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Children and  
Family Protection  
Support Hub

# FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAV  
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA



Front cover: FYR Macedonia, Tabanovce/ An Information and Advice Desk assist captures feedback from a refugee using a mobile data collection application on a tablet. © UNHCR/ Vasko Borizovski

Back cover: FYR Macedonia, Gevgelija/ The path from the Greek border to Vinojug transit centre in Gevgelija © UNHCR/ John Warnes

A refugee family finding time to smile on site in Gevgelija in FYR of Macedonia © UNHCR/ A Moller



*“The Information and Advice Desk is becoming a place where the people know they can speak with us, so we try to gain their trust by explaining that we are here to listen to their needs. In order to remember all the feedback they are giving to us, we need Kobo Toolbox.*

*- IAD Assistant (Gevgelija)*

# FEEDBACK MECHANISMS: IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

## DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A FEEDBACK MECHANISM TO ADAPT HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMMING TO THE NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES

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This document, and the research it contains, was compiled by UNHCR Innovation in collaboration with the UNHCR office in Skopje. It explores UNHCR's approach to closing the feedback loop in emergency operations. The research findings and the recommendations presented here are informed by field assessments, surveys and interviews with key stakeholders, in addition to collaborative feedback from divisions and bureaux within UNHCR.





*“A feedback mechanism is seen as effective if, at minimum, it supports the collection, acknowledgement, analysis and response to the feedback received, thus forming a closed feedback loop.”*  
- ALNAP<sup>1</sup>

Staff preparing the Information and Advice Desk for operation.  
© UNHCR/John Warnes

## INTRODUCTION

# WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO LISTEN TO COMMUNITIES IN A HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY?

**‘Accountability’ has become a bit of a buzzword in the sector; an abstract virtue to which to aspire.**

However, reviews of recent humanitarian responses - to both natural disasters and complex contexts - often find that mechanisms to ensure accountability to the affected community are infrequently embedded into the response, and if they are, it is very rare that a response is altered based on the feedback collected. This leads to feedback largely being ‘unheard’ and individuals are left thinking ‘Did they really listen to me?’ In order to meet commitments outlined at the World Humanitarian Summit, humanitarian actors are striving for ways to improve how they listen to the people they are trying to help.

This case study draws recommendations from UNHCR’s operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYR Macedonia) that demonstrate how effective feedback mechanisms can be used as a tool to inform and shape humanitarian response. In fYR Macedonia, in response to the European Refugee and Migrant crisis, an inter-agency feedback mechanism was established using face-to-face communication and mobile data collection tools.

Through this learning, we have identified 10 steps that can help guide responders when setting up a feedback mechanism, making it simpler, more consistent and better coordinated. We’ve also included some practical tips and tricks that we’ve seen be quite effective in the field.

## THE EUROPEAN REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CRISIS

The mass displacement as a result of multiple conflicts in the Middle East and Afghanistan has been well documented - catalyzing the movement of thousands of people seeking protection across Europe. Many countries - particularly Greece and Balkan countries - experienced many people passing through their territories on a daily basis. In fYR Macedonia - from August 2015 until the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement in early April 2016 - thousands of people crossed the border from Greece each day. This movement peaked on 9th November 2015 with the arrival of 11,572 people.

This context raised obvious concerns for the well-being and safety of individuals, as well as significant communication and logistical challenges for the Government, UNHCR, and the other organizations responding, including many volunteers. Two transit centers at the northern and southern border points (in Tabanovce and Gevgelija respectively) were rapidly established to ensure refugees had access to shelter and basic services, as well as any legal assistance they might require.

In terms of engaging with these mobile communities and responding to their feedback, [challenges were numerous](#). They ranged from the limited time to build trust with people, multiple language barriers, and the rapidly changing context coupled with the need to counter the proliferation of harmful rumors.<sup>2</sup> Other identified challenges included how to respond directly to refugees and migrants who had moved on to different sites, and whether this interaction would be relevant if it was in response to the services they were no longer using.

As the response progressed, the operational context in fYR Macedonia underwent a dramatic change. Borders across Europe were reinforced and ultimately the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement saw the ‘closure’ of the route. This led to a more static population in both transit centers, providing more time and opportunities for engagement with communities but also leading to [more complex challenges](#) in terms of personalized information sharing and feedback sharing.<sup>3</sup>

Staff demonstrate the tablets used for capturing feedback at the Information and Advice Desk  
© UNHCR/Katie Drew

1 P4. Bonino F. (2014) Closing the Loop - Practitioner guidance on effective feedback mechanisms in humanitarian contexts.  
2 <http://innovation.unhcr.org/the-european-refugee-crisis-10-communications-with-communities-challenges/>  
3 <http://innovation.unhcr.org/update-10-cwc-challenges-new-face-european-refugee-crisis/>

## UNHCR INNOVATION

**Supporting innovation in high-tech, low-tech and no-tech situations.**

The establishment of the inter-agency feedback mechanism in fYR Macedonia was supported by UNHCR Innovation’s Emergency Lab which has a specific focus on communicating with communities. The Emergency Lab aims to utilize technological and non-technological innovations to help UNHCR improve its accountability in Emergency situations - where time is critical and resources are often limited. Through creative interventions, intelligent partnerships and human centered design, the Emergency Lab aims to inject added value and catalyze innovations which have a direct impact on the lives of refugees and contribute to enhanced protection outcomes.

The Emergency Lab was invited to support the UNHCR operation in fYR Macedonia after they highlighted the significant challenges related to engaging with communities and integrating their feedback into the response. The transit centers provided an opportunity for testing and possible scaling of solutions - with the inter-agency feedback mechanism being a key initiative.







## INFORMATION AND ADVICE DESKS

In the context of these challenges, UNHCR identified the need to enhance the way it engaged with refugees and migrants to make it more comprehensive and consistent.

The primary mechanism to do this was an inter-agency initiative, namely the Children and Family Protection Support Hubs (CFPSH) that were being rolled-out across the response. These hubs were a result of an agreement between UNHCR and UNICEF to provide consolidated services in one location, helping avoid duplication and ensure due accountability. They were designed to provide consistent and quality services in each location across multiple countries. This was to enable refugee and migrant families to easily identify and access the services available at each site.

One of the elements of these hubs was an Information and Advice Desk (IAD) - or information kiosks - which were established as visible, static information points. The IADs serve as the central point for feedback and information requests and allow for feedback across all services and issues to be captured in each location.

### A marked improvement?

Prior to this desk being created, feedback was collected on a largely ad-hoc basis. All of the organizations would capture this through their day-to-day interactions with refugees and migrants as well as through their management of individual cases which needed specific support. This was shared informally and the main forum for inter-agency discussion and decision making was through inter-agency-coordination meetings, in particular the Protection Working Group, also covering sub-sectors such as Child Protection and SGBV. Whilst, of course, this often resulted in action to resolve the issue in question, the lack of a systematic approach meant that it was not always clear for the refugees or migrants how they could lodge feedback or complaints, how responses would be monitored and whether anything would be done in light of that feedback.

Through the Information and Advice Desk, systems and tools were designed that allowed the systematic capture of solicited and non-solicited feedback and complaints. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were created with a mobile-data collection function introduced so that staff could collect feedback in real-time.

A 'blue dot' image represented the CFPSH to make it easy for families to seek out the IADs across different sites, both inside and outside FYR Macedonia.

Agreement was reached between the inter-agency group behind the CFSPs as to who would provide which service in order to operationalize the service. For the information and advice desks in this context, both UNICEF and UNHCR co-hired the staff through local NGO 'LaStrada' and provided specific training. UNICEF agreed to provide the equipment for the desks and UNHCR took on the responsibility for providing the technical information management solution for capturing and storing feedback data. This included the overall responsibility for analyzing and sharing the data with the appropriate organizations in the available forums.

In FYR Macedonia these IADs were personned by a dedicated team of assistants who also had a roving function - walking the sites to improve outreach and information provision. UNHCR with UNICEF and local partners trained the IAD Assistants in engaging with people in a culturally appropriate way, and capturing the relevant details of their interactions. This role also included management of individual cases and ensuring follow-up. Effort was made to ensure that staff are easily 'identifiable' and accessible so that people knew they could be approached for information, advice and as a channel to provide feedback.

Many of these assistants also speak Arabic, further helping them engage directly with people. Given the direct engagement these assistants have with communities, they provided a good entry point for UNHCR to begin designing and defining a feedback mechanism.

### Building the tools and systems

In conjunction with UNHCR Innovation's Emergency Lab, the FYR Macedonia partners conducted an [information and communications needs assessment](#)<sup>4</sup> with refugees and migrants to identify their preferred modes of communication. An outcome of these conversations was that face-to-face communication is often preferred. With further support from the Emergency Lab, the team of IAD assistants and UNHCR's Protection staff began defining the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the IADs utilising face-to-face. This means that the different pathways were mapped according to how individuals would respond to somebody coming to the desk in-person: When to provide information; when to directly refer them to a particular service; when to simply log feedback as no further action is required. It was important to understand what referrals would be needed and what information would be collected before designing the questionnaire and how the data would be collected.

Forms were created based on the information that was needed - it was important not to 'over collect' information that would be irrelevant or superfluous. The information architecture (the structural design of the information) was very simple at the initial stage. It contained limited 'categories' - also known as taxonomies. The form was designed to capture two main types of feedback; positive or negative sentiment towards a product or service and requests for information or referral. Both types can be recorded as an individual or in a group. The service/product sentiment information was chosen to be collected with the aim of discovering trends that reveal the success or failure of operational changes. The information request/disclosure element included in-built accountability features (i.e. space provided to input points of action). All data to be collected in the questionnaires, in compliance with UNHCR data protection policy, was designed to be anonymized. Basic information such as language, gender and age were recorded to provide better disaggregation and analysis.

Whilst this mechanism is centered primarily around the information kiosks and its assistants, there are several aspects that make the FYR Macedonia mechanism more plural in terms of communication channels. A phone number was advertised in women's bathrooms for sensitive complaints. In addition, by actively soliciting feedback the desk assistants were able to expand outreach - allowing for feedback to be provided away from the static location of the information desks. This increased opportunities for those not confident or able to approach the desks to have their voice heard. In Autumn 2016, feedback boxes were introduced as a complementary channel for acquiring feedback.

To date, in the lifetime of the current feedback mechanism in FYR Macedonia, there have not been any complaints of sensitive and/or serious nature reported (as of 16 February 2017). Whilst this may be inherently positive, it does also signal the need for an in-depth evaluation of the mechanism's ability to provide a sense of safety to people who seek support on more challenging problems. When some reports of dissatisfaction of the system itself were received, UNHCR and UNICEF reviewed the Standard Operation Procedures to strengthen the follow-up of feedback received.

<sup>4</sup> <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/35563>



# 1 DEFINE THE CHALLENGE: CONSULT WITH COMMUNITIES AND HUMANITARIAN RESPONDERS TO WORK OUT WHAT BARRIERS ARE PREVENTING FEEDBACK BEING LISTENED TO AND ACTED ON

**This 'homework' phase is essential.**

By consulting with communities and response stakeholders - it is important to determine what barriers there are in terms of feedback being listened to and acted on. For example, in the early phase of the response in FYR Macedonia - receiving and responding to feedback operated primarily on an ad hoc basis. Any information that was noted was brought to inter-agency coordination meetings for discussion. While this may have resolved particular issues, the lack of a systematic approach meant that people were not always aware of how to lodge feedback or complaints and there was no way for humanitarian staff to easily track their responses and share this data with their partners. UNHCR recognized the need to improve this system for managing to ensure the process was well institutionalized and systematized so that 'listening' became a central element of decision making.

# 2 DON'T DUPLICATE EFFORTS: BUILD ON EXISTING STAFF CAPACITIES AND WORK WITH ESTABLISHED SERVICES TO ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY

**Top-down solutions to any challenge are notoriously hard to institutionalise.**

To ensure buy-in and sustainability, the feedback mechanism in FYR Macedonia needed to capitalize on existing capacities. One of the key inter-agency initiatives being rolled-out across the response were Children and Family Protection Support Hubs (CFPSH). These hubs were designed to provide consistent and quality services in each location across multiple countries. This was to enable refugee and migrant families to easily identify and access the services available at each site. One of the elements of these hubs was an Information and Advice Desk (IAD) - or information kiosks - which were established as visible, static information points. In FYR Macedonia these IADs were personned by dedicated assistants who also had a roving function - walking the sites to improve outreach and information provision. Many of these assistants can also speak Arabic, furthering helping them engage directly with people. Given the direct engagement these assistance have with communities, they provided a good entry point for UNHCR to begin designing and defining a feedback mechanism.

# 10 STEPS TO SETTING UP AN EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK MECHANISM

*"At the food service during Ramadan, after the evening meal (Iftar) UNHCR and partners were waiting for feedback to see if the people were satisfied with the food or not. It was nice to hear the results as it encourages us to do our jobs better."*

*- IAD Assistant (Tabanovce)*

Tabanovce/ Emergency Lab Manager Katie Drew pilots the mobile data collection tool with a refugee. © UNHCR/John Warnes



*“What’s also interesting is that people prefer seeing their feedback directly documented into Kobo Toolbox, because it reinforces the feeling that their opinions matter and that somebody is listening to them.”*

*- IAD Assistant (Tabanovce)*

## 3 USE THE COMMUNITY’S PREFERRED COMMUNICATION CHANNELS: ENGAGE WITH THEM THROUGH CHANNELS THEY LIKE AND TRUST.

**Persuading people to adopt a new communication channel or change their ‘communication behaviour’ is challenging in any situation.**

Engagement with communities needs to be through preferred and trusted channels. Following consultations with refugees and migrants in FYR Macedonia and by building on known data from Greece, face-to-face communication was clearly the community’s preferred communication channel for dialogue with humanitarian actors. While people were using phones or Facebook to contact family members, trusted information and updates on services came through one-on-one or group discussions with volunteers, partners and UNHCR staff. Any feedback mechanism would need to strengthen face-to-face communication and leverage the trust that people already placed in this channel. The key was to design a system that could maximize the effectiveness of this engagement. To better facilitate the collection of feedback and complaints, the mechanism in FYR Macedonia capitalized on the CFPSH model by working with ‘information kiosk’ assistants who used an online data collection tool. This KoboToolbox form was designed with UNHCR protection staff to ensure the form was contextually appropriate and could safely collect all the relevant information to help improve the quality of services provided at the transit sites.

## 4 COORDINATE: HAVE CLEAR COMMITMENT AND AGREEMENT ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, BOTH INTERNALLY AND INTER-AGENCY.

**For an efficient feedback mechanism to operate, there needs to be clear commitment and agreement on specific roles, internally and at inter-agency level.**

Obscurity around responsibilities of human and financial resources can hinder the establishment of any mechanism. In FYR Macedonia, the services available in the transit centers are provided by a range of humanitarian actors, including UNHCR, partners, volunteers and authorities. It was vital that the feedback mechanism was designed for inter-agency collaboration to ensure mutual accountability between stakeholders. In FYR Macedonia there has been good inter-agency collaboration with regular coordination meetings hosted by UNHCR and good stakeholder engagement - including the government, UN agencies and local partners. This provided a good platform to build the inter-agency mechanism on. It was agreed that information gathered through the online forms would be a standing agenda item of this meeting with resolutions and action points followed up each week. In addition a dissemination plan was determined - a weekly report summarizing the feedback received is shared with the government and other partners.

Tabanovce/ Feedback is captured using 'Kobo Toolbox' is captured by an assistant and is sent for analysis  
© UNHCR/ Vasko Borizovski



# 5 FOCUS ON WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS: COLLECT STRUCTURED DATA THAT ENABLES YOU TO MAKE DECISIONS AND TAKE ACTION AT THE RIGHT TIME.

**Listening without action disempowers communities to engage as their feedback only filters into an 'echo chamber'.**

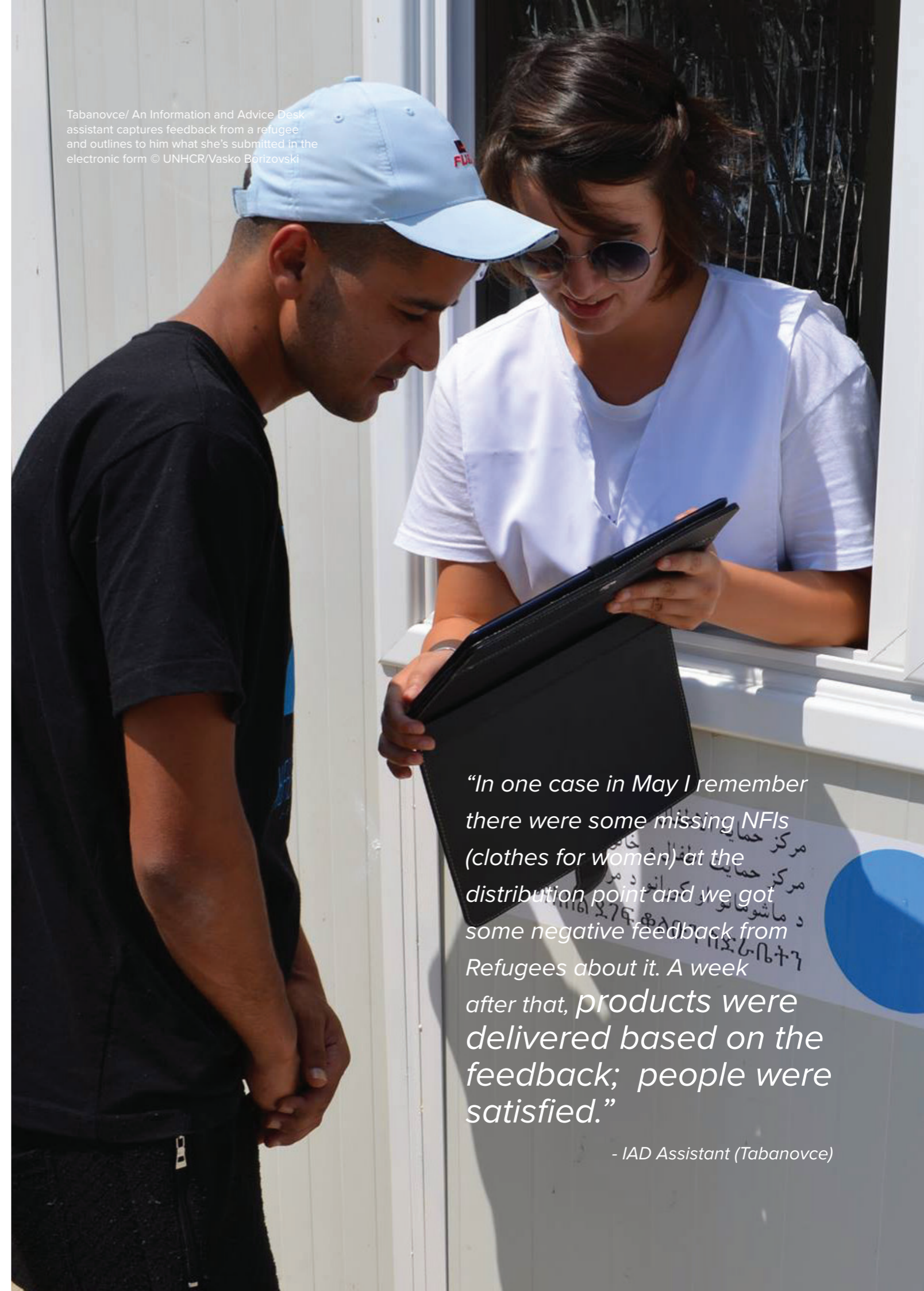
To ensure that actionable information was being collected - and therefore corrective action taken when necessary - UNHCR worked to design the required data fields on the feedback form. This meant that the form was able to capture positive or negative sentiments towards a product or service, the type of information being requested as well as the number and type of referrals. Based on the context, the form also supports data collection at individual or group level. The service/product sentiment information was chosen to be collected with the aim of discovering trends that reveal the quality or shortcomings of services provided, and the impact - if any - of changes made. The information request and referral elements included in-built accountability protocols - for example a space was provided to input points of action or the name of agency and focal-point that the referral was made to. All data is collected in the questionnaires in compliance with UNHCR's data protection policy - no personal data which could identify the individual or group member is collected in the form. When the data is shared it is anonymized. Basic information such as language, gender and age were recorded to allow for trends for specific groups to be analyzed.

# 6 PREPARE FOR SENSITIVE ISSUES: ENSURE YOU HAVE A SAFE CHANNEL FOR CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING.

**Feedback mechanisms must be prepared to respond to sensitive issues, such as Sexual and Gender Based Violence and other serious protection concerns.**

Recognizing the challenge people face when reporting sensitive concerns, the feedback mechanism must include channels which prioritize confidentiality and create a private and safe environment for reporting. In FYR Macedonia, the assistants were trained to deal with sensitive complaints in-line with established referral procedures. As certain cultural or social norms may prohibit some information being shared with members of the opposite sex, it was important that the assistants are both men and women. To encourage people to share their concerns, assistants sought to actively solicit feedback helping people feel their views were important and valued. The team also clearly explained the anonymity of the data protection to build trust in the mechanism. Another specific initiative that helped to provide a private avenue for reporting sensitive concerns was the integration of a phone-channel. A direct-dial telephone number was advertised - using stickers in the ladies bathrooms - to provide another option for those who feel the information desks are too public or unsuitable. The recent introduction of anonymous boxes also provides an additional complementary channel for reporting.

Tabanovce/ An Information and Advice Desk assistant captures feedback from a refugee and outlines to him what she's submitted in the electronic form © UNHCR/Vasko Borizovski



*“In one case in May I remember there were some missing NFIs (clothes for women) at the distribution point and we got some negative feedback from Refugees about it. A week after that, products were delivered based on the feedback; people were satisfied.”*

*- IAD Assistant (Tabanovce)*





*“Some have told us, they feel like the Information and Advice Desk is ‘the voice of the refugee’ in the transit centre.”*

*- IAD Assistant (Gevgelija)*

A number of refugees and migrants wait patiently outside Gevgelija transit centre in fYR of Macedonia for registration with authorities.  
© UNHCR/ Mark Henley

## 7 TEST AND REFINE: SPEAK TO THOSE USING THE MECHANISM AND ITERATE YOUR DESIGN TO ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS.

**The assumptions which inform the design of a feedback mechanism - including the type, quantity and quality of feedback data - need to be tested.**

Based on these tests, refinement of the mechanism is important to ensure its effectiveness. For example, the initial design of the mechanism in fYR Macedonia was based on the assumption that mostly ‘non-solicited feedback’ would be received through the Information and Advice Desks. Initially, the proponents of feedback were men. The team in fYR Macedonia countered this imbalance by more structured engagement with women through actively soliciting their feedback. Now the gender balance is more equal. This demonstrates how the system needs refining to ensure inclusive engagement. The team has identified other areas that need to be strengthened to improve inclusive engagement, including the representation of children. This may require specialized recruitment of staff with experience of specifically engaging children - especially to manage any sensitive issues that may be raised.

## 8 ENABLE EVOLUTION: ADAPT YOUR MECHANISM TO THE CHANGING DYNAMICS OF THE RESPONSE - GO BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD IF NECESSARY.

**In emergencies, contexts often change rapidly and dramatically. For a mechanism to maintain its relevance, it needs to adapt to these changes. As discussed, due to the external change, the movement of the refugee and migrant population in fYR Macedonia became a lot more stable.**

Original discussions to explore remote and mobile communication channels – to continue dialogue with those who have moved on - became less of a priority. As people now remain at the site, the assistants became well-known focal points, with people actively providing inputs on behalf of themselves and other members of the community.



# 9

## MAKE DATA DIGESTIBLE: VISUALISE YOUR DATA, SHOW TRENDS AND FIND THE RIGHT FORUM(S) FOR SHARING TO MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE.

**An impenetrable block of feedback data won't drive decision making and will decrease the chance of operational changes or corrections being made.**

In FYR Macedonia the kobotoolbox platform was chosen because of its custom visualization features. To support data management and visualization in FYR Macedonia, a focal point creates weekly reports that are distilled to highlight key issues requiring action. These reports also include an overview of all information received - including positive feedback. Sensitive, individual case data is not shared. The frequency of these reports and their centrality to decision making on services and protection concerns definitely demonstrates a commitment to fostering a feedback culture amongst partners. However, partners decided that weekly circulation of 'data-lite' graphs wouldn't be useful - as it is difficult to track trends and analyze the effect of programming changes. The mechanism therefore adopted a supplementary monthly 'visualization' of the data to clearly demonstrate changes in perceptions and trends. The feedback from decision makers on this reports indicated that they were accessible, and easy to navigate.

# 10

## DEMONSTRATE YOU'VE LISTENED: PROACTIVELY EXPLAIN THE CHANGES YOU'VE MADE AND WHY CERTAIN ACTIONS SOMETIMES CANNOT BE TAKEN.

**Response to feedback and demonstrable action or change is important to fostering a community's trust in the mechanism and ensuring its continued relevance.**

In FYR Macedonia examples of how the feedback loop is being closed include partners actively sharing information about changes and improvements to services and products with the community in both the Gevgelija and Tabanovce sites. This information is displayed on central information screens and also communicated via loudspeaker broadcasts. Individual follow-up is usually reserved for specific information requests that require person-specific responses. One of the challenges with closing the feedback loop in FYR Macedonia is that they system currently collects anonymized data on services which doesn't lend itself to individual responses. The team is therefore looking to develop a more systematized approach to responding to individuals.



*"The Kobo Toolbox is very useful and helpful for our work in the Information and Advice Desk. It allows us to collect feedback and report with just a few taps on the screen."*

*- IAD Assistant (Gevgelija)*

Gevgelija/ UNHCR staff provide information to a group of Afghani refugees at Gevgelija Transit Centre © UNHCR/Mark Henley



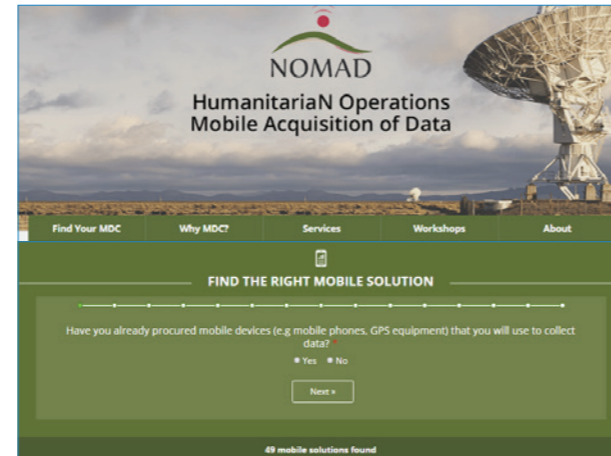
# SET UP MOBILE DATA COLLECTION IN 5 EASY STEPS

## Finding the Right Tool

Collecting data through an electronic system has never been easier. There are a plethora of tools available to do this and sometimes it can be hard to figure out which suits your needs.

Tools such as the Humanitarian Nomad can help. This, and a number of other platforms, can help determine your specific needs through a selection of questions, and help you narrow down your search to an appropriate mobile data collection tool.

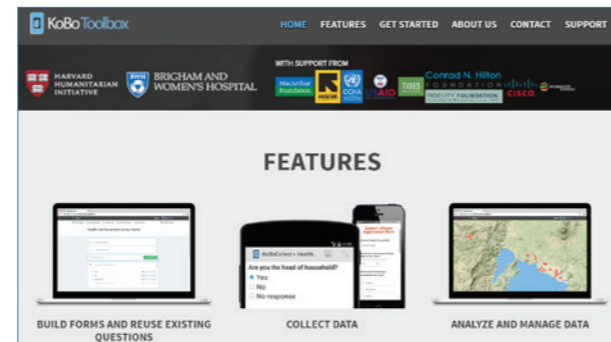
<http://humanitarian-nomad.org>



## Opting for KoboToolbox in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

For the work in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the UNHCR Innovation Emergency Lab introduced 'Kobo Toolbox'. This mobile data collection tool is an open source product, built around the [Open Data Kit](#), that is completely free to use. The software was founded by a team based at the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and the Brigham and Women's Hospital and is supported by a range of other organisations and donors. There is an instance of Kobo Toolbox running on [HumanitarianResponse.info](http://HumanitarianResponse.info) that allows you to build your own system within a matter of minutes.

For more information to go <http://www.kobotoolbox.org>.



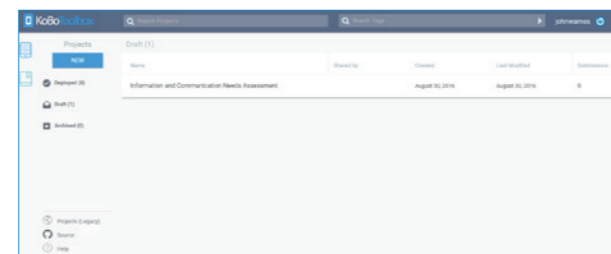
UNHCR offers access to KoboToolbox on secure servers, ideal for storing refugee-sensitive data.

To set up an account and get started go to: <http://kobo.unhcr.org>

In other cases, KoboToolbox is also available from a variety of providers such as <http://kobo.humanitarianresponse.info><sup>1</sup>

From creating an account, it's possible - with little prior knowledge - to set up a form and start collecting data in a matter of minutes. Kobo Toolbox provides a suite of tools that makes it easy to set up questionnaires, capture data in a variety of formats, including photos, videos and location data, and stores these in a secure database. In FYR Macedonia, key information about Age, Gender and Diversity was captured alongside both structured and unstructured inputs around the issues people were facing. Issues with certain sectors can be noted quickly. It is also possible to triage and refer cases for immediate follow-up. It is also possible to design the forms so that only the questions that require answers show up, making it as easy and as quick as possible, giving the staff member more time to concentrate on listening and responding to the individual approaching the desk.

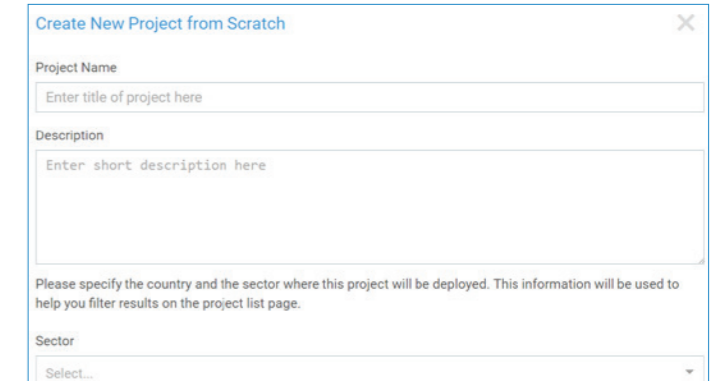
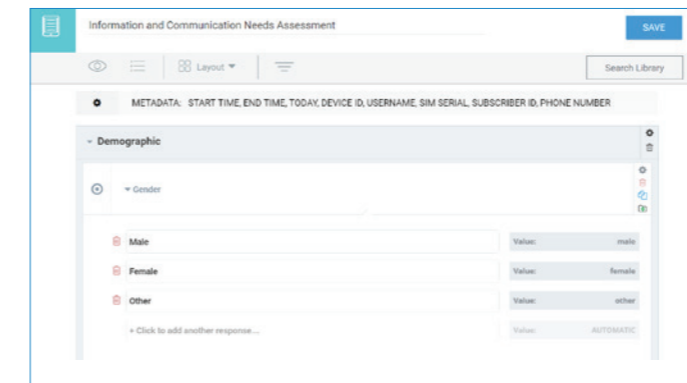
Beyond the five steps presented opposite, Kobo Toolbox has a selection of handy guides available at <http://support.kobotoolbox.org/customer/en/portal/topics/690865-getting-started/articles> which can provide deeper insight into how to set up surveys and specific tutorials to illustrate through example.



# CAPTURE DATA WITH KoboToolbox

## 1 NEW FORM

Click 'New Form' to start to create your project from scratch. Fill in the fields with the appropriate data. This creates your project after you click save.

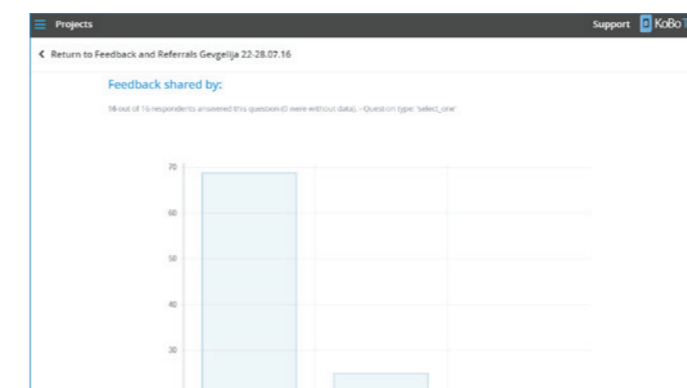
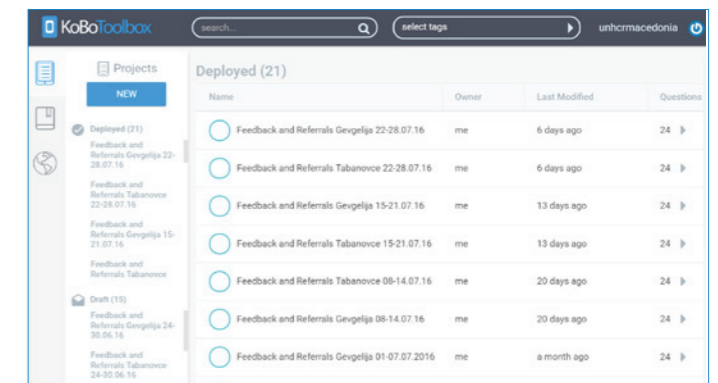


## 2 ADD QUESTIONS

Now click on the '+' icon in the corner to start adding questions. Choose your type i.e. multiple choice and write in the question text and start filling in answers.

## 3 DEPLOY & COLLECT

You can choose to build one or many forms, depending on how you would like to organise yourself. These can be filled in using the web form or the Android app.

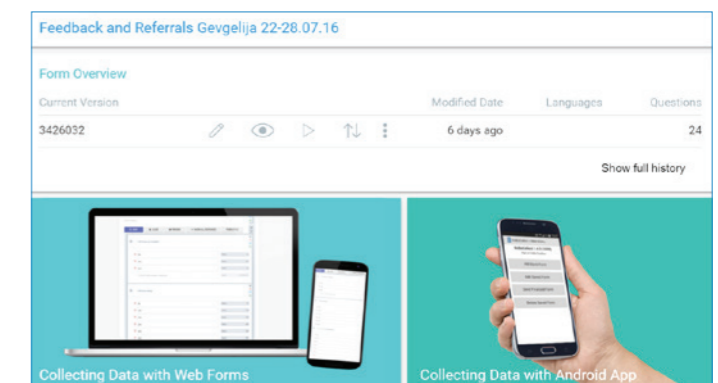


## 4 ANALYSE

Built into Kobo Toolbox is the ability to automatically create graphs of the data captured, providing an easy way to get quick insights.

## 5 EXPORT

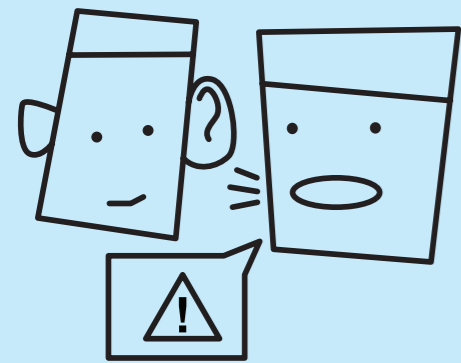
When data is collected and sent via the application or form, you'll record this online. You can access this data on the portal and download it as a normal excel file, amongst other filetypes.



<sup>1</sup> UNHCR is unable to guarantee the security of the data stored in third-party servers.



## PRACTICAL TIPS

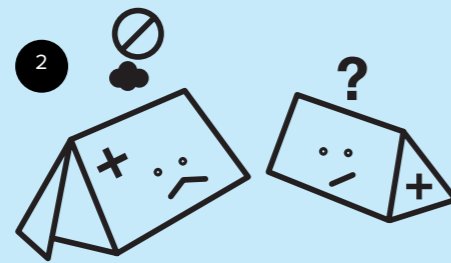


1

**Define the Challenge:** Consult with communities and humanitarian responders to understand what barriers are preventing feedback being listened to and acted on.

**TIPS:** Work out where the problems really lie - these can include lack of staffing, poor or non-existent communication channels, non-working technology, bad data management and confused information flows.

**Eg:** Listen first to focus on where the problems are - talk to as many people as possible, including communities, to hear their challenges; join meetings, following individual complaints, test existing channels (such as calling a hotline number).

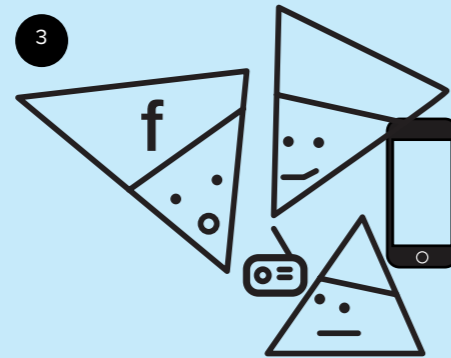


**Assess the existing capacities:** Ensure buy-in and sustainability by capitalising on existing resources.

**Suggestion:** Don't duplicate efforts: Build on existing staff capacities and work with established services to ensure sustainability

**TIPS:** Work out what activities are already underway and build on these, identify which community members, partners and staff you can work with.

**Eg:** If people are regularly attending schools, medical centres, or distribution points then you can plan to integrate your mechanism into these services, working with teachers, parents, medical staff and distribution volunteers etc.



**Use the community's preferred communication channels:** Engage with them through channels they like and trust.

**TIPS:** Conduct an Information and Communication Needs Assessment - different groups and individuals prefer different channels.

**Eg:** Consult with communities to determine what channels of communication they are currently using, what sources they trust and how they would like to talk to humanitarian agencies.

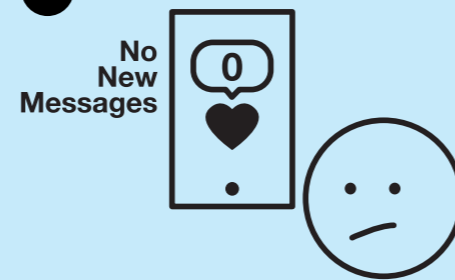


**Coordinate:** Have clear commitment and agreement on roles and responsibilities, both internally and inter-agency.

**TIPS:** Draft Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which clearly indicate the agreed commitments, timeframe for follow-up, as well as different agency/individual roles.

**Eg:** There might be existing coordination mechanisms for the feedback data to input into; additional actors - such as the local media, telecommunications companies - may need to be engaged.

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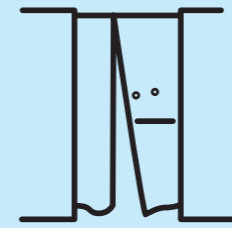


**Focus** on what you need to know to make improvements: Design your mechanism to collect structured data that enables you to make decisions and take action at the right time.

**TIPS:** Mobile data collection enables quick collation, is time-efficient and reduces errors - it also enables the capture of standardised data through structured questionnaires. Design your questionnaire with decision makers so that they define what information is collected.

**Eg:** Collect disaggregated data to identify specific concerns for different groups and be sure to cover the services/products being provided.

6



**Prepare for sensitive issues:** Ensure you have the resources and appropriate channels to create a safe and confidential space for reporting.

**TIPS:** Provide private areas and/or channels for discussion and reiterate the confidentiality of the information being shared. Always consider gender and age dynamics of staffing and ensure they know how to escalate/refer the sensitive issues they receive.

**Eg:** A dedicated phone line to a female staff member may help encourage women to report protection concerns in contexts where they may not be able to share details with a man.

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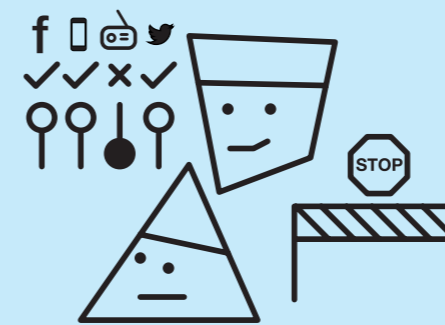


**Enable evolution:** Adapt your mechanism to the changing dynamics of the response - go back to the drawing board if necessary.

**TIPS:** The more channels you establish the less risk there is of complete loss of engagement with a community if access to one fails.

**Eg:** In changing contexts new channels may become available, and existing ones disrupted, information needs will change and different groups of people may be affected.

7



**Test and refine:** Speak to those using the mechanism and iterate your design to ensure effectiveness.

**TIPS:** Consult with communities to understand why/why not they are using the mechanism.

**Eg:** Work with specific groups within the community - such as the youth, disabled groups, women's associations - to brainstorm solutions which would overcome the challenges.

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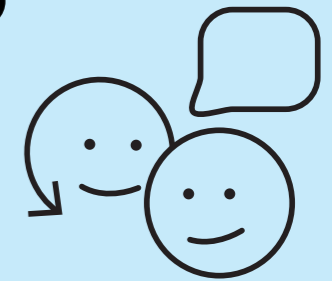


**Make data digestible:** Visualise your data, show trends and find the right forum(s) for sharing to make it accessible.

**TIPS:** Mobile data collection tools help you to easily pull your data into charts - show trends for different groups and clearly highlight priority concerns for follow-up.

**Eg:** If certain groups have specific issues, make sure these are disaggregated and highlighted so the action/solution can be targeted.

10



**Demonstrate you've listened:** Proactively explain the changes you've made and why certain actions sometimes cannot be taken.

**TIPS:** Don't wait until the community is frustrated by the lack of feedback make sure a key responsibility of the mechanism is to 'close the loop'. The loop needs to be closed through preferred and trusted channels.

**Eg:** Examples include, inviting leaders to interagency groups, sharing information verbally through community structures or using audio equipment dependent on the community's preference(s).



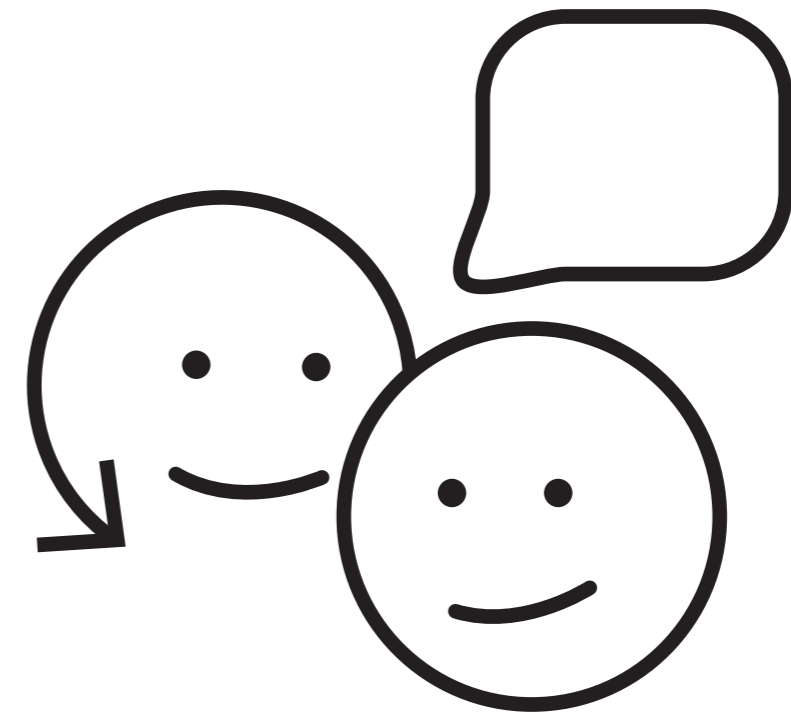
# TAKING ACTION

Over time, the operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have made efforts to integrate the pilot into their systems and overall way of working and delivery of protection and assistant to the refugees in the different transit centres.

Weekly reports were compiled and analysed by firstly the UNHCR Protection team, and subsequently shared and discussed at an inter-agency level. This led to immediate action from field times on the relevant issues to ensure timely follow-up and improvement of humanitarian delivery, based on the needs

On an intermittent basis, broader trend reports were created with greater focus on prioritisation of areas of focus, resolving longstanding issues and steering the overarching direction of the humanitarian response.

Over time, the team in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will further improve the way it captures and analyses the data it is pulling in through the information and advice desks. Efforts are being made to explore whether additional channels can be established to bring in feedback from the affected communities.



For more information contact [innovation@unhcr.org](mailto:innovation@unhcr.org)

**Children and Family Protection Support Hub**

## FEEDBACK REPORT

TRANSIT/RECEPTION CENTERS IN TABANOVCE AND VINOJUG  
MAY – AUGUST 2016

**BACKGROUND**

In February, special support centres were set up for children and families along the most frequently used migration routes in Europe, known as Child and Family Support Hubs (CFSH) or Blue Dots. Consequently, Information and Advice Desks (IAD) have been established in Vinograd and Tabanovce as part of the minimum package of services within CFSH. The aim was to identify and refer persons with specific needs to the second-line services and to receive feedback/complaint from refugees.

**OVERVIEW**

**Tabanovce**

- 391 feedbacks were noted in Tabanovce within indicated period, of which 280 negative and 111 positive. Most of the feedback (250) was shared by individuals, 119 were provided by groups, and 22 by families.

**Vinojug**

- 387 feedbacks were collected in Vinograd, of which 212 positive and 175 negative. 233 feedbacks were provided by individuals, 104 by groups, and 50 by families.

The analysis of data indicated that the population in Vinograd was more satisfied with the provided services within reported period. 55% of feedbacks in Vinograd were positive, compared to the 73% of the feedback in Tabanovce that was negative.

This report summarizes the major findings of collected feedback in transit/reception centres Vinograd and Tabanovce, within the period of May - August 2016. Feedback/ complaints are systematically documented in a feedback and referral data collection form in the Kobo Toolbox. Information Desk Assistants collect data during the week and create weekly reports (Friday to Friday) that present noted positive/negative feedback. Submitted reports are further shared with authorities and partners. The purpose of the feedback is to identify positive practices or matters for improvement in providing services, as perceived by refugees and migrants in Vinograd and Tabanovce.

In Tabanovce, the highest dissatisfaction was noted on the food quality.

**Negative Feedback Tabanovce**

- Food: 28%
- NFI: 10%
- Health: 23%
- Accommodation: 10%
- Other: 29%

**Negative Feedback Vinograd**

- Food: 12%
- NFI: 7%
- Health: 20%
- Accommodation: 20%
- Other: 31%

Men in Tabanovce shared more feedback than women, while in Vinograd men and women equally shared feedback. There was a low response by children on both locations. However, children in Tabanovce shared more feedback (39 children shared feedback) than children in Vinograd, where only 3 feedbacks were shared by children.

Parents and children in Vinograd and Tabanovce were highly satisfied with the provided services at the Child Friendly Space (CFS). In particular, they appreciated the staff's attitude, approach, and quality of activities. Many parents were satisfied with the care provided for their children.

**Cumulative negative feedback full list Vinograd**

Other	65
WiFi/charging/connectivity services	7
Transportation	0
Toilets & Wash facilities	0
Reading areas (accommodation)	11
Registration & documentation	39
Psychosocial Support	1
Protection concerns (SRP, extortion, etc.)	0
Protection concerns: USC specific	0
Health care & first services (general)	8
Health & nutrition services for PWR	0
Health & nutrition services for children	3
Family separation & Family tracing	0
Food distribution (non-child specific)	26
Disability related services to survivors etc.	1
Clothes distribution (non-child specific)	11
Clothes distribution (for children)	1
Asylum application process	1
Access to money/financial services	1

**FOOD**

More than half (78%) of all negative feedback collected in Tabanovce was on food quality. In particular, people complained on:

- Poor food quality: no variety of dishes; mainly canned food served; food not cooked enough; not used to eat certain type of food ("They are giving us canned food again, it doesn't taste nor look nice");
- Lack of fresh fruits and vegetables in the menu;
- Food inappropriate for people with medical history and pregnant women ("I need vitamins, vegetables and fruits. I feel sick from the served food");
- A small number of people complained on the size of the portions ("meals are not enough for an adult person");

Positive feedback was noted when a new dish was served (e.g. rice and chicken, eggplant with meat) and after the placement of refrigerators with cold water. The highest decrease of negative feedback on food was noted in the weeks after placement of cooking stoves, when within a period of three weeks, 9 negative feedbacks were shared compared to 18 in the week before placement of the stoves. However, the trend of negative feedback continued in July and August. The lack of cooking products were cited as a problem, and a small number of people complained on the long waiting lines.

Conversely, in Vinograd the vast majority of people who shared feedback on food (75%) were satisfied



Gevgelija/ UNHCR staff setting up entertainment systems, an initiative expanded based on positive feedback collected. © UNHCR/Katie Drew





### **IMPLEMENTING FEEDBACK MECHANISMS IN EMERGENCIES**

The Emergency Lab is a joint initiative between the Division for Emergency Services and UNHCR Innovation. The Emergency Lab is currently focussing on how to 'close the feedback' loop and is available to support UNHCR's Emergency Operations in implementing projects like those covered in this study.

Contact us in UNHCR Innovation: [innovation@unhcr.org](mailto:innovation@unhcr.org)



 KoBoToolbox