



Community Feedback and Complaints Mechanisms

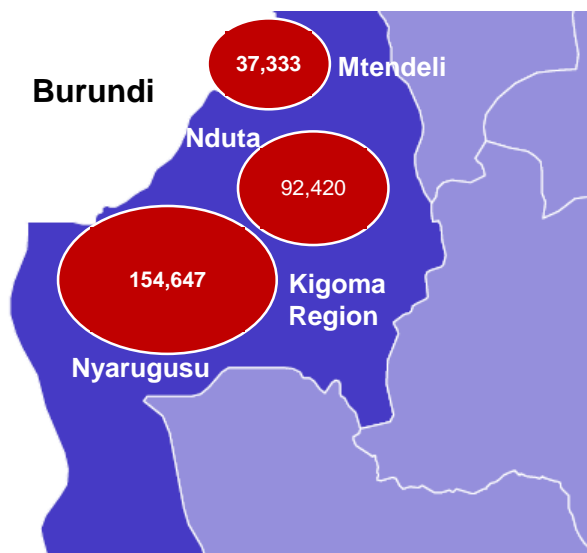
Experience from Tanzania

Technical Lead in Inter-Agency Feedback Mechanism

Has received over 2,700 inputs of community feedback

Established community and complaint mechanisms since 2015

Plan International Tanzania Refugee Response



Tanzania is currently hosting over 270,000 refugees from DRC and Burundi in three refugee camps in NW Tanzania. Plan International Tanzania commenced its response in Kigoma Region in 2015 and is the UNHCR Implementing Partner for Child Protection in Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps. It also implements youth economic empowerment and secondary school programs to support adolescent girls. It currently has 80 emergency response staff and has secured over €10 million in funding from various partners including UNHCR, UNICEF, GFFO, SIDA, NORAD and ECHO.

Feedback and Complaint Mechanisms: Overview

Engaging refugee communities in humanitarian action is crucial for their protection, dignified survival and recovery and help ensure programmes are high quality and using resources efficiently. Feedback and complaint mechanisms used by Plan International Tanzania are guided by the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability and supported by the guiding principle of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on children’s right to participation.

Plan International defines a feedback mechanism as “capturing and reporting the viewpoint of children, young people, community members and other partners about Plan International’s work in order to improve it”. Feedback mechanisms are often also referred to as ‘feedback and complaints’ mechanisms as they aim to capture different types of feedback, including complaints.

The feedback and complaints mechanism that Plan International Tanzania uses include suggestion boxes, community engagement meetings, participation in camp meetings, surveys and evaluations, help desk and home visits. In all these methods Plan International ensures the mechanisms are child friendly. These child friendly mechanisms promote gender and age-appropriate, inclusive, safe and confidential ways for children and young people to receive information, provide feedback and meaningfully participate in influencing humanitarian programming.

Feedback mechanisms also play a key role in strengthening prevention and reporting mechanisms for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and in safeguarding children and young people. Feedback mechanisms can assist known and potential survivors, facilitate reporting and referrals of child safeguarding breaches or SEA incidents and allegations and fulfil a prevention function through training and awareness-raising of staff members and the community.

Feedback and Complaints Mechanisms

Plan International Tanzania has established multiple mechanisms of feedback and complaints and currently reinforcing all of those to be child friendly and inclusive of sex, age and vulnerabilities to freely provide feedback, complaints, and to receive information. These various mechanisms are explained in further detail below:

Suggestion Boxes:

Plan International has installed suggestion boxes at child friendly spaces, registration centres and case management offices and youth centres. These are secured metal boxes for community members to leave their written feedback and they are installed at a reasonable height for easy access to children. Every day feedback officers opens the boxes, work with Burundian data collectors to translate, analyse, input into the database and make referrals.

Mobile Child Friendly Help Desk:

A mobile child friendly help desk visits Plan International Tanzania's child friendly spaces, case management, and youth centers. These help desks gives an opportunity for refugees to have a one on one consultation with staff.

It is the most preferable feedback mechanisms and often used with Plan International Tanzania's primary beneficiaries including youths, foster parents, unaccompanied minors, separated children and at risk children. The mechanism was established in 2018 and has received reports regarding serious child protection cases including sexual abuse, exploitation, child abandonment, exploitation, and child labour. All Tanzanian, Burundian and international staff have received training on child safeguarding and processes involved in feedback mechanism. The mechanism is confidential which allows people of different ages to report serious complaints.

Inter-Agency Help Desk:

An Inter-Agency feedback and complaint mechanism has been established where Plan International Tanzania is the technical lead for training and development. Feedback and complaints received are analyzed by sector, gender and age and shared with agency focal persons for action and reply for the closing of the feedback loop in the master database. Plan International Tanzania has assigned one dedicated staff in each camp for the desk and work to collect feedback and complaints, managing the database, disseminating consolidated feedback and coordinating follow-up action for CP feedback. There are also dedicated Burundian incentive workers who support the collection and dissemination of information, feedback findings and responses as well as agreed action with community members. This mechanism is effective as all humanitarian organizations in the camps are aligning efforts into collection and responding to feedback and complaints from refugees.

Camp Coordination Meetings

Plan International Tanzania participates in camp based coordination meetings including camp management meeting, zonal leaders' meetings, town hall and community meetings. This mechanism is effective as it enable Plan International to involve key decision makers in disseminating information regarding services and projects.

Monitoring distribution of Kits, Project Evaluations, and Assessments

Plan International regularly uses both quantitative and qualitative methods in monitoring distribution of kits and none food materials, project baseline and end line evaluations, quarterly satisfaction surveys and assessments to promote feedback and identify areas for improvement on Plan's services from refugees.



Click [here](#) to access the step-by-step guide & tools and the accompanying training package.

Plan International Child-Friendly Feedback Mechanism: Guide and Toolkit

Purpose: The purpose of the guide is to support Plan International and partners in developing or strengthening child friendly feedback mechanisms in humanitarian settings. The step-by-step guidance and accompanying tools help humanitarian teams to design and implement feedback mechanisms in collaboration with children, young people and communities. The guide is divided in two parts:

Part 1: The first part of the guide introduces the key concepts of accountability and feedback mechanisms in the humanitarian sector and within Plan International.

Part 2: The second part of this guide provides step-by-step guidance on how to design and implement a child friendly feedback mechanism.

The guide is accompanied by Child Friendly Feedback mechanisms training course.

Who is this guide for?

This guide is designed for humanitarian teams in Plan International and partners who are responsible for setting up a child friendly feedback mechanism as core part of humanitarian response programs.

How to use this guide?

Humanitarian teams follow the step-by-step guidance and use the accompanying tools during a process of designing, implementing and learning from child friendly feedback mechanisms in humanitarian action. They key steps provide minimum requirements for feedback mechanisms, while all tools can be adapted to fit the specific country or humanitarian context.

Examples of Tools included:

There are 20 tools provided in the toolkit. These include feedback categories, child-friendly feedback form, technology and feedback mechanisms, safeguarding risk assessment, feedback database guidance and tools for child friendly feedback activities, focus group discussions, feedback boxes and feedback survey questions.

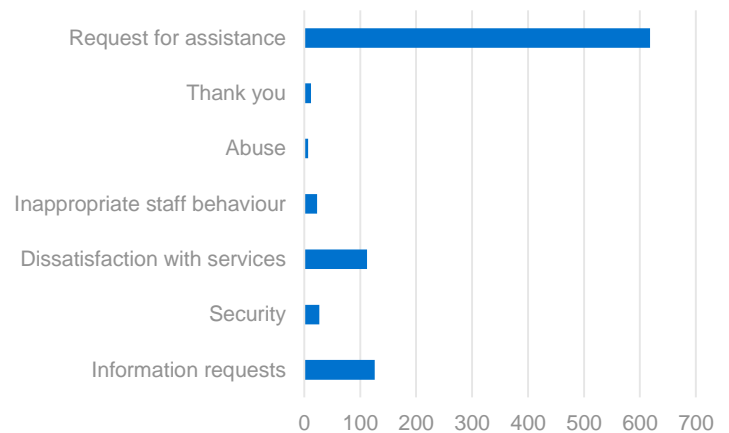
Feedback and Complaints Categories

Plan International Tanzania consolidates all collected feedback into a central feedback database that is password protected. This assists in recording, tracking of responses, and analysing trends according to specific categories listed below. Written feedback is kept in locked filing cabinets for future references and validation and discarded when feedback is closed and community satisfied with support.

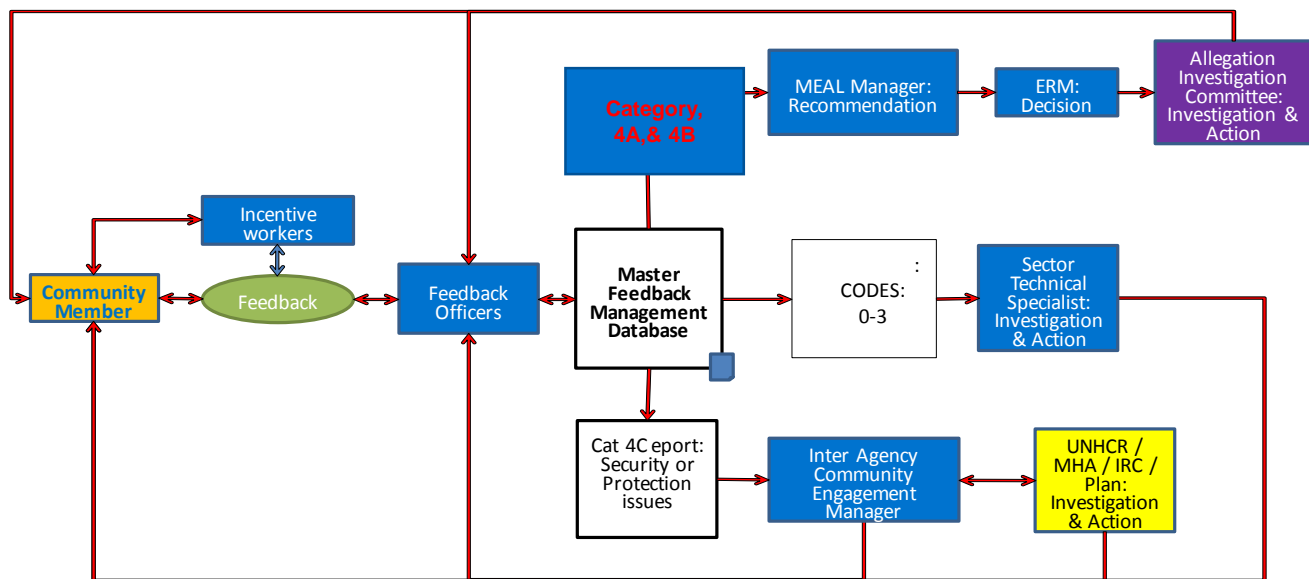
Codes	Feedback categories	Timeline
N/A	Not applicable (not feedback), e.g. blank paper, greetings	N/A
Code 0	Thanks you note, appreciation	Face-to-Face: Immediate
Code 1	Request for information: information about services available	
Code 2	Request for assistance (sector specific, excluding general NFIs)	Two weeks
Code 3	Dissatisfaction with incentive workers conducts, project and programs services, distributed kits and materials, project or activities	
Code 4A	Report of inappropriate staff behaviour (e.g. abusive language, misappropriation of goods)	Follow-up contact within 48hr to confirm next steps.
Code 4B	Report of sexual abuse or illegal activity	
Code 4C	Security issue	

2018 Feedback by Categories

During 2018, Plan International Tanzania received 925 feedback and complaints using the various mechanism already outlined. The main feedback and complaints categories were request for assistance (67%), information requests (14%) and dissatisfaction with services (12%). It is noted also that 2% of the feedback and complaints involved inappropriate staff behaviour.



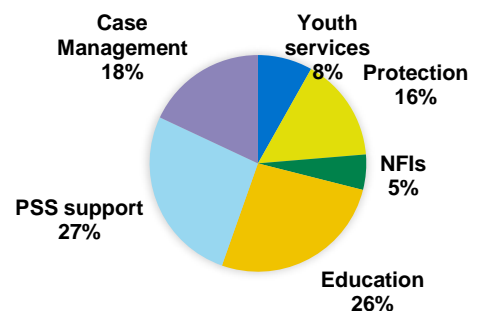
Feedback Flow and Management for Code 0 to 4c



Feedback Flow and Management

1. Community provide feedback to assigned staff (national/or incentive workers)
2. Translate and consolidate feedback collected by date, categories, name (optional), registration number (optional), age, sex, camp, zone, house number (optional), phone number (if available)-store in master database.
3. Thank you notes, requests for information and assistance, minor or major dissatisfaction for the services channelled to sectoral /programme staff.
4. Staff conduct and safeguarding issues are confidentially forwarded to ERM through MEAL manager for investigation
5. Security and protection issues are forwarded to UNHCR inter agency community engagement manager for investigation, ERM copied

2018 Request for Assistance by Sector



During 2018, from the various requests for sectoral assistance Plan International Tanzania received, requests for PSS support were highest (27%) with education (26%) and child protection case management (18%) indicating a high level of understanding on the services Plan International Tanzania is providing to refugees.

Closing the feedback loop

Effective feedback and complaints mechanisms include a component of informing the feedback provider(s) about the action taken to address their feedback and asking them whether they are satisfied with these actions.

For those feedback providers that have included their names, home addresses or phone numbers with their feedback, Plan International Tanzania staff contacts them directly and provides an update and actions taken.

For information requests at help desks, Plan International staff usually responds to these requests in real-time and are closed immediately.

Anonymous complaints and feedback regarding dissatisfaction of project services are addressed through various community engagement activities including on-going services in the centres, zonal leader meetings, Ministry of Home Affairs town hall meetings, mass information campaigns by volunteer incentive workers and implementation meetings and trainings.

Key Successes and Learnings

- Communities and people affected by the refugee crisis have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to give their feedback and complaints;
- Increased transparency and trust amongst refugees with Plan International Tanzania and the broader humanitarian community
- Increased participation in the monitoring of project activities amongst vulnerable groups such as children;
- Strengthened community based monitoring mechanisms to report fraud, corruption and breaches of codes of conduct by staff and incentive workers;
- Alleged breaches of code of conduct and safeguarding policies against staff needs to be managed according to strict processes which all staff need to be aware of. If not, this can lead to conflict;
- The design of feedback and complaints mechanisms should be in consultation with affected communities with a range of ages, abilities and sex;
- The management of an effective feedback mechanisms requires dedicated trained staff to ensure regular collection, analysis, follow up and closing of feedback loop;
- A single mechanism for feedback and complaints is not effective and sufficient given a broad range of community abilities and preferences;
- A simple excel database should be designed and used for input of feedback and complaints, follow up actions and analysis that needs to be password-protected and only accessible by a minimal number of staff.

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People First Impact Methodology

Plan International Tanzania utilises a 'People First Impact Methodology' (PFIM) as part of its commitment to offer opportunities for refugees to have their opinions and voices heard through active participation in community discussions, needs assessments, program designs and evaluations. PFIM supports participatory approaches where refugees are the centre of the dialogue when giving their perspectives of living in a refugee camp and not just passive recipients of humanitarian aid.

Discussions are opened with a main topic where key issues, experience, knowledge and solutions are driven by refugees and not humanitarian staff. Staff take on a facilitation role through indirect probing but do not drive or direct the community discussions. Example where a PFIM approach has been used include SGBV research and the identification of corruption and fraud risks.

Examples of community feedback that have improved programme interventions

Feedback through post distribution monitoring exposed poor quality of school bags that were distributed to school children. Plan International Tanzania returned the bags to the vendor and procured and distributed better quality school bags. This also prompted a review of suppliers.

Feedback from Child Friendly Spaces indicated alleged harassment of children by an incentive worker. The incentive worker was immediately removed and further training conducted for all incentive workers on child safe-guarding.

The People First Impact Methodology, post-distribution monitoring and help desks uncovered misappropriation of start-up materials for vocational training graduates. As a result, Plan International Tanzania improved monitoring of distributions and stock management processes.