



# Disaster response and contingency planning guide



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

# The International Federation's Global Agenda (2006–2010)

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Over the next five years, the collective focus of the Federation will be on achieving the following goals and priorities:

## Our goals

**Goal 1:** Reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.

**Goal 2:** Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.

**Goal 3:** Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.

**Goal 4:** Promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion.

## Our priorities

Improving our local, regional and international capacity to respond to disasters and public health emergencies.

Scaling up our actions with vulnerable communities in health promotion, disease prevention and disaster risk reduction.

Increasing significantly our HIV/AIDS programming and advocacy.

Renewing our advocacy on priority humanitarian issues, especially fighting intolerance, stigma and discrimination, and promoting disaster risk reduction.

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# Acknowledgements

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These guidelines draw upon on a wide variety of documents already produced or in use by National Societies, field delegations, partner organizations and disaster management professionals, as well as on a two-year process of dialogue and collection of best practices and peer reviews from within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. An external inter-agency working group, a disaster management delegates' working group, and a reference task force also inform these guidelines. The following is a list of the main documents consulted:

- 1 *Preparation of Community Disaster Preparedness Plans in Community-Based Self Reliance - Disaster Preparedness Manual: A Manual for Red Cross Instructors in the Pacific*. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Regional Delegation Suva.
- 2 *Disaster Preparedness*, 2nd edition. Randolph Kent for DHA Disaster Management Training Programme, 1994. Prepared in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Disaster Management Centre and InterWorks.
- 3 *Guidelines for Disaster Response and Contingency Planning*, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), 2006.
- 4 *Preparedness Planning Module*. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Disaster Preparedness Training Programme. June, 2000.
- 5 *Inter-Agency Contingency Planning Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance*. Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), November, 2001.

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**This guide will serve as a working tool for disaster response staff from within National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the International Federation) working at local, national, regional and global levels.**

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# Acronyms

<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of South-East Asian Nations
<b>BPI</b>	Better Programming Initiative
<b>CEPREDENAC</b>	Coordination Centre for National Disaster Prevention in Central America
<b>CPD</b>	Coordination and Programme Division
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>DMIS</b>	Disaster Management Information System
<b>DMRF</b>	Disaster Management Resource Framework
<b>DMU</b>	Disaster Management Unit
<b>DREF</b>	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund
<b>ECHO</b>	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department
<b>EOC</b>	Emergency Operations Centre
<b>ERU</b>	Emergency Response Unit
<b>FACT</b>	Field Assessment and Coordination Team
<b>GIS</b>	Geographical Information Systems
<b>IADB</b>	Inter American Development Bank
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IDRL</b>	International Disaster Response Law
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>MSF</b>	Médecins sans frontières
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NDRT</b>	National Disaster Response Team
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental Organization
<b>OCHA</b>	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
<b>RDRT</b>	Regional Disaster Response Team
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VCA</b>	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WPNS</b>	Well Prepared National Society

# Chapter 1

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## Introduction

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a world leader in disaster management. Effective preparedness for and response to emergency situations are fundamental elements of its mandate, and support the fulfilment of basic human rights and respect for humanity. The Movement's comparative advantages are its large number of paid and volunteer staff throughout the world, who are able to respond immediately at local level, and the significant resources of the 186 National Societies and the International Federation's Secretariat. Each of these 186 members bases its actions on the Movement's seven Fundamental Principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

Most National Societies are recognized by their governments as “auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field<sup>1</sup>”. National Societies and the International Federation are uniquely placed to work with governmental authorities and response agencies, and have the community-based outreach to identify those most at risk and vulnerable to disasters. Activities conducted within each country are delivered through a nation-wide network of volunteers who, in times of disaster, are often the first to provide assistance to those affected.

Most countries periodically face emergencies so severe that international Red Cross Red Crescent humanitarian assistance is required. These disasters may arise from natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, droughts and cyclones or from any number of risks, such as food or water shortages, epidemics, environmental or technological disasters, acute economic distress, civil unrest or armed conflict. Refugee outflows and internal displacements are consequences of humanitarian emergencies and are also emergencies in their own right.

### How to use this guide

Disaster response and contingency planning is a responsibility at all levels of the organization. The International Federation recommends that National Societies and International Federation offices develop either a multi-hazard disaster response plan with hazard-specific annexes, or several hazard-specific contingency plans to cover high-risk disaster events. Many emergency management procedures are common to all disasters, regardless of the hazards involved.

The information provided in the following chapters should be regarded as a guideline, rather than as strict rules. Planning priorities will differ according to the context and scope of the situation – whether local, national or regional. It is essential to work on response and contingency plans in consultation and cooperation with those who will have to implement or approve them. **These guidelines aim to ensure that Red Cross Red Crescent disaster response is consistent and of high quality.**

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<sup>1</sup> Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement adopted by the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross at Geneva in October 1986 and amended by the 26th International Conference of the Red Cross at Geneva in December 1995. <http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/idrl/I290EN.pdf>

The planning process is as important as the plan itself. In this regard, disaster response and contingency planning should be viewed as an on-going activity, which enables us to test and refine existing plans, integrate new partners, and orient staff and volunteers over time.

The main topics covered in these guidelines include:

- The response planning process;
- Steps involved in developing the plan;
- Communication and coordination of disaster response;
- Plan implementation, training, updating and evaluation; and,
- Standards, tools and templates.

**The leadership/management of the Red Cross Red Crescent is responsible for ensuring the production, implementation and monitoring of disaster response and contingency plans**

### 1. Local or community level

At branch and community levels, National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies can play a useful role in supporting the organization of disaster planning committees responsible for developing community-based disaster response plans. Use of the International Federation's vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) tool and its 'Preparedness Planning Training Module' is encouraged. First-aid training is another example of Red Cross Red Crescent contribution to a community's level of preparedness. In addition, local communities can provide a great deal of information regarding their own risks and capacities.

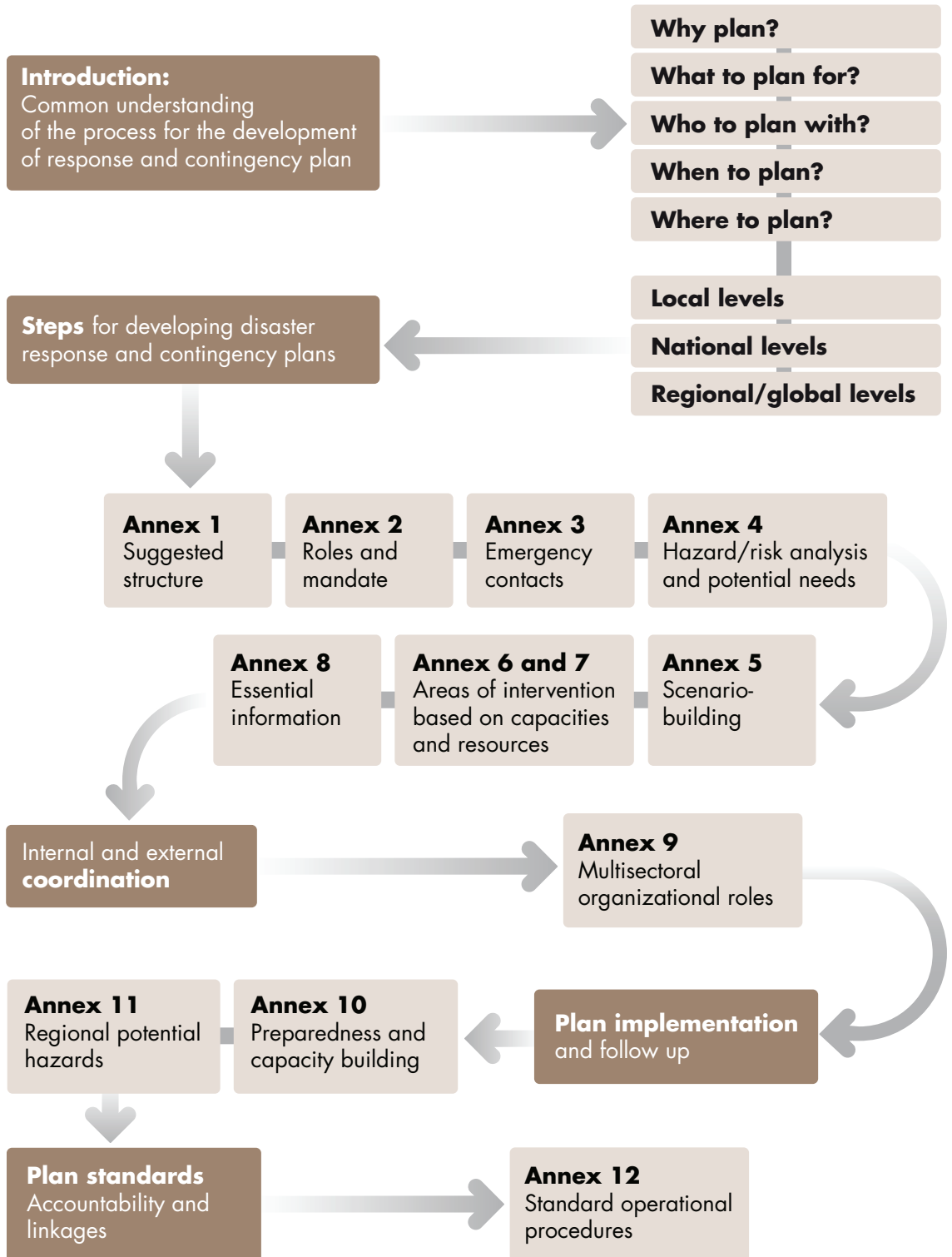
### 2. National level

A national disaster response plan addresses and assesses all potential hazards, evaluates the National Society's capacity for response and describes the approach to be taken in emergencies. A 'well-prepared National Society' (WPNS) should follow the planning process described in this document. National Societies should each have a national disaster response plan. Their institutional role and planned response in times of disaster should also be recognized by their respective governments. This was agreed to as part of the 2004 International Conference's Agenda for Humanitarian Action.

### 3. Regional and global levels

As a function of the International Federation's coordination support role to National Societies, regional delegations and pan-regional disaster response/management units (DMU) must develop risk-area contingency plans. Risk-area contingency plans cover a specific hazard with the potential to cause destruction on a scale requiring extensive international humanitarian assistance. National Societies and the International Federation should plan for these events, setting out the necessary requirements, working relationships, and roles and procedures, as well as identifying event triggers. Those concerned should follow the planning process described in this document.

## The process to build response and contingency plans





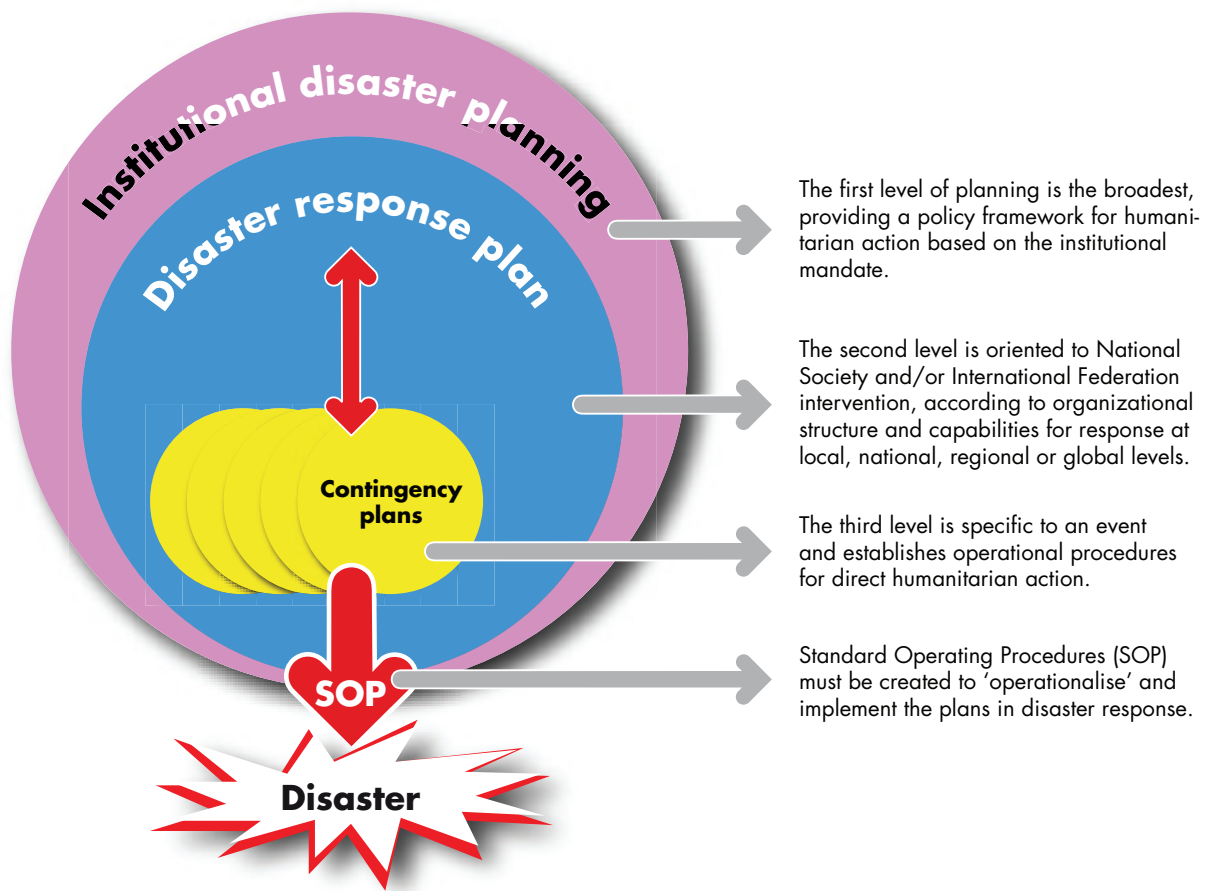
## What is disaster response and contingency planning?

Disaster response and contingency planning leads to organizational readiness in anticipation of an emergency. This includes management of human and financial resources, availability of emergency supplies, and communications procedures. Such planning can help mitigate the destructive effects of a disaster by ensuring timely and effective provision of humanitarian aid to those most in need. **Time spent in disaster response planning equals time saved when a disaster occurs.** Delays in providing services can result in needless suffering for individuals and families affected by a disaster, and create additional burdens for those responding. Effective disaster response planning leads to timely and effective disaster relief operations. It also helps in building realistic expectations.

### AIM

This document provides an overview of the key elements of disaster response and contingency planning. *This guide is most appropriate for National Society and International Federation staff responsible for developing disaster response and/or contingency plans at the local, national, regional or global levels.*

- **Institutional disaster planning** – This defines the general scope of humanitarian action that the National Society and/or International Federation will undertake. It is based on the organization's institutional mandate, which provides a framework within which its policies, strategies, standards and norms, and legal remit can be defined.
- **Disaster response plan** – Disaster response planning involves identifying, strengthening and organizing resources and capacities so as to reach a level of preparedness for timely and effective response to a potential disaster. This includes: determining roles and responsibilities; developing policies and procedures; and identifying and developing generic tools for response (e.g. the use of National Disaster Response Teams (NDRT), information management, etc.). Disaster response planning is preliminary in nature, based on educated assumptions of risks and hazards, and does not address specific disaster scenarios – as is the case for contingency plans. Once a disaster occurs, plans must then be monitored, evaluated and adapted to the specific situation.
- **Contingency plans** – These are based on specific events or known risks at local, national, regional or even global levels (e.g. earthquakes, floods or disease outbreaks), and establish operational procedures for response, based on anticipated resource requirements and capacity.
- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)** – These are a set of standard procedures that “operationalise” the disaster response and/or contingency plans. In other words, SOPs specify the way in which individuals or units will carry out their functions under the plan (e.g. alerting and mobilizing NDRT, deploying assessment teams and carrying out the assessment process). The SOPs set out what should be done, how it should be done, who is responsible for implementing what, and specifies available resources. These guidelines do not specifically deal with SOPs, but an example is given in **annex 12**.



**Figure 1.1 Connections between response and contingency planning and the overall relationship to institutional planning**

## Response planning process

### Why plan?

A well-coordinated plan, which makes best use of the Movement's combined expertise and resources, is essential for efficient and successful disaster response. During an actual emergency, rapid and effective action is required. For this to happen, disaster response and contingency plans must be in place before a disaster strikes – along with the necessary resources. If appropriate action is not taken or if the response is delayed, lives may be needlessly lost.

It is true that many details remain unknown until an actual disaster occurs. Nevertheless, it is essential to prepare a preliminary disaster plan, which should include:

- an overview of all available resources;
- identification of emergency shelter sites;
- relief activity planning, including the identification of suppliers, warehouses and transportation means;
- identification of emergency water sources;
- knowledge of customs procedures, for rapid clearance of international assistance;
- establishment of chains of command and communication procedures;
- training of response personnel;
- community education and awareness-raising activities about what to do in case of an emergency; and,
- identification and implementation of key mitigation and early-warning activities.

Ensure that plans, focal points and resources are in place to receive and use external resources when needed.

In addition, disaster response and contingency planning helps to ensure a coordinated response:

- Goals, strategies, roles and responsibilities have been clarified in advance.
- Relevant information has been gathered and analysed.
- Potential difficulties have been anticipated and attempts have been made to overcome problems.
- Relationships with other agencies, associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments and local actors have been created or strengthened.

The increased cooperation and coordination resulting from the planning process is often invaluable in ensuring a timely, efficient and effective response to emergencies, making optimal use of all necessary resources. Furthermore, it can lead to increased collaboration in disaster preparedness and mitigation activities, thereby reducing potential losses in the event of a disaster.

## What to plan for?

These guidelines are designed to assist in the preparation of response and contingency plans for all types of humanitarian emergencies, including: complex emergencies, natural and environmental disasters, and other significant crises to which National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies may be required to respond – whether with their own resources, with the assistance of sister societies, or with that of the International Federation and/or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Planning should be specific to each context and take into consideration a number of factors including: the situation; the government's own disaster response plans and capacity; reception and coordination of national, regional or global inputs; potential sources of donor support; the likelihood of disaster occurrence; and the vulnerability of the population.

Objective criteria must be used in determining where and what to plan for. National Societies and International Federation delegations should use hazard maps as a way to prioritize their planning. Additional guidance on the importance of hazard/risk analysis is provided in Chapter 2. In cases where resources are limited, a network of response teams and relief stocks must be organized in such a way as to cover likely risk scenarios – on a district, national or regional basis.

## Who to plan with?

Developing a plan is a question of teamwork. Input and support from a variety of people in different positions (e.g. governance, senior managers, sectoral technicians, volunteers, administrative personnel, logisticians, etc.), from different levels within the Movement (local, national and regional/global), as well as from external partners (e.g. government, UN partners, NGOs, etc.) will provide crucial assistance to those who are doing the planning. See Chapter 3 for additional guidance on the importance of coordination – both internally and externally.

In formulating and updating planning assumptions and objectives, National Societies should communicate with governmental agencies and NGOs involved in disaster response, with a view to coor-

dinating their respective response and contingency plans. Similarly, Red Cross Red Crescent staff members responsible for regional or global disaster response planning must consult with partners within the Movement. This will help to improve coordination, reduce duplication of efforts, clarify roles and expectations, and increase the overall effectiveness of disaster response. Direct coordination enables National Societies and International Federation delegations to divide responsibilities and plan their actions accordingly.

Planning is most effective when it is a participatory process that (ideally) includes all the actors who will be required to work together in the event of an emergency. A response or contingency plan must be a dynamic document and planners should encourage screening, critique and discussion from those who must approve and/or implement its components. This means the plan should be widely disseminated and communicated to National Society board members, headquarters offices and departments, branches, volunteers, and relevant external agencies or organizations.

## When to plan?

Disaster response and contingency planning is an on-going process. Red Cross Red Crescent leadership should include it in the annual planning process, and as part of strategy development and staff accountability measurements. Plans must be tested and updated regularly to validate their relevance. During rapidly changing situations, plans will need to be updated more frequently; whereas under normal circumstances, less frequent updating will be sufficient.

Resistance to planning can be overcome by promoting its importance even during times of relative normality, and incorporating it into annual work objectives. A good time to promote the development or the updating of a plan is after a major disaster has occurred. All planning begins with an assessment and analysis of risks, vulnerabilities, capacities, resources and roles.

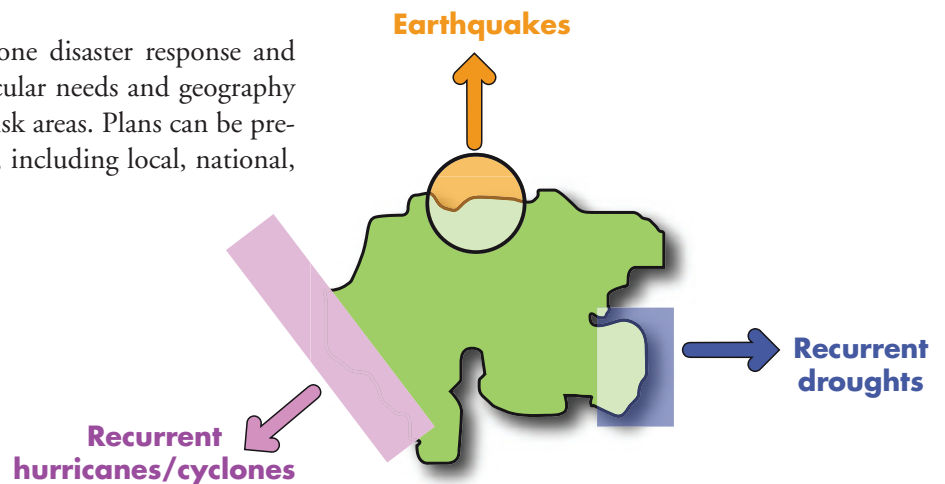
Contingency planning should always be undertaken when there is a high risk/probability that a disaster or emergency situation may occur. National Societies and International Federation delegations should also plan in the face of recurring natural disasters, for example seasonal events such as floods, hurricanes/cyclones, etc. Contingency planning should be incorporated into all regular planning processes, when relevant.

## Where to plan?

Disaster response plans are necessary at national and other levels (including regional and global), to ensure effective coordination and response to large-scale disasters. Plans should be promoted and established by all National Societies, and International Federation delegations where applicable, according to the risk, frequency, and complexity of potential disasters. Plans and their implementation processes will differ according to the situation in a specific country and/or region, the institutional framework, geographic scope, etc.

## National level

National Societies can have more than one disaster response and contingency plan, according to the particular needs and geography of the country – each focusing on main risk areas. Plans can be prepared with different geographical focuses, including local, national, sub-regional and regional levels.

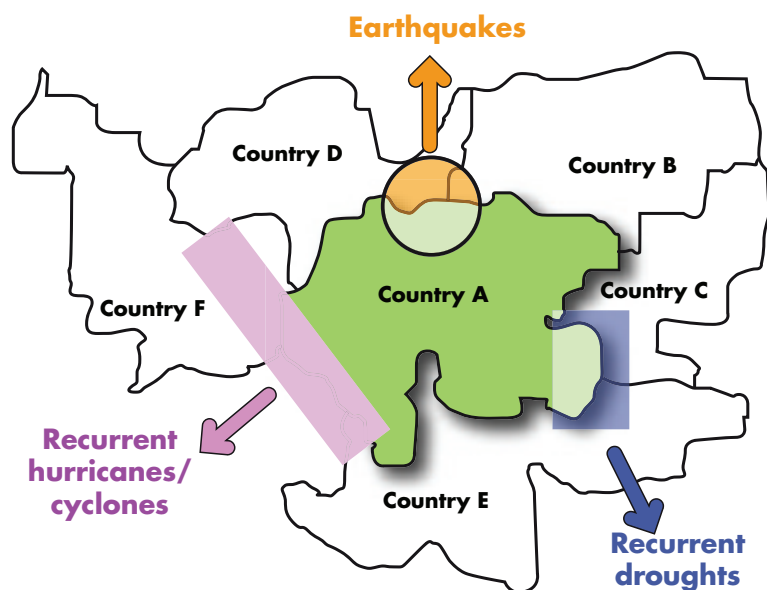


## Cross-border level

*(Between neighbouring countries, or nationally, between neighbouring district/local entities)*

Most plans are prepared for individual countries; however, plans can also be prepared jointly for a number of countries or for regions where there are cross-border issues to consider. This is often the case with large-scale natural hazards, such as hurricanes or cyclones. In such instances, consultation between disaster response planners from all affected countries is critical when developing regional scenarios, which will then inform and shape country-based contingency planning. The International Federation's regional delegations have made a commitment to support and lead this regional disaster response and contingency planning process.

Most countries will also need to develop contingency plans. These are important in responding to specific threats or for planning within a specific context. However, contingency planning will not always be necessary – particularly in the case of smaller countries, or when the context does not call for one. In these cases, a disaster response plan will be sufficient for the National Society's purposes.



## Chapter 2

# Steps for developing disaster response and contingency plans

Although there are important distinctions between disaster response and contingency plans, this chapter addresses those components that are common to both.

Remember that the first level of disaster response planning – institutional – defines the mandate, policies and legal framework upon which the National Society or International Federation will base its response and contingency plans. Following on this, the disaster response plan outlines risks, response strategies, actions and capacities in a **multi-hazard** context. Contingency planning, in turn, involves preparing for and scaling-up to respond effectively to very **specific risks**, which have been identified during the disaster response-planning phase.

There are six main steps involved in developing disaster response and contingency plans:

- Step 1** Institutional disaster planning
- Step 2** Hazard, vulnerability, capacity and risk analyses
- Step 3** Resource identification and mobilization
- Step 4** Early-warning, alert systems and triggers
- Step 5** Linkages and communications
- Step 6** Sectoral responsibilities
  - Emergency assessment
  - Continuity of operations during an emergency
  - Rescue and medical assistance
  - Health services
  - Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion
  - Food and nutrition
  - Relief
  - Shelter
  - Restoring family links
  - Protection, safety and security
  - Logistics and transport
  - Information technology (IT) and telecommunications
  - Communication and reporting
  - Monitoring and evaluation

Planning will use information from a variety of sources. This information must be dependable, of high quality and serve a specific purpose or objective within the plan. If there are doubts as to the usefulness or reliability of the information, it should not be included.

**Annex 1** sets out the suggested structure and minimum recommended contents in preparing disaster response and contingency plans.

**Remember!** Contingency plans focus on specific disaster events with a high risk of occurrence and linked to high levels of vulnerability; they identify in detail the potential humanitarian needs, actions, resources, constraints and gaps. Although both disaster and contingency plans include similar steps, the perspectives from which they are written and the level of detail required are different.

## Step 1 Institutional disaster (framework) planning

This first level of planning provides the general reference for humanitarian action, based on the institutional mandate, policies, strategies, standards and norms, and legal framework of the organization.

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies carry out their humanitarian activities in line with the Fundamental Principles and Statutes of the Movement, the Constitution of the International Federation, as well as their own statutes and national legislation. As auxiliaries to their governments in humanitarian service, National Societies support their respective countries' public authorities according to the needs of the population. However, this auxiliary role does not limit the initiative of National Societies to undertake other humanitarian activity within their countries. They are autonomous national organizations, supporting the public authorities with their own programmes. National Societies are required to work closely with their governments to ensure respect for International Humanitarian Law, guard the integrity of the Emblem and uphold the fundamental principles.

Recommended reference documents:

- Fundamental Principles
- The Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief
- Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures
- Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response
- Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief
- Guidelines for well-prepared National Societies (WPNS)
- Better Programming Initiative (BPI)
- Good humanitarian donorship

A National Society's precise role in times of disaster should be negotiated and defined with its government. Policy should then be developed accordingly, and the society's role incorporated into the government's national disaster plan. It is the **duty of National Societies to prepare themselves to provide and receive assistance in the event of a disaster**. This will include, for instance, negotiating with their governments for exemption from taxes and customs duties on items intended for dis-

aster victims, and agreeing on procedures for the rapid issuance of visas for Red Cross Red Crescent personnel taking part in relief operations if Movement-wide assistance is required. The International Federation should also pre-identify Red Cross Red Crescent roles and legal mandates in the region/zone, and develop planning assumptions based on these mandates and anticipated needs (**See annex 2**).

## Organization

During an emergency, many agencies are generally involved in providing response services. These may include the national civil defence agency, the military, various emergency ministries, local fire brigades, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as well as other international agencies and NGOs. It is likely that a number of them will be carrying out the same tasks – such as providing first aid, shelter and food to the disaster-affected. In such situations, clear coordination is essential to ensure that the maximum number of people receive assistance as rapidly as possible, and to avoid unnecessary duplication of services.

For this reason, each agency should identify the activity or activities it will be responsible for when creating a disaster response or contingency plan. This will be based on existing capacities and resources, and the agency's anticipated level of involvement in case of an emergency. Organizations should also determine where, within their own structures, responsibility and decision-making for each function will reside. Standard operating procedures should be developed at the local, regional and global levels and include procedures for identifying and accessing potential resources (**see annex 3**).

## Management

Both disaster response and contingency plans for National Societies or International Federation offices should include SOPs, specifying the responsibilities and contact details of (**see annex 3**):

- the emergency response focal point;
- team members at each operational level and;
- individuals in charge of:
  - activating response services;
  - communicating with headquarters;
  - managing external relations and appeals for external aid (including governmental, international and funds from the public);
  - communicating with the media;
  - coordinating and liaising with other agencies and services and,
  - managing administrative work.

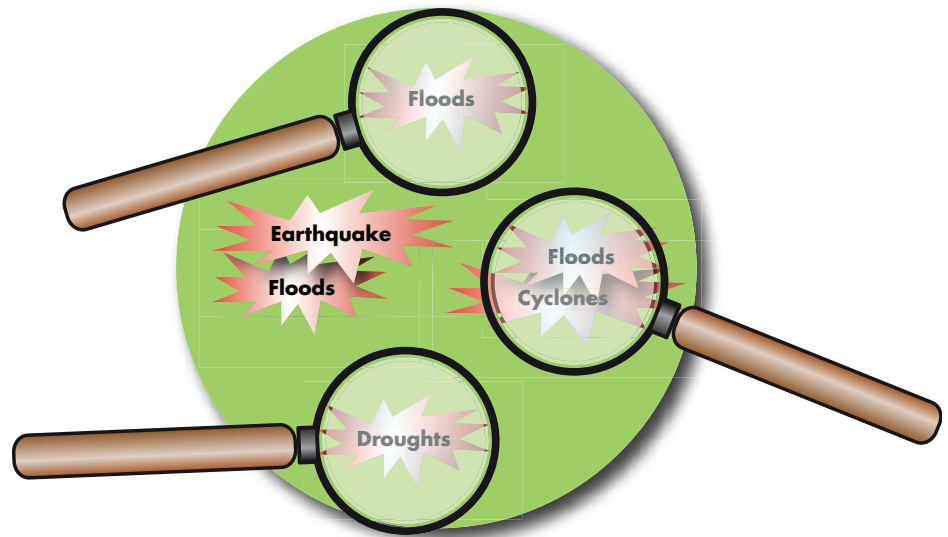
## Step 2 Hazard, vulnerability, capacity and risk analyses

Proper disaster response and contingency planning must be based on an analysis of the risks faced by a country or region. This involves identifying hazards, and assessing vulnerabilities and capacities at local, national or regional levels (**Use annexes 4.a – 4.d for this step**). Realistic scenarios can then be developed for planning purposes.



### Disaster risk scenarios


Before beginning an analysis of hazards/threats and vulnerabilities, a risk reference framework should be developed to include, at a minimum, the following:





Field	Analysis of hazards/threats	Analysis of vulnerability
Geographical unit of analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Country/region</li> <li>■ Province/canton/city</li> <li>■ District or municipality</li> <li>■ Specific locality or neighbourhood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Population</li> <li>■ Community</li> <li>■ Family</li> <li>■ Individual</li> </ul>
Temporal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Period of recurrence (time frame) and incidence. For example: months, years, every five years, decade(s), etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Period during which specific vulnerabilities apply to a defined group.</li> <li>■ Dates of the information used and analysed.</li> </ul>
Events/areas of analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Most important hazards/threats in the geographic zones analysed (e.g. earthquakes, flooding, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, droughts, epidemics, landslides, etc.)</li> <li>■ Variations in the period of recurrence as a result of environmental or climate change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Specific conditions of exposure and vulnerability (e.g. physical, economic, social, organizational, institutional, educational, cultural, etc.)</li> </ul>
Indicators of measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Probability of occurrence</li> <li>■ Potential area affected and territorial coverage</li> <li>■ Magnitude of damage and losses</li> <li>■ Percentage of population affected</li> <li>■ Other</li> </ul>	<p>Indicators for each area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Economic vulnerability: family earnings, unemployment rate, etc.</li> <li>■ Social vulnerability: life expectancy, access to health services, education, infrastructure, sanitation, etc.</li> <li>■ Organizational vulnerability: existence of committees and disaster response plans, early warning systems, etc.</li> <li>■ Physical vulnerability: shelters, location and quality of structures and dwellings, etc.</li> </ul>
Sources of information	Provide specific references for sources of information as a means of verification.	


Based on the analysis of potential risks, the incidence of previous disasters, and the vulnerability of the population, disaster response planners should be able to compile a list of likely needs, and identify available resources. If planners anticipate a gap between needs and resources, they should look for ways of reducing it in advance.

## Steps for analysis of hazards, vulnerabilities and risks

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**1 Review secondary data** – including studies and analyses of hazards/threats, vulnerabilities and risks prepared by technical or scientific institutions, universities and/or other organizations with a presence in the area (see Risk reference framework above).
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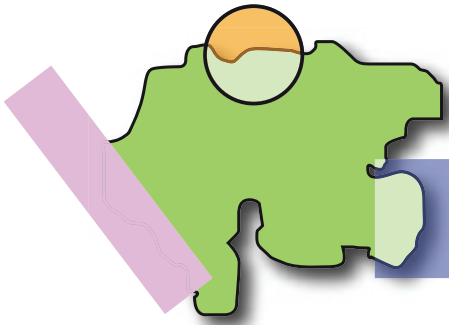
**2** Ensure that the institution has the **technical capacity** and appropriate experience to carry out the risk analysis required for the disaster response or contingency plan. To facilitate this, collaboration agreements can be established with technical /scientific institutions and universities. Sister societies and the International Federation can often provide technical support and share reference tools.
- 

**3** Carry out an **analysis of hazards**, starting with available information on past emergencies, and taking into account probability, frequency, location, magnitude and potential impact. Note: Do not rely only on historical data. Consider the possibility of extreme weather linked to climate change, major shifts in risk due to deforestation, unplanned urbanisation, etc. Expertise from external agencies may be useful in understanding these factors.
- 

**4** Analyse the **vulnerability** level of those exposed to a potential hazard/threat. Support this, when possible, with indicators measuring the five main components of vulnerability: livelihood, well-being, self-protection, social protection and government protection.
- 5** Carry out a **risk analysis**, combining hazards/threats and vulnerabilities. Create maps highlighting areas at risk. Define and prioritize geographic zones to assist with the development of scenarios.

A quality risk analysis may require resources and technical capacity not always found within the Red Cross Red Crescent. To achieve a solid analysis, it is important to seek advice from and collaborate with governmental technical agencies, scientific institutions, universities and other specialized organizations.

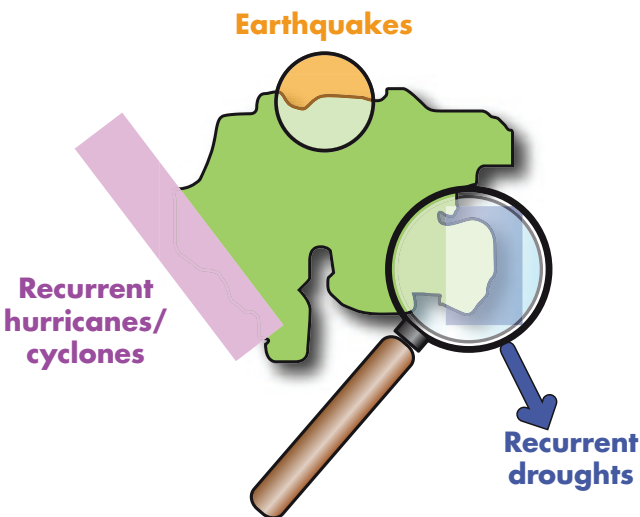
The risk of disaster is linked to a population's vulnerability to particular threats; varying conditions can affect vulnerability levels. Good planning must also assess capacities within the communities at risk, and identify opportunities and mechanisms for strengthening and drawing on these capacities – in both planning and disaster response activities.



Contingency scenario analysis should reflect:

- Number of people at risk
- Geographical location
- Potential impact
- Most recent impact
- Climate
- Topography
- Main source of livelihood

As mentioned, we recommend using existing studies or vulnerability indicators from reliable secondary data sources (academic, governmental, scientific, etc.). Participatory community VCA processes, even if still ongoing, will also provide important input to the plans (for localized threats or in well-defined areas).



Once the risk analysis is done and the contingency analysis is completed, the next steps should be:

- Carry out VCA in the risk areas.
- Elaborate disaster preparedness and response plans.
- Implement mitigation projects where needed.
- Support capacity-building initiatives at national, local and community levels.

### Levels of vulnerability

A simple way of defining the vulnerability levels for a specific geographical area or zone is by using the categories of high, medium, or low, as shown in the table below:

Vulnerability level	Characteristics
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A particular hazard/threat is generally recognized. The affected population is aware of its characteristics and possible occurrence during a particular period of time.</li> <li>■ There is a high level of both organizational preparedness and response capacity for a possible disaster.</li> </ul>
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Although threats are not easily identified, there is some level of awareness of the risk, coupled with weak organizational and response capacities.</li> </ul>
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Those exposed to hazards/threats may know of them, but pay them little or no attention. They are unaware of which warning and preparedness actions to implement.</li> <li>■ Those exposed to a particular hazard/threat have insufficient response capacity or resilience.</li> </ul>

## Vulnerability analysis

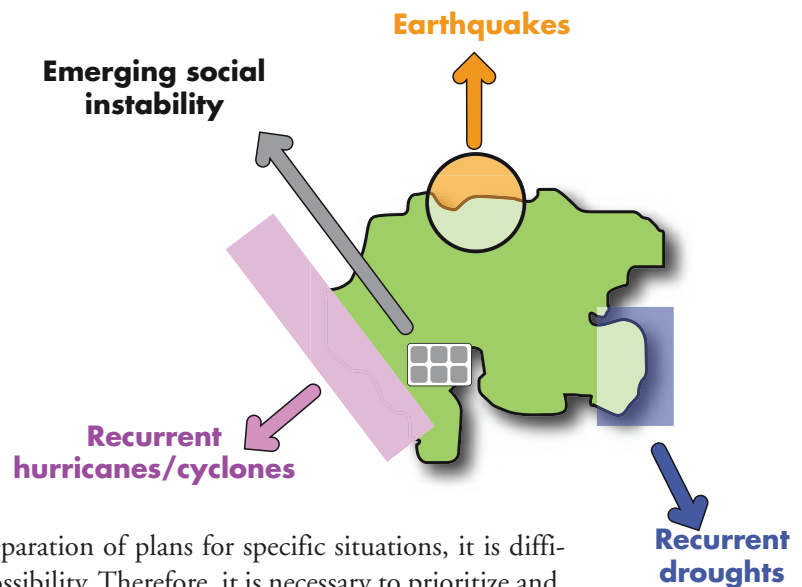
To estimate the risk of possible disasters, it is necessary to define the vulnerability of a population exposed to particular hazards/threats. Planners can establish vulnerability levels by considering a variety of factors.

If a particular context requires a detailed vulnerability analysis, identify groups of indicators for each area of vulnerability, and assign them different rankings as a way to define overall vulnerability. The following table provides some examples:

Area of analysis (country or regional level)	Examples of indicators
Physical vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Quality of means of communication</li> <li>■ Presence and quality of public infrastructure and shelters</li> <li>■ Presence of and accessibility to evacuation routes in the event of a disaster</li> <li>■ Quality of dwelling construction</li> <li>■ Proximity of homes or population centres to identified hazards/threats</li> </ul>
Organizational vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Existence, effectiveness and awareness of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ early-warning systems</li> <li>■ disaster response plans and systems</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Existence of skilled response teams</li> <li>■ Presence of development projects or NGOs (local and international)</li> <li>■ Existence of community-based organizations, social groups, etc.</li> <li>■ Ways of delivering basic services to the population</li> <li>■ Centralized/decentralized decision-making in disaster management</li> </ul>
Institutional vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Presence of assistance/relief entities such as Red Cross Red Crescent, fire department, police, civil defence, etc.</li> <li>■ Human resources dedicated to disaster response</li> <li>■ Financial resources dedicated to preparedness and disaster response</li> <li>■ Awareness and commitment of local authorities to disaster reduction</li> <li>■ Legislation, plans and instructions for local/national disaster management</li> <li>■ Access to vulnerable population in disaster situations</li> <li>■ Readiness and quality of mechanisms for receiving external and international assistance.</li> </ul>

Vulnerability analysis can be as detailed and as comprehensive as desired, as long as the information is regularly up-dated and of good quality. The extent of this analysis will obviously depend on the time and resources available. In most cases, a broad macro-analysis or profiling exercise of all hazards faced by the country and/or region is recommended as a first step.

This will provide the National Society and other Movement partners with an overall picture of the situation, and assist in prioritizing high-risk areas during the planning process. In cases where an imminent hazard/threat prompts the contingency planning process (e.g. a sharp deterioration in the stability of a country), the analysis (and the contingency planning process) should focus on this particular hazard/threat. This will also provide a basis for selecting the most appropriate early-warning indicators for monitoring purposes.



Given that contingency planning involves the preparation of plans for specific situations, it is difficult to prepare contingency plans to cover every possibility. Therefore, it is necessary to prioritize and, at least, prepare contingency plans for the highest-risk scenarios identified. Based on the risk analysis, National Societies and International Federation delegations should focus planning and scenario-building on the most relevant situations – whether at local, national or regional levels. (See annex 5)

### Step 3 Resource identification and mobilization

Two of the most important elements in developing response and contingency plans are:

- 1 Capacity analysis
- 2 Resource identification

It is crucially important that information on capacities and resources be accurate and trustworthy – since this will be the basis for identifying weaknesses and gaps, as well as for optimising the use of existing resources. Furthermore, existing capacities can be strengthened in a strategic manner, so as to best meet anticipated needs during a potential disaster.

Once potential emergency needs have been determined, it will become clear how best to allocate existing resources and which additional ones may be required.

There is no simple formula or complete checklist to assist in analysing capacities and identifying resources. These elements differ depending on the context and according to the scenarios identified. Nevertheless, for the purposes of Red Cross Red Crescent planning, five categories can be identified when considering resources (see annexes 6 and 7):

- 1 Community-level capacities and resources – including participatory approaches targeting various segments of the population, as well as the public and private sectors.
- 2 National and branch-level Red Cross Red Crescent capacities and resources.

- 3 Regional and international institutional capacities and resources, including readiness to request and receive resources from within the Movement;
- 4 External institutional capacities and resources;
- 5 Agreements with other partners.

Responding to an emergency requires resources, and the response or contingency plan must take into account different levels of preparedness. Consideration should therefore be given to the following:

- What resources are already available and in what quantities, for how many people and for how long?
- How can community resources and capacities be strengthened and increased?
- Which staff and volunteers can be brought in from other programmes during an emergency?
- What resources will be needed that are not currently available?
- What plans exist for procuring needed resources?
- What plans and preparations exist for receiving and managing international assistance?

Information must be up-dated regularly. This is especially crucial for registries of personnel and their capabilities, or for inventories of equipment and logistics resources. For example, a volunteer database may not reflect the current situation because mapping of Red Cross Red Crescent resources has not been undertaken recently; or registers of stock levels and equipment may not take account of deterioration due to poor maintenance. In such cases, inputs must be ensured from key individuals holding the most up-to-date information.

The 'Well-prepared National Societies' assessment tool can also help in identifying the existing capacities and resources of a National Society.

## Step 4 Early warning, alert systems and triggers

The disaster response planning process should ascertain how the population is warned of emergencies, and identify those responsible for notifying others. Systems should be put into place in association with organizations that monitor disasters (e.g. governmental, meteorological, scientific and other) to ensure that Red Cross Red Crescent branches, offices and delegations are on their notification and activation lists. In addition, there are a number of meteorological and earthquake centres which monitor and report on disasters. The International Federation's Disaster Management and Information System (DMIS) provides links to some of these global monitoring centres.

- 1 Has the National Society developed an early-warning procedure with meteorological, geological or other scientific institutions with expertise in the area?
- 2 Has the International Federation established an early-warning procedure with regional meteorological, geological or other scientific institutions?
- 3 Has the National Society and International Federation office or regional delegation established a procedure to provide information to DMIS?
- 4 Have the local Red Cross Red Crescent branches established early-warning information procedures with their national headquarters?

National Societies should also identify someone (in addition to the public relations officer) who will be in charge of sharing information with the media. This person should have the necessary experience and contacts with government, local businesses and social organizations. National Society management and/or the International Federation Head of Delegation should determine who can communicate with the media. Other response team members should refer all communications and public relations issues to this identified point of contact, so as to avoid confusion and ensure consistency of external communications. In addition, standard messages or talking points should be developed, and training provided to key team members in how to communicate these points effectively.

In cases where the authorities do not have adequate systems in place to notify the public of an impending disaster, the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society may establish local networks to both receive and act on warnings, thereby raising community awareness of potential risks and appropriate actions.

## Step 5 Linkages and communications

Disaster information management requires specific skills and methods. National Societies, regional delegations and the International Federation secretariat should establish information management procedures within their disaster response and contingency plans in the following five areas:

- 1 Public information
- 2 Operational information
- 3 Internal information
- 4 Reporting
- 5 Institutional communication

Each area has different objectives and should therefore be treated differently.

- 1 Public information relates to the local, national, regional and international media. A preparedness plan should include this aspect, as well as consider possible demands for multi-lingual spokespersons and the implications of time zone differences.
- 2 Operational information is essential for effective decision-making and should be managed by the emergency operations centre (EOC).
- 3 Internal information-sharing aims to ensure an adequate flow of information to all employees and volunteers on specific issues of relevance and concern related to the emergency operation.
- 4 Reporting requirements must be respected and promoted at national, regional and international levels as a means of accountability. The reporting process should be well planned, with updates provided on a regular basis.
- 5 Institutional communication should enhance coordination within the National Society, between International Federation actors and within Movement components, as well as with other agencies.

Sharing and exchanging information with representatives of other agencies is crucial during emergencies. To ensure clear and effective communication in an emergency, the plan should specify how communication will take place and via which media (e.g. e-mail, radio, fax, telephone, in person, coordination meetings, etc.) (See annex 8). This also applies to internal Red Cross Red Crescent communication at field level (within the National Society and/or with sub-offices), international level (communicating with the International Federation secretariat in Geneva) and with partner National Societies already in-country.

Many governments have an emergency or national disaster operations centre, task force or coordination group, which receives disaster alert and activation notifications in which the Red Cross Red Crescent is included. We recommend appointing someone to liaise actively with these entities for coordination and communication purposes.

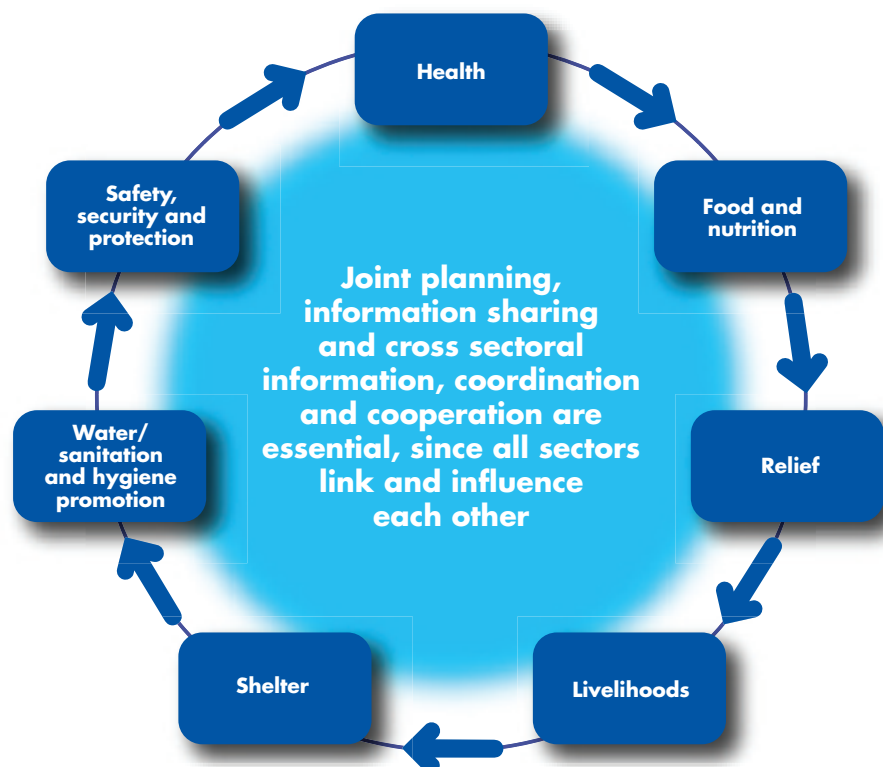
A particular failing, noted in previous disaster response operations, concerns a failure to share assessment information – which is therefore often duplicated or incomplete. Disaster planning should stress the importance of information-sharing at all levels, and in particular strengthen mechanisms for sharing assessment information both within the Movement and with other partners.

Media relations should also be reinforced. Past experience shows that media-relevant information originating from field sources varies widely in quality. One practical solution is to provide field teams with an emergency media kit to enable them to collect quality digital and audio data. Plans should also include mechanisms for sharing information on Red Cross and Red Crescent activities with the affected communities, in order to broaden their own awareness of and access to humanitarian assistance.

## Step 6 Sectoral responsibilities

Disaster response and contingency plans should include summaries, by sector, of how sectoral needs and functions will be addressed, including the allocation of roles and responsibilities.

The main sectors to keep in mind can be summarised as follows:





Sectoral roles may vary from one National Society to another. It is important to remember that in many cases, the government retains overall responsibility for disaster response. It is therefore important to define what the Red Cross Red Crescent's role will be, how it will participate and how it will coordinate within the sector, particularly with the local community and other actors providing support. The most relevant Red Cross Red Crescent service-delivery sectors are outlined below:

- 1 Emergency assessment
- 2 Continuity of operations during an emergency
- 3 Rescue and medical assistance
- 4 Health services
- 5 Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion
- 6 Food and nutrition
- 7 Relief
- 8 Shelter
- 9 Restoring family links
- 10 Protection, safety and security
- 11 Logistics and transport
- 12 IT and telecommunications
- 13 Communication and reporting
- 14 Monitoring and evaluation

While it is critical to ensure that all of these sectors are specifically addressed in the planning process, actual service-delivery (by National Societies, the International Federation and external partners) will ultimately need to respond to individual and community needs in a holistic manner, drawing on the different sectors to provide relevant, appropriate and effective assistance. Primary emphasis should be placed on strengthening community capacities for relief and recovery, and establishing good cooperation among assisting agencies to ensure that all significant gaps are being addressed.

The entities within disaster management (e.g. response, preparedness for response, mitigation, risk reduction etc.) must be seen as a continuum. As relief activities decrease, recovery and risk reduction activities (disaster preparedness and mitigation) will increase. All of these elements of disaster management must support each other and none can be successfully implemented on its own.

The basic components for each sector, as relevant to disaster response and contingency planning, are detailed below. It is also worth noting that the Federation is committed to the *Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response* – a powerful tool<sup>2</sup> which details standards for the following sectors: water, sanitation and hygiene promotion; food security, nutrition and food aid; shelter, settlement and non-food items; and health services.

## 1 Emergency assessment

When planning, it is important to determine whether sufficient staff and/or volunteers would be available to conduct an immediate emergency assessment, which must be well planned and organized if it is to be effective. In most cases, a comprehensive needs assessment should be conducted immediately after an emergency, and updated throughout the response and recovery phases.

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2 The entire manual, *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response*, can be downloaded from The Sphere Project's website <http://www.sphereproject.org/>, or can be ordered through Oxfam publishing at Bournemouth Book Centre (BEBC), PO Box 1496, Parkstone, Dorset BH12 3YD, Tel: +44 (0) 1202 712933, Fax: +44 (0) 1202 712930. The Sphere Project can be contacted at P.O. Box 372, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland, Tel: (41 22) 730 4501 Fax: (41 22) 730 4905.

It is also necessary to ensure that staff and volunteers have been properly trained, so that common criteria, standards and indicators are used during assessments. Ideally, local volunteers in the most disaster-prone areas should be trained to conduct immediate damage/needs assessments. The *Guidelines for emergency assessment*, published by the International Federation, and the Sphere standards available from the secretariat and on FedNet<sup>3</sup>, should be utilized.

When planning for an emergency needs assessment at local, community or regional level, it is necessary to identify:

- Who is responsible for the assessment and when will it be carried out (e.g. immediately, after three days, two weeks, etc.)? Assessment teams should be made up of persons having various functions, and include specialists from several sectors.
- What information is required at each stage of the emergency?
- How/where will response teams be formed and trained?
- What standards are being used to measure the severity of the emergency?
- What elements have been incorporated into the assessment to facilitate early recovery?
- How will the impact of humanitarian aid be determined? Will BPI guidelines be considered?
- How will beneficiary communities be involved in the whole process?

**Remember!** Programmes will be effective and realistic if a solid and comprehensive assessment has taken place.

## 2 Continuity of operations during an emergency

A National Society's ability to function may be directly affected by a disaster (e.g. through damage to its headquarters or other facilities, the injury or death of key personnel, etc.). It is therefore essential to plan for continuity of operations, even though this is not a sectoral activity as such. It is important to consider the following:

- Selection and set-up of a relocation site able to support the continuation of essential activities.
- Activation of such a site and/or a crisis management headquarters at branch, National Society or International Federation delegation levels.
- Re-deployment of paid and volunteer staff from their normal operating locations.
- Provision of logistics, IT and telecommunications support by temporary use of non-standard or alternative means.

This section should also take into account the potential impact on other Red Cross Red Crescent services such as health programmes, blood donation, social support, etc. – all of which may also be threatened in the event of a disaster. At times, these services may need to be suspended, to allow prioritization of other response activities; at other times, these services may be needed more than ever and should be prioritized.

<sup>3</sup> The *Guidelines for emergency assessment* document is available on FedNet.

### 3 Rescue and medical assistance

Major emergencies and disasters often result in injuries and deaths. Regardless of whether it is focused on the national, regional or global level, the plan should outline:

- What types of injuries and medical needs are likely to result from the scenarios addressed in the plan?
- Is the Red Cross Red Crescent involved in search and rescue operations, and who will be responsible for organizing these?
- How will human remains be handled?
- Who organizes first aid, temporary ambulances, medical evacuation and hospitalization?
- What registration and distribution systems will be used?

### 4 Health services

Access to safe water, satisfactory sanitary conditions in shelters, and proper nutrition all help to avoid disease outbreaks. These issues should be addressed before launching health programmes. The following health and nutrition issues should be considered in disaster response and contingency planning at the national, regional or global level:

- Who is responsible for health and nutrition needs?
- What is the local healthcare structure and how does it function during emergencies?
- Where can vaccinations for infectious diseases (e.g. measles) be conducted?
- What supplementary feeding requirements (e.g. for children, pregnant and lactating women, etc.) or special feeding programmes may be necessary?
- Which governmental or non-governmental agencies are responsible for healthcare, disease prevention and public health campaigns? What role does the National Society play?
- Is health protection/nutrition different in winter? In what way? What special measures should be considered during a winter emergency?
- How can the problem of overcrowding be solved? How will the problem affect healthcare during and after an emergency?
- What measures should be taken for different population groups (e.g. children, pregnant women, etc.)?
- What medication and medical equipment is available? What additional supplies might be needed and in what quantity?
- Are storage facilities available? If not, what should be done?

### 5 Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion

During an emergency, there is often a lack of safe drinking water, appropriate sanitation facilities and hygiene commodities – all of which may make people more susceptible to illness or death from water and sanitation related diseases. Since people can live longer without food than without water, a supply of clean drinking water is a priority in an emergency.

Sanitation and hygiene promotion also play a crucial role in the reduction of environmental health risks. Measures should include: disposal of human waste, sewage and garbage; insect and rodent control; safe hygiene practices; site drainage; and waste water management. The plan should also include provisions for water supply and distribution, hygiene promotion and sanitation during an emergency.

For water, the following should be specified:

- What is the current water source and who are its present users?
- What technical capacities exist?
- Is there a supply/distribution system in place and if so, are water collection points close enough to dwellings?
- Is water treatment necessary? Is it possible? What treatment is required?
- Which equipment will be required and is there a need for water tanks (if local water sources are not available)?

For sanitation, the following should be specified:

- What is the current defecation practice? Are there any existing sanitation facilities and who is responsible for them (public divisions or private sector)?
- Are people familiar with the construction and use of toilets?
- Should training programmes in sanitation be conducted?

For hygiene promotion, the following should be specified:

- What are the traditional beliefs and practices related to the collection, storage and use of water?
- Do people have enough water containers?
- What are the current beliefs and practices (including gender-specific practices) concerning excreta disposal?
- Do people wash their hands at key times (e.g. after defecation and before food preparation and meals)?

## 6 Food and nutrition

Food provision is aimed at meeting the nutritional needs of an affected population during an emergency. The preparedness plan should define, calculate and stipulate how food will be provided in emergencies of differing intensities and impact: During the planning stage, the following questions should be answered for the relevant context (national, regional or global):

- Who is responsible for assessment of food supply needs and coordination of this part of the disaster response operation?
- What food is available locally, throughout the area and countrywide? What are the capacities of and prices in local markets?
- Which traditional or widely consumed food items are likely to be in short supply?
- What items should the food basket contain?
- What are the calorific requirements for various climates (e.g. in cold, mountainous environments)?
- What basic needs should be met for small children?
- What food distribution systems have been previously used in the local area, district, and country? How could they be used in an emergency?
- Will the unaffected population living close to the emergency site also be provided with food? (This issue arises when the unaffected population is also highly vulnerable, even under normal circumstances).
- Who is responsible for communicating with the government and international food donors (e.g. World Food Programme), NGOs and other agencies?
- What are the food storage requirements? What storage facilities are available?

## 7 Relief

The plan should address in detail the way in which basic immediate emergency needs related to shelter, water and food will be met. Typical non-food items included in such a plan are: soap, blankets, kitchen utensils, water containers and matches. Since situations may vary, the list of essentials should be compiled based on the anticipated needs of the population most likely to be affected – taking into account cultural diversity, where applicable: The national, regional or global plan should address the following:

- What items will be needed and which of these are available? Who will coordinate the negotiation of pre-existing agreements with suppliers for these items?
- To what extent can local markets and organizations handle the distribution of such goods? How can these mechanisms be strengthened to play a bigger role in relief activities?
- What are the local storage capacities and what additional facilities will be required?
- What are the available reserves of blankets, water containers, fuel for food preparation, stoves, kitchen utensils, clothing and other essential non-food items?
- What are the targeting, registration and distribution processes?
- Who is responsible for the management of relief supplies?
- Who is responsible for needs assessment?
- How will a monitoring and evaluation process be ensured?
- How will coordination of quality, quantities and coverage be handled with other agencies?

## 8 Shelter

In some cases, emergency shelter provision is needed for those whose homes have been destroyed or are unsafe. This may require urgent repair work (including the provision of appropriate tools and locally-used materials), the distribution of tents and tarpaulins for temporary shelter; or sheltering homeless people in public buildings such as schools. The following shelter issues should be considered in response and contingency planning at the national, regional or global level:

- What is governmental policy with regard to sheltering a disaster-affected population? Which governmental body is in charge of shelter-related activities?
- What governmental, local and international organizations are active in shelter provision?
- Who is responsible for management and needs assessment relating to shelter?
- Are supplies of tents, construction materials and plastic sheets needed?
- Have sites or buildings for communal shelters been identified for possible large-scale emergency needs?
- How will sites be identified? Are there difficulties related to land ownership? What potential problems may occur with the local community?
- What particular difficulties may arise in various seasons (winter, summer, rainy, etc.)?
- What types of assistance will be needed by those who are sheltered or hosted by relatives or friends (i.e. food aid, heating, cooking, hygiene or water and sanitation supplies)?
- Would the provision of cash be more appropriate to provide people with a choice of options?
- What traditional construction materials are available locally? Does the procurement and use of traditional building materials harm the environment and what materials can be used instead? Remember to make use of what is locally appropriate (i.e. investigating the type of material people already use for housing and how to improve safety in construction).
- What solutions make the best use of community knowledge, capacities and resources in providing shelter? How will 'safe building' techniques be promoted locally (e.g. community awareness-raising using a 'construction theatre' to display key 'safe building' procedures, such as appropriate foundations, reinforcements, fixings, tie-down and bracing)?

- How will any risks concerning existing houses and settlements be evaluated? How can the post-disaster stability of housing sites be appraised? How can appropriate settlement planning be ensured to minimize risks? What mitigation measures can be taken to minimize future risks associated with housing to be repaired?
- How can technical assistance for reconstruction best support the return of households to their dwellings, when appropriate? Remember that, in many cases, households will wish to return immediately to their damaged or destroyed houses.

## 9 Restoring family links

One of the priority social welfare tasks in many relief operations is to quickly initiate a search for missing people and reunite family members. The family is the basic social unit in most societies and plays a key role in meeting personal needs and solving community problems. National Societies responsible for restoring family links should consider the following issues in planning at national level:

- Who is responsible for managing search and reunification activities and who (staff and/or volunteers) will be involved?
- Is the ICRC or host National Society involved?
- How many families may need temporary accommodation?
- What are the cultural norms which may hinder reunification activities (e.g. taboos on photography)?
- Which methods or approaches will be used to carry out these activities?
- Which communication methods will be used to reunite family members?
- What other agencies and governmental departments are responsible for these operations? What level of coordination is required?
- At which stage of response should search operations be started (this normally begins after 24 to 48 hours, since many families manage to locate missing relatives during this period)?
- How will the affected population learn about this service?

## 10 Protection, safety and security

Preparedness plans should identify who is responsible for the protection, safety and security of the disaster-affected population. This is normally the responsibility of the national government, although other actors may be involved. The plan should also identify the actions to be taken to ensure the security of Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers involved in disaster response. Security is a complex issue and the International Federation has developed appropriate guidelines which are available on FedNet<sup>4</sup>.

International Federation security in the field – including institutional and personal codes of conduct – is based on seven factors. The first two factors are unique to the Red Cross Red Crescent and deal with: (1) acceptance (both political and operational) of the fundamental principles which guide Red Cross Red Crescent action, and (2) identification, through recognized use of the Emblem.

- Acceptance
- Identification
- Information
- Regulations
- Personal behaviour
- Communication
- Protection

<sup>4</sup> Security guidelines and manuals are available on the disaster management resource framework (DMRF) on FedNet

## 11 Logistics and transport

Emergency response operations often require transport of numerous personnel, and large quantities of humanitarian aid and equipment to the disaster site. Therefore logistics and transport issues are crucial to a successful response: The following aspects of logistics and transport should be considered in national, regional or global level planning:

- What are the principal and alternative aid delivery routes to anticipated disaster areas and affected populations?
- Have agreements been developed with suppliers to expedite procurement?
- Where are available seaports and airports located, including relevant information concerning capacity and procedures?
- What are the most appropriate available storage sites?
- Have transportation modes (e.g. road, railway, air, etc.) and issues such as availability and cost been specified?
- What is the availability of fuel depots and service stations, clarifying any limitations?
- What level of cooperation exists with the governmental office or ministry responsible for customs clearance of incoming goods? Has agreement been reached with appropriate governmental structures to ensure privileged conditions for import of humanitarian aid?
- Which spare parts may be needed for vehicles? Have preliminary arrangements been made for their supply?
- What is the probable impact of weather conditions on logistics work?
- Have needs been defined and training conducted for personnel or divisions responsible for logistics in an emergency?

## 12 IT and telecommunications

Continuous and effective communications between the various components of the Movement are vital to the success of any emergency operation. For radio communications, it is essential to list the relevant radio frequencies in the disaster response or contingency plan. The plan should also specify who will manage, maintain and control access to the radio equipment. The following should be considered when planning nationally, regionally or globally:

- What is the National Society's capacity (connectivity, types of telecommunications, coverage, etc.)?
- What is the national legislation with regard to the use and importation of various types of IT and telecommunications equipment – particularly in an emergency situation?
- What communications equipment do you anticipate needing (such as hand-held radios, satellite telephones, mobile phones, and land lines)?
- Have radio frequencies and channels been identified and agreed?

## 13 Communication and reporting

The importance of communication cannot be stressed enough. To enable the International Federation to act as the focal point for information about a disaster, National Societies should immediately inform it of any major disaster, the extent of damage incurred and what direct action is being undertaken. Timely input to DMIS is especially important to alert the wider disaster management community, particularly if the scale of an emergency requires international assistance.

The mapping section within the International Federation secretariat's operations support department can quickly produce maps to assist in the disaster response or contingency planning process.

These can be made available through DMIS for sharing with National Societies and Red Cross Red Crescent disaster managers. Geographical information systems (GIS) mapping and satellite imagery is also a resource that should be explored with government, academic and scientific community partners.

Questions to consider when formulating national, regional or global plans include:

- What will the public information strategy be?
- Can the current staff handle the likely influx of journalists and anticipated media demands, or should additional personnel be recruited?
- Can the current staff provide timely inputs for information bulletins, operational reports and appeals to donors or should reporting staff be recruited?
- How should media relations be coordinated?
- What will the information strategy be for the target population? Within the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement? For donors? For other agencies?

#### **14 Monitoring and evaluation**

Once initial assistance has been provided to the affected population, it is essential to ensure that aid has reached beneficiaries as planned, that it has had the anticipated impact and that no unmet needs have been overlooked. Monitoring and evaluating implementation of the plan of action – both the response as a whole, and individual programmes – is an integral part of disaster response. The following should be taken into account when creating disaster response and contingency plans at the national, regional or global levels:

- What level of monitoring and evaluation will be needed?
- Which areas will need monitoring within each sector?
- What tools will be necessary to carry out monitoring and evaluation (e.g. forms, checklists, reporting formats, etc.)?
- How will issues arising from monitoring and evaluation be addressed?
- How will the necessary staff/volunteers be identified and trained?
- How will beneficiary communities be involved throughout the process?



## Chapter 3

# Internal and external coordination

Coordination is key to successful disaster response, and is essential in ensuring timely and appropriate scaling-up of resources. Coordination activities can take place at different levels and in different forms. Good coordination is crucial for combining resources effectively and efficiently, in order to reach the disaster-affected more rapidly. It contributes to better cooperation, reduces the level of duplication and helps to ensure a well-organized operation. For the Red Cross Red Crescent, the two main areas of coordination are internal (within the Movement), and external.

The Movement's *Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief* outlines responsibilities with regard to coordination. Main points to consider include:

- Red Cross Red Crescent – at both national and international levels – should endeavour to take into account assistance being provided by other national and international organizations.
- National Societies may have to respond to disasters that are beyond their capacities, and should therefore make preparations for receiving and managing international assistance provided by the International Federation.
- National Societies should endeavour to conclude agreements on future mutual assistance in the event of disaster, with sister societies from neighbouring countries.
- The International Federation shall endeavour to negotiate pre-disaster agreements with National Societies from the most disaster-prone countries, aimed at enhancing national disaster preparedness activities.

## Internal coordination

### Movement coordination

The key responsibilities for coordination between Movement actors in international disasters are outlined in the *Seville Agreement* and *Supplementary Measures*, the International Federation's *Constitution*, and the *Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief*. It is very important to consider the role of any given component of the Movement in contingency planning for different disaster scenarios and to refer to the relevant policy and/or agreement to guide coordination, responsibilities, and action.

Although no two disasters will generate the same level of international participation, there are common scenarios that will require putting in place specific coordination mechanisms to manage the international response. The two scenarios described below are also relevant to regional (cross-border) disasters:

- 1 A natural disaster occurs in a non-conflict area and is beyond the capacity of the affected National Society. The *Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief* is the guiding policy to be followed to enable an effective response by the International Federation and its members. The *Seville Agreement* and the *Supplementary Measures* should be followed concerning coordination responsibilities.

- 2 A natural disaster occurs in a conflict area where ICRC is operational. The *Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures* are to be followed to determine who is responsible for carrying out disaster response/emergency relief and what action is to be taken regarding coordination with other Movement partners. Where the International Federation has responsibility, the *Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief* constitutes the guiding policy.

A number of coordination activities apply to both of these scenarios and should be included in disaster response and contingency planning, as well as in training, so as to enable a more cohesive Red Cross Red Crescent response:

- Coordination meetings – Plan to hold regular meetings with Movement partners to determine activities and roles;
- Mapping of Red Cross Red Crescent resources – Identification of Movement resources and competencies;
- Information management – Information-sharing on disaster impact, assessment and needs through input into DMIS;
- Communication means – Plan for continuous information and communication flow;
- Movement Coordination Frameworks – Plan for strategic and operational coordination;
- Partnership agreements – Identify existing agreements. Determine additional agreements needed to meet needs;
- Legal status agreements – Specify the legal status of the National Society and the International Federation delegation in the country.
- Movement Coordinators – Operational tools such as FACT, ERU, DREF and DMIS.
- Training and orientation – Ensure individuals react appropriately in the given situation according to coordinated roles.

These individual bullet points are explained in greater detail in the *Handbook – Coordination of International Disaster Response*, 2007.

## External coordination

In disaster response and contingency planning, it is also necessary to take account of the capacities and resources of institutions and organizations external to the Movement. Their presence and responsibilities in certain sectors or geographical areas are highly relevant to the disaster response or contingency plan.

These agencies or institutions can be categorized into three broad groups, according to their mission, role, and area of responsibility:

- 1 National governmental institutions (civil defence, ministry of health, national disaster management offices, military, etc.);
- 2 National or international non-governmental organizations (CARE, Oxfam, MSF, faith-based, etc.); and,
- 3 Multilateral and/or bilateral cooperation organizations (UN agencies, the IOM, ECHO, ASEAN, USAID, DFID, international/regional military, etc.). Remember that the United Nation's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is the UN-mandated organization for coordination in such situations.

It is not necessary to carry out an exhaustive analysis of each of these groups, but rather to indicate which may potentially have an important role during the response to a disaster. The following table provides a list of institutions and organizations to take into consideration:

Type of institution	Examples
Governmental coordination and disaster response entities (both in the affected country and in other countries).	Emergency management services/civil protection. Most countries have a national response committee, task force or council with which the Red Cross Red Crescent should seek to engage and coordinate. An affected country's military will, in many cases, play an active role.
Relief and rescue organizations (both in the affected country and in other countries).	Fire and ambulance services, police, national military, search and rescue groups, etc.
Relevant ministries whose areas of responsibility coincide with National Society programmes.	Ministries of health, education and the interior, meteorological and geological offices, etc.
Inter-governmental and regional organizations for coordination in emergency interventions.	NATO, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), etc.
UN agencies with programmes or activities in the prioritized areas or those with which the Movement has a history of collaboration.	UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, WHO, UNDP, OCHA, etc.
National non-governmental organizations with a presence and programmes in a particular area.	NGOs specialized in health, food security, shelter, water and sanitation, etc.
Non-governmental organizations with similar or complementary missions or programmes to those of the National Society, and with common donors or a history of close cooperation.	OXFAM, Save the Children, CARITAS, CARE, MSF, etc.
Projects with a significant impact in areas prioritized by the response/contingency plan.	World Bank, IADB, etc.
Other public or private organizations of relevance.	Academic and research centres.

See **Annex 9** for help in identifying organizational roles.

## United Nations partners

To ensure that international resources are used in the best possible way to benefit disaster-affected populations, the International Federation must actively engage in international coordination. Since 1994, the International Federation has had observer status at the United Nations General Assembly. At field level, this has translated into active collaboration with UN partners during emergency response operations. The current model in this regard is the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) country team. These teams are composed of NGOs, the Red Cross Red Crescent and UN agencies, and constitute the forum where these organizations meet to agree on preparedness and response.

The United Nations play a major role in coordination of international response during emergencies. It is therefore essential for the Red Cross Red Crescent to coordinate with UN agencies, whilst taking into account the specific mandate and principles of the Movement. It is important to be aware of how UN partners work, in implementing disaster response or contingency plans at the local, regional or global levels. Ideally, National Societies and International Federation delegations should have working relationships with UN agencies in their country or, at least, close familiarity with the scope of their work. It is worth noting that the International Federation has an increasing number of agreements in place with individual UN agencies within various sectors of humanitarian response. These are detailed later in this chapter.

### **Pre-existing agreements**

The International Federation secretariat works closely with its member National Societies and with the ICRC; it also collaborates on behalf of its membership with many other organizations, in order to carry out the International Federation's work more effectively. For example, the International Federation's secretariat has developed working agreements with a wide range of international partners, focusing on the priorities set out in *Strategy 2010* (i.e. disaster preparedness, disaster response, health and care in the community, and the promotion of principles and values). The following link shows the current active agreements within all core areas at the regional and global levels: <http://www.ifrc.org/who/agreement.asp>.

### **Cross-border coordination**

Sometimes risks or disasters are not restricted to one country, or may impact on another due to factors such as proximity or historical links. In formulating a disaster response or contingency plan, it is important to contact and involve National Society or delegation counterparts in neighbouring countries. Plans should include cross-border analyses of political events and their potential impact on the population, as well as the identification of particular vulnerabilities in border areas. Consider various scenarios (e.g. most likely, worst possible), and conduct simulations for cross-border response.

In cases of civil unrest, it is essential to take into account any security implications and plan accordingly to ensure the safety of Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff during the response phase. Clear communication lines between countries and within the National Society should be set out in the plans, and necessary telecommunications compatibility should be ensured in advance.

### **Regional and international coordination**

The International Federation's regional delegations have the responsibility of ensuring and maintaining contacts with relevant regional entities. These could include regional offices of ECHO, regional development banks (IADB, Asian Development Bank, etc.), and regional entities (e.g. ASEAN, African Union, CEPREDENAC, etc.). This should be done as part of an overall coordination policy to ensure contacts are in place and can be called upon when the National Society or delegation is preparing a disaster response or contingency plan. The IASC Inter-Agency Contingency Planning Guidelines have been specifically created to help in developing inter-agency contingency plans and should be used when doing so.

One of the main regional/international coordination mechanisms is the 'cluster approach', which has normally been agreed upon prior to emergencies, and which can therefore be put into practice dur-

ing an emergency response operation. It covers the main sectors of emergency response (e.g. health, water/sanitation, shelter, logistics, etc.) and applies to the humanitarian community as a whole. Each sector is led by a specific agency on a pre-agreed basis (i.e. WHO for health, the International Federation for emergency shelter in natural disasters, etc.) – although during an operation, lead agencies can agree to pass on their coordination role to other agencies<sup>5</sup>. In preparing regional, national or global plans, it is essential to take the cluster approach into account in order to ensure our involvement in humanitarian community-wide coordination, whilst making sure that the Movement's mandate and principles are not compromised.

Coordination within the Movement should also take place at this level when creating disaster response and contingency plans. It is essential that international and regional support is linked and provides mutual reinforcement. Furthermore, this must be in line with a National Society's own plans, so that such support provides added-value and does not hamper the national response during emergencies.

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<sup>5</sup> Additional details can be found in the IASC 'Guidance note on using the cluster approach to strengthen humanitarian response' on [www.reliefweb.int/humanitarianreform](http://www.reliefweb.int/humanitarianreform)

## Chapter 4

# Plan implementation and follow-up

For the response or contingency plan to be a dynamic and useful tool that enables quick and appropriate decision-making during disasters, it is also necessary to allot time and resources to awareness-raising, training, testing through simulations or drills, and updating. Developing plans should not be viewed as a static activity with a defined start and finish, but as a cyclical and on-going process integrated into the institution's daily strategies and tasks.

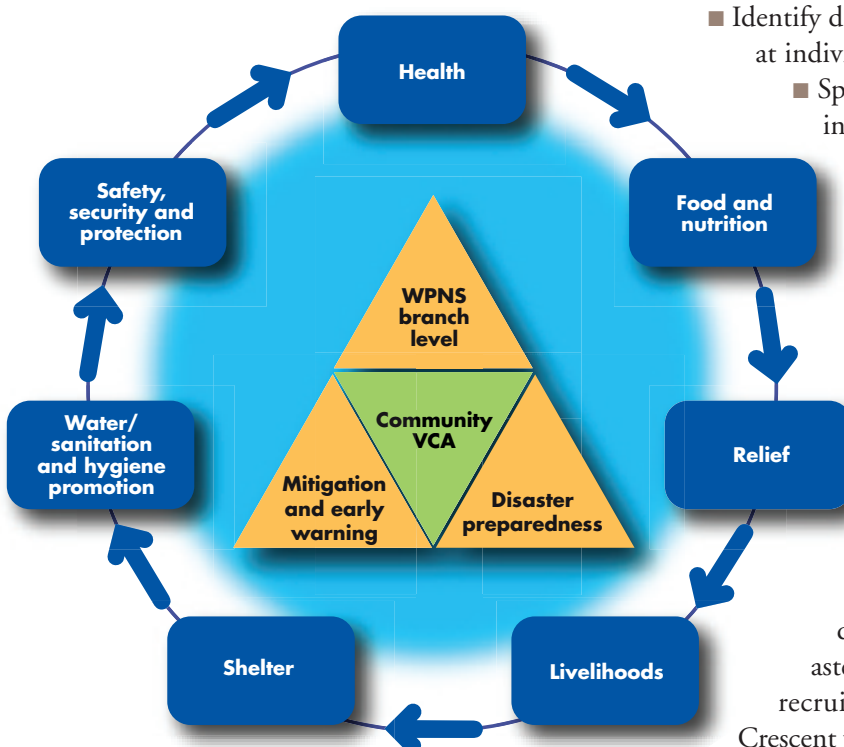
## Training and awareness of disaster response and contingency plans

The disaster response and/or contingency planning process will only be effective if those who provide response services and those who receive assistance know what to do and what to expect before, during and after an emergency. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies involved in response operations need to inform people in high-risk areas about official disaster response plans and related arrangements (see annex 10), as well as to educate them about basic measures they can take to reduce the impact of a potential disaster.

The disaster response or contingency plan should:

- Identify disaster preparedness measures that can be taken at individual and community levels;
- Specify how the local population will be notified in the event of an emergency, and ways in which people can volunteer to support the response.
- Tap into local knowledge and include this information in community preparedness and disaster response plans (this is what makes the Red Cross Red Crescent a truly community-based volunteer organization).

After all, it is family, neighbours and members of the local community who are always the first to arrive on the scene when a disaster occurs. For this reason, educating those whose lives or homes might be at risk during a disaster is a critical component of disaster response and contingency planning, as is the recruitment and retention of Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers. Such education or awareness-building may take the following forms:



## Public awareness, education and training

Through a variety of public education programmes, those threatened by a potential disaster will learn about what to expect and what they will be asked to do, or how they may participate in times of emergency. At the same time, those conducting public education programmes should also gather feedback from the local population about potential problems or gaps that may exist in the plan. The community has an innate understanding of its own risks, resources and capacities. It is important to remember that, in the field of disaster management, education is a two-way process. For example, if a group does not fully comprehend the warning sequences in a particular plan, then these may require adjustment or reworking.

## Specific disaster response training

Training should be designed for an adult population, specifically focusing on Red Cross Red Crescent disaster response training for both staff and volunteers. Some National Societies offer training in specific sectors such as damage/needs assessment, shelter, relief, community-based disaster preparedness, emergency health, etc. Many of these training sources can be found on FedNet<sup>6</sup>, under the disaster management resources framework. Training courses might also target other community-based organizations likely to provide critical services in the event of a disaster, even if that is not their current mandate. Training a pool of local outreach workers in high-risk areas will help to ensure that larger segments of the population possess the relevant skills and information to act as immediate response providers, prior to or during an emergency.

It is important to link or connect all training within the Movement, in order to ensure coordinated scaling-up from local to global. For example, national disaster response team (NDRT) training complements regional disaster response team (RDRT) training, which in turn complements global training initiatives for emergency response units (ERU) or field assessment and coordination teams (FACT). This ensures continuity and a basic common understanding of how each one fits into the system, and how the various parts of the disaster management system all fit together.

Finally, it must be stressed that training cannot be a one-time event. Refresher courses for volunteers, National Society staff, managers and delegates are essential.

## Exercises and simulations

The only way to know if a response or contingency plan can work is to put it into action, evaluate it and revise it, as appropriate. This can be done in one of two ways: (1) response exercises/simulations; and, (2) an after-action review of the plan's implementation and validity following an actual emergency.

Exercises provide an excellent opportunity to review the strengths and weaknesses of a plan. They do not necessarily need to include all actors, and can be undertaken as tabletop exercises (e.g. for decision-makers and planners). After-action reviews provide a good way to capture the lessons learned on a scheduled exercise. These lessons can then be incorporated into the disaster response plan, resulting in an improved plan and better disaster relief operations.

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<sup>6</sup> The DMRF pages are available in FedNet through the following link: <https://fednet.ifrc.org/sw72995.asp>

Emergency response simulations/rehearsals are a way to test the assumptions and procedures of a disaster response or contingency plan, when resources and time are limited. Situations as similar as possible to the scenarios predicted by the plans should be re-created through simulations and training exercises. Participants should be encouraged to play the roles and act out functions as established for them by the disaster response or contingency plan.

Such simulations and exercises will expose both the strengths and weaknesses of a plan. Ideally, simulations and exercises should be system-wide and include all components that would be involved in an actual disaster situation (e.g. National Societies, governmental agencies, NGOs and other groups). Tabletop exercises, which test procedures, as well as the reactions of decision-makers and planners, are also valid and important.

Most simulations and exercises cannot portray the full dynamics and chaos of a real disaster response operation. Furthermore, participants may engage in simulations only half-heartedly. However, these should not be used as excuses for avoiding the need to test; after all, it is the nearest anyone will get, until disaster strikes, to seeing if the disaster response or contingency plan is effective.

Simulations and exercises will also help to re-emphasize points made in separate training programmes and to test the system as a whole. Rehearsals often expose gaps in disaster response or contingency plans that might otherwise be overlooked.

Simulations and exercises are a useful way of keeping plans fresh, especially during extended disaster-free periods, and should be followed up with discussions on ways to update and modify plans in order to improve them.

## Updating and evaluating the plan

After finishing the first version of the disaster response or contingency plan, it is important to determine if the structure and contents are best suited to actual response capabilities. The previous section outlined the need to test the plans and, based on lessons and conclusions, to make the appropriate changes. It is also important to recognize that disaster response or contingency plans may become outdated due to social, economic, organizational and other changes that have occurred since the plans were initially developed.

Keeping the disaster response or contingency plan current and relevant is a challenging task, but can be achieved by scheduling regular reviews. The plan should specify the frequency of such regular reviews (e.g. every six months, every year, etc.) and the persons responsible for updating the plan. Information that requires regular updating includes:

- Contact information of emergency response personnel and agencies (i.e. phone, mobile and fax numbers, e-mail addresses, etc.);
- Logistics transportation plans;
- Availability of emergency structures; and
- Lists of available resources.



The process of updating procedures outlined in disaster response and contingency plans can be very simple and should include, at least, the following elements:

**Which sections should be updated?**

A detailed list of the parts of the plan that must be updated, highlighting the most important contents. Not all elements will need to be updated with the same frequency or in the same way.

**When or how frequently to update?**

Clearly define the frequency with which each part of the plan should be updated. This will be according to the importance of the information, and the frequency with which it is susceptible to change. For example, anything referring to resources will change more often than data related to the general context. In general, it is advisable to update contingency plans much more frequently than disaster response plans.

**How or with which methodology should the plan be updated?**

The most appropriate methodology should be chosen according to the part of the plan under consideration. Certain sections can easily be updated by consulting internet pages or institutional and strategic documents, while other sections may require more extensive consultation, evaluation, or simulation and training exercises.

**Who has responsibility for updating which section?**

Responsibilities for updating different parts of the plan should be divided up, ideally making optimal use of existing organizational resources. Normally, human resource managers update those sections related to capacities, whilst response scenarios and strategies are the responsibility of programme directors or technicians. We strongly recommend that one person be responsible for leading the process through to completion.

**What resources are required to update the plan?**

If additional resources for updating are required, this should be highlighted and reflected in the National Society's budget.

**Registering when changes have been made to the plan**

It is important to maintain a registry of when and who has made any updates to the disaster response or contingency plan. This registry should include the number of copies made and who has received them, since this makes it easier to distribute subsequent updates.

A disaster response or contingency plan's validity and usefulness can also be evaluated once it has been implemented in real situations, such as when a disaster occurs. Evaluations should be made frequently using real data – based on different methodologies, depending on whether the evaluation is carried out during or after a disaster response operation.

**Evaluation during (real time) and after the response**

The true test of a plan is in its implementation during actual disaster relief operations. A relief operation tests planning concepts and assumptions. Evaluating an operation affords an opportunity to determine how well the plan's concept of operations, management systems, procedures and processes actually address operational issues and requirements.

During a particular event, a person or group of persons (usually considered external if they have no responsibilities within the plan or if their support is not necessary) are designated to act as ‘observers’ during the first days of plan implementation. They use pre-established criteria and indicators to evaluate different aspects of the plan in order to extract conclusions, lessons learned and actions necessary for its improvement. This type of evaluation has a special value in emergencies whose scope and complexity (e.g. involving many humanitarian actors, or affecting multiple countries, etc.) require closer observation.

Methods of evaluating operations include: the use of secondary data (reports from similar operations and/or other agencies, newspapers, other evaluations); interviews (using focus groups, questionnaires, interviews with key personnel and beneficiaries); and direct observation. With all methods, key issues are identified and recommendations developed to ensure that future plans and relief operations build on successes and address identified problem areas.

Aggressive and thorough follow-up on key issues and recommendations is fundamental to the success of the evaluation process.

## **Responsibilities for evaluating disaster response and contingency plans**

### **National Society disaster response and contingency plans**

National Societies determine the required content and format of their own disaster response plans and the process used to evaluate those plans. National Society leadership should require a formal evaluation of each national and branch level disaster response plan at least every three years; however, the plan should also be evaluated whenever there is a significant change made to it, as well as following any significant disaster relief operation. The International Federation’s disaster management technical staff can assist in the development, evaluation and review of these plans, as requested. Together with regional delegations, National Societies should evaluate and update their response and contingency plans every three years.

### **International Federation disaster response and contingency plans**

The Coordination and Programme Division (CPD) at the International Federation will formally evaluate each regional disaster plan every three years; it will also conduct an annual review to ensure that the plan describes each required element sufficiently to enable Movement coordination and provide disaster response in an effective and timely manner. This includes the responsibility to evaluate high-risk area contingency plans on an annual basis – by way of an exercise with the relevant National Societies or an evaluation based on a large-scale disaster operation. *International Federation regional heads of delegation and disaster management coordinators will be responsible and accountable for ensuring that regional disaster response and contingency plans are in place.*

## Chapter 5

# Plan standards, accountability and linkages

These guidelines aim to provide advice and suggestions to help disaster managers produce disaster response and contingency plans of high quality, relevance and usefulness. This is not only because disaster response falls within the mandate of National Societies. It is also an obligation to the people most in need of Red Cross Red Crescent assistance and whose lives depend on it during times of crisis. Disaster response and contingency plans must be accountable to beneficiaries and meet the high standards developed throughout decades of disaster response experience.

These guidelines have also repeatedly stressed that disaster response and contingency planning are processes that cannot be carried out in isolation. In order to be relevant and useful, disaster response and contingency plans must be a collaborative effort. They must also be linked to the plans, systems or processes of other governmental, partner or Movement bodies at all levels – national, regional and global.

### Standards and accountability

When disaster response or contingency plans are being developed, we recommend that planners be aware and make use of policies, principles, standards and indicators that have already been developed. These include the *Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures*, the *Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response*, the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations in Disaster Relief*, the *Code of Conduct* for staff, the *Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief*, the *Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement* and the International Federation's disaster management policies, guidelines for well-prepared National Societies, the *Better Programming Initiative*, and *Gender in Disasters* and *Good humanitarian donorship*, among others.

These documents can then be applied in order to promote and ensure standards and accountability; they can also be used in developing planning assumption indicators, and drawn on to monitor and evaluate disaster response impact.

Ultimately, all of these tools are aimed at ensuring that the needs of the affected people and communities are at the forefront of any disaster response.

## Standards and accountability – Issues to remember in disaster response

### Assessment

Include questions of access, awareness, and understanding about the Fundamental Principles, Sphere, the Code of Conduct, the Seville Agreement, and gender and broader protection issues in the initial assessment. Plan programme activities accordingly, with a view to promoting and improving these aspects.

### Access to information

Procure enough handbooks of the various tools and guidelines, so that people have access to the information when they need it. Translate any of these tools into local languages to further their understanding and adoption.

### Training

Conduct basic and refresher training for existing staff using materials available in local languages. Arrange training on these tools for any new staff and volunteers.

### Advocacy

Communicate the need to adhere to standards and the importance of the Fundamental Principles, the Code of Conduct, the *Seville Agreement* and *Supplementary Measures* and the *Principles and Rules for Disaster Relief* within the Red Cross Red Crescent, and to governmental and other local partners. Document and report on work with tools such as Sphere, in order to demonstrate their application and encourage further donor support.

### Monitoring

Monitor observance of standards and principles and identify areas that need further work. Note that the indicators from the 'Characteristics of a well-prepared National Society', Sphere and the principles in the Code of Conduct can be used within a project-monitoring plan.

### Evaluation

Evaluate adherence to WPNS, Sphere standards and the Code of Conduct, and identify lessons learned and areas for future improvement. The Sphere project web site<sup>7</sup> provides some good examples on how to use the Code of Conduct in project evaluation.

As explained in the previous chapter, plans must be continually monitored and updated to maintain their effectiveness. If a disaster response or contingency plan is being evaluated following an actual emergency, International Federation delegations and National Societies can review and update their existing plans to reflect the reality, opportunities and challenges experienced during the disaster response. Questions that should be asked during this review include:

- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the disaster response or contingency plan? How might it be modified or improved?
- What caused the most casualties and damage? What, if anything, can the National Society do to mitigate this or prevent it from happening in the future?
- What were the main difficulties in getting assistance to people in need? How might the National Society overcome this in the future?
- How did the warning system work? What improvements are required?

<sup>7</sup> The upload/download section of the Sphere Project (found on the main menu) leads to Sphere monitoring and evaluation and audit examples. [http://www.sphereproject.org/component/option,com\\_docman/Itemid,203/lang,English/](http://www.sphereproject.org/component/option,com_docman/Itemid,203/lang,English/)

- What mistakes were made? What changes must be made to avoid these in the future?
- What was done well? What steps can be taken to ensure that the National Society will continue to maintain this standard?
- Which supplies were available and which were lacking? How might shortfalls be remedied in the future?
- What was the level and quality of coordination with the National Society and with other external partners? What additional coordination is required? How might this coordination be improved in the future?

## Linkages between national, regional and international tools (local to global)

As disasters “know no boundaries”, it is important that plans developed at national level by National Societies be incorporated into regional plans. In the case of complex emergencies, it is sometimes easier to anticipate whether one or more neighbouring countries will be affected. Such elements should become evident during the planning process (see **annex 11**).

The International Federation’s regional delegations have worked hard in recent years to support the rapid deployment of resources to disaster-affected countries or regions. This has included training and equipping disaster response teams (branch, national and regional), as well as establishing logistics bases and pre-positioning relief stocks.

The ability of regional delegations to respond quickly and appropriately is directly dependent on their awareness of disaster response and contingency plans for high-probability emergencies developed at the national level. National Societies or delegations at country level must ensure that regional disaster managers are either informed of or, preferably, included in the national planning processes.

Just as local planning should feed into regional planning; the same applies to the need for regional planners to make use of tools and resources at the global level. All those involved in disaster response or contingency planning, regardless of level, need to be aware of these tools and the ways in which to access them. Some of the major global tools are listed below, while a more detailed list and information about how to access them are provided in the tool box section of DMIS<sup>8</sup>.

### Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF)

The International Federation’s DREF represents a pool of un-earmarked money that can be used to guarantee immediate funding in response to emergencies. The fund is managed by the secretariat’s CPD division and is a valuable part of the organization’s overall disaster response capacity.

### Appeals

When initial information from a disaster-stricken country indicates that resources from partner National Societies and other donors will be required to meet the needs of the people and of the host National Society, an emergency appeal may be launched. This can be based on the initial assessment and/or information available, disaster and response history of the given country and overall knowl-

<sup>8</sup> The tool box section of DMIS is available at the following link: <https://www-secure.ifrc.org/dmis/toolbox/toolbox.asp>

edge of the type of disaster. The initial appeal is often preliminary and is followed by revisions within days or a week, when more information becomes available directly from the field.

### **National disaster response teams (NDRT)**

NDRT are the national disaster response teams of a specific National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society. The NDRT concept should not be seen as something new in terms of Red Cross Red Crescent response mechanisms. Members of national disaster response teams may have different types of skills, depending on the national context (i.e. logistics, psychological support, water and sanitation, health in emergencies, relief, shelter, etc.). National Societies may have different response mechanisms, such as:

- 1 Community disaster response teams;
- 2 Branch disaster response teams; and,
- 3 National disaster response teams.

### **Regional disaster response teams (RDRT)**

The main tasks of RDRT are to assist the host National Society in assessment and various sectoral responses in disasters. The RDRT is an International Federation team and acts as a regional, cross-border partnership arrangement for both disaster preparedness and disaster response. The team consists of trained staff and volunteers from National Societies within the specific regions.

### **Field assessment and coordination teams (FACT)**

Field assessment and coordination teams are ready to be deployed within 6-24 hours notice, to coordinate the Movement's response to both sudden and slow onset disasters, including analysing assessment information and supporting the drafting of plans of action. The teams are composed of experienced disaster managers and sectoral experts from National Societies and the International Federation secretariat who are trained in a common methodology.

### **Emergency response units (ERU)**

Emergency response units provide the International Federation with a key disaster response tool that includes flexible modules comprising: pre-trained technical specialists; standardized equipment; readiness to be operational within 48 hours of deployment; the ability to be fully self-contained for one month; and the capacity to be deployed for up to four months.

The ERU can provide a range of services (i.e. health, water, relief), plus essential support functions (i.e. logistics, telecommunications and IT) where local facilities and infrastructure have been damaged, overwhelmed by needs or are non-existent. ERU have been deployed to sites of natural disasters, including earthquakes, floods and hurricanes, and have also been used following population displacements.

The various ERU are sponsored by National Societies, while the International Federation secretariat is responsible for the overall coordination, deployment, technical support, and evaluation of ERU deployments and related activities.

## **Disaster Management Information System (DMIS)**

DMIS is an interactive, password-protected website providing disaster monitoring, mapping, field reports, information exchange on disaster response operations, country data sheets, fact sheets and other resources, procedures and guidelines for disaster response practitioners in National Societies and in the field.

Local and regional inputs to global tools such as DMIS are important to alert the wider disaster management community, especially if the scale of an emergency requires external assistance. The rapidity and effectiveness of disaster response will be enhanced if there is widespread awareness of the seriousness of a situation, with timely updates, and if needs are communicated directly from the affected area. Inputs received from the field form the basis for information bulletins, allocations from DREF and appeals to donors.

## **Disaster management resource framework (DMRF)**

The International Federation and its members have an unparalleled wealth of experience in disaster management and many tools, training packages, policies and other guidance documents have been created by the secretariat in Geneva, delegations in the field and National Societies themselves. Many of these resources, along with disaster management definitions, concepts and knowledge-sharing platforms, can be found in the DMRF on FedNet.

## **International disaster response laws, rules and principles (IDRL)**

The International Federation secretariat, together with National Societies, governments and other partners have committed to leading global research and advocacy on IDRL, examining ways in which national, regional and international legal and policy frameworks could be better used to facilitate and improve international disaster response when it is needed. More information, including a database of existing legislation, can be accessed on the International Federation's website: [www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/IDRL](http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/IDRL)



Knud Falk/Danish Red Cross



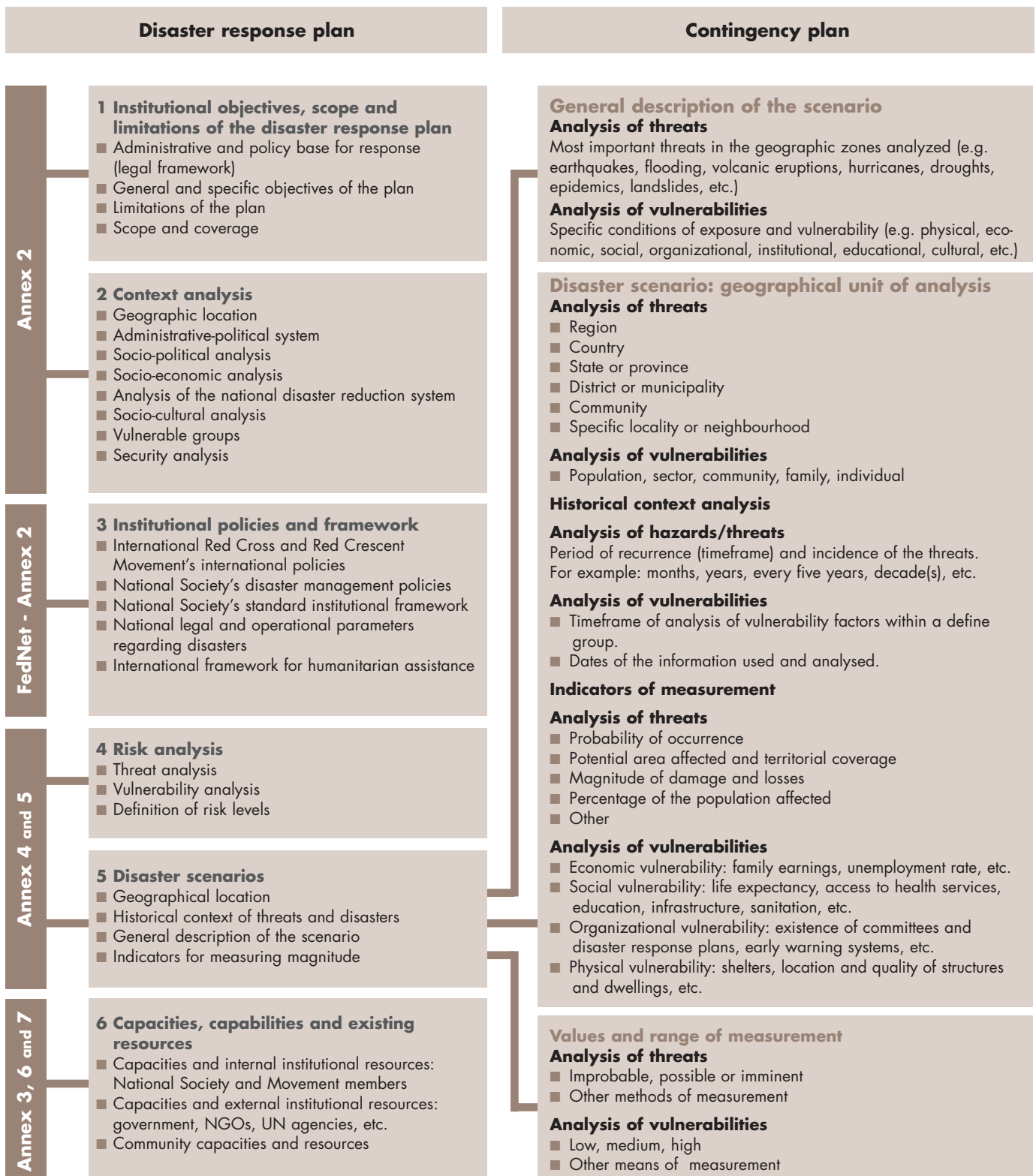
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# Annex 1

## Disaster response and contingency plans – Suggested structure/minimum contents





## Annex 2

---

### Roles and mandate

*Use this form to briefly describe the National Society's mandate and policies, and present a context analysis.*

**Specify: What is the National Society's role in times of disaster or during complex emergencies?**

---

**Explain: Is the National Society's role in times of disaster or during complex emergencies reflected in governmental plans?**

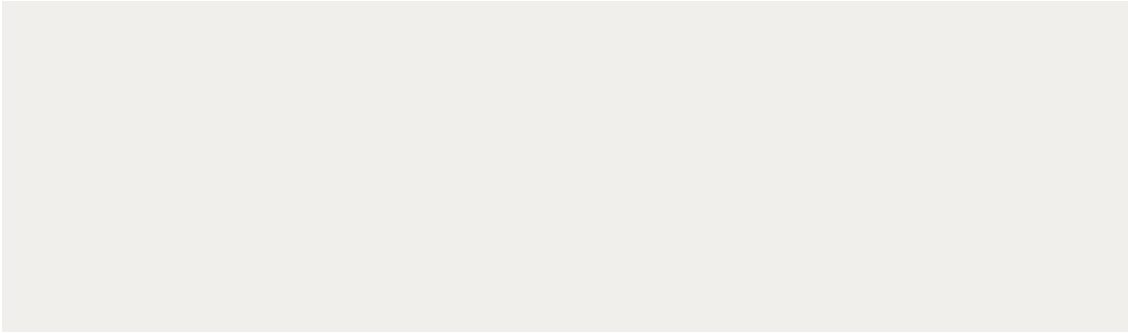
---

**Describe: What exemptions from taxes and customs duties does the National Society benefit from in time of disaster?**

---

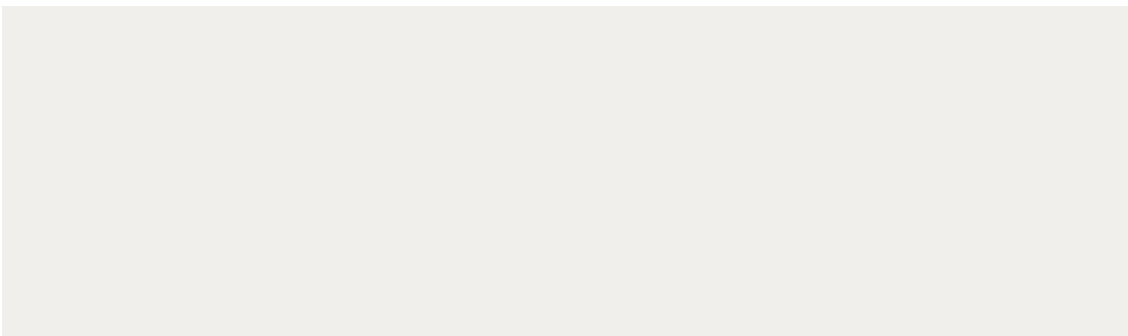
**Explain: What is the National Society's constituency?**

---



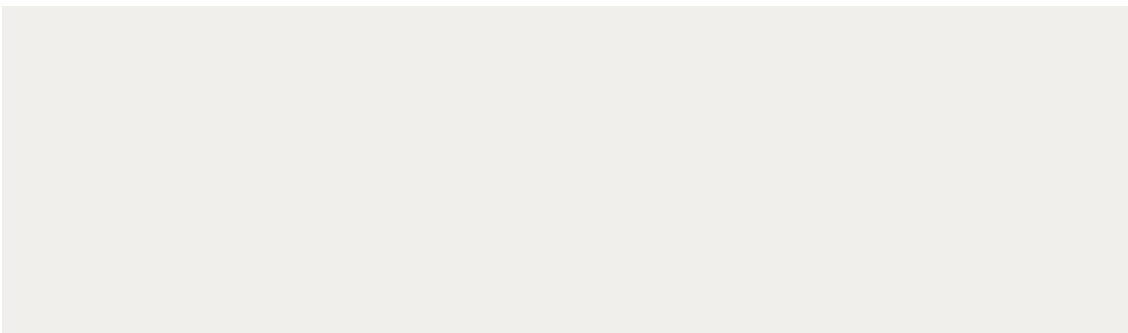
**Specify: What are the National Society's human, material and technological capacities?**

---



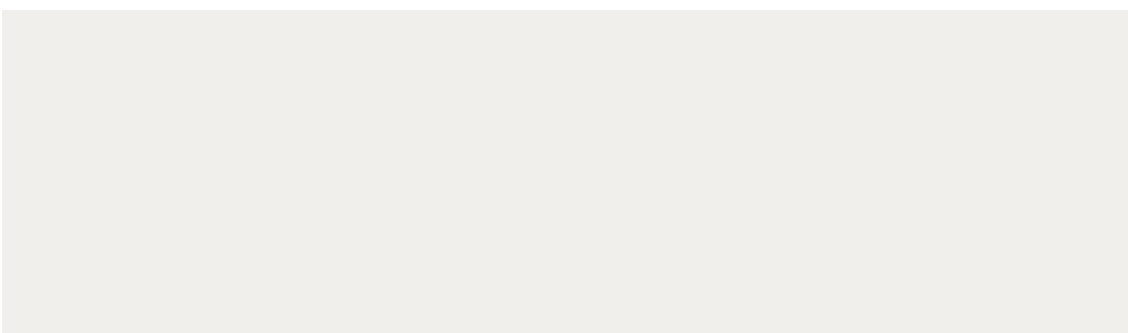
**Describe: What are the limitations and scope of the plan?**

---



**Present briefly: Socio-political, economic and cultural analysis**

---



## Annex 3

### Emergency contacts

#### Example 1: Emergency contact details for National Societies

National Society	Focal point	Team members (include phone numbers)	Back-up focal point
<b>Disaster response area of responsibility</b>  <b>Example: Emergency response focal point</b>	Name:		Name:
	E-mail:		E-mail:
	Office phone number:		Office phone number:
	Fax number:		Fax number:
	Mobile phone number:		Mobile phone number:
	Home phone number:		Home phone number:
	Other phone number:		Other phone number:

#### Example 2: Emergency contact details for International Federation office

Country/ regional delegations	Focal point	Team members (include phone numbers)	Back-up focal point
<b>Disaster response area of responsibility</b>  <b>Example: Activating response services</b>	Name:		Name:
	E-mail:		E-mail:
	Office phone number:		Office phone number:
	Fax number:		Fax number:
	Mobile phone number:		Mobile phone number:
	Home phone number:		Home phone number:
	Other phone number:		Other phone number:

#### Complete the above for the following areas of responsibility:

Communicating with headquarters, managing external relations and appeals, communicating with the media, coordinating and liaising with other agencies and services, managing administrative tasks.

# Annex 3

## Emergency contacts

Emergency contact details – Include all host and supporting/participating National Societies in region

Organization	First contact	Position	Skills	Back-up	Position	Skills
<b>National Society</b>  <b>Emergency contacts</b>	Name:			Name:		
	E-mail:			E-mail:		
	Phone number of the institution:			Phone number of the institution:		
	Fax number:			Fax number:		
	Mobile phone number:			Mobile phone number:		
	Home phone number:			Home phone number:		
<b>International Federation secretariat Geneva</b>  <b>Emergency contacts</b>	Name:			Name:		
	E-mail:			E-mail:		
	Phone number of the institution:			Phone number of the institution:		
	Fax number:			Fax number:		
	Mobile phone number:			Mobile phone number:		
	Home phone number:			Home phone number:		
<b>International Federation zonal office</b>  <b>Emergency contacts</b>	Name:			Name:		
	E-mail:			E-mail:		
	Phone number of the institution:			Phone number of the institution:		
	Fax number:			Fax number:		
	Mobile phone number:			Mobile phone number:		
	Home phone number:			Home phone number:		
<b>International Federation DMU</b>  <b>Emergency contacts</b>	Name:			Name:		
	E-mail:			E-mail:		
	Phone number of the institution:			Phone number of the institution:		
	Fax number:			Fax number:		
	Mobile phone number:			Mobile phone number:		
	Home phone number:			Home phone number:		
<b>International Federation country office</b>  <b>Emergency contacts</b>	Name:			Name:		
	E-mail:			E-mail:		
	Phone number of the institution:			Phone number of the institution:		
	Fax number:			Fax number:		
	Mobile phone number:			Mobile phone number:		
	Home phone number:			Home phone number:		

## Annex 4

### Hazard, vulnerability, capacity and risk analyses

#### Annex 4a

#### Hazard/risk analysis

Use this form to help to determine the probability of hazards, based on an analysis of relevant data.

<b>Country:</b>			
<b>Geographical location:</b>			
Hazard	High probability	Medium probability	Low probability

#### Annex 4b

Use this form to help to understand possible risk, once the analysis of vulnerability is completed.

Risk analysis – Geographical location		
	Probability	Comments
<b>Hazard 1</b>		
Consequences	Worst case scenario	
Consequences	Severe scenario	
Overall risk		
Likely triggers		
Seasonality		
Risk analysis – Geographical location		
	Probability	Comments
<b>Hazard 2</b>		
Consequences	Worst case scenario	
Consequences	Severe scenario	
Overall risk		
Likely triggers		
Seasonality		



## Annex 4c

Use this form to help to summarize the consequences of the hazard for a particular area considered to be at risk

<b>Country:</b>					
<b>Geographical location:</b>					
Hazard	% of population at risk	Environmental risk	Economic risk	Social risk	Livelihood risk

## Annex 4d

### Potential needs

Use this form to help to identify potential needs and the resources necessary to meet them.

Potential emergency needs	Typical need	Potential emergency resources Role? Responsibility? (yes or no)			
		Local population/volunteers	National Society	Civil defence	Others
<b>Immediate needs</b>					
Search and rescue					
First aid					
Emergency evacuation					
<b>Water and sanitation needs</b>					
Distribution, storage, processing					
Rehabilitation/development of alternative sources					
Disposal of excreta					
Disposal of garbage					
Personal hygiene					
Insect and rodent control					
<b>Food and nutritional needs</b>					
Short-term distribution					
Long-term distribution					
Supplementary/curative feeding					
Agriculture					
Nutritional monitoring					

Potential emergency needs	Typical need	Potential emergency resources Role? Responsibility? (yes or no)			
		Local population/ volunteers	National Society	Civil defence	Others
<b>Shelter needs</b>					
Emergency shelter					
Buildings/structures					
Blankets					
Fuel for dwellings					
Kitchen utensils					
<b>Health-related needs</b>					
Personal health					
Reconstruction, transport, equipment					
Medical supplies					
Immunisation					
Diarrhoea control					
Infectious disease control					
<b>Social welfare and restoring family links</b>					
Community social services					
Street children					
Schools/education					
Restoring family links					
<b>Safety and security needs</b>					
Well-being					
Control of theft					
Control of violence					
Control of abuse of power					
<b>Other types of emergency needs?</b>					
Agreements with others partners					
Community disaster plans					
Community solidarity plans					

## Annex 5

### Scenario building

Use this form to understand potential emergency needs in relation to a particular hazard.

	Earthquakes	Floods	Population movement	Famine/drought	Other disasters
Search and rescue					
First aid		F	O4	S	S
Emergency evacuation		F	O4	S	S
<b>Water and sanitation</b>					
Distribution, storage, processing	F1	F	F	F	
Rehabilitation/development of alternative sources	F1	O2	F	F	
Disposal of excreta	FU	OU	F	S	
Disposal of garbage	FU	OU	F	S	
Personal hygiene	FU	OU	F	S	
Insect and rodent control	OU	F	S	S	
<b>Food and nutrition</b>					
Short-term distribution		F	O	F	F
Long-term distribution		OU	FR	F	F
Supplementary/curative feeding		S	O	O	F
Agriculture		S3	F	F	F
Nutritional monitoring		S	O	F	S
<b>Shelter and household goods</b>					
Emergency shelter		SC	S	F	S
Buildings/structures		F	O4	F	S
Blankets		SC	SC	SC	S
Fuel for dwellings		S	O	F	O
Kitchen utensils		F	O4	F	S
<b>Health</b>					
Personal health		F5	O	F	O
Reconstruction, transport, equipment		F	O	F	S
Medical supplies		F5	O	F	O
Immunisation		S	O	F	F
Diarrhoea control		S	F	F	F
Infectious disease control		S	F	F	F
<b>Social welfare and restoring family links</b>					
Community social services		F	F	F	S
Street children		O	O	F	O
Schools/education		F	O	F	S
Restoring family links		F	F	F	S

Needs emerging frequently	F	1	Only if direction of underground flows change
Needs emerging moderately often	O	2	If wells or normal surface sources are contaminated or inaccessible
Needs emerging seldom	S	3	If main irrigation systems destroyed
Needs in urban areas	U	4	Only in case of sudden floods
Needs in rural areas	R	5	First few days only, to treat the affected.
Climate-related needs	C		

## Annex 6

### Areas of intervention (based on capacities and resources)

This form can also be used to detail intervention capacities from an institutional perspective.

Areas of intervention	Red Cross Red Crescent branch If yes, explain capacity and resources available, and timeframe.	Red Cross Red Crescent headquarters If yes, explain capacity and resources available, and timeframe.	International Federation secretariat If yes, explain capacity and resources available, and timeframe.	Sister National Society If yes, explain capacity and resources available, and timeframe.
<b>First response</b>				
Search and rescue				
First aid				
Emergency evacuation				
Emergency assessments				
Emergency relief aid				
Restoring family links				
Health in emergencies				
Emergency water distribution				
<b>Water and sanitation</b>				
Distribution, storage, processing				
Rehabilitation/development of alternative sources				
Disposal of excreta				
Disposal of garbage				
Personal hygiene				
Insect and rodent control				
<b>Food and nutrition</b>				
Short-term distribution				
Long-term distribution				
Supplementary/curative feeding				
Agriculture				
Nutritional monitoring				
<b>Shelter and household goods</b>				
Emergency shelter management				
Emergency shelter support				
Buildings/structures				
Blankets				
Fuel for dwellings				
Kitchen utensils				

<b>Areas of intervention</b>	<b>Red Cross Red Crescent branch</b> If yes, explain capacity and resources available, and timeframe.	<b>Red Cross Red Crescent headquarters</b> If yes, explain capacity and resources available, and timeframe.	<b>International Federation secretariat</b> If yes, explain capacity and resources available, and timeframe.	<b>Sister National Society</b> If yes, explain capacity and resources available, and timeframe.
<b>Health</b>				
Personal health				
Reconstruction, transport, equipment				
Medical supplies				
Immunisation				
Diarrhoea control				
Infectious disease control				
Psychological support				
<b>Social welfare and restoring family links</b>				
Community social services				
Street children				
Schools/education				
Tracing				
<b>Logistics</b>				
Procurement				
Transportation				
Warehousing				
<b>Safety and security</b>				
Well-being				
Control of theft				
Control of violence				
Control of abuse of power				
<b>Other</b>				

## Annex 7

### Areas of intervention local-global

#### NDRT (BDRT) national database

Name	Position	Skills	Languages	Availability for mission	Gender	Nationality

#### RDRT regional database

Name	Position	Skills	Languages	Availability for mission	Gender	Nationality

#### FACT, ERU, and database of other human resources in the region

Name	Position	Skills	Languages	Availability for mission	Gender	Nationality

#### Resource mapping

National Society	NDRT	Vehicule Field vehicles Trucks	Emergency equipment Radio VHF, HF Satellite phone	ERU	Warehouses Number Capacity	Emergency stocks Food Non-food Shelter

## Annex 8

### Essential information

Use this form to manage basic and essential information.

<b>National Society:</b>	<b>Form completed by:</b>
--------------------------	---------------------------

#### 1 Contact details for coordination purposes with international donors, partners and media in the event of a disaster:

Primary contact name:	Secondary contact name (back-up person):
Name:	Name:
E-mail:	E-mail:
Office phone number:	Office phone number:
Fax number:	Fax number:
Mobile phone number:	Mobile phone number:
Home phone number:	Home phone number:
Other phone number:	Other phone number:

#### 2 In case of a large-scale disaster, additional contacts may be required for coordinating and providing information to international donors, partners and the mass media. Please enter as many names as needed:

Primary contact name:	Secondary contact name (back-up person):
Name:	Name:
E-mail:	E-mail:
Office phone number:	Office phone number:
Fax number:	Fax number:
Mobile phone number:	Mobile phone number:
Home phone number:	Home phone number:
Other phone number:	Other phone number:

#### 3 In order to estimate the National Society's actual response capacity in the event of a disaster, please provide the following information:

Number of volunteers available to support the National Society's response during:	Main National Society activities (e.g. rescue, first aid, blood donation, tracing, damage and needs assessment)	National Society logistics capacity for relief distribution:
First 24 hours:		For how many people?
First 72 hours:		For how long?
First week:		
First month:		

<b>National Society:</b>		<b>Form completed by:</b>	
<b>4 Previous disasters and main hazards:</b>			
Last major disaster to affect the country	What was the overall impact?	Geographical area affected	
Main disasters over the past ten years (earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, fires, etc)		Most vulnerable areas in the country	
National Society branches with low response capacity (include geographical area and main hazards)		National Society branches with medium to high response capacity (include geographical area and main hazards)	
<b>5 Basic information for National Society radio communications (if functioning on a regular basis):</b>			
Radio frequency	Operational hours	Other methods of contact (e.g. via amateur radio operators)	
		Contact information:	
<b>6 Relevant information for the following agencies:</b>			
National emergency office  Phone number: Fax number: Website:	Police headquarters:  Phone number: Fax number:	Fire department headquarters  Phone number: Fax number:	
<b>7 Financial details for international donations:</b>			
Any specific message that you would like to convey?			
Bank account number: Web page address: E-mail address: National Society address:			



<b>National Society:</b>	<b>Form completed by:</b>
--------------------------	---------------------------

**8 In the event of a disaster and based on past experience, please indicate the six main POTENTIAL NEEDS in order of priority:**

Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Priority 4	Priority 5	Priority 6

**9 Contact details (focal points) for:**

<b>Government Emergency : Operation Centre (EOC)</b>	E-mail: Office phone number: Fax number: Mobile phone number: Home phone number: Pager:
<b>Health authorities</b>	E-mail: Office phone number: Fax number: Mobile phone number: Home phone number: Pager:
<b>Military/Police</b>	E-mail: Office phone number: Fax number: Mobile phone number: Home phone number: Pager:
<b>Welfare authorities</b>	E-mail: Office phone number: Fax number: Mobile phone number: Home phone number: Pager:
<b>Civil defence</b>	E-mail: Office phone number: Fax number: Mobile phone number: Home phone number: Pager:
<b>International Federation</b>	E-mail: Office phone number: Fax number: Mobile phone number: Home phone number: Pager:



## Annex 10

### Preparedness and capacity building

#### Preparedness activities

Activities	By whom	When
1 Provide xxx supplies and xxx equipment (such as xxx) for all health centres in districts that are most vulnerable to cholera to ensure that a standing treatment capacity of 5,000 cases is in place.		
2 Procure additional stocks of food commodities (eg., maize, vegetable oil, etc.) as a contingency stock for immediate distribution.		
3 Map the locations of Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres and Supplementary Feeding Centres and general food distribution points in all flood-prone areas.		
4 Procure additional seeds/agricultural inputs as a contingency stock for immediate distribution in case of flooding.		
5 Identify, stock and pre-position tents and other items for flood-prone areas for community/household use.		
6 Identify and upgrade existing capacity of water and sanitation structures in areas likely to temporarily host displaced people.		
7 Procure school materials, as well as teaching and learning kits for rapid distribution.		
8 Other		

#### Mitigation and capacity-building activities

Activities	By whom	When
1 Retrofit logistics centre in xxx and improve roof conditions of the warehouse.		
2 Install back-up generator for telecommunications system in case of electricity failure.		
3 Other (etc.)		

## Annex 11

### Regional potential hazards

#### Regional representation essential emergency information template

(This document is on DMIS and must be updated by the International Federation regional representation or the zone. The regional representative or the head of zone may delegate this task; however, he/she is ultimately responsible for ensuring that it is carried out)

Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Potential hazards faced by National Societies in the region that could exceed National capacity and require external assistance**

National Societies	Strong winds/tornado	Flood	Drought	Landslide	Fire	Earthquake	Snowfall	Man-made disaster	Industrial disaster	Other
	L	S	L	M	L	S	M	L	M	
	L	S	M	M	S	M	M	L	L	
	L	S	M	M	M	S	M	M	M	
	L	M	L	L	S	S	L	M	M	
	L	S	L	L	M	S	M	M	L	
	L	S	M	M	L	M	M	L	L	

Legend: S – severe; M – moderate; L – low

# Annex 11

## Pre-disaster preparedness for response

	(Region) National Societies		Regional representation		Zones/DMU	
		Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
<b>ON A REGULAR BASIS</b>	<b>Monitoring and Preparedness</b>					
	<b>Monitoring and Preparedness (continued)</b>					
	<b>Information/ Reporting/ Communications</b>					
	<b>Finance/ Administration</b>					

## Annex 12

### Standard operating procedures (SOP)

The purpose of SOP is to ensure that certain tasks are carried out in a specific way by key people or units. SOPs are a way to ensure that tasks specified in the Disaster Response and/or Contingency Plan are carried out quickly and according to pre-agreed criteria. SOPs constitute the link between these plans and the actual operational response.

SOPs must:

- Be simple and easy to understand (preferably in checklist format).
- Be able to stand on their own.
- Clearly indicate how a task is to be done, who is responsible for ensuring that it is done and who actually performs it.
- Be approved and disseminated within the organization, and used in training.

Flow charts can be used to help in visualizing the entire body of response-related SOPs or the specific SOPs relating to a particular sector.

SOPs should, at a minimum, contain the following:

---

**Title:** showing what the SOP covers. *Example: SOP on establishing a logistics chain.*

---

**Date of issue:** (e.g. 1 May 2007)

**Period of validity:** (e.g. 1 May 2007 – 30 April 2009)

**To be reviewed by:** (e.g. 30 April 2008)

---

**Purpose of the SOP:** *Example: In the event of floods in District XX, establish a logistics chain from international ports of arrival to the main warehouse in YY-town in support of relief, shelter, watsan, health, etc.*

---

**Responsible department:** (e.g. Logistics section)

**Responsible position:** (e.g. Head of Logistics section)

---

**Process and decision that will trigger the use of the SOP.** *Example: The National Society management – the president, secretary general, head of the disaster response department or any combination of these, according to National Society rules – decides on the need to respond to the emergency, initial assessment shows which relief items are needed, etc.*

---

**Relations with other entities:**

This section must show as necessary:

- Coordination needed/expected – internal to the Movement and with external actors (e.g. government, NGO, UN etc.).
- Links to others (what, how and with whom) that ensures the SOP will work
- Information and media
- Others as appropriate.

---

**Safety and security:**

If it is known that safety and/or security issues may arise in carrying out the SOP, these issues must be described and measures to ensure optimum safety and security of personnel and equipment detailed.

---

**Operational activities/tasks:**

Step-by-step description of the activities needed to implement the SOP – who does what, how, and when. Checklists and flow charts can help in this.

---

**Training/simulating with the SOP:**

*Example: All logistics staff will attend a two hour training session on this SOP. An annual one-day exercise on the SOP will be held in June.*

---

**Review of the SOP:**

*Example: A review of this SOP will be carried out no later than March each year and after each operation in which the SOP is activated. The head of the logistics section is responsible for organizing this review and ensuring that its findings are incorporated into the SOP.*

Changing circumstances may require modification of the SOP. At a minimum, regular reviews/evaluations must be carried out and the SOP amended accordingly. The frequency with which this should happen is reflected in the section (above) which gives the period of validity of the SOP. In addition to this regular review, an evaluation and if necessary modification of the SOP should take place after each operation in which it is used.

---

**Annexes:**

Checklists  
Contact lists  
Resource lists  
Forms/templates  
Manuals  
Other as necessary

---

## Annex 12

### Up to 24 hours – Initial response

	<b>Affected National Societies</b>	<b>Regional representation</b>	<b>Zone/ DMU</b>	<b>Non-affected (region XXX) National Societies</b>
<b>PHASE</b> Response and assessment				
Information/ communication/ reporting				
Finance/ administration				
	Decide whether further external assistance required or not – if required, move to step 2			



# Annex 12

## 24 hours to end of week 1

	Affected National Societies	Regional delegation	Non-affected (region XXX) National Societies
P H A S E	Response and assessment		
	Information/communication/reporting		
	Finance/administration		
		Review scope of external assistance required according to assessments	

## Annex 12

### End of week 1 to end of emergency

	Affected National Societies	Regional delegation	Non-affected (region XXX) National Societies
PHASE	Disaster management		
	Information/communication/reporting		
	Finance/administration		
		Move to recovery phase	

# The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

---

## **Humanity**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

## **Impartiality**

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

## **Neutrality**

In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

## **Independence**

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

## **Voluntary service**

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

## **Unity**

There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

## **Universality**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies promotes the humanitarian activities of National Societies among vulnerable people.

By coordinating international disaster relief and encouraging development support it seeks to prevent and alleviate human suffering.

The International Federation, the National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross together constitute the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.