FEEDBACK MECHANISMS IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
FEEDBACK MECHANISMS: IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A FEEDBACK MECHANISM TO ADAPT HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMMING TO THE NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES

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This document, and the research it contains, was compiled by UNHCR Innovation in collaboration with the UNHCR office in Skopje. It explores UNHCR’s approach to closing the feedback loop in emergency operations. The research findings and the recommendations presented here are informed by field assessments, surveys and interviews with key stakeholders, in addition to collaborative feedback from divisions and bureaux within UNHCR.
INTRODUCTION

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO LISTEN TO COMMUNITIES IN A HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY?

‘Accountability’ has become a bit of a buzzword in the sector; an abstract virtue to which to aspire. However, reviews of recent humanitarian responses - to both natural disasters and complex contexts - often find that mechanisms to ensure accountability to the affected community are infrequently embedded into the response, and if they are, it is very rare that a response is altered based on the feedback collected. This leads to feedback largely being ‘unheard’ and individuals are left thinking ‘Did they really listen to me?’ In order to meet commitments outlined at the World Humanitarian Summit, humanitarian actors are striving for ways to improve how they listen to the people they are trying to help.

This case study draws recommendations from UNHCR’s operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYR Macedonia) that demonstrate how effective feedback mechanisms can be embedded into the response, and if they are, it is very rare that a response is altered based on the feedback collected. The transit centers provided an opportunity for testing and communicating with communities and integrating their feedback into the response. The transit centers at the northern and southern border points (in Tabanovce and Gevgelija respectively) were rapidly established to ensure refugees had access to shelter and basic services, as well as any legal assistance they might require.

As the response progressed, the operational context in fYR Macedonia underwent a dramatic change. Borders across Europe were reinforced and ultimately the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement saw the ‘closure’ of the route. This led to a more static population in both transit centers, providing more time and opportunities for engagement with communities but also leading to more complex challenges in terms of personalized information sharing and feedback sharing.

UNHCR INNOVATION

Supporting innovation in high-tech, low-tech and no-tech situations.

The establishment of the inter-agency feedback mechanism in fYR Macedonia was supported by UNHCR Innovation’s Emergency Lab which has a specific focus on communicating with communities. The Emergency Lab aims to utilize technological and non-technological innovations to help UNHCR improve its accountability in emergency situations - where time is critical and resources are often limited. Through creative interventions, intelligent partnerships and human centered design, the Emergency Lab aims to inject added value and catalyze innovations which have a direct impact on the lives of refugees and contribute to enhanced protection outcomes.

The Emergency Lab was invited to support the UNHCR operation in fYR Macedonia after they highlighted the significant challenges related to engaging with communities and integrating their feedback into the response. The transit centers provided an opportunity for testing and possible scaling of solutions - with the inter-agency feedback mechanism being a key initiative.
INFORMATION AND ADVICE DESKS

In the context of these challenges, UNHCR identified the need to enhance the way it engaged with refugees and migrants to make it more comprehensive and consistent.

The primary mechanism to do this was an inter-agency initiative, namely the Children and Family Protection Support Hubs (CFPSH) that were being rolled out across the response. These hubs were a result of an agreement between UNHCR and UNICEF to provide consolidated services in one location, helping avoid duplication and ensure due accountability. They were designed to provide consistent and quality services in each location across multiple countries. This was to enable refugees and migrant families to easily identify the services available at each site.

One of the elements of these hubs was an Information and Advice Desk (IAD) - or information kiosks - which were established as visible, static information points. The IADs serve as the central point for feedback and information requests and allow for feedback across all services and issues to be captured in each location.

A marked improvement?

Prior to this desk being created, feedback was collected on a largely ad-hoc basis. All of the organizations would capture this through their day-to-day interactions with refugees and migrants as well as through their management of individual cases which needed specific support. This was shared informally and the main forum for inter-agency discussion and decision making was through inter-agency-coordination meetings, in particular the Protection Working Group, also covering sub-sectors such as Child Protection and SGBV. Whilst, of course, this often resulted in action to resolve the issue in question, the lack of a systematic approach meant that it was not always clear for the refugees or migrants how they could lodge feedback or complaints, how responses would be monitored and whether anything would be done in light of that feedback.

Through the Information and Advice Desk, systems and tools were designed that allowed the systematic capture of solicited and non-solicited feedback and complaints. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were created with a mobile-data collection function introduced so that staff could systematically capture feedback and ensure this was shared and monitored. The IADs are the central point for feedback and were developed as visible, static information points. The IADs serve as the central point for feedback and information requests and allow for feedback across all services and issues to be captured in each location.

A blue dot image represented the CFPSH to make it easy for families to seek out the IADs across different sites, both inside and outside FYR Macedonia.

Agreement was reached between the inter-agency group behind the CFPSHs as to who would provide which service in order to operationalize the service. For the information and advice desks in this context, both UNICEF and UNHCR co-located the staff through local NGO ‘LaStrada’ and provided specific training. UNICEF agreed to provide the equipment for the desks and UNHCR took on the responsibility for providing the technical information management solution for capturing and storing feedback data. This included the overall responsibility for analyzing and sharing the data with the appropriate organizations in the available forums.

In FYR Macedonia these IADs were personed by a dedicated team of assistants who also had a roving function - walking the sites to improve outreach and information provision. UNHCR with UNICEF and local partners trained the IAD Assistants in engaging with people in a culturally appropriate way, and capturing the relevant details of their interactions. This role also included management of individual cases and ensuring follow-up. Effort was made to ensure that staff were easily ‘identifiable’ and accessible so that people knew they could be approached for information, advice and as a channel to provide feedback.

Many of these assistants also speak Arabic, further helping them engage directly with people. Given the direct engagement these assistants have with communities, they provided a good entry point for UNHCR to begin designing and defining a feedback mechanism.

Building the tools and systems

In conjunction with UNHCR’s Innovation’s Emergency Lab, the FYR Macedonia partners conducted an information and communications needs assessment4 with refugees and migrants to identify their preferred modes of communication. An outcome of these conversations was that face-to-face communication is often preferred. With further support from the Emergency Lab, the team of IAD assistants and UNHCR’s Protection staff began defining the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the IADs utilizing face-to-face. This means that the different pathways were mapped according to how individuals would respond to somebody coming to the desk in-person. When to provide information, when to direct refer them to a particular service, when to simply log feedback as no further action is required. It was important to understand what referrals were needed and what information would be collected before designing the questionnaire and how the data would be collected.

Forms were created based on the information that was needed - it was important not to ‘over collect’ information that would be irrelevant or superfluous. The information architecture (the structural design of the information) was very simple at the initial stage. It contained limited ‘categories’ - also known as taxonomies. The form was designed to capture two main types of feedback: positive or negative sentiment towards a product or service and requests for information or referral. Both types can be recorded as an individual or in a group. The service/product sentiment information was chosen to be collected with the aim of discovering trends that reveal the success or failure of operational changes. The information request/disclosure element included in-built accountability features (i.e. space provided to input points of action). All data to be collected in the questionnaires, in compliance with UNHCR data protection policy was designed to be anonymized. Basic information such as language, gender and age were recorded to provide better disaggregation and analysis.

Whilst this mechanism is centered primarily around the information kiosks and its assistants, there are several aspects that make the FYR Macedonia mechanism more plural in terms of communication channels. A phone number was advertised in women’s bathrooms for sensitive complaints. In addition, by actively soliciting feedback the desk assistants were able to expand outreach - allowing for feedback to be provided away from the static location of the information desks. This increased opportunities for those not confident or able to approach the desks to have their voice heard. In Autumn 2016, feedback boxes were introduced as a complementary channel for acquiring feedback.

To date, in the lifetime of the current feedback mechanism in FYR Macedonia, there have not been any complaints of sensitive and/or serious nature reported (as of 16 February 2017). Whilst this may be inherently positive, it does also signal the need for an in-depth evaluation of the mechanism’s ability to provide a sense of safety to people who seek support on more challenging problems. When some reports of dissatisfaction of the system itself were received, UNHCR and UNICEF reviewed the Standard Operation Procedures to strengthen the follow-up of feedback received.


Feedback Mechanisms
1. **DEFINE THE CHALLENGE: CONSULT WITH COMMUNITIES AND HUMANITARIAN RESPONDERS TO WORK OUT WHAT BARRIERS ARE PREVENTING FEEDBACK BEING LISTENED TO AND ACTED ON**

This 'homework' phase is essential.

By consulting with communities and response stakeholders - it is important to determine what barriers there are in terms of feedback being listened to and acted on. For example, in the early phase of the response in FYR Macedonia - receiving and responding to feedback operated primarily on an ad hoc basis. Any information that was noted was brought to inter-agency coordination meetings for discussion. While this may have resolved particular issues, the lack of a systematic approach meant that people were not always aware of how to lodge feedback or complaints and there was no way for humanitarian staff to easily track their responses and share this data with their partners. UNHCR recognized the need to improve this system for managing to ensure the process was well institutionalized and systematized so that 'listening' became a central element of decision making.

2. **DON’T DUPLICATE EFFORTS: BUILD ON EXISTING STAFF CAPACITIES AND WORK WITH ESTABLISHED SERVICES TO ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY**

Top-down solutions to any challenge are notoriously hard to institutionalise.

To ensure buy-in and sustainability, the feedback mechanism in FYR Macedonia needed to capitalize on existing capacities. One of the key inter-agency initiatives being rolled-out across the response were Children and Family Protection Support Hubs (CFPSH). These hubs were designed to provide consistent and quality services in each location across multiple countries. This was to enable refugee and migrant families to easily identify and access the services available at each site. One of the elements of these hubs was an Information and Advice Desk (IAD) - or information kiosks - which were established as visible, static information points. In FYR Macedonia these IADs were personned by dedicated assistants who also had a roving function - walking the sites to improve outreach and information provision. Many of these assistants can also speak Arabic, furthering helping them engage directly with people. Given the direct engagement these assistance have with communities, they provided a good entry point for UNHCR to begin designing and defining a feedback mechanism.

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“At the food service during Ramadan, after the evening meal (Iftar) UNHCR and partners were waiting for feedback to see if the people were satisfied with the food or not. It was nice to hear the results as it encourages us to do our jobs better.”

- IAD Assistant (Tabanovce)
USE THE COMMUNITY’S PREFERRED COMMUNICATION CHANNELS: ENGAGE WITH THEM THROUGH CHANNELS THEY LIKE AND TRUST.

Persuading people to adopt a new communication channel or change their ‘communication behaviour’ is challenging in any situation.

Engagement with communities needs to be through preferred and trusted channels. Following consultations with refugees and migrants in FYR Macedonia and by building on known data from Greece, face-to-face communication was clearly the community’s preferred communication channel for dialogue with humanitarian actors. While people were using phones or Facebook to contact family members, trusted information and updates on services came through one-on-one or group discussions with volunteers, partners and UNHCR staff. Any feedback mechanism would need to strengthen face-to-face communication and leverage the trust that people already placed in this channel. The key was to design a system that could maximize the effectiveness of this engagement. To better facilitate the collection of feedback and complaints, the mechanism in FYR Macedonia capitalized on the CFPSH model by working with ‘information kiosk’ assistants who used an online data collection tool. This KoboToolbox form was designed with UNHCR protection staff to ensure the form was contextually appropriate and could safely collect all the relevant information to help improve the quality of services provided at the transit sites.

COORDINATE: HAVE CLEAR COMMITMENT AND AGREEMENT ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, BOTH INTERNALLY AND INTER-AGENCY.

For an efficient feedback mechanism to operate, there needs to be clear commitment and agreement on specific roles, internally and at inter-agency level.

Obscurity around responsibilities of human and financial resources can hinder the establishment of any mechanism. In FYR Macedonia, the services available in the transit centers are provided by a range of humanitarian actors, including UNHCR, partners, volunteers and authorities. It was vital that the feedback mechanism was designed for inter-agency collaboration to ensure mutual accountability between stakeholders. In FYR Macedonia there has been good inter-agency collaboration with regular coordination meetings hosted by UNHCR and good stakeholder engagement - including the government, UN agencies and local partners. This provided a good platform to build the inter-agency mechanism on. It was agreed that information gathered through the online forms would be a standing agenda item of this meeting with resolutions and action points followed up each week. In addition a dissemination plan was determined - a weekly report summarizing the feedback received is shared with the government and other partners.
Focus on what you need to know to make improvements: collect structured data that enables you to make decisions and take action at the right time.

Feedback mechanisms must be prepared to respond to sensitive issues, such as Sexual and Gender Based Violence and other serious protection concerns.

Prepare for sensitive issues: ensure you have a safe channel for confidential reporting.

Listening without action disentivises communities to engage as their feedback only filters into an ‘echo chamber’.

To ensure that actionable information was being collected - and therefore corrective action taken when necessary - UNHCR worked to design the required data fields on the feedback form. This meant that the form was able to capture positive or negative sentiments towards a product or service, the type of information being requested as well as the number and type of referrals. Based on the context, the form also supports data collection at individual or group level. The servicial/product sentiment information was chosen to be collected with the aim of discovering trends that reveal the quality or shortcomings of services provided, and the impact – if any – of changes made. The information request and referral elements included in-built accountability protocols – for example a space was provided to input points of action or the name of agency and focal-point that the referral was made to. All data is collected in the questionnaires in compliance with UNHCR’s data protection policy – no personal data which could identify the individual or group member is collected in the form. When the data is shared it is anonymized. Basic information such as language, gender and age were recorded to allow for trends for specific groups to be analyzed.

Preparation for sensitive issues:

Feedback mechanisms must be prepared to respond to sensitive issues, such as Sexual and Gender Based Violence and other serious protection concerns.

Recognizing the challenge people face when reporting sensitive concerns, the feedback mechanism must include channels which prioritize confidentiality and create a private and safe environment for reporting. In FYR Macedonia, the assistants were trained to deal with sensitive complaints in-line with established referral procedures. As certain cultural or social norms may prohibit some information being shared with members of the opposite sex, it was important that the assistants are both men and women. To encourage people to share their concerns, assistants sought to actively solicit feedback helping people feel their views were important and valued. The team also clearly explained the anonymity of the data protection to build trust in the mechanism. Another specific initiative that helped to provide a private avenue for reporting sensitive concerns was the integration of a phone-channel. A direct-dial telephone number was advertised - using stickers in the ladies’ bathrooms - to provide another option for those who feel the information desks are too public or unsuitable. The recent introduction of anonymous boxes also provides an additional complementary channel for reporting.

“In one case in May I remember there were some missing NFIs (clothes for women) at the distribution point and we got some negative feedback from Refugees about it. A week after that, products were delivered based on the feedback; people were satisfied.”

- IAD Assistant (Tabanovce)
TEST AND REFINE: SPEAK TO THOSE USING THE MECHANISM AND ITERATE YOUR DESIGN TO ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS.

The assumptions which inform the design of a feedback mechanism - including the type, quantity and quality of feedback data - need to be tested. Based on these tests, refinement of the mechanism is important to ensure its effectiveness. For example, the initial design of the mechanism in FYR Macedonia was based on the assumption that mostly ‘non-solicited feedback’ would be received through the Information and Advice Desks. Initially, the proponents of feedback were men. The team in FYR Macedonia countered this imbalance by more structured engagement with women through actively soliciting their feedback. Now the gender balance is more equal. This demonstrates how the system needs refining to ensure inclusive engagement. The team has identified other areas that need to be strengthened to improve inclusive engagement, including the representation of children. This may require specialized recruitment of staff with experience of specifically engaging children - especially to manage any sensitive issues that may be raised.

ENABLE EVOLUTION: ADAPT YOUR MECHANISM TO THE CHANGING DYNAMICS OF THE RESPONSE - GO BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD IF NECESSARY.

In emergencies, contexts often change rapidly and dramatically. For a mechanism to maintain its relevance, it needs to adapt to these changes. As discussed, due to the external change, the movement of the refugee and migrant population in FYR Macedonia became a lot more stable. Original discussions to explore remote and mobile communication channels – to continue dialogue with those who have moved on – became less of a priority. As people now remain at the site, the assistants became well-known focal points, with people actively providing inputs on behalf of themselves and other members of the community.

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“Some have told us, they feel like the Information and Advice Desk is ‘the voice of the refugee’ in the transit centre.”
- IAD Assistant (Gevgelija)
MAKE DATA DIGESTIBLE: VISUALISE YOUR DATA, SHOW TRENDS AND FIND THE RIGHT FORUM(S) FOR SHARING TO MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE.

An impenetrable block of feedback data won't drive decision making and will decrease the chance of operational changes or corrections being made.

In FYR Macedonia the kobotoolbox platform was chosen because of its custom visualization features. To support data management and visualization in FYR Macedonia, a focal point creates weekly reports that are distilled to highlight key issues requiring action. These reports also include an overview of all information received - including positive feedback. Sensitive, individual case data is not shared. The frequency of these reports and their centrality to decision making on services and protection concerns definitely demonstrates a commitment to fostering a feedback culture amongst partners. However, partners decided that weekly circulation of ‘data-lite’ graphs wouldn’t be useful - as it is difficult to track trends and analyze the effect of programming changes. The mechanism therefore adopted a supplementary monthly ‘visualization’ of the data to clearly demonstrate changes in perceptions and trends. The feedback from decision makers on these reports indicated that they were accessible, and easy to navigate.

DEMONSTRATE YOU’VE LISTENED: PROACTIVELY EXPLAIN THE CHANGES YOU’VE MADE AND WHY CERTAIN ACTIONS SOMETIMES CANNOT BE TAKEN.

Response to feedback and demonstrable action or change is important to fostering a community’s trust in the mechanism and ensuring its continued relevance.

In FYR Macedonia examples of how the feedback loop is being closed include partners actively sharing information about changes and improvements to services and products with the community in both the Gevgelija and Tabanovce sites. This information is displayed on central information screens and also communicated via loudspeaker broadcasts. Individual follow-up is usually reserved for specific information requests that require person-specific responses. One of the challenges with closing the feedback loop in FYR Macedonia is that they system currently collects anonymized data on services which doesn’t lend itself to individual responses. The team is therefore looking to develop a more systematized approach to responding to individuals.

“The Kobo Toolbox is very useful and helpful for our work in the Information and Advice Desk. It allows us to collect feedback and report with just a few taps on the screen.”

- IAD Assistant (Gevgelija)

Gevgelija: UNHCR staff provide information to a group of Afghan refugees in Gevgelija Transit Centre © UNHCR/Mark Henley
SET UP MOBILE DATA COLLECTION IN 5 EASY STEPS

Finding the Right Tool

Collecting data through an electronic system has never been easier. There are a plethora of tools available to do this and sometimes it can be hard to figure out which one suits your needs.

Tools such as the Humanitarian Nomad can help. This, and a number of other platforms, can help determine your specific needs through a selection of questions, and help you narrow down your search to an appropriate mobile data collection tool.

http://humanitarian-nomad.org

Opting for KoboToolbox in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

For the work in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the UNHCR Innovation Emergency Lab introduced ‘Kobo Toolbox’. This mobile data collection tool is an open source product, built around the Open Data Kit, that is completely free to use. The software was founded by a team based at the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and the Brigham and Women’s Hospital and is supported by a range of other organisations and donors. There is an instance of Kobo Toolbox running on HumanitarianResponse.info that allows you to build your own system within a matter of minutes.

For more information go to http://www.kobotoolbox.org.

UNHCR offers access to KoboToolbox on secure servers, ideal for storing refugee-sensitive data.

To set up an account and get started go to: http://kobo.unhcr.org

In other cases, KoboToolbox is also available from a variety of providers such as http://kobo.humanitarianresponse.info

From creating an account, it’s possible - with little prior knowledge - to set up a form and start collecting data in a matter of minutes. Kobo Toolbox provides a suite of tools that makes it easy to set up questionnaires, capture data in a variety of formats, including photos, videos and location data, and stores these in a secure database. In FYR Macedonia, key information about Age, Gender and Diversity was captured alongside both structured and unstructured inputs around the issues people were facing. Issues with certain sectors can be noted quickly. It is also possible to triage and refer cases for immediate follow-up. It is also possible to design the forms so that only the questions that require answers show up, making it as easy and quick as possible, giving the staff member more time to concentrate on listening and responding to the individual approaching the desk.

Beyond the five steps presented opposite, Kobo Toolbox has a selection of handy guides available at http://support.kobotoolbox.org/customer/en/portal/topics/690865-getting-started/articles which can provide deeper insight into how to set up surveys and specific tutorials to illustrate through example.

1 UNHCR is unable to guarantee the security of the data stored on third-party servers.

Feedback Mechanisms
**PRACTICAL TIPS**

1. **Define the Challenge**: Consult with communities and humanitarian responders to understand what barriers are preventing feedback being listened to and acted on.

   **TIPS**: Work out where the problems really lie - these can include lack of staffing, poor or non-existent communication channels, non-working technology, bad data management and confused information flows.

   **Eg**: Listen first to focus on where the problems are - talk to as many people as possible, including communities, to hear their challenges; join meetings, following individual complaints, test existing channels (such as calling a hotline).

2. **Assess the existing capacities**: Ensure buy-in and sustainability by capitalising on existing resources.

   **Suggestion**: Don’t duplicate efforts. Build on existing staff capacities and work with established services to ensure sustainability.

   **TIPS**: Work out what activities are already underway and build on these, identify which community members, partners and staff you can work with.

   **Eg**: If people are regularly attending schools, medical centres, or distribution points then you can plan to integrate your mechanism into these services, working with teachers, parents, medical staff and distribution volunteers etc.

3. **Use the community’s preferred communication channels**: Engage with them through channels they like and trust.

   **TIPS**: Conduct an Information and Communication Needs Assessment - different groups and individuals prefer different channels.

   **Eg**: Consult with communities to determine what channels of communication they are currently using, what sources they trust and how they would like to talk to humanitarian agencies.

4. **Focus on what you need to know to make improvements**: Design your mechanism to collect structured data that enables you to make decisions and take action at the right time.

   **TIPS**: Mobile data collection enables quick collection, is time-efficient and reduces errors - it also enables the capture of standardised data through structured questionnaires. Design your questionnaire with decision makers so that they define what is information is collected.

   **Eg**: Collect disaggregated data to identify specific concerns for different groups and be sure to cover the services/products being provided.

5. **Prepare for sensitive issues**: Ensure you have the resources and appropriate channels to create a safe and confidential space for reporting.

   **TIPS**: Provide private areas and/or channels for discussion and reiterate the confidentiality of the information being shared. Always consider gender and age dynamics of staffing and ensure they know how to escalate/refer the sensitive issues they receive.

   **Eg**: A dedicated phone line to a female staff member may help encourage women to report protection concerns in contexts where they define what is information is collected.

6. **Test and refine**: Speak to those using the mechanism and iterate your design to ensure effectiveness.

   **TIPS**: Consult with communities to understand why/why not they are using the mechanism.

   **Eg**: Work with specific groups within the community - such as the youth, disabled groups, women's associations - to brainstorm solutions which would overcome the challenges.

7. **Enable evolution**: Adapt your mechanism to the changing dynamics of the response - go back to the drawing board if necessary.

   **TIPS**: The more channels you establish the less risk there is of complete loss of engagement with a community if access to one fails.

   **Eg**: In changing contexts new channels may become available, and existing ones disrupted, information needs will change and different groups of people may be affected.

8. **Make data digestible**: Visualise your data, show trends and find the right forum(s) for sharing to make it accessible.

   **TIPS**: Mobile data collection tools help you to easily pull your data into charts - show trends and find the right forum(s) for sharing to make it accessible.

   **Eg**: Examples include, inviting leaders to interagency groups, sharing information verbally through community structures or using audio equipment dependent on the community’s preference(s).

9. **Coordinate**: Have clear commitment and agreement on roles and responsibilities, both internally and inter-agency.

10. **Demonstrate you’ve listened**: Proactively explain the changes you’ve made and why certain actions sometimes cannot be taken.

    **TIPS**: Don’t wait until the community is frustrated by the lack of feedback make sure a key responsibility of the mechanism is to ‘close the loop’. The loop needs to be closed through preferred and trusted channels.

    **Eg**: Examples include, inviting leaders to interagency groups, sharing information verbally through community structures or using audio equipment dependent on the community’s preference(s).
Feedback Mechanisms

Feedback Mechanisms

CFSH. The aim was to identify and refer persons with vulnerabilities, within the period of May - August 2016, to receive feedback/complaint from refugees.

Systematically documented in a feedback and referral system, the data collection form in the Kobo Toolbox. Information on work further shared with authorities and partners. The analysis of data identified positive/negative feedback. Sublimated reports were compiled and analyzed by firstly the UNHCR Protection team, and subsequently shared at an inter-agency level. This led to immediate action from field times on the relevant issues to ensure timely follow-up and improvement of humanitarian delivery, based on the feedback.

On an intermittent basis, broader trend reports were created with greater focus on prioritisation of areas of focus, resolving longstanding issues and steering the overarching direction of the humanitarian response.

Over time, the team in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will further improve the way it captures and analyses the data it is pulling in through the information and advice desks. Efforts are being made to explore whether additional channels can be established to bring in feedback from the affected communities.

TAKING ACTION

Over time, the operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have made efforts to integrate the pilot into their systems and overall way of working and delivery of protection and assistant to the refugees in the different transit centres.

Weekly reports were compiled and analysed by firstly the UNHCR Protection team, and subsequently shared and discussed at an inter-agency level. This led to immediate action from field times on the relevant issues to ensure timely follow-up and improvement of humanitarian delivery, based on the feedback.

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IMPLEMENTING FEEDBACK MECHANISMS IN EMERGENCIES
The Emergency Lab is a joint initiative between the Division for Emergency Services and UNHCR Innovation. The Emergency Lab is currently focussing on how to ‘close the feedback’ loop and is available to support UNHCR’s Emergency Operations in implementing projects like those covered in this study.

Contact us in UNHCR Innovation: innovation@unhcr.org