



# REPORT

from the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform  
on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

From dialogue to action: advancing joint goals  
towards Africa's anticipatory action roadmap

28 to 30 June 2022



Partners:



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



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Further details about the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform, including the full agenda, speakers and the participant list, are available on the event website. Registered participants can also watch many of the sessions from the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform here: [bit.ly/420eWIs](https://bit.ly/420eWIs)

Interviews with participants are available on our YouTube channel: [bit.ly/3dTIs9E](https://bit.ly/3dTIs9E)

## Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G7	Group of Seven
GBV	gender-based violence
ICPAC	IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NGO	non-governmental organization
REAP	Risk-informed Early Action Partnership
SAWS	South African Weather Services
UN	United Nations
WFP	World Food Programme

# FOREWORD

It was a great pleasure to be part of the team that organized and facilitated the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action. After a break from face-to-face meetings due to Covid-19, this year's Africa Dialogue Platform was a mix of excitement and ambition: excitement to see old friends and meet new ones, and ambition to share our challenges on anticipatory action in the wake of compounding and cascading risks – and to design and agree on the strategy to address these as a continent.

The three days we spent together, in person and online, gave birth to the draft Africa roadmap on anticipatory action. This was the highlight of the Dialogue Platform, with the governments and non-governmental stakeholders present pledging to deliver on their part of the bargain. We had deep reflections, challenging ourselves on what and where to improve in order to see anticipatory action integrated into existing disaster management systems, and to grow in scale and become sustainable in the longer term in Africa.

The real work begins now the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform is over: delivering on the various ambitions defined in the roadmap. We hope you enjoy reading our report as we share with you what transpired, how we did it and what we achieved.

Until next year,

**Irene Amuron**, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, and  
**Phoebe Shikuku**, International Federation of Red Cross and  
Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)



Irene Amuron and Phoebe Shikuku present at the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform in Kenya.

# Reflections from our hosts

## Dr Ahmed Amdihun

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)  
Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC)

The Africa Dialogue Platform was a great opportunity to bring stakeholders together to deliberate on key agendas around anticipatory action, and to draft the Africa roadmap. As an intergovernmental body, IGAD/ICPAC was privileged to host this fifth edition of the Africa Dialogue Platform and is committed to advancing anticipatory action.

Acting in anticipation of climate extremes is a top priority for **the IGAD region**, and for Africa at large, as we brace for more frequent hazards and more widespread impacts due to climate change and other risk multipliers. In view of these increasing climate extremes and climate-induced disasters in the region, primarily drought and floods, building the institutional capacities of IGAD and its Member States to anticipate risk and take early, timely actions is the utmost priority. Such capacity needs to be improved, from regional to local levels, to avert the loss of life, livelihoods and assets, and to minimize damages to critical infrastructure. This, together with people-centred early warnings tied to anticipatory action, have great potential to break the vicious cycle of climate-induced humanitarian crises in the Horn of Africa.

More action is needed to advance anticipatory action at the community level and to scale up the pilots that are being implemented by the different stakeholders, such as the World Food Programme (WFP). IGAD has developed a regional roadmap on forecast-based anticipatory action and is committed to its full implementation. This will significantly contribute to the shift towards front-loading approaches, as opposed to crisis management.



Dr Ahmed Amdihun speaking at the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform.

# Highlights from the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform

## A roadmap for anticipatory action in Africa

The 5th African Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action was held from 28 to 30 June 2022 under the theme ‘From dialogue to action: advancing joint goals towards Africa’s anticipatory action roadmap’. The main objective was to draft a roadmap for anticipatory action in Africa – and, working together, we did it! It took many hours of reflection, discussion and cross-regional learning, but there is now a shared document to guide how anticipatory action is integrated into existing disaster management systems, and is scaled up across the continent, in the coming years. The next steps will be to revise this roadmap and ensure it is applied across Africa, so that new and existing projects can align with its goals and ambitions.

## Progress in implementing anticipatory action

The roadmap was informed by a stocktake of anticipatory action on the ground in Africa. This revealed that while the approach is at different stages within the various regions, it is under way – and increasing in scale – across them all. This is clear evidence of the widespread interest in applying this approach, and the examples highlighted in different countries demonstrate its potential and benefits.

## More participants – and greater diversity

The 5th Africa Dialogue Platform was the largest to date. Across three days, 418 people took part, coming from 61 countries, including 36 in Africa. The event also attracted the most diverse set of participants so far, with representatives from across governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), science, academia, meteorology, United Nations (UN) organizations, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, practitioners and communities.

## Going hybrid

This was the first fully hybrid dialogue platform organized by the Anticipation Hub. More than 80 participants gathered at the ICPAC headquarters near Nairobi and there was also a live studio in Johannesburg. In addition, over 300 people took part online. Both formats – in person and online – have advantages. For example, the in-person sessions allowed for face-to-face meetings and facilitated networking and interaction; meanwhile, the online sessions enabled wider participation and helped to reduce the environmental impacts of the event. This year’s Africa Dialogue Platform therefore acted as a ‘test run’ for how future events, in Africa and beyond, are likely to be held.



Participants at the ICPAC headquarters in Kenya.

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So great to have so many first-time participants! The network is growing!

Marlene Fiedler, German Red Cross

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5th Africa Dialogue Platform  
on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

DAY  
ONE

- The opening day of the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform gave participants the opportunity to reflect on a question that is critical to developing an Africa-wide roadmap for anticipatory action: what has been achieved so far?

## Regional marketplaces

In four regional hubs, participants discussed the status of anticipatory action in northern Africa, southern Africa, eastern Africa and West Africa/Sahel. This involved considering the hazards that have been anticipated, the projects launched, the successes and failures, and the lessons learned. These outcomes provided four regional baselines from which to define ambitions and ways forward for anticipatory action in Africa, and against which it will be possible to measure progress.



Interaction at the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform.



# Opening ceremony

To open the dialogue platform officially, six speakers offered their reflections on the main achievements in Africa so far, as well as their hopes and expectations for the coming days.

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As the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, we are very much focused on communities... anticipatory action is a way to build their resilience.

Dr Michael Charles, IFRC Pretoria

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Anticipatory action means so much – to WFP and to this region [southern Africa] – and [it] couldn't be more urgent; the number of people suffering food crises has never been higher.

Margaret Malu, WFP

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At the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction<sup>1</sup>, it was really encouraging to see the loud call for scaling up anticipatory action... However, there must be more that we can do together. [At this dialogue platform] come and tell us what is really needed in your region.

Kara Siahaan, Anticipation Hub

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This platform happens at a pivotal time... this is the fourth failed rainy season [in eastern Africa]. I am pleased to see that this year's theme moves us from dialogue to action.

Dr Asha Mohammed, Kenya Red Cross Society

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<sup>1</sup> This was held in Bali, Indonesia, in May 2022.

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It's obvious from the past decade... that early action can protect communities when disasters happen... [But] how do we strengthen early action initiatives? How do we strengthen risk-financing mechanisms? We need to collaborate – and then collaborate again.

Amadou Diallo, Start Network

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As the current G7 presidency, Germany has made anticipatory action one of its priorities – and [there is] a clear commitment from all G7 partners that we see this as very important, and we want to scale up our support.

Dr Ferdinand Von Weyhe, German Federal Foreign Office

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## Looking back: a stocktake of anticipatory action in Africa

The opening keynote address focused on the role of national and regional climate centres in anticipatory humanitarian action. **Dr Ahmed Amdihun**, ICPAC, explained that a key question for these centres is how they can improve forecasts, which are a first step in anticipatory action. This can be in terms of lead times, further triggers for initiating early action, or moving further into impact-based forecasting: “It's interesting to see what the weather will be, but more important to see what the weather will do.”

While great advances have been made in forecasting and analysis, challenges persist. In Africa, there remains a need for greater finance to enable more countries to act early. It is not the lack of knowledge that presents a barrier, he noted, but the lack of resources: “It is up to all practitioners to push this forward.”

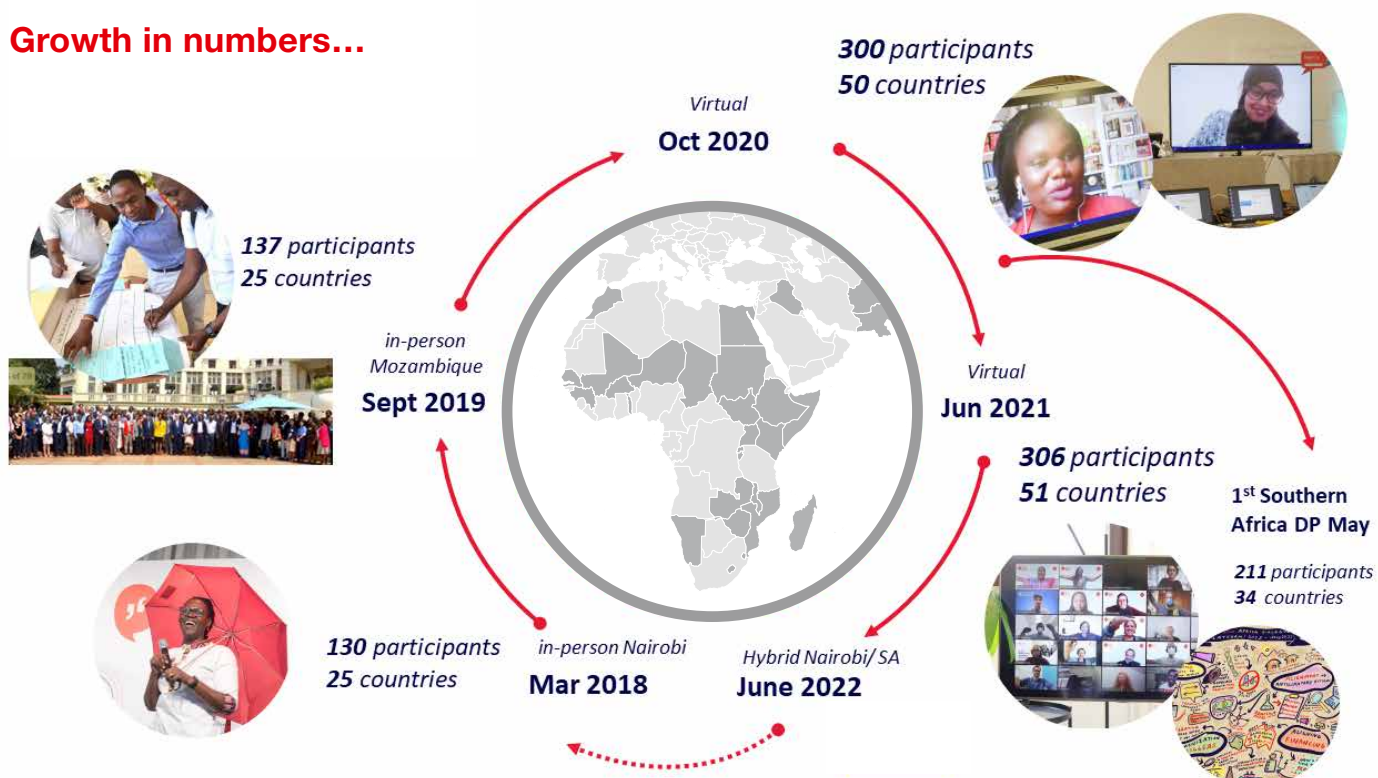
# Looking back: the journey of the Africa dialogue platforms

Focusing on the overarching theme of day one, this plenary session zoomed in on the previous Africa dialogue platforms: the themes that emerged and evolved, the increasingly diverse set of people taking part, and how these forums can be even more effective in the future. “It’s important to reflect on where we’ve come from, and plan for where we are going,” noted **Phoebe Shikuku** from IFRC.

The size of the dialogue platforms has certainly changed, from 130 attendees in 2018 to more than 400 in 2022. The organizations taking part have

also diversified, with representation shifting from a Red Cross Red Crescent focus to more than 90 different organizations in attendance – and the vision is to work with even more. Themes have also evolved over the years; early on, the focus was introducing the concept of forecast-based financing, whereas now attention is more on how anticipatory approaches are being implemented and the lessons we can take from experiences to date. But one common thread over the years is the need to scale up; this is something that always needs even more attention.

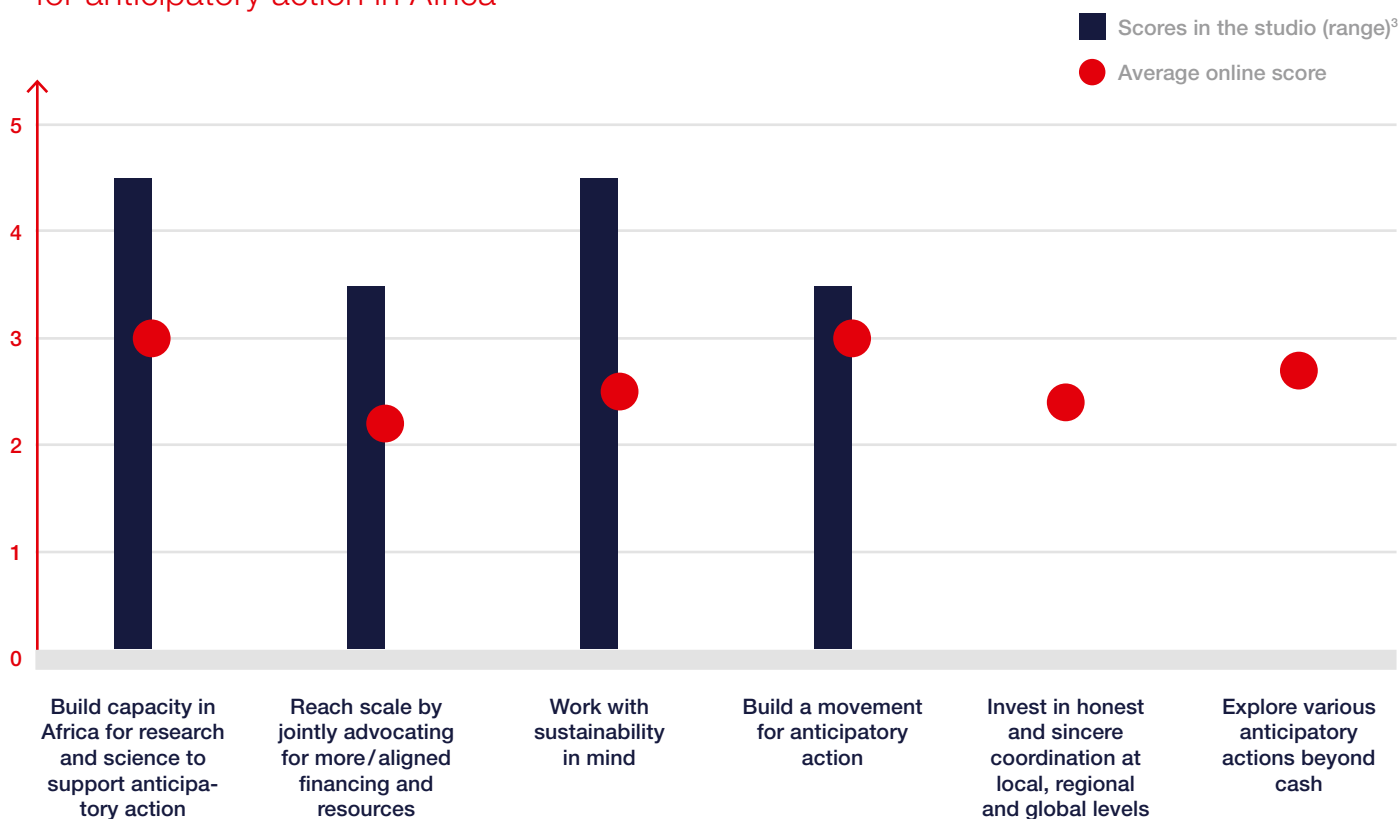
## Growth in numbers...



A slide from the presentation.

Irene Amuron, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, took the audience back to the 4th Africa Dialogue Platform and the ‘Message to the world’ that came out of that event.<sup>2</sup> The six priority areas (Figure 1) identified aimed to move us towards scaling up anticipatory action, but how much has been achieved in the last 12 months? Participants offered their ratings from one (low) to five (high). In summary, there has been progress in some areas. But with such wide-ranging opinions on exactly how much, there is still plenty of scope to do more.

**Figure 1.** Participant reflections on progress towards the priority areas for anticipatory action in Africa



<sup>2</sup> You can read the ‘Message to the world’ here: [bit.ly/410SaZA](https://bit.ly/410SaZA)

<sup>3</sup> The last two areas were not ranked in the studio, due to limited time.

# A regional stocktake of progress towards anticipatory action in Africa

After intense discussions in the regional hubs, there was plenty to feed back during the first panel discussion. Representatives from each region shared the most significant updates, including the status of anticipatory action initiatives, the challenges faced to date, and the gaps that persist.

“ One thing different in northern Africa is that the footprint [for anticipatory action] is not as big as in other regions. However, there are some initiatives going on... and there is huge scope for working in areas such as data preparedness, [with] forecast data often missing. The good thing is that a community of practice for MENA [Middle East and North Africa] is going to be launched.

Omar Farook, WFP

“ The focus [in southern Africa] is on integration: moving from isolated programmes and silos towards integrated systems.

Anna Lena Huhn, WFP

These are just a snapshot of the outcomes from the four regional marketplaces, which provided a valuable source of information for the roadmap for anticipatory action in Africa. These will be a critical starting point for shaping this strategic document, guiding Africa's progress and priorities in this field.

“ Central African countries [in West Africa/Sahel] have not been as active... but things are moving forward very fast in certain countries where anticipatory action is already under way, such as Niger. Other countries are also scaling up their level of understanding.

Luca Parodi, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

“ Participants showed a big appetite to be more proactive to the rising impacts in eastern Africa, especially from floods and droughts. They also noted a growing awareness of anticipatory action and how it can be integrated into their work.

Shaban Mawanda, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre

# Voices from the field

One objective for this year's Africa Dialogue Platform was to hear more from those at the sharp end of anticipatory action: the people and communities whose lives and livelihoods are devastated by hazards, as well as the humanitarians who work with them. During the second panel discussion, representatives from Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia and Sudan shared their experiences of how anticipatory action is implemented at the local level.

In Sudan, over 800,000 people were affected by floods in 2020, which was a wake-up call to invest in early action, explained **Hussam Hanafi Hussam** from Save the Children. In 2021, Save the Children was able to raise an anticipatory alert and support 13 communities across three states ahead of floods; these actions were supported by the Start Fund. Importantly, the anticipatory actions – which included cash-for-work programmes and disaster risk reduction committees – were fully led by the communities, with people having a say in designing and implementing the interventions. A post-event impact assessment, which surveyed over 1,000 people, also created an opportunity for advocacy with communities: a chance to demonstrate that anticipatory action really works and offers them a way forward, in Sudan and elsewhere.

The Kenya Red Cross Society also engages communities directly in anticipatory action initiatives, for example in identifying disaster-prone areas and deciding how to manage and mitigate disasters. **David Njenga**, a volunteer with the Kenya Red Cross Society, noted that one focus area was mental health among young people, and especially young men. This is a neglected area but a vital one, as good mental health helps people to implement anticipatory action.

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No anticipatory action initiative that is designed [from the] top down will succeed, or at least not in a sustainable way. It is not just about local knowledge, which is critical; it is about buy-in, engagement and ownership [by] the community.

Hussam Hanafi Hussam,  
Save the Children

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We need to find more time and learn from the community itself, because that is the primary source of information. [We need to] understand what they go through... and the burning issues with them. Let's find time for more time in the community.

David Njenga, Kenya Red Cross Society

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The need to hear more from communities has been raised several times at previous dialogue platforms. This session aimed to address this and will hopefully mark the start of increasing participation by those active in the field.

5th Africa Dialogue Platform  
on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

DAY  
TWO

→ After reflecting and taking stock, the second day of the Africa Dialogue Platform was an opportunity to think about the future and ask: what are the leading ambitions for anticipatory action in Africa?

## Looking ahead: defining the ambitions for anticipatory action in Africa

**Antonio Beleza**, National Institute for Disaster Management and Risk Reduction in Mozambique, opened the second keynote address with his vision for the coming decades: “In 10, 20, 30 years, local governments should be leading the anticipatory action agenda [to] ensure integration into local development plans that promote local communities’ resilience.” He also outlined some of the steps needed to integrate this approach into national systems, such as the technical working groups that bring different stakeholders together.

Following this, **Elizabeth Viljoen**, South African Weather Services (SAWS), shared experiences of impact-based forecasting in South Africa. This started in 2016, drawing on the local knowledge of disaster managers to develop impact tables for various hazards, which ranged from ‘minor’ to ‘severe’. This approach was not without its challenges, though; disaster managers were concerned that SAWS might take their place, and while the public generally understood the warnings, they needed them to be more graphical in form.

To address these challenges, SAWS reassured disaster managers that they wanted to work alongside them, not replace them. They also developed graphics about warnings and shared them on social media, which proved a successful approach. Other adaptations included translating hazard warnings into local languages, such as Zulu. “Our vision is to create a weather-smart nation: a nation that is more informed, alert, resilient and ready to act,” she concluded.



# Insights on progress from the subregions

During the morning on day two, the four regional hubs reconvened to analyse, synthesize and define the ambitions for their part of Africa. All four presented back the main outcomes during the first plenary of the afternoon.

Northern Africa is taking ‘baby steps’ towards anticipatory action, according to **Omar Farook**, WFP. There are signs that things are happening, though, which vary with the differing contexts found across the region. In some countries, relationships with governments are a way to advance this approach, while in others it is organizations that are engaging: “We need to find entry points on disaster risk reduction and early warning: focus on the basics to increase awareness of anticipatory action in the region.”

Encouragingly, momentum is building in northern Africa. For example, IFRC and WFP are establishing a community of practice. This will be further shaped during a meeting in August 2022, at which there will be training on how to make anticipatory action context-based. Regular exchanges through this community of practice will help to embed this approach within institutions.

**Izidine Pinto**, Climate System Analysis Group at the University of Cape Town, and also with the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, outlined the vision for southern Africa: “Governments in the region are empowered to deploy and integrate a harmonized approach to anticipatory action along the humanitarian–development nexus, and sustainable government-led anticipatory action systems [are in place] to significantly reduce the imprint of humanitarian shocks.”



Discussions at the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform.

To get there, the focus must be on increasing the capacity of governments, so they can lead and support the humanitarian organizations that implement anticipatory action. Involving communities and integrating social protection into anticipatory action can also help to ensure the sustainability of projects, he noted.

So, how do we realize this? Opportunities range from partnering with other humanitarian actors in the region to mobilizing resources for anticipatory action, for example by mapping out who has which resources.

There are also challenges, of course. Coordination between institutions is lacking at times, and there is an ongoing need to further involve governments, academia and humanitarian agencies. “The issue of coordination and communication is really important for improving anticipatory action,” Izidine noted, “for example, harmonizing drought triggers across agencies in the region.”

There is a risk that West Africa is being left behind, warned **Kiswendsida Guigma**, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre. Even the definition is difficult: ‘West Africa’ includes western Africa, the Sahel region and central Africa, but at times there is very little coordination between these: “We need to come together [and] collaborate to achieve.”

Opportunities exist, though. Advocacy can begin with institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States, and there is now a regional planning centre for central Africa. The priority should be to engender political will among decision-makers, starting with high-level advocacy. “If we get [these] commitments, the next step is to develop national strategies for anticipatory action,” he suggested. “[These] need to be owned by governments”. Regional strategies are also required to tackle transboundary issues and ensure that when one country takes action, these are not cancelled out by a neighbour.

The shared vision for eastern Africa, said **Emanuel Ntale**, Uganda Red Cross Society, is that anticipatory action is harmonized and integrated into government-led processes for disaster risk management, with the engagement of communities and all supporting stakeholders. But a series of actions are needed to get there. Firstly, greater investment in capacity building within government agencies, including both human capital and digital tools. Furthermore, it will be necessary to break down the silos that exist in the region; to tap into existing policy and environmental frameworks; and to maintain the goodwill of government agencies. Lastly, he noted, communities should be at the centre of all discussions, echoing a point that was consistently raised throughout the three days.

So, on to the next question: how do we achieve these ambitions? The audience at the session shared their own ideas, and engaging with governments was a recurring theme. Some of the suggestions put forward are listed here:

- Include anticipatory action in national plans for disaster contingency. Most countries have these and there is always money put aside for disaster response.
- Raise awareness among members of parliament, as they are the ones who decide on budget allocations.
- Clarify what anticipatory action is for, as governments are not always comfortable with creating new budget lines. This will help to explain why they should support it.
- Involve governments in discussions from the start, as this can lead to protocols, memorandums of understanding, working documents and so on. These in turn make it more likely that governments will follow up on agreed actions.
- Speaking the 'language' of governments is critical. Try to understand their bureaucracy and budgetary processes, and use available government tools and entry points.
- Approach governments with solutions. For example, explain how to implement programmes and actions, as this will help to direct their activities.
- Build government capacity in this sector. This could be by identifying 'national champions' who understand the importance of anticipatory action and can advocate from within government systems, helping to drive the agenda.

The onus is not just on governments, however. Humanitarian agencies should also allocate resources from their disaster response budgets towards anticipatory action. And there was also a call to ensure civil society has a 'seat at the table', which can help to put pressure on governments to engage more in anticipatory action.



Debate and discussion at the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform.



## Parallel sessions

The audience get involved at the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform.

Anticipatory action is a rapidly developing approach, one that is being applied in many different contexts across Africa. The 15 parallel sessions at the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform took participants to many of the places where it is being implemented. They also provided a space to discuss the impacts of, and lessons from, these projects.

### **State of play: integrating anticipatory action into national legal disaster management frameworks: African REAP case studies**

The Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) aims to take anticipatory/early action to scale, and key to achieving this is ensuring that risk-informed approaches are country-led and embedded across national systems. In this session, government representatives from Madagascar, Mozambique and Niger talked about the state of play in terms of integrating anticipatory action into their national landscapes for disaster management.



Full abstracts for each parallel session are available on the event website (go to the tab '29th of June'):

**[bit.ly/3NRm0wP](https://bit.ly/3NRm0wP)**

Most of the parallel sessions can be watched on the event website:

**[bit.ly/420eWls](https://bit.ly/420eWls)**

## Learning from trigger-performance evaluation approaches

The Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre and WFP presented three trigger mechanisms for drought, as well as a system to monitor and evaluate the performance of these. The session shared lessons from Ethiopia, Somalia and Zimbabwe, for example how to evaluate the performance of triggers and how this performance can be sustained as part of integrated systems.

## Making a case for anticipatory humanitarian action in Africa for small- to medium-scale crises / Finding the right windows of opportunity in anticipatory action

Anticipatory action has the potential to save more lives than traditional humanitarian responses, but at times the ‘window of opportunity’ to intervene is missed. This session unpacked the key questions around this issue, such as: how do we anticipate the right windows of opportunity and provide the right assistance at the right time?

## Anticipatory action to tackle drought-induced crises: acting on lessons from the 2021/2022 drought in East Africa

Anticipatory action predicts where hazards will hit and deploys resources when the impacts on people and their assets can still be mitigated. But despite global commitments, its implementation at scale has been a major challenge. This session facilitated a stakeholder dialogue on experiences from the ongoing drought in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, looking at why the predicted impacts failed to translate into anticipatory action

## Fresh from the field: anticipatory action for rapid-onset hazards (floods and cyclone) in Mozambique and Madagascar

Madagascar and Mozambique face the highest cyclone risk in Africa, with three to four events each year. Both countries have implemented measures to act ahead of these hazards, and this session shared the successes and lessons learned, to enrich multilateral exchanges and, above all, improve the vision for anticipatory action.



Eddie Jjemba presents at the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform.

## **A call for an integrated approach: the importance of anticipatory action in gender-based violence prevention, response and risk mitigation in the field**

Anticipatory action is a promising approach for interventions that tackle gender-based violence (GBV) in emergencies, particularly in response to disasters in Africa. However, there is an urgent need to strengthen the integration of prevention, risk mitigation and preparedness measures for GBV. This session sought to ensure this issue was included in the roadmap for anticipatory action in Africa.



Most of the parallel sessions can be watched on the event website:  
**[bit.ly/420eWIs](https://bit.ly/420eWIs)**

## **Impact-based forecasting co-production: supporting communities and examples from across the region**

The climate crisis has focused attention on the urgent need for improved weather and climate information services. Impact-based forecasting – moving from what the weather will be to what the weather will do – entails synthesizing weather information (e.g., forecasts) with quasi-static information on exposure and vulnerability (e.g., geodemographic and essential-facility maps) to identify the range of risks that an area faces. This session presented a case study of impact-based forecasting in Ethiopia.

## **Anchoring anticipatory action at the community level: case studies from Malawi and southern Africa**

As part of its forecast-based action project in four districts prone to riverine floods, the Malawi Red Cross Society and its Red Cross partners are digitizing the contingency plans created by target communities, and equipping community-based disaster responders with mobile phones to enable real-time, two-way communication during a disaster. Meanwhile, the Local Leadership for Global Impact project is shifting towards more anticipatory action at the local level. This session shared lessons about the role of civil society actors in forecast-based action.

## **The next-generation early warning systems with reference to current practices in several African countries**

Hazard forecasts and warnings are crucial for understanding and managing systemic, cascading and compounding risk, and advances in observation technology and data management have created enormous opportunities. This session provided an overview of the exciting potential of next-generation early warning systems, highlighting current practices in several African countries, including case studies of flooding and drought in the Nile River Basin.

## **Unravelling the compounding impacts of climate change and conflict to inform future anticipatory action planning**

It is now possible to put in place the actions and financing required to act before a disaster hits. To do this, however, it is essential to understand the complex and compounding impacts of multiple climate- and conflict-related hazards; currently, risk assessments often focus on single hazards only. Improving compound risk analysis is one objective of the Anticipation Hub's working group on anticipatory action in conflict settings. This session started a discussion around opportunities for integrating compound risk into anticipatory action.

## **Mapping of risk zones for forecast-based financing: Mapathon sessions**

The Mali Red Cross collects data from at-risk areas to operationalize the forecast-based financing mechanism in the country. These Mapathon sessions, which take place every other week, use open data (e.g., OpenStreetMap), free mapping software and web-based resources to identify and map vulnerable communities living on the banks of the country's two main rivers. This work was presented in detail during this session.

## **African governments leading the way: from minimum to advanced linkages between social protection systems and anticipatory action**

Social protection systems can protect people from the impacts of disasters, and there is the potential to scale these up further by linking them to national early warning systems. Through case studies from Lesotho, Mozambique and Somalia, this session illustrated the variety of approaches to link anticipatory action with social protection, while also highlighting some of the emerging themes and hidden issues with this approach.

## Community-led early warning and anticipatory action in Somalia

Community networks are key to facilitating actions in anticipation of, and in response to, shocks. Building on lessons about anticipatory action in Somalia and Somaliland, this session highlighted the experiences and expertise of those affected by hazards and disasters. It also explored how the government and NGOs in Somaliland are supporting people in anticipating and preparing for climate shocks.

## Integrating indigenous knowledge into forecast information

Indigenous knowledge has long been used to predict how the climate will behave, and in many parts of Africa it is seen as the most reliable form of forecast information. Participants shared their experiences of integrating indigenous knowledge into climate science, both the success stories and the challenges encountered.

## Hard talk: honest conversations about what is not going right with anticipatory action – and what can we do about it?

While acknowledging the vast benefits of anticipatory action, it is important to speak about the challenges and misfires that are part of this work: when forecast events do not occur, for example, or where the early actions undertaken are ineffective or inappropriate. This session explored how to tackle these drawbacks, using the missed opportunities for acting ahead of drought in East Africa.



Parallel sessions.



5th Africa Dialogue Platform  
on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

# DAY THREE



The core concerns of the audience – collaboration, coordination and funding, as reflected in the centre of the Mentimeter word cloud – were also on the minds of the panellists. **Sergio Innocente**, FAO, highlighted the second of these during his reflections: “[Coordination] is needed internally within the anticipatory action community, and externally with other actors. What can we do better? How can we consolidate?”

**Halima Saado**, Umma University, raised an issue facing those working on the ground: “How far are we going in terms of getting more people actively involved in anticipatory action? Who are we speaking to? Mainly practitioners in the last years, but we need to go beyond; [we need to] bridge divides and stand out.” This perspective was shared by **Maurine Ambani**, WFP: “As a practitioner, my concern is how we go beyond institutional silos to jointly deliver and codesign anticipatory action at scale.”

**Dr Kiswensda Guigma**, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, drew together two themes that arose during the earlier discussions: financing and localization. In light of the (economic) fragility of many African states, he urged for a greater focus on how to enable anticipatory action in these contexts: “How [can we provide] communities at the local level [with] access to financing for anticipatory action?”

Maurine Ambani then raised another concern, one that is pertinent to collaboration: what happens between the dialogue platforms? “Institutions are making attempts to talk, but we need to get better at doing something about the talking. We agree to plan together, but when it comes to delivery, we do not manage this in a coordinated way. We need to utilize each other’s strengths to complement each other’s work on the ground.”

Building on this theme, Kiswensda Guigma felt it was too strong to say that organizations are competing with each other – for example, WFP and the Red Cross have shared data around anticipatory action – but leadership from the countries being supported is missing: “The competition comes when organizations all rush and overburden their partners... When a country wants to engage, it is best to reach out to the partners already in the field and align.” He argued that southern leadership is needed to manage the partnerships between organizations: “It’s about how we work together, and we need clarity from the states we work in on this.”

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When we coordinate  
and collaborate,  
we serve the  
communities better.  
Nelly Maonde, Start Fund  
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Funding is, as ever, an issue that cannot be ignored. “Money matters when it comes to taking action,” noted Halima Saado. “This is where we can be competing – and we need to unpack this and find solutions.” One way to maximize how the available funds are used is to build on what is already in place, she argued. “We have been working for the last five years on anticipatory action for floods and droughts; why should FAO [and] WFP develop a [new] system? Why can’t we go to existing systems and strengthen those?” This competition for resources is an area where action is needed, she stated: “In sub-Saharan Africa, people are dying because of no food – but we are talking about systems development.”

“Where are the donors in this conversation?” asked Maurin Ambani. “How can we agree with them on how money is distributed? We need to get better at understanding different agencies’ strengths and weaknesses, and then agree how we split the money [across] agreed critical actions.”

Context – or perhaps the lack of it – was another issue for discussion. Halima Saado noted that, after four failed rainy seasons in Kenya, there are 23 livelihood zones affected, but they are not all at the same level of emergency response. “Anticipatory action can work [at all stages],” she noted, “[but] it should be context specific. We have to focus on the specific needs of each community to develop appropriate anticipatory actions.”

“

Does friendship  
end where money  
matters start?

Bettina Koelle, Red Cross  
Red Crescent Climate Centre

”

## What needs to happen next?

The session was a chance to air concerns, but it's always good to hear some solutions as well! **Dinalao Gabriel**, Namibia Red Cross Society, recommended organizing national dialogue platforms to determine who is doing what, to strengthen efforts and to avoid duplication. And should these go ahead, there is one group of people not at the table: the donors. Halima Saado continued on this point, asking: "Are they hearing our language, and the challenges on the ground? That is where the conditions are set, and they need to hear us!"

Governments also need to be more involved in future dialogue platforms. They can tap into the multi-billion funds available (e.g., from the World Bank) and have ultimate responsibility to coordinate everything that happens to tackle hazards. The panellists noted the need to get better at 'inviting them to the table', because governments set the tone for how anticipatory action is delivered on the ground.



Debate and discussion at the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform.

# Africa taking action: our plans and commitments

Over three days, the four regional hubs defined the status, needs and ways forward for their part of Africa. As the event drew to a close, it was time to move from dialogue to action. Who will do what to make the ambitions in the roadmap actually happen? The vision and priorities from across the regions were presented as follows.

## Northern Africa

The vision here is that governments and organizations have confidence in anticipatory action and integrate it into disaster risk management and shock-response systems; governments need to understand where the money should go. In addition, there is a desire to be close to communities and ensure that anticipatory action in northern Africa is localized. Actions to achieve this include:

- continuous awareness and advocacy – and there is growing evidence of how to do this from other regions
- investment in forecasting and statistics to better understand vulnerability hotspots: who is most exposed?
- partnerships and joint resource mobilization
- flexible funding, so that funds can be used ‘smartly’ ahead of a disaster.

## Eastern Africa

In eastern Africa, actors want to see anticipatory action harmonized and integrated into governments’ disaster risk management systems, and to better involve communities to reduce the impacts of hazards on vulnerable people. This can be achieved through:

- capacity-strengthening for, and coordination among, all stakeholders
- continued advocacy and awareness that explains the benefits of anticipatory action, thus supporting its mainstreaming into existing government systems

- resource mobilization to ensure that all these ambitions are ‘oiled’ and can be achieved, and to ensure that anticipatory action in the region is sustainable.

## Southern Africa

The ambitions for southern Africa built on the roadmap developed by the regional technical working group on anticipatory action.<sup>4</sup> The overarching vision is that governments in the region are empowered to employ anticipatory approaches along the human–development nexus. The priority actions to realize this include:

- enhance coordination at the national level
- develop synergies with social safety nets
- expand beyond climate-related hazards to include hazards such as health and conflict
- sensitize donors around the need for more – and more flexible – funding
- facilitate cross-border and south–south exchanges in the region
- ensure that community voices are heard, and that awareness-raising activities are led by communities.

## West and central Africa

This region outlined four priorities: (1) fill the gap in central Africa, where there are few anticipatory action programmes to date; (2) improve the capacity of regional meteorological services to forecast risk and impacts; (3) increase funding for technology in the region; and (4) push for joint advocacy and resource mobilization across the region. The immediate steps to achieve these include:

- knowledge-sharing between west and central Africa
- regional institutions taking leadership on anticipatory action
- knowledge-sharing to ensure users’ needs are met
- establish a regional working group on anticipatory action.

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<sup>4</sup> See: [bit.ly/3p3qmGy](https://bit.ly/3p3qmGy)

## Moving forwards

So, what is needed for these regional ambitions to be blended into an ambitious and achievable pan-African roadmap? Concrete ideas were put forward by both panellists and participants.

“

Consensus is emerging across the four regions [and] the key words are (nearly) the same: government-led, avoid competition, enable coordination, and recognize the role of science in the anticipatory action agenda. Academic institutions... [can] provide a new cadre of trainees who have the knowledge, abilities and attitudes needed for anticipatory action.

Prof. Luis Artur, Eduardo Mondlane University

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“

For youth, we have a lot of potential and the capacity to implement most of these [anticipatory] actions. It is upon us to ensure that we are coming up with plans that are more sustainable and achievable using the potential that youth have.

Ben Kabi, Kenya Red Cross Society

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The role and ownership of local and national government is key for anticipatory action in conflict settings. Collectively, we should ensure that financing mechanisms are connected from global to local levels. Mechanisms need to be developed that put the most vulnerable at the centre.

Morena Bassam, International Committee of the Red Cross

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“

Making the process led by governments brings issues of legitimacy. Which government is being led? How efficient is the government in providing the [action] that is needed? Sometimes you need a route to ensure that anticipatory action is delivered. Sometimes we have to question the leadership of the government.

Prof. Luis Artur, Eduardo Mondlane University

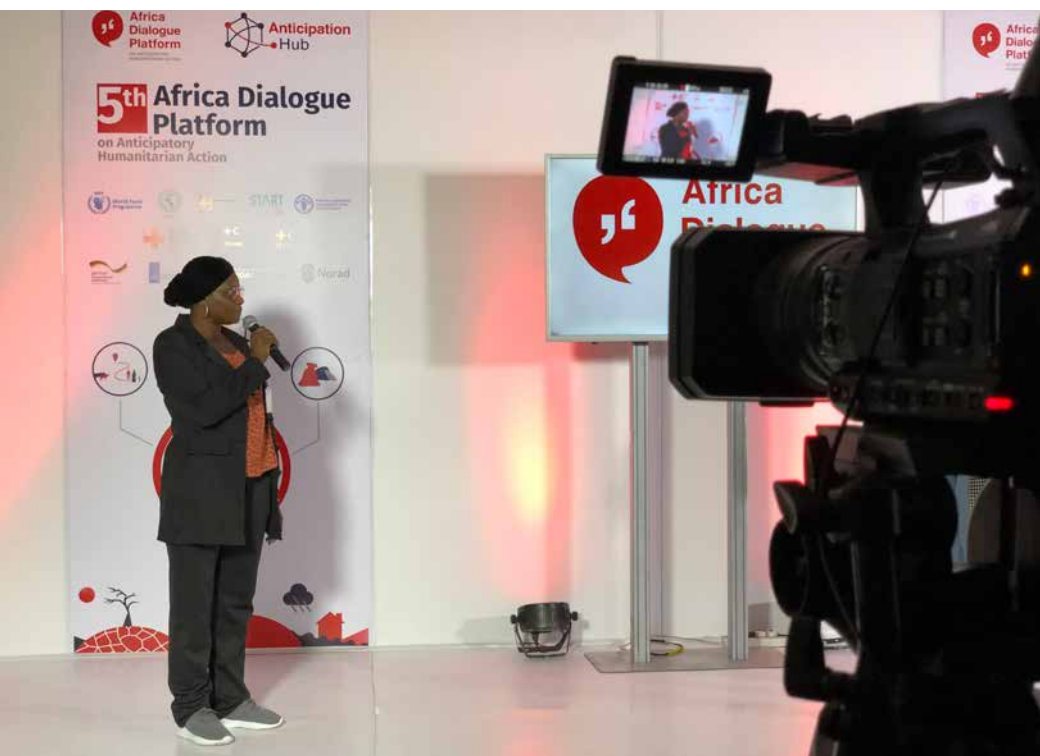
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There is a thin line between anticipatory action and early warning systems: if early warning fails, anticipatory action fails. [So] early warning systems need to be implemented with an anticipatory action lens... if early warnings lead to action, then you can ... prevent or mitigate the impacts.

Gatkuoth Kai, African Union

”



Discussing ambitions for the Africa roadmap.

# Closing ceremony

A drumroll moment to conclude the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform... the launch of the roadmap for anticipatory action in Africa! **Irene Amuron**, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, talked the participants through the joint vision for Africa and the common priorities to 2028. This is, understandably, a work in progress and further refinement will take place in the coming weeks and months. But at the end of three intense days, this document is evidence of shared experiences and agreement on where anticipatory action in Africa needs to go next.

## Africa roadmap

### The African joint vision

By 2028, anticipatory action is integrated into government led disaster risk management (DRM) systems with the commitment to codesign and codeliver anticipatory action with communities

#### NORTHERN AFRICA

Governments and cooperating partners have confidence in anticipatory action and integrated into their DRM and shock-responsive social protection system and livelihoods

#### EAST AFRICA

Anticipatory action is harmonized and integrated into government-led DRM systems with the engagement of communities and supporting stakeholders in order to reduce the impact of hazards on lives and livelihoods

#### WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

By 2030 governments take the leadership and ownership in anticipatory action with support from regional technical and political organizations

#### SOUTHERN AFRICA

Anticipation of disasters had become an integral part of the DRM cycle within the humanitarian community and national governments in southern Africa

“

Today, we discussed what we are actually doing... to move from dialogue to action. An important word is ‘joint’; for the Start Network, this is the key point: the concept of working together is extremely important in anticipatory action.

Anna Farina, Start Network

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“

As IFRC, we have committed to [providing] 25 per cent of our Disaster Response Emergency Fund to anticipatory action, and we are committed to strengthening anticipatory action in the region... we offer our support to this plan.

Mohammed Babiker, IFRC Nairobi Cluster

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“

We need to keep the eyes of the world on the crisis unfolding on our doorstep, and we know the gains that anticipatory action can bring. It's time for action now; the roadmap is clear on priorities and the actions needed [and] you can continue to count on the support of WFP.

Sibi Lawson-Marriott, WFP

”

“

This event has looked at where we have come from... and where we go, and I think we have made good progress along this line. We know there are competing crises, and global crises, but we will only make progress if we go to scale... I want to reiterate the full commitment of FAO to [this] work.

Cyril Ferrand, FAO

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“

The Anticipation Hub really wanted to offer the chance to come together as a community, to show why your work matters, to celebrate this work... and to plan for the time ahead. And I think we achieved this. We have an Africa roadmap – this is amazing!

Dr Nikolas Scherer, Anticipation Hub

”



We can say that this roadmap is collaborative from all of you... [and] the Africa Dialogue Platforms should remain... where we bring in our best practices and good intentions to reduce the impacts of disasters. Let me reiterate those commitments [to anticipatory action] from ICPAC's side... It was a great pleasure to host this event. Please come again!

Dr Ahmed Amdihun, ICPAC



## Africa roadmap priorities

### Common priorities to 2028

1. Capacity strengthening to support government-led and context-specific anticipatory action via African institutions
2. Harmonized coordination for delivery of anticipatory action at scale
3. Joint Africa-wide advocacy
4. Aligned Africa-wide resource mobilization
5. Improved community engagement

#### NORTHERN AFRICA

- Awareness and advocacy
- Capacity-building
- Partnership and joint resource mobilization
- Resource mobilization
- Engagement of all
- Sustainability

#### EAST AFRICA

- Advocacy and awareness
- Capacity and coordination
- Resource mobilization
- Engagement of all
- Sustainability

#### WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA

- Awareness-raising
- Advocacy and resource mobilization
- Enhanced coordination
- Capacity building

#### SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Evidence-based advocacy and awareness-rising
- Coordination frameworks for anticipatory action
- Harmonization of triggers
- Aligning anticipatory action instruments

# Reflections on the 5th Africa Dialogue Platform



“Very interesting and promising ideas and statements shared these days! However, it seems that concrete and solid actions are still needed to make the anticipatory approach a reality... and to ensure community participation.”

Pedro P. Palma Urrutia, session chat



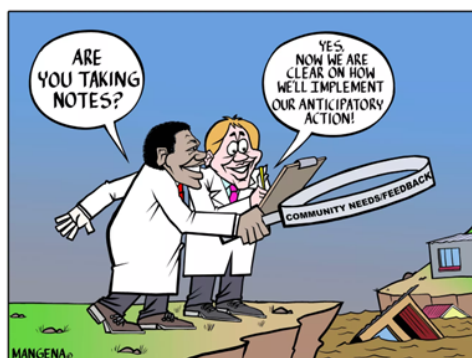
“[Anticipatory action] has to be in legislation if it is to be sustained in government systems. Otherwise it will be like a visitor: here today and gone tomorrow.”

Anonymous, event pinboard



“The need for multiple stakeholders to take centre stage in anticipatory action has been clear in the discussions so far and – with political will – youth and marginalized groups can surely play an integral role in this, for example through disaster prediction and preparedness activities.”

Maryanne Muriuki, daily email newsletter



“Attending the community-led #AnticipatoryAction in Somalia session at the #AfricaDP22. I totally agree community networks are critical sources of early warning information and these insights should be included in both anticipation and in the response to shocks.”

@JTeran2000 on Twitter

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