"A Business Continuity Plan is a crucial and continuous process, owned and operated by the senior management of the National Society. Its aim is to ensure the organisation continues to function in times of crisis, and to resume critical operational processes when its programmes have been unexpectedly disrupted".

**WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?**

When a change has occurred in the operational environment of the National Society and its critical operations have been affected by an adverse event, either natural or man-made, which generates an emergency or a disaster.

1. **What are the critical operations of the National Society?**

   These are the activities that should be permanently maintained or recovered within a very short time to ensure provision of services. These activities or processes cannot be disrupted or unavailable for several working days without having a significant negative impact on the organisation. Although these should be defined by each NS as part of their own planning, these can include:
   - Human Resources/staffing management (contracts and payroll management; staff health monitoring and referral; counselling and psychological support, among others)
   - Security management.
   - Finance and accounting (cash availability, payroll continuity, contingency in case of closure of banking services, etc.)
   - Logistics, procurement and stock management

   It is everyone's responsibility: All administrative and operational departments, as well as senior management, should support not only the planning process, but also the development of infrastructure to set up, maintain and implement the plan. This will ensure that management and staff at all levels of the organisation understand that the business continuity plan is a priority for senior management.

2. **Who is responsible for planning business continuity?**

   The time scale for completing the plan will depend on each National Society, the involvement of their departments and the critical processes that they carry out. However, the process should not take longer than three months in total. Spending longer on planning does not always result in a better plan. Departments and units will be provided with plan templates, so analysis of the operational impact will probably be the most time-consuming part of the process, whilst writing up the finished plan should be a fairly quick step.

3. **How long does it take to prepare a Business Continuity Plan?**

   For specific technical support, email: crepd.americas@ifrc.org or fill out the following form: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/1f1b2aa40da84553aa0a6046c15ba3566.