

# EPRP: Frequently Asked Questions

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## What is the EPRP?

EPRP stands for Emergency Preparedness and Response Package. The EPRP is a practical and action-oriented tool that guides WFP Country Offices (COs) in establishing preparedness and response capacity for emergencies. It also provides guidance to Regional Bureaux (RBx) to strengthen Emergency Preparedness and Response in oversight countries.

## WFP already has Contingency Planning Guidelines. Why do we need a new preparedness tool?

In 2009, a Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Contingency Planning was carried out and found that Contingency Plans were not action-oriented, often drafted in isolation and not shared with the all staff of the Office. The Evaluation recommended reconceptualising Contingency Planning, integrating different elements of the preparedness processes such as risk and security management, pandemic planning and business continuity into one single tool. In response, the EPRP has been developed by ODEP with strong support from WFP's Regional Bureaux, selected Country Offices and key technical departments in HQ.

## What is the difference between WFP Contingency Planning and the EPRP?

While Contingency Planning mainly focused on scenario development with little emphasis on concrete preparedness enhancing actions (such as pre-positioning of stocks, logistical arrangements, improved access to sources of information and pre-approved agreements with partners or authorities), the EPRP focuses on establishing concrete, actionable standard emergency preparedness measures that address both WFP's internal environment and the external environment in which WFP operates. Unlike Contingency Planning, the EPRP involves all the staff of the Country Office in the preparedness planning exercise and assigns clear roles and responsibilities.

## Does the EPRP replace WFP Contingency Planning?

Yes, within WFP, the EPRP replaces Contingency Planning.

The WFP Directive on “**Action oriented Preparedness, Readiness and Response – the WFP Emergency Preparedness and Response Package**”

(<http://docustore.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/cd/wfp249465.pdf>) was approved in July 2012 by the Deputy Executive Director for Operations formalizing the EPRP as the corporate tool to improve the readiness and response of WFP Country Offices. According to the Directive, each Country Office should implement the tool by December 2012.

## **How does EPRP fit into the IA Contingency Planning Guidelines?**

Concurrent with the development of the EPRP, WFP has supported the revision of the Inter-Agency Contingency Planning Guidelines. Both use the same approach, are interoperable and have been integrated into mechanisms developed as part of the Inter-agency Transformative Agenda.

## **What is inside the package?**

The Emergency Preparedness and Response Package consists of three parts:

- Guidance on conducting a Risk Assessment
- Emergency Preparedness, Readiness, and Response Checklists for Country Offices including a template for a Concept of Operations and Standard Operating Procedures for the initial stages of a response.
- Guidance for Regional Bureaux on Emergency Preparedness and Response in Oversight Countries.

The Package equips WFP Country Offices with the tools to conduct a Risk Assessment and to mainstream a minimum level of preparedness throughout all functional areas as part of the Country Office Annual Work Plan.

The EPRP guidance on Emergency Preparedness and Response in Oversight Countries provides help for Regional Bureaux in maintaining a minimum level of preparedness in countries where WFP is not present.

## **How are the risks identified?**

The risks are identified at the Country Offices through a risk assessment based on WFP's corporate Risk Assessment Methodology.

Corporately, there are three risk categories: contextual, programmatic and institutional.

## **Which kind of risks does the EPRP focus on?**

The EPRP focuses on mitigating the effects of contextual risks that affect on-going operations or which give rise to a need to launch new ones. These contextual risks can be divided into the following types:

- Natural hazards, such as earthquakes and pandemics and extreme seasonal weather events that cause floods, landslides or droughts;
- Armed conflict and civil unrest;
- Restrictive government legislation, such as export and import bans;
- Drastic changes in the socio-economic environment, such as surge in prices of essential goods;
- Terrorism and crime.

## How can risks be monitored?

As part of the risk assessment exercise, the Country Office will select critical indicators that need to be monitored in relation to risks that have been identified. These indicators need to be analysed for tipping points that will act as triggers for decision-making.

Monitoring these critical indicators will enable the Country Office to decide whether it has reached a threshold that requires it to increase its preparedness level from Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs) to Emergency Response Actions (ERAs).

The monitoring of these critical indicators will be made based on the availability of in-country information.

The ODEP Early Warning, Analysis and Crisis Support Team can assist Country Offices and Regional Bureaux in this, as well as in assessments and warnings, especially for risks that affect several countries and/or regions.

## How do the checklists work?

There are three EPRP Checklists:

1. **Minimum Preparedness Actions** – to establish a minimum level of emergency preparedness throughout all working areas of the Country Office
2. **Emergency Readiness Actions** – to assist Country Offices in gradually stepping up their emergency readiness if and when a particular risk becomes imminent
3. **Standard Operating Procedures** – to help Country Offices in their immediate response during the first 72 hours of an emergency.

Timeframes and accountability for actions to be taken are clearly laid out and all Country Office staff are involved deciding who is responsible for each one.

## Which tools are available for a CO to step up from preparedness to response?

When an emergency hits, the Standard Operating Procedures should be followed for the first 72 hours response. If it hasn't already been drafted, the Country Office should prepare a Concept of Operations (CONOPS).

The objective of the CONOPS is to structure the response activities in the immediate aftermath of an emergency and better coordinate with host government, UN partners and other stakeholders, including donors.

The CONOPS, together with the preparedness actions put in place by the Country Office before the emergency, will ensure an effective and timely implementation of the emergency operation.

## **Who is accountable for the implementation of the EPRP?**

The EPRP requires the involvement of all functional units in WFP Country, Area and Sub-Offices. Country Office Management is to lead the process. The Country Director has the ultimate responsibility for the progressive adoption of the Package.

The Regional Bureaux and the Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch (ODEP) assume an advisory and technical support role in this process. The Regional Bureaux are also tasked with identifying priority oversight countries and ensuring a minimum level of emergency preparedness in them.

## **Who is responsible for collecting and compiling the information?**

The EPRP involves all staff of the office in the preparedness planning exercise and aligns clear roles and responsibilities in the different preparedness and readiness actions. The EPRP focal point, who is to be appointed by Country Office Management, is the custodian of the final document and should update it periodically.

## **How often does the EPRP need to be updated?**

The EPRP needs to be implemented in all WFP Country Offices by the end of 2012. It needs to be updated any time a risk becomes imminent and at the beginning of the year as part of the annual work plan in the Country Offices. The risk assessment needs to be revised every 6 months.

## **What about the Area and Sub-Offices? Are they part of the process?**

The EPRP is also applicable to Area and Sub-Offices. The Country Office checklists can be easily tailored to them.

## **How can the level of preparedness in a Country Office be checked?**

Once the EPRP has been implemented, each Country Office uploads the risk assessment and the checklist information to the EPweb. Based on the action status (“done” /“deadline set” /“to be initiated”) a pie chart will be automatically created.

It will show the level of preparedness in the Country Office. This information will be public to any WFP staff accessing through EPweb.

## **Does the EPRP require a big investment? How much does the EPRP cost?**

The EPRP doesn't require a big economic investment. Most of the required actions in the EPRP imply only some restructuring and the assignment of responsibilities in the Country Office. If additional funds are required for the EPRP implementation, the Country Office can apply through the Immediate Response Account for Preparedness.