

Concept Note for the Central America Regional Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Action

‘Towards a more local and integrated anticipatory action’

31 October to 2 November 2023

San Pedro Sula, Honduras

Context

The **Regional Dialogue Platform in Central America** (countries of the Central American Integration System - SICA) **on Anticipatory Action** is organized by the Anticipation Hub, co-organized by the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Disasters in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Honduran Red Cross, the German Red Cross, and the World Food Program (WFP). The Anticipation Hub is an initiative of the German Red Cross, the Climate Centre, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); it has financial support from the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany (GFFO).

To promote greater integration of anticipatory action in Central America, the Regional Dialogue Platform will run parallel to the **‘Mitch +25’** forum, which will convene leaders to discuss progress and challenges 25 years after the impact of Hurricane Mitch, which transformed the region forever. The exchange between governments and key stakeholders in national risk management systems for more effective collaboration will be a milestone this year.

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Objectives

- Exchange experiences, best practices, lessons learned and opportunities among key stakeholders in national risk management systems in Central America, to integrate the anticipatory action approach into the humanitarian agenda.
- Generate inputs to promote the integration of anticipatory action into national risk management systems.
- Identify opportunities, gaps and next steps for the localization and institutionalization of anticipatory action at national and SICA levels.

Expected outputs

- Mapping of evidence, experiences, best practices, challenges and opportunities for the localization and institutionalization of anticipatory action in Central America, by sector and by hazard.
- A technical note with priorities for regional action.

Participants

The **Regional Dialogue Platform** is aimed at key humanitarian actors in Central America who are part of national risk management systems, including those involved in disaster risk management in agriculture and food security, as well as partners with technical, operational and financial resources.

Event methodology

The event includes plenary sessions, workshops and parallel sessions on specific technical topics, as well as dialogue around a set of recommendations for anticipatory action by Central American governments. Participants at the Dialogue Platform will be able to take part in joint sessions with the Mitch +25 forum.

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Background

The last decade has seen an incredible shift in **anticipatory action**. Acting before a disaster to safeguard lives and livelihoods is not only a widely accepted concept now, but is increasingly integrated into the overall humanitarian system. This is thanks to the momentum and commitment of a significant and complementary network of actors in the political, scientific, academic and practical spheres.

Anticipatory action provides an opportunity to mitigate the impacts of different threats affecting at-risk populations and their livelihoods, allowing governments, populations and the humanitarian community to act before disasters occur, or before they reach their peak, as soon as they are predicted, and a warning signal appears.

These actions can be implemented through cash transfer programmes (in cash/cash-based transfers), the delivery of goods and services (e.g., seeds, tools, irrigation systems), through programmes combining cash and goods, services and supplies, and through delivering training and awareness as needed by the community. They are not isolated events but should be embedded in a risk management system, framed in a resilience-building effort, and linked to monitoring, forecasts and alerts, giving rise to an anticipatory action system.

Since 2015 in Latin America, the **National Red Cross Societies** in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Peru have significantly contributed to the region's development of the disaster and crisis anticipation mechanism known as forecast-based financing (FbF). This has been supported by the German Red Cross, the Climate Centre, the IFRC, FAO and WFP.

Forecast-based financing is an innovative mechanism that uses reliable forecasts, thresholds and impact analysis to allow the timely disbursement of funds to implement early actions before an extreme event occurs in highly vulnerable communities. It aims to strengthen the capacities of key stakeholders in national risk management systems, through the strengthening of skills in prospective and corrective risk management.

In the region, **WFP** has also collaborated with disaster management agencies, social development organizations, meteorological services and others to develop

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forecast-based financing programmes. It has anticipatory action projects under development in eight countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. WFP's vision in the region highlights a focus on the integration of anticipatory action and the use of forecasts in national risk management and social protection systems, the strengthening of early warning systems, and sustainable and flexible financing to expand anticipatory action projects. In Central America, WFP has experience in driving projects to combat drought and a lack of rainfall in the dry corridor of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

For its part, **FAO** has been working for years in several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen capacities, develop protocols and implement anticipatory actions to mitigate the impact of multiple threats affecting food security and agricultural livelihoods, with a focus on territory, inclusion and cultural relevance, while also emphasizing institutionalization. In Central America, its experiences in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua stand out in the face of drought forecasts. Additionally, in June 2023, FAO signed a framework cooperation agreement with the SICA countries to jointly address the transformation of agri-food systems in the countries of the dry corridor, including mitigation of the impact of food crises and climate shocks.

At the beginning of 2023, the **CEPREDENAC** joined the Anticipation Hub as a key partner at the regional level, for inter-institutional coordination with governments and key stakeholders for the institutionalization of anticipatory action.

To promote the importance of anticipatory action in the face of disasters and crises, to share experiences and to disseminate lessons learned, the **Anticipation Hub** has led the establishment of a global community of practice that meets annually at regional and global levels, in events known as Dialogue Platforms. The **Regional Dialogue Platforms** held in America (Arequipa, Peru, in 2018; Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, in 2019; Panama City, Panama, in 2021; and Antigua, Guatemala, in 2022) have been a decisive space for analysis, discussion and learning on anticipatory action across the continent, as well as for promoting inter-institutional cooperation among key stakeholders.

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