



***Accountability to those we serve:***

***What role for research?***

**José RIERA**  
**Senior Adviser to the Director**  
**Division of International Protection**



# What is ‘accountability’?

- No equivalent in many languages (*Imandari in Nepalese*)
- “Accountability is a *hammer*”
- SCHR Peer Review process
- UNHCR HAP baseline
- Timing: Management and structural reforms - UNHCR’s Global Accountability Framework



# SCHR Peer Review: Building blocks

- Acknowledging and diminishing power imbalance
- Meaningful involvement in key decisions
- Dialogue/relationship characterized by dignity and respect
- Information and communication ('transparency'): consultation and feedback
- Integrity in behaviour, delivering upon commitments, engendering trust



# Moving from words to action: Some lessons

- Process: not a state of grace
- Way of working, not ‘menu of activities’
- Institutional and individual dimensions
- Values and commitments are insufficient
- Management responsibility
- Embedding accountability
- Delegation: partners and networks
- Feedback and complaints
- Resources and advocacy



# Peer Review:

## Recommendations and good practices

- ✓ Promulgate a clear, brief statement of the organization's understanding of 'accountability'
- ✓ Embed accountability in needs assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and staff performance appraisals
- ✓ Complaints: think outside the 'box'
- ✓ Enable populations of concern to assess 'impact' and 'quality' of response during implementation and evaluation
- ✓ Verify that partners are putting accountability principles into practice
- ✓ Close the information loop: dialogue versus extracting info



# Think “outside the box”





# The various dimensions of “accountability” – the case of UNHCR

A diagram consisting of three light blue curved segments arranged in a semi-circle. The top segment is positioned above the text '1. Mandate: Registration, Resettlement, Refugee Status'. The bottom-left segment is positioned above the text '2. Working through partners'. The bottom-right segment is positioned above the text '3. Responding to individual grievances requiring redress (rape, fraud, abuse of power)'.

**3. Responding to individual grievances requiring redress (rape, fraud, abuse of power)**

**1. Mandate:  
Registration  
Resettlement  
Refugee Status**

**2. Working  
through partners**



# Embedding accountability in UNHCR

- Mandatory refresher training on Code of Conduct
- Mandatory participatory planning at least annually (box-ticking?)
- Mainstreaming age, gender and diversity: Management responsibility
- New Global Accountability Framework
- But uneven picture on ground



# Role of research

- Baseline data needed
- UNHCR's Evaluation Policy
- Peer reviews: should be used more extensively; SCHR learning document
- UNHCR's Iraq Review: 70 per cent POC interviews
- Research: Where is the paper trail?
  - ✓ Feedback
  - ✓ Monitoring and evaluation
  - ✓ Complaints mechanisms: community involvement
  - ✓ Critical incident reporting and response: analysis



Any question? Comments?

Thank you!