

ASIA
PACIFIC

REGIONAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Terms of Reference



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STRATEGIC VISION

Anticipatory Action - also known as Early Warning Early Action or Forecast-based Financing - links early warnings to actions that can protect families, their livelihoods and lives ahead of a hazard, either human or climate induced.

Acting prior to the onset of a predictable hazard to safeguard lives and livelihoods, to reduce human suffering, losses and damages is a faster, efficient and more dignified humanitarian model.

There is a growing consensus that given the increasing availability and skill of risk and forecasting information, we cannot wait for hazards to impact communities instead of acting before humanitarian needs manifest.

Anticipatory Action has gained significant momentum leading to a faster, more efficient and more dignified humanitarian assistance. Country examples from Bangladesh, Mongolia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and others show that governments and communities have much to gain from the Anticipatory Action model. The approach further acts as a bridge between humanitarian and development communities.

To address the increasing number and severity of climate and human induced hazards, government, humanitarian, and development organizations need to support a transition from repetitive crisis response to forward-looking and preventive risk management.

The shift towards Anticipatory Action is further becoming embedded into global and regional policy including: Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. Anticipatory Action is a mechanism that contributes to achieving these commitments by addressing the gaps between disaster risk finance, climate science and action.

CONTEXT

The Asia-Pacific region is one of the most diverse in the world. It's home to nearly 4.5 billion people – some 60 percent of the global population – with roughly 2 300 languages and dialects between them. The geography reflects this diversity, from the high plateaus of Afghanistan to the tropical islands of Fiji and the wide-open grasslands of the Mongolian steppe.

The region is also one of the most hazard-prone: some 70 percent of the world's disasters hit here. And they particularly hit hard for families with limited means, who often belong to minority groups, living in remote areas, or on the fringes of cities. For them, the sequence of cyclones, floods, droughts, and heat waves can be relentless. These events are also getting more frequent and intense, thanks to the burden of climate change. Equally taxing can be the impacts of conflict and economic malaise, especially if they coincide with natural shocks.

It's no coincidence that some of the most hazard-prone communities in the region are also among the world's poorest, as crisis after crisis strips away at the hard-earned assets of farming families who have limited means to protect themselves and limited time to recover between shocks.

Anticipatory Action is a system that combines impact-based forecasting, anticipatory actions, ex ante financing, and the strengthening of the operational capacity to implement anticipatory actions *[continued on the next page]*.



The concept has been widely accepted and adopted by humanitarian partners and governments as a way to better protect lives/livelihoods and maintain people's self-reliance. By minimizing personal set-backs, Anticipatory Action also protects larger development gains. Consider, for example, a family's ability to keep their children in school with the income they derive from livestock they were able to protect or the fact that a community at large can maintain a basic level of healthy nutrition even in trying times. In short, by being more timely, Anticipatory Action reduces losses and suffering and protects progress.

While we may not entirely prevent disasters from happening, we can minimize the consequences by acting early. By using better forecasting models, prepositioning available resources and mapping the vulnerable groups,

Anticipatory Action has the potential to prevent people from falling further into destitution and sustain development gains.

As interest grows in the Asia-Pacific, so does the need for information sharing, coordination and joint advocacy. There is currently a gap in terms of regional partnerships convening the humanitarian, development and climate resilience communities. There is a need to draw on evidence and best practice to drive up and unify standards, while also increasing investment. This Regional Technical Working Group (RTWG) on Anticipatory Action aims to address this gap and promote a regional approach to knowledge sharing and cooperation.



KEY FUNCTIONS

The key functions of the group include:

- Develop a common framework and further the intellectual underpinning of Anticipatory Action to ensure technical rigour in the region (including definitions and standards).
- Promote the scale-up of collective Anticipatory Action efforts and provide technical support to joint inter-agency efforts.
- Support governments and partners to develop collaborative, sustainable and holistic Anticipatory Action systems.
- Generate joint evaluation methodologies, evidence and disseminate lessons learned.
- Collaborate on joint events, knowledge products and workshops.
- Coordinate and engage in joint resource mobilization efforts for Anticipatory Action and flexible financing.
- Provide technical materials, tools and templates to guide countries on setting up Anticipatory Action systems.
- Support the linking of Anticipatory Action to key themes, i.e. Adaptive/Shock-Responsive Social Protection, cash preparedness, social inclusion, climate resilience, among others.
- Provide regional early warnings updates, specifically for El Niño/La Niña events (to be presented at regional groups such as the Emergency Preparedness Working Group, IASC Regional Network as well as the Climate Outlook Forums;
- Provide technical assistance to regional bodies on Anticipatory Action both in terms of practical and policy uptake (i.e. the Association of Southeast Asian States (ASEAN) the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Center), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP), among others).





PARTICIPATION & MEMBERSHIP

The group will include partners who have technical experience leading Anticipatory Action programmes within the Asia-Pacific region. Other members of the IASC as well as key technical research institutes on forecasting and risk analysis will also be invited. Regional intergovernmental bodies such as the ASEAN, AHA Center, PIFS, and SAARC are also warmly welcomed to join.

The RTWG meets on a monthly or bi-monthly basis (depending on need) through web-based calls and, if possible, face-to-face meetings every 6 months taking advantage of regular forums where many members are present. If you are interested in joining the group, you can message the co-leads: Raymond.Zingg@ifrc.org & Catherine.Jones@fao.org.

Founding Members

Co-leads

- International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) & its Partner National Societies and Reference Centres
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)



Members

- World Food Programme (WFP)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES)
- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)



ANNEX

Objectives & Activities

The RTWG will facilitate knowledge sharing, development of coherent technical tools, training materials and joint advocacy messages. Accordingly, it will perform four key functions:

1. Regional & National Coordination

- Information sharing on current and future complementary projects in order to minimize duplication of efforts, coordinate potential joint-scoping missions or pair up to host events. Activities include:
 - Develop a shared road map on Anticipatory Action at the regional level (with a focus on Shock-Responsive Social Protection as a key modality for this approach in the region)
 - Support the set-up or strengthening of existing national technical working groups on Anticipatory Action.
 - Provide technical back-stopping at support to regional bodies understanding and uptake of Anticipatory Action into Policy and Practice.

2. Fostering Partnerships

- Strengthen partnership between partners and with Governments to document best practices and lessons learned. Identify gaps and opportunities for policy change and funding. Activities include:
 - Coordinate advocacy and policy efforts with key stakeholders.
 - Back-stop country and country discussions on Anticipatory Action policy inclusions.
 - Generate links to other key working groups to offer an Anticipatory Action perspective, Multi-hazard early warning systems and adaptive social protection.



3. Knowledge gathering & sharing

- Provide joint technical support to countries and create repositories of best-practice for early warning information systems, Anticipatory Actions, implementation plans, programmes that will be accessible on the Anticipation Hub. It will aim to bridge the gap between the global and country levels; Activities include:
 - Develop a regional repository of Anticipatory Actions for priority hazards that could be triggered by a forecast.
 - Develop a regional repository of early warning systems for priority hazards.
 - Develop a regional repository of best practices for SRSP for Anticipatory Action (in terms of financing, beneficiary intake/registries, effectiveness and delivery systems).
 - Develop an evidence base on protection and Gender-Based Violence risk mitigation for Anticipatory Action.
 - Develop a common framework for the evidence collection to determine the effectiveness of Anticipatory Actions and improve these systems (i.e. an evaluation of the three OCHA Central Emergency Response Fund Pilot Projects: Bangladesh, Nepal and the Philippines).

4. Capacity Building via Training and Events

- Develop training materials and conduct trainings, produce multi-partner communication products. Raise awareness about the importance of integrating Anticipatory Action considerations in humanitarian action and development programming. Activities include:
 - Consolidate existing tools and training materials to be hosted on the Anticipation Hub.
 - Develop training packages on Anticipatory Action (and where appropriate link to SRSP).
 - Develop a communication strategy.
 - Lead the roll-out of the Asia-Pacific Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Action and support broader forums such as the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR).

