ASIA-PACIFIC DIALOGUE PLATFORM on ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Anticipation Hub

REPORT

from the 8th Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

Harmonizing the anticipatory action approach: finding the right tune for coherence

4 to 6 November 2025

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ASB	Arbeiter Samiter-Bund
DRM	disaster risk management
DRRM	disaster risk-reduction and -management
EW4All	Early Warnings for All
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
NDRRMA	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority
NGO	non-governmental organization
NORCAP	A global provider of expertise to the humanitarian, development and peace-building sectors, operated by the Norwegian Refugee Council.
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RIMES	Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia
TWGAA	Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action
UN	United Nations
WFP	World Food Programme
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

Highlights from the 8th Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform

There were 109 participants at the 8th Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform.

A commitment to greater harmonization

Anticipatory action has expanded across the Asia-Pacific region in recent years; in 2024, there were 137 frameworks in 15 countries, and over 200 have been identified in 2025, across 20 countries. But while impressive, this growth raises a question: are these frameworks harmonized with each other? Are the organizations behind them well coordinated, in terms of when they trigger these frameworks, where they are intervening and the types of assistance they provide?

The Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform was an opportunity to examine the different types of harmonization taking place within countries, as well as an opportunity for countries to learn from one another. And, while each country is at a different stage of the process, there was agreement across all the participants that better harmonization will be critical for ensuring this approach is sustainable in the future.

A coordinated future with governments

Across the region, governments are increasingly stepping into the anticipatory action agenda, with countries such as Bangladesh,

Mongolia, Nepal and the Philippines demonstrating visible leadership. What is emerging is growing government ownership of the approach: they are shaping trigger systems, defining standards and protocols for anticipatory action, and exploring how this approach fits within their disaster-risk-management (DRM) and climate-adaptation systems.

While financing opportunities are emerging, lessons from the Philippines – especially the recent State of Imminent Disaster Law (Republic Act 12287) – provided participants at the Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform with an exciting vision of how anticipatory action can be institutionalized at the national level, with clear examples of how local-level actors can select different approaches – and how they can finance them. Overall, the discussions confirmed that governments are increasingly the drivers of how anticipatory action is designed, governed and expanded across the region.

Planning for the years ahead

With representatives from 15 different countries attending, the Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform was a chance for the Asia-Pacific Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action (TWGAA) to ask: how can we support your efforts to strengthen anticipatory action across the region? How can we improve anticipatory action in the coming years? What are the challenges, and how can we work together more effectively? Ideas and feedback were gathered throughout the event, and reviewed collaboratively on the final day. The main findings will inform the working group's activities in the coming months.

DAY ONE

Opening

After welcoming the participants, **Asmawi Syam**, Indonesian Red Cross Society, began the discussions by setting out his ambition for this approach in the host country: "Anticipatory action, for multiple hazards, must be evidence based; it must be inclusive, and closely connected to community networks. This dialogue platform brings capacities together so that decisions can be made earlier – and better." He also touched upon why the central theme for the event was important: "Anticipatory action cannot be achieved by a single actor; we need to complement one another."

"The concept of anticipatory action is increasingly seen in global and regional DRM landscapes," continued **Tito Asung Wicaksono**, Regional Disaster Management Agency of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, "and is supported by advances in forecasting, early warnings and financing." He explained that the Yogyakarta region – the location for this year's event – is known not only for its rich culture, but also its resilience to hazards. Yogyakarta has made progress in institutionalizing anticipatory action, for example through a community-level plan for cyclones that guides how local communities should act when a hazard warning is issued. "Anticipatory action should not just be a practice, but a policy in Yogyakarta," he concluded.

> "Anticipatory action saves lives, strengthens communities and must be the foundation of our disaster risk governance."
>
> Tito Asung Wicaksono, Regional Disaster Management Agency of the Special Region of Yogyakarta

Pangarso Suryotomo, National Agency for Disaster Countermeasure of Indonesia, explained why anticipatory action is necessary in Indonesia, a country that faces many disasters, including floods, landslides and tsunamis. According to the *WorldRisk Index 2024*, it is the world's second-most vulnerable country.[1] "The government has taken firm steps to contextualize anticipatory action in the country's DRM system" he said.

> "Anticipatory action cannot be achieved by a single actor; we need to complement one another.
>
> Asmawi Syam, Indonesian Red Cross Society

[1] See: tinyurl.com/nhd8urpj

Government representatives from Indonesia opened the dialogue platform.

"It not only saves lives, but reduces the cost to the economy." This is reflected in several regulations in the country, which explicitly embed this approach. Such systematization must start from information being accepted, understood and acted upon by the people, he added, and this is one area where Indonesia is investing. For example, anticipatory action is part of the 'Resilience Villages' initiative, which helps to ensure it is embedded at the community level.

Lastly, **Lilik Kurniawan**, Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Cultural Affairs in Indonesia, updated the participants about the government's roadmap for anticipatory action (2025-2029) which it hopes will act as a regulatory framework for ministries and other stakeholders. Alongside this, the government is building a national coordination team for anticipatory action at the national and subnational levels. It is also part of the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative, which aims to ensure everyone in the country is covered by early warnings by 2027. He concluded with a request for the coming three days: "Please use this forum as a place to exchange and share good practices."

> "The Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform is the place to work together and explore potential solutions to the 'harmonization problem'."
>
> Raymond Zingg, IFRC

One voice from Yogyakarta: harmonized cyclone protocol

The first example of a harmonized protocol came from Yogyakarta, the host region. **Erik Nugroho**, World Food Programme (WFP) Indonesia, explained how authorities in the region, including the provincial disaster management office, have been working to harmonize the region's cyclone protocols. This process began after Tropical Cyclone Cempaka in 2017 exposed delays between early warnings and actions. Now, early warnings are linked to triggers and government budgets, and integrated with risk information, forecast data, sectoral impacts and funding mechanisms – thus aligning science, governance and budgets.

> "Anticipatory action becomes sustainable when everyone shares the same system and the same triggers."
>
> Erik Nugroho, WFP Indonesia

The basic principle is that everyone – from meteorological agencies to village governments – speaks the same language and follows the same system. In practice, this means that villages use the same stages for early warnings as the government ('alert', 'cautious', 'be prepared') so that all the actions taken are coordinated.

And the region has already seen improvements, for example in the speed of decision-making and greater local ownership. The harmonized protocol still needs to be tested ahead of an actual cyclone, but there are plans to instil this approach more widely across the country.

Harmonizing via sound: an experiment

Traditional bamboo instruments are used to share early warnings in many parts of Indonesia. The participants got an opportunity to try one of these on day one: the *angklung*, an instrument from West Java made from bamboo tubes cut to create different notes.

Plenary #1: documenting anticipatory action harmonization in six target countries to support a regional guidance

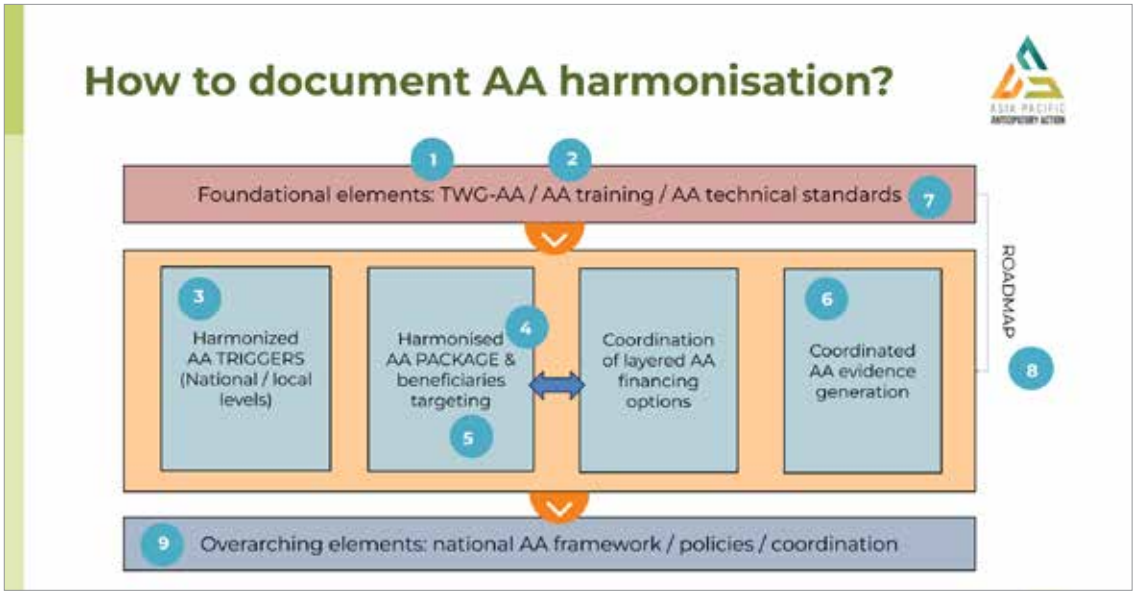
Harmonization is not a new concept in the Asia-Pacific region; it is already happening in several countries. But after applying this approach for ten years, it has never been more crucial, explained **Damien Riquet**, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). A recent mapping exercise by the Asia-Pacific TWGAA showed that there were 137 frameworks in 15 countries in 2024: "Is this progress, or is it too many – and are they too fragmented? Do we need to reduce the number of frameworks, but ensure they are more harmonized?"

Citing country examples – the Philippines has 34 frameworks, Indonesia has 30 – he clarified that this growth is normal, as more organizations adopt anticipatory action as an approach, and for more hazards. But can we continue to support so many frameworks and so many types of actions? There is an argument for focusing on those that really make a difference – potentially at the exclusion of others.

Vlad Cozma, NORCAP, then explained how harmonization can reduce through standardized approaches and better complementarity across organizations. To push this forward, there are efforts under way to develop a regional guideline on how to do this, building on the roadmaps in place across Asia-Pacific. The TWGAA has been documenting initiatives to improve harmonization using nine criteria, which were developed based on discussions with six countries (Figure 1).

> "In the Philippines, different organizations activated for different typhoons that struck in the past year. With harmonization, we could reach more people at the same time."
>
> Damien Riquet, FAO

Figure 1. How to document anticipatory action harmonization



The participants then worked in country groups to rate where they stand according to these criteria. Bangladesh is one of the countries that has made considerable progress, for example through the establishment of a technical working group for anticipatory action. Others, such as the Maldives, have not been implementing this approach for as long, meaning efforts towards harmonization are at an earlier stage.

Each country's self-assessment was collected to inform later discussions during the dialogue platform, and to help countries identify where they need to focus to increase harmonization. Feedback on the nine criteria was also gathered during this session, and will be used to refine the regional guidelines for harmonization; these will be finalized in 2026.

> "Harmonization is very important to make sure that we are working towards the same language, towards the same goal, to make sure everyone is safe before a disaster happens."
>
> Chrysant Lily Kusumowardoyo, Arbeiter Samiter-Bund (ASB), on LinkedIn

Countries assess their progress towards greater harmonization.

Ignites

Across the three days, short, focused Ignite sessions – each no longer than ten minutes – provided the participants with a snapshot of issues critical to anticipatory action in the Asia-Pacific region. Several organizations provided these updates, which covered diverse themes:

1. Power in participation: localizing inclusive anticipatory action in Indonesia (Plan International)
2. Embedding anticipatory action in Nepal's disaster-risk-reduction and -management landscape (Nepal AA Clinic)
3. Implementing anticipatory action in conflict-affected areas: a toolkit introduction (Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre)
4. Heat perception and impact study in Indonesia (Indonesia Red Cross Society)
5. National Early Action Protocol: from development to institutionalization (Bangladesh Red Crescent Society; Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Bangladesh)
6. Readiness to roadmap: index-based readiness of anticipatory action to guide roadmap development (American Red Cross; IFRC; Nepal Red Cross Society)
7. 3rd National Dialogue Platform in Bangladesh: what, how and what next? (Bangladesh TWGAA)
8. One trigger to rule them all! Harmonized flood anticipatory action (Sri Lanka Red Cross Society)
9. Integrated trigger mechanisms for anticipatory action and climate risk insurance (Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Bangladesh; Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh; WFP)
10. Pakistan flood activation 2025 (Pakistan Red Crescent Society)

Thematic sessions 1 to 3

The thematic sessions during the Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform gave the participants a choice of subjects to explore in depth. The first three took place during the afternoon on day one.

Development of anticipatory action roadmaps and beyond

What does it take for governments to move from anticipation to action at scale? This session – led by the Indonesia TWGAA, the Nepal AA Clinic and the Nepal Red Cross Society, with the American Red Cross, the Danish Red Cross, FAO and the IFRC – shone a spotlight on how countries, including Indonesia, Nepal and Timor-Leste, are transforming pilot projects into national-level, government-led systems. Using examples of these countries' national roadmaps, the participants learnt what worked and what didn't – lessons that will help to create a practical blueprint for scaling up this approach across the region.

Bridging the gap: gender-responsive anticipatory action in Asia-Pacific

When disaster strikes, who acts first – and who gets left behind? Across Asia-Pacific, new evidence shows that anticipatory action saves more lives when it's designed with – and for – everyone. In this session, speakers from FAO, the Finnish Red Cross, Plan International and UN Women explained how gender-responsive and inclusive anticipatory action is changing the game. This included details of the *Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Anticipatory Action Toolkit*, a practical guide to turning these principles into practice.

Trigger approaches in conflict and displacement anticipatory action

In fragile and conflict-affected settings, forecasting and trigger models for anticipatory action face unique challenges – but also offer new opportunities. This session, led by the Danish Refugee Council, Plan International and World Vision International, with the Myanmar Red Cross Society and the Philippine Red Cross, showcased different approaches to conflict-sensitive forecasting, exploring whether harmonized trigger models are feasible, or even desirable, in such settings.

> "The discussion… highlighted the need to prioritize safety and security when supporting communities to define triggers in conflict contexts, and to bridge data-driven forecasting with local insight for more conflict-sensitive early action."
>
> Plan International Asia-Pacific, on LinkedIn

Marketing good ideas

The marketplace session on day one gave organizations, from across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond, the opportunity to showcase their work. As well as stalls that focused on efforts to harmonize anticipatory action, other critical aspects of this approach were covered: everything from early warnings and impact forecasting to complex crises and inclusive approaches.

Plenary #2: anticipatory action rationalization between humanitarian actors and governments – a prerequisite for layered financing

Day one concluded with a role-playing exercise. A community is forecast to be hit by a cyclone in three days; four agencies are primed to provide assistance. How can they coordinate their planned actions, which range from cash grants and shelter-strengthening to livelihood support and food? Which community members will they support – and why?

This exercise, led by FAO, NORCAP and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), sought to demonstrate how the actions delivered by different agencies *could* be effective – but sometimes miss the mark. The 'farmer', for example, wasn't convinced about the relevance of the support package he received. The 'fisher', by contrast, was happy with the cash grant that meant he could meet his family's needs – but noted that this did little to protect his livelihood assets, notably his boat, which was destroyed by the cyclone. And while the shelter kit was practical, the 'community member' noted that she didn't receive any training in how to set it up.

Harmonized, or rationalized, anticipatory action means that organizations work together to ensure that the support provided – which often comes

from multiple agencies – meets the varying needs of at-risk communities. This is especially important at a time when the financing available for all types of humanitarian assistance is under huge pressure.

Following the role-play, the participants worked once again in country groups to identify which actions should form a 'baseline' package – one that all households in the target area receive – for different hazards; they also needed to decide what an 'additional' package could look like.

This task required critical thinking about which sectors (e.g., health, shelter) were the priority for each hazard, and what was achievable in the lead time between the forecast and the hazard striking. "It's wonderful that every table looks different," remarked **Vlad Cozma**, NORCAP, "and the reasons behind your decisions will be interesting to hear."

> "What an inspiring start to the 8th Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Action here in Yogyakarta, Indonesia! Day 1 was full of energy and meaningful discussions around documenting [the] harmonization of anticipatory action, roadmaps and many more..."
>
> Muhammed Atif Khan, German Red Cross in Pakistan, on LinkedIn

Prioritizing actions for different hazards.

DAY TWO

Thematic sessions 4 to 6

Can we come up with harmonized anticipatory action triggers based on impact forecasts?

This session looked at why we need harmonized triggers, and what successful harmonization looks like in the Asia-Pacific region. Led by FAO, Start Network and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), together with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES) and WFP, it explored how current anticipatory action approaches can be made compatible with the government-led forecasts and warning systems in place, so that these respond to the needs of anticipatory action. Throughout the discussions, the key question was: how can impact-based forecasts be developed, and how can they help to define and harmonize triggers for individual or compound hazards?

> We have different triggers, different thresholds, different systems in countries: we need to talk about how to harmonize these – and if we can do it. Why is it hard to harmonize triggers? We want to know your thoughts.
>
> Arvin Caro, Start Network

Arvin Caro.

> This week, we are all rolling up our sleeves to rethink how we collaborate, across governments, UN agencies, Red Cross and Red Crescent, NGOs, and research partners, to build a cohesive, coherent and connected Asia-Pacific anticipatory action ecosystem.
>
> Asia-Pacific TWGAA on LinkedIn

National Heat Action in Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nepal: a multisectoral approach to #Beat_the_Heat

Heat waves are becoming silent but deadly disasters across the globe, demanding coordinated and multisectoral anticipatory action. In this session, participants heard from countries at the forefront of efforts to anticipate heat, including those – such as Bangladesh and Nepal – that are pioneering protocols and frameworks that bring together governments, meteorological agencies, health systems, city authorities, development partners and community organizations. The session was led by the American Red Cross, the Finnish Red Cross and the IFRC, together with the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, the German Red Cross, the Indonesia Red Cross Society, the Nepal Red Cross Society and Start Network Bangladesh, and the contributions gathered will inform an upcoming paper on this theme.

From floods to firearms: what changes when anticipatory action meets violence, conflict and displacement?

What happens when anticipatory action designed for predictable climate risks is used in the less predictable environment of conflict and displacement? Led by the Danish Refugee Council, Plan International and World Vision International, together with the German Red Cross, this session examined the operational, ethical and political changes needed to make anticipatory action effective in fragile sessions – especially for women, young people and marginalized groups.

> “This discussion… emphasized the importance of conflict-sensitive forecasting, community participation and inclusive decision-making to ensure that women, youth and marginalized groups are not only protected, but empowered to lead.”
>
> Plan International Asia-Pacific on LinkedIn

Plenary #3: Early Warnings for All and anticipatory action – same same but different?

“Which pillar of EW4All is most related to anticipatory action?” asked **Damien Riquet**, FAO to kick off the opening plenary on day two. “Ah, you know… Pillar 4!” But the real question under discussion was: is EW4All useful for anticipatory action, or are people confused about the connections? How do we connect the initiative with the approach? “We have noticed that there is a lot of confusion about EW4All at the country level,” he noted. “Is it the same, is one part of the other? Some know, but others are confused, which means donors and partners are also – probably – confused.”

Eleven of the EW4All initiative's initial focal countries are in Asia-Pacific and in 2024, at the request of practitioners in the region, the Asia-Pacific TWGAA tried to clarify the connections by drafting a think piece that explored this relationship. This outlined some of the differences between the two. For example, EW4All is, by definition, for everyone, while anticipatory action is highly targeted, so there is a disconnect in terms of scale between the two. It also highlighted areas for cooperation. For example, there are efforts to embed anticipatory action within national and government-led systems to ensure it is sustainable; this is an area where EW4All can help, as it already operates at these levels.

The presenters then walked the participants through six key points from the think piece (see box). Each table was asked to provide feedback on these, based on their own experiences at the country level. "Do you agree with them? Or would you like something else?" asked **Jochen Luther**, WMO. "How could they be used in your country? And is there anything missing?" The feedback gathered from this session will be used to refine the recommendations, after which the think piece will be published.

> "We need to speak more: the EW4All community of practice and the anticipatory action community of practice."
>
> Damien Riquet, FAO

Six key points for EW4All and anticipatory action

1. At the country level, there must be better alignment between early warning systems and anticipatory action projects, ideally with common hazard(s) and geographic priority areas.
2. Convergence between early warnings and anticipatory action triggers must be ensured through the use of pre-warning information, impact-based forecasting or aligned thresholds.
3. While anticipatory action relies on all four of the EW4All pillars, Pillar 4 should ensure that the work of the anticipatory action community of practice is scaled up.
4. If convergence between early warning systems and anticipatory action projects is ensured, development finance may focus on the 'build' part, while humanitarian financing can contribute more effectively to the 'fuelling' of anticipatory action frameworks.
5. The evidence base for anticipatory action and its integration within early warning systems must be reinforced to clearly recommend a sustainable way of addressing anticipatory assistance.
6. The overall coordination role of the Asia-Pacific TWGAA could be enhanced within the wider EW4All initiative.

Discussions under way in Yogyakarta.

Plenary #4: anticipatory action institutionalization

The second plenary of the day focused on the institutionalization of anticipatory action. Four government representatives, all from their country's national disaster management authority, took to the stage to share their experiences.

Atty Rafael R. Ricalde, Office of Civil Defense, spoke about the State of Imminent Disaster Law, which was passed in the Philippines in September 2025. The push for this came from the frequency of disasters the country has faced in recent years; in 2024 alone, six cyclones hit in quick succession. Yet when drafting the implementing rules and regulations for this law, several issues came up. One of these was that the new law didn't set specific targets or levels for how much government units should spend on anticipatory action. This meant that the amounts allocated could be miniscule: "Just enough for token compliance with the new law."

Another issue raised relates to the realities of implementing the measures set out in the law. For example, the national fund for disaster risk reduction was 514 million US dollars in 2024, but most of this went on post-disaster rehabilitation for communities; anticipatory action and other pre-disaster projects received just 220,000 US dollars. Embedding anticipatory action into law should see this amount rise. Indeed, this was one of the reasons behind it, as historically, anticipatory action has been a very low priority for government agencies.

In Indonesia, several initiatives have sought to integrate anticipatory action into ministerial strategies, including through the national roadmap for anticipatory action. What were the key ingredients behind doing so? One approach, as outlined by **Robi Amri**, National Agency for Disaster Countermeasure, is to align anticipatory action with existing DRM structures, for example by contextualizing it within national regulatory frameworks such as the Disaster Management Law: "This can help position anticipatory action as an official disaster-management strategy."

Government representatives share their thoughts during the plenary.

Anticipatory action is also presented as an approach that builds resilience to disasters; this increases support within the Indonesian government. And the country is now documenting successes, gained from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and humanitarian partners, to build the evidence base for anticipatory action – essential for advocacy efforts with different government departments.

In Nepal, the AA Clinic was established by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) to coordinate all anticipatory action partners – from within the government and outside – while also strengthening capacity for this approach within the country. The vision, explained **Ram Bahadur KC**, NDRRMA, is to establish anticipatory action as a central approach to disaster management: "We are [establishing] projects across Nepal, because we want to work across the society."

One of the AA Clinic's early achievements was the national framework and roadmap for anticipatory action. These set out five pillars to ensure that all actors in the country use the same approach. And the next step? To ensure that anticipatory action is operationalized at all levels of government: central, regional and local.

The final presentation came from Bangladesh, which recently launched national-level early action protocols for cyclones and floods. The former was activated ahead of Cyclone Remal in May 2024, and **Razwanur Rahman**, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, shared some of the lessons. For example, partners disseminated early warnings in at-risk areas and helped 3 million people to evacuate to cyclone shelters; they also helped around 30,000 households through cash transfers. These actions dramatically reduced the number of lives lost from the hazard: from more than a million during past events, to just 18 people from Cyclone Remal.

Despite having national protocols in place, there are still challenges to overcome, such as short lead times or cyclones changing pathways at a late stage. How can the protocols be made more effective? Through secure financing, he stated: "This means working with the Ministry of

> "Our ambition is to involve more people in anticipatory action: governments, fishermen, journalists and many others. They need to understand the benefits… that will help us [with scaling up]."
>
> Razwanur Rahman, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Bangladesh

Finance, while also talking to the country's many insurance companies to see if they can play a role."

To conclude, the speakers were asked: how can the humanitarian and anticipatory action community support governments better? "Support actions at the grassroots," suggested Robi Amri, "and share the evidence. Evidence from community efforts makes it easier for the government to gain wider political support, and to demonstrate the benefits of anticipatory action, to ensure it is integrated into wider DRM and development programmes."

Thematic sessions 7 to 9

Integration of anticipatory action into existing government DRRM structures: multi-country case study from Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Nepal and Bangladesh

This multi-country session showcased how governments and partners are integrating anticipatory action into disaster risk-reduction and -management (DRRM) systems. Led by Caritas, the People's Disaster Risk Reduction Network and Yayasan Mitra Tani Mandiri, together with the German Red Cross (Pakistan office), Oxfam, the Pakistan Red Cross Society and WFP, it shared lessons on policy, financing and coordination – all of which are needed for institutionalizing this approach.

Evidence for anticipatory action – what do governments want, are we making gains and where to next?

This session brought partners together to take stock of the new evidence and data about anticipatory action generated in 2023 and 2024. Led by FAO, together with the American Red Cross and Start Network, this was a chance to identify the evidence gaps that remain, and for partners to align around how these insights can be used to strengthen the policy case for anticipatory action. The discussion focused on three core areas – return on investment/cost-effectiveness; socio-economic impacts; process lessons – to ensure that evidence is not just descriptive, but also strategically positioned to inform decision-making, while also anchored in clear theories of change.

Reaching the right people at the right time: smart targeting for anticipatory action

When a hazard is forecast, who should we reach first – and how do we decide? These questions were the focus of this session, led by the Bangladesh TWGAA, together with partners from People In Need, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Start Network and WFP. For example, targeting and beneficiary selection are at the core of anticipatory action, yet vulnerabilities change with geography, caste, gender and livelihood; getting this right is both complex and critical. The session drew on field experiences and insights from governments, UN partners, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and civil society partners, leading to new ideas that can help shape who is reached, when and why.

There was plenty to digest in the thematic sessions.

DAY THREE

Plenary #5: let's talk money – finance ministries to the front!

"Where can we find sustainable financing to keep anticipatory action alive?" asked **Catherine Jones**, FAO, as the opening plenary on day three – part one of a 'Financing half-day' – began. To set the scene, the presenters clarified some of the terminology that has risen up in recent years, including 'build' and 'fuel' financing (see box, page 23).

> "We've been wanting to have this discussion for many years, so it's great to have some finance ministries in the room."
>
> Raymond Zingg, IFRC

Build financing doesn't mean building entirely new structures, however. It often means enhancing or adapting the DRM infrastructure in place in a country. In Mongolia, for example, pre-positioned hay and fodder for livestock were once only used in response to a *dzud*,[2] but this system was adapted to be released ahead of this hazard and protect livestock beforehand. "There are ways to adapt existing systems, rather than create new ones," she explained.

Shifting the financing for disaster management is usually a legal, or policy, matter: can funds be released for something that hasn't happened yet? This is often a critical issue for anticipatory action – and the best people to shed light on this process were representatives from finance ministries.

In terms of putting in place the build financing for anticipatory action, **Filadelfo V Escaro Diaz**, Department of Finance in the Philippines, suggested his country was well advanced. This is largely due to the State of Imminent Disaster Law, which provides the legal means to use funds ahead of a disaster: "Now we have a legal basis; in the coming years, we will test this out and hopefully maximize this, then see how we can improve further."

For the Ministry of Finance in Bangladesh, anticipatory action is still a relatively new approach, noted **Md Shamim**. Other ministries need to make the case for funds to be allocated ahead of a disaster before it can be disbursed. But it is possible to finance anticipatory action, he noted: "I can give them [ministries] money to use, according to their needs; we are 'ready to roll'!"

[2] This is a disaster in which large numbers of livestock die, primarily due to starvation as they are unable to graze due to severe winter conditions.

Timor-Leste is at an earlier stage with anticipatory action, said **Julio Henriques**, Ministry of Finance. According to budgetary laws, allocations are largely for disaster response, but they do have funds in place to strengthen DRM systems for certain hazards.

Next, to the fuel financing: how are ministries ensuring there are resources available when a system is triggered ahead of a hazard? The Philippines has fuel financing on standby, suggested Filadelfo V Escaro Diaz. "10 per cent of funds are earmarked for anticipatory action, but how it can be accessed quickly, and released based on forecasts, is an area for improvement in the coming years."

Bangladesh has a robust budgeting system, through which funds are disbursed from the Ministry of Finance to other ministries. "Money is available from the first day of the fiscal year, and the ministries are then free to spend the money whenever they need," explained Md Shamim. "[We tell the ministries] 'It is your budget; if you want to spend it on anticipatory action, you can'. There are challenges, of course, but the money is there in principle."

And in Timor-Leste, annual budgets can be used for anticipatory action, confirmed Julio Henriques. There are discussions under way on how funds for disaster response, such as regional contingency funds, could be used to support anticipatory action; this has already been proposed to the finance ministry.

Build and fuel financing

Build financing supports the systems and structures that need to be in place for anticipatory action to work, such as trigger development or capacity building; in effect, the foundations that enable us to *do* anticipatory action.

Fuel financing is the money needed to implement the actions, which is released once a trigger is reached. Critically, this needs to be in place ahead of time to allow the actions to be carried out rapidly (i.e., before the hazard strikes).

> "Hopefully we will be able to develop specific instruments for fuel financing; we are looking into this."
>
> Filadelfo V Escaro Diaz, Department of Finance in the Philippines

Design lab to visualize anticipatory action finance readiness and future pathways

The second part of the financing half-day asked each country table to draw a picture: what would the perfect 'car' for anticipatory action look like? Where is each country along the process? This could be anywhere from 'on the drawing board' and still designing how the system will work, to 'ready to race' with a functioning, well-funded system for financing anticipatory action.

Each country group then took turns to present its 'car' to the audience.

Indonesia: "We are 'on the road'; we have a mechanism, and in some sectors, it is working; for example, the Ministry of Agriculture is supporting anticipatory action before hazards. But it is not yet working everywhere."

Bangladesh: "The road is a bit bumpy, but that is what we have to drive on. And we need to avoid the potholes!"

Pakistan: "We designed a luxury car for the 'build' financing; most of the systems and protocols are ready. But the fuel is just a horse-drawn carriage, as there is still a lot more needed!"

Nepal: "Since 2015, we have done a lot of anticipatory action, especially pilots. Driven by all these things, now we are finalizing the anticipatory action framework. We also have the NDRRMA's AA Clinic; this will be the power to drive us along the highway! And we are in the process of having a dedicated fund. We are almost ready for a test drive!"

Myanmar: "You don't see a car – in Myanmar, we are in the building phase. We have some technical resources – the energy to drive our car is already here – but we need to know where we will go, we need to finalize our roadmap. And who will be the driver – the government? The UN? And we need the money, the fuel."

Kyrgyzstan: "There are flags for the partners – the UN, the IFRC – and we are thinking about the car!"

Lao People's Democratic Republic: "We have received a commission for anticipatory action for three years, so we have pilots in three provinces. But we have limited experience with

implementation. Our dream car exists, but it is not yet ready to drive."

Philippines: "With the enactment of the [State of Imminent Disaster] law, **we are seeing a lot of frameworks,** a lot of financing. There is financing available, using public funds – but we're not there yet. There are still components we need to build… we're still building a system that is embedded in, and harmonized with, the government:"

Maldives: "We don't need a car; we need a boat! We have our islands, and we are working towards steps that we can integrate into our existing systems."

Cambodia: "The car is not fancy or complete… we have so many ingredients, but how to bring it all together? We have forecasting information, for example, but need to improve it. And we have community-based early warning systems, and government systems we can use. But we need to ensure the funding to fuel our car is there in the next few months and years."

The team from Pakistan present their 'anticipatory action car'.

Thematic sessions 10 to 12

Forecast to financing: weaving anticipatory action finance into shock-responsive social protection and disaster-risk financing

What do Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines have in common? They are all exploring how to turn early warnings into 'early wallets' – and channelling forecast-based financing into national systems for social protection and disaster response. This session provided a whirlwind tour of how these countries are stitching anticipatory action into their national funding fabric. It was led by the Bangladesh TWGAA, with the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, the Pakistan Red Cross Society, the Philippine Red Cross, Start Network and WFP.

The cash dilemma: planning for impact or following people's choices?

Can cash transfers truly mitigate the impacts of a disaster if people use them 'differently'? When fisherfolk received anticipatory cash, the hope was that they'd protect their livelihoods. Instead, many chose to invest in education and other pressing needs. This session looked at the tension between the objectives of an anticipatory action project and community priorities. Led by FAO and NORCAP, it presented perspectives from donors, governments, practitioners and the communities.

> "It is the communities that make anticipatory action effective."
>
> Mery Efriana, assistant to the deputy minister for disaster management in Indonesia

Voices from the frontlines: gender equality, disability and social inclusion-responsive anticipatory action

This session was a space for storytelling and dialogue. Participants heard from community leaders and the organizations that are putting gender equality, disability and social inclusion at the heart of anticipatory action. There were stories from local partners, followed by a talk-show conversation with government representatives and key actors shaping national systems. Led by the Finnish Red Cross, Plan International, RIMES, Save the Children, UN Women and YAKKUM Emergency Unit, it was an opportunity to see what inclusive anticipatory action really means — in communities, in policy, and in practice.

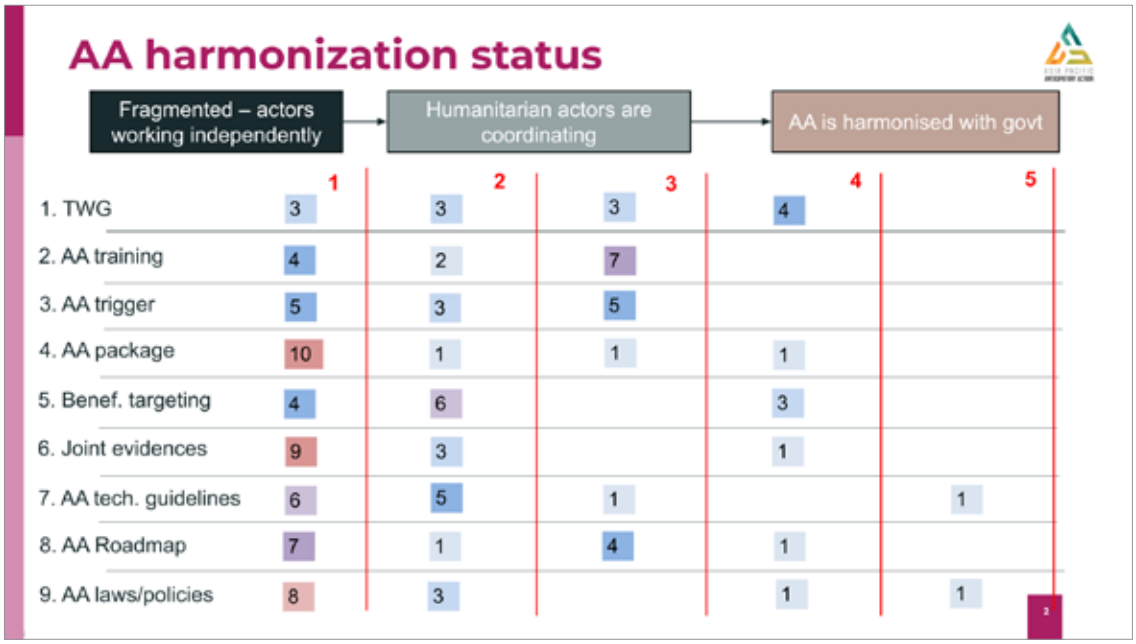
Discussing gender equality, disability and social inclusion in anticipatory action.

Plenary #6: guidance document and regional roadmap

To conclude three days of in-depth discussions, the participants revisited an exercise from day one: the nine 'bricks' of harmonization. "You have been extremely modest when assessing your progress!" remarked **Damien Riquet**, FAO. "But it gives us a very useful summary of where we stand."

The collated results indicated different levels of progress across the nine categories (Figure 2). For example, in terms of the creation of technical working groups, four countries were quite advanced, scoring themselves at 4 out 5. Less advanced were the 'bricks' for collating joint evidence for anticipatory action, with nine countries awarding themselves a score of 1 out of 5: "I think we are still mostly producing evidence from our own organizations, not collective evidence," agreed Damien Riquet.

Figure 2. Anticipatory action harmonization status



The discussion then moved on to a review of the regional roadmap for 2023 to 2027.[3] The lead organizations for each of the roadmap's five pillars provided an update of progress towards each of its 35 activities. Following this, the participants were invited to reflect upon where these activities need to be adjusted, as well as what support each country needs from the Asia-Pacific TWGAA – and what they in turn can contribute to the working group.

[3] Available at: tinyurl.com/yb9my9rb

Lao People's Democratic Republic: "We want to develop a national plan for anticipatory action; it's also important to set up ways to include NGOs and civil society organizations within government activities."

Maldives: "We would like technical support in building our national roadmap – and we can support the working group with a vacation in the Maldives!"

Mongolia: "We can deliver to you our roadmap, as we will have a joint mission in 2025 where we will be finalizing our triggers. We can soon provide joint evidence, as we are expecting to have a harsh winter *dzud*."

Myanmar: "We need more capacity-building support, and also conflict-based training."

Timor-Leste: "We can provide lessons learned and experience of protocol activations. We need technical support for trigger harmonization, and mapping our protocols and roadmap."

> "We've taken a lot of knowledge from you these past three days."
>
> Catherine Jones, FAO

Closing

To conclude the 8th Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform, there were some closing remarks from the governments that supported the event.

> You are making a difference – and we are proud to be part of this effort.
>
> Andri van Mens, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

> At a time of a changing humanitarian landscape, it becomes even more important to ensure that these efforts are well coordinated, so that we can achieve the maximum impact
>
> Laura Engel, German Embassy in Indonesia

> *Tanggu, tanggu, tanggu*... resilience, resilience, resilience!
>
> Mery Efriana, Coordinating Ministry of Indonesia

There was a lot to discuss over three days in Yogyakarta.

Reflections on the 8th Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform

> Feeling inspired by the depth of sharing and exchange around anticipatory action, from technical insights, in particular the design lab session on visualizing finance readiness, to practical, innovative solutions… It's encouraging to see stronger links forming across national and regional technical networks.
>
> Vanda Lenklong, Plan International, on LinkedIn

> Our key takeaways:
>
> - #AnticipatoryAction should be guided by clear outcomes and linked to policy and financing decisions, with evidence embedded from the design stage.
> - Analyses on return on investment and cost-effectiveness are key to demonstrating the economic value of anticipatory action.
> - Socio-economic results must reflect equity and inclusion, prioritizing gender and marginalized groups.
> - Continuous feedback loops with communities build trust, accountability and relevance.
>
> Start Network on LinkedIn

> We are here because we believe in anticipatory action.
>
> Reena Bajracharya, Nepal AA Clinic

> We have an atmosphere of collaboration in the room – I am always pleased to see that.
>
> Raymond Zingg, IFRC

> For us, it is very important that, as we prepare for a harmonized anticipatory action framework, regionally and nationally, we make sure that it's not just putting forward the actions, but making sure that the actions are inclusive for everyone – including for people with disabilities.
>
> Chrysant Lily Kusumowardoyo, ASB, on LinkedIn

> It's always great to learn from diverse experiences across countries and see how collaboration can make anticipatory action more timely, effective and impactful.
>
> Muhammed Atif Khan, German Red Cross in Pakistan, on LinkedIn

> Power doesn't only lie in the science; it lies in participation. When participation becomes inclusive, early actions become faster, more relevant and trusted.
>
> Ignite presentation by Plan International

Artwork created during the Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform.

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