Stage 3

Review, learn and improve

We can review the effectiveness of the CTP preparedness process itself, as well as the resulting CTP operations. Both provide opportunities for reflection, learning and improvement – and these can be documented and contribute to a growing body of expertise about capacity in CTP operations.

Stage 3 has three steps and five sub-steps.

Figure 10. **The steps in review, learn and improve**

Review, learn and improve		
Step 7. Evaluating levels of CTP preparedness	**Step 8. Learning from CTP operations**	**Step 9. Communicating and sharing learning**
• creating a learning environment • internal review of CTP preparedness	• learning-by-doing for National Society staff and volunteers • external evaluation of CTP operations	• document and disseminate learning and contribute to global evidence
Advocacy and communication		

Figure 11. **A summary of the four tracks in 'review, learn and improve'**

Review, learn and improve benchmarks	Enabling systems	There is an open and transparent attitude to review, evaluation and learning with the National Society.
		CTP learning identifies remaining obstacles to improve CTP processes.
		The National Society is open to learning from others inside the Movement and externally and joins with others to share learning.
		Learning shared and disseminated within and externally to the National Society.
	Programme tools	Standard tools are used or adapted to the local context, and used for: • reporting on the progress of the CTP preparedness project • evaluating the level of CTP preparedness • external evaluation of CTP operations • developing case studies.
	Resources and capacities	Internal capacity to effectively monitor CTP operations and preparedness project.
		Documentation and review are adequately resourced with people, time and financial resources with senior leadership engaged in the learning process.
		Measures are in place to monitor and review financial service providers working with the National Society.
	Communication and coordination	National Society fully engages in a range of networks and platforms for exchanging CTP experience.
		Learning opportunities are properly documented and disseminated.

See the end of this section for a more detailed description of the four tracks applied to 'review, learn and improve.'

Step 7. Evaluating levels of CTP preparedness

7.1 Creating a learning environment

It is critical that senior leadership are committed to transparent learning from the outset, and a willingness to review processes that may go beyond the immediate implementation of CTP operations. For example, case studies that show a National Society recognizing an internal weakness and taking action to overcome it are far more convincing – and provide better learning for others – than case studies that consistently show operations as functioning smoothly.

People are essential to the review and learning process, and the mind-set of monitoring, review and learning should be part of the CTP approach from the outset. As a starting point it is important to ensure that the CTP focal point has a clear role in monitoring and evaluation. The CTP technical working group,

or nominated representatives within it, should help to set up the systematic monitoring system across the different departments or sectors of the CTP preparedness PoA. The technical working group would also work with the CTP focal point to gather the information across the sectors to input into the monthly narrative and financial reports shared with senior managers and the Movement partner(s). And finally, the technical working group should conduct a mid-project review with senior leadership and key stakeholders to review progress on the PoA and propose amendments its outputs, activities and budgets.

The CTP preparedness outputs such as tools and procedures should be reviewed during the simulations and pilots that are part of the contingency planning. They can also be considered as part of a wider review and learning process of operations to fine tune existing systems and tools. During development and implementation, points for review can be included at key milestones in the CTP preparedness PoA. Monitoring the CTP preparedness PoA is important, as it enables the National Society to routinely collect and analyse information to track progress, check compliance and make informed decisions on the project management.

7.2 Internal review of CTP preparedness

A one or two day lesson learning workshop should be included in the original CTP preparedness PoA and the National Society should ensure it takes place to capture learning and recommendations from each CTP simulation, pilot or response. It is important to focus on the whole CTP process rather than just the final simulation or response, to be able to identify what contributed to the successes, and what needs to be improved. The lesson learning workshop follows a similar approach to the workshop at the beginning of the CTP process (see 3.1). It should be consultative and participatory, and develop recommendations based on the implementation of CTP actions. Whenever possible, it is good to link it with any other similar workshops planned in relation to wider preparedness, contingency planning or response activities.

Participants at the workshop should include:

- CTP focal point and technical working group members
- National Society senior governance and leadership (at least for the results session and final session on recommendations/next steps)
- National Society management
- key programme and support services staff from headquarter and branches
- key volunteers from headquarter and branches involved in the CTP programme
- Movement partners in-country/region; and external participants (partners, donors, etc.) involved in CTP (for some of the sessions).

A wider group of those directly involved could be invited to join in the learning and recommendations brainstorming sessions.

The key sessions that should occur at this point are:

- A refresher on the CTP preparedness process, and the main activities and outputs, including systems, procedures, tools, training and communications materials.
- The identification of opportunities for learning from the CTP preparedness process, including specific recommendations on how to improve the process

in the future. This should identify specific changes to be made to the systems, procedures and tools that were tested during the delivery, with input from those involved at headquarter and branch levels or from other organizations. Other areas to include could be thinking through how to ensure sustainability of the CTP preparedness process, how realistic or ambitious the expected outcomes were, the adequacy of resourcing allocated and of expenditure against budget, and the reasons for things working or not working out well and what specifically needs to change next time.

- Updating of the National Society CTP capacity SWOT analysis to see what progress and changes have occurred, what bottlenecks still need to be worked on and identify any new challenges that need to be tackled. This helps to stimulate discussion and inform next steps and recommendations for the future. It can also reinforce the National Society's commitment to continue developing its capacity in CTP.
- There should be a presentation of the National Society's current CTP response capacity and recommended action points from workshop discussions to take this forward. This could include a discussion of potential resource mobilization options if the National Society is to continue with CTP and the possibility of replicating the experience in new areas/branches. There should also be a discussion of the ongoing roles of the CTP focal point and technical working group.
- A final session should focus on learning from the CTP preparedness process and the action points from the meeting, which should be captured in writing and shared with key stakeholders. The National Society should draft a CTP lessons learned workshop report.

It is interesting to consider a CTP lessons learned workshop press release or online newsfeed from the communications department to share with partners and media. Communications could also consider drawing up a document of the workshop (written or audio-visual) to share with other headquarter and branch staff and volunteers, as well as partners unable to be present.

Box 14. CTP lessons learned workshop report

Start with a summary of key achievements and good practices.

Include a summary explanation and the original and revisited CTP capacity SWOT.

Include recommendations for improving specific outputs (systems, tools, training materials, etc.).

Conclude with recommendations for improving/adapting the CTP preparedness process.

Finalize with next steps and recommendations for the future.

Step 8. Learning from CTP operations

8.1 Learning-by-doing for National Society staff and volunteers

Review and learning should also be considered as part of CTP training efforts and factored into training syllabuses and follow up. It can also be stimulus for a more "learning-by-doing" approach to implementation, which has proved to be the most popular and successful approach to capacity building, as participants are able to:

- test systems, processes and tools in simulated or real environments
- improve, refine and adapt CTP tools, procedures and templates to local context
- have a clear picture of the real CTP operational capacity and readiness of the National Society.

Opportunities to implement learning-by-doing include:

Preparedness activities: Integrating CTP into VCA, risk and hazard mapping, market and key commodity mapping, assessment of potential cash transfer modalities and delivery mechanisms, population preferences, targeting approaches (geographical/vulnerability based), cash grant values per sector and National Society capacities database analysis all allow staff and volunteers to learn new skills and tools in a controlled and more relaxed timeframe before an emergency.

Contingency plan simulations and programming pilots: This allows a National Society to test the CTP SOPs, including financial systems, assessment tools, decision-making and communication processes, implementation approaches and tools, coordination mechanism etc. It also allows for testing of the monitoring system and tools.

Real-time emergency response: Developing and testing CTP systems, tools and capacities can also be learned during the implementation of a real emergency response, especially if there have been delays or lack of funding for preparedness activities before the disaster or crisis hits. DREF and Emergency Appeals can accommodate some CTP capacity building activities, if CTP is part of the ongoing emergency response.

It is a good idea to limit the scope of learning-by-doing to small and targeted activities so enabling selected branches to develop their CTP capacities. These branches can then become champions of CTP and support its replication in other areas of the National Society, which is often more sustainable than participating in external CTP training events.

It is always good practice to include external partners in learning-by-doing exercises, particularly during the preparedness or contingency planning phase, as this fosters better communication and coordination in real life scenarios. It is also possible to carry out peer coaching or learning deployments, where a National Society agrees to allow CTP staff/volunteers from other National Societies to participate in their operations to have hands on learning experience.

8.2 External evaluation of CTP operations

It is important to hold an internal review through the lessons learned workshop, but it is also important to ensure there is an external evaluation at the end of a CTP preparedness process or emergency response. The aim is to identify in a systematic and impartial way, the process's strengths and weaknesses in relation to its design, actions/outputs and impact. The evaluation should draw out the lessons learned (it can also look at findings from the lessons learned workshop as part of the process) and make key recommendations to inform and improve existing and future practices, based on external experience and perspectives. It is important that the National Society should plan and budget for a specific CTP evaluation in the CTP preparedness PoA, to look in more detail at the workings of CTP processes during the preparedness stage as well as during any response. If other evaluations are planned for either the preparedness or response activities, then CTP processes should be included in these, but this should not replace a specific evaluation for the CTP experience.

An independent evaluation team should be hired, including a team leader and members with relevant Movement and CTP experience, plus previous experience of evaluation techniques. The evaluation should include questions and analysis specifically targeted at reviewing the process, design, outputs and impact of the CTP preparedness work in the National Society. The evaluation must also show the resources allocated and expended and must capture good practice and make concrete recommendations.

Case studies are also an interesting way to consider documenting the strengths, challenges and solutions found during a CTP experience (see case studies on the four pilot countries evaluated as part of the IFRC CTP preparedness pilot project). An external reviewer/writer can be identified to review the experience to date and draw up a brief study to illustrate the learning and recommendations for future cash transfer programming. This can also contribute to the wider body of evidence around CTP experience in the Movement and support similar initiatives in other countries or could be used to support resource mobilization and efforts to support future capacity building.

Step 9. Communicating and sharing learning

9.1 Document and disseminate learning and contribute to global evidence

It is important to share and promote all good practice and learning from the CTP preparedness experience, both internally to Movement partners and externally to other actors and networks. This includes learning from experience, from the lessons learned workshop and from any reviews or evaluations. Dissemination of tools and case studies, news and audio-visual materials can be an excellent way to promote the work of the National Society as well as making a valuable contribution to the humanitarian sector. A National Society should also be willing to provide peer-to-peer technical support to other National Societies that are implementing similar initiatives.

Becoming an advocate for the use of CTP throughout the Movement and sharing experience with other humanitarian partners will help to contribute to the growing evidence-base around CTP. Good quality monitoring and tracking of progress through the CTP preparedness process against the initial baseline can be used as clear evidence of the capacity gained which is vital to attract and secure further investments. A National Society should commit to sharing their experience with others and to providing technical assistance to less experienced National Societies through peer support to share their CTP learning.

The four tracks applied to the 'review, learn and improve' stage of the CTP preparedness process

Enabling systems

The National Society is **committed to learning** and development through comprehensive and transparent processes.

CTP learning is captured and utilized to improve CTP systems, procedures and tools as well as to document progress, achievements and remaining obstacles to mainstreamed CTP.

Solid monitoring and learning systems will be in place at key milestones in the CTP preparedness PoA and will be used to make revisions and updates to ensure effective and efficient progress.

CTP preparedness activities and any related emergency response will be **evaluated** to identify, capture and document learnings to date and make recommendations on the future sustainability of any capacity built.

Learning and resources from other humanitarian partners are known and made available to National Society headquarter and branch staff working on CTP to provide technical guidance.

Learning and evaluation findings are captured and disseminated widely within the Movement and externally to partners, donors, media outlets, etc.

The National Society will **research and join local networks** to support technical quality and share learning.

Programme tools

• CTP preparedness monthly reporting template	CiE Toolkit Module 1
• IFRC Contingency Planning Guide (2012)	
• IFRC simulation guidance and templates (2015)	
• NS CTP capacity SWOT template and sample	CiE Toolkit, Module 1
• Generic CTP Preparedness Evaluation ToR	CiE Toolkit, Module 1
• IFRC NS CTP Preparedness Self-Assessment Tool	CiE Toolkit, Module 1
• IFRC CTP Case Study and Fact Sheet Templates	CiE Toolkit, Module 1
• CaLP Cash Atlas	

Resources and capacities

National Society **CTP technical working group and CTP focal point are appointed to monitor and review** the CTP preparedness process and empowered to implement improvements and support the evaluation process.

National Society staff/volunteers are **trained on CTP monitoring approaches, systems and tools** as part of their CTP training and are aware of planned CTP reviews/evaluations.

Adequate time and human resources are be given for monitoring, review/evaluation and lesson learning. This includes during the lessons learned workshop, updated SWOT analysis and recommendation development.

Adequate **resource mobilization** is available to support monitoring, review, the lesson learned workshop and the final evaluation, and is specifically budgeted for in the CTP preparedness PoA.

Steps are in place to **monitor and review the accountability of third parties and financial service providers** working with the National Society.

Communication and coordination

- National Society **fully engages in networks and platforms for exchanging CTP experience** with other Movement partners and/or with external partners, both in country and at regional and global levels where appropriate.
- **Regular reviews of communications / beneficiary communication and accountability strategies** and plans are undertaken, specifically their targeting and outreach/hit rate, to see if they continue to be effective or need updating. This should be planned and budgeted for.
- IFRC and National Society **CTP learning products** such as case studies and audio-visual materials are produced and shared and disseminated widely.

Introduction

Prepare & analyse

Develop & implement

Review, learn & improve

Annex