Tool 12

FCRM Effectiveness Check

This tool presents key steps and reflection questions associated with annual effectiveness checks on the FCRM.

Instructions: *Use this tool for an annual check on the effectiveness of the FCRM. This may be a stand-alone event or combined with an annual reflection meeting or larger MEAL system review. The steps and reflection questions are intended to guide the effectiveness check and should always be adapted to the local context.*

Tip: In adapting the tool, focus on ongoing FCRM processes that can be improved during implementation. To contribute to larger project learning, reflection on initial FCRM design and start-up may be better addressed as part of evaluation events.

What makes an effective FCRM?

Teams may see an increase or decrease in the use of FCRM channels during implementation and can reflect on what these changes mean for overall FCRM effectiveness. Here, the key characteristics of an effective FCRM are summarized to guide reflection.

- MEAL and program staff have clear roles related to FCRM implementation and the necessary capacity to fulfill them.
- Community members are aware of the purpose of the FCRM, how to access individual channels, and how and when a response will be received.
- All FCRM channels are in use.
- Individuals from diverse community groups are using the FCRM.
- The response timeline meets or surpasses the commitment that teams have made.
- Satisfaction with the FCRM is high among individuals who have submitted feedback or complaints.
- Sensitive complaints are escalated immediately as per local and agency protocol.
- Feedback and complaints are used during ongoing project decisions.

Step 1: Review FCRM data

Step 2. Interview staff

Step 3. Consult communities

Step 4. Reflect on results and plan for improvements

Step 5. Communicate and document changes

Step 1. Review FCRM data

Review FCRM data to provide key results and visuals that will inform reflection and action planning. Here is a suggested list of analysis steps to inform visuals:

- Feedback and complaints received through each FCRM channel.
- Feedback and complaints received in each standard FCRM category.
- Changes in feedback and complaints trends during implementation, by channel and category.
- Changes in feedback and complaints trends in different geographic areas, by channel and category.
- Changes in feedback and complaints related to key project implementation activities (e.g., distributions) or key seasonal factors, by channel and category.
- Use of the FCRM by program participants and non-participants in the community, by channel and category.
- Use of the FCRM by diverse community members, by gender, age, disability and other relevant factors (e.g., minority ethnic, religious or political groups), by channel and category.
- Summary of feedback and complaints shared through active channels (e.g., post-distribution monitoring or focus group discussions) versus static channels (e.g., hotline or suggestion box).
- Response rate in FCRM, by channel and category.
- Average response time, by channel and category.

Tip: Reference notes from quarterly reflection meetings or other reflection opportunities to generate further insights or data analysis needs.

As part of this review, check to see whether the feedback and complaints registry is complete and correctly used by staff. At a minimum, the registry should include: a) date feedback received; b) category of feedback; c) response given; and d) response date. Share with staff any recommendations on how to use the registry more efficiently.

Step 2. Interview staff

Interview a range of MEAL, program and field staff to triangulate perspectives and experiences with the FCRM. It is recommended that two to three staff are interviewed in each group. Refer to previous FCRM data review results as these interviews offer an opportunity to understand or interpret trends prior to the reflection event and to better understand questions that the current data review may raise. Here is a suggested list of staff interview questions for adaptation in each context:

1. What is your role(s) related to FCRM?
2. What questions do you have about your role(s) related to FCRM?
3. What additional or different support and resources would be helpful to you in fulfilling your role(s)?
4. When interacting with community members, do you perceive they trust and value the FCRM? Why or why not? Which community members does this perspective represent and which does it not represent? How can trust and value be increased for all community members?
5. Are all feedback and complaints being acknowledged?
6. Are all feedback and complaints processed as per the standard operating procedures, considering referral, response and escalation for different categories?
7. Is all personally identifiable information protected in the data registry, and in the referral, response and escalation processes?
8. What opportunities have you had to use FCRM data in adaptive management? Do you have any examples of use of FCRM to share? How can use of FCRM data be optimized?
9. Who are the champions of FCRM in your team? What mindset or skills do they contribute to the FCRM process? How can more team members become FCRM champions?
10. What suggestions do you have for improving the FCRM?

Step 3. Consult communities

Hold focus groups discussions with community members, organizing subgroups to represent diversity factors, men and women, and program participants and non-participants. Refer to *Tool 2: Context analysis checklist* to determine the key diversity factors within the community and ensure those are represented in the subgroups to capture a wide range of perspectives. It is recommended that two to three focus groups are held with each subgroup. The discussions should address any concerns about use of and access to the FCRM identified through data review and issues raised by staff during interviews. Here is a suggested set of reflection questions to be incorporated into other tools and adapted to the local contexts as needed:

- What are the channels through which feedback and complaints can be provided to the project team?
- Which of these is most useful to you and why?
- Which of these is least useful to you and why?
- Are you aware of the type of staff behavior or conduct, if it were to occur, that should be reported via these channels? If so, please describe or give examples.
- If you needed to share a sensitive complaint, which channel would you use and why?
- Are there any community members not able to share feedback and complaints? If so, why? Who are these community members? How can the channels be adjusted to give them access?
- Have feedback and complaints been *acknowledged* by the teams when shared?
- Are you aware of the timeline for response to feedback and complaints? If so, are you happy with this timeline?
- Have feedback and complaints been *responded to* by the team when shared?
- Are you satisfied with the feedback, complaints and response mechanisms in your community? Why or why not?
- How can the feedback, complaints and response mechanisms become more valuable to your community?
- What other suggestions would you like to share with us today?

Tip: Consider using participatory methods, such as community score cards, to solicit community perspectives and experiences on FCRM.

Step 4. Reflect on results and plan for improvements

Reflect on the results of the FCRM data review, staff interviews and community consultations. Include field staff and others who interact directly with the FCRM in the reflection process. It is recommended that a half-day reflection event is planned, and key findings (data visuals and summaries) are circulated for reference before the session. These general reflection questions should be adapted to reflect initial findings or key information needs in the project context:

- Are all community members aware of the purpose and scope of the FCRM and how to access it?
- Are all community members aware of the type of staff behavior or conduct to be reported if needed?
- How can this understanding be improved as needed?

Access

- Which groups are most likely to access the FCRM? Which channel(s) specifically and why?
- Which groups are least likely to access the FCRM? What are the key barriers to FCRM access for these groups?
- How can the FCRM be more accessible to all community members?

Mix of channels

- Which channels are most valued by community members and why?
- Which channels are least valued by community members and why?
- What changes should be made to the FCRM for greater efficiency and use?
- Are there further opportunities to collect face-to-face feedback and complaints as part of project activities? If so, how can this be achieved?
- Are there further opportunities to actively collect feedback and complaints in monitoring tools? If so, how can this be achieved?

Consent

- Are community members providing consent before submitting feedback and complaints? If so, does this meet donor and local requirements? If not, how can this be improved?

Staffing

- Are all staff clear on the purpose of the FCRM as well as their roles and responsibilities associated with the FCRM?
- How can this understanding be improved?
- What support and resources can help staff to fulfill current roles and improve overall FCRM effectiveness?
- What improvements in staffing structure or general human resources processes (job descriptions and performance planning) can improve the effectiveness of the FCRM?
- What improvements in mindset and skills can improve community trust and value in the FCRM?
- How can senior leadership continue to or increasingly champion the use of FCRM data and the responsiveness of the FCRM?

Acknowledgement

- Are all feedback and complaints responded to? If not, how can this be improved?

Response

- Are we meeting our timeline commitment to respond to each category of feedback and complaint?
- Is the FAQs sheet helpful in responding to the most common feedback and complaints? If not, how can this be improved?
- How can the FCRM become more responsive to community members?

Referral

- Are all out-of-scope feedback and complaints referred to other actors as appropriate? How can the referral process or map be improved to better support referrals?

Escalation

- Have all sensitive complaints been escalated to the EthicsPoint / country representative (or designate) or staff safeguarding focal points immediately (within 24 hours)?
- Is there evidence that the community trusts the FCRM to confidentially respond to sensitive complaints?

Use of data

- What examples do we have of use of FCRM data to improve program quality and impact?
- How can the use of FCRM data be improved?

Data management

- Is the FCRM registry complete and used appropriately by all staff? If not, how can this be improved?
- Is all personally identifiable information appropriately protected? If not, how can this be improved?

Evaluation

- What questions on FCRM design and use could be added to future evaluation events?

Recommendations

- What are priority changes to increase the effectiveness and value of the FCRM? Please identify a timeline and person(s) responsible for each.

Tip: Integrate key FCRM recommendations into the project's detailed implementation plan to solicit strong project management support and enable follow-up on the action plan during quarterly and annual review meetings.

Step 5. Communicate and document changes

Communicate the planned changes to the FCRM with staff and stakeholders, seeking approval from donors if needed. Include the changes in upcoming communication opportunities with the community or organize a stand-alone event. The communication event also provides an excellent opportunity to reinforce initial messaging around FCRM purpose and access.

When communicating changes with staff, clarify any changes in their roles or responsibilities associated with the FCRM. During this exchange, staff should be encouraged to ask any questions they have about their existing roles.

Document the planned changes in an updated FCRM flowchart and the SOPs, including key annexes for roles and responsibilities, FAQs, and acknowledgement and response scripts.

Tip: It is recommended that the findings of the effectiveness check be documented in the SOPs so that staff can reference these in evaluation events or when planning future FCRMs.