ANTICIPATORY ACTION
NEPAL

OCHA

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 predict-able, specific and severe hazard is significantly faster, more (cost-)effi-cient 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).

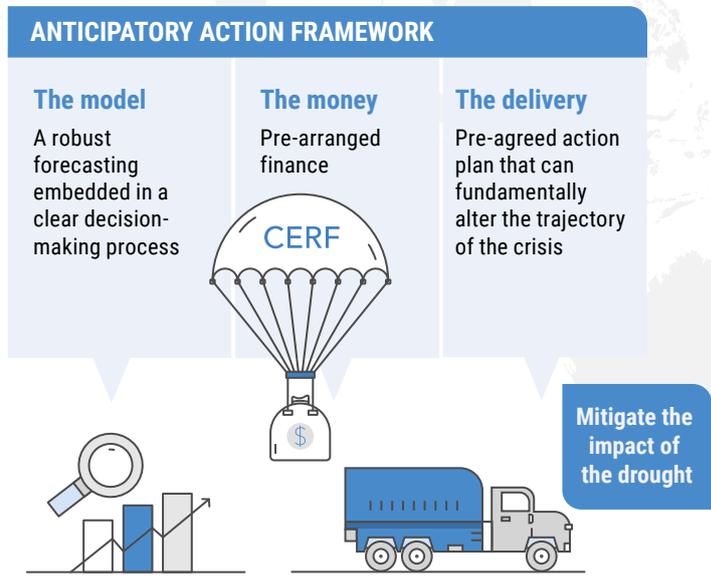**Pre-agreed action**s that can alter the trajectory of the crisis (the anticipatory activities).

Pre-arranged finance, including by CERF.

ANTICIPATORY ACTION FRAMEWORK

The model
A robust forecasting embedded in a clear decision-making process

The money
Pre-arranged finance

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

CERF

Mitigate the impact of the drought

Each pilot also invests in rigorous learning and documentation of evidence. The framework for Nepal is set up for severe flooding during the monsoon period. Under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and building on existing structures, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP collaborated with the government and local implementing partners to design a more timely, effective, efficient and dignified response to the anticipated emergency.
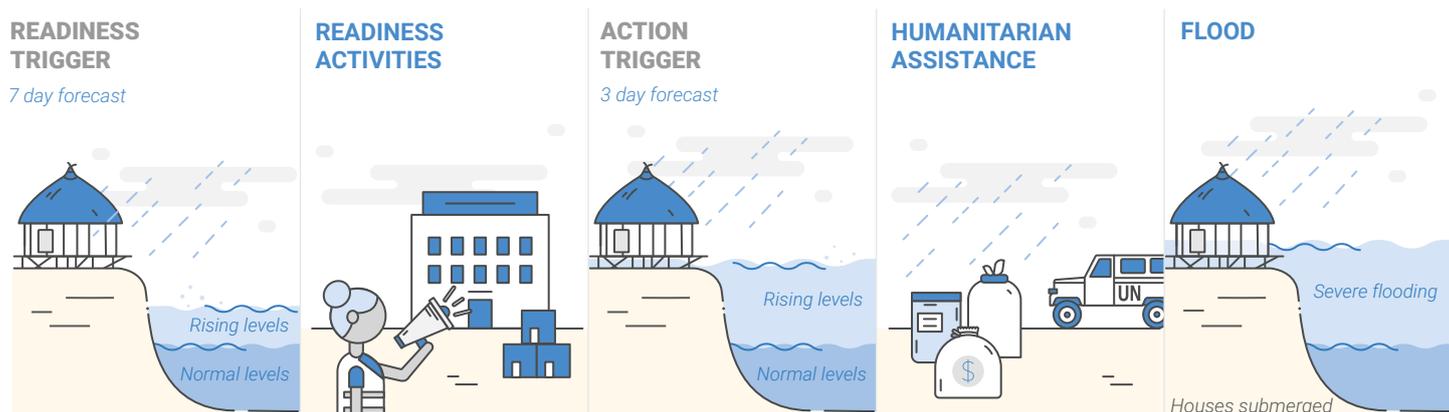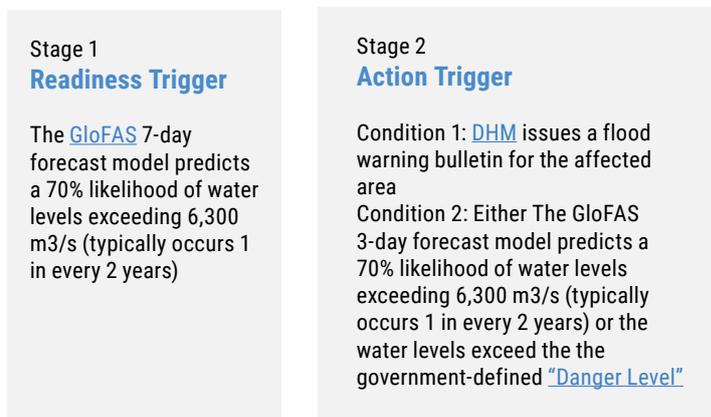
The Trigger Mechanism

Knowing when to act

Using hydrological forecasts, a two-step trigger system was developed for two river basins in Nepal (the Karnali and Koshi basins), consisting of a readiness trigger and an action trigger. Once a pre-determined waterflow threshold is predicted to be breached 7 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).

This pilot relies on forecasts provided by the Global Flood Awareness System (GLoFAS), flood warning bulletins issued by the Government of Nepal's Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM), and real-time river water level monitoring by DHM. A full activation of the framework is contingent on the following two conditions being met.

Stage 1
Readiness Trigger

The GLoFAS 7-day forecast model predicts a 70% likelihood of water levels exceeding 6,300 m3/s (typically occurs 1 in every 2 years)

Stage 2
Action Trigger

Condition 1: DHM issues a flood warning bulletin for the affected area
Condition 2: Either The GLoFAS 3-day forecast model predicts a 70% likelihood of water levels exceeding 6,300 m3/s (typically occurs 1 in every 2 years) or the water levels exceed the the government-defined "Danger Level"

READINESS TRIGGER
7 day forecast

Rising levels
Normal levels

READINESS ACTIVITIES

ACTION TRIGGER
3 day forecast

Rising levels
Normal levels

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

UN

FLOOD

Severe flooding

Houses submerged

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 Nepal is relatively short. Once the readiness trigger is activated, most of the pre-agreed activities need to be carried out within days. To maximize impact, all activities included in the 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 Nepal Anticipatory Action framework for monsoon floods:

ANTICIPATORY ACTION ACTIVITIES

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Reduce morbidity and mortality

Actvities
- Repair WASH facilities at evacuation sites
- Raise awareness about hygiene promotion

Health

Mitigate flood-related health impacts, including maternal death, rape and challenges in menstrual health

Activities
- Equip health facilities to provide sexual- and reproductive healthcare services
- Equip health facilities and midwifes with the means to safely deliver babies
- Provide conditional cash to pregnant women to facilitate referrals and access to obstetric services

Protection

Promote GBV and child protection outcomes

Activities
- Raise awareness on gender-based violence
- Distribute dignity kits
- Provide conditional cash to survivors of GBV
- Deploy community psychosocial workers

Multi-purpose Cash

Stabilize household incomes, reduce households' reliance on negative coping strategies and support local markets

Activities
- Provide unconditional, multi-purpose cash to vulnerable households
- Distribute comprehensive relief packages

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 frameworks. In line with the Emergency Relief Coordinator's vision for moving from a reactive to an anticipatory humanitarian system, each framework 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.