



Guidance Note

Preparedness for Emergency Response in IOM

Draft Version 1.0 | Last updated: September 2020



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The UN Migration Agency

Table of Contents

Overview	3
1 st Step - Risk Analysis & Monitoring.....	5
2 nd Step - Minimum Preparedness Actions	7
3 rd Step - Contingency Planning.....	8
Annex - Impact & Likelihood Scales	9

Rationale & Objectives for this Guidance Note

IOM is working globally on preparedness through support and capacity building of communities and governments. Institutionally, the *Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF)*¹ is the key IOM framework about Preparedness and Response to Crisis². For instance, in line with the Sendai Framework, IOM works on Disaster Risk Reduction with more than 100 DRR-related projects in 65 countries³. IOM also contributes to the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus efforts and work on building community and government resilience before, during and after an emergency. Overall, the preparedness work of IOM is reflected in many guidance and tools available on the [Emergency Manual](#). As well, several projects and flagships products and trainings around preparedness are also in place such as [MICIC](#), MEND⁴ or MASC⁵.

Yet, **Preparedness for Emergency Response** is not addressed at length in the “BEFORE” phase of the MCOF. In the same way, IOM Projectization process includes risk analysis and mitigation steps (as part of PRIMA submission) but it is specific to the project level which often varies (subnational, national, etc.). This could leave a gap for a comprehensive overview at Country Level or for some risks that are not yet covered by an IOM project⁶.

In addition, given IOM’s vast engagement with communities and governments as well as participation and contribution to inter- agency processes, there is need to develop an IOM guidance on Emergency Preparedness which is aligned to the Inter-agency standing committee (IASC) [Emergency Response Preparedness \(ERP\)](#)⁷. This inter-agency tool is the basis for a common understanding of Emergency Preparedness among UN actors and partners.

The objectives of this guidance note aim to support IOM Country and Regional Offices for:

- Internal *Preparedness for Emergency Response* in complement to the MCOF
- Contribution into inter-agency *Emergency Response Preparedness* plans

This guidance note will refer to other existing IOM guidelines and checklists based on various sectors and thematic areas, but it does not aim at being the repository of all Emergency Preparedness elements of IOM⁸. Instead, it is designed as a **light document, particularly oriented towards IOM country offices less familiar with Emergency Preparedness & Response**.

This **guidance note will be a living document** available on the IOM Emergency Manual and IOM-PRD SharePoint. In order to make it more relevant and useful for Country and Regional offices, it will undergo additional consultations with field colleagues for feedback and comments, it will also be regularly updated according to evolution of key related resources. For further information, please contact Damien Fresnel (dfresnel@iom.int) and Fatma Said (fsaid@iom.int), Emergency Preparedness Officers in the [Preparedness and Response Division](#) (PRD).

Acknowledgments: in order to align with already existing products, some elements of these guidelines rely on existing internal IOM and/or UN and inter-agency products. Sources are referenced where available.

¹ To be noted that the MCOF is currently under revision and will be finalized in 2021, this document will be updated accordingly by then.

² For instance, IOM Risk Management and its implementation in PRIMA at Project level also contribute to the Preparedness strengthening of IOM. As well, preparedness elements are shared with Staff Security Procedures or Business Continuity (e.g. Risk Analysis)

³ See Transition & Recovery [DRR internal SharePoint Page](#)

⁴ Mass Evacuations in Natural Disasters – See doc on [CCCCM Cluster](#) website

⁵ Mass Shelter Capability Project ([link](#))

⁶ See the IOM Emergency Preparedness Dashboard and PRIMA Dashboard with EP Projects (IOM VPN required).

⁷ Many elements of this guidance are similar to the ERP one. To be Noted as well, IOM is also part of other multi-lateral preparedness efforts such as the [Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative](#) CADRI, and part of the [INFORM](#) Steering Group

⁸ The key repository remains the [Emergency Manual](#) and IOM SharePoint; further detailed technical guidance per sector could be also be obtained via technical focal points at RO/HQ

Overview

What is Preparedness & why is it relevant?

“Preparedness” is broadly defined as: “the Knowledge and capacities to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters”⁹. This definition resonates the MCOF’s formulation of IOM’s role before, during and after a crisis¹⁰.

The “anticipate” and “recover” elements of preparedness imply a longer-term perspective. This guidance note focuses on “Preparedness for Emergency Response” (or “Emergency Preparedness”¹¹), and therefore considers a shorter timeframe to increase the capability and readiness to “respond to”, particularly during the first 3 to 4 weeks following a sudden-onset disaster or crisis¹².

This distinction around timeframe is mainly theoretical, yet it is helpful to attribute classification of IOM projects ; for instance between a longer-term “DR - Disaster Risk Reduction”¹³ component (often with multiple years projects) and a more shorter term “EP” – Emergency Preparedness”¹⁴ component (often with a shorter outlook period ranging from months to one year). Most “preparedness” projects would actually include both DR and EP components rather than only one or the other.

Indeed, this distinction is not clearly cut in practice. It is almost always the same persons as IOM focal points at Country Level for DRR, EP and/or Emergency Response. Furthermore, disaster and crisis often have a cyclical repetition of emergency and transition phases rather than a linear timeline (see figure below). Overall, the aim of Emergency Preparedness is to act ahead of potential crisis to improve the speed, volume, and quality of the emergency response¹⁵.

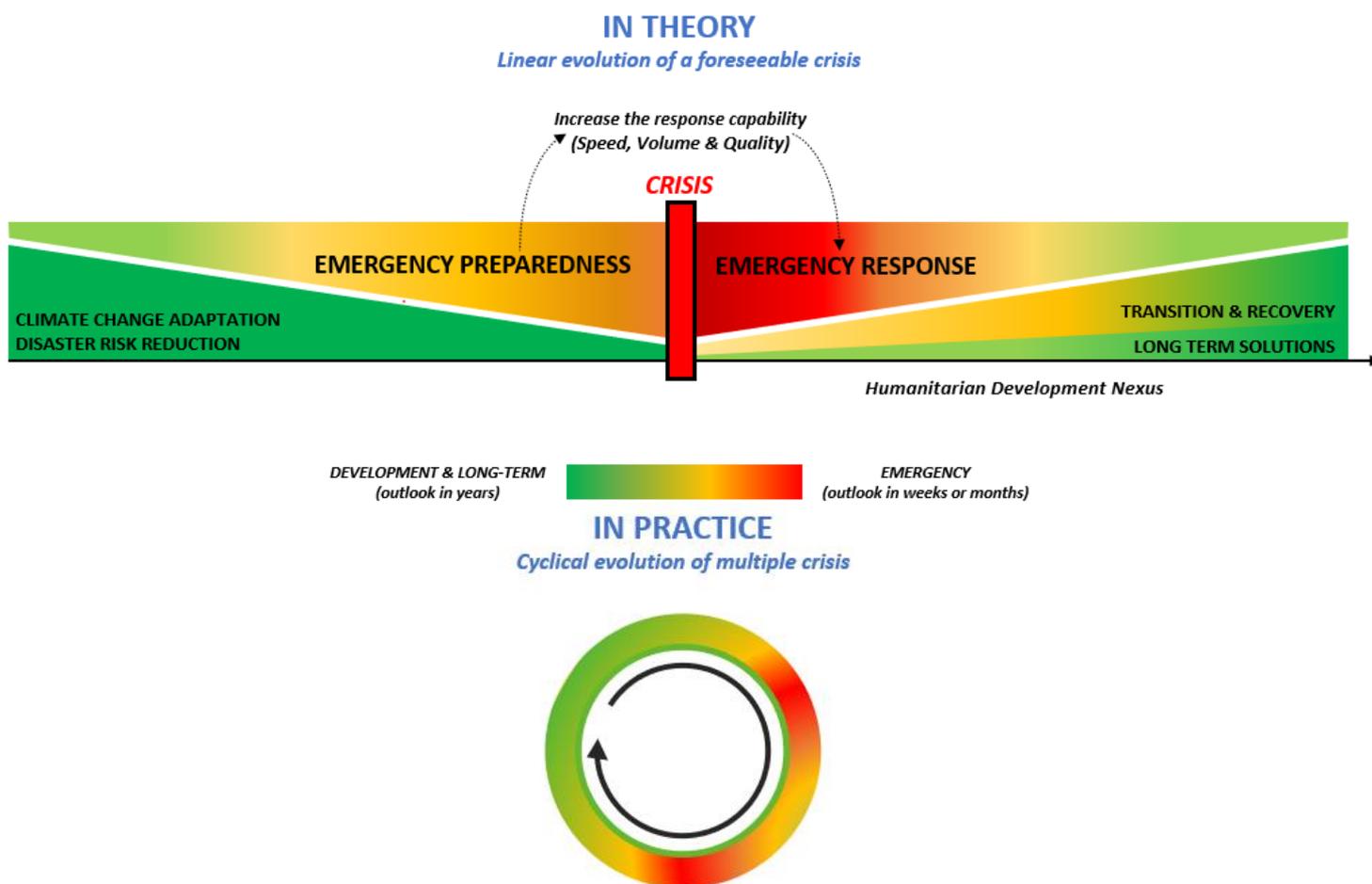


Figure 1 - Different Phases of an Emergency (Theory & Practice)

⁹ From UNDRR Terminology also used in Sendai Framework, see [UN General Assembly Resolution, 2016](#)

¹⁰ IOM Emergency Manual: [MCOF](#)

¹¹ “Preparedness for Emergency Response” could be used inter-changeably with “Emergency Preparedness” in this Guidance Note

¹² Find more on [IOM Emergency Corporate Activation](#) (L1, L2, L3)

¹³ Focal Points Division being Transition and Recovery Division in DOE-HQ; see as well guidance on Project Code DR (TRD) & NC (MECC)

¹⁴ Focal Points Division being Prepared and Response Division in DOE-HQ

¹⁵ See UNICEF/WFP [Preparedness - Return on Investment Study, 2015](#)

Who are the stakeholders in Emergency Preparedness?

The government is the primary entity and duty bearer responsible for Emergency Preparedness & Response. The UN and other international and local partners seek to support the efforts of the government in responding to an emergency. When the government requires external support, the interventions of the UN/NGOs to “prepare and respond” should be coordinated through existing mechanisms in the country, notably through the sector/cluster system¹⁶.



- National Preparedness.
 - See [Repository National Plans/Platforms \(UNDRR/Prevention Web\)](#)
- Partners & Inter-Agency Preparedness, read more
 - Emergency Response Preparedness Guidance (ERP)
 - Inter-Agency Plans (HRP, Cooperation framework, MSNA, etc.)
 - Sector/Clusters Preparedness plans
- IOM Preparedness, see
 - [Repository of IOM CO Preparedness & Contingency Plans](#) (see [Emergency Preparedness Dashboard](#))

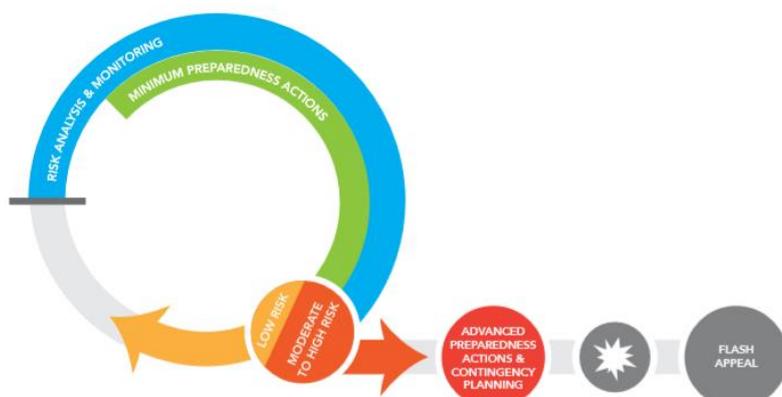
Figure 2 – Linkages between preparedness plans

It is worth noting that any inter-agency or agency-specific preparedness plan should seek to align with national plans and priorities¹⁷. Thus, discussions with the government and communities- both at country office and inter-agency levels need to be made at an early stage, as joint planning, programming, and monitoring is vital to achieving a cohesive and well-coordinated response.

Common approach for Emergency Preparedness in the UN System

The [IASC Emergency Response Preparedness \(ERP\)](#) approach is central to establishing common understanding of Emergency Preparedness among UN Agencies and partners. Most UN agencies use this methodology, or a slightly adapted version tailored to agency-specific mandates¹⁸. This IOM guidance note builds on this same approach, with more specific context to IOM’s mandate in addressing and responding to migration crisis.

The emergency preparedness cycle includes 3 main steps.



STEP 1 | Risk Analysis & Monitoring

STEP 2 | Minimum Preparedness

STEP 3 | Contingency Planning

Figure 3 - IASC Emergency Response Preparedness Phases

¹⁶ See [UN Cluster System](#)

¹⁷ To ensure respect of humanitarian principles, alternative coordination arrangements may be required under International Humanitarian Law in cases of internal conflict where Government has an active role in the conflict.

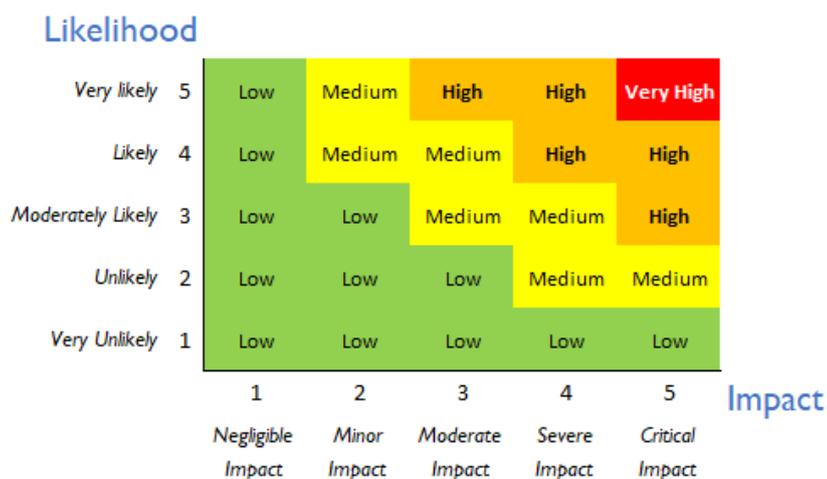
¹⁸ See for instance UNHCR ([PPRE](#)) or UNICEF ([Guidance Preparedness](#)).

1st Step – Risk Analysis & Monitoring

Risk Identification & Risk Seriousness (Impact x Likelihood)

The risk analysis process identifies the hazards or events that could trigger an emergency. Hazards can then be ranked by calculating their Risk Seriousness based on potential impact and likelihood¹⁹(see details around impact and likelihood scale in annex I)

The risk identification should be done regularly, usually at least every 6 months (e.g. in parallel with the drafting of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) phase and the mid- year review of the HRP²⁰), but frequency could change according to the context²¹. Risk identification for IOM should in priority consider how hazards might have potential impacts on Migration Crisis & Human Mobility dynamics²².



IMPACT x LIKELIHOOD = RISK SERIOUSNESS

E.g.: (4) Severe Impact x (4) Likely = (16) High Risk

Figure 4 – Risk Seriousness Calculation

Types of Hazards

The hazards with potential humanitarian consequences can be classified in the two categories below. Most of the Emergency Preparedness approach is common for any type of risk (e.g. Risk Analysis, Minimum Preparedness), but some elements are specific to some crisis contexts only (e.g. during internal armed conflict, coordination with the host Government will likely differ compared to a disaster response situation when it comes to ensure impartial/neutral humanitarian action).

Slow & Sudden Onsets Hazards <i>Such as</i>	Crisis <i>Such as</i>
Natural hazards, either hydro-meteorological (floods, landslides, storms, droughts) or geophysical (earthquake, volcanic eruption, tsunami)	Armed conflict and civil unrest
Technological/Environmental sudden hazards (industrial accidents, severe pollution)	Serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law
Epidemics and pandemics	Drastic changes in the socio-economic environment, such as a surge in prices of essential goods, restrictive government legislation such as export and import bans
Humanitarian Principles International humanitarian Law²³	

¹⁹ See annex I for details around Impact and Likelihood scales

²⁰ [Humanitarian Program Cycle](#)

²¹ In the event of a sudden onset crisis, the risk analysis would be used to contribute to the development of a flash appeal.

²² For guidance on how to estimate the Humanitarian Caseload, see the [2016 IASC guidance Humanitarian Population Figures](#)

²³ NB: Sendai Framework/UNDRR Terminology does not cover the right column around “crisis/conflicts”

Risk Monitoring

It should be noted that for risk monitoring purposes, hazards or events (e.g. *upcoming tense elections*) have different outlook period that can be classified as:

- **Seasonal/recurring:** such as floods, cyclones, and drought, which pose risks at regular, predictable times. Early Warning resources²⁴ and indicators are often more available and relied upon than for crisis/armed conflict.
- **Evolving:** such as armed conflict, serious human rights violations, economic hazards, and pandemics. The risks that these hazards pose change irregularly over time.
- **Static:** such as earthquakes, volcanic eruption, and tsunamis, posing almost the same level of risk all the time. Predicting Static hazards occurrence is difficult and/or extremely short term (e.g. volcanoes and tsunamis) or completely impossible (e.g. earthquake).

The Risk Seriousness should be balanced with existing and potential country's capacities to respond to an emergency - notably Government, UNs & INGOs, local NGOs and civil society capacities, private sector, potential donor interest and of course existing IOM capacities in the country. For risks still ranging from "Medium" to "Very High", a more detailed Risk Analysis is advised, using for instance the PESTLE approach²⁵ and estimation of caseload²⁶.

For evolving hazards such as political crises or in general when the situation is volatile or uncertain, different scenarios could emerge and should be considered for Contingency Planning (see annex 3). The three scenarios to be considered in order of importance would be: 1) Most likely scenario, 2) *Worst case scenario* and 3) *Best case scenario*. Scenario development should remain quite simple, and in case of limited resources/manpower, joint risk monitoring with other partners should be prioritized²⁷.

Risk Monitoring should be done according to the type of hazard/events (seasonal, evolving or static), looking for early warnings for seasonal trends, already identified and emerging risks as well. Further detailed risk analysis should be conducted at inter-agency level around spill-over and compounding effects of risks (e.g. *Impact of Floods on 1) displacement, 2) increased risk for health/communicable diseases, 3) loss of crops and food security considerations, etc.*).

Early warning should be followed by early action to adjust IOM's level of preparedness (e.g. *Early Warning of a tropical storm should trigger the revision/activation of the Contingency Plan, or the development+activation of Contingency Plan if none were pre-existing*).

The aim of the Risk Analysis and Monitoring is to have a simple and common understanding of IOM's capacity to respond to various risks and to prepare accordingly at all levels of the organization²⁸:

What is the IOM Country Office capacity to manage the Emergency Response if this particular risk materializes?

- The Country Office has the capacity to manage
- The Country Office would need the support of the Regional Office
- The Country Office would need the support of the Regional Office and Headquarters

²⁴ Key resources for Early warning are available on the [Emergency Preparedness Dashboard](#); additional resources available on [PRD SharePoint](#)

²⁵ PESTLE method is used for identifying the Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental factors, and their potential impact. See tool 1.9 in the [IOM Project Handbook](#)

²⁶ For guidance on how to estimate the Impact/Humanitarian Caseload, see the [2016 IASC guidance Humanitarian Population Figures](#)

²⁷ Inter-Agency Risk Analysis tools include among others: such as the [JIAF](#), and other [Needs and Analysis tools](#)

²⁸ This classification echoes the [IOM Corporate Emergency Activation](#) with the three levels of 1) National, 2) Regional, 3) Global

2nd Step - Minimum Preparedness Actions

The Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs) are a set of activities/actions (see annex 2) that every IOM office should implement in order to establish a minimum level of emergency preparedness to increase IOM's capacity to respond to **any risk**.

These actions **are not risk or scenario-specific** and usually **do not require significant additional resources** to be implemented²⁹. Implementing the MPAs will make a **fundamental difference to the speed, volume and quality** of an eventual response.

Preparing an IOM Country Office for an emergency response requires involvement of multiple functional areas and sectors. One challenge is to keep the process light and easy to ensure implementation and prevent “preparedness fatigue”. Therefore, **the MPAs proposed below focus only on some key Functional Areas**³⁰, rather than aiming at exhaustive sectoral/thematic checklists³¹.

Implementing the simple actions listed in the checklists allows offices to achieve a **recommended minimum preparedness** level across key functional areas (see overview in figure 5 below and annex 2 for detailed checklist).

Areas covered by the proposed Minimum Preparedness Actions



1 | Risk Monitoring



2 | Coordination & Management Arrangements



3 | Programs & Sector



4 | Human Resources



5 | Supply & Logistics



6 | Partnerships



7 | Advocacy & Communication



8 | Resources Mobilization



9 | Security & Business Continuity Plans

Figure 5 - Areas for Minimum Preparedness Actions
(see checklists for each area in Annex 2)

²⁹ e.g. maintaining a list of vetted local daily worker, third party contractors to recruit on day 1 on a sudden emergency

³⁰ This guidance does not supersede recommendations from various IOM Thematic units, please report any conflicting recommendations to PRD if they occur.

³¹ For what needs to be done BEFORE an emergency in each Sector not mentioned in the MPA, see elements in: the MCOF, the Inter-Agency Guidelines and/or resources on thematic pages in IOM HQ. At a later Stage, “One-pager Checklists” might be developed for most IOM-DOE Sectors and available on IOM Intranet as well.

3rd Step - Contingency Planning

WHAT IS CONTINGENCY PLANNING?

“*Contingency planning (CP) is a management process that analyses disaster risks and establishes arrangements in advance to enable timely, effective, and appropriate responses.*”

*Contingency planning results in organized and coordinated courses of action with clearly identified institutional roles and resources, information processes and operational arrangements for specific actors at times of need*³².

“*The contingency planning process can basically be broken down into three simple questions:*”

1. *What is going to happen?*
2. *What are we going to do about it?*
3. *What can we do ahead of time to get prepared?*”

IFRC

To be noted, contingency planning is the framework to put in place before an emergency happens. Once a humanitarian emergency is declared, depending on the scale and magnitude, an IOM Corporate Emergency Activation³³ and/or an inter-agency one may be required³⁴. Having a contingency plan in place will facilitate the speed, volume, and quality of the emergency response.

WHO DEVELOPS A CONTINGENCY PLAN?

The development of a contingency plan should be undertaken by the appointed emergency focal point(s) with support from IOM CO Senior Management Team. DOE RTS and HQ DOE Division can provide support developing those plans and/or trainings/capacity building.

WHEN TO DEVELOP A CONTINGENCY PLAN?

Contingency Planning cannot be done as a standalone step, it should build up on the 2 previous steps (1. Risk Analysis/Monitoring, 2. Minimum Preparedness Actions). Following a risk identification/analysis to be done regularly (e.g. every 6 months in classic contexts, every year in “low risks” countries), development of a contingency plan is recommended for Risks ranging from “Medium” to “Very High”.

CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR WHICH SCENARIOS?

Contingency Plans explore different scenarios for potential affected populations, notably about migration and Human Mobility dynamics (*Most Likely, Worst-Case and Best-Case Scenario*), this phase also requires identifying Early Warning indicators relevant to the context. However, to keep the preparedness effort reasonable against often limited resources, CP should be maintained as short and to the point as possible (e.g. *better to have a 10 pages document up to date rather than an outdated 60 pages one*).

ONE OR MULTIPLE CONTINGENCY PLANS?

A contingency plan could be hazard-specific (e.g. cyclone) but it would be advised to do a multi-hazard plan if the expected humanitarian consequences of different crises are expected to be similar (e.g. any natural hazards). Specific contingency plans can/should be developed when humanitarian consequences are expected to be very different between two risks (e.g. specific type of outbreak, level of coordination with Government during internal armed conflict).

LINKAGES BETWEEN IOM CONTINGENCY PLAN & INTER-AGENCY ONES?

The UNCT/HCT and the clusters, where they exist, play a role in the development of Contingency Plans as well. Developing internal IOM contingency plans will strengthen IOM contributions to the more global UNCT/HCT emergency preparedness efforts. As such, those plans should be seen as complementary and avoid duplication. Therefore, it is advised for IOM CPs to use references and links from inter-agency ones when they exist rather than repeat the same elements.

See in **annex 3 (IOM contingency plan template) a series of key questions**³⁵ to guide the country teams while developing a contingency plan and identify any preparedness gaps.

³² [UNGA Resolution](#): working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction

³³ [IOM Emergency Corporate Activation](#)

³⁴ [IASC Scale-Up Protocols](#)

³⁵ Based on IASC ERP Contingency Plan template, adjusted for IOM Specificity. To be noted, the IASC ERP approach also includes “Advanced Preparedness Actions” that build on the MPA. Those “APA” are often risk & context specific; they could be identified during the CP phase.

Annex - Impact & Likelihood Scales

There are different methodologies to assess the impact of potential hazards, but as Emergency Preparedness requires collaboration with partners from other agencies, it is advised to rely mainly on the definitions of the IASC ERP. For information and to help reconcile the inter-agency approach with the internal IOM one, please find below what could be the corresponding definitions in the IOM [project handbook \(p.33\)](#).

To be noted as well, the scale and magnitude of the impact estimation will always differ from one country to another:

- the impact of a new humanitarian caseload of 100,000 people will be different in a country of 2M people compared to one with 250M people.
- the impact estimation should also consider the severity of the crisis/disaster, the capacity/willingness of the government and the presence of partners.

IMPACT

	Definition Inter-Agency (IASC ERP)	Definition IOM Project Handbook
1 Negligible Impact	Minor additional humanitarian impact. Government capacity is sufficient to deal with the situation. <i>e.g. new caseload <20k people</i>	<i>Level 1</i> A few are affected
		<i>Level 2</i> Tens are affected
2 Minor Impact	Minor additional humanitarian impact. Current country level inter-agency resources sufficient to cover needs beyond government capability. <i>e.g. new caseload between 20k-100k people</i>	<i>Level 3</i> Hundreds are affected
3 Moderate Impact	Moderate additional humanitarian impact. New resources up to 30% of current operations needed to cover needs beyond government capacity. Regional support not required. <i>e.g. new caseload between 100k to 250k people</i>	<i>Level 4</i> Thousands are affected
4 Severe Impact	Substantive additional humanitarian impact. New resources up to 50% of current operations needed to cover needs beyond government capacity. Regional support required. <i>e.g. new caseload between 250k to 500k people</i>	<i>Level 5</i> Tens of thousands are affected
5 Critical Impact	Massive additional humanitarian impact. New resources over 80% of current operations needed to cover needs beyond government capacity. HQ support required <i>e.g. new caseload >500k people</i>	<i>Level 6</i> Hundreds of thousands or more are affected

LIKELIHOOD

	Definition Inter-Agency (IASC ERP & EWEAR)	Definition IOM Project Handbook
1 Very Unlikely	A remote chance of an event occurring in the current year, from 0-5%. <i>e.g. Seasonal hazards that have happened once or less in the last 20 years.</i>	<i>Level A</i> Requires exceptional circumstances and is unlikely, even in the long term; only occurs as a “100-year event”
2 Unlikely	The event has a low chance of arising in the current year, from 5 to 15% <i>e.g. Seasonal hazards that have happened 1 to 3 times in the last 20 years.</i>	<i>Level B</i> Has occurred elsewhere, or could occur within decades
3 Moderately Likely	The event has a viable chance of arising in the current year, from 15-30%. <i>e.g. Seasonal hazards that happened 2 or 3 times in the last 10 years, or once or twice in the last 5 years</i>	<i>Level C</i> Has occurred before in a similar organization, or could occur within the next few years
4 Likely	The event has a significant chance of arising in the current year, from 30-50%. <i>e.g. Seasonal hazards that happen every second or third year, e.g. two times in the last 5 years.</i>	<i>Level D</i> Has occurred before in IOM, or could occur within months to years
5 Very Likely	The event has a positive chance of arising, over 50%. <i>e.g. Seasonal hazards that have happened 3 or more times in the last 5 years, or >5 times in the last 10 years.</i>	<i>Level E</i> Could occur in most circumstances, or could occur within weeks to months
		<i>Level F</i> Could occur in most circumstances, or could occur within days to weeks