The Feedback and Complaints Mechanism Challenge

Rationale

Receiving feedback from stakeholders and turning this process into a meaningful conversation is at the heart of every Accountable Now member's work. However, putting theory intro practice can be difficult and it can confront implementors with many expected but also unforeseen challenges. In the Accountable Now community of practice we enable our members to address these challenges collectively and learn from each other: Join us in our new Feedback and Complaints Mechanism Challenge where you and other Accountable Now members will work together in a peer advice group to implement a fully-functioning internal and external feedback and complaints mechanism.

The Challenge

We challenge you to develop a fully functioning internal and external feedback and complaints mechanism that includes the following principles:

- Accountability
- Timeliness
- Confidentiality
- Documentation
- Mutual respect
- Learning
- Transparency with respect to confidential information
- Closed Feedback Loops
- Actual Change

The "100 day" goal

The team will define its goal based on what the minimum standard would be for Accountable Now members' complaints mechanisms. The starting point for discussion suggested by Accountable Now is:

1. **Every Accountable Now member participating in the challenge has a fully functioning external feedback and complaints mechanism**

   For members who do not have a policy in place:
   - They will have a policy on how feedback and complaints are processed in place + a clear plan on how they want to achieve the goals below.

   For members who have a policy in place:
   - The complaints mechanism should be clearly visible on the member's website, in a separate form, or have a dedicated section within the general "contact us"/info@ methods of getting in touch
   - They should have a process and person in place who monitors, documents and processes incoming messages and responds to the people who have filed the complaint
   - They should publish a general overview of the nature of complaints (in case the details can't be published out of privacy regulations) on their website.
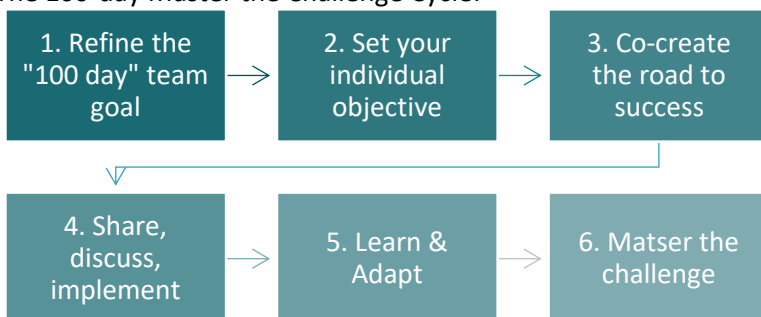
2. **Best practices are captured based on context and shared with the wider CSO community to promote our members' efforts, for example:**
   - How to best design a feedback and complaints mechanism suited for safeguarding issues
   - How to best design a feedback and complaints mechanism for children
   - How to avoid becoming a dumping ground for hateful comments against the mission of my organization.

Approach

The participants of the "Feedback and Complaints Mechanism Challenge" will come together as a peer advice team facilitated by Accountable Now. The team will work together for 100 days and run through the 100-day Master the Challenge Cycle while adhering to the Dynamic Accountability principle.

The 100-day Master the Challenge Cycle:

1. Refine the "100 day" team goal	→	2. Set your individual objective	→	3. Co-create the road to success

4. Share, discuss, implement	→	5. Learn & Adapt	→	6. Matser the challenge

1. **Refine the "100-day" team goal**
   To master the first step towards the challenge the group needs to be more than individual organisations working together. They need to build an entity that refines the suggested "100-day goal" and clearly assigns responsibilities amongst them.

2. **Set your individual objective**
   Within reaching the "100-day" goal, each member of the challenge team will come with their own individual objective that they want to explore in order to improve their organisation's feedback and complaints mechanism. Setting your objective will depend on analysing and diagnosing weaknesses and where your individual organisation can improve. This could be done by using for example the DFID organisational learning tool.

3. **Co-create the road to success**
   Considering each member's individual objective while also keeping the team's "100-day" goal in mind, a timeline to accomplish the Challenge will be designed. In the design we will also discuss how to include the Dynamic Accountability principle in the process. Depending on the individual objectives of the team members, we will outline who needs to be involved in which conversation and form smaller groups for similar objectives. We will also pair up team members who diagnosed a certain weakness with the ones who are already more advanced in that particular area. This will allow us to explore different formats of exchange and make the group as flexible and effective as possible.

4. **Share, discuss, implement and review**
   Members, with the support of Accountable Now, will now share, discuss and implement ideas to improve their feedback and complaints mechanisms. Based on the objective of each individual (that defines the particular aspect each member is interested in), not everyone will be part of each discussion. Members will join in the discussions they are best able to contribute to or also the ones they have special knowledge about. Progress will be regularly checked against the "100-day" goal and individual objectives to ensure we stay on track.

5. **Learn, adapt & document**
   Based on what we learn throughout the project each member will lay out a plan on how to adapt their internal and external feedback and complaints mechanism. Accountable Now will compile best practices.
6. **Master the first step towards the challenge**
   In the end the team will have achieved the set "100-day" goal as well as their individual objectives.

The Dynamic Accountability Principle

Dynamic Accountability is a principle we want to apply to every aspect of our work. In relation to the Challenge this means:

1. **Work *with* your stakeholders – not just *for* them**
   When discussing how feedback and complaints mechanisms are best designed for certain stakeholders, the people that would actually use these mechanisms should be consulted. The Challenge team will explore in which ways and with which tools they want to include stakeholders' voices in the discussion. This could include surveys, user tests with focus groups or simply including stakeholders in the calls with the other challenge team members.
2. **Hold yourself to account and let your stakeholders do so too**
   To be transparent the team should publish their objectives, their roadmap to success, and progress updates every 20 days on Accountable Now's website. These results should be shared via social media and other communication channels (especially with those directly involved in the process above) to allow stakeholders to hold the group to account.

Accountable Now Support

1. **In team calls**
   During these calls Accountable Now will listen in, provide resources for open questions and challenges and take notes about upcoming ideas, barriers and solutions. We will compile learnings and identify needs for the constructive continuation of the discussion. Based on the needs of the group we will further ask members that are doing particularly well on this issue to join specific calls.
2. **Via the Online Platform**
   Via a Workplace group (Facebook for work but data is owned by Accountable Now) members will have the unique opportunity to always be in contact with their peers. In order to ensure participation Accountable Now could facilitate answers to the raised questions by prompting other members with expertise to answer or providing a source directly to the one raising the question.
3. **Dissemination**
   Accountable Now will document and publish the progress and results (progress update on deliverables achieved, how-to's and blog posts) of the group primarily via our website and disseminate via various other channels.