PREVENT AND PREPARE FOR PANDEMICS

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING

Guidelines for small and medium-sized enterprises

Printed in Switzerland

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BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING
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Increasing resilience and mitigating risk to enhance preparedness for crisis recovery

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING
FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

Foreword

With workers, employers and communities facing the possibility of a catastrophic pandemic, three years ago the ILO launched efforts to combat the effects of influenza outbreaks on livelihoods and health and safety in the workplace. Its unique tripartite structure places it in an extremely favourable position to address the concerns of governments, employers and workers regarding the threats posed by the disease. ILO's goals are twofold: first, to grapple with the current effects of the most recent influenza strains (avian and swine) in the workplace, promoting good practices that can limit their spread, and second, to encourage preparedness in case of a pandemic.

The ILO started being actively involved on influenza issues when it hosted a technical workshop, "Avian Flu and the Workplace: Preparedness and Response", on 27 September 2006. This conference concluded that ILO's response should focus on: protection of livelihoods, respect for international health regulations, information sharing and the promotion of sound preventive behaviour. Since then, through three different projects, the ILO and its Constituents promoted practical preventive actions for Avian Influenza and Pandemic Human Influenza at the workplace. Countries in Asia, in particular Thailand and Indonesia, are already sharing good practices developed through these recent initiatives. Moreover, the ILO is continuing to support and strengthen coordinated efforts to effectively promote workplace preparedness plans in the face of an influenza pandemic.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING
FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

ILO's most recent project for livelihoods support and pandemic influenza (in Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia) assists small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in their effort to develop contingency plans to protect their workers from future Pandemic Human Influenza. This manual should be used as a practical tool towards this objective. Better work conditions can result in higher productivity and improve the quality of work. Even the simplest measures, such as regular cleaning of equipments and proper storage of materials, can considerably reduce work hazards and upgrade efficiency.

This compilation of good preparedness practices broadens the series of publications already started with the two action manuals for SMEs published by the ILO Sub Regional Office in Bangkok. Ideally, these guidelines for business continuity planning will be constantly updated and improved with the contribution of the readers and, among them, representatives of SMEs, workers' and employers' organizations. Such a participatory approach will enrich and complete ILO's effort.
The manual, employing a user-friendly approach, is part of the work plan of the ILO Task Force on Influenza Prevention and Preparedness coordinated by Donato Kiniger-Passigli, Senior Specialist, Strategic Partnerships and Crisis Response Coordination, assisted by Elisa Selva, Influenza Focal Point. Special thanks go to all members of the task force and ILO staff, who have provided valuable comments.

Alfredo Lazarte-Hoyle
Director
ILO/CRISIS

Contents

Contents

Preface

This model business continuity plan has been elaborated on the basis of ILO's recent research and field work for livelihoods support and pandemic prevention.

Through the UN Central Fund for Influenza Action the ILO developed three consecutive projects[1] in the Asian region to prepare workers and employers in the face of a possible influenza outbreak and, in the worst case scenario, of a pandemic.

ILO efforts are aimed at reducing risks of infection among workers and at inducing behavioural change, equally targeting formal and informal economies. Among the most important achievements obtained so far, the following activities can be enlisted:

- collective good practices were promoted;
- workers in rural and urban areas were advised on ways to improve safety and health standards;
- training materials on prevention and preparedness were developed and disseminated;
- awareness raising and advocacy programmes were conducted at enterprise level.

Moreover, a network of actors involved in influenza and pandemic prevention was created globally, and interministerial cooperation was facilitated in selected countries.

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[1] Avian Influenza and the Workplace (Thailand), started in October 2007 and ended in January 2009; Avian Influenza and the Workplace (Indonesia), started in April 2008 and ends in June 2009; Livelihood Support for Avian Influenza Prevention and Pandemic Human Influenza Preparedness at the Workplace, started in February 2009 and is currently ongoing in Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Malaysia.

Notwithstanding the encouraging preparedness measures already put in place, one area of interest to workers and employers was not adequately covered yet**: business continuity planning**. This is the objective of the present manual. The development of company contingency/preparedness plans, as a participatory process, will help identify the risks that might affect a specific business or organization in times of crisis and devise strategies to reduce their impact. Lessons learned from various sudden onset crises recommend that workers and employers consider, ahead of time, how best to organize their work in the face of possible disastrous scenarios, in order to reduce their devastating impact and prepare for immediate business recovery. When a disaster strikes, the scale of its impact is, in part, determined by the speed and effectiveness of the response of all actors – communities and members of the society alike. Preparedness is a key prerequisite to effective response.

With the ultimate objective of supporting and assisting livelihoods in the event of a pandemic outbreak, the ILO has now compiled a standard business continuity plan comparing different instruments[2] of various specialized institutions and private companies. This model could stand as a general reference for those small and medium enterprises most at risk of being seriously affected by a pandemic outbreak, and could be adopted as a guideline to increase resilience and mitigate risk, thus enhancing preparedness for fast recovery.

A business continuity plan provides opportunities not only to cope with adverse events, but also to develop a stronger strategical approach that will improve overall business operations and processes.

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[2] In particular, the "Pandemic Influenza Workbook" by the Australian Government was taken as main reference.

The reality of workers and employers is not the only one that can be addressed through this tool: business continuity planning has also a positive rebound on local communities, both in terms of preparedness and of recovery. ILO's current livelihoods support programme in East Asia will help by adopting similar guidelines at the local level that can be transferable to different regions, so that companies and communities can be better prepared for sudden crises.

The seven-step process which the manual recommends should give the reader the opportunity to reflect over the essential elements of a business continuity/emergency plan. All pages contain a notebook space to write down personal considerations and suggestions. Each and every step has a dedicated annex at the end, in the form of a template, which is intended to help consolidate the company plan.

This manual should help companies, organizations and communities to specifically prepare themselves for a possible pandemic. However, it should be applicable to different contexts in times of crisis. Ideas, thoughts and reflections should be validated with individual practical experience and are subject to further refinement. We are grateful to our readers for any suggestions which may help us to improve the first version of this booklet.

Donato Kiniger-Passigli
(Coordinator ILO Task Force on Influenza and Pandemic Preparedness)
Senior Specialist
Strategic Partnerships and Crisis Response Coordination
ILO/CRISIS

STEP 1 – Know your business priorities

1.1 Key business products/services

Identify key business products/services and rank them in order of importance.

Keep in mind that the ranking could change in the course of time.

Which is the product/service that most contributes to your revenues?

Is your most profitable product/service seasonal or subject to fashion?

Which external factors could impact on your product/service delivery?

1.2 Critical activities

Identify activities which are critical in order to keep your business going.

Is there a non-essential activity that could be temporarily stopped without affecting the final output?

Is there an essential but troublesome activity that could be easily outsourced?

Could things be done differently without altering your productivity?

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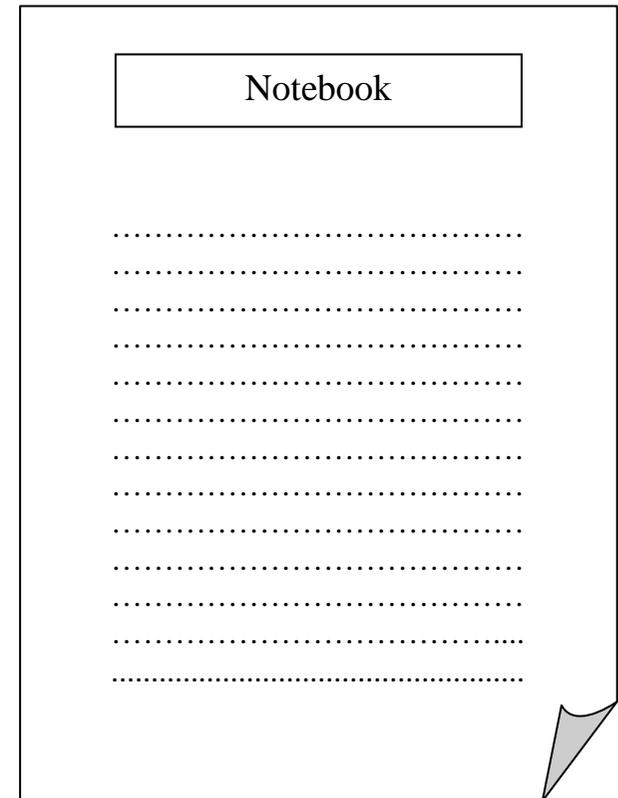
IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS **BASICS**

Effectiveness is about doing the right things.

Efficiency is about doing things right.

And productivity is about doing the right things right. It is not about working harder, but about working smarter.

1.3 Support to critical activities

Identify key individuals in charge of critical activities.

*Who are the heads of department supervising critical activities?
How are responsibilities distributed?*

*Is knowledge shared among the members of the department?
Could workers in a team easily interchange to replace each other in case of sickness?*

Identify contingencies/essential components related to critical activities.

What do critical activities need in order to continue functioning?

*Under which circumstances would you be requested to increase/decrease/adapt
such critical components?*

How long could you continue to keep your business going with a given amount of resources?
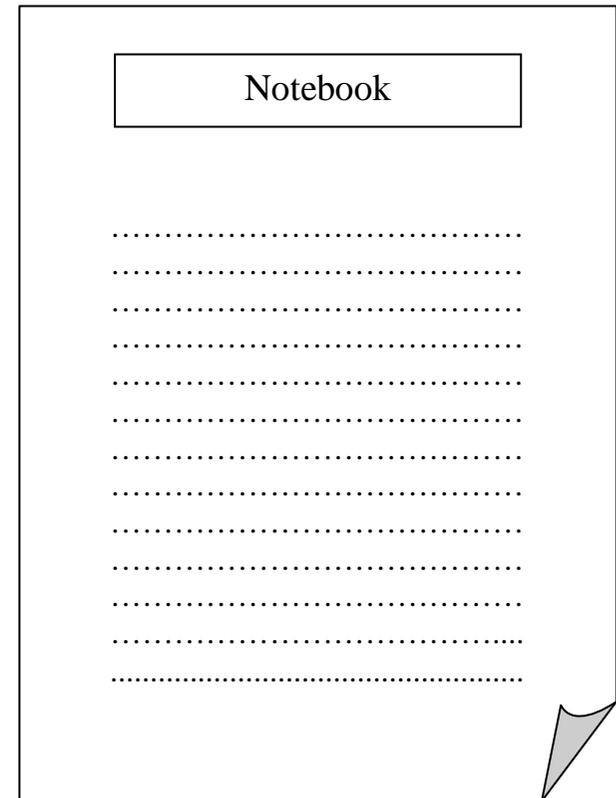
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1.3 Support to critical activities (continued)

*Please check your notebook and consolidate your answers
using Step 1 template in Annex I at page 41*

STEP 2 – Analyze the risks of a pandemic

2.1 Impact on your community

Analyze the impact of a pandemic on your community.

To what extent will it affect normal life?

What different scenarios could arise?

Restriction of movement, quarantining, mandatory closures will affect the normal life of your community.

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2.2 Impact on your business

Analyse the impact of a pandemic on your business.

Which are the most probable consequences a pandemic outbreak will have on your business?[3]

- *reduced availability of personnel*

- *high levels of uncertainty and anxiety*

- *changes in demand*

- *prolonged duration of the impact*

- *diminished resources*

Which areas of your business will be affected first?

How will the pandemic affect your suppliers, customers, stakeholders, and community?

In return how will this affect your business?

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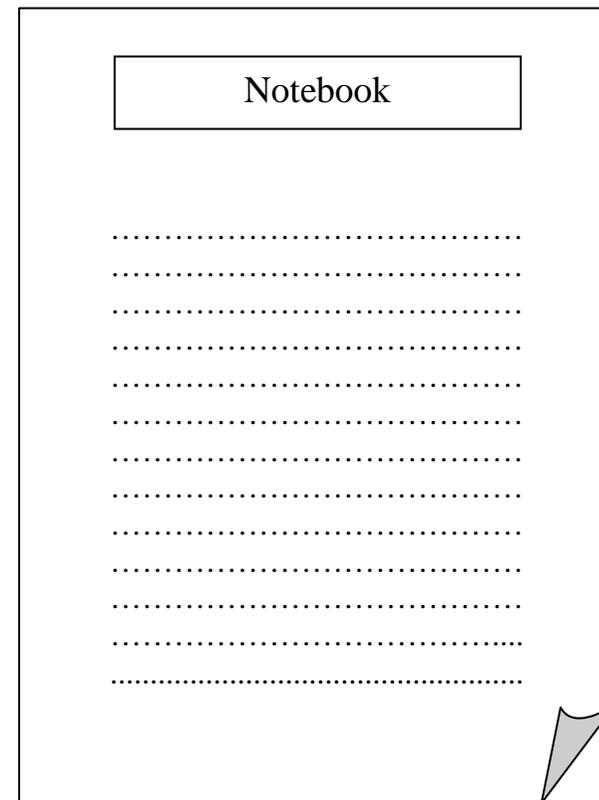
[3] See Box 3 in Annex II, at the end of this manual, on how to deal with quarantine.

2.2 Impact on your business (continued)

Personal/family illness, quarantine, government, school, business, public transportation closures are elements that require your consideration.
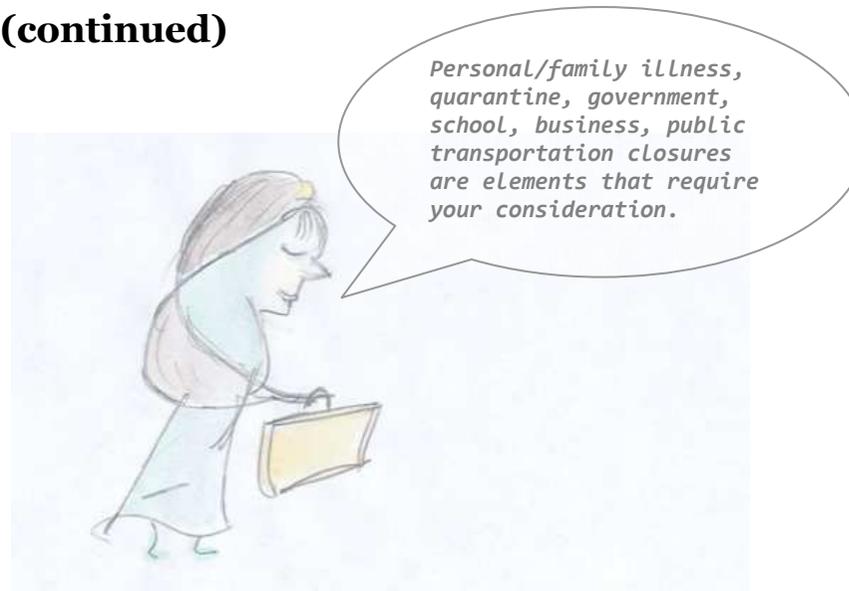
Potential impact on business

Once a pandemic occurs, it will usually be an extended event with various periods of outbreaks in the same geographic area, and each outbreak could last from six to eight weeks. It is possible that these waves occur over a year or more. The consequences on businesses could be significant.

For planning purposes, it should be assumed that the rate of absence may rise to 40% during peak periods either because (i) employees are sick, (ii) they have to care for sick family members, or (iii) they are afraid to come to work.

Another likely consequence is that certain key suppliers to your business may be unable to provide you with the raw materials or the labour support they usually provide, because the areas where they are located could be hard hit by the pandemic. Should this occur, your company would not be able to operate, even if your area has not been directly affected by the disease.

2.3 Risks rating

Rank your risks in order of priority, taking into account their likelihood to occur
and their impact on your business:

High – Medium – Low

*Highly likely,
high impact risks
need to be dealt
with first.*

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*Please check your notebook and consolidate your answers
using Step 2 template in Annex I at page 42*

STEP 3 – Reduce the impact of the risks
BEFORE THE EVENT!

3.1 Knowledge management

Ensure the protection and transmission of company knowledge.

Is critical information captured and managed?
Is knowledge shared among the members of a team?

Provide Standard Operating Procedures: clear instructions will ensure the continuity of critical processes and will avoid loss of effectiveness.

Consider establishing "emergency" hierarchy lines: you might want to provide more staff with the appropriate authority to take action and make decisions when other staff may be sick.

Create the **Emergency/Pandemic Outbreak Team**, which will be tasked with the development of a pandemic operating regime and related contingency plan.

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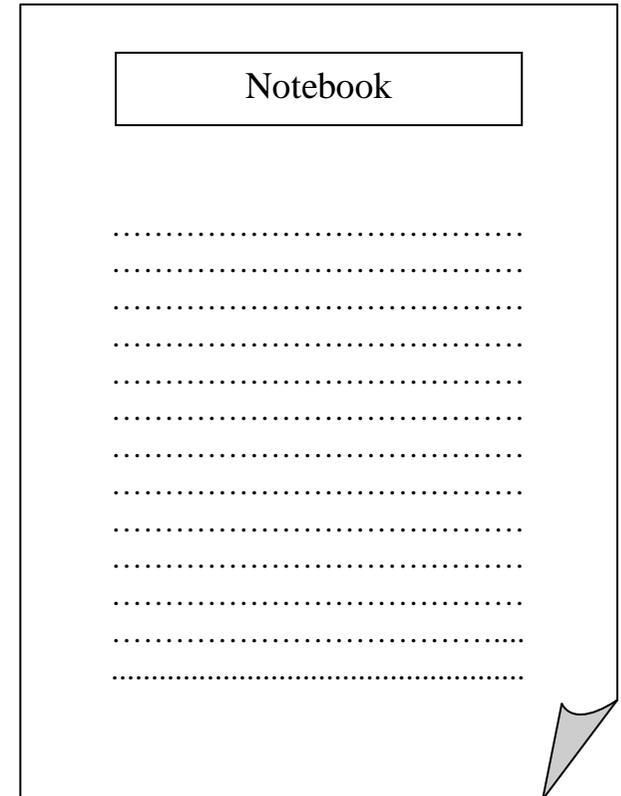
IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS **BASICS**

Ensure that all workers in the business together (including you) become a team, with everyone being part of that team.

Teamwork improves coordination and interaction between workers, thus increasing productivity. In a team with a good team spirit, all will feel responsible for the success of the business.

3.1 Knowledge management (continued)

Back-up critical information and provide off-site storage.

Organize cross-skilling and cross-training for key employees.

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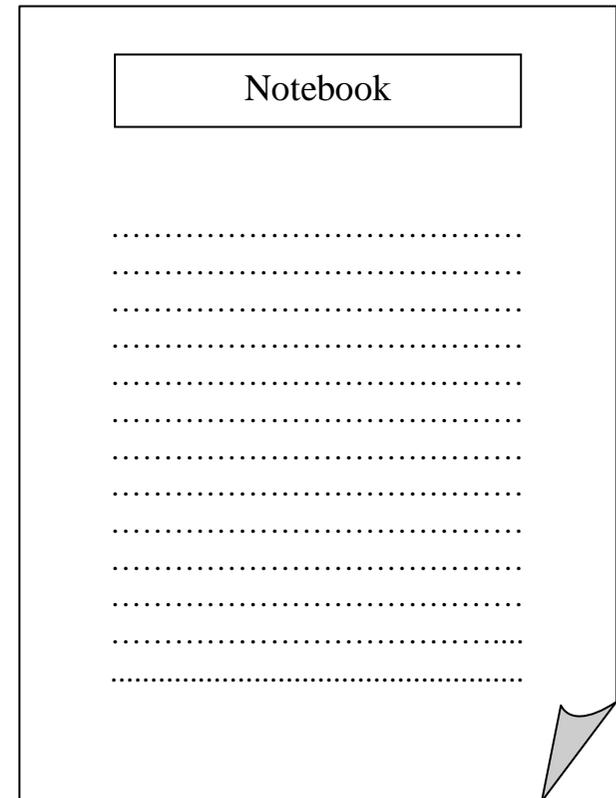
3.2 Flexible work practices

Plan flexible work practices. Make a diagram of the workflow or list the operations in the order they are performed, and consider how they can be improved.

Identify staff who can work remotely, either from home or from other location.[4]

If you cannot develop a flexible approach to your business, you might consider scaling down operations / closing / supporting other companies for a period of time.

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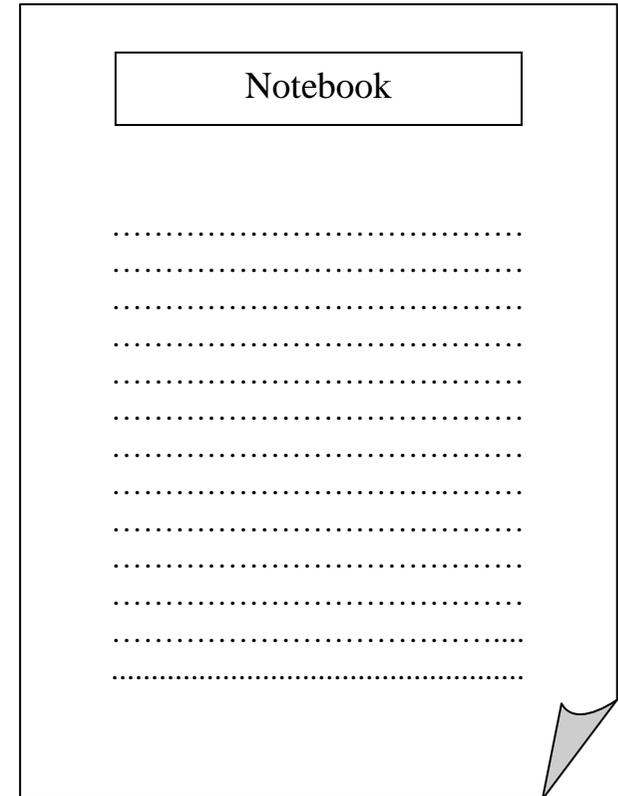
[4] In the face of a pandemic, employers have to be prepared to change usual practice and work with technical experts and their workers to achieve a reasonable balance of safety versus obligation to work.

3.3 Supply Chain

Identify your main suppliers and ensure they have a business continuity plan in place.

Assess your competitors' bargaining power and position yourself.

How much will you need to stockpile?
Will you need to contract multiple suppliers?
Is there any substitute for your critical inputs?

IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS **BASICS**

Efficient material storage and handling ensure that work flows smoothly and help protect supplies from being damaged or getting old and obsolete.

3.4 Communication

Establish a **Communication Company Team** that during the emergency will be authorized to communicate with staff, key stakeholder, and media.

Arrange for a hotline that will be activated during the outbreak for quick reporting and counselling.

Ensure all contact lists are up to date and maintained.
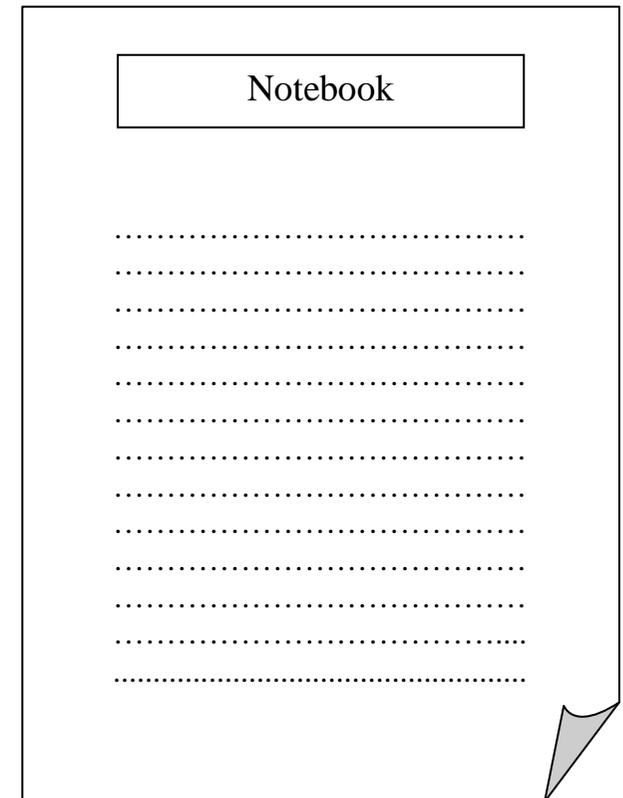
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3.5 Policy, insurance and security measures

Re-examine your insurance policy.

Is your business covered for all cases, including voluntary and mandatory closure?
Is your company covered for loss of income?
Is your company insured for sick personnel?

Review your personnel policies and make sure your employees know their entitlements during a pandemic.

Ensure hygiene conditions are respected and A/C plant and washrooms are well maintained.[5]

Appoint a security officer and register him/her with police and emergency services.

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IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS **BASICS**

Make your workers feel safe and secure in their job.

In a safe and efficient workplace workers will be motivated to do their job, to do it right, and with a minimum of loss in time, raw materials and quality.

A safe and productive workplace is good for workers and appreciated by customers.

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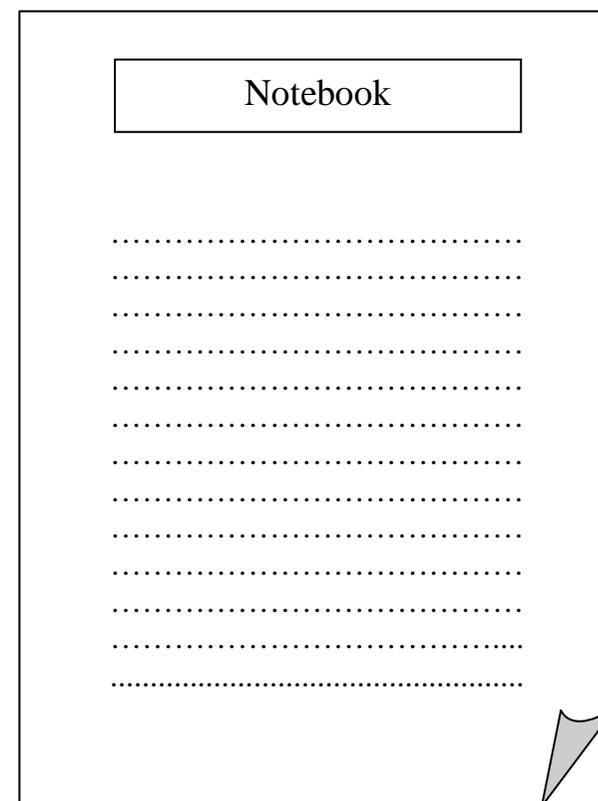
[5] Implement the preventive measures illustrated in the manual « Protecting your employees and business from pandemic human influenza », http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_101422.pdf
See also Box 1.1, 1.2 and 2 in Annex II, at the end of this manual, on protective practices and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

3.5 Policy, insurance and security measures (continued)

HR policies concerning travelling, sick leave and compensation for temporary restriction of economic activities should exist and suit different types of risk

Special attention should be devoted to the most vulnerable among your employees. For example, migrant workers, who are far from their home and family, will particularly appreciate your support.

Targeted measures should be considered to assist women, which in addition to working are usually burdened with housekeeping and family care. Most probably, in the case of a pandemic outbreak they will be the ones who care for the sick in the family, and will be grateful for your attentiveness towards them.

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3.5 Policy, insurance and security measures (continued)

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Social protection

According to ILO standards, employers need to find out if their workers have social protection under national schemes and if not, find ways to encourage workers to cooperate with company or private schemes of social insurance. Social protection is especially important in an influenza outbreak to ensure workers cooperation with medical care, quarantine and sick leave regulations. If workers do not seek medical help when unwell with influenza, or take sick leave, they could start a chain of transmission of the disease in the workplace, which could have much more expensive consequences than the timely provision of social protection.

Employers therefore need to decide how they will interact with any of their workers who become sick with influenza and, for whatever reason, are not protected by social protection. Employers may consider providing a suitable form of protection in a pandemic outbreak, to cover the basic costs of medical care or quarantine for any of their workers who are affected, to ensure that sick workers do not attempt to work when unwell or in quarantine.

Regarding workers who are asked to work in jobs with an increased risk of contracting influenza, for instance during an outbreak, it would be unethical to employ them without any employment injury protection. This is essential even for short-term, migrant or daily labourers, who take on employment as part of a response to an influenza outbreak.

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Source: adapted from ILO working paper "SARS – Practical and administrative response to an infectious disease in the workplace".

*In preparing workplace policy,
employers are advised to consult ILO standards and guidelines and national guidelines,
in consultation with the workers and workers' representatives in their organizations.*

*Please check your notebook and consolidate your answers
using Step 3 template in Annex I at page 43*

STEP 4 – Identify response actions

DURING THE EVENT!

4.1 Personnel

Make sure hygiene and social distancing good practices are respected and ensure supplies of tissues, gloves, masks etc. Ensure that staff are sufficiently trained in infection prevention and control and know how to use personal protective equipment (PPE) to be ready for an outbreak. [6]

Secure provision of essential staples.

Consider planning for the security of personnel whilst at the office, as well as whilst working at home.

Elicit your staff views at all time and be open to suggestions.

> You could contract a bus company, or establish a car pool system, to ensure your personnel travel safely.

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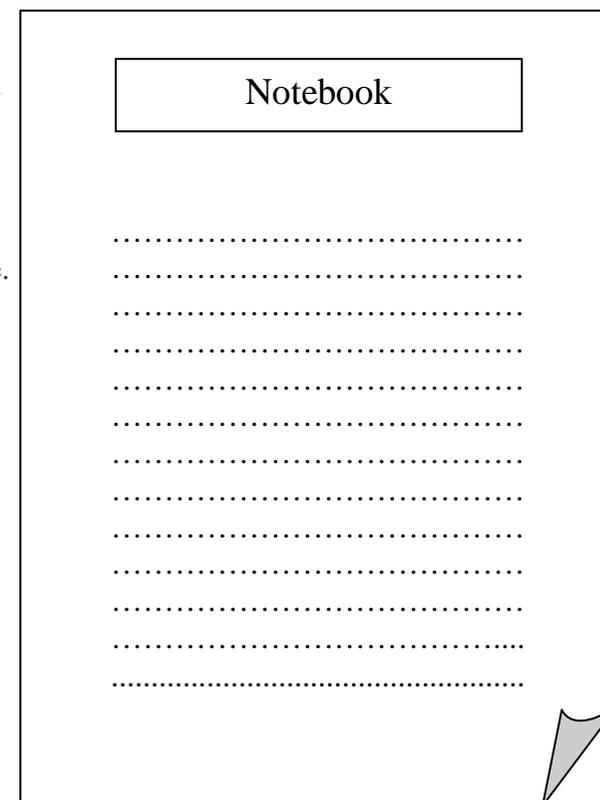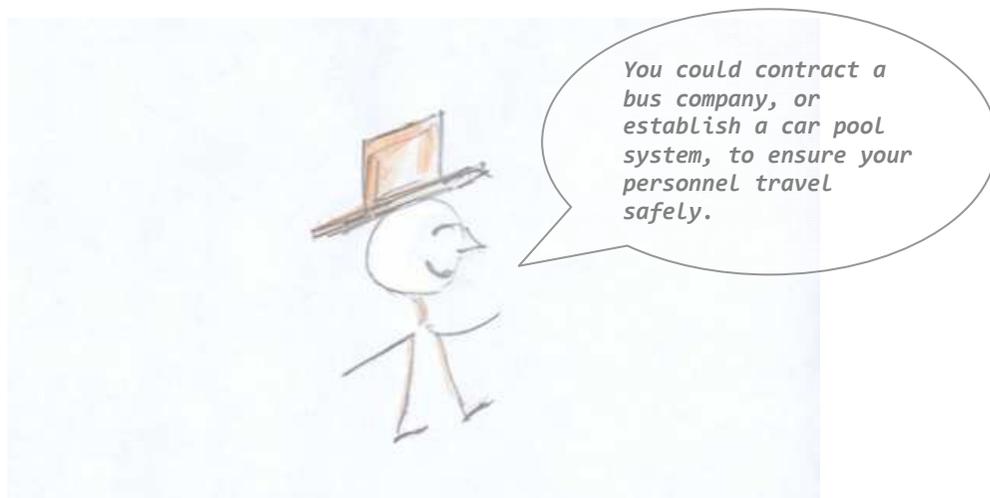
[6] Follow the instructions at sections III and IV of the manual « Protecting your employees and business from pandemic human influenza » http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_101422.pdf

4.1 Personnel (continued)

Provide safe transportation for company personnel.

Consider that, in case of severe pandemic, critical staff might be required to stay in the company premises to keep the business running. Secure provision of essential staples such as canned food, water, toiletries, sleeping bags and mattresses.

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4.2 Customers

Maintain communication with your customers and listen to their needs.

Review your customer database and assess your local, regional, global marketing opportunities.

Review options to reduce delivery costs and movement of people.

Review possibilities to diversify your production in order to spread the risk among different categories of products.

4.3 Communication

Deliver contingency messages through the **Communication Company Team**: share information with your customers and local community, suppliers, banks, neighbouring companies and other business partners, to avoid scaremongering and panic.

Have you developed a communication strategy/plan for times of emergency?

Stay current. Monitor the media for advice.
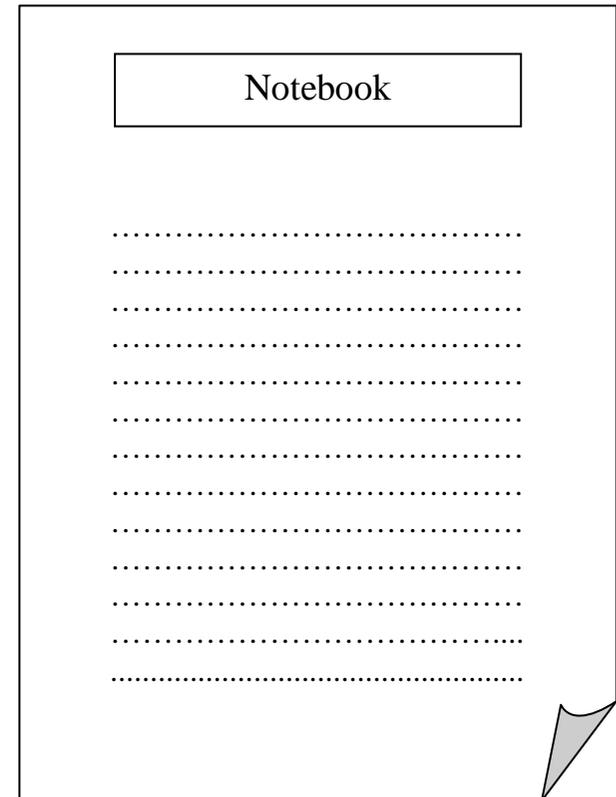
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*Please check your notebook and consolidate your answers
using Step 4 template in Annex I at page 44*

STEP 5 – Design and implement your Business Continuity Plan

5.1 Design your plan

Consolidate all the information gathered through the previous steps.
Start preparing your plan with the **Emergency/Pandemic Outbreak Team**.

Prepare your response for different scenarios:
- moderate pandemic
- severe pandemic

Taking into account the different levels of severity that the pandemic could reach, your plan will have to foresee various operating schemes, from ordinary business to special/emergency modes, to the suspension of activities for safety reasons.

Outline actions required to prepare for, respond to and recover from the emergency.

Involving heads and workers of critical departments will ensure that you address the right issues as well as promote ownership of the plan.

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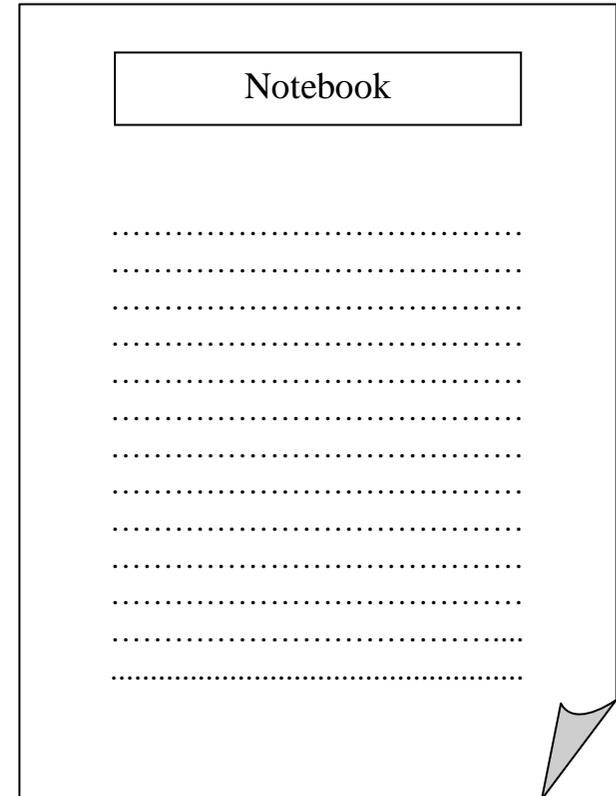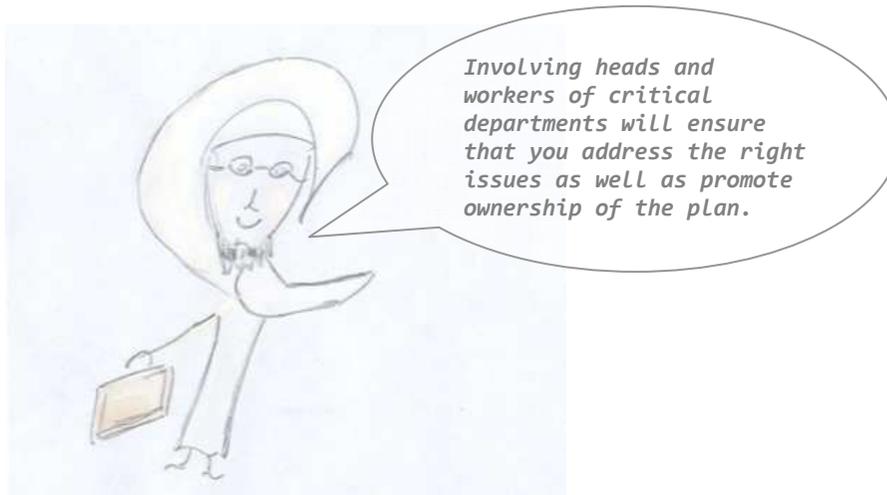
The template of your plan will contain:

5.2 Organization details

List company contacts and details and keep them up to date.

5.3 Key response team – Contacts and roles

Identify who in the company will be in the **Emergency/Pandemic Outbreak Team**.
Roles and responsibilities must be clearly stated in the plan, as well as possible replacements.

5.4 External contact details

Prepare a directory of all external contacts/stakeholders your organization deals with.
This list needs to be maintained and updated regularly.

5.5 Team procedures

For any possible event, identify actions required, responsibilities involved and
supporting documents and resources.
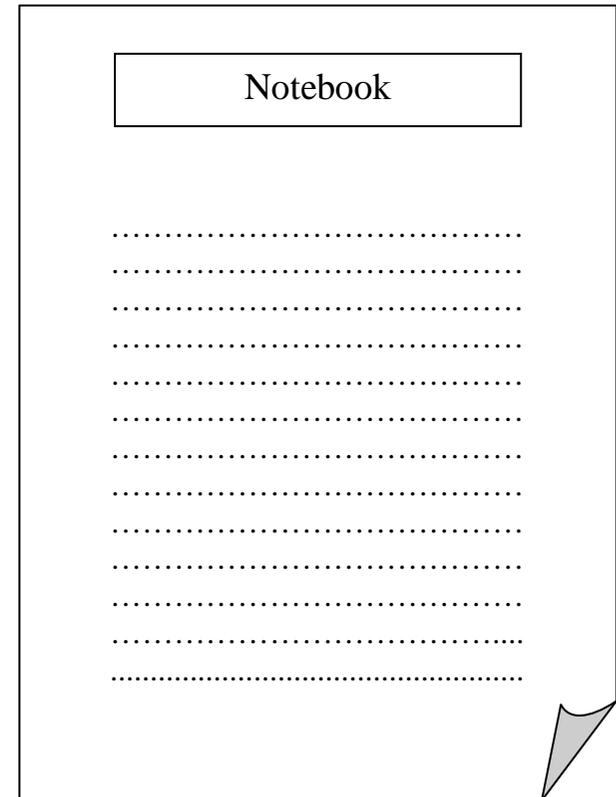
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*Involvement of union representatives is highly recommended
at any step of the planning process.*

*Please check your notebook and consolidate your answers
using Step 5 templates in Annex I at pages 45-48*

5.3 Key response team – Contacts and roles (continued)

Managerial responsibilities and workers' safety concerns

It is recommended that prior to any outbreak of influenza, managers of staff who might be expected to work during an outbreak, enter into discussion with workers to jointly agree on parameters that would define the workers' and management's responsibilities.

During such discussions with workers the following issues could be raised:
1. The responsibility of management to remove sick people from the workplace or to provide adequate systems of isolation.
2. The responsibility of management to provide appropriate PPE, if relevant to the actual workplace situation.
3. The responsibility of management to provide protection, such as medication or immunization, when available, to those at increased workplace risk.
4. The responsibility of workers to cooperate with the occupational health and safety measures provided by the employer.
5. The responsibility of management to help workers ensure adequate social protection.
6. The setting up of joint management – workers committees to discuss workplace safety concerns.
7. The involvement of the workers in policy decisions on who could reasonably be excused from service in increased-risk areas. If there are no pre-existing national guidelines, the following groups could be discussed:
- pregnant workers;
- breastfeeding workers;
- elderly workers;
- workers with medical conditions that might increase their risk of catching or dying from influenza;
- workers with social or psychological difficulties;
- workers requesting compassionate leave after bereavement.
8. The possibility of incentives or community recognition for those willing to work in areas of increased risk, for example: by assurance of maximum social protection, increased earnings, extra vacations, rewards and recognition for services rendered, etc.
9. The ongoing commitment of management to respond appropriately if a worker has a particular safety concern.
10. The protection of workers from any disciplinary action if they, in good faith, felt there was a breach in occupational safety and health that caused them to complain about their working conditions.

Once the management and workers have developed a system, based on national guidelines, that offered a reasonable balance between the protection and the responsibilities of the workers, the workers would need to be informed and comply with its decisions.

Source: adapted from ILO working paper "SARS – Practical and administrative response to an infectious disease in the workplace".

STEP 6 – Communicate your plan

6.1 Share the plan

Inform your staff, suppliers, customers, stakeholders and the media about the existence of a plan. At different levels of detail, share with them which response actions you are going to implement and which policies will be supporting your action.

When would you communicate the details of the plan to staff and others who would benefit?

Which tools would be most effective to communicate to each particular audience?

Address internal and external stakeholders' different specific needs.

Ensure all communication about pandemic preparedness is appropriate for your employees/clients/stakeholders so they can understand the arrangements.

Communicate with a single voice through your *Communication Company Team*.

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6.2 Internal communication

Provide information on how to deal with infected staff, when to quarantine, as well as counselling.

Inform about amended HR policies concerning travelling, sick leave and compensation for temporal restriction of economic activities.

Review IT and telecom networks, consider videoconference and other alternatives.

Consult and provide feedback regularly to address any concerns of your staff.

IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS **BASICS**
Prepare a <u>code of conduct</u> explaining the rules of the workplace to welcome employees to your business. Hold <u>staff meetings</u> and training/information events on sensitive subjects to support troubled employees. Be <u>accessible</u>: promote open dialogue with your employees and make sure they feel free to discuss issues with you. This will allow you some level of control on troubled situations.

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Workers' safety concerns

It is to be expected that during an influenza pandemic, many workers may be reluctant to go to work. Such fears are understandable and, depending on the safety of the workplace situation, may or may not be justified. These issues should be addressed in an objective forum, so the workers will not feel their concerns are being ignored or overridden.

6.2 Internal communication (continued)

Make sure that messages are translated into local languages and adapted to prevailing culture.

The plan must be easily accessed by the people that need to use it. This will ensure your plan will not be forgotten.

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6.3 External communication

Prepare clear contingency messages accurately targeted to your audience to avoid scaremongering and panic.

Collaborate with other organizations and share lessons learned from other pandemic continuity plans.

Consider assigning a point of contact with local and/or state and territory emergency, health and insurance institutions to maximise understanding and communication about other plans and what can be provided during a pandemic.

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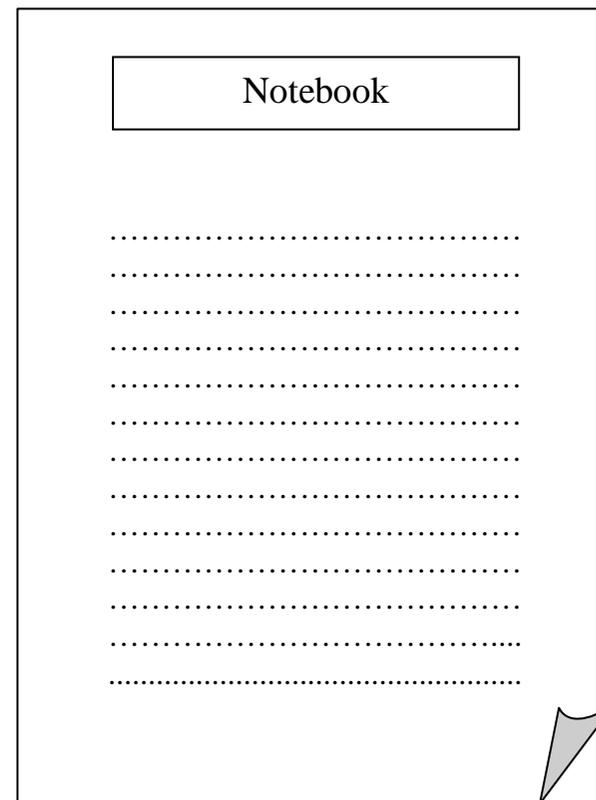
Please check your notebook and consolidate your answers
using Step 6 template in Annex I at page 49

IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS **BASICS**

Customer relations
Maintaining good relations with customers is essential. Satisfied customers come back. Dissatisfied customers will spread rumors and could ruin your business.

Relations with suppliers
Keeping good relations with suppliers helps maintain a steady supply of good quality materials and prices. Moreover, suppliers are a good source of information about business trends: your company will benefit from the connection.

Your family
A good and constructive relationship with your family is important both for the material and the moral support that you will need to start and improve your business.

Your neighbours and the community
A business that cares about the impact it has on the neighbourhood will enjoy the support of its community.

Competitors
Competition is healthier when it is done through cooperation. Both you and your competitors will benefit from sharing relevant information and good practices.

Government agencies, trade unions, business associations, and other institutions
Government agencies and trade unions can help your business comply with existing regulations. Constant dialogue with representatives of these and other organizations will help you gain the support of your workers and community, and will often give you good ideas to improve your business.

STEP 7 – Test your plan

7.1 Arrange, review, amend

Put arrangements in place and test them.

Review the plan frequently in order to make sure that problems and solutions you identified remain relevant.

Amend outdated procedures and practices and update contact lists.

Is there anything you have overlooked?

Is your plan practical?

Are your staff aware of their roles?

It is up to the individual enterprise to decide how often to review the plan.

How much are the key activities or the environment of the organization likely to change?

Which are the potential new and emerging risks? Does the plan reflect them?
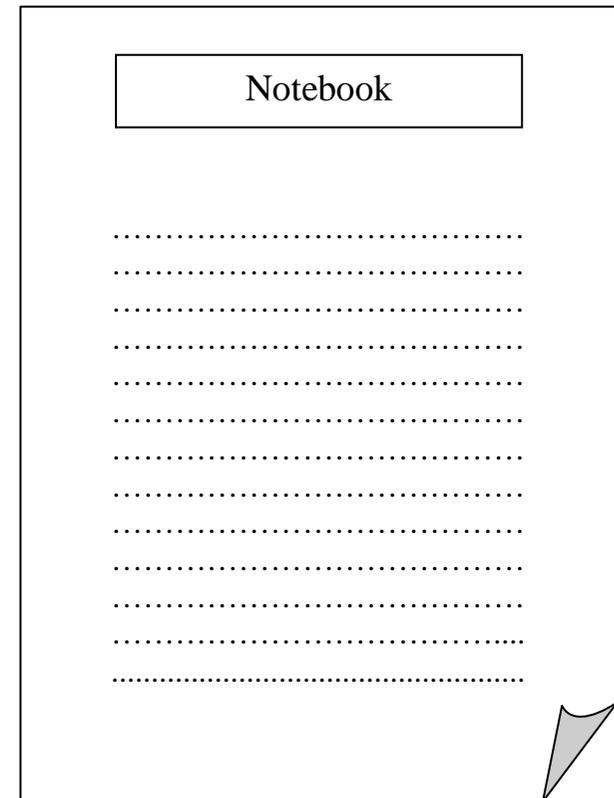
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7.1 Arrange, review, amend (continued)

> Try to involve the same committee that prepared the plan to review it on a regular basis. This familiarity will make the review process quicker and more efficient.

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7.2 Periodically review

Consider going through this seven step planning exercise periodically and start again from step 1.

Please check your notebook and consolidate your answers
using Step 7 template in Annex I at pages 50-51

IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS **BASICS**

Plan to prevent accidents
Maintain equipment and make sure workers use it regularly.
Organize your workers to work safely and train them.

Carry out regular safety inspections
Identify all hazards and unsafe working practices and get information from your workers.

Correct problems immediately
Once danger is recognized, immediately find a solution to reduce the risk of accidents.

Have a plan for when accidents occur
Make sure that a quick response can be put in place in case of emergency.

Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Risk Reduction

Business Continuity Planning helps a company/organization to prepare for unexpected negative events.
Disaster risk reduction (DRR) promotes efforts to minimise risks and related vulnerabilities.
DRR practices include preventing disaster risk and limiting the adverse impact of hazards when they occur, through disaster mitigation, preparedness and response. DRR measures should therefore be taken into account when planning for business continuity.

KEY STEPS IN PLANNING

Step 1

KNOW YOUR BUSINESS PRIORITIES

Step 2

ANALYZE THE RISKS OF A PANDEMIC

Step 3

REDUCE THE IMPACT OF THE RISKS

Step 4

IDENTIFY RESPONSE ACTIONS

Step 5

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT YOUR BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

Step 6

COMMUNICATE YOUR PLAN

Step 7

TEST YOUR PLAN

*Involvement of union representatives
is highly recommended
at any step of the planning process.*

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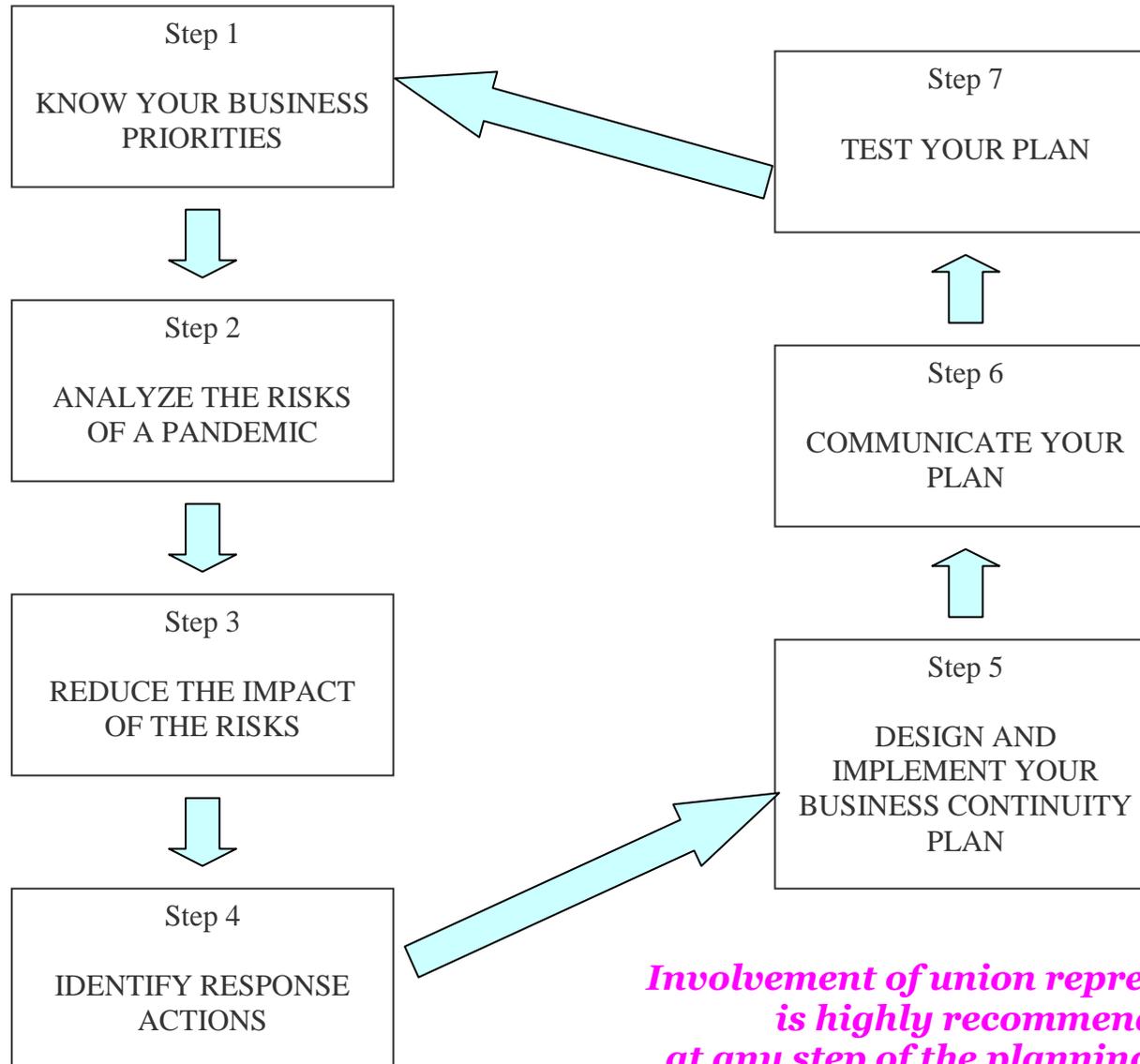
SOURCES

While compiling relevant materials, several sources have been consulted. Suggestions have been retained from the following sources:

Building resilience through business continuity and pandemic planning - Pandemic Influenza Workbook, *Australian Government, 2008*

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/communities/progserv/Documents/pandemic_influenza/default.htm

Pandemic Business Continuity Planning, *Teed Business Continuity, 2005*

http://www.teed.co.uk/pandemic_business_continuity_planning.shtml

Business Continuity during an avian flu pandemic, *Continuity Central, 2005*

http://www.continuitycentral.com/feature0251.htm

http://www.continuitycentral.com/feature0664.html

SARS – Practical and administrative responses to an infectious disease in the workplace – Working Paper, *International Labour Office, 2004*

http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/accidis/sars.pdf

People and Productivity – Improve your business Basics, *International Labour Office, 2003*

Higher productivity and a better place to work – Trainers' manual, *International Labour Office, 1988*

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING
FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

Project by: Donato Kiniger-Passigli and Elisa Selva.

Original illustrations by DKP, Geneva 2009.

ANNEX I

Templates for Business Continuity Planning adapted from

the "Pandemic Influenza Workbook" by the Australian Government

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING
FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

STEP 1 — Know your business priorities TEMPLATE

Key business products/services	Critical activities/services	Internal or External	Identify what support your key products/services depend on
List your key business products/services and rank them in order of importance	In the event of influenza pandemic is the product/service critical?	Is the product/ service an internal function or external deliverable?	What do you depend on, so that you can deliver the product/service (e.g. IT, information, people, facilities etc)?

STEP 2 – Analyze the risks of a pandemic TEMPLATE

Identify risks	Impact on business	Likelihood of occurrence	Rate (the risks) in order of priority
In the event of an influenza pandemic, identify the risks that may impede your company's ability to meet its key business products7services (e.g. absenteeism of staff, loss of IT etc).	Describe the possible impact of the risk (if it were to occur), including any interdependencies that may be affected.	High, medium or low? Remember the likelihood of occurrence can change over time.	Identify your top five risks. Remember the rating can change over time.

STEP 3 – Reduce the impact of the risks TEMPLATE

BEFORE THE EVENT!

Identified Risk	Action	When	Supporting Documents/Resources	Who's Responsible
List the prioritised risks identified in Step 2.	Outline the action you could take before the event occurs, to reduce the impact of the risk.	Detail when you would activate/complete the action.	Identify your key documents and resources (that will be used as part of your action plan), how they can be accessed and where they are retained.	Include delegation of authority, escalation processes and key contacts.

INVOLVE UNION REPRESENTATIVES IN YOUR PLANNING PROCESS!

STEP 4 – Identify response actions TEMPLATE

DURING THE EVENT!

Identified Risk	Action	When	Supporting Documents/Resources	Who's Responsible
List the prioritised risks identified in Step 2.	Outline the action you would take *during* the event, to manage the impact of the risk.	Detail when you would activate/ complete the action (e.g. immediately, within one week, within the first month etc.)	Identify your key documents and resources (that will be used as part of your action plan), how they can be accessed and where they are stored.	Include delegation of authority, escalation processes, key contacts and any possible changes to accountability.

INVOLVE UNION REPRESENTATIVES IN YOUR PLANNING PROCESS!

STEP 5 – Design and implement your Business Continuity Plan TEMPLATE

ACTION PLAN

Company Details	
Company Name	
Address	
Location (Street Directory Reference)	
Telephone Number	
Facsimile Number	
E-mail Address	

STEP 5 – Design and implement your Business Continuity Plan TEMPLATE (continued)

ACTION PLAN

Emergency/Pandemic Outbreak Team - Contacts and Roles				
Name	Work Number	After hours Number / Mobile	Role in the emergency	Back-up

STEP 5 – Design and implement your Business Continuity Plan TEMPLATE (continued)

External Contact Details			
Name	Work Number	After hours Number / Mobile	Role in the emergency
Police			
Fire			
Ambulance			
Insurance Company			
Contractors			
Suppliers			
Key Staff			
Workers' Organizations			
Employers' Organizations			

STEP 5 – Design and implement your Business Continuity Plan TEMPLATE (continued)

		Team Procedures		
Team:		Manager:		
		Back-up Manager:		
Procedures	Action Required			
	Before the Event - Preparation Phase	Person Responsible		Supporting Documents/Resources
	During the Event - Immediate Phase	Person Responsible	Time Elapsed (hours / days)	Supporting Documents/Resources
	After the Event - Recovery Phase	Person Responsible	Time Elapsed (days/months)	Supporting Documents/Resources

INVOLVE UNION REPRESENTATIVES IN YOUR PLANNING PROCESS!

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING
FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

STEP 6 – Communicate your plan TEMPLATE

Objectives	Target Group	Key Messages	Communication tool	Notes
Outline the objectives you need to achieve as part of your communicating the business continuity plan.	Specifically identify who needs to receive the information/message (e.g. your employees, union representatives, customers, suppliers, business partners).	Detail the information you need to provide at various stages of the event (to ensure your objective is achieved).	Identify the tools you have available to distribute information (e.g. manager's kit, fact sheets, posters in the workplace, planning meetings).	Identify when, who and how the message will be communicated, including how you can check the objective has been achieved. Speak with a single voice through the Communication Company Team.

MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION WITH UNION REPRESENTATIVES!

STEP 7 – Test your plan TEMPLATE

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING CHECKLIST

Question	Yes	No
Do you know what the most critical products and services of your organisation are? If yes, have they been documented?		
Do you know what impact a pandemic might have on your company and business? If yes, have these impacts been documented?		
Do you know who the key people are in your company and their roles? If yes, have they been documented?		
Do you know what key skills are required to continue the delivery of your key products/services? If yes, have they been documented?		
Do you know how long you can continue to operate with limited staff and limited resources? If yes, has this been documented?		
Do you know what specialist information technology and/or equipment is required for your critical operations? If yes, has this been listed?		
Do you know which suppliers are necessary for you to continue to operate? If yes, are there alternative options available? Have you seen their plans to ensure they will still be able to provide products/services to you?		
Do your employees know what to do in a pandemic?		

STEP 7 – Test your plan TEMPLATE (continued)

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING CHECKLIST

Question	Yes	No
Have you developed social distancing policies? Are staff aware of pandemic hygiene and social distancing practices?		
Have you rehearsed measures that support social distancing i.e. testing technology for employees to work from home, establishing teleconferencing facilities etc?		
Do you have the contact details for your employees, suppliers, insurers, union representatives if you need them in an emergency? Is this information stored in more than one place?		
Does your location or neighbouring company increase your risk (e.g. do you have a reception desk that is open to the public)?		
Do you have supplies of masks, gloves, detergents, alcohol wipes etc?		
Do you have cash reserves?		
Would staff be able to assume different roles to ensure the delivery of services if required (e.g. have staff been cross trained)?		
Do staff members share in key information or is it accessible (e.g. can several people access keys, passes, safe combinations) if access is required in an emergency?		
Have you discussed possible response measures with union representatives?		

If you answered "No" to any of these questions, you should consider developing or expanding plans that can assist you to manage an unscheduled event.

If you answered "Yes" to any of these questions, you should still remember to review and update these plans.

ANNEX II

Thematic boxes adapted from ILO working paper

"SARS – Practical and administrative response

to an infectious disease in the workplace"

Box 1.1

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The following protective practices can be recommended:

1. The provision of clean toilets, liquid soap and hand washing facilities.

2. The provision of individual towels or hand dryers for hand drying.

3. The provision of covered rubbish bins for used towels, handkerchiefs or litter.

4. Encouraging workers to wash their hands after they use the toilet and before eating.

5. The provision of individual, clean utensils for eating and drinking.

6. Encouraging workers to use tissues to contain respiratory secretions, to dispose of the tissues immediately after use in a covered bin, and then to wash their hands.

7. Not allowing spitting in the workplace.

8. Ensuring daily cleaning of workplace areas and toilets, using normal household disinfectants or diluted household bleach.

9. Ensuring workplace cleaners are trained in cleaning techniques and are supplied with utility gloves and adequate cleaning materials, to protect both themselves from injury and workers from contamination.

10. Ensuring a continual supply of fresh air, or if the workplace is mechanically ventilated, adequate maintenance, filtration and cleaning of the system, to prevent any airborne circulation of micro-organisms.

11. Ensuring acutely sick or febrile workers or visitors do not come into the workplace, especially if they are.

12. Encouraging sick employees to seek a medical opinion before returning to work, if they have persistent fever and other influenza symptoms.

</div>

Box 1.2

> ### Additional measures only required during an outbreak:
>
> 13. Prevention of close or physical contact in the workplace, such as handshaking or kissing as forms of greeting.
>
> 14. Avoiding any forms of gathering. Telephone or internet meetings should substitute face to face meetings.
>
> 15. Preparation of a suitable isolation area in the workplace for the assessment and clinical care of suspected case(s) and storage of personal protective equipment (PPE), to use if a suspected case comes into the workplace.

Box 2

> ### Personal protective equipment (PPE)
>
> The aim of this equipment (or clothing) is to completely cover the worker with a physical barrier to the virus. Great care also needs to be taken while putting on and wearing the protective clothing to ensure the protective barrier is not inadvertently broken by maladjustment. Similarly, great care is needed on removal of the PPE, to avoid contamination by touching the outer surface of the clothing.
>
> The typical requirements for PPE include:
>
> - disposable gloves;
> - disposable respirator (eg. N-95, N-99, N-100);
> - disposable gown or other protective overall;
> - waterproof apron;
> - waterproof boots;
> - goggles as eye protection;
> - a face shield;
> - a head cover.

Box 3

Quarantine

One of the most effective ways to control an influenza pandemic outbreak is to impose a system of quarantine for those people who have had close contact with a suspect or confirmed patient, or exposure to their secretions. These people who are to go into quarantine are not ill, the only reason they are being quarantined is because of their exposure to the risk of infection. One of the main reasons for quarantine therefore, is to greatly reduce the movement of people who may develop the disease over the next few days.

People in quarantine are well people and will feel quite capable of performing their work and usual daily tasks. It is therefore important that those requested to go into quarantine understand why the request is made in order to increase their compliance. It is equally important, to ensure voluntary compliance, that some recompense for loss of earnings be made to quarantined workers. This recompense may only be a percentage of usual earnings, but, at least, needs to ensure that basic living expenses for food and accommodation can still be met. Workers also need to be assured that they will be legally protected from dismissal at work if, in complying with quarantine orders, they have to be absent from work.

Working in quarantine

It may be that a worker is requested by an employer to continue to do some work while in quarantine. For instance it may be possible for the worker to access a computer with links to the workplace or to do some other light indoor work.
In such cases the worker and employer would have to negotiate an agreement regarding salary to be paid, hours to be worked and general conditions while quarantine lasted. Care should also be taken that occupational health and safety rules are respected if work is to be done in the home and that quarantine rules are not violated if papers or materials have to be passed between the worker and employer.

Box 4

Confidentiality

During a pandemic outbreak it is to be expected that public health authorities be authorized by governments to perform medical screening of populations, contact tracing, quarantine and isolation of cases. Indeed such public health measures may be backed by national legislation and so citizens are obliged to cooperate with the measures imposed. Such legislation can be considered ethically correct as it strives to protect the whole community from harm. Nonetheless, any medical or personal information, gained as part of a national effort to control the disease, should be kept within the usual boundaries of medical confidentiality and information gathering.

For instance, if workers are screened for influenza in the workplace, medical information will be gathered about them, such as their temperature or any symptoms they may have. This information is confidential to everyone, except those medically authorized to record and use it. Similarly, if a sick worker is discovered and requested to leave the workplace by the public health authorities, the medical details of the worker should be kept confidential. Clearly the organization should be informed that the worker has been found unfit to work but the general principles of medical confidentiality should be respected.