



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Home Affairs
National Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Authority



Third National Dialogue on Anticipatory Action

Towards a National Framework on Anticipatory Action

Hyatt Regency, Kathmandu | 9-10 May 2024

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SUPPORTED BY:



FOREWORD

In recent years, Nepal has witnessed the increasing impact of climate induced hazards emphasising the urgent need for effective disaster preparedness and response. Anticipatory Action (AA) has emerged as a crucial approach to reduce the impacts of such disasters before they occur, demonstrating the power of proactiveness in humanitarianism that save lives, protect livelihoods, and build community resilience.

The Third National Dialogue on Anticipatory Action, convened in 2024, marked a significant milestone in our collective journey towards a more resilient Nepal. This gathering brought together over 150 experts from diverse fields, including government representatives, scientists, humanitarian actors, private sector leaders, media, and members of the Anticipatory Action Community of Practice (CoP). The Dialogue's central theme, "Towards a National Framework for Anticipatory Action," underscored the shared vision and commitment to scale up and harmonise AA efforts across the country.

Nepal has made remarkable progress in developing and implementing anticipatory measures over the years. However, there remains a pressing need for a cohesive policy framework that can guide and unify these efforts at the national level. Discussions during the national dialogue provided a unique opportunity to exchange ideas, share evidence-based practices, and address the challenges and opportunities. It also paved the way for establishing improved collaboration and joint actions and a roadmap of commitments to expedite the widespread adoption of anticipatory approaches.

This report encapsulates the rich discussions, lessons learned, and actionable insights from the third national dialogue. It is a testament to our unwavering commitment to a future where disaster impacts are substantially reduced, and communities across Nepal are better prepared and protected. We hope that the collective knowledge and roadmap outlined in this report will inspire further collaboration and innovation, driving us closer to joint actions for a safer, more resilient nation.

Let us continue to work together, share knowledge, and push forward with a unified purpose, recognising that Anticipatory Action is not just a strategy—it is a shared responsibility.

Anil Pokhrel

Chief Executive

National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

Authority

Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of Nepal

THEMATIC FOCUS



A. Multi-hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS):

The NDRRMA is developing a National Multi-hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) framework, aligned with the Early Warning for All Initiative. This theme focused on the government's action plans for developing an End-to-End Early Warning System (EWS) that prioritises end users, emphasising their knowledge and experiences. The session also delved into the challenges and opportunities related to forecasts, risk communication.

B. Financing and Resourcing for Anticipatory Action:

The session emphasised on institutionalising AA and exploring financing sources that can be rapidly deployed based on forecasts. This topic focused on examining various predetermined financing mechanisms, such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), and Start Network's Start Fund. The participants also addressed barriers and opportunities related to mobilising the government's disaster management fund for AA.

C. Early Actions: Practices, Protocols, and Evidence:

Nepal has accumulated substantial experience in anticipatory action. Collectively, we have progressed from testing and

piloting to developing early action protocols and standard operating procedures. These protocols have been tested through simulations and activated during seasonal and unseasonal floods. This topic will also provide insights into the evidence generated from these simulations and activations.

D. Linking Anticipatory Action with Social Protection:

Social protection programmes inherently have a shock-responsive element, as they address life-cycle shocks that negatively affect families or individuals, such as birth, old age, or illness. However, there is growing recognition that these programmes, with their extensive coverage of vulnerable populations, should be leveraged to address increased needs following a disaster. Evidence from Nepal suggests that linking AA with social protection can expedite early actions and support its institutionalisation.

E. Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI):

The elements of PGI are vital. The approaches to mainstreaming protection have evolved significantly, with most humanitarian actors now familiar with protection principles, focusing on avoiding harm and ensuring inclusive and risk-sensitive targeting of beneficiaries. This theme explored the complexities and progress of integrating PGI into AA.

KEYNOTE SPEECHES



Mr. Azmat Ulla, Head of Delegation, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Mr. Azmat Ulla highlighted the widening humanitarian needs fuelled by climate change and demanded new approaches and alternative ways of working, emphasising local action and innovative financing. He commended Nepal Red Cross Society's work on localised AA related to monsoon and floods, showcasing their effectiveness in saving lives. He applauded NDRRMA's efforts in scaling up AA by initiating the process of developing a National Framework, calling for government-led initiatives alongside NGOs. He pledged IFRC's commitment to support Nepal's efforts in AA, and Early Warning System (EWS) coupled with Early Actions (EA).

Mr. Michael Kroft, Representative, UNESCO Nepal

Michael Kroft highlighted the significance of the National Dialogue emphasising its continuation from previous dialogues by the NDRRMA. He stressed on the importance of developing a comprehensive AA framework for Nepal to enable humanitarian organisations to act ahead of disasters. Mr. Kroft cited the UN Agency for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), stating that AA is faster, more dignified, and cost-effective than post-event responses. He emphasised collaboration with the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the integration of AA into national strategies, supported by funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) of the UN. Mr. Kroft advocated for sustainable multi-year financial resources to expand initiatives and enhance coordination for multi-hazard AA.



Dr. Jagadishwor Karmacharya, Director General, Department of Hydrology and Meteorology

Dr. Jagadishwor Karmacharya highlighted the importance of Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS) prioritising hazards related to hydrology and meteorology due to Nepal's geological fragility topped by climate change. He stressed on the need for investment in station networks and forecasting models, but also acknowledged challenges in data utilisation and system operation. The DHM aims to generate useful information from existing systems through collaborations with development partners for heat wave monitoring and sending SMS alerts. Dr. Karmacharya stressed

on the need for capacity building and policy development to enhance forecasting effectiveness, advocating for collaboration to avoid duplication and achieve sustainability. He affirmed DHM's readiness for AA through various forecasting methods and called for collective support towards common goals.



Dr. Ganga Lal Tuladhar, Member, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council

Dr. Ganga Lal Tuladhar stressed on the importance of the National Dialogue in shaping the AA framework for Nepal. Reflecting on past disasters like the 2015 earthquake, he highlighted the constitutional provisions for disaster risk management and emphasised the significance of early warning, preparedness, and response, noting the effectiveness of prevention over rehabilitation and reconstruction,

and the need for collective responsibility. He commended the efforts of the NDRRMA and advocated for increased national budget allocation towards disaster management. Mr. Tuladhar urged participants to contribute innovative ideas for framework development, emphasising the need for collaborative action to save lives.

Mr. Anil Pokhrel, Chief Executive, NDRRMA

Mr. Anil Pokharel highlighted the evolution of AA in Nepal over the past three years. He emphasised the collaborative efforts in risk understanding, EWS and risk communication to reach each household. He stressed the importance of collaboration with various stakeholders, including ministries, UN agencies, Red Cross movement partners, international agencies, and NGOs in finalising the national framework. Mr. Pokhrel elaborated on the ongoing efforts, such as the development of a National framework on the Multi-hazard Early Warning System and the National Gender Equality, Disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) strategy. He highlighted initiatives like the volunteer management system (VMS), risk communication campaigns, and the establishment of a shock-responsive social protection (SRSP) task force. Mr. Pokhrel underscored the need for policy reform, budget allocation, and modern technology adoption to address challenges like forest fire effectively. He discussed the integration of disaster risk management into infrastructure projects like the upper Arun hydropower project. He emphasised collaboration with global partners and participation in initiatives like the UN's "Early Warning for All" programme. Mr. Pokhrel concluded the session by expressing gratitude for the collaborative efforts and acknowledging the progress made on AA awareness and implementation. He emphasised the importance of continued collaboration and innovation to effectively address emerging challenges and ensure the success of AA initiatives in Nepal.



PLENARY SESSION

A. Anticipatory Action in Multi-Hazard Early Warning System

Moderator – Mr. Ajaya Dixit, ED – Institute for Social and Environmental Transition

Panelist:

- Rameshwor Marahatta, Joint Secretary, NDRRMA
- Dr. Archana Shrestha, Deputy Director General, DHM
- Nirmala Chaudhary, DRR focal person, Tikapur Municipality
- Ministry of Information Communication and Technology
- Hervé Gazeau, Programme Coordinator, IFRC

Background

The NDRRMA is developing a National Multi-hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) framework that is also aligned with the Early Warning for All Initiative. Under this topic, we will learn about the government's action plans towards developing an End-to-End EWS that puts the end users of the early warning messages and their knowledge and experience at the centre.

Anticipatory Action (AA) approach relies on our ability to anticipate and understand potential future threats. Forecasting plays a key role in determining the feasibility and success of AA strategies by predicting hazards accurately. By using advanced forecasting techniques like Impact-based Forecasting (IbF), we can design early intervention measures to mitigate risks to vulnerable populations. It's crucial to review available forecasting capacities for different hazards in a country, assessing their reliability and identifying any gaps. This knowledge helps decision-makers prioritise and invest in AA strategies, ultimately strengthening community resilience against future disasters.

As such, the session was designed to delve into insights gathered from various stakeholders, including the DHM, NDRRMA, local governments, development partners, telecommunication service companies, and the IFRC/Red Cross, as well as local communities.

These insights will inform the development of the National Framework for Anticipatory Action.

Recommendations

- Increase monitoring in mountainous region for floodings. The DHM is shifting to IbF to better predict and manage disasters. This includes new policies for stakeholder cooperation and improved communication across sectors. Partnering with NGOs and municipalities will make information more accessible, bolstering climate resilience.
- Strengthen risk assessment system for flood damage evaluation and claim validation. The municipality will enhance record-keeping and communication to ensure prompt action on early warnings, aiming to build community trust and disaster preparedness.
- Improve disaster readiness. NDRRMA is developing a multi-hazard risk assessment guideline and enhancing coordination and monitoring. Effective communication systems and collaboration between agencies like DHM and Department of Mines and Geology (DMG) are essential for comprehensive early warning and disaster risk management.
- Scale up EWS based on lessons from the pilots by prioritising vulnerable areas with a multi-hazard method. Increase investment in local governance and response, valuing grassroots efforts, and recognising the efforts of youth and volunteers, especially the Nepal Red Cross as essential for inclusive, scalable actions.
- Develop a unified national alert systems for improved communication across hazards and empowering communities to respond. There is a need to gather feedback, impact assessments, and monitoring to evaluate and improve interventions. These steps aim to strengthen Nepal's resilience to multi-hazard threats through public cooperation and informed action.

B. Financing for Anticipatory Action

Moderator – Hemanta Dangal, Humanitarian Manager, Save the Children

Panelist:

Piush Kayastha, Program Officer, European Union Humanitarian Aid Operations

Goma Devi Chemjong, Under Secretary, NDRRMA

Ganesh Chaudhary, Mayor, Janaki Municipality

Santosh Dahal, Humanitarian Coordination Officer, UNRCO

Prajwal Acharya, DRM Programme Manager, IFRC

Pramila Subedi, Programme Manager- Start Fund Nepal

Background:

Financing for AA is crucial to implement activities in advance, in collaboration and coordination with the government, development agencies, and communities. In Nepal, it's essential to understand the legal framework and provisional connectivity of AA. Although the GoN's Monsoon Preparedness and Response Plan, National Disaster Response Framework, and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Act mention preparatory actions based on weather forecasts, none of the provisions discuss financing for AA.

The NDRRMA plays a crucial role in defining the financing mechanism in line with the existing rules and legal provisions for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) in Nepal. Planning activities, guiding local government, monitoring, coordination, and collaboration are the fundamental principles that define investment opportunities guided by a robust framework of AA.

The local governments should lead the operational activities when designing AA activities and work closely with the local administration. Financing from local resources could be a starting point for implementing critical activities based on forecasts for hazards like floods, heat waves, cold waves, fires, droughts, and landslides.

However, with scarce resources, limited activities might not lead to increased preparedness for at-risk vulnerable

communities, and the risk of acting in vain always impedes investment and financing in anticipatory action. Therefore, the financing mechanism must account for investments that can increase preparedness and early action capabilities where local governments and communities share an understanding of the risks and opportunities.

The session was intended to explore learning from the federal and local government, development partners, and UN Agencies to provide insights into the National Framework for Anticipatory Action. The speakers' insights helped in informing the legal and provisional basis for anticipatory action in Nepal and align with the focus on agreeing on a national framework this year.

Recommendations

- Bridge the gap between the needs to further AA and available funding mechanisms by connecting climate financing with AA.
- Foster public-private partnerships to harness innovative technologies for early warning, early action and response.
- Incorporate multi-hazard approaches and scale up collaborative efforts across sectors to enhance resilience and preparedness.
- The National framework on AA underscores the need for policy coherence and institutional support to mainstream AA practices effectively. Identify and address legal barriers and streamline fund utilisation for AA initiatives.
- Increase investment to enhance the reliability of forecasts and prioritise AA for vulnerable populations. Categorise AA priorities to ensure equitable access, particularly for marginalised communities.
- Increase investment in human resource capacity at all levels of governance and continued training and knowledge enhancement.
- Prioritise lifesaving and livelihood interventions. Leverage public participation for resource mobilisation and infrastructure maintenance. Expand insurance coverage for farmers in flood-prone areas.
- Creation of pooled funding to invest in preparedness activities, such as capacity building and risk reduction measures, to facilitate AA.

C. National Framework on Anticipatory Action

Moderator – Madhab Uprety, Red Cross Red Cross

Panelist:

- Government - NDRRMA (Joint Secretary – Rameshwor Marattha)
- Dinesh Gurung, DCA, Programme Manager, Community of Practice on AA, Co-lead
- Government- MoFAGA

Background:

Various agencies in Nepal, including the United Nations, international NGOs, and Red Cross actors are working on AA. However, this concept is still new to several government ministries, departments, and local authorities, which has led to limited coordination and collaboration among government agencies and development partners working on AA. Additionally, there is a limited understanding about the concept and implementation approach of AA among most development and humanitarian partners, creating confusion and the need for a common national framework to clarify the concept and implementation modality of AA in the country. In this context, NDRRMA is initiating a multi-stakeholder collaborative process to establish a national framework for AA, that establishes a common legal foundation to mainstream AA within the country's disaster management efforts and support sustainable scale-up AA across multiple hazards in Nepal. Having a framework for early action will help to create coherence and synergy among development partners across Nepal that augurs well for a consistent approach towards the design, development, and implementation of AA in Nepal.

The dialogue session was intended to kick off the conversations around the development national framework on AA. Specifically, NDRRMA focus on learning from international experiences of the designing and implementing similar frameworks and roadmaps and sought inputs from the wider stakeholders around the process for the formulation and endorsement of the national framework. Building on these initial inputs, NDRRMA will lay out an institutional process and plan for the development of a national framework on AA, that will be further developed over a course of time through a multi-stakeholder consultation at different levels.

Recommendations:

- Develop conceptual clarity on AA amongst wider stakeholders and establish an implementation model – defining and selecting appropriate adaptation models and strategies and the institutional coordination mechanism all government levels.
- Streamline responsibilities and establish clear mandates amongst government agencies for DRM. Improve coordination between government, civil society, and private sector actors necessary for coherent adaptation, planning and implementation.
- Prioritise planning, implementation, monitoring, and collaboration to access investment prospects on AA framework.
- Local governments should align their work on AA with local administration and initiating funding from local sources for essential activities to mitigate disasters like floods and landslides.
- In Nepal, securing sustainable financing for adaptation initiatives at the government level may be challenging. Limited fiscal resources, competing priorities, and uncertainties around external funding sources can hinder long-term planning and implementation of adaptation projects.
- It is essential to understand the legal framework and provisional connectivity of AA with Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act. Although, Monsoon Preparedness and Response Plan, National Disaster Response Framework and DRRM Act mentioned preparatory measures and actions based on the weather forecast, none of the provisions discuss the financing for AA.



PARALLEL SESSIONS

A. Risk Visualisation and Communication

Lead Agencies: Youth Innovation Lab (YI-Lab) and National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA)

The session on Risk Visualisation and Communication at the 3rd National Dialogue on Anticipatory Action in Nepal focused on building a shared vision for a National Framework on Anticipatory Action. It brought together diverse expertise, innovative ideas, and impactful stories to improve risk communication strategies tailored to Nepal's context.

The session emphasised integrating socio-cultural dimensions and applying best practices for effective communication. Through hands-on demonstrations and interactive exercises, participants engaged directly with proactive risk communication methods. Expert panel discussions provided diverse insights and highlighted evidence-based approaches from real-world scenarios. The session outcomes aimed to empower communities with practical knowledge, encourage interactive and experiential learning, incorporate indigenous and nature-based solutions, and present replicable innovations for disaster management practitioners.

Key objectives of the session

- Effective risk communication tailored to vulnerable communities is pivotal for an inclusive AA National Framework by empowering the communities at risk with relevant information, enabling informed decisions, and proactive risk mitigation.
- Encouraging innovative approaches and learning from diverse experiences enhances community resilience by incorporating adaptable strategies. The framework addresses emerging challenges effectively.
- Engaging government stakeholders and experts at all levels fosters collaboration, leveraging resources for the implementation of the National Framework on AA.

Recommendation from the session

- In response to the question regarding the essentials for effective risk communication, 65 respondents highlighted the importance of simplified language, awareness, and robust communication channels.
- Emphasis given to citizen science approach and inclusive communication, advocating for the integration of local languages, songs, mural arts, participatory mapping, IVR (Interactive Voice Response), mobile games, drama, jingles, social media, SMS, household-level risk mapping, and visualisation techniques.
- Ensure effective risk communication by ensuring user-friendly system, use of local languages, an inclusive and multi-hazard approach, risk transfer mechanisms, indigenous knowledge, existing risk assessments, and risk-informed triggers.
- Integrate various tools developed by UN agencies and I/NGOs into the National System Bipad Portal, hosted by the NDRRMA. This integration is crucial for ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of risk communication efforts.

B. Forecast Café

The session aimed to delve into the forecast challenges and opportunities encountered by humanitarian communities and the national weather forecasting (DHM) service to identify potential opportunities to execute AAs. Given the pivotal role of forecasts in AA, the session underscored the need for reliable, timely, and accurate forecasts and their sources. However, Nepal currently faces challenges in producing such forecasts, necessitating a discussion on possible solutions. The key objectives included identifying strategies for accessing reliable and timely forecasts, discussing methods to enhance forecast accuracy, and exploring opportunities for collaboration among stakeholders, particularly DHM and other regional forecasting services. By addressing these challenges and exploring ways to improve forecasts, the session aimed to inform the National Framework for AA in the forecasting front. Additionally, based on the most recent

national scoping exercise for AA, the session touched upon major learnings and practices from the wider humanitarian community regarding triggers, their application, and challenges in triggering

AA.Recommendation from the session

- **Strengthen Data Sharing:** Enhance collaboration and partnerships among global, regional, and national institutions for efficient data sharing mechanisms, ensuring reliable and accurate forecasts.
- **Foster Cooperation:** Promote cooperation and collaboration at national, regional, and global levels to effectively address challenges associated with weather forecasting and EWS.
- **Update Technological Infrastructure:** Upgrade tools and technologies for data gathering, analysis, and management, while ensuring optimal utilisation of existing systems within DHM.
- **Capacity Building:** Prioritise knowledge and skill development through coaching, orientation, and capacity building initiatives to effectively operate updated tools and technologies, ensuring sustainable operations.
- **Engage Research Institutions:** Collaborate with research institutes and academia to conduct research and evaluation activities, such as assessing forecast accuracy and determining warning and danger levels, thereby enhancing forecasting capabilities. That will allow DHM to focus on specific prioritised areas.

C. Activation Success and Failure

The session on Activation focused on sharing practical experiences from government and non-government partners involved in AA. It explored successes, challenges, and even failures that have influenced AA work over time, aiming to shape a comprehensive national AA framework. The session featured experiences from multiple districts, including Kailali, Banke, Siraha, Rasuwa, Sindhupalchok, Sarlahi, Rautahat, Dhanusha, and Mahottari.

Key learnings were drawn from AA efforts during floods in 2021 and 2022 in the Karnali River region (Kailali district), the 2023 floods in Rautahat, landslides in Rasuwa, and anticipatory responses to cold waves in 2021. Discussions also covered the use of AA tools for heat and cold waves,

supported by Danish Red Cross, People in Need (PIN), and CARE. The session highlighted a joint initiative by the DHM and CARE to develop an interactive web portal for monitoring heat and cold waves, as well as PIN's collaboration with Ram Laxman Group to install Local Early Warning Systems (LEWS) in Madhesh Province.

Recommendation from the session

- To ensure effective response to multiple hazards, triggers should be both uniform and tailored to local circumstances. For instance, automatic activation of protocols should be developed based on the specific needs and situations of each municipality. The few essential things that need to be focused during the trigger development process are geo morphology, social norms, runoff model, rainfall and soil moisture.
- To enhance the effectiveness and reliability of the existing EWS, it is imperative to reinforce its infrastructure and expand its coverage to include additional relevant locations. This proactive measure ensures that communities at risk are adequately equipped with timely alerts and information, bolstering overall AA, disaster preparedness, and response capabilities. Based on the learnings, expanding the IbF also needs to standardise the risk assessment framework.
- The existing plan/policy should be AA-friendly but the National framework should play a key role in reducing the obstacles
- The framework should address the roles and responsibilities of the three tiers (Federal, Province and Local government) and district authorities.
- AA should be technical-friendly and also build the capacity of relevant stakeholders.
- Clarity regarding the financial mechanism is crucial. The framework should outline strategies for mobilising and channelling funds from local, provincial, federal, and other relevant agencies.
- The framework should address the selection criteria for beneficiaries, considering factors such as vulnerability and exposure to hazards. Additionally, it should define the scope of targeting, outlining the specific demographics or geographic areas that will be prioritised for assistance.

This ensures that resources are allocated effectively to those most in need.

- Engage the existing community structures by defining their clear roles, for e.g.: *Badghar, Chiraki etc.*

D. Operationalising National Volunteer Management Guidelines for Early Actions

Volunteer management is key to effective disaster management and AA. In Nepal, NDRRMA, in partnership with the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), has developed guidelines and established volunteer bureaus to strengthen disaster preparedness and response.

The “Operationalising National Volunteer Management Guidelines for Early Actions” empowers communities by mobilising volunteers for early warnings, risk assessments, evacuations, and support for vulnerable groups. This proactive approach reduces disaster impacts and fosters community ownership, enhancing collaboration and decision-making. Training initiatives equip volunteers with skills for AA, aiding in data collection and informed resource allocation. By integrating these guidelines, disaster resilience is strengthened, contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals and fostering long-term community sustainability.

Recommendation from the session

- **Easy, Transparent, and Accessible Recruitment System:** Ensure the recruitment process is straightforward, transparent, and accessible to all potential candidates.
- **Clear Mobilisation Plan with Specific Job Descriptions:** Develop a clear mobilisation plan that includes specific job descriptions to outline roles and responsibilities.
- **Capacity Building with Essential Logistics:** Implement capacity-building initiatives, providing necessary logistics such as personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure readiness and safety.
- **Accessible Database System:** Maintain an accessible database system for efficient information management and retrieval.
- **Reward and Recognition:** Establish a system for rewarding and recognising contributions to motivate and retain personnel.

- **Link with Local Disaster Management System:** Create strong links with the local disaster management system to ensure coordination and integration of efforts.

Localisation of AA: practices and policies, community engagement

Team lead/Focal person for the session: Nabin Shrestha, People in Need

Session task team: PIN, DCA, Plan International, WFP

This session focused on implementing AA at the grassroots level, emphasising policy frameworks, best practices, challenges, lessons learned, and community involvement in managing hazards like landslides and floods. It aimed to foster dialogue among local municipalities, promoting collective learning and knowledge exchange to enhance preparedness.

Key topics discussed included:

- **Policy Frameworks:** Analysis of municipal-led frameworks, such as early action protocols, and discussions on systems for early warning, risk dissemination, AA in terms of planning, designing triggers, and actions, and financial arrangements.
- **Localisation Successes:** Case studies demonstrated the benefits of early actions tailored to community needs, addressing challenges like resource limitations, technical gaps, and coordination.
- **Community Engagement:** Emphasis on active community involvement to strengthen resilience, local capabilities, and participatory decision-making.

The session underscored the importance of collaborative learning to support a standardised but adaptable national AA framework, responsive to specific hazards and challenges.

Recommendation from the session

- Local representatives and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) need awareness and capacity building to strengthen the building blocks of AA, including forecasting, early warning, risk information, planning, designing triggers and actions, and pre-arranged finance.

- Simplified and timely dissemination of forecast, risk information, and potential impacts is crucial for implementing AA at the local level.
- Embracing the “Think globally, act locally” approach ensures that AA practices are adapted to local contexts and continue effectively.
- Clearly defined hazard-specific triggers (readiness and activation), roles for personnel at federal, provincial, and local levels, and pre-financing mechanisms are vital for successful AA actions.
- Developing clear AA guidelines at the municipal level by NDRRMA or MoFAGA would standardise hazard-specific early actions locally.

Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Anticipatory Action

Lead Agency: UN Women

Focal Agencies: Danish Red Cross, Plan International Nepal, UNFPA

Crises impacts women, girls, men, and boys differently due to societal roles and pre-existing inequalities. Vulnerabilities

are often worsened by factors like age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, caste, ethnicity, and religion. Discriminatory practices and gender roles heighten risks for marginalised groups, such as persons with disabilities, gender minorities, female-headed households, adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, the elderly, Dalit women, and ethnic or religious minorities. These groups face barriers to accessing services, information, economic opportunities, and decision-making platforms, often experiencing increased risks of gender-based violence.

The session highlighted the importance of recognising intersectional discrimination and addressing the specific needs, capacities, and priorities of these groups. It emphasised integrating protection, gender equality, and inclusion into AA efforts. Discussions focused on government strategies, protection protocols, and designing inclusive AA plans with equitable financing, data management, and local leadership. The session aimed to promote active participation and leadership of women, girls, and marginalised groups to drive transformative change and ensure equitable disaster preparedness and response.



Recommendation from the session

S.No.	Area	Recommendations
1	Plans and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The framework should be made after extensive consultation with diverse groups as mentioned above. • Effective implementation of the National GEDSI Strategic Action Plan on DRR and commitment to fully fund the plan by government and development partners. • All AA policies and plans to be informed by strong GEDSI analysis in the affective communities (differential needs, concerns, and existing gaps). • Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) to be integrated throughout the DRM cycle, with conceptual clarity. • All DRR plans to specify GEDSI specific and targeted action, including use of intersectional lens with strong indicators on women's leadership, engagement of representative women's rights organisations and CBO networks of marginalised groups. • Effective monitoring of the action plans engaging the community and GEDSI and PGI experts and stakeholders.
2	Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity and intersectional lens in protection mechanism • Invest in capacity strengthening of local stakeholders (local government, protection actors, local women's groups/excluded and vulnerable group CBOs; CSOs). • Ensure sectoral integration with a focus on PGI.
3	AA from design to financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the engagement of the most vulnerable groups, ensure GEDSI analysis to identify differential needs, concerns and existing gaps. • Ensuring meaningful, equitable participation and representation in decision making related to AA of marginalised and vulnerable groups, throughout the AA cycle (design, implementation, monitoring, learning). • Develop a result framework with strong and transformative outcomes, output, activities, indicators that ensures effective benefits and services to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. • Pre-arranged financing and integrate GEDSI responsive budget principles, and GEDSI marker from the design stages. • Create comprehensive community engagement plans for GEDSI focused and targeted tailored actions. • GEDSI inclusive user friendly and accessible infrastructure (safety and security and access to services for all vulnerable groups including GBV survivors, LGBTIQ+ individuals). • Integrate policy and appropriate measures for prevention of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse (PSEA) in all humanitarian and DRR programmes. • Integrate capacity building of local community stakeholders, local volunteer groups in AA preparedness, so that they are capacitated to respond to upcoming disasters in the community. • Set a criteria to inform the most vulnerable, at-risk groups according to the following vulnerability. For example, economically weak groups: land-less, homeless, slum dwellers, (returnee) migrant workers; minority groups: religious and ethnic minorities, Dalit groups, persons with disabilities, gender, and sexual minorities.

4	Data, information, and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate and strengthen collection and use of sex, age, disability, diversity data and generate GEDSI specific data and evidence, from all AA sources. • Ensure risk informed triggers and use of inclusive communication channels. • Establish feedback mechanisms to receive direct feedback from the community. • Create mechanisms for inclusion of the most marginalised groups without formal national identification for inclusive access to services. • Develop, manage and update roster of services and inclusive human resources available for PGI responsive interventions (psychosocial counsellors, community psychosocial counsellors, Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness-PASSA; LGBTQIA+ services)
5	Community response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To build and strengthen capacities of women in non-traditional skills like emergency volunteers, women in rescue, emergency first aid providers for transformative approaches. • Integration of citizen science in AA. • Integration and recognition of indigenous and traditional informal governance structures (eg. <i>Badghar</i>, <i>Katuwal</i>) • Meaningful mobilisation of local CBOs, CSOs including local women and youth groups. • Strengthening capacities of National Volunteers for PGI in AA.

Shock Responsive Social Protection

Background:

Nepal is currently developing a Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) guideline to effectively utilise existing social protection programmes in managing emergencies. The primary goal is to enhance the country's resilience to shocks, such as natural disasters or economic crises.

Recommendation from the Session

- Nepal's existing social protection programmes, particularly the Social Security Allowance (SSA) and the Prime Minister's Employment Programme (PMEP), should be leveraged for anticipatory action and response.
- The policy allows the social protection mechanism or its components to be used before, during and after an emergency.
- There is flexibility in advancing the payment schedule of social assistance and the municipality can decide the same.
- The municipality level can be the right platform where social protection data can be extracted and used for emergencies as the municipality is responsible for both tasks.
- The Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) guideline, which is being drafted, correctly shows how social protection can be linked to AA.

Anticipatory Action Evidence and Knowledge

The WFP's impact evaluation on AA during the 2022 floods in Bardiya and Kailali districts compared pre-shock assistance and early cash transfers (AA group) with transfers done three to four weeks after the floods (post-shock group) after re-verification of damage caused by the disaster. The study, using Cluster RCT, surveyed approximately 10,500 households in the AA group and 2000 households in the post-shock group across three rounds of data collection.

Recommendations

- WFP's Impact Evaluation of flood anticipatory action underscores the benefits of early response and interventions. In the context of cash distribution, the results show that the earlier the transfer, the better the households' food security.
- Early cash transfers also have a direct impact on reducing households' chances of adopting negative coping strategies such as reducing meal portions, relying on borrowed food commodities, and consuming foods of little preference.
- The AA interventions also resulted in better mental health and wellbeing of affected households.
- 'The earlier the better' – so, efficient coordination among organisations/agencies involved in AA is crucial to ensure timely delivery of anticipatory interventions.

The Mercy Corps addressed 2023 drought as early action in 11 *Palikas* across 5 districts in Sudur Paschim and Karnali provinces supporting 1,177 households. An early action protocol was developed and food security monitoring, spanning three stages: from analysing (i) global and regional weather outlook, (ii) National level District level data on drought from DHM (iii) physical verification at the community level, along with experts, consultation, and validation. The project distributed electronic value vouchers equivalent to 60% of the Minimum Expenditure Basket between May 09, 2023, and June 22, 2023.

Recommendations

- Drought monitoring data requires a clear monitoring framework with indicators and defined triggers. This framework involves multi-stage and multi-layered data, necessitating consultations with multiple stakeholders,

including governmental entities such as the National Agriculture and Research Council.

- While scientific data collection and reliance are pivotal, community consultations and field verification are equally essential to activate the final trigger for early action. Simultaneously, establishing triggers at various levels, along with validation processes, is imperative. Early action protocols tailored to each stage of the context are indispensable for averting crises within communities.
- Given the looming spectre of climate change exacerbating droughts and impacting food production and food security, which could lead to chronic food insecurity and, ultimately, famine, monitoring the food security situation is imperative to avert a national crisis.
- At the local level, drought is often perceived as business as usual rather than a shock or stress, making it challenging to establish systems and support at the systemic level. Therefore, there is a need for extensive capacity building at all levels. Establishing EWS for droughts and bolstering the capacity of local emergency centres are essential.
- During droughts, the price of food commodities inflates. Educating people about the connection between drought and food commodity prices is difficult. Local vendors often do not adjust food commodity prices in line with drought timelines, complicating local market management. The disaster preparedness and response plan overlook drought, highlighting the urgency of integrating AA for drought into DRR plans.
- As drought persists, vulnerable households start to consume their stored seeds, putting long-term food security at risk. Providing timely assistance, facilitated through value vouchers, is essential to alleviate the adverse effects on these vulnerable households.

Closing remarks

Dr. Raju Thapa (NPDRR Secretariat, DPNET chair)



Dr. Thapa emphasised the benefits of taking proactive measures to save lives and reduce losses and damages based on weather forecast information. He commended Mr. Anil Pokharel for exceeding expectations in prioritising AA and risk transfer for robust AA. He also acknowledged the long-term effort required to institutionalise and localise early actions and the importance of a robust policy framework to address the complexities of disaster response. He also praised the humanitarian organisations' experience with community-level early actions providing proof of concept and success stories vis-à-vis the effectiveness of AA and to draw upon the policies

developed from a bottom-up approach. He also underscored the importance of community involvement and clear communication, with a call to simplify technical terms for better understanding. He concluded by thanking all contributors to the knowledge exchange programme on behalf of DPNET.

Mr. David Fogden, Country Manager, Danish Red Cross



Mr. Fogden, thanked the NDRRMA and the participants for their commitment to AA and fruitful discussion in the dialogue. Drawing from his experience in Africa, he shared two parables to encapsulate the essence of AA in Nepal. The first proverb, "The goat that is destined for a feast does not fear the knife," highlights the inevitability of certain events and the importance of being prepared rather than fearful. This aligns with the proactive steps taken in AA. He illustrated the second proverb,

"A Chattering Bird Builds No Nest," emphasises the need for action over discussion. It serves as a reminder that real progress requires concrete steps, not just talk.

He noted that while the dialogue on AA has been initiated, it will be the tangible actions that define success. He announced the IFRC and Danish Red Cross' support through a technical coordinator to aid NDRRMA in developing national framework on AA and stressed the importance of using the national dialogue platform to enhance collaboration, harmonisation, and scaling of AA practices. He concluded by expressing gratitude for the collective efforts to advance AA.

Dr. Archana Shrestha, Deputy Director General, DHM

Dr. Archana Shrestha expressed her sincere gratitude to all participants. She highlighted the DHM comprehensive involvement in all AA programmes, emphasising their pivotal role in the second National Dialogue on AA. Dr. Shrestha further emphasised that the third dialogue signifies a progressive shift towards a national framework for AA. Rather than waiting forty years for results, the aim is to achieve tangible outcomes within a mere two years by bridging gaps and establishing a new framework.

She extended her appreciation to all involved, as the two-day programme effectively focused on critical areas such as risk, hazards, financial inclusion, and localisation. Dr. Shrestha underscored the programme's potential to culminate in a valuable draft. While acknowledging the DHM's indirect

link to AA, she emphasised the department's crucial role in weather forecasting, encompassing daily, three-day, and term forecasts. Finally, she commended those advocating for collaboration with the DHM to drive progress.



Anil Pokhrel, Chief Executive, NDRRMA

Mr. Anil Pokhrel expressed his gratitude to all the member agencies engaged, all the panellist, experts, participants and organising team for their proactive role and contribution in the dialogue. He expressed his confidence that the dialogue will serve as a key in the development of the national framework on AA.



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