

Locally Led Anticipatory Action

Guide and Toolkit

How civil society organisations can engage with communities, and collaborate with mandated, technical and donor agencies to localise and scale up early warning and early action

Developed by

Diakonie 
Katastrophenhilfe

Implemented by



Global Network of
Civil Society Organisations
for Disaster Reduction

Financed by



[Glossary](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Anticipatory
action](#)

[Locally led
anticipatory
action](#)

[Toolkit
overview](#)

[Phase 1](#)

[Phase 2](#)

[Phase 3a](#)

[Phase 3b](#)

[Phase 3c](#)

[Phase 4](#)

[Phase 5](#)

Contents

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----|---|----|--|-----|---|-----|--|--|--|
| Glossary | | | | | | | | | | |
| Introduction | 05 | Chapter 1 | 23 | Chapter 5 | 81 | Chapter 9 | 145 | | | |
| | 11 | Anticipatory action | | Phase 2: Participatory assessment and enhanced community contingency planning | | Phase 4: Coordinated monitoring, evaluation, feedback and advocacy | | | | |
| | | Chapter 2 | 43 | Chapter 6 | 93 | Chapter 10 | 159 | | | |
| | | Locally led anticipatory action | | Phase 3a: Community-led early action | | Phase 5: Collaborative development of early action protocols | | | | |
| | | Chapter 3 | 51 | Chapter 7 | 109 | | | | | |
| | | Toolkit overview | | Phase 3b: Local actor early action | | | | | | |
| | | Chapter 4 | 67 | Chapter 8 | 121 | | | | | |
| | | Phase 1: Engagement, assessing feasibility, and design | | Phase 3c: Enhanced participatory contingency planning | | | | | | |

Glossary

Advisories

A range of risk information products communicating to members of the public with explanations of what will happen; when will it happen; how bad will it be and where; and what actions can be taken by communities/ individuals. Advisories can include sector specific advisories with technical details on forecast events and impacts.¹

Anticipatory Action (AA)²

Anticipatory action is defined as acting ahead of predicted hazardous events to prevent or reduce acute humanitarian impacts before they fully unfold.

¹ ACT Alliance EU (2023) *Localisation: The vision and practice of ACT Alliance EU*.

² Red Cross Red Crescent (2023) 'Glossary of Terms for Forecast-based Financing', *FbF Practitioners Manual*.

³ REAP (2022) *Finance for Early Action: Tracking Commitments, Trends, Challenges and Opportunities*.

Local actors are encouraged to think of AA in terms of “mechanisms incorporating pre-agreed predictable financing for pre-agreed plans, released when an agreed trigger point is reached, and more informal approaches where - although a mechanism incorporating triggers, financing and activities has not been [fully] established in advance – action is taken in anticipation of a crisis or disaster on the basis of a *forecast* [or predictive analysis]”.

Build finance

Money for initiatives that create and strengthen the underlying systems and capacities needed for early action.³

Contingency planning

A management process that analyses disaster risks and establishes arrangements in advance to enable timely, effective and appropriate responses.⁴

Disaster Risk Financing (DRF)

A term covering financial mechanisms, arranged in advance of disasters, for use in disaster risk management activities; including decreasing disaster risks and supporting resilience well before any hazardous event occurs to preparedness, anticipatory action, response and recovery after the disaster has occurred.²

Early Action⁵

A set of actions to prevent or reduce the impacts of a hazardous event before they fully unfold predicated on a forecast or credible risk analysis of when and where a hazardous event will occur.

Local actors are encouraged to think of, “early action used to describe actions taken before the impact of a hazardous event, based on a forecast, which [either have been or may not have been] planned or allocated funding in advance”.

Early Action Protocol (EAP)

A document containing information on triggers, early actions and

describes the step-by-step process for the implementation of early actions once a trigger is hit. It provides guidelines for who takes action when, where and with what funds. The activation of the protocol is triggered when a certain forecast reaches a certain level that indicates there could be severe negative impacts.² UN agencies refer to these as anticipatory action (AA) protocols.

Early Warning

Information provided in advance of a specific hazardous event, disaster or conflict to enable stakeholders to take timely action to reduce disaster risks.²

Early Warning Early Action (EWEA)

A general concept of taking early action based on a warning. EWEA builds on the Early Warning Systems concept, emphasising the need to reinforce actions as key outputs of the warning system.²

⁴ UNDRR (2016) 'Terminology', *Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*.

⁵ REAP (2022) *Glossary of Early Action Terms*

Enhanced Participatory Contingency Planning (EPCP)

A process of collective interpretation of forecast-based action planning information. Whereby community representatives, local actors and technical experts exchange knowledge on the impact of hazardous events and analyse forecast information to develop locally relevant plans for preparedness and early action and determine triggers for the activation of these plans. Advisories and communication plans are also developed to provide timely, understandable and actionable forecast information to communities.⁶

Forecast

A definite statement or statistical estimate of the likely occurrence of a future event or conditions.²

Forecast-based Action (FbA)²

Disaster risk management actions that are initiated on the basis of a forecast.

Local actors are encouraged to think of FbA as an anticipatory action approach, which is more strongly associated with pre-agreed funding.

Forecast-based Financing (FbF)

An anticipatory action approach that releases pre-agreed finance for pre-agreed activities to prevent or mitigate the impact of an imminent hazardous event or shock when forecast triggers are reached. The terms forecast based finance and forecast based action are often used interchangeably.²

Fuel finance

Funds to pay for early action.⁴

Impact-based forecasting

Impact-based forecasting is an approach that forecasts the potential negative consequences of a hazardous event.²

Impact level

The degree of forecasted loss and damage (human, livelihoods, infrastructure, environment etc.), or the degree of humanitarian impact of an extreme event that would trigger action.⁶

Lead time

The time from when the forecast is issued until the occurrence of the event that is forecast to happen. For example, a forecast issued on Monday for a storm to make landfall on Friday has a 4-day lead time.⁶

Local actors

Diverse local formal and non-formal civil society actors. These range from national and local NGOs, community-based networks, local committees, social movements, women-led and youth organisations. They encompass faith, secular and interfaith actors and networks. Local authorities and local markets & service providers are also key local actors.¹

Locally Led Anticipatory Action

A process driven and led by communities and actors, at the local level to create an enabling environment for anticipatory action by: empowering communities and local actors to implement their own early actions; identifying and

communicating gaps and weaknesses in early warning systems and planning and coordinating mechanisms; and advocating for flexible or pre-agreed financing for autonomous locally led early action ahead of the peak impact of forecastable or predictable hazardous events, or shocks, to reduce their impact.⁷
See also Chapter 1: What is anticipatory action?

Microgrants / Group Cash Transfers (GCTs)

Funds for communities to action their community-led planning, including to take early action or to respond quickly to new issues arising during a crisis.¹

⁶ Definition developed within the *Local Leadership for Global Impact* project.

⁷ Definition developed within the *Local Leadership for Global Impact* project, applying anticipatory action informed by elements and principles set out in Local to Global Protection (2021) *Guiding Principles*.

No Regrets / Low Regrets Actions

Disaster risk management actions taken in advance of a hazardous event that provide benefits to the receiving population irrespective of how, or whether, a disaster occurs.²

Pre-arranged Financing

A specific form of disaster risk financing that has been approved in advance of a crisis and that is guaranteed to be released to a specific implementer when a specific pre-identified trigger condition is met.²

Simulation

Aims to test the viability and timeliness of the early actions in real time. The exercise primarily consists of practical actions, performed by participants who will carry out their roles and responsibilities as assigned in the EAP. As the drill proceeds, an environment is created that is as similar as possible to what would exist in a real situation in the days preceding an extreme event.⁶

Survivor and community-led crisis response (Sclr)

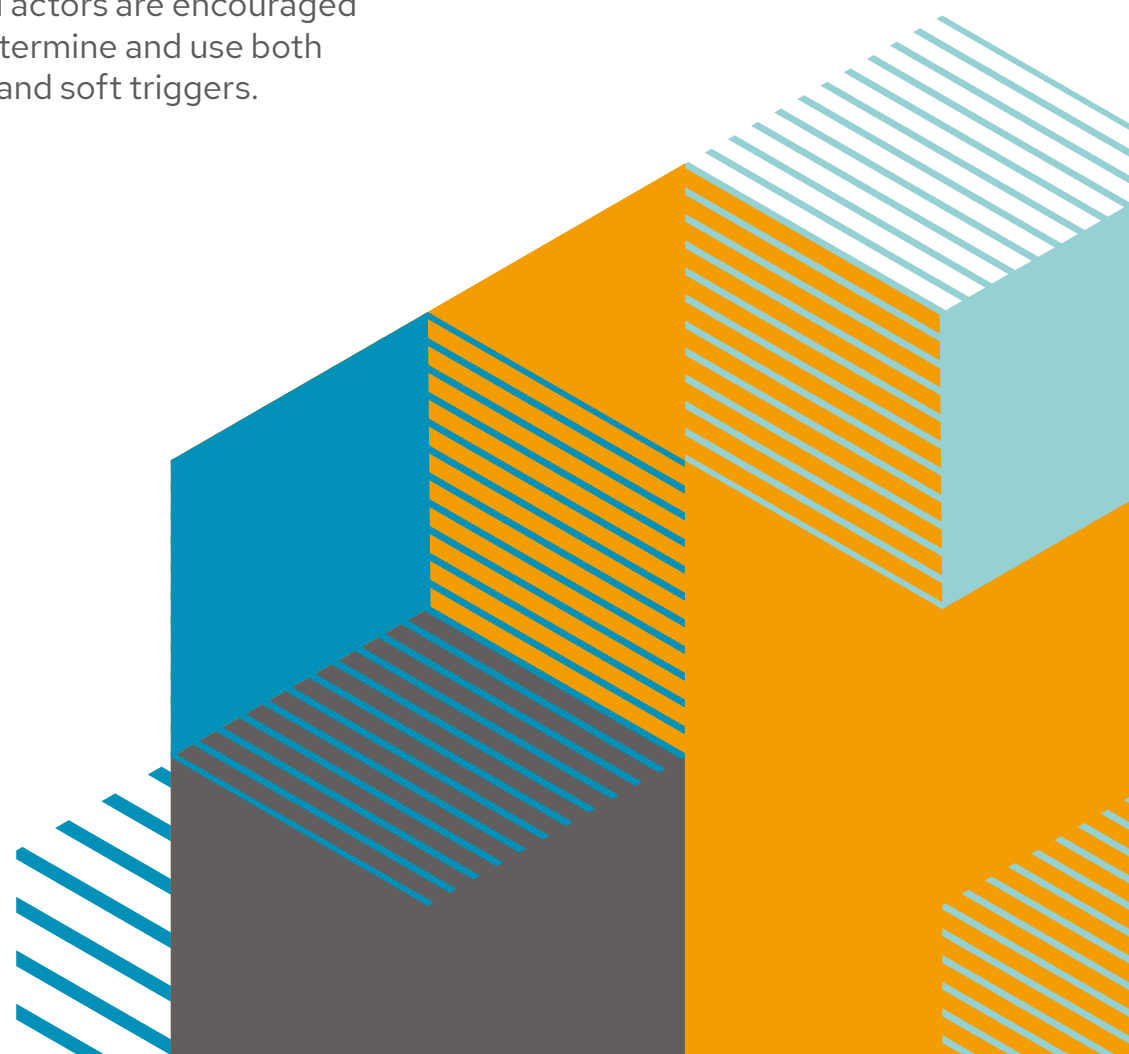
An approach that aims to support crisis-affected communities to lead and manage their own holistic, coordinated response to emergencies in ways that improve immediate survival, protection and well-being, strengthen longer-term resilience and facilitate greater social cohesion.⁸

Trigger

A predetermined criterion that, when met, is used to initiate actions. A trigger can be a predetermined value for a specific indicator, set of indicators or index that is forecast to occur (such as wind speed in 48 hours time) or has been measured as having occurred (such as the amount of rainfall in a specific time). It can also be an assessment of loss (such as the proportion of damage to property) or a more general judgement of severity. For some users, the term

trigger implies that, when the predetermined criterion is met, actions will be initiated automatically. Others differentiate between 'hard' (automatic) triggers and 'soft' triggers, with the latter initiating decision-making processes that may lead to the action, rather than initiating the actions themselves.²

Local actors are encouraged to determine and use both hard and soft triggers.



⁸ Local to Global Protection (2021) *Sclr*.

Introduction



Locally led anticipatory action (AA) is integral to strengthening locally led risk informed approaches and contributes to increased coherence in local and higher-level disaster and crisis preparedness planning processes⁹ – which realises in practice the commitment to action “as local as possible, as international as necessary”.¹⁰

This guide has been developed with civil society organisations (CSOs) engaged in locally led anticipatory action in Southern Africa¹¹ and is based on learning from applying anticipatory action in collaboration with local actors for tropical cyclone and flooding events between 2021 and 2023. It also draws on learning from Kenya on anticipatory action for electoral violence.¹²

The guidance is presented to be applicable to a wide range of hazardous events. One basis being that, if established locally led AA approaches have demonstrated that early action can be conducted for tropical cyclones within a lead time of only three to five days, then these approaches should also function for hazardous events with longer lead times of weeks or months, such as droughts.

The purpose of the guide is to support CSOs to engage with communities and other actors and structures at the local level; to play a central role in planning and establishing local mechanisms for anticipatory action and drive the process of scaling up anticipatory action.

By sharing evidence and learning, this guide contributes towards:

- Clarifying communities’ and local actors’ existing capacity to act ahead of hazardous events by contributing to the design of early warning systems and anticipatory action processes, and the implementation of early action
- Developing collective understanding of three fundamental locally led AA approaches: community-led early action (Phase 3a); local actor early action (Phase 3b); and enhanced participatory contingency planning (Phase 3c)
- Presenting the benefits and added value of applying these three complementary approaches in terms of increasing coverage, efficiency and impact
- Strengthening and widening partnerships through collaborative application, learning and advocacy
- Presenting processes which enable communities and local actors to engage in locally led AA without the availability of pre-agreed financing mechanisms
- Increasing focus on the need to provide AA financing to reduce the impact of hazardous events (fuel financing) to the local level
- Creating a more enabling environment for local experience and capacities to engage in strengthening mechanisms – including the collaborative development of required early action protocols based on established practice

⁹ GNDR (2022) *Risk-Informed Development Guide*.

¹⁰ ODI (2018) *As local as possible, as international as necessary*.

¹¹ Ecumenical Committee for Social Development (CEDES), Mozambique; Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD), Malawi; and SAF/FKJM, Madagascar.

¹² HPN (2021) *Learning from survivor- and community-led response in Haiti*.

This guide covers locally led AA approaches which apply:

- Planning for actions across the 'wider window of anticipation' between the early warning or trigger point and the conventional humanitarian response, which begins with the impact of a hazard
- Both pre-defined planned actions, and real time planning of actions, prior to a predicted hazardous event
- The use of both forecasting and predictive analysis methods
- Both pre-defined 'hard' triggers and consensus-based activation or 'soft' triggers

The guide outlines an overall process and the three main approaches applied in locally led AA.

Community-led early action (Phase 3a)

Empowering local structures and community groups to plan and implement their own early actions (using microgrant management mechanisms and through the provision of resources and rapid skills upgrading). This approach is inspired by the *survivor and community-led crisis response (Sclr)* by Local to Global Protection.

Locally led early action (Phase 3b)

Early action planning (in the form of Alert Notes and Proposals for early action) by local actors using available forecasts or predictive analysis and local decision-making. This approach is informed by the Start Network *FOREWARN* initiative.

Enhanced participatory contingency planning (Phase 3c)

Engagement in localising the use of forecast-based action (FbA) planning in multi-stakeholder contingency planning connected from the local to national level. This approach is informed by the Red Cross Red Crescent *FbF Practitioners Manual* approach and approaches applied by United Nations (UN) agencies including the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Limitations of this guide

The utilisation of the survivor and community-led crisis response (Sclr) approach and community microgrants, as well as group cash transfers (GCTs), is rapidly expanding. The learning presented is based on limited experience of this locally led anticipatory action and is one of the first documented pilots of applying aspects of Sclr and microgrants to anticipatory action.

Emphasis is placed on the use of improved local early warning systems and available forecasts to inform decision-making to trigger early action, and on how learning from this can be used to inform the development of triggers. It is acknowledged that the guidance provided on enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP; see phase 3c) is simplified. Also, the use of technical risk models or forecasts can be beyond the mandate or capacity of some CSOs; this can require accompaniment from technical agencies.

Some terminology and concepts remain complex. Those who led on developing the guide call for collaboration to address this so that anticipatory action is more accessible to all.

Potential sources of disaster risk financing (DRF) are outlined but it is acknowledged that DRF currently remains a significant limitation for CSOs.

Who should use the guide

The main intended users of the guide are CSOs with a permanent presence at the local level. When speaking of civil society organisations the guide refers to local and national NGOs; community-based organisations (CBOs); and potentially community structures including disaster risk management committees or civil protection committees.

The guide needs to be applied in collaboration with local structures, communities and other local actors to support them in playing a central role in planning and establishing local mechanisms for anticipatory action. Some of the guidance and specific tools are intended for direct use by community leaders, representatives and groups, and community-based volunteers. In particular, the guidance and tools are for communities to develop their own microgrant proposals for community-led early action (See Phase 3a).

The guide can also be used as a reference for mandated actors including government authorities at different levels and technical agencies, to strengthen collaborative engagement with local actors and structures, and to facilitate the establishment of a more enabling environment for mainstreaming and scaling up locally led AA.

Where formal local structures or planning processes are absent the primary user is a facilitating actor, such as local or national non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It is also understood that actors such as Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies, international NGOs, and even disaster management authorities take on this role. Therefore, these actors are also encouraged to look into the relevance of presented approaches, methods and tools for their own work.

The guide enables users to:

- Understand where anticipatory action sits in the disaster risk management timeline
- Understand key concepts and different approaches to anticipatory action
- Learn from evidence of the effectiveness of locally led AA and the unique value of local actors
- Establish partnerships with key actors to collaboratively develop anticipatory action mechanisms
- Identify gaps in early warning systems, contingency planning, local financing mechanisms and emergency response coordination mechanisms at the local and national levels
- Assess and anticipate significant hazardous events, crises or shocks and their impacts
- Determine preparedness actions and early actions to be implemented when trigger points are activated
- Establish locally managed microgrant management mechanisms for community structures or groups, while ensuring transparency and accountability in crisis contexts
- Strengthen capacities to capture and communicate evidence and learning, and to advocate for a more enabling environment to scale up successful locally led AA

How to use the guide

In Chapters 1 and 2, the guide can be used to develop understanding of anticipatory action and locally led AA alongside financing opportunities or limitations. Resources presented within the guide can be used to strengthen capacities to initiate the process, for example, the Local to Global Protection [Sclr Short Course](#), Start Network [Start Ready Training](#) videos, [Crisis Anticipation and Action](#) training course, and the FAO [Developing an Anticipatory Action System](#) e-learning course.

From Chapter 3, the user can facilitate Phase 1 of the process to engage and raise awareness on locally led AA with relevant actors to assess the feasibility of applying different locally led AA approaches.

Once locally led AA approaches have been selected, guidance and tools for the other phases (Phases 2 to 5) are used to design the processes. Each of the phases of the process include an explanation of the purpose; the levels of planning and coordination, leadership and participants involved; the main outputs; and methods applied. The steps within the phases set out the actions to be taken, along with guiding questions to be addressed to reach specific objectives, as well as tools to be applied and additional reference resources.

Examples are also provided for each phase providing key learning from practitioners who have applied locally led AA in practice.

Acknowledgements

Author: Chris Ball, Director of [Bounce Back Resilience Ltd](#) and Humanitarian Advisor DRR and Climate Change for Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH).

This guide and toolkit was developed based on learning from piloting locally led AA approaches in [Local Leadership for Global Impact](#) from 2021-23 in Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique by [Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe](#) in collaboration with [CARD](#), [CEDES](#), [SAF/FJKM](#) and [GNDR](#). The strong stakeholder collaboration throughout this process is highly acknowledged, including with disaster management authorities BNGRC, DoDMA, and INGD; local authorities; and the communities of Nsanje District in Malawi, Nhamatanda District in Mozambique, and Ampanefy in Madagascar.

The project was supported by funds from the Federal Republic of Germany through the [Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development](#) (BMZ) and the contribution of funds from Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe.

The author acknowledges the work of other organisations which has significantly contributed to informing the development of the guide, providing tools to be applied or adapted for locally led AA. Appreciation is given to the following actors for their invaluable support, input, and guidance:

- Members of [Act Alliance](#)
- [Anticipation Hub](#)
- [CALP Network](#), and the [Group Cash Transfers Working Group](#)
- [German Federal Foreign Office \(GFFO\)](#)
- [Local to Global Protection](#)
- [Malteser International](#)
- [Risk Informed Early Action Partnership \(REAP\)](#)
- [Start Network](#)
- [Save the Children International](#)
- [Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations \(FAO\)](#)
- [Welthungerhilfe \(WHH\)](#)

Reference resources

CALP Network (2021) [Group Cash Transfers Guidance and Tools](#)

CARE International (2018) [Practical Guide to Participatory Scenario Planning](#)

CGIAR (2018) [Guide to Participatory Scenario Planning \(PSP\)](#)

FAO (2023) [Developing an Anticipatory Action System](#). The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is in the process of compiling a compendium, a manual and affiliated learning modules (both e-learning and in-person modules) on community engagement in AA)

FAO (2020) [Applying an inclusive and equitable approach to anticipatory action](#)

GNDR (2022) [Localising Climate Projections Guide & Toolkit](#)

IFRC and Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems Initiative (2020) [People Centred Early Warning Systems](#)

Local to Global Protection (2018) [Training Materials](#)

Local to Global Protection (2021) [Sclr](#)

Red Cross Red Crescent (2023) [FbF Practitioners Manual](#)

Start Network (2018-2023) [Crisis Anticipation Materials](#) (these are a range of resources for the development of an early action mechanism)

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (no date) [Anticipatory Action Toolkit](#)

Welthungerhilfe (no date) [Welthungerhilfe's approach for a localised EAP development - Step-by-Step Guidance](#)

WISER (2019) [A manual for co-production in African weather and climate services](#)

WISER (2020) [Building blocks for co-producing climate services](#)

World Food Programme (2019) [Getting ahead of crises: A thesaurus for anticipatory humanitarian action](#)

1 Anticipatory action



Why we need to change how we prepare and take action for forecastable and predictable crises

Climate and environment crisis and compound risk¹³

Risk drivers including climate change are affecting the global nature of risk, with hazards and threats becoming more frequent, intense and complex. Across the world we are struggling to address the systemic nature of risk and witnessing the multiplier effect of shocks and stresses. Across the world, we are increasingly seeing compounding risks and their impacts.

Challenges faced by the existing humanitarian system¹⁴

Humanitarian needs are at a record high. Crises and conflicts, climate change impacts and disasters are increasingly threatening the lives and livelihoods of millions of people – trends exacerbated by the impacts of Covid-19, instability and conflict, and the cost-of-living crisis affecting marginalised groups everywhere. For the humanitarian system to continue protecting affected populations, to bridge the growing financing gap and protect hard-won development gains, a paradigm shift towards more efficient, effective and forward-looking humanitarian assistance is needed.

What is anticipatory action?¹⁵

Anticipatory action refers to actions taken to reduce [prevent or mitigate] the impacts of a specific, imminent, forecasted hazard before it occurs, or, before its most acute impacts are felt. The actions are carried out in anticipation of a hazard's predicted impacts and based on a forecast [or early warning] of when, where and how the event will unfold. Anticipatory action takes different forms and happens on a range of scales depending on the organisations involved, the context in which people live, the type of hazard or hazardous event they are facing, and the available forecasts [and lead times] for that hazard or hazardous event.

Disaster risk management timeline and the window of anticipation

The disconnect between longer term risk reduction activities and conventional humanitarian response, often implemented by stakeholders with different sets of expertise, has been a significant obstacle to effective management of disaster risk. Anticipatory action bridges this gap to establish a continuum between targeted DRR measures, emergency preparedness, and humanitarian response, followed by longer-term development, as part of a disaster risk management timeline. The result is a more fluid process.

¹³ IPCC(2022) *Sixth Assessment Report Report*.

¹⁴ German Government Federal Foreign Office (2022) *G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement on Strengthening Anticipatory Action in Humanitarian Assistance*.

¹⁵ Anticipation Hub (no date) *What is anticipatory action?*



The actions are carried out in anticipation of a hazard's predicted impacts and based on a forecast

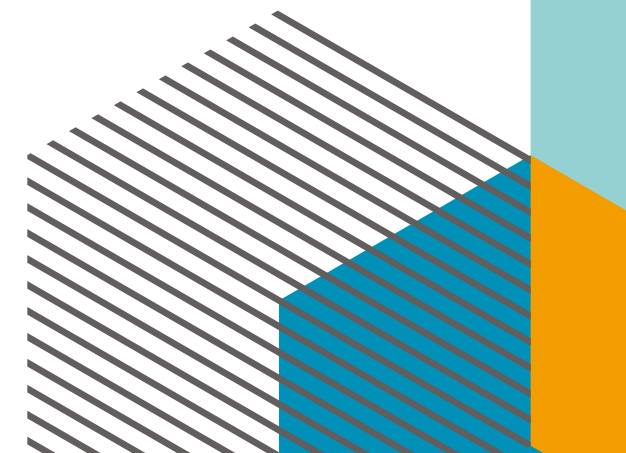
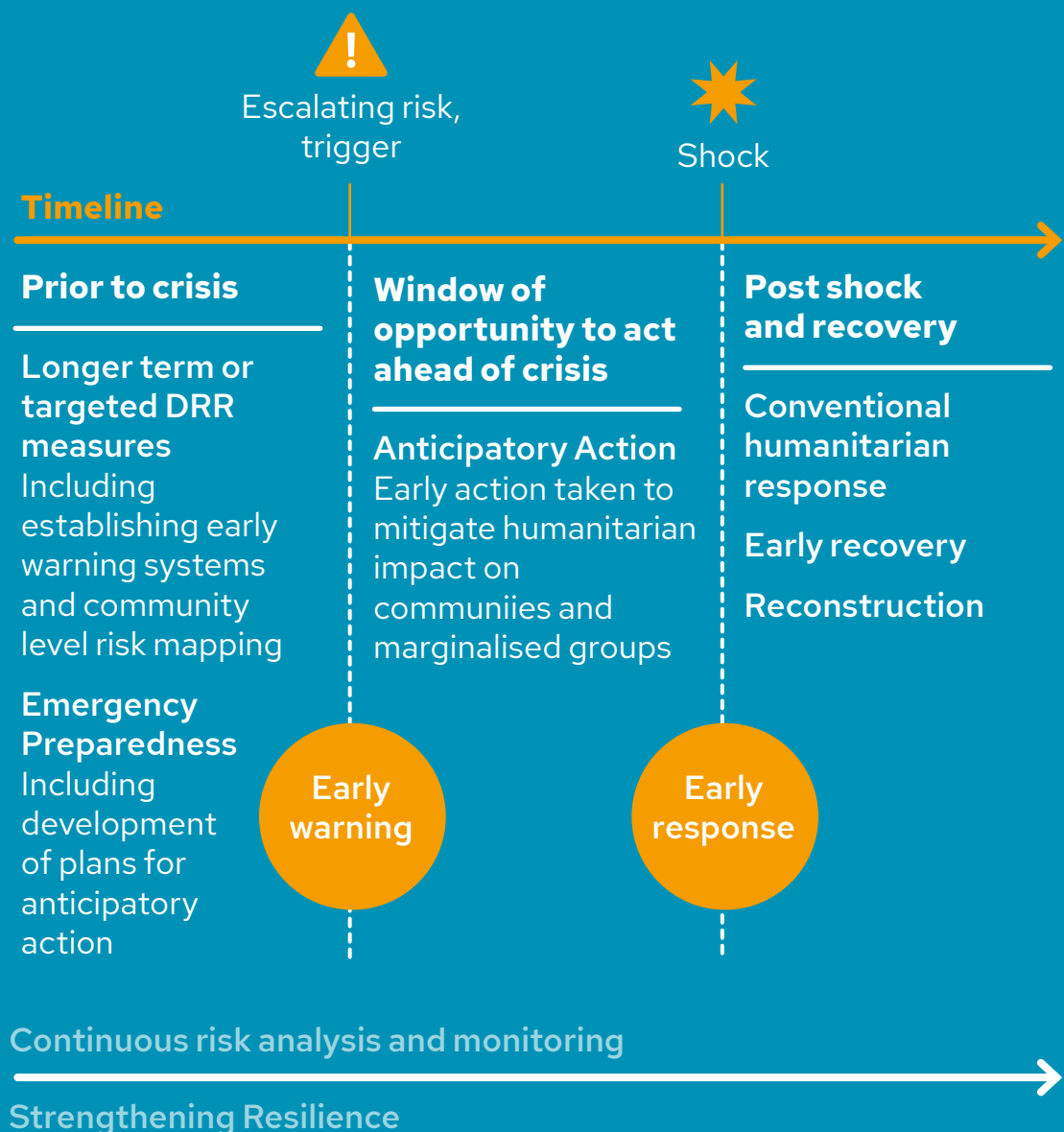


Diagram 1:

Anticipatory Action as a bridge between targeted disaster risk reduction, preparedness and crisis response¹⁶



The aims and objectives of anticipatory action¹²

Anticipatory action is an approach leading a shift from reacting to hazards to acting ahead of them, by systematically linking early warnings to early action. Engaging in anticipatory action provides benefits in terms of improved mechanisms and institutional systems. Acting before the onset of a forecast hazard helps to protect the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable people around the world. Acting before a hazard becomes a disaster also helps to build peoples' resilience to future shocks and eases the pressure on strained humanitarian resources.



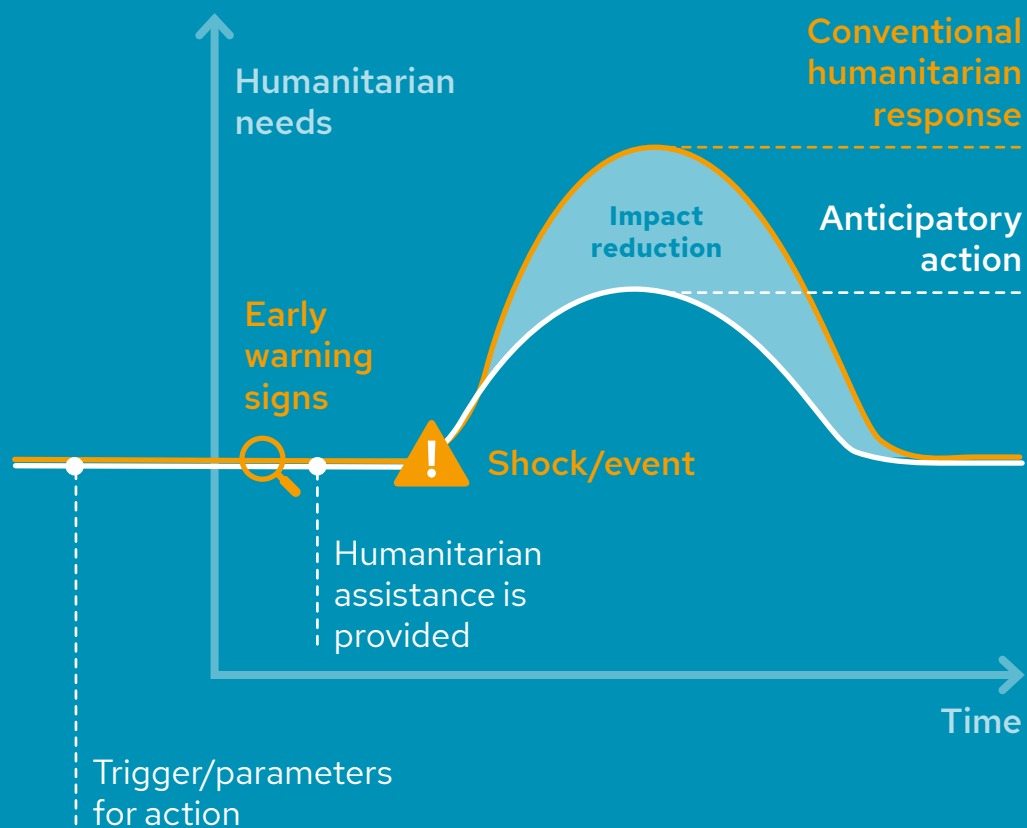
Acting before a hazard becomes a disaster helps to build peoples' resilience to future shocks and eases the pressure on strained humanitarian resources

Statements on the objective of anticipatory action:

- To reduce the potential impacts of forecastable hazard(s) ([Anticipation Hub](#))
- Enables [actors] to take anticipatory action before the impacts of crises take place, preventing or reducing their humanitarian impact ([Start Network](#))
- Acting ahead of predicted hazards to prevent or reduce acute humanitarian impacts before they fully unfold ([G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement on Strengthening Anticipatory Action in Humanitarian Assistance](#))

¹⁶ Adapted from Save the Children (2022) *Framework for Anticipatory Action*.

Diagram 2:
Reduced impact of hazards when applying anticipatory action¹⁷



Expected outcomes of anticipatory action¹⁸

| Humanitarian systems / Institutional level | Individual and household levels |
|---|---|
| Increased operational capacity to act on forecasts, early warnings, and rapid risk analyses | Protected lives |
| Reduced response costs and time | Maintained dignity |
| Reduced or transformed scale of later humanitarian needs | Protected livelihoods |
| Shift in humanitarian, disaster management and/or development culture and policy | Avoided losses |
| Increased efficiency and/or cost reduction | Faster recovery |
| | Avoided or mitigated physical and psychological suffering |
| | Protected food security and nutrition |
| | Strengthened resilience |

¹⁷ Centre for Humdata (no date) *Anticipatory Action*.

¹⁸ Adapted from WFP (2020) *The Evidence Base on Anticipatory Action*.

The window of anticipation or window of opportunity¹⁹

The window of anticipation is the period of time between a forecast being issued until the occurrence of the event that is forecast to happen. There are different opinions on how far in advance of a disaster or crisis an action must be in order to be 'early' or 'anticipatory'. Some actors restrict terms related to early or anticipatory action to activities that take place before a hazardous event occurs, for example, before the onset of a drought or heavy rains.

Others accept that activities that take place after the hazardous event can also be early or anticipatory if they occur before the hazardous event has become a disaster, for example before any crop failure or livestock loss associated with a drought has had an impact on health, nutrition or livelihoods; or before floodwaters have reached human settlements. Still others allow any action that occurs before a reactive, relief-focused conventional response to the disaster to be described as early, on the grounds that these actions, founded on early warning, are earlier than they would otherwise have been if no warning was given.

Different approaches to anticipatory action

Actors engaged in anticipatory action differ in the degree to which anticipatory action and early actions need to be planned and structured in advance. For some actors, activities which have been planned and agreed in advance - that are initiated when predetermined indicators reach agreed trigger values and for which funding has been prearranged - count as early or anticipatory action (i.e. Red Cross Red Crescent [forecast-based financing](#)). Other actors (i.e. the Start Network's [fund for crisis anticipation](#)) are also open to a wider range of activities with a lower degree of pre-planning being defined as early or anticipatory.²⁰

The unique contribution and value of local actors in anticipatory action

Locally led approaches are needed to scale up anticipatory action. Utilising the expertise of communities and local actors on the front lines of disasters and crises, and those most vulnerable to their impacts, is critical to ensure that effective early warning and early action becomes the norm in all parts of society. The effectiveness of locally led AA along with the rapid disbursement of financing to the local level is becoming evident, particularly in terms of more proactive self-mobilisation by local structures, and increased community ownership of interventions.



¹⁹ ODI (2020) [Anticipatory action for livelihood protection](#).

²⁰ REAP (2022) [Glossary of Early Action Terms](#).

Investing in local structures and providing essential technical and financial support for anticipatory action at the local level will enable appropriate action ahead of disasters and crises, save lives, protect livelihoods and strengthen communities' resilience. This investment will contribute to collaborative and coherent action towards achieving the Sendai Framework,²¹ Paris Agreement,²² 2030 Agenda,²³ and international agreements on early warnings for all.²⁴ The active involvement and empowerment of communities also plays an important role in the humanitarian localisation debate.²⁵

Local actors working with communities bring a unique value to realising the system shift to anticipatory action.²⁶ Firstly, they have a permanent presence in communities, in-depth contextual understanding, and relationships with local structures and groups. Establishing meaningful partnerships and strengthened collaboration with local actors – and their associated civil society networks – provides an opportunity to ensure that local actors are effectively empowered to engage in anticipatory action.

Secondly, they provide indigenous knowledge on early warning systems and access to local data for increased granularity of risk and vulnerability (i.e. more localised data). They are able to facilitate feedback on local factors affecting the reliability of forecasting models and the effectiveness of established mechanisms and interventions.

Local actors are best placed to engage with community-based early warning systems in areas where forecasting models (e.g. for floods) are unable to cover.

Thirdly, they are best placed to make decisions on who should do what and when once a risk has materialised, or a trigger has been activated.

Fourthly, they are able to rapidly mobilise local structures.

And lastly, decision making around how finance is spent needs to be informed by their local knowledge and expertise on vulnerabilities, risks, and available capacities. Ensuring local actors' involvement in shaping financing and resource allocation contributes towards strengthened local transparency and accountability mechanisms.



²¹ Especially Priority 4 of the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*.

²² UNFCCC (2015) *The Paris Agreement*.

²³ Referencing especially *Sustainable Development Goal 13*.

²⁴ For example *Early Warnings for All* and the targets of the *Risk-informed Early Action Partnership*.

²⁵ Charter4Change, NEAR, A4EP recommendations for the next phase of the Grand Bargain (2023-2026); *Grand Bargain Intermediaries Caucus, Towards Co-Ownership: The Role of Intermediaries in Supporting Locally-Led Humanitarian Action, 2022*

²⁶ GNDR (2023) *Scaling up locally-led anticipatory action – so that no one is left behind*.

How anticipatory action is financed and the limitations for civil society organisations

Donors currently appear to be more comfortable with funding system strengthening initiatives than providing direct finance for implementing early actions. The former is often referred to as 'build' money for initiatives that create and strengthen the underlying systems and capacities needed for early action, and the latter as 'fuel' money that directs funds to pay for early action.²⁷

Financing options for early action vary. Pre-arranged finance is arranged in advance and is paid out on pre-determined triggers. Fast and flexible finance is pre-allocated to a specific activity but not automatically triggered.

An example of fast and flexible finance are crisis modifiers, where a programme has an associated budget line.² Having funding based on forecasts in place is one of the pillars of anticipatory action - alongside triggers and planning - that guarantees the delivery of humanitarian assistance in the short window between a forecast and the impact of an extreme event. Having access to finance mechanisms which guarantee resources allows actors to make robust plans to act quickly and confidently to fulfil their role in preventing human suffering before a disaster happens. The funding options, their coverage, and focus, vary according to different organisations' mandate, their structure, and their approach to anticipatory action.²⁸

Organisations which have their own funding mechanism for anticipatory/early action include the International Federation for the Red Cross (IFRC) [Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(DREF\)](#) and United Nations Agencies' [Central Emergency Response Fund \(CERF\)](#) and associated [country-based pooled funds \(CBPFs\)](#).

This means that currently most CSOs rely on securing one-time sources of financing for early action by:

- Developing specific project proposals, or components of a project proposal, for locally led AA including both 'build' and 'fuel' elements
- Including a crisis modifier within project proposals and designing them specifically for early action
- Allocating any locally available funds for early action

This also means that advocacy is required towards donors for the establishment of disaster risk financing mechanisms, and towards government agencies for locally managed funds, which provide pre-agreed financing for early action whenever the mechanism needs to be activated.

Examples include:

- Start Network: [Global Start Fund](#) and [Start Ready](#)
- Organisations such as Trócaire who are establishing disaster risk financing models for [pre-positioned funding](#) as an approach to advance localisation and locally-led humanitarian action; as part of the [Local Leadership for Global Impact](#) project, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe adapted its small emergency fund to establish a financing mechanism for early action for their local partner NGOs

²⁷ REAP (2022) [Finance for Early Action: Tracking Commitments, Trends, Challenges and Opportunities](#).

²⁸ Anticipation Hub (no date) [Financing mechanisms for anticipatory action](#).

- Welthungerhilfe has established an Anticipatory Humanitarian Action Facility (WAHAFA) supported by the German Federal Foreign Office, through which German and local NGOs can receive financial and conceptual support to develop and implement early action protocols (EAPs) when they are triggered; while this is a pilot financing facility only available for the lifetime of the project, it is only the second example of a national government donor funding such a pooled financing facility (the only other case being the financing facilities established by the Start Network)
- Locally established and managed contingency funds, with one example being the fund established by the Philippines under the Comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Program (CDRRMP), established in 2011 under Republic Act 10121; similar funds have also been established by governments in Indonesia and India

Status and developments in forecasting and early warning systems

Early warning Systems (EWS) – and multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS) specifically – enable communities to act ahead of the peak impact of hazards to mitigate their impact and protect those most at risk from climate change. However, early warnings are often not linked well with early or anticipatory action, which is driven and exacerbated by misalignments in funding that do not complement the full value chain of EWS down to local early action.

The Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) established four international targets in 2019 to better connect early warnings to first/last mile early action and the UN Secretary General's Early Warning for All (EW4All), launched in March 2022. This aims to provide a renewed political momentum on the need for quality forecasts that allow for preparedness ahead of impacts.

Elements of multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS) are usually driven by national mandated authorities, particularly the national meteorology and hydrology services who have responsibility to protect civilian populations from extreme weather events.



While progress has been made in hazard monitoring and forecasting, early warning infrastructure and dissemination, alerts and decision-support services need to reach, and better support communities, in a more time-sensitive manner. MHEWS need to be more people-oriented with focus on first/last mile communities, with a shift in focus from early warning dissemination to communication through impact-based forecasting and warnings. The Sendai Framework indicator G4 measures the availability of plans to act on early warnings at local level.

Countries with MHEWS have reported low progress in this element of MHEWS – only 46 per cent of such countries have reported availability of such plans to act on early warnings.²⁹

The *Early Warnings For All Initiative (EW4All)* was formally launched by the UN Secretary-General in November 2022 at the COP27 meeting in Sharm El-Sheikh. The initiative calls for the whole world to be covered by an early warning system by the end of 2027.

Under Pillar 4 of the EW4All, national consultation mechanisms should allow for the broader inclusion of local and national partners involved in preparedness and anticipatory action mechanisms, alongside the Pillar Lead (IFRC) and relevant UN agencies present in country (such as WFP, FAO, OCHA or others). This initiative provides a strong foundation for the achievement of REAP targets that aim to significantly scale the delivery of first/last mile early and anticipatory action by 2025.



MHEWS need to be more people-oriented with focus on first/last mile communities, with a shift in focus from early warning dissemination to communication through impact-based forecasting and warnings.



²⁹ UNDRR (2022) *Global status of multi-hazard early warning systems: Target G.*

Collaboration required to enable anticipatory action

Anticipatory action has principally been applied by humanitarian actors including UN agencies, Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, and INGOs to plan and conduct early action interventions.

The establishment of the anticipatory action mechanisms that are required for forecasts and early warning to be effectively communicated, understood, and most importantly, acted upon, requires increased emphasis on people-centred and locally led approaches. Collaboration is needed between humanitarian, development and climate change actors – which places wider civil society actors with a permanent presence at the local level at the centre, and meaningful and active participation of communities at the front line of disasters.

For anticipatory action to become sustainable and to realise its full potential, it needs to be both mainstreamed into disaster management systems and to fully utilise the knowledge and existing capacities of communities and local actors. Achieving this requires acknowledgement that officially mandated authorities are ultimately responsible for realising early warning and early action, and the role of CSOs to complement, facilitate, address gaps, and contribute to scaling up.

Evidence and value of investing in anticipatory action

The following quantitative evidence is taken from submissions by various actors recorded in the Anticipation Hub [evidence database](#). This includes evidence for cyclone, flood and heavy rainfall events, for early action covering early warning, shelter, water and sanitation, food security and health.

- Households that received cash transfers were 12% more likely to evacuate household members and 17% more likely to evacuate their livestock
- 15% of beneficiaries reported experiencing health problems and physical injuries (such as bruises and fractures) after and because of the cyclone compared to 27% of non-beneficiary households (i.e. a 12 percentage point reduction)
- 51% of beneficiaries indicated that some of their working equipment (such as tools, fishing equipment, pumps, etc.) was damaged to some degree or lost, versus 72% of comparison households (i.e. a reduction of 21 percentage points)



Collaboration is needed between humanitarian, development and climate change actors

- Beneficiaries reportedly received a higher level of assistance at the shelters, they had an overall better experience with less problems, and access to more services; the overall shelter experience was rated better by beneficiaries, with an average score of 6.2 (out of 10) versus 5.3 for the comparison group (i.e. an average increase of 0.9 points)
- On average, households receiving the cash transfer borrowed \$7 less, and at lower interest rates, than control households in the two months after the onset of flooding

2 Locally led anticipatory action



What is locally led anticipatory action?

Locally led AA often works best if the following core components are agreed by stakeholders in advance:

1. The actions to be taken and the specific roles of each stakeholder (this includes the roles of local actors and structures engaged through locally relevant and inclusive mechanisms)
2. The forecasts for the hazard and the threshold levels that are used to trigger the actions
3. Financing (both the amount and the source of funds in place to allow the actions to be implemented once thresholds for triggering the actions are met)

Local and national NGOs³⁰ who have implemented locally led AA define the key elements as follows:

- Starting from the community: engage with grassroots volunteers, local associations and other community groups; ensure the meaningful inclusion of all groups; foster partnerships between a wide range of actors - who must own the initiative - from the inception of the process
- Facilitation by local actors who provide guidance and training on the process and support the establishment of necessary coordination mechanisms
- Exchange between communities and agencies, including technical agencies and disaster management representatives, to discuss forecasting and early warning systems and to collectively determine locally relevant triggers and thresholds

- Enabling communities to draw up their own plans for preparedness and early action activities
- Empowering local communities to shape financing for early action based on the budgets they determine to be necessary for effective early action interventions, and to be responsible for making decisions on how funds, for example in the form of community microgrants, are utilised

The Start Network's definition of locally led action includes, "where locally led groups of members have access to their own resources and make the decisions on how these are used".

Welthungerhilfe³¹ describes community participation in anticipatory action in terms of grassroots organisations and local communities leading scenario-based contingency planning, ensuring the plans are inclusive and appropriate to local environments. This provides a set of pre-funded contingency plans to respond to different hazards. Local NGOs are then able to draw on a newly established source of flexible and easily accessible funding to design and implement early actions to minimise future risks.

³⁰ Ecumenical Committee for Social Development (*CEDES*), Mozambique; Churches Action in Relief and Development (*CARD*), Malawi; *SAF/FKJM*, Madagascar; all of whom have participated in the Local Leadership for Global Impact project and reflect on learning from it.

³¹ Welthungerhilfe (2022) *Aisha Jamshed: Shifting to an anticipatory mindset - locally led early action in Pakistan.*

The principles for locally led AA are anchored by the World Resources Institute's principles³², and presented here with additions to the text (in italics) to make them specifically applicable for anticipatory action.

1. Devolving decision making to the most appropriate community-specific level
2. Addressing structural inequalities faced by women, youth, children, *older persons*, persons with disability, persons living in displacement, Indigenous Peoples and marginalised ethnic groups, *as well as through socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and gender identity*

3. Providing patient and predictable *pre-arranged or flexible* funding that can be accessed more easily (*i.e. on the basis of a forecast*)
4. Investing in local *technical and operational* capabilities to leave an institutional legacy
5. Building a robust understanding of climate *and other forecastable and predictable risk* and uncertainty
6. Flexible programming (*pre-defined plans, or a predictive analysis and approval mechanism*) and learning
7. Ensuring transparency and accountability
8. Collaborative action and investment

³² World Resources Institute (no date) *Locally Led Adaptation*.

³³ GNDR (2020) *Views from the Frontline Global Report: Why are people still losing their lives and livelihoods to disasters?* GNDR asked over 100,000 local actors about their perspectives of risk and resilience across 44 countries.

³⁴ FAO (2020) *Applying an inclusive and equitable approach to anticipatory action*.

Disabling and enabling factors for local actors' engagement in anticipatory action

Locally led planning by governments and local organisations, access to finance and risk data, and local actors' operational readiness are all essential preconditions to ensure the effective implementation of anticipatory action at the local level. Despite the critical role of civil society organisations, local government and community leaders in managing disasters, 84% of local actors report not being included in assessing threats, preparing policies and plans, and taking action to reduce threats³³.

There are groups and individuals that are at greater risk in times of crisis. They are often those who face the highest inequalities in everyday life, including people living in rural areas, Indigenous Peoples, women, children, ethnic and linguistic groups, persons with disability, migrants and displaced populations, gender and sexual minorities, youth, and older

people³⁴. However, marginalised groups can and do have the knowledge and skills needed to plan appropriate actions to be taken ahead of hazards striking.

For locally led AA to be realised at scale it requires mandated, technical and donor agencies to play a more active role in initiating and strengthening processes for anticipatory action; there needs to be better connection between the international/national level and the local level. This requires these actors to:³⁵

1. Strengthen partnerships and collaboration with local actors and structures
2. Invest resources and flexible and pre-agreed financing for early action at the local level
3. Ensure inclusive locally led coordination
4. Invest in strengthening existing local actors, structures and technical capacity, and collective learning
5. Include local actors in all anticipatory action policy decision making



Locally led action, survivor and community-led crisis response, microgrants and group cash transfers

The integration of survivor and community-led crisis response (Sclr)³⁶ principles and components, including the use of microgrants (or GCTs), as applied in Phase 3a, maintains community engagement. It provides tangible outputs for communities to strengthen community preparedness or mitigate risks which could prevent them from effectively implementing early action in the event of a forecastable or predictable hazardous event.

Experience indicates their value. Locally led action can be much faster and more cost efficient than conventional aid or humanitarian interventions. It also better involves communities' knowledge, skills and insights to respond to crises, to identify innovative solutions and to learn.³⁷ Sclr approaches automatically operate within the humanitarian-development nexus and promote initiatives that would fall outside current siloed understandings of humanitarian programming.³⁷

Providing microgrants for preparedness activities strengthens communities' capacity to manage microgrants when provided for locally led early action when activated. This experience is particularly important in the case for early action for rapid-onset events, as communities must be able to manage microgrants, independent of local actor facilitation.

Guiding principles of Local to Global Protection's survivor and community led crisis response (Sclr) approach:

- Adopt a new mindset that recognises crisis-affected people as first and last responders
- Adopt strengths-based participatory assessments and appreciative inquiry methods
- Challenge gender narratives: women as leaders, not victims
- Strengthen (do not weaken) collective action, social cohesion and sense of community
- Support multiple different groups to reflect the heterogeneity of crisis-affected people
- Explicit transfer of power (using microgrants) to community groups
- Promote broader well-being and psycho-socially informed approaches
- Recognise that a crisis-affected populations' natural tendency is to respond holistically
- Develop new management systems and organisational cultures that incentivise staff to let go and allow greater sharing of power
- Give more focus to supporting local government agencies to adopt and fund community-led approaches
- Redefine relationships between donors and national and international agencies
- Support 'whole of system' change that motivates all aid departments to challenge assumptions and accepted norms that limit opportunities for humanitarian aid to enable local agency

³⁵ GNDR (2023) *Scaling up locally-led anticipatory action – so that no one is left behind.*

³⁶ Local to Global Protection (2021) *Sclr.*

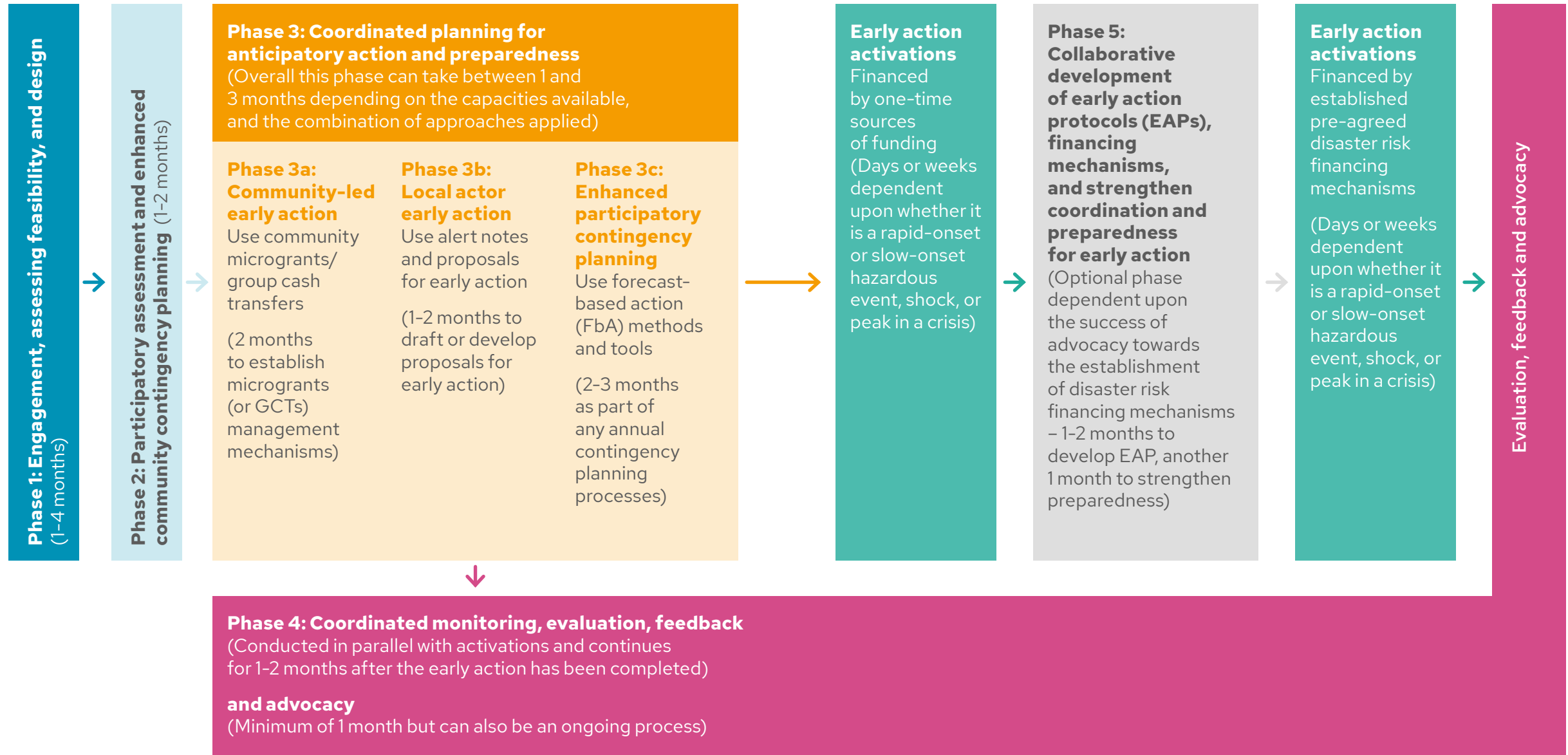
³⁷ Humanitarian Practice Network (2021) *Survivor- and community-led crisis response: Practical experience and learning.*

3 Toolkit overview



Diagram 3:

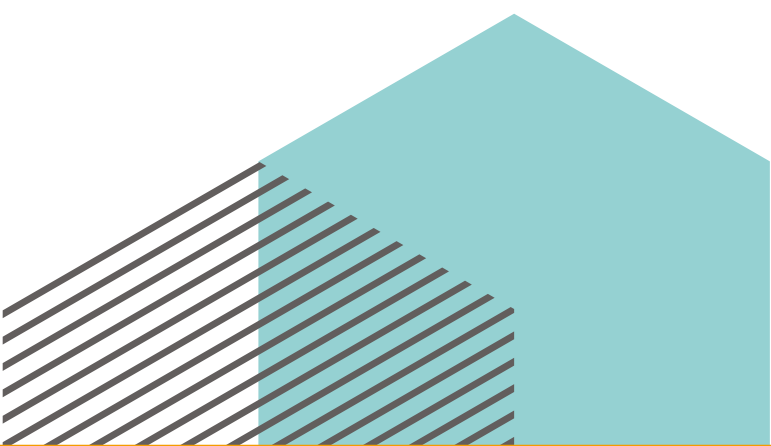
The phases and three complementary approaches to locally led AA.



Three approaches to locally led anticipatory action

The three fundamentally different approaches to locally led AA are complementary, and developing capacity to implement each of them contributes to increasing the scope of application of anticipatory action. For each of these approaches, the table below outlines the types of hazardous event for which they are most relevant, key strengths of each approach, level of investment required in prior planning, and the mechanisms required to be put in place.

| Approach: | (3a) Community-led early action | (3b) Local actor early action | (3c) Enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP) |
|--|---|--|--|
| Types of hazardous events for which the approach is best applied | All types, although rapid disbursement of microgrants for rapid-onset events can be more challenging, and attention given to conflict sensitivity (do no harm) | Predictable events with a higher degree of uncertainty, particularly for the onset of complex crises, events caused by compounding risks, and <i>under-the-radar, small to medium-scale crises</i> | Rapid-onset and forecastable hazardous events with a regular frequency of occurrence (within at least 5-10 years) |
| Key strengths of each approach | High relevance as early actions determined by communities. Contributes to increased engagement and strengthened coherence between community led actions and the actions of external actors. Higher cost efficiency. | Highly adaptive to rapidly changing events as they develop prior to, and during, the initial onset of a hazardous event | Strengthens coordinated and collaborative early action by local stakeholders working to prevent or mitigate the forecast impacts of an event across multiple sectors of intervention |



Continued

| Approach: | (3a) Community-led early action | (3b) Local actor early action | (3c) Enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Extent of investment in prior planning and preparedness | Low or none: Rapid autonomous community-led planning process | Low to medium: Local analysis or forecasts or increased risk – conducted in advance or as the hazardous event is occurring | High: Contributes to enhanced contingency plans and development of EAPs |
| Mechanisms required to be pre-established | Community microgrants (or GCTs) management mechanism at the local level | One-time funding source or disaster risk financing facility or fund – held either locally, regionally or internationally | Disaster risk financing facility or fund – held either locally or regionally |
| Source of the methods and tools applied | <i>Survivor and community-led crisis response (Sclr) approach, and group cash transfers (GCTs) guidance</i> | <i>Forecast-based warning, analysis and response</i> | <i>Forecast-based action (fba), forecast-based financing (FbF), impact-based forecasting (IbF).</i> |

How to apply locally led anticipatory action

Phase 1: Engagement, assessing feasibility, and design

Assesses the feasibility of applying the locally led AA process and the three different locally led AA approaches. This includes the assessment of available financing options and determining the collaboration required between stakeholders, as well as defining agreed roles and responsibilities to collectively design and plan the overall process. This phase connects local level and national level planning processes.

Phase 2: Participatory assessment and enhanced community contingency planning

Representatives of community groups and local structures map the most vulnerable and at-risk groups, how these groups cope during crises, and assess unmet needs. Communities then assess EWS and identify prioritised early actions to be incorporated into community contingency plans. Local forecast-based action (FbA) planning information is identified and gathered from agencies and technical experts at different levels including details on relevant risk models, forecasting systems, and triggers and thresholds already in use. This phase involves both community centred activities and consultation with technical agencies.

Phase 3: Coordinated planning for anticipatory action and preparedness

Phase 3 applies three complementary approaches to locally led AA:

Phase 3a: Community-led early action

Community structures and groups autonomously plan and implement their own preparedness and early actions at the community level by applying for community microgrants (or GCTs). This phase focuses on community centred activities.

Phase 3b: Local actor early action

Local actors use alert notes and develop proposals for preparedness and early action using improved forecasting, early warning systems or predictive analysis methods.

Activities are proposed to both increase preparedness for early action, and for the early actions to be taken to reduce the impact of hazardous events at the individual, household and community levels. This phase focuses on actions by local actors.

Phase 3c: Enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP)

EPCP builds on, and strengthens, existing local contingency planning using forecast-based action (FbA) planning tools. Workshops are conducted at the local level (i.e. district level) involving local actors and technical experts. All participants contribute information and collectively develop collaborative plans, triggers, and advisories.

Plans are also developed for strengthening local mechanisms for disseminating early warning information, including on preparedness and early action to at-risk populations and community groups and structures using understandable, non-technical language.

EPCP connects local to national level planning through the engagement of community representatives (with attention to gender, sex, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and physical abilities) and local actors in contingency planning at provincial and higher levels.



Phase 4: Coordinated monitoring, evaluation, feedback, and advocacy

Monitoring of all early action activations is conducted by capturing information on the implemented financing mechanism (transfer of funds) and implementation of early actions. The effectiveness of triggers or any decision-making mechanisms are evaluated, and the impact of the implemented early actions are assessed. There is an exchange of learning between all actors involved in the process. Necessary advocacy is then conducted with decision-makers on any action required to create a more enabling environment to scale up successful early action.

This phase involves community representatives (with attention to gender, sex, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and physical abilities) and local stakeholders and connects local level learning with local and national level policy.

Phase 5: Collaborative development of EAPs

EAPs are developed by consolidating the planning details and experience gained from any activations using 'one-time' sources of early action (fuel) funding. The development of EAPs is conducted collaboratively through exchange and inputs between local actors and structures, technical agencies, and the fund holder of risk financing.

This phase connects local level mechanisms with the external actors required for these protocols to be activated.

Time taken to implement each phase and the three approaches

The time required to implement locally led AA can be influenced by the following factors:

- Scale of target area to be covered by the intervention
- Extent to which community and local contingency planning processes and community structures have already been established
- Existing anticipatory action protocols or frameworks already established by other agencies
- Accessibility to data from forecasting and early warning systems, and available vulnerability and capacity data
- Extent of willingness for collaboration by relevant stakeholders
- Anticipatory action platforms existing in the country and the region

- Need to translate resources presented within this guide into local language(s)

It is assumed that the facilitating actor (see definition below) has already used this guide to develop their understanding of anticipatory action and locally led AA concepts, approaches and tools, and how anticipatory action is financed. They will need to have secured at least a one-time source of funding, and conducted necessary capacity strengthening to be able to facilitate the process.



The indicative time required to strengthen local capacities, establish necessary mechanisms, and to draft or develop required plans (Phases 1-3) and be ready to activate early action, is between three and nine months. Early action activations, when triggered, are implemented over periods of days or weeks, depending upon the lead time for the hazardous event. Coordinated monitoring, evaluation, and feedback (Phase 4) is conducted in parallel with activations and continues for one to two months after early action interventions have been completed, with advocacy conducted for a minimum of one month (although advocacy can also be an ongoing process).

If the locally led AA mechanisms and early actions are determined to be successful, the process for collaborative EAP development (Phase 5) using the experience gained may take one to two months. However, if feedback and evaluation findings indicate there are still significant gaps in the mechanisms or capacity to implement the early action, necessary mechanisms for the locally led AA approaches will need to be strengthened.

Spotlight case

Local actor members of ACT Alliance Kenya Forum, Anglican Development Services (ADS) and National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) developed proposals for early action ahead of the Kenya national elections in 2022 for foreseen electoral violence.

This process was conducted in collaboration with IFRC and the Kenya Red Cross Society with a workshop designed to provide local actors with the awareness and capacity to develop their own early action proposals. An early action protocol (EAP) and mechanism for pre-arranged financing was established with Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe. Financing was released for preparedness actions ahead of the election, but early action was not activated, according to monitoring based on the defined violence outbreak scenarios. This entire process was conducted within three months.

Roles and responsibilities of different actors

Facilitating actors have the primary roles in initiating locally led AA processes, but the existing anticipatory action capacities of communities and technical agencies need to be fully acknowledged. As capacities, relationships and coordination mechanisms are strengthened, local structures and actors will be enabled to take on a more leading role directly in collaboration with mandated and technical agencies. Within this process any accompanying organisation, such as a non-direct implementing INGO, has a role to play in responding to the demand-led needs of the facilitating local actor. This can include aspects such as addressing gaps in technical agency support, facilitating knowledge management, enabling engagement in relevant advocacy platforms (up to the international level), or amending financing arrangements.

Facilitating actors (CSOs, local and national NGOs, CBOs):

- Facilitate inclusive 'whole of society' engagement and enable communities and local structures to lead or engage in locally led AA
- Encourage knowledge exchange and enable communities to identify and share their own experiences
- Gather and facilitate the participatory analysis of information and make this available for enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP), including facilitating input into the development of triggers and advisories
- Ensure the documentation of outputs developed in the process are documented and recorded in collaboration with actors including local government

- Encourage discussions between agencies communicating risk information and early warning and community representatives (with attention to gender, sex, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and physical abilities) to contribute towards building relationships and trust
- Facilitate learning communication and exchange and engagement in advocacy to establishment a more enabling environment for locally led AA

Local structures and actors (community leaders, committees, volunteers, and representatives of different community groups):

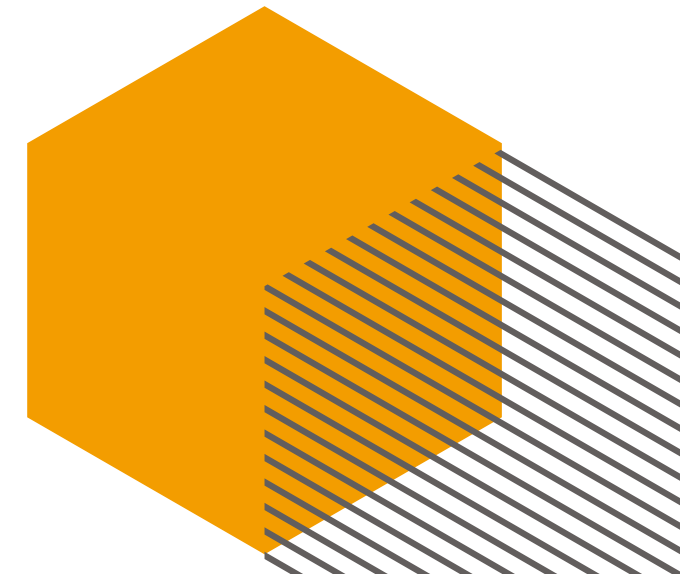
- Raise community awareness of locally led AA
- Mobilise community engagement and available local capacities
- Facilitate inputs on local knowledge and learning into locally led AA processes

- Identify and support community champions, especially women leaders, who can take on responsibility for ensuring the sustainability and development of locally led AA
- Contribute to strengthening local transparency and accountability mechanisms

Local and national government and technical agencies:

- Collaborate in facilitating locally led AA and EPCP workshops and recording information and outputs
- Engage in knowledge and learning exchange at the local level
- Follow up on relevant planning information gathered in the process

- Contribute to finalising collaborative contingency plans for early action, determining triggers, developing improved advisories and collaborative early action protocols
- Contribute to establishing or addressing identified gaps, to ensure local planning and coordination mechanisms for contingency planning and locally led AA are connected from the local to the national level



4 Phase 1: Engagement, assessing feasibility, and design



Purpose

Identify appropriate target areas and design an approach for locally led AA that is relevant for the hazardous event(s) which local communities face, including addressing gaps to enhance participatory contingency planning (EPCP). This requires building partnerships with key stakeholders and gaining an understanding of the local context and needs of the community related to prioritised hazards. Stakeholders are also informed, and awareness is raised on locally led AA, for them to be meaningfully engaged in the process.

Levels of planning and coordination, leadership, and participants involved

This phase connects local level planning processes with national level planning processes.

Participants involved include:

- Disaster management authority experts in contingency planning, early warning, early action or anticipatory action
- Early warning and forecasting systems experts (i.e. meteorology departments, risk analysis experts)
- Local authority representatives
- Cash programming stakeholders and experts (with a focus on community microgrants or group cash transfers)
- Civil society organisation and non-governmental organisations

- Community representatives (with attention to gender, sex, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and physical abilities) including community disaster risk management committees, first responders, and volunteers
- Donor agencies or fund holders

Main outputs

Collective agreement and plans for the process

Methods

Interviews, task group or technical working group meetings, workshops, and focus group discussions.

Steps

1. Assess feasibility, establish partnerships and commitment to the process
2. Plan and initiate inclusive 'whole of society' engagement
3. Co-design the process

Reference resources

For all steps:

- UNDRR (no date) *Anticipatory action*
- FAO (2020) *Applying an inclusive and equitable approach to anticipatory action*. See: Step 1: Disaster risk prioritisation, and Step 4: Planning for implementation
- Welthungerhilfe (2022) *FbA manual: Early action identification and EAP development - step-by-step guidance*. See: Planning of step 1 - Work plan activities: Inception meeting, stakeholder workshops, community awareness (EAP custodian meetings in case EAPs are developed in tandem or through local partner organisation)

- Start Network (2023) *Pre-Alert Guidance Notes*. This provides details on sources and types of forecasting information which can be used for the analysis of forecastable or predictable hazardous events, and details on early actions identified to be effective.

For step 1:

- For information on the status of anticipatory action frameworks in different countries see the *Global map for anticipatory action* by Anticipation Hub
- Red Cross Red Crescent (2023) '1. Commit to FbF and assess feasibility', *FbF Practitioners Manual*. This is particularly useful for Phase 3c: EPCP

For Step 2:

- Knowledge for Recovery Series: Info Kit #7 Disaster Risk Reduction: Gender Assessment
- Welthungerhilfe (2022) *FbA manual: Early action identification and EAP development - step-by-step guidance*. See: Planning of step 1 - Work plan activities: Inception meeting, stakeholder workshops, community awareness (EAP custodian meetings in case EAPs are developed in tandem or through local partner organisation)

For step 3:

- AO (2023) Guidance Note: Community engagement in Anticipatory Action.
- Anticipation Hub's Learning resources. Find training resources here, including training of trainers' tools kits, learning materials, presentations, podcasts, webinars, etc. These resources could be used to facilitate anticipatory action awareness sessions, trainings, events, etc.
- Welthungerhilfe (2022) A streamlined NGO approach to drought-induced food insecurity in Zimbabwe: voices from EAP custodians and stakeholders. The potential for community fatigue and a sense of over-research has led WHH to review which steps/activities can be combined, resulting in a merger of community awareness meetings with some consultative meetings.

Useful tips

1. Although the activities have been presented here as three steps, in practice some of the steps continue in parallel with each other.
2. From the outset of the process, facilitating actors must work with all stakeholders to establish a common understanding of new terms as outlined in the glossary. These terms need to be translated into the local language used by communities.
3. A gap and policy analysis, presented in step 1, aims to focus on identifying the most significant gaps, weaknesses and disabling factors in key systems (components) at the local and national level. Policy analysis needs to consider both whether policies (i.e. gender inclusion, etc.) are in place, and whether they are being put into practice. Collaborating with national civil society networks can be an effective way to communicate these findings to relevant national agencies.



4. It is important to engage with all stakeholders from the beginning of the process and to ensure that stakeholders with responsibility for these mechanisms are engaged in the co-design step. These stakeholders need to be fully oriented on the processes and tools that will be applied.
5. Languages and literacy issues can be a barrier to effective whole of society engagement. Ensure that all resources are translated into the local language at the beginning of the process using simple, understandable terms as much as possible.

Particularly for approach 3a: Community-led early action:

1. Can potentially be applied in most settings by CSOs, or other actors, focused on empowering communities
2. Provides a practical approach to empower community representatives (with attention to gender, sex, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or ability) to meaningfully engage in approach 3c: EPCP
3. Can be piloted with minimal funds, however make sure enough funding is available for pilots to produce sufficient impact, experience and learning. Consider keeping the target area focused so as not to spread available funding too thinly.

Particularly for approach 3b: Local actor early action:

1. Requires the availability of flexible funding (i.e. through an adapted emergency response fund, or using flexible project funding for a forecastable or predictable hazardous event)
2. Close coordination with any existing networks such as Start Network Hubs, UN agencies, Red Cross Red Crescent Societies and international NGOs working on anticipatory action is needed for technical experience sharing and to ensure coherence in the mechanisms and plans being developed during the process.

Particularly for approach 3c: EPCP, and the development of early action protocols:

- Requires the availability of pre-agreed disaster risk financing, which is made available over the longer term (i.e. several years)
- Close coordination with actors and coordination platforms working on anticipatory action frameworks, including national governments, IFRC and Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies, UN agencies, Start Network and INGOs working on anticipatory action is needed for technical experience sharing and to ensure coherence in the mechanisms and plans being developed in the process.
- Memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with responsible agencies are essential to strengthen the partnership and commitment necessary for the process to be successful, and to ensure the access to required forecasting and vulnerability data.



- When designing the process identify and utilise or adapt as necessary existing tools and established processes such as government approved contingency planning guidelines and formats, participatory scenario planning (PSP) processes, etc.
- A technical working group is very beneficial for the process and should be established based on a formal partnership agreement or MoU. This is needed to ensure effective collaboration, coordination and engagement throughout the process.

Step 1: Assess feasibility, establish partnerships and commitment to the process

Actions

- Analyse stakeholders: Identify anticipatory action stakeholders that provide forecasting and risk information services, including impact-based forecasts, triggers and advisories, and implement or support implementation of early action.
- Select representatives from potential stakeholders to participate in the interviews, meetings or workshops.
- Design and conduct gap and policy analysis at the national level to gather initial information on gaps, weaknesses, and barriers for:
 - Early warning and forecasting systems
 - Participatory contingency planning

- Funding mechanisms (including for microgrants) for anticipatory action
- Anticipatory action coordination mechanisms (platforms)

- Assess the hazardous events for which locally led AA can feasibly be applied and needs to be prioritised – giving particular consideration to the availability of any support required from technical agencies.
- Engage any technical agency representatives required to support the process.
- As relevant, establish memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with disaster management agencies, meteorological service providers, or other risk forecasting institutions.

Key questions

These are to assess the feasibility of applying different locally led AA approaches, including for which hazardous events and where.

- What is the status of national anticipatory action frameworks?
- Which actors are already working on anticipatory action, on which hazardous events, and where?
- Is there potential to collaborate with national disaster management agencies?
- Is there potential to collaborate with technical agencies including national hydrometeorological services, or other risk forecasting or analysis agencies?
- Can you access required at-risk population vulnerability data, impact data from historical hazardous events, and risk and forecasting data?
- What can different stakeholders contribute?

Tools

- Glossary of terminologies
- Tool 4: Gap and policy analysis – national level

Step 2: Plan and initiate inclusive whole-of-society engagement

Actions

- Establish a multi-stakeholder task group or a technical working group – a technical working group is needed specifically for Phase 3c
- Review findings from the gap and policy analysis at national level conducted in step 1, and plan actions based on these findings to address barriers to the meaningful participation of communities and local stakeholders in the locally led AA process
- Identify and plan how to address the capacity building needs of stakeholders to meaningfully engage in locally led AA processes

- Provide orientations to participants, including the use of games, to ensure inclusion of all groups (considering gender, age, and persons with disability) and ownership of the process by developing orientation resources.

Key questions

To ensure key stakeholder engagement in the process, and to establish coordination mechanisms with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

- Who will be involved in the task group or technical working group for both designing and overseeing implementation of the process?
- What barriers do any groups face in engaging with the process with specific consideration to gender, age and persons with disability, and what needs to be done to overcome these barriers?

- Are there barriers preventing women and other groups from participating in decision-making and leadership roles? How can these barriers be addressed?
- Which private sector representatives need to be engaged in the process?
- What can different stakeholders contribute?

Tools

- Task group terms of reference (ToR)
- Glossary of terminologies
- Climate Centre's innovation and tools

Task group terms of reference

Tasks:

- Collaborative design of the process, review of tools and resources
- Engagement of experts to provide knowledge and skills upgrading inputs
- Collaborative planning, and development of procedures, advocacy plans and actions

- Follow up to ensure the documentation and storage of hazard, risk and vulnerability data, and planning outputs so that it is accessible and maintained
- Learning capture and dissemination
- Communication of learning through relevant networks and platforms



Step 3: Co-design the process

Actions

- Select representatives from potential stakeholders to participate in the interviews / meetings / workshops.
- Provide orientations to participants to communicate and analyse findings from the gap and policy analysis at national level and ensure inclusion and ownership of the process by developing and conducting orientations on locally led AA. Analyse local context (target area profile): Priority hazardous event(s) identified, as well as the main human, livelihood and infrastructure vulnerabilities
- Select which of the locally led AA approaches are to be applied:
 - 3a: community-led early action
 - 3b: local actor early action
 - 3c: ECPC and the development of early action protocols
- Design the participatory vulnerability and capacity (PVCA) and/or FbA planning and community contingency planning activities and adapt, or develop, the tools to be applied
- Plan the timing and frequency of workshops, and their locations, taking into consideration existing local contingency planning processes
- Budget for conducting the meetings, workshops and developing the outputs
- Develop an agenda and agree on task distribution with stakeholders for workshops: preparing logistics, facilitating workshops, synthesising workshop results and workshop products, communicating workshop products, monitoring, and evaluating the process
- Prepare logistics: date, invitation letters, venue, and materials, among others

Key questions

To ensure wider stakeholder engagement in the process, and to clearly define roles and responsibilities.

- What groups, committees and other community structures exist in the community?
- Who will be involved in the workshops and in what way (facilitating actor, technical working group, local leaders, and representatives of community groups ensuring gender representation and representation of vulnerable groups)? - Who is responsible for recording information in the process and creating the plans, triggers, and advisories?
- Who needs to be involved in monitoring and evaluating the process?
- What logistical preparations are required for the workshops? Who will be responsible to do the preparations?
- What capacity do stakeholders need to accomplish their tasks?

- When/how often will workshops happen and where?
- What are the costs for implementing the process?

Tools

- PVCA and FbA plans - guidance and reports templates. Provided as an example which is adapted or re-designed in this step according to the selected hazardous event(s).
- Refer to the other tools to be applied within the process which may also need to be adapted or revised, in particular the tools and design of the enhanced participatory contingency planning process (EPRP, approach 3c.)

5 Phase 2: Participatory assessment and enhanced community contingency planning



Purpose

To facilitate a participatory process of determining and documenting PVCA and FbA planning information to be used by communities to develop or strengthen their contingency plans integrating early action. As relevant, FbA information is also gathered which is to be communicated and analysed in multi-stakeholder enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP) - Phase 3c.

Levels of planning and coordination, leadership, and participants involved

PVCA and community contingency planning focus on community centric activities whereby local stakeholders analyse the local context. This includes community representatives from the targeted area (with attention to gender, sex, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and

physical abilities) including disaster risk management committees/volunteers, specific at-risk groups, representatives of groups for persons with disabilities, women's organisations, youth groups, livelihoods groups, small enterprises, etc.

The gathering of FbA information involves community level stakeholders and can involve local and national level stakeholders, such as other civil society actors, representatives of disaster management authorities at different levels, forecasting and risk analysis experts, UN agencies (e.g. OCHA, FAO and WFP), IFRC and Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, Start Network Hubs, and INGOs.

Main outputs

PVCA reports, FbA reports, updated or newly developed community contingency plans integrating early actions.

Methods

Participatory assessment, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, workshops, task group or technical working group meetings.

Steps

1. Participatory vulnerability and capacity assessments (PVCA) and gathering forecast-based action (FbA) planning information
2. Community contingency planning – Integrating early action aligned with improved early warning

Reference resources

For step 1

- Start Network (2023) *Pre-Alert Guidance Notes*. Provides details on sources and types of forecasting information which can be used for the analysis of forecastable or predictable hazardous events, and details on early actions identified to be effective.
- Start Network (2019) *Disaster risk and forecast-based financing - a guide to using household economy analysis*.
- GNDR (2022) *Localising Climate Projections Guide & Toolkit*.

Useful tips

1. Utilise existing assessment and analysis reports and information already conducted by other agencies. These tools and reports can often be identified in coordination with national level anticipatory action working groups
 2. Develop simplified assessment and survey tools to facilitate the collection of necessary data according to the hazardous event for which early action is being planned
 3. Community contingency plans (developed in step 2) should be further strengthened by providing feedback to communities on the outputs developed from the EPCP (Phase 3c, step 1) if conducted
- Step 1: Participatory vulnerability and capacity assessments (PVCA), and gathering forecast-based action (FbA) planning information

Step 1: Participatory vulnerability and capacity assessments (PVCA), and gathering forecast-based action (FbA) planning information

Actions

- Conduct a gap and policy analysis at the local level to gather information on gaps, weaknesses and barriers for:
 1. Early warning and forecasting systems
 2. Participatory contingency planning
 3. Funding mechanisms (including for microgrants) for anticipatory action
 4. Anticipatory action coordination mechanisms (platforms)

- Provide support to those communities that require it to mobilise/organise and gather PVCA information, including the mapping of exposed areas or vulnerabilities (e.g. hazard exposure and vulnerability maps)
- Collect forecast-based action planning information with communities
- As relevant, gather FbA information from disaster management, meteorological or other agencies on technical forecasting systems and triggers

Spotlight case

Having conducted a gap and policy analysis at the local level, a local actor, CEDES in Mozambique, identified disparity in gender representation in terms of a lack of implementation of 50:50 gender representation. It was identified that almost all CLGRD committees (local disaster risk management committees), had less than two or three women representatives, resulting in underrepresentation in

decision-making, considering the specific emergency planning concerns of women and girls. Once verified, CEDES presented the results in coordination meetings at the district level with the participation of INGD (disaster management authority) from the provincial level. These meetings served to establish agreement to ensure the equitable engagement of women through the revitalisation of committees (CLGRD). Women took up positions including those of coordinator, vice-coordinator, radio monitor, evacuation (a position previously assigned only to men) and early warning. In the district level meetings of CLGRDs women became empowered to have a voice. The involvement of women in all aspects has helped to reduce the number of women remaining uninformed about early warning. Women have become part of all decision-making processes, including starting to manage community microgrant funds. Within a period of a few months five out of 12 committees had attained 50:50 gender representation.

Key questions

The questions below can help determine or validate the target communities to be engaged, the communities' profile, and local factors which can either enable or disable locally led AA processes.

- Which specific locations and communities are most frequently and most severely affected by the hazardous event(s)?
- What groups, committees and other community structures exist in the community?
- What early warning, forecasts and risk information is available in the target area?

- What is the status of community and local contingency planning and how inclusive are these processes?
- What local funds or resources are allocated or accessible for community preparedness and response?
- What local response coordination mechanisms are in place, and are they inclusive?

These further questions can ensure that key community vulnerability and hazard impact information is gathered:

- When and how does the hazardous event affect vulnerable groups, livelihoods, and community infrastructure?

- What are the key indicators / factors of vulnerability related to the hazardous event being focused on in this locally led AA process?
- Are there any factors which are leading to an increase in the vulnerability of any specific groups, livelihoods, or infrastructure?

Finally, these questions can ensure that forecasting, early warning, or risk analysis information is gathered:

- What relevant forecasting information is available at the local level, including from national agencies and international systems?
- What is the quality of the forecasts?
- Are forecasts at a sufficient geographical scale to be used for local decision-making?
- How often are forecasts or warnings released and updated?

Tools

- Gap and policy analysis – local level
- PVCA and FbA plans – guidance and report templates

Step 2: Community contingency planning – integrating early action aligned with improved early warning

Actions

- Facilitate strengthening or establishing communities' capacities to mobilise/organise for the development of community contingency plans
- Facilitate reflections on key findings from the PCVA
- Provide inputs from the forecast-based action planning information gathered to inform the development of community plans and to inform the improved use of forecasting services, early warning systems, and triggers



- Support the development of enhanced community contingency plans, and as relevant, the development of consolidated contingency plans covering several communities
- Ensure that enhanced contingency plans are made available to the wider community, and register them with local authorities

Key questions

These are to assess the suitability of existing local contingency plan formats:

- Do contingency plans cover and breakdown the stages of actions planned before, during and after a hazardous event?
- Do the stages of the actions planned align with available early warning or forecasting information services, which can, and should be, made available at the local level, especially for the ‘window of anticipation’ for early action?

Tools

Right is an example of adapted government contingency planning guidelines and formats.

Useful tip

Some hazardous events can occur either as rapid or slow onset, and many early actions can apply to both. Here, slow-onset does not include events evolving gradually from incremental changes (e.g. desertification or sea-level rise). Further examples can be found on the Anticipation Hub [early action database](#).

Table 1: Simplified table of rapid and slow onset hazardous events

| Rapid-onset | | Slow-onset | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Tropical cyclones | Intensive rainfall | Drought | Diseases |
| Flash floods | Cold or heat waves | Pests | Conflict |
| | | | Floods |
| Examples of early actions for rapid-onset hazardous events | | Examples of early actions for slow-onset hazardous events | |
| Early warning messaging | Asset protection | Selling/destocking animals | Water conservation |
| Clearing drainage systems | Early harvesting of crops | Planting short cycle seed crops | Rehabilitation boreholes |
| Evacuation and services at shelters | Food and non-food items | Cooling or heating facilities | Health-protection equipment |
| First responder equipment | Psychosocial support | Proactive relocation options | |
| Hygiene kits | Reinforcing housing or shelter kits | | |
| Water purification equipment | | | |

Table 2: An example of adapted government contingency planning guidelines

| Rapid reaction matrix | | Cyclone Flood | | Area/Location covered (year) | |
|---|------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| No. | Objectives | Activities | Methods/Tools/Materials | Coordination | Responsible |
| At the latest, from the opening of the high-risk hazard season for ... (Date) | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| As soon as a cyclone or depression is announced, subject to meteorology vigilance | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |

Anticipatory action preparedness

| Rapid reaction matrix | | Cyclone Flood | | Area/Location covered (year) | |
|---|------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| No. | Objectives | Activities | Methods/Tools/Materials | Coordination | Responsible |
| Green alert notice: Warning notice 5 to 2 days before | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| Yellow alert notice: Threat notice 48 to 24 hours before | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| Red alert notice: Danger notice 12 hours before impact | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| Blue alert notice: watch notice | | | | | |
| First 24 to 48 hours | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| Weeks | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| Weeks and months during the implementation of responses – aimed at resilience and disaster risk reduction (DRR) | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |

Window of anticipation for early action

Example template: (SAF/FJKM) Enhanced contingency plan - rapid reaction matrix template. A rapid reaction matrix is used to define a contingency plan for all periods of the DRM cycle. The period for conducting anticipatory action preparedness, and the window of anticipation for early action are indicated.

6 Phase 3a: Community-led early action



Purpose

The community-led early action approach empowers local structures and community groups to plan and implement their own early actions using microgrants and through the provision of resources or rapid skills upgrading. This approach to locally led AA is inspired by the local to global protection *survivor and community-led crisis response (Sclr)* approach.

Useful tips

Community-led early action can be applied on its own to support community groups and local structures (i.e. community committees) to take autonomous action ahead of a forecast or predicted hazardous event, or a new spike in a crisis. Enhanced community contingency planning – as outlined in Phase 2 – can strengthen communities' planning for early action, particularly for rapid-onset events, but is not a mandatory pre-requirement.

The provision of microgrants for community-led early action can be integrated within the development of proposals for local actor early action (approach 3b), to use that mechanism to also release financing to community groups. The engagement of community groups and local structures in EPCP (Phase 3b) strengthens coordinated planning for anticipatory action and preparedness through the exchange of knowledge and strengthening of local mechanisms.

Levels of planning and coordination, leadership, and participants involved

This phase connects community-led action with locally led planning:

- Community committees and groups identified in Phase 2 directly engaged in planning and implementing early actions
- Local volunteers facilitate the process and are involved in locally relevant accountability and feedback mechanisms for microgrants

- Local stakeholders contributing resources, including skills upgrading and technical support
- Local leadership involved in microgrant proposal review panels

Main outputs

Local financing mechanism: strengthened capacity, transparency and accountability to manage funds to implement locally led early actions.



Methods

Different local coordination channels can be used, depending on the context of the specific area: meetings of local government (e.g. local contingency planning platforms), community volunteer groups or committees, community livelihood groups meeting, meetings of associations, community meetings.

| Approach | Types of hazardous events for which the approach is best applied | Extent of investment in prior planning and preparedness | Mechanisms required to be pre-established | Financing mechanisms |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Community-led early action | All types, although rapid disbursement of microgrants for rapid-onset events can be more challenging, and attention given to conflict sensitivity (do no harm) | Low or none: Rapid autonomous community-led planning process | Community microgrants (or GCTs) management mechanism at the local level | Up to approximately 5,000 euros per microgrant (or GCT), rapidly approved by a panel of local actors |

Steps

1. Establish microgrant management mechanisms
2. Locally led action planning, resource mobilisation and financing
3. Microgrant funded projects for preparedness and early action – when activated

Reference resources

- Local to Global Protection *introductory resources* for the survivor and community-led crisis response (Sclr) approach
- CALP Network (2021) *Group Cash Transfers Guidance and Tools*.
- Practical Action (2010) *Practitioners handbook for establishing community based early warning systems*.

Further resources

- Anticipation Hub (2021) *Accountability to at-risk communities in Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) systems*.
- Start Network (2021) *Gender Inclusive Disaster Risk Financing*.

Useful tips

Communities which are unfamiliar with the use of microgrants (or group cash transfers) may have difficulty applying these for early action for rapid-onset hazards providing only a few days of lead-time. Therefore, it is necessary to first establish the microgrants mechanism and pilot the mechanism by providing microgrants for preparedness actions.

A simplified set of tools for managing microgrants (as applied in Sclr), and additional tools actors may find useful (as outlined in GCTs Guidance) are provided. It is recommended to apply the simplified set of tools initially, especially for smaller grants and with less established community groups. The additional GCTs tools can be applied if they are determined to be necessary.

Local communities and CSOs should be empowered to shape finance for early action as a locally led process. Therefore, the budgets necessary for effective locally led AA and early action interventions first need to be determined by communities, and then appropriate financing secured. This will require advocacy for the establishment of appropriate, flexible, pre-agreed or pre-positioned financing.

Step 1: Establish microgrant management mechanisms

Actions

Establish microgrants coordination, transparency, accountability, and feedback mechanisms in coordination with responsible stakeholders (i.e. microgrants project proposal review panel, and oversight and feedback committee). The actions conducted for managing the microgrants (group cash transfers) include:

- Spreading information about microgrants support (MG#1) and criteria for applicant groups (MG#2). Clarifying best systems of transparency and accountability for microgrants
- Collecting details on groups applying for microgrants (MG#3)
- Review (MG#5 and #6) of microgrant project proposals (MG#4)

- Issue project contracts (MG#7); training groups on procurement and book-keeping (MG#8)
- Award microgrants and ensure that project details are publicly communicated (MG#9)
- Transfer of microgrants to groups (MG#10). Provide skills upgrading (training) on-demand, coordinate with stakeholders, and monitor (MG#11) of microgrant funded projects (transparency, accountability, inclusion, conflicts, etc.)
- Collecting project and expenditure reports and receipts (MG#12)
- Participation in evaluating completed microgrant funded projects (MG#13)
- Exploring options for improved coordination and local resource mobilisation for community-led preparedness and early action

Key questions

To determine what capacities and mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure timely and relevant microgrant actions can be implemented:

- What is the level of capacity of community structures, groups or committees? Will they be the recipients of microgrants support, and will this be as a cash grant (group cash transfer), or in the form of skills upgrading or the provision of equipment or materials to conduct their activities? (This question is to determine the types of capacity strengthening support these structures require)
- Are microgrant funds planned to be in place for timely actions to be conducted considering high-risk periods?
- Are flexible multi-year financing arrangements in place with the donor to enable flexibility in the timing of provision of microgrants based on multi-hazard forecasting and early warning systems?

Tools

Tool Microgrants management tools to establish the mechanism

Simplified version (applied in Sclr):

- MG#1: Flyer for announcing microgrants – examples
- MG#2: Detailed criteria for groups applying for microgrants
- MG#3: Applicant details form
- MG#4: Microgrants project proposal form
- MG#5: Checklist for reviewing microgrant applications
- MG#6: Review panel decisions record form
- MG#7: Contract template
- MG#8: Procurement and book-keeping guidelines
- MG#12: Project report and expenditure report forms

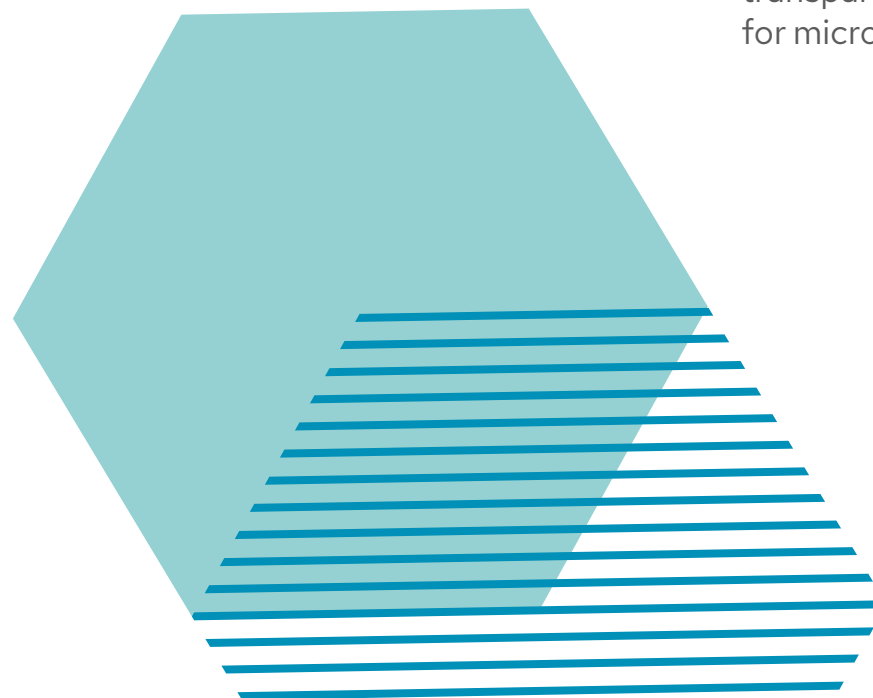
Additional tools actors may find useful (as outlined in GCTs Guidance):

- MG#9: Microgrants transparency and accountability checklist
- MG#10: Microgrant transfer options assessment form
- MG#11: Peer monitoring form
- MG#13: Post-distribution monitoring form

Step 2: Locally led action planning**Actions**

- Orientation session (and training) to engage volunteers - to support the use of information and plans from Phase 2 for community action planning and microgrants process; and to agree how the information will be communicated, collected and shared
- Spreading information about microgrants support; clarifying the best systems of transparency and accountability for microgrants

- Community meetings for sharing information on microgrants, enhanced contingency planning (planned early actions), and forest-based action (FbA) planning information (scenario planning information, information on impacts, forecasting and trigger details as relevant); Communities discuss proposed options for microgrants projects (refer to point six below). Details on groups or committees which would be applying for microgrants are gathered (MG#3)
- Groups develop and submit microgrants project proposals (MG#4) for review; based on feedback from review panels, groups revise their proposals and budgets
- Microgrants are awarded, contracts signed (MG#7), groups are trained on procurement and book-keeping (MG#8), and project details are communicated publicly



Spotlight case

“Through my involvement as a village representative in locally led anticipatory action, I saw our village civil protection committee (VCPC) improve our planning skills whereby we annually update our village action plans, and because of capacity strengthening on the use of microgrants, we can generate our own ideas to reach out to the most vulnerable people within our society before a disaster strikes. The main lesson that we have learnt as a committee working together with CARD, a local CSO, is that we need to be ready to implement early actions in the three to four days before the impact of cyclones. Our committee likes the microgrant approach because we as community members are aware of the potential impacts of the various disasters that we face, and with these funds we know how to be proactive rather than only reactive to disasters.”

Pastor Anderson Bizek, VCPC member in Group Village Headman Mbeta in Nsanje District, Malawi

Key questions

To assess inclusiveness; reviewed with and by community volunteers (as outlined further in Tool 7: Action planning and learning guide):

- Are particular parts of the community who are at high risk being left out? (e.g. more exposed and vulnerable areas, women, children, elderly, people with disabilities, ethnic groups, and different sexual orientations) And if so, what more needs to be done to include them?
- What are the potential attitude barriers, social stigmas or tensions that prevent some people from participating in group or community-level activities?
- How should psycho-social issues be considered in the planning of community-led actions?

Key questions

To assess whether mechanisms for communicating scenario planning and forecasts/advisories are functioning and information is being used:

- What risk and early warning communication channels are being used as planned? What has not been used? Why?
- Who has previously communicated forecast information, risk communication and advisories? Who has not? Why?
- What other target groups and communication channels were reached?



- Is there any feedback from end-users (communities or individuals, and sector actors) when receiving and using the provided forecasting, early warning, and advisories that communicators observed?
- Are there any tensions, conflict or cases of increased insecurity being inadvertently provoked by any possible interventions? If so, what can be done to address these and avoid them from occurring in the future?

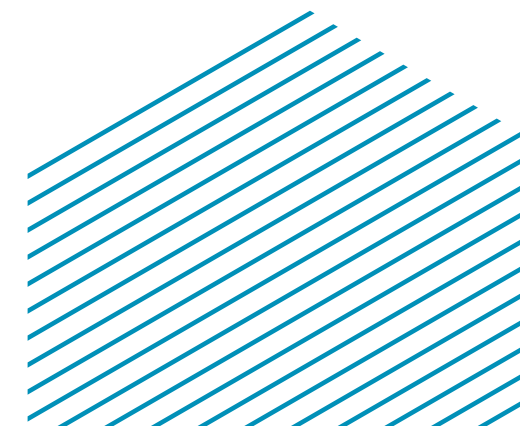
To assess the mechanism of transparency, accountability, and avoiding harm; reviewed with and by community volunteers (as outlined further in Tool 7: Action planning and learning guide):

- What are the best means of making sure that providing microgrants do not cause problems by provoking confusion, misinformation, jealousies, gossip, local tensions or even conflicts?
 - What are the best means to ensure local accountability and ensure that all the grants are used properly according to approved proposals?
- Tools**
- Tool 7: Action planning and learning guide - to facilitate the planning process with community groups, including assessing conflict sensitivity (do no harm), inclusion and locally relevant mechanisms for transparency and accountability
 - Tool 8: Microgrants management tools – tools applied in this step:
 - MG#4 Microgrants projects proposal form
 - MG#7 Contract template
 - MG#8 Procurement and book-keeping guidelines

Step 3: Microgrant funded projects for preparedness and early action when activated

Actions

- Receipt of microgrants by groups and mobilisation of community and resources (funds) provided by other actors. Implementation of actions as relevant to the situation (preparedness actions, or, when the anticipatory action mechanism is activated, the early action), skills upgrading (training), coordination with stakeholders, and monitoring of microgrant funded projects (transparency, accountability, inclusion, conflicts, etc.)
 - Groups/committees participate in relevant coordination mechanisms to explore options for improved coordination and local resource mobilisation for community-led preparedness, early action, or response
- Submission of project and expenditure reports and receipts (MG#12)
 - Evaluating completed microgrant funded projects and sharing lessons (within the community, between communities, and with other stakeholders)
 - Exploring options for improved coordination and local resource mobilisation for community-led preparedness, early action, or response



Spotlight case

The *Local Leadership for Global Impact* (LLGI) project activated the early warning mechanism for cyclones and floods six times during 2022 and 2023, disbursing 5-10,000 euros up to five days before impact. Triggered community microgrant funded early actions included the provision of volunteer first responder equipment and refresher training two days before impact (SAF/FJKM), and the protection of 75 vulnerable houses by a community using plastic sheets purchased one day before impact (CARD). Prepositioned food items and utensils arranged through community microgrants for anticipatory action preparedness were also provided by local civil protection committees immediately after impact, as opposed to being provided weeks afterwards in cases of previous similar events. One early action that was identified applied a predictive analysis of new risk ahead of the high-risk cyclone season: a community microgrant was used to redirect a drainage channel that had been created during road maintenance works and had caused an increased risk of flooding to the community.

Key questions

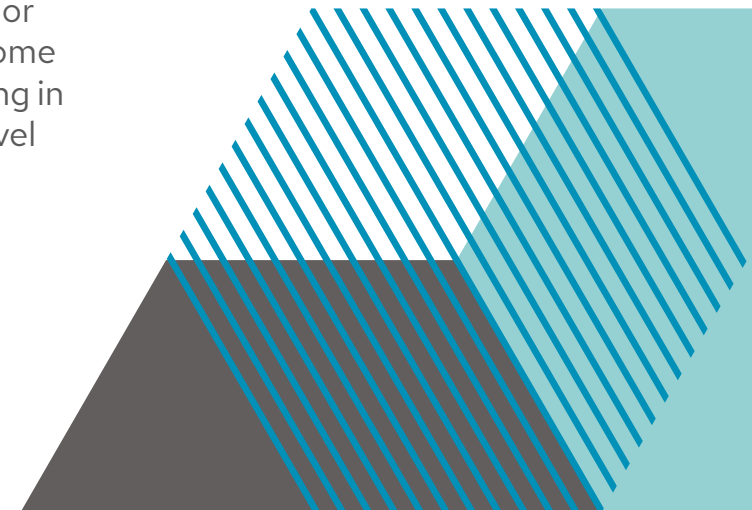
To facilitate avoiding harm, and ensure inclusiveness in the use of microgrants:

- Are there any tensions, conflict or cases of increased insecurity being inadvertently provoked by any possible interventions? If so, what can be done to address these and avoid them from occurring in the future?
- Are particular parts of the community who are at high risk being left out? (e.g. more exposed and vulnerable areas, women, children, elderly, persons with disability, ethnic groups, different sexual orientations). And if so, what more needs to be done to include them?
- What are the potential attitude barriers, social stigmas, or tensions that prevent some people from participating in group or community-level activities?

- Are there any items that cannot be obtained from markets at reasonable prices and in the quantities needed?

Tools

- Tool 7: Action planning and learning guide – to facilitate the learning process with community groups
- Tool 8: Microgrants management tools – tools applied in this step:
 - MG#9: Microgrants transparency and accountability checklist
 - MG#11: Peer monitoring form
 - MG#12: Project report and expenditure report forms



7 Phase 3b: Local actor early action



Purpose

The local actor early action approach enables local actors to develop their own proposals for early action using available forecasts or rapid risk analysis. This approach to locally led AA is informed by the Start Network FOREWARN initiative.

Useful tips

Local actor early action can be applied on its own for CSOs to plan and take action ahead of a forecast or predicted hazardous event or a new spike in a crisis. Enhanced community contingency planning, as outlined in Phase 2, can provide valuable information to strengthen local actors' planning for early action, particularly for rapid-onset events, but is not a mandatory pre-requirement.

The provision of microgrants for community-led early action (Phase 3a) can be integrated within the development of proposals for local actor early action to use this mechanism to also release financing for community groups.

Conducting EPCP (Phase 3c) in combination with the local actor early action approach strengthens coordinated planning for anticipatory action and preparedness through the exchange of knowledge and strengthening of local mechanisms.

Levels of planning and coordination, leadership, and participants involved

This phase connects locally led action to national level planning:

- Civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Early warning and forecasting systems experts (i.e. meteorology departments, risk analysis experts, to inform decision making for activation)
- Required donor agencies/ fund holders for activation of financing mechanisms (if required dependent on the type of financing in place)

Main outputs

Early action mechanism including the procedures and tools used to decide when to activate the mechanism, and the financing arrangements to be put in place.

| Approach | Types of hazardous events for which the approach is best applied | Extent of investment in prior planning and preparedness | Mechanisms required to be pre-established | Financing mechanisms |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Local actor early action | Predictable events with a higher degree of uncertainty, particularly for the onset of complex crises, events caused by compounding risks, and <i>under-the-radar, small to medium-scale crises</i> | Low to medium: local analysis or forecasts or increased risk conducted in advance or as the hazardous event is occurring | One-time funding source or disaster risk financing facility or fund held either locally, regionally or internationally | Consensus based decision-making between the local actor and experts/funding decision-makers with reference to any pre-agreed trigger(s) or local risk factors |

Steps

1. Establish the early action mechanism
2. Development and approval of alert notes and proposals for early action when activated

Reference resources

For all steps:

- Start Network *pre-alert guidance notes* – these provide details on sources and types of forecasting information which can be used for the analysis of forecastable or predictable hazardous events, and details on early actions identified to be effective
- Start Network *Learning & Change resources* – these provide a range of resources informing the development of early action mechanisms

- Start Network's *Building Blocks*, currently only available to Start Network members but may be made available to non-members in the future; members wishing to access can email startready@startnetwork.org to request the password

Useful tips

- For rapid onset hazardous events alert notes need to be drafted in advance, including details on the forecasting, early warning systems and any triggers and thresholds which will be used
- For rapid onset hazardous events proposals for early action need to be drafted in advance
- The provision of microgrants for community-led early action (Phase 3a) have been included, therefore using this early action mechanism to provide financing directly to communities

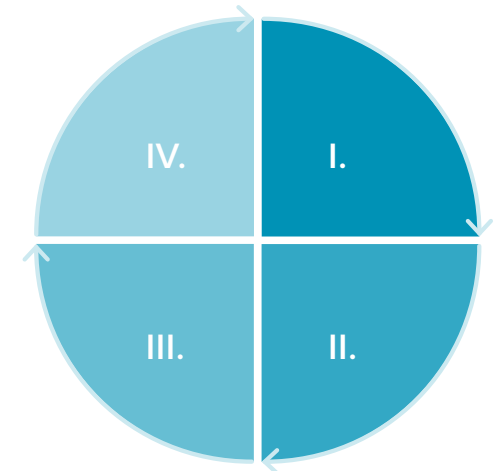
Step 1: Establish the early action mechanism

Actions

- Collaboratively develop the overall process and standard operating procedures for the early action mechanism, standard operating procedure (SOP)
- Adapt or develop the tools: Proposal for early action, EA Tool 2: Early action alert note, EA Tool 3: Approval questions for early action alerts, EA Tool 4 Proposal template for early action
- Define financing arrangements and pre-position financing as necessary
- Orient all staff and relevant stakeholders on the procedures and mechanisms put in place

Early action mechanism steps

The full mechanism for activating EAPs, or for raising alert notes and proposals for early action is outlined in the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe *Standard Operating Procedure: Early Action Small Emergency Fund*.



- I. Early Action Protocol (optional)
- II. Early Action Alert Notice
- III. Proposal for Early Action & Approval/Financing Process
- IV. Early Action Review

Spotlight case

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe has a small emergency response fund which provides up to 10,000 euros for local actors to rapidly conduct needs assessments and small-scale emergency response interventions. Within the *Local Leadership for Global Impact* project, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe consulted with local actors to define a pre-agreed and pre-positioned financing mechanism for early action for cyclones and flooding events. This early action financing mechanism was activated six times in 2022 and 2023 with a total allocation of 40,000 euros.

Key questions

To ensure coordination is effective and that early action can be implemented timely:

- Has a focal point been assigned to monitor forecasting systems for the triggers to ensure that timely forecasts and advisories are raised to enable early actions to be implemented in the lead time before hazard impact?
- Is financing available which can be (rapidly) released to ensure the available lead time is maximised (within hours or a day for rapid-onset events, or week(s) for slow-onset events), so that early actions can be implemented timely?

Tools

- Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe Standard Operating Procedure: Early Action Small Emergency Fund
- EA Tool 1: Early action protocol³⁸
- EA Tool 2: Early action alert note³⁹
- EA Tool 3: Approval qs for early action alerts⁴⁰
- EA Tool 4: Proposal template for early action

Step 2: Development and approval of alert notes and proposals for early action when activated

Actions

- Develop and submit alert notes
- Develop draft proposals for early action

- Engage in coordinated monitoring of the forecasts, early warnings, or risk factors with relevant service providers, at-risk communities, and other actors
- Coordinate with decision-makers using alert notes to come to a consensus when trigger thresholds, indicators or risk analysis show that the mechanism needs to be activated
- Rapidly adjusted proposal for early action, as required, and submitted for approval by the funding agency/fund holder considering the available lead time.

Key questions

For assessment and approval of alert notes and proposals for early action (questions are from EA Tool 3: Approval questions for early action alerts:⁴¹

- Does the alert meet one or more of the crisis profiles for which the early action fund has been designed?

³⁸ Template adapted from IFRC (2020) *Mozambique: Floods - Early Action Protocol summary*

³⁹ Start Network (2020) *Start Fund Anticipatory Alert Note*

⁴⁰ Based on Start Network approval questions

⁴¹ Based on Start Network approval questions

- Forecasts of impending crises
- Spikes in chronic humanitarian crises
- A cyclical hazard which presents an unusually high risk to communities due to contextual factors (i.e. forecast of an abnormal or extreme level of the hazard, heightened vulnerability due to the impact of prior crises, or a change in the nature of the risk, etc.)
- Timing of alert (the duration from the beginning of the crisis to the alert being raised): What impact does the timing of the alert have on the ability to act ahead of the impact of a hazard, or peak impact of a crisis, and make a positive impact? Is there enough lead time until the predicted peak of a hazard to implement crisis anticipation activities?
- Reliability of the forecast or risk analysis: What is the source of the information (e.g. primary data collection by alerting agencies)? Are we close enough to the peak of the hazard to have a robust forecast? Is there any rating of the skill of the forecast that should be considered?
- What coverage rate might be achieved with the fund allocation? (Can a relatively small injection of funds have an impact on the foreseen crisis at community level?)
- What is the level of preparedness for this hazard at community level? What community structures are likely, or have potential, to engage in crisis anticipation activities?

Tools

- Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, *Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Early Action Small Emergency Fund*
- EA Tool 2: Early action alert note
- EA Tool 3: Approval questions for early action alerts
- EA Tool 4: Proposal template for early action
- Tool 7: Action planning and learning guide (use to facilitate the planning process with community groups, including assessing conflict sensitivity, inclusion, and locally relevant mechanisms for transparency and accountability)

Example activity matrix from a proposal for early action

Within this matrix, the provision of community microgrants to community committees and groups (both for preparedness actions and early action) have been included, therefore using the early action mechanism to provide financing to communities.



EA Tool 4: Proposal template for early action

This example is for cyclones and floods with a lead time of up to five days, which is why the timeframe period prior to impact (the lead time) is indicated for one week.

Timeframe (period prior to and after trigger activation):

- (-1) indicates the period prior to trigger activation
- (0) indicates the lead time period (between trigger activation and hazard impact)
- 1 to 5 indicates the weeks following hazard impact

| Activities Initiated based on an alert note and the approval of an updated proposal for early action | | Timeframe (weeks) Time frame prior to and after trigger activation | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| A | Preparedness for anticipatory action (readiness and pre-positioning) | | | | | | | |
| A1 | Activation of communication channels (early warning systems), and mobilisation of volunteers and community disaster management committees to carry out preparedness activities | x | x | | | | | |
| A2 | Re-sensitisation of district level key stakeholders on EAP (disaster committee, cluster committee) | x | | | | | | |
| A3 | Mobilisation of volunteers or community structures | x | x | | | | | |
| A4 | Provision of emergency equipment (to evacuation centres, trained volunteers, community structures) | x | x | | | | | |
| A5 | Development and communication of community early warning alert messages and advisories through communication channels or by grassroots volunteers/community structures | x | x | | | | | |
| A6 | Procurement and pre-positioning of stocks (e.g. food relief packages; WASH kits (including chlorine for drinking water); and shelter items) | x | x | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A7 | Validating beneficiary register details (i.e. with community structures) ⁴² | x | x | | | | | |
| B | Community microgrants (for both preparedness actions and early action) | x | x | x | | | | |
| B1 | Community microgrants – disbursal | x | x | x | | | | |
| B2 | Community microgrants – monitoring and reporting | | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| C | Early action (activated by the trigger) which may continue with early response actions | | | | | | | |
| C1 | Support evacuation processes | | x | x | | | | |
| C2 | Preposition/distribution of food relief packages | | x | x | x | | | |
| C3 | Preposition/ distribution of WASH items (kits, chlorine tablets) | | x | x | x | | | |
| C4 | Preposition/distribution of shelter items | | | x | x | | | |
| C5 | Preposition/distribution of dignity kits | | x | x | x | | | |
| C6 | Psychosocial support by volunteers | | x | x | x | | | |
| C7 | Provision of essential medical supplies to health centres | | x | x | x | x | | |
| D | Monitoring and learning | | | | | | | |
| D1 | Monitoring team deployment (including for the microgrants mechanism or post-distribution monitoring (PDM) as relevant) | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| D2 | Capture stories and evidence on the impact of the early action | | | | | | x | x |
| D3 | Early action review (EA Tool 5) information gathering, including from stakeholders | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |

⁴²Anticipatory action aims to determine beneficiaries based on impact-based forecasting (i.e. beneficiaries identified at highest risk before a disaster occurs). However, if actions are conducted as early response and not early actions, then a rapid needs assessment for distribution activities will need to be conducted.

8 Phase 3c: Enhanced participatory contingency planning



Purpose

The enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP) approach integrates the use of forecast-based action (FbA) planning in multi-stakeholder contingency planning connected from the local to national level. This approach is informed by IFRC's *forecast-based financing (FbF) approach* and the approaches applied by UN agencies including OCHA, FAO and WFP to develop AA protocols and frameworks

Useful tips

Engagement, assessing feasibility and design as outlined in Phase 1, and participatory assessment and enhanced community contingency planning as outlined in Phase 2, are necessary to establish the collaboration and capacities necessary to ensure the meaningful engagement of all actors.

Although the activities have been presented here as two steps, in practice these should take place in parallel to ensure contingency planning at the local level is informed by and complementary to higher levels.

Conducting the EPCP approach in combination with both the local actor early action (Phase 3b) and community-led early action (Phase 3a) strengthens coordinated planning for anticipatory action and preparedness through more informed knowledge exchange between communities, local actors and representatives of mandated and technical agencies.

Levels of planning and coordination, leadership, and participants involved

This phase connects community-led and locally led planning to national level planning:

- Key stakeholders engaged in Phase 1 who will contribute to facilitating EPCP workshops include disaster management authority experts, local authority representatives, forecasting and risk analysis experts
- Community representatives engaged in Phase 2 (with attention to gender, sex, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and physical abilities) including community disaster risk management committees, first responders, volunteers
- Community-based organisations
- Community groups involved in community-led early action (Phase 3a)
- Local actors involved in local actor early action (Phase 3b)
- Other civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations and representatives of the private sector
- Cash programming stakeholders and experts (with a focus on community microgrants/group cash transfers)

Main outputs

- Consolidated local level (i.e. district level) forecast-based action plans
- Improved early warning systems, including triggers and actionable advisories
- Local coordination mechanisms are strengthened and communication plans are developed outlining the information to be communicated to communities

Methods

For the planning process this includes multi-stakeholder workshops and meetings between members of the task group or technical working group established for this process.

Steps

1. Enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP) applying forecast-based action planning (FbA)
2. Strengthen coordination between local and higher-level contingency planning

| Approach | Types of hazardous events for which the approach is best applied | Extent of investment in prior planning and preparedness | Mechanisms required to be pre-established | Financing mechanisms |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP) | Rapid-onset and forecastable hazardous events with a regular frequency of occurrence (within 5-10 years) | High: contributes to enhanced contingency plans and development of EAPs | Disaster risk financing facility or fund held either locally or regionally | Financing typically released on pre-agreed trigger(s) Can also include consensus decision-making based on local risk factors |



Reference resources

For step 1:

- '4.2 Select Early Actions' in Red Cross Red Crescent (2023) *FbF Practitioners Manual*.
- Centre for Humanitarian Leadership (2023) *Scenario Building in Complex Contexts*.
- Welthungerhilfe (2022) *FbA manual: Early action identification and EAP development - step-by-step guidance*. See step 2: Identification, prioritisation and validation of early action
- FAO (2020) *Applying an inclusive and equitable approach to anticipatory action*. See step 2: Inclusive early warning systems, and step 3: Identification and design of anticipatory (early) actions
- Prepare Center (no date) *Common Alerting Protocol Implementation*.

For step 2:

- Anticipation Hub (2022) *How can we mainstream anticipatory action in disaster risk-management systems?*
- '4.4 Simulate' in Red Cross Red Crescent (2023) *FbF Practitioners Manual*.

Further resources:

- Start Network (no date) *Accessing and Interpreting Weather and Climate Forecasts for Anticipatory Humanitarian Action*.
- Anticipation Hub (2020) *The future of forecasts: Impact-based forecasting for early action*.
- Start Network (2021) *Information is Power: Connecting Local Responders to the Risk Information That They Need*.

Useful tips

- Time the process in alignment with any scheduled annual government (local authority) contingency planning processes, typically preceding high risk seasons
- It is important to be specific about the prioritised hazardous event for which FbA planning is being conducted. For example, the type of flooding, or which point or factor relating to drought (i.e. dry spells)
- It may not always be relevant to make different scenario action plans (e.g. plan A, B, C) for different severity levels. What must be determined is the scenario details which define when the severity level of a hazard results in impacts on the community and requires external assistance, so that this information can also be used by all actors to determine early actions and plans which are coherent with the plans and actions of communities
- Facilitators and the task group or technical working group must follow up on the communication plan made during the EPCP workshops (session five). Coherence in communicating advisories can be strengthened through the utilisation of social media platforms, such as WhatsApp, to establish two-way communication for forecasting information, early warnings and disaster impacts
- When determining the trigger mechanism, regional and global forecasting systems and risk models, and community-based EWS need to be considered in addition to only relying on existing disaster management warning mechanisms
- Participation needs to be ensured in work group meetings on planning anticipatory action at community, local (district) and national level.

Step 1: Enhanced participatory contingency planning (EPCP) applying forecast-based action planning (FbA)

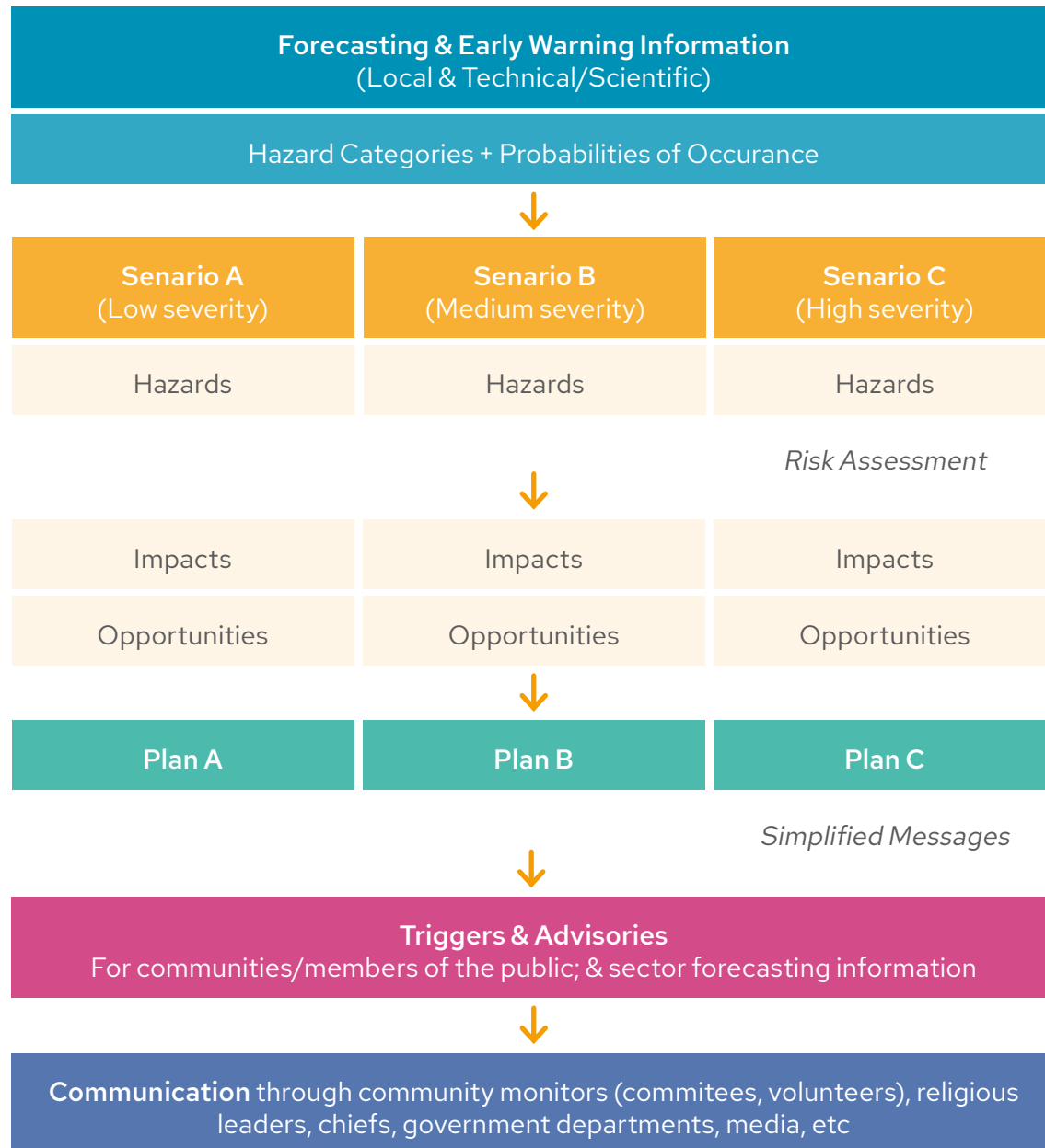


Figure 4: Forecast-based action planning using scenarios

Actions

The workshops are divided into five sessions:

Session 1: Review and reflect on forecasts, early warning and early action

To review and reflect on occurrences of the focus hazardous event and the forecasting and early warning information made available; develop understanding on forecasting systems; and assess how accessible and useful the forecasts and early warnings were for different community groups and local actors.

Session 2: Develop localised impact scenarios and identify forecast information

To consolidate communities' local knowledge and experts' technical knowledge to co-create impact scenarios and determine the most important forecasting information and indicators to be used to make decisions on when to implement early action.

Session 3: Develop localised impact scenarios and identify preparedness and early actions

To plan the actions to be taken ahead of the impact of a hazardous event based on the available forecasts to avoid loss and to mitigate risks.

Session 4: Set triggers and develop advisories

To develop locally relevant triggers based on locally identified impact scenarios which provide sufficient time for communities and local actors to implement preparedness actions and early action, and to develop advisories for the impacts and risks communities prioritise for the defined scenarios.

Session 5: Develop a communication plan for advisories

To develop a multi-actor plan for timely and targeted dissemination of advisories.

Spotlight case

Within the *Local Leadership for Global Impact project*, local actor SAF/FJKM have worked on defining a trigger for riverine flooding resulting from cyclones for targeted communities in Madagascar. This included gathering flood early warning information from a flood management agency, APIPA. However, challenges were faced in this process as flood risk models were not available for the smaller river basin catchment target area, and there were difficulties in accessing historical data for flood forecasting from the Meteorology Department. It was then decided to utilise a combination of forecasting and local information gathered during the PVCA as the basis for defining a consensus based decision-making trigger to be used for activation of early action. This included improved use of rainfall forecasts provided by the WFP *Advanced Disaster Analysis and Mapping* combined with community-based early warning on river levels and specific heights, or points on embankments, which communities understood as presenting an increased level of risk for flooding events.

Tools

- Anticipation Hub [Trigger database](#). This database of triggers serves as a platform for practitioners to see what triggers are being formulated and to facilitate further exchange about the trigger development process.
- OCHA Centre for Humdata [Catalogue of predictive models in the humanitarian sector](#). Provides an overview of predictive models available and their state of development

Session 1: Review and reflect on forecasts, early warning, and early action

Purpose

To review and reflect on occurrences of the focus hazardous event and the forecasting and early warning information made available; develop understanding on forecasting systems, and assess how accessible and useful the forecasts and early warnings were for different community groups and local actors.

Activities

Discussion on the communities' and other stakeholders' experiences of:

- Early warning and forecasting information provided, advisories on risks and proposed actions, and the communication channels used to communicate this information
- Share information and experiences of the hazardous event and any early actions taken by communities and local actors
- Reflect on how communities' actions were influenced by the risk information, advice and support they received

Key questions and considerations

- Evaluate community-based early warning systems, available technical forecasts and early warning information, and any two-way communication
- Compare previous forecasts or predicted hazardous events with the actual local experience
- How do communities get updates on forecasts and associated risks; from which sources; and are they accurate?
- What do different community groups use hazard forecasts and early warnings for (what are the current decisions and actions taken)?

Useful tips

- Early action experiences from Phase 3a and 3b can provide valuable input for this session.
- Separate group discussions can be an effective workshop method to conduct inclusive reviews with gender, age, disability, and ethnic group perspectives.
- The very first workshop will focus on a review of early warning systems, forecast information, risk communication channels, and early actions taken, and local coordination mechanisms in place prior to conducting EPCP.

Future workshops will reflect on:

- How well have communities responded and coped when compared with previous hazardous events? Why? Any problems and solutions?
- Are there any improvements to be made regarding the planned preparedness or early actions, or the advisories including their timeliness and communication?

Session 2: Develop localised impact scenarios and identify forecast information

Purpose

To consolidate communities' local knowledge and experts' technical knowledge to co-create impact scenarios and determine the most important forecasting information and indicators to be used to make decisions on when to implement early action.

Activities

- Familiarise participants with the glossary of terminologies and clarify understanding on the limitations of forecasts
- Community representatives present information to technical experts on the vulnerabilities and hazard exposure in areas historically affected from the PVCA report findings obtained in Phase 2

- Stakeholders present, develop understanding, and interpret forecasting information by sharing findings from the FbA report obtained in Phase 2
- Communities and technical experts discuss to co-generate local scenarios for different levels of severity, and information on the most important forecasts and indicators for the different severity level scenarios

Key questions

- Are there any technical terms which could be simplified?
- What forecast or early warning information can be provided by communities? What are the key risk indicators observed by communities?

- What forecasts can be made available from technical forecasting agencies (i.e. meteorological department, disaster management authority, etc.) and how do communities perceive them?
- What is the most important forecasting information communities need for the scenarios being discussed?
- How reliable are forecasts and what are their limitations?
- How do communities and local actors interpret forecasts?

Useful tips

This session does more than simply give communities access to forecasting information. It builds communities' trust in forecasts by improving their understanding of the data's origins, how it is collected, and its accuracy and reliability.

The exchange between communities and technical experts can also strengthen two-way communication and feedback mechanisms between users of forecasting information services and producers of the data.

Session 3: Develop localised impact scenarios and identify preparedness and early actions

Purpose

To plan the actions to be taken ahead of the impact of a hazardous event based on the available forecasts to avoid loss and to mitigate risks.

Activities

- Participants develop impact scenarios for different severity levels
- Communities and local actors from representative groups and discuss possible actions and important decisions to avoid loss and mitigate risks
- Information gathering is used to identify early actions which can be implemented by communities and local actors

Key questions

- What scenarios can be generated based on the available forecast information?
- What are the hazards, risks, impacts to livelihoods, vulnerable groups and infrastructure?
- Are there any opportunities to strengthen disaster resilience in each scenario?

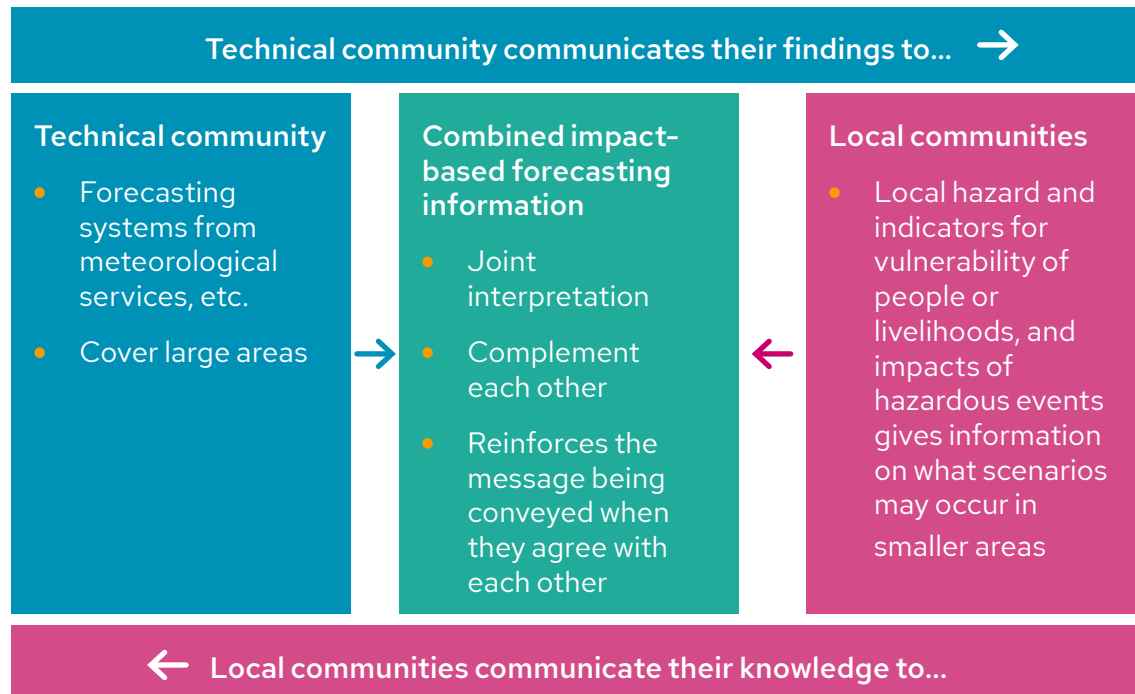


Figure 3: Combined localised forecasting analysis ⁴³

⁴³ Adapted from CGIAR (2018) *Guide to Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP)*

- What are the possible actions for the different scenarios? Specifically considering preparedness and early actions, which can be implemented based on available forecast information?
- For early actions, what no/low regret strategies can be prioritised for avoiding loss and to mitigate risks?

Useful tips

This session encourages an understanding of how uncertainty can be managed, and to inform decisions and mitigate risk. Learning collectively means communities gain understanding from other communities' and local actors' experiences of using forecasts and early warning to manage risks. Make sure that the actions are specific and relevant to the local context.

Session 4: Set triggers and develop advisories

Purpose

To develop locally relevant triggers based on locally identified impact scenarios which provide sufficient time for communities and local actors to implement preparedness and early actions; and to develop advisories for the impacts and risks communities prioritise for the defined scenarios.

Set triggers: activities

Use the scenarios and impact assessments of past disaster events, and analysis of exposure and vulnerability data to determine the triggers to be used with guidance from technical experts.

Develop a timeline diagram indicating the lead times for the trigger points. Preparedness actions and early actions are then set out at different stages along this timeline up to the point of the hazard impact or the peak of the crisis.

Set triggers: key questions

- Are triggers based on a high degree of certainty/probability that humanitarian impacts are forecast to occur?
- Do the triggers provide long enough lead time for the planned preparedness, and early actions to be implemented by communities and local actors?

Set triggers: useful tips

There are three different types of triggers: probabilistic, predictive and observational. Communities can provide particularly valuable information especially for observational triggers. Technical agencies and actors can provide advice on probabilistic and predictive triggers. Refer also to the Anticipation Hub [Trigger Database](#) for information on triggers which have been developed for a range of hazardous events.

A timeline of trigger points can be set: this can include setting an earlier trigger point to be used to initiate preparedness actions to ensure that early actions are carried out timely when that trigger is activated.

As this is a developing area of work, triggers - including the forecasts and models used and the thresholds set - are often being improved and revised based on learning from activations.

Develop community/individual advisories: activities

Participants present group results and create advisories based on the information generated.

Participants consider the forecast impacts of different scenarios and identify preparedness and early actions to develop actionable advice.



Develop community/individual advisories: key questions

What is the best or most appropriate combination of actions to be taken by communities / individuals in response to the given impacts for the defined scenarios? This includes advice for preparedness and early action considering: specific exposed areas and vulnerabilities, gender, age, disability, specific livelihood groups, ethnic minorities.

Develop community/individual advisories: useful tips

Co-create options for communities / individuals rather than giving 'instructions', and develop advisories based on the impacts and risks communities prioritise for the defined scenarios.

This session creates a space for knowledge exchange, so the facilitators should enable opportunities for communities and local actors to identify and share their own experiences of what works, as well as presenting challenges that need to be resolved.

Develop sector specific advisories: activities

Develop technical summaries of forecast events and impacts with information for specific sectors.

Develop sector specific advisories: key questions

Based on the impacts communities are unable to manage themselves, what are the prioritised impacts that different sectors require information for, considering the needs of different vulnerable groups?

Sector specific users: What technical forecast and impact information is required for specific sectors for the different forecast events?

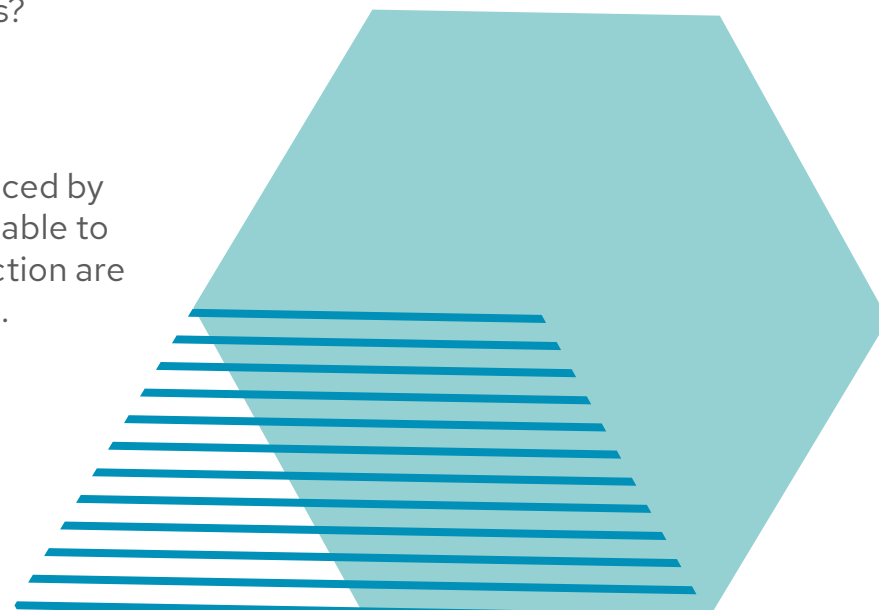
Develop sector specific advisories: useful tips

Challenges and issues faced by specific sectors in being able to take appropriate early action are taken up in the next step.

Guidance: Advisories need to be developed taking into consideration the trigger threshold and the scenarios developed for the different severity level. The advisories are developed including an explanation of:

| | |
|---|---|
| What is going to happen? | Summary of the hazard impacts, avoiding technical terms |
| When will it happen? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When will impacts begin? • When will impacts stop occurring? • Timing and location |
| How bad will it be and where? | Clear, jargon-free explanation of risk, focussed on impacts |
| What actions can be taken by communities/ individuals to reduce impacts? | Advice and guidance on what actions can be taken to prepare for early actions, and to respond (i.e. cope and recover); present these activities in sequence as a clear timeline |

Table: Template for Community/Individual Advisories ⁴⁴



⁴⁴ Anticipation Hub (2020) *The future of forecasts: Impact-based forecasting for early action*

Session 5: Develop a communication plan for advisories

Purpose

To develop a multi-actor plan for timely and targeted dissemination of advisories.

Activities

Identify the preferred language and style to communicate the advisories: paper format, SMS, voice or pictures.

Determine the who, what, when, and how for the communication of advisories.

Determine the other information from the EPCP process which needs to be communicated to the wider community, and plan how, and by who, it needs to be communicated.

Key questions

- Who will be in the audience?
- Who will communicate?
- What to communicate? (Including the severity levels that will be used to define which advisories will be communicated: forecast information, advice on actions to be taken, self-care awareness, and information on available services)
- How to communicate?
- When to communicate? (Including the lead-times for issuing advisories based on available forecasts)
- Where to communicate? (Through community structures, through local coordination mechanisms and with specific sectors)

Useful tips

This step ensures that advisories are communicated rather than simply disseminated. The EPCP should treat communication as a two-way process, allowing community representatives to not just listen to information but feel confident in questioning it.

It is important to understand the users' behaviour in receiving and sharing information, as well as the communication mechanisms and the speed of communication required, to identify the most appropriate communication channels. This will vary significantly from one location to another (e.g. posters, community group meetings, village meetings, loudspeaker, WhatsApp, Facebook, village boards, local coordination mechanisms, etc.).

Step 2: Strengthen coordination between local and higher-level contingency planning

Actions

- Provide information from Tool 4: Gap and policy analysis
- Facilitate community representatives and local actors' engagement in contingency planning at provincial and higher levels
- Meetings with disaster management agencies and meteorology departments to share and discuss findings and plans
- Coordinate with other actors working on anticipatory action
- Participate in or conduct simulation exercises to test and improve the mechanisms put in place

Key questions

To strengthen coordination between local and higher-level contingency planning:

- What planning or related initiatives are being conducted by other actors and how can these be improved with local forecast-based action and enhanced contingency planning information?
- What local capacities and knowledge is overlooked in higher level planning?
- Which mechanisms (i.e. early warning, coordination, resource mobilisation) between the local and higher level need to be tested or strengthened?

- What added value can be brought by linking local and higher-level planning?
- What resources are available at higher levels and how do resources available for preparedness need to be allocated to enable locally led AA?

Tools

- Tool 4: Gap and policy analysis



9 Phase 4: Coordinated monitoring, evaluation, feedback and advocacy



Purpose

To enable continued improvement of the locally led AA and EPCP process and the sharing of learning.

To inform technical working group members about who is using which information in which ways and what new information needs to be disseminated.

To gather information on target group and stakeholder engagement, including gender roles and inclusion of vulnerable groups.

To monitor the results, impacts, and outcomes of the locally led AA and EPCP process on the disaster resilience of communities.

To advocate for changes in practices and influence policies to establish mechanisms and systems which enable successful approaches to be mainstreamed and scaled up.

Levels of planning and coordination, leadership, and participants involved

Involves community representatives and local stakeholders, and connects local level learning with local and national level policy:

- At-risk populations involved in activations of early action, and at-risk populations who were not engaged in early action when hazardous events occurred
- Community representatives (with attention to gender, sex, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity and physical abilities) including community disaster risk management committees, first responders, volunteers, and community-based organisations
- Community groups involved in community-led early action (Phase 3a)

- Local actors involved in local actor early action (Phase 3a)
- Key stakeholders including disaster management authority experts, local authority representatives from different levels, and forecasting and risk analysis systems experts
- Other civil society organisations and non-government organisations and representatives of the private sector, etc.
- Cash programming stakeholders and experts (with a focus on community microgrants/group cash transfers)

Main outputs

Learning documents and advocacy plans

Methods

Focus group discussions, learning capture and exchange workshop, stakeholder interviews, facilitating agencies field observation (i.e. case studies/impact stories, activity reports submitted by groups and committees receiving microgrants, community response monitoring reports), early action reviews (EARs), future EPCP workshops (Phase 3c: Session 1); and if conducted, feedback workshops with local government, advocacy action planning and tracking of policy influence.

Steps

1. Capturing and communicating learning
2. Advocacy from the local to the national and international level



Reference resources

- Welthungerhilfe (2021) *MDG Trigger Evaluation*.
- FAO (2021) *Applying an inclusive and equitable approach to anticipatory action*. See Step 4: Evaluation of impact and learning
- Various *working groups* listed on the Anticipation Hub website
- GNDR (2016) *National Advocacy Toolkit*
- *Welthungerhilfe, Forecast-based Action in an NGO Setting – Theory of change for Early Action*.

Useful tips

Learning and successes from the application of the locally designed processes - including the tools applied - need to be communicated to the national level agencies and actors to inform the improvement of planning, monitoring and evaluation systems for locally led AA.

Knowledge sharing platforms and social media need to be utilised to communicate stories of success/impact.

Communication of lessons learnt through national roundtable events enable an exchange which can contribute to developing partnerships, strengthening coordination and exploring options to overcome barriers and identify potential ways forward.

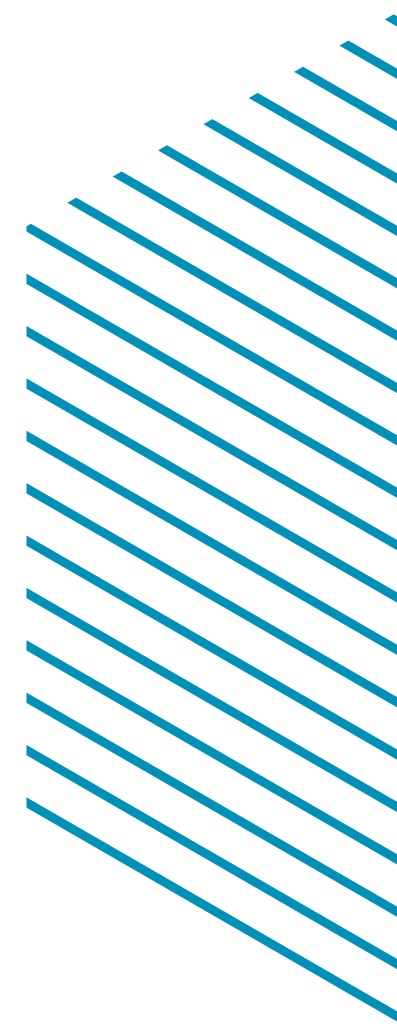
Building on local knowledge and expertise, regional and international anticipatory action events should be identified, and applications submitted for side events to communicate learning. Resources also need to be identified to overcome barriers faced by local actors to engage, such as language issues.

If developed, EAPs and any triggers or activation decision-making needs to be improved, based on the learning gathered each time an EAP is activated, and whenever an EAP should have been activated but was not.

Step 1: Capturing and communicating learning

Actions

- Evaluate community led early action funded with microgrants
- Conduct early action reviews for activated/inactivated proposals for early action or EAPs
- Conduct focus group discussions, key informant interviews or a learning exchange workshop with wider audiences
- Conduct outcome harvesting and identify most significant change
- Capturing learning using the case studies/impact stories template
- Lessons learned report compiling learning, best practices and case studies
- Post documents and resources on web learning platforms (e.g. [Anticipation Hub](#)) and social media sites
- Conduct webinars or presentations to communicate learning (e.g. [Dialogue Platforms on Anticipatory Action](#))
- Monitoring, evaluation and getting feedback from users can also be collected in the next EPCP workshops (Phase 3a: Session 1) with the relevant stakeholders



Spotlight case

Resources and learning from the LLGI project were made available to other actors through the use of Google Drive and were communicated across networks including through the use of the [GNDR Community Platform](#). Collaborative task group meetings held between actors working on locally led AA in Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique were conducted with the invitation of experts and made open to the participation of members from across GNDR and other global networks. Abundant Grace Female Foundation in Ghana participated in these task group meetings and following their involvement they replicated one of the task group sessions and invited press agencies to attend. These press agencies then released articles under the title of [Civil Society Organisations Must Embark on Early Action Planning](#).

Key questions

To determine the effectiveness of the process and outputs:

- Are contingency planning recommendations, any advisories, and EAPs actionable?
- Availability: Are early warnings and advisories publicly communicated in more diverse formats (maps, posters, SMS)?
- Accessibility: Are vulnerable groups and communities able to access more relevant forecast and risk information, resources, and support (for preparedness/mitigation/adaptation, readiness, early action, and relief) through community structures and local agencies?
- Timeliness: Do communities receive timely forecasts and early warning information which enables them to make decisions and take timely action, including early action?

- Understandability: Are advisories appropriate and understandable for women, men, youth, persons with disability and ethnic minorities? Do communities engage in improving the advisories, contingency planning, EAPs and triggers so they better meet their needs?
- Usefulness/impact: Does the information provided, and actions taken, contribute to reducing losses or improving coordination and resource mobilisation (or is it perceived that they will)? Are they appropriate for community and vulnerable groups' needs? Has communities' and other actors' behaviour changed?

For outcome harvesting and identification of most significant change:

- Who did what differently?
- How significant is this change?
- What contribution was made by the programme to this change?

Tools

- EA Tool 5: Early action review
- [Saferworld, Learning Paper – Doing things differently: Rethinking monitoring and evaluation to understand change. Page 5 Outcome Harvesting step by step](#)
- Lessons learned report⁴⁵
- Case studies/impact stories template⁴⁶

Early action review⁴⁷

Monitoring the activation

Funding mechanism:

- Were all the financial resources released as planned?
- Were all funds accessible for immediate action implementation?
- Were any irregularities encountered in managing the small emergency/microgrant/EAP funds?

Implementation of early actions and other activities:

- Time implemented (in relation to trigger/alert)
- Any constraints to implementation? (e.g. logistics, access, conflict sensitivity, etc.)
- Feedback or reactions from beneficiaries/affected communities

Assess impact

- What would have happened if the community hadn't received assistance through microgrants for early actions/response actions?
- Were impacts which occurred for similar crisis events avoided because of the microgrant preparedness/early action/response projects?
- As a result of microgrant projects, did your community avoid or reduce any crisis impacts as compared with other communities?

Evaluation of the trigger

- Did we learn something new about the elements that form the basis of the trigger? (Is one of the elements different from what it was when triggers were initially defined? Has anything changed about the datasets we use that requires a review of triggers?)
- Do we know more about the accuracy of the forecast models used? (How accurate was the forecast compared to the actual event? Are the forecast models used still the best available?)
- Were the probabilities and impact levels of the original trigger appropriate?

⁴⁵ Based on: Lessons Learned Document and Process. The Salvation Army Sweden and Latvia Territory - International Development Department - Project Support Manual.

⁴⁶ From Local Leadership for Global Impact - MEAL Framework Toolkit

⁴⁷ Extract from Start Network Early Action Review

Step 2: Advocacy from the local level to national and international levels

Actions

- Developing an advocacy action plan
- Developing alliances to embed successful approaches into practice, and influencing other actors to adopt and mainstream successful approaches into mechanisms and systems
- Conducting analysis of relevant policies
- Documenting critical gaps which are disabling locally led AA, in the form of a 'call to action' paper
- Roundtable events to identify policy recommendations
- Publication of policy briefs to present prioritised gaps and key recommendations
- Tracking policy influence

Spotlight case

Within the LLGI project, a 'call to action' paper was developed on *Scaling up locally-led anticipatory action – so that no one is left behind*. This paper was used for both international and national events, including for a hybrid international roundtable event, and a national roundtable event, conducted by SAF/FJKM in Madagascar. In both of these events, representatives from communities shared their experiences of locally led AA and engaged in multi-stakeholder discussions. This event contributed to strengthened collaboration between local and international organisations, the national disaster management authority (BNGRC), UN agencies (including OCHA, and UNDP), and the Start Network FOREWARN Hub in Madagascar. Following this event Humanity and Inclusion took the lead in establishing a multi-stakeholder forum to improve coordinated planning on the development of early action protocols (EAPs).



Key questions

To develop an advocacy action plan, and to determine if actions are effective:

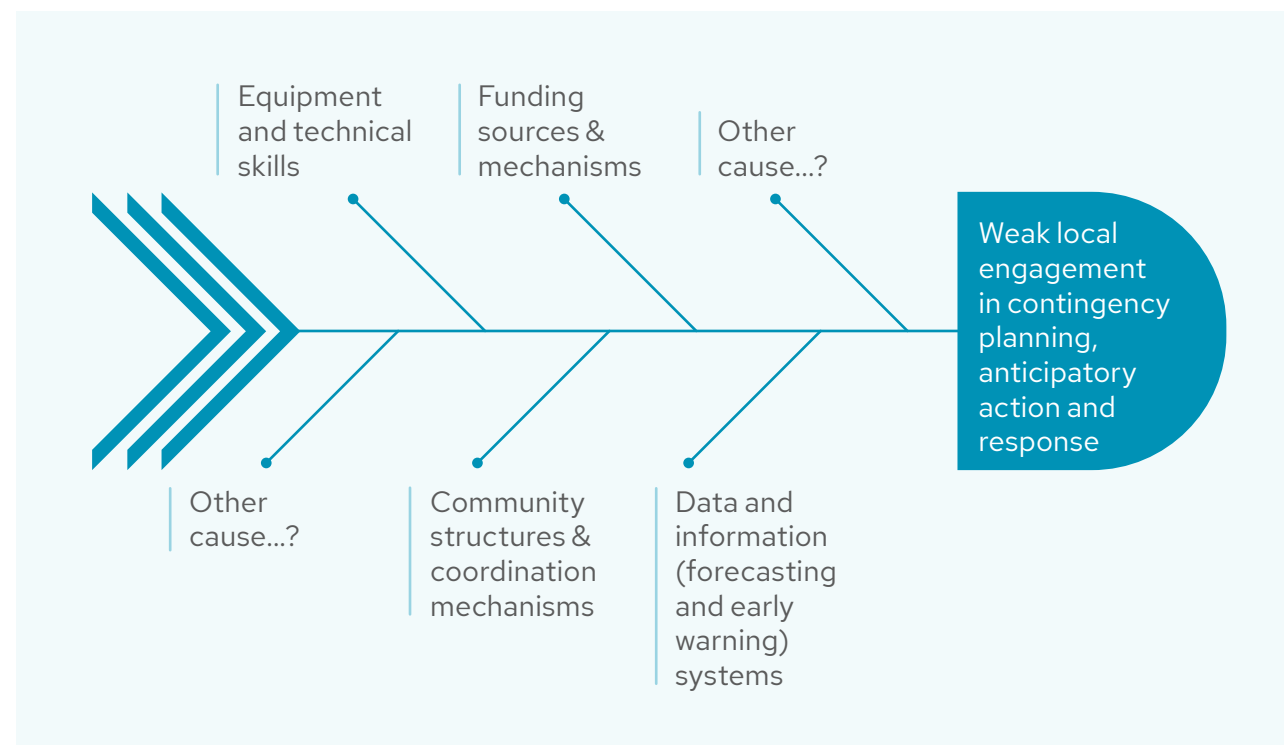
- What is the overall change you want to see?
- What are the short, medium, and long-term advocacy goals?
- What are the key messages you want to communicate (i.e. what do you want to change?) To whom do you need to communicate this message, and when and how?
- What works well? Which of your advocacy actions are effective?
- What obstacles do you encounter?
- What would you do differently next time?

Tools

- GNDR (2023) *Scaling up locally-led anticipatory action – so that no one is left behind.*
- Roundtable guidance
- Locally led AA theory of change (see right)
- Fishbone analysis (see right)



Above: Locally led AA theory of change



Above: Fishbone analysis helps to categorise causes and identify core issues that, if addressed, would solve the main problem. Try to end up with no more than six broad categories.

10 Phase 5: Collaborative development of early action protocols



Purpose

For relevant recurring hazardous events, to enable the collaborative development of early action protocols at the local level connected with higher level protocols or frameworks, and the establishment of pre-agreed financing mechanisms.

Levels of planning and coordination, leadership, and participants involved

Connects local actors planning to national level planning and donors/funds holders:

- Disaster management authority experts, local authority representatives, forecasting and risk analysis systems experts
- Community groups involved in community-led early action (Phase 3a)
- Local actors involved in local actor early action (Phase 3b)
- Required donor agencies/fund holders for establishing pre-agreed risk financing arrangements

Main outputs

Collaborative local level early action protocol (EAP), including disaster risk financing mechanism for pre-agreed financing connected to higher level EAPs (or in the case of UN agencies anticipatory action protocols).

Methods

For the planning process this includes meetings and workshops, including meetings between actors implementing locally led AA and fund holders/donor agencies.

Steps

1. Collaborative development of early action protocols and financing mechanisms

Reference resources

- Welthungerhilfe (2022) *FbA manual: Early action identification and EAP development - step-by-step guidance*. See Step 3: EAP development, validation and operationalisation
- Start Network's *Building Blocks: Our guide to building out disaster risk financing systems and accessing start ready*.

Useful tips

- EAPs need to be developed ahead of any high-risk season to ensure timely establishment of funding mechanisms, prepositioning of resources and activation approval
- Pre-agreed financing and - when necessary pre-positioned financing - must be in place to ensure that early actions can be implemented without delay
- Effective local coordination mechanisms are essential for EAPs to be activated and implemented in a timely way
- Advisories (developed in Phase 3: Step 1) and the mechanisms and early actions defined in EAPs need to be coherent with each other so that communities know what actions will be taken, when and by which actors



Step 1: Collaborative development of early action protocols and financing mechanisms

Actions

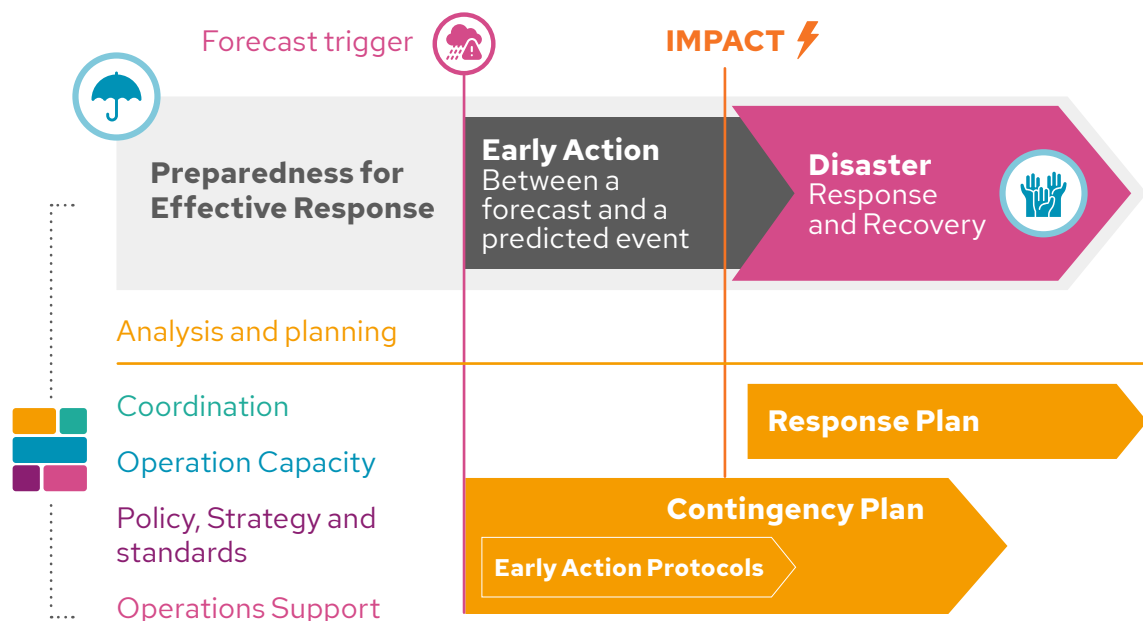
1. Consolidation of plans, mechanism, and learning as developed and gathered during the previous phases and steps, including:

- Outputs from Phase 1: Planning details including partnership agreements and methods for 'whole of society' engagement
- Outputs from Phase 2: Enhanced community contingency plans
- Outputs from Phase 3: Plans developed for one-time sources of early action (fuel) funding from Phase 3a and 3b; consolidated FbA plans, advisories and communication plans developed as part of Phase 3c EPCP

- Outputs from Phase 4: Learning captured from activations using one-time sources of early action (fuel) funding from Phase 3a and 3b Local, from the review of EPCP planning, focused on the effectiveness of advisories
2. Engage in the collaborative development of early action protocols (EAPs)
 3. Establish pre-agreed financing arrangements

Spotlight case

READY Pakistan is a locally led leadership hub which in 2022 had a membership of 120 organisations and has established a strong and well-established disaster risk financing (DRF) programme. To mitigate Pakistan's hazards, like floods, heatwaves and droughts, READY Pakistan's DRF programme models risk, develops plans and pre-positions funds that respond to high-confidence predictions of those hazards. Hub members can then respond quickly and proactively to needs before, and during, the early stages of crises. In 2021, the hub's DRF system was triggered five times: four times for heatwaves and once for drought. This hub and DRF programme has gained recognition from - and collaborated with - national authorities, as well as multilateral and international organisations. The hub invested in strengthening engagement, outreach and collective action with national authorities.



Above: Adapted from 'Set up a FbF Programme' in IFRC (2023) *FbF Practitioners Manual*.

Key questions

To ensure coordination is effective and that EAPs can be implemented timely:

- Are relevant local coordination platforms in place with representation from all relevant stakeholder groups?
- Who has participated in local coordination platforms? Which stakeholders have not? Why?
- Has a focal point been assigned to monitor forecasting systems for the EAPs or triggers to ensure that timely forecasts and advisories are raised to enable early actions to be implemented in the lead time before hazard impact?
- Is pre-agreed financing in place which can be released to ensure the lead time needed (within hours or a day for rapid onset, or week(s) for slow onset events) is maintained, so that early actions can be implemented timely?

| Step 1. EAP Development | Step 2. EAP Validation | Step 3. Forecast Monitoring |
|---|--|--|
| An Early-Action Protocol (EAP) defines the roles and responsibilities of each participating organisation and describes the mutually agreed upon impact levels at which early actions are triggered. | The proposed EAP is reviewed and approved by all involved parties including meteorological agencies, local and national government, and humanitarian partners. | Forecasts are monitored and if the identified impact levels are met or exceeded, funding is automatically released, and early actions are implemented. |

Above: Early action protocol (EAP) development

Tools

- EA Tool 1: Early action protocol⁴⁸

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>i.</p> <p>Description of the EAP development process, including key actors involved</p> | <p>ii.</p> <p>Risk analysis, including hazard and prioritized risks</p> | <p>iii.</p> <p>Trigger development process</p> |
| <p>iv.</p> <p>Justification for the selected early actions</p> | <p>v.</p> <p>Potential beneficiaries and selection process</p> | <p>vi.</p> <p>Budget for EAP activation, readiness activities</p> |
| <p>vii.</p> <p>Capacity to implement early actions</p> | <p>viii.</p> <p>Process for EAP activation</p> | <p>ix.</p> <p>Description of the monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning of the EAP</p> |
| <p>x.</p> <p>EAP endorsement process</p> | | |

Example financing mechanism for early action protocol activation

Mechanism established by Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe for an early action protocol for rapid onset cyclones and floods:

1. The approval of an early action protocol (EAP) forms the basis for signing cooperation agreements with local partner NGOs for the transfer of financing. A maximum figure for the financing available to local partners is fixed for the high-risk season for the hazard(s) covered by the EAP. The maximum financing available to partners for one high risk season is [insert amount] per partner.

2. An early action package is developed by local partners based on this EAP, including proposals for early action and budget (EA Tool 4) and draft alert notes (EA Tool 2). Each partner can allocate up to 25% of the available funds for preparedness (readiness and pre-positioning actions). The budget is split into two instalments:

a. The first instalment being for preparedness (readiness and pre-positioning) and community microgrants which are utilised immediately by partners on the approval of an alert note.

b. The second instalment being for the early actions (also including community microgrants) which are utilised when the trigger indicator threshold has been reached. A stop mechanism is applied in the event that there is a significant reduction in the forecast severity of the hazard impact for the selected target area.

⁴⁸ Template adapted from IFRC (2020) *Mozambique: Floods - Early Action Protocol summary*

Above: EAP contents

3. Cooperation agreements are established directly with local partners and, upon receipt of a funds request, the first [insert amount] are transferred and pre-positioned with the local partner.

4. When a partner raises an alert note it is reviewed (EA Tool 3) along with any necessary revisions to the partners' proposal and budget for early action (EA Tool 4). Upon approval, and upon receipt of a second funds request, up to a further [insert amount] funds are transferred to the partner.

5. Any funds that remain unused can either:

- a. Remain with the partner for implementation of this EAP in the proceeding high-risk season
- b. Be repurposed for preparedness activities
- c. Be returned

6. Dependent upon the availability of funds within the early action fund, an updated early action package from local partners, and incorporating learning from early action reviews (EA Tool 5), partners can submit another funds request (ahead of the next high-risk season) to return their EAP budget balance to a maximum of [insert amount].



Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)

Registered charity no. 1141471.

Company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales no. 07374358

Registered office: 8 Waldegrave Rd, Teddington, London, TW11 8HT, UK

+44 (0)2089 777726 | info@gndr.org | gndr.org

Developed by



Implemented by



Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction

Financed by



[Glossary](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Anticipatory action](#)

[Locally led anticipatory action](#)

[Toolkit overview](#)

[Phase 1](#)

[Phase 2](#)

[Phase 3a](#)

[Phase 3b](#)

[Phase 3c](#)

[Phase 4](#)

[Phase 5](#)