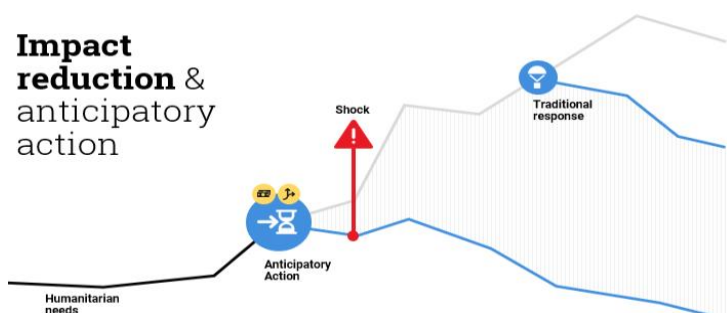


Rationale

More and more people depend on humanitarian assistance and protection to survive: currently 168 million or 1 in 45 people in the world. And with COVID-19, these numbers are likely to increase. Meeting these humanitarian needs will require funding of nearly \$31 billion dollars. More funding is needed and how these funds are spent most effectively and efficiently will be key.

Today, we can predict with growing confidence humanitarian impacts of certain climatic shocks and communicable diseases. In these cases, neither the shock nor the way a crisis will unfold should surprise us. Data can contribute to facilitate the decision to release of pre-arranged finance for pre-agreed interventions that take place before such shocks to mitigate their impact. By taking this anticipatory approach – using evidence of risk instead of suffering - to respond, we can better protect and save more lives, and increase the impact of available funds.

Impact reduction & anticipatory action



that is more dignified. One that protects hard-won development gains.

What does **traditional response** look like?



There are potential beneficial outcomes for education of anticipatory action. For instance, building on literature on the impact of stunting on education, the World Bank estimates that during slow onset disasters, such as droughts, long-run cost of a slow response leads to a loss of 3.9 percent of income (GDP) per capita. Anticipatory action focused on nutrition and education together can mitigate much of that loss.

By taking an anticipatory approach we can have a better, faster and cheaper solution to humanitarian needs. One

Anticipatory Action Frameworks

A way of scaling up this approach is by putting in place formal *anticipatory action frameworks* that allow country teams to crowd in the data, money and capacity to mitigate life-threatening shocks collectively. An anticipatory action framework has three elements:

- Forecast and decision-making rules (the model)
- Pre-agreed action plans (the delivery)
- Pre-arranged finance (the money)

How does this work? When the forecast exceeds an agreed threshold (e.g., probability and/or severity), the default decision will be to release pre-arranged finance for the implementation of pre-agreed actions, to ensure the timely implementation of critical actions to mitigate the impact of the predicted shock.

What does **anticipatory action** look like?



Anticipatory action is different from traditional humanitarian response in three ways:

- Timing: before rather than after a shock or, at a minimum, before the manifestation of humanitarian needs.
- Targeting: people whose lives are at imminent risk rather than only people who are already in acute need.
- Objective: to mitigate the impact of a shock to reduce a crisis and its humanitarian impact rather than respond to a fully evolved crisis and its humanitarian consequences.

Anticipatory Action in Practice

Building on pioneering work done by partners over the last years, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator has decided to invest a significant amount from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to pilot collective anticipatory action at scale in 2020-2021, with a focus on drought in Somalia, Ethiopia, Malawi and Chad; on cholera outbreaks in sub-Saharan Africa; and floods in Bangladesh.

CERF is not meant to be the sole funder of the anticipatory action plans but will guarantee a significant level of financing to ensure viability of the pilots. OCHA thus works with other strategic partners, including the World Bank and the Education Cannot Wait fund, to support anticipatory action to have a most meaningful impact on the most vulnerable.

Spotlight on Somalia

In 2019, OCHA, together with FAO, WFP, UNICEF, Start Network, and the Red Cross, piloted the first collective, multi-sectoral anticipatory action framework against out-of-the-ordinary drought shocks in Somalia. The framework was developed jointly with the World Bank taking advantage of Somalia being one of the “first mover” countries for the Famine Action Mechanism (FAM). Finance will be released when a severe drought is predicted with high probability – analogous to 2010-11 and 2016-17 – for key interventions to mitigate the impact of the drought, like the distribution of drought-tolerant seeds, provision of supplementary fodder for livestock, and rehabilitation of water points.

To mitigate the impact of drought, education takes an important place in that framework. Once triggered, financing should be released against a set of interventions which will mitigate the drought’s impact on school children and their families:

Anticipatory Action	Targetted population	Cost
Emergency school feeding	338,773 school children	USD 7 per child per month for 6 months - USD 42
Water for school children	338,773 school children	for 6 months it is USD 3.96 per child
Teacher incentives	8,469 teachers	The standard emergency teacher incentive is USD 100 per months
Child protection services	338,773 school children	a standard recreational kit: cost per child is USD 3 the total cost amounts to USD 381,060 (4234 teachers trained) the total cost per child for child protection services is USD 4.1

In June, CERF allocated \$15 million for anticipatory actions to support 1.3 million Somalis ahead of rising food insecurity and the compounding effects of locust, COVID-19 and flooding. Interventions included cash transfers, desert locust operations, livestock vaccination and health service readiness.

Spotlight on Bangladesh

Building on the work by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Red Cross/Red Crescent, the United Nations developed an anticipatory action framework to respond to monsoon flooding in Bangladesh. On 4 July, the flood forecasts indicated severe floods would occur in mid-July. This trigger activated the pilot and the CERF allocated \$5mn, which were released within 4 hours, allowing agencies to commence with readiness activities, supporting almost 200,000 people. 23,000 households received unconditional cash transfers of \$53, 7,000 households received water-proof storage drums and 15,000 women received dignity, menstrual hygiene kits and health kits. Previous experiences show that recipients of cash ahead of floods improve access to food, reduce high-interest debt accrual and psychosocial stress. Families used funds to evacuate, buy essential supplies and medicines, and invest in education.