

GUIDANCE ON FRAGILITY

WHAT IS IT?

- A practical and pedagogical tool for Belgian development actors to integrate a fragile-sensitive approach

WHAT IS IT FOR?

- To be used as crash course for staff not yet trained or experienced in working in fragile contexts
- To be used as a daily work reference to incorporate a fragility dimensions throughout the programme cycle and the different aid modalities

WHAT DOES IT CONTAIN?

- Nine chapters inspired by the principles of engagement in situations of fragility and including key dilemmas, questions, guiding modalities, examples and resources
- A checklist that translates the key principles into concrete questions that should be taken into account in order to ensure that any process, exercise or decision integrates a fragile-sensitive approach

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PRINCIPLES / CHAPTERS

START FROM CONTEXT

Starting from context implies to rely on context analysis rather than on routines or other methodological blueprint approaches and to make sure such analysis is available, of good enough quality and can be spread and used as the keystone to further programming.

FOCUS ON STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS

To focus on state-society relations means considering the state broadly and thus not only supporting state actors (both at central and decentralised level), but also strengthening constructive relations between state and society (namely local actors such as informal or traditional ones, civil society, medias, etc.).

DO NO HARM

Do no harm requires seeking to avoid or mitigate the negative impacts that may arise from the intervention. It builds on the acknowledgment that whatever and whenever international assistance is provided in a fragile context, this assistance becomes part of that context and can therefore attenuate or exacerbate the dynamics of fragility.

MAKE PREVENTION A PRIORITY

Make prevention a priority requires a focus on both quick tangible results and on long term planning and sustainable impact based on a deep understanding of the past (i.e. causes of conflicts). This can be achieved through early warning systems and tackling root causes of fragility.

ADOPT A WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

A Whole-of-Government Approach (WGA) assumes that when different departments have a shared understanding of the problem, exploit synergies in the pursue of a common strategy and agree upon a plan to implement, monitor and evaluate such strategy, a donor will not only have a more sustainable and meaningful impact, but also at a lesser fiscal cost and with a greater legitimacy in the eyes of its partners.

PROMOTE NON-DISCRIMINATION

This principle urges international donors to promote non-discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable societies. This means to promote human rights, gender mainstreaming, social and political inclusion, equity and fair access to basic services.

ALIGN WITH LOCAL PRIORITIES

Donors should wherever and whenever possible use the partner country's (1) priorities and strategies (strategic dimension) and (2) policies and systems for aid financing, management and delivery systems (operational dimension) to guide their action.

ACT FAST, STAY ENGAGED AND BE FLEXIBLE

Engaging in fragile contexts must be flexible enough to take advantage of windows of opportunity and respond to rapidly changing conditions on the ground. At the same time, given the complexity of the challenges facing fragile contexts, long-term and flexible engagement is crucial as change can only be expected after a long period of time.

MANAGE RISKS

Programming in fragile contexts is inherently risky, in that we may have relatively limited control over the outcomes. Because of this higher level of uncertainty failure (or doing more harm than good) is more likely. In order to prevent failure and adapt interventions to fragile contexts it is important to have a continuous and in-depth understanding of the risks one will be confronted with when working in such fragile contexts.



CONCEPT NOTE ON INCENTIVES & PARTNER COMMITMENTS

BUILDING INCENTIVES AND PARTNER COMMITMENTS

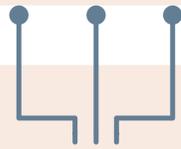
BELGIAN FOUR PILLAR APPROACH



VISION FOR CHANGE

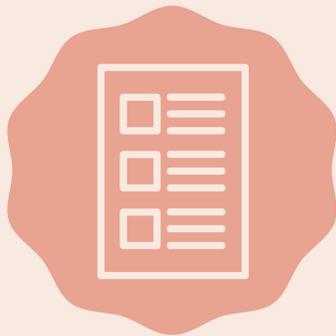
Based upon two core elements:

- The **contexts** of the partner and donor countries
- The **objective** given to the mechanism (end vs. mean)



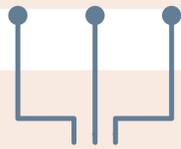
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- As multi-donor as possible
- As multi-actor as possible
- As multi-dimensional as required
- As multi-level as required

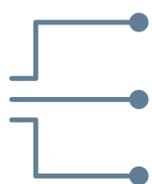
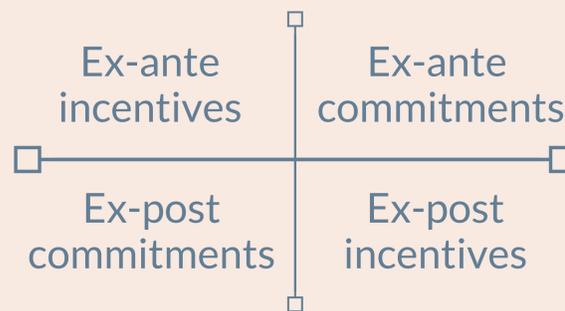


OPERATIONAL PARAMETERS

- Channel(s) of cooperation
- Roles & responsibilities
- Proportionality
- Outcomes- vs. rules-based indicators
- Micro-analysis of criteria
- Embedment in local priorities & policies
- Links with other interventions
- Feedback loop frequency



TYOLOGY OF MODALITIES



SET OF INCENTIVES & PARTNER COMMITMENTS MODALITIES

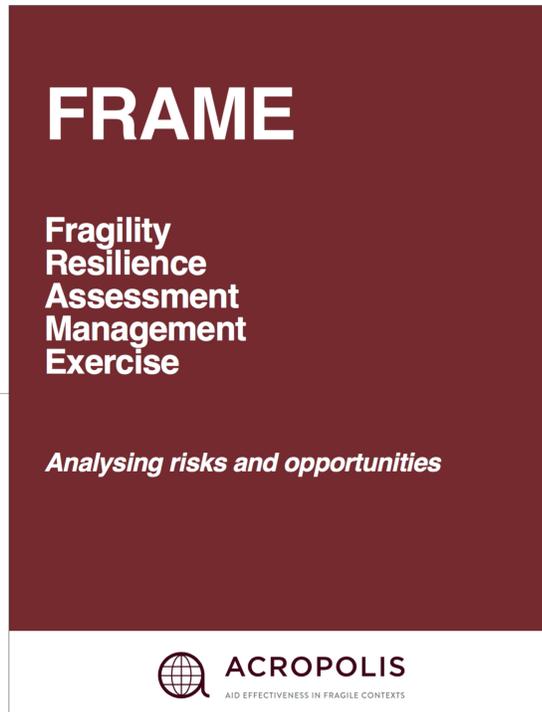


FRAME

FRAME (Fragility Resilience Assessment Management Exercise) has been developed as a supporting tool to assess and manage risks and opportunities when working in fragile contexts.

A powerful tool that combines

- A **multi-dimensional and universal approach** to fragility
- A **systemic approach** to resilience
- A **political economy approach** to agency
- A **balanced approach** to risks management



- Field-tested in **Mali, Burkina Faso** and the **DRC**.
- Initially designed for **Belgian Embassies**
- **Flexible** enough to adapt according to needs and objectives of end user

4 QUESTIONS

1. What am I trying to achieve, and what level of risk appetite is accepted to achieve these results?
2. How might the 10 components of fragility affect the achievement of these results?
3. What are the risks and opportunities that are very likely to occur and will have a high impact?
4. How will you accept, share, mitigate or avoid the identified risks, and how will you exploit, enhance, share or neglect the identified opportunities?

10 FRAGILITY COMPONENTS



GUIDELINES

CHAPTER 2

Objective Setting

Q1 What am I trying to achieve, and what level of risk appetite is accepted to achieve these results?

The first step to achieve a useful risk exercise is to have a clear answer on the question why we need risk management. Risk management is not an end in itself. Risks are managed in function of the objectives you set. Thus, each time a risk exercise is done it is important to define your goal.

A second related question is one of timing: for what period do you want to assess risks? Risks are measured against a particular time horizon. Logically, this time horizon relates to the short or long term goals you have set to realize.

A guiding question that can help to identify objectives, scope and time horizon for a useful risk exercise is to ask the question: **what system do you want to change?** Or more concretely, what are the long-term transformational changes you want to realize in order to increase the resilience of that system? The advantage of starting from a systemic approach to analyze risks and fragility is that it forces you to take into account the broader context of the system instead of focusing on some part of it while also reflecting on long-term transformational change instead of short-term results.

Third, at the policy level there should be clarity about the accepted level of risk appetite. What is the risk tolerance of the donor organization? What kind of risks are acceptable, what kind of risks are not negotiable?

The Risk Appetite Dilemma

The dilemma is about the green light and red line that defines whether or not and how to engage or disengage in particular situations. In some circumstances the decision to engage or disengage is conditional with the strict condition of changes from one day to another. These are difficult decisions with consequences that are difficult to predict and make many questions on what grounds your actions start with imposing conditionality or sanctions, what are minimal conditions to engage in the first place, and do donors have clear (written) rules and procedures to decide when and on what grounds engagement should be put on hold or to an end?

In many cases it is difficult to define the stopping point when certain risks require engagement or disengagement. The Do No Harm principle can be used as a rule of thumb: when engagement/disengagement will do more harm than good, things should be reconsidered. Furthermore, identifying green light and red line can be helpful. In conditions that should be met before engagement is possible (green light), and actions that should lead to considering disengagement (red line). These should prevent real and essential changes that make sense in the context they will be applied to. Furthermore, if those green light / red line are communicated proactively, this will prevent or facilitate making once a crisis happens, and they can also prove their usefulness in leading the political dialogue on a level of multi-level level.

TOOL

RISK MATRIX	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	LEVEL	AGENCY
Dimension 1: Economic Fragility				
1. Long Term Economic Development	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE
2. Labor Market Integration	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE
Dimension 2: Environmental Fragility				
3. Resilience, vulnerability and waste management	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE
4. Natural Disaster Risks	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE
Dimension 3: Political Fragility				
5. Checks and balances and protection of human rights	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE	POSSIBLE

