**TOOL 3: CEA Policy Template**

This tool provides a template and guidance on how to develop and draft a CEA Policy for your organization. A CEA Policy sets out what the organization commits to and the roles and responsibilities of different departments. There is also the option to call this document a ‘CEA Approach’ or ‘CEA Commitments’ if the process to develop a formal policy is too lengthy or difficult within your organization.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA) POLICY <YEAR>**

*Overall Guidance on developing your CEA policy*

*It is important to apply a community engagement approach to the development of this policy by consulting a wide range of staff and volunteers. If staff and volunteers are engaged in the process of developing this, and feel consulted and listened to, they will be more likely to take ownership of the policy and implement it within their area of work.*

**DOCUMENT CONTROL** **(for internal use)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Managed by | *Who is the owner of the policy? And will follow up its implementation?* |
| Status | *Is it approved? Draft?* |
| Responsible Position | *Job title of the person who owns the policy* |
| Contact Information | *Their email and telephone numbers* |
| Date Approved | *What date was the policy approved* |
| Version | *Is this the 1st version, 2nd version etc?* |
| Approved by | *Authorizing body e.g. SMT* |
| Next Review Date | *When is the policy due to be revised?* |

**REVISION HISTORY (for internal use)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Revision | Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded | Date | Authorizing Body | Document Reference No. |
| Original |  |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  |  |

This policy sets out the commitments <insert name of National Society> makes in relation to engaging with and being accountable to local people. It provides staff and volunteers with clear guidance on what is expected of them in relation to community engagement and accountability (CEA) and how CEA should be integrated into other <name of National Society> documents, including the strategic plan, annual plans, proposals and other policies and guidelines.

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# Definitions and Abbreviations

*Use this section to explain the terms you use in the policy and spell out any abbreviations or acronyms in full. This helps readers have a common understanding of key terms in your policy.*

For example:

* **Accountability:** in this document, accountability refers specifically to accountability to communities or local people and not to donors or partners.
* **Community:** refers to the group of people affected by the organization’s activities, programmes, or operations – including those who receive support and those who don’t. The community can be defined geographically or by personal characteristics, such as age, gender, or status (e.g., pregnant women).
* **CEA:** Community engagement and accountability.
* **Feedback:** Community feedback is any insights generated by community members and can include any type of information, such as questions, suggestions, observations, beliefs, perceptions, concerns, complaints, and statements of thanks. Community feedback can therefore be positive, neutral, or negative information.

# Introduction

*Use this section to introduce the policy and:*

* *Explain what CEA is*
* *Why CEA is important and how it fits within the National Society, Movement, and wider humanitarian sector*
* *What the National Society has already achieved in relation to CEA and why this policy is being introduced.*

**To help you get started here is an example of what this could look like:**

Community engagement and accountability is a way of working that recognises and values all community members as equal partners, whose diverse needs, priorities, and preferences guide everything we do. We achieve this by integrating meaningful community participation, open and honest communication, and mechanisms to listen to and act on feedback, within our programmes and operations. Evidence, experience, and common sense tells us when we truly engage communities and they play an active role in designing and managing programmes and operations, the outcomes are more effective, sustainable, and of a higher quality.

Working in partnership with communities is at the core of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. We commit to involving people in the management of aid, holding ourselves accountable to those we seek to assist, and building on local capacity in [the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement’s Code of Conduct in Disaster Relief](https://www.ifrc.org/media/48907). The [Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance](https://www.ifrc.org/document/principles-rules-humanitarian-assistance) commit to including transparent communication and feedback mechanisms in emergency responses. In December 2019, the first set of [‘Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability’](https://communityengagementhub.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/R1-Movement-wide-commitments-for-CEA.pdf) was approved at the Council of Delegates.

The Movement is not alone in its efforts to strengthen community engagement and accountability. There are several global initiatives also working to support this aim. These shared commitments support collective action on improving community engagement across agencies and include the [Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS)](https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/the-standard), which sets out nine commitments that organisations and individuals involved in humanitarian response can use to improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they provide, the [Interagency Standing Committee Commitments on Accountability to Affected People](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/results-group-2-accountability-and-inclusion), and the [Grand Bargain Commitments](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain) to increasing the participation of affected communities in addressing humanitarian needs.

<insert name of National Society> has been working to adopt a more systematic approach to CEA since <year>. This has included <outline what has been achieved so far in relation to CEA>. Challenges faced have included <outline challenges faced and why this policy will help to address them>.

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# Purpose

*In this section outline why you are creating this policy and what you hope it will address.*

**For example:**

The aim of this CEA policy is to support <name of National Society> to adopt a more systematic and planned approach to engaging communities and ensure consistent and high quality accountability across all our programmes and operations. By institutionalizing CEA into our ways of working, <name of National Society> will:

* Improve its understanding of the community context and needs
* Which will lead to better, more effective programmes and operations
* Which contribute to stronger community ownership and resilience
* Build trust, access, and acceptance in communities
* Uphold Movement commitments to accountability
* Strengthen the organization’s reputation with communities, donors and partners.

Through this policy, <name of National Society>;

* Set out what we commit to in relation to engaging with and being accountable to the communities we work with
* Provide our staff and volunteers with clear guidance on what is expected of them in relation to CEA, including the roles and responsibilities of different departments and levels
* Describe how CEA should be integrated into other National Society documents, including the strategic plan, annual plans, proposals and other policies and guidelines
* Outline the support, resources, and operational plan to ensure this policy can be implemented within <name of National Society>.

# Scope and audience of policy

*In this section outline who the policy applies to within the National Society and what departments or work it impacts upon.*

**For example:**

This policy applies to;

* All staff and volunteers working for <insert name of National Society>
* All <name of National Society> members of Governance
* Partners of <name of National Society> implementing projects in <country>.

While this policy covers all aspects of <name of National Society>, it has particular importance for departments and projects involved in the delivery of programmes and operations within communities.

# Key principles of the policy

*This section is where you outline the main content of the policy. It should include:*

* *The overall principles or commitments the National Society makes in relation to CEA. Use the* [*Movement-wide Minimum Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability (CR/19/R1)*](https://rcrcconference.org/app/uploads/2019/12/190024_en-CD19-R1-Movement-wide-commitments-for-CEA-CLEAN_ADOPTED_en.pdf)*, adopted at the Council of Delegates on 08 December 2019. These overarching, strategic commitments aim to ensure a consistent approach to how we engage with and are accountable to people and communities across the Movement. All members of the Movement, including every National Society, ICRC delegation and IFRC office, is responsible for meeting and upholding these commitments and they are relevant and applicable to all staff and volunteers throughout the Movement regardless of their role.*
* *The specific actions the National Society will take to ensure these commitments are met. These should be more detailed and connect to the overall principles or commitments above and could come from the minimum actions to institutionalize CEA and integrate it in programmes and operations, as outlined in the* [*Movement Guide to Community Engagement and Accountability*](https://communityengagementhub.org/resource/ifrc-cea-guide/)*. These should be discussed and adapted to suit the context of your National Society.*

**See below for some ideas to get your started:**

**At the organizational level:**

* + <name of National Society> will adopt key performance indicators to measure how the National Society is being accountable to communities.
  + <name of National Society> will provide CEA training opportunities to its staff and volunteers within the headquarters and at branch level.
  + <name of National Society> will integrate a CEA Manager position into its headquarters staff structure and identify CEA focal points within all branches.
  + <name of National Society> will integrate CEA within all existing and new policies, procedures, annual plans, and the strategic plan.
  + CEA will be included in all relevant staff job descriptions and appraisal processes.
  + <name of National Society> will establish and maintain a community feedback mechanism to cover all of the organization’s work in communities.

**Within programmes and operations:**

* + <name of National Society> will always meet with communities at the start of programmes and operations to explain who we are, the behaviour people can expect from our staff and volunteers, and what support will be provided through the programme or operation.
  + <name of National Society> will always ask communities about their priority needs and preferences before planning any programmes or emergency responses.
  + Every <name of National Society> programme will be co-designed and overseen by a project management committee that will include members of the community, including men, women, boys and girls, older people, people with disabilities and any marginalized or at-risk groups. These committees will be trained on their roles and responsibilities and their effectiveness monitored
  + Every <name of National Society> programme and operation will include activities, indicators, and budget for community engagement.
  + <name of National Society> will regularly review and adjust programmes and operations based on community feedback and monitoring data.

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# Roles and Responsibilities

*Outline who has responsibility in implementing this policy and what their responsibilities are. This depends very much on the content of your policy and who will be critical to implementing it within your National Society. Below are some examples of the different roles you might want to include, but you do not have to include all of these, unless it makes sense for your National Society.*

*For example:*

* *What responsibilities are common to all staff and volunteers?*
* *What are the responsibilities of the Secretary General and senior management?*
* *What are the responsibilities of programme and operations managers, for example head of health, disaster management etc?*
* *What are the responsibilities of connected cross-cutting areas, such as the planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting team, organisational development or protection, gender and inclusion?*
* *What are the responsibilities of other support services such as finance and human resources?*
* *What are the responsibilities for branch managers?*
* *What are the responsibilities of Governance, at the branch and headquarters level?*
* *What are the responsibilities of Partner National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC?*

# Implementation and monitoring of this policy

*In this section, set out briefly how this policy will be implemented and monitored. This should include:*

* *Who has the overall responsibility for overseeing this policy?*
* *What will happen to support the implementation of the policy? For example, will an action plan or strategy be developed to outline how the actions in the policy will be implemented? Will staff be briefed on the policy? How will it be widely circulated? Is there training planned?*
* *How will implementation of the policy be monitored? For example, will an annual evaluation be carried out? Are there key performance indicators to monitor if the policy commitments are being met? Will it be reported on at board meetings?*

# Related Policies, Strategies, Procedure and Guidelines

*In this section, list all the existing National Society policies, procedures, plans and guidelines that CEA will be integrated into or that link to this policy and how they connect. Examples could include: National Society strategic plan; PMER guidelines; Human Resources policy; Disaster Response Standard Operating Procedures; Human Resources Policy; Communication Policy etc.*

# Appendix

*Include here any other key documents linked to the implementation of this policy, for example the National Society CEA strategy or action plan.*