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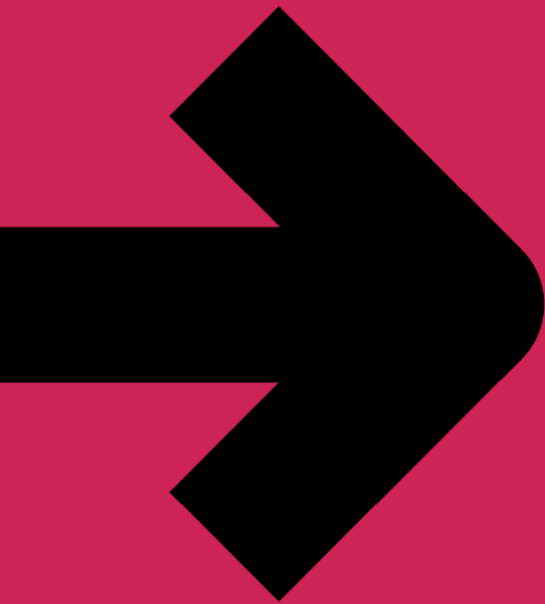
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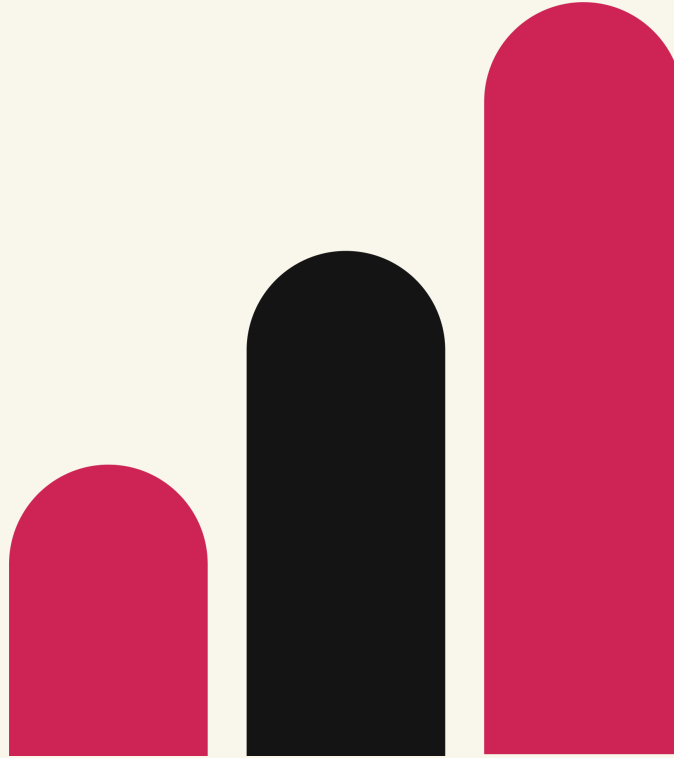
PSFG
PEACE & SECURITY FUNDING GROUP



BETTER PREPAREDNESS RISK AND ROLE ASSESSMENT

2024

Risk and Role Assessment



To provide funding in high-risk contexts and crisis, foundations, civil society, and partners must accurately develop and assess risk. This document provides a step-by-step session guide to assess risk to those receiving funding (movement and civil society partners), to those making grants (internal stakeholders), and across the funding ecosystem.

This tool is provided as part of the Better Preparedness Crisis Coordination Playbook, a comprehensive how-to guide to coordinate philanthropic funding for movements in crisis and highly restricted civic space.

Purpose

- **The purpose of the Risk Assessment session** is to create shared analysis by understanding the risks and needs of civil society, sharing funders' planned responses, sharing funders' internal assessments of the risks faced by their foundation, as well as the mitigation options, and identifying each institution's risk appetite.
- This session is designed to help colleagues understand their internal risk culture. For example, it may help funders understand where they are making a choice

based on an appetite for risk, which may often be swayed by risk-aversion, as opposed to what the legal limits may allow for.

→ **The purpose of the Role Assessment session** is to understand which foundations are best placed to provide different types of support required by civil society, based on relative risk appetite. This session also verifies a set of internal and external advocacy talking points and identifies any other actions needed to ensure internal and group alignment.

What are they: Risk and Role Assessment group discussions, conducted in 120- and 60-minute calls with a group of foundations.

When to use them: The assessments can be used as a standalone tool, or at Step 4 of the Better Preparedness Coordination Blueprint:

1. Rapid coordination start-up
2. Assess the crisis
3. Map the funding ecosystem
4. Assess risk appetites, potential complementary roles, and internal coordination needs
5. Develop the coordinating group's strategy

Session Agendas

The outlined agenda for each session is below. The detailed facilitators' instructions are included in the session flows, later in the document. The timings for each session assume up to 8 participants, but the length of each session is adjustable if more colleagues take part.

Session 1 - Risk Assessment group discussion - 120 minutes

- **Civil Society Risk and Needs Register** - 20 mins - mapping civil society actors, understanding the risks they face, and understanding the likely program interventions needed.
- **Foundation Responses** - 35 mins - colleagues share their strategic priorities, programming, and funding.
- **Foundation Risks and Mitigations** - 35 mins - colleagues share their analyses of risks posed to their organizations by this crisis, as well as potential solutions.
- **Foundation Risk Appetites** - 20 mins - initial assessment using Risk Appetite Profiles.

Session 2 - Roles - 60 minutes

- **Role Assessment** - 30 mins - collective coordination of individual foundation roles
- **Internal alignment** - 30 mins - what is needed internally to ensure this work can move forward?

Resource: Funder Risk Appetite Profiles

As part of this tool, in step 1d below, organizations are invited to assess their risk appetite profiles. Based on mapping of the field, this tool presents a range of profiles that can provide illustrative guidance to determine risk appetites, which may vary by organization or even by staff within a single institution.

Risk Appetite Profiles	Indicative organizational risk appetite profiles		
Risk indicator	Low risk appetite	Medium risk appetite	High risk appetite
Country and / or specific crisis - referencing your organization's existing assessment	Country or crisis is judged to be high risk, and org has low risk appetite	Country or crisis is judged to be high risk, and org has medium risk appetite	Country or crisis is judged to high risk, org has high risk appetite
Leadership, reputational, legal, and compliance	<p>Legal first - stopping well before actual limit of applicable laws; has risk averse org risk management and culture</p> <p>Highly sensitive to external reputation</p>	<p>Programming positive - judges risk to the letter of the law; has org risk management guidelines</p> <p>Sensitive but manages external reputation risks</p>	<p>Programming first - works up to limit of applicable laws; finding compliance solutions</p> <p>Manages external reputation risks</p>
Moving money	Moves money using traditional banking channels and intermediaries	Moves money using traditional banking channels and intermediaries, plus other legal means	Moves money using all legal means, including, local money markets, bitcoin, cash
Grantmaking	<p>Cautious approach, places safe bets funding the tried-and-true</p> <p>Funds in countries with lower risk profiles.</p> <p>May make restricted grants due to concerns about demonstrating tangible results.</p>	<p>Measured approach, mixing safe bets with some higher risk grants.</p> <p>Funds in countries with a range of risk profiles.</p> <p>Acts as an intermediary for other funders.</p> <p>Persists when political or civic space changes make outcomes less certain.</p> <p>Some level of unrestricted funds.</p>	<p>Funds politically sensitive work, including in countries where activism is criminalized.</p> <p>Funds in countries including highest risk profiles.</p> <p>May act as an intermediary for other funders.</p> <p>Places bets on unconventional ideas.</p> <p>High levels of unrestricted funds.</p>

Session 1: Risk Assessment

120 minutes

How: Appoint a coordinator/facilitator and convene interested foundations to have a 120-minute facilitated call.

This call requires the highest level of security protocol, for example a combination of: phones off; use of a secure comms platform such as Jitsi; VPNs on; and malware check on laptops beforehand.

Before the first session:

The session coordinator and facilitator should:

- Identify interested participants, noting that legal and compliance colleagues may also wish to take part;
- Communicate what needs to happen before the session, as well as the chosen suite of secure meeting and collaboration tools; and
- Where possible, pre-populate the Civil Society Risk and Needs Register, to save time.

Foundation colleagues taking part should ideally have:

- Collected data from civil society colleagues on the risks and needs they face;
- Completed an internal organizational risk assessment/risk appetite assessment, in relation to this crisis; and
- Conducted any security preparations.

NOTE: The risk assessment and appetite profiles sections below can be used by an internal team to develop initial assessments.

1a. Civil Society Risk and Needs Register - 20 minutes

Purpose: Colleagues develop a shared understanding of the particular ecosystem of civil society actors that is essential for a response to the crisis, the risks they face, and the protections and program interventions they need.

How:

- If you are following the Crisis Coordination Blueprint, Steps 1 and 3 will already have mapped out the civil society and funding ecosystem, and can be drawn from for pre-populating the table below; or
- If you are using this Risk Assessment tool as a standalone exercise, first map the key civil society actors (in column 1), then colleagues can input into the other areas of the table.

During the session, start with up to 10 minutes of silent time for colleagues to add their inputs into the table; then, open up for a short 10-minute discussion. NOTE: Data should be anonymised, not including the names of individuals.

1. Map civil society actors Who? Do they receive foundation funding already?	2. Risk 2a. What are the risks faced? Immediate - Resulting from the crisis i.e. harassment. Laws and regulations - Which of these laws and impacts are applicable to the grantee, and what are the associated risks at this time? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign funding laws • Declaration of grants to government authority • Blacklisting and forced of civil society groups • Forced closure of civil society groups • Other 2b. What is their attitude to risk?	3. Needs of the civil society group (could include protection measures)	4. Foundation programmatic interventions required	5. Risk of inaction

1b. Foundation Responses - 35 mins

Purpose: Colleagues share overviews of how they are planning to meet the needs of civil society around this crisis, including their foundation's strategic priorities, programming, and approaches to funding.

How: A group conversation, going around the room to hear from colleagues, who have 3 minutes each to share:

- strategic priorities and program interventions you are planning, and existing support to civil society partners;
- amount, length of funding and support commitments, and what phase in the cycle you are in; and
- where might you need to collaborate with other foundations to increase reach.

1c. Foundation Responses - 35 mins

Purpose: Having mapped the needs of civil society partners, as well as how foundations are planning to meet them, this step helps understand the risks posed to foundations, and to identify what mitigations may exist.

How: A group conversation, with colleagues individually sharing their internal risk assessments. Go around the room hearing from people individually, 3 minutes each.

Before starting, the group and session facilitator will agree on how to take notes for this part of the conversation.

Facilitator's guidance:

To introduce and frame this conversation, give an overview of the likely facets of risk:

- What is the type and impact of the risk? Leadership, reputational, legal and compliance, programme, and grantees.
- What is the potential severity (probability x impact)?
- What is the mitigation?

Then, introduce the likely potential risk areas, below.

→ Laws and regulations

- ◆ What is your own country of registration's assessment of the destination country, and potential grantee(s), in relation to applicable 'home' laws and regulations (e.g. for the US, this includes OFAC, anti-terrorism, anti-money-laundering)?
- ◆ What risks do foundations face in the destination country?

→ **Banking**

- ◆ Can you make transfers using your bank to the desired grantees?
- ◆ Have you experienced issues transferring money to a grantee recently, and why?

→ **Moving money.** Are you able to use:

- ◆ Hawala
- ◆ Blockchain-backed
- ◆ Cash direct to grantee
- ◆ Cash via intermediary
- ◆ Other

Advocacy. Is your foundation willing to be public about the role you are playing?

1d. Foundation Risk Appetites - 30 mins

Purpose: Colleagues identify their risk appetites, so that the group has a collective understanding of which organizations may be best placed to meet specific needs of civil society.

How: Colleagues identify their risk appetite by using the Risk Appetite Profiles table provided, then open for discussion. Begin by taking 3 minutes of silent, individual reflection, for colleagues to consider and choose their organization's risk appetite profile. Then, open up for sharing and discussion.

Risk Appetite Profiles: There are a series of risks, with three archetypal risk appetite profiles for each. They are designed to help foundations assess their risk appetite as it applies to specific crises, rather than to judge their holistic organizational risk appetite. The risk appetite profiles have been developed from insights shared by Better Preparedness core foundation colleagues about the typical risks faced when funding civil society facing acute human rights crisis and entrenched civic space restrictions.

Session 1: Role Assessment

60 minutes

Between the first and second sessions:

Coordinator/facilitator:

- Consolidate your notes; and
- Develop a draft set of internal and external advocacy talking points for foundation colleagues.

2a. Role Assessment - 35 minutes

Purpose: Having assessed programmatic interventions required and risk appetites, this discussion helps determine what role each member of a coordinating group may play, to enable the delivery of a range of activities which may include: programmatic activities; moving money; and/or public and private advocacy, including issuing collective statements.

How:

Take a few minutes of silent reflection, considering:

- If level of risk allows for the programmatic interventions required.
- If level of risk requires internal discussion.
- The roles you think are needed based on the programmatic interventions.
- What role you could play, offer to play for others, or need others to play.
- What you need.

Go around the room for colleagues to share and discuss.

Then, take time to discuss, agree on any actions, request assistance from each other, and confirm roles.

Plan of actions to follow - facilitator to record roles and what the group agrees to take forward

Organization	Role you will play / interventions	What do you need

NOTE: Roles may, of course, change over time depending on developments in the crisis and resulting changes to any coordinating group strategy. This table can be revisited at key moments when the coordination strategy is being reviewed.

2b. Internal Influencing and Alignment - 25 mins

Purpose: Share and discuss the internal influencing talking points, and identify what internal requirements will need to be met to enable the desired coordination approach.

How:

First step, facilitator to share draft influencing talking points and discuss. What are key talking points required for internal conversations, to align with colleagues?

Second step, use the Better Internal Coordination Checklist as a guide to conversation on any other requirements.

Consider what internal policies and procedures are relevant to:

- Enabling your work; and
- External collaboration.

Also, relevant to this crisis, who are key decision makers in your organization regarding:

- Strategy
- Programs
- Legal and banking compliance
- Grants management colleagues
- Advocacy
- Communications
- Crisis Management

Did this tool work for you? Are there changes or refinements you suggest to make it stronger? Share your feedback with the Better Preparedness team today!