EARLY ACTION

THE STATE OF PLAY 2023

SUMMARY



REAP

Risk-informed
Early Action
Partnership

About REAP

Launched at the UN Climate Action Summit (UNCAS) in September 2019, the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) brings together an unprecedented range of stakeholders across the climate, humanitarian and development communities with the aim of making 1 billion people safer from disaster by 2025.

The Partnership is built around four ambitious targets that aim to drive a systemic shift towards acting earlier to reduce the impacts of disasters. It creates a space in which Partners and aligned organisations from across its various constituencies use the ambitious targets to mobilise commitments and inspire action.

Acknowledgements

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A note on definitions

Relevant terms within this report use the definitions set out within the Glossary of Early Action Terms: 2022 Edition.

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FOREWORD

2024 is going to be a challenging year as climate impacts continue to accelerate in scale, intensity and frequency; as action and implementation on mitigation and adaptation fail to keep pace; and as conflict and insecurity mark the world. As a consequence, our key goals are at risk, including keeping 1.5C alive, fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and meeting the targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

But collectively, we're no strangers to challenge, and 2023 sowed important seeds of hope. The decision to establish the first global fund for Loss and Damage under the UNFCCC, the incorporation of early warning and early action as a priority action area for the DRR strategy of the G20, progress on the Early Warnings for All initiative, and the vigour and attention COP28 paid to the nexus of development, climate and humanitarian issues, all provided us with momentum and a platform to tackle the challenges ahead.

One of REAP's notable endeavours was co-developing the Getting Ahead of Disasters Charter with the UAE, and then securing endorsements from over 40 governments and organisations by COP28. The Charter demonstrated the willingness of stakeholders to come together across sectors and geographies to support shared ambition around financing early action. As co-Chairs we thank and pay testament to the work of the Secretariat, our UAE colleagues and endorsing partners in achieving this success. We are committed to using the Charter to further drive positive practice for effectiveness on early action financing and we welcome your support on this.

To remain relevant and effective in a changing world, we must all continue to look ahead to the challenges of the future and ask if our work is bringing about the change that we want to see. Each of REAP's State of Play reports seeks to ask and answer that question by reflecting on the work being undertaken globally on early action and identifying examples of good practice that can teach us useful lessons.

The question also applies to our partnership, and will be a focus for us all over 2024 as we deliberate on REAP's role and impact post-2025. As co-Chairs of REAP's Governing Board, we are committed to supporting the Partnership to be evidence-led, ambitious and confident in order to arrive at an outcome that benefits those increasingly at risk from the effects of climate change. We thank you for your continued support, leadership and endeavours on early action which will support us all to rise to the challenges ahead of us and deliver against the vital goals of our Partnership.



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SUMMARY

WHERE DO WE STAND?

Now in their third year, the State of Play reports provide snapshots of international, regional and national investments, commitments and activities linked to early warning and early action. This year's report focuses on the work of REAP Partners following the recommendations of the 2022 report; and provides an overview of commitments and activities that contribute towards REAP's 4 Targets ; and identifies both upcoming (for 2024) and longer-term issues, and opportunities for addressing them.



Part of the Weather Mtaani awareness campaign under DARAJA, this mural in Lindi village, Kibera, showcases new forecast alerts produced by the Kenya Meteorological Department. © Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI)

On the state of play of early action

2023 marked substantive developments in line with the **recommendations** from last year's State of Play:

1. **Support to regional bodies** and **leadership at the regional level** for early warning and early action increased, but finding ways to further increase government leadership in anticipatory action systems, at national as well as regional levels, remains a top priority.
2. Several Partners demonstrated the benefits of **cross-sectoral cooperation**, such as through joint strategies for scaling up anticipatory action to prevent specific impacts, or joint publications to contribute to strengthening information sharing on evidence-based progress – even though these efforts remain insufficient when compared to the challenges faced.
3. 2023 saw increasing recognition of the value of and need to work with a **full value chain** understanding of early warning early action systems[1], while the humanitarian community has taken further steps to mainstream anticipatory action. Learning opportunities have also increased to support capacity-building on diverse topics, approaches and target audiences relevant to EWEA.
4. The Getting Ahead of Disasters Charter was launched at COP28 to **improve the efficiency of finance for disasters** (including for early action), and a number of REAP Partners have adopted organisational strategies that seek to **expand financial mechanisms and instruments** and to include more diverse funding sources, which remains a top priority for bringing early action to scale.
5. **Risk communication** approaches that acknowledge communities vulnerable to disasters as senders of information, rather than merely receivers, have become more recognised as essential for developing meaningful EWEA. However, true people-centredness continues to remain a gap in many EWEA strategies and activities, which often lack feedback mechanisms for community input and omit risk information generated within the communities.
6. We have observed progress on the **coherence in reporting** on activities of different stakeholders to avoid generating multiple sets of data that are difficult to reconcile, for example where organisations are working in the same region, or where initiatives share similar aims. Moreover, a number of stakeholders have worked on new approaches to measure (state) funding for anticipatory action or broader EWEA activities, which will help to make future investments in early action more transparent, and to hold donors accountable for their commitments.

For **2024**, priority topics include: the ongoing impacts of El Niño; expanding anticipatory actions to more hazard types; increasing the number of disaster risk financing instruments that support early and anticipatory approaches; and finding a middle ground between differing perspectives on how best to scale anticipatory action.

Looking further ahead, continued efforts are needed to enable humanitarian, development and climate actors to work better across their respective sectors, and this year's research and analysis has put forth **three steps to implement this approach**.

1. Shared understanding should be sought regarding the role (and limitations) of EWEA, including anticipatory action, within the broader disaster risk management cycle and long-term planning. This requires deeper exploration of how anticipatory action and humanitarian experiences can be used to support cross-sectoral collaboration with development and climate actors.
2. Global policy discussions must consider and be informed by the realities facing the implementing communities and organisations most affected by the impacts of climate change.
3. Relevant initiatives, partnerships and networks working on different aspects of early action need to clarify and make sense of their specific added value, how they relate to one another, and what benefits stakeholders can expect from their engagement.

1 The "full value chain" includes, but is not limited to: systematic observations; climate and weather monitoring; impact-based forecasting; early warning system design and implementation; risk communication; early action planning and delivery; development of appropriate financing instruments and delivery of finance across the various components of the value chain; the elements that establish an enabling environment, such as national legislation, policy and planning; and development and mainstreaming of risk knowledge and capacity.

Progress against REAP's targets

REAP was launched with four shared targets, each of which contribute to making 1 billion people safer from disaster by 2025. Developed by the convening Partners of REAP, these ambitious targets are achievable only through partnership and a shared commitment to joined-up, risk-informed early action.

Target 1 aims, by 2025, for 50 countries to review and integrate their crisis/disaster risk management and climate adaptation laws, policies and/or plans to ensure that they reduce climate change impacts and exposure on people and the environment. As of now, Target 1 has been achieved as more than 50 different countries have taken the different steps outlined for the Target. Many Partners continue to identify integrated approaches as a priority and several organisations directly contribute to further bringing the Target forward by supporting countries on integrating relevant policies and plans. Progress has also benefited from increased government leadership: the work of the Partnership attracts more and more governmental actors; governments are speaking more about the integration of early action; and there is a strong movement towards institutionalising EWEA as an approach to addressing disasters. However, while national-level leadership on integrated legislation and policy is critical to ensure the environment exists for comprehensive disaster risk management approaches, translation and contextualisation are required to bridge the gap between internationally agreed policy frameworks, national systems, and connecting and adapting these efforts to the local level.

To achieve **Target 2**, by 2025, 1 billion more people must be covered by financing and delivery mechanisms connected to effective early action plans, ensuring they can act ahead of predicted disasters and crises. Comparable funding data on early action remains conspicuously unavailable but the disbursements of the five largest humanitarian funds show that spending on anticipatory action has increased considerably over the past years: in 2022, the latest year with full reporting data, funding indicated as "anticipatory" came to more than USD 63.8 million, which represents a rise of more than 50 per cent since 2020 (where these funds spent a maximum of USD 41.5 million). However, research completed by the Centre for Disaster Protection shows that only 2.7 per cent of international development financing was pre-arranged in 2021, while anticipatory finance claimed an even lower share at just 0.2 per cent of humanitarian funding. Progress has been made on Target 2, but the goal still requires considerably more effort – primarily on scaling up and delivering financing for early action, but also on reporting on how many people are reached by relevant programs. However, there is a way forward for the first of these challenges – "Getting Ahead of Disasters: A Charter on Finance for Managing Risks," endorsed by over 40 countries and organisations at COP28, provides a roadmap for sustainably achieving Target 2.

The goal of **Target 3** is that by 2025, we achieve at least USD 500 million invested in early warning system infrastructure and institutions to target early action in "last/first mile" communities. It seems plausible that Target 3 has been achieved by now: several Partners contributed to improving early warning system infrastructure with financing of over USD 500 million, in addition to growing momentum around the United Nations Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative. Several governmental Partners indicated Target 3 as their priority. However, continued work linked to this Target remains important. For example, while many Partners see it as a given that "local" or "last/first mile" communities are at the core of their activities, this focus is still identified as "hard to measure." Moreover, many of the large humanitarian donor countries still do not directly work with local implementing partners.

Target 4 aims to ensure that by 2025, 1 billion more people are covered by new or improved early warning systems, including heatwave early warning, connected to longer-term risk management systems, and supported by effective risk communication and public stakeholder dialogue. In 2023, Target 4 benefited from heightened awareness of the nuances of early warning systems in international fora, and increased mobilisation around enabling early warning and early action thanks to the momentum generated around the EW4All initiative. Measurable progress has been made on warning dissemination and communication, but, in stark contrast, disaster risk knowledge lags behind significantly. Regarding actual implementation of the Target's different objectives, the road ahead remains long. While the number of multi-hazard early warning systems increased across all regions, still half of the world's countries are lacking such systems with persistent and considerable geographic differences.

Figure 1. Progress on early action at the regional level



MENA

Anticipatory action community of practice

- Following the launch of the MENA Anticipatory Action Community of Practice (CoP), established through WFP and IFRC, terms of reference have been developed to guide its ongoing work.
- Under WISER MENA the CoP can also access small programme grants for staff and events. Both the CoP and individual countries are looking into organising a regional or national dialogue platform.

Growing

East Africa

Resurgence's DARAJA East Africa Scale Up Programme

- DARAJA's multi-stakeholder pilots have enabled urban communities living in the informal settlements of Nairobi and Dar es Salaam to take preventative action ahead of weather events to avoid loss and improve livelihoods.
- DARAJA has scaled to other cities in the region and provides actionable climate information and early warning services to 250 million urban residents.

Scaled up

Southern Africa

Operationalising the Southern Africa Development Community's Humanitarian & Emergency Operations Centre

- Following the Maputo Declaration, DRM authorities from the region met to sign an Intergovernmental Memorandum of Agreement and operationalise the SADC Humanitarian & Emergency Operations Centre (SHOC).
- The SHOC will coordinate regional disaster risk preparedness, response and early recovery to support Member States affected by disasters.

Next phase

Southeast Asia

Adopted

Ministerial Statement on the strengthening of ASEAN anticipatory actions

- During the 'Year of Anticipatory Action' for ASEAN, a Ministerial Statement on strengthening AA was adopted to implement the AADMER Work Programme.
- Its three building blocks are: (1) comprehensive risk information, forecasting and EWS; (2) strategic planning and efficient operations; and (3) pre-arranged financing.

Asia Pacific

Coherence

Increased coherence on anticipatory action in Asia Pacific

- The Asia Pacific Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action continues to grow and has promoted coherence across the region by supporting the Asia-Pacific Regional Roadmap for Anticipatory Action 2023–2027, publishing Technical Standards for Anticipatory Action in Asia Pacific, and working on anticipatory action and cash transfers for rapid-onset hazards with the Regional Cash Working Group.

Pacific

Lessons learned

Regional analyses on anticipatory action in the Pacific

- FAO and the University of Technology Sydney published *Pathways towards Anticipatory Action in Pacific Island Countries*.
- The Humanitarian Advisory Group, the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations and FAO launched a paper on *Envisioning a model for anticipatory action in the Pacific*.

TOPICS OF EMERGING IMPORTANCE AND OUTLOOK FOR 2024

El Niño phenomenon

In the second half of 2023, forecasts predicted the natural climate phenomenon El Niño, which typically occurs every two to seven years and has major influences on weather patterns for up to a year in many parts of the world. Over large parts of Africa, for example, El Niño can lead to severe droughts in some regions and floods or storms in others. As the phenomenon is predictable with a considerable lead time, allowing for planning and implementation of anticipatory actions, many Partners mentioned this as a key focus for 2023 (and potentially beyond).

- **WFP** released USD 12.8 million for anticipatory actions to avoid and mitigate predicted humanitarian impacts of drought caused by El Niño in four Southern African countries, and USD 4.1 million to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of people in anticipation of floods across seven districts in Somalia.
- **FAO** launched an El Niño Anticipatory Action and Response Plan, which prioritises action in 34 countries in four regions (East Africa, Southern Africa, Latin America, and Asia-Pacific) with a focus on mitigating the phenomenon's effects on agriculture and food security. It aims to reach 4.8 million people by March 2024 and the interventions planned require USD 160 million funding. To date, in close coordination with governments and partners, FAO has launched anticipatory actions in 19 countries, providing support to approximately 700,000 vulnerable people (farmers, herders and fishers) to help them maintain food production.
- **Regional AA Working Group (RAAWG) partners** in Southern Africa jointly launched the first and largest interagency activation for drought based on the forecasted El Niño. An estimated USD 17 million was disbursed to implement multi-sectoral anticipatory action, reaching 693,000 beneficiaries across the region. The RAAWG Secretariat (FAO, IFRC and WFP) also coordinated the development of the first interagency El Niño CERF Anticipatory Action Frameworks for Madagascar and Zimbabwe, together with OCHA's Regional Office for Southern and Eastern Africa.
- In August 2023, **ACMAD** organised a Policy Dialogue Day for Anticipatory Action to promote dialogue and enhance understanding among partners around El Niño. While pointing out that El Niño may present some potential benefits, ACMAD underlined that these can only be leveraged if all stakeholders collaborate closely to alleviate potential negative impacts. Many REAP Partners were involved in the panel discussion, including OCHA, IFRC, UNDRR, and AUC. Highlighting the importance of El Niño for anticipatory action, the **Anticipation Hub** published an FAQ on the topic.

Expanding the scope of anticipatory action

A new technical working group on **multi-risk, including compound risk**, was launched at the 2023 Global Dialogue Platform and aims to facilitate connections across academia, practitioners and donors; accelerate learning; and focus on joint analyses to produce practical guidance for the anticipatory action community. Another working group on **locally-led anticipatory action** was launched in August 2023, and is currently co-chaired by Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH), the German Red Cross, the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations

for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), Start Network, and Welthungerhilfe. Meanwhile, the Centre of Excellence for Climate and Disaster Resilience organised a consultation for a handbook on **early warning and early action in fragile contexts**. The launch of the handbook (2024) is preceded by the policy paper "Early Warning Systems and Early Action in Fragile, Conflict, and Violent Contexts: Addressing growing climate & disaster risks." Germany is also funding a MapAction project with approximately USD 540,000 (EUR 500,000) to improve data access and quality for the **use of anticipatory action, including in fragile and conflict-affected settings**.

In November 2023, IFRC, the German Red Cross and FAO co-organised a workshop on **anticipatory action in displacement contexts**, hosted by the Anticipation Hub. To discuss current approaches and tangible ways forward, the workshop brought together experts and practitioners already involved in, or looking at, anticipatory action for displacement; researchers and other institutions working on models that could be used to anticipate displacement and its humanitarian outcomes; as well as donors.

Efforts to expand anticipatory actions to **more hazard types** also continued. For example, a CERF Anticipatory Action Framework aiming to prevent a **cholera pandemic** in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was triggered (USD 750,000, targeting 150,000 people in the DRC). The co-leads of the Working Group on Anticipatory Action and Health under the Anticipation Hub have also published a brief on **anticipatory action for epidemics**.

Enabling early action through insurance

Several partners are collaborating and getting more involved in increasing the number of disaster risk financing instruments that support anticipatory approaches. At the end of 2022, **OCHA** and the **African Risk Capacity** began a partnership to improve risk management and mitigate disaster impacts through parametric insurance, which aims to increase accessibility and transfer risks to the markets. **WFP** is also planning additional pilots that leverage climate risk insurance elements to scale up anticipatory action programmes (see Target 2 chapter). Beyond anticipatory action, **IDF** has approached several governments to support capacity building and increase their understanding of the opportunities offered by risk insurance, including through the Tripartite Agreement held with UNDP and the German Government. In a public-private partnership with Aon and **CDP**, **IFRC**'s Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (**DREF**) developed an insurance product as a new financing model for humanitarian response: up to CHF 5 million will be invested annually to fund the insurance premium, which would generate up to CHF 20 million in disaster risk financing. Other REAP Partners support the use of insurance by funding premiums and product development, although insurance providers still observe some reluctance from donors to fund insurance premiums at scale within the humanitarian sector. Despite the positive development, several survey respondents recommended designing even more comprehensive parametric insurance and disaster risk finance instruments, which could support the endeavours of the **Global Shield**, the **Insurance Development Forum**, and **UNDP**'s Insurance and Risk Finance Facility.

From terminological differences towards conceptual debates

Finally, as part of the key informant interviews conducted for this State of Play, as well as in public and informal discussions, the debate around terminology and definitions (see the State of Play 2022 and the REAP Glossary) seems to have moved into a next phase, illustrated by the recurring question of how to frame the pathway to scaling up EWEA. In essence, one framing emphasises the humanitarian aspects of anticipatory action: it uses humanitarian action as a departure point, and plans to scale up by reaching out to development, climate and other actors to support funding anticipatory action as a means to avoid or mitigate humanitarian impacts. Another framing adopts a broader perspective on anticipatory action: it focuses on developing a greater diversity of approaches and activities, and addressing a broader timescale through anticipatory insurance or risk-informed development, to take two examples. These framings are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but effort will be required on all sides to find an effective way (or ways) forward.

LOOKING FURTHER AHEAD: PRIORITIES TO BRING EARLY ACTION TO SCALE

An ever-greater number of actors are engaged in the early warning early action agenda, including on policy development, investment, planning, and implementation. Thanks in large part to the greater diversity of actors contributing to improved awareness, understanding and collaborative action across the full value chain, approaches to the agenda are also becoming more sophisticated and nuanced. Most actors agree with and support calls for humanitarian, development and climate actors to work in closer harmony, across sectors and levels, as recommended by the 2022 State of Play.

This year's research and analysis highlighted three important ways to make that move. They may even be regarded as prerequisites for achieving our common objectives, including REAP's 4 Targets and the EW4All's aim to have everyone covered by early warning systems. Each has been linked to one of REAP's three Drivers of Change to indicate where action could begin; however, each of the Drivers of Change will need to be addressed to achieve progress in these three areas.

Integrating anticipatory action into broader disaster risk management action

Deeper exploration is required into the future of anticipatory action: Will it remain a predominantly humanitarian matter? Can we take it to the scale required with humanitarian resources alone? Alternatively, how can anticipatory action and humanitarian experiences be used to support cross-sectoral collaboration with development and climate actors? This exploration should support shared understanding on the role (and limitations) of EWEA, in particular anticipatory action, as a part of long-term planning and the broader disaster risk management cycle.

Anticipatory action, despite originating within humanitarian organisations, receives widespread political support across sectors. Efficient and effective anticipatory action can prevent or minimise losses of development gains, and can support responses to climate losses and damages, as well as reduce acute humanitarian needs. If brought to scale, it has the potential to change the lives of even more of the people who are most affected by the climate crisis and exposed to its risks. However, we must continue to identify how to take anticipatory action to the scale demanded by increasing needs. An issue that actors continue to grapple with is the level of financing available for delivering anticipatory action: while progress is being made, as noted in the Target 2 chapter of this report, it remains insufficient.

Realising the potential of anticipatory action will also mean embedding it firmly into a coherent and coordinated disaster risk management cycle. Anticipatory action – as a short-term intervention that responds to residual risks that cannot be avoided, mitigated or transferred through risk-informed development and climate adaptation and resilience building – needs to work hand-in-hand with those approaches in order to support long-term development and ongoing disaster risk reduction efforts. The responsibility for ensuring

this takes place falls on humanitarians, development and climate actors alike.

Risk-informed approaches are inherent to anticipatory action, and its positive short-term impacts can contribute effectively as a key enabler in long-term sustainable development – if it is effectively integrated with longer-term processes. It is through adopting a long-term risk-informed lens to planning that we will not only close the gaps in the current fragmented approach to disasters, but also unlock more coordinated finance across the disaster management cycle. To take anticipatory action to scale, deeper strategic conversations are required between climate, development and humanitarian actors to position us jointly regarding the shifts required in business-as-usual financing, implementation, and evaluation.

So where do we go from here?

Starting point: *global commitment on policy and practice (driver of change 1)*

This issue will have to be addressed from multiple angles, by a diverse set of actors, in a range of contexts. The **"Getting Ahead of Disasters" Charter**, in its attempt to catalyse coordinated action across sectors and timescales, offers a roadmap to achieve this in relation to finance. Governments and organisations that have endorsed the Charter – as well as those who have yet to do so – are strongly encouraged to use its principles to assess how they can shift their approaches to providing finance before disaster impacts in line with the needs identified above. The work of the **Grand Bargain political caucus on scaling up anticipatory action** also promises progress in this area. It states that, among other priorities for change, anticipatory action should be a collective effort shared between humanitarian, development and climate actors. If the political caucus is able to work with development and climate colleagues to deliver concrete recommendations on how anticipatory action can be used as a lever to better integrate humanitarian, development and climate action, we may soon see a clear pathway towards true cross-sectoral collaboration.

Grounding global policy debates in the realities of implementation

We must consider the realities faced by implementing organisations on the ground. Global policy discussions must support and be informed by the communities most affected by the impacts of climate change who are implementing early warning and early action.

There is a disconnect between global policy debates and the realities of community-based implementation of early warning and early action. This is also true when it comes to linking funding for anticipatory action with longer-term development or climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. In practice, these silos exist more at the policy and strategic funding level.

REAP's main arena of influence is at the international level, but it benefits from the active involvement of its Partners in putting programmes along the value chain into action at all levels. This diverse membership gives REAP the means to elevate the concerns and practical considerations of those who are often not heard on the global stage. But to do so, there still remain challenges to overcome. The Partnership Stocktake showed that REAP has a lot of scope to improve its engagement with non-Western governments and organisations – challenges which are likely faced by many other initiatives, partnerships and networks. Within its current work and through its Partners, REAP aims to bridge different levels of activity by exchanging information, raising awareness and sensemaking. Governmental and non-governmental Partners from countries most affected by climate change impacts see the value added through this approach. Other actors engaged in policy debates are strongly encouraged to address the disconnect between international and local levels, between policy debates and implementation.

The EW4All initiative, for example, may offer an opportunity to create systemic change from the national and sub-national levels – if all pillars are interconnected and the decision-making power is situated at the national and subnational levels.

So where do we go from here?

Starting point: *enabling local- and country-level ownership and leadership (driver of change 2)*

The onus for action on this issue should rest primarily at the international level – where the greatest share

of resources sits. Attending to the needs of underrepresented groups should always be considered at the earliest stages of planning, even where this is not simple. Opportunities already exist: the **EW4All** initiative has committed to establishing a Multi-Stakeholder Forum to enhance consultation and foster collaboration with a wider group of partners, and the **Water at the Heart of Climate Action initiative** (see Target 3 chapter Story of Change) is adopting an approach that centres local decision-making. The **"Getting Ahead of Disasters" Charter** also notes, in Principle 5, the need to "prioritise locally-led and people-centred approaches to taking action ahead of disasters, with government leadership and greater involvement of local actors and systems." Ultimately, progress should ensure that local actors are not just consulted, but regarded as equal partners and provided with access to resources for implementation based on local needs.

Making sense of the initiatives, partnerships and networks working on early warning and early action

Relevant initiatives, partnerships and networks need to clarify and make sense of their specific added value, how they relate to one another, and what benefits stakeholders can expect from their engagement. This is vital for enabling members of the global community to make informed decisions as to where they dedicate their time and resources.

The increasing number of initiatives, partnerships and networks active along the entire early warning early action value chain gives rise to real risks of confusion and loss of engagement among key stakeholders, and of duplication and/or competition for limited resources among important efforts to make people safer from disasters. Based on research, conversations, interviews, and surveys throughout the year, it has become apparent that REAP has to do its part to clarify its specific mandate and operational niche, and the value it can add to its Partners' ambitions. The purpose of this is not to separate out the initiatives, but to highlight their synergies. For this reason, REAP must also be transparent about its scope and added value in relation to other initiatives – identifying where its sister initiatives have the momentum, focus and resources to better progress certain action areas. This sensemaking process should influence how the initiatives, partnership and networks develop over time, with changes being demand-driven by the organisations and countries they are designed to support. Identifying gaps and ways to fill them by adapting already-established structures will help to avoid a further proliferation of initiatives. For example, questions remain over what the future holds for REAP past 2025, and while the Partnership Stocktake evidenced a desire among Partners to see REAP continue its work, it is not a given that this will happen – if a new phase is needed it must be designed to fulfil a specific gap in the current landscape.

So where do we go from here?

Starting point: *fostering collaboration and linking supply with demand (driver of change 3)*

This State of Play, complementing similar efforts, contributes a starting point to the discussion of where different initiatives are locating themselves on the EWEA value chain (see Annex 1 of full report). REAP encourages other initiatives to engage in similar sensemaking and participate in exchanges on commonalities and differences, to allow new actors to better understand the complementarities and unique value propositions of those working on early warning and early action.

TARGET 1 / STORY OF CHANGE
Building alignment at a National Dialogue on Anticipatory Action

In Nepal, the government seeks to move from conventional disaster response to risk-informed approaches. It supports this shift by leading the development of a shared, national commitment to anticipating disaster impacts and enabling action ahead of shocks. Nepal's objective is clear: saving lives and building a more resilient future through forward-thinking approaches to disaster risk management.

In May 2023, taking this ambition a step further, the country's National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (REAP Partner since 2021) organised the second National Dialogue on Anticipatory Action. The Dialogue brought together government ministries and authorities, such as the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority of the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Ministry of Health and Population, as well as technical partners from the RCRC Movement, INGOs and UN agencies. The Dialogue offered a platform to showcase good practices, to exchange experiences and lessons learned, and to inform Nepal's policy direction on anticipatory action. Three thematic areas were of particular relevance: (1) multi-hazard risks; (2) disaster risk financing and risk transfer mechanisms; and (3) shock-responsive social protection. The National Dialogue benefited from the work of the national Community of Practice on Anticipatory Action and Shock Responsive Social Protection.

In convening this second National Dialogue, the Nepalese government demonstrated national-level leadership in: **integrating anticipatory action with other national systems and policies** such as social protection; integrating anticipatory action **at all governmental levels**; and **linking ambitions to general disaster risk reduction efforts**, as the outcomes directly feed into the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR). Moving this process forward in a joint endeavour serves as a practical example of aligning country- and local-level ownership and leadership, which REAP identifies as a key driver of systemic change.

Where does it go from here? The Nepalese government has promising plans: first, they are working towards a national roadmap to integrate and mainstream coordinated anticipatory action into all aspects of humanitarian response and preparedness; second, the NPDRR wants to establish an "Anticipatory Action Clinic," a dedicated centre for knowledge exchange, and a collective approach among government agencies, non-profit organisations, academia, the private sector, and local communities.

Other countries are also demonstrating commitment to making anticipatory action a cross-sectoral concern: Uganda held its first National Dialogue on Anticipatory Action in 2022, which led the government to set up a Disaster Risk Finance Technical Working Group with representatives from various ministries, departments and agencies in Uganda, the United Nations and the Red Cross. The Uganda Red Cross Society is planning to hold the National Dialogues biannually. Under the lead of Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority, anticipatory action stakeholders also organised the country's first National Dialogue in December 2023. In Bangladesh, the Anticipatory Action Technical Working Group under the leadership of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief hosted the country's second National Dialogue Platform in September 2023.

TARGET 2 / STORY OF CHANGE
Embedding risk-informed approaches in funding and financing decisions

Over the past decade, USAID has developed resources and tools to help advance effective climate adaptation approaches, including early and anticipatory action, as well as disaster risk finance. The USAID Climate Adaptation Support Activity (CASA) has taken this further by publishing three reports aimed at strengthening USAID and the humanitarian community's organisational readiness. The outputs offer a clear vision for linking anticipatory action to disaster risk finance, and for bridging the gap between long-term action to reduce exposure to hazards and their impacts (e.g., through traditional disaster risk reduction programmes) and reactive humanitarian response, through "risk-informed" approaches.

In particular, the policy brief outlines actionable recommendations for donors and other humanitarian actors to scale up risk-informed and anticipatory humanitarian approaches. These recommendations are based on three other outputs: a conceptual framework for humanitarian donors and other practitioners to develop and implement disaster risk finance activities, early action, and anticipatory action; a Disaster Risk Finance and Anticipatory Action Readiness Checklist for practitioners (published as an Annex to the framework); and a global mapping of humanitarian disaster risk finance instruments and initiatives.

The CASA recommendations sit across multiple REAP Targets and Drivers of Change. To ensure that more people are appropriately covered by financing and delivery mechanisms to act ahead of predicted disasters, for example, the recommendations call on humanitarian actors to concentrate on specific impacts they want to address when supporting national-level efforts, rather than merely focusing on using one specific (innovative or DRF) financing instrument and thus following a mechanism-led approach. This is re-emphasised by the call for more risk-layered approaches, going beyond the use of one single instrument to instead layer pre-arranged finance in the most efficient and effective way. This is already happening in practice, for example, in several pooled funds, but it can be done more at scale. To address the challenge that risk-informed approaches require long-term funding at scale beyond the capacities of the current humanitarian system, the reports recommend adopting risk-informed assistance within climate finance strategies, as well as considering how best to coordinate international and national climate-related loss and damage mechanisms with the international humanitarian system. In addition, the reports recommend that disaster risk management frameworks and funding mechanisms, which facilitate risk-informed assistance, be updated; include pre-agreed risk-informed triggers; and be built on risk assessments, accurate forecasts and established early warning systems, as well as arranged in advance to ensure money and resources are available without delays when they are needed.

Together, these reports clearly state that long-term and transformative changes are needed to respond to the challenges posed by the climate crisis – and this means changes at a systemic level. One of these changes will come about by ensuring that the humanitarian system is fully integrated into holistic approaches to climate impacts. To that end, this body of work offers a strong conceptual framework for how to approach this challenge through making better use of available finance.

TARGET 3 / STORY OF CHANGE

Merging indigenous knowledge with technological approaches to put water at the heart

To minimise the impacts of water-related risks and disasters, and to support the scale-up and inclusion of anticipatory action in national and regional DRR policies and strategies in the Nile Basin, a new initiative was launched to reduce water risk and increase resilience. In June 2023, a strong partnership with a joint vision came together to bring local knowledge to scale and integrate it with technological support for better use of water – a valuable resource – and to prevent water-related hazards from becoming disasters, through "Water at the Heart of Climate Action."

REAP Partners including IFRC, WMO and UNDRR from a technical side, together with the SOFF multi-partner financing mechanism, launched the "Water at the Heart" programme in the Nile Basin (Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda, scaling to Rwanda). Funded by the Government of the Netherlands (EUR 55 million, approximately USD 58 million), the approach puts multi-disciplinary country teams in the lead to design country-level WASH policies and actions on forecasting, monitoring, warning about, and ultimately acting upon weather and water-related hazards. The teams will develop country-specific plans to ensure collaboration, alignment and co-creation of the network partners. Early actions aim to prevent humanitarian impacts linked to disaster impacts from both the absence of sufficient water as well as the presence of too much of it. For this, the WMO will strengthen the capacity of and improve the data available to national meteorological organisations; UNDRR will strengthen national policies to reduce the risk of disasters; and IFRC and national RC societies will strengthen the use of local data and knowledge.

The programme supports the entire early warning early action value chain, aiming to improve water-related risk knowledge, monitoring and forecasting, early warning systems, as well as anticipatory actions and locally-led adaptation. As a starting point, the initiative recognises that meaningful participation in decision-making by local and marginalised actors is weak or non-existent when it comes to reaching global policies and platforms for structural changes. To achieve systemic change, it specifically focuses on not only reaching "first/last mile" communities with early actions, but also on putting their knowledge upfront in the development process and is thus a concrete contribution to REAP's Targets and to the EW4All Initiative.

The initiative was initially designed to operate in Sudan as a fourth country located in the Nile Basin, but activity was put on hold due to the conflict that arose in 2023. However, the initiative has been working with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to develop a conflict-sensitive approach to its programme of activity, ensuring that marginalised communities in areas affected by conflict are not left behind. While the five-year programme initially targets a small number of countries, the project aims to be scaled and replicated in more regions if successful.

TARGET 4 / STORY OF CHANGE

Ensuring locally-led anticipatory action through public dialogue and learning

It is evident that locally-led approaches should be embedded throughout the early warning early action value chain, a principle enshrined in REAP's commitment to being people-centred. However, delivering on this commitment means moving beyond the mere rhetoric of inclusive participation and leadership by communities at risk, to offering practical solutions for how these goals can be achieved. The Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), a REAP founding Partner, has risen to this challenge, engaging in public stakeholder dialogues to share knowledge from different fields and actors, all the while being driven by lessons learned at the local level on what is needed to enable local leadership on anticipatory action.

Through the Local Leadership for Global Impact project – a collaborative initiative between GNDR, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH) and local partners – experiences and learnings were gathered from civil society organisations in Southern Africa on applying locally-led approaches to anticipatory action. The purpose of this applied learning approach was to produce a call to action directed at national governments and disaster management agencies, EU Member States and donors, and technical agencies on how to mainstream local approaches into anticipatory action planning and design, including for early warning systems. In order to ensure that the call to action was grounded in local experiences but spoke to broader audiences, GNDR and DKH held a roundtable discussion with international partners to share and refine the call before it was finalised.

Understanding the need to follow policy recommendations with practical steps for implementation, GNDR and DKH developed the Locally Led Anticipatory Action Guide & Toolkit. This resource sets out how to collaborate across civil society organisations, communities, donors, and technical agencies to localise and scale up early warning and early action with a shared understanding and common approaches. The guide and toolkit is designed to serve a broad range of stakeholders, and thus covers the basics of anticipatory action – what it is, who needs to be involved and how it can be approached – as well as what is meant by "locally-led anticipatory action" and practical steps for its implementation (from having requisite financing in place to ownership). It spells out what collaboration with local actors (including civil society networks, disaster management authorities and forecasting agencies) and investing in local structures means for decision-makers. More concretely, it asks decision-makers to adapt legal frameworks to ensure accountability, flexible funding arrangements, and local actors' involvement in shaping resource allocations.

So far, the call to action is mainly based on the experience of several countries in Southern Africa. Further plans include hosting several more national roundtables, sharing insights at international policy events, as well as launching a global campaign targeted to key humanitarian actors on local participation and mainstreaming resilience approaches in contingency planning mechanisms. Importantly, GNDR and DKH call on humanitarian, climate change and development actors to join this endeavour.


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