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Risk and Resilience Toolkit

- Risk & Resilience Framework Summary
- Tools & Templates to support the Risk And Resilience Process

- Annex: Risk and Resilience Framework Exploratory Questions

To use in conjunction with Bitesize Module B: Using Risk to Build Resilience



How to use the Risk and Resilience Toolkit

Purpose: The Risk and Resilience (R&R) Framework and accompanying tools and templates are designed to help organizations identify, assess and respond to risks that could affect project outcomes. By making uncertainty explicit, the framework helps organizations to build impact and organizational resilience, prevent harm, test assumptions, adapt to changing circumstances and make better-informed decisions throughout implementation.

The framework combines **risk management practices** that help identify, assess and respond to risks, with **resilience-based approaches** that strengthen a project's ability to adapt, learn and respond to changing circumstances and emerging challenges.

When to develop & review: The R&R Framework is applied at the outset of investment and project design and the outputs should be regularly reviewed throughout project delivery to ensure ongoing risk identification and management and ensure learnings are applied.

Who develops it: The people responsible for designing and delivering the investment, drawing on evidence, stakeholder perspectives and subject matter expertise. It may also be appropriate to include funders involved in co-designing a project.

Who should use it: Project teams responsible for delivery, leadership teams, boards and other stakeholders involved in project design, implementation, monitoring and adaptation. Key outputs and learnings may also be incorporated into reporting and discussions with funders.

Key inputs: Project goals and outcomes, Roadmap to Impact, Impact Framework, stakeholder perspectives, evidence and contextual analysis, emerging trends, assumptions, and lessons from implementation, including any incidents or risk events.

Internal

The risk assessment process at a glance | A cycle, not a checklist



1. Identify
Identify the risks that could affect project objectives or cause harm

2. Assess
Prioritize them, and understand causes and impacts

3. Respond
Decide how to address risk and build resilience

4. Monitor & Review
Track risks and how actions are working

5. Learn & Adjust
Reflect on what's changed, and adapt, feeding back into Identify

Risk management should be dynamic and a part of how projects are run and governed day to day, not a separate compliance process.

The following tools and templates are designed to support analysis and decision making around each stage of the process.

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Identify Stage: Key steps guidance

Purpose: Identify the risks that could affect achievement of your project objectives.

1. **Define your objectives:** Start by defining your project objectives and key assumptions. Refer back to your Roadmap to Impact and Impact Framework.

2. **Think expansively to identify risks:** What are the risks that might prevent you from achieving your objectives or cause unintended harm? The **Risk and Resilience Framework** Exploration Questions is a tool that can be used to prompt thinking in identifying risks, however other risk categories or brainstorming tools may also be used (see **Tool A** and the **Annex**)

3. **Consider stakeholders:** Stakeholder analysis can be used to identify key stakeholders that may either pose risks or dependencies to achieving your objectives or may be impacted by the project and determine appropriate engagement approaches (see **Tool B**).

4. **Consider external context:** Consider risks arising from emerging social, technological, economic, political and environmental trends relevant to your context (see **Tool C**).

Output: By the end of Identify Stage, you should have a consolidated list of identified risks grouped by Framework aspect or other category, ready for assessment.

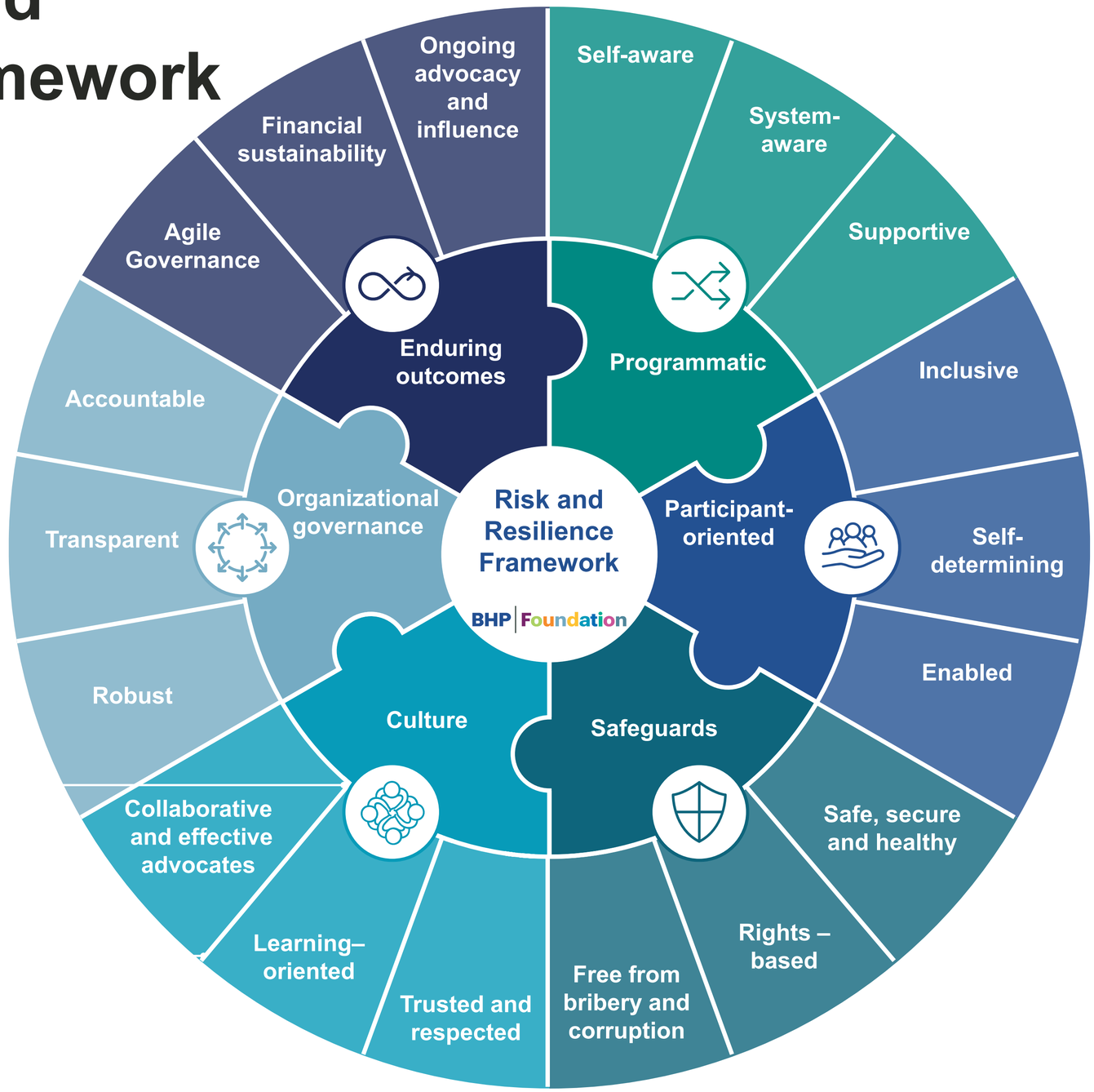
Tool A: Risk and Resilience Framework

The Risk and Resilience Framework (R&R Framework) supports structured thinking and planning to help navigate and adapt to uncertainty.

It is most impactful when integrated into project design and implementation to best support you in achieving your objectives.

The framework comprises 6 *aspects* which together form the basis of resilient projects (Inner ring of the diagram)

The aspects are underpinned by *characteristics* which are considered the critical enablers for each aspect (outer ring of the diagram).



Further detail about the Framework can be found in the Annex.

Note: other risk categories or brainstorming tools may be used in place of the R&R Framework wheel. The important thing is to think expansively to identify risks.

Identify Stage – Tool B: Stakeholder Analysis Template

GUIDANCE:
Consider: Who are the key stakeholders (groups or individuals) that the project is dependent on and why (e.g. participants, financing, political support, regulation change or enforcement, knowledge sharing). What risks do they introduce to your project objectives? What engagement approach is required to monitor their position or seek to influence them?
Consider also which stakeholder groups may be impacted by the project or your activities, and what needs to be put in place to avoid harm or undesired impact.
Priority ratings are based on the extent to which the stakeholder could influence project success or be affected by project activities.

Stakeholder Organization / Individual ***(Categories provided – list specific individuals or groups)***	**Potential impact on Project outcomes OR Potential impact of the Project on the stakeholder**	**Priority stakeholder: High / Med / Low**	**Proposed engagement approach** ***(May capture in communications / engagement plan)***
Participants (individuals or communities that are intended to benefit from the work)			
Community Organizations (separate from participants)			
Sub-grantees or others involved in the project			
Governments			
Investors / funders			
Others (e.g., alliances / networks; staff / board)			

Identify Stage – Tool C: Emerging Trends Template

GUIDANCE: Reflecting on the wider external context of the project, what emerging trends could impact you achieving your objectives? Consider social, technological, economic, political and environmental.

Aspect	Event / Issue
Social *(e.g. regional conflict may impact ability to engage with project participants)*	
Technological (*e.g. new technology that will require new training to optimize community outcomes)*	
Economic (*e.g. collapse in key agricultural commodity prices may reduce livelihood opportunities)*	
Political (*e.g. political uncertainty may change project funding opportunities)*	
Environmental (e.g. *an extreme weather or pollution event significantly impacts participants*)	

Assess Stage

Purpose: Determine which risks matter most and understand their potential consequences.

1. **Prioritize identified risks:** Given time and resource constraints, screen the list and prioritize which risks to take forward for detailed assessment based on potential impact on the project and ability to influence the risk. Similar risks may be aggregated.

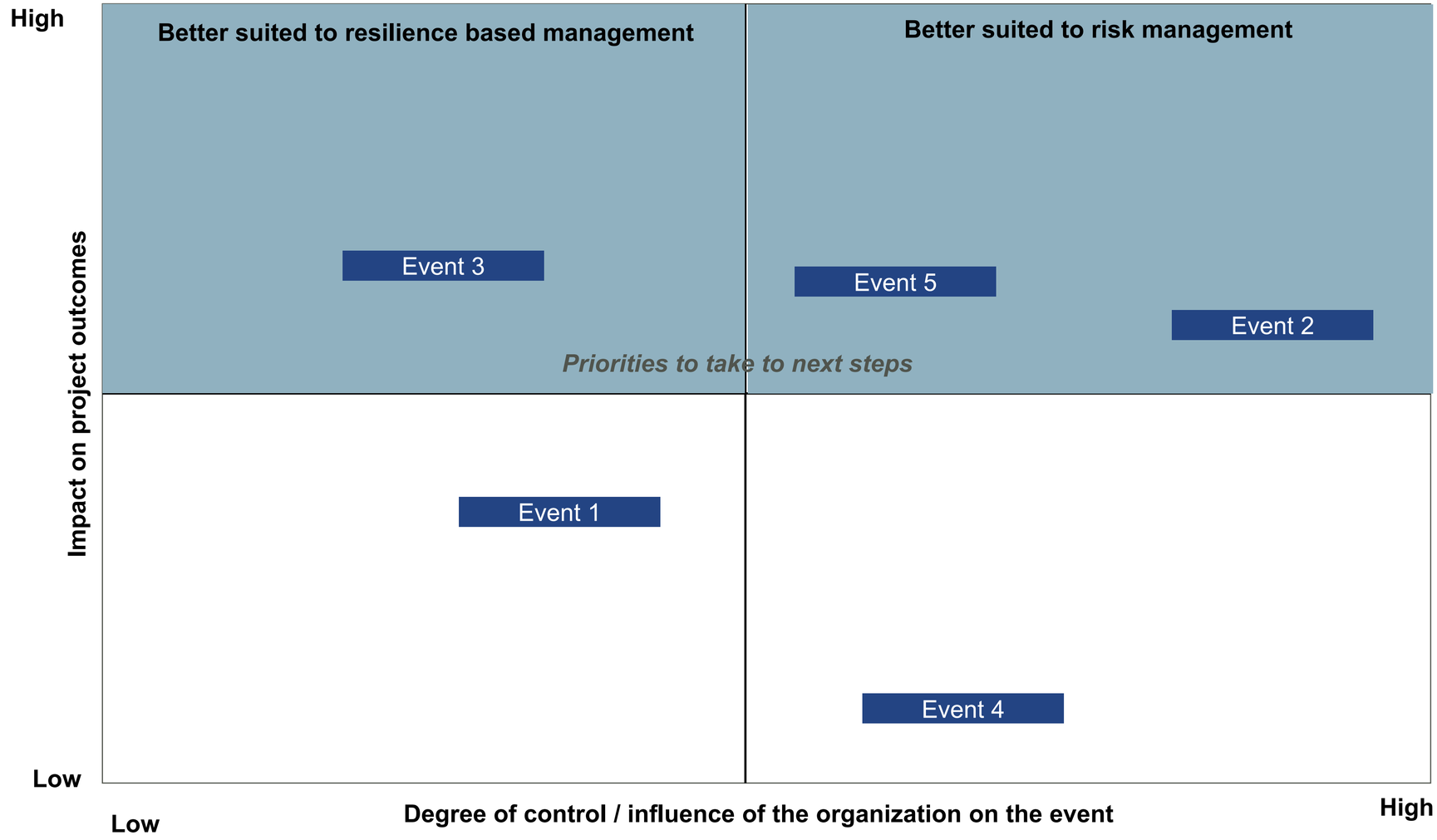
2. **Analyze prioritized risks to determine causes and impacts:** To determine the cause consider the factors that might make the risk occur. Impacts could be to finances, project delivery, reputation, people, etc. Listing causes and impacts makes it easier to check if current responses are adequate.

3. **Rate and record risks in the Project Risk and Resilience Register:** Rate risks based on worst case impact on project objectives, assuming there are no responses

Output: A prioritized set of risks with clearly defined causes, impacts and risk ratings. These can be mapped on a matrix (see **Tool D**), rated using an agreed risk rating (see **Tool E**) or populated in the Risk Register (see **Tool I**)

Assess Stage – Tool E: Prioritization Matrix Template

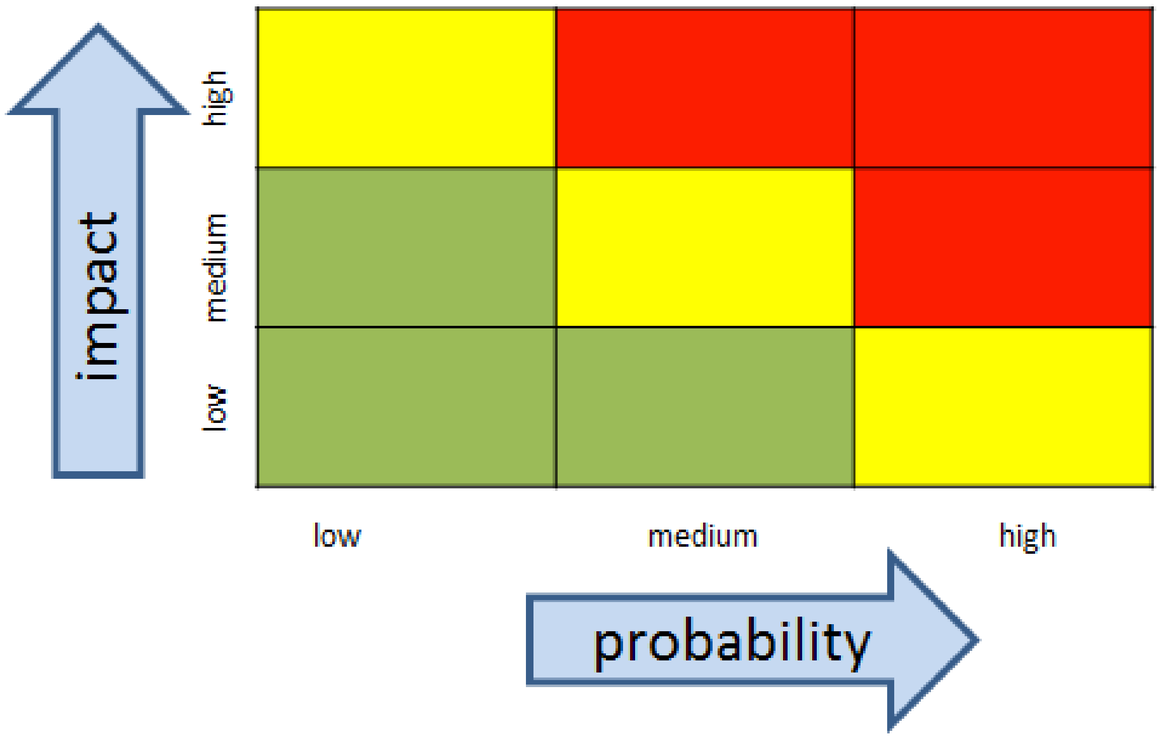
GUIDANCE: Review the identified risks in stage 1 (Identify Stage) – what is the degree of control you have on these events versus the impact they could have on you achieving your objectives?



Risk rating (Based on worst case impact)	
Low	Insignificant impacts on project objectives
Medium	Moderate impacts on project objectives
Major	Material impacts on project objectives
Critical	Catastrophic impacts on project objectives

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Assess Stage – Tool E: Basic risk matrix to rate risks for prioritization



This is an example only of how the risk ratings can be determined using both the severity of impact and the probability, or likelihood, of the risk occurring to help prioritize top risks.

The matrix should be adjusted to suit the organization's risk appetite, with descriptors developed for each risk rating to provide guidance.

Response Stage

Purpose: Identify and prioritize actions that reduce risks and strengthen resilience.

1. **Identify response options:** Identify potential responses for each risk considering root causes, team responsibilities for response, and benefits of the response, including across multiple priority issues. See **Tool F** for response options suitable for different risks and document them in **Tool G**.

2. **Prioritize responses:** Given time and resource constraints, and potential complexity, shortlist which responses can be taken forward. Consider the level of required resource to the influence the response would have on the project's risks. (see **Tool H**)

3. **Implement responses as appropriate:** Consider any changes required to the project design, activities, budget or Roadmap to Impact to implement the responses identified.

Output: An agreed set of responses, owners and implementation actions for priority.

Response stage: Tool F –Response Options

GUIDANCE: Responses can be designed to address causes, reduce potential impacts and enhance resilience. The figure below provides an overview of response types along the continuum of uncertainty and examples of response types that can be considered.

Avoid

Remove the cause that could give rise to the risk

Examples

- **Eliminate:** Redesign model from the outset
- **Capacity building** – train and support staff to identify situations where issues might arise
- **Agreements** – ensure contractual and non-contractual arrangements anticipate and include measures to avoid the risks
- **Resources** – sufficient resources to deliver objectives, avoid risks to performance, schedule and cost

Minimize

Reduce the likelihood of causes, or severity of impact

Examples

- **Manage** – procedures and plans in place for likely causes
- **Engineer** – redesign to cut likelihood or severity of impact without losing function
- **Respond** – monitoring and triggers that prompt timely action
- **Minimize vulnerability** – cut exposure of people and assets through training / equipment

Absorb

Cope with impact if it happens, and recover quickly

Examples

- **Restoration** – return to the original state (e.g. rehabilitation)
- **Compensation** – insurance, offsets (carbon, biodiversity, water) or socio-economic payments
- **Contingency** – incorporate contingency funding for program delays
- **Critical path** – know which functions matter most and recover them first

Adapt

Adjust in anticipation of, or in response to, a risk

Examples

- **Learning-oriented** – monitor, evaluate and adjust as information and feedback emerges
- **Collaboration** – share knowledge and resources with others facing similar challenges
- **Inclusivity and diversity** – broad consultation for better decisions
- **Optionality** – multiple, diverse ways to meet the same need
- **Redundancy** – spare capacity for surges and disruption

Transform

Move to a fundamentally new approach when the old one won't hold

Examples

- **Changing norms and rules** – advocate for new policies and approaches
- **Re-purposing** – new uses for existing assets (e.g. nature-based solutions)
- **Decentralization** – modular infrastructure, distribute governance, power sharing
- **New collaborations** – relationships with influential voices to tackle root causes, move to a multi-partner model



Knowns

Unknowns

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Response stage: Tool G – Mapping Response Template

Issue A:

Causes	Impacts

Response options:

Avoid	Minimize	Absorb	Adapt	Transform

Tool G – Worked example of Mapping Response Options

Risk: The community is not effectively engaged and supportive of the project.

Consider the causes and impacts

Causes	Impact
• Engagement model not effective • Insufficient community participation • Insufficient community representation • Insufficient capability of community representative body • Insufficient capacity in community representative body • Lack of intergenerational engagement	• Project objectives are not supported by the community • Project participation is not sustained • Community conflicts

Knowns — **Consider the continuum of uncertainty** — **Unknowns**



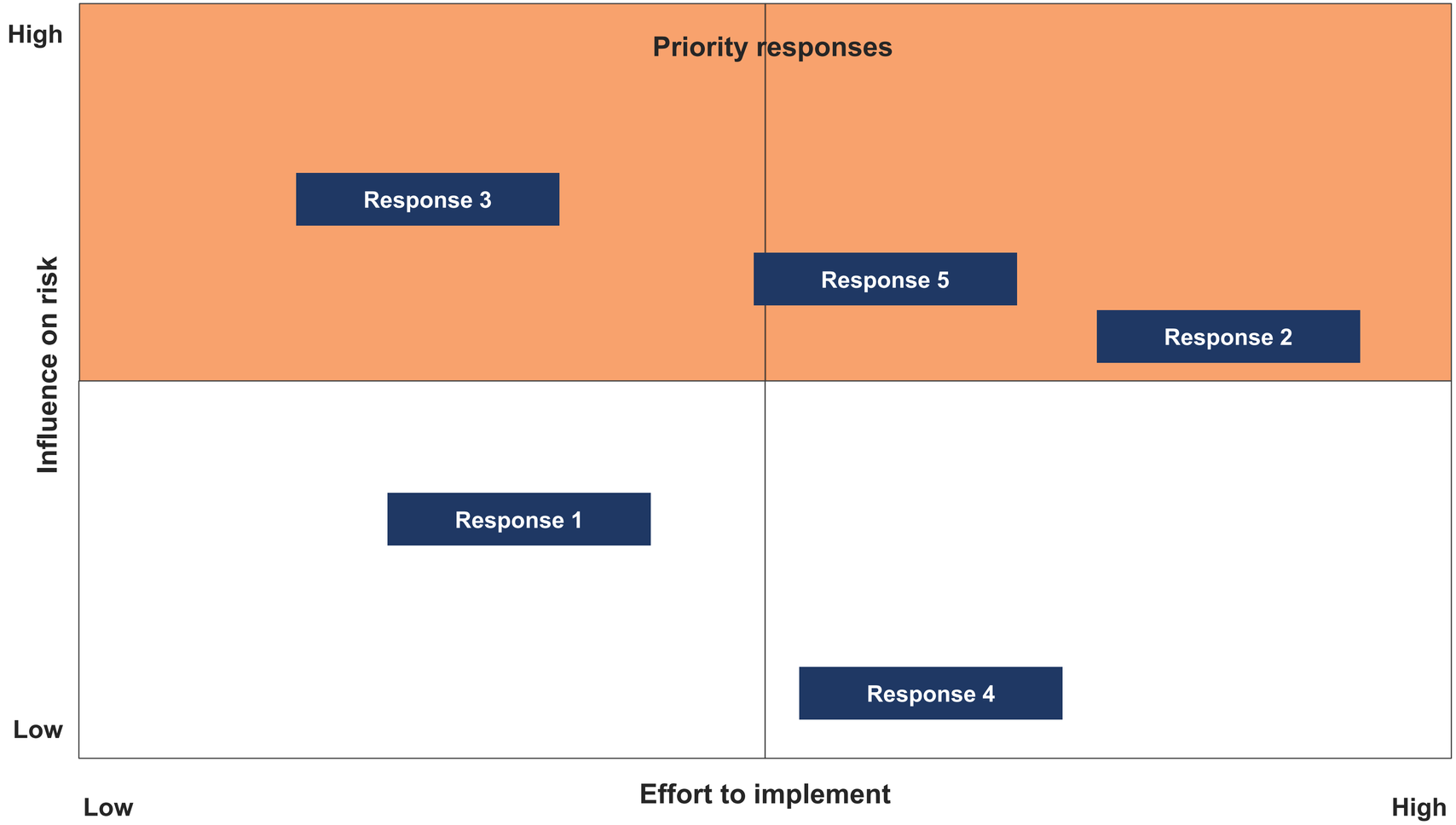
Consider Reponse types

Avoid causes that may give rise to the risk	**Minimize** the likelihood of causes and/or reduce the severity of impacts	**Rectify/Absorb** the severity of impacts arising from the risk or enable a fast recovery	**Adap**t by adjustments in anticipation of or in response to risks	**Transform** towards a fundamentally new approach
Develop responses				
Timing of engagements to accommodate work and school routines. This response **'avoids'** causes that may give rise to the risk such as the community being unavailable to participate in project engagement activates.	**Community feedback and grievance mechanism.** This response **'minimizes'** the likelihood of a cause by setting up a procedure to connect the community and the project and manage and respond to grievances.		**Quarterly engagement evaluation processes.** This response **'adapts'** by being learning orientated and establishing a process to evaluate and make adjustments to the delivery of engagement activities as new information emerges.	**Co-design of engagement model with the community.** This response **'transforms'** towards a new approach to community engagement. It considers how norms and rules might be changed and encourages new collaborations.
Community representative body governance capacity building program. This response helps **'avoid'** causes that may give rise to the risk such a lack of capacity by building the capacity of support community representative bodies to participate and engage in the project.				**Community leadership program.** This response helps to both **'avoid'** causes that may give rise to the risk by building capacity to support community leaders and **'transform'** towards a new approach by encouraging distributed governance, power sharing and self organization.

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Response Stage – Tool H: Response Options Matrix Template

GUIDANCE: To prioritize potential responses, the axis criteria below examines the risk versus effort to implement the response. The criteria can be customized to suit the project and its context. Use of this matrix is optional, but may support prioritization of resources in deciding how to respond to particular risks.



Monitor & Review Stage

Purpose: Establish a monitoring and review cycle to track risks, emerging trends and actions

1. **Establish a monitoring and review cycle that tracks actions, emerging trends and changes:** Using the Risk and Resilience Register (see **Tool I**) to track progress of risks and responses. Process and review frequency should be tailored to the level of project risk and resourcing.

2. **Review the Register regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of responses and risk status:** Guide discussions to look at what risks could occur in the near future – try to be proactive not reactive.

3. **Communicate and consult on risks:** Monitoring and review should include considering 'lessons learned' when things go wrong or when an adverse or unanticipated event occurs.

4. **Evaluate the extent to which the project has successful implemented responses and managed the risks identified:** Evaluation of risks can be incorporated into the project Monitoring & Evaluation Plan.

Monitor & Review – Tool I: Risk Register Template

R&R Framework Aspect	Risk Description	Causes	Impacts	Risk rating (before responses, based on worst case outcome)	Responses	Response status	Improvement actions

Risk rating (Based on worst case impact)	
Low	Insignificant impacts on project objectives
Medium	Moderate impacts on project objectives
Major	Material impacts on project objectives
Critical	Catastrophic impacts on project objectives

Response Status
Implemented and effective
Partially implemented / room for improvement
In development, not yet implemented
Not yet developed

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Monitor & Review – Tool I: Risk Register Worked Example

Guidance: Risk Register is established at outset using the R&R Framework and used as a focus for ongoing review. This can be adapted to your existing risk processes and criteria.

R&R Framework Aspect	Risk Description	Causes	Impacts	Risk rating (before responses, based on worst case outcome)	Responses	Response status	Improvement actions
Participant-oriented	Community are not effectively engaged in or supportive of the project	• Engagement model not effective • Insufficient community participation or representation • Insufficient capacity in community representative body • Lack of intergenerational engagement	• Project objectives are not supported by the community • Project participation is not sustained • Community conflicts	Major	• Co-design of engagement model with community • Community feedback and grievance mechanism • Timing of engagements to accommodate work and school routines • Quarterly engagement evaluation process • Community representative body governance support program • Community leadership program	In development	Development of engagement model and feedback mechanism (Nicole Yu; 31/5/2025) Establishment of community governance and leadership programs (Freddie Smith; 30/12/2025)

The Register addresses each characteristic of the Risk and Resilience Framework.

Listing causes and impacts makes it easier to check if your responses are sufficient

This is the worst case impact, assuming responses don't work

Consider the spectrum of response types to not just address risk but also build resilience. The more specific the responses, the simpler it will be to track effectiveness through measurement and evaluation processes.

This is the general current status of responses

Record of improvement actions, by who and by when so improvements can be tracked

Risk rating (Based on worst case impact)	
Low	Insignificant impacts on project objectives
Medium	Moderate impacts on project objectives
Major	Material impacts on project objectives
Critical	Catastrophic impacts on project objectives

Response Status
Implemented and effective
Partially implemented / room for improvement
In development, not yet implemented
Not yet developed

This helps draw attention to what is already in place vs what needs to be resourced and focused upon as part of project implementation

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Monitor & Review: Risk review considerations

When conducting a review on individual risks or risk areas, consider the following:

- Is the risk still valid? Has it changed since last review?
- Have all causes been identified? Are the impacts still reasonable?
- Are there any examples of incidents within your organization or elsewhere that present learnings, including new causes?
- Do the responses address all the causes?
- Which responses are most important and how are they working? Are personnel sufficiently trained where required?
- For any improvement actions, are time frames and resources appropriate and accountabilities clear?

Learn and Adjust Stage

Purpose: Reflect on what the project has learned and then adapt / adjust in response

1. Reflect on what the project has learned:

- What are the key learnings from the last year? What has worked and what could be improved?
- How is the context of the project changing?
- How can the project adapt or adjust in order to continue to meet its objectives?
- Consider your Roadmap to Impact. Are there any reflections or learnings that affect any of the inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and assumptions that have been identified?

2. Adapt and adjust in response to learnings and report on the changes:

- Identify and incorporate lessons learned from the implementation of responses and risk management including any emerging issues and trends or risk events
- Work with both internal and external stakeholders to adapt and adjust the project in relation to learnings.

Internal

Tips for strong risk management

- **Involvement:** include project team and broader stakeholders when relevant in brainstorming issues and responses
- **Clear ownership:** owners assigned for risks and response actions (and due dates for actions)
- **Credible options:** more than one way to respond, not a single path. Build contingencies in case risks eventuate.
- **Monitoring leads to action:** tracking a risk only matters if it informs action or decision-making and monitoring risks periodically helps prioritize response efforts and actions
- **Specific, not vague:** risk descriptions should be specific to the organization's risk exposure, not generic
- **Be Realistic:** consider the required effort and potential influence on risks, prioritizing response efforts
- **Not cluttered:** only the risks that actually matter get tracked closely (use ratings to prioritize risks)
- **Early warning indicators:** trigger points that prompt action before it's too late (relevant for key risks listed in Impact Framework which require indicators and targets to be developed)



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Annex

Risk and Resilience Framework: Further Detail and Exploration Questions

Aspects of Resilient Projects

Aspect	Description
Programmatic	Truly transformational projects are complex and carry risk to delivery of the intended outcomes. Effective projects are those where project design is agile and resilient so that we all learn from both progress and challenges, respond to risk, and pivot as required. This includes an **awareness** of risks to project objectives arising from assumptions, uncertainties or project activities; an understanding of the **system** and context within which the project operates and the risks and opportunities and an understanding of those others upon which the project depends for success and how they can be **supported** to manage risk and be resilient in their own right.
Participant-oriented	Unlocking the scale of impact required to effect system change, requires working in partnership with participants and fostering genuine collaboration to reach shared goals. The Participant-oriented aspect considers how the project relates to and collaborates with participants including the extent to which the project: supports **inclusive**, meaningful and diverse participation empowers participants to make informed decisions and exercise **self-determination**; and understands and addresses the barriers to better **enable** participation.
Culture	Working in partnership with others is pivotal addressing some of the world's most critical sustainable development challenges. Cultural attributes of acting with integrity (through **trust-based relationships**), being purpose driven and demonstrating a **learning-orientation** through a capacity to learn and grow and being able to maintain connectivity and **collaborate** to support outcome advocacy are central to effective partnerships.
Organizational Governance	Effective Organizational Governance is a critical enabler underpinning the resilience and success of any initiative. This includes maintaining **robust** and fit-for-purpose organizational governance processes including resourcing, succession planning and legal compliance; **transparently** sharing outcomes and learnings and avoiding misstatements and having mechanisms to understand, respond and be **accountable** to participants and other stakeholders.
Enduring Outcomes	The Foundation is committed to achieving sustainable, positive, systemic transformational outcomes. To deliver enduring outcomes requires consideration of how **agile governance** structures and mechanisms will be established, including how agility will be maintained should the need arise to change course; approaches to enabling **financial sustainability** and diversity; and the role of **ongoing advocacy, influence** and the sharing of learnings and outcomes in support of scaling impact.
Safeguards	We always seek to safeguard the **health, safety, security** and **human rights** of Foundation personnel, partner organizations and sub-grantees, community participants and other project stakeholders. It seeks to respect, uphold and promote the spectrum of civil, political, economic, cultural and social human rights, including indigenous rights and gender equality through the project work that it supports. We have zero tolerance for breaches of **anti-bribery and corruption, anti-terrorism financing and trade sanctions** laws and unmitigated conflicts of interest for any of the Foundation, partner organization or sub-grantees.

Risk and Resilience Framework: Exploration questions

Aspect	Characteristic – successful and resilient projects are:	*Exploration questions:*
Programmatic	**Self-aware**	What risks could arise and how can resilience be built in relation to: - assumptions, uncertainties and activities underpinning the roadmap to impact, project design and project activities? - emerging trends (social, political, economic, technological and environmental) within the broader system the project is in (PESTLE analysis)? *These trends may require ongoing monitoring* - stakeholders and other organizations which the project depends upon? *Stakeholder analysis tool may be used to support this area*
	System-aware	
	Supportive	
Participant-oriented	**Inclusive**	What risks could arise and how can resilience be built in relation to: - inclusive, diverse and meaningful participation of participants and other stakeholders? - supporting participants to act independently, make informed decisions and exercise self-determination? - barriers that may prevent effective participation? - *Consider FPIC and cultural consultation where applicable*
	Self-determining	
	Enabled	

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Risk and Resilience Framework: Exploration questions

Aspect	Characteristic – successful and resilient projects are:	*Exploration questions:*
Culture	Trusted and respected	What risks could arise and how can resilience be built in relation to: - maintaining open and trust-based relationships and subject matter expertise? - ongoing learning? - maintaining connectivity and collaboration to support outcome advocacy?
	Learning-oriented	
	Collaborative	
Organizational governance	Robust	What risks could arise and how can resilience be built in relation to: - maintaining robust and fit-for-purpose organizational governance including resourcing, succession planning, complying with legal obligations, data privacy and cyber security? - sharing outcomes and learnings and avoiding misstatements? - understanding, being responsive and accountable to other stakeholders?
	Transparent	
	Accountable	
Enduring outcomes	Agile governance	What risks could arise and how can resilience be built so that project outcomes can be sustained, scaled and replicated in consideration of: - governance structures and mechanisms, including how agility will be maintained should the need arise to change course? - financing mechanisms? - ongoing advocacy, influence and the sharing of learnings and outcomes?
	Financial sustainability	
	Ongoing advocacy and influence	

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Risk and Resilience Framework: Exploration questions

Aspect	Characteristic – successful and resilient projects are:	*Exploration questions:*
Safeguards	**Safe, secure and healthy**	• Does the organization interact with children or vulnerable adults (e.g. women, people with disabilities, minority groups or the elderly) and what is the nature of the interactions? • Could the project potentially expose participants or community members to (or exacerbate) exploitation, abuse or harassment including gender based violence • Could the project otherwise compromise or impact on the health (including physical health, well-being and mental health), safety and security of workers, participants or community members? • Does the project involve other work in a high risk setting for health, safety and/or security (e.g. aviation, working with fire, SCUBA diving, high crime area, high mental stress, etc.) • If so, how will these unintentional adverse impacts to these groups be identified and managed? • ***Key mitigation response to consider:*** - Screening of personnel and third parties - Key protocols and training

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Risk and Resilience Framework: Exploration questions

Aspect	Characteristic – successful and resilient projects are:	*Exploration questions:*
Safeguards	**Rights-based**	• Does the organization interact with indigenous peoples, local communities, minorities or other vulnerable groups and what is the nature of the interactions? (The more direct the interactions the higher the risk) • Does the project require consent to proceed? • How could unintentional impacts arise and be managed? ***Other risk considerations:*** • Could the project involve activities that may unintentionally impact human rights? Consider human rights including non-discrimination, gender equality, education, labor rights, freedom of expression, privacy and information rights. If so how could this arise and be managed? • Could the project involve activities that may unintentionally impact the environment or cultural resources? If so how could this arise and be managed? • Could the project involve activities that may unintentionally increase social or environmental vulnerability? e,g, creating alternative livelihood dependencies, increasing vulnerability to natural disasters / climate change. • See next slide for further detail. ***Key mitigation response to consider:*** - Does the organization have an appropriate and transparent grievance mechanism in place?

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Risk and Resilience Framework: Safeguarding prompts

Aspect	Characteristic – successful and resilient projects are:	*Exploration questions:*
Safeguards	**Free from bribery and corruption**	• What interactions will the project have with Government Officials or people that represent others (Indigenous leaders, union leaders)? • Will any of the project funds potentially be paid to or used for the benefit of these groups? • Are any of the project activities dependent on consents or permits from Government bodies (in particular in higher corruption risk countries)? • How does the organization manage the risk of received funds being laundered funds? • Does the organization transact with any high sanctions risk countries? • Tools such as Transparency International's Corruption Index can be used to understand country-level corruption risk profiles.

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Thank you