



6th Africa Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action



Preparing for the (un)predictable: anticipatory action
in the face of a changing climate and changing contexts

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Co-hosts



Food and Agriculture
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Africa continued to experience the impacts of extreme weather in 2022. With floods in Mali and Nigeria, drought-induced famine in the Horn of Africa, and cyclones in the Indian Ocean islands and Mozambique, the continent's humanitarian needs continued to grow. These hazards, alongside non-climate-related hazards such as disease and conflict, further emphasized the need to scale up and strengthen anticipatory action.

Yet 2022 also saw progress. Organizations implemented anticipatory action in 15 countries in Africa during the year, acting ahead of floods, economic crises, drought, electoral violence, cyclones and epidemics. Increasingly, the continent's Regional Economic Communities – including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) – are, under guidance from the African Union (AU), pushing the agenda towards the UN secretary-general's call for functioning early warning systems for all in the next five years.

Building on the outcomes from 2022's dialogue platform, the **6th Africa Dialogue Platform** will explore diverse issues around its main theme: **'Preparing for the (un)predictable: anticipatory action in the face of a changing climate and changing contexts'**. This will be an opportunity for all stakeholders in the anticipatory action sector – humanitarians, communities, community-based organizations, (local) governments, donors, researchers, scientists and others – to discuss:

- how to operationalize Africa's regional roadmaps for anticipatory action
- how anticipatory action in Africa fits with the Early Warning For All (EW4ALL) initiative
- financing options for anticipatory action in Africa
- major barriers and enablers to bring locally led anticipatory action to scale.

The Anticipation Hub is an initiative of

The Africa Dialogue Platform is supported by



Participants will jointly prepare an outcome statement during the event to capture the key recommendations from the event, which will inform the EW4ALL regional work plan.

Format

Held over three days, the 6th Africa Dialogue Platform will combine in-person meetings in Johannesburg with online talks and sessions to engage the wider community.

Key topics

The event's plenaries and parallel sessions will explore the following topics.

1. Compounding and cascading risks
2. Anticipatory action in the context of protracted crises: food insecurity, recurrent cyclones, drought
3. Tools and approaches to anticipate food crises and growing food insecurity
4. Lessons on implementation in Africa: which practices work and which ones don't?
5. Strengthening roles at all layers: policy, operational, and national to global
6. The role of digitalization in delivering anticipatory action
7. Financing for anticipatory action in Africa
8. Linking investment in infrastructure and institutions to effective anticipatory action at the 'last mile'
9. Using early warnings as a catalyst for individual and community-led anticipatory action
10. Community-informed impact-based forecasting design
11. Mainstreaming anticipatory action into national and regional disaster risk management
12. Fragility, conflict and violence: how does anticipatory action play a role in addressing these?
13. Loss and damage: what can anticipatory action offer to policy-makers?

Agenda

Day 1: Regional lessons and regional roadmaps

In-person and online participants will split into regional groups to:

- assess progress on the status of the regional roadmaps
- identify the changing risk, policy and climate landscapes for anticipatory action in Africa
- identify opportunities to operationalize these roadmaps, to be captured in an operational plan
- explore ways to engage at-risk communities while achieving each roadmap's ambitions
- exchange and learn among the regions.

Day 2: Regional roadmaps to national practices

Together, participants will explore different roles in implementing the regional roadmaps and:

- define the roles of the Regional Economic Communities in advancing the regional roadmaps and, more broadly, early warning systems and anticipatory action
- explore how we are financing anticipatory action and what the future opportunities are
- revise the Africa roadmap on anticipatory action
- explore the requirements to operationalize this Africa-wide roadmap
- explore links between the Africa roadmap and ongoing national and regional initiatives (e.g., the EW4ALL initiative).

Day 3: Anticipatory action in a changing future - can this be locally led?

The final day will explore the next steps and decisions needed to operationalize the Africa roadmap. Together, participants will:

- validate and sign off on the Africa roadmap
- make declarations and commitments towards its operationalization
- define strategies to engage governments, communities, academia, humanitarian organizations and others for the implementation of, and reporting on, the Africa roadmap.

Anticipatory action: highlights from 2022

Africa continued to experience the impacts of extreme weather in 2022, when over 4,000 people were killed and 19 million affected ([Carbon Brief 2022](#)). From floods in Nigeria to the drought and famine in the Horn of Africa, humanitarian needs continued to grow. This is unsurprising, given that the [IPCC's 2021](#) report projected an increase in the intensity of such hazards. Combined, these re-emphasized the need to scale up and strengthen anticipatory action, early warnings and early action.

There was progress towards addressing the problem in 2022, with organizations implementing anticipatory action in 15 countries in Africa, acting ahead of floods, economic crises, drought, electoral violence, cyclones and epidemics. Despite this progress in implementing anticipatory action, challenges remain.

One challenge is that although early warnings are already commonly issued on a national scale, they do not always reach those who need them most, nor are they always understood in time by the relevant authorities and communities. In the case of the Cyclone Idai in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, for example, nobody expected a storm of such magnitude and the warnings did not communicate the potential impacts and damage, in particular to vulnerable homes in poor communities. In addition, the early warnings weren't used to initiate anticipatory action in the critical time window between the forecast and cyclone making landfall; this may have mitigated the impacts of the torrential rains and devastating winds ahead of time.

More encouragingly, several initiatives – both new and ongoing – gained momentum at global, regional and national levels in 2022. For example, the AU's Africa Multi-hazard Early Warning and Actions System (AMHEWAS) was launched in early 2022, with the goal to substantially reduce disaster losses in Africa by 2030. Since its launch, it has made substantial progress in training AU Member States, and over 400 advisories have been published through its flagship product, the [Continental Watch](#).

In line with the AMHEWAS, and through a joint programme with the EU, SADC and the IFRC partnered to launch the [SADC Humanitarian Operation Centre in Mozambique](#). This aims to develop a regional framework for multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS) for SADC Member States and to operationalize early warning systems.

In September 2022, the ministerial conference on bridging this gap between early warning and early action was held in Maputo, Mozambique, which resulted in the [Maputo Declaration](#) on bridging the gap between early warning and early action.

Preceding this ministerial meeting in Maputo, the Africa Regional Anticipatory Action working groups were established to further discussions on anticipatory action, including scaling up and mainstreaming mechanisms and approaches in the disaster

management landscape. This resulted in several regional roadmaps, for example for the IGAD and SADC regions. For SADC, the Regional Anticipatory Action Working Group, which has FAO, WFP and the IFRC as its secretariat, launched the [Southern Africa Regional Roadmap on Anticipatory Action](#); the operationalization of this is being taken forward through the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) Joint Early Warning Anticipatory Action Programme for Southern Africa. Regional dialogue platforms on anticipatory action also provided a platform for different stakeholders to be brought on board and discuss partnerships, collaboration and innovative solutions to achieving the various ambitions for this approach.

At the global level, the UN secretary-general António Guterres called for everyone on Earth to be protected by early warning systems in the next five years, with a strong pillar on preparedness and anticipatory action. The EW4ALL initiative's [Executive Plan of Action](#), launched during COP27, called for timely implementation of this initiative, which will build on the AU's AMHEWAS to ensure that every African is protected in the five years.

In June 2022, another milestone was reached with the endorsement of the [Council of Delegates Resolution on strengthening anticipatory action](#) across the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This commits to expanding anticipatory action to more countries, protecting more people and covering more hazards, including compounding risks and non-weather-related hazards, with anticipatory action. To operationalize these ambitions, the [IFRC's Operational Framework for Anticipatory Action 2021-2025](#) sets out that, by 2025: 80 National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies will be implementing anticipatory action; 25 per cent of its Disaster Response Emergency Fund will be allocated to anticipatory action; 4.3 million people will be reached annually; and anticipatory approaches will be extended to more hazards, including non-weather-related hazards and compounding risks. Start Network also initiated research into anticipatory action in 2022 as it sought to build evidence of this approach, for example through its report [Potential for Anticipatory Action and Disaster Risk Financing](#).

See also

- [The draft IGAD and regional roadmaps](#)