



TfaC Malawi Operations Continuity Plan

Introduction

This plan provides information and guidance with the aim of preparing the TfaC team for a swift, effective reaction to an emergency.

The plan has been reviewed in the light of the current global crisis caused by the Coronavirus as of March 2020, and current medical advice.

At Theatre for a Change, our first priority is the Health and Safety of our staff and participants. It is our priority at TfaC to ensure that we – as an organisation and as responsible individuals - are doing everything we can to delay the spread of the virus, and to mitigate its impact.

The impact of these measures, and the possible infection of staff members, will be significant, and will be monitored by the Leadership Team and the Board of Directors. These guidelines will be updated as further information is received, and the Human Resource and Operations Manager will be responsible for updates on level of risk and appropriate actions.

Coronavirus will disrupt our operations in Malawi. This document is designed to maximise our ability to mitigate the impact of the virus by doing what is within our control to protect our staff and participants, and to keep operations functioning where appropriate. The emphasis will be on prevention and response.

This document aims to provide clear prevention procedures, and the necessary response procedures for any sudden changes in risk level within the wider environment and the working environment. It details how to respond effectively while, where possible and appropriate, maintaining operations. Within the Annexes at the end of this plan there is the information on emergency communications, and key information on Coronavirus. It explains how TfaC Malawi may need to re-group, to re-locate, to adopt a radically different mode of working in order to sustain our activities where appropriate and safe.

All members of staff should be familiar with this document, and security representatives should keep a copy at home. It is “owned” by the Board of Directors, the Executive Director the Head of Human Resource and Operations, and the Leadership Team (LT). It must be reviewed to reflect changes and developments which may affect the relevance of each level.

Security Team

Chairman of Board/Board representative- Robert Ngaiyaye

Executive Director – Patrick Young

Head of Operations & HR – Gibby Musukwa (Security Focal Point - SFP) Theatre for a Change Leadership Team.



Day to day implementation of the Operation Continuity Plan is the responsibility of the Security Team comprised of the non-Board members listed above. The Security Team is responsible for setting the security level at all times and must be reviewed monthly at a minimum. At higher risk levels (3-5) the Board Security Team member must be included in all Security meetings.

Trigger Points

There are five general areas of threat, apart from the possibility of a major fire in one of our offices, or serious storm damage:

- **Natural disaster:** Malawi is very vulnerable to a severe outbreak of Coronavirus, or any other epidemic, and can be subject to flooding and earthquake – all are considered trigger points.
- **Civil unrest** – this could be caused by shortage of foreign exchange and or fuel, the declining value of the local currency and food insecurity.
- **Political unrest:** this could occur at any time but is often a hallmark of elections, both national and local.
- **Crime:** if there is a marked increase in crime, leading to many feeling threatened and vulnerable. If there is a marked increase in car-jacking and burglaries, some violent, in urban areas.
- **Terrorist activity:** although there has neither been an international terrorist attack in Malawi, nor a specific or direct terrorist threat to perceived UK interests this cannot be ruled out.

Incident Response Levels

In order to clearly identify the risk level and appropriate action TfaC uphold a five level plan which details the appropriate response depending on the severity of the situation. The Security Team set the level at all times and are responsible for ensuring the measures set below per risk level are implemented in full. When considering the level the Security Team should factor in World Health Organisation recommendations, Embassy/ High Commission, partner NGO and UN security levels.



Level 1 - Normal

Conditions in Malawi under this level would be considered normal with no perceived major risk of any of the trigger points. Security measures in place under this risk level are designed to protect staff members in the office support normal day to day operations.

- Information disseminated with the facts of Coronavirus, how it is transmitted, how to protect yourself and the symptoms
- Working from home to be understood as an evacuation/social distancing measure
- Generator and water storage at the office
- All Staff issued with official ID Cards
- First Aid Kits maintained in the office and evacuation sites and in all vehicles
- Fire Extinguishers and fire proof maintained in the office and SEP
- Full server backup held in the fire proof safe at the SEP at all times
- Back up fuel reserved may be held depending on the circumstances

Level 2 – Increased Risk

Conditions in Malawi under this level would be considered to have a raised risk level compared to normal with a heightened risk of future trigger points. There may be specific cases of trigger points such as confirmed cases of Coronavirus, or civil unrest.

At the time of writing, March 23rd 2020, there have been no confirmed cases of the Coronavirus. However, given the fact that the virus can be transmitted before any symptoms are shown, there needs to be a strong level of prevention for staff working in the office, and it is anticipated that it is only a matter of time before the first cases are confirmed by reliable sources.

For all staff, strict procedures of hygiene and handwashing should be followed.

Under this level all measures mentioned under Level 1 must be maintained with the addition of:

- Handwashing points at entry to the office, with mandatory handwashing by all staff and visitors, using soap and water and the Handwashing Guidelines must be positioned next to the soap and water at the entrance points.
- Surfaces that are touched by more than one person (eg door handles, taps, toilet handles) should be regularly disinfected during the day.



- Leadership team should do an assessment of team members who are particularly at risk as a result of having compromised immune systems, or other underlying health issues.
- Full weekly security assessment must be conducted by Security Team – Board member representation optional but minutes to be shared if not attending
- When moving from Level 1 to Level 2 an LT meeting must be held to assess the impact on programmes for a potential further increase in mitigating actions
- Self-isolation of any member of staff who has symptoms of Coronavirus, or who has been caring for, or in contact with, anyone one who has symptoms.
- Emergency fuel reserves to held at the office with monthly checks
- Senior managers maintain constant communication with each other and the wider team on the necessary measures to be taken.

Level 3 - Insecure

Conditions in Malawi under this risk level would be considered to be insecure with a very high risk of future trigger points and current minor incidences becoming widespread.

In the case of Coronavirus, this happens when the Government or NGO community advises that schools should be closed, unnecessary travel and public gatherings be suspended.

At the time of writing, the Government has now indicated that all schools will be closed from March 23rd.

Under this level all security measures mentioned under Level 2 must be maintained with the addition of:

- Full weekly security assessment must be conducted by Security Team including the Board member
- Information session to be led by LT with the facts on how Coronavirus is transmitted and how it can be prevented. This information should then be disseminated to all staff, and participants, along with any updates.
- Leadership team communicate daily on the status of risk
- Working hours of staff in the central office in Lilongwe reviewed and potentially adjusted to minimise risk exposure, non-essential staff may be requested to work from home



- Assessment conducted by Security Team and plans put in place for full or partial suspension of programmes. Programme Planning meetings will be held by LT and PMT to identify the impact of Level 3 on programmes, and what can be done.
- The focus will shift to adaptations of programmes to provide participants and facilitators with the correct information, and the safest way of continuing programme delivery where possible, with Safeguarding of vulnerable participants prioritized. Monitoring and reporting of programme adaptations to be carefully considered and put in place.
- Information on Covid 19 to be disseminated
- All work in schools, Teacher Training Colleges to be suspended
- All non-essential vehicle movement suspended
- Daily briefing of all TfaC employees on the current situation
- Staff work in the office on a rotating basis.

Level 4 – Deteriorating security

Conditions in Malawi under this level would be considered to be significantly deteriorating with widespread actual trigger points occurring making operations impossible.

In the case of the Coronavirus, the trigger would be the President declaring a lockdown, or over 21% of staff being incapacitated. Under this level all security measures mentioned under Levels 1-3 must be maintained with the addition of:

- All staff work from home
- Operations suspended with immediate effect and office closed
- Full daily security assessment must be conducted by the Security Team including the Board member
- Daily briefing of all TfaC employees on the security situation by email and Whatsapp
- Key hard copy files transferred to LT homes, particularly Finance, who will need to pay staff and third parties.
- All movement of employees to be minimized.
- Non-essential movement suspended.
- Essential movement is regarded as leaving the house for i. Medicine or ii. Food – food shopping should be once per week only.



Level 5 – Major insecurity

Conditions in Malawi under this risk level would be considered to be in a state of crisis with widespread actual significant security trigger points occurring and no immediate prospect of a reduction in insecurity.

The triggers for this would include the absence of the whole Leadership Team due to the Coronavirus, and over 50% of staff being incapacitated.

Under this security level all security measures mentioned under Level 4 must be maintained with the addition of:

- TfaC Malawi officially closes all operations
- Hourly communication between Security Team
- TfaC Malawi responsibility handed over to representative of the board

Annexes to this document include:

- Emergency contact details for Security personnel
- Information on the facts of Coronavirus

- Monthly stock check on:
Soap
Hand Sanitiser

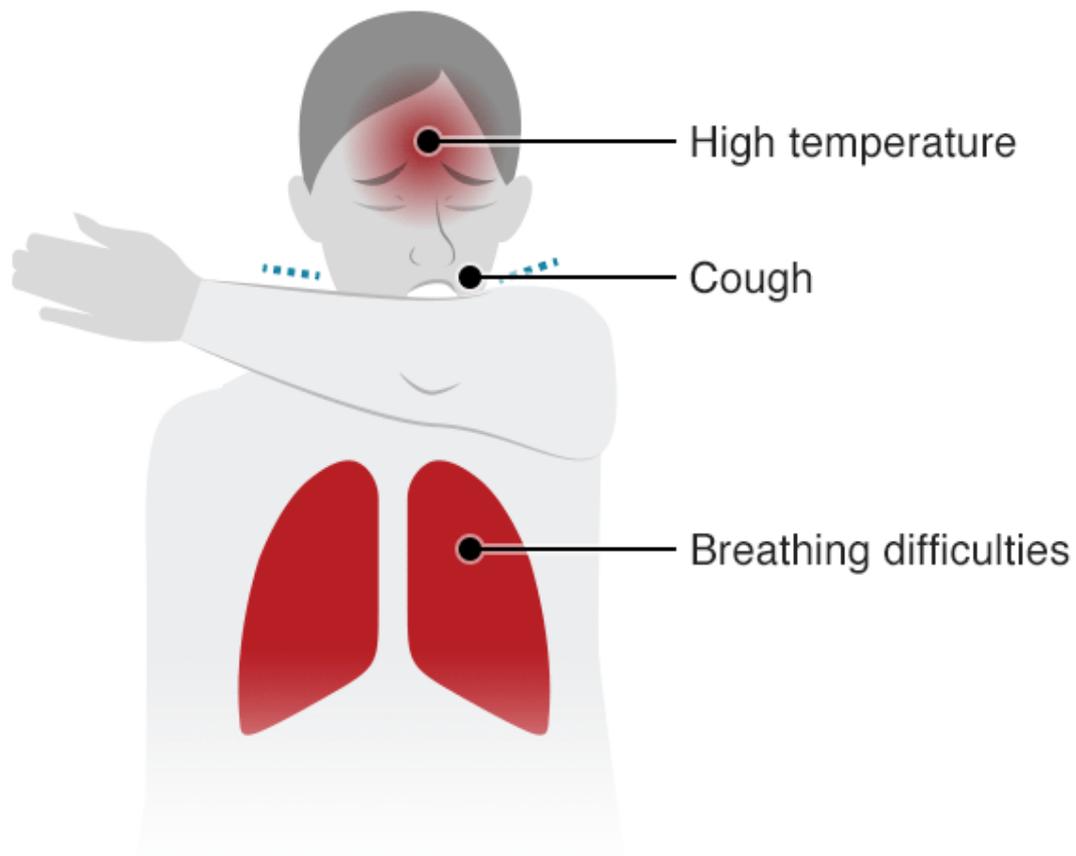


Annex 1 – What is Coronavirus and what are the symptoms?

The virus that causes Covid-19 has already infected many people around the world in just a few months.

And the best explanation for this rapid spread is that the virus is being passed through droplets from coughing or sneezing. When these virus-laden droplets from an infected person reach the nose, eyes, or mouth of another, they can transmit the disease.

Coronavirus: Key symptoms





Annex 2 – How to prevent the spread of Coronavirus

People will be most infectious when they have symptoms, but there have been suggestions some can spread the virus even before they are sick. The early symptoms can easily be confused with other winter bugs including colds and flu.

In order to delay - and ideally prevent - the spread of the virus among staff and employees, it is essential that the following guidelines are followed:

1. Avoid crowded public transport, and hold meetings outside the office by phone rather than face to face.
2. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, or disinfect your hands, **before you enter** the office.
3. Disinfect your keyboard and desk and shared surfaces such as doorhandles.
4. Sneeze or cough into your flexed elbow or a tissue, and then dispose of the tissue hygienically. Avoid touching your face.
5. Take measures to boost your immune system – Vitamin supplements, healthy diet, sleep and exercise <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/mar/08/how-to-boost-your-immune-system-to-avoid-colds-and-coronavirus>.
6. Self-isolation is mandatory if you have a relative who you are living with who has shown the symptoms - whether you are demonstrating any symptoms or not, as the incubation period of the virus is not yet known.

This means you stay away from the office and do not come into contact with other people at home.

7. Communicate early with your line manager if you are showing symptoms of C 19 - eg coughing, fever, respiratory problems.

8. Don't come into work if you are demonstrating any of the symptoms. Self-isolate and follow instructions: <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/02/20/what-is-self-isolation-and-why-is-it-important/>



What should I do to prevent catching and spreading the virus?



Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use a sanitiser gel



Catch coughs and sneezes with **disposable tissues**



Throw away used tissues (then wash hands)



If you don't have a tissue **use your sleeve**



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands



Avoid close contact with people who are unwell