



REPORT

from the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform on
Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

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

1 to 3 October 2024



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Further details about the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform, including the full agenda, are available on the event website: tinyurl.com/2266ubrv

Acronyms and abbreviations

ARC	Africa Risk Capacity
CALP Network	Formerly the Cash Learning Partnership
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CUWALID	Climate into Useful Water And Land Information in Drylands
DARAJA	Developing Anticipatory Risk Awareness through Joint Action
DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICPAC	IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
NMHS	national meteorological and hydrological service
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODI	Formerly the Overseas Development Institute
PASSAGE	Strengthening Pastoral Livelihoods in the Greater Horn of Africa through effective Anticipatory Action
SoDMA	Somalia Disaster Management Agency
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
WFP	World Food Programme

Foreword

Eastern Africa continues to grapple with an unprecedented convergence of climate shocks, economic instability and conflict, all of which exacerbate vulnerabilities and displacement. Recent events – including the 2020 to 2023 drought, the El Niño-induced flooding of 2023/2024, and other cascading crises – have left millions in need of humanitarian assistance.

The crises and challenges emanating from these disasters reaffirm the importance of anticipatory action in mitigating the devastating impacts of these hazards. Encouragingly, anticipatory action approaches have gained traction, reaching millions in 2023 and driving the development of frameworks across the region. Yet much remains to be done to scale up these efforts, integrate them into government-led systems, and ensure they are inclusive, sustainable and multi-hazard in scope.

The first Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action brought together around 210 delegates from governments, humanitarian organizations, development organizations, research and academic institutions, the private sector and community actors. This clearly demonstrates the commitment among stakeholders to champion a collective front on anticipatory action. The event marked a pivotal moment in our region's collective efforts to build resilience in the face of compounding and complex crises.

The theme for the event, 'From policy to practice: strengthening disaster risk management through anticipatory action', is timely, as it underscores the urgency of moving beyond conventional, traditional reactive responses to embracing proactive, evidence-based approaches that save lives and protect livelihoods through anticipatory actions. And the 'Mombasa Declaration 2024', which highlights 17 priority actions, provides an invaluable opportunity to align regional priorities with global initiatives, foster partnerships, and develop actionable solutions to advance anticipatory action at scale.



Furthermore, the Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform increased the impetus to work together, minimize bottlenecks, avoid duplication and fragmentations in our efforts, and chart a pathway forward for the implementation of anticipatory action. This is a testament to the reaffirmed commitment to collaborate, innovate and share accountability.

This event focused on action, partnerships and transforming the way we address risk in eastern Africa. The outcomes will, potentially, influence global conversations about anticipatory action and drive tangible change for communities at risk. Collectively, we have the opportunity to pioneer a more anticipatory, inclusive and resilient future; let us seize this moment.

Dr Ahmed Amdihun

Head of disaster risk management, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

Highlights from the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform

A declaration that sets out the region's commitments towards anticipatory action

For three days, around 210 experts and practitioners met in Mombasa, Kenya, to debate and discuss how anticipatory action is benefitting people in the region – and what needs to happen next. The main points were crystallized into an official declaration – the ‘Mombasa Declaration 2024’ – which lists 17 commitments moving forwards. Importantly, these commitments align with IGAD’s *Regional Roadmap on Anticipatory Action*,¹ published in 2023. Combined, these will help to ensure that all the main actors in eastern Africa are coordinating around shared regional ambitions for anticipatory action, rather than pursuing separate agendas.



The full declaration is included as an annex in this report, and can also be downloaded from the Anticipation Hub: tinyurl.com/mw6y686c

Anticipatory action is broadcast live to the nation

On day two, four of the participants at the dialogue platform were invited to join a discussion about anticipatory action hosted by Citizen TV, a popular channel in Kenya. They outlined how anticipatory action works in practice, drawing on examples from Kenya and sharing the benefits for at-risk communities, then explained why the regional dialogue platform was important.



The full discussion can be watched again on YouTube, along with other videos from the dialogue platform, on a dedicated playlist for the event: tinyurl.com/2hm5e7by

¹ tinyurl.com/57judaeh

Tackling the region's big issues

This was eastern Africa's first regional dialogue platform, representing an opportunity to tackle the critical challenges that affect this hazard-afflicted region. The urgent challenges that countries face were the focus of many sessions, including how to adjust financing systems so that they can pre-allocate financing for anticipatory action, and how to implement this approach ahead of complex and compounding risks. "I am confident that the outcome of this regional platform will lead to stronger, more coordinated anticipatory action efforts," said Dr Mohamed Ware, IGAD.

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“The region has been flipping from one [climate] extreme to another. People have lost their lives, people are losing their property... we come here to understand the regional challenges, [to learn] what people are doing in the region, and... how [we can] move forward and develop a unified regional approach towards addressing the extremes.”

George Otieno, IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC)

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George Otieno addresses the audience.

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The 1st Eastern African Dialogue Platform attracted participants from 18 countries – including 13 in Africa – and from a number of sectors relevant to anticipatory action. The strong government representation was significant, with 38 officials in attendance from countries across the region. There were also 16 people from national meteorological and hydrological services; this is a relatively high number for the dialogue platforms, representing a positive shift towards their greater contribution to the discussions that take place.

DAY ONE

The theme for the opening day was ‘Stocktaking of anticipatory action in the region: where are we and are we getting it right?’.

Opening ceremony

A high-level panel opened the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform by setting out their expectations for the event, and for anticipatory action in this region. **Olivier Brouant**, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), stressed the need for collaboration between donors, humanitarian actors and local authorities to deliver a single mechanism for anticipatory action in eastern Africa. He also encouraged all the partners present to include crisis modifiers – a flexible financing mechanism that links humanitarian contingency funds to long-term resilience-building programmes – in their projects.

After commending the organizers of the event for the excellent work, **Alessandra Gilotta**, Anticipation Hub, highlighted the notable progress being made by governments in taking up the anticipatory action approach: “Anticipatory action has transformed from a humanitarian-led to government-owned approach, as more national governments are integrating this into national disaster risk management (DRM) frameworks.” Organizations should take this opportunity and aim to work together for greater impact, she noted, and use the dialogue platform to deliver a roadmap for this purpose.

Brenda Lazarus, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), explained how it has been working with governments and humanitarian actors to mainstream anticipatory action in several countries in the region. There was also a note of caution for the audience: that anticipatory action is only as good as the early warning information upon which it depends. She outlined the need to support and strengthen early warning systems, calling upon all stakeholders in the region to enhance partnerships at the regional and global levels in this respect.

Next to speak was **Marco Massabo**, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), who also focused on the importance of early warnings and early action in strengthening systems for disaster risk reduction (DRR) and achieving long-term gains. One of its priorities is enhancing national-level capacity for early-warning and early-action initiatives, and he highlighted that UNDRR has supported the establishment of centres of excellence in Africa, including the disaster operation centre at IGAD, and the development of regional situation rooms in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania.

“It’s finally here! The inaugural Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Action is now under way in Mombasa, Kenya. This event will review regional progress, share learning, and propose policy, practice and finance priorities. It also aims to foster coordinated efforts, develop multi-hazard anticipatory action systems, and enhance anticipatory action integration into governmental and development frameworks.”

ICPAC on LinkedIn

Dr Mohamed Ware, IGAD, provided an overview of the progress made by his institution in establishing anticipatory action systems in eastern Africa. The success of such systems was dependent on the provision of timely early warnings, he argued, and the coordination of the anticipatory actions that follow these warnings. One approach to such coordination is through the regional roadmap that IGAD developed, which can guide the design and integration of anticipatory action at the national level: “We appeal to all Member States to develop their own roadmaps – and we are available to provide support.”

Mohammed Bare, Ministry of Interior and National Administration, represented the Kenyan government during the official opening. Echoing several other panellists, he emphasized that the event was an opportunity to share experiences and chart a way towards anticipatory action becoming a central aspect of DRM. He challenged those present to ensure that their efforts were action-driven, because policies alone cannot secure our future. He also called upon everyone to develop lasting solutions during the three days and to “channel our anticipatory action vision into reality”.

“[We can learn] the best practices from each other, from the different countries that are here... We’ll be looking at strengthening aspects of coordination, aspects of financing, but also having a very clear strategy [for the countries in the region].”

Phoebe Wafubwa Shikuku, UNDRR



The opening ceremony in Mombasa.

Effectiveness of anticipatory action in East Africa: why we need anticipatory action in the protracted flooding crisis in South Sudan

Dr Joshua Banak, South Sudan Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, delivered the opening keynote talk. Anticipatory action is needed in South Sudan, he explained, due to its vulnerability to climate hazards, which are increasing in frequency and magnitude; in addition, the impacts of these hazards are often compounded by the conflict that is ongoing in the country.

One recurrent hazard is flooding. In 2024, floods have already affected 720,000 people, a figure which could rise to 3.3 million. And anticipatory action could help the country to support these people: “Traditional response is helping, but we need to do better.”

He noted that the key capacities required to deliver anticipatory action in the country were in line with those seen more broadly: strong, science-based early warning systems; pre-agreed actions; and pre-arranged funding. And South Sudan is working to build its capacity. Anticipatory action is coordinated through the National Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action, while a feasibility study conducted by the government confirmed that it is possible to implement anticipatory actions ahead of floods and drought.

The next steps for South Sudan will be to strengthen the capacity of South Sudan Meteorological Services, so it can generate skilful forecasts that can be used to trigger anticipatory actions for floods and drought. The government will need to collaborate with other stakeholders to build these anticipatory action systems, he noted, and also establish technical committees for anticipating these hazards at sub-national levels.



Dr Joshua Banak.

Introduction to the regional anticipatory action roadmap and the birth of the Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform

The IGAD region – comprising the Member States of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda – is a frontier for climate extremes, noted **Dr Ahmed Amdihun**, ICPAC, during the next plenary. Combatting these extremes demands advocacy and the right strategies, and IGAD is well placed to do this. Its strength lies in convening these Member States and, as part of this role, it was a prominent player in the ‘birth’ of this first Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform. IGAD has also developed several frameworks to guide the design and delivery of anticipatory action in the region: the *IGAD Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management (2019-2030)*,² the *IGAD Institutional and Operational Framework for Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action*³ and the *IGAD Regional Roadmap for Anticipatory Action*. These lay the groundwork for this approach, and “with the goodwill of communities, partners and states, anticipatory action can be achieved”.

But there are issues to overcome. For one, there are too many pilot projects, which are fragmented and done in isolation, with institutional coordination undertaken by different actors within their own internal structures. Scaling up these projects will require advocacy with governments and investments in research and learning, he argued: “There is a need to demonstrate to donors and governments that the return on investment of acting early is better than managing the crisis.”



Irene Amuron.

² tinyurl.com/36db97yh

³ tinyurl.com/5xc654a9

The region requires a shared vision to facilitate a fuller transition to anticipatory action and “IGAD commits to supporting the development of national roadmaps for anticipatory action by Member States and coordination structures aligned with the regional roadmap”.

The next part of this session was a stocktake of where anticipatory action is happening in eastern Africa, based on the regional roadmap. Led by **Irene Amuron**, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, and **Jyothi Bylappa**, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), participants collated evidence of anticipatory action activations in the region, which can inform the Member States as they develop or review their national-level anticipatory action roadmaps during the dialogue platform.

“This roadmap is [there] to guide our Member States as they integrate anticipatory action into their national disaster management strategies.”

Dr Mohamed Ware, IGAD

Parallel sessions #1



The presentations from many of the parallel sessions and workshops are available on the Anticipation Hub: tinyurl.com/2266ubrv

Harnessing innovations for anticipatory actions to protect the most vulnerable pastoral communities in eastern Africa

Pastoralist communities in eastern Africa are the most vulnerable to climate change, with climate shocks such as severe droughts fuelling poverty and conflict. Given the potential increase in the frequency and intensity of climate hazards in the future, acting to prepare for forecast hazards is crucial. Innovation and technology offer new opportunities for anticipatory action; for example, they can address the main constraints to disseminating timely information to at-risk communities ahead of worsening disasters. Drawing from the evidence base on anticipatory action approaches, this session showcased innovative tools and evidence from successful interventions in countries that have made significant progress towards proactive DRM.

Systematic community organizing as a critical pillar in localization of anticipatory climate actions: lessons from the Consortium for Re-imagining Humanitarian Action in Ethiopia

Historically, many communities have faced challenges in mitigating the impacts of drought. In Ethiopia, however, the Consortium for Re-Imagining Humanitarian Action has implemented an approach that integrates social community systems and communication to enable communities to take actions ahead of droughts. This approach empowers local communities and ensures that the anticipatory actions taken are tailored to the unique contexts and needs of vulnerable populations. The emphasis is on strengthening local governance systems, and the approach incorporates capacity building and training for community organizations and other local actors to equip them with the tools they need to manage climate risks.

Effective use of cash and voucher assistance in anticipatory action

Cash and voucher assistance plays a critical role in anticipatory action and this session explored the steps needed to ensure that it is used effectively and achieves the intended objectives. Discussions focused on how cash and voucher assistance is integrated into anticipatory action frameworks, helping participants to identify opportunities and solutions to the gaps and challenges that exist. Reflecting on the cash and voucher anticipatory actions undertaken in East Africa to date, the session also explored how collaborations between cash practitioners and anticipatory action practitioners could enhance the effectiveness of this anticipatory approach.



Group discussions in Mombasa.



Parallel sessions at the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform.

Enhancing flood anticipatory action in eastern Africa: lessons from Kenya, Burundi, Uganda and Somalia

This session was a comprehensive exploration of the effectiveness of anticipatory actions for flood management in eastern Africa. Using case studies from Burundi, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda, the presenters provided real-world examples of innovative technologies, community-based early warning systems and collaborative anticipatory actions that have helped to mitigate the devastating impacts of floods.

Enhancing the effectiveness of anticipatory action through collaborative approaches: a Kenya Red Cross experience

This session began with a series of presentations about collaborative approaches, which prompted a dialogue among those in the room on some of the 'critical enablers' for an effective and successful anticipatory action. Suggestions included: (1) the need for targeted financing, and for this to be sustainable; (2) adequate commitment by all actors; (3) government involvement, which is essential for the success and sustainability of anticipatory action; and (4) greater understanding of communities and their perceptions, so that they also buy into the process, for example through the co-development of anticipatory action frameworks and protocols.



Listening in at the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform.

Strengthening resilience: the roles of key actors in preparedness and anticipatory actions

Key actors in anticipatory action in East Africa include governments, meteorological agencies, disaster management authorities, civil society organizations, researchers and development partners. These actors collaborate in several areas: to enhance impact-based forecasting, for example, or to integrate anticipatory action into disaster risk strategies. Despite progress, though, there are still technological, institutional and capacity-building challenges. Exchanging knowledge and best practices helps to address these gaps and can inspire more coordinated, inclusive and innovative approaches to anticipatory action across the region. In this session, the presenters highlighted some of the main actors in this field for each country in East Africa and outlined the actions they have taken; for example, national governments often lead the development and establishment of country-specific roadmaps for anticipatory action. Overall, this session highlighted that coordination and collaboration among these actors is a crucial factor behind successful anticipatory action.

Workshops #1

The role of NMHSs in scaling up anticipatory action in the region

National meteorological and hydrological services (NMHSs) are authoritative voices on weather and climate, and provide an essential contribution to anticipatory action. For example, the early warning systems they provide are the ‘engine’ that powers this approach, delivering the vital weather- and climate-monitoring data, forecasts and warnings needed to trigger timely and effective anticipatory action. This workshop shared best practices from different NMHSs in delivering impact-based forecasts to enhance DRM in eastern Africa. There was also time to consider the challenges that NMHSs face, which can undermine their efficiency and effectiveness, and, drawing from successful regional examples, to reflect on opportunities for advancing their capabilities through technological innovation, partnerships, and collaborations with development and humanitarian agencies.

“How can we have a more systematic approach [to anticipatory action] that is all encompassing and not limited to organizational good practices?”

Anonymous question raised during the survey of participants

How can we support child-centred and community-based anticipatory action in coping with increasing extreme weather events?

This workshop began with an interactive exercise to get the participants thinking... what is different about community-based and child-centred anticipatory action? Next, a series of short ‘Ignite’ talks considered different aspects of child-centred, inclusive and community-based anticipatory action, with experiences from Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan all put forward. After this, it was time for group discussions around the four themes highlighted in the talks: (1) child-centred anticipatory action; (2) child-centred early warning systems; (3) community-based anticipatory action in protracted crises; and (4) engaging local knowledge within the co-development of localized climate services, which are required for community-based anticipatory action.

Integrating/mainstreaming anticipatory actions in disaster risk management

Anticipatory action isn’t a stand-alone endeavour; it’s intricately woven into the fabric of DRM, adaptation and resilience. As such, it has to be integrated and mainstreamed into existing DRM systems and frameworks if it is to be scaled up and increase its long-term sustainability. This requires a better understanding of how anticipatory action relates to existing government structures, policies and programmes. The Somali

Red Crescent Society shared its experiences in ‘preparedness for effective response’, which included the development of DRM policies and strategies for multiple hazards.

Next, the South Sudan Red Cross reported the steps it has taken, which include a feasibility study for anticipatory action and work to develop a joint plan of action for anticipatory action. Building on these examples, the participants held an open discussion about the opportunities and pathways for integrating anticipatory action into DRM frameworks and practice, such as advocacy that targets policy-makers at different levels of government.

Overcoming the urban blind spot in anticipatory action: evidence of impact and lessons from DARAJA and urban anticipatory action initiatives

The Developing Anticipatory Risk Awareness through Joint Action (DARAJA) project links weather-service providers to last-mile users. Largely financed by UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office under the Weather and Climate Information Services programme, it is a first-of-its-kind inclusive weather service for informal settlements in urban areas, which are often the most vulnerable to climate hazards and therefore need weather information that they can act upon. DARAJA’s approach has three themes: partnerships, research and co-design.

Examples shared included the floods that menace Kawempe Division in Kampala, Uganda; here, weather information from the Uganda National Meteorological Authority is communicated to the community, especially during rainy seasons. On Tuti Island, Sudan, which is situated in the Nile River, a community-based early warning system, passed down over generations, uses lookout stations to gauge the river’s level – all inspired by community knowledge of the flood cycle.

Those involved in the DARAJA project shared some of the lessons learned so far. In terms of sustainability, they noted the need to collaborate closely with relevant stakeholders, such as county governments and city authorities, to mainstream anticipatory actions. They also remarked that the co-production approach is the best way to plan and execute project activities.

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“Great community action presented by DARAJA on urban anticipatory action”

Feedback shared during the review of day one

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There was much to discuss during the workshops on day one.

DAY TWO

The second day tackled two core themes. The first was ‘Financing for anticipatory action: how can we better layer and adjust systems to pre-allocate financing to support the rapid and at-scale delivery of anticipatory action?’, with the second being ‘Anticipatory action in multi-hazard, multi-year, complex and compounding risks contexts’.

How can we better layer systems to pre-allocate financing at scale for anticipatory action?

The opening plenary on day two addressed a recurring theme for the anticipatory action sector: financing.

Anticipatory action systems require two types of financing, explained **Olivier Brouant**, ECHO. First is the financing for activations (known as ‘fuel’ financing) and secondly to build the systems that can deliver this (‘build’ financing). These are emergency and development funding, respectively, and the anticipatory action approach needs to be presented as such. While ECHO has increased its regional funding for anticipatory action, and is collaborating with other development partners to build systems, he noted that within donor circles, anticipatory action is not viewed as a development programme, or even connected. Changing this perspective will require greater advocacy efforts.

Khadar Sheikh Mohamed, Somalia Disaster Management Agency (SoDMA), spoke about how Somalia is developing a national strategy for disaster risk financing. Could this strategy enable funding for anticipatory action at scale, and within federal budgets? The signs are encouraging: an integral part of the strategy will be the formation of a government fund for anticipatory action. The government also wants to harmonize anticipatory action through a multi-hazard framework, and they are doing so with an emphasis on how to finance and fund this.

The Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) is a specialized agency of the African Union that plans, prepares and supports responses to extreme weather events. It is now pre-allocating financing for drought and floods, reported **Lusungu Kamudoni**, and its approach is risk modelling for financing, which transfers risk to insurance markets. ARC has put in

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The million-dollar question: how early is early?

Comment from group 1 during the discussion

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place donors and partners to provide financing, and it has channelled this through government structures. Anticipatory insurance means ensuring access to finance before a hazard turns into a risk, she noted.

The UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocates 10 per cent of its funds to anticipatory action, said **Jyothi Bylappa**, OCHA. This approach is further institutionalized in OCHA's own strategy, which embeds this approach throughout, with a focus on systems, evidence and scaling up. Three priorities for CERF are: (1) continue to increase funding for climate disasters through climate action funds; (2) increase the amount of co-financing at the country level; and (3) risk analysis for anticipatory action.

Concluding the presentations, **Nelly Maonde** explained how Start Network's multi-agency and multi-year financing mechanism gives its members financing for anticipatory action. This approach allows the funding flow to be demand-driven, making funding processes more efficient. It collaborates with other funds, such as the CERF and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) Disaster Response Emergency Fund, which enables the layering of anticipatory actions and disaster response.



Asking the right questions at the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform.



To wrap up the plenary, the speakers were asked for one priority for anticipatory action. Here are their answers:

- OCHA: mainstream anticipatory action and systemize learning and evidence
- ARC: collaborate across sectors regarding disaster-risk-financing strategies in government
- SoDMA: that anticipatory action is a nexus actor with humanitarian and development programmes
- ECHO: to show how anticipatory action is suitable as a *modus operandi*, and that crisis modifiers are included in programmes
- Start Network: a coordinated approach with governments to ensure the sustainability of anticipatory action.

Workshops #2

Mapping the landscape for integrating anticipatory action and social protection in the eastern Africa region

This session sought to establish a common understanding of the barriers, opportunities and entry points for integrating anticipatory action with social protection in East Africa. This is seen as a way to help address the multiple and compounding risks that affect vulnerable populations, and to do so in a timely, sustainable and cost-effective manner. There are two main ways anticipatory action can be integrated into social protection systems: (1) government or humanitarian actors using elements of the social protection architecture to implement anticipatory action; and (2) social protection systems integrating the core components of anticipatory action systems. This workshop was a chance to discuss which of these would work best in the countries and contexts of eastern Africa.

Strengthening drought anticipatory action: harmonizing triggers and thresholds for multi-season/multi-year events

The Greater Horn of Africa faces recurrent and prolonged droughts, which severely affect food security, water availability and livelihoods. As droughts in the region become more frequent and intense, there is an urgent need for anticipatory action strategies that can mitigate their impacts. Effective anticipatory action protocols depend on accurately identifying the triggers (thresholds) for activating protocols for drought, allowing for timely interventions to protect communities that rely on rain-fed agriculture and livestock. In this session, participants evaluated the effectiveness of the drought triggers currently in place in the region, analysing their current use for multi-season and multi-year droughts. By establishing the main challenges with developing drought triggers, they could consider how innovative approaches and emerging science, such as machine-learning techniques, could be used to develop and adapt drought triggers.

Anticipate, protect, prevent: anticipatory action in displacement contexts

In humanitarian crises, timely and reliable information about potential displacement is critical for preparing and responding appropriately. The objective of this workshop was to explore how displacement can be anticipated and mitigated effectively, with a focus on the role of anticipatory action. To begin, the presenters emphasized the importance

of anticipating displacement events as early as possible to protect vulnerable populations; by acting early, humanitarian organizations can prevent displacement or reduce its impact. Next, they presented a machine-learning model that can predict displacement by analyzing factors such as natural hazards, conflict triggers and economic instability. They also explained why it is necessary to implement anticipatory actions along displacement routes, for example providing essential services and protection measures to minimize the risks and challenges faced by displaced populations.

Navigating protracted crises: experience of the humanitarian actors from the 2020-2024 drought to flood cycle and space for anticipatory actions in East Africa

The period 2020 to 2024 brought escalating climate disasters to East Africa. Following an extreme, three-year drought, 2023 was the hottest in its history; in the later part of the year, El Niño caused widespread flooding, which continued into 2024. These climate hazards have occurred in the context of the other hazards that affect the region, including epidemics, political instability, conflict and macroeconomic challenges. Humanitarian actors in the region have strived to mitigate potential humanitarian crises. However, the multitude of concurrent shocks in the region, and the protracted nature of many of these crises, meant that humanitarian interventions were not without challenges. In this workshop, the Kenya Red Cross Society, the World Food Programme (WFP) and FAO facilitated a conversation with regional partners, which helped to identify the gaps and challenges around anticipatory action in protracted crises, and took positive steps towards a framework for doing this.



Discussions under way in Mombasa.

Parallel sessions #2

Addressing climate hazards at scale: extreme heat in cities and drylands

The first presentation in this session looked at the Strengthening Pastoral Livelihoods in the Greater Horn of Africa through effective Anticipatory Action (PASSAGE) project, which aims to build the resilience of pastoralist communities in the region. The audience heard from an activist and elder from Marsabit, Kenya, who explained how his community is affected by extreme heat; one example given was that their goats are not able to sustain pregnancies. The next presentation explained pastoralists' early warning systems for extreme heat, which are based on their perceptions and experience of its different impacts and consequences. For example, they assess how long the water basins can sustain water after rains, through methods such as checking the depth of the water.

This was followed by an example from South Sudan, which experienced extreme temperatures that led to the death of 19 people. Anticipatory action is needed but the audience was told that, at present, there is no global consensus on monitoring extreme heat. The final presentation looked at establishing percentile-based thresholds for detecting extreme heat. Impact models have been developed using various indicators, such as heat stress index with terciles of 'caution', 'extreme caution' and 'danger'. Together, these case studies and examples helped to raise awareness of the need to act collectively to develop triggers for anticipatory action ahead of extreme heat.

Anticipatory action in complex crises: the challenge of the (im)possible

Currently, anticipatory action isn't as effective as it should be: it's too technical and often treated in isolation from the broader DRR spectrum. Recent research suggests that its effectiveness in complex crises is extremely limited. But acting earlier in advance of a crisis is an approach that we need to get right, argued **Sophie Tholstrup**, ODI. What does this mean in practice?

Andy Wheatley, International Committee of the Red Cross, shared recent experience from the El Niño response in southern Somalia. Trying to get anticipatory action 'right' in a conflict context was complex and imperfect, but there were important successes. It is still possible to implement anticipatory actions in complex crisis, they concluded, but this requires (among other elements) a focus on the long term, a change in mindset and internal systems from reactive to proactive, and clearly demonstrating the positive impacts and added value of acting early.

Addressing multi-hazard and slow-onset challenges in anticipatory action

East African countries face a variety of hazards, which oftentimes intersect and compound each other. Currently, many anticipatory action frameworks (e.g., early action protocols) and their associated triggers are hazard-specific; this raises challenges when actors have to prevent or mitigate outcomes that are caused by a combination of factors. One such outcome is malnutrition, and this session showcased Action Against Hunger's Modeling Early Risk Indicators to Anticipate Malnutrition project (known as MERIAM), which develops models that forecast acute undernutrition rates in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan. These forecasts have a lead time of up to 12 months, which is an opportunity to strengthen anticipatory actions that address malnutrition.

Forecasting seasonal water availability and adaptation policy analyses for enhanced decision-making in anticipatory action

The Climate into Useful Water And Land Information in Drylands (CUWALID) hydrological forecast model was developed to help with some of the issues related to hydrological models for the eastern Africa drylands. It can also support anticipatory action in eastern Africa by providing actionable hydrological forecasts that decision-makers can use for their interventions. This includes, among others, early warnings and risk assessments, or support for multi-hazard early warning systems.

CUWALID developed a policy framework for climate adaptation, and many elements of this directly align with the region's anticipatory action roadmap. It can therefore be very useful for practitioners in planning responses that are anchored in legal and institutional frameworks. Key elements that could be useful include coordination, funding, future projections, monitoring, evaluation and learning – all critical elements for policies that support anticipatory action.



Conversations and dialogue are central to these events.



Financing for anticipatory action is always a hot topic at the dialogue platforms.

Demonstrating commitments to financing regional anticipatory action initiatives in eastern Africa

In the closing plenary on day two, **Dr Ahmed Amdihun**, IGAD, led the attendees through some of the commitments made to supporting anticipatory action in the region. ECHO allocated 5 per cent of its humanitarian funding to anticipatory action, including 4 million euros (of a total of 6.6 million euros) in a regional project that will run for two years. The Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa initiative supports this approach and will continue to work with regional climate centres, focusing on capacity building. And Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, is another donor that has committed to continue supporting anticipatory action in eastern Africa, and has developed a policy brief on how this support will be provided in the future.

The plenary also examined some of the challenges with financing this approach. The funding arena is very crowded, with everybody looking for money. One suggestion to improve this was to establish a centre of excellence to deal with all the complex questions on financing. There were also proposals for those seeking financing for anticipatory action: demonstrate how this approach adds value, and build your own capacities for managing financial flows.

Yet while the importance of anticipatory action is clear, funding remains a huge gap. What can be done to change this? Several ideas were put forward. One is to look beyond the traditional donors and approach funds such as the Green Climate Fund or the Adaptation Fund, as well as the private sector and multilateral banks. IGAD is in a position to support this, and will explore opportunities for engagement with the private sector, alongside its broader commitment to provide country-level support to its Member States as they develop national roadmaps for anticipatory action.

Report:
from the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform on
Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

“

“At the #EADP, there was resounding agreement on governments in eastern Africa to take the lead on scaling up #AnticipatoryAction in the region, including in allocating budgets for pre-emptive actions to reduce risks before they turn into disasters.”

Maurine Ambani, WFP, on LinkedIn

”

Anticipatory action is broadcast live to the Kenyan nation

The buzz around the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform extended beyond the venue. On the evening of 2 October, four participants were invited to join a discussion about anticipatory action hosted by Citizen TV, a popular channel in Kenya. They outlined how anticipatory action works in practice, drawing on examples from Kenya and sharing the benefits for at-risk communities. Following this, they explained the reasons for hosting a regional dialogue. The full discussion can be watched again on YouTube: tinyurl.com/5bxxfyd4

**2ND
OCT 2024
9PM**

DR. DAVID NANYENDE
Technical Officer, National Disaster Operation Center, Kenya

DR. GEORGE OTIENO
Thematic Lead Anticipatory Action, IGAD

DR. NIKOLAS SCHERER
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Trevor OMBIJA

STRENGTHENING DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT THROUGH ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Anticipation Hub

IGAD
PEACE, PROSPERITY AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform
ON ANTICIPATORY HUMANITARIAN ACTION

JK LIVE

CITIZEN TELEVISION

DAY THREE

The focus on day three was to establish what is missing from the coordination and mainstreaming of anticipatory action – and to begin the process of developing national roadmaps to address these gaps.

How are the existing inter-agency coordination structures ensuring the anticipatory action roadmaps and frameworks are coordinated and government-led?

The final day began with something of a reality check. Using a Menti survey, the audience was asked if governments are taking the lead in terms of anticipatory action frameworks and roadmaps. The answer? An indication that this is not yet happening.

This does not mean that there has been no progress, however. In Ethiopia, there is a DRM Technical Working Group which is led by the government; anticipatory action is implemented through this structure, and through the sub-national technical working groups.

There is also the Regional Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action, noted **Dr George Otieno**, ICPAC, which has IGAD as its permanent chair and WFP as its current co-chair. This is supported by sub-groups, which are led by different actors.

Other initiatives are also working to coordinate anticipatory action in eastern Africa. **Sapenzie Ojiambo** told the audience how the CALP Network convenes stakeholders from different sectors to look at how to improve cash and voucher assistance, a commonly used approach to anticipatory action. And **Irene Amuron**, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, presented the Anticipation Hub as a platform that promotes the exchange of knowledge and learning around anticipatory action.



Maurine Ambani and Mary Anne Zeilstra at the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform.

“Over time many government ministries have been taking part in discussions on anticipatory action. In the Regional Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action, sub-technical working groups will be coordinated in collaboration with governments; for example, trigger development will involve NMHSs. National technical working groups will also be part of [it], and this will help building government capacity on anticipatory action.”

Dr George Otieno, ICPAC

Workshops #3

The remainder of day three was structured around a series of workshops, each dedicated to one of the pillars of the *IGAD Regional Roadmap for Anticipatory Action*:

1. Harmonization of triggers and thresholds
2. Anticipatory action financing
3. Research, evidence and learning
4. Coordination and legal frameworks
5. Communication and advocacy
6. Harmonization of anticipatory actions.

These workshops aimed to establish, country by country: (1) who is doing what under each pillar; (2) the top three priorities for the country; and (3) the support needed from the Regional Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action to implement these priorities. These will be used to inform the national-level roadmaps that each country aims to finalize; Table 1 captures some of the initial findings from the workshops.

Table 1. Priorities for anticipatory action and support needed among IGAD Member States

	Priorities	Support
Burundi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing • Research • Infrastructure development
Djibouti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical capacity building for forecasters • Integration of anticipatory action into the DRM plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance for anticipatory action in DRM • Financing for anticipatory action
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and harmonization of anticipatory action thresholds • Map existing anticipatory action plans • Develop a communications strategy and dissemination system for government and other actors • Innovations on tools for anticipatory action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance • Technical support and capacity building • Regional integration between eastern Africa countries
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonization of triggers and thresholds • Disaster risk financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to harmonize triggers and thresholds • Develop a disaster-risk-financing framework
Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Not provided</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to research-based early warning systems and academia • Establish new partnerships
Somalia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a national framework for anticipatory action • Triggers and thresholds • Financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transboundary information-sharing • Knowledge exchange • Advocacy for an anticipatory action roadmap
South Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for a legal framework for anticipatory action • Harmonization of partners' mapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building for anticipatory action • Advocacy for anticipatory action
Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building and advocacy • Formulate a technical working group • National anticipatory action dialogue platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipatory action roadmap and guidelines • Strengthen governance for anticipatory action • Institutional capacity strengthening • Harmonize the trigger mechanism for anticipatory action
Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a national 'basket' for anticipatory action • Technical support for the integration of finance for anticipatory action • Strengthen early warning systems for triggers and activations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource mobilization • Capacity building for key players • Develop and review an anticipatory action roadmap • Support to establish new partnerships for anticipatory action
Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an integrated strategy for disaster risk financing • Legal framework for anticipatory action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cascade the anticipatory action roadmap to the national level • Advocacy for a technical working group at the national level

Closing ceremony

After three days, it was time to conclude the inaugural Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform. **Gift Mashango**, IFRC, thanked those who took part for their interaction, efforts and discussions about different hazards in eastern Africa. He underscored the role of partnership, with collaboration based on each partners' added value, as well as the need to work with local universities, especially in terms of gathering evidence.

“

“We can only achieve anticipatory action at scale with partnerships... We look forward to working with you all and thank you for your contributions.”

”

Sarah Klassen, Start Network, began by acknowledging the inspiring and diverse knowledge on display over the past three days. Yet while noting that anticipatory finance continues to contribute to humanitarian support, she reiterated that financing measures need to be scaled up. Further, she noted that anticipatory action must complement government systems and should be tailored to the various contexts in eastern Africa, taking vulnerable communities into consideration.

“

“Let's continue working... As the declaration says, Tuko Pamoja; we are together.”

”

Dr Abdi Fidar, ICPAC, brought the ceremony to its end by acknowledging the partners' efforts in anticipatory action in the region, which has helped to mitigate the impacts of forecast hazards. IGAD is, he confirmed, fully committed to spearheading anticipatory action in the region.

“

“IGAD will support Member States in early warning systems and the development of national roadmaps.”

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There was plenty to celebrate on day three.

Reflections on the event

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“I liked the level of presentations by the panels and the breakaway sessions, which gave room for more interaction.”

Feedback shared during the review of the event

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“We're working on a regional plan to anticipate and address humanitarian crises in the Greater Horn of Africa. Thanks to support from Anticipation Hub, World Food Programme, IGAD Secretariat, ICPAC and other regional development partners for organizing and supporting the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action for Eastern Africa #EADP”

David Nsiyonna Luganda, Network of Climate Journalists of the Greater Horn of Africa, on LinkedIn

”

“

“Exciting 1st day of #EADP for #AnticipatoryAction: key insights 1. Government to be driving agenda 2. Partnership and coordination 3. Evidence and the role of early warning information 4. Harnessing #Community practices”

Tahira S. Mohamed, International Livestock Research Institute, on X

”

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“We are working on the assumption that we are all on the same page, but we may be leaving others behind.”

Feedback shared during the review of the event

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DECLARATION FROM THE FIRST EASTERN AFRICA DIALOGUE PLATFORM ON ANTICIPATORY ACTION ‘MOVING FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE: STRENGTHENING DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT THROUGH ANTICIPATORY ACTION’

3 October, 2024

East Africa is experiencing growing humanitarian needs, with multiple disasters affecting the region in an already fragile and complex context. There is a pressing need to scale up Anticipatory Action (AA) to protect those most at risk across the region.

To achieve this ambition there is need for wider coordination, alignment and collaboration, with governments at the forefront in leadership.

From 1st to 3rd October 2024, more than 200 people, including representatives from government, UN Agencies, Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, humanitarian agencies, NGOs, national hydrological and meteorological services, Disaster Risk Management authorities, research and academia, and donor agencies and development partners, met in Mombasa, Kenya to discuss progress and steps towards strengthening Disaster Risk Management through anticipatory action.

These conversations culminated into the following declarations:

MOMBASA 2024 DECLARATION

We, the participants of the 1st Eastern Africa Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Action, commit to scaling up anticipatory action to enhance the resilience of communities across the Eastern African region in alignment with the IGAD Regional Roadmap on Anticipatory Action.

We commit to:

1. Coordinate for collective anticipatory action through existing coordination structures, such as regional and national working groups, to harmonise triggers and thresholds, actions and financing by leveraging on each other's strengths.
2. Enhance the technical capacities of governments to design and implement the anticipatory action approach at national level.
3. Support the integration of anticipatory action into national policies, laws and frameworks, including social protection systems and establish clear governance structures at the regional, national and local levels.
4. Collectively communicate and advocate for anticipatory approaches across the development, humanitarian and peace nexus.
5. Strengthen national and regional forecasting capabilities to ensure early warning is effectively developed, communicated, leading to coordinated and timely anticipatory action from the local to the national and regional level.

6. Promote community-led and informed anticipatory action through the meaningful participation of those at greater risk of being disproportionately impacted by disasters, including women and children;
7. Ensure that Anticipatory Action frameworks are responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable, including displaced populations, those in conflict-affected areas, and communities facing protracted crises.
8. Continue, wherever possible, to explore anticipatory action in fragile and conflict-affected areas, and expand to other hazards such as heatwaves, contexts such as urban areas, to leave no one behind.
9. Explore and implement innovative approaches to scale up, reach and protect more people at risk, especially in hard to access areas, leveraging new technologies like digital Cash and Voucher Assistance.
10. Cooperate to address transboundary risks and encourage data sharing within and across countries for Anticipatory Action.
11. Develop a solid evidence base by collectively monitoring and evaluating progress, based on robust scientific methodologies, and by sharing lessons learned in relevant knowledge platforms and events such as the dialogue platforms.
12. Where necessary, support to develop communication and advocacy strategies on anticipatory action.

More specifically, we encourage national governments to:

13. Set up, or continue to support, anticipatory action technical working groups to lead the development and evolution of national roadmaps for Anticipatory Action and further coordination effort.
14. Allocate budget resources for Anticipatory Action, recognising that governments should lead resource mobilisation efforts.

We appreciate if the international community could:

15. Increase flexible and coordinated funding for Anticipatory Action.
16. Support the long-term journey to embed Anticipatory Action into governance structures across the region.
17. Support the Early Warning Systems value chain to reach the last mile.

-END-

Partners



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