



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

**Programmatic partnership**

# Increasing capacities and scale for Anticipatory Action



**Funded by  
the European Union**

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The increasing frequency of crises and related growing humanitarian needs coupled with shrinking resources highlight the need for more cost effective impactful actions to protecting lives and livelihoods. A strategic shift from responding to predictable shocks to anticipating their impacts by acting ahead of forecast events has the potential of breaking the cycle of growing dependence on humanitarian aid.

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# About the programmatic partnership

Recognizing the effectiveness of Anticipatory Action, in 2021, the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launched a three-year pilot programmatic partnership on increasing capacities and scale for Anticipatory Action including through social protection systems.

Implementing Anticipatory Action at scale in regions and countries with complex humanitarian needs can effectively contribute to breaking the vicious cycle of continuous recurrent crises. By receiving support early, vulnerable households can hold on to productive assets and thus continue producing food where it is most needed. Avoiding disaster losses frees up critical financial resources needed to purchase food, and it brings other positive gains, such as being able to keep their children in school. This builds up short-term economic gains while also contributing to long-term resilience. By strengthening country capacity to implement anticipatory actions, this programmatic partnership contributes to larger ongoing global efforts towards preventing food crises.

The Anticipatory Action programmatic partnership converges around three main streams:

- **Standard setting and implementation.** Establish Anticipatory Action systems and test them with government counterparts and partners. This allows gathering lessons learned, identifying gaps and increasing outreach efforts to build or strengthen capacities and knowledge sharing on this new Anticipatory Action approach.
- **Institutionalization.** Explore opportunities and pathways to support governments to integrate Anticipatory Action into disaster risk management systems.
- **Partnerships.** Work closely with governments, regional and global actors, build a collective voice, vision and understanding of the Anticipatory Action approach.

The initiative focuses on five countries in Asia – Bangladesh, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Pakistan, the Philippines and Viet Nam – to learn from and tailor the approach to specific needs and contexts. New joint initiatives on Anticipatory Action that are funded by DG ECHO and led by FAO have now started in Southern Africa, the Dry Corridor of Central America and Cameroon. At regional and global levels, the focus is on sharing learnings across different contexts; influencing regional and global policy and decision-making; setting minimum standards; and harmonizing approaches through coordination and normative guidance – always based on evidence from countries and being aware of context specificities.

The DG ECHO and FAO Anticipatory Action programmatic partnership is a clear recognition that protecting agricultural livelihoods ahead of shocks is critical to safeguard livelihoods and food security.

# Standard setting and implementation

**Collective learning, standard setting among partners and capacity for implementation are essential to anticipate food crises and to scale up anticipatory actions.**

Since the inception of its Anticipatory Action work in 2015, FAO has been committed to facilitating common understanding and the establishment of Anticipatory Action standards in agriculture and food security. In the framework of this programmatic partnership and other Anticipatory Action initiatives, learnings are being systematically documented and disseminated in support of evidence-based standard setting. A key output of this programme is the generation of collective quantitative and qualitative evidence on the effectiveness of Anticipatory Action, including through shared impact evaluations with partners.

As protecting people against shocks remains ultimately the priority of this partnership, capacities are being strengthened to develop anticipatory systems (i.e. risk monitoring, early warning and triggers; identifying the target population and type of interventions; defining roles and responsibilities of relevant actors) and to effectively implement anticipatory actions at the needed time. Where possible, this work builds on existing information and risk management processes at country and subnational levels.



## ***Striking before disasters do: Promoting phased Anticipatory Action for slow-onset hazards***

An example of providing normative guidance and support for global common standard setting is the recent position paper *Striking before disasters do – Promoting phased Anticipatory Action for slow-onset hazards*. Building on FAO's extensive experience implementing anticipatory actions for slow-onset hazards such as drought, cold waves, pests and diseases, and the secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the paper provides guidance on how to programme Anticipatory Action interventions in agriculture for different livelihood groups.

## **Acting ahead of typhoon Noru in Viet Nam**

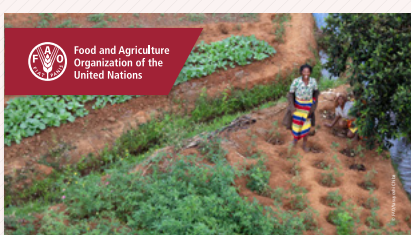
In September 2022, FAO provided livelihood support to vulnerable farmers before tropical cyclone Noru made landfall in Viet Nam. Knowing the typhoon would make landfall in three days and with the early warning triggers being reached, FAO alongside the Viet Nam Disaster Management Authority worked together in Thua Thien Hue and Quang Tri provinces, delivering unconditional cash and waterproof

plastic drums, which helped safeguard valuable items and reduce the adoption of negative coping strategies among targeted households.

With the financial support of DG ECHO under the Anticipatory Action programmatic partnership in Asia.

“ When the strong winds came, my sister and I went upstairs to take shelter. But receiving the cash beforehand I could go to the market to buy food which is harder to get after these events. We got fish, meat and milk which kept us happy for a week and enough time for the flood waters to go. ”

Hoang Thi Xuam (59)



### Madagascar

Anticipatory Action to avert a Malagasy migratory locust upsurge

Context	
Madagascar is highly prone to natural hazards, including drought, floods, cyclones and locust crises. In the Grand Sud region, three years of consecutive severe drought have wiped out harvests and hampered people's access to food, leading to high levels of acute food insecurity and malnutrition. In late 2021, an outbreak of Malagasy migratory locust was expected to affect the upcoming agricultural season (November 2021–March 2022) if left uncontrolled, thus further aggravating an already dire situation. Such early warning triggered the rapid activation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO's) Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities Anticipatory Action window (SFERA-AA), thanks to the contribution of the German Federal Foreign Office.	
SFERA activation overview	
Intervention areas	Grand Sud Region, specifically: Menabe, Atsimo Andrefana, Ihorombe and Anosy
Budget	USD 960,000
Population reached	1 million people at risk
Anticipated hazard	Outbreak of Malagasy migratory locust
Sector	Crops
Trigger	400,000 ha of pasture and crops forecast to be hit by the Malagasy migratory locust in districts with dire food security situation
Anticipatory actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing direct support to locust surveillance and control operations</li> <li>Strengthening government capacity for locust control</li> </ul>
Implementing partners	Ministry of Agriculture, particularly the National Locust Control Centre (NLC)

## Averting a Malagasy migratory locust upsurge in Madagascar

In late 2021, an outbreak of Malagasy migratory locust was expected to affect the upcoming agricultural season (November 2021–March 2022) if left uncontrolled, thus further aggravating an already dire situation following consecutive droughts in the Grand Sud region. Such early warning triggered the rapid activation of anticipatory actions which provided direct support to locust surveillance and control operations and strengthened government capacity for locust control. As a result of the almost USD 1 million investment in timely surveillance and control of the upsurge, a severe deterioration of the locust situation has been prevented.

With the financial support of the German Foreign Federal Office through FAO's Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities Anticipatory Action window.



### Colombia

## Impact of Early Warning Early Action

Boosting food security and social cohesion on the frontline of the migration crisis

## Boosting food security and social cohesion on the frontline of the migration crisis in Colombia

In 2018, early warning signs in La Guajira, Colombia, indicated that an impending drought combined with an expected further increase in new migrant arrivals from Venezuela, expected to result in further pressure on vulnerable communities and their food security. Together with partners, FAO anticipated the effects of drought and migration with the timely establishment of community fields for rapid crop production, distribution of seeds and agricultural tools to individual households, animal health support, and rehabilitation of water infrastructure. In addition to mitigating drought impacts, this made a positive contribution towards improving the social cohesion between targeted migrant and host community households.

With the financial support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) through FAO's Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities Anticipatory Action window.

# Institutionalization

## Integrating Anticipatory Action in national systems

One of the key endeavours under this programmatic partnership is to ensure the sustainability of the Anticipatory Action approach by promoting its integration in existing national systems, such as those for disaster risk management and social protection. While the different maturity of social protection systems has posed challenges to promote the integration of Anticipatory Action in various countries and is generating different levels of achievement according to the context, the process has been valuable in generating a better understanding of and lessons learned on how to replicate it in other contexts.

For instance, in the Philippines, the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) is being tested to explore its potential to become more responsive to forecast shocks and thus more anticipatory. In Viet Nam, provincial government counterparts are moving towards developing their own standard operating procedures in Quang Tri province for anticipating typhoons and droughts to ensure collaboration and stepping up coordination on Anticipatory Action. Comparatively, countries like the Lao People's Democratic Republic are exploring how Anticipatory Action can be woven into their growing disaster risk management portfolio to address the increased risk of climate shocks.

For a true system change there is a need to intensify efforts in this direction and transfer knowledge to government counterparts, scale up collaboration efforts and explore how national systems including social protection can be tailored to deliver anticipatory funding and assistance. This is a long-term transformative goal, which this Anticipatory Action programmatic partnership, and growing initiatives in Africa and Latin America, will collectively contribute to.



### Spotlight on Anticipatory Action and social protection in Mindanao, the Philippines

Two ongoing processes in Mindanao are exploring how Anticipatory Action and social protection can work together.

1. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is planning to test how its existing social protection system could release unconditional cash based on a flood warning in North Cotabato. With support from FAO, this exercise will deliver cash through the government's social protection system (potential beneficiaries will be identified through the 4Ps and complemented by at-risk households identified in the Listahanan, a database of poor households that will serve as a basis for the Department in the identification of beneficiaries on its different social protection programmes and services. This activity is led

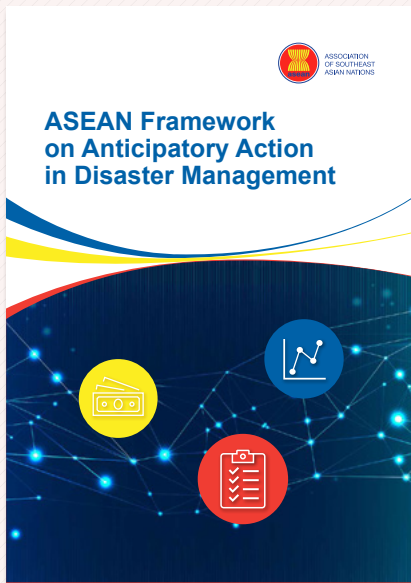
by the DSWD Social Technology Bureau in collaboration with the DSWD Disaster Response and Management Bureau and together with the DSWD 4Ps and National Housing Targeting Office.

2. A joint programme between Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) government, FAO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is looking to ensure inclusive and risk-informed shock responsive social protection (SRSP) resulting in more resilient communities. It aims to:
  - mainstream SRSP in the Bangsamoro Development Plan;
  - build capacity of BARMM institutions to analyse and monitor both natural and human-induced risks and improve synergy and coordination between social protection programmes, climate change adaptation and disaster preparedness and management; and
  - improve the poverty registry system.

The Anticipatory Action programmatic partnership will provide an opportunity to pilot SRSP in one given geographic area, for either drought or flood risk, in close collaboration with the local government.

## A shift in regional disaster management

At the regional level, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has taken leadership on both the Anticipatory Action and social protection approaches. ASEAN is committed to strengthening the capacity of its member states to reduce disaster risks, with an overall vision of a disaster-resilient region. Building on the momentum seen in the past decade on regional disaster management, including through the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), the ASEAN Framework on Anticipatory Action in Disaster Management demonstrates a significant shift in the way disasters are managed in the region: acting ahead of shocks rather than responding to disasters. Furthermore, its influence does not stop in Southeast Asia – increasingly governments and intergovernmental bodies are learning from the ASEAN experience and how cross-learning experiences can be scaled up in the future. In fact, FAO has been supporting the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in East Africa to develop a regional strategy on Anticipatory Action and is currently working with the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) to do the same in Western Africa.



## ***ASEAN Framework on Anticipatory Action in Disaster Management***

Scaling up Anticipatory Action and ensuring the sustainability of this approach requires government ownership and sovereign decision-making. Launched at the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction in May 2022, the Framework provides an opportunity for ASEAN countries to converge on the topic of Anticipatory Action through a common definition and three key building blocks to shape the approach:

- risk information, early warning and forecasts;
- design, selection and delivery of anticipatory actions; and
- pre-arranged financing.

It maps out the way forward and provides guidance on how to link the approach to existing disaster risk management processes. Adopting and scaling up Anticipatory Action through this Framework, combined with the ASEAN Guidelines on Disaster Responsive Social Protection to Increase Resilience, represents a significant shift to how ASEAN plans to manage risks. Over the coming years, FAO will further support ASEAN to implement their plan of action.

“*Southeast Asian countries are moving towards mechanisms for disaster preparedness and response that can operate based on the ‘One ASEAN, One Response’ principles of speed, scale and solidarity.*”

Tianchai Chukittiwibul

**Deputy Director-General, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Thailand  
Chair, ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management**



# Partnerships

Coordination and collaboration with all relevant partners and institutions at country, regional and global levels are key to achieve Anticipatory Action. At country level, Anticipatory Action working groups have been established with government counterparts and partners to promote engagement and ownership by national authorities. For instance, FAO is leading national technical working groups in Pakistan, the Philippines, and soon in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In Bangladesh, FAO is a key contributor to the technical group hosted under the UN Resident Coordinator Office, while in Viet Nam, a small community of practice has been formed to enable frequent cross exchanges.

Coordination does not stop at country level. Similarly, the Asia-Pacific regional technical working group on Anticipatory Action, co-led by FAO and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), is aiming to meet various calls from regional and country-level colleagues to ramp up training, develop technical standards and map out best practices across the region. Many are still exploring how to interpret Anticipatory Action, and this group acts as a gateway to learn and expand knowledge collectively. With over 22 agencies, the group is now developing a roadmap for the collective vision into 2025 to further build coherency and ways to further support the implementation of the ASEAN Framework on Anticipatory Action in Disaster Management.

At global level, FAO has continued to play a central technical and operational role in several global Anticipatory Action partnerships and initiatives which have a strategic role as they provide a platform to jointly advance the global thinking on Anticipatory Action and related policies and practices. In this context, DG ECHO has actively participated in selected events, the latest being the Anticipating Food Crises Workshop (2–3 November 2022) organized in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC), and a side event on Anticipatory Action organized under the Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) at the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) and hosted at the European Union Pavilion.



## Upcoming joint DG ECHO and FAO advocacy events

- Global Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action, December 2022
- European Humanitarian Forum, March 2023
- Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Weeks, April 2023
- Anticipatory Action National Dialogue Platforms: the Philippines, March 2023; Pakistan, May 2023; Bangladesh, September 2023; Colombia, in 2023 (TBC)

As the partnership on Anticipatory Action between DG ECHO and FAO extends to other new initiatives led or co-led by FAO in other regions (DG ECHO's support, 2022 Humanitarian Implementation Plans), these also provide ground for further collaboration with partners. These initiatives include, among others: a joint FAO, WFP and IFRC regional project in Southern Africa, a FAO-led project in the dry corridor of Central America jointly implemented with WFP and the German Red Cross, and a FAO-led project in Cameroon. This has several benefits such as promoting cross fertilization across regions, ensuring coherence in Anticipatory Action implementation and further positioning DG ECHO as a key donor in promoting Anticipatory Action as a critical measure to prevent food crises.



### **Selected Anticipatory Action partnerships and joint initiatives**

- Anticipatory Action Task Force, founding members include FAO, WFP, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), IFRC and the START Network
- REAP
- Anticipation Hub
- AATF support to the G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement on Strengthening Anticipatory Action in Humanitarian Assistance
- Development and implementation of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)-funded joint multi-agency Anticipatory Action frameworks
- FAO-WFP Anticipatory Action Strategy, currently under finalization

# Outlook

The investment in this programmatic partnership and other Anticipatory Action joint initiatives responds to the commitment under the Grand Bargain in promoting one approach for higher efficiency of humanitarian aid. Evidence shows that acting in anticipation of shocks is more dignified and more cost efficient. There is a need now to take bold decisions to translate the technical work of these past years into concrete change and to step up investments in prevention and Anticipatory Action to strengthen resilience and help reduce growing humanitarian needs.

DG ECHO and FAO are committed to moving the agenda forward and, concurrently, exploring on the ground how Anticipatory Action can contribute to humanitarian commitments. Yet, future programming will need to overcome existing challenges. These include, for example, the necessity to further support the institutionalization of the approach together with partners to promote the integration of Anticipatory Action into relevant strategies and plans, thus facilitating a system-wide shift over time. In addition, there is a need to further strengthen capacities for Anticipatory Action to be technically, operationally and financially ready to act early. To this end, testing of anticipatory actions should be prioritized whenever possible, and lessons learned systematically documented and discussed with partners. This learning will be precious to improve the effectiveness of the anticipatory interventions and will help to overcome challenges as the partnership expands to other contexts.



WATER®

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The DG ECHO and FAO Anticipatory Action programmatic partnership is a critical catalyst to showcase how the way disasters are managed can be changed. Through scaling up our efforts to set standards, foster mainstreaming processes and partnership efforts, there can be a collective shift from a reactive to a preventive humanitarian system.

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FAO's Anticipatory Action approach uses risk analysis and forecasts to trigger interventions before a crisis escalates into a humanitarian emergency.

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## Contact

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FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific  
FAO-RAP@fao.org | [fao.org/asiapacific](http://fao.org/asiapacific)  
Bangkok, Thailand

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FAO Office of Emergencies and Resilience  
Anticipatory-Action@fao.org | [fao.org/emergencies](http://fao.org/emergencies)  
Rome, Italy

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