
Develop a Complaint and Feedback Mechanism

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The ultimate objective of a Complaint and Feedback Mechanism (CFM) is to be accountable to beneficiaries. A CFM is a set of procedures that provides a channel for affected populations to communicate with IOM and ensures that IOM can respond and/or adapt interventions to any issues and suggestions arising.

CFMs can be individual mechanisms or systems that are set up jointly between other implementing organizations and IOM (if it is a joint effort). The important thing is that beneficiaries have a place where they can provide feedback that is secure, safe, and where complaints are addressed in a timely manner. Ensure communities understand their rights within CBI and make CFMs accessible to all, including women, minorities, persons with disabilities and others.


All IOM CBI should establish ways of receiving feedback and complaints from affected populations in order to ensure that issues are heard, acted upon and reported back throughout the implementation of interventions. Thereby ensuring accountability in the provision of assistance.

[IN285 IOM AAP Framework](#)

Figure 10: Organization and Project-level SOPs

	Organizational-level	Project-level
Definition	Strategic-level documents in establishing procedures for the design and implementation of CBI	Tactical-level documents, addressing specific steps designed for specific projects
Facilitates	Planning and implementation	Execution of specific tasks
Developed in line with	Organizational mandate Organizational policies (e.g. compliance, procurement) Resources available to the agency	Organizational-level SOPs Resources available to execute Contracts negotiated with service providers and implementing partners
Roles and responsibilities broken down by	Function: Finance, supply chain, IT, etc. Management Level: Senior management, team managers, officers, etc. Office: Headquarters, regional, country and field	<i>All listed in the organization-level, plus:</i> Organization: The agency, partners and suppliers Individual: The specific person or position performing a task (segregation of duties)
Content defined by	Primarily by Headquarters/organizational senior management	Primarily by country teams/implementation teams

Adapted from the e-learning module “[Core CVA skills for Supply chain, Finance and ICT staff](#)”, developed by the Fritz Institute and the CALP Network, in collaboration with the International Rescue Committee.

 **Protection:** Ensure gender balance with teams managing CFMs as that is a big factor in making it inclusive and accessible. In some communities, they may not be willing to share confidential complaints to male staff. Depending on the context, consider a women-centred CFM.

5.4.1 Components of complaint and feedback mechanism

It is key to set up a mechanism that offers a variety of channels for complaint and feedback and that is accessible to all beneficiaries, as well as non-beneficiaries. Feedback mechanisms can be confidential or not confidential. They can also be formal or informal. Feedback can be provided in multiple ways, such as in writing, verbally, or during a phone call.¹⁴

Ensuring that beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries are aware of the existence of such feedback

mechanisms is insufficient. **They should also know how to access them and feel both safe and confident in doing so.** The mechanisms established can be different depending on the size and types of the programme. In order to establish and activate feedback mechanisms, teams need to:

- Define purpose, expected uses and needs of the mechanism.
- Method(s) for collecting, recording and sorting feedback.
- Method(s) for follow-up, implementing corrective actions and responding to the feedback received.
- Methods to analyze and report on the feedback received and actions taken as a result of the feedback.

Table 9: Do's and Don'ts of Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms

Do	Don't
<p>Raise community awareness of their right to make reasonable feedback and complaints, and to receive a response within a certain timeframe. Specifically raise community awareness on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). Please refer to the IOM PSEAH Country Office Toolkit and Checklist or contact psea-sh@iom.int for more information.</p> <p>Ensure programmatic, safe and accessible CFMs are established within IOM operations, capable of handling sensitive complaints such as SEA.</p> <p>Sensitize communities on the standards of behaviour they should expect from IOM personnel.</p> <p>Ensure community awareness of their right to complain to IOM on serious issues, such as sexual abuse, fraud or other serious complaints, including through the “We Are All In” reporting platform or through OIGintake@iom.int.¹⁵ If the community does not have access to this, local alternatives should be used, herein in coordination with GBV actors for cases of sexual abuse.</p> <p>Make sure staff are well trained to handle complaints and know what to do when they receive feedback. Staff should also have referral pathways handy from the Protection partners. Ensure staff are aware of their duty to report, via “We Are All In” reporting platform or through OIGintake@iom.int, any breach of the organization’s rules and regulations.</p>	<p>Establish feedback or complaints systems that are difficult to access by vulnerable groups or that can be manipulated by elite people.</p> <p>Fail to follow-up and act on feedback and complaints.¹⁶</p> <p>Forget to close the feedback loop – have you reported back to communities?</p> <p>It is advised not to document cases of GBV.</p>

Do	Don't
<p>Respond to complaints in a timely manner.</p> <p>Document complaints and feedback.</p> <p>Help develop an internal learning culture, where feedback and complaints are welcomed and not feared by staff.</p> <p>Use feedback and complaints information to improve programme impact.</p>	

Adapted from CARE's "[Guidance for creating and managing effective feedback and accountability mechanisms](#)".

Best AAP practice dictates that the community should be consulted in the development of the CFMs. In this regard, any community consultation should be representative of diverse and marginalized groups, as they may have different answers on how they wish to make a complaint.

Accessibility and user-friendliness of the feedback and complaint mechanism for all genders, especially marginalised groups who might face barriers to access CFM, should be considered. For example, a female beneficiary may not have access to a mobile phone to call a hotline. The feedback and complaints, as well as information on how they were resolved, should all be logged in a secure and centralized database.

During distribution, it is a good practice to set up a complaint desk at the distribution site in a location where people can access it safely and confidentially. If this is not possible, it can suffice to share information on how to contact existing CFMs, by giving contact details, location and opening hours and sharing information materials on how to contact the "[We Are All In](#)" reporting platform to report issues of misconduct.¹⁷

5.4.2 Select and develop key communication messages for target audience

During beneficiary sensitization, it is recommended to conduct unique sessions on the function of the delivery mechanism and the redemption process. This is to ensure that beneficiaries understand well how they can access the value transferred.¹⁸ In sensitization material, it is also important to include key messages that make it clear that nothing is expected in exchange for assistance. Please refer to the [IOM PSEAH Country Office Toolkit and Checklist](#) for examples of key messages for different contexts.

Sensitization activities need to consider socio-cultural norms. In certain contexts, it can be necessary to conduct sessions split between the sexes, e.g. one male and one female. Also consider age, disabilities and literacy as determinants of the design of sensitization activities. Lastly, certain contexts will enable IOM to sensitize beneficiaries at a household-level with the support of

technology, e.g. telephones. Notification and communication with beneficiaries can also be included as an action prior to disbursement. A more targeted notification coordinated with the timing of the disbursement is a best practice to consider in terms of information sharing and ensuring access to assistance.

In the case of voucher and restricted modalities or delivery mechanisms, you will also need to provide training and/or sensitization to vendors participating in the project.

¹⁴ More detailed guidance is provided in the [IOM AAP Toolkit: Complaint & Feedback Mechanism](#).

¹⁵ When necessary and applicable, OIG will refer programmatic complaints to the appropriate unit. Sensitization efforts should seek to clarify what complaints may amount to misconduct and what may be considered programmatic feedback.

¹⁶ Only the Office of the Inspector General has the right to conduct investigations. Reports of possible misconduct, herein sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, fraud and corruption and misuse of resources, should be reported on weareallin.iom.int.

¹⁷ The Gender Coordination Unit has developed “We Are All In” promotional materials, such as posters, which can be displayed by Missions in locations of direct interaction between IOM personnel and beneficiaries.

¹⁸ For more generic and detailed guidance on information sharing, consult the IOM AAP Toolkit: Information Sharing and Transparency.

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