



## 7 BUSINESS CONTINUITY TAKEAWAYS YOU MISSED FROM THE PREVIOUS BCI EVENT?

The Business Continuity Institute Eastern Africa pulled out all the stops for its first-post COVID physical event hosted by Sentinel Africa at the HQ - Rainbow Towers, dubbed Continuity Connect.

The event brought together different Business Continuity practitioners who shared their expertise and knowledge on the subject. The event featured three panelists Ken Kaberia from Safaricom Plc, Mahsen Aboud from Kenya Medical Research Institute, and Sospeter Thiga from CPF. The panelists were moderated by the Chair of Business Continuity Makona Simiyu. Here are some key takeaways

### 1 Importance of agility and flexibility in responding to potential disruptions.

The panelists emphasized the importance of agility and flexibility in responding to potential disruptions. The ability to pivot quickly and adapt to changing circumstances is critical to maintaining a responsive Business Continuity Plan.

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**Indeed, technologies such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and automation can be powerful tools for improving business resilience and reducing the impact of disruptions.**

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...Having such plans in place not only helps businesses to mitigate the impact of disruptions but also instills confidence in customers, investors, and employees that the organization is well-prepared to handle the unexpected. This requires a mindset of continuous learning and innovation, as well as a willingness to experiment and take calculated risks.

## 2 The role of technology in enabling business continuity.

One of the key topics of focus was on the role of technology in enabling business continuity. Indeed, technologies such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and automation can be powerful tools in improving business resilience and reducing the impact of disruptions. Cloud computing, for example, can provide businesses with a flexible and scalable IT infrastructure that can be quickly adapted to changing business needs. This can be particularly useful in situations where businesses need to rapidly scale up or down their operations in response to a disruption. Cloud-based systems can also provide businesses with greater accessibility and collaboration capabilities, allowing employees to work remotely and securely from anywhere.

Artificial intelligence and automation, on the other hand, can help businesses to automate key processes and reduce the risk of human error. This can lead to improved efficiency and productivity, as well as reduced costs. In addition, AI and automation can help businesses to identify and respond to potential disruptions more quickly and effectively, by analyzing data and identifying patterns that may be difficult for humans to detect.

## 3 Collaboration and information-sharing among businesses.

The panelists' emphasis on collaboration and information-sharing among businesses was spot on. In today's interconnected and complex business environment, no business can truly operate in isolation. By pooling resources and expertise, businesses can improve their overall resilience and better prepare for potential disruptions. Collaboration can take many forms, from informal networks of business partners and suppliers to more structured public-private partnerships and industry associations.

Regardless of the form it takes, effective collaboration requires a culture of trust and openness, where businesses are willing to share information and work together towards common goals..

Government agencies and regulators can also play an important role in facilitating information-sharing and collaboration among businesses. For example, they can provide guidance and resources to help businesses develop contingency plans and mitigate risks, or they can act as a neutral mediator to facilitate dialogue between businesses that may have competing interests.

Ultimately, collaboration and information-sharing among businesses can help to create a safer and more resilient business environment for all. By working together to identify and address potential threats and vulnerabilities, businesses can build stronger relationships with customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders, and position themselves for long-term success.





## To ensure continuity of operations, businesses must take a proactive approach to risk management and have robust contingency plans in place to mitigate the impact of potential disruptions.

### 4 Risk management is a critical component of business continuity

The experts' reiterated that risk management is a critical component of business continuity. In today's dynamic and rapidly changing business environment, risks can arise from a wide range of sources, including natural disasters, cyberattacks, regulatory changes, economic instability, and more. To ensure continuity of operations, businesses must take a proactive approach to risk management and have robust contingency plans in place to mitigate the impact of potential disruptions.

Conducting regular risk assessments and simulations is an important part of this process. By systematically identifying and evaluating potential risks and vulnerabilities, businesses can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the threats they face and develop targeted strategies for managing those risks. This can help businesses to prioritize their resources and investments, and to ensure that they are focusing on the most critical risks and vulnerabilities.

### 5 Testing the effectiveness of contingency plans in business continuity

In addition, testing the effectiveness of contingency plans through simulations and other exercises can help businesses to identify gaps or weaknesses in their plans and make necessary adjustments. This can also help to build confidence among stakeholders that the business is well-prepared to respond to potential disruptions.

### 6 The importance of communication in Business continuity

The panelists also focused on the importance of communication in ensuring business continuity is right on target. Effective communication is a critical component of any business continuity plan, as it ensures that all stakeholders are aware of potential disruptions and are equipped to respond appropriately.

Clear and concise communication channels are essential for ensuring that employees and stakeholders receive timely and accurate information about potential disruptions.

This can include regular updates via email, text message, or other communication channels, as well as in-person meetings or training sessions to ensure that everyone is on the same page. In addition, regular communication with stakeholders and customers is also important to keep them informed of any disruptions and to manage expectations. This can help to build trust and confidence among stakeholders and can minimize the impact of any disruptions on the business.

### 7 Continuous improvement as a key factor in business continuity

I couldn't have said it better myself! The panelists' emphasis on continuous improvement as a key factor in ensuring business continuity strategies are constantly evaluated and refined so as to better handle disruptions and adapt to changing circumstances. By embracing a mindset of continuous improvement, businesses can remain ahead of the curve and adapt to new challenges and opportunities as they arise.





# in summation,

the conference served as an important reminder that disruption is inevitable, but it doesn't have to be catastrophic. With the right tools, processes, and mindset, businesses can weather any storm and emerge stronger and more resilient than ever before.

The attendees all agreed the conference was a success and offered them the opportunity to learn from the panelists' experiences. The energy in the room was a good indicator of the quality of the discussions and the participants' passion. All Business Continuity practitioners in attendance agreed it was important to continue fostering such connections and opportunities for learning so that the business continuity discipline in Eastern Africa can be improved.



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