



1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

From policy to practice:
Strengthening disaster risk management through anticipatory action

1-3 October 2024, Mombasa, Kenya

Concept Note

The Inaugural Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Action

Theme: 'From policy to practice: strengthening disaster risk management through anticipatory action'

Venue: Mombasa, Kenya

Dates: 1-3rd October 2024

1. Background

The Eastern Africa region is impacted by a multitude of slow and fast onset disasters caused by multiple and often compounding hazards, including drought, floods, extreme heat, pests and diseases, conflict, and economic instability. The climate and non-climatic factors collide to cause large-scale and protracted displacement and devastating impacts on lives and livelihoods. In 2023, the Eastern Africa conflict and climate collided to aggravate pre-existing vulnerabilities and inequalities, thereby triggering displacement on an unprecedented scale.

The recent prolonged drought from 2020 to 2023, the El Nino induced flooding in 2023/24 and other ongoing drivers of vulnerability that have increased the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance have put emphasis on the need for anticipatory action (AA) approaches. Delivery of anticipatory actions has therefore gained momentum in the region. In 2023, about 3.6 million people were reached^[1] with AA assistance in the region, covering various hazards, sectors and impacts. There is also progress on development of AA systems and methods. As of 2023, AA plans/

frameworks were available in 7 countries in the region, as well as a Regional AA roadmap for Eastern Africa. This progress provides an opportunity for generating shared learning and evidence that can inform both practice and policy to support the growing AA approaches.

While various actors at different levels are involved with developing AA systems and delivering AAs, the approach is still majorly supported by humanitarian agencies, with a wide recognition that there is a need to better engage government institutions in the AA approach. Considering the escalating humanitarian needs in the region, much needs to be done to move from pilots to implementing the AA approach at the level of need. Additionally, there is a push for establishing multi-hazard AA systems in light of complex crises in the region. An increased scale of funding for AA systems and delivery, as well as strengthened capacities, coordinated partnerships and AA approaches integrated in mainstream systems are critical pieces of this puzzle.

The very first Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform (EADP) on AA will aim to take stock of AA progress in the region, generate shared learning and propose priorities for policy, practice and finance to support mainstreaming of AA in the region as well as concise recommendation actions to various actors to effectively coordinate and partner to implement the AA in the region. The EADP will provide a crucial platform for discussing region-specific issues, sharing best practices, and developing strategies tailored to the unique challenges of the region and aid the deepening and mainstreaming of AA initiatives into government, humanitarian and development frameworks specific to East Africa.

The event represents a strategic opportunity to advance AA in the region. By addressing region-specific challenges, sharing best practices, and developing collaborative strategies, the event will enhance the impact and integration of AA initiatives across the region. The outcomes of the event will align and identify key EA specific issues linked to the Global Dialogue Platform as well as contribute to the broader goal of building resilient, proactive communities capable of anticipating and mitigating the impacts of various hazards.

2. Objectives of the EADP

Recognizing that AA is an emerging practice that needs to be applied in different settings and sectors in increasingly complex and compounded situations and has to balance both immediate as well as longer-term resilience goals, the EADP event will:

1. Take stock of AA learning, evidence and experiences across the region, highlighting challenges and bottlenecks as well as promising innovations and solutions that can be delivered at scale
2. Propose priorities for policy, practice and finance to support the mainstreaming of AA in the region

3. Recommend actions to Governments, humanitarian, development and other agencies to most effectively coordinate and partner to deliver AA and associated actions
4. Produce outcome statements and a Declaration for presentation at GDP, COP29 and other relevant events

3. Thematic Areas

1. Sub-theme 1: Are Anticipatory Actions delivered in Eastern Africa effective?

Various anticipatory actions have been delivered in the region when triggers have been reached, such as dissemination of early warning information, cash transfers, prepositioning and distribution of non-food items, among others. The National Hydrological and Meteorological Services (NHMSs) are critical institutions with authority and mandate to provide data and credible forecasts to support the development and delivery of impact-based forecasts informing activation of the AA interventions.

This theme will provide an opportunity to take stock and learn from anticipatory actions delivered in the region in the recent past. The session will reflect on presenting and reflecting on both quantitative and qualitative evidence and learning about the outputs, outcomes and impacts of AAs. It will further explore questions such as what did not go well with AA delivery and what will we try to do differently next time. What have we learnt from our experiences and evidence so far? Understanding the NMHSs role towards AA implementation through pilots and research. What can and must improve if we are to achieve our aims for AA? Are current AAs effective in reducing hazard impacts? Are anticipatory actions targeting the right populations? How will these experiences inform better AA practice and policy? This sub-theme will also present a chance to map ongoing AA initiatives in the region.

2. Sub-theme 2: Are we getting the systems and processes, right? Addressing multi-hazard, multi-year, complex and compounding risks across scales.

The East African region is a bedrock for complex and protracted risks. The region has experienced impacts of weather and climate hazards, including successive droughts, desert locusts, landslides, floods and storms, among others. At the same time, the region is experiencing resource-based and armed conflict leading to internal and cross-border displacement, leaving no room to recover from one crisis to the next and with complex interactions with other challenges. Most of these hazards and risks occur at cross-border scales, not respecting known administrative boundaries. In efforts to address these challenges, AA has gained momentum in the region, leading to the development of AA systems for various hazards in different countries, by different organisations. The development of these systems has largely been siloed leading to a plethora of indicators, thresholds, and anticipatory actions

as well as different methodologies for risk assessments, trigger development, definition of anticipatory actions and targeting. Additionally, most of the systems are designed to address a single hazard over a season or a few months of the year. There is a need to evaluate the current AA initiatives, systems and processes considering: (i) the need to scale up AA taking into account cross-border and ecological perspectives; (ii) the occurrence of multi-year events such as the 2020 to 2023 drought in the region; (iii) crises driven by increasing conflict and displacement in the region; and (iii) occurrence of and interaction between concurrent hazards in the same locations.

This sub-theme will encourage dialogue and shared learning across and knowledge and practices that have worked on AA from pilots and various initiatives in the region. Critical questions to ask such as: Are current early warning systems adequately giving alerts on hazard occurrence and magnitude? How can methodologies and approaches be harmonised to inform collaborative implementation of AA at scale? How best can AA be provided in the context of multi-year and multiple concurrent shocks? How can the current AA systems be enhanced to address protection, conflict and displacement? Are the systems and processes needed for AA agile enough to avoid or reduce impacts before they turn into a crisis?

3. Sub-theme 3: Status of Roadmaps and Technical Working Groups

Scaling-up of AA across all levels (regional, national and sub-national) requires the existence of platforms and mechanisms to do so. There are efforts across the region to establish national frameworks and roadmaps with the ambition to apply these in AA integration. With the Early Warning for All(EW4All) initiative, there is an opportunity to strengthen partnerships across all levels through established working groups. GAD and partners have developed a roadmap for AA to establish a cohesive regional approach to AA that will support the integration of AA within regional and national policies and strategies. Some noticeable progress has been made in various countries to establish working groups as platforms for coordinated national approaches to AA. This session will aim to understand the set-up of WGs and the milestones achieved or planned. Some critical questions here; What are the existing AA and related WGs in the countries? Are WGs and roadmaps effective in coordinating AA? How are the existing inter-agency coordination structures ensuring the roadmaps/frameworks are government-led and owned? What are the Government coordination structures in the region supporting AA activation and what are the bottlenecks? What are the priority opportunities within the IGAD regional roadmap to support AA in the countries? This session will provide an opportunity to review the roadmaps and WGs, discuss their effectiveness towards supporting AA, and develop critical steps at national and regional levels to strengthen coordination of AA.

4. Sub-theme 4: Financing for AA at scale

Multiple donors are interested in and providing finance for AA initiatives in the region. While humanitarian funding has been majorly driving support for the AA initiatives, development actors are increasingly interested in supporting the approach but are not yet well engaged. On the other hand, financing from government budgets in Eastern Africa is yet to be tapped into, as well as enhancing governments' capacity to leverage existing financing opportunities. This theme will encourage dialogue on: what does the AA financing landscape look like in the region. How can we better layer and adjust financing systems to pre-allocate (ring fence) financing to support rapid delivery of AA? What capacities are needed? How can existing government policies and strategies support AA financing at scale? How can governments and donors better coordinate to collaboratively finance both AA systems (build funds) as well as AA delivery (fuel funds) in mainstream systems?

5. Expected outcomes

1. Shared learning and actions on AA in the region and recommendations synthesised to guide future practice and policy
2. Priority actions agreed to better layer and enhance financing for AA and included in the EADP declaration
3. Roadmap implementation steps at country and regional levels reviewed and prioritised
4. Declaration with recommendations for modalities and mechanisms for mainstreaming and integrating AA in systems and financing agreed (to be presented at GDP, COP29 and other relevant events)

4. Format/Modalities of EADP

- The EADP is co-organised by IGAD, Eastern Africa Regional Technical Working Group (RTWGAA), Anticipation Hub and other partners.
- The event will be physical attendance only, there will be no virtual participation.
- The EADP is organised around four sub-thematic areas that will run each day
- There will be high level keynote speeches for each day
- Partners and interested organisations will be invited to host a session under the sub-theme of their interest.

5. Costs for participation

The participants are expected to cater for their own costs for participation. The organising committee will cater for the cost of the conference package including teas and lunches.

[1] Anticipatory Action in 2023: A Global Overview

<https://www.anticipation-hub.org/advocate/anticipatory-action-overview-report/overview-report-2023>

Contact Information

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