

TIPSHEET: CARM & COVID-19

CARM continuity and risk management

This tipsheet serves as guidance to help field teams think through different ways to mitigate the spread and impact of COVID-19 through CARM feedback channels. The use of CARM feedback channels can potentially lead to the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Simple mitigation protocols can be put into practice to help minimize or eliminate these risks. If you need additional guidance this tip sheet does not address, please reach out to Lauren Shaughnessy, Community Accountability Advisor:

lshaughnessy@mercycorps.org.

Make sure that all team members follow general COVID-19 guidance carefully—including frequent and thorough hand washing, equipment cleaning, and ensuring appropriate distance (2 meters recommended) from program participants, community members, stakeholders, and other team members. This tip sheet builds off existing guidance, and should be used in partnership with it.

You will find centralized information on the Hub's [COVID-19 Information Hub](#).

CARM continuity

Even if programming is suspended and/or team members are working remotely, it is important to keep CARM feedback channels open if possible, and to conduct remote CARM monitoring and management.

- > The country CARM focal point should document what adaptations are being made based on this guidance, and share with the senior management team, program managers, MEL manager(s), and other CARM team members.
- > The country CARM focal point should continue to monitor if feedback channels remain functioning/operational, working with program team members to develop recommendations for channels that stop receiving feedback.
- > Each program should consider establishing a weekly, recurring phone call to discuss the feedback recently received (Grades 1-4), and how it might be incorporated into remote work or future programming.

Managing feedback channels remotely

If team members are working from home, access to certain implementation sites is restricted, implementation is suspended, or movements are restricted, teams should suspend, remove, or adapt feedback channels that require team member presence in communities:

Channel	Remote management adaptations
Community Accountability Committees	- Do not travel to communities to directly receive the collected feedback from committees

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can the committee directly input the feedback they collect into another remote channel, such as the hotline, WhatsApp, email, etc? - Can a focal point of the committee be provided with an inexpensive cell phone or phone credit to help facilitate communication with the hotline or other Mercy Corps phone number?
Community Ambassadors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not travel to communities to directly receive the collected feedback from ambassadors - Can the ambassador directly input the feedback they collect into another remote channel, such as the hotline, WhatsApp, email, etc? - Can the ambassador be provided with an inexpensive cell phone or phone credit to help facilitate communication with the hotline or other Mercy Corps phone number?
Face-to-Face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If team members are not accessing communities, face-to-face feedback will not be collected
Help Desk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If team members are not accessing communities, help desks will not be established
Suggestion Boxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If time and access allow, remove suggestion boxes from communities where access is expected to be restricted - If Mercy Corps isn't able to remove the boxes, can a trusted community leader store them safely? - If possible, replace suggestion boxes with information (i.e. flyer, poster, etc.) with the information for alternative channels
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For alternative feedback channels, consider if team members must be present in communities (even if only briefly) in order for that feedback to reach Mercy Corps. - Consider if any of the above remote management options are applicable - Contact the global Community Accountability Advisor for additional guidance

Community sensitization

- > Where Mercy Corps continues to operate, communities members are sensitized to the availability and purpose of CARM. Sensitization material will need to be updated to help mitigate the risks outlined in the table below.
- > Where Mercy Corps is no longer able to operate, maintain sensitization materials such as flyers, posters, etc. advertising the availability and purpose of feedback channels. Sensitization material will need to be updated to help mitigate the risks outlined in the table below.

Feedback channel risk management

Channel	Risk	Mitigation
Community Accountability Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High risk of transfer - Potential transfer of virus between committee members during meetings - Potential transfer between community members and committee members when sharing/collecting feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold open air meetings only, and in a space large enough for a safe distance (2 meters) between members and individuals sharing feedback - Advise members to avoid all physical greetings with individuals (i.e. hand shake, hug, etc.) - Advise members to immediately wash hands for 20 second with soap and water or use an alcohol-based solution after receiving physical feedback (i.e. paper) - Provide COVID-19 transmission and prevention information to committee members - Explore how committee can provide feedback collected to Mercy Corps via phone, email, WhatsApp, etc. to avoid need to collect physical feedback forms in-person
Community Ambassadors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High risk of transfer - Potential transfer between community members and ambassador when sharing/collecting feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure ambassadors maintain safe distance (2 meters) with any individual sharing feedback - Provide COVID-19 transmission and prevention information to ambassadors - Advise ambassadors to avoid all physical greetings with individuals (i.e. hand shake, hug, etc.) - Advise ambassadors to immediately wash hands for 20 second with soap and water or use an alcohol-based solution after receiving physical feedback (i.e. paper) - Explore how ambassadors can provide Mercy Corps with the feedback collected via phone, email, WhatsApp, etc. to avoid need to collect physical feedback forms in-person
Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medium risk of transfer - Potential transfer between individuals using the same computer/phone to share feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When responding to email to acknowledge receipt of feedback, include COVID-19 transmission and prevention information
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medium risk of transfer - Potential transfer between individuals using the same 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When responding to message to acknowledge receipt of feedback, include COVID-19 transmission and prevention information

	computer/phone to share feedback	
Face-to-Face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High risk of transfer - Potential transfer between team members and individuals sharing feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid all physical greetings with individuals (i.e. hand shake, hug, etc.) - Maintain a safe distance (2 meters) with any individual who wants to share feedback
Hotline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medium risk of transfer - Potential transfer between individuals using the same phone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After feedback has been shared, advise the caller to immediately wash their hands for 20 second with soap and water or use an alcohol-based solution if they are using a shared phone - Team member(s) answering the phone should also wash their hands for 20 second with soap and water or use an alcohol-based solution after answering the phone
Help Desk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High risk of transfer - Potential transfer between team members and individuals using the help desk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid all physical greetings with individuals (i.e. hand shake, hug, etc.) - Maintain a safe distance (2 meters) with any individual who wants to share feedback - Immediately wash hands for 20 second with soap and water or use an alcohol-based solution after receiving physical feedback (i.e. paper), and after leaving the help desk
Suggestion Boxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low risk of transfer - Potential transfer between individuals using the same pen/pencil to write down their feedback - Potential transfer to team members touching the box or its contents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider suspending the use of suggestion boxes and removing them from communities. Replace them with advertisements for alternative feedback channels. If team members are no longer traveling to certain locations, those suggestion boxes must be suspended. - Provide COVID-10 transmission and prevention information at suggestion boxes - Provide instructions that individuals who use the box should wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or use an alcohol-based solution after using the box and/or pens/pencils - If possible, do not provide pens/pencils at the suggestion box to be used by multiple individuals - COVID-19 can survive approximately 3 days on surfaces. After removing the suggestion box from the field, consider waiting 3 days before removing the contents.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team members moving the box or reviewing the contents of the box should either wear gloves when doing so, or immediately wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or use an alcohol-based solution
WhatsApp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medium risk of transfer - Potential transfer between individuals using the same phone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After feedback has been shared, advise the caller to immediately wash their hands for 20 second with soap and water or use an alcohol-based solution if they are using a shared phone - Team member(s) answering the phone should also wash their hands for 20 second with soap and water or use an alcohol-based solution after answering the phone
Other	<p>For alternative feedback channels, consider whether or not Mercy Corps team members are in direct contact with community members in order to collect that feedback, or if materials physically pass between individuals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare your alternative channel to the list above and if risks are similar, apply the associated mitigation measure(s) - Contact the global Community Accountability Advisor for additional guidance