TOOL 17

OPTIONS FOR SHARING EVALUATIONS WITH COMMUNITIES[1]

Community Engagement and Accountability / IFRC / June 2016

This document is intended to provide advice and guidance on how evaluations can be shared easily with communities. It is based on guidance from the IFRC Monitoring and Evaluation Guide and the 'ALNAP Participation by crisis-affected populations in humanitarian action: A handbook for practitioners'.

Introduction

If communities have given their time to feed into an evaluation, they deserve to hear the final results. Dissemination of evaluations should be multidirectional. This means that in addition to distributing information upwards to management, senior management and donors, information flows should also be directed to field staff, partners and the beneficiaries themselves.

Providing this feedback to communities is central to participatory evaluation. Given the fact that participatory evaluation is a time-consuming undertaking, the population will be willing to commit itself on a continued basis only if the flow of information is two-way and proper feedback on the results occurs at the end.

In most instances, a good option is to hold a meeting where there can be discussion about the evaluation, its methodology, its findings and how the recommendations will be implemented and the impact for the community. The findings of an evaluation report are more likely to be understood and used if they are not limited to a printed report, but presented to the community in a face-to-face forum that allows them to reflect and give feedback. Ideally, this can be done before the final draft of the report to confirm key lessons and inform realistic recommendations. However, be aware that asking for feedback is a risky endeavor if the capacity to implement changes required as a result of the evaluation process is low.

Different ways to share evaluations

- ➢ Focus groups
- ➢ Community meetings, workshops or presentations
- ➢ Communication and information tools, such as posters, radio spots or shows, newspaper adverts, films or presentations
- ➢ Notice boards in communities
- ➢ Distributing the printed evaluation report, or a shorter version – for example a newsletter version of the evaluation
- ➢ Internet

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[1] Accountability to Beneficiaries in East Africa and the Indian Ocean Islands / Adapted from the IFRC M&E Guide and ALNAP's Participation by crisis-affected populations in humanitarian action: A handbook for practitioners / November 2014

Questions to consider when deciding the best way to share an evaluation

- ➢ Can the community read and write?
- ➢ What communication channels do they most commonly use?
- ➢ Can you reach different groups in the community in the same way eg men, women, boys, girls and marginalized groups or do you need to share the evaluation and ask for feedback in different ways for different groups?
- ➢ What time and resources are available?
- ➢ Can you share the full evaluation or does it have confidential or security-related information that should be omitted?
- ➢ How can the safety of those groups involved in the evaluation process be guaranteed, and the risks of stigmatisation or social tension be minimised?
- ➢ Do you need to make sure that individuals who contributed to the evaluation cannot be identified in the final report? Or if people are named or identifiable in the evaluation report do you need to get their permission to share it with the community?
- ➢ Do you want to collect feedback on the evaluation or just share the results i.e. one-way or two-way?

Key tips

- ➢ Both successes and failures have to be acknowledged
- ➢ All stakeholders should be formally invited
- ➢ Use the same language as the community
- ➢ Ask people how they would like to receive information on the evaluation while they are taking part in it
- ➢ Use simple language people can understand
- ➢ Keep it short – don't hide information but aim to help people understand the main points
- ➢ Encourage people to participate and provide feedback by including a question and answer session
- ➢ Be aware people may not agree with the results, or people in the community might not agree with each other so think how you will deal with this and ensure everyone has a chance to speak and feels listened to
- ➢ Do not make commitments to changes or future actions coming out of the evaluation unless you are sure you can implement them.