



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Scaling up Anticipatory Action in Latin America and the Caribbean

Supporting nationally owned anticipatory systems to reduce impacts of climate shocks on food security

Latin America and the Caribbean is highly vulnerable to climate extremes, which are a key driver of food insecurity in the region. The financial cost of these events can be catastrophic, as seen by category 5 hurricanes Melissa (2025) and Beryl (2024) and its impacts in the Caribbean, as well as the droughts of 2023-24 and resulting crop losses in Central America associated with an intense El Niño cycle. Likewise, the disruption to ecosystems is impacting the lives and livelihoods of many farmers and indigenous populations in the region. To successfully manage these compounding risks and avert cascading humanitarian crises, traditional humanitarian response systems need to evolve **from crisis response to forward-looking risk management**.

By acting based on predictable risks rather than waiting for needs to manifest, anticipatory action (AA) mitigates unnecessary harm to vulnerable communities and can lessen the need for subsequent and costlier emergency response. **Anticipatory action offers an innovative approach that enables the implementation and pre-agreed financing of actions** triggered by weather forecasts, before an extreme weather event has occurred. Protecting instead of rebuilding is now more needed and easier than ever: forecast accuracy is continuously increasing and impacts from predictable climate hazards can be mitigated by embedding anticipatory action **into existing and strong social protection and risk management structures**.

January 2026



This approach is operationally feasible and has been demonstrated in the region by WFP and partners.

For example through **AA activations in 2025:**

- Acting on forecasts from the national early warning system in February 2025, WFP **Peru** provided early warning messages to 1,700 people and cash transfers to 716 people at risk in Atumplaya, San Martín, identified from the social protection registry, before the floods caused by the overflowing of the Mayo River occurred, allowing for timely evacuation, protecting food security and livelihoods.
- In February 2025, WFP **Ecuador**, in partnership with municipal authorities and other national partners, provided early warning messages and cash transfers to 716 people several days before the impact of floods in Samborondón.
- In July 2025, WFP **Guatemala** and partner agencies part of the United Nations Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) framework, activated AA and provided support to mitigate forecast drought impacts ahead of the postrera agricultural season. WFP led the comprehensive targeting exercise for all agencies and supported over 40,000 people at risk with cash-based transfers, basic grain silos and early warning messages so that they could protect themselves and their livelihoods from expected drought impacts in Chiquimula, part of the Dry Corridor.
- In October 2025, WFP **Cuba** and **Haiti** acted in collaboration with other agencies ahead of the impacts of hurricane Melissa. WFP **Cuba** provided food assistance to evacuation centres before the hurricane made landfall, reaching over 180,000 people. WFP **Haiti** shared early warning messages to 2.3 million people and send anticipatory cash transfers to more than 47,000 people at risk before the floods.

THE CARIBBEAN

WFP is working in close collaboration with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and the Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO), including the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH). A new AA working group, co-led by CDEMA and WFP, has been launched in 2025, expected to become a sub-committee of CDEMA's Regional Early Warning System Consortium. For WFP's Caribbean Multi-Country Office (MCO), a risk layering approach supporting the linkage of AA and macro-insurance products such as the CCRIF is at the core of its AA programming in the Caribbean and a study to identify potential financing mechanisms in the region has been developed by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and WFP.

BELIZE

In Belize, WFP is supporting the government with the finalisation of a drought Anticipatory Action Plan. Drought triggers are developed together with the National Meteorological Service of Belize. Unconditional cash payments, early warning messages and training are envisioned to be provided to the most at-risk communities that are part of the government's farmers' registry.

CUBA

Building on existing leadership from the government implementing forms of AA since decades, WFP Cuba has been working closely with government and humanitarian partners to finalize a country-wide multi-sectorial AA plan for hurricanes. This was activated ahead of hurricane Melissa impacts in October 2025, demonstrating the effectiveness of delivering pre-agreed actions through the social protection systems. A drought AA plan is under development and linkages to national social protection systems and an existing microinsurance for smallholder.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

WFP is supporting Social Development Directorate of Supérate in designing hurricane activation protocols in the Lower Yuna Watershed, paving the way for anticipatory measures to be embedded in national safety nets. In addition, WFP is advancing geospatial analysis innovation through the ANACAONA system, which provides real-time meteorological analysis that enables monitoring for AA triggers. WFP is also strengthening local risk governance by supporting Provincial Committees for Prevention, Mitigation and Response (CPPMR) to define anticipatory measures and develop preparedness plans.

HAITI

WFP has been focusing on strengthening capacities of the Civil Protection Agency and the national meteorological services and has built an AA mechanism for floods, which was activated in 2023, allowing the distribution of early warning messages and cash transfers through the national social protection system before the flood occurred. To protect the most vulnerable from hazards, a multi-sectorial AA framework for hurricanes has been established and activated in 2025, WFP provided early warning messages to 2.3 million people and cash to more than 47,000 people at risk.

SAINT LUCIA

WFP has been supporting the Government of St Lucia with the set-up of an anticipatory action mechanism to disburse cash, vouchers and early warning messages through existing social protection mechanisms to reduce the impact of an impending hurricane. That taking action is feasible within just a matter of hours and days, has been tested in a simulation exercise, led by the Ministry of Social Protection in May 2025.



CENTRAL AMERICA

Support to institutionalisation can be spearheaded by subregional intergovernmental actors, such as the Coordination Center for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC). The Mitch+25 declaration, announced 2024 as the Year of Anticipatory Action by CEPREDENAC and the inclusion of the AA concept in CEPREDENAC's Regional Disaster Risk Management Plan 2024-2030. In 2023, the regional technical working group on Anticipatory Action (GTAA, led by WFP, FAO, German Red Cross, OCHA) was formed and has been instrumental in providing streamlined support and enhancing alignment of AA approaches. With technical support from the GTAA, CEPREDENAC has developed its regional AA strategy, that provides guidance on AA integration for its member states. To implement this strategy at national level, CEPREDENAC now has a dedicated AA advisor.

EL SALVADOR

In El Salvador, WFP is collaborating closely with partners such as the Red Cross and FAO, to jointly support the Civil Protection authority in leading the integration of anticipatory action in its risk management approaches. The government has established and is leading a special commission for anticipatory action and aims to establish a legal framework to implement AA. WFP has co-developed the AA framework to act ahead of drought together with partners such as OCHA, FAO, UNICEF and PAHO, and a flood AA plan is under development.



GUATEMALA

WFP co-leads the AA technical working group. An AA mechanism for drought that is currently being adapted to serve as an innovative meso-level insurance pilot providing payouts based on forecasts. Complementary, a multi-sectorial AA framework to act ahead of drought together with partners such as OCHA, FAO, UNICEF and PAHO was developed and activated ahead of the post-rain season in July 2025. The AA programme supports the coordination between national government agencies, Agroclimatic Roundtables and municipalities, to mainstream AA into national risk management plans.

HONDURAS

WFP in Honduras co-leads the AA Working Group, to support the integration anticipatory action in legal frameworks (SINAGER) and the national emergency response architecture. WFP is spearheading efforts by promoting the connection between the national risk management and social protection authorities, formalizing a roadmap and protocols for emergency response and AA through shock-responsive social protection. Jointly with the RC and FAO, WFP Honduras activated AA ahead of tropical storm Sara in November 2024, providing commodity vouchers to households at risk of flooding. Similar to Guatemala and El Salvador, WFP has co-developed the multi-sectorial AA framework to act ahead of drought with partners.

NICARAGUA

WFP has provided support to smallholder farmers cooperatives across Nicaragua's Dry Corridor in the departments of Jinotega, Matagalpa, Nueva Segovia, and Estelí, with the aim of strengthening their capacities to implement AA in response to multi-hazard risks. WFP will assist in the vertical and horizontal expansion of national social protection programmes, particularly the Ministry of Education's Comprehensive School Nutrition Programme, to increase the coverage of the school feeding initiative, helping to prevent nutritional deterioration and reduce school dropout rates in areas affected by climate-related risks.

SOUTH AMERICA

At subregional level in South America, the intergovernmental Comunidad Andina and El Comité Andino para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres (CAN-CAPRADE) is increasingly supporting its member states Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru on integrating anticipatory action in disaster risk management structures.

BOLIVIA

WFP Bolivia developed an AA plan for the Altiplano province of Oruro, to be able to provide support to smallholder quinoa farmers and livestock herders before drought impacts materialize. An expansion and adaptation of the drought plan for other provinces is under development.

COLOMBIA

WFP Colombia has been working closely with the Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environment (IDEAM) and partners to develop an AA mechanism for floods in the Chocó region, one of the areas with the highest needs for humanitarian assistance – and one of rainiest places on earth. At national level, together with partners from the food security and nutrition cluster, WFP supports the national risk management authority UNGRD in leading the AA coordination.

ECUADOR

WFP in Ecuador has been working closely with the local government and community to support the design of AA mechanisms for floods (Guayaquil and Samborondón) and droughts (Santa Elena). When the flood trigger was reached, WFP and partners acted swiftly several days ahead of floods in February 2025. Together with partners such as the Ecuadorian Red Cross and FAO, WFP is supporting the inclusion of anticipatory action in national and municipal legislation and risk management plans. This work has culminated in the development and government endorsement of Ecuador's first National Guideline for Anticipatory Action.



PERU

WFP is supporting the Ministry of Social Development and Inclusion and national disaster management authorities to link shock-responsive social protection with AA mechanisms for floods in San Martín and Amazonas region. When this mechanism was activated in February 2025, WFP provided early warning messages and cash transfers to population at risk identified from the social protection registry. A milestone has been the integration of the AA concept in the social protection regulatory in February 2025, providing government actors with the legal framework to take actions before negative impacts unfold. To ensure protection from multiple hazards, WFP Peru is supporting the government with the AA plan for drought and cold waves.

VENEZUELA

WFP Venezuela is supporting a proactive risk management model, by developing an AA plan, based on data shared by the National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology to mitigate predictable flood impacts in Anzoátegui state, along the Orinoco River. Together with partners of the national AA Working Group, they are supporting government partners such as the Ministry of Eco-socialism and local authorities to include an anticipatory approach into national risk management structures.

WFP's approach to anticipatory action in LAC

STRENGTHENING EARLY WARNING CAPABILITIES

WFP is working with governments to strengthen early warning capabilities, develop triggers that indicate when to act before expected hazard impacts materialise, and mainstream AA into national disaster risk management systems. As the only humanitarian implementing entity of the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF), WFP is supporting the roll out of SOFF pilots in several SIDS in the Caribbean, such as Dominica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Lucia and the Dominican Republic, supporting governments through improved weather forecasts and climate information services in order to save lives and protect livelihoods. In addition, close links to the Early Warning for All (EW4All) initiative exist and WFP is part of the Regional EW4All Coordination Mechanism.

LINKING SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND SUPPORTING AA TO REACH SCALE

WFP is working with governments and partners to support existing disaster management, social protection and disaster risk finance systems, offering a unique opportunity to scale up AA. WFP sees integration with existing systems and institutionalization of AA as essential to reaching scale. WFP's technical support to strengthen social protection systems offer clear opportunities for AA, as they already have required elements: a vulnerability analysis that informs targeting and an operational protocol to disburse funds. A missing piece has been the integration with early warning systems and disaster risk management authorities. If, for instance, a severe drought is forecast in a region where people rely heavily on social assistance to meet their essential needs, AA can provide protection before an event - quickly and at scale.

FLEXIBLE DISASTER RISK FINANCING FOR ENHANCED COVERAGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

While forms of AA, such as evacuations ahead of hurricanes or floods, have been led and improved by governments in the region, the systematic integration into risk management systems is still relatively innovative. Even though there is evidence to show that acting before a humanitarian crisis unfolds is cost-effective and saving lives, governments are not always legally able to invest in action based on forecasts. WFP is providing technical advice to government frameworks and also working closely with private sector actors – such as insurers and reinsurers – to complement government financing for AA. This can include micro- and meso-insurance schemes, or a layered risk management approach with macro-insurances, such as the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF). WFP in LAC advocates for such public-private partnerships and to explore a range of other financial mechanisms, including forecast-based insurance, contingent financing linked to national disaster management systems, social protection systems, and sovereign/regional risk finance pools that governments can access to support at-risk populations.





ANTICIPATORY ACTION SAVES LIVES, TIME AND MONEY

Advances on AA in Latin America and the Caribbean would not be possible without the generous support from:



Co-funded by
the European Union



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



World Food Programme

Via Cesare Giulio Viola 68/70, 00148

Rome RM, Italy - T

wfp.org

For further information contact: nora.guerthen@wfp.org

Photo cover page: WFP/Gonzalo Ruiz

Photo page 3: WFP/Jean Paul Laveau

Photo page 4: WFP/Giulio d'Adamo

Photo page 5: WFP/Gonzalo Ruiz

Photo page 6: WFP/Theresa Piorr

Photo page 7: WFP/Oscar Duarte