REPORT
from the 11th Global Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

People at the centre: scaling up anticipatory action

10 to 12 October 2023
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Further details about the 11th Global Dialogue Platform, including the full agenda, speakers and participant list, are available on the event website. Many sessions can also be watched again here tinyurl.com/2d7uphjj

**Acronyms and abbreviations**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACAPS</td>
<td>formerly known as the Assessment Capacities Project</td>
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<td>AI</td>
<td>artificial intelligence</td>
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<td>CEPREDENAC</td>
<td>Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America</td>
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<td>COP</td>
<td>UN Climate Conference, formally the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</td>
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<td>EAP</td>
<td>early action protocol</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EW4All</td>
<td>Early Warnings for All</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>GFFO</td>
<td>German Federal Foreign Office</td>
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<td>GNDR</td>
<td>Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>Group of Seven</td>
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<td>G20</td>
<td>Group of Twenty</td>
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<tr>
<td>HUMLOG</td>
<td>Humanitarian Logistics and Supply Chain Research Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>IBF</td>
<td>impact-based forecasting</td>
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<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</td>
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<td>NDRRMA</td>
<td>National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>OCHA</td>
<td>United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>REAP</td>
<td>Risk-informed Early Action Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children's Fund</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<td>WASH</td>
<td>water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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Highlights from the 11th Global Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

A truly global platform

The Global Dialogue Platform is an opportunity to learn about how anticipatory action is evolving around the world. In 2023, there was strong representation from three of the regions where this approach is now firmly established. Of the 296 people who joined in person in Berlin, 52 came from Africa and the Middle East and North Africa regions (18 per cent), 46 from the Americas (16 per cent) and 45 from Asia-Pacific (15 per cent). In addition, around 1,500 people participated online,¹ with registrations coming from 145 countries. Encouragingly, the total number of people joining also reached the highest number to date (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Participant numbers at the Global Dialogue Platforms, 2015-2023

¹ This is an estimate based on statistics from the event platform; an exact figure is not possible due to data-protections laws.
A strategic focus

As anticipatory action expands across the world, it is increasingly important to align this approach with other humanitarian agendas. With this in mind, three of the workshops and sessions at this year’s Global Dialogue Platform focused on strategic global initiatives: the Early Warnings for All initiative (EW4All), the Global Shield against Climate Risks, and the Grand Bargain. These were a chance to find out more about these initiatives and explore what they mean for the anticipatory action sector – and how anticipatory action can play a role in delivering the objectives of these initiatives.

High-level participation...

Anticipatory action often requires government-level leadership to advance in a country, so it was encouraging to see strong government representation at the 11th Global Dialogue Platform. There were government speakers from Germany, Honduras, Nepal and South Sudan, as well as many others who took an active part in the discussions and ensured that high-level viewpoints were included.

... with people firmly at the centre

A strong theme across many of the sessions – and reflected in the theme for this year’s event – was the need to include local people and communities in all stages of anticipatory action. Often captured under the term ‘locally led anticipatory action’, many discussions considered
how to ensure this happens. Several speakers shared the perspectives from their communities, including Wenddy Emilia Vera García, a youth leader at Movimiento Por Ser Niña in Ecuador, who talked about her experience of creating informal education spaces to build knowledge and capacity on climate action.

Averting disasters: the essence of anticipatory action

Preventing hazards from becoming disasters is at the heart of anticipatory action, making the Global Dialogue Platform an excellent place to announce the winners of the second Averted Disaster Award. This recognizes successful disaster-mitigation interventions that go unnoticed precisely because of their success. The prize for 2023 went to the Amrita Center for Wireless Networks and Applications in India, in recognition of its work on landslide early-warning technology and efforts to engage communities for emergency preparedness and resilience in India.
DAYS ONE

11th Global Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action
DAY ONE

Opening of the event

The 11th Global Dialogue Platform opened with representatives from the event’s organizing partners and donor sharing their commitments, ambitions and expectations for the next three days. “Many of you have been on this path with us from the very start; I always feel like being in a room with friends,” began Christof Johnen, German Red Cross. “Sometimes we get caught up in new and exciting developments... but I really like that [this year] we step back, reflect and focus on people. That’s what it’s all about... [anticipatory action] was always about people and how we can support them to act ahead of a crisis.”

Susanne Fries Gaier, German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), noted the progress that has been made with this approach: “We are not only discussing the concept anymore; we are moving to operationalize it. It was mentioned for the first time in the Sendai Framework review, we [now] have a G20\(^2\) Working Group... we see [anticipatory action] is really in the minds of people.”

She did, however, note an area where more work is needed: “We need to improve the evidence... the evidence database has only grown marginally.” Doing so will support advocacy efforts to scale up this approach further. Germany committed five per cent of its humanitarian budget for 2023 to anticipatory action, and other G7\(^3\) nations have also promised to significantly increase financing; the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Start Network, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) are also expanding their commitments. But, she noted, “we need to lobby for more partners to come on board.”

Wherever I travel, I see the results; I see that our approach is working.

Susanne Fries Gaier, GFFO

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\(^2\) An intergovernmental forum comprising 19 countries, the European Union (EU) and the African Union.

\(^3\) An intergovernmental forum consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the USA, with the EU acting as a non-enumerated member.
The impacts of climate change will become worse. We have to scale up our action. Anticipatory action is the cleverest way, because it is most effective and gets us in conversation with the people on the ground, and that in itself is an act of empowerment.”

Martin Frick explained why WFP is increasing its support for anticipatory action. “There are 345 million food-insecure people that [WFP is] trying to look after... and we know the impacts of climate change are only getting worse,” he warned. But anticipatory action helps us to spend the money in the cleverest way, and “gives power to the people. We can get into a conversation with people on the ground, and that in itself is an act of empowerment.”

The need to connect with those facing the worst impacts of hazards was endorsed by Nena Stoiljkovic, IFRC. “National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are often the first to respond to disasters... [they] bridge the gap between early warning systems and vulnerable communities. Let us explore how we can further support the capacities of local actors.”

FAO is active in the anticipatory action sector, supporting around 500,000 people in 18 countries – and seeing positive impacts – but there are still some deeply disturbing trends, remarked Fleur Wouterse, FAO: “Pre-arranged financing for anticipatory action remains very low, compared to the needs... [and] we need to learn much more on the effectiveness of anticipatory action. There are some cases where the returns are less strong... it would be good to understand where we see high and low returns... so we can understand better how we can strengthen our interventions.” The dialogue platforms are a great opportunity to start these discussions, she noted.

The Global Dialogue Platform is also an opportunity to share insights from the regional dialogue platforms in Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Americas. Anil Pokhrel, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), looked back at this year’s Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform, which was held in Nepal. This was a chance to share lessons and highlight opportunities for collaboration, he noted, as well as “a stepping stone for raising the profile of early action pilots, not only in Nepal but across the region.”
Balancing acts: scaling up anticipatory humanitarian action while keeping people at the centre

Why work with acrobats? That was the question people were asking as the opening plenary session began. “They are experts at everything that we need,” explained Pablo Suarez, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre. “If you want to do anticipatory action, you need to be better at understanding trajectories; you need trust, you need to change your ambitions. Acrobats know this [and] we can learn from them: how do they build trust?”

These concepts were displayed by Gravity & Other Myths, a team of professional acrobats from Australia. And it wasn’t just the acrobats who took to the stage: some brave participants joined them to demonstrate how we can catch those who are falling. One by one, someone called “Falling!” and hoped the others would catch them. “As we went on, we started to anticipate when people would fall,” explained Em Gare, Gravity & Other Myths. “As an acrobat, I have a lot of faith in my colleagues to catch me.”

So, what does this mean for anticipatory action? What could we do differently? The online participants and those in the room were asked for their snap reflections. The need for trust, teamwork and coordination were clear themes, as was learning from mistakes.

Wrapping up the plenary, Banak Joshua Dei Wal, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs & Disaster Management, South Sudan, reflected on how to integrate anticipatory action into national frameworks and policies, based on his own experiences. “Since joining in two years ago, I am a true ambassador for anticipatory in South Sudan,” he noted. “In South Sudan, we have 9.6 million people who need humanitarian support. I am in a fortunate position where I can translate anticipatory action into action.” He also highlighted some of the challenges in prioritizing this approach, such as having budgets put aside for it.

“

The world is a tightrope of risk; multiple challenges will cause a fall. Collaboration, trust, perspective and the will to seek new heights = anticipatory action to protect lives and livelihoods, stopping loss and damage. Fantastic launch to #GDP2023.

Elise Belcher, Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), on X
Amira Mostafa, Egyptian Meteorological Authority, offered insights from her work. “As meteorologists, we have to handle all these [different] tasks – and forget we are there for the people,” she said. “We are behind our computer models, trying to deliver accurate and timely forecasts... but one of the risks we face is these forecasts not being properly understood. This has happened when our forecasts failed to trigger early actions.” She explained how some governments have other priorities, and how the acrobatic performance and its messages – the need for trust, dialogue, a common language, timing and juggling (priorities) – are needed to deliver people-centred anticipatory action.

Workshops #1

→ Before lunch on the opening day, participants joined a series of workshops that took an in-depth look at some of the main strategic issues affecting anticipatory action.

Achieving Early Warnings for All: strategies and synergies for implementation

Half of countries globally do not have adequate early warning systems and even fewer have regulatory frameworks to link early warnings to emergency plans. During this workshop, experts, practitioners and policy-makers shared their experiences, insights and best practices for designing and implementing end-to-end early warning systems that are inclusive, integrated and accessible to all.

The workshop was structured around the four pillars of the EW4All initiative: (1) risk knowledge; (2) observations and forecasting; (3) dissemination and communication; and (4) preparedness and response. The importance of multistakeholder collaboration when establishing early warning systems was highlighted, and the participants also discussed ways to overcome the challenges and barriers faced in implementing these systems, covering themes such as knowledge gaps, technical capacity and institutional frameworks.

Lessons from anticipatory action in outbreak preparedness, prevention and response

During 2022 and 2023, new anticipatory action pilots for malaria and cholera were implemented in sub-Saharan Africa, with further protocols being developed for dengue and other climate-sensitive infectious diseases. This workshop looked at the evidence garnered so far to establish what matters most in anticipatory action for epidemic-prone diseases.

A video summarizing the outcomes from this workshop is available on the Anticipation Hub’s YouTube channel tinyurl.com/bdzcbtzu

Discussions during the EW4All workshop.
Blending conceptual ideas with practical experience, the speakers presented a variety of different anticipatory approaches for disease outbreaks, including the use of climate variables in malaria-prediction models and the use of community-based surveillance to improve alerts and decrease response times. There was also time for the participants to develop a decision tree on the data and resources needed for anticipatory approaches in different contexts.

**Anticipatory action about us without us is not for us: improving community engagement and locally led anticipatory action**

Community engagement plays an important role in anticipatory action, supporting the development and implementation of context-specific, conflict-sensitive and timely interventions. Improved community engagement can help to ensure an inclusive approach to anticipatory action programmes by reflecting the perspectives and priorities of at-risk people, including groups who are particularly vulnerable due to their gender, age and other diversity dimensions. This includes the continual integration of community perspectives and priorities. This workshop introduced practical steps to engage at-risk people and communities, with an emphasis on understanding and tailoring anticipatory action interventions to the specific risks, needs, priorities and capacities of women, men, young people, older people, minority groups, internally displaced people and people with disabilities.

**Child-centred anticipatory action: education and protection as a key entry point for child participation**

Around the world, millions of children miss their chance to go to school due to climate disasters, cyclical conflict and displacement – and girls are the worst affected. This significantly affects their educational attainment and jeopardizes their well-being and overall development. These impacts can significantly increase protection risks, especially for adolescent girls, including child marriage and child labour.

Anticipatory action has the potential to address and reduce these impacts if it is implemented using an education-focused approach. This workshop encouraged education practitioners to engage in anticipatory action as part of their preparedness, mitigation and response activities, as well as connecting with humanitarian practitioners to consider anticipatory actions that place children and their protection at the centre.
Working through the anticipatory action timeline: what happens before an activation?

When anticipatory actions are presented, the focus is often on the activation itself: the activities that were implemented and their impacts. However, anticipatory action is proactive by nature, meaning that plenty of planning takes place before an activation. This workshop took participants through the crucial steps involved in anticipatory action approaches, such as the use of risk information to develop triggers, decision-making processes, and contingency planning for anticipatory activities. The examples used were two different approaches to anticipatory action: one through the Start Ready mechanism, which is a pooled fund for predictable climate risks with pre-arranged financing; and one through the Start Fund Anticipation Alerts, which allows non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to monitor risks dynamically and raise alerts on a more flexible basis.

How can loss and damage funding support anticipatory action?

Anticipatory action can help to minimize losses and damages for vulnerable people; as such, anticipatory action could be financed through the new loss and damage funding arrangements, which were announced at the United Nations’ 27th Climate Conference (COP27). This workshop explored how these funding arrangements could complement existing funding mechanisms for anticipatory action, in terms of financing gaps, potential beneficiaries, and possible structures and channels for this funding. The outcomes from this workshop will be used to identify some recommendations for the design and operationalization of loss and damage funding arrangements, including the new Loss and Damage Fund.
Parallel sessions #1 and #2

→ Day one continued with two sets of hybrid parallel sessions.

The risks and rewards of multiple triggers in anticipatory action

The growth of anticipatory action has brought with it new actors, and many have developed their own protocols and activation triggers. While some practitioners call for the unification of triggers, it is important to recognize that a multiplicity of trigger scenarios can be beneficial in addressing the diversity often found in terms of needs and geography, as well as the capacity within a community. In this session, participants discussed the effectiveness of having multiple triggers, as well as the consequences should a disaster not materialize, or the hazard be greater than forecast.

Finance for anticipatory action

This session showcased new and newly adapted financing mechanisms for anticipatory action. Five organizations introduced a source of finance that they have accessed, identifying the challenges in doing so and how they overcame these. Their feedback set out some best practices for donors who want to finance anticipatory action.

Making the case: discussions on the methods used to measure the impact of anticipatory action in Afghanistan, Madagascar, Nepal and South Sudan

Although anticipatory action is increasingly recognized as an approach that can reduce the potential impacts of disasters on people’s lives, livelihoods and food security, there is still a dearth of the evidence needed to build a substantial case for acting ahead of disasters as opposed to acting in response. As such, capturing evidence should be a critical and integral part of an anticipatory action system. In this session, organizations shared their experiences of using innovative methods to gather rigorous evidence on the benefits of implementing anticipatory action.

Have your say: learning for anticipatory action (parts I and II)

The Anticipation Hub is developing a series of learning modules to introduce government and hydrometeorological professionals to the
concept, principles and practice of anticipatory action. This session was an opportunity to refine the form and content of these modules to ensure they are relevant and accessible, and effectively build people’s capacity to deliver anticipatory action.

**Bringing evidence into practice: people-centred, contextually tailored and locally led approaches for inclusive and equitable anticipatory action**

This session used evidence from different types of agencies – civil society organizations, government agencies, academia – to demonstrate how investing in local action and empowering the most at-risk groups are the most effective ways to ensure that anticipatory action does not leave anyone behind.

**Revisiting past disasters and reimagining their future**

Building on conversations from the 10th Global Dialogue Platform, this session, organized by the Future Leaders Network on Early Warning Early Action and early-career researchers in the Academic Alliance for Anticipatory Action, sought to develop a taskforce to think ‘outside of the box’ on the big problems still facing anticipatory action. Participants were asked to reimagine the pathways of historical disasters and identify whether and how anticipatory action could have mitigated the impacts that were seen.

**Where it matters most: advancing anticipatory action in protracted crisis contexts through the power of common principles**

Although predictable, and increasingly frequent, climate extremes are known to hit hardest in protracted crises. Yet it is these exact contexts that often lack functional programmes to anticipate and proactively protect extremely vulnerable people from such shocks. FAO, WFP and the Global Network Against Food Crises recently published a set of agreed principles around which to align stakeholders’ respective approaches to anticipatory action, specifically for protracted crises. This session provided an overview of these principles, followed by an expert discussion on how to translate them into actions for policy and practice.

**Anticipatory humanitarian actions carried out by the Red Cross Society of Côte d’Ivoire’s local committee in Abobo**

Anticipatory action in the commune of Abobo, Côte d’Ivoire, focuses on awareness programmes and training for local communities on
the potential risks of floods, conflict and epidemics. Longer-term actions include setting up early warning systems and rapid-response mechanisms and, in collaboration with municipal authorities, building flood-prevention infrastructure to reduce risks and mitigate impacts. The overall objective is to strengthen the resilience of communities and reduce their dependence on humanitarian aid by anticipating disasters and taking preventive measures. This session outlined the requirements for achieving this, drawing on experiences to date.

Local actors at the centre: locally led anticipatory action to increase efficiency and scale up impact

If we are to achieve early warnings for all and early action at the local level, then communities and local actors must be at the centre. This session proposed locally led anticipatory action as a process that is driven and led by communities and local actors to: (1) create an enabling environment that demonstrates their capacities to implement their own early actions; (2) identify and communicate gaps and weaknesses in early warning systems; (3) plan and coordinate mechanisms; and (4) advocate for accessible, flexible and pre-agreed financing for autonomous, locally led anticipatory action. This session, led by local actors, highlighted achievements from places where there is collaboration with, and investment in, local structures.

Anticipatory action triggers: from development to evaluation

Timing is key in anticipatory action: the effectiveness of this approach is dependent on robust trigger mechanisms that provide early warnings to
activate actions ahead of a shock. Trigger mechanisms are monitoring tools designed to build evidence and confidence about a hazard’s development and potential impacts. Creating a trigger mechanism therefore requires a deep understanding of hazard risk. This session explained the trigger-development process for major hazards including drought, tropical cyclones and floods. It also proposed options for evaluating trigger systems for anticipatory action, based on their representation (e.g., indicator selection, threshold and weighting, warning levels), the actionability of warning information, hazard impacts, and the applicability and user-friendliness of a trigger system.

**Linking social protection systems and anticipatory action approaches: the key to scaling up delivery?**

The session built upon recent literature and country case studies to explore the key challenges and opportunities faced when linking social protection and anticipatory action. This included insights into themes such as ensuring that anticipatory action is embedded in policy frameworks and that there are domestic financing sources and coordination mechanisms in place. There was also time to look at how to design social protection schemes so that they can channel anticipatory actions.

**Lightning talks**

To conclude the opening day, Liz Stephens, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre and the University of Reading, led the audience through a review of weather and climate disasters around the world over the past year. In summary, 2023 was a tale of two storms, both of which were unprecedented. Cyclone Freddy was the longest-lived tropical cyclone that ever occurred, while Storm Daniel in the Mediterranean led to unprecedented rainfall in Greece and Libya, among other countries.

Reflecting on how well these events were forecast, she noted that the forecasts for both were very good: “We could see them coming.” But where we fell short was in predicting the amount of rainfall they would bring. Only when Cyclone Freddy first made landfall in Mozambique did things become uncertain: “We didn’t even know which way it would head next. It went on to affect northern Mozambique, but the forecasts didn’t [accurately predict] the subsequent rainfall in Malawi.” We could tell it would be extreme, she explained, but not that the rainfall it brought would be unprecedented.

It was a similar story later in the year with Storm Daniel: “I don’t think anyone predicted the impacts.” This is partly because meteorologists
need to speak to others: for example, people who run the dams, who know what condition they are in and how much more rain the reservoirs can hold. “Without building those relationships, we won’t be able to get very good at predicting such impacts,” she concluded.

The second lightning talk came from **Wenddy Emilia Vera García**, a youth leader at Movimiento Por Ser Niña (the ‘Because I am a Girl’ movement) in Ecuador, which works with 600 young people in the country. She told the audience about her experience of creating informal education spaces to build knowledge and capacity on climate action with a gender-transformative lens. Girls are more vulnerable to climate change, she explained, due to their social and economic position, and her project helps them to exercise their rights before, during and after disasters, especially related to gender-based violence.

Wenddy explained the benefits of women having equal participation in climate action. For example, this improves the effectiveness and sustainability of actions, strengthens women’s economic and social empowerment, and promotes intergenerational equity and respect. She also had a call to action for all participants: put women and girls at the centre of anticipatory action. “Give women and girls, in all their diversity, a role in anticipatory action; don’t let our voices get lost!”

The in-person participants in Berlin spent the early evening viewing a series of posters and asking the creators about them. The online participants had the chance to review these online and add their questions and comments; these are still available to view here [tinyurl.com/mtszcax4](http://tinyurl.com/mtszcax4).
11th Global Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

DAY TWO
Anticipatory action practice in 2023 and beyond: navigating challenges from protracted crises to El Niño

Anticipatory action is now being implemented in more than 60 countries around the world and there are a lot of examples of both successes and failures. But even for seasoned practitioners, there were interesting new developments during 2023, and the panellists for the first plenary on day two shared some of their organization’s highlights. A common theme was El Niño, which presented a major challenge – but, as Julia Wittig, OCHA, pointed out, we are further forward than during the previous major El Niño event and now have better tools.

One new theme in Central America is anticipatory action for population movement. Mathieu Destrooper, German Red Cross, and Diana Muñoz, Honduran Red Cross, talked about how this is manifesting in the region, as people move in search of new opportunities. They come from Colombia and Venezuela in particular, but also from Cuba, Haiti and beyond. The tragedy is that a lot of migrants are affected on route as they don’t have access to basic needs, said Mathieu. The Honduran Red Cross is trying to support them and anticipate the worst impacts, many of which relate to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). For example, it uses information from the National Migration Centre in Panama about people crossing through the Colombia–Panama region as they head north to the USA. “This is what gives us the lead time to better prepare,” he said.

Another non-weather-related hazard in 2023 was the cholera outbreak in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Phenide Ange Beaussejour, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), explained how this was the result of several factors, including war and population movement leading to internally displaced persons, and how funds from the Central Emergency Response Fund boosted efforts to tackle this outbreak ahead of its peak. For example, UNICEF could increase the size of its response team and boost its response to cases in the community. There were further activations in different regions during the year, such as in Kalemie and Nyemba, and UNICEF and its partners were able to act very quickly. “This makes a difference to the [disease outbreak] curve,” she noted.
The audience then heard how the Somali Humanitarian Hub recently shifted from a 72-hour response to anticipatory action. This is necessary in a country with many complex challenges, said Albashir Ibrahim, Nexus Consortium Somalia: “Previously it was drought, but last week it was floods”. The activities they use to act ahead of hazards include increasing community awareness through radio messages and community disaster-preparedness meetings. They also ensure good preparation for support teams, for example by equipping them with first aid kits and other materials.

Professional cartoonists were present in Berlin throughout the 11th Global Dialogue Platform, turning the in-person participants’ reflections on anticipatory action – the good, the bad and the infuriating – into sketches that will be used to engage others with this subject in the future. You can find their cartoons here tinyurl.com/49w6zj2s

Parallel sessions #3 and #4

Day two continued with more hybrid parallel sessions.

Systems and tools to accelerate anticipatory action

The IFRC and its partners have developed systems and online tools/platforms to assess risk and accelerate anticipatory action. These include, among others, the Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System and the DisasterAware portal. This session allowed participants to explore these tools, with support and guidance from the agencies which developed them.

A roadmap to institutionalization: anticipatory action milestones towards shared resilience

Bangladesh, Nepal and the Philippines have strong anticipatory action communities. Their governments and partners have been working on a range of tools to be better prepared for disasters. In this session,
Government representatives from all three countries highlighted how they have been trying to integrate anticipatory action into their systems and plans for disaster management, in order to expand this approach from the policy level to operationalization in the field.

**Beyond evacuation to justify activation: localized, sudden-onset and extreme hydrometeorological events require new approaches to anticipatory action**

Hazards such as flash floods, urban floods, glacial-lake-outburst floods, mudflows, landslides and landslips are devastating to those who experience them, but they have not yet been fully addressed within the anticipatory action community. This session outlined the challenges in developing anticipatory action systems for localized, sudden-onset, high-impact hydrometeorological events. There was also a discussion about if, and to what extent, current standards and guidelines for protocol development are both applicable to these types of events and sufficient to support anticipatory action for vulnerable populations.

**Scaling down to scale up: the importance of local knowledge to mainstream anticipatory action and facilitate trigger development**

In theory, if localities and local actors are all prepared to act, they should be able to act faster and in greater numbers. This session explored various themes related to collaboration with local actors and tapping into local knowledge as a mechanism to scale up anticipatory action. The success of local anticipatory action was illustrated through the perspectives and first-hand experiences of local actors from across Africa and in Pakistan. For example, it highlighted how centring decision-making around local actors and local knowledge can contribute to better-informed decisions, as well as the potential for local actors to be systematically integrated in trigger-development processes.

**The good, the bad, and the law: a talk show, a game and the prize**

Laws, policies and institutional arrangements have a crucial role to play in supporting all aspects of disaster risk management, including early warnings, anticipatory action and disaster risk financing. Building upon the collaboration between anticipatory action and disaster law in the Asia-Pacific region, this session provided an overview of the legal and policy frameworks for anticipatory action, and what an enabling environment – including early warning, risk information, the design and delivery of actions, and pre-arranged financing – entails from a law and policy perspective.
Exploring adaptations: experiences and ideas on how to adapt disaster-risk-financing instruments to fuel anticipatory action

This session discussed experiences and strategies for adapting disaster-risk-financing instruments, such as insurance, crisis modifiers or reserve funds, to fuel anticipatory action. By exploring emerging practices, lessons learned and conceptual considerations, participants could identify and discuss practical ideas on how to overcome the challenges in adapting these instruments for anticipatory action. These will inform a policy paper being developed by the Sectoral Community on Linking Risk Financing and Anticipatory Action.

Anticipating displacement: Quo vadis?

In recent years, practitioners have developed an increasing number of plans to anticipate human displacement, including when displacement is not linked to an extreme weather event. At the same time, more and more models are available to predict migration flows and displacement. Some of these go beyond forecasting trends at the country level and might be specific enough to enable anticipatory action. This session showcased examples of anticipatory action for displacement, including an expert discussion on which impacts can be anticipated and which are better left to response efforts.

Implementing anticipatory action together: how the government, the UN, business actors and the Red Cross used their specific skills and positions to improve anticipatory action in Malawi

All kinds of different skills, expertise and experience are needed to implement anticipatory action effectively. This session demonstrated how, in Malawi, bringing together a number of organizations provided all that is needed. First and foremost, the government had the

Discussions at the 11th Global Dialogue Platform.
mandate and the access; UNICEF Malawi brought its network; Royal HaskoningDHV provided expert knowledge of flood modelling; the Malawi Red Cross Society brought local community engagement; and 510 - An Initiative of the Netherlands Red Cross’s digital impact-based forecasting (IBF) portal brought it all together.

Untangling complex systems for anticipatory action: the launch of the Anticipation Hub Technical Working Group on Multi-risk

There is an opportunity to strengthen the integration of multi-risk approaches to improve anticipatory humanitarian action and response, and anticipate the impacts of multiple, interrelated events. A new technical working group on multi-risk – which includes, for example, compound risks – aims to: (1) facilitate connections across academia, practitioners and donors; (2) accelerate learning; and (3) focus on hands-on joint analyses to produce practical guidance for the sector. This session was a chance for participants to help shape the agenda of this working group.

Towards government-led anticipatory action: regional experiences

The international humanitarian sector has incorporated anticipatory action as a key approach to reducing humanitarian needs. In recent years, these efforts have focused on a wide array of interventions: from agreeing on triggers to developing plans and securing financial resources, as well as increased coordination among humanitarian actors to implement coordinated and value-adding actions. Governments have been part of these efforts, and there is evidence that they are increasingly incorporating anticipatory action into state-led strategies and plans. This session explored why is it important – and to what extent – that governments internalize the anticipatory action approach.

Impact-based localized forecasting for flood-related anticipatory action in Bangladesh

Since 2015, Bangladesh has had a centralized system to anticipate floods in 11 highly vulnerable districts. But flooding impacts vary from district to district, due to different hydrological settings and socio-economic conditions. In light of this, WFP, in collaboration with the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre, the Department of Disaster Management and the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, has developed a decentralized trigger mechanism in the districts of Kurigram, Sylhet and Sunamganj. In this session, experts presented the development and implementation of this IBF framework for decentralized local-level triggering of anticipatory action for monsoon floods.
Workshops #2

Day two ended with a second set of in-depth, interactive workshops.

Where next for Earth observations and anticipatory action?

This workshop brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to discuss how Earth observations have been harnessed to support humanitarian action in some of the largest and most complex recent disasters. This included a look at the spectrum of products developed by data providers, as well as lessons learned by both product developers and product users. There was also a chance to look into the future, as participants identified opportunities to build on these lessons and determine where we go from here.

The Global Shield and its relevance to anticipatory action

The Global Shield against Climate Risk is a new initiative to avert, minimize and address climate-related losses and damages by scaling up climate-risk and disaster-risk financing instruments, coupled with social protection mechanisms and early warning systems. The initiative was launched at COP27, building on a joint effort by the G7 and the Vulnerable 20 Group.

This workshop introduced participants to the aims and structure of the Global Shield, including how both the Global Shield Solutions Platform and the Global Shield Financing Facility can support climate-risk and disaster-risk financing instruments, including anticipatory action approaches. Through a series of breakout sessions, participants shared what they would like to see from the Global Shield, provided inputs on how they can support anticipatory action system-building, and indicated what they can bring to the Global Shield, in terms of resources, expertise and experience.

The ‘data guardians’ game for anticipatory early action

The data guardians game helps people grasp the significance of data in decision-making for anticipatory action. Participants are divided into four groups, each tasked with investing in various governmental agencies to enhance their data-collection and analysis capabilities. In the second stage of the game, a flood scenario is introduced – but participants are only permitted to access data and information from the specific agencies in which they invested. Armed with this information, the groups then proceed to make crucial judgments regarding the activation of an early action protocol (EAP).
Doing better, not just doing more: conflict-sensitive anticipatory action as a commitment and a way of working

Any humanitarian assistance is an intervention into a context. Conflict sensitivity, informed by comprehensive – or at least good enough – context analysis, is crucial in the design and implementation of anticipatory action in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Where anticipatory action is undertaken without it, interventions may have unintended side effects and do more harm than good by exacerbating existing tensions or deepening societal divides. But while the need for conflict sensitivity is increasingly recognized, guidance on practical approaches is scarce. Building on a training programme currently under development within the Anticipation Hub’s Anticipatory Action in Conflict Practitioners Group, this workshop aimed to formulate tangible recommendations for conflict-sensitive anticipatory action, including relevant indicators, minimum standards and requirements.

A collective push for locally led anticipatory action: where do we go from here?

Locally led approaches are needed to scale up and mainstream current best practices in anticipatory action. This workshop provided a space to discuss various questions around locally led anticipatory action, including: (1) what a working group on locally led anticipatory action could look like; (2) what the role of international actors, such as international NGOs, UN agencies and other networks, could be; and (3) what the barriers and potential solutions are for locally led anticipatory action.

Marketplace

The final activity on day two was a marketplace where the in-person participants could learn more about four different themes:

- Earth observation and the automation of global flood and landslide hazards to advance early warnings for all
- Harnessing artificial intelligence (AI) to target emergency aid
- Anticipating climate-induced mental illnesses in humanitarian response
- Harnessing the potential of no-code technologies to empower locally led anticipatory action

Online and in-person participants had plenty of opportunities to share their own ideas during the three days.
11th Global Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

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Fight for your right to party: celebrating learning beyond success stories

The growing prominence of anticipatory action has led to more evidence being generated on what works and what doesn’t, but also increased competition for visibility and funding. To open the final day, Liz Stephens, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre and the University of Reading, and Clemens Gros, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, challenged the audience to look beyond success stories and celebrate the full spectrum of learning potential.

To begin, Clemens explained that instead of assuming something works and searching for affirmative evidence, we need to ask: Does it work? Why and how does it (not) work? For whom? He shared three common ‘evidence traps’ that can affect how we evaluate anticipatory action initiatives:

1. Post-hoc fallacy: if B follows A, then A must have caused B.
2. A small number of cases can prove almost anything.

Next, it was time for a group rant: what bothers you, or what is missing, about the current evidence and learning around anticipatory action? One complaint was that the evidence is generated by tools designed to inform ourselves and our donors. But how useful is this for other stakeholders – and especially project recipients?

The overall message was one we need to remind ourselves of more often: celebrate the lessons beyond the success stories! This includes the things that didn’t work, the unexpected outcomes – everything that helps us to refine, revise and improve the anticipatory action approach.

“We should engage more with the people that we target at the design phase: listen to them and engage with them.”

Abdulrazzaq Saleh, OCHA Yemen
Parallel sessions #5 and #6

Day three continued with the final two rounds of parallel sessions.

What matters? Humanitarian perspectives on the future of early action

In 2023, the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) undertook a review of its activities. This was done to understand whether it is still serving the needs of its partners in bringing together multiple communities around the shared aim of scaling up early action. At the same time, the Somali Disaster Management Agency joined REAP to further its ambition to mainstream early/anticipatory action within its approach to disasters. This session was a prime opportunity for humanitarian partners and friends to engage in a dialogue with both organizations on how to work in ever-closer partnership to protect the most vulnerable people.

Role-playing to resilience: unleashing the power of anticipatory action through social protection

In this role-playing session, participants assumed distinct roles in an imaginary country affected by very real extreme events. Their challenge was to protect people by taking appropriate anticipatory actions through social protection systems. As the participants juggled development priorities and budgetary constraints, they had to develop social protection programmes that were anticipatory, scalable and which protected those in need, whenever they are in need. This activity helped them to understand how social protection provides a unique opportunity for anticipatory action, and the core components that can make this happen.

Failure café: managing risks in anticipatory action

The risk of ‘acting in vain’ – that is, delivering anticipatory action when forecasts are inaccurate – is a major perceived barrier to scaling up anticipatory action. But when initiatives target communities that are not directly impacted by shocks, they can still tackle the wider, indirect impacts of poverty through the effective targeting of poor, vulnerable and marginalized people. Despite this, projects across the world still speak about good practices and lessons learnt; they seldom talk about the failures or when things go wrong. This session was a chance to redress this imbalance.
Same same but different? From international practice in humanitarian contexts to national application in European civil-protection mechanisms

Climate change is expected to exacerbate the impacts of hydro-meteorological events all over the world. This means that instruments and approaches should not only be applicable for so-called ‘classic’ humanitarian contexts, but also for domestic preparedness and response efforts all over the world. Despite decades of global experience in anticipatory action, and generally high-quality forecasting and response capacities, anticipatory action in Europe is not yet implemented in a systematic manner, let alone mainstreamed in disaster-risk-management systems and mindsets. This session looked at current efforts and challenges in Europe, starting with hazard- and impact-forecasting capacities, then moving on to national anticipatory action and response capacities, including case studies of organizations’ international experiences being transformed to their respective national contexts and authorities.

Evidence to establish what matters in anticipatory action? Recent findings and developments

Implementation-oriented research on what works and what doesn’t in anticipatory action helps practitioners to design the most impactful interventions. It can also reveal unanticipated effects on what matters, to whom, and under which circumstances. In this session, practitioners shared recent evidence and experiences from implementing anticipatory action around the world.

Anchoring anticipatory action in the Grand Bargain

Despite encouraging recent developments, the potential of anticipatory action has not yet been fully realized. Several challenges remain, including the amount of, and access to, funding, as well as institutional barriers, operational capacities, data gaps and a lack of access to forecasts. Addressing these challenges will require greater political support and this session explored where the Grand Bargain could bring the greatest added value in scaling up anticipatory action.

Scaling up financing for early warning and early action in protracted fragility

People living in areas with protracted fragility/conflict are highly susceptible to suffering disproportionately from climate- and weather-related hazards. Affected by multiple vulnerabilities, there is an argument that they need anticipatory action support most urgently, yet anticipatory action is nascent in these contexts. This session focused on the crucial need to enhance resources for initiatives that aim to provide early
warning systems and anticipatory action in fragile contexts. It explored how initiatives can be designed and delivered in a way that is tailored to the unique needs of communities affected by conflict. There was also time to consider how operations need to be adaptable in the face of sudden changes and volatility.

**Acting together: how diverse actors can work collaboratively for anticipatory action**

This session focused on how different stakeholders and actors can be brought together to enhance collaboration on anticipatory action. Starting with a brief presentation of WFP’s work in Somalia, it moved on to discuss: (1) the anticipatory action and disaster management strategies that exist in countries, including current government plans; (2) how governments work with networks and NGOs; (3) how civil society is involved in anticipatory action and disaster management in these countries; (4) their strategies to better understand risks; and (5) the advantages of pre-positioned financing.

**Cash: sometimes, but not always**

Donors are asking if cash is always the right way to go for anticipatory action interventions. How do we help them understand what is appropriate (and not) in different situations, based on the evidence that we’ve gathered to date? This session facilitated a discussion around the tools that are currently available to assess the appropriateness of different modalities for anticipatory action.

**Beyond data: embracing complexity in anticipatory action through joint analysis**

The global community is faced with an increasing number of protracted and complex crises, emerging from a combination of conflict, successive economic shocks, natural hazards and extreme weather events brought on by climate change. To overcome this challenge, there is a need for anticipatory action to shift from a data-centric and single-hazard approach, which fails to accommodate the intricate complexities of diverse contexts with uncertain futures, to a multi-hazard and multiple-scenario approach. ACAPS presented its joint anticipatory analysis workshops, which aim to equip participants with the skills and knowledge needed to incorporate anticipatory thinking into the strategic planning and activities of humanitarian organizations. By jointly envisioning diverse possible future developments and conceptualizing their impacts on affected populations and humanitarian operations, participants gained insights into an applied methodology that supports the implementation of more robust and contextualized programming, one that considers the dynamic complexity of humanitarian crises.

Most sessions were streamed live, making the Global Dialogue Platform accessible to a much larger audience.
Reaching more people through strengthening systems for anticipatory action

Perhaps unsurprisingly, many experiences and lessons to date have highlighted the critical links between disaster preparedness, anticipatory action, and disaster response and recovery. This session provided an opportunity for practitioners to discuss how and where anticipatory action fits in the disaster-risk-management continuum, and the opportunities to strengthen collaborations between different teams working across this continuum. It was an opportunity to share not only experiences and challenges for capacity strengthening, but also potential solutions.

From theory to reality: institutionalizing anticipatory action

As the 11th Global Dialogue Platform drew to a close, it was time to delve into how to institutionalize anticipatory action within governmental and humanitarian frameworks. This plenary explored some of the diverse pathways that have emerged.

**Eduardo Castro Jr.**, Mozambique National Institute of Disaster Management and Reduction, shared an example of institutionalizing anticipatory action in Mozambique. Forecast-based financing (an approach to anticipatory action) was first introduced in 2015 by the Mozambican Red Cross and the German Red Cross. Yet the government only started considering this approach after the drought that occurred from 2015 to 2016: “At that time, there was no warning system, and the government couldn’t [support those affected] in a timely manner.” Since then, anticipatory action has become established in the country and the government’s capacity has shifted: “Now, they are able to produce monthly information about drought triggers.”

The session emphasized the pivotal role of local communities in shaping policies and legislation, and the need to ensure their voices are heard in anticipatory action. **Criselda Longga**, Philippine Red Cross, reported that anticipatory action is institutionalized from the national to the local levels. For example, it is included in formal government plans, including national policies for disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management, and there is national-level funding set aside for this. To support cooperation between the many actors involved across the Philippines, there are also national dialogue platforms dedicated to this approach and a national technical working group.
Institutionalization also needs to happen within humanitarian organizations and Luluwa Ali, OCHA Regional Office for Southern and Eastern Africa, explained how OCHA is tackling this: “We have this very clearly articulated in [our] strategic plan... to generate evidence to scale up... and to bring our staff on board with skills and knowledge [for] anticipatory action.” OCHA is using different modalities to achieve this, for example integrating the core dimensions of anticipatory action and early warnings in countries that implement the Humanitarian Programme Cycle. It is also consolidating its working groups to support effective decision-making and to act ahead of shocks.

**Averted Disaster Award 2023**

Preventing hazards from becoming disasters is at the heart of anticipatory action, making the Global Dialogue Platform an excellent place to announce the winners of the second Averted Disaster Award. This recognizes successful disaster-mitigation interventions that go unnoticed precisely because of their success.

The prize for 2023 went to the Amrita Center for Wireless Networks and Applications in India, in recognition of its work on early warning technology for landslides and efforts to engage communities for emergency preparedness and resilience in India. “I would like to thank each one of you for this award, and the committee for selecting us,” said Dr Maneesha V. Ramesh after collecting the award. “I will take back what I have learned [at the dialogue platform] so we can do anticipatory action better.”

Dr Maneesha V. Ramesh receives the award on behalf of the Amrita Center for Wireless Networks and Applications.

This award was developed to highlight those successful interventions, to render what is largely invisible more visible; it should send a signal to governments and policy-makers that we are able to work earlier and quicker, rather than waiting until... lives are lost and livelihoods lost before we actually do something.

Shanna N. McClain, National Aeronautics and Space Administration

The award ceremony featured the premier of a short documentary film, ‘Living Without Fear’, which highlights the achievements of the Amrita Center.

You can watch this here [tinyurl.com/43ctpwnj](tinyurl.com/43ctpwnj)
CLOSING THE CIRCLE: REFLECTIONS FROM PARTNERS AND PARTICIPANTS

The closing of the 11th Global Dialogue Platform was not just an end; it was a chance to close the circle with gratitude, inspiration and a renewed determination to ensure that anticipatory action remains at the forefront of the global agenda and leaves no one behind. In this spirit, some of the participants shared their reflections on the three days.

“
We are very excited to connect all the dots... to promote better coordination, to avoid duplication and to increase capacities. Having the opportunity to have global and regional dialogue platforms... highlights the link from the global to regional to local [levels].

Claudia Herrera, CEPREDENAC

“
It’s been an amazing three days... I will be leaving with a lot of new knowledge and new networks. I will go back and put the real people – the communities themselves – at the centre.

Nelly Maonde, Start Network

“
It’s been such a pleasure catching up with old friends, meeting new ones and cooking up new ideas. A big thank you to all of the organizers.

Julie Arrighi, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre

The 11th Global Dialogue Platform closed with an immersive experience co-created by, for and with the anticipatory action community. There were songs and dancing and the participants celebrated the achievements.
“Honoured to have been part of my first Global Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Action in Berlin, 2023... A massive thank you to the organizers, fellow participants, and all who made this event possible. Let’s carry this spirit forward and continue working together to make a difference on a global scale.”
Niroj Sapkota, Start Network Nepal, on LinkedIn

“Fantastic week representing the Global Policy Lab’s work on harnessing AI to target emergency aid at the Anticipation Hub’s Global Dialogue Platform. Got to connect with partners from World Food Programme and other orgs I hadn’t seen in years and engage with leading experts on anticipatory action from across the globe.”
Emily Goldman, University of California, Berkeley, on LinkedIn

“A week focusing on how to keep people at the centre, while improving and scaling up early action. [The] Anticipation Hub managed to create a great platform for knowledge sharing, leaving me with a lot of food for thought on anticipatory action.”
Pernille Meier, Lund University, on LinkedIn

“Thank you to everyone who joined the #GlobalShield Workshop at #GlobalDP Lots of food for thought on how to connect #AnticipatoryAction with #prearranged finance for #lossanddamage. Special thanks to all facilitators and @AnticipationHub for providing this platform.”
Global Shield on X

“Encouraging to see the turnout at the 11th #GlobalDP: governments, donors, partners, @FAOcolleagues, discussing scaling up #AnticipatoryAction, with people the focus of interventions. Food crises, compounded by conflict and climate change, demand multi-sectoral approaches!”
Rein Paulsen, FAO, on X

“What a great experience, joining in with the #GlobalDP event run by @AnticipationHub in Berlin here from Helsinki. A fantastic hybrid event on #AnticipatoryAction with lots of great insights from across the world.”
Sarah Schiffling, HUMLOG Institute, on X
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to all our partners for their support with the 11th Global Dialogue Platform and the German Federal Foreign Office for its financial support. Thanks also to the Storytile team for their continued support for the dialogue platforms.

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Please note that you need to log in to access these. The full agenda, including all speakers, is also available online.