Client Responsive Programming Framework

Client Responsiveness at the IRC: engaging people receiving aid and services in the decisions which affect their lives

The purpose of this document is to present the IRC's approach to Client Responsiveness[1]. Client Responsiveness is an organizational priority at the IRC, which reflects our commitment to meaningful participation of people receiving our aid and services, delivered directly and in partnership with others. It also reflects our commitment to promoting the means through which clients may hold us accountable for the decisions we make on their behalf. This document explains the Standards and Practices which our Country Programs are required to apply throughout all stages of the program life-cycle, and the enabling factors which we ask them to strengthen in support of meaningful participation of and accountability to our clients.
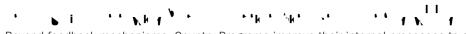
Programming is client-responsive when our clients are engaged in influencing decisions about its design and delivery. Clients may participate in decision making in different ways: they may be consulted for their opinion or the IRC and its partners may collaborate with them to take decisions which affect their lives. To achieve this, IRC Country Programs establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) governing the collection, use and response to feedback from clients and communities, applying best practice as defined by the sector in ensuring that feedback channels are accessible to women and men, girls and boys of all ages with or without disabilities, and marginalized groups according to the operational context.

A client is a person for whom the IRC provides, or intends to provide, assistance or services. We use the term "client", because it signals our belief that the people we serve have the right to decide what kind of aid and services they need and want. We also want to learn from clients whether they have benefitted from the aid and services provided and how we can improve our work to meet their needs.

Our framework also takes into consideration the need for a to client and community engagement and participation, especially in context where clients are receiving services from multiple actors. It also recognizes the need to

Beyond feedback mechanisms, Country Programs improve their internal processes to achieve the Standards and associated Practices that they have prioritized. All Country Programs are encouraged to define Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for collecting, analyzing and responding to client feedback through a combination of selected feedback mechanisms: at least one proactive (ex. FGD, community meeting, satisfaction survey using the Core Feedback Themes[3]) and one reactive channel (ex. hotline, help desk, office walk-in). The SOPs also specify a number of enabling conditions such as data management systems, referral pathways, roles and responsibilities among staff that Country Programs should have in place. Each project should have a Client Responsiveness Plan as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to align with the

The IRC's approach reflects the sector-wide commitment and recent efforts to advance the meaningful participation of and accountability towards people affected by crisis in the way that humanitarian actors design and deliver aid and services.

The IRC's Client Responsive Programming Framework internalizes the goals and commitments made by the sector through the IASC Results Group 2 (IASC RG2) on Accountability and Inclusion, Grand Bargain Participation Revolution (GB PR) and CHS commitments in the design of our approach. In particular the IRC's approach reflects GB PR aspiration to include crisis affected people in decision making processes[4]; CHS Commitment Four that emphasizes the need for safe, accessible and appropriate participation, feedback, and Commitment Five that states that complaints should be welcomed and responded to[5]; as well all five IASC Commitments for Accountability to Affected People (CAAP) on improved leadership, transparency, participation and feedback and complaints mechanisms as well as involvement of affected populations in the design, monitoring and evaluation of programs[6]. We routinely review our achievements and methodology to ensure that we are meeting and exceeding sector standards.