

Terms of Reference

Anticipatory Action *Community of Practice*



Middle East & North Africa region (MENA)

Background

Countries and populations around the globe are being exposed to a growing mixture of hazards and risks, in places and to an extent previously unrecorded, increasing the pressure on humanitarian actors to respond more frequently to disasters. In the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) region, countries and populations are increasingly vulnerable to more frequent hazards and risks. The MENA region continues to experience conflicts, inflicted internal displacement and cross-border population movement, as well as climate change, rapid urbanization and unplanned development practices that increase the risks and vulnerabilities and are further exacerbated by challenges of recurrent flooding, heatwaves, cold waves and drought emergencies. As climate change impacts in the region become increasingly complex, frequent, and severe, the role of humanitarian actors in reducing risk has become even more critical. With an increasing number of crises in the region, humanitarian needs are reaching unprecedented levels.

Anticipatory Action is an innovative approach that is being used to act earlier in the face of predictable risks to reduce or mitigate the impact on the most vulnerable people. Anticipatory action uses forecasting, risk, and early warning information to track climate, socioeconomic trends, and food security to let humanitarian actors predict the impact of a hazard like a flood or drought and roll-out interventions that protect people's lives and livelihoods. Once certain thresholds are reached, a potential trigger or signal activates anticipatory actions that allow actors and partners to mobilize financial resources to protect people, their assets and resources. While gaining global momentum, anticipatory action is still nascent in the MENA region.

Efforts are being made by a multitude of actors, and regional coordination and collaboration will be necessary to complement efforts and engagements, as partners engage with national governments, societies, institutions, and local actors. To date, actors including WFP, REAP and IFRC have joined together on a number of engagements that have supported the advocacy and awareness on anticipatory action including joint advocacy at the Global Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action, in 2020/21 and most recently the MENA Climate Week in 2022.

Overall Goal

The main objective of this MENA region anticipatory action Community of Practice is to establish a space for technical and advocacy coordination, collaboration and learning exchange and capacity strengthening on anticipatory action and acting earlier ahead of

disasters in the region. It will bring together key actors to work together to ensure an effective and coordinated efforts to scale up anticipatory action in the region.

Topics Covered

Anticipatory Action, Forecast-based Action/Financing (FbA/FbF), early warning early action.

Specific Objectives

1. Advocacy, Evidence & Positioning for anticipatory action

The community of practice will support collaboration and coordination on policy positioning and advocacy, and leverage evidence at the regional level to mainstream and scale up anticipatory action.

2. Knowledge Exchange & Technical Excellence for anticipatory action

The community of practice will support knowledge sharing and exchange on anticipatory action and identify and act upon opportunities to enhance technical capacities in the region. This may include the development of tools/materials when required to strengthen the capacity on anticipatory action in the region,

The CoP will provide a platform for participating organizations and entities to actively support the regional evidence and learning through successful case studies, best practices, lessons learned among other learning outputs to ultimately ensure the integration of anticipatory action approaches, tools and practices at regional and national levels.

Membership / Composition

The Community of Practice is composed of **interested** and **active** local, regional and international actors operating and/or with strategic interest in anticipatory action approaches in the MENA region. Members are expected to actively engage with knowledge, resources, expertise, time etc. and sustain commitment towards planned workplan activities under the community of practice.

- The CoP activities will be co-managed by the IFRC and WFP Regional offices.
- Co-facilitators from the CoP will be agreed upon by the CoP members during the first meeting to ensure continuity and enhance knowledge management transfer
- among the group members.

- Task-specific working groups can be established for specific tasks, as identified by the CoP. The scope and duration of those working groups will be defined by the CoP members.
- Members of the CoP will revise these Terms of Reference if needed to ensure their relevance to the context; changes will be effective upon endorsement from members.

Meetings

The CoP will hold plenary meetings on a quarterly basis (TBD) with all members and will have at least one annual face-to-face meeting. The frequency of meetings will be reviewed regularly. Other external stakeholders can/will be invited to CoP meetings on an ad-hoc basis.

The IFRC and WFP regional offices together with the interested co-facilitators will hold follow-up monthly meetings as well to following on actions and activities agreed by the members.

Documentation

The CoP work will be documented; minutes of the meetings will be made available to the members and the wider stakeholders (e.g. via MENA page on Anticipation hub and/or other online platforms), if requested. A Microsoft Teams site/channel will be created for this purpose.

Annual plan will be developed together with the members of the CoP to include regular updates on progress of the CoP. This annual plan will be part of a wider multi-year strategic framework/roadmap developed by the CoP.

Information sharing and meetings

Information sharing will be facilitated through closed user platforms, like Teams. Announcement of initiatives takes place via email.