HO D3.1 Accountability Triangle

The Accountability Triangle is a simple diagram showing four key elements of accountability that are also crucial for protection mainstreaming. They are all interdependent: without one the triangle is incomplete.

INFORMATION SHARING. Accurate, timely and accessible information can save lives and creates more certainty

* **WHAT** information to give—try to provide a minimum of accurate and timely information:
	+ Who you are;
	+ Project details;
	+ Time period of project;
	+ Who is being targeted; and
	+ How they can feedback.
* **WHO** to give information to—different groups should understand the role of the organisation and its work, including what services are available to them:
	+ Consider who is receiving the information and the best way to reach them e.g. consider audiences such as older people, people with disabilities (physical, visual, audio etc.) teenagers, illiterate, or marginalised groups access or receive information.
* **HOW** to give information—information should be shared through a range of formats, languages and media. Ensure people receive information in more than one format, trying to provide:
	+ One version that’s written (e.g. posters, leaflets, checklists etc); one that is verbal format (e.g. megaphones, information desks, outreach worker visits); one that is pictorial (can be good for children or those who are illiterate).
	+ Information can either be static or movable (e.g. using megaphones or written on a board that can be moved around);
	+ Central points are good, providing people with mobility difficulties can also access the information.
* **WHEN** to give different information—even in the early stages of a response, basic information should be shared with affected populations to help them get the support or assistance they need.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. Makes aid more effective and appropriate. Helps people regain/maintain dignity.

* Think about who participates in design and implementation of the project.
* Are more marginalised groups involved in deciding what is provided, who receives it and where it is distributed etc?
* Community input is vital if you want to know where risky areas are or how to adapt to the needs of vulnerable groups.

FEEDBACK/COMPLAINTS. When things do go wrong, they can be put right.

* Feedback is crucial to get information about any exploitation or abuse (as well as general information about whether the programming is suitable and targeting is working).
* It is good to triangulate the ways you get feedback. For example, a phoneline can be great, but some people—including children and the elderly—might not use them. Think about also having an information desk, house visits or a suggestion box etc.
* Aim to establish systems to track and respond to complaints and feedback.
* Inform beneficiaries (and staff) how they can complain.

STAFF CONDUCT. Underpins and enables the other parts of the triangle.

* This is the core of the triangle (i.e. holds up the other components; without good staff you will not be able to achieve the objectives of Information, Participation or Feedback).
* Ensure there is gender balance on your staff so that, on sensitive topics, women can ask women and men can ask men.
* Make sure staff have clear job descriptions, are supervised, and have support to build their capacity.
* Make sure staff are oriented on the code of conduct and know what behaviour is expected of them. If you intend to involve volunteers in your programming, establish terms and conditions, making clear your expectations and the standards/principles that must be upheld.
* Make sure there is a mechanism in place for dealing with any complaints about staff behaviour.
* Make sure staff understand the project and know how to introduce themselves.