexity of your team and the nature of the feedback.

A referral implies that the responsibility to act upon the feedback and close the loop with the client(s) is transferred to another person or organisation.

Whenever possible, it is advisable to let the clients know that you are referring their case, informing them:

- To whom the feedback has been referred;
- Who their new point of contact is; and
- That their personal details will not be shared without their consent.

This is more challenging with anonymous, highly sensitive feedback or a large volume of referrals.

The entire process of referrals is made much easier if your team has already established an internal protocol on referrals. This usually entails mapping out your organisational structure and indicating which person should receive which kind of feedback, and who are the key decision-makers about referring feedback to different teams or organisations. Guidance on establishing a protocol is provided in Section II, but the following section provides general guidance for different kinds of referrals:

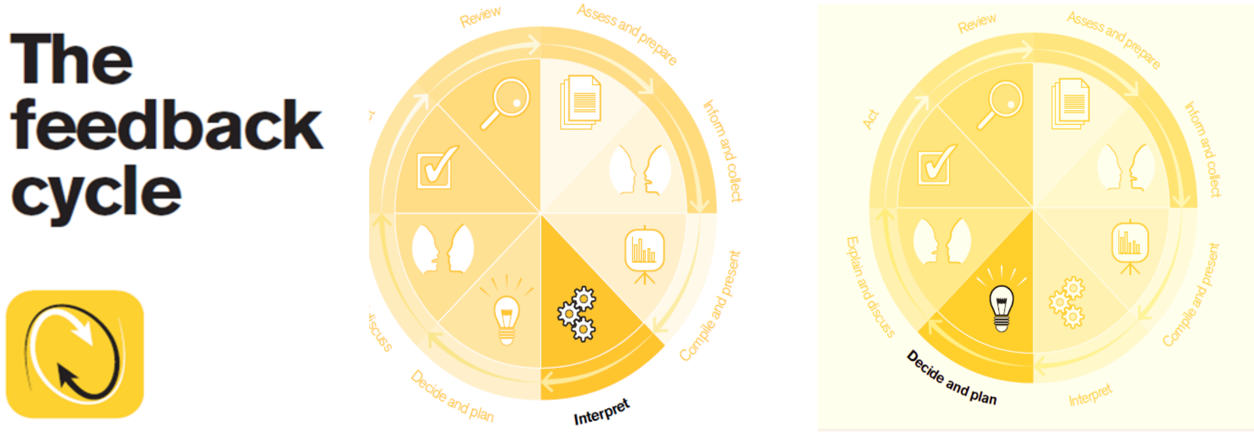
Type of Referral	When to Apply	Proposed Actions
No Referral / Not Necessary	No referral is necessary if the client feedback is a compliment or an irrelevant message that doesn't require any specific action and doesn't need to be referred internally or externally.	• Acknowledge the client's feedback. • Thank them if it is a compliment. If it is irrelevant, then take a moment to inform the person about the purpose of the feedback mechanism.
No Referral / Not Possible	The feedback received is outside of the scope of work and / or the mandate of the IRC and the team doesn't know of any other organisation that would be able to act or respond on the client feedback.	• Acknowledge the client's feedback and thank them for taking the time to share their thoughts. • Inform the client that you are not able to respond and that you do not know any other organisation to which you can refer their feedback. • Let the client know you will inform them if you identify an organisation to which you will refer their feedback.
Internal Referral / Routine	Non-sensitive, non-urgent client feedback, such as a question or a request for assistance that can be compiled with other data and reviewed on a periodic basis.	• Record Client Feedback in the Feedback Registry according to the Feedback Categories outlined in Table 1 of Guidance 5 of the Client-Responsiveness Resource Kit: Feedback Recording and Classification • This kind of feedback is usually best consolidated into weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly reports and shared with key decision-makers. Certain specific requests and questions can be flagged for people who may be best able to respond.
Internal Referral / Urgent	Non-sensitive client feedback reflecting a minor or major programmatic dissatisfaction should be referred internally to the specific staff member / department authorised to make a decision and / or take an action.	• Record Client Feedback in the Feedback Registry according to the Feedback Categories outlined in Table 1 of Guidance 5 of the Client-Responsiveness Resource Kit: Feedback Recording and Classification

Type of Referral	When to Apply	Proposed Actions
		• According to the referral pathway that you and your team have already established, identify focal-point staff member to refer client feedback within the relevant programme and support units
Internal Referral / Sensitive	Sensitive client feedback (an allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct by an IRC staff member, or allegations of abuse or exploitation against non-IRC staff or representative) should be immediately referred internally to the relevant unit (usually Ethics & Compliance).	• Depending on the content of the feedback (safety, finance, Code of Conduct matters), refer the feedback to the relevant unit using the different channels outlined in the IRC Way. • Define specific referral protocols and ensure sensitive feedback are referred immediately. • Remember that there are protection concerns with feedback. Feedback can sometimes endanger staff or client safety. It is important to handle this feedback carefully and share it only with the appropriate people. Think about the feedback and the potential harm that could come from sharing it with certain people or groups. • Protecting the anonymity of feedback. When there are security or confidentiality concerns, be careful not to share details that might identify the client or a specific group. A client may be comfortable sharing information with your community mobilisers non-anonymously, but would not be willing to share that same information with another organisation or government officials. If you know the identity of the person who shared the feedback, you should request his/her permission before sharing potentially identifying information with other persons.
External Referral	Refer client feedback to a partner organisation: When the IRC is not implementing its activities and services directly, it should support its partners to respond and act upon client feedback. All feedback received should thus be referred to the partner organisation. Refer client feedback to a peer organisation: When the IRC receives client feedback whose	• Develop a specific referral pathway and identify focal-point staff member to refer client feedback within the IRC implementing partners • Identify who can make the decision about external referrals, and who is actually best positioned to communicate a referral to a partner. • In your referral protocol, it may be helpful to distinguish between sensitive, urgent, and routine

Type of Referral	When to Apply	Proposed Actions
	scope or content is outside of the services provided by the IRC and we know of another organisation who has the mandate or capacity to act and respond, we can refer the feedback to them.	feedback referrals to partners. For instance, routine feedback might be discussed in monthly cluster meetings, whereas different channels might be developed for urgent and sensitive feedback. • Inform the client which organisation he / she is being referred to, the expected timeframe and any requirement / actions needed from the client. • Consider using inter-agency cluster / sector coordination mechanisms to verify and refer issues that fall beyond the IRC's mandate and current programmatic scope.

Guidance 3:
Interpreting Client Feedback and Making Decisions about How to Respond

I. Applicability



This Guidance provides advice and support to IRC country teams in implementing Actions 4 (Interpreting the feedback data) and 5 (Deciding and planning what actions and decisions to take in response to the feedback).

II. Interpreting Feedback and Making Decisions about how to Respond: General Approach

Humanitarian agencies tend to have more challenges in interpreting client feedback, and deciding how to respond to it, than they do in collecting it. It can be easy to feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume and / or complexity of client feedback. Further, client feedback is only one of the many sources of data (e.g. M&E reports, assessment data, information from partners) that we must analyse and make decisions in response to. The process of deciding how to respond becomes even more complicated when the feedback from clients differs from one client to the next, or when client feedback contradicts other sources of information. The challenges of managing such contradictions are addressed in Sections III-V.

The following section outlines some general tips on how to interpret and make decisions based on client feedback:

1. **Identify major trends and outliers**: Look at the feedback you have received over the past week, month, or quarter. Try to identify the major trends. What are people most concerned about? What are they most confused about? What do they want to see happen? Then identify the outliers: pieces of feedback that seem to disagree with what the broader group is saying, or cases in which certain clients are talking about topics that no one else is bringing up.

2. **Try to understand what is behind the trends**: Based on what you know about your clients, try to explain the trends you see in the data. Which group of clients may be concerned about an issue, and what particular experiences may have informed their particular perspective? What might be unique about the outliers that would leave them to have different concerns or opinions from other clients?

3. **Triangulate**: Where possible, bring in other sources of information to help you make sense of what you are seeing in the feedback data. Are there other reports, records, or resources that might help you understand the trends and what is behind them? Can other sources of information further describe and validate the concerns and priorities you are hearing through client feedback?

4. **Weigh your options:** Try to outline the possible courses of action that could be taken to address the various concerns and ideas raised through the client feedback. Evaluate how feasible it would be to implement those actions based on your programme's resources (technical, human, financial) and mandate. Try to establish whether you can meet the expressed expectations of all the clients that you have heard feedback from, or whether there need to be trade-offs. If you decide there will need to be trade-offs (that is, you cannot meet everyone's requests) you will need to consider your operating environment, and the IRC's strategic objectives in order to prioritise.

5. **Decide a course of action:** Based on your analysis of the trends, the options you've generated, and the opportunities and constraints you've identified, your team needs to make a decision. This decision could be made in consultation with a group of clients (such as a Stakeholder Reference Group – a small group of clients representing the interests of your target group) or internally with other IRC team members. And, of course, don't forget to "close the loop" by informing your clients about the decision and creating room for discussion. Advice on how to effectively close the loop is provided in the Guidance on Closing the Loop.

III. Interpreting Feedback and Making Decisions about how to Respond: When there are Contradictions or Major Differences in Clients' Feedback

Communities affected by crisis are not all the same. Think of any small village, or a city block, or a camp – the people living there have a range of experiences, aspirations, challenges, and assets that shape their unique priorities. Even within a single household, different family members may have different resources, needs and priorities based on factors such as gender, age, ability, and distribution of power within a family. If we are not receiving at least some contradictory feedback from our clients, this should be a red flag that we are only hearing perspectives from a certain part of the population that we are serving.

Here are some reasons why we might be hearing client feedback that contradicts other client feedback:

- **People have different experiences with our services:** we rarely have the resources to address all the diverse needs of our clients, and therefore we need to make prioritisations and trade-offs that will likely satisfy some groups / individuals and not others. This may lead us to hear positive feedback from the group that was served, and negative feedback from the group that feels left out. Someone may have had an unpleasant interaction at a distribution or felt confused during a meeting. Not everyone's experiences are the same, so not everyone's feedback will be the same

- **People are entitled to different opinions:** any group of reasonable people can disagree about the best course of action to be taken to deal with a complex emergency. While the IRC's course of action may be shaped by evidence on best-practice, donor constraints, and our resources, our clients' may have different ideas about what we should be doing based on their unique experiences, needs, and perspectives. Therefore, even a highly participatory process may not be able to generate consensus about whether what the IRC is doing, and how, is the most appropriate approach.

It often seems as if we can't win – no matter what decisions we make, a group of our clients will be dissatisfied. It is important to remember that contradictory feedback is not necessarily an indication of problematic programming. It is a reminder that the communities we are trying to serve are complex.

This section offers key questions and steps to help you and your team think through how to interpret conflicting feedback and make decisions on how to respond to it.

Let's think about the context
It is important for us to understand which groups within our communities are experiencing problems with our services. It is not uncommon to receive contradictory feedback where one section of the community is satisfied, and another section is unhappy. This can help us understand power balances within the community, who is able to access our services, and who may have very different needs.

- **Who are our clients?** This may seem like an obvious question, but it is harder to answer than you may think. We may see our clients as one group (e.g. IDP camp residents), but that is not their only identity. There are men, women, boys, and girls. There are people of different religions, ethnicities, clans, and castes. There are people of different economic classes, and with different assets. There may be people of different sexual orientations and gender identities. There are people with different physical and mental health challenges. Understanding who we are serving helps us understand their different priorities.
- **What are our clients' different experiences, challenges, privileges, resources, and priorities?** Each of these sub-groups – and each individual within each sub-group – may have different experiences of the crisis and as a result different needs and challenges. Each group may have different strengths and resources as well. People possess multiple identities and belong to multiple groups, and different privileges or disadvantages can compound each other. All of these produce different priorities and will affect the way they see the assistance that the IRC is offering.
- **What are the potential sources of division and conflict among our clients?** When we understand the diverse priorities and perspectives of our clients, we strengthen our analysis of how these priorities and perspectives conflict with each other. This is similar to a Do No Harm analysis. Certain differences within a community may not lead to conflicting views of our services. However, other differences will, and it's important to keep these potential divisions in mind.

Making sense of the contradictions

- **Who might this feedback be coming from, and what might be the story behind it?** When we receive conflicting feedback, our first step is to try to analyse who the feedback is coming from, and what might have led them to give us that feedback (this might be more challenging if the feedback is anonymous). Using your knowledge about your clients and the guidance provided in Section II, you can try to piece together a story about why the feedback may be different.
- **Who else can help us make sense of the contradictions?** Your team doesn't have to answer this question by yourselves – you can bring other people into the conversation and ask more questions.
    - **Ask your IRC colleagues,** especially your field staff who may come from the same communities as our clients. Different members of your team might have different experiences in the community that can help you make sense of the feedback, particularly if they've been working in this community for a longer period. It is especially important to involve those staff who may have a better understanding of local context and nuances, and may themselves come from the same communities as our clients.
    - **As your clients.** You can have a meeting with your clients (through, for example, a Client Advisory Group) where you ask them to help you make sense of the different opinions you are hearing. The advantage is that no one is better suited to explain the

complexity of a community than the people who live in it. However, we have to be careful about this option for feedback that might be sensitive or put groups of clients at risk.
   - **Consult other people who have knowledge of this community.** That could be other aid workers, academics, journalists, local government workers, or anyone else with experience in that community. When getting their interpretations of the feedback, you must still be aware of their particular biases based on their relationship to your clients, and be careful not to disclose information that could violate the confidentiality of client feedback or cause harm.
- **Can we triangulate some of the information?** In addition to consulting other people, you can consult other data sources. Look at reports from other programme teams, M&E data, information from the IRC hotline (if one exists), distribution logs, etc. You may find some information that helps you understand the contradictions you are seeing.

IV. Interpreting Feedback Making Decisions about how to Respond: When the Feedback Contradicts Other Data / Information

Sometimes, the feedback you receive from clients may contradict other sources of information you have. Here are a few examples of scenarios where client feedback contradicts other information:

- A donor's call for proposals asserts, based on its own assessment, that the most urgent need in an IDP camp is shelter. But your team collected feedback as part of a design process, and the IDP camp residents overwhelmingly are more concerned about access to clean drinking water.
- An M&E report indicates that 95% of a community was reached by a malaria education campaign, but the call centre is getting lots of questions about what the recently-distributed bed nets are for.
- An IRC post-disaster needs assessment shows that people lost all of their livestock during displacement, but recent client feedback indicates that people in fact have goats and are requesting access to veterinarians.
- A school supported by the IRC has attendance records showing low attendance rates for girls, but during community discussions, parents assert that they are sending their girls to school.

There are many reasons that client feedback may contradict other sources of information. Here are some reasons why client feedback may be telling you something different than your other reports or records:

- **Communities change over time:** Communities are constantly evolving and changing, as are their needs, priorities, and experiences. An assessment done a month ago may show that people were concerned about shelter, but since then, the dry season has begun, and people are more concerned about access to drinking water. Therefore, data collected at different times may just be reflecting changes on the ground.

- **Different data reflect different aspects of the truth:** Often, client feedback may not be contradicting existing data but rather providing more insight and nuance. An M&E report may count the number of participants in a malaria seminar, but based on client feedback, field staff may realise that people didn't understand the key messages and were confused. This isn't contradictory information; it's complimentary information.

- **People may tell different information to different people:** Who is collecting information, and in what circumstances, may affect what information people provide. If a survey was done by foreigners and a call centre is being run by locals, people may tell the foreigners what they think they want to hear or what might get them more assistance and may be more honest with their fellow citizens. Or, people may be ashamed to admit something to local staff but not ashamed to admit it to a foreigner who they will never see again.

- **People may not tell the truth:** Clients are not obliged to tell us the truth. They may withhold information or tell us what they think we want to hear, which will inevitably contradict more objective sources of information (like school attendance records).

How to make sense of contradictory information sources?
Much like when client feedback contradicts itself, we need to go through different steps to make sense of contradictory feedback:

Think about the context and about who your clients are: Again, investing in understanding your context and your clients is essential to making sense of contradictory feedback, You not only need to understand the intersecting identities of your clients and the potential divisions in the community – you need to understand how your clients perspectives may change over time since your data sources might cover different time periods.

Make sense of the contradictions:

- **Who collected what data, under what circumstances?** It's important to understand the people who collected the information and the circumstances under which they collected it. What might their biases be? Do they have an incentive to produce a report with a certain finding? Would our clients be comfortable telling these people the truth about whatever the topic was? Would there be any incentives for our clients to say one thing rather than another?

- **Weigh the objectivity of each data source:** You need to assess how objective, complete, and valid your different information sources are. A school attendance record is more objective than self-reported attendance. On the other hand, objective and complete information (like attendance records) may not capture more important, subjective information (like behaviour change or learning). Certain information may be very objective and valid for a small group (i.e. clinic records), but not reflect the overall population (because not everyone goes to the clinic). All of this needs to be balanced when making sense of contradictory information sources.

- **Make sure you aren't comparing apples to oranges**: You need to truly understand what your different sources are measuring or reporting. You may have an M&E report that tells you that adequate food was delivered to every household, and client feedback that the food delivery wasn't satisfactory. This may not be a contradiction: the M&E report is telling you about the *quantity* of food, while the client feedback is telling you about the *quality* of food. Your information sources may be comparing two very different time periods (rainy season versus dry season) or two different groups of people (literate women who could use a letter box to write complaints versus women of all literacy levels who participated in a focus group). Your information sources may not be as contradictory as you think.

- **Ask around and triangulate:** Like in Section III, ask around. Other people within the IRC or in the community may be able to help you make sense of the contradictions. You may even want to talk to whoever was responsible for collecting the data that you feel is contradictory to the client feedback you are hearing. Again, this must be done in a way that is respectful of the confidentiality of client feedback and that does not risk putting any group at increased risk for harm.

V. Interpreting Feedback Making Decisions about how to Respond: Making decisions from contradictions

Once we think we have made sense of contradictory information, how do we make decisions?
Once we make sense of the different voices behind the different opinions, we can weigh that with all of the other information, values, and constraints that go into making any decision at the IRC. In an ideal situation, your team may be able to brainstorm new options that could satisfy the different

opinions being voiced. Or you may be in a position where decisions are being made collaboratively with your clients and compromises may be reached this way.

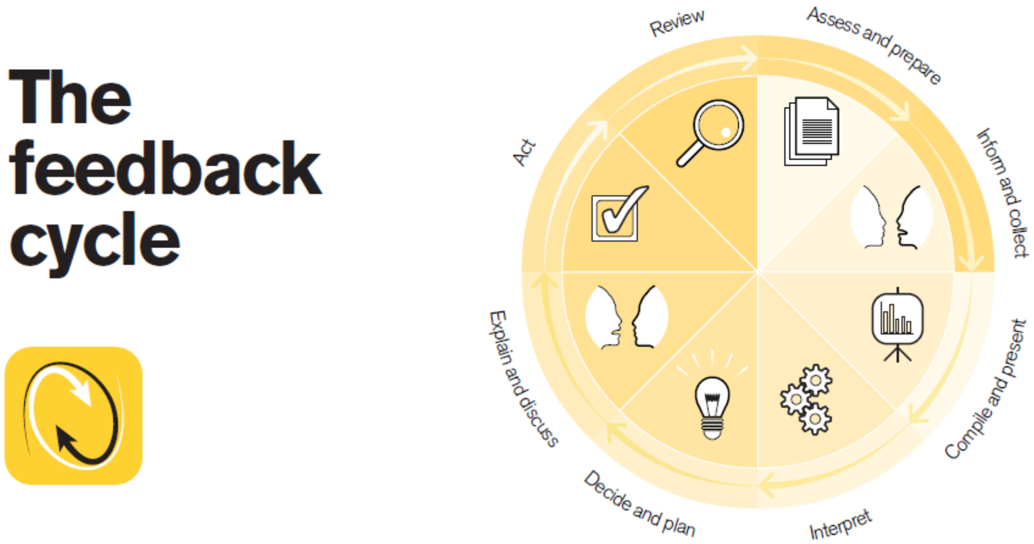
However, there will be times when only one group will be satisfied. In cases like these, trade-offs and decisions need to be made based on our values and considerations of the operating environment. If there is a discrepancy between a group with power and one in a more vulnerable position, then we may decide that our principles or strategic priorities encourage us to favour the needs of the more vulnerable group. If there are many different opinions on how the IRC should structure a programme, but our budget can only support one of them, then that constrains our options and helps us to decide.

What should we do after we make the decision?

In cases of contradictory feedback, it is particularly important to close the loop and let your clients know what decision you made and why. If there was a situation where you had to choose between satisfying one group and not another, then you need to be prepared to communicate this in a way that doesn’t further exacerbate tensions within the community or put a group at risk of resentment or retribution (including the IRC and its partners). You can open up discussions with your team or other stakeholders about how to mitigate any negative consequences of these decisions. And, as always, you need to be willing to keep listening to all client voices and continue this dialogue.

Guidance 4:
Closing the Loop

I. Applicability



This Guidance provides advice and support to IRC country teams in implementing Action 6 (where teams explain and discuss their decisions with their clients).

II. Understanding the Process of Closing the Loop

What is closing the loop?

"Closing the loop" means telling clients what has been done in response to their feedback. We call it "closing the loop" because, ideally, client feedback shouldn't be a one-way flow of information from our clients to the IRC. Instead, we need to report back to our clients and let them know what we have done with their feedback. We should do this even if we know they will not like the outcome of what IRC has decided[3].

"Closing the loop" is often referred to as "responding" to feedback: it means we provide an oral or written response to our clients that informs them 1) what has been done with their feedback; 2) what the IRC decided based on their feedback; and 3) how the IRC reached that decision. It is different from "acting" on feedback because the IRC may not always be able to take action based on what our clients want (we may not have the resources or mandate to do so). So, while we are not obliged to act on each piece of client feedback, we are obliged to respond to client feedback.

Why do we close the loop?

Functioning feedback mechanisms are essential to the IRC for many reasons. They can give our clients a sense of agency and help them to develop a sense of ownership in IRC activities. They provide us with invaluable information about our operating environment, our clients' unique priorities

[3] Refer to Guidance 8 of the Client-Responsiveness Tool Kit: "Handling Negative Feedback and Difficult Conversations" for more on how to handle giving disappointing information to clients.

and challenges, sources of conflict and safety risks. Feedback mechanisms help us fulfil our institutional commitments to Client Responsiveness.

However, if we don't "close the loop", the feedback process falls apart. Experience and research has shown that if clients do not know what has become of their feedback, if it disappears into an organisational "black box", then they will lose trust in the feedback process and will stop using it. The following section highlights some of the reasons why closing the loop is so essential to a healthy, functioning feedback mechanism:

a. <u>Closing the loop shows that we are listening</u>

In day-to-day conversations, we expect people to acknowledge what we are telling them as a sign that they are actively listening to us. Responding to client feedback is, at a minimum, an acknowledgement that the organisation is actively listening to what our clients have to say. If clients feel that they are speaking to us and we are not listening, they will eventually stop communicating with us.

> *A community member in Ethiopia shared this: "They hear us. They listen to us. They do all that they can and tell us what they can't do. And they give us respect." CDA Case Study, Ethiopia, 2016*

b. <u>Closing the loop is a sign of respect</u>

Clients take time and energy to give us feedback, and it would be disrespectful not to take the time and energy to respond to them. If we do not take the time to close the loop, it may signal that we are taking their feedback for granted. The best way to demonstrate that we value their participation and communication is with timely and respectful responses.

c. <u>Closing the loop builds trust</u>

By routinely communicating how feedback has informed our decisions and providing an opportunity to discuss these decisions and actions, we promote trust in the IRC. With increased trust in us and in our feedback mechanism, clients will be more likely to use it and to provide us with important information which we need to make effective programming decisions. If someone uses a suggestion box and never learns if her feedback was ever read, she may come to believe that the organisation knows what is wrong and simply doesn't care enough to fix the problem or explain its position. This can undermine trust not only in the feedback process, but the IRC overall.

d. <u>Closing the loop promotes dialogue and transparency</u>

When we listen, respond and communicate how we are using their feedback, we shine a light into the black box of decision-making. It gives communities a better sense of how the IRC works and manages expectations of what we can and cannot do. This is a form of dialogue: we explain our decisions and actions in response to feedback and provide the opportunity for clients to ask further questions and provide further feedback, to which we respond then or at later point. This is part of our commitment to Client Responsiveness.

Why do we find it hard to Close the Loop at times?

The importance of closing the loop is clear. In reality, closing the loop can be difficult at times. Here is why:

<u>We may not be able to respond with the information that we think clients want to hear:</u>

- <u>We may lack information</u>
  We may find it hard to close the loop with our clients when we do not have sufficient information. We should accept the fact that we cannot have a perfect answer to everything an affected community asks and be honest when we cannot find an answer to their question.

- <u>We cannot act on the client's request</u>
  Client feedback can be about issues beyond IRC control. We may not have the mandate, the capacity, or the resources to act on the information. The humanitarian system can be confusing, and our clients may not understand the political, operational, and financial

constraints of the IRC, and they may request changes that are unrealistic. We should be honest about the limits of our organisation.

- The client request goes against IRC principles and ethics
  Sometimes, clients may request information that we are not allowed to give because of confidentiality or ethical reasons. For example, even if a community requested a list of names of people who visited an HIV clinic, it would be unethical to provide them with those names. Or they may request changes that go against other important principles and ethical norms within IRC (for example, using an IRC platform to denounce homosexuality). We should communicate in a clear but sensitive way about the principles to which the IRC adheres.

Case studies have shown that crisis-affected communities prefer an honest response, even if unsatisfactory, to no response at all[4]. Clients need up-to-date information to make important decisions about their lives and livelihoods. More information about how to communicate potentially unsatisfactory or disappointing feedback is presented in the Guidelines for Handling Negative Feedback & Difficult Conversations.

[4] Cechvala, Sarah. "'For them, with them.' Building Accountability Systems in Post-Earthquake Nepal." CDA-World Vision International Nepal Feedback Loops Case Study. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, January 2016.

III. Practical Guidance on Closing the Loop

Action	Description and Rationale	Tips and Advice
1. Ask your Clients	Clients are more likely to use the channels when they select them. Empowering clients to tell us how they want to hear from us will increase the likelihood that the channels will be used	• Include questions about preferred responses channels into your clients surveys, community meetings etc. • Ask different groups of clients to consider different responses channels appropriate to all of them (e.g. women, minorities, etc.) • Note that it may be appropriate to select a different channel to close the loop through, than the one you received the feedback from in the first place.
2. Select the appropriate response channels	Select the appropriate channel to provide a response to the client. Different channels will be appropriate depending on the type of feedback received (from one individual or from a group, sensitive or not) and on your operational environment (access, resources and skills available, literacy levels and languages spoken). Table 1 below will help you select your response channels.	• Select multiple channels to respond to different types of feedback and to different clients • Consider costs and other available resources
3. Identify / set the timing of the response	Define, in consultation with staff and your clients, the maximum number of days that the IRC should take to provide a response to clients.	• Involve staff and clients in defining the maximum time to provide a response • The time to provide a response should not exceed 15 days • Set up faster response time for sensitive and / or urgent feedback • If providing a complete response require more time, acknowledge receipt of the feedback and provide regular updates to the client.
4. Plan and allocate resources to respond to client feedback	At project design and / or start-up: Develop plans and budgets for the staff and other resources required to respond to your client feedback.	• Plan and budget for the human resources, travel, field activities, material and communication costs required to respond to client feedback • Integrate relevant actions and activities required into staff and programme works plans.
5. Record and keep track	Feedback received by any type of channels should be recorded into a feedback registry. It helps you process and track feedback and ensure that the loops has been closed.	• Use the Feedback Registry (Tool 2 of the Client-Responsiveness Resource Kit) and its associated Guidance Feedback Recording and Classification • Develop specific protocol to define roles and responsibilities in recording and accessing

		information in the Feedback Registry
6. Monitor and Review	Regularly monitor and review the performance of your feedback mechanisms to provide responses to client feedback	• Monitor and review the number of responses provided out of the number of feedback received • Monitor and review the timeliness of the responses provided • Ask the perspectives of clients about the channels, content and timeliness of the response provided • Ask your clients if they had an opportunity to ask questions, discuss or provide additional questions after receiving the response. • Document and analyse monitoring data to improve the quality and timeliness of the responses provided to client feedback

Choose an appropriate channel:

Just as there is no one way to collect client feedback, there is no one way to respond to client feedback. You can have multiple options for how you respond to different kinds of client feedback. These options should be defined by client preferences (much in the same way you selected feedback channels) and available resources (technical, financial, and human). Which channel you use to deliver a response to any given piece of feedback depends on the nature of the feedback (routine, urgent, sensitive) and what you know about the people who provided the feedback and / or who could benefit from hearing the response (e.g. literacy levels). The following tables help to select appropriate channels for response:

Table 1: Response Channel Selection Framework

The table below will help you to select the appropriate channel(s) through which to respond to the client feedback received.

Response channels	Individual meetings	Community meetings	Billboards	Email	SMS	Call back	WhatsApp	Local Radio	Social media	Stakeholders Group	IRC Community volunteers
Individual Feedback	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓
Collective Feedback	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sensitive Feedback	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
Non sensitive Feedback	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Anonymous feedback	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Issues with Accessing the client	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Issues with language	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Issues with written responses	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Limited staff capacity	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Limited financial resources	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓

Table 2: Strengths and weaknesses of the different channels and contextual and operational considerations

The following table details more of the relative advantages and disadvantages of these various channels.

RESPONSE CHANNELS	FEATURES	STRENGTHS OF CHANNEL	WEAKNESSES OF CHANNEL	CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS	OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS
Community Meeting *(Convening community members in order to respond publicly through a formal and regular meeting)* *Can also include existing meetings where a sub-group meets regularly (e.g. if the feedback comes primarily from one particular group, this offers a bit more 'privacy' for the interested group)*	Formal, Face-to-Face Public, Verbal, Low Tech	⇒ Response reaches a large group, and helps to ensure that many people are informed ⇒ Allows for additional time for clients to ask additional / follow-up questions ⇒ Public demonstration of IRC's commitment to transparency and responding ⇒ Verbal communication as opposed to written avoids barriers related to illiteracy	⇒ Public setting makes it difficult to respond to feedback of a sensitive nature ⇒ Some people might feel uncomfortable asking questions in this environment ⇒ Some people will be unable to attend the meeting ⇒ Risk of only hearing only dominant voices	⇒ Location of the meeting can restrict access by vulnerable populations ⇒ Sometimes it is not possible to convene community meetings that include all genders and all ages ⇒ Some people may not feel comfortable attending a meeting or will not feel comfortable asking follow-up questions in a large group setting ⇒ Some people might not be able to attend (access, livelihood, or family activity) ⇒ Language barriers could inhibit everyone from receiving the information ⇒ Access to the community could be challenging in insecure or remote environments.	⇒ Security risks might restrict staff from convening a group regularly ⇒ Security risks might hinder regular access to the community ⇒ Requires staff to have good facilitation skills ⇒ May require staff to be knowledgeable about the topic being discussed and any other issues that might be raised ⇒ Clients often prefer to have staff from IRC who can make decisions the meeting when significant issues are raised
Individual Meetings *(One-on-one conversations between staff and the client who*	Informal, Face-to-Face, Verbal, Low Tech	⇒ Response can be directed to the individual who provided the feedback ⇒ Good for discussing sensitive topics	⇒ Can only be used when it is known who provided the feedback ⇒ Limits ability to share information with a larger group of clients	⇒ Staff gender might restrict their ability to convene individual meetings ⇒ Potential language barriers between staff and clients	⇒ Requires large amount of staff time ⇒ Limited access to individuals might restrict the ability to reach clients regularly ⇒ May require staff to be knowledgeable about the

RESPONSE CHANNELS	FEATURES	STRENGTHS OF CHANNEL	WEAKNESSES OF CHANNEL	CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS	OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS
provided the feedback)		⇒ Allows for a more in-depth discussion on a one-on-one basis ⇒ Verbal communication as opposed to written avoids barriers related to illiteracy	(if feedback is non-sensitive) ⇒ Requires a lot of staff time in the field with clients.	⇒ Access to the client could be challenging in insecure or remote environments	topic being discussed and any other issues that might be raised ⇒ Clients often prefer to have staff with some level of authority in the meeting when significant issues are raised ⇒ Requires a strong collection, documentation, and internal referral system to ensure information is not lost
Stakeholder Reference Group *(Responding by sharing responses to feedback with community leaders or groups, which is then shared with clients)*	Informal, Face-to-Face, Verbal, Low Tech	⇒ Sharing information through local leaders might be an expected part of relationship-building and bypassing leaders could damage IRC's perception ⇒ Often a traditional source of information for the community ⇒ Verbal communication as opposed to written avoids barriers related to illiteracy	⇒ Local leaders could become gatekeepers of information ⇒ Leaders may misrepresent the IRC's response to the community ⇒ Often not an appropriate channel for responding to sensitive feedback ⇒ Leaders may lack the skills to respond to questions that arise from the wider community in response to the information passed on	⇒ Traditional structures for community representation may systematically exclude certain groups ⇒ Perceptions related to political parties could hinder IRC's ability to be seen as impartial ⇒ If leaders are seen as linked to the conflict it could hinder IRC's ability to be seen as impartial	⇒ In a high-risk security context, reaching leaders on a regular basis could pose security risks for staff ⇒ Risk that leaders could use the channel for personal / group gain ⇒ Clients often prefer to communicate with IRC staff from IRC, ideally staff who make decisions or can ensure that necessary follow-up process is followed when significant issues are raised
IRC Community Volunteers	Informal, Face-to-Face,	⇒ Often a natural and trusted bridge between	⇒ Could challenge the volunteers' credibility if they are unable or	⇒ Power dynamics may limit their ability to be effective communication channels	⇒ Can require strong communication skills

RESPONSE CHANNELS	**FEATURES**	**STRENGTHS OF CHANNEL**	**WEAKNESSES OF CHANNEL**	**CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS**	**OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**
(Responding by sharing information with IRC's community volunteers, which is shared with clients)	Verbal, Low Tech	the community and IRC ⇒ As community members, they have deep knowledge of the context and local needs ⇒ Verbal communication as opposed to written avoids barriers related to illiteracy	not equipped by IRC to respond appropriately ⇒ Volunteers could become gatekeepers of information ⇒ Risk that volunteers could use the information for personal / group gain ⇒ May lack skills to respond to questions that arise from responses ⇒ Often not an appropriate channel for responding to sensitive feedback	⇒ Gender or age barriers might inhibit their access or reliability ⇒ Unintended negative impacts related to empowering one group with more information over another ⇒ Language barriers in multi-lingual contexts	⇒ Risk of the group using the channel for personal / group gain ⇒ Clients often prefer to speak directly to IRC staff
Local Radio *(Communicating responses via a local radio program* ***Billboard*** *(very similar pros and cons – can use icons to explain but still requires some skill to read, know where it is etc.)*	Formal, Public, ICT, Verbal	⇒ Often ideal for combining information provision, public service announcements, and responses to recurring inquiries ⇒ Provides the opportunity to access a large population ⇒ Allows IRC to reach populations in more remote or insecure locations (where staff presence may be limited)	⇒ One-way communication channel, where clients cannot ask additional questions (unless the channel provides for call-ins from clients) ⇒ Radio is not always accessible to everyone ⇒ Not appropriate channel to respond to sensitive feedback ⇒ Language barriers between the radio	⇒ Risk of perceived bias, depending on the reputation of the station ⇒ Gender, age, and power dynamics related to accessibility to the radio ⇒ If two-way, only allows clients with access to phone to reach the station ⇒ If two-way, reputational risks when criticisms or allegations are raised publicly	⇒ Cost implications: high fee for hosting the radio show, especially if the station is very popular and has large coverage/subscription ⇒ Staff time will be needed to develop content ⇒ Useful in contexts where staff are unable to travel regularly to communities due to security risks

RESPONSE CHANNELS	FEATURES	STRENGTHS OF CHANNEL	WEAKNESSES OF CHANNEL	CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS	OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS
		⇒ Verbal communication as opposed to written avoids barriers related to illiteracy	presenters and client population		
Call Backs *(Staff, volunteers, or a third-party service provides a response by calling back clients who have provided feedback)*	Formal, ICT, Verbal	⇒ Verbal communication as opposed to written avoids barriers related to illiteracy ⇒ Allows for two-way communication and the opportunity for the client to ask additional clarifying questions ⇒ Often a good channel to respond to sensitive feedback (if administered by staff with appropriate levels of authority)	⇒ Limited to only clients who can access a phone ⇒ Language barriers between the person calling back and the client ⇒ Can be time-intensive for staff	⇒ Good for remote areas and restricted areas where mobile coverage is high ⇒ Gender, power, and age dynamics may determine who has access to phones and who does not	⇒ Can require large amount of staff time
Social Media *(Responses provided via Facebook, Twitter, organisational webpage, WhatsApp, Instagram etc.)*	ICT, Informal, Public, Written	⇒ Provides the opportunity to access a large population ⇒ Often great in urban contexts to reach a community that is geographically spread-out ⇒ Often a good channel to respond to youth ⇒ Can provide a forum for clients to ask clarifying questions	⇒ Requires access to a smartphone / computer and the internet ⇒ Often not a good channel to respond to sensitive information ⇒ Language barriers between clients and content providers	⇒ Risks excluding a large portion of the population based on age or gender due to lack of technical challenges or access to the necessary technology ⇒ Illiteracy may limit access for certain populations ⇒ Can be cost prohibitive for people to access smartphones / internet ⇒ Requires high levels of ongoing internet connectivity and electricity to keep phone charged	⇒ Requires staff time and ability to monitor and manage responses ⇒ Staff required to have strong written communication skills

RESPONSE CHANNELS	FEATURES	STRENGTHS OF CHANNEL	WEAKNESSES OF CHANNEL	CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS	OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS
Emails *(Responding directly to clients via email)*	ICT, Written, Informal	⇒ Often a good channel to respond to sensitive feedback ⇒ Can allow for follow-up clarifying questions ⇒ Often good in urban contexts to reach a community that is spread-out	⇒ Language barriers between staff and clients ⇒ Requires knowledge of the person's email address ⇒ Limits accessibility to clients who have access to email	⇒ Illiteracy may limit access for certain populations ⇒ Requires access to the internet and smartphone / computer ⇒ Risk excluding a large portion of the population based on age and gender	⇒ Requires staff time and ability to monitor and manage responses ⇒ Staff required to have strong written communication skills
SMS or Whatsapp *(Responding directly to clients individually or in group via SMS)*	ICT, Written, Informal	⇒ Often a good channel to respond to sensitive feedback (direct message) ⇒ Two-way channel that can provide a forum for asking clarifying questions ⇒ Often good channel to respond to youth ⇒ Often good in urban contexts to reach a community that is spread-out	⇒ Language barriers ⇒ It requires the client has access to a smartphone and the internet	⇒ Illiteracy may limit access for certain populations ⇒ Risks excluding a large portion of the population based on age and gender ⇒ Can be cost prohibitive for people to have mobile phone credit to text back if they have question (unless this cost is covered by IRC) ⇒ Requires regular access to a mobile telephone network and electricity to keep phone charged	⇒ Requires staff time and ability to monitor and manage responses ⇒ Staff required to have strong written communication skills