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Start Fund: Evaluation of Crisis Anticipation

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Commissioned by



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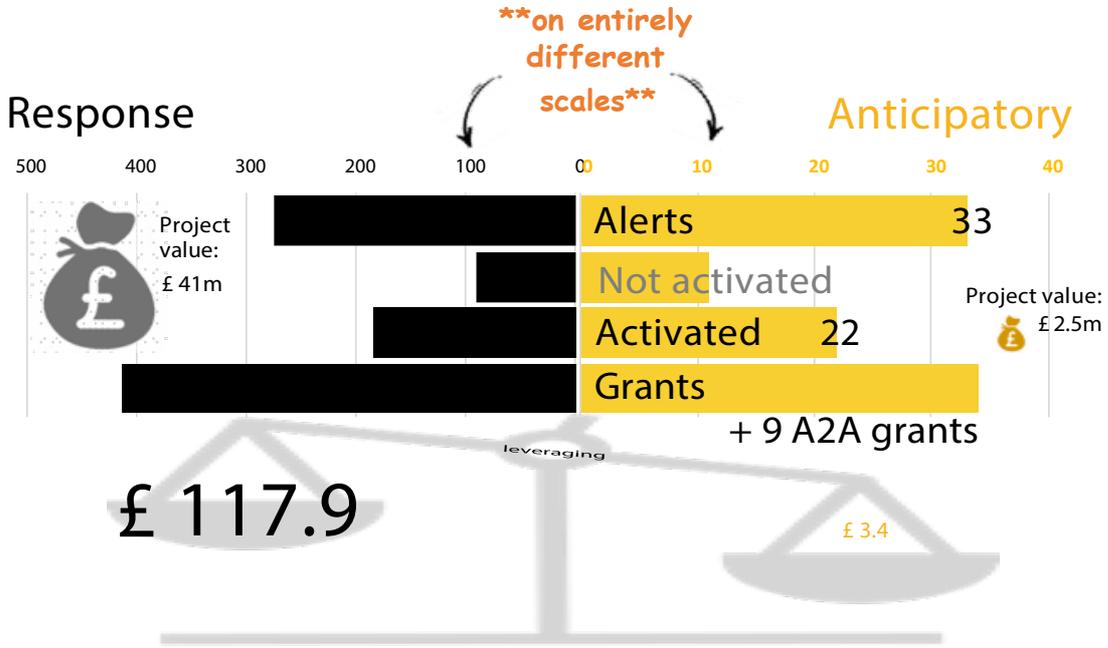
Executive Summary

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Executive Summary (Pictorial version)

Response vs. Anticipatory Projects

2014 through Alert 300/Feb 2019



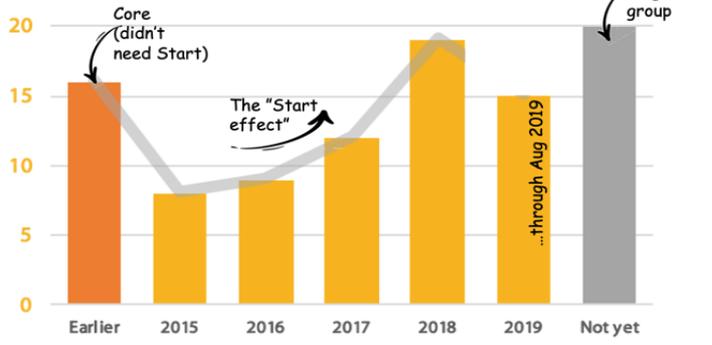
Impact: are Start members monitoring risk and acting before events occur?



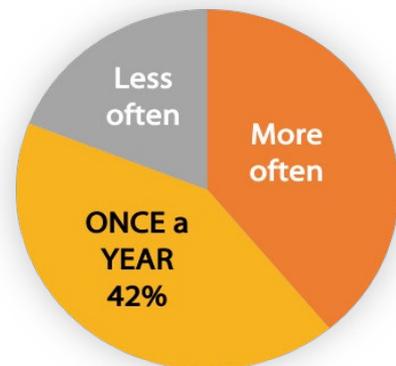
- * Experience in anticipation
- * Confidence to take risk, act under uncertainty
- * Awareness and use of sources
- * Collaboration in risk analysis
- * A4A grants reduce uncertainty

Acting on the basis of a forecast

(Nb. respondents, earliest year through Aug 2019)



N=99, 32 orgs, many include > 1 response per agency



Impact: have harm and losses been mitigated?

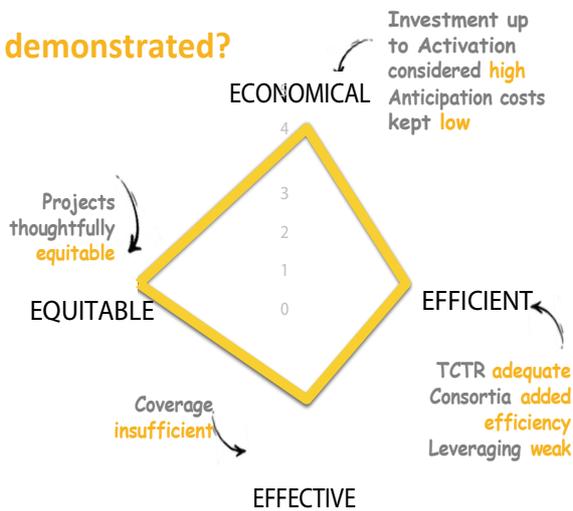
- Focus on acute mitigation and preparedness
- Confidence in achievement
- Worse crises: had projects not been implemented
- Lack of clear definition of terms
- Metrics and reporting inadequate to monitor effectiveness or evaluate impact
- Common appraisal tools not yet used

Impact: How do results relate to timing?

of Start activations implemented prior to crisis onset (all Anticipation)

avg. # days from trigger to activation: (immensely Improved!)

V4M: what value has been demonstrated?



What has Start enabling work contributed?

- ❖ Transparent, learning-oriented
- ❖ Approachable,
- willing to share
- ❖ Unique and substantial benefits
- ❖ Strategic partnerships
- ❖ Commitment to learning with others is overdue
- ❖ Culture is strengthening
- ❖ **Enormous contribution**

RECOMMENDATIONS (abbreviated)

STRATEGIC: Increase Start Fund investment in anticipation. Clarify differences between anticipation and forecast based funding. Invite RCRC to an externally facilitated learning event. Establish Start position more precisely on what Anticipation can be expected to achieve. Highlight and promote the localisation aspects of forecasting and anticipatory action. Develop rule-based system for repeat alerts to lessen dependence and strengthen national capacity.

OPERATIONAL: Increase HR capacity/availability for hands-on support to country teams. Establish SOPs and a budget for a light but objective evaluation for ALL activated alerts

TECHNICAL: Compile/finalise a glossary of all key terms related to Anticipation. Invest in an appropriate set of metrics to monitor and evaluate Anticipation success. Explore risk in relation to scale. Task an IT / database team to streamline the Tracker.

1. Background, Purpose and Scope

Background of Anticipatory action in Start

Start Network is a network of 42 international humanitarian NGOs that seeks to improve humanitarian aid through innovation and the development of new financing mechanisms, harnessing the knowledge and influence of local actors and those most affected by humanitarian crises.

In 2013, the Start Network launched the Start Fund, a multi-donor pooled funding mechanism by which its members and their partners might rapidly access funding (within 72 hours of a request or 'Alert') for small-scale emergencies that might not otherwise capture the attention of the international community.

Initially the Start Fund only granted funding for response projects but, in 2016, the Network established the Start Anticipation programme, a complementary, innovative approach which allows members to access funds based upon forecasts¹ of impending crises. According to the Start Annual Report, "Anticipation" is one of six Start programmes². It is described as an "approach embedded in all funds that allows for early and forecast based funding".

Operation of the Fund is supported by the Forecast-based Warning, Analysis, and Response Network (FOREWARN), an interdisciplinary network of scientists, humanitarians, and humanitarian experts based at diverse institutions around the world. They meet virtually to discuss, share, and develop knowledge to support the Start Fund's anticipatory humanitarian decision-making. Specific members of FOREWARN are called upon by Start to advise on the quality of forecasts and activation of anticipation alerts submitted by its members.

Since that time (until the in-depth analysis for this evaluation Started in May 2019), all together there had been:

- 33 anticipatory alerts;
- 22³ activated anticipatory alerts (the main target of the evaluation);
- 34 grants for activated projects;
- Anticipatory action project expenditures of 2.6m⁴ GBP and
- 9 funded 'Analysis to Action' (AA) grants that allow Start members to invest in the collaborative data collection, risk analysis, and planning processes at the national or local level that are necessary to gather information needed to trigger and execute anticipatory funding and action.

Purpose

As learning is a driving value of the Start Network, and the concept and practice of anticipatory humanitarian action is relatively new, Start engaged Integrated Risk Management Associates (IRMA) to conduct an

¹ Forecast: a prediction, especially as to imminent weather or other events, typically provided by expert agencies mandated to conduct EW and communicate with the public. To forecast: To estimate or predict conditions by analysis of data. For instance, the analysis of meteorological data to forecast the likelihood of specific weather conditions.

² The six programmes include: Start Fund, Start Fund Anticipation, Start Fund Bangladesh, Migration Emergency Response Fund, DEPP Innovation Labs and Risk Financing. The DEPP Programme listed in that report ended in 2018.

³ This number varies throughout the evaluation report as component analyses drew on the data sources at different time periods and data sets had varying levels of completion.

⁴ This figure and the number of activated anticipation window alerts differs from the official Start "allocations" attributed to anticipatory projects (Oxley 2019 reports "Between 2016-2019, the Anticipation Window allocated £3.7 million to implement 19 early action projects").

evaluation of the Start Fund Crisis Anticipation operations and interventions. This evaluation aimed to determine the impact and ‘value for money’ of Start Fund Crisis Anticipation and to identify the contribution of the ‘enabling work’- the partnerships, fund management, guidance to members, and learning and evidence processes established and conducted by the Start Fund - to its achievements. The results will be used to enhance Start Fund Anticipation and potentially other innovative financing mechanisms and contribute to strategic level learning on forecast-based action.

Scope

The evaluation was carried out from May to December 2019. It encompassed analysis of all Alert/project documentation from 2016 to May 2019, in-depth study of three Alerts and responses that took place in 2018 or 2019, and discussions with key informants with direct knowledge of the Fund’s operations over any period from its inception to the current time.

Audiences

This findings of this evaluation are intended to serve the following audiences:

- Those immediately involved in Anticipation operations: The Start Network Crisis Anticipation team, Start Network Innovation labs team (focused on disaster risk financing);
- Anticipation operations: Start Network members, FOREWARN contributors, Start Network donors, including German Federal Foreign Office, UK Department for International Development;
- The broader realm of stakeholders and organizations outside the immediate Start Network with a general interest in anticipatory or forecast-based humanitarian action.

2. Methodology

Approach

The evaluation was designed to use a mixed methods approach to answer three key questions, as portrayed in Exhibit 1):

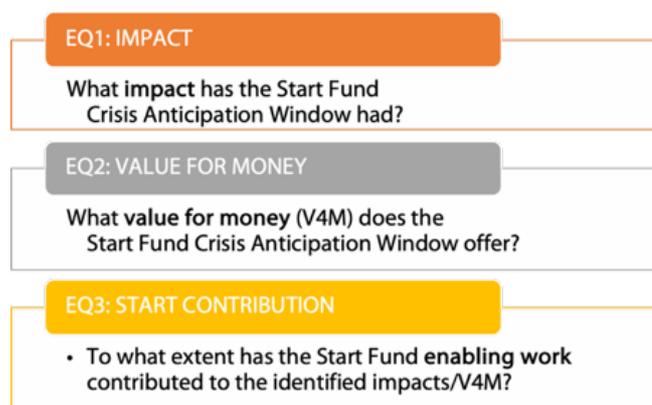
A framework was developed to define sub-questions, sources and data collection methods, and was approved by the evaluation Steering Group before data collection began (See Annex 2).

Sequencing and Participation

The research leading to the deliverables followed three classic but reliable phases: Inception, Consultation/Collection and Synthesis/Reporting (See Annex 1). All phases actively engaged Start members, Start Monitoring and Evaluation Staff,

and the External Evaluation Steering Committee as much as was possible to make this a user-driven evaluation. During the Consultation/ Collection stage, members and Start staff were consulted through key informant interviews and a survey, as were donors, FOREWARN members and other partners. In the three case study countries, national researchers led data collection and collaborated on the analysis. These researchers--IRMA team members--were approved by Start Fund and the Start members in each of the case study countries.

Exhibit 1: Evaluation questions



Case studies

The three case studies were: Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Somalia (See Exhibit 2). In each, National Researchers collected qualitative evidence through KII, FGD and a workshop. The set was chosen to provide a wide range of Anticipation examples, crisis events and members/implementing organisations; field work sites were based on where the Anticipation grants were invested and availability of staff and partners to facilitate access. See **Error! Reference source not found.** for merged workshop products across the three countries.

Exhibit 2: Synthesis of Anticipation Case Studies

	Anticipation Alert No. and Dates	Event	Start Members receiving funding
Nigeria	Alert 300, February 2019	Electoral violence	Tearfund, Norwegian Refugee Council
Sri Lanka	Alert 282, November 2018	Flooding	Oxfam, World Vision, Save the Children
Somalia	Alert 308/09, March 2019	Cholera	Trocaire, Relief International

Value for Money methods and metrics

In regard to the Value for Money portion of the evaluation, IRMA has used multiple methods repeatedly in humanitarian contexts that were applied in this evaluation (See Exhibit 3). It is critical to note that this evaluation component aimed to quantify to the extent possible but has no ambition of measuring V4M/impact in any statistical manner.

Exhibit 3: Comparison of metrics for V4M analysis

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
'Total cost-to-transfer ratios' (TCTR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicates the value of assistance that reaches affected populations, compared to all other costs Provides quantification TCTR methodology is a way to measure cost-efficiency to compare across many different projects Objectives include: ensure that assistance reaches beneficiaries more effectively, efficiently, directly, and in a manner that is appropriate to the context and phase of a crisis; enhance transparency and accountability; and achieve scale 	Requires detailed budgets; most straightforward for projects with hard outputs
4 Es: Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds "equity" to the traditional mix of Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness Comprehensive and applied in a participatory (workshop) manner 	Mainly qualitative

Process and sampling

This evaluation required a strongly respected **temporal sequence**: from portfolio and literature review to survey to KII (in this order, as each one build on the other), as follow:

- The **portfolio review** entailed a deep dive into the folders for each of at least 20 activated anticipation projects and the 10 Anticipation alerts that were not activated. It also included a detailed analysis of data from the **Start Tracker**⁵. Other literature reviewed includes annual reports, learning and training materials, case studies, risk bulletins, blogs on Start's website, project information provided outside Start fund Secretariat, and others.

⁵The version of the Start tracker in XLS used was dated May 2019. While the tracker is a gold mine of important information, it is not always self-explanatory nor simple to navigate. Project data in the tracker also regularly evolve from one period to another making some key indicators incomparable across the life of Start anticipation.

*The **survey** of 21 quantifiable questions (using Likert scale of agreement) was directed to all (40) Start members and other stakeholders. While over 489 individuals were invited, 91 completed the survey, including 53 that has raised or managed an anticipation alert, 37 Rota members and 25 that had managed an Analysis for Action grant. Greater detail is available in Annex 6. E-Survey profiles.

- Next, **interviews** were held with 19 **key informants** (see Annex 7) from Start members, Start staff, FOREWARN members, pertinent partners and one donor, using sub-sets of questions from the Evaluation Matrix.
- Through national researchers, IRMA designed and facilitated field work in three case studies (with KIIs, FGDs) ending with a 6-hour participatory **workshop** to guide a group of leaders/ managers/partners from multiple projects linked to one alert to participate in their own ‘safe’ assessment of Impact and V4M. While it was often parallel to some of the more quantified analyses in the Desk Study, efforts were made to guard against desk results influencing participatory results. Participants were empowered to produce their own conclusions, learning from the systematic guided explorations.
- A final participatory Conclusions and Recommendations webinar was held in January 2020 to allow the Start Anticipation team to digest and translate the main findings into conclusions and produce the most actionable recommendations.

CAVEAT: this full evaluation is couched in the context of 22 cases of Start anticipatory projects to date.

3. Findings

3.1 What impact has the Start Fund Crisis Anticipation had?

Summary of key findings

- Anticipation in the studied period included 22 activations, 34 grants and 2.6m GBP.
- Anticipatory action constitutes 11% of activations and 6% of Start Fund total expenditures (by projects) in the review period.
- On average, under half anticipation alerts result in funded projects (same for response alerts/projects).
- Anticipatory action is still very new for Start members as is acting under uncertainty, but a growing body of practitioners are gaining direct experience in anticipatory processes.
- Start members are aware of and monitor a wide range of sources (from local to international) on evolving risks, before hazards occur or reach their peak.
- Analysis of forecasts and other relevant data largely takes place through information-sharing and collaboration and results in a trigger or forecast/prediction of impacts.
- Nearly half of respondents (N=34) reported that their organisations acted on the basis of a forecast for the first time in the past two years.
- Analysis for Action grants have made a strong contribution to anticipatory action by decreasing uncertainty about forecasts and risks and generating confidence among users.
- A majority of anticipatory actions have aimed for ‘acute mitigation’ and ‘enhancing preparedness’, but with a lack of clear differentiation. A minority have been for longer-term DRR and possibly other objectives not strictly within the niche of Start Fund Crisis Anticipation.
- Stakeholders are confident that projects funded by anticipation achieved their objectives, but reporting is insufficient to monitor effectiveness and impacts. Common appraisal tools and terminology are not yet being used for this purpose.
- It is unanimous that communities targeted would have been in a worse situation should the anticipation projects not have been implemented.
- Lag times for anticipation have improved immensely, currently an average of 11 days is required from trigger to activation (conducted on Anticipation only). In a separate analysis of the full portfolio, activations across the Start portfolio however are **not** occurring before crisis onset. Only five (all anticipation) of 209 projects Start implementation before crisis onset.

- Perceptions hold that the main difference between Anticipatory and Response implementation is linked to both **cadence** (shorter but under less pressure) and **coordination** (opportunities). There is also anecdotal evidence that response is more costly (in terms of damage to assets, and funds and labour required for recovery) and takes longer.

The 22 activated anticipation alerts (producing 34 grants and project expenditures of 2.6m GBP) varied widely over the years, with the highest number being in 2018 (11 projects). Overall, anticipatory activations make up 11% of the Start portfolio with an average of 4.4 activations per year. At peak, anticipatory alerts have risen to roughly one-fifth of the portfolio by number of activations (a figure retained even including partial 2019 – through Alert #304 of Jan. 2019). Anticipatory projects however have never held their weight in **GBP value**: only 6% of the overall estimated 43.7 GBP was invested in anticipatory projects. In comparison, numbers of **Response alerts** Started earlier (2014) and rose regularly through 2018 but with a drop in 2017; they typically punch above their weight in aggregate project value.

Exhibit 4: Temporal flow of anticipatory compared to response alerts, grants and project values

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
	ACTIVATED ALERTS (through Alert #304 and M017)							ACTIVATED ALERTS						
ANTICIPATORY	0	1	5	3	11	2	22	0%	3%	12%	7%	18%	18%	11%
RESPONSE	13	33	40	40	51	9	186	100%	100%	98%	93%	82%	82%	92%
TOTAL	13	33	41	43	62	11	203							
	START GRANTS							START GRANTS						
ANTICIPATORY	0	1	5	9	17	2	34	0%	1%	5%	10%	14%	11%	8%
RESPONSE	30	86	97	80	103	17	413	100%	99%	95%	90%	86%	89%	92%
TOTAL	30	87	102	89	120	19	447							
	PROJECT VALUES (EXPENDITURES in GBP)							PROJECT VALUES (EXPENDITURES in GBP)						
ANTICIPATORY	£ -	£ 61,741	£ 432,375	£ 563,483	£ 1,375,927	£ 144,112	£ 2,577,638	0%	1%	5%	6%	11%	6%	6%
RESPONSE	£ 2,113,805	£ 8,375,822	£ 9,073,561	£ 8,216,010	£ 11,142,107	£ 2,236,858	£ 41,158,164	100%	99%	95%	94%	89%	94%	94%
TOTAL	£ 2,113,805	£ 8,437,563	£ 9,505,936	£ 8,779,493	£ 12,518,034	£ 2,380,970	£ 43,735,802							

To what extent are Start members monitoring risks and acting before events occur?

Anticipatory action funded by the Start Fund theoretically moves through seven connected phases. It Starts with a forecast or other trigger, detected through risk monitoring, that leads Start members in-country to carry out risk analysis and, if necessary, generate an **alert note** to request funds. The Start team then triangulates the analysis through a survey of relevant FOREWARN members and a third-party briefing note from ACAPS. A funding decision is then made by a rota of Start Network member agency representatives. If the decision is to allocate funds, interested members in the country concerned submit proposals to the Start Team. Projects are selected (or not), and funds are sent to the relevant organisations. Implementation begins, and aid is received by the people at risk. This process usually takes 72 hours, although up to a week can be given for the development of anticipation proposals where appropriate. The actual transfer funds often happen after that period, but members are expected to be able to Start implementation with their own funds and replenish them with the transfer from Start when it arrives.

In order to evaluate Start stakeholders' behaviour and achievements in relation to anticipatory action, the research examined specific activities within key phases, as described below:

What risk data are being monitored? How? When? By whom?

Analysis of documentation relating to 25 alerts⁶ reveals that, **a wide range of data sources are being monitored by Start members** prior to producing alerts, including international media/reports, regional and national reports generated by UN agencies, assessments conducted by INGO and NGOs, information provided by national governmental entities, and verbal reports from communities.

All Alerts studied draw on more than one source of data (see Exhibit 5), **rather than a single or official forecast**. Using multiple sources reduces the likelihood of members being overly influenced or relying too much on one source of potentially poor quality. **The combination of data sources differs by crisis/hazard type**, with data from UN, international sources and community sources being used most to monitor evolving conflict or displacement crises and health crises, and national-level governmental entities being relied upon more frequently for crises related to heavy rains, storms and flooding. No one source was dominant in monitoring of heatwaves, cold waves and drought.

Exhibit 5: Data sources cited by Members in Alert Notes

Alert hazard type	Data sources												TOTAL in set
	International	% of total	UN region/country	% of total	INGO/NGO	% of total	National Gov	% of total	National media	% of total	Community	% of total	
Conflict/displacement	3	38%	5	63%	3	38%	3	38%	1	13%	4	50%	8
Heatwave/drought	2	29%	2	29%	1	14%	3	43%	1	14%	0	0%	7
Flood/landslide/storm	4	40%	2	20%	3	0%	7	70%	0	0%	0	0%	10

Start members monitor quantitative and qualitative data, but with differing emphases depending on the type of crisis/hazard. Alerts for conflict/displacement mainly use qualitative data such as public acts of violence, protests, contentious statements by public figures and divisive actions, complemented by some quantitative data such as trends in number of incidents, number of border crossings, etc. Alerts for floods and storms mainly cite quantitative trends in rainfall, river levels and number of people affected, with some descriptive qualitative data; those for heat and cold waves refer mainly to quantitative trends in temperatures (actual and forecasts), numbers of people exposed or vulnerable, and crops/livestock affected, also with some qualitative descriptions. Alerts for health crises refer largely to quantitative data on number of cases, referrals and deaths. In the case of the cholera outbreak in Somalia, water level in wells, saltiness and air temperatures were also monitored as key indicators of drought and conditions in which cholera prosper. In general, the tendency to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative data – regardless of the differing emphases – increases the quality of the analysis

If the timing of a hazard/crisis is uncertain or not imminent, Start members have tended to use Analysis for Action grants to design and enable systematic monitoring / study of the risk. For example, following an official governmental communication about renewed activity of the Goma volcano, DRC Start Members requested an A4A grant to enable them to better understand what was happening, to understand what to monitor and assess community-level preparedness.

As reported, *“In 2018 October there was an alert from the volcanologists who were monitoring they found an event that was not normal so emitted the alert saying that maybe the eruption can happen. The agencies got the information and started to revise their contingency plans so we took that opportunity to say ‘this could happen at any time’ – let’s request an Analysis for Action grant to look at the level of preparedness to find out*

⁶ Including 3 alerts not activated

if the population is ready to evacuate or respond or to make good choice about what to do before, during and after?" (KII, Start staff members).

Evidence from Nigeria Case Study

Even before accessing the Start Fund became a possibility, Start Members and partners in Nigeria were actively gathering information about potential election violence. Following the official postponing of the elections – which was cited by most stakeholders as the earliest warning sign – Start members began to receive concerning information about rising tensions from partners implementing peace-building programmes in at-risk communities. This prompted them to monitor the situation more systematically through visits and by phone. Once Start funds were granted, monitoring by members and partners intensified. Even during the voting process, i.e. just hours and minutes before violence was predicted to break out, Start Members continued to monitor the situation through in-community sources (Peace Ambassadors and Community/Religious Leaders) by cell phone.

TIMING		BEFORE Start FUNDING
Earliest	National sources	<i>"The first sign was when the date for the Presidential election was postponed.... Anxiety was everywhere"</i> (Start member/partner)
	International Sources	<i>"There was a document about the issues that made Nigeria fragile...from Security to drugs, to political parties to the INEC."</i>
	Partner/community sources	<i>"Because we were into peace building work, we saw the early sign of trouble that will likely brew or might turn violent if there is no intervention." "Our organisation's concern was raised because we work in these communities and we had gone there to find out, what was troubling their peace and they began to raise some of these issues."</i>
↓		AFTER Start FUNDING
Latest	Start Member/partner sources	<i>"The youth had a plan to cause trouble. When people come with goods to be conveyed to their homes from the main road, the youth only convey it if you belong to their political party of choice" "The young people were being given drugs, and were being trained to say if the election does not go our way, this is what should happen" "People were closing shops to travel home."</i>
	Community sources	<i>"During the elections we did monitoring. We gave our numbers to our beneficiaries to phone in to tell us what is happening in their areas, so we could ... announce something is about to happen somewhere so people should be vigilant."</i>
	Social Media	<i>"In social media, most of which were speculations"</i>

What analysis, decision-making and actions are taking place? How? When? By whom?

Anticipatory action is still very new, as noted by stakeholders during the Anticipation Alert 284 (see Text Box, right). While small among other Start programmes, anticipation rose to 18 and 6 % of the overall Start portfolio respectively activations and total project expenditures; see Exhibit 4: Temporal flow of anticipatory compared to response alerts, grants and project values, above).

... "it was our first ever experience implementing anticipatory action"

(Start Members: 284 Mongolia anticipation of dzud)

To further demonstrate decision-maker willingness however, the Start tracker enabled the calculation of proportion of funded alerts per year (see Exhibit 6: Activation over time (Anticipatory vs. Response). Since 2015, no less than 43% of anticipatory alerts has resulted in a funded Anticipatory project. To give a fair perspective, however, roughly the same proportion overall—two-thirds—of both anticipatory and response alerts are activated.

Exhibit 6: Activation over time (Anticipatory vs. Response)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL
ANTICIPATORY		1	8	7	15	2	33								
Not activated			3	4	3	1	11			0%	38%	57%	20%	50%	33%
Activated		1	5	3	12	1	22		100%	63%	43%	80%	50%	67%	
RESPONSE	20	43	61	66	76	14	280								
Not activated	7	11	25	19	24	5	91		35%	26%	41%	29%	32%	36%	33%
Activated	13	32	36	47	52	9	189		65%	74%	59%	71%	68%	64%	68%
TOTAL	20	44	69	73	91	16	313								
Not activated	7	11	28	23	27	6	102		35%	25%	41%	32%	30%	38%	33%
Activated	13	33	41	50	64	10	211		65%	75%	59%	68%	70%	63%	67%

For both anticipatory and response activations, a majority are focused on natural hazards. Activation for anticipatory alerts are concentrated above all on climatological hazards (32%). See Exhibit 7: Comparing Activation. For Response alerts climatological hazards represents 6% of the activations; response activations are more frequently focused on conflict (32%) and hydrological crises (28%). Most un-activated anticipatory alerts target a mix and for Response projects, conflict.

Analysis related to Start alerts largely takes place through information-sharing and collaboration. The actions organisations engage in most frequently in response to an external forecast or when their monitoring detects an evolving crisis are (in this order): organizing internal meetings, conducting a risk assessment, holding meetings with national actors, and meeting/exchanging with other Start members. See Exhibit 8. The result of this analysis is, in effect, a ‘hybrid’ – a forecast-cum-prediction that combines hazard behaviour and potential impact on vulnerable populations, compiled from various sources and agreed among multiple actors. Based on this analysis, they apply for Start funding using an Alert or/and seek funding from other sources.

Exhibit 7: Actions triggered by forecasts



Start stakeholders feel confident in their capacity in this phase of the anticipatory action cycle, with 100% claiming that the risk analysis and forecasting (associated with Start alerts) was of good quality. While a minority disagrees (15%), a majority agrees that Start has enabled good use of forecasting information. See

Exhibit 8: Comparing Activation

Crisis category	ACTIVATED						NON ACTIVATED					
	ANTICIPATORY		RESPONSE		TOTAL		ANTICIPATORY		RESPONSE		TOTAL	
Human-made	6	27%	65	35%	71	34%	2	18%	28	31%	30	29%
Natural	16	73%	119	65%	135	66%	8	73%	60	66%	68	67%
Other	0	0%	5	3%	5	2%	1	9%	3	3%	4	4%
TOTAL	22		184		206		11		91		102	

Crisis Type	ACTIVATED						NON ACTIVATED					
	ANTICIPATORY		RESPONSE		TOTAL		ANTICIPATORY		RESPONSE		TOTAL	
Biological	3	14%	25	13%	28	13%	1	9%	4	4%	5	5%
Climatological	7	32%	11	6%	18	9%	2	18%	19	21%	21	21%
Conflict	4	18%	60	32%	64	30%	2	18%	25	27%	27	26%
Displacement	1	5%	2	1%	3	1%		0%	1	1%	1	1%
Geophysical	1	5%	11	6%	12	6%	1	9%	6	7%	7	7%
Hydrological	4	18%	53	28%	57	27%	1	9%	21	23%	22	22%
Meteorological		0%	15	8%	15	7%	2	18%	10	11%	12	12%
Other	2	9%	12	6%	14	7%	2	18%	5	5%	7	7%
TOTAL	22		189		211		11		91		102	

Exhibit 9. Key informants in several countries also attest to the effectiveness of support provided by the Start team, both in terms of guiding them through the monitoring and analysis process and connecting them with relevant experts. For example, Start connected members in Pakistan with an LSE Statistician, who developed guidance for them to use in heatwave monitoring and analysis, enabling them to present a robust alert and secure Start funding.

Evidence was found to support that **forecasts of slow-onset hazards offered greater challenges than rapid onset**. This is because the rapid onset threats have generally attracted much more investment and excitement given their damage potential, intensity and visibility. See more on challenges in timely anticipation of slow onset hazards near Exhibit 20: Reaching Communities before crisis onset, below.

Exhibit 9: Perceptions of forecasting

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
Start Fund Crisis Anticipation enables good use of forecasting information for funding decisions and project design.	7%	6%	52%	35%	14
The forecasting and/or risk analysis that triggered this Anticipation project was of decent QUALITY.			50%	50%	26

Members highlight the importance of the Start Fund Crisis Anticipation to enable them to **move from monitoring and analysis to anticipatory action**. One noted: “We were analysing the situation and wondering where would get funding so we were very happy when Start fund just flew into the programme.” Another explained: “We on our own had done an assessment but could not act because we had no funds”.

Evidence from Nigeria Case Study

In Nigeria, Start members held coordination meetings where they shared information and drew on their local experience, knowledge and presence, including risk assessments that some had conducted with communities. These discussions enabled them to systematically build a common understanding of the situation and how they expected it to develop and agree ways to manage it. On this basis, they drafted and submitted the alert *note*.

Prior knowledge of vulnerability	<i>“We have worked in this community before, so we know their vulnerability” (Start member partner)</i>
Collaborative risk identification and mitigation	<i>“We did a community risk assessment with the community” (Start member partner)</i>
	<i>“We listed possible risks; how do we manage them; how do we mitigate these risks? The risks identified, were discussed and charted ways on how to take care of them. (Start member partner)</i>

Evidence from Somalia Case Study

Based on their knowledge of the context and historical trends, Start members had a strong sense that a cholera outbreak was imminent and were monitoring even before accessing Start funds. NGO representatives and community members alike remembered a deadly outbreak in 2017 for which response was too slow. In 2019, following an appeal from the MOH and Local administration in Gedo, four Start Network partners coordinated to raise a Start Alert. Start Network partners coordinated closely with local authorities, the Ministry of Health, and UN Cluster organizations, monitoring river and well levels and health data emerging from the IDP camp health centres. When the number of cases of AWD started to increase, Partners acted quickly to raise the alert and obtain funds.

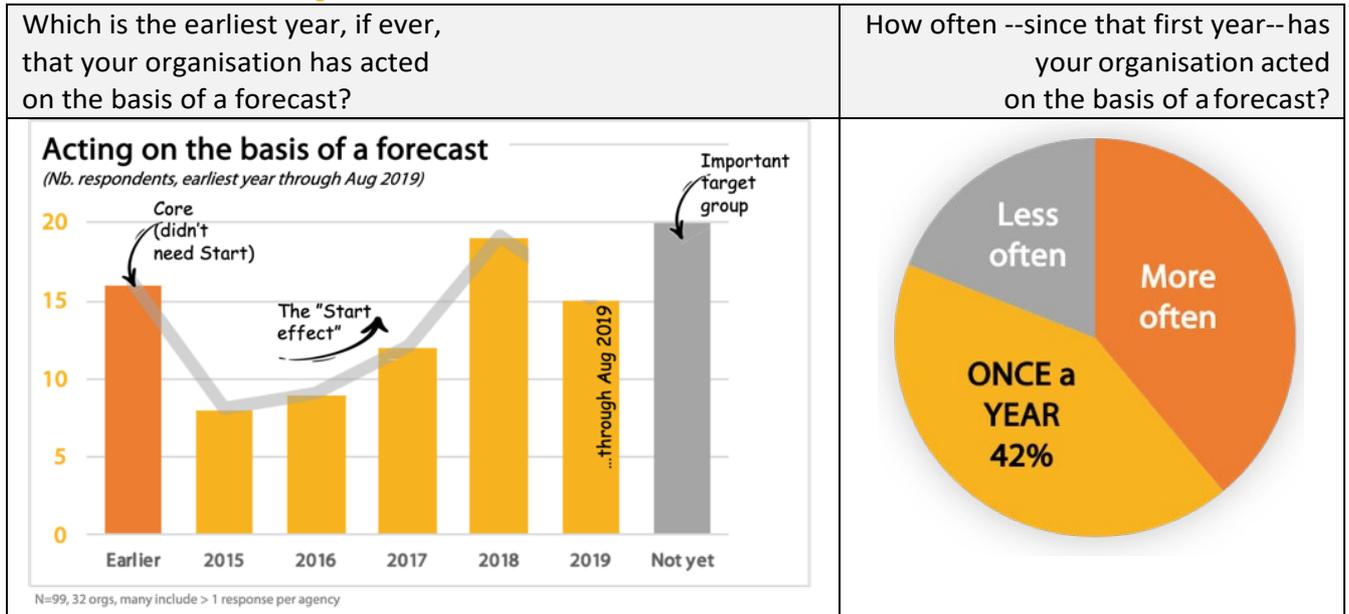
Prior knowledge of vulnerability	<i>“Previous trends also pointed to an imminent outbreak i.e. last cholera outbreak in Gedo happened during the same season of the year in 2017, with 39 deaths out of the 4352 cases treated.” (Start Network member partner)</i>
	<i>“AWD is always a prone disease in Gedo region during the months of March to April. In 2019 there had been severe drought in Gedo region, particularly in Belet Hawo, and the river dried up and all shallow wells too dried up and water levels went down, and also there is a lack of proper hygiene, so there has been fear of the outbreak...Through this we decided that there was a window, and also followed closely on other organisations data like FSNU and OCHA reports on the situation of the drought and possibility of outbreaks of cholera and AWD” (Start Network member partner)</i>
	<i>“There are signs that tell us when the AWD is imminent. There will be a lot of ‘kuleylo’ (heat), even if it is during the dry season, but then very hot weather prevails. The expected rains will not come at the time they are expected. The season falls back. There will changes in the drinking water, they water becomes very salty. The sweet water from the wells turn and become very bitter. Water becomes scares in the whole region. For the people in the badia (pastoral hinterland), who use the Mado’s, (watering point along beds of the seasonal streams), or from the ‘ells’ (wells), the waters become very bitter. So, those signs are seen ... those are the signs that it is possible that AWD may affect the region.” (IDP Camp Resident)</i>
Collaborative risk identification and mitigation	<i>“The line lists were used to map epicenters of the diarrhea cases and extra assessments conducted by a multi-sectoral team. This yielded information on the affected, those most at risk, the prevailing conditions that put them at risk, existing capacities/resources and the priority activities. These were presented in a meeting of the multi-sectoral Emergency Response Team and all partners informed of the next steps, which included seeking for external support.” (Start Network member partner)</i>
	<i>“Trocaire coordinated closely with Concern Worldwide, Relief International and World Vision, to monitor the situation and raise an alert. At the regional level, Trocaire took a lead role to have the WASH cluster alerted by the MOH. As a result, a multi-sectoral Emergency Response Team composed of partner agencies was set up under the leadership of MOH, to guide preparedness and harmonize response efforts. Local Government leadership organized initial meetings that brought together agencies and organizations, who pledged what assistance they would be able to bring to combat the AWD” (Start Network member partner)</i>

To what extent is behaviour changing among Start members and the sector?

A vast majority of survey respondents familiar with anticipation projects reported **using forecasting and risk analysis**. Nearly half respondents (N=34) reported that their organisations acted on the basis of a forecast for the first time in the past two years (i.e., 2018 or more recently). See

Exhibit 10. Given the timing, this is a solid indicator attesting to the impact of Start anticipation efforts. Moreover, since their first time, over two-thirds continue to act on a forecast at least once a year (Pie Chart, right).

Exhibit 10: Advances in acting on the basis of a forecast



Evidence from Sri Lanka Case Study

In Sri Lanka, two alerts were activated in 2018: Alert 238 in May and Alert 282 in November. While the locations were not identical (238 focused on Gampaha, Rathnapura, and Puttalam --SW of the country and 282 on Mullaitivu, Trincomalee and Batticaloa regions in the NW), both were for flooding and the earlier one also for landslides. An earlier alert (060) was activated in 2015 also for flooding (no portfolio data available). Over the period covering the three alerts, Start members in Sri Lanka have started to think carefully about anticipation. Start members have Started to build awareness and capacity among government partners. While there were strong feelings among rota members that Alert 238 was “a little late to qualify for anticipatory action”, in Alert 282, the position was clearer, and investments had even been made to enhance technological methods to enhance government forecasting. With time clear improvements have been made by all stakeholders at all levels in anticipation alerts. Synergy of Start partners has also improved; the consortia have strongly contributed to producing knowledge and sharing good practice and resources.

In Sri Lanka, where multiple alerts have been made for flooding, Start members have Started to use new technologies, such as mobile apps and tablet PCs, to monitor quantitative data: “We installed a device to monitor water level of the tank; anybody can see the water level information through www.waterlevel.lk website.” Government partners were impressed that “the sensors fixed under this project help us to get the information in our mobiles ---connected in a one dashboard so that information is available with the district secretarial office and the irrigation department office”.

Communities and Start members appear to be increasing capacity in proactive analysis and decision making. Public representatives were nominated from each part of the village to monitor disaster situations and report to disaster committee. They “identified where water gets stagnated during flood period and bushes are then cleared”.

After monitoring, Start members in Sri Lanka share with the other Consortium actors, contact their district offices and also “monitor to see whether we are on track; if there is a discrepancy anywhere, we get explanations from the DMC”. Various NGOs use plenty of information in the alerts as a rapid assessment, and later design the activation effort, often with the alert ROTA committee.

A growing body of humanitarian practitioners (i.e. Start members) **are gaining direct experience in anticipatory funding processes as a result of Start Fund Anticipation.** Nearly all 60 respondents (in this section) had contributed at least once to a Start Fund crisis anticipation alert, and just over half of them had actually sent the alert to Start on at least one occasion. FOREWARN surveys are completed largely but not exclusively by the FOREWARN members, who were the most frequent to receive Analysis for Action grants. See Exhibit 11.

Exhibit 11: Has your organisation ever.....

Green most / red least frequent	Start Members	Start Members (NOT ROTA or Forewarn)	ROTA Members	FOREWARN Members
Number times my organisation (since Start began):	90	51	37	19
...contributed to the formulation of a Crisis Anticipation Alert Note	2.77	2.50	3.18	2.50
...sent the Crisis Anticipation Alert Note to Start Fund	2.40	2.63	2.25	2.17
...completed a FOREWARN Survey	3.52	3.62	3.00	5.67
...attended the meeting that lead to the Activation Decision	3.91	2.56	5.85	3.50
...prepared a proposal linked to a positive Activation Decision	3.00	2.74	3.00	3.17
...received funding for an Anticipation grant	2.66	2.30	3.24	1.00
...received a Start Fund Analysis for Action Grant	2.46	2.36	2.75	3.00
<i>Respondents selected all profiles that applied</i>				

Some key informants also noted that Start members have begun to act earlier on man-made crises (in anticipation of violence or displacement, which is a newer concept and practice) than preparedness or early response to disasters triggered by natural hazards.

By all accounts **‘Analysis for Action’ grants have made a strong contribution to anticipatory action.** Before they receive an A4A, many members feel unable to take decisions due to lack of information and familiarity with the situation. While still relatively infrequent in the field, 17 respondents had engaged in these grants. They were unanimous about the grant enabling them to collaborate on risk analysis and that the collaboration was key. Six percent fewer report that Start connected their organization to partners who could help them with data analysis. Only 5% reported not collecting both primary and secondary data for these risk analyses, but 16% reported not collecting quantitative and qualitative data. Nonetheless, they are unanimous that the grant improved understanding of the context and 95% report the grant directly informed an alert.

Exhibit 12: Perceptions on collaboration and Analysis for Action grants

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
The Analysis for Action Grant enabled us to undergo collaborative inter-agency information, gathering and risk analysis.			62%	38%	15
The collaboration/inter-agency aspect of this grant was important.			65%	35%	16
Start helped connect my organisation to partners that supported with data analysis, etc.		6%	55%	40%	17
With the A4A grant, we collected both primary and secondary data.	5%		60%	35%	16
With the A4A grant, we analysed quantitative and qualitative data.		16%	56%	28%	14
The Analysis for Action grant improved our understanding of the context.			47%	53%	16
The Analysis for Action grant directly informed a Start fund Alert.		5%	66%	29%	14

To what extent have harm and losses been mitigated in intervention communities?

What were the objectives of the actions taken?

According to the Start Fund, funded anticipatory actions are expected to meet at least one of **four objectives**: Acute mitigation, enhancing preparedness, information gathering and analysis, and Longer-term/conventional DRR⁷. In all cases they are expected to be bound to a forecast, not actions that could be taken at any time, which puts emphasis on the first two. In the case of longer term DRR, the expectation from Start Secretariat is that this should be a secondary objective, but there has been some ambiguity and flexibility in this regard, especially in the early years.

Indeed, the vast **majority of actions have aimed for ‘acute mitigation’⁸ and ‘enhancing threat preparedness’**. In the literature review, acute mitigation appeared to be the main objective of 44 Anticipation proposals. In comparison, however, nearly 80% of survey respondents reported that the anticipation efforts were focused on enhancing threat-preparedness, compared to acute mitigation (less than 50%), see Exhibit 11 below. This difference is most likely due to stakeholders’ partial or inaccurate recollection of objectives ‘after the fact’, particularly given that many actions served to meet more than one objective. It may also be partially due to the fact that Start has not promoted the use specific terminology to describe the stages of anticipatory action, to avoid creating additional barriers to uptake of anticipation.

The literature review and survey respondents concur that a small proportion of the actions – presumably the Analysis for Action grants - were primarily for information gathering and analysis, and an even smaller number were for conventional longer-term DRR. In the case of the latter, it is debatable whether they should have been funded by Start Fund Crisis Anticipation, given the short timeframe (45 days) for actions to be implemented. Examples of actions and their objectives are shown in Exhibit 13.

Exhibit 13: Comparing Anticipation objectives

Location	Objectives	Classification
Nigeria	To promote non-violent behaviour and minimise reactions to acts of violence, just before and during the elections	Acute mitigation
Somalia	Curb the spread and impact of a cholera outbreak	Acute mitigation
Mongolia	Reduce losses from dzud conditions already affecting livestock.	Acute mitigation
Sri Lanka	To improve planning and coordination between local government officials and CBOs, to conduct risk assessments to ensure appropriate humanitarian response to imminent flooding, to improve drainage channels with food-for-work	Enhancing preparedness; acute mitigation
DRC	Rapidly enhance risk understanding at community-level in relation to increased volcanic activity	Enhancing preparedness

⁷ IRMA used the following definitions to classify alerts in the Literature Review:

Acute mitigation - action to reduce impacts that are already being felt, direct to beneficiaries (distribution of goods or services); Enhancing preparedness - prepositioning, informing communities and addressing acute deficiencies or bottlenecks, working with communities or leaders to prepare for an imminent crisis;

Longer-term DRR - planning, training or policy discussions that set the stage for response but are more general or long-term than for a specific threat (such as community preparedness plans and capacity building, contingency plans, and infrastructure improvements).

⁸ Aiming to reduce or manage the impacts of a hazard event that is already occurring, before their natural peak (i.e. the timing is acute)

Exhibit 14: Main objective as expressed in proposals (left) and respondents (right)

Expressed in proposals (ref Tracker)				Expressed by Survey respondents
Objective	Number of Proposals	Percentage	Number of Separate Alerts	<p>Enhancing preparedness (75%)</p> <p>Acute mitigation (49%)</p> <p>Other (35%)</p> <p>Info & Analysis</p> <p>Long-term DRR</p>
Acute Mitigation	29	66%	14	
Enhancing Preparedness	10	23%	7	
Longer-term / Conventional DRR	5	11%	3	
Total	44	100%	NA	

Debates about definitions and particularly those associated with timing are central to the raison d’être of Start Fund Anticipation. In 2016 one Start member reflected: *“We’ve said that the thing we’re anticipating is the crisis: but the rains don’t constitute a crisis, they potentially offer a ray of hope in a crisis that’s already happened, i.e. widespread food insecurity... except that many of the crisis-affected population aren’t in a position to grab that ray of hope because they have no seed. So, for me, the proposed response, procuring and distributing seed, is simply a response to the existing crisis, not anticipation. Obviously the committee as a whole didn’t take that view, and I respect that decision, but we need to be 100% sure that we’ve got our definitions straight – otherwise we risk our argument falling apart.”* While stakeholders have grown more confident and consistent in their use of terms since 2016, evidently doubts and different interpretations still exist.

How successful were the projects in relation to objectives)?

Start stakeholders are confident that the projects funded by Start Fund Crisis Anticipation achieved their objectives. A vast majority of survey respondents felt that their anticipation project generated the expected outputs; even more felt their projects generated the anticipated outcomes. Furthermore, all but 3% of the respondents maintained that **the sector of the anticipation projects was appropriate based on the forecasts available.** There was almost unanimous agreement that sector-specific results contributed positively to the efforts overall impact (See Exhibit 15).

Exhibit 15: Perceptions on appropriateness and effectiveness

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
Start Fund Crisis Anticipation enables good use of forecasting information for funding decisions and project design.	7%	6%	52%	35%	14
The forecasting and/or risk analysis that triggered this Anticipation project was of decent QUALITY.			50%	50%	26
The SECTOR targeted (refer to one above) was the appropriate action based on the forecast and context.		3%	35%	62%	30
The SECTOR-specific results of the Anticipation project contributed to the overall impact achieved (for the project as a whole).			61%	39%	27
The Anticipation project funded under this Alert generated the OUTPUTS it set out to.		3%	42%	55%	27
The Anticipation project generated the OUTCOMES it set out to.			53%	47%	26
My organisation took a RISK to act on the data/information/analysis available when preparing the Alert Note.		26%	58%	16%	26

Evidence from CASE STUDY NIGERIA

In Nigeria, Start Members, partners and community members concur that the action was largely successful. Some violence occurred but at flash points, but it was not widespread, and loss and harm were mitigated in terms of fewer deaths than previous years and no largescale displacement. While it is recognised that this cannot be attributed only to the Start project, stakeholders are confident that Start played an important role in the areas in which its members and partners acted.

Stakeholder type Effectiveness

Start Member	<i>“The anticipated violence actually took place in some flash point communities but there are communities where we worked where there was not as much violence as we feared. As testified by our partners, many of them listened to the voice of reason.”</i>
Start partner	<i>“A bit of the violence happened. It was not at the magnitude and severity expected. If I am to grade it as a teacher, I will say that maybe we go 50% of the violence”</i>
Community member - male	<i>“Things were much better, but there were a lot of intimidation in several units. Some people were forced to vote”</i>
Community member - male	<i>“Party B supporters shouted, ‘let’s sweep the place!’ That was when people came out with dangerous weapons and Started chasing people to harm. They hit and wounded many people and others had their shops looted. Those that received help wanted to leave town but after the help was administered, many stay back to manage their lives.”</i>

In Sri Lanka, positive impacts of anticipation projects surfaced explicitly **from all sources, methods and both genders**. Those most likely to **highlight positive impacts** within each grouping however portray some interesting trends that shed light on Anticipation in that context, see Exhibit 16.

- **Start members:** discussions revealed an appetite for anticipation among Start member agency staff that was less evident in the government and community discussions. While the latter expressed gratitude for the projects (and communities and government representatives appreciated training, tarpaulins and the infrastructure support launched through cash for work), they did not convey as strong an understanding of anticipation or drive to sustain it. It was reported that as you stepped away from the capital, anticipation is less and less well known; *“it may take some time for us to be as aware as others centrally located”* and *“The main challenge is that local government has limited manpower and machineries”* (government officials).
- **Men:** were mildly more positive about anticipation across all profiles. In Sri Lanka, there was excitement about the sensor being installed for early warning of flooding and equipment and infrastructure were more commonly cited by men then by women. Although fewer in number overall, female respondents were more likely to positively refer to awareness, training, capacity building and school safety for their children.
- **Key Informant interviews:** were the most positive in tone (this represents 12 Start members and 8 government actors). It is not uncommon that the tone of a focus group discussion be influenced by the most vocal of the group. Additionally, time does not allow for more individual expressions. This merely reinforces the value of multiple sources and triangulation.

These trends above were upheld both for volume of transcripts coded overall and also when controlled for volume of sample in each subgroup.

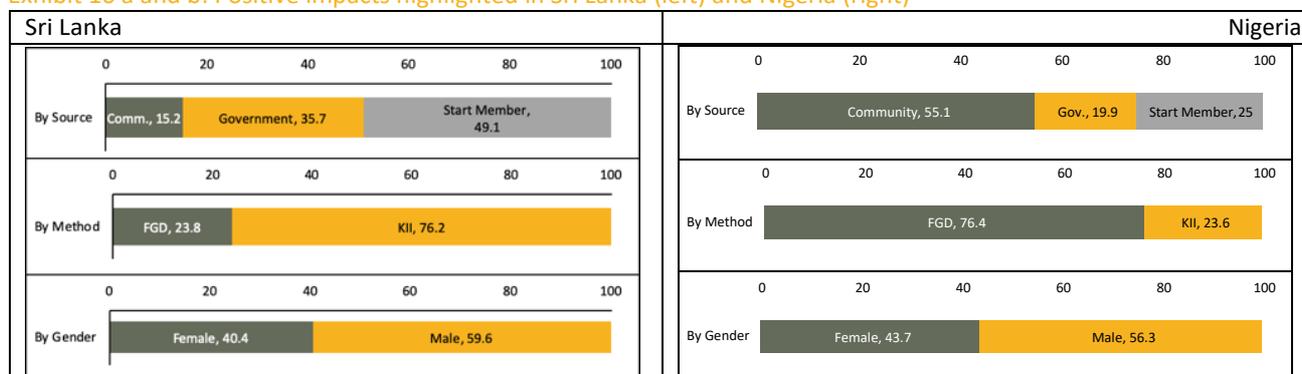
Evidence from CASE STUDY SOMALIA

In Somalia, actions aimed to reduce the risk of a major cholera outbreak, including distribution of soap, chlorine tablet, and jerry cans and WASH hygiene education to help ensure the residents of IDP camps had access to clean water and knew how to protect themselves from AWD. The results varied across the country: in most areas the action was considered very effective in preventing an outbreak like the one seen in 2017, while in others it was delayed and/or the outbreak never really happened. Where the action was implemented, stakeholders were convinced of its timeliness and success.

Stakeholder type Effectiveness

Start Member	<i>"There would have been a big crisis and the levels of deaths would have been higher. The project was implemented in the right time, since alerts were raised earlier"</i>
(Start partner)	<i>"The potential problem of AWD/Cholera was contained this year (2019), as the program bought us time in the critical April month, as we worked to contain outbreaks in the most vulnerable-to-AWD sites."</i>
(Community member)	<i>"The preventive action helped us very much to overcome the AWD, providing medicine, soaps, chlorine tablets, plastic jerry cans, water, awareness creation and campaigns. The most important intervention was the provision of water."</i>
(Community member)	<i>"There were many cases of AWD, it happened even this year, but there were many activities to overcome the spread of the AWD. There were medical staff, and Trocaire brings medicine every Thursday to Busley camp. Every other Thursday the bring biscuits and nutrition, people were connected to the health centre and hospital. Once a week, there are exercises and awareness creation activities, and sanitation exercises were carried out. The awareness creation, included asking people to wash hands, to build latrines."</i>
(Community member)	<i>"If the Trocaire had not assisted us in time, with this preventative strategy, we would have faced deep problems. If the intervention had been delayed, and the disease broke out, we would have been faced with 'halis' fatal danger. The disease would have quickly spread and it would have been like a repeat of 2017. Sick people would be collected from the villages, brought to hospitals, people would have to quarantined away."</i>
(Community member)	<i>"The preventive action helped us very much to overcome the AWD, providing medicine, soaps, chlorine tablets, plastic jerry cans, water, awareness creation and campaigns. The most important intervention was the provision of water. (Agreement by several voices: water, water)"</i>

Exhibit 16 a and b: Positive impacts highlighted in Sri Lanka (left) and Nigeria (right)



In **Nigeria** positive expressions of results were quite different. The most positive were communities (versus Government and Start members) and Key informants (vs FGD participants). Explanations for these differences merit further exploration. One possible reason for the more strongly positive community responses in Nigeria

(than Sri Lanka) is the community-focused nature of the project. Messaging, communications, IEC materials and cash transfers were carried out on a very local level and mainly in communities at risk of violence. In Sri Lanka the governmental authorities were closer witnesses to the benefits of the grant, as they received the training, equipment, and other support, whereas in Nigeria Start members worked independently of governmental entities and only interviewed one for this evaluation.

In Mongolia, following the publication of a Dzum Risk Map by the national meteorological agency and climate information from the Ministry of Agriculture, Start members used anticipation projects to complement the pasture and precipitation data in the NMO’s map with additional data on population and vulnerability, based on how people and animals were affected in previous bad winters. In this way, they built up a more holistic set of indicators to monitor. According to Post Distribution Monitoring reports, in **Mongolia** the action was very timely, taking place before the peak of the cold weather. *“Over 97% of herder households highlighted the significance of right timing of the anticipation project which distributed fodder to the cattle and cash to the most vulnerable households, explaining that the support also prevented from falling into debt or having to purchase new livestock to replace those lost, which is common coping strategy among herders.”*

Start members in **Philippines** also felt their action achieved the desired level of preparedness for a predicted Lahar, as well as for other hazards/events. In the words of one of Start’s member’s partners, *“through the project we were able to strengthen the capacity of the DRM council...They now have warning kits (for Lahars), and they can use it for other events too”*.

To further understand what harm and loss was mitigated, the Start tracker provides qualitative answers to the question: **Did the forecasted risk (crisis) happen as expected?** At least 14 of the activated anticipatory projects provided explanations to this question (See Exhibit 17: Did forecasted risk happen as expected?). Half of the 14 reported that the crisis anticipated did not occur, but for most the actions were described as useful or “robust”. Four anticipatory projects (roughly one-third of the anticipatory portfolio but including one of the same projects) reported the crisis as expected and the funded efforts on par and useful. Only two of the 14 (Sri Lanka 238 and Uganda 254) stressed that the crisis was either not anticipatory or substantially underestimated and suggested that the Start anticipatory envelop had an expectedly small impact on the overall scale of the crisis. While only qualitative, these anecdotes usefully demonstrate the wide range of possible scenarios in anticipatory action.

Exhibit 17: Did forecasted risk happen as expected?

Crisis less/later than expected, or did not actualise [7]	Crisis was as expected [4]	Crisis more severe than expected or project too late [2]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 173 Tajikistan: crisis did not occur but project-built confidence of communities • 175 Kenya elections: crisis did not occur, and pre-positioned kits were redirected to drought affected populations • 205 Pakistan and Afghanistan: crisis did not occur....so “no work took place in the end”⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 173 Tajikistan: crisis did occur and communities were protected • 220 Malawi: crisis did occur and cholera spread was mitigated, communities were protected • 263 Afghanistan Displacement: occurred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 238 Sri Lanka Anticipation of landslides was too late to be considered “anticipatory” • 254 Uganda anticipation of Ebola: risk was underestimated, and needs escalated

⁹ Start team and members were aware at the outset of this project that the forced return may not take place. It was agreed that if the crisis did not occur funds would be recouped, which eventually happened.

Crisis less/later than expected, or did not actualise [7]	Crisis was as expected [4]	Crisis more severe than expected or project too late [2]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 237 Pakistan: temperatures did not meet the feared level, but actions were robust to educate on prevention • 273 DRC anticipation of volcanic eruption: did not erupt as feared, but people are now “better prepared to deal with the risk in case it happens” • 282 Sri Lanka anticipation of flooding: crisis was delayed (implementation risks...) • 283 Rwanda anticipation of Ebola: did not occur but trainings were robust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • same or lesser scale, slowing also project completion • 284 Mongolia anticipation of dzud: as expected and due to anticipatory project “97.3% of surveyed herder households lost less livestock than previously” 	

Overall the reporting from for each allocation is not adequate to record and/or understand to what extent harm and loss were mitigated, nor to what extent the project reached its objectives. In order to know whether the projects and alerts were effective and had impact, one would expect Start to require members reporting on their implemented projects to state:

- Dates for the start¹⁰, peak and end of a crisis, if it happened
- The timing of their action in relation to the Start, peak and end of the crisis, if it happened
- The effects and impacts of their projects in relation to those stated in their proposal

Historically and currently, reports are overly freestyle (i.e. what difference did this project make, and what is the evidence?), and while most implementing members use similar terms to describe their grant (successes, achievements, challenges), comparisons cannot be drawn with what they planned to do, nor can results be aggregated across grants/allocations to identify trends in certain situations.

Also, while all grants include a quick, internal learning review, and members can request 1% of the value of the grant for learning purposes, independent evaluations of projects seem to be rare or non-existent. A standard procedure, budgeting requirement and evaluation questions would be of great benefit to the Start Fund in terms of building the evidence base.

What was the level of risk taken in the action based on the data uncertainty? What level of no regrets?

For many Start members, acting under uncertainty is a new and somewhat uncomfortable dynamic. Many (68% of survey respondents) admitted they felt they were taking a risk to act on data available when preparing the alert note. The majority deemed the level of funds allocated appropriate to the perceived likelihood of risk (only 15% disagreed), which suggests that some were reassured by the relatively small size of Start allocations. Interviews with country-level informants confirmed that Analysis for Action grants are often viewed as the ‘safer’ option when the level of risk was unclear or members were new to anticipatory action.

¹⁰ ‘Expected start date of crisis’ is recorded in the alert note, but report forms do not require members to state the actual start, peak or end dates.

In Nigeria, the anticipation action was clearly ‘no- regrets’ (not one person consulted expressed any doubt or risk of wasting the effort) because the project reinforced ongoing work. Indeed, several consider that more longer term ‘prevention’ post-event should have been done, to take advantage of heightened awareness.

In Mali, Start members who participated in the alert highlighted (during an end-of-project Learning Review) how even when the hazard event does not unfold as anticipated in some locations, there are tangible benefits in terms of preparedness for future events: *“Although the extent of the anticipated crisis materialized differently across the targeted zone, the focus on local skill strengthening supported a sustainable impact by raising disaster risk reduction capacity in zones where flooding was minimal while effectively preventing flooding in other areas.”* In other words, when faced with some uncertainty in relation to a recurrent hazard in chronically vulnerable areas, anticipatory action is a ‘low-regrets’, win-win decision because the project will serve its purpose now, or with a few months, or both. As long as the action is designed to generate some longer-term benefits, even if the specific forecast does not come to fruition, it will benefit the community’s preparedness in the longer term.

This was almost certainly the case in Mongolia. One member of FOREWARN recalls advising against approving an alert from Mongolia because the indicators of a crisis used by the Red Cross had not been reached, but as other experts either did not share that view or decided to opt for a low-regrets approach, Start proceeded to activate the alert.

To what extent are results related to the timing of the action?

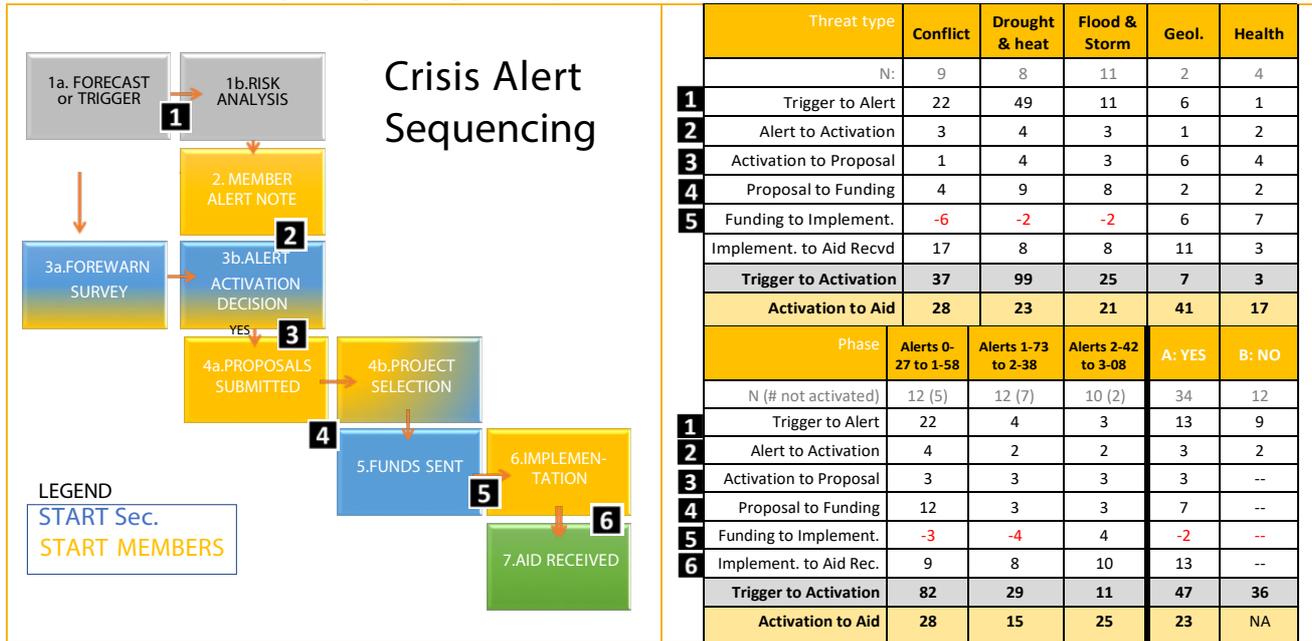
Evidence from Portfolio Analysis

As part of the Portfolio Analysis of 34 grants from activated anticipatory alerts¹¹, the **lag times** were compared across threat type (see top, right of exhibit) and by phase (dividing the alerts into three quantiles, see bottom right). ‘Lag time’ here refers to the number of days between two defined points in time (NB: the definition of “trigger”, as opposed to a forecast--which is more official and concise--adds noteworthy challenges to the definition of precise times. Nonetheless, from this analysis, a few trends surface (see Exhibit 18):

- Although few cases, anticipation alerts for health-related hazards register the fastest turn arounds (3 days from trigger to activation and 17 from activation to aid --this in comparison to 37 and 28, respectively for conflict alerts;
- Across time, lag times from trigger to activation have improved immensely: from 82 days for Alerts 0-27 to 1-58 to 29 days and later to 11 days for Alerts 2-42 to 3-08;
- Two moments that endure the longest across the cases include: trigger-to-alert (averages about 13 days, is highest for drought and has improved strongly through time) and implementation-to-aid received by affected;
- Funds sent to implementation registers negative days systematically because implementation regularly Starts (with funds advanced by member) prior to funds being received.

¹¹ Given the intensity of this exercise it was not possible to conduct the analysis on all alerts and activations. This subsection is focused only on Anticipation projects.

Exhibit 18: Crisis Alert Sequencing and Lag Times by Threat and by Phase



Since 2017, Start Fund changed the proposal development period for anticipation alerts to be up to seven days, depending on what Start members deem appropriate for the hazard.

What scenarios could have unfolded without the action?

In terms of a counterfactual, it is unanimous that communities targeted would have been in a worse situation should the anticipation projects not have been implemented. See Exhibit 19.

Exhibit 19: Perceptions on Counterfactual and Comparing Anticipation with response Projects

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
Without this Anticipation project, the community would have been in a WORSE situation immediately after the event.			47%	53%	29
The Anticipation project offered greater IMPACT than a normal Response project.		7%	42%	51%	23
The Anticipation project offered more Value-for-Money than a normal Response project.		7%	34%	59%	23
The Anticipation project mitigated the targeted threat such that a subsequent RESPONSE OPERATION was not needed.	10%	10%	41%	39%	26

In Sri Lanka, there was absolute agreement among stakeholders (Start members and others) that things would be worse without Crisis Anticipation Alert 282. Communities recognised that flooding would have been more severe (including with health hazards) without the canal cleaning. Others suggested that “If those activities did not happen at that time our school well, garden, fences would have collapsed, and more people would be displaced”. Government stakeholders agreed, adding that “several villages might have sunk into the flood” and credited the project with lessening displacement and protecting roads. Without providing tarpaulin sheets to the most vulnerable families to protect them from heavy rains, they would have been affected heavily. Start members noted that the project reduced a lot of negative impact: “anticipation is really of value”. They

stressed that *“response can be done by anyone—even the next-door neighbour, but anticipatory action is critical”*.

Evidence from CASE STUDY NIGERIA

In Nigeria, stakeholders have no doubt that the timing of the campaign part of the action, i.e. prior to the elections rather than waiting to see what would unfold, was critical. Several examples of ‘near misses’ underlined the point, such as: *“Based on the training we had, I observe that in one polling unit, we intervened in one case, otherwise it would have been fatal. Some people in one of the polling units, were trying to buy votes but, these people had to be escorted away for their safety. Otherwise they could have been mobbed to death by the youth”* (Nigeria). Attribution to Start was highlighted in Nigeria, including by community members: *“In Tudun Wada, if the program had not been implemented, there would have no doubt been post-election violence.....it would have moved to other places too.....because the youth have a network through which they communicate.”* (Start partner) and *“With your intervention and those of other stakeholders, the anticipated violence was averted.”* (Community member – male).

However, the cash component – which was distributed after the Nigerian elections - could be described as ‘better late than never’: *“We cannot say that the situation of those that received helped was too late to help them cope with the impact. Those who did receive cash needed it anyway and whether it was delivered late or not, the need will remain there. The need for cash in some cases last for over a month. However, for some cases that were directly linked with violence, we wish that it was given within 1-2 weeks after the impact. After that it may be too late depending on the severity of the problem.”* While the project enabled cash delivery to be sped up (by obtaining funds and setting up logistics, targeting prior), it was not speedy enough (Nigeria).

In general, Nigerian stakeholders felt that the whole project should have Started earlier. One Start member said: *“I think that if we had Started 4 weeks earlier it would have been much better. The whole world was aware that Nigeria will have elections in February, we should have Started our intervention may be even from December. ”* and a community member poignantly gave this opinion: *It might be good time but not the right time, because at that time it should have been a reminder.* Some doubted that the action would have had effect if elections had not been imminent, but this could have been resolved by designing a longer action with a peak right before the elections. Anticipatory action rather than response was highly appreciated: *Coming after the crisis would have been disastrous. We would then be talking more of trying to mend relationships and not solving the problem. After the relief programme the issues might be let unsolved and the problem Starts again.*

Stakeholders in **Mongolia** echoed the same sentiments: *Most people said it was a hard winter or a dzud. Without the Start action, the most vulnerable children would have faced worse winter days; Not many other agencies were active. Later, communications are harder, roads are worse.* In Post distribution monitoring activities, beneficiaries were asked what would have happened if the assistance arrived a month later, to which the majority (45.1%) reported they would have had to take a loan, 37.8% would have use their resources (pension, child money, their prepared hay/fodder etc.) to keep their animals alive, 13.8% said their livestock would have had to die, and 2.3% said they would have sold their animals.

Representatives of the organisations that implemented the anticipation grant in the Philippines stated that the information generated enabled them to have smarter evacuation plans, not just to evacuate the whole area around the volcano in the event of a warning. *This, they argue, prevented evacuated people from having to stay in evacuation centres for up to three months, because the flow and impact of lajars is relatively easy to predict.”* They did, however, admit that a lahar has not taken place during the time period in which it was predicted.

What else was learned about timing?

Generally, activations across the Start portfolio are **not** occurring before crisis onset. Only six (6) of the 209 with (full data¹²) data succeeded in issuing an alert before the crisis onset, and five projects started implementation before crisis onset. **All of the five cases¹³ were anticipatory alerts**, representing 28% of Start Fund Anticipation portfolio. When broken down by category of crisis, only **rapid onset** Anticipatory cases have full date data, so a comparison with slow onset is not possible (many cases indicated anticipatory but not slow or fast). While it may be interesting to

Exhibit 20: Reaching Communities before crisis onset

	Alerting Before Crisis				Implementing Action Before Crisis			
	NO	YES	% yes	Avg Days	NO	YES	% yes	Avg Days
ALL Activated	209	6	3%	-22.2	202	5	2%	-24.1
ANTICIPATORY	17	6	35%	-17.0	18	5	28%	-23.9
<i>Slow Onset*</i>	3			-113.6	3			-126.2
<i>Rapid Onset*</i>	4	2	50%	-2.1	5	1	20%	-7.6
	YES ONLY (2) [†] + 11.95				YES ONLY (1) [†] + 17.63			
RESPONSE	198			-22.7	189			-24.1
<i>Slow Onset*</i>	25			-57.1	22			-55.5
<i>Rapid Onset*</i>	173			-17.9	167			-19.9
<i>Numbers are cases † Full date data not available for all cases in tracker</i>								

compare this analysis with one using “crisis peak” rather than “crisis onset” the data were not available in the tracker (and therefore not available for the full portfolio portrayed in Exhibit 20).

When including proposal as first “alert” (see Response in Exhibit 20 or slow onset hazards for Anticipatory alerts), delays between alert and crisis, and implementation and crisis provide unexpected patterns. All combined, the crises are occurring on average 22 days **before the alert is issued** and 24 days before the project implementation Starts. These numbers are slightly shorter for anticipation compared to response alerts; anticipatory projects average 17 days **after onset** compared to 23 for response projects. The few slow-onset cases in anticipatory alerts that have data (NB: only 3) show much higher average delays even than the slow onset averages in response alerts (114 days late compared to 57 days late).

While most stakeholders agree that the anticipation project they know was implemented before the onset of the event, only one quarter strongly agrees. See Exhibit 21. More people strongly agreed that the project was implemented before the peak of an event, which is also an indicator of success. As many Start Alerts and projects are addressing situations in which risk is already heightened, the approval of Start funding is fundamental to reducing their risk before impacts are widespread or go too deep.

¹² **Date data** in Tracker version used include a. Approximate date when emergency started (crisis onset), b. alerting date and time and c. project selection start date & time

¹³ These include the following anticipation alerts:

- 282 Sri Lanka (Anticipation Flooding)
- 283 Rwanda (Anticipation Ebola)
- 284 Mongolia (Anticipation of dzud)
- 300 Nigeria (Anticipation of electoral violence)
- 308 Somalia (Anticipation of Cholera)

Exhibit 21: Perceptions on Monitoring/Acting on risks and its timing

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
The Anticipation project DESIGN USED existing forecasting and/or risk analysis.		5%	31%	64%	27
Timing: the Anticipation project was implemented BEFORE the ONSET of the event.		8%	67%	25%	27
Timing: the Anticipation project was implemented BEFORE the PEAK of the event.		11%	52%	37%	26

Evidence from CASE STUDY SOMALIA

Despite the successes in Somalia outlined in the evidence box above, there was also widespread sentiment that it the project would have benefitted from a longer implementation timeline: *The weakness of the project was that it could not go beyond 45 days though the risk factors for AWD outbreak still existed beyond the project period.*

In response, stakeholders suggested extending the implementation period or a phased approach in which additional funding might be sought should the conditions prevail after the initial 45 days

Anticipation versus Response

In the Start tracker, up to 17 anticipatory project stakeholders explained how anticipatory action differs from “normal response”. As answers to the question: “During planning or implementation, were there any differences between implementing this anticipatory work compared to a normal response?”, stakeholders mainly report the well-known attributes of anticipation: prevention and the expectation that more lives will be saved. Importantly, one stakeholder eloquently described the new challenges of anticipation: *“Anticipatory work has been more difficult to plan and implement as the hazard has not yet taken place, it is unsure when it will take place and the target population and other stakeholders are not used to preparedness planning. It required more sensitisation sessions with the beneficiaries and stakeholders. ... It is easier to implement a response to something that has already taken place.”*

..... It is easier to implement a response to something that has already taken place.”

(Anticipation stakeholder, 273 DRC anticipation of volcanic eruption)

More specifically, the difference is linked to both **cadence and coordination**. While for some the difference of anticipatory action relates to a faster speed than response: *“implementation was much quicker”* (173 Tajikistan Anticipation of Landslides and Flooding). For others despite short implementation schedules, it was quite the opposite: anticipation provided *“enough time to sit with all the stakeholders to examine the successes and the gaps together and collect feedback from each party. Quality contingency plans were developed which we could not have done as well with the normal response project timings.”* (273 DRC anticipation of volcano) and *“the speed at which the planning and implementation of the project interventions were done was [slower] than a normal response”* (254 Uganda anticipation of Ebola).

Quite clearly, anticipatory action in Start is seen as offering opportunities for **better coordination** and learning—and enhanced requirements for—from each other when compared to response.

- 220 Malawi Anticipation of flooding and cholera: *“we were able to work more closely with government partners”*; given the crisis was not yet underway, they were more available.
- 237 Pakistan Anticipation of Heat Wave: anticipatory work involved *“regular monitoring of weather forecast, weekly/biweekly coordination discussions with government”* and *“closely monitored project activities and held weekly progress meetings”*.
- 254 Uganda anticipation of Ebola: We had weekly coordination meetings with the District, Health Partners and local government offices to ensure we aligned closely on needs, delivery and monitoring.

- 263 Afghanistan Displacement: *“In this anticipatory work we focused on improved coordinated response through conducting regular coordination meetings with UNOCHA, NRC and other INGOs who were involved in responding to the crisis while in normal response the number of coordination meetings were much smaller”*. This was due to having an improved coordinated response to prevent duplication and fill gaps.
- 273 DRC anticipation of volcano: In anticipatory action, *“there are far more issues to negotiate....we had to consult with national and Provincial government, the Goma Observatory and schools. Far more time is needed for negotiation, buy-in and agreed procedures. ...it is a learning process”*.
- 284 Mongolia anticipation of dzud: *“Compared to the normal response, some stakeholders...required more effort [by Start member] to explain about the forecasted risk, advantages of taking early actions to protect herders' livelihood and soums at greatest risk based on the analysis”*. Also *“one of the main differences was that the project interventions support beneficiaries psychologically [and proactively, since] a lot of herders experience depression at the loss of livestock”*.

In Sri Lanka, women’s and men’s perceptions of the differences between anticipatory action and response highlight the deeper impacts, greater cost and time implications, and different types of activities that would be needed or appropriate if aid and funding had come later, i.e. as a response to a crisis rather than as anticipatory action.

If aid/funding had come later...what would have happened?	
Women’s perceptions	Men’s perceptions
Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mosquito would also increase. Dengue and another virus fever could be spread. • A greater number of houses might sink into the water. • Most families could displace and had to go to temporary shelters. Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time might be taken to drain water. Cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If flood comes, we all get those benefits • We would focus more on cleaning our wells and building our livelihoods Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This sort of awareness could not be done effectively. After floods our priorities would change. 	Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would need to work against damages as well. Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works might be doubled. Cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (with anticipation) Tanks were protected with less investment rather than repair them after got damaged. Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities would be targeted to recover the people and their properties.

3.2 What value for money has Start Fund Crisis Anticipation demonstrated since launch?

This question is explored using the 4’E’s: economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity. Findings are provided in that order below. Each sub-section Starts with a reminder of the definition applied during the queries across sources/methods.

Summary of key findings

- Investment in activating anticipation projects was deemed heavy by a majority of respondents, especially when compared to total budget volume.
- A vast majority of respondents surveyed agree that project costs were kept low.
- Total cost to transfer ratio (TCTR) of Anticipatory projects is acceptable at 1.44. Anticipation of drought or heat appears to offer the greatest efficiencies.
- Only one-third of anticipatory projects (grants to members) manage to leverage at least one additional grant (compared to nearly half, 47% of the response projects). While they sum to 3.4 GBP, there is no evidence to say the additional funds have contributed to promote the practice or concept of anticipation. In fact leveraging is unlikely to be a useful metric for anticipation.
- Coverage compared to identified need is insufficient throughout the portfolio.
- Interventions were largely and thoughtfully equitable.

When asked to compare Start anticipation and Start response projects, respondents found that Anticipation projects offered more Value for Money and to a slightly lesser extent greater impact than response projects. However, it was not crystal clear that Anticipation projects avoided the need for subsequent response operations.

ECONOMY/To what extent were funds sourced and managed economically?

Economy here is defined as:

FORMAL DEFINITION	<i>Reasonable cost to acquire good quality inputs that will help the project to achieve what it set out to achieve.</i>
WORKING DEFINITION	<i>Inputs and Costs — what went in?</i>

Were costs kept low while maintaining quality?

In terms of **economies**, a vast majority of respondents surveyed agree that project costs were kept low. An analysis of global level funding and expenditures was not an aim of this research (See Exhibit 22). Additionally, most stakeholders agree that quality was achieved / maintained despite low budgeted costs.

Exhibit 22: Investment and economies

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
My organisation INVESTED HEAVILY in this project (all resources combined: human, financial, time, etc)	7%	11%	53%	29%	29
Reflecting on the alert, the allocation amount was appropriate for the perceived likelihood of the risk occurring.	8%	7%	59%	27%	27
COSTS incurred for this Anticipation project were kept reasonably low while maintaining quality.		3%	62%	35%	28

In **Sri Lanka**, anticipatory action has become known as “*always less expensive than our traditional response projects*” and providing highest value for money, with no new staff recruit for the projects, sharing of resources across the consortium, building on existing processes and systems. Start members report that “*we can implement an anticipatory project by using 20% of response project investment*”. In **Somalia**, too, costs were seen to be lower because they were made in Anticipation, aided by collaboration between partners: “*I think both cost (slightly higher) and quality (slightly lower) would be affected in the case of a response in the same location, since a response would require more quick decisions and turnaround times to save lives.*” (Start member partner). Pakistan stakeholders suggested the Anticipation project was “*great value for money – one of cheapest campaigns for Start, reaching 1.6 million people*”. In **Sri Lanka**, programme outcomes have produced a mixed bag for all stakeholders: while most are good, others are challenged. Nonetheless, anticipation is widely seen to create value in the work Start Members do.

Stakeholders generally sought creative ways to keep costs low; in **Mongolia**, they “chose local vendors from a neighbouring province – this was really helpful to save on transportation costs from capital city.” In **Sri Lanka**, while quality was reportedly never compromised, consortia are seen to lend economic savings through joint procurement getting competitive prices for items. In most cases, suppliers transported items to locations to save on logistic costs and no warehouse overheads or distribution costs were incurred.

In **Nigeria**, however, there was a feeling that the budget was perhaps overly lean and unrealistic: “There was no way we could lower the budget. We split one set of distributed clothing between two persons...to reach more people than we planned for” (Start Member) and “Doing same in a lower cost and not compromising standards will incur more and more sacrifice on our part.” (Start Member). In multiple sites, including **Mongolia**, efforts to economise more within anticipation budgets have been “maxed out”. Stakeholders generally report that it would be nearly impossible to reach more people under current budget levels.

What time and effort were required to obtain Start funds?

As another measure of **economy**, the evaluation explored the investments stakeholders generally made (here especially Start members) to get access to funding for Anticipation alerts and the linked projects. In general, **both time and effort were considered moderately heavy investments, in relation to the volume of funds received.** Investment in activating anticipation projects was deemed heavy by a majority of respondents (only 18% of them did not find this).

The management of Start anticipation funding was frequently perceived as requiring more time and effort than necessary due to funding transferred late, forcing members to make alternative arrangements in order to act in time. In fact, implementation of anticipation projects routinely Started before funds were received (see negative numbers above on phase sequencing). In Nigeria, although the application and approval mechanism themselves were agile, the mechanics of transferring funds appear to lag behind. As a one Start partner pointed out, “the arrival of Start fund was a limitation. We had to wait for the money to get Started so we had to combine certain activities to achieve our goal.”

The global trend, however, has been improving, with less and less need for members to advance funds in the most recent set of anticipation alerts. See Exhibit 4 above.

EFFICIENCY

Efficiency here is defined as...

FORMAL DEFINITION	<i>A measure of productivity — how much sent out to help or results achieved versus what is put in /invested?</i>
WORKING DEFINITION	<i>Inputs to outputs — what happened? What was leveraged with that?</i>

In terms of productivity, all case study countries reported achieving the outputs expected. While Sri Lanka reports not being able to do much better, **Nigeria** claims an earlier Start (“at least 3 months earlier”) would have enabled even greater coverage, but it would have been based largely on past experience of elections rather than real-time analysis of evolving risk in the communities.

Cost efficiency

To further explore V4M of anticipation, a Total Cost to Transfer Ratio¹⁴ (TCTR) analysis was conducted using all projects whose budgetary data were accessible. TCTR is most often used in traditional humanitarian

¹⁴ The TCTR measures above all cost-efficiency. Defined by the total cost to transfer one monetary unit to a beneficiary, including the value of the transfer, it indicates the value of assistance that reaches affected populations, compared to all other costs. It is calculated

response/assistance projects. High TCTR indicates low, unfavourable cost-efficiency; the aim is to have the lowest possible TCTR, delivering the greatest aid to recipients directly. The reported humanitarian ideal (proposed by ECHO) is to have a maximum of 2.0 (i.e. the funds arriving to the affected population represents half of the total project cost) and **the lower the TCTR the better**. To increase cost-efficiency, more coordination and collaboration between partners and other donors is required.

The overall TCTR for the set of anticipatory projects with available expenditure data is acceptable, at **1.44**. TCTRs are portrayed in Exhibit 23 **Error! Reference source not found.** by threat, phase and intervention sector. For threats, health anticipation projects hold the highest (i.e. least cost-efficient) TCTR¹⁵ (1.99), with heat and geological anticipations averaging 1.59. For phases, the TCTRs of projects in this set Started out strongly cost-efficient and have **progressively become less so**. This may be explained by increasing complexity of the projects, a greater focus on actions that ‘benefit’ but are not directly supplied to beneficiaries or may reflect stochastic change in the hazard focus. In light of the sectors, those with nutrition, shelter and food security

Exhibit 23: TCTR (Cost Efficiency)

	TOTAL	DIRECT	TCTR	BENEFICIARIES
OVERALL AVERAGE	£ 78,853	£ 55,507	1.44	48,511
AVERAGES BY THREAT				
Conflict	£ 114,467	£ 80,425	1.39	21,481
Drought	£ 69,941	£ 48,912	1.37	19,857
Heat	£ 54,335	£ 34,245	1.59	94,300
Flood/Storm	£ 77,841	£ 61,350	1.24	115,747
Geological	£ 48,513	£ 29,882	1.59	50,292
Health	£ 56,847	£ 33,195	1.99	268,487
AVERAGES BY PHASE				
Alerts 0-27 to 1-58	£ 64,626.41	£ 48,153.50	1.31	25,475
Alerts 1-73 to 2-38	£ 95,395.91	£ 64,082.30	1.47	100,729
Alerts 2-42 to 3-08	£ 93,907.75	£ 63,270.34	1.66	55,934
AVERAGES BY SECTOR of INTERVENTION				
WASH	£ 84,392.93	£ 57,910.55	1.52	74,125
Health	£ 76,455.30	£ 54,926.04	1.62	80,545
Shelter	£ 122,901.82	£ 84,687.01	1.40	84,672
Nutrition	£ 65,634	£ 49,074	1.40	7,712
Education	£ 144,112	£ 96,397	1.49	117,627
Protection	£ 95,790	£ 64,503	1.49	71,506
Food security & Livelihoods	£ 87,673	£ 59,847	1.44	17,399
Cash (UCT, voucher/token, or cash-for-work)	£ 111,180	£ 74,861	1.52	22,208
Disaster Risk Reduction	£ 83,723	£ 57,062	1.51	35,114

appear to offer the strongest cost-efficiencies when measured using this technique. Due to the

by dividing the total programme cost by the total value of the transfers provided directly to recipients. Compared to cost per beneficiary, using a ratio allows comparison between programmes that deliver different amounts and types of outputs.

¹⁵ These numbers go somewhat contrary to that of ECHO researchers who suggest complex emergencies and slow onset crises have higher (worse) TCTR values.

intensity/complexity of the analysis, the comparison to date does not cover anticipation versus response operations.

To what extent were other resources leveraged (beyond Start funds)?

Overall, Start funds for anticipation have had at most moderate success in terms of leveraging. Looking across all alerts (N=208) and projects (N=459) with some leveraging data, it clearly surfaces that Start has been influential in funds leveraged. However, missing from current Start reporting on leveraging to date is the breakdown of leveraging between anticipatory and response alert projects.

According to the Tracker (see Exhibit 25: Leveraging in the Start Tracker), only one-third of anticipatory projects (grants to members) with data reportedly manage to leverage at least one additional grant (compared to nearly half, 47% of the response projects). Seven (7) grants leveraged by these anticipatory projects (with data) raised only 3.4m GBP (or equivalent)¹⁶. This represents only 3% of the total reported values leveraged, the largest share of which were leveraged during the Start anticipation project. In comparison, response projects reportedly leveraged over 118m GBP (also with the largest share during project implementation). Start members reported that all of the seven grants (compared to 89% of the response grants) were influenced at least mildly by Start actions.

Exhibit 24: Leveraging in the Start Tracker

	Projects		Received at least 1 grant	WHEN (NB: only for 1st of multiple grants leveraged, if any)			
				BEGINNING	DURING	END	No Data
ANTICIPATORY	43	33%	14	5	8	1	0
RESPONSE	416	47%	194	70	88	25	21
Grand Total	459	45%	208	75	96	26	21
Grants leveraged			TOTAL	VALUE (all reported grants combined)			
ANTICIPATORY	7	3%	£ 3,416,297	£ 621,378	£ 694,918	£ 300,000	£ -
RESPONSE	192	97%	£ 117,904,722	£ 17,842,464	£ 79,911,899	£ 10,494,155	£ 5,799,035
Grand Total	199		£ 121,321,019	£ 18,463,843	£ 80,606,817	£ 10,794,155	£ 5,799,035
			START INFLUENCE (all reported grants combined)				
			At least mild	Entire	Significant	Mild	None
ANTICIPATORY			100%	2	3	2	0
RESPONSE			89%	10	127	34	21
Grand Total			89%	12	130	36	21
<i>NB: Numbers do not aggregate fully as full exhibit limited to cases with data in Tracker v. X</i>							

What is critical but missing to enhance any analysis of funds leveraged is a more careful and precise examination of the aims of those funds leveraged. While anticipatory projects may be well placed to leverage funds for the crisis at hand, if the objectives of even the 3.4m GBP reportedly leveraged in anticipatory action were mainly directed to humanitarian response, this contributes little if anything positive to anticipatory action.

While all respondents report having linked the right resources to the desired change, **leveraging is still seen to be a challenge among Anticipation actors**. One-fifth were unable to mobilise resources beyond the Start Fund (including ideas, skills, etc) and slightly fewer report that the projects made it easier for other actors to intervene.

¹⁶ Compare with the total value of 2.6m GBP for the Anticipatory project expenditures.

Exhibit 25: Resources and leveraging

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
The project linked the 'right' RESOURCES (its own skills, knowledge and networks) to the desired change.			48%	52%	29
The Anticipation project BUILT ON previous investments or complemented longer-term DRR programming.		10%	50%	40%	28
The project strategically mobilised RESOURCES BEYOND those provided by Start Fund (i.e. other funds, ideas, skills of other entities/individuals).		21%	59%	20%	27
Anticipation project made it easier for other actors to intervene in other phases of event (e.g. catalysed donors to fund, enabled actor to manage).		16%	54%	30%	19

Leveraging is also used by consulted stakeholders to describe other types of resource transfers, not just those from international donors:

- In **Nigeria**, resources for the project to complement Start funding were leveraged locally from the community and partners. Value for money was achieved through leveraging or drawing on previous investments. Partners had a longstanding presence in the project areas, from which the Start-funded activities benefited. *“Our Peace Ambassadors in the communities have been trained on early warning signs and early warning response, which is why they were able to pick up on signs. There was capacity on ground.”* In addition, partners used their own funds and connected with other local partners, while the community tended to contribute in kind, with a hall for meetings and their time as volunteers.
- In the **Philippines**, additional technical advice was leveraged from a DRR expert within one of the responding members
- Partners also used Start to leverage funding for additional research: **London School of Economics**, obtained funding from the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) ¹⁷ to explore anticipation and extreme weather forecasts more deeply.
- **Mongolia** stakeholders leveraged extra funding from Consortia members, enabling them to conduct additional related activities beyond those funded by Start Anticipation grants.
- In **Sri Lanka**, communities and government appear to have less ability to “leverage” than do Start members. While communities reported not receiving funds from any other donors, government seized the Anticipation activities to provide dry rations and other facilities for displaced families.
- In Somalia, Trocaire was able to leverage an additional 100,000 Euro from Irish Aid. The Start member reported that Start Network funds enabled them to “stabilize the situation as more funds were sought.”
- As a challenge to leverage: identifying the right skill set to leverage for anticipation even among Start Member staff was reported in Sri Lanka.

Among the case studies, only Sri Lanka reported at least minimal leveraging of other **(international) donors**. To Nigeria members’ knowledge, Start fund was the only fund made available. Those that succeeded to leverage funds from other donors for same or subsequent actions linked to the Anticipation efforts: *“we were able to showcase the work done under Start Fund Anticipation project to raise additional funding for Mullaitivu, Batticaloa & Trincomalee in December to support the flood affected communities”*. As stressed above, Start Members also perceive the anticipation grant to help mobilize *“till other funds come in; that window is very helpful. Most of the time we work through consortium/joint procurement...members work in different locations, and know the area context ...this is efficient, technical skills have been shared among all”*. **Nigeria** cited leveraging international donors as a *“missed opportunity”* due to limited technical know-how and human capacity.

¹⁷ <https://nerc.ukri.org/funding/>

EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness here is defined as...

FORMAL DEFINITION	<i>Are Anticipation projects generating outcomes proportional to identified need? Are they effective to generate positive and sustainable outcomes?</i>
WORKING DEFINITION	<i>Inputs to outputs to outcomes — what resulted?</i>

Have Start anticipation projects had reasonable reach?

In general, **coverage** compared to identified need is insufficient throughout the studied portfolio (source: field case studies). Targeting, however, surfaces as adequately reaching those most in need. Only 3% of respondents expressed that the anticipation projects may not have ensured the participation of the most vulnerable; the same proportion also felt the right quantity of at-risk individuals was not reached. See Exhibit 26. Somalia may have been one of the exceptions to this general rule, but due to security issues that would have probably prevailed in a response situation too.

Exhibit 26: Reach

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
The Anticipation project appropriately TARGETED and ensured the participation of most vulnerable groups.		3%	50%	47%	30
The Anticipation project reached the right NUMBER of at-risk people.		3%	76%	21%	26

Evidence from CASE STUDY Somalia

In **Somalia**, those who benefited were well served, but there were more isolated populations that could not be reached for reasons of security, transport, or limited funds. Within the camps themselves, newly arrived refugees who were not yet registered were not able to benefit from the program, despite being weak and in need. The need to reach these more isolated or vulnerable populations was echoed by Partners and community members alike.

Stakeholder type Reach

Community Member	<i>There are areas that are even more needy than we are. The camp 16, have many people who have never been assisted. They have been some who were registered and have been given cards, but then there are others who received no cards, and they will not get any assistance. But then there are also people in other camps, like 18, 20, who have lived there for 2 years, but not registered"</i>
Start Partner	<i>"There were populations who were severely affected, but not easily reached. Including the riverine communities away from Dollo and Luuq focus areas. Security was an issue hindering health workers from reaching populations away from population centers, which were affected."</i>
Start Partner	<i>"The beneficiaries of our assistance was targeted to the residents of the villages. However, those who are away from the centers in the Badia may have been needy but were not reached."</i>
Start Partner	<i>"There are many villages and sites which are vulnerable who were not assisted because the project was limited. They were as vulnerable as the people and sites that were assisted."</i>

In **Nigeria**, Start members and partners felt that, with more time and/or more money, they could have reached more people at risk. *"I think we met most of our target. But there is room for improvement. If we Start the Alert early, and we have a more funds, we can capture larger audiences or communities."* In **Sri Lanka**, targeting also appears to have been done well and equitably for Alert 282, but the volume reportedly fell far short of covering the full scope of needs (especially the volume of people in need). There appears to be greater

success in the **Philippines**; while direct reach may have been limited, impact was wider through replication: *“it’s going to be used as a model in the contingency plan in these three municipalities. You can say that yes, only these three municipalities, but the indirect benefit is vast.....”*.

To what extent are Start outcomes sustainable?

While aspirational, anticipation outcomes are not widely regarded as sustainable. Starting with the portfolio/literature review, out of 44 funded Anticipation proposals (issued for 19 separate alerts), only six mentioned sustainability in a meaningful (though often cursory) way. Strategies for sustainability fall into three categories:

- Engaging local partners in the intervention (3 proposals);
- Engaging communities in design and implementation (3 proposals);
- Connecting the intervention to ongoing programs in the area (3 proposals).

While Anticipation projects are considered generally to have contributed to resilience, at the project level, there are more concerns about sustainability of anticipation project actions. See Exhibit 27.

Exhibit 27: Sustainability

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
The Anticipation project made people more secure or RESILIENT.		7%	48%	45%	25
The Anticipation project has some SUSTAINABLE outcomes.		12%	62%	27%	25

In **Nigeria**, the outcomes were deemed sustainable, as evidenced in media reports, individual testimonies, community appreciation. Leveraging, however, will be necessary for more sustainable follow-on work: *“If we want to do a sustainable work it could be higher. The post or later intervention will be higher in terms of cost. It is like a dust being raised. It is also a community that will need healing.”* (Start member partner in Nigeria). *“If they have a separation that **not** everything is 45 days, then it will be better.”* In **Sri Lanka**, some activities are sustainable such as rainfall monitoring system, and capacity building of government stakeholders. Indeed, the effort was an *“eye-opener for government entities on how to act before disaster”*.

Suggested measures to heighten sustainability included: continuous media engagement, advocacy and social mobilizing (e.g., on peace building) before, during and after elections in Nigeria, and hazard and vulnerability mapping/updates and community based early warning systems in Sri Lanka.

EQUITY/To what extent are Start processes and outcomes equitable?

Equity here is defined as...

FORMAL DEFINITION	<i>Is the project appropriately engaging and producing proportional benefits for diverse groups?</i>
WORKING DEFINITION	<i>Equal inclusion of vulnerable groups , gender equity</i>

With few exceptions, **interventions were largely and thoughtfully equitable**. The anticipation projects are seen to have directed an appropriate proportion of the funds directly to the affected populations (95%) and, to a slightly lesser extent, the diversity and inclusion of specific groups contributed positively to the outcomes. See Exhibit 28.

Exhibit 28: Equitable

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
Compared to the total budget for Anticipation project, the PROPORTION OF FUNDING directly reaching affected community was appropriate.		5%	58%	37%	30
DIVERSITY or INCLUSION of specific groups of beneficiaries substantially contributed to the success of outcomes.		8%	48%	44%	26

Communities in **Sri Lanka** and elsewhere reported that those selected for cash for work were systematically the most vulnerable families including those *“not receiving any other project benefits”* and largely (70%)

targeted to women; one mother used it to take her disabled child to hospital for a treatment. There, Start members reported equitable targeting as a very good awareness and capacity building for the government officials, even enabling Start members to work more effectively and improve their professional reputations.

In the **Philippines**, there was a strong focus on equity. The Anticipation project distributed Inclusive Warning kits which contain *“audio and visual devices which are used by the Barangay local authorities to communicate and give warning from house to house. The audio devices include a whistle, a megaphone, and as visual devices: communication cards, which can be used for persons with intellectual and communication disabilities”*. Also in this country, anticipation projects reportedly reached the most vulnerable—and not the easiest to reach: *“Despite the fact that it is easier for the local municipalities to scale the project towards the communities with lower risk, we actually reached the right communities—those who need to have more new discussions and preparations when it comes to lahar. ”*

Other countries had more challenges with equity. In **Pakistan**, although one member took specific measures to reach women and non-literate people, another commented that their actions were not really equity-conscious, possibly due to time crunch: *“We were not gender inclusive and not blind – all messages going to all equally.... :”*. In **Nigeria**, opinions differed about equity issues, particularly with regard to Persons with Disabilities (PWD). In one area the partner reported reaching the most vulnerable thanks to good targeting. In another context, the PWDs have not been reached, in addition to the blind, deaf and dumb. Additionally, the *“Fulani youth have not been reached, but should be to reduce the recurring conflicts”*.

In addition, rather than seeking sustainability (above section), some suggest that the right—more fair--question for short-lived projects such as Start Anticipation should be, instead: *“did we take care to do no harm; did we leave communities better than how we found them?”* For instance, significant issues arose in **Nigeria** with the cash component. Some felt it was too small, others queried why it was targeted only in certain places, highlighting that equity/cash issues could have led to more violence. *“Those of us that received cash disbursement also faced criticism from others who complained of selective treatment in the fund’s administration even though a thorough assessment was used”*.

Equitable programming was also recognised by Start members in many countries as requiring a prerequisite investment in time and stronger information management (including affected population databases). In **Nigeria**, lack of these elements resulted in the numbers reported in the communities to be underestimated, and later the sampling methods to be less effective to identify those in need with the requisite accuracy.

Although not noted at the time of the grant, this research revealed **gender** dimensions to early warning information from community members, worthy of further investigation. In **Nigeria**, for example Exhibit 29) men heard and saw signs of incitement and aggression and division in public places such as buses and within the community, and from local politicians. Women heard information from secondary sources (official and social media) and via observation of youth.

Exhibit 29: Comparison of Gendered perspectives in Nigeria

What men noticed	What women noticed
<p><i>Young people were being provided with free drugs preparatory to the elections” (Community member - male)</i></p> <p><i>“What raised our concerns were that most of the communities were divided. In one family, you will see one supporter for APC and another for PDP” (Community member - male)</i></p>	<p><i>“When the elections were postponed” (Community member - female)</i></p> <p><i>The posting that I saw on social media was very frightening (Community member -female)</i></p>

<p><i>“Before the elections when you are travelling in the bus, you will hear people saying we will come out and fight for our right if the election is rigged.” (Community member - male)</i></p> <p><i>“Politicians were going around to give money to traditional rulers to gain support for the election.” (Community member - male)</i></p> <p><i>There was an attitude of winning at all costs (Community member - male)</i></p>	<p><i>The youth are Starting to cause trouble (Community member - female)</i></p> <p><i>The youth allowed themselves to be used by politicians (Community member -female)</i></p>
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3.3 To what extent has Start enabling work contributed to the identified impacts and value?

Summary of key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing and engaging FOREWARN has generated unique and substantial benefits for anticipatory action. Utilisation of this resource has improved but its full value has not yet been harnessed. Partnership with LSE has led to improved forecasting of heatwaves and potentially other hazards; other partnerships help to introduce new ways of thinking to change paradigms in the sector. Commitment to ‘learning together’ by Start and other forecast-based funding/financing mechanisms is now overdue, to increase impact and efficiency. All enabling work has contributed to building a culture of anticipatory action Other most enabling aspects include Start secretariat’s transparent, learning-oriented ways of working and willingness to travel to impart guidance; least enabling include parameters for expenditure and funding transfer arrangements. Clearer responsibilities among members and within FOREWARN have had a positive effect. Despite contextual differences, from the perspective of members at country level, Start’s enabling work has contributed enormously to their ability to act in anticipation of crises.

To what extent and how have partnerships influenced the impact/value for money?

Partnership has been promoted by Start Fund among anticipation projects in numerous ways, including by establishing FOREWARN as an entity to enhance the forecasting and interpretation side of the anticipation efforts. Generally, partnerships recognised by 98% of 78 respondents were reported to have positively influenced the impact of their organisations; slightly fewer agreed that the partners added to their value for money. See Exhibit 30.

FOREWARN specifically was met with positive feedback and is widely recognised as having a unique influence on anticipation impact. All but 7% of FOREWARN respondents (n=11) have provided a technical advice for a live anticipation alert. For the Start team (and other Rota members) the inputs by FOREWARN members are invaluable guidance for decision-making on Alert activations and funding. For Start members, the impact of FOREWARN stretches beyond the funding directly received from Start: except for 12%, survey respondents were of the opinion that FOREWARN has been helpful to advocate for early action.

FOREWARN members have also benefited from their engagement in the Start Fund crisis anticipation They say that Start Fund efforts help “link their research applied to real life issues” and that they are developing new partnerships (peer, etc) as a result of their participation. While all but 16% believe the advice they provided was well used, several commented that they did not know the impact of their engagement and that it would be both helpful and rewarding to know more about how it was used and the outcome of the projects: *“I didn’t see my work in practice. I tried to follow through to see if my work had helped but it was not possible; the rota changes so quickly (after 6 or 7 weeks it’s new).”* This, together with other suggestions of a slight disconnect between FOREWARN and the on-the-ground impacts that Start Anticipation has, indicates that **the**

full potential of the relationship between FOREWARN, Start members and the humanitarian sector has yet to be developed.

Exhibit 30: Partnership and Forewarn

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
Partnerships with entities named above have positively influenced the IMPACT of my organisation.		2%	50%	48%	78
Partnerships with entities named above have positively influenced the VALUE for MONEY my organisation offers.	3%	6%	49%	42%	70
Participating in FOREWARN has helped me advocate for more engagement in early action within my own organisation.	4%	8%	48%	40%	76
Participating in FOREWARN enables forecasters/academics to have their research applied to real life issues.		7%	59%	34%	15
We (FOREWARN) have provided technical advice for a live anticipation alert.		7%	62%	32%	13
We have established new contacts with relevant peers through engagement in FOREWARN.			45%	55%	12
The technical advice we (FOREWARN) provided was well used.	8%	8%	39%	45%	11

Positive contributions to impact and value for money have also been made by certain academic entities and individuals. A partnership with London School of Economics (LSE) was considered extremely useful by Start members in Pakistan, as well as by the LSE statistician who has used the positive results to secure more research funding. Following a difficult experience with an Alert for a heatwave in Pakistan in 2017, Start engaged LSE to provide expert support to members in that country. The LSE consultant produced a technical guidance note, ran a webinar and engaged directly with the country team to help them implement it in practice, including during the following heatwave. Thanks to the strong technical support, their monitoring and use of forecasts improved, the second Alert was produced in good time and was successfully activated. The guidance note was then revised based on feedback from the country team, which ensured that it would be as practical and understandable for non-specialists in similar contexts. As a result of this very positive experience, Start and LSE have begun a similar initiative for cyclones in the Philippines.

Partnerships designed to build capacity and/or understanding of anticipatory action have been important for introducing new ways of thinking but less immediately satisfying for the participants and experts. For example, a consultant from the EPSRC-funded CRUISE Network provided awareness-raising sessions on dealing with radical uncertainty for FOREWARN members. They involved webinars, discussions and exercises on making decisions in scenarios of uncertainty, many of which served to highlight the degree of difficulty for most humanitarians when attempting to move outside the major paradigm in their sector. *“The exercise showed how people – mostly practitioners and some academics - are deeply uncomfortable with acting in situations of uncertainty. We should not pretend we know everything, we have to accept that there are assumptions involved. It showed that there needs to be re-learning and a different kind of accountability. There isn’t a right answer when it comes to the future.”*

A less formal type of partnership between Start and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Climate Centre is valued by both parties. **Beyond the valuable participation of RCRC staff in FOREWARN, the impact of the relationship is largely due to the way in which their different models of forecast-based funding/financing challenge each other to generate evidence and learning.** The Red Cross model is a long-term investment with National Societies to build their capacity to forecast and act upon specific hazards. It requires the development of indicators and thresholds at country-level, and awareness and ability to monitor them within the National Society. Once established, funding ‘kicks in automatically’ when the thresholds are passed, without the need for case by case analysis and judgement. The Start model, however, is more flexible and can be activated for any type of hazard, anywhere. It requires teams in-country and within FOREWARN to collect and analyse data and take decisions on the severity of the crisis in real-time, on a case by case basis. As one stakeholder commented *“One of the benefits of the Red Cross system is that you don’t have responsibility for taking a decision in the moment of the crisis. The downside is that nuances are lost’.* **Together the RCRC and Start are bringing anticipatory action into discussions with donors and practitioners across the entire sector,** each contributing its experience to the body of knowledge on what type of investment is needed, what the pros and cons are of different approaches, and the importance of information-sharing and coordination.

To what extent and how have anticipation management and its processes influenced the impact/value for money?

While 16% respondents disagree, **Start Fund is generally considered to have enabled the raising of quality alerts among its members.** The dissenting voices may be from countries and members that have not generated many Alerts, hence have not applied learning from their experience.

More importantly, all but 8% agree that the **Start Fund has enhanced the culture of early action.** See Exhibit 31. Indeed, many discussions with stakeholders revealed that Anticipation efforts provide a living lab or safe space for proactive explorations that “*give members the chance to try things*”. Nonetheless, this learning by doing points to a need for more direct coordination between Start Anticipation and Start Risk Financing Team (in fact, this action is underway).

Exhibit 31: Start Fund enabling

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
Direct engagement with Start Fund anticipation team members has enabled my organisation to raise alerts or improved the quality of an alert.	2%	14%	49%	36%	82
The Start Fund has generally enhanced the culture of early action in my organisation.	1%	7%	46%	46%	82

The following aspects of management and processes were highlighted by stakeholders consulted as having an impact – positive or negative - on the achievement of Start’s objectives:

Expenditure periods: Currently, Start funds are normally required to be spent within 45 days of their approval, although it is possible to request a longer period. Evidently, awareness of this flexibility is low, as feedback from several countries indicates that they considered that more could have been done to mitigate the impacts of the current crisis if they had been able to spend/implement for longer. Indeed, where Start allowed them a longer expenditure period, members noted that it enabled them to achieve better results.

FOREWARN structure and responsibilities: Start’s enthusiasm for cultivating FOREWARN led to a rather oversized group without clear responsibilities or expectations. Alerts were circulated to the entire group, but few people responded, and many felt that they did not have the requisite expertise for the specific hazard or geography. As a result, Start management decided to restructure FOREWARN into subgroups by hazard type. This has been much more productive: Start team now only need to communicate with a small group for each Alert, and recipients of Alerts know that what they receive is aligned with their area(s) expertise. Consequently, inputs are greater and stronger, support to the country team is more relevant, and approvals are more appropriate and efficient.

Rota system: The decision to create a rota of members has increased the sense of responsibility of those ‘on call’ to ensure that they respond adequately to evolving/incoming Alerts. In addition, it enables those not on call¹⁸ to focus on providing technical support on longer projects, knowing that the need to respond ‘out of hours’ and with urgency rests with others. Both effects are conducive to greater impact of the Start Fund crisis anticipation because adequate advice and support are available to members at all times.

¹⁸ Representatives of eight member organisations are on call at a time, and focus on their usual remit in their own organisations in the intervening periods.

Willingness to travel: All members of the Start team have provided in-country support as needed, taking on demanding travel schedules to reach out to all parts of the Start membership to deliver capacity-building, conduct assessments and evaluations, discuss strategy and share knowledge. This appears to have contributed to the range of achievements over a short period and across wide geographies. Its flipside, however, should not be ignored. As some have pointed out, deep organisational learning usually requires time for collective reflection, and efficiency comes from focus and continuity.

Transfer of funds: Despite a rapid turnaround of alerts, the actual transfer of funds from Start to the organisations incurring expenditure for implementation of the anticipation project is often slow. As partners in Nigeria and Somalia commented: *“The arrival of Start fund was a limitation. We had to wait for the money to get Started so we had to combine certain activities to achieve our goal”*, and *“The waiting period for funding was a bit long”*.

Ways of working: The energy and commitment to learning of the Start team are admirable. Comments include ‘very engaged’, ‘open to trying new things’, ‘very innovative’, ‘trying to improve’. Stakeholders across the globe appreciate Start guidance and approach for its **transparency** in decision making, its inclusive participation (*“they make a lot of people participate in the funding decisions--which is good”* and *“Start Fund involves people on the ground and those in the area to give their say – which is even better”*). While a small team, Start Fund anticipation staff are *“very proactively engaged in supporting members in alerts and reaching out to influence the sector --Start Fund punches above its weight”*.

There is a feeling, however, that the time has come to be more focused. Comments such as: *“They do too many initiatives at the same time, spreading themselves too thin”*, ‘they travel a lot’ and *“They should put more resources in the ones they prioritise”* suggest that Start would benefit from a ‘consolidation’ and ‘enhancing’ approach in its next strategic cycle. This is particularly important with regard to sharing learning and engaging with similar types of actors and initiatives.

To what extent and how has Start Fund guidance and learning processes influenced impact and value for money in Anticipation?

Guidance and training provided by the Start Fund to its members have had a positive influence. Guidance (understood to mean advisory support and documents) appears to be slightly more appreciated than trainings (understood to mean face to face or webinar-style sessions), for which 19% of respondents disagreed that it has been influential, see Exhibit 32. Specific forms of guidance and learning highlighted by those consulted include:

- **Briefing documents:** *“Start Fund briefing documents are very helpful. They feature different disasters and clear guidance which is very good to share with country team. The handbook is a very useful tool, under review, with the latest version in 2017”*. Risk Bulletins were also highlighted as useful.
- **Training:** Positive feedback was received in relation to webinars, face-to-face sessions for global FOREWARN members, coaching for country-level staff, and country-specific capacity-building. National staff in countries that had received sustained coaching during alert development and capacity-building visits were highly complementary of the Start team and confirmed the positive impact of such activities. Comments included *“It’s very empowering”* and *“advisors visit, run sessions and are very supportive”*. However, some countries appear to have had much less training than others, and mainly related to filling out alert forms and internal processes. For them, the training received was positive in that it enabled them to access funding, but they did not see other benefits.

- **Web platform:** Learning and Evidence section¹⁹, plus others “*Start Fund has a great web site, with lots of documents I’d like to see used more consistently and updated. There is a lot to learn and Start is very willing to share*”.

Exhibit 32: Technical Support

PERCEPTION	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N
Start Fund TRAINING on Anticipation has influenced my organisation to begin conducting risk analysis or raise an anticipation alert.	3%	16%	50%	30%	65
Start Fund GUIDANCE notes/risk briefings have positively influenced us to raise an Alert, or the quality of an alert we were considering.	1%	6%	62%	31%	79

In **Nigeria**, stakeholders reported a positive contribution of Start Fund in instruments and Anticipation training. Once the anticipation effort is approved, clocks Start ticking to prepare: “*once we knew that it was coming, we had two days of training (including on tools we had earlier received from Start and how it can be used and pertinent issues) for all the staff and the volunteer Peace Ambassadors.*” There is also appetite for more: “*We need to know more about Start Fund and do things a lot better*”.

In **Sri Lanka**, Start Fund is appreciated for its insistence on highlighting the details of children girls and boys, elderly and disabled: “*Start compels us to look for data, and that guidance is very importance*”. While an appetite for anticipation appears to be growing, Start Members express some concerns. These include workload (“*our workload increases but days for implementation are short*”), timing (“*to successfully implement in 45 days, we need more knowledge and practice*”), imprecise estimates of those at risk and affected (“*respond operations are more precisely informed by needs/impact assessments which anticipation cannot by definition benefit from*”) and uncertainty of the funding (“*a main difficulty in this process is while planning, we never know whether we will get or not funds from Start*”).

The above comments from Nigeria and Sri Lanka highlight some of the difference between the **Start Fund and the Red Cross Climate Centre’s parallel approaches to capacity building for their anticipation tools and funds**. The latter also invests heavily in training through significant multiple year investment at National Society Level. As RCRC contributors explained: “*It’s not just about accessing money for early action, it’s also having the mechanisms that allow the institution to deliver with quality. We have a tool that tells them when and where to act called ‘Action planning’; it’s like the next generation of Contingency Planning*”. According to key informants, compared with the Start Fund crisis anticipation the RCRC’s Forecast Based Financing strategy is more focused and systematic, but less flexible. Capacity building of National Societies follows a set order of priority and staged investment, indicators and thresholds for specific hazards are agreed, and once the ‘Action Plan’ is in place, funding is automatically triggered when they are passed. The Start Fund’s approach includes ‘deliberately opportunistic’ elements that focus resources where immediate need for anticipatory action is identified, provide training and guidance ‘on demand’, and the crisis anticipation may be used for action related to any hazard in any context. A frank reflection process by both entities on the relative benefits of each aspect of their approaches would be of significant benefit to the sector.

Theory of change analysis

Across all case studies and throughout the evaluation, evidence supports that the **impacts** planned in the Start anticipation theory of change were generally achieved. The expected **assumptions** underpinning the impact have generally held true . Risk aversion is lessening, Start members are demonstrating ability and interest in a culture of risk informed anticipatory action and, to a slightly lesser extent, risk taking is incentivized (less so in Nigeria) and momentum for anticipation is building in the humanitarian sector (possibly less so in Somalia). See Exhibit 33.

¹⁹ <https://Startnetwork.org/learning-and-evidence>

All seven **activities** were, in the three case studies, considered fully implemented, systematically supporting strong **results** in Nigeria and moderate results in Sri Lanka and Somalia. The slightly contested results in Sri Lanka stem from the availability of forecasting information; challenges in Somalia included collaborative risk assessments and common appraisal tools.

Reportedly, the most **widely varied performance** of the Start Anticipation Theory of Change—according to workshop participants in three case studies—is the **problem statement**. In fact, each of the three problems expressed in the ToC are less pertinent in one country. In Nigeria, limited evidence and fragmented learning approaches do not resonate with local stakeholders. In Sri Lanka, members do not perceive themselves as risk averse. Somalia, and to a lesser extent Nigeria, refute the absence of a limited evidence base for early action. It is difficult to be confirm if this is in fact the “Start effect” or was also true prior.

Exhibit 33: Theory of Change Analysis

START Anticipation ToC: Evidence suggests performance is:			
	Nigeria	Sri Lanka	Somalia
Problem Statement			
1. The humanitarian system is currently reactive and risk averse; response is often late, at a high cost to communities	◆◆◆	◆◆	◆◆◆
2. Humanitarian agencies lack the capabilities needed for anticipation, including collaborative risk analysis, forecast-based design and decision-making under uncertainty	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆
3. The evidence base for early action is limited and approaches to learning around early action are fragmented	◆◆	◆◆◆	◆
Activities			
1. Manage the Start Fund Crisis Anticipation Window			
2. Provide financial incentives and 'safe to fail' opportunities to act early.			
3. Enhance the supply and demand of risk and forecasting information across the Network			
4. Foster partnerships with forecasting information providers	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆◆
5. Convene a space for forecasters to work together with humanitarians			
6. Consistently identify and apply learning from Start Fund anticipation alerts			
7. Develop and communicate evidence that demonstrates the value of acting early			
Results			
1. Increasing numbers of successful anticipatory alerts, incorporating forecasting information and collaborative risk analysis.	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆◆
2. Greater availability of forecasting information to support hum. decision-making.	◆◆◆	◆◆	◆◆◆
3. Humanitarians carry out collaborative risk analysis and incorporate it, alongside forecasting information, into project design.	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆
4. Agencies analyse programmes using common appraisal tools, driving improved prog/dev sector understanding of what does/does not work in crisis anticipation	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆
Assumptions			
1. The combination of incentives and technical support proposed will reduce the risk aversion that currently prevents anticipatory response	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆◆
2. If we train agencies to use forecasting information for programme development, they will more systematically use and respond to risk information during projects.	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆◆
3. By sharing risk analyses between agencies, we will incentivise risk-taking and enable new forms of anticipatory project	◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆◆
4. Robust evidence of 'what works' will convince the humanitarian sector of the value of anticipatory response.	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆
ToC as a whole: IMPACT	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆◆

Explanation 1: three black diamonds indicate evidence points to strong, two gold to moderate and one grey to weak performance.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

Despite being a relatively new and financially modest addition to the Start Fund, Anticipation has had distinct impact among its members. It has had a strong influence on creating a culture of anticipatory action, with a growing number of practitioners and headquarters-based staff engaging in the process of making decisions based on a forecast and evidence-based prediction of humanitarian impacts. Most often, these decisions are made collaboratively, with peers and partners and as a result of interaction with other stakeholders such as government units, meteorological agencies and UN bodies. The availability of funding, guidance on how to gather and process data and present arguments for intervention, and technical support related to certain hazards have made the strongest contribution to these changes. The willingness of experts to engage with the concept, commit their time and offer advice through FOREWARN has also undeniably contributed at practical and strategic levels, and is poised to do more when the right formula is found.

The projects funded by Start Fund Crisis Anticipation have focused on acute mitigation and preparedness. Some funding decisions have generated lively debate about the what anticipatory action is, and what the Start Fund should do, and while this is partly due to a lack of clarity on concepts and terms in Start and among members, it has also contributed to shifting the paradigm towards proactive risk management. Experience of discussing or taking anticipatory action has helped increase its profile and users' confidence in this type of intervention, apparently causing

a virtuous circle effect on the frequency with which anticipatory action is undertaken and how quickly decisions to do so are made.

Beneficiaries almost unanimously agree that the projects funded by Start Fund Anticipation have reduced potential harm and loss. While timing - which is the essence of anticipatory action – is far from perfect (most projects do not Start before the onset of a crisis), even less timely interventions are met with positive feedback

from beneficiaries and local government who encourage agencies to continue in this vein. For beneficiaries, anticipatory action is preferable because it reduces potential loss of life, health and assets and facilitates a speedier recovery.

On the other hand, stakeholders are not yet sure that they have the right metrics to understand the value of anticipatory action. Cognisant of the effort that risk monitoring, raising an alert and justifying the proposed action requires, they want to be able to say with greater certainty what acting precisely when they did, and how they did it, led to demonstrably greater benefits than waiting until the crisis had unfolded. They have not yet consistently applied methods to assess impact, and traditional techniques to measure efficiency, sustainability and leveraging do not appear to tell the whole story. Although Start's Anticipatory Action portfolio appears to be relatively cost-efficient, economical, equitable and effective, coverage or reach is

Question	Answer (Abbreviated)
Impact: are Start members monitoring risk and acting before events occur?	Yes , even if there is a long ways to go, Start Fund Anticipation has contributed strongly to the culture of anticipation. Start needs to accelerate the effort, reinforcing FOREWARN.
Impact: have harm and losses been mitigated?	Inconclusive evidence overall, but definite successes with communities at small, local scale. Start is not investing sufficiently in Anticipation, when compared to response.
Impact: How do results relate to timing?	Not strong. Timing is the main metric that can be measured at the Anticipation project level, but only 5 cases have implemented prior to crisis onset. Alternative 'crisis peak' not used consistently in reporting.
V4M: what value has been established?	Anticipation efforts so far are proving economical, modestly efficient and effective, and generally equitable.
How has Start Enabling work contributed?	Strongly: evidence is strong that Start enabling has had a direct impact on Anticipation.

limited and while some projects have leveraged additional funding, there is no evidence that this was invested in anticipatory action rather than response.

Indeed, the comparison of Anticipatory and Response projects in Start Network (and more widely) is a challenging one. What surfaces is that the most critical things we expect **from anticipatory projects** (as opposed to Response projects; see left side of Exhibit below) are elements that the projects cannot be held themselves to measure. This heightens the role of Start in exploring and identifying measurement techniques, especially when the crises successfully overbverted the negative impacts.

Anticipatory Start projects	“Normal Response” Start projects
Expect SAME	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do no harm approach and context analysis • Inclusion, participation, localization, equitable actions • Cost efficiency during project implementation 	
Expect MORE (NB: not exclusive to one side)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative risk analysis (RA) and monitoring of risk • Use of forecasting information and RA in project design • Earlier action • Uncertainty and safe risk taking, creative problem solving • Upstream objectives: safeguarding, protecting, reducing risk/exposure • Adaptive management • Leveraging interest and funds for the follow-on response of same crisis • Mitigation of harm and potential loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action after crisis has Started • Downstream objectives: saving lives, recovery • Use of standard good practice • Leverage interest in anticipation (by what we should have done) • Mitigation of loss
Expect MORE ***but NOT measurable at project level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveraging funds/longer-term effects/impact: increased interest in/culture of anticipation • Cost-effectiveness of acting earlier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer-term effects/impact: # lives saved

Overall, Start Fund Anticipation’s theory of change has held true. Financial incentives, technical and ‘moral’ (advisory) support have helped people at all levels in this organisational architecture to take risks. More forecasting information is flowing between actors, being analysed by them, and resulting in an increase in forecast and prediction-based programming decisions. To attain the full impact there is still work needed to increase the robustness of evidence to more reliably pinpoint good practice as well as the added value of anticipation over response.

5. Recommendations

The recommendations below are grouped by strategic, operational and technical.

Strategic

- **Increase Start Fund investment** in Anticipation. Only 22 cases of activated anticipation alerts since 2015 is too few and too slow, especially in comparison with response activations.
- Establish and disseminate any **differences and complementarities** between anticipation funding, risk financing and forecast based action. Anticipation practitioners need to be able to speak intelligently about these nuances.
- Invite RCRC FBF to an **externally-facilitated forecast-based action learning event** to unveil successes, doubts, failures and collective challenges. To demonstrate commitment to collaboration, allocate resources before the event to implementing the collective solutions/steps forward identified by participants. Once a safe environment for learning has been established between Start and RCRC, subsequent learning events could include WFP, FAO and others.
- Seize what Start members see as the most important differences between anticipation and response (the particular rhythm of an anticipation intervention and greater need for cooperation) to establish **Start position on what Anticipation projects can be expected to achieve**, singularly or as a global set. For example, risk taking, and cost efficiencies are often counterproductive in same project. Leveraging for response as a metric does not do justice to Anticipation. Among the list of expectations, re-orient responsibility of Anticipation at project level from sustainability to Do No Harm.
- Highlight and **promote the localisation aspects of forecasting and anticipatory action** (as an added value to enhance understanding of and commitment to localisation), including aspects related to: sources of data, 'locale' of analysis and decision-making, role of external support, people-centred measurement of impact, etc.
- Develop **rule-based system for repeat alerts** (i.e. no approval after two projects same country/context) as a technique to lessen dependence and create national capacity. In the absence of this, establish in Start a team that is tasked to contribute to Start members focus on national government capacity.

Operational

- Increase HR capacity/availability for **hands-on support to country teams**, provided through roving Secretariat staff or regionally-based ones; consider a stronger role for FOREWARN in this (possibly including a supply-demand matching service), and what incentives/benefits would attract FOREWARN members' participation.
- Establish **SOPs and a budget for a light but objective evaluation for ALL activated alerts** (or if part of Tracker, to be enhanced). This should include all projects, all stakeholders, and the funding for it should be included in the allocation. While much of this is currently captured by the tracker, it is inadequate and hard to navigate (for analysts). Require all processes to systematically use the metrics established for anticipatory action, to enable aggregation and comparison. This will strengthen the evidence base, as intended in the Theory of Change.

Technical/Definitions and measurement

- Compile/finalise a **glossary of all key terms**, including forecast, crisis, risk (not only/mainly programmatic risk), onset, peak, prediction of humanitarian impact, trigger, acute mitigation, acute/enhanced preparedness; clarify niche (acute) and position on risk management spectrum.
- Invest in appropriate **set of metrics** to monitor and evaluate anticipatory action that assess its unique features, added value and impacts. Include specific metrics for anticipatory action in relation slow

onset hazards. Singular anticipation projects cannot be expected themselves to hold the flag on measurement; metrics may be needed more at central levels. This will enable Start to demonstrate that anticipation and prevention are inarguably more lifesaving and effective than responding to a crisis outbreak.

- Explore risk in relation to **scale** and **identify rubrics/a checklist** to assess if anticipation is the appropriate solution given lag time and likely scale of an imminent crisis. Develop a technique to intervene at a scale that is appropriate based on context (re. low reach/coverage, high influence, strong learning, not one volume fits all).
- Build an evidence base for **leveraging** (definition, how, when, from where), including especially what the additional funds were spent on. Provide clearer **guidance to members on expectations and non-expectations** in this regard, in light of what anticipation can really be tasked to contribute.
- **Task an IT / database team to streamline the Tracker**, linking unique identifiers across phases of Start. It is such a rich resource but has many quirks, discrepancies and is very challenging to navigate and mine without easily introducing errors into the analyses.

Annexes

Available in full [here](#).

Crisis Anticipation Evaluation: Management Response

April 2020

START
NETWORK

Comments on results

Different interpretations of crisis anticipation meaning (p.18): The report states ‘While stakeholders have grown more confident and consistent in their use of terms since 2016, evidently doubts and different interpretations still exist’. The flexibility of the Start Fund has provided the space for innovation to enable us to forecast a wider variety of crises than any other anticipatory funding mechanism. Our approach is to avoid strict definitions, which would require wide agreement from our members and could limit us unnecessarily. Instead, we focus on encouraging Start Network members to define clearly a specific window of opportunity in advance of a predicted event and actions they can take to limit risk.

Did the forecasted crisis happen as expected? (p.21): The evaluation includes analysis of 14 funded projects from 13 different anticipation contexts and reported that half of these did not occur. Analysis conducted by Start Network of report form data from 37 projects funded through 24 alerts shows that 36% of forecasted emergencies took place as predicted or with a more significant impact. 34% of forecasts which did not come to fruition were disease outbreaks, where the absence of the forecasted crisis can be more easily attributed to the project impact. Alert 308 for cholera Somalia, analysed within the body of the report, for example indicates that project activities limited the spread of cholera. A further 17% of projects where the emergency did not occur were active volcanos (in DRC and the Philippines), where it is not possible to estimate when a full eruption may occur. The suitability of volcanos for crisis anticipation remains an open question. These alerts have been funded following Analysis for Action grants which have made a compelling case for intervention. Their impacts will last long beyond the project timeline as they both incorporated elements of capacity development. This table summarises the number of projects that have reported predictions as correct, under or overestimated; these categories have been used for simplicity, though more nuance is provided in the report forms, which are available on request.

Hazard	Prediction correct or impact more severe	Impact was less severe or did not occur
Drought/food insecurity	5	2
Conflict/displacement	2	6
Disease outbreak		8
Extreme temperature	1	1
Flooding/landslides	5	2
Volcano		4

Whether or not a forecast was correct is not a binary question, typical variations we see are:

- The crisis happened but it was less (or more) severe
- The political event happened, but it did not have the forecasted humanitarian impacts
- The crisis happened but not at the scale anticipated, or the impact happened in a different location

Our objective is to ensure the highest quality information is provided for decision makers, ensuring our decisions are defensible and that uncertainty is managed. The shift towards forecast-based action reflects an increased risk appetite on the part of humanitarian agencies; funding situations where a risk does not come to fruition may be seen as a characteristic of a healthily risk-taking humanitarian system. Start Network decision makers are conscious to match the level of funds agreed to the perceived likelihood of an event taking place. 85% of stakeholders surveyed for this evaluation agreed or strongly agreed that funding levels were appropriate for the level of risk (only those who had direct alert experience answered this question). We have also experimented with new ways to manage uncertainty. For alert 208, for anticipated forced return of refugees from Pakistan to Afghanistan, decision makers allocated knowing the crisis might not take place.

Funds were transferred on the basis that if the numbers of arrivals were low, the funds would be recouped, which happened with close cooperation between members and the central Start Network team.

The ‘no regrets’ approach has taken shape in practice, usually involving small investments of value to communities in any scenario. For example, sustainable infrastructure to divert floods and landslides (gabion walls, alert 173 Tajikistan), training health staff in Ebola case management (254 and 283 anticipation of Ebola in Uganda and Rwanda) and training staff in emergency assessments (alert 175 anticipation of election violence, Kenya).

We continue to work with decision makers, to support them to allocate funds for anticipated crises effectively, for example by providing training and guidance on interpreting seasonal weather forecasts and decision making under uncertainty. With the exception of disease outbreaks, the Start Network cannot impact how a forecasted scenario plays out.

28% of the crisis anticipation portfolio was activated before crisis onset (p.26): We dispute this finding based upon analysis of alert notes received, which capture the date of submission, the forecasted peak of the crisis (a range) and the ideal time for an anticipatory project (a range). These data points are used by decision makers to determine whether there is adequate lead time to start an anticipation project, they are not included within the evaluation analysis. Based on data we have been capturing since 2017, which includes 31 alerts, the average number of days between an alert being raised and ideal start date for an anticipatory project is 7.8 days. For activated alerts this rises to 10.94 days and 0.75 days for non-activated alerts, showing a clear bias towards activating alert notes which have been raised with time to act, considering the hazard type and forecasted peak.

Alert type	Average number of days from alert to suitable start for anticipatory project	Range	Interquartile range	Average number of days from alert to forecasts crisis peak	Range	Interquartile range
Activated	10.94 (n=18)	0 - 76	5-9	11.15 (n=20)	-37 - 70	4-20
Not Activated	.75 (n=8)	-11 - 10	-4.5 – 6.5	14.3 (n=8)	-22 - 108	-10 - 2

Pinpointing a specific date for crisis onset is an ongoing challenge for the Start Fund, underlined by the different dates for crisis onset we have on the same crises in different information products. The Start Fund often operates in either chronic emergencies or slow onset crises for which start dates are hard to isolate specifically. Even in faster onset scenarios, identifying a start date can be subjective. For example, in October 2019 an alert was funded for flooding in Rwanda. There had been substantial flooding in the weeks running up to the activation, which had been within the capacity of the government to respond. When a forecast of further flooding was issued, it was recognised to be beyond existing coping capacities and therefore a fit for the Start Fund. As such, the alert note presented that the crisis had started 37 days previously, but that there was a lead time of 6 days for crisis anticipation. They could have described the crisis onset here as either the expected date of the next deluge (in the future) or the start of the previous flood (37 days previously). Equally, crisis onsets can be geographically distributed, for example when a storm moves across a country or region. Based on these nuances, Start Network members are asked for ranges of dates for the ideal time for an anticipatory project and when they believe the crisis will peak. We are continuing to work with Start Network members on raising timely, accurate alerts and on carefully justifying the timing of their alert in relation to a specific window of opportunity for protective action.

In 2019 the average time between crisis onset and alert was 13 days across all alerts except for slow onset crisis, using the alert date and time, and crisis onset date pulled from project reports.

Inconclusive evidence that harm and loss have been mitigated: This statement was made in the

conclusion and discussion session, in reference to the three qualitative cases studies undertaken as part of this evaluation. The longer results section looking at whether harm and loss were mitigated expresses the following:

- In Nigeria: one respondent gave a specific example of how training funded by Start had helped avoid violence within a polling booth (p.25), and more broadly stated “harm and loss were mitigated in terms of fewer deaths than previous year and no large scale displacement. While it is recognised that this cannot be attributed only to the Start project, stakeholders are confident that Start played an important role.”(p.19)
- In Somalia: “In most areas the action was considered very effective in preventing and outbreak like the one seen in 2017” (p.20)
- In Sri Lanka: “In Sri Lanka, positive impacts of anticipation projects surfaced explicitly from all sources, methods and both genders” (p.19)

Since 2016 when the crisis anticipation at the Start Fund was launched, members have reported avoiding a number of different types of harm and loss. This includes protecting critical infrastructure, livestock, homes and agricultural land in a variety of contexts, it also includes avoiding harm caused by diseases such as cholera, malaria and Ebola. These are captured in case studies which were not provided but not referenced in the scope of this evaluation. The evaluation points out successes have been at a small, local scale, which is to be expected given the niche of the Start Fund. As such, based on information within and beyond this report, we reject this statement.

We are continuing to invest in impact measurement to quantify harm and loss avoided across the different sectors in which we work.

Response to recommendations

	Recommendation	Response
Strategic	Increase Start Fund investment in Anticipation. Only 22 cases of activated anticipation alerts since 2015 is too few and too slow, especially in comparison with response activations.	Accepted: The Start Team is continuing to work closely with members to encourage them to raise anticipation alerts. We have increased our investment in critical enablers such as forecasting information, capacity development and evidence. We also continue to grow the Start Fund to make funds for crisis anticipation available.
	Establish and disseminate any differences and complementarities between anticipation funding, risk financing and forecast based action. Anticipation practitioners need to be able to speak intelligently about these nuances.	Partially accepted: Several actors, for example the Overseas Development Institute have described the landscape of different Early Warning Early Action approaches. We promote a layered approach to disaster risk management, exploiting the complementarities between different humanitarian financing options. This is described in training packages we deliver at the country level and in this position paper: Disaster Risk Financing in concert . As such, we are describing and disseminating these nuances, primarily to Start Network members as our key stakeholders.
	Invite RCRC FBF to an externally-facilitated forecast-based action learning event to unveil successes, doubts, failures and collective challenges. To demonstrate commitment to collaboration, allocate resources before the event to implementing the collective solutions/steps forward identified by participants. Once a safe environment for learning has been established between Start and RCRC, subsequent learning events could include WFP, FAO and others.	Partially accepted: The Start Network are proactive in their approach to co-learning. During the time elapsed for the development of this evaluation, two mechanisms have been established as for a for cross learning across key forecast-based action practitioners. One is the Early-Action focus tasked force and one is the M&E of forecast based action practitioner group. Both incorporate the RCRC Climate Centre, alongside other key relevant stakeholders including the wider Red Cross Movement, United Nations and Start Network membership. We collaborate directly with RC Climate Centre on facilitating certain groups and the development of a variety of early action resource materials. The partnership is highly valued, alongside our wide engagement with diverse stakeholders from a variety of fields with interest in early action. We will explore arranging a closed-door learning event if it can be attached to another meeting where a critical mass of each organisation are present (eg. The Berlin Dialogue Platform for Anticipatory Action).

	<p>Seize what Start members see as the most important differences between anticipation and response (the particular rhythm of an anticipation intervention and greater need for cooperation) to establish Start position on what anticipation projects can be expected to achieve, singularly or as a global set. For example, risk taking, and cost efficiencies are often counterproductive in same project. Leveraging for response as a metric does not do justice to anticipation. Among the list of expectations, re-orient responsibility of anticipation at project level from sustainability to Do No Harm.</p>	<p>Partially Accepted: As a member led organisation, our approach is to enable work we believe will help support positive changes in the humanitarian system (innovation, early action etc), and reflect back to the members what does and does not work through the dissemination of learning and research. We define the key responsibility of an anticipation project as mitigating harm and loss. We will work to clarify with members their objectives for crisis anticipation projects, encouraging them to be realistic about sustainability</p>
	<p>Highlight and promote the localisation aspects of forecasting and anticipatory action (as an added value to enhance understanding of and commitment to localisation), including aspects related to: sources of data, 'locale' of analysis and decision-making, role of external support, people-centred measurement of impact, etc.</p>	<p>Accepted: Localisation is critical to the Start Network's ability to deliver our vision. Our 2019 paper 'Putting People at the Centre of Early Action' sets out the different facets of early action which rely on localisation and makes recommendations. We continue to drive localisation through, for example, our focus on local decision making and the establishment of national FOREWARN coordinators in three contexts.</p>
	<p>Develop rule-based system for repeat alerts (i.e. no approval after two projects same country/context) as a technique to lessen dependence and create national capacity. In the absence of this, establish in Start a team that is tasked to contribute to Start members focus on national government capacity.</p>	<p>Partially Accepted: We have tested the idea of a rules-based system with the Start Fund Committee before in a variety of ways and they have chosen to maintain their ability to consider contextual factors, thereby rejecting a shift to a rules-based system. However, our disaster risk financing projects are developing triggers of certain hazards in key locations, thereby introducing rules for disbursement based on suitably robust risk analysis only. We continue to provide experience-based guidance to decision makers on issues which reoccur, such as anticipating cyclical crises.</p>
Operational	<p>Increase HR capacity/availability for hands-on support to country teams, provided through roving Secretariat staff or regionally-based ones; consider a stronger role for FOREWARN in this (possibly including a supply-demand matching service), and what incentives/benefits would attract FOREWARN members' participation.</p>	<p>Accepted: During the time this evaluation has been conducted, the crisis anticipation team has merged with the risk financing team and substantially increased our human resource capacity. We have added positions across operations, monitoring and evaluation, policy and advocacy. We have also arranged increased support for certain national contexts through the recruitment of National FOREWARN coordinators and risk financing system builds; these two approaches substantially increase country level capacity.</p>
	<p>Establish SOPs and a budget for a light but objective evaluation for ALL activated alerts (or if part of Tracker, to be enhanced). This should include all projects, all stakeholders, and the funding for it should be included in the allocation. While much of this is currently captured by the tracker, it is inadequate and hard to navigate (for analysts). Require all processes to systematically use the metrics established for anticipatory action, to</p>	<p>Not Accepted: As a member led organisation, the Start Network are not in a position to create SOPs which our members would be obliged to follow or enforce reporting on specific indicators. Equally the diversity of the hazards and programmes approaches we work with does not lend itself to measurement by standard indicators. Our approach is to</p>

	enable aggregation and comparison. This will strengthen the evidence base, as intended in the Theory of Change.	provide technical tools, resources and funding to enable members to conduct their own evidence and learning initiatives where possible. We continually improve reporting and learning to gather the highest quality project level data possible. We have also increased funds available for robust impact measurement for 2020-2023 and will continue to strengthen the evidence base across our portfolio; we have opted for a small sample of in depth, statistically robust impact studies rather than a wide sample of light evaluations.
Technical	Compile/finalise a glossary of all key terms, including forecast, crisis, risk (not only/mainly programmatic risk), onset, peak, prediction of humanitarian impact, trigger, acute mitigation, acute/enhanced preparedness; clarify niche (acute) and position on risk management spectrum.	Partially Accepted: This work has been attempted within the sector before. A natural characteristic of a diverse humanitarian ecosystem is that different agencies or actors may use slightly different definitions of similar terms. Our approach is to ensure clarity of understanding of key terms in the relationships we foster, rather than trying to develop a static list for others to defer to. We will create a brief document of key terms, with input from Start Network members for clarity within the Network. It will be publicly available.
	Invest in appropriate set of metrics to monitor and evaluate anticipatory action that assess its unique features, added value and impacts. Include specific metrics for anticipatory action in relation to slow onset hazards. Singular anticipation projects cannot be expected themselves to hold the flag on measurement; metrics may be needed more at central levels. This will enable Start to demonstrate that anticipation and prevention are inarguably more lifesaving and effective than responding to a crisis outbreak.	Partially Accepted: The Start Network track programme level key performance indicators across our crisis anticipation and risk financing portfolio. For example, the % of alerts to the Start Fund which are anticipatory, the # of people covered by risk financing mechanisms, the reach of our anticipation projects etc. Our drought risk financing measurement framework outlines our approach to monitoring and evaluating the unique characteristics of anticipatory action. We have not developed uniform project level indicators due to the diversity of our projects and approaches. This position is common across the sector, as outlined in this recent sector wide review of the M&E of forecast based action .
	Explore risk in relation to scale and identify rubrics/a checklist to assess if anticipation is the appropriate solution given lag time and likely scale of an imminent crisis. Develop a technique to intervene at a scale that is appropriate based on context (re. low reach/coverage, high influence, strong learning, not one volume fits all).	Accepted: The Start Network have a ‘Critical questions for decision-makers when allocating funds’ document which refers specifically to timing and scale as factors to consider when allocating funds. Through the development of the Start Financing Facility , Start Network are planning to make available a variety of complementary funding mechanisms which could be used in the same geographic area, for different crises of different scales and levels of predictability.
	Build an evidence base for leveraging (definition, how, when, from where), including especially what the additional funds were spent on. Provide	Partially Accepted: The Start Network track this data quantitatively as it supports our value proposition to network members. However, we do not intervene directly to support our members to leverage further resources and introducing further reporting on this would

	clearer guidance to members on expectations and non-expectations in this regard, in light of what anticipation can really be tasked to contribute.	be onerous for members. We would not necessarily expect funds leveraged during an anticipation alert to contribute to anticipatory objectives and the window of opportunity for anticipation would likely close in the intervening period.
	Task an IT / database team to streamline the Tracker, linking unique identifiers across phases of Start. It is such a rich resource but has many quirks, discrepancies and is very challenging to navigate and mine without easily introducing errors into the analyses.	Accepted: During the period of the evaluation, significant progress has been made in this area. Report forms are now submitted online through a form linked directly to Salesforce, via a quality assurance process by the Start Network MEAL team. The process of migrating historical data from the tracker into Salesforce, putting the tracker fully into obsolescence, is under way.

Additional Actions

In addition to actions resulting from the specific recommendations. The Start Network will be taking forward work based on certain findings within the body of the report.

20% of survey respondents have not yet acted on the basis of a forecast: The Start Network continue to focus on engaging members in the concept of early action. We have increased resources available to build capacity of members to take actions using forecasts and invested in an e-learning enabling us to reach an unlimited number of people with the basics of crisis anticipation. We hope over time the group of members not using forecasts will decrease in size.

Reporting: The evaluation suggested adding dates for start, peak and end of crisis, and timing of the work in relation to this. We have amended our report form to more explicitly incorporate this. The evaluation also suggests specific reporting on what was planned versus what was accomplished, which is currently provided through the activity reporting within our existing process.

Gender: The report has some very interesting gendered findings from different communities involves in forecast-based action in Nigeria and Sri Lanka. This topic has so far been neglected within the Start Network. During 2019-2020 we will conduct further research on this theme to better understand how we can integrate gender considerations into our early action programming.

FOREWARN: FOREWARN is a key stakeholder group for the Start Fund Crisis Anticipation and Risk Financing team and it was very helpful to learn that they would appreciate further feedback on the impact of their contributions to alerts. We will discuss with them directly the best way to close this loop.