

**Title: Anticipatory Approach to COVID-19 and other crises**

**Sponsors and Organizers: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); World Food Programme (WFP); United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); START Network; Germany; United Kingdom**

**Date and Time: Thursday 11 June | 8:00am - 9.30am**

### **Background and objectives**

Acting prior to the onset of a hazard to safeguard lives and livelihoods is now becoming widely accepted and gradually embedded within the humanitarian system and disaster risk management.

There is growing evidence that effective use of predictive analytics, early warning information and pre-arranged financing can save lives and lead to more effective, cheaper and more dignified humanitarian action. Country examples to date have shown that acting ahead of shocks has multiple proven benefits, including but not limited to, curbing food insecurity and malnutrition, protecting livelihood assets, resilience building, and supporting the mental well-being of vulnerable families.

The importance of effectively anticipating shocks is particularly relevant today in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This health crisis and the fall-out of the global recession and domestic containment measures have potentially devastating emerging but also future impacts on people's lives and livelihoods. Successfully addressing this depends on effective monitoring, forecasting of likely impacts, coordination among partners, equipping local actors and rapid, anticipatory action.

This side-event will explore the concept of anticipatory action for mitigating shocks and their impact on humanitarian needs. Specifically, it will apply learning from the anticipatory approach work, the core principles and forward-looking considerations of 'anticipation' to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Experiences from key agencies (IFRC, FAO, WFP, OCHA & START Network) will be drawn upon in order to encourage discussions on collective 'next steps' for scaling-up and achieving a system-wide shift towards anticipation.

The event will firstly provide a short overview on the concept of anticipatory action and then move to a panel discussion which will cover the following objectives:

- Key innovations of anticipatory action and their application to the context of the COVID-19 including:

- what elements and best practice from anticipatory action can be useful in the COVID-19 crisis?
- dealing with a crisis within a crisis: how humanitarian actors can protect people from other hazards in a COVID-19 context;
- Encourage critical thinking and learning from the COVID-19 responses for scaling up a system-wide shift towards anticipatory approaches to future crises.

### **Discussion points:**

- What have we learned from past experiences with anticipatory action that can be applied in the COVID-19 context?
- How can we continue to safeguard lives and livelihoods from hazards in a COVID-19 context?
- What uncertainties are there around understanding the impacts of COVID-19 especially in terms of data, assumptions and existing early warning systems? What does that mean for anticipatory action in this space?
- What opportunities and gaps does COVID-19 highlight for anticipatory action? How can it inform the thinking around scale-up and how can we embed anticipatory action into the humanitarian system?

### **Key concrete action points and recommendations/take away messages**

1. With advancements in technology and data availability, anticipating crises and mitigating their humanitarian consequences is not only possible: it is a responsibility. Additional investments should be directed towards the development of standard operating procedures to link early warning to anticipatory action in risk-prone areas;
2. The COVID-19 pandemic adds to the challenges of providing timely and effective humanitarian assistance. On the other hand, it further highlights the importance to accelerate the shift towards a more anticipatory approach based on forward-looking analysis. It is necessary to strengthen partnerships between governments, development and humanitarian organizations, and local communities in order to ensure that early warning information is effectively shared and action is taken ahead of the brunt of primary, secondary and tertiary effects of shocks on people's lives and livelihoods.

### **Format**

The 90-minute event will be chaired by Thomas Zahneisen, Director of Humanitarian Assistance of German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) and Matthew Wyatt, Director, Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department of the United Kingdom Department of International Development (DFID). OCHA will moderate the event. It will consist of a panel discussion from the key agencies who have been active in the anticipatory action arena and also open up the floor for a Q&A.

1. Welcome by the Moderator
2. Opening remarks from the Moderator and Chairs;
3. Short video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16MdCBkiw2c>) [5mins];
4. Setting the scene - opening speeches;
5. Panel discussion: What role does anticipatory action play in the current COVID-19 crisis?;
6. Q&A session
7. Wrap-up

## Chairs

- **Dr Thomas Zahneisen**, Director for Humanitarian Assistance of German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO)
- **Mr Matthew Wyatt**, Director, Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department, Department for International Development (DFID), UK

## Moderator

- **Mr Steve O'Malley**, Lead, COVID-19 team, OCHA

## Setting the scene - opening speeches

- Short introductory video 5min (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16MdCBkiw2c>)
- **Ms Pascale Meige**, Director of Disaster and Crises, IFRC
- **Dr Jonathan Stone**, Head of Secretariat, Risk informed Early Action Partnership (REAP)
- **Mr Patrick Saint-Hilaire**, Ambassador, Chargé d'affaires, Permanent Mission of Haiti to the United Nations

## Panel composition

- **Ms Ana Marie Dizon**, Start Network- FOREWARN Coordinator, CARE Philippines
- **Mr Gernot Laganda**, Chief / Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Programmes, WFP
- **Mr Md. Rafiqul Islam**, Deputy Secretary General, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
- **Ms Dunja Dujanovic**, Early Warning Early Action Lead, FAO/ EA FTF

## Background Material

Anticipatory Action: Collaboration, Examples & Financing: [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/anticipation-hub\\_anticipatory-action-collaboration-examples-activity-6668537259974914049-V\\_KT](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/anticipation-hub_anticipatory-action-collaboration-examples-activity-6668537259974914049-V_KT)

Anticipation Hub Blog Post Series: Anticipatory Approaches and the Pandemic

<https://www.forecast-based-financing.org/anticipation-hub/>

### **Connection details to join the event**

Registration link: [https://fao.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_IOwVda2gTGuWkxnS0Yug7g](https://fao.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IOwVda2gTGuWkxnS0Yug7g)

Please submit any questions to: [Alessia.DeStefani@fao.org](mailto:Alessia.DeStefani@fao.org)

After registration, participants will receive an email with the link to access the event.

### **Contact**

For more information, please contact:

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