

Accountability to Communities

Accountability to Communities

Panel Discussion 13 November 2015
American Evaluation Association
Chicago

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Sauver des vies, changer les mentalités.

 Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge



Kristin Helz, Monitoring & Evaluation Advisor, Washington DC
Mimose Jeune, Sr. Accountability to Beneficiaries Manager,
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

 American Red Cross

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“As an institution, we really place our beneficiaries at the center of our interventions in Haiti. That means we don’t decide for them.” – Mimose Jeune, Sr. Accountability to Beneficiaries Manager, American Red Cross in Haiti



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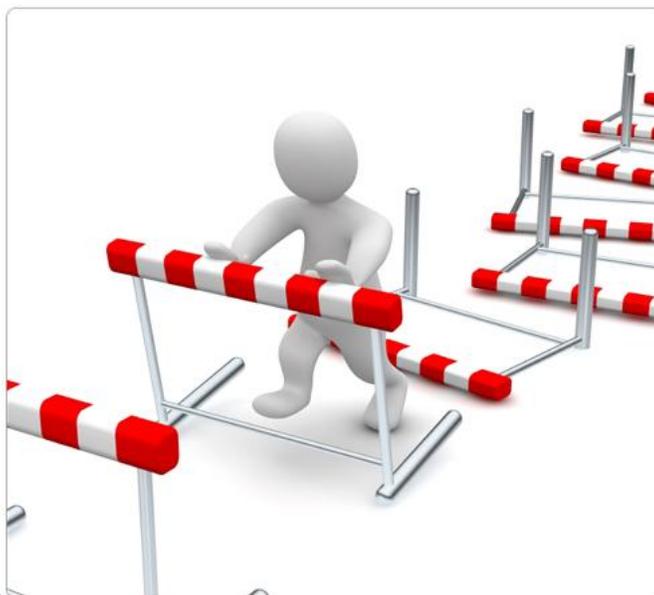


“We have a good collaboration with the Red Cross. I always have good information on the project for instance, activities planning and implementation.”
– John Joseph,
Campeche,
Port-au-Prince.



Accountability to beneficiaries is everyone's responsibility

Every staff member. Every department.



Looking to the Future



Accountability to Communities East Africa and Indian Ocean Island

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Objectives of the AtC initiative

- Develop a set of minimum standards of AtC specifically for the EAIOI region.
- Ensure each standard has a set of practical actions, built around the programme cycle, to enable staff and volunteers to meet the standard.
- Develop a set of tools to help staff and volunteers implement AtC actions



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What is the rationale of the AtC project?



- No IFRC framework specifically for AtC
- No common understanding of what AtC means in this region
- National Societies requested more support to help build AtC into programmes
- Increasingly under pressure to demonstrate high levels of AtC to our donors

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Methodology

- § **4 pilot National Societies:** 4 NS in the region are piloting the standards in specific programmes they have identified. The pilot NS are Sudan, Burundi, Kenya and Madagascar.
- § **Assessment:** Before drafting the standards, 4 pilot NS were visited in September 2014 to discuss the project, to carry out an assessment on current levels of AtC and areas to scale up, and also to meet with communities to identify how AtC is perceived by beneficiaries



Methodology

- § **Developing the Standards:** Based on feedback from pilot NS, 6 minimum standards were created (4 programme, 2 organisational).
- § **Training on the Standards:** HQ and programme staff from pilot NS were trained to ensure they understand the minimum standards, to identify relevant actions needed to reach each standard, and to practice using the AtB toolkit.
- § **AtB training rolled out:** Trained programme staff used the training package to share the minimum standards with volunteers and to help implement AtB strategies within programmes.

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Implementation achievements

- § Project and M & E staff trained on AtC
- § Implementation plans, logframes and indicator tracking tools developed and are currently in use
Community consultations by project teams
- § Feedback mechanisms established and programs on 'the right to complain launched.'
- § Community structures reinforced to include AtC i.e inclusion of women and youth in community structures.
- § For one NS all project managers trained and a draft AtC framework put in place.

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Preliminary Results from Mid Term Assessment

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Achievements in Madagascar

- § The program worked with the traditional chiefs to build representative village / commune decision making structures that bring representatives from all local stakeholder groups together
- § Women are meeting together for the first time as well as being represented on the “KOIF” and representing other stakeholder groups
- § These new systems are transforming community dynamics, power structures and building a stronger sense of community cohesion and resilience

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Community reflections on what has changed

- § Before it was just the leaders involved in decision making and now all the community is involved
- § People mobilise themselves and don't wait as much any more to be told by their leaders what to do
- § With the wide representation of interest groups, people now resolve problems between themselves
- § People realise the young have more capacity to contribute to the life of the village

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Achievements in Sudan

- § Have formalized systems of complaints handling and response
- § Use of complaints boxes and telephone numbers
- § In general, people were found to be very satisfied with their ability to give feedback and make complaints
- § The opportunities for women to make confidential complaints is still not satisfactory



Sudan learning and themes

- § You can't assume that a good relationship with communities will translate into their feeling free to complain and give feedback
- § Addressing complaints seriously and responding promptly builds trust and deepens the relationship with the community
- § AtB isn't separate from the gender commitments of the movement

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Sudan Learning cont'd

- § To do AtC effectively necessarily involves elements of social transformation. As the SRCS builds greater trust and increased access to more conservative communities, their obligation to address issues of social equality increase, as they are the ones with this unique access and their target is the most vulnerable
- § AtC provides an excellent framework for this, in a gradual and thoughtful way

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Questions?



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Accountability and Feedback Loops in Humanitarian Action



Isabella Jean

CDA Collaborative
Learning

AEA 2015
Nov 13, 2015

Phone lines and technology are important, but they are not the whole solution. We need a change of mentality. Investing in listening to the people is critical.

- Aid Worker, Pakistan

Collaborative Learning / Case Studies on Feedback Mechanisms in Humanitarian Contexts



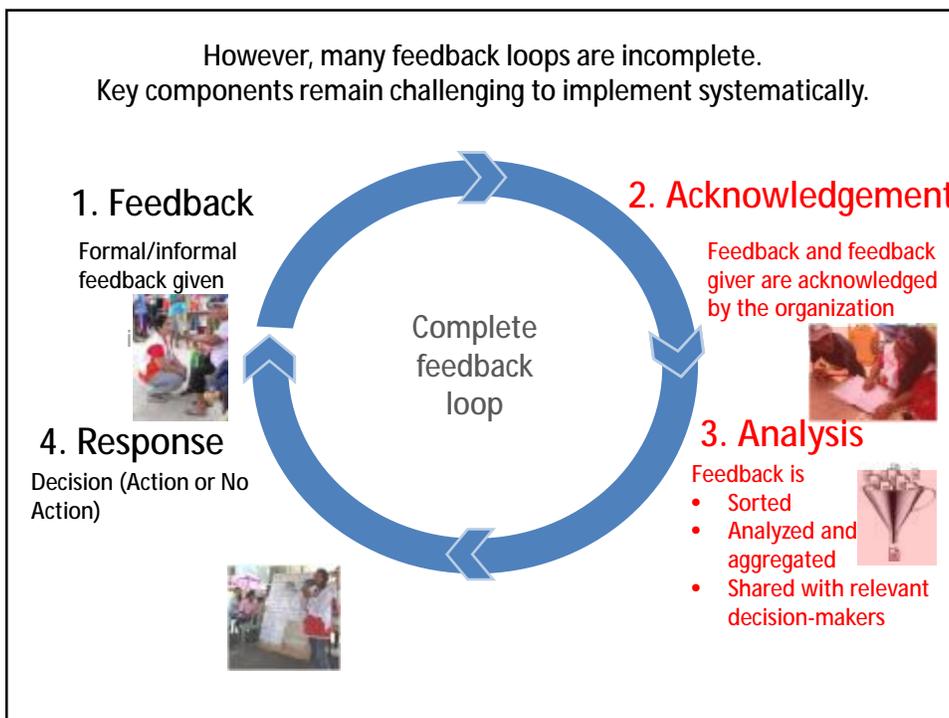
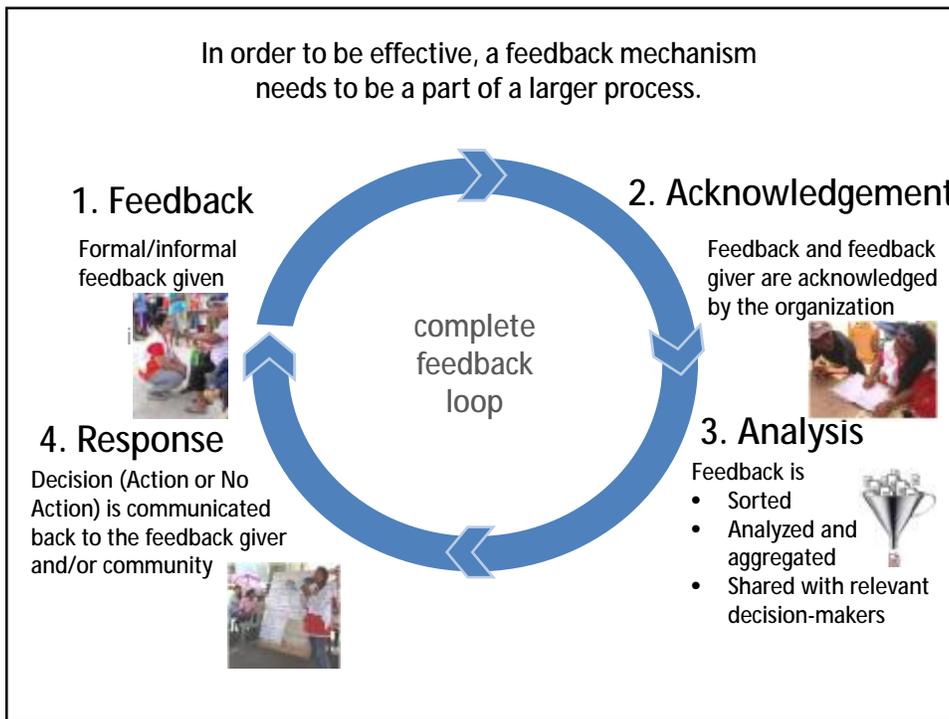
Feedback Mechanisms help aid workers listen and respond.



They are tools and procedures to give aid recipients a way to voice their opinions and concerns...

...and provide a process for including community feedback into decision-making.





"The feedback mechanism is a mirror that helps us understand our work better."
- CRS Staff Member, Port-au-Prince

"They open the Feedback Box in front of us."
- Darfur School Principal

"We of course hear of other requests and needs and we refer these to relevant agencies."
- IOM Program Staff, Sindh

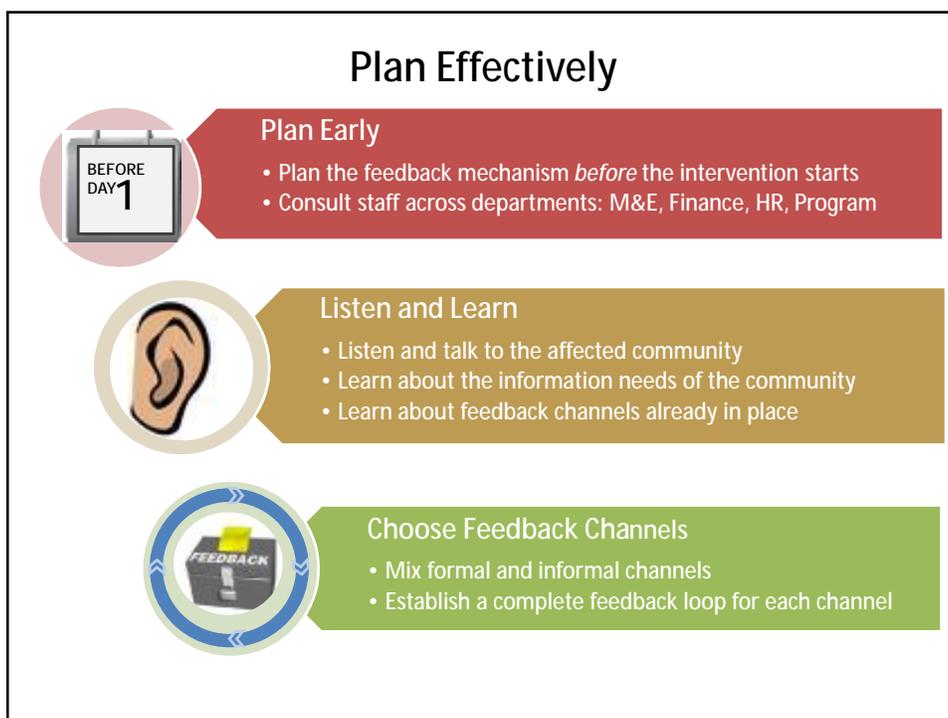
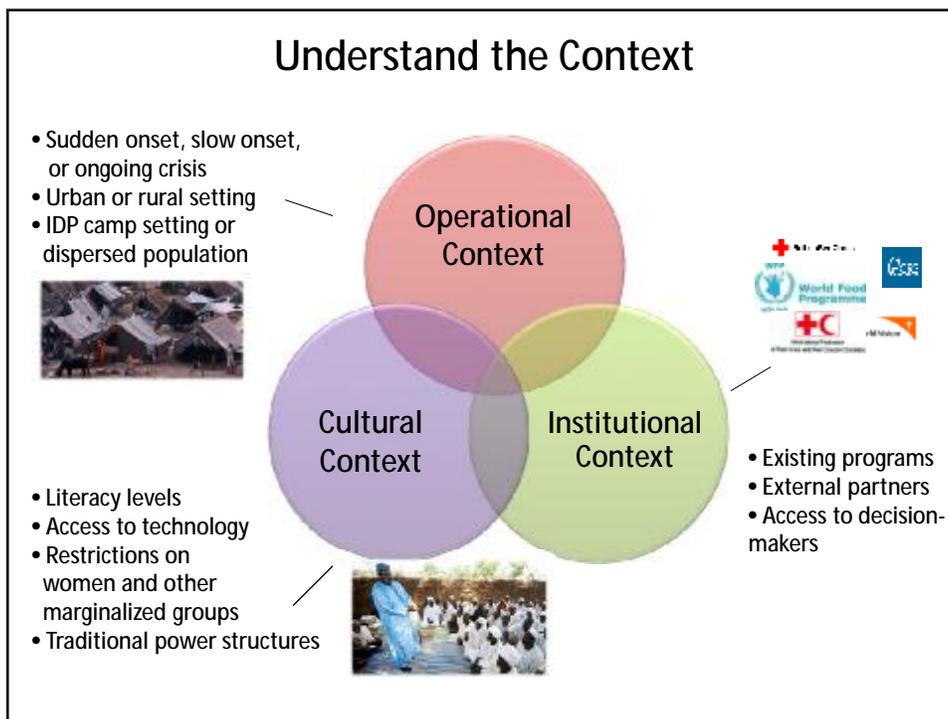
"Since we started Community Help Desks, we have been able to make changes that we know are aligned with what beneficiaries want."
- World Vision Staff Member

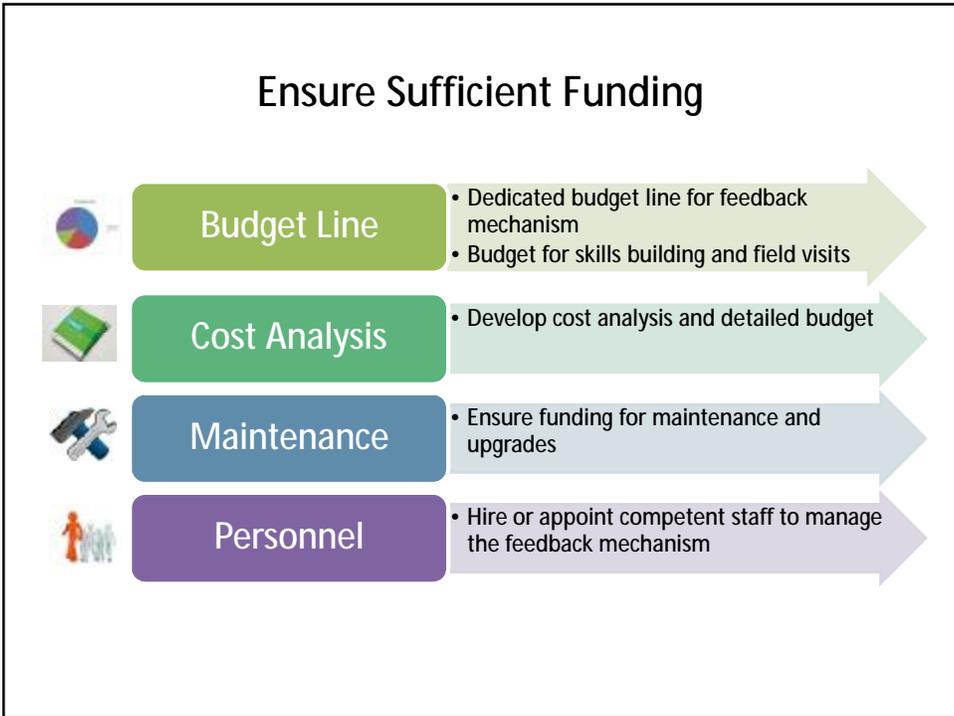
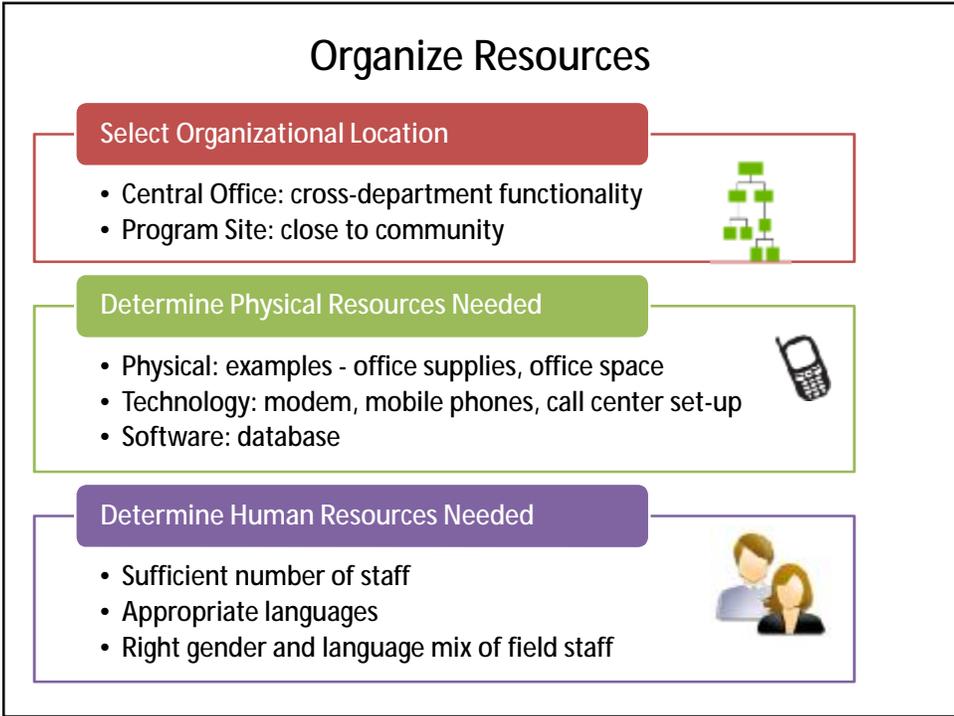
"The Red Cross number is good. Whenever we call, they respond!"
- Resident of a temporary camp, Port-au-Prince

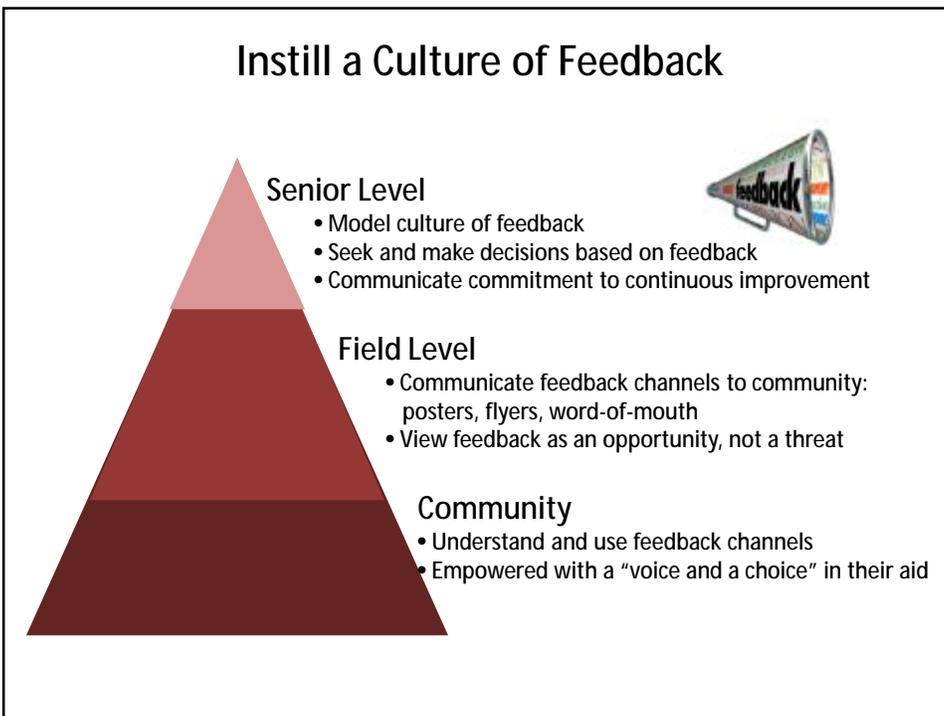
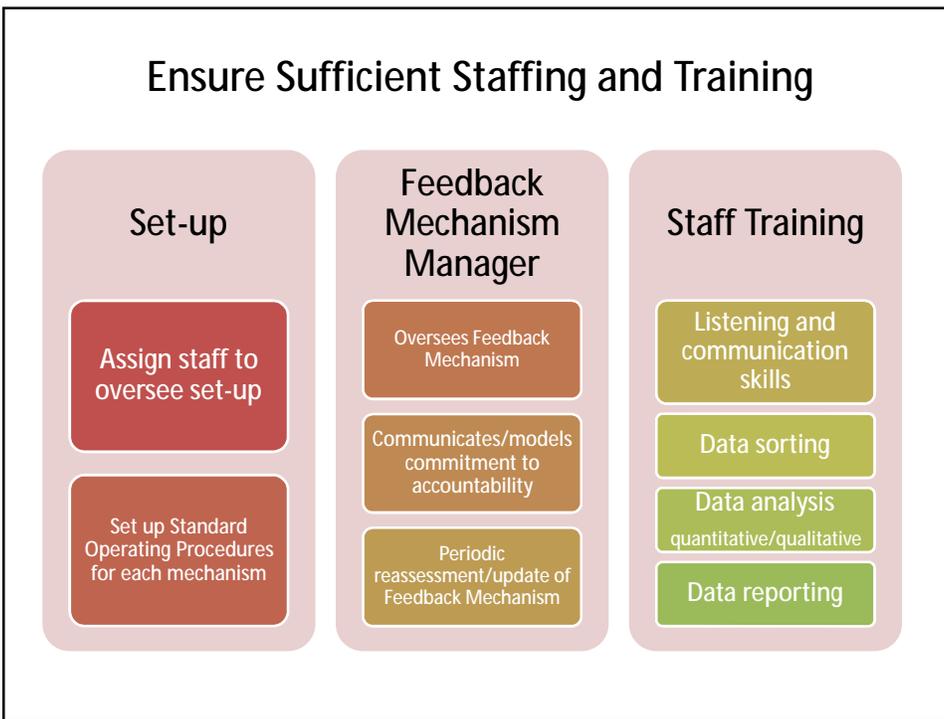
Guidance Points

So What Does It Take to Ensure Effective Accountability and Feedback Practices?









"For any intervention, you should be able to design an accountability system. In every community, there is a way."
- Aid Worker, Sudan

Questions

- **How do you do “accountability”?**
- **How do you measure it”**
- **What constraints/challenges do you encounter?**
- **What lessons do you have?**