

ANTICIPATORY ACTION

BANGLADESH



Getting Ahead of Severe Monsoon Flooding

Today, we can predict with increasing confidence the occurrence and humanitarian impact of certain shocks including out-of-the-ordinary weather events. The projected impact of these events can proactively be mitigated based on pre-identified anticipatory actions.

Building on growing evidence that acting prior to the onset of a predictable, specific and severe hazard is significantly faster, more (cost-)efficient and more dignified than traditional humanitarian responses, OCHA is facilitating the setup of multiple anticipatory action pilots. Each of the OCHA-facilitated frameworks methodically combines three components:

- Robust forecasting** with a clear decision-making process (the trigger mechanism).
- Pre-agreed actions** that can alter the trajectory of the crisis (the anticipatory activities).
- Pre-arranged finance**, including by CERF.

Each pilot also invests in rigorous learning and documentation of evidence. The framework for Bangladesh was set up for severe flooding during the monsoon period. Under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and building on existing structures, FAO, UNFPA, WFP, IFRC and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) collaborated with the government and local implementing partners to scale up a more timely, effective, efficient and dignified response to the anticipated emergency.

In July 2020, following predictions of severe flooding, the framework was triggered for the first time, prompting the activation of financing agreements for pre-agreed activities designed to mitigate the impact of the flood and to stabilize and protect vulnerable people in five districts of the Jamuna river basin.

The Trigger Mechanism

Knowing when to act

Using hydrological forecasts, a two-step trigger system was developed for Bangladesh, consisting of a **readiness trigger** and an

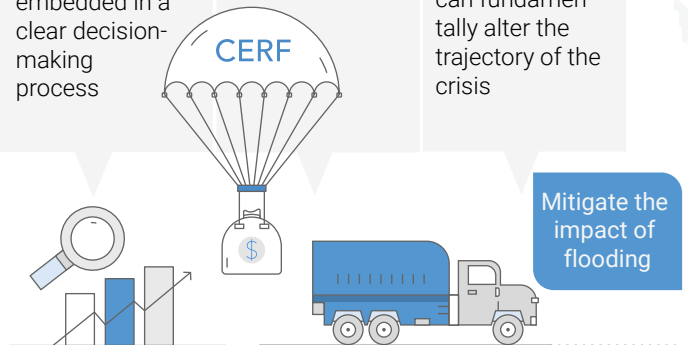
ANTICIPATORY ACTION FRAMEWORK

THE MODEL THE MONEY THE DELIVERY

A robust forecasting embedded in a clear decision-making process

Pre-arranged finance

Pre-agreed action plan that can fundamentally alter the trajectory of the crisis



action trigger. Once a pre-determined waterflow threshold is predicted to be breached 10 days into the future, the first trigger activates the release of funding to cover critical readiness activities. Upon confirmation of the second trigger, recipient agencies begin delivering CERF-funded assistance to communities prior to peak flooding (see illustration below).

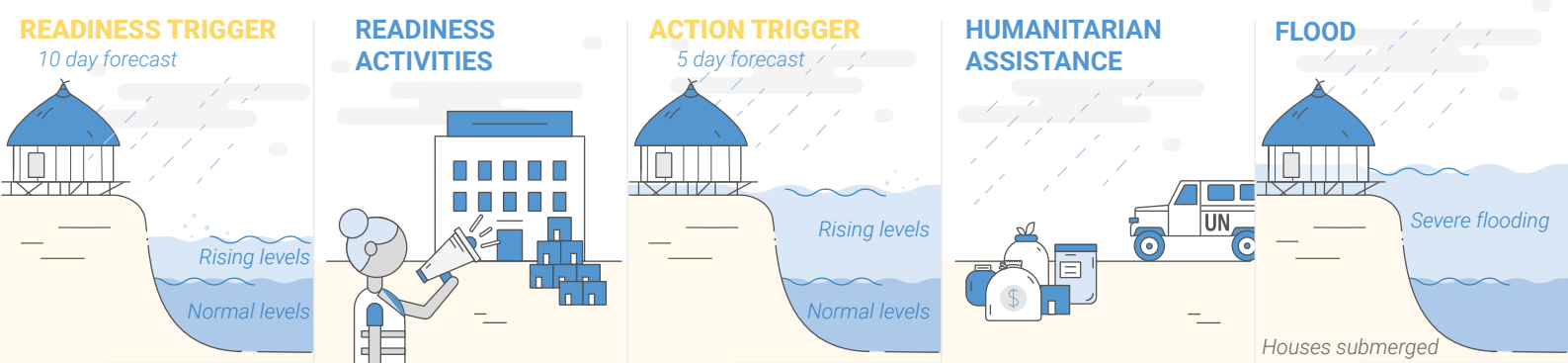
For this pilot, two forecasts, one provided by the Global Flood Awareness System (GLOFAS) and the other by the Bangladesh Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC), were selected based on a thorough study by the Red Cross Climate Center and incorporating previous experience triggering anticipatory action for monsoon floods. A full activation of the framework is contingent on the following two conditions being met.

Stage 1 Readiness Trigger (probabilistic)

The GloFAS 10-day forecast model predicts a 50% likelihood of water levels exceeding 100,000 m³/s over a period of three days (typically occurs 1 in every 5 years)

Stage 2 Action Trigger (deterministic)

The FFWC 5-day lead time model predicts that water levels will exceed the government-defined "Danger Level" by at least 0.85 meters



Anticipatory Activities

Acting when the time is right

All anticipatory action frameworks facilitated by OCHA establish an action plan that is implemented by UN agencies and their partners as soon as trigger conditions are met. Intended to alter the trajectory of an anticipated crisis, the pre-agreed activities are primarily selected based on the following criteria:

Anticipatory character: Actions must be effective in preventing or reducing the humanitarian impact of the predicted shock.





Timing: Each potential action has a specific window of opportunity, outside of which an action loses much of its intended effect. Only those activities that can be carried out between the trigger and the shock impact are chosen for anticipatory action.

Capacity: UN agencies and their implementing partners must have the capacity (thematic, logistic, administrative, financial,

human resources) to implement actions effectively given the available lead time and required scale.

The window of opportunity to act prior to the floods in Bangladesh is relatively short. Once the readiness trigger is activated, the pre-agreed activities need to be carried out in 10 days or less. To maximize impact in the given operating environment, all activities included in the Anticipatory Action Framework are designed to build on and reinforce the existing and functioning disaster management architecture, and not build parallel systems. To promote multiplier effects, multi-sectoral, co-targeted interventions are given priority. All funded activities are in line with CERF's Life-Saving Criteria and directly implemented by UN agencies in partnerships with NGOs, host Governments and Red Cross/Red Crescent societies.

The following interventions are included in the Bangladesh Anticipatory Action framework for monsoon floods:

	ANTICIPATORY ACTION	AIM
 Food security	Provide safe storage drums to protect grains, seed and other assets Provide livestock supplementary feed Distribute water purification tablets and anti-parasite medicines for animals Provide emergency veterinary services	Reduce risk of food insecurity and loss of livelihoods
 Health	Equip health facilities with the means to respond to sexual violence Equip health facilities and midwives with the means to safely deliver babies Distribute menstrual hygiene management kits for adolescent girls Conduct refresher trainings on the clinical management of rape	Mitigate health impacts of flood for women and girls, including maternal death, rape and challenges in menstrual health
 Multi-purpose cash	Provide unconditional, multi-purpose cash to vulnerable households	Stabilize household incomes Retain food security Improve protective measures by beneficiaries to reduce impact of flood Support local markets in affected areas
 Protection	Raise awareness on Gender Based Violence Distribute dignity kits	Mitigate risk of Gender-Based Violence

Pre-arranged Financing

Money when it's most needed and effective

For this pilot, CERF set aside financing to be activated and distributed as automatically as possible once the defined trigger is reached. Relevant CERF documentation, including projects proposals, are pre-filled and pre-approved as part of the framework to ensure funding is made available on a no-regrets basis for the anticipatory humanitarian action within hours of the trigger being met.

Evaluation and Learning

OCHA invests in documenting evidence and learning from all pilots. In line with the Emergency Relief Coordinator's vision for moving from a reactive to an anticipatory humanitarian system, each pilot seeks to provide evidence that collective anticipatory humanitarian action at scale works, and that the anticipatory approach leads to a faster, more efficient (cheaper), and more dignified response.