



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# Integrating Anticipatory Action and Social Protection

## WHAT IS ANTICIPATORY ACTION?

The anticipatory action system aims to prevent or reduce the impact of predicted imminent extreme weather events on at-risk populations. It requires linking forecast triggers to pre-defined actions and pre-arranged funding to reach households or communities ahead of a forecast weather shock.

Actions such as cash, in-kind support, early warning messaging and are implemented in the critical window between a forecast and an extreme weather event to reduce its impact on vulnerable populations, save lives and protect livelihoods.

The anticipatory action system seeks to complement rather than replace other risk management activities, including disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and early action. In protracted crises, where emergency preparedness, response and recovery are already ongoing, this programme works in complementarity to address new risks that are predicted to impact vulnerable communities.

## WFP PIONEERED ANTICIPATORY ACTION

WFP pioneered the anticipatory action system, together with the German Red Cross, in 2015. The system has gained significant momentum in recent years and currently WFP is implementing and building capacity on anticipatory action in 21 countries, in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, along with governments and other key humanitarian partners.

## INTEGRATION OF ANTICIPATORY ACTION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

When anticipatory action is layered with social protection, it can help address the climate risks affecting the most vulnerable populations in a timely, sustainable, and cost-effective manner. Aligned with WFP's Strategic Outcomes, there are two main ways of integrating Anticipatory Action and social protection, which can be combined:

1. **The implementation of anticipatory actions by government or humanitarian actors leverages elements of the social protection architecture.** This means that the implementation of anticipatory actions could rely on existing elements of a large-scale, long-term and nationally owned social protection system (e.g., coordination platforms, targeting and identity management systems, payment and delivery mechanisms, etc.) to rapidly and adequately reach large segments of vulnerable people at risk of predicted imminent climate-related hazards.
2. **Social protection systems integrate the core components of an anticipatory action system.** Here, the anticipatory action core components—namely pre-defined forecast triggers, pre-agreed action plans and pre-arranged financing—are incorporated to the social protection system to enable rapid scale-up of social protection programmes, before the onset of forecast climate-related hazards.

## WFP'S ADDED VALUE IN THIS AGENDA

Considering the unprecedented trend of rising humanitarian needs and the global food crisis in which climate shocks play a major role, WFP has the capacity and expertise to reach vulnerable populations at risk of an imminent climate shock to reduce the impacts. In line with our dual mandate across "Saving Lives" and "Changing Lives", WFP can:

- **Support national systems and programmes.** This includes providing advice and guidance to national governments across the social protection building blocks, including supporting multi-sectoral coordination and the governance structure, or creating a new design or adapting current social protection programmes to deliver support in anticipation of a forecast climate hazard. It also includes the continuous work to strengthen the social protection building blocks as needed.
- **Direct delivery of anticipatory actions complementing governments' efforts with the purpose of contributing to more effective outcomes for people and strengthened systems.** This will be done by replicating aspects of the government programme to fill temporary gaps where requested, in the face of a forecast climate hazard. It can also be done by adopting the elements of an existing social protection programme or system to deliver other anticipatory action schemes. WFP can also pilot anticipatory actions through its own systems and projects with the overall objective to produce evidence-based recommendations, where WFP absorbs the risks and facilitates an eventual and progressive handover to the government.

## KEY STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION

Integrating anticipatory action and social protection should be tailored to each country context. Some key steps to be followed are: (1) **Assessing the feasibility for the integration:** considering national and cultural aspects, through research and studies; (2) **Setting up the governance structure and relevant agreements** needed for joint-decision making on the essential components of anticipatory action and social protection systems; (3) **Designing and planning:** producing Anticipatory Action Plans considering the existing social protection system or supporting governments in their development; (4) **Activating:** the anticipatory action and social protection programmes implementation takes place once an extreme weather event is forecast and the correspondent trigger is reached; and (5) **Evaluating the impact and incorporating lessons learned,** with the aim to produce evidence and inform future decision-making processes.

WFP is currently working with governments to integrate anticipatory action with social protection systems in Latin America and the Caribbean, East Africa, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and Southern Africa. This approach represents a paradigm-shift whereby social protection can provide assistance in an anticipatory manner to reduce peak needs before a forecasted climate shock occurs.

To know more about WFP's work in social protection, follow this link:

[wfp.org/social-protection](https://wfp.org/social-protection)

To know more about WFP's work on anticipatory action, follow this link:

[wfp.org/anticipatory-actions](https://wfp.org/anticipatory-actions)

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