



Setting up a national disaster preparedness and response mechanism: Guidelines for National Societies

Strategy 2020

Strategy 2020 voices the collective determination of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in tackling the major challenges that confront humanity in the next decade. Informed by the needs and vulnerabilities of the diverse communities where we work, as well as the basic rights and freedoms to which all are entitled, this strategy seeks to benefit all who look to Red Cross Red Crescent to help to build a more humane, dignified, and peaceful world.

Over the next ten years, the collective focus of the IFRC will be on achieving the following strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises
2. Enable healthy and safe living
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace

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Acronyms

BDRT	branch disaster response team
BIT	branch intervention team
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DIPECHO	EU Disaster Preparedness Programme
DM	disaster management
DMIS	disaster management information system
DREF	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund
DRR	disaster risk reduction
ERU	emergency response unit
FACT	field assessment and coordination team
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NDRT	national disaster response team*
NGO	non-governmental organization
NIT	national intervention team*
PNS	Partner National Society
RDRT	regional disaster response team
RIT	regional intervention team
RFL	restoring family links
RFL specialist pool	International pool of RFL specialists from the ICRC and National Societies
RLU	regional logistics unit
SOP	standard operating procedure
VCA	vulnerability and capacity assessment
WPNS	Well-Prepared National Society

National Societies across the globe with the exception to the Americas use national disaster response teams (NDRTs), when referring to their national disaster operational teams. In the Americas NDRTs are referred to as national intervention teams (NITs). However, both terms relate to the same function, role and purpose and link with the regional and global initiatives, such as regional disaster response teams (RDRTs) and regional intervention teams (RITs) for the regional context. Similarly, in the Americas branch disaster response teams (BDRTs) are referred to as branch intervention teams (BITs). For simplicity, within these guidelines we have used the single terms NDRTs, RDRTs and BDRTs.

Introduction

This publication presents a set of practical guidelines that are designed to support National Societies in developing the processes, systems, teams and individuals involved in preparing for and responding to disasters. The guidelines acknowledge that response is first and foremost local, but that it takes place within the global solidarity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement).

By following these guidelines, National Societies will be better able to:

- develop their capacity in disaster preparedness and response
- ensure that their work meets a global set of disaster preparedness and response standards
- coordinate their approaches with other National Societies and/or non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

What are the guidelines?

The ultimate purpose of these guidelines is to help National Societies carry out independent, informed and responsible humanitarian actions that adhere to internationally recognized humanitarian standards – both within and outside the Movement. They are designed as a proposal for action, and as a tool to guide the transformation of existing policies, manuals and guidelines into concrete preparedness and response action.

They have been developed with the following National Society capacity-building objectives in mind:

- to contribute to the coordination of our national and global systems (working as an integrated system, ‘From Local to Global’, the Global Agenda and Strategy 2020, among others)
- to motivate and facilitate the role of National Society leadership in national preparedness and response mechanisms
- to improve the quality and responsibility of disaster preparedness and response, including minimum standards, indicators, tools and references
- to learn and profit from the experience of others
- to empower National Societies to become more creative and innovative in disaster management (DM), within a recognized framework.

Who are they for?

The guidelines have been developed for staff and volunteers of National Societies involved in disaster preparedness and response at national level. They must be used within the context of the local situation in terms of the needs, risks, vulnerabilities and capacities of the National Society and those affected by disasters.

For the guidelines to serve their purpose, and for the various recommendations to be implemented, it is essential to have the commitment and political will of the National Society leadership, governance bodies and decision-makers, as well as operational staff who have been properly recruited and

trained. Each National Society will define what is appropriate for its own context. However, it is important that leadership at the highest levels supports adherence to global guidelines.

How were they developed?

The guidelines were first drafted following a six-month consultancy that ran between September 2006 and March 2007. The process involved a review and analysis of more than 100 documents alongside a broad participatory process, which included consultations and interviews with almost 50 secretariat risk-reduction and disaster-management delegates and staff in Geneva, and more than 25 National Societies. The team also consulted other humanitarian organizations with experience of dealing with disaster preparedness and response, and their guidelines have been taken into account where relevant.

Most of those who were consulted agreed on the main topics and issues. This made it possible to build and shape guidelines that are aligned with the needs, expectations and recommendations of the majority.

How should they be used?

This publication is designed as a hands-on resource to guide you through the process of setting up a national disaster preparedness and response mechanism (the mechanism). You may choose to use it as a detailed model of step-by-step actions to follow in specific situations, or more generally, as a source of inspiration. You may also find it useful as a support document for funding proposals.

The guidelines are designed to be universally relevant, but it is important to use them with judgement, as some circumstances will require a different approach to that stated. Overall, they form recommendations rather than policy. This means that they are not mandatory, and cannot be used as the basis for sanctions against any component of the Movement.

The guide uses the following elements to help you:

- section overviews, which summarize each section and provide signposts on key points
- tips, which provide straightforward advice on applying the guidelines in practice
- questions to ask yourself, to help you apply the guidelines to your own situation
- case studies, which offer an opportunity to learn from the experience of other National Societies
- details of useful resources for further reading.

What do they include?

The list of acronyms explains clearly the terms used throughout the publication.

This Introduction sets out what the guidelines are, who they are for, how they were developed and how to use them.

Section 1 explains how to develop the political will within your National Society to set up the mechanism. This is done by linking the mechanism with global priorities, taking the decision to establish

and support the mechanism, and finally defining the general direction and allocating resources accordingly.

Section 2 sets out the tasks involved in ensuring that conditions are ready to establish the mechanism. First, this means making sure that all staff and volunteers understand the National Society and its wider context, and accept the need for the mechanism. It also involves linking the mechanism to existing operations, integrating policy into strategy and planning, and planning for implementation and sustainability.

Section 3 outlines the key steps in implementing the mechanism. This involves putting in place effective procedures for recruitment, capacity-building and high-quality deployment. It also comprises work to coordinate operations with other international response activities, integrate the mechanism teams in existing operations, monitoring and evaluation, and guaranteeing continuity and sustainability.

Annex 1 sets out roles and responsibilities, including concrete tasks that are expected of the various levels of staff and volunteers of the National Society. This table can be used to further understand the indicators of the guide, as well to develop learning objectives and capacity-building goals for the National Society.

Annex 2 contains four tables that serves as a menu for capacity-building, learning and training events, all focused on the operational teams. It includes recommendations on how to set up a learning package and suggests themes to include in a basic core curriculum for training.

1

Developing the political will

The first stage in creating the mechanism is to develop the political will to do so. This decision must be supported by leadership at the top of the National Society in question. In this section, we look at:

- linking the mechanism with global priorities
- recording a decision to support the mechanism
- defining priorities and allocating resources.

1.1 Linking the mechanism with global priorities

The first step in developing the political will to create the mechanism is for the National Society's key leaders to demonstrate and accept how a mechanism such as this will relate to the International Federation's global policies, strategies and Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the fundamental principles).

You will know you have achieved this when:

- the International Federation's secretariat and National Society leadership have discussed and agreed on the approach they will take in the mechanism
- the National Society's leadership is open to, and agrees to be engaged in, the national disaster preparedness and response process
- managers, directors and decision-makers are able to explain how their National Society operates in times of disasters, what its key activities are in relation to preparedness, and how these link to the International Federation's global strategies, policies and fundamental principles
- the secretariat and the National Society leadership have discussed and agreed on the role of the secretariat in providing preparedness and response support to the National Society.

Understanding the International Federation's policies, strategies, guidelines and tools

The secretariat and country and/or regional representation can play a key role in sharing the main policies, strategies and tools related to disaster preparedness and response – particularly with National Society leaders and key players – and in ensuring that the relevant people have understood them correctly.

In some cases, leaders within a National Society (including senior and middle managers and staff) have not been aware of the existence of internationally agreed policies, guidelines and regulations, and so have not followed them due to lack of clarity and understanding of the binding nature of the documents.

For this reason, it is a good idea to promote and facilitate a regular forum to share and analyse information. Experience has shown that this type of scheme can help to build an atmosphere of trust in which people can come together to express constraints, concerns and divergences, and identify solutions collaboratively. Running this type of forum has helped National Society and delegates to reach a common understanding of how the Movement can function as a system, from the local to the global level.

Establishing a good relationship with the secretariat

From the beginning of the process, the roles of the National Society and the secretariat need to be well defined. The two parties need to agree on the type of services the secretariat will provide to the National Society (for example, technical advice, financial support, political, lobbying or advocacy), and how often. The National Society must explain to all its partners, including the secretariat, the scope of its political will, its level of commitment, and forms of engagement.

At this early stage, the National Society can also define the roles and terms of how it will cooperate with key players such as neighbouring National Societies, Partner National Societies (PNSs), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), government bodies, corporate sector organizations, and local or international NGOs.

Tip: To keep costs down and avoid overloading staff with meetings, schedule forums to take place alongside other national or regional meetings, and at which your National Society's key players have already agreed to participate.

Questions to ask yourself

- Have we organized forums to disseminate and share information?
- Have we invited the key players to participate in a forum?
- Are we confident that by creating or strengthening the mechanism, our disaster preparedness and response capacity will increase in the way we need it to?
- Do we feel part of a broader system in which coordination and minimum quality standards are necessary?
- How can we profit from working along with other bodies and components within the Movement (including country and regional representations, neighbouring National Societies, PNSs and the ICRC among others)?
- Are we ready to commit ourselves to long-term and sustainable processes?

1.2 Recording a decision to support the mechanism

The next step in developing the political will to create the mechanism is for the National Society leaders to record a decision that they agree that their National Society should establish the mechanism and provide the necessary operational support.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- the National Society board or similar authority has met and formally decided to establish and support the mechanism
- the decision has been formally recorded according to your National Society's internal procedures

- key managers and volunteers within the National Society have been adequately involved and consulted, before the decision is adopted and recorded.

Making sure the decision is independent and well-informed, with a long-term vision

The National Society leadership should decide to implement the mechanism only after thoroughly analysing the context, needs and capacities of the National Society. They need to base this analysis on quality information that allows decision-makers to see the pros and cons of establishing such systems. Ideally, the decision will be independent and will follow an internal National Society analysis that will allow ownership by all National Society key players.

It is important to consider carefully how external agendas, interests, timeframes and pre-conditions will be influenced, and a decision should never be forced. These processes often take time, as the National Society has to feel comfortable and confident with whatever decision they make. Additionally, National Society leadership understands that the decision implies a long-term vision, ownership, and commitment, and commits current and future institutional resources.

Involving key players in the decision-making process

Although formal decisions rest with governance bodies, it is their responsibility to consult and receive input from other members of the National Society who can provide relevant information and insights to make a well-informed decision. Ideally the final decision will be the result of a participatory process where political and technical considerations have been well balanced.

Recording and formalizing institutional commitments

The decision to implement the mechanism must be formalized in writing and recorded according to National Society internal procedures. Any decision implies an institutional commitment that is not based solely on individuals. This formalization of the decision will help to achieve a common, objective understanding of the agreements and commitments, to secure institutional resources, and to facilitate the continuation of and respect for the processes when leadership and decision-makers change or are replaced.

Tip: Make sure the decision-making and recording process is in line with internal regulations. Involving key staff and volunteers in the decision-making process is an advantage that assures the ownership of the mechanism process.

Questions to ask yourself

- Is our decision the result on an in-depth analysis, conducted with broad participation?
- Is our decision the result of a well-documented process?
- Does our decision represent a long-term, sustainable commitment?
- Do we have sufficient resources and support to start the process?
- Have we considered the consequences of our decision?
- Have we informed key stakeholders, both inside and outside of the National Society, of our decision?

1.3 Defining priorities and allocating resources

The final step in developing the political will to create the mechanism is for the leadership to define the general direction and priorities of the National Society. This includes allocating sufficient resources – both to establish the mechanism, and to implement the mechanism effectively and sustainably.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- the National Society has established a baseline of the capacities and needs of its disaster management departments, with broad participation of key staff and volunteers, using the existing Movement tools such as the *Well-Prepared National Society* (WPNS) and the National Society self-assessment
- the results of assessments such as WPNS serve as a ‘road map’ to identify gaps, define priorities and next steps, and steer meetings in order to define the implementation strategy, with participation of leadership, decision-makers and technical staff
- strategic decisions have been recorded in formal internal documents
- the National Society has secured sufficient financial, human and material resources to ensure that the mechanism will be sustainable
- the National Society has formally included mechanism-related goals and activities in its priorities and annual operational plans
- formal agreements have been written up between the secretariat, the National Society and relevant stakeholders, to outline roles, responsibilities and available resources.

From decision to action

Once the National Society leaders have formalized and recorded their decision, the next step is to put them into practice. It is a good idea to carry out an assessment of the capacities and needs of the disaster and risk management departments using the existing Movement tools, such as the WPNS questionnaire and methodology. The outcome of this assessment will form a ‘road map’ that clearly defines strategic lines, priorities and next steps, and action points for key staff and/or volunteers.

At this stage, it is important to assign responsibilities to individuals with the time and capacity to make things happen. If necessary, you may be able to negotiate external support for the process from secretariat delegates or members of other National Societies who have experience and expertise in establishing the mechanism.

Negotiating agreements with key players

Putting in place agreements on collaboration – for example, pre-agreements reached before a disaster occurs – can be a particularly effective way of guaranteeing that commitments are fulfilled. It can also help build mutual respect and trust between key partners.

These agreements can be formalized in different formats. One of the most common is the memorandum of understanding, in which all parties set out their intentions and agree on the ‘rules of the game’. Formalizing arrangements in this way can help the various parties to avoid misunderstandings, clarify roles and responsibilities, and agree in advance on how they will resolve any conflicts. Often, parties are reluctant to sign these kinds of agreements if they want to avoid making formal commitments, but experience has demonstrated that they are extremely helpful.

Tip: Make sure that your National Society defines timings, resources, responsibilities and 'road map' milestones that are realistic and set according to its individual context, needs and capacities. Do consider 'external' elements, but make sure these do not become the driving force of the initiative.

Some National Societies are unable to sign formal agreements because of their internal procedures. In this situation, it is better to sign something 'light', such as a declaration of intentions, than to sign nothing at all. This is because any written agreement is likely to help reinforce intentions and commitments.

National Society leaders often express concerns about the limited resources available for capacity-building. National Society leaders often have to juggle a number of conflicting demands on the scarce resources, so it is especially important that needs and priorities are identified and assessed adequately. There are a number of tools and experiences that can help with this process (see Case study 1).

Case study 1 The 2008–9 IDP crisis in Pakistan – teamwork for disaster response

The concept of the regional disaster-response team (RDRT) is now well established in South Asia. The International Federation's regional delegation mobilized an average of more than 100 RDRT-trained personnel for big disasters like the Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2005 Pakistan earthquake, major typhoons in the Philippines and, in 2007, Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh.

RDRT members also add considerable value for their own National Society response effort, as was comprehensively demonstrated during the 2008–9 IDP crisis in Pakistan, when nearly all 16 RDRT-trained staff and volunteers of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society were deployed. RDRT members led national disaster-response teams (NDRTs) and provided strong technical support for emergency needs-assessments, planning, camp management, and emergency health and other interventions.

Fighting between the Pakistani armed forces and insurgent groups in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan began in mid-2008 and intensified in April 2009. It left hundreds of thousands of people deprived of basic services.

As many as 3 million people were displaced. Large numbers took shelter in schools, hospitals, with friends and relatives, or they just camped out on open ground.

In response, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society and the ICRC set up joint operations to assist IDPs in seven camps in Malakand, Swabi, Lower Din and Risalpur districts. The PRCS distributed food and non-food items to more than 18,000 families, provided shelter, health

and care, and water and sanitation. In June 2009, the operations were extended to the Huripur and Mansehra areas of Hazara division and Punjab, with emergency relief, camp management, health and care, water and sanitation, winter assistance, returnee packages and early recovery. Simultaneously, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society and the ICRC have been providing restoring family links (RFL) services to the affected population in IDP camps but also to those who have remained in Swat region in North-West Frontier Province. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society and ICRC RFL teams restored around 6'000 family contacts, using satellite telephones, mobile telephones and Red Cross Messages. The teams were also actively involved in tracing persons who have separated from their family members or who have disappeared during the displacement.

NDRT deployments were initiated through text messages. Multidisciplinary teams consisting of health, water and sanitation, relief, and communications specialists were deployed by the Pakistan Red Crescent Society to conduct rapid assessments, implement water and sanitation activities, and provide health services – all of which were eventually handed over to Pakistan Red Crescent Society or ICRC staff.

All told, more than 6,600 IDP families were provided with non-food items in phase one, out of which 6,150 families were provided with phase-two relief items; nearly 3,000 families were provided with food; more than 14,000 people received free medical treatment; and psychosocial support was provided to more than 4,000, especially women and children. Clean drinking-water and sanitation facilities were also secured in several camps.

Lessons learnt

- Based on the Pakistan NDRT/RDRT experience, the linkage between the two should be strengthened by standardizing training, operating procedures and field handbooks.
- Teams should have a more even mix of men and women.
- Audits should be conducted to help identify and fill gaps in training programmes.
- Knowledge of local languages and context should be taken into account when deploying either national or regional teams.
- A more prominent role should be given to NDRTs/RDRTs, and they should be allocated adequate resources as part of an all-round strengthening of disaster response.

Ask yourself:

- How do these lessons relate to your National Society?
- Are NDRTs part of contingency planning in your country or region?

Making sure key staff and volunteers are well informed

For the mechanism to be established successfully, the National Society's leaders, staff, volunteers and other key players need to work together in the same direction, respecting each other's roles. It is very important that everyone is thoroughly familiar with the strategic lines, priorities and details of the 'road map', and appropriately informed of their roles and of what is expected of them during the implementation.

Tip: For most National Societies, the key players who need to be informed and involved in the process include not only National Society staff or volunteers, but also government institutions, local partners, community representatives, and other key stakeholders. The nature of their role will depend on factors such as the mandate, size, roles and capacity of the National Society within its specific context.

Questions to ask yourself

- To what extent is the implementation of the mechanism a priority for our National Society?
- What capacity do we want to have in five years?
- What funds do we have available to invest in the development of the mechanism?
- Can we access additional funds, and if so, do we need additional support with this?
- Have we defined responsibilities to make things happen?
- Do we have sufficient capacity to start the process?
- Have we drawn up a 'road map' that sets out priorities, tasks, responsibilities and timescales?
- Have we informed our staff, volunteers and key players of the strategic decisions and next steps?
- Do we know what role these key players will have?

Summing up

In this section we have looked at how to develop the political will to create a national disaster preparedness and response mechanism, through three key activities: linking the mechanism with global priorities, taking the decision to establish and support it and, finally, defining the general direction, and allocating resources accordingly.

In the next section we go on to look at ways of ensuring that conditions are ready to establish the mechanism.

2

Preparing for the implementation

The next step is to ensure that the conditions are viable to establish the mechanism. In this section we look at:

- understanding the National Society and its wider context
- accepting the need for the mechanism
- linking the mechanism to existing operations
- integrating policy into strategy and planning
- planning for implementation and sustainability.

2.1 Understanding the National Society and its wider context

The first step in preparing to implement the mechanism is to ensure that leadership, staff and volunteers understand their National Society and the context in which it is operating.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- the key players involved in the mechanism are able to follow, as a minimum, your National Society's basic DM planning tools and documents, including the preparedness and response plan, and contingency plans
- policy decisions and commitments related to the mechanism have been shared with the National Society's key players and volunteers, both at the central and local levels
- national and local leaders can demonstrate an understanding of your National Society's role and responsibilities within your government preparedness and response system in your country.

Identifying the most at-risk geographical areas

According to Red Cross Red Crescent fundamental principles, along with individual National Society missions and strategic priorities, National Societies are mandated to support people affected by disasters, giving special attention to the most vulnerable groups. To be able to do this, each National Society needs a thorough understanding of the context in which it works, and to have accurately identified the geographical areas where the risk to disaster is the highest, and where the most vulnerable communities or groups can be found.

Tip: Try using response and contingency planning, risk reduction initiatives and vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA). These are some of the best tools to help you better understand the risks in a given geographical part of the country.

Understanding the expected role of the National Society

National Societies can play any of number of roles in disaster situations. Which role is played depend on various factors, including:

- existing needs
- internal capacity
- public expectations
- government mandates
- the National Society's areas of expertise.

National Societies are auxiliary to public authorities. The formal roles and responsibilities of a National Society are usually defined within the national legal framework and the country disaster response plans of the government in question. Which type of mechanism is required will depend on a full knowledge and understanding of the National Society's role and what is expected of it in case of disaster. For this reason, it is important to know and understand the government's plan. Ideally, the National Society will have played a part in its development.

Becoming familiar with national documents

To be able to link your role and mandate with the situation where our National Society works, you need full knowledge of the legal framework and government plans for disaster preparedness and response. This knowledge can help you in two ways: first, in identifying the gaps between what we do and what we should be doing, and second, in allowing us to focus our efforts, in case you want to advocate and influence the government's national plans.

Questions to ask yourself

- Have we already identified the most at-risk areas or zones in our country?
- Do we have the institutional presence and necessary capacity to fulfil our mandate and commitment to the most vulnerable communities?
- Do we have a clear understanding of the role we must fulfil in case of disaster?
- Are we familiar with the country's legal framework for disasters and national response plans? Are we happy with the role we play within the national response system? Do we want to position our National Society differently?

2.2 Accepting the need for the mechanism

The next step in ensuring that conditions are ready to establish the mechanism is to ensure that the key players within the National Society have clearly identified, understand, and accept the needs for preparedness and response.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- the results of the previously carried out capacity and needs assessment and the existing 'road map' have been disseminated and shared with National Society key players at all levels
- the country's most at-risk areas have been identified, and strategies to develop the National Society's capacity in those areas have been outlined
- local branches located in the most at-risk areas have been prioritized to develop their capacity through the mechanism, and through organizational development initiatives

- trained and experienced staff and volunteers, both at headquarters and local branches, have actively participated in the analysis and planning processes.

Using existing tools to identify needs

There are various tools that will help you identify where you are in terms of preparedness to respond. The WPNS is a useful tool for identifying internal capacity and highlighting areas that need strengthening in order to establish the mechanism. The *Disaster Response and Contingency Planning Guide* offers methodologies and tools to identify needs and capacities in a broader context, where external actors and partners are involved. Both these tools will help you identify gaps and preparedness for your National Society to set its strategy and priorities within the implementation plan.

Ensuring participation of key staff and volunteers

Experience has shown that if the staff and volunteers who are selected and trained during the implementation of the mechanism are involved in the assessment and planning process, this can provide extraordinary added value for a National Society. They should be integrated in the community VCA and risk reduction activities and in preparing the response and contingency plans. By participating in these activities they will acquire a full knowledge of the institutional strategies and procedures, as well as a better understanding of the context in which they will operate in case of disaster.

Prioritizing the most at-risk areas

Very often the most vulnerable communities are isolated ones in which the institutional presence is limited, and operational costs are very high. For this reason we tend to focus our efforts on more accessible places, where we have had previous experience and have an installed capacity. However, although this makes sense in some cases, National Societies should not use this way of working in defining its strategy to establish the mechanism. Instead, they should prioritize the most at-risk geographical areas, and it is these that should be included in the first stages of the implementation plan.

If the mechanism is established correctly, it will improve the timeliness and quality of a local response and should therefore be able to operate and support areas where the Red Cross Red Crescent's local branches and authorities face greater challenges and limitations.

Tip: Where branches are not located in the most at-risk areas of the country, our plan to establish the mechanism should include strategies to minimize or fill this gap.

Questions to ask yourself

- How is our National Society capacity compared to that of a 'well-prepared' National Society?
- Have we identified our gaps?
- Do we have a strategy or plan to fill these gaps?
- Have we requested additional support to improve our capacity – and if so, from whom?
- Do we need to develop or improve the mechanism to fill the gaps in our needs and capacity?
- Is the mechanism – NDRTs the right approach in our context?
- Do leaders, key staff and volunteers have a shared understanding and vision of the preparedness and response capacity we need?

2.3 Linking the mechanism to existing operations

Having identified and prioritized the most at-risk areas, the next step is to make sure that key staff and volunteers within the National Society can explain how the mechanism takes into account existing initiatives, integrates the various departments, and builds the capacity of the organization.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- key National Society staff and volunteers agree on how existing and past initiatives relate to the mechanism
- lessons learned from previous DM initiatives are integrated into the mechanism
- the mechanism has the support and collaboration of and may incorporate key staff and volunteers of areas and departments outside of DM, such as health, psychosocial support, RFL, volunteer management, human resources, communication and organizational development
- National Society department heads can explain how the mechanism has contributed, and can contribute in the future, to building the capacity of the National Society
- DM staff and volunteers are actively involved in the development and implementation of DM tools, such as response and contingency planning, WPNS and VCA.

Tip: The preparation of the mechanism implementation plan is an opportunity for the National Society to invite feedback from non-Red Cross Red Crescent stakeholders.

Questions to ask yourself

- Is the mechanism implementation plan the result of a participatory process to which the main stakeholders were invited?
- Do key staff and volunteers understand and agree on the relationship between ongoing and existing initiatives and the mechanism?

2.4 Integrating policy into strategy and planning

The next step in ensuring that conditions are ready to establish the mechanism is to ensure that policy decisions and commitments are already integrated into the National Society's strategic and development initiatives and planning cycle.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- the National Society's strategic and development plans include the mechanism as part of its priorities
- the DM operational plan includes objectives, outcomes and activities related to the mechanism
- sufficient budgets, funds and resources have been allocated to guarantee that the implementation of the mechanism is sustainable
- DM, response and contingency plans integrate the concept of the mechanism with overall capacity-building and organizational development.

Integrating the mechanism within organizational structures and flowcharts

The National Society's organization, protocols and structures need to be updated to include the new concept of the mechanism and to specify its role and status within the disaster preparedness and response structure, activation mechanisms and decision-making processes. Formalizing the mechanism as part of the National Society's overall development and organizational development plans can help integrate members of NDRTs into the National Society's normal activities in between disaster response operations.

Linking with DM, response and contingency plans

The DM plan and response plans should be updated to incorporate everything related to the new mechanism. This can be done through protocols and standard operating procedures (SOPs), by assigning specific roles and responsibilities to the new mechanism and team members. National disaster and response teams may provide relevant support to update disaster response and contingency plans at national and local levels, among their other priorities and responsibilities, and to support the development of branch disaster response teams (BDRTs).

Questions to ask yourself

- Are all the National Society key players aware of the development of the mechanism, and do they understand it as an integrated approach for the whole organization?
- Are operational teams integrated within the National Society's structure and organizational chart?
- Do our main planning tools, such as our institutional development plan and response plan, include the mechanism approach and contemplate any teams or staff associated with the mechanism?

Case study 2 Disaster response teams – part of the contingency plan

Tajikistan is a mountainous, landlocked country that is prone to chronic disasters. Earthquakes, landslides mudflows, floods, droughts and avalanches are common occurrences, and more than 3,000 earthquakes are recorded each year, one third of which are above 4.5 on the Richter scale. The widespread poverty coupled with the low response and mitigation capacity of national Government agencies combine to magnify the negative effects of even smallest of natural disasters. Moreover, many areas of the country become isolated for months during the year.

For all these reasons, the importance of the strengthening the disaster preparedness and response system of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan is vital for the country.

In 2002 Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan, with the support of the International Federation and PNSs, started to establish NDRTs in ten disaster preparedness centres. The aim of these teams was to effectively respond to disasters, reaching the most vulnerable populations in close coordination with governmental bodies, rapid emergency assessment and coordination team (REACT) partners, and other DM players both within the country and from outside it.

Today, the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan is one of the main disaster management actors in the country, and its NDRTs are a cost-effective country disaster response support system that is entirely staffed by the National Society members and volunteers. The network activates trained Red Crescent staff and volunteers in any disaster preparedness and response operations that take place in the country.

The NDRTs can be involved in assessing the emergency situation, implementing relief operations, rendering first aid, and providing shelter. Each team consists of 12 trained volunteers and employees, comprising a core group of eight, with four backup personnel. All team members are trained in disaster preparedness or disaster response and first aid and meet the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere). The teams are equipped with the basic response tools, transport and communication means.

Since their inception, the NDRTs have delivered effective responses to a range of emergencies that hit the country. One example was an earthquake that hit Qumsangir region, in Khatlon oblast, southern Tajikistan in summer 2006. The Kurgan-Tube region's NDRT responded rapidly through situation assessments, providing first aid and distributing non-food items from pre-positioned emergency stock. The network of available trained Red Crescent volunteers was also utilized by other organizations, to help distribute emergency items to those affected.

Lessons learnt

- Red Crescent teams are highly effective in disasters, because they can be among the first to reach the site.
- By demonstrating their professionalism, NDRTs can enhance the image of the National Society.
- It is important to coordinate between DM players to avoid duplication and to decide on concerted actions.
- There is a need to develop further NDRTs and centres in order to refine national and regional contingency planning processes and strengthen disaster preparedness and response systems in the region.

Ask yourself:

- How do these lessons learnt relate to your National Society?
- Are NDRTs a part of contingency planning in your country or region?

2.5 Planning for implementation and sustainability

The final step in ensuring that conditions are ready to establish the mechanism is to ensure that the National Society has a mechanism implementation and sustainability plan that is understood and supported by all the relevant key players.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- leaders, directors, technical staff and key volunteers have met, discussed and agreed upon an implementation plan to develop the mechanism

- the plan includes the allocation of funds and resources, to ensure sustainability
- the plan is known to internal key players, both at headquarter and branch level, and to relevant external actors and strategic allies
- the plan includes milestones to enable you to monitor and evaluate progress and achievements
- the plan makes explicit reference to internationally recognized humanitarian standards, such as Sphere.

Ensuring that the implementation plan is relevant to the wider context

The purpose of the implementation plan is to ensure that the mechanism meets the standards laid out in these guidelines. A useful starting point is the previously identified contextual needs and capacity gaps, as well as the preparedness needs highlighted in Sphere.

It is important that you involve and consult relevant key staff and volunteers, both at headquarters and at branch or local level, and that everyone is clear about the implications of the plan for their area of responsibility. If you succeed in involving the main stakeholders, you will have a plan owned and understood by everyone, and it will be easier to integrate it within your National Society's priorities and day-to-day activities.

Tip: Preparing the mechanism implementation plan presents an opportunity for the National Society to invite feedback from non-Red Cross Red Crescent stakeholders. For this reason it is a good idea to invite country or regional secretariat delegations, through their DM delegates, to be part of the process of developing the plan. You may also find it useful to invite public institutions, local authorities, NGOs and other relevant parties.

Setting clear timeframes and responsibilities

Your implementation plan must be very clear about the timeframe within which you will reach your goals. It should also outline the resources that are needed in order to do so. Ideally the plan should cover between two and five years, and should secure resources for at least two fiscal periods. However, each National Society must determine this according to its own analysis.

Then, each task and required outcome is assigned to a staff or volunteer who will be accountable for carrying it out.

Tip: Due to the high turnover of staff within many National Societies, and the importance of continuity, resources and responsibilities should be allocated in relation to positions within the structure of the National Society. Assigning resources and tasks to individual people is not as effective as assigning them to the post they occupy.

Including means of monitoring progress

Your plan needs to include valid means of monitoring progress and evaluating achievements. Try to identify realistic intermediate goals and milestones against which you can chart the progress made

in implementing the mechanism. This guide also proposes some general key indicators, but in some cases it will be necessary to formulate more specific indicators linked directly to goals and milestones.

Questions to ask yourself

- Is our mechanism implementation plan the result of a participatory process, and have we invited the main stakeholders to join in?
- Have we defined clear responsibilities for the implementation plan?
- Does our plan include milestones to monitor achievements?
- How will we disseminate our plan?
- Have we allocated and secured enough resources for the first year?

Case study 3 National intervention teams – a focused solution

In May 2008, in the span of five days, Belize was struck by two tropical storms – Alma and Arthur – causing severe flash flooding. Two-thirds of the country was flooded, affecting 10,000 people. Many were stranded without electricity and facing isolation as roads became impassable. Seven people died.

From the National Society headquarters to the branch level, the response was immediate, rapid, orderly and controlled. The Belize Red Cross Society immediately responded to the disaster, and all eight local branches in the six districts of the country were prepared and able to respond quickly and appropriately.

Within 24 hours, more than 30 national intervention teams (NITs) were deployed to the most-affected areas: the districts of Corozal, Orange Walk and Stann Creek. As part of the relief operation, each assessment team had a member trained in community-based first aid, and basic first aid was carried out in all three affected districts.

The worst-affected of these three areas was Stann Creek, which was completely cut off due to flooded roads and damaged bridges. NITs from the local branch were activated to carry out assessments of the situation there, including the living conditions and needs in shelters, and in June, an NIT specializing in water and sanitation was deployed to the area. To prevent the risk of waterborne and water-related diseases that can arise within three days of a disaster, the team brought and set up an emergency portable water purifier, which produced more than 4,000 litres of drinking water per hour. Overall, the team distributed more than 137,500 litres of water to affected communities.

Lessons learned

- The National Society was able to respond to the disaster in a timely and effective manner.
- Trained NIT members were able to provide immediate and appropriate response in the affected districts.
- The timely response reflects on the progress made in the preparedness to disaster in terms of organization, management and coordination.

Ask yourself:

- Does my National Society have trained staff and/or volunteers who can be mobilized to respond to disasters in a timely and effective manner?

Summing up

In this section we have looked at the preparations you need to make to ensure that conditions are ready to implement the mechanism. First, we considered the need to understand the National Society and its wider context, and to accept the need for the mechanism. We then went on to look at how to link the mechanism to existing operations, and how to integrate policy into strategy and planning. Finally, we discussed the need to plan to ensure that the mechanism is implemented in a way that is effective and sustainable.

In the final section we go on to look at the process of implementing the mechanism.

3

Implementing the mechanism

The final stage in establishing the mechanism is to ensure that it is ready to operate successfully. In this section we look at:

- recruitment procedures
- building capacity
- ensuring effective deployment
- coordinating operations with other international response activities
- integrating teams in existing operations
- monitoring and evaluation
- guaranteeing continuity and sustainability.

3.1 Recruitment procedures

The first step in ensuring that the mechanism is ready to operate effectively is to ensure that the National Society has appropriate, pre-established recruitment procedures to select operational teams through an open, transparent selection process.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- members of operational teams – such as NDRTs and BDRTs – are selected according to context, needs and internationally agreed criteria, as stated in the common standards seven and eight of Sphere.
- the National Society's key staff and volunteers have agreed on selection criteria and respect National Society statutes
- candidates for positions within operational teams (including NDRTs and BDRTs) have a demonstrated an understanding of, and have formalized their commitment to, the Red Cross Red Crescent fundamental principles
- National Society leadership respects and follows pre-established recruitment procedures
- the roles and responsibilities of operational teams (NDRTs and BDRTs) are widely understood within the National Society
- selection processes have guaranteed a gender balance and representation from different ethnic groups, cultures, geographical areas, local branches, and so on.

Agreeing on appropriate selection criteria

The process of selecting candidates to become members of the operational teams is a key step in guaranteeing the quality of response operations in case of disaster. National Society leaders are responsible for establishing appropriate selection criteria that guarantee high quality, accountable humanitarian action. Experienced staff and volunteers should be involved in defining the selection

criteria and in considering factors including the capacities, skills, experience and commitment of the potential candidates.

Ensuring transparency and accountability

Leaders and decision-makers must respect the criteria that are agreed and refrain from interfering with or subjectively influencing the selection process. The process should be transparent and should include clear procedures and criteria previously disseminated and known by all. It is also important to put in place mechanisms for complaints and conflict resolution. To prevent conflict and misunderstandings it is recommended that the final decision be in the hands of a 'selection committee' that represents all the relevant players.

Questions to ask yourself

- Do we have selection criteria known and understood by everyone?
- Do we have procedures to guarantee transparency?
- How are we considering the possible abuse of power in our recruitment phase?
- Is our leadership ready to respect established and agreed selection procedures?
- Do we acknowledge that the quality of our teams will reflect on the image of our institution and the extent to which we are respected as a National Society?
- How are we ensuring diversity and gender equality in our recruitment?

3.2 Building capacity

The next step in ensuring that the mechanism is ready to operate effectively is to make sure that the National Society has a realistic, sustainable DM capacity-building strategy and plan. This should be developed according to the individual context and needs, but should also be in line with Strategy 2020 and established procedures, and must meet international humanitarian standards.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- you have a DM capacity-building plan that goes beyond training, to include other areas to be strengthened, such as systems, resources, planning, communications and equipment
- funds and resources for the capacity-building plan have been allocated and secured with a long-term vision of not less than two years
- learning approaches incorporate a variety of methods, and will honour different learning preferences
- learning activities include themes and topics that guarantee a good understanding of the Movement as well as of humanitarian standards and principles
- themes recommended as minima by the International Federation (see Annex 2) have been integrated in your learning activities and training packages.

Taking capacity building beyond training

To improve your DM capacity to respond to disasters in a timely, responsible and high quality way, you need to understand the process of improving and strengthening your National Society's capacities through a comprehensive approach in which training, while important, is just one part of a whole. National Societies should develop DM capacity-building strategies and plans with a long-term vision that includes a range of areas, including systems, planning, institutional mechanisms,

funding and equipment. Trained and experienced volunteers are very important, but they work within an institutional context that needs to be strengthened too.

Training is more than workshops

Building the experience, skills and competencies of the mechanism members and operational teams (such as NDRTs and BDRTs) involves much more than a series of training workshops. You also need to set up a structured and planned training strategy, integrated with a capacity-building plan, where learning needs and objectives are well identified and coupled with a variety of learning activities – one of which can be workshop learning.

This approach includes a diversity of learning methods and techniques, such as simulations, secondments, exposures, exchange programmes, independent learning, refreshment meetings, coaching, one-to-one training, and mentoring. Each National Society should determine what is needed for its staff, volunteers and operational team members, according to factors such as the context, institutional size and capacity.

Tip: Keep in mind these two principles: continuity of learning and diversity of approach.

Set training content tailored to need and context

Experience both within and outside the Red Cross Red Crescent has demonstrated that a one-size-fits-all approach to training content does not work. Each National Society should define the training content according to its individual context and learning needs, identified during the development of the mechanism. The themes might include (but will not necessarily be limited to):

- the most common hazards and vulnerabilities in the country
- the role and tasks of the operational teams before, during and after disasters
- the profile of National Society staff and volunteers.

Adopt the minimum recommended training themes

These guidelines propose a set of minimum recommended themes that can help National Societies to build their own learning and training packages. These themes, presented in Annex 2, have been selected from existing NDRT, RDRT, the emergency response unit (ERU), field assessment and coordination team (FACT) and other training curricula. They also include recommendations from key players in various countries and regions.

Tip: When preparing the training curricula and learning activities, try not to focus on which themes and topics should or should not be included. Instead, decide which knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies the operational teams need to develop for each theme. Don't forget to include some reference to international humanitarian standards.

Questions to ask yourself

- Which capacity-building options do we need – workshops, mentoring, or other options?

- Do our training curricula include the recommended minimum themes in accordance with the International Federation's systems and international standards?
- Does our capacity-building plan include a variety of methods appropriate to our needs and context?
- Have we allocated sufficient funds and resources to our capacity-building plan in order to guarantee its quality and implementation?
- Are we going to need technical expertise not available in the National Society?

3.3 Ensuring effective deployment

Having addressed the issue of building capacity, the next step in ensuring that the mechanism is ready to operate effectively is to ensure that the National Society has the means to guarantee that the operational teams will be deployed in a way that is timely, secure and effective.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- operational members are mobilized through transparent mechanisms according to the context and scope of the disaster and specific needs
- roles and responsibilities of operational team members are formalized through clear terms of reference or mission plans that the key players understand
- there are clear protocols and SOPs that define how the operational teams will be mobilized and deployed
- team are composed to ensure a good mix of appropriate skills or competencies and a gender balance, and take into consideration cultural and political sensitivities
- the necessary security and safety measures are in place
- the necessary resources and equipment are available for the operational teams within the timescales required.

Putting in place mobilization procedures

Each National Society has to develop its own SOPs to guarantee that the operational teams are mobilized and deployed promptly and efficiently. These procedures are usually integrated into existing response and contingency plans, and relate to factors such as early warning systems, alert, selection and mobilization of operational teams, well defined roles and responsibilities. These SOPs must be simple, clear and familiar to all key players before any disaster, in order to save time and facilitate clarity in the aftermath of any disaster.

Tip: Experience has shown the benefit of simulation exercises, held with all key players, to disseminate and promote understanding of the SOPs in advance of a disaster taking place.

Ensuring understanding of the mission plan, roles and responsibilities

Operational team members will receive a clear mission plan and terms of reference before their deployment. These will have been agreed upon by headquarters, local branches and team members, and will specify the objectives, tasks, timeframe, roles and responsibilities of each member of the team.

Tip: Sending an operational team into the field without a clear mission and roles has been reported as a major obstacle to teams' success. It is also important to ensure the full involvement and prior agreement of the local branch before the deployment. Failing to involve the branch or to have clear terms of reference has caused overlapping, duplication, confusion and lack of trust. This has seriously affected the response and recovery processes.

Ensuring a balanced selection of team members

Operational team members should be selected according to the context and needs identified in the aftermath of the disaster. The overall team should be balanced in terms of skills, expertise, context knowledge, language, culture and gender. It is important to select team leaders carefully, as this is crucial to the success of the mission. When the operational team has to be deployed and we have limited information about the disaster, we will base our decision on our previous experience in similar disasters and try to establish a multi-disciplinary team.

Tip: Operational teams should include a balance between people with operational relief skills and people with administrative and reporting skills. Team leaders should also guarantee a comprehensive approach in which the emergency phase is connected to the recovery and rehabilitation phases. It is essential that team leaders have people management skills.

Ensuring acceptable working conditions

One of the key roles of the National Society leadership during disaster response is to guarantee the minimum working conditions of the operational team members. While deployed in situations of conflict and insecurity, they should have life and medical insurance. Security protocols and guidelines should be put in place and disseminated among team members.

According to needs and mission objectives, the necessary equipment should be provided so that team members can work with dignity. This may include identification cards, uniforms, telecommunications equipment, relief and medical kits. The physical, emotional and psychological well-being of team members is a priority in the operation, and good National Society leaders will make themselves accountable in this matter.

Questions to ask yourself

- Do we have clear procedures in place to alert and mobilize operational teams?
- Have we ensured that the team's composition is appropriate to the needs and context?
- Are the terms of reference and mission instructions understood by the teams?
- Does the branch agree with the decision to deploy?
- Have we guaranteed the minimum safety and security conditions for our teams?
- Do we have adequate equipment for the team to fulfil its mission with dignity?
- How are we monitoring the well-being of our staff and volunteers?
- How do we plan to ensure the rotation of operational staff and volunteers?

3.4 Coordinating operations with other international response activities

The next step in ensuring that the mechanism has been created and is ready to operate effectively is to ensure that National Society operational teams work in a way that allows them to coordinate their activities with other Movement international response mechanisms and tools, such as RDRT, ERU, the regional logistics unit (RLU), FACT and the international pool of RFL specialists from the ICRC and National Societies (RFL specialist pool).

As part of the implementation measures of the RFL Strategy for the Movement 2008–18, the ‘RFL specialist pool’ has been created with the aim of strengthening the Movement’s RFL response in natural and man-made disasters.

The RFL specialist pool comprise of approximately 60 staff from National Societies and ICRC (expatriate and delegation employees), with a mix of competencies, backgrounds and languages, who have been selected and trained to respond rapidly in disasters.

The RFL specialist pool has an essential role to respond rapidly and provide specialist input especially in large-scale disasters.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- there are mobilization protocols between National Society leadership and the secretariat to regulate the deployment of regional and global resources following the *Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures*
- operational team leaders are thoroughly familiar with regional and global Movement tools and have demonstrated good negotiation and coordination skills that follow the seven fundamental principles
- National Society disaster response and contingency plans include SOPs for coordination with the Movement’s regional and international response mechanisms
- terms of reference and mission plans for national teams include a clear explanation of their roles and responsibilities when working alongside regional and global International Federation response mechanisms
- SOPs are in place to set out the field relationships and communications between national operational teams and Red Cross Red Crescent international response mechanisms.

International agreements and protocols

The National Society leaders, secretariat delegations and other relevant players should discuss and agree upon protocols that clearly state the relationship between the mechanism and other regional and global International Federation tools. These protocols will clarify roles and responsibilities, as well as the desired mechanisms for coordination. They will be disseminated and made familiar to all the relevant actors at the various levels. They will apply to disasters where the mechanism has to interact with supra-national teams and individuals. All of this must happen in advance of a disaster taking place.

Building trust and respect

Experience has shown that disaster situations amplify the complexities of interactions between people and personalities from different cultures and backgrounds. Post-disaster ‘lesson learned’ exercises often reveal that a lack of communication and information sharing can easily escalate into a lack of understanding and mistrust.

National Societies can work in coordination with secretariat delegations to promote occasional meetings, training sessions or simulation exercises in which team members from different levels (including NDRT, RDRT, ERU, FACT and the RFL specialist pool can share experiences and insights, in order to build confidence and share approaches prior to disasters. During disasters, ensuring open communication channels, transparency and mutual accountability will help prevent problems.

Identifying and building capacity of team leaders

National Societies need a pool of experienced, qualified, effective team leaders who are able to coordinate operational teams while negotiating and coordinating with other regional or global teams. Because it is so important that team leaders are well qualified, it is important to prioritize this element of the capacity-building strategy or plan. Team training sessions present a good opportunity to identify potential candidates with the necessary qualifications to become strong leaders. They can then receive special training with appropriate follow up.

Questions to ask yourself

- Do the operational team members understand their role in relation to Red Cross Red Crescent regional and global response mechanisms?
- Do our team leaders have a profile that facilitates Movement coordination?
- Have we invested in team- and trust-building activities?
- Do we have clear protocols and procedures to regulate the deployment of response mechanisms?
- How are we ensuring that our team leaders understand the importance of local as well as global disaster response mechanisms?

3.5 Integrating teams in existing operations

The next step in ensuring that the mechanism is ready to operate effectively relates to performance. It involves ensuring that operational teams are integrated appropriately into the structure and context in a way that builds local capacity.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- National Society leadership respects, supports and facilitates the work of the operational teams.
- post-disaster recovery activities are identified, and an exit strategy is agreed on before the end of the operational team’s mission
- the team leader or relevant members are thoroughly familiar with, and demonstrate respect for, the local context in which they will operate
- team members behave in way that shows respect for local structures and coordinate with relevant local actors such as community leaders, local authorities and local NGOs
- the terms of reference and mission plans for the operational teams are agreed on with local branches and their leadership

- the relevant principles of the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief* (the Code of Conduct) are respected.

Understanding the context and respect for local dynamics

Ideally, the operational team members understand the context in which they are deployed. The team should include members who speak the local languages and understand the socio-political dynamics and culture. The team must respect branch representatives and local authorities. Where it is not possible to mobilize NDRT members with knowledge of the local context, then National Society leaders must ensure that the team members are well coordinated and supported by local branches or other Red Cross Red Crescent partners.

Transferring knowledge and building local capacity

The operational team's mission plan and terms of reference include actions related to building local capacity and transferring knowledge, skills and technology. All team members should work to help strengthen local branches and communities. Team leaders and local branch representatives should work together to identify those areas that need to be strengthened and agree on ways to achieve this. All disaster response initiatives must keep in mind a long-term developmental approach.

Tip: During the emergency phase, a good way to enable knowledge transfer is to form mixed sub-teams made up of national operational team members and staff and/or volunteers at the local branch who can participate actively in the response activities. It is imperative to ensure respect for the Code of Conduct.

Looking ahead: recovery and exit strategies

During the first stage of the emergency response, the operational team members should already be thinking ahead, to help identify strategies for the recovery phase and possible exit strategies. The terms of reference and mission plan should reflect this responsibility, and some of the team members should have experience in the risk-reduction and development sector, in order to coordinate and facilitate a comprehensive approach in their mission.

Questions to ask yourself

- How familiar are team members with the geographical area in which they will operate?
- How are branch capacity-building elements included in the teams' terms of reference?
- Have we coordinated and agreed on the deployment with the local branches' leadership?
- Have we informed other relevant local key players about deployments?
- Do our team members understand their mission beyond the emergency?
- Do team leaders understand their responsibility to identify elements for the recovery phase and exit strategy?

Case study 4 National disaster response teams – responding quickly to build local capacity

Sudan is a disaster-prone country exposed to various natural and man-made hazards, from floods and droughts to armed conflicts. The Sudanese Red Crescent faces an enormous task in trying to respond to these disasters.

In 2003, the Sudanese Red Crescent organized its first training sessions to establish an NDRT with the technical support of the International Federation delegation in Nairobi. Around this time the conflict in Darfur worsened, surpassing the capacity of the three state Red Crescent branches to respond.

With the support of the ICRC (provision of funds, training, materials, relief supplies and technical support), the Sudanese Red Crescent took part in a major relief operation while RFL work was intensified in response to the needs arising from the escalating conflict. The Sudanese Red Crescent decided to deploy 18 NDRT members to various parts of the area, where more than 1.6 million people were affected by the conflict. The NDRT members prepared at short notice, carried out a needs assessment, and helped with camp management, relief distribution, coordination within and between the three Darfur branches, and reporting to headquarters in Khartoum. They also trained 60 volunteers and staff at the local branches in disaster preparedness and response to establish BDRTs. These BDRTs continued activities after the NDRT withdrew and strengthened the local branches, which thus became better prepared to respond to future humanitarian crises.

The establishment of the NDRT, and the training of its members, came at a crucial time. Today, the Sudanese Red Crescent knows that it is better prepared to intervene quickly in the earliest stages of a catastrophe. Its training processes encouraged branches to establish their own disaster response teams so that they can carry out disaster reduction and community-awareness activities before disaster strikes, to mitigate the impact on disaster-prone communities and improve disaster response.

Lessons learned

- Trained and organized operational teams (NDRTs) provide the most appropriate response when immediate support is needed at the local or branch level.
- Operational teams (NDRTs) provide added value in conflict situations, where a good knowledge and understanding of the local context is an imperative as well as a good coordination with ICRC operations.
- The existence and deployment of NDRTs represents a unique opportunity to strengthen the capacities of local branches in conflict areas.
- National operational team members are the natural channel to train volunteers from the local branches (BDRTs).
- The rapid and effective mobilization of staff and volunteers from all over a country can help increase public respect for the National Society.

Ask yourself:

- Does your National Society face similar challenges to those initially faced in Sudan?
- Can operational teams provide an appropriate solution in your context?

3.6 Monitoring and evaluation

Having integrated your operational teams, the next step is to put monitoring and evaluation systems in place, to measure the performance, impact and quality of the operation.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- a performance follow-up and review procedure has been agreed by team leaders and team members
- National Society leaders and technical staff encourage and facilitate formal individual and group reviews
- internal and external intermediate and final evaluations of the response are designed to facilitate the participation of operational team members
- the mechanism implementation plan and emergency appeals allocate funds and resources for monitoring and evaluation of the overall mechanism, including operational teams, 'lessons learned' exercises and after-action reviews.

Setting individual performance evaluation criteria

Your National Society will need to develop a standard methodology and national set of criteria to evaluate the performance of team members, both during and after their deployment. The main objective of this performance review is to assess the impact and quality of work done by the team members, and to identify gaps and learning points. It should take an empowering approach, with a human resource development focus. The results of these reviews should be helpful to inform future capacity-building processes.

Funding and resources for monitoring and evaluation

Effective National Society leadership assumes the responsibility of establishing and promoting a working culture that promotes organizational learning and capacity-building. It is important that leaders think about allocating funds for performance reviews and evaluations early, before a disaster takes place. When preparing public appeals and proposals for external donors, make sure you include reviews, evaluations and self-analysis initiatives. This sends out the message that the National Society is committed to learning and improving the quality of services in the future.

Questions to ask yourself

- Do we have pre-established procedures and mechanisms to evaluate the performance and impact of the teams and team members, and to evaluate the overall mechanism?
- Have we informed our team members about the performance review mechanisms?
- Have we allocated funds and resources for the performance review process?
- Are we clear that the main objective of the performance evaluation process is to extract lessons in order to improve our services and quality and build our capacity?
- How are we helping to build a culture of learning within our National Society?

3.7 Guaranteeing continuity and sustainability

The final step in ensuring that the mechanism is ready to operate effectively relates to sustainability. It involves ensuring that the National Society leadership has developed strategies and actions to guarantee the continuity and sustainability of the mechanisms during the periods in between disasters.

You will know you have achieved this when:

- operational team members are integrated into ongoing and day-to-day National Society initiatives and programmes, such as response and contingency planning, risk-reduction activities, training, and capacity-building processes
- financial mechanisms are in place to guarantee the sustainability of the initiatives undertaken within the mechanism, such as external funding, allocations within annual budget, and contingency and disaster relief emergency funds (DREF)
- a human resource management system of motivation, retention and development is set up to ensure that operational teams remain active and committed between disasters
- the National Society has put in place occasional formal refreshment and coordination events at which operational team members can receive updates and share their experiences.

Integrating the roles of operational team members

Operational team members should have an integral role within the National Society's normal activities. Experience has shown that operational team members are excellent resources that can be integrated into ongoing risk reduction activities, as well as serving as trainers and mentors for new team members, and as advisors for developing response and contingency plans.

By involving operational team members in its day-to-day activities, the National Society can increase their motivation, knowledge, commitment and ownership along with their skills, competencies and capacity to respond.

Developing fundraising strategies

Most National Societies cite a lack of financial resources as the main constraint in ensuring that the mechanism is sustainable. There are many innovative ways to access funds for preparedness immediately after a response, but you do need to invest in fundraising capacity to be able to obtain more funding.

Increasingly, donors are investing in disaster preparedness and risk reduction initiatives, and National Societies are in a privileged position to apply for this type of funding. Nevertheless, National Societies need to continue developing their own technical capacity to submit competitive proposals. It is also worth exploring the corporate sector, where some National Societies have already obtained very positive results.

Tip: Generally speaking it will be very difficult to obtain all the resources you need from the same donor. It might be better to split your big plan into a series of small parts, each of which can be financed by a number of donors. This will also allow you to move ahead with parts of your plan as you receive funding for them, instead of having the entire plan on hold due to a lack of funding.

Strategy to manage and retain volunteers

Most National Societies have a very high turnover of volunteers. Volunteers play an important role in the mechanism, so this is a challenge that should be carefully considered from the beginning of any process. Effective National Society leaders will prioritize the development of adequate strategies to identify, recruit, manage and retain volunteers. There is no 'one size fits all' solution to this challenge, and each National Society needs to identify their own situation and come up with their own solutions. Sometimes the problem is due to external factors and structural constraints that are difficult to influence. However, the problem often lies within the National Society, and is related directly to the way it manages its volunteers and how it understands the principle of voluntary service.

Tip: Keeping people motivated should be one of the key elements of your preparedness and response strategy, and is a critical element to consider in your organizational development initiatives.

Questions to ask yourself

- Do our operational team members participate actively in the National Society's planning, training and preparedness activities?
- Have we explored and fully utilized all available funding opportunities, including external funding, allocations within annual budget, and disaster relief funds, among others?
- Have we carried out an in-depth analysis of the reasons that volunteers are not motivated, and do we know what would prevent high turnover?
- Do we have a strategy or plan to identify, recruit, retain and motivate volunteers within our National Society?

Summing up

In this final section we have looked at what you need to do to ensure that the mechanism is ready to operate effectively. First we looked at the importance of setting clear procedures for recruitment and building capacity. We then discussed ways of ensuring effective deployment, and how to coordinate operations with other activities and integrate teams in existing operations. Finally we considered a crucial element – monitoring and evaluation – and how to guarantee continuity and sustainability of the mechanism.

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Annex 1

Roles and responsibilities

This annex sets out the key roles and responsibilities of the various levels of staff and volunteers of the National Society in relation to the mechanism. It can be used to develop learning objectives and capacity-building goals.

The roles and responsibilities are set out within the following areas of work:

- **Table 1.1:** National DM policies and mechanisms
- **Table 1.2:** Movement principles and DM systems or mechanisms
- **Table 1.3:** The mechanism
- **Table 1.4:** Basic or foundation themes.

The roles highlighted across all four tables are:

- **Leadership:** normally, roles associated with governance
- **Directors:** normally, senior and middle managers
- **Operational teams:** those carrying out field-based activities.

Table 1.1 National DM policies and mechanisms

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Country context and risk analysis	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To facilitate and ensure that the National Society's mechanism implementation strategy prioritizes high risk
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To propose the implementation of risk reduction programmes in vulnerable communities ■ To ensure that the most vulnerable and disaster-prone areas are included and prioritized in the existing planning tools such as disaster response and contingency plans
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To identify the most at-risk geographical areas and vulnerable groups in a given situation ■ To use technical and humanitarian arguments to convince the National Society to focus its response on the most at-risk areas and vulnerable groups
Country disaster management policies, strategies and plans	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To be well informed of the National Society's role and responsibilities within the national DM plans ■ To advocate for and encourage the National Society to participate adequately within the country DM strategies and response plans

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Country disaster management policies, strategies and plans	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure that the National Society's strategies and resource allocation allow it to adequately fulfil its responsibilities within the national response plan
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To know in detail the roles and responsibilities of their area or department within the national plans ■ To participate in information or coordination meetings with government institutions and other actors, according to defined protocols ■ To define their priorities, and allocate resources according to their roles within the plan
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To know and understand the role that the National Society plays within the national response plan, and the operational implications ■ To make sure that when they participate in a response operation, their actions are in line with DM policies, strategies and plans ■ To be ready to participate regularly in training, practices and simulation exercises organized within the framework of national response plans
Country disaster management key players (stakeholders)	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To know who the main players are, and the relationship that the National Society must have with them ■ To lobby to facilitate good relationship and coordination with DM key players ■ To promote and formalize agreements or memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to coordinate work and joint efforts with main stakeholders ■ To facilitate and encourage good relationship between the National Society and key public institutions ■ To promote the National Society's role and mission, and raise its profile
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To facilitate contacts at the operational level to coordinate with key players ■ To identify areas in which the National Society can collaborate ■ To attend forums and meetings where key players participate, and look for ways of cooperating ■ To coordinate and implement disaster-related agreements with public institutions ■ To attend meetings to coordinate work and share information
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To know who the key stakeholders are in the context of where they operate ■ To establish contact with key players when working in the field, and integrate them into the process of information gathering, assessment and first response ■ To identify ways of collaborating and carrying out complementary or joint working with key players, according to the context ■ To inform local authorities of the Red Cross Red Crescent mission and ongoing operations ■ To observe and, when necessary, support local authorities in fulfilling their obligations

Table 1.2 Movement principles and DM systems or mechanisms

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Red Cross Red Crescent principles, policies and strategies	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To guarantee that all staff and volunteers know and understand the fundamental principles, work in line with them, and are inspired by them ■ To know the content of existing Red Cross Red Crescent policies and strategies and follow up on any changes and updates, in order to inform National Society key staff and volunteers ■ To put in place mechanisms to ensure that National Society policies, strategies and priorities are in line with Red Cross Red Crescent global and regional ones
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure that within their area of responsibility the strategies, priorities and actions are defined according to global and regional Red Cross Red Crescent principles, policies and strategies ■ To encourage and monitor staff and volunteers under their coordination, to ensure that they understand and behave according to the fundamental principles ■ To inform staff and volunteers of any changes in policies and strategies that may affect their work
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To focus their work and efforts in line with Red Cross Red Crescent strategies and priorities during deployments ■ To behave and work respecting and promoting the fundamental principles
Principles and rules in disaster response	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To participate and contribute actively in global and regional meetings where Red Cross Red Crescent DM policies, principles and strategies are discussed and agreed upon ■ To put in place mechanisms to guarantee that National Society policies, strategies and programmes are defined according to Red Cross Red Crescent DM policies, and strategies and follow international humanitarian principles and standards
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To facilitate and ensure that strategies and programmes in their area of influence are designed according to DM policies and strategies ■ To be informed and ensure mechanisms for the dissemination and training of National Society staff and volunteers on international humanitarian principles and standards, and Red Cross Red Crescent DM policies and agreements ■ To have a thorough knowledge of humanitarian principles and standards, and ensure and monitor their integration in the programmes in their area of responsibility ■ To facilitate training for staff and volunteers in their area of responsibility and ensure that they behave according to international humanitarian principles

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Principles and rules in disaster response	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To behave and work respecting international humanitarian principles such as the Code of Conduct and the Humanitarian Charter ■ To respect Red Cross Red Crescent DM policies and agreements such as the <i>Seville Agreement</i> when deployed on a humanitarian response mission ■ To ensure that their decisions, efforts and work during their missions fulfil Sphere
National Society policies, strategies and plans, disaster response and contingency plans	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure that the mechanism is integrated within the National Society's strategic and planning tools ■ To guarantee the involvement of key staff and volunteers in the different levels and phases of the internal DM planning process ■ To disseminate the existing DM guidelines and planning tools to the directors, key staff and volunteers
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To participate actively in the process of DM planning, and facilitate the involvement of staff and volunteers under their responsibility ■ To ensure coherence and harmony among the different levels of the DM planning framework ■ To disseminate the different planning tools and documents among volunteers and staff working in their area of responsibility
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To be informed of the existing DM strategies and plans and work in accordance with them ■ To identify problems or gaps in the existing DM tools and plans during their response mission, along with ways to improve them ■ To participate actively in the development and updating of the DM, response and contingency plans, when necessary
From Local to Global: Red Cross Red Crescent response system or mechanism and tools	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To be informed of relevant response tools, and publicly support them among key staff and volunteers ■ To participate actively in top-level meetings and forums where new strategies, mechanisms, tools and changes are discussed and decided ■ To facilitate and encourage the participation of National Society key players in coordination and technical meetings where tools and mechanisms are discussed and improved ■ To coordinate and join efforts with other Red Cross Red Crescent partners involved such as the secretariat, the National Societies, PNS and the ICRC to build networks and a 'one-response system' approach
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To guarantee that strategies, programmes and priorities within their area of responsibility help build shared standards and the goal of a 'one-response system'
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To focus their work and actions to contribute to the goal of a 'one-response system' ■ To perform according to previously agreed-upon global and regional standards and mechanisms ■ To be a team player during deployments, coordinating and facilitating the work of other regional and global International Federation response mechanisms

Table 1.3 The mechanism

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Selection, training and deployment mechanisms	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To encourage and facilitate the establishment of pre-agreements and procedures, to guarantee clear and transparent processes ■ To support and guarantee respect for the process of selecting, training and deploying operational team members
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To identify staff and volunteers with the profile and potential to become operational team members ■ To disseminate the role of the operational teams and encourage the involvement and participation of staff and volunteers ■ To participate actively in the different stages of the process when necessary or requested by leadership
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To participate actively and collaborate in the different stages of the process, including pre-disaster activities, when called to action ■ To respect the established procedures and mechanisms ■ To identify gaps, and elements to be improved, within the mechanisms and procedures
Team building and coordination	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To facilitate arenas where decision-makers and key technical staff and volunteers can share insights and experiences ■ To put in place procedures and mechanisms to guarantee participatory planning processes ■ To encourage and facilitate the signing of pre-agreements and MOUs to improve coordination within the Movement and among other key players
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To identify staff and volunteers with diplomatic and negotiation skills to be operational team leaders and to represent the National Society ■ To facilitate and implement communication and participation mechanisms within their areas of responsibility ■ To agree and formalize mechanisms for exchange and coordination with other areas and directors.
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To behave professionally and be respectful when representing Red Cross Red Crescent during missions ■ To be open to working with others and to be a team player ■ To facilitate mechanisms for coordination and cooperation with local actors
National response plan and contingency plans	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To guarantee and allocate resources for the National Society to develop the response and contingency plans if necessary ■ To put in place mechanisms to guarantee that the National Society's response and contingency plans are developed according to the International Federation's guidelines and standards ■ To ensure the dissemination of the response and contingency plans to relevant Red Cross Red Crescent members and external key players

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
National response plan and contingency plans	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To disseminate the International Federation's existing planning guidelines to key staff and volunteers
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To lead the preparation of response and contingency plans and guarantee the technical quality ■ To guarantee the participation of staff and volunteers under their responsibility in the process of preparing response and contingency plans ■ To ensure that elements of the thematic or programme area they lead are integrated in the response and contingency plans ■ To define strategies and plans to develop the necessary capacity to respond to emergencies within the thematic area they lead
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To participate in the preparation of response and contingency plans, according to their experience and specialization ■ To identify gaps and elements to improve in response and contingency plans during deployments
Relationship with International Federation and Movement preparedness and response tools and mechanisms	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure the National Society has the necessary knowledge, understanding and mechanisms to benefit from regional and global tools such as RDRT, ERU, the DREF, FACT and the RFL specialist pool ■ To facilitate the formalization of pre-agreements and protocols to define and clarify the roles and responsibilities of global and regional response mechanisms that are likely to interact with operational teams ■ To ensure that experienced and qualified operational team members and team leaders coordinate actions with outsiders, in line with the principle of Universality
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To lead the processes and procedures to request and benefit from International Federation response tools ■ To provide operational team members with the necessary information, support and means to establish good relationships and carry out complementary work with the people and teams arriving from outside the country ■ To accompany and monitor the process in disasters where national and supra-national response structures are involved ■ To put in place mechanisms to support, facilitate and follow up on the joint work of operational teams and other external players
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To provide the necessary information during the emergency for the National Society to be able to benefit from DREF, ERU, FACT and other tools ■ To participate in training, meetings or processes organized to improve knowledge of supra-national International Federation response tools ■ To update individually their knowledge and understanding of the global tools and mechanisms for disaster preparedness and response ■ To offer RDRT, ERU or FACT members the necessary support and information when they arrive in the country to provide support in an emergency ■ To engage with RDRT, ERU, FACT and others within the spirit of the seven fundamental principles

Table 1.4 Basic or foundation themes

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Reporting	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To understand the donors' requirements and expectations ■ To guide donors to ensure that they have realistic expectations ■ To guarantee that the National Society has sufficient capacity among its staff and volunteers to write reports according to international standards ■ To participate in high-level meetings in which reporting formats and procedures are discussed and agreed upon with external key actors
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To guarantee that reports related to their area of influence are well prepared, according to agreed-upon formats and contents, and are delivered on time ■ To identify staff and volunteers with the skills to write reports ■ To facilitate mechanisms so staff and volunteers can improve their reporting capacity
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To write reports according to pre-defined formats, where these exist ■ To provide relevant, timely and high quality information to prepare reports for various purposes ■ To respect the formats and guidelines given to present the information gathered ■ To support team leaders in preparing reports ■ To keep a record of relevant information that could be requested by others (for example, lists of distributions or beneficiaries, or the number of kits) ■ To use reporting mechanisms as management and learning tools
Administration and finance	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To guarantee that National Society administrative and finance mechanisms are compatible with those of external donors and sufficiently flexible to work in emergency situations ■ To ensure that finance and administration managers facilitate the work of operational staff and volunteers during response operations ■ To guarantee the fulfilment of finance and administrative procedures, and of donor rules and requirements, in order to preserve transparency and proper resource management ■ To lead and facilitate internal or external audits as necessary
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To monitor and ensure that administrative and finance staff work to facilitate the response, and to support the work of the operational teams ■ To encourage and motivate staff under their responsibility to make sure they are familiar with, and fulfil, the National Society administrative and finance procedures ■ To monitor and be aware of any irregularity that occurs within their area of responsibility ■ To facilitate and explain administration and finance procedures to operational teams when working in the field

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Administration and finance	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure that their actions or work is done according to established administration and finance procedures ■ To ask for support and advice when not sure about administration and finance procedures ■ To measure and analyse the potential financial and administrative consequences of any action
Telecommunications and information systems	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure that existing telecommunications equipment to be used by operational teams is in place and working ■ To support the establishment of the necessary equipment
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To make sure that staff and volunteers under their responsibility are trained and know how to use the telecommunications equipment and most common Red Cross Red Crescent software
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To take care of, maintain and use appropriately the telecoms equipment provided to support their work in the field ■ To use the equipment and software according to established procedures ■ To seek training in the use and maintenance of hardware and software
Logistics	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure that National Society logistics procedures and plans are in place and have been updated according to needs, and to monitor this situation ■ To ensure appropriate coordination with other actors and external donors in large-scale emergencies ■ To negotiate and sign pre-agreements with the authorities and obtain special status to facilitate National Society logistics (for example, customs procedures, warehouses and transport) in case of disaster
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure that logistical means are in place, functioning, and ready to be used ■ To participate actively in the development of logistic plans and procedures ■ To identify staff and volunteers with the skills and profile to work in logistics
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To support the organization of the distribution chain for humanitarian kits (purchases, transport, storage and distribution) ■ To negotiate and coordinate logistics with local authorities and other key players in the field ■ To identify logistics gaps and needs, and report them to decision-makers
Damage assessment and needs assessment	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure the timely deployment of the assessment team ■ To guarantee that the composition of the team is appropriate for the context and needs ■ To share internationally the assessment findings ■ To ensure that the information gathered during the assessment is used and disseminated responsibly and professionally, through the established channels

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Damage and needs assessment	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To participate in the design of the terms of reference and advise on the composition of the assessment team ■ To verify that the methodology is appropriate to the context ■ To support the identification and recruitment of the assessment team members
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To be part of the assessment process according to the pre-agreed terms of reference ■ To make sure that the information gathered during the assessment is relevant to the context ■ To use internationally recognized methods and tools during the assessment ■ To coordinate and share information with other local key players
Community-based relief programmes: participation, beneficiary targeting, registration, food and non-food items distribution	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To make sure the National Society follows the principles and procedures for the selection and registration of the beneficiaries, distribution of the relief goods, and the monitoring and the evaluation of the relief programme ■ Monitor and advocate for other institutions and NGOs to be transparent and impartial during relief operations
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To develop procedures, methodologies and tools for the relief operations that encompass assessment, beneficiary targeting, registration, selection, distribution, and monitoring of the relief operation ■ To facilitate relief training for staff and volunteers ■ To ensure that within the operational teams there are members with expertise in community-based relief programmes
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure that the relief programme is carried out according to transparent procedures and Sphere ■ To consult the people affected by disasters during relief programme design ■ To put in place mechanisms to guarantee the principle of impartiality in the relief operations
First aid	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To guarantee that the National Society provides first aid in emergencies, according to internationally recognized quality standards ■ To ensure the monitoring and quality control of the first aid training courses ■ To allocate resources to buy appropriate equipment ■ To liaise with public authorities
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To promote and guarantee first aid training for the staff and volunteers in their area of responsibility ■ To ensure the quality of the training processes and equipment to respond in emergencies
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To offer first aid during missions in the field according to internationally recognized quality standards ■ To support training processes when available and requested by the National Society

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
RFL	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure RFL needs and risks in disasters are incorporated in the National Society's strategic and development plans and in its emergency-preparedness and response plans ■ To establish relationships with the authorities to avoid delays in response and ensure that RFL issues are included in national disaster-preparedness and response, setting out the role of the National Society ■ To allocate resources to develop and sustain RFL capacity for disaster response
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To incorporate RFL action in emergency-preparedness and response plans in accordance with relevant RFL standards, guidelines and tools ■ To ensure appropriate training for RFL practitioners and for all first responders in disasters at headquarters and in the branches ■ To call on the ICRC without delay for support, including the deployment of the RFL specialist pool, where RFL needs outstrip the National Society's capacity
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To assess RFL needs and respond to them rapidly and effectively in emergencies in accordance with relevant RFL standards, guidelines and tools ■ To liaise and coordinate with other Movement partners of the worldwide Family Links Network when concerned and with the RFL specialist pool when deployed ■ To liaise with other stakeholders concerned by RFL activities, such as authorities and other institutions and NGOs
Integrated approach to planning and intervention	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To guarantee appropriate capacity in the thematic areas where the National Society normally responds in case of emergency ■ To ensure that National Society DM policies, strategies and planning tools integrate the public health approach
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure that operational teams include members with expertise in the National Society's distinctive areas of intervention ■ To identify staff and volunteers to be trained in the thematic areas relevant to the Red Cross Red Crescent's distinctive areas
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To help integrate the public health approach during the initial assessment and design of the response strategy ■ To identify local partners and resources to strengthen capacity in the thematic areas where the National Society has the role and responsibility to respond
Management	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To guarantee that the National Society has in place security guidelines and plans in accordance to the level of risks existing in the country ■ To authorize the mobilization of personnel and volunteers in highly unsecured environments ■ To negotiate and advocate for the existence of humanitarian spaces or corridors to guarantee the work of humanitarian organizations in conflict situations
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To lead and participate actively in the process of developing security guidelines and plans

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Management	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To monitor and update operational team members, staff and volunteers about the evolution of the security situation in a given context ■ To make sure staff and volunteers know and understand the National Society security management policy and guidelines ■ To name qualified and experienced people to manage security in the field during operational teams response operations
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To respect and follow the existing security guidelines and procedures ■ To inform immediately the team leader or designated director of any security incident during their mission ■ To avoid any unnecessary risk or action that could create insecurity for the rest of the team
Representation, negotiation and coordination	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To represent and position National Society work and profile in high level meetings with DM key players ■ To explore public institutions and partners to develop strategic alliances according to National Society priorities and interests ■ To support the work and initiatives of key staff and volunteers when high-level political representation is necessary
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure operational team leaders have skills and experience in institutional coordination and representation ■ To participate in meetings with DM key players and institutions at which operational and coordination issues are discussed and agreed upon ■ To provide operational teams with the necessary information to establish good relationships and coordination in the field
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To behave professionally and respectfully when representing the National Society in the field ■ To facilitate a positive atmosphere for potential coordination with DM key players
Diversity, gender and vulnerable groups	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To take measures to ensure that the National Society has appropriate policies, strategies and tools to consider issues relating to diversity, gender and vulnerable groups when responding to disasters ■ To ensure that diversity and gender issues are understood and respected by staff and volunteers
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To encourage and facilitate training on diversity and gender for decision-makers, key staff and volunteers ■ To lead and participate in the development of policies, strategies, methodologies and tools designed to integrate diversity and gender analysis during response operations ■ To ensure that, whenever feasible, operational teams are diverse and gender balanced
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To take the gender and diversity analysis into account during the initial assessment and response operation

Area of work	Role	Responsibilities
Diversity, gender and vulnerable groups	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To identify the most vulnerable groups, and to prioritize them within the response operations ■ To fulfil Sphere and to respect vulnerable groups
Appeals and proposals	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure National Society knowledge and capacity to prepare and present appeals with the necessary quality ■ To develop the capacity of the National Society to manage proposals with key external donors ■ To verify that the appeals and proposals prepared meet the necessary quality standards ■ To participate and represent the National Society in strategic meetings and field visits with donors
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To lead and provide technical support in the preparation of appeals and proposals ■ To ensure that there are people among the staff and volunteers with the skills and expertise necessary to prepare high quality appeals and proposals ■ To look for additional support when expertise is not in place ■ To offer technical leadership and input during field visits and key meetings with external donors or technical staff
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To search for timely and quality information to be included in the appeals and proposals. ■ To write inputs for appeals and proposals when requested from the National Society ■ To explore potential collaborations with other organizations to develop joint proposals
VCA	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To promote and facilitate the integration of a disaster risk reduction (DRR) approach into the National Society's strategies and programme areas ■ To disseminate the existing VCA guidelines and tools among key staff and volunteers ■ To manage and allocate resources for DRR programmes and training processes
	Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To promote and design projects and actions of DRR ■ To ensure that staff, and volunteers under their responsibility, use existing VCA tools in the DRR programmes ■ To identify staff, volunteers and operational team members to be trained and integrated in the DRR activities ■ To put in place mechanisms for the integration of DRR and preparedness and response programmes
	Operational teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To participate in and support DRR fieldwork and training when requested by the National Society ■ To take advantage of VCA analysis, where existing, when doing initial assessments and identifying response strategies ■ To identify situations where the National Society can implement future DRR programmes during their response operation

Annex 2

Creating a basic learning package

This annex explains how to create a basic learning package for the operational teams, through four basic modules:

- **Table 2.1:** National DM policies and mechanisms
- **Table 2.2:** Movement principles and DM systems and mechanisms
- **Table 2.3:** The mechanisms
- **Table 2.4:** Basic or foundation themes

Each of these four tables contains a cluster of themes and contents that are considered the minimum requirements for training operational team members. They have been carefully selected according to the basic knowledge and understanding expected of the team members, regardless of the context in which they will be deployed, or which National Society they belong to.

Within each thematic area, you will find a set of minimum skills and competencies expected of operational team members in order to help National Society decision-makers to better define the content and methodologies of the training package. You will also find reference materials and tools that relate to each thematic area. You will find it useful to refer to these when preparing the training strategies and to support the training process (consult Annex 1).

The basic foundation or themes (Table 2.4) have been selected from existing training curricula that National Societies in different regions have already implemented in training events for their operational teams. They incorporate insights and recommendations offered by Red Cross Red Crescent key players, at different levels, during an open consultation process. The selected themes are grouped into four basic tables, organized in a logical sequence that begins with the context and strategic 'big picture' and ends with the more concrete technical and operational elements.

The main context of each table is as follows:

Table 2.1 National DM policies and mechanisms

This table focuses on elements related to the national context in which the National Society operates.

The main content relates to:

- the most relevant hazards and vulnerabilities
- government risk reduction policies, strategies and plans
- an understanding of the main DM stakeholders and the National Society's role within the country's DM system.

Operational team members need to develop a minimum knowledge and understanding of these areas in order to be able to perform in accord with the existing context and needs.

Table 2.2 Movement principles and DM systems and mechanisms

This table provides operational team members with the necessary knowledge and understanding of the Red Cross Red Crescent principles, policies, strategies and mechanisms both at national and

supra-national levels. These elements will help team members to understand the institutional framework within which operational teams are integrated, and to develop the necessary skills and competencies so they can carry out their work in accordance with Red Cross Red Crescent and National Society standards, mechanisms and plans, while respecting the fundamental principles.

Table 2.3 The mechanism

This table focuses on the existing operational mechanisms and tools, and how they work. It will enable operational team members to know and understand their roles and responsibilities and those of the different Red Cross Red Crescent key players within the national preparedness and response system. It will also familiarize them with the processes, tools and SOPs related to their deployment and performance.

Table 2.4 Basic or foundation themes

This table includes all the themes related to specific operational issues. It seeks to guarantee comprehensive training for operational team members, and to develop technical skills and competencies so they can perform better in the field when they are deployed. The themes have been carefully selected to guarantee a good balance of political, technical, administrative and financial elements.

Five steps to creating the training package

The following five steps take you through the process of creating a training package for your operational teams:

Step 1 Define roles and responsibilities

The first step is to determine the main roles and responsibilities that the operational team members are expected to play for each knowledge and operational area. You need to do this according to a prior analysis of the country's context and needs, and by considering the National Society's role and capacity in disasters. The table in Annex 1 will help you carry out this analysis.

Step 2 Select the thematic areas

Next, decide what the operational team members need to know. Select the thematic areas that are most relevant to the role that they are expected to play in disaster preparedness and response. The themes, skills and competencies highlighted in the tables of this annex will help you identify the expected skills and competencies for each thematic area.

Step 3 Decide on the required level of skill and competency

The next step is to determine the main skills and competencies that operational team members are expected to have within each thematic area. The themes, skills and competencies flagged up in the tables in this annex will help you identify the skills and competencies required for each thematic area.

Step 4 Select the contents, duration and methodologies

In this step, you need to determine what weight you want to allocate to each thematic area within the training package. For each thematic area, you need to define three key elements: content, duration and methodology. This means selecting the most appropriate content, allocating time (hours or days) to the training process, and choosing the most appropriate methodologies to help people acquire the expected skills, attitudes and competencies. In this step, it is very important to have the advice and support of training specialists within the various thematic areas.

Step 5 Create your basic training package

Finally, it is time to create the basic training package for the operational teams, by pulling together all the elements analysed and selected in the previous steps.

Tip: When you create a basic learning package for your operational teams, consider the following key elements:

- the profile of your staff and volunteers
- the country context needs and most frequent hazards
- the role that the National Society plays within the country response system
- strategic areas prioritized within the existing response and contingency plans
- the National Society's areas of specialization, and those that need improvement
- the roles and responsibilities that you are expecting the operational team members to play
- the skills and competencies that you expect in the operational team members
- capacities that you wish to strengthen over the medium and long term.

Questions to ask yourself

- Have we considered the main role of our National Society in disasters, in order to select the thematic and operational areas of the training package?
- Are the roles and responsibilities of the operational team members relevant to the external context and needs?
- Does the training package have the appropriate contents for the skills and competencies we want operational teams members to have?
- Does the training package have a good balance in terms of quality of contents, allocation of time and appropriate methodologies?

The remainder of this annex sets out the expected skills and competencies within each of the themes, along with reference tools to use when devising training

Table 2.1 National DM policies and mechanisms

Theme and contents	Expected skills and competencies	Reference materials and tools
<p>Country context and risk analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Socio-political context ■ Hazards and vulnerabilities analysis ■ Prioritized areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge and understanding of the country's socio-political context ■ Knowledge of the country's main hazards and vulnerabilities, and their causes and consequences ■ Ability to identify the country's high-risk and disaster-prone areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Risk mapping and risk analysis studies that exist in the country ■ Inventory of hazards and disasters
<p>Country DM policies, strategies and plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Government policies and strategies for disasters ■ Role in DM of governmental bodies and institutions ■ Country national response plans and contingency plans ■ Emergency operating centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge and understanding of the national and local governments' main policies and strategies for disasters ■ Familiarity with the scenarios, priorities and strategy of the country's national response plan or similar document ■ Ability to identify the main roles and responsibilities of the government in case of disasters and the complementary role of the Red Cross Red Crescent and the National Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National development plan or similar documents ■ Government national response and contingency plans (if these exist) ■ Existing government protocols and SOPs where Red Cross Red Crescent is included
<p>Country DM key players (stakeholders):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Governmental institutions ■ UN agencies ■ Local and international NGOs ■ Other actors (private sector, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ability to identify the various key players and stakeholders in the country or area and their roles ■ Understanding of how the National Society relates to and coordinates with the different actors, and of who are its strategic partners ■ Knowledge and understanding of the role of the National Society compared to other actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Existing institutional agreements or protocols signed with key partners ■ Country national response plan ■ National Society response and contingency plans

Table 2.2 Movement principles and DM systems and mechanisms

Theme and contents	Expected skills and competencies	Reference materials and tools
<p>Red Cross Red Crescent principles, policies and strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The seven fundamental principles ■ Strategy 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge of the seven fundamental principles, and an understanding of their implications for the work of the National Society and the mechanism in a given context ■ Ability to act according to the fundamental principles when representing the Red Cross Red Crescent ■ Overall knowledge of the International Federation's global and regional policies, strategies and priorities, and an understanding of how they are linked to those in the National Society context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strategy 2020 ■ Training manuals or materials on the fundamental principles ■ <i>From Principles to Action</i> CD Rom
<p>Principles and rules in disaster response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief ■ The Code of Conduct ■ Sphere ■ The Seville Agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge of the main humanitarian principles and the ability to apply them when working in the field ■ Ownership of the Code of Conduct and Sphere as guiding principles in Red Cross and Red Crescent operations ■ Ability to fulfil Sphere during missions ■ Ability to differentiate and understand the roles of movement members according to each context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sphere and training package ■ <i>The Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures</i> ■ <i>The Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief</i>
<p>National Society policies, strategies and plans DM response and contingency plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Society mission, role and legal framework ■ Strategy and institutional development plan ■ National DM plan ■ Response and contingency plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understanding of the role of the National Society within the country response system, and of how it is related to the work of the mechanism in the field ■ Knowledge of the National Society policies, strategies, priorities and programmatic areas, and of which of them relate to the work and mission of the mechanism ■ Understanding of the role of the mechanism within the national DM plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Country's main disaster legislation ■ National Society institutional development plan ■ National Society DM and response plan ■ National Society contingency plans ■ <i>Disaster Response and Contingency Planning Guide</i>

Theme and contents	Expected skills and competencies	Reference materials and tools
<p>From Local to Global: Red Cross Red Crescent response system/mechanism and tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working as one system ■ Global response tools ■ Regional response tools ■ Financing tools ■ Appeals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clarity on the different roles and responsibilities of existing regional and global International Federation tools ■ Understanding of the approach to work as 'one Red Cross Red Crescent response system' ■ Ability to support and become an active member of global response tools such as ERU, FACT, and RDRT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appeal template

Table 2.3 The mechanism

Theme and contents	Expected skills and competencies	Reference materials and tools
<p>Operational teams selection, training and deployment mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Operational teams selection, training and deployment mechanisms ■ Selection process ■ Training, capacity building and continuum development plan ■ Alert and mobilization ■ Safety, health and readiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Operational team members are informed of the criteria and mechanism for selection as team members and/or team leaders ■ Understanding of learning as a process as a continuum with a variety of methodologies ■ Familiarity with the alert and mobilization procedures ■ Knowledge and understanding of the rights and duties of operational team members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ SOPs included in the response and contingency plans ■ The Code of Conduct ■ National Society security guidelines and protocols ■ National Society staff and volunteer management policies
<p>Team building and coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Negotiation skills ■ Working as a team ■ Self-awareness ■ Managing people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge of tools and basic skills for negotiation and coordination ■ Knowledge of methodologies to improve self awareness ■ Knowledge of the rules and principles of teamwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Workshop reference materials
<p>National Society disaster response plan and contingency plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prioritized scenarios ■ Areas of intervention ■ Internal and external coordination ■ Protocols and SOPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understanding of the importance, and advantages, of working as a team player ■ Ability to participate in developing response and contingency plans within the National Society ■ Knowledge of the main scenarios identified and prioritized for the National Society ■ Knowledge of the main strategies and plans developed by the National Society to respond to disasters ■ In-depth knowledge of response and contingency plans (if existing) ■ Knowledge of the SOPs related to the mechanism and ability to react according to them ■ Knowledge of their roles and responsibilities within the existing response plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Society response plan ■ National Society contingency plans ■ SOPs ■ Any other disaster response strategy or plan developed by the National Society ■ <i>Disaster response and contingency planning guide</i>

Theme and contents	Expected skills and competencies	Reference materials and tools
<p>Relationship with other International Federation tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ RDRT ■ FACT ■ ERU ■ DREF ■ DMIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understanding and ownership of the activation mechanisms through participating in simulation exercises ■ Understanding of the complementary role of the mechanism and other global and regional International Federation response mechanisms, such as RDRT, ERU and FACT ■ Knowledge of the existence of DREF and how it relates to the mechanism ■ Knowledge of the existence of DMIS and its usefulness for the work of the mechanism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ DMIS ■ FedNet ■ DREF procedures and guidelines

Table 2.4 Basic or foundation themes

Theme and contents	Expected skills and competencies	Reference materials and tools
<p>Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Which information is relevant? ■ Different kinds of reports ■ Templates of reports used by National Society and the secretariat ■ Examples of good practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ability to select information that is relevant to Red Cross Red Crescent and the mission within a given context ■ Minimum writing and style skills to prepare a comprehensive situation report according to the official templates used within the National Society ■ Understanding of required reporting skills and responsibilities according to the role played within the mechanism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Examples of good situation reports ■ Templates of reports approved or used by the National Society or the mechanism
<p>Administration and finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Main National Society administration and finance procedures ■ Special procedures in case of disaster ■ Secretariat administration and finance procedures relevant to National Societies and the mechanism ■ Basic tools to monitor and control budget and expenditure ■ Most up-to-date forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge of the International Federation and National Society's basic finance and administrative procedures, and of how they relate to the work of the mechanism ■ Understanding of why finance and administration procedures are necessary within a response operation ■ Understanding and knowledge of how to fill in the administrative forms that operational team members will use during their missions ■ Knowledge of basic tools to monitor and control budget and expenditure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Society finance and administration guidelines ■ International Federation finance and administration procedures ■ Templates of budget monitoring tools ■ Templates of finance and administration forms
<p>Telecommunications and systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The telecommunications equipment of the National Society ■ Practice with the equipment ■ Procedures to use equipment ■ Most relevant software used by the National Society and the secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ability to use basic telecommunications equipment normally used by National Society in the operations (HF radios, VHF, sat-phones, etc) ■ Basic computer skills and familiarity with the software used by the National Societies and the International Federation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Basic telecommunications training manuals

Theme and contents	Expected skills and competencies	Reference materials and tools
<p>Logistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Society logistical plan and systems ■ Basic tools and methodologies for the distribution of humanitarian aid ■ Logistical support from others (National Societies or the secretariat) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge of National Society logistics systems in place (warehouses, suppliers, means of transport, acquisitions procedures, among others) ■ Knowledge of basic tools and systems for transporting, storing and distributing humanitarian aid ■ Knowledge of logistical support offered by the secretariat and other National Societies in case of disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Logistics Standards Online</i> ■ <i>Emergency Items Catalogue</i>
<p>Damage and needs assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Basic methodologies for information gathering ■ Most up-to-date assessment tools and reporting forms ■ The process of the assessment (terms of reference, team selection, logistics, etc) ■ Different roles within the assessment team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge of basic methodologies for information gathering in disasters ■ Capacity to distinguish which information is relevant for the needs assessment ■ Good knowledge of the assessment tools and assessment report formats used by the National Society or other relevant actors in the country ■ Knowledge and understanding of the different roles that members of an assessment team play according to their area of expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Guidelines for Assessment in Emergencies</i> ■ <i>Assessing needs in the sphere of restoring family links, handbook for National Societies and the ICRC</i> ■ National Society emergency assessment tools (if these exist) ■ Government assessment tools (if these exist)
<p>Community-based relief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Programme ■ National Society relief plan and systems ■ Developed systems and procedures for effective relief programmes ■ Relief support from others (National Society or secretariat) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge and understanding of relief cycle and international standards such as Sphere and the Emergency Items Catalogue to ensure the participation of people affected by disasters ■ Knowledge of basic methodologies and tools for effective relief programming ■ Ability to apply international standards of relief programming within the context in which the mechanism will operate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sphere (assessment, targeting, registration) ■ Standard relief training curriculum adapted to meet National Society needs ■ <i>Relief ERU Field Manual</i>
<p>First aid training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contents according to nationally and internationally recognized standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ability to offer first aid help when working in the field ■ Knowledge of, and the capacity to implement, the main first aid techniques ■ Ability to differentiate when first aid is needed, and when further attention and skills are required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Red Cross and Red Crescent first aid training manuals

Theme and contents	Expected skills and competencies	Reference materials and tools
<p>RFL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge of types of RFL needs in disasters and possible responses ■ Knowledge of roles and responsibilities in management of dead bodies and possible Red Cross Red Crescent roles ■ Ability to liaise and coordinate with RFL resources available, including the National Society's service in charge of RFL and the RFL specialist pool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ RFL in disasters Field Manual and related training materials for RFL specialists and non-specialists ■ Management of Dead Bodies after Disasters: a Field Manual for First Responders
<p>Integrated approach to planning and intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Search and rescue ■ Temporary shelter ■ Health services ■ Hygiene promotion, water and sanitation ■ Food aid and food security ■ Psychosocial support ■ Missing, search and family reunification ■ International standards for each thematic area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge and understanding of the public health approach in emergencies ■ Overall knowledge and understanding of all the thematic areas in which Red Cross Red Crescent responds in case of disasters ■ Thorough knowledge and understanding of the international quality standards applicable to each thematic area ■ Thorough knowledge and understanding of the thematic areas in which National Society normally responds in case of disaster, included in the response strategy within the response and contingency plans ■ Thorough knowledge and basic skills in the thematic area related to the professional sector, or experience of the mechanism member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Response plan ■ Contingency plans ■ Sphere ■ Temporary shelter training materials
<p>Security management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Security principles and standards ■ Context and risk analysis (threats) ■ Alert warning and evacuation ■ Red Cross Red Crescent – National Society security guidelines and plan ■ Tools and techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge and understanding of Red Cross Red Crescent security principles and standards ■ Knowledge of the main security threats and scenarios ■ Knowledge of security guidelines or procedures for the country and field missions ■ Knowledge of basic tools and techniques to react in unsecured environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Society security guidelines ■ Existing security plans ■ Secretariat security guidelines and procedures ■ Example of security plans

Theme and contents	Expected skills and competencies	Reference materials and tools
<p>Representation, negotiation and coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Basic theory and principles of negotiation ■ Representing the Red Cross Red Crescent ■ Techniques and tools ■ Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge of basic principles and the ability to use basic skills for negotiation and coordination in response operations ■ Ability to behave and react according to the situation and people involved ■ Clarity about the implications of representing and working for the Red Cross Red Crescent 	
<p>Diversity, gender and vulnerable groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Importance of diversity and gender ■ Women in disasters ■ Minority groups, culture and language issues ■ Tools and methodologies ■ Vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understanding of the importance of using a diversity and gender approach when responding to disasters ■ Knowledge of basic methodologies and the ability to use basic skills to integrate a diversity and gender analysis when responding to disasters as an operational team member ■ Ability to conduct a basic analysis to identify the most vulnerable groups in a given disaster context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Society gender and diversity policy (if existing) ■ <i>Gender policy</i> ■ Good practice case studies ■ <i>The Oxfam Gender Training Manual</i>
<p>Appeals and proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Red Cross Red Crescent appeals procedures and forms ■ Main external donors rules, procedures and forms ■ Operational implications of working with external funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Overall knowledge of the procedures and forms for launching an International Federation appeal ■ Overall knowledge of the rules, procedures and forms of the main external donors that offer support to National Society in emergencies ■ Good knowledge of the operational implications of obtaining funds from International Federation appeals and external donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Example of external donor proposals, reporting (DFID, ECHO, etc) ■ Federation appeal procedures and forms
<p>Introduction to VCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Disasters and vulnerabilities ■ Purpose of VCA ■ Outcomes of VCA ■ Good practice examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understanding the importance of operational team members being integrated into risk reduction activities ■ Knowledge and understanding of the VCA approach and how to use the existing tools and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>What is VCA? An introduction to vulnerability and capacity assessment</i> ■ Good practice case studies

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.



**Our world is in a mess.
It's time to make your move.**
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