

Breakout Group D:

Flexible and accountable: make your authorising environment work for you

Aim

Is flexibility incompatible with accountability? Development organisations often fall short of achieving outcomes because they fail to find ways to take enabling risks that can *improve* our work. In this session, participants will explore the room for responsiveness that helps organizations align their institutional incentives to shifting contexts.

Approach

The group will dig into a framework for organizational agility being developed by Mercy Corps in order to identify and prioritize the factors that enable and inhibit adaptive management. This may aim not just at improving service delivery, but building citizen trust in government, and the legitimacy of the state. But how far is 'isomorphic mimicry' shared - of neatly defined problems with technical solutions?

The framework, built on the findings from the [ADAPTing Aid](#) field research (conducted by Mercy Corps and IRC under the ADAPT partnership), explores the following themes:

Strategy & approach

Team & leadership

Analysis & action

Operations & processes

Partnerships & funding

We will work through real world cases. These will include Mercy Corps's global efforts to improve organizational agility, accountability and responsiveness, to pinpoint capabilities and constraints to flexible programming. We will then identify and prioritize potential solutions to improve the flexibility of our case institution(s).

Takeaways

At the end of the two days, we hope the group will:

- Test the usefulness of the framework used to ***analyze organizational agility*** during the session
- Have a ***practical*** understanding of the complex factors that drive the flexibility of our institutions
- Absorb ideas and ***lessons from experiences*** of their fellow group members and the case(s) explored in the sessions around flexibility, accountability and responsiveness.

Facilitators

Max Everest-Phillips: UNDP, Director: Global Centre for Public Service Excellence

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