

Flood Action Group Evaluation Tools

Interreg
North Sea Region
FRAMES
European Regional Development Fund



Supporting and representing flood risk communities

Shani Lambert and Katia Sanhueza-Pino

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1 Introduction

A suite of evaluation tools has been developed by the National Flood Forum that can be used to guide and measure progress made by Flood Action Groups as they take shape and form on

their journey to help reduce flood risk within their village, town or city. The evaluation tools offer an opportunity to show the Risk Management Authorities and other organisations how they are perceived by Flood Action Groups, where they fit in working with a Flood Action Group and see how their relationship develops with the Flood Action Group over time. The tools provide the opportunity to make sure that both Flood Action Groups and Risk Management Authorities as well as other organisations work positively together to achieve the desired aim.

The tools are not meant to evaluate the efficiency or productivity of a Flood Action Group, neither to assess them. It is important to remember that Flood Action Groups are made up of residents who volunteer their time to tackle their flood risk on behalf of their wider community.

The Evaluation Tools are designed to complement a facilitation process that supports the development of a Flood Action Group. This requires highly skilled facilitators who take an adaptive approach to achieving results. Details can be found at National Flood Forum and Collingwood Environmental Planning, 2018. It also requires strong relationships between the facilitator and the Flood Action Group.

The tools were developed and tested with 4 Flood Action Groups in Kent and one in Nottinghamshire.

2 The Evaluation Tools

There are four separate evaluation tools that have been devised:

- A Evaluation Framework table based upon the two-stage process of forming a Flood Action Group;
- A Social Networking tool to visualise relationships with organisations and authorities;
- A Perception Tool illustrating perceptions between Flood Action Groups and the organisations they are working with
- A questionnaire to gather how people feel about flooding.

The tools are intended to be used alongside work with a Flood Action Group and are not meant to be used in a specific order. However, it is recommendable that the tools are used at the early stages of formation of a Flood Action Group or the first time of engagement with an already established Group and applied around every 12 months to oversee their progress and gather a perception of their general set up and their direction.

It is not necessary to use all of the tools with each Flood Action Group. The right tool needs to be used in each situation, requiring judgement. It should also be recognised that applying the tools takes time and effort, both on the part of the facilitator and the Flood Action Group volunteers. The facilitator should be very clear about the appetite of the Flood Action Group to undertake these tasks before commencing them.

2.1 The Evaluation Framework Tool

The Evaluation Framework Tool was developed as a guide to help Flood Action Groups meet certain criteria to help them form a working Group to address the flood risk within their area, together with their communities and Risk Management Authorities. The tool can be taken to any Flood Action Group throughout their journey to understand how the Group is progressing and help them envisage clear objectives to achieve.

The tool consists of two stages, Stage 1 being the criteria needed for the successful formation and maintenance of a Flood Action Group. Stage 2 includes the criteria for the group to successfully deliver projects in partnership with others. Following the process for Stage 1 can take many months for a Flood Action Group to achieve but it is essential that they do so before moving onto Stage 2, so that they are clear in what they want from working with the Risk Management Authorities on reducing flood risk. Failure to do this results in groups that do not function properly, that may be contentious, are unsustainable, are unable to work effectively with their communities and Risk Management Authorities and which are unable to deliver projects. The last phase of Stage 1 is the Group's first Multi-Agency Meeting, which ultimately moves them onto Stage 2 of the process. Stage 2 is about working with partners, introducing work plans and achieving goals.

Reaching Stage 2 is not a permanent achievement – Groups can use the evaluation table to go back to Stage 1 should they encounter issues along the way or should the Flood Action Group change their permanent members. It is important to note as well that Stage 2 is not a final stage, as Flood Action Groups may move from finalising or collaborating in one project to a new one. Other Groups may wish to hold Multi-Agency Meetings only once a year, or even less, or only when a flooding event occurred.

When using this tool, the headings provide one level of detail that goes into working with a Flood Action Group. However, the value in using these headings is to explore the detailed arrangements in place and what issues need to be addressed. Ideally this should be done in conversation with the Group, rather than using it as a tick-box list. If the tool is completed in front of people while talking to the Group, it may give the impression that they are being evaluated and assessed. This could lead people to think they are not doing enough work and discourage them from continuing to invest their time in the Flood Action Group. The conversation can begin by asking how they formed the Group, how they communicate and engage with the wider community, and listening to their concerns and issues before they set up a Group. This will uncover topics that can be taken to Stage 2 for work programmes such as Emergency and Resilience Plans, Natural Flood Management works, or working with Riparian owners.

Table 1 Evaluation Framework Stage 1 and Stage 2

Engagement Objectives	Actions	Indicators
Stage 1		
Forming the Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with individuals to identify existing community groups and leading individuals • Contact groups and individuals to understand the appetite for future flood risk work, interrelationships, etc. • Discuss with individuals setting up a Flood Action Group • Organise a meeting of interested parties • Gain agreement for further work using either an existing group or forming a new group • Organise a series of meetings to form/ consolidate a Flood Action Group 	A Group in place with a Chair
Communication with the wider community	Group to gather information from the wider community on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in flood risk • Experience of flooding • Flood risk issues • Experience of working with partners 	Evidence of wider community engagement by the group
Articulating the flood risk issues	Through flood Group/group meetings generate a common written understanding of flood risks and issues of concern.	A list of issues agreed by the Group
Understanding roles and responsibilities of organisations	Through discussion at meetings, generate a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Risk Management Authorities and other organisations; what they can and cannot do	Session completed with the Group
Ability to work with partners	Through discussion at meetings agree how the Group will work with Risk Management Authorities and other organisations	Multi-Agency Meeting
Stage 2		
Multi-Agency Meetings	Group to lead and chair Multi-Agency Meetings to work through the issues identified by the community. This may be with support that tailors off over the course of meetings Develop a rolling Flood Action Plan	Multi-Agency Meeting
Start to introduce and steer towards proactive work	Identify actions that the Group can, and wish to, take forward, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency plan • Resilience Plan • Planning and development issues • Riparian management • Insurance • Natural Flood Risk Management 	Work programme introduced
Working with the Group to undertake proactive work	Group deliver its work programme	Work programme started

2.2 The Social Networking Tool

There is growing evidence to suggest that the greater the social network within a community the greater resilience is when a natural disaster occurs (Kruse et al., 2017), therefore the National Flood Forum has developed a tool which aims to measure the social network of its Flood Action Groups. This tool aims to help Flood Action Groups look at who they are working with, think about how they work with those Groups to help them reduce their flood risk and which social connections can help them manage their flood risk better. One of the benefits of this tool is that it can highlight the gaps in a Group's social network and highlight where they need to build better relationships with other organisations, agencies or parts of their community.

The Social Network Tool is a simple tool that can be drawn in Office Power Point or manually on a flip chart. It looks at the organisations and independent groups the Flood Action Group has contacted and how their relationship work with each other and one another.

During the time that the Flood Action Group is in existence the social network should grow and shrink according to the specific needs of the Group. During the earlier stages of forming a Flood Action Group, they may only contact and work with Risk Management Authorities such as the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority or the local town and parish councils. During phases when the Group forms a community resilience plan, they may need to work with schools, churches and local businesses, thus extending their social network and working relationships. Likewise, as developments take place and actions are completed, organisations may drop off the social network scale.

The Social Network Tool can be used to demonstrate how a Flood Action Group develops its social connections over time and whether it maintains those social connects as it achieves its goals.

The diagrams below outline the process to follow when analysing the social network of a Flood Action Group, here using the Southwell Flood Forum as an example:

- **Slide 1** The Social Network Template: The slide shows the Flood Action Group in the centre and the Key at the bottom shows the relationships between Group and organisations/other Groups. (This slide can be used in conjunction with a white wipe board if the facilitator wishes to draw the social network diagram rather than use power point) (**Figure 1**).
- **Slide 2** This slide shows an interactive slide as it has a series of oval shapes that can be moved around (**Figure 2**). The facilitator can work with the Group (or individual) to move the shapes around and help them fill in the name of the organisation or Authority the Flood action Group has contact with. These organisations can include the different Risk Management Agencies, local authorities, community groups and any other significant groups that they have had contact with. These shapes can then be moved around the page surrounding the Flood Action Group as shown in **Slide 3** (**Figure 3**).

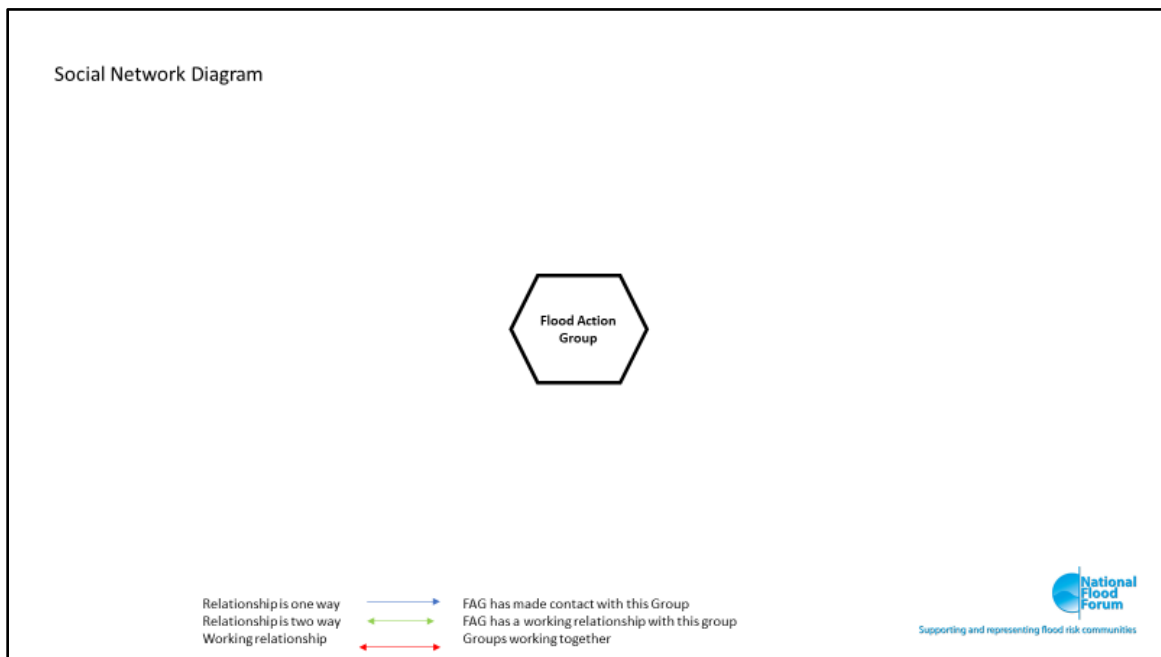


Figure 1 Slide 1: Social network template

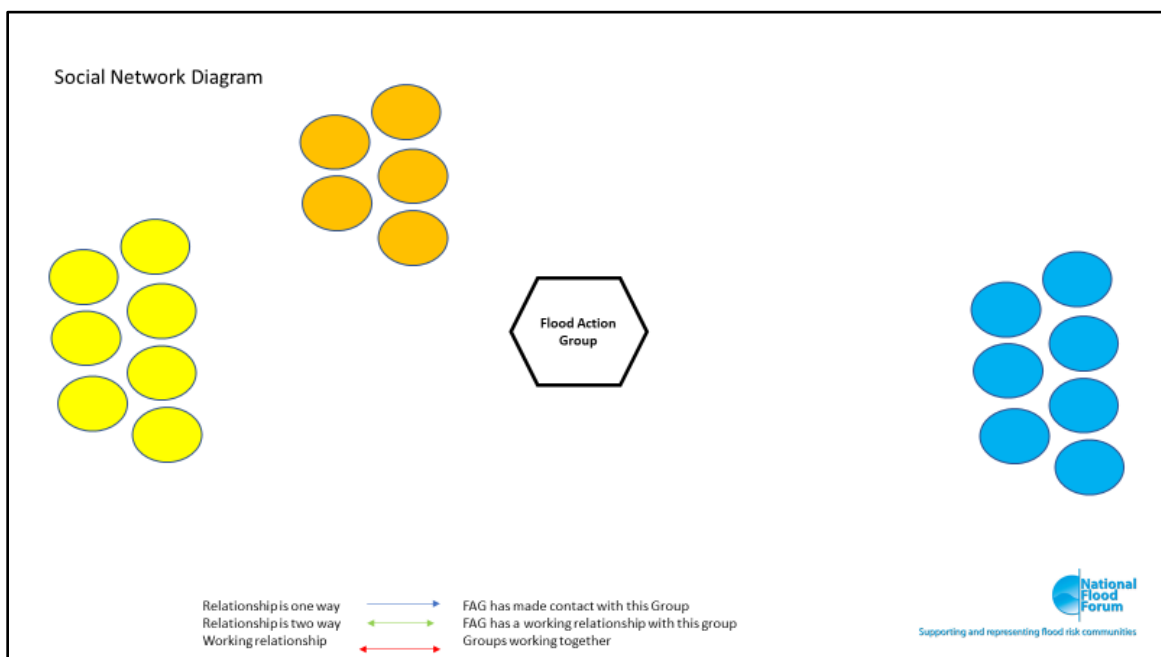


Figure 2 Slide 2: Social network diagram with mobile shapes to insert names of organisations and authorities

- In **Slide 3**, the Group can include the number of individuals they are working with within each Risk Management Authority, organisation, community group or individuals in the wider community.

Using Slide 3 and the Key at the bottom of the slide, the facilitator can draw arrow lines from the Group to the organisation showing what kind of working relationship exists between the Group and the organisations, as demonstrated in **Slide 4 (Figure 4)**.

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Figure 4 Slide 3: Southwell Flood Forum social network

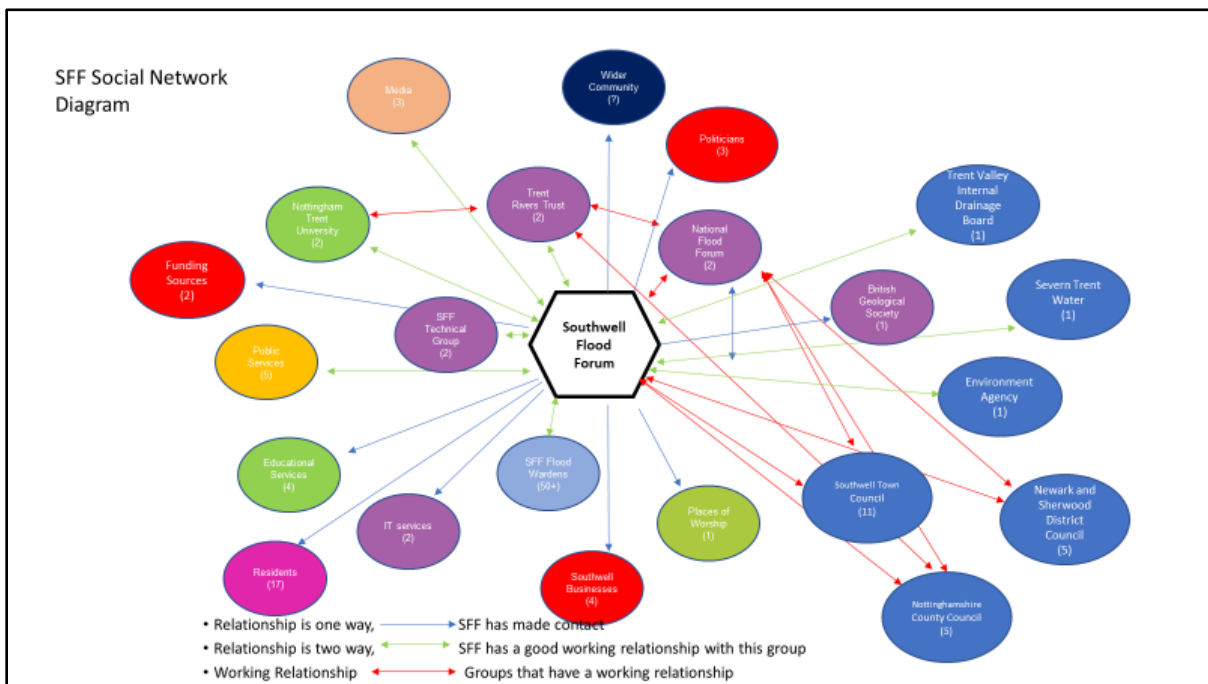


Figure 3 Slide 4: Southwell Flood Forum’s social network diagram with types of relationships

The arrows indicate the kind of relationship established: if the Group has made **contact**, if they have a **two-way relationship** or if this is a **working relationship**.

2.3 How to use the Perception Tool

When communities begin their journey forming a Flood Action Group, often they already have preconceived ideas about Risk Management Authorities and how they do or do not work. This is often a result of either individuals having tried in the past to get things done but have found themselves not getting the results that they want, or people generally not knowing who within the authority or agencies does what. There is often a lot of confusion about the roles of Authorities and what they are expected to do during times of flood, which ultimately leads to disappointment and action not being taken to resolve flooding issues (or in some cases, the 'wrong' action being taken).

The Perception Tool benefits the organisations by showing them how they are perceived by the Flood Action Group, allowing them to work on their strengths and weaknesses as they work with the Group.

How the tool works

The tool is built around 10 axes, as set out in **Figure 2** below.

The tool is built on a series of five pairs of axes, with each pair having opposite titles at either end. For example, one axis has Centralised 'control and command' Governance and on its opposite axis there is Adaptive Decentralised 'collaborative' Governance, another axis has Civil Society Responsibility and on the opposite axis is State Responsibility. At each end of the axis there should be opposing statements (see **Table 2**).

The Flood Action Group would be asked to place the organisation they are working with on the axis that they think fits the Group's experience of that organisation (**Figure 6**). For example, if the Group are working with the Environment Agency, they may choose to put that organisation on the axis of State Responsibility as they see the Environment Agency having certain state responsibilities through legislation and they have the powers to prosecute. However, on the opposite axis of Civil Society Responsibility the Group may list others community groups or charities because they see those organisations as independent of the government, socially formed groups that have no legal responsibility and does not have legal powers but taken on a specific view from society or are acting for the social welfare of a section within society, e.g. the National Flood Forum. **Table 2** lists the axis used in the Perception Tool and give a brief explanation what is meant by the titles.

A shift of placement on the axes is expected after the Flood action Group initiates a working relationship with the Risk Management Authorities. Groups will learn about the roles and responsibilities of the Authorities whilst engaging regularly and over time within a Multi-Agency setting.

Table 2 Explanation of Perception Tool axes

Axis title	Meaning	Opposing Axis	Meaning
Adaptive decentralised collaborative governance	Able to change to suit the situation, re-organising into smaller autonomous units and working together on a joint project	Centralised command-and-control governance	Top down and a linear approach to management.
Deliberate democracy	A democracy that has deliberation at the heart of its decision making	Agonistic pluralism	Several autonomous but inter-dependent groups having equal power, striving for an effect
Civil society responsibility	Aggregate of non-governmental organisations and institutions that manifest interests and the will of citizens	State responsibility	Determine when an obligation has been breached and the legal consequences of that violation
Engagement with social learning	Learning by watching others	Consultation and participation	Working with the public to inform their policies
Co-operative civil engagement	Collaborative working; through public knowledge, social and financial resources	Contractual civil engagement	Authorities that give a level of protection through taxes and support

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Our perceptions

.. of our Flood Action Group

.. of other organisations

Organisation A

Organisation B

Organisation C

1. Decentralised, collaborative and adaptable
2. Centralised command and control
3. Democratic group
4. Interdependent groups/organisations striving together
5. Society responsibility
6. State responsibility
7. Learning with others
8. Formal consultation
9. Collaborative working
10. Contractual working

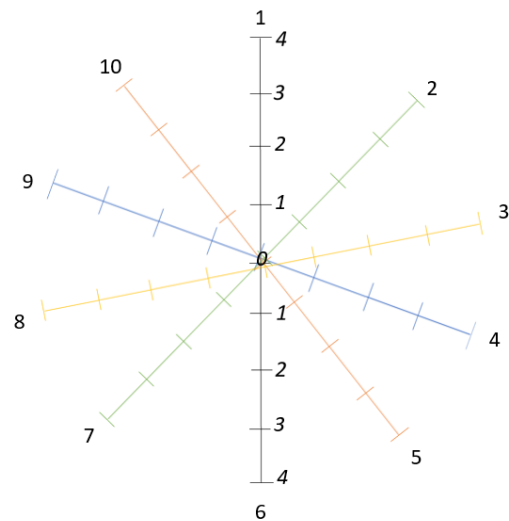


Figure 5 The Perception Tool

Our perceptions

.. of our Flood Action Group

.. of other organisations

Organisation A

Organisation B

Organisation C

1. Decentralised, collaborative and adaptable
2. Centralised command and control
3. Democratic group
4. Interdependent groups/organisations striving together
5. Society responsibility
6. State responsibility
7. Learning with others
8. Formal consultation
9. Collaborative working
10. Contractual working

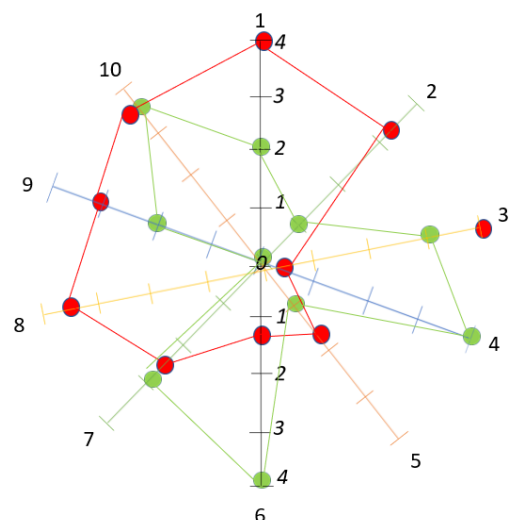


Figure 6 An example of how the Perception Tool can be used

One of the potentially most useful uses for the tool is to highlight where relationship problems exist. If a Risk Management Authority is trying to be collaborative, but the group are confrontational then partnership working will be difficult. Equally, if the group are trying to work collaboratively, in partnership, but one of the Risk Management Authorities is using a top down approach then issues will be difficult to progress. Highlighting this may help to resolve issues.

2.4 The Questionnaire

The Questionnaire (**Annexe A**) was developed from the notion that flooding impacts people's life in various ways and people react in their own way to cope with trauma and loss. This tool allows a facilitator to gather information about how people feel about their flood risk and the way it impacts on their life, how useful they think that being part of a Flood Action Group is for them and how they evaluate their partnership engagement with the flood Risk Management Authorities.

This tool is a cost-effective, quick and efficient evaluation tool that can be used to understand perceived subjective resilience and gain a more holistic and bottom-up perspective on how people feel. The Questionnaire can help to better identify which factors contribute to increased and decreased perceived resilience to better understand how an individual or a member of a Flood Action Group understands that their flood risk can be reduced.

The Questionnaire offers a valuable opportunity to capture the perspectives of those who know most about their own resilience and the factors that contribute to it – the people themselves. It captures the voices of the people that are directly affected and the potential knowledge of local communities that can be shared with the flood Risk Management Authorities to contribute to the alleviation of flood risk. In the future, this may also help in the creation of adaptive pathways.

The Questionnaire is aimed at individuals who are part of a Flood Action Group, which means that it will provide a picture of the overall sentiment within the Group taking account of different feelings and perspectives. Everyone reacts differently to the devastation and trauma of flooding. Furthermore, a person's resilience is comprised of both tangible objective elements (small scale and larger scale assets such as Property Flood Resilience products or capital scheme flood protection measures) and wider social, cultural and psychological elements (Adger et al., 2013). The elements of subjective resilience are associated with a range of issues such as perception of risk, sense of place, beliefs and culture, social norms, social cohesion, power and marginalisation, and cultural identity (Grothmann and Patt, 2005; Adger et al., 2009; Clayton et al., 2015).

Subjective resilience is a judgement that can be given on the spot, based on the situation that individuals are in right at that moment and that can be influenced by a myriad of contextual and emotive factors. Further biases can be influenced by personality, time of the day, well-being, weather, location where the question is asked, position of the question in the Questionnaire, time since the last flooding event, time since the last communication with Risk Management Authorities, etc. Furthermore, people tend to compare themselves to others, especially when it comes to showing strength or weakness (Jones and Tanner, 2015). Therefore, the Questionnaire should be undertaken individually and privately.

What does the Questionnaire aim to do?

The term "resilience" means different things to different people and depends on many factors, (see above). Therefore, it has been omitted in the Questionnaire and replaced it with other words such as "ability to cope", "feel more confident", etc.

The Questionnaire embraces the different capacities that resilience can be categorised in (Folke, 2002):

- Capacity to cope
- Capacity to adapt
- Capacity to transform

As well as the different processes steps and functions of how resilience can be increased (Jones et al., 2010):

- Iterative learning (repeating a process)
- Accessing knowledge
- Information or promoting innovation

These capacities and processes are reflected in the questions and statements. They will help to establish a clearer picture of how people perceive their flood risk and if they think they are contributing to alleviate it, while working in partnership and engaging with the Risk Management Authorities.

Questionnaire responses are likely to reflect different answers and levels of optimism depending on when a member of a Flood Action Group is asked to complete it. Similar to the Evaluation Framework Tool, it is not intended to evaluate the productivity of a Flood Action Group, but to understand how they feel they can get the best support, their issues and concerns and to gain evidence that can be used to progress the engagement process with the Risk Management Authorities to reduce their flood risk.

A list of flood impacts are listed in Section 2, and the respondents are asked to rank them according to severity from 'no impact' to 'extreme impact'. They can be categorised into tangible (material losses) and intangible (emotional and non-material losses), and later into immediate and lasting impacts (Werritty et al., 2007).

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- Werritty, A., Houston, D., Ball, T., Tavendale, A., & Black, A. (2007). Exploring the social impacts of flood risk and flooding in Scotland. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.

Figure 6 Questionnaire to capture how flooding impacts individuals and their perception of benefit or advantage of being part of a Flood Action Group.

Annexe A Questionnaire

How does flooding affect you?

The purpose of this survey is to gather your perception about how you feel about your flood risk and the impact it has on your life.

The information is collected anonymously except where there is a prior agreement with a Flood Action Group to disclose the name for inclusion in the INTERREG North Sea Region FRAMES project, or a project report in your area.

We respect your trust and protect your privacy, and therefore will not share this data with any third parties without your consent.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact katia@floodforum.org.uk

Thank you for participating and for your time.

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1. Please select the option that best represents how you feel about each statement:

a) If heavy flooding were to occur in my area tomorrow, I feel confident that I would be able to draw on the support of the flood risk management authorities and organisations to help me to cope with the situation. (Please tick all that apply).

County Council	Environment Agency	Emergency Services	Local Authority	Voluntary organisations	Other (please specify)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Please list anything that you think you need to help you cope with the situation that is currently missing:

b) I have learnt how to cope with the devastation caused by past flooding events – this knowledge will help me to cope with future flooding.

Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

c) I worry about my house being flooded every time it rains.

Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

d) I have resigned to the fact that my property floods and I accept that I need to learn to live with the impact it has on my property and life.

Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

2. Thinking about the impact flooding has on your life and home, how would you score the following:

	No impact	Mild impact	Serious impact	Extreme impact	N/A
Financial loss	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Loss of property value	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disruption to electricity and water supply	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Damage to vehicle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Loss of irreplaceable/sentimental items	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disruption to work and employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disruption on education (school, apprenticeship, university, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Living in temporary accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dealing with builders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dealing with insurers and loss adjusters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impact on partner or spouse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impact on children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impact on extended family and friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to sell my home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting future insurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stress, anger, frustration, anxiety about how the situation is managed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coping with life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impact on general health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worry about future flooding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If other, please specify:

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3. Please select the option that best represents how you feel about the following statements:

a) Knowing that there is a Flood Action Group in my local area makes me feel more confident that we can make the flood Risk Management Authorities aware of local flooding issues.

Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

b) The Flood Action Group has helped to promote our flood risk concerns so that we feel confident they will be reduced and managed.

Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

c) I feel that the Flood Action Group is making a difference locally in reducing flood risk and gives me hope in tackling the situation in partnership with the flood Risk Management Authorities.

Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

d) The NFF and the local Flood Action Group has allowed me to share and discuss my issues and concerns about flooding.

Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

e) I feel that the Flood Action Group has brought people in my community together and makes us push for a collective voice.

Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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f) I feel that the flood Risk Management Authorities would not take our local flooding concerns seriously if it wasn't for the Flood Action Group.

Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

g) Which other organisations or authorities have offered a similar service such as the National Flood Forum in your area? (Please briefly explain)

Comments:

Please tell us which Flood Action Group you belong to: _____

I agree that the information above can be utilised for evaluation and reporting purposes (please tick and sign, if utilising an electronic copy please print your name).

Date and signature _____

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

The information is collected anonymously except where there is prior agreement to disclose the name of the Flood Action Group for inclusion in the INTERREG North Sea Region FRAMES project or a local project report.

We respect your trust and protect your privacy, and therefore will not share this data with any third parties without your consent.



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