The Start Fund Crisis Anticipation Window enables members to begin responding before a crisis turns into a disaster. It can be difficult to decide when to trigger an anticipatory alert through the Start Fund and what projects can be the most effective. This document is designed to make it easier for agencies to raise Start Fund anticipatory alerts for disease outbreaks or to submit Start Fund project proposals when an alert has been activated.

**SECTION 01 SHOULDN'T MY AGENCY RAISE AN ANTICIPATION ALERT FOR AN ANTICIPATED DISEASE OUTBREAK?**

**WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED?**

Anticipatory activities could happen after the identification of a zero case but before the likely spread of a disease in the surrounding environment. It’s important to consider all available local, national, regional and international information sources such as: community data sources (including local case indexes), regional health information sources such as WHO regional health observatories and NGO assessments and UN sitreps. However, it’s important to remember that health data can often lag behind the spread of the outbreak because of reporting issues, or this data may not be available because it’s political. It’s important to consider relevant and timely information sources for your particular context.

**SOME INFORMATION PROVIDERS TO CONSIDER:** (click on the links below)

- THE WHO DISEASE OUTBREAKS NEWS (DON)
- GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH INTELLIGENCE NETWORK (GPHIN) for early warning information on potential public health threats worldwide
- THE WHO HEALTH TOPICS INDEX for specific information about various diseases
- THE WHO WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL RECORD (WER) for rapid and accurate dissemination of epidemiological information on cases and outbreaks of diseases
- ProMED for information on outbreaks

**WHO RESOURCES FOR SPECIFIC DISEASES:** (click on the links below)

- FLUNET: a global web-based tool for influenza surveillance. The data at country level are publically available and updated weekly
- CHOLERA DATA SETS: generated from surveillance systems over time to identify vulnerable populations
- MENINGITIS WEEKLY BULLETIN for information specific to the African ‘Meningitis belt’:

**WHAT ARE THE KEY RISK FACTORS THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO THE SPREAD OF A DISEASE?**

Some examples include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSUFFICIENT NUTRIENT INTAKE AND UNSAFE FOOD AND WATER</th>
<th>LACK OF ABILITY OF THE HEALTH SYSTEM TO DETECT, MAP AND CONTAIN DISEASE OUTBREAKS</th>
<th>TYPICAL EPIDEMIOLOGY OF THE DISEASE (IF KNOWN)</th>
<th>HIGH POPULATION DENSITY AND OVERCROWDING</th>
<th>BEHAVIOURAL FACTORS THAT MIGHT PROMOTE THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE (I.E.FUNERAL TRADITIONS, BUSH MEAT CONSUMPTION ETC.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USE OF AND BELIEF IN TRADITIONAL MEDICINE</td>
<td>REMOTENESS, OR CHALLENGES ACCESSING AN AREA OF POTENTIAL OUTBREAK</td>
<td>DISPLACEMENT AND OTHER MOVEMENT PATTERNS THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO THE DISEASE</td>
<td>UPCOMING WEATHER PATTERNS – PARTICULARLY RAIN</td>
<td>LACK OF ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE OUTBREAKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES TO THE PUBLIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>POOR VACCINATION COVERAGE</td>
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As “on the ground” actors, Start agencies have the ability to identify particular vulnerabilities in communities and can therefore anticipate the spread of a disease into an outbreak before it reaches large case numbers.

**WHEN AGENCIES ARE CONSIDERING COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY, SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER ARE:**

- Are there communities that struggle to access healthcare? Where are they? I.e. Mixed with the general population or segregated?
- Is there poor access to potable water, hygiene and sanitation?
- What is the population’s level of knowledge about the disease, vectors, and the possibility of treatment?
- How does the movement of groups within/between communities impact the potential spread of the disease (i.e. traders, living on a key transport route etc)
- Is there the necessary expertise to deal with the disease outbreak?
- Could the disease outbreak have a negative effect on other areas of life such as livelihoods and markets, education, human rights and the existing health system?
- Are there other funding mechanisms that are available to respond?

**WHAT IS THE APPROPRIATE ALLOCATION AMOUNT?**

Anticipation activities are designed to mitigate the financial and humanitarian impacts of crises and this should be reflected in the allocation amount. As a benchmark, past alerts to address disease outbreaks which included activities to prevent the disease from spreading are:

**BURKINA FASO ALERT**

*Dengue fever*

**ALLOCATION AWARDED:**

£150,000

**BENEFICIARIES REACHED:**

114,771

**RESPONDING AGENCIES:**

ALIMA, DOCTORS OF THE WORLD

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**TOGO ALERT**

*Lassa fever*

**ALLOCATION AWARDED:**

£150,000

**BENEFICIARIES REACHED:**

809,729

**RESPONDING AGENCIES:**

PLAN INTERNATIONAL

*NOTE: HIGH BENEFICIARY NUMBERS DUE TO AN ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN*

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS ALERT, CLICK ON THE ALERT ABOVE TO ACCESS THE START FUND PORTAL.
There are a wide variety of effective projects that can mitigate the spread of a disease or the negative impacts of a disease. It’s important to involve community members in designing interventions which are appropriate to their local context. Activities should be specific to the particular disease of concern as actions which may reduce the spread of one disease may do very little for another disease. Organisations should refer to disease control guidelines, such as those provided by the WHO (See pages 43 and 44, Appendix 1 and 2). Start Members have highlighted examples of activities which mitigate the impacts of an anticipated disease outbreak:

**ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION:**
- Community awareness campaigns amongst the most vulnerable community members (i.e. poor urban populations)
- Ensure adequate channels of communication with local community members are prepared in advance for before, during and after a possible disease outbreak; consider working with local and religious leaders to promote health messages
- Advocacy to ensure community behavioural changes to prevent the spread of the disease

**RISK MAPPING AND MONITORING:**
- Identifying the most vulnerable communities through programmes such as GIS (geographic information system) and then sharing this information with stakeholders in advance of a possible disease outbreak; focusing anticipatory activities on the most vulnerable communities with little coping mechanisms
- Mapping critical disease hotspots (i.e. urban centres, difficult to access areas etc) and sharing with key stakeholders in advance of a possible disease outbreak
- Utilising epidemiological and risk assessment methods to identify divers of a disease to enable mitigation measures

**REMEMBER:** Start members also have the option to re-quest to use the ‘Analysis for Action Grant’ for inter-agency information gathering and analysis in order to better understand a context.

**SURGE HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING:**
- Strengthen disease detection and referral mechanisms in vulnerable areas in advance of a possible disease outbreak
- Provide surge capacity building to frontline health staff
- Support local health authorities with active case finding and mapping in order to better understand the scope of a possible outbreak, and to limit transmission and target response measures
- Facilitate the creation of or strengthen cross-border disease mitigation plans
- Water point disinfection or chlorination of water points
- Support services during a suspension of user fees to enable comprehensive access to health care

**WHAT GEOGRAPHIC AREAS SHOULD MY AGENCY FOCUS ON?**

Agencies are encouraged to coordinate their activities effectively according to the geographical areas at risk in order to mitigate the impacts of a forecast disease outbreak. It’s important to consider potential geo support with Start Network partners. The Start Fund team can help to facilitate and broker support for this from mapping organisations such as:

**MapAction**  
If you require maps please contact Emma Mumford, MapAction Operations Director emma.mumford@mapaction.org and please see [http://guides.mapaction.org/](http://guides.mapaction.org/) for examples of mapped products available.

**REACH**  
REACH’s online platform allows agencies to access reports, factsheets, maps and other information products developed by REACH teams worldwide.  
[http://www.reachresourcecentre.info/](http://www.reachresourcecentre.info/)