

Concept Note: Workshop on Anticipatory Action

Background

Building on pioneering work done by partners like FAO, WFP, the Red Cross, or Start Network NGOs over the last years, OCHA is working with the humanitarian system to make anticipatory action work at scale. Following comprehensive consultations and technical groundwork, OCHA started to pilot collective anticipatory action in Somalia in 2019 and is adding four more pilot countries in 2020, including Ethiopia.

The Ethiopia pilot focuses on anticipatory action for out-of-the-ordinary drought shocks. The pilot involves putting in place a formal mechanism called an anticipatory action framework that outlines the activities that will be carried out, when and by whom, thereby facilitating a coordinated and appropriate response in an early warning timeframe. The framework creates a line of sight between what people at risk are doing and need at a specific point in time, the response actions to meet that need, and the scientific trigger and financing required.

Workshop objective

The workshop will help to elaborate the central component of the framework: a set of impactful and feasible actions (for which funding will be disbursed when a trigger is reached according to a forecast). Aside from the identification and prioritization of the actions, the workshop will map these on a timeline. Understanding when an action must take place to best mitigate a drought shock will help specify requirements for triggering and funding disbursement processes.

The workshop will feed into a draft Anticipatory Action Framework to be reviewed by the wider group.

Workshop outputs

- Crisis timeline
- Anticipatory actions (costed; readiness requirements specified)
- Calendar of actions (in relation to the rainy season)

Workshop structure

Instead of a full-day in-person event, the workshop will consist of three parts:

1. Foundation session with the ICCG (w/c 8 June, 90min)
2. Cluster-specific sessions, 1 per cluster (w/c 15 June, 60min)
3. Finalization session with the ICCG (w/c 29 June, 90min)

Part 1) Foundation session with the ICCG

Date: w/c 8 June
Time: 15:30 – 17:00 Addis / 08:30 – 10:00 NYC
90 minutes

Session objectives

- Establish a common understanding of anticipatory action
- Clarify the differences and linkages between anticipatory action, humanitarian response and other concepts (resilience, disaster risk reduction, prevention, preparedness)
- Explain the desired workshop outputs and how they link in with the other parts of the framework
- Initial discussion on how to reflect the impact of other shocks (conflict, locust, COVID) in the framework (?)

- Initial discussion/agreement on the crisis timeline (?)

Key questions

- Is there a predictable sequence of impacts that results in an escalation of need that could be reduced with anticipatory action?
- How would other shocks (locust, COVID, conflict) compound a drought?

Session outcome

- Cluster coordinators are empowered to lead intra-cluster identification and prioritization of anticipatory actions

Methodology

Introduction	05 min	Sajjad
Presentation	10 min	Roll-out team
Q&A	15 min	
Interactive scenario	10 min	Roll-out team
Presentation	10 min	Roll-out team
Q&A	30 min	
Closing & way forward	10 min	Roll-out team

Part 2) Cluster sessions

Date: w/c 15 June

Time: TBC (some time between 15:00 and 17:00 Addis / 8am and 10 am NYC)
60 minutes x 7 (one session per cluster)

While the tenets of anticipatory action are well supported, there remains a strong need to understand how earlier access to resources will be operationalized. Pre-arranging anticipatory interventions can help ensure that programming can be implemented quickly and efficiently across humanitarian and development channels. What sectoral interventions should comprise the “anticipatory action toolkit” to help mitigate the potential impact of a shock / crisis? Is this “more of the same” – but taking place at an earlier point in time – and/or is there a need to develop a set of “new” interventions specifically for anticipatory purposes? When should these interventions ideally be launched and what can be pre-arranged prior to implementation, e.g. procurement, contracting, training, etc.

Session objectives

- Reach a common understanding of anticipatory action
- Clarify the differences and linkages between anticipatory action, humanitarian response and other concepts (resilience, disaster risk reduction, prevention, preparedness)
- Confirm the chain of events / causal linkages (direct and indirect) of how and when drought results in humanitarian needs of the respective sector

Key questions

- What are the direct and indirect pathways of drought that lead to an extraordinary need in the respective sector?
- At what point(s) prior to the peak of the crisis could anticipatory action have helped mitigate the impact of the drought and reduce aggregate humanitarian need?
- What activities could be implemented?
- What needs to be in place for these activities to take place at the right time?

Session outcomes

- Clusters are clear on how to fill in the intervention sheets, i.e.
 - o identify 3-4 anticipatory action interventions (per sector) in detail and can articulate how they achieve the desired impact
 - o map interventions on a timeline in relation to the rainy season
 - o provide indicative unit costing
 - o provide a precise lead-time for start of the implementation of these interventions
 - o provide time estimates and process description for procurement, staffing/technical capacity, and logistical processes that are required for each intervention
 - o identify implementing partners for these AA activities and the contractual relationship

Methodology

Introduction	03 min	Cluster Coordinator
Presentation	10 min	Roll-out team
Q&A	42 min	
Closing & way forward	10 min	Roll-out team

List of clusters:

1. Education
2. Food Security / Agriculture
3. Health
4. Nutrition
5. Protection (incl. GBV & child protection)
6. Shelter
7. WASH
8. Logistics

Part 3) Finalizing and Review session with the ICCG

Date: w/c 17 August
Time: 14:00 – 15:30 Addis / 07:00 – 08:30 NYC
 90 minutes

Looking across sectors, how do the anticipatory activities best link up (and what are the forms of doing this)? And more broadly, given that crises are the result of many drivers interacting simultaneously, a “whole-of-aid” approach which includes Government, humanitarian and development partners is needed to not only anticipate and respond to immediate shocks but to build resilience over the long-term. What collaborations are needed to ensure anticipatory actions speak to these multi-dimensional needs, maximize effectiveness and improve sequencing and targeting across stakeholders?

Session objectives

- Conduct a “peer review” of the proposed actions (feasibility, impact)
- Reach a common understanding of the collective anticipatory effort (sequencing)

Key questions

- What are the interventions that the clusters propose?
- How do sector-specific anticipatory interventions interact with other sectors?

- Are there activities in other sectors that need to happen at the same time or before/after your activities in order to ensure maximum effectiveness of your activities?
- Are the interventions feasible? (lead times, etc.)

Session outputs & outcomes

- List of anticipatory actions
 - o Participants appreciate that anticipatory action consists of a narrow set of interventions which are very focussed and time critical
 - o Participants understand the linkages between activities
 - o Participants identify linkages between target groups of different interventions
- Calendar of actions
 - o Participants have mapped interventions on an overall timeline

Methodology

Introduction (overview & housekeeping)	05 min	Roll-out team (Saeed & Julia)
Update on AA pilot (consultations and technical work)	05 min	Roll-out team (Willem & Leonardo)
Presentation of identified actions by cluster	35 min (3 min presentation per cluster)	Cluster coordinators
Discussion of sequencing/timelines and feasibility in 3 break-out groups of max 5 persons (zoom required)	15 min	
Plenary: presentation of small group outcomes with discussion/Q&A	25min (10 min presenting; 15min Q&A)	
Summary & next steps	10 min	Roll-out team

References

OCHA (2020), Ethiopia Anticipatory Action Framework Concept Note

OCHA (2020), [Anticipatory Action Update. CERF Advisory Group Meeting, 1 June 2020](#)

Centre for Disaster Protection (2019), Anticipatory Crisis Financing and Action: Concepts, Initiatives and Evidence

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IFRC, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, German Red Cross (2020) *Forecast-based Financing Practitioners Manual* <https://manual.forecast-based-financing.org/>