World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Executive Director's Circular
(Office of the Deputy Executive Director)

Date:	08/07/2021
Circular No.:	OED2021/015
Revises:	
Amends:	
Supersedes:	OED2016/012

WFP BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT

Purpose and scope

1.   This Circular describes the policies, organization, as well as roles and responsibilities for the management of WFP's Business Continuity Management programme.

2.   This is one of three Executive Director circulars that concern organizational resilience and should be read in conjunction with WFP Organizational Resilience Management System (ORMS)[1] and WFP Crisis Management.[2]

3.   This Circular is addressed to all WFP offices worldwide.

Introduction

4.   Business Continuity Management (BCM) is a core element of the ORMS,[3] an integrated framework for building and maintaining WFP's organizational resilience. In this context, resilience refers to the ability to continue to meet strategic and operational objectives in the face of change, threats and disruptions to WFP's operations. The ORMS framework is illustrated in Annex 1.

5.   The objective of business continuity is to ensure organizational capacity to continue delivering products or services, at meaningful levels, following a disruptive event. In WFP, business continuity focuses on ensuring that the Organization's critical business processes[4] continue to be executed following a critical disruption.

6.   A robust BCM programme[5] provides other benefits, including:

    a.   meeting WFP's commitment to good corporate governance and compliance;

---

[1] OED2021/013 Organizational Resilience Management, which refers to the Policy on the Organizational Resilience Management System (ORMS), Chief Executives Board, UN, effective 1 December 2014.
[2] OED2021/014 WFP Crisis Management
[3] The UN Policy on the Organizational Resilience Management System (ORMS),
[4] WFP's critical business processes were defined during a corporate Business Impact Analysis workshop, looking at the effects of interrupting business processes, held in July 2014. Since then, processes have been reviewed systematically by functional areas, in collaboration with the BCM Team, resulting in additional processes being identified. The full list of critical business processes is included in WFP's Corporate Business Continuity Plan.
[5] In this document, "BCM programme" refers to the totality of norms, issuances, actions, structures and other elements that are directly related to business continuity in WFP.

World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Executive Director's Circular
(Office of the Deputy Executive Director)

    b.   maintaining WFP's mandate, core values and good reputation; and

    c.   safeguarding the interests of all stakeholders (including governments, donors, partner, other United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)).

7.   To be successful, BCM must be embedded in WFP's corporate culture. BCM must also be integrated with other WFP and UN-wide preparedness and response activities, such as the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS) and Programme Criticality planning as well as with the other key elements of WFP's ORMS.[6]

Policies and Standards

8.   WFP will maintain a current Corporate Business Continuity Plan (CORP-BCP),[7] describing the actions and resources needed to ensure continuity in WFP critical programmes and activities. Actions required to ensure business continuity for HQ following a disruption, are referred to in the CORP-BCP and described in greater detail in the supporting e-Guide.[8]

9.   Each Regional Bureau will maintain a current Business Continuity Plan (RB-BCP), describing the actions and resources needed to ensure business continuity following a disruption impacting that bureau.

10.   Each Country Office will maintain a current Business Continuity Plan (CO-BCP) describing the actions and resources needed to ensure business continuity following a disruption impacting that Country Office, including to its area- and sub-offices where applicable.

11.   A WFP office that is not within the Rome-HQ/RB/CO structure (such as a WFP Office or a UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD)) must also maintain a current BCP and may ask support from the Corporate Business Continuity Manager to do so.

12.   The Corporate Business Continuity Manager can, in consultation with the Regional Director or relevant department head, recommend that smaller offices may not need a BCP, to the Deputy Executive Director.

13.   All BCPs will use, where possible, similar document structures, processes and tools to facilitate integration between plans and other preparedness activities such as the Emergency Preparedness and Response Package (EPRP). These are described in the CORP-BCP, and support in their use can be requested from the Corporate Business Continuity Manager.

14.   A BCP is a "living document" which requires regular maintenance to remain up to date (to reflect changes in risks and threats levels, staff lists, planned actions, etc.). It needs to be comprehensively reviewed once a year.

15.   In implementing the BCM programme, WFP will collaborate as appropriate or required by applicable norms with national authorities, other UN agencies, including the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) and UNSMS, the BCM Unit of the UN Secretariat in New York, and partners. Where appropriate, reciprocal arrangements will be made with third parties (e.g. Rome-Based Agencies).

---

[6] OED 2021/013 WFP Organizational Resilience Management
[7] WFP's Corporate Business Continuity Management Plan can be found on WFPgo and in the e-Guide's section on Business Continuity.
[8] The e-Guide (http://eguide.wfp.org) is WFP's process-repository: critical-business processes are highlighted and alternative processes documented, it includes a dedicated Business Continuity section.

World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Executive Director's Circular
(Office of the Deputy Executive Director)

Activating Business Continuity procedures

16. RB and CO Business Continuity procedures are, when necessary, invoked by the Chair of their respective CMT after consultation with the Designated Official (DO). If the RB/CO management is unable to do so, the decision may have to be taken by the DED/Chair of the CORP-CMT.

17. Corporate Business Continuity procedures are normally activated by the Chair of the Corporate Crisis Management Team (CORP-CMT),[9] but may also be invoked by other managers in accordance with the provisions of the CORP-BCP. In such cases, the Chair of the CORP-CMT must endorse the decision and the Chair of the Organisational Resilience Management Group (ORMG) must be kept informed.

Organization and Management

18. Roles and Responsibilities:

   a) **The Executive Director** is responsible for the implementation of the UN's Organizational Resilience Management System Policy, of which Business Continuity Management is a core element

   b) **The Deputy Executive Director (DED)** oversees WFP's BCM programme and approves the CORP-BCP

   c) **The Chair of the ORMG** is responsible for monitoring the preparation and maintenance of the CORP-BCP, in accordance with WFP's Organizational Resilience Management System.[10]

   d) **Functional area managers**, normally Division Directors, are responsible for ensuring the business continuity of areas under their responsibility.[11] In doing so, they:

   (i) appoint Process Experts (see e) below), where required, to collaborate with the Corporate Business Continuity Manager; and

   (ii) ensure that any other resources under their responsibility effectively contribute to the successful application of the BCM programme, as described in the CORP-BCP.

   e) **Process Experts** are appointed by functional area managers, where required, and are selected for their in-depth knowledge of the critical business processes. Some may be responsible for the coordination of other process experts in his/her functional area. Process Experts:

   (i) ensure that critical business process documentation and related business continuity solutions (processes and systems) are complete and up to date; and

   (ii) participate in the definition, preparation, delivery and assessment of the testing, training and exercise activities required to ensure that business continuity solutions are effective and actionable.

---

[9] Crisis Management Teams are established at Corporate, Regional and Country levels as requested by the circular on WFP Crisis Management; the Chair of the Corporate CMT is the Deputy Executive Director.

[10] OED2021/013 WFP Organizational Resilience Management, which refers to the Policy on the Organizational Resilience Management System (ORMS), Chief Executives Board, UN, effective 18 January 2021.

[11] For the other responsibilities of functional area managers concerning organizational resilience, see the ED circular OED2021/013 WFP Organizational Resilience Management.

f) **Members of the ORMG,**[12] in regard to Business Continuity Management, will facilitate and coordinate business continuity preparedness and response actions for their functional areas in accordance with the BCM programme.

g) **The Corporate Business Continuity Manager.** This full-time role, in the Office of the Deputy Executive Director, will report to the Chair of the ORMG and will be responsible for:

   (i) preparing and maintaining the CORP-BCP, ensuring input from the relevant functional areas through the Process Experts and with the support of the functional representatives on the ORMG

   (ii) providing support to RBs, COs and other organizational structures of WFP that prepare and maintain BCPs, with the goal to enable integration between plans so that different organizational structures can more easily assist each other in the execution of business continuity following a disruptive event

   (iii) coordinating and monitoring regular reviews and testing of divisional BCPs and DRPs

   (iv) developing KPIs and processes for periodic measurement and reporting of BCM to be approved by the ORMG

   (v) facilitating integration between the BCM programme and related initiatives in WFP and elsewhere in the UN, including the Emergency Preparedness and Response Package (EPRP) and Enterprise Risk Management in WFP, and with UNSMS policies and procedures, Programme Criticality[13] and the Global ORMS Working group elsewhere; and

   (vi) maintaining a coordinated approach to WFP's Organizational Resilience Management System (WFP- ORMS), which includes crisis management and business continuity management, including, *inter alia*,

      i. ensuring that the WFP BCM team provides support to the ORMG and CMT as needed

      ii. providing operational information management secretariat support for the ORMG and CMT

h) **Regional Bureau** and **Country Office Business Continuity Managers** are appointed by their respective Directors (see below) from among their direct reports. They:

   (i) prepare and maintain their respective BCPs;

   (ii) appoint members to a Business Continuity Management Team for their office, who assist them in preparing and maintaining their BCP, and in responding to the activation of business continuity procedures; and

---

[12] The Organizational Resilience Management Group (ORMG) is responsible for ensuring an integrated approach to the application of Organizational Resilience in WFP, of which Business Continuity is a core element (UN Policy on the Organizational Resilience Management System). For more information on the membership and responsibility of the ORMG refer to OED2021/013 WFP Organizational Resilience Management

[13] The Programme Criticality Framework is a common UN system policy for decision-making on acceptable risk. It puts in place guiding principles and a systematic structured approach to ensure that activities involving United Nations personnel can be balanced against security risks.

World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Executive Director's Circular
(Office of the Deputy Executive Director)

(iii)   request the support of the Corporate Business Continuity Manager in the preparation and maintenance of their BCP, when required.

i)   **Regional Directors** are responsible for:

(iv)   appointing a BC Manager for the Regional Bureau (RB-BC Manager) from among his/her direct reports;

(v)   approving the RB-BCP, reviewing the plan once a year, and approving any substantive changes before, or as a result of, the yearly revision;

(vi)   overseeing COs for business continuity compliance throughout the region;

(vii)   contributing as required to the maintenance and exercise of the CORP-, RB- and CO-BC Plans; and

(viii)   effectively activating any required business continuity procedures.

j)   **Country Directors** are responsible for:

(i)   appointing a BC Manager for the Country Office (CO-BC Manager) from among his/her direct reports;

(ii)   approving the CO-BCP, reviewing the plan once a year, and approving any substantive changes before, or as a result of, the yearly revision;

(iii)   ensuring integration of all aspects of the CO BCP with UNSMS policies and procedures;

(iv)   contributing to the maintenance and exercise regime of the CO-BCP; and

(v)   effectively activating any required business continuity procedures.

k)   **Directors/Managers of other offices** that are not within the Rome-HQ/RB/CO structure (such as WFP partnership Offices and UNHRDs) are responsible for ensuring that any critical business processes within their areas of responsibility continue functioning following a disruption.

Maintenance and Exercise

19.   All Business Continuity Plan holders must ensure that the BCPs are updated annually and tested bi-annually. Support from the corporate BCM Team can be requested, if required. Activities include:

a.   updating contact details, annexes and agreed actions, to ensure that these remain relevant and actionable;

b.   ensuring processes, assets, facilities and ancillary IT systems supporting business continuity are maintained and tested regularly, and that appropriate personnel have access;[14]

---

[14] At the date of this circular, the systems that directly support business continuity comprise of the eGuide, the Emergency WINGS environment and the Business Continuity Portal. More information on the systems can be found in the Corporate Business Continuity Plan.

c. providing regular information and training sessions on procedures and, where necessary, skills[15] to ensure employees with responsibilities related to business continuity are can perform effectively, if needed; and

d. conducting regular exercises within WFP and within the Country team structures to ensure relevant employees are practised in their respective business continuity roles and responsibilities, and produce reports outlining identified gaps and actions required to address them.

Exceptions and Review

20. The Executive Director may make exceptions to the provisions of this Circular as deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

21. The Deputy Executive Director may issue further guidance in respect of the framework established by this Circular.

22. This Circular shall be subject to periodic review and adjustments, as appropriate.

Effective Date

23. This Circular takes immediate effect.

Annexes:

1. Framework for the application of ORMS in WFP

David M. Beasley
Executive Director

---

[15] Skills training, for example, is required in certain functional areas where RBs need to take on HQ responsibilities in case of need.

World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Executive Director's Circular
(Office of the Deputy Executive Director)

Annex 1. Framework of the application of ORMS in WFP