



## Statement to the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022

20 May 2022

*This statement outlines key messages about how the anticipatory action and disaster risk reduction (DRR) communities can work in synergy to help countries achieve their targets under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-30 and, by doing so, protect the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable people. It was developed by the anticipatory action community, facilitated through the Anticipation Hub. The messages are directed at governments, donors and the anticipatory action and disaster risk reduction communities, in order to strengthen and scale up anticipatory action approaches.*

### To governments

#### 1. Review and update DRM frameworks and policies

In many countries, disaster risk management (DRM) legislation and policies are still geared towards post-disaster response activities. For instance, the mandate of DRM agencies to take anticipatory action and release funding on the basis of a trigger is not always clearly established. Decision-makers should review relevant DRM acts, policies and plans to check if they enable and support the implementation of anticipatory action. If necessary, they should specify legal settings and clarify institutional responsibilities to permit anticipatory action.

Since anticipatory action helps to improve access to disaster-risk information and assessments, and to multi-hazard early warning systems, countries undertaking such a review process will be directly contributing to the implementation of Target G of the Sendai Framework. It also shows their commitment to the Sendai Framework, which underscores that "it is urgent and critical to anticipate, plan for and reduce disaster risk in order to more effectively protect persons, communities and countries, their livelihoods, health, cultural heritage, socioeconomic assets and ecosystems, and thus strengthen their resilience" (Preamble No 5).

#### 2. Clarify roles and responsibilities in relevant disaster risk management frameworks and promote a multi-stakeholder approach

Anticipatory actions can only have an impact if actors on the ground are capable of implementing them at any given time within the window available between the predicted event and the actual impact. They need forecasts in time, and these must be reliable and comprehensible. Actors also need to know what to do when a hazard occurs. This requires proactively clarifying roles and

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responsibilities in cooperation agreements, identifying who will collect the risk data (about the hazard, exposure, vulnerabilities), generate forecasts and warnings, and implement anticipatory actions for different hazards.

Local responders and at-risk people should be engaged in the planning process from the very beginning, and continuously throughout, to ensure that warnings are understood at the 'last mile' - by the communities benefiting from the process - and that anticipatory actions are grounded in local needs and feasibility.

Ideally, forecasts are generated that do not only predict what the weather will be but what the weather will *do*. Such impact-based forecasts require collaboration between NMHSs, disaster management authorities and local communities to capture local knowledge and formulate actionable warnings. Such a participatory, multi stakeholder approach is in line with priority 2 of the Sendai Framework which calls for strengthened disaster risk governance through partnership and collaboration, and priority 4 which calls for the development of people-centred, multi-hazard, multisectoral forecasting and early warning systems through a participatory process.

### **3. Increase access to funding for anticipatory action**

Wherever possible, funding should be channelled through existing funding mechanisms (e.g., national catastrophe funds, local disaster response funds) and non-governmental actors on the ground (e.g., local DRM agencies, local NGOs Red Cross Red Crescent branches). It is essential to ensure that funds can be released immediately to DRM agencies and/or implementers on the basis of forecasts, and in line with other transparent criteria. The choice of the delivery channel for funds depends on the national context (e.g., disaster risk financing tools, government capacity, agencies implementing anticipatory action).

In principle, funding should be directed to where it is needed the most, focusing on the most vulnerable and taking into account evolving needs and contexts. Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience is called for in Sendai Framework for DRR priority 3, whereby government investments in anticipatory action capture synergies with long-term investments in preparedness and risk-reduction activities through risk knowledge and capacity strengthening.

### **4. Promote synergies and break silos to link anticipatory action with social protection**

DRM plans and policies are often still focused on single-hazard disasters and not integrated into a multi-sectoral, multi-hazard approach for strengthening the resilience of people and communities. Instead of addressing all these crises in siloes, governments should look at how these risks interact and compound the impacts on people - and, accordingly, promote integrated approaches.

One way to do this is to link anticipatory action to social protection policies. After a disaster, national and sub-national social protection systems (e.g., cash transfers, cash-for-work programmes, temporary employment programmes, school feeding programmes) can help affected populations cope with the impacts by providing direct support and preventing (or reducing) some of the most serious consequences. These systems can also be used and temporarily be scaled up before a hazard becomes a disaster, for example by identifying and enrolling new beneficiaries, providing a cash 'top-up' to existing beneficiaries, or financing complimentary social protection measures that improve incomes, livelihoods and resilience. Bringing the concepts of anticipatory action and social protection together - known as shock-responsive social protection - presents a valuable opportunity to improve system delivery and reduce the disaster burden. By doing so, DRM can also support longer-term social resilience.

## To donors

### 1. Increase and ease access to financing to scale up anticipatory action

Anticipatory action is a proven way to minimize the loss and damage caused by different hazards, including those being exacerbated by climate change. It saves lives and livelihoods, protects development and resilience gains, helps to preserve people's dignity and provides value for money. But although more and more disasters and crises are predictable, less than one per cent of humanitarian funding is currently available for anticipatory action. When funding is available, it is most often limited to single-agency, small-scale projects.

Building on the recent commitments made by the G7 in May 2022,<sup>1</sup> donors should increase the financial resources available for anticipatory action. We need coordinated, long-term and large-scale funding to build and strengthen the infrastructure and preparedness capacities to develop and implement anticipatory action, especially locally. Donors should follow up on their commitments and increase their support to existing instruments - including the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) as well as to the Start Network's Start Funds and Start Ready - and expand this approach to the Country-based Pooled Funds where appropriate. Moreover, they should use their leverage to expedite the work under way to reform the architecture for global climate and disaster risk financing so that they better support the development of the anticipatory action system.

### 2. Support the integration of anticipatory action into national frameworks

Communication and preparedness around disaster risks are a crucial enablers of anticipatory action. Risk information has no benefit unless it is understandable, actionable and disseminated in a timely manner to at-risk populations. As with emergency responses, pre-agreed plans and adequate operational capacities and processes are all essential for the effective implementation of anticipatory action.

Through partnerships, financial resources, political commitments and other activities and investments, donors should support countries to develop the necessary governance systems and enhance their available operational capacities. The integration of anticipatory action into governmental DRM frameworks, national adaptation plans and related policies and financing frameworks would enable concerted efforts and overcome sectoral silos. Such investments in institutional development will support governments to achieve adjoining global targets around DRR, climate and sustainable development.

## To the anticipatory action and DRR community

### 1. Build partnerships to promote national ownership and strengthen locally led anticipatory action

For anticipatory action to be truly sustainable, it needs to be nationally owned and embedded in national and local DRM policies, laws and processes. Sharing experiences and expertise, and building and formalizing partnerships with government representatives, enables countries to strengthen their capacities, institutions and operational systems to implement anticipatory action

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<sup>1</sup> [www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/g7-anticipatory-action/2531236](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/g7-anticipatory-action/2531236)

effectively. It also allows countries to exercise leadership in scaling up and advancing anticipatory action.

Anticipatory action needs to address needs and priorities of the communities at risk and those working on the front line of crises. To develop and strengthen structures, systems and capacities that enable anticipatory action in areas of high disaster risks, the anticipatory action and DRR communities should work closely with local authorities, civil society and communities. These actors best understand local vulnerabilities, needs, capabilities and barriers to participation, allowing for a more inclusive approach to anticipatory action. Moreover, it is necessary to coordinate with, build upon and support the work of others active in the anticipatory action space. Exchange, coordination and partnerships are the basis for driving the anticipation agenda.

## **2. Collect, share and exchange knowledge, lessons and evidence about how anticipatory action makes a difference**

As anticipatory action continues to gain momentum, the anticipatory action community must ensure that we study, document and share the lessons learned. This will help to develop and expand this approach by exploring more deeply how it makes a difference in mitigating hazards and supporting longer-term resilience efforts. Looking at what works, and being honest about what doesn't work, is critical for long-term success in minimizing and preventing human suffering. Support learning and evidence building by contributing their experiences - in terms of practice, science and policy - to knowledge and exchange platforms such as the Anticipation Hub and Start FOREWARN. Further, it is useful to establish partnerships, such as the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership, to drive political momentum globally through sharing the evidence base and lessons learned with policy-makers.

## **3. Promote socially inclusive anticipatory action approaches that 'leave no one behind'**

We are all vulnerable to disasters - but some are far more vulnerable than others. Statistically, men and women have different chances of survival when a disaster strikes – sometimes starkly so. In general, women and children are 14 times more likely than men to experience displacement or die during a disaster<sup>2</sup>. Persons with disabilities - estimated to represent 15 per cent of the world's population - have a mortality rate that is two to four times higher than persons without disabilities<sup>3</sup>.

Anticipatory action approaches must 'leave no one behind' and ensure that it is inclusive, accessible and non-discriminatory, paying special attention to people disproportionately affected by disasters. It is essential that there is greater awareness of the issues and barriers that vulnerable and marginalized groups and individuals face, and at all stages of the anticipatory action approach. This includes, among others, gender, age, ability, ethnic and religious identity, displacement status, sexual identity and other social, cultural, and economic barriers to inclusion. With this knowledge, we can engage marginalized groups in the development of anticipatory action initiatives, tailor plans to their specific requirements, involve them in decision-making and further their capacity to protect themselves ahead of disasters.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www1.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/gender/Gender%20and%20Environment/PB3-AP-Gender-and-disaster-risk-reduction.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-task-team-inclusion-persons-disabilities-humanitarian-action/documents/iasc-guidelines>

#### **4. Be innovative to make anticipatory action applicable to a wider variety of hazards, including compound risk**

To date, anticipatory action has mostly been developed and tested for natural hazards. This is because the science of forecasting weather events has progressed to a point where a wide range of weather and climate hazards have become increasingly predictable. However, thanks to technological progress in other fields, there are increasing opportunities to anticipate and act ahead of other hazards and risks, such as epidemics, food insecurity and displacement of affected people.

Moreover, most of the world's humanitarian needs are in countries affected by complex crises that include multiple hazards, concurrent shocks and compounding impacts. When different hazards happen at the same time, or one as the result of another, they can multiply each other's impact in unprecedented ways. These 'compounding impacts' on communities were illustrated during the COVID-19 pandemic as national and international responders had to deal with quarantine restrictions and shifts in shipping and transportation affected supply chains.

Anticipatory action approaches should reflect this complexity on the ground and account for compound risks more fully. This includes the integration of multi-hazard considerations and multi-sectoral activities throughout the planning and implementation of anticipatory actions. For example, evacuation to shelters in anticipation of a cyclone could increase the transmission of infectious diseases (e.g., COVID-19) through crowded conditions and require, inter alia, the provision of masks, disinfectants and hygiene kits.

*These key messages were developed by the Anticipation Hub in consultation with partners. The Anticipation Hub is a platform to facilitate knowledge exchange, learning, guidance, and advocacy around anticipatory action. It brings together 93 partners across the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, universities, research institutes, (i)NGOs, UN agencies, governments, donors and network initiatives.*