

# 03. Set up an FbF Programme

## Summary

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In this chapter, the essential steps for setting up a Forecast-based Financing (FbF) programme within a National Society are outlined. The successful implementation of an FbF programme is dependent on strong leadership ownership, careful planning, and the involvement of key stakeholders across various sectors. Emphasis is placed on ensuring that leadership is fully engaged, a comprehensive plan of action is developed, and a skilled team is assembled. It is also highlighted that the FbF programme should be integrated into existing disaster risk management strategies, that government authorities should be engaged, and that the organization's capacities should be continuously assessed and strengthened. By following these steps, a robust FbF programme can be established, which not only addresses immediate hazards but also enhances long-term resilience.

## Step 1: Double-check ownership at leadership level for FbF

If not done before, a focal point for FbF should be identified (see [chapter 1, step 2: Identify a focal point for FbF](#)). Secondly, the leadership of the national society (e.g. president and secretary general) should have ownership of FbF before embarking on the planning process and setting up an FbF programme. Hence, the leadership should have a vision of how FbF fits into the national society's disaster management strategies and how this links to its development plans. If this is not the case yet, explore some options in [Chapter 1 \(Step 1-3\)](#) that includes workshops, meetings and room for discussions.

## Step 2: Develop a plan to set up a FbF system

While the scoping study can guide on what hazards would be viable for an FbF system and what FbF-relevant capacities the national society already

has, the national society needs to decide how to set up their FbF system, e.g. how many EAPs do they want to develop in which time, what capacities need to be built and what people can set up the system. Hence, developing an FbF system requires planning and a budget as well as the ownership and interest of the national society to build such a system. The development of the first EAP usually requires time. The national society's strategies and plans and discussions after the onboarding of the leadership should guide the development of a plan of action for setting up an FbF program. Key considerations include the number and type of hazards to be addressed, which financing mechanisms to use (e.g. DREF for imminent crises, simplified or full early action protocol), how to engage stakeholders and what capacities still need to be developed to allow early action. In many cases, the national society has a dedicated FbF project that includes a proposal and logframe. These can help to plan the process!



Note that experiences from the past years have shown that it can take between 18 and 24 months for a National Society to develop a full EAP and be activation-ready. However, Kazakhstan RC and Ghana RC are good examples of how to develop a simplified EAP in a short time and without a full fledged project.

## **Review scoping study and select hazard**

In case you have done a scoping study (see [chapter 1](#)), you should review the roadmap and the recommendations. This should already give you indications of:

- Priority hazards
- Operational and institutional capacity building needs
- Strategic collaborations with stakeholders
- Potential early actions
- Data availability and gaps

It is recommended to select one or two hazards to start developing an EAP. Experience shows that once the first EAP is developed, the development of

additional EAPs is faster.

## **Develop a plan of action and a budget (if required)**

Depending on how your FbF system development is funded, you are required to develop a logframe and budgets. In any case, it is beneficial to develop a plan of action to understand milestones and timelines of the development of your FbF system. For example, you can organize your workplan around the following work packages:

- *Development of EAP*

A key step is the development of the anticipatory action plan or EAP itself. A detailed outline of what is needed can be found in the EAP template and quality criteria (see [chapter 4](#)). For example, it includes the definition of the trigger, the selection of actions, but also a budget. [Here](#) and in the [toolbox](#) below, you find a template with the different milestones to develop an EAP

- *Set-up, testing and integration of EAP in national society structures*

To ensure that the EAP is not only a document but operational, we recommend you test the EAP in simulations and integrate triggers in the operations centre or early warning mechanisms of the national society. Furthermore, it is important that all agreements—with IFRC but also with other partners that play an active role in the EAP—are signed.

- *Capacity and process strengthening of national society staff and partners for anticipatory action planning and implementation*

Effective capacities, e.g. staff, procedures, volunteer management, logistics, procurement, prepositioning/warehousing and processes need to be in place to ensure the development of new EAPs, the implementation and updating of existing EAPs and to be ready for an activation. Hence, national society staff from the branch to the national level, as well as from partner organizations, such as the national disaster management authority or the ministry of agriculture needs to be trained on anticipatory action in general as well as on the implementation of existing EAPs. The national society further needs to know how to update existing EAPs after activation and perhaps develop additional EAPs. Hence, in order for a national society to have the capacity to successfully develop, implement, and sustain an FbF program, the program will need to be integrated into/existing tools and processes.

- *Policy and advocacy around anticipatory action*

It is important that regional and national organisations and government institutions understand the key elements of anticipatory action so that an enabling policy environment can be established. Hence, raising awareness through meetings, advocacy material, and

invitations to regional or the global dialogue platform can be considered. See [chapter 2](#) for additional ideas on how to engage stakeholders.

Design different work packages depending on your budget and the structures that already exist in-country. Please find examples of logframes for FbF projects below

- [Model logframe for FbF project logframe for national societies with a partner](#)
- [FbF logframe \(empty\)](#)
- [FbF lograme example \(filled\)](#)

Who should be involved in the planning and implementation?

- All relevant departments from national society that will set up and develop and implement FbF including technical sectors such as health, WASH, logistics and support services such as finances.
- Experience shows that it is useful to have a FbF coordinator within the national society, who is responsible for all work related to FbF set-up and EAP development and implementation.
- In case the FbF project is implemented in collaboration with a partner national society, the partner should also be involved in the planning, as they can often share examples and experiences from other countries.

## Step 3: Put together and onboard a team for FbF development

A dedicated team with a specific skill set and technical capacities is usually needed to develop an EAP and to establish sustainable FbF systems usually requires a. In some countries, an internal technical working group has been helpful.

**Who needs to be on the team?**

Who?	What?	When?
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Who?	What?	When?
FbF focal point or project coordinator	Oversees the FbF programme	Entire FbF process. This will be intensive at the start of the project and through EAP development and validation. After validation, FbF Focal Points monitor and coordinate EAP during activations, as well as maintain capacity to activate at all levels necessary for NS to carry out EAP. The National Society can partially cover the salary costs using the readiness budget of the EAP to ensure sustainability.
Technical advisor, e.g., hydro-met expert	Trigger + EAP development, monitoring and FbF activation, revalidation of EAP	Entire FbF process. You can partially cover the salary costs from the readiness budget of the EAP to ensure sustainability
IM, GIS	Impact-based mapping and activation map generation; digitalisation of beneficiary selection and warehousing	Ideally, an IM person is already onboarded at the beginning of the project as the collection of impact and risk data is one of the first steps in an FbF programme. If possible, this person should stay on throughout the whole EAP development process and perhaps longer to support the monitoring of the trigger and the implementation.
PMER	Development of M&E plan, theory of change for early actions, impact study post activation	A dedicated PMER staff for the FbF project can be helpful when developing the MEAL plan of the EAP that usually comes towards the end (1-2 months). In any case the PMER department should be looped in to also support MEAL after an activation (1-2 months). For more information on MEAL in the EAP and respective support, please refer to chapter 9.
Cash expert	Identification of financial service provider, minimum expenditure basket	If cash is considered as an early action, a cash expert should be looped in once this decision is taken. They can help you to design appropriate cash interventions and to ensure that cash delivery systems can accommodate the rapid timelines required for anticipatory action, especially for fast-onset hazards.

Who?	What?	When?
Logistics	Ensure that early actions can be delivered in time	A logistics expert or the logistics department should be engaged once first early actions are brainstormed.
Other experts, e.g. livelihood, veterinary, shelter, PGI etc.	Early action development	Subject-matter experts in designing specific early actions. In most cases, their services will only be needed temporarily to assist with the development of specific sections or plans.

## Job descriptions

You can find various job descriptions for the above-named positions [here](#) and in the [toolbox](#) below. If you have other job descriptions to share from your work, please reach out to us.

## Train the FbF team

Once you have your team identified, you need to ensure that they are well trained on anticipatory action, FbF and also the workplan or logframe. In contrast to high-level stakeholders discussed below, the core team will need to have an in-depth understanding of how to develop the EAP and meet validation criteria.

## Step 4: Agree on information management system

During the EAP development phase, you will collect all kinds of information: primary data from interviews and focus groups, secondary data from reports and websites, forecasts and risk datasets. In many cases, you will work with people on your EAP who come from different agencies and organisations. Information management is crucial as after an activation the EAP needs to be resubmitted and ideally the FbF coordinator will still be able to access the information that was used for the development of the EAP. Hence, you might find [MS Teams](#) or [Google Drive](#) useful or any other system that is recommended from your national

society or a partner that is working with you.

## **Step 5: Sensitize other key staff of the national society, government focal points and other stakeholders involved**

### **National society staff**

Again, it is critical to ensure national society ownership of the FbF approach and program. Not only will national society leadership have to sign and validate the EAP before it is submitted to the DREF (see [chapter 12](#)) and authorize activities for activation, they will need to allocate staff and financial resources to sustain the EAP in the future. For this reason, they need to understand anticipatory action, know what the EAP contains and entails, and understand overall processes. Aside from the leadership, the following departments might need to be involved in the EAP development process as they will have a crucial role to play in the development, implementation, and maintenance of the EAP:

- Disaster risk management
- PMER
- Operational units, such as surge, communications and logistics
- Administrative and finance units
- Information Management/Knowledge Management
- MEAL
- Thematic units, such as health/WASH, shelter, cash, DRR

### **Staff and volunteers in the national society and other actors at local level**

Red Cross Red Crescent branches (or chapters) and volunteers, sub-national DRM authorities and civil society should have an understanding of FbF, and most importantly their role in executing early actions during activation once these are developed. At this point, you can invite some representatives to introductory activities.

One way to sensitize National Society staff and partners is through induction workshop in which you introduce key concepts, present project plans, and confirm next steps in a participatory format. The box below proposes some possible agendas for induction workshops.



## **Induction workshop**

- **Participants:** National society leadership, thematic and administrative units of the national society (see above), disaster management authorities, meteorological service, DRM committees, perhaps staff from national societies branches, other stakeholders such as UN agencies or NGOs
- **Content:** Presentation of the scoping study (if conducted), overview of the project or program including workplan, overview of the FbF methodology, examples from other FbF initiatives, EAP requirements and templates
- **Format:** 3 days, in-person
- **Material:** Induction material (see [chapter 1](#)), FbF Manual, EAP criteria and templates (see [chapter 5](#))

### Examples of induction workshop agendas

- [Lebanon](#)
- [Somalia](#)
- [Madagascar](#)

Read more: [Philippine FbF brochure](#), the [global map on the anticipation hub](#)





Induction workshop with the Malagasy Red Cross

**Train as many people as possible!** Experience shows that there can be high staff turnover within National Societies, so it is always best to spread the knowledge as widely as possible.

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## **Government authorities & external stakeholders**

As the national society is an auxiliary to the government, it is important that FbF aligns with national and sub-national level DRM strategies and plans. Government focal points and other external stakeholders should be sensitized about FbF and involved in the process from the beginning to foster alliances. See [chapter 2](#) for information on how and when to engage these stakeholders.

## Step 6: Assess existing capacities, strategies and plans

FbF builds upon the existing experience of the national society in disaster risk reduction, early warning systems and response. Understanding how and where FbF fits into and adds value to the existing preparedness, contingency and response strategies, is essential for sustainable FbF implementation. The capacities needed to respond effectively to a disaster are often the same capacities needed for the activation of EAPs.

Throughout the FbF and EAP development process you will work on strengthening capacities and institutional preparedness for FbF. Both EAP templates include a section on the capacity of the national society. For example, the full EAP asks you to do the following:

- *Describe how the National Society has operative and administrative capacity to implement the EAPs.*
- *Describe the National Society's experience in the implementation of the selected early actions (Livelihoods, including Cash and Voucher Assistance; WASH; Food Security; Shelter, etc.).*
- *If the NS does not have experience in these areas, indicate the steps taken to improve its capacity in the respective sector to implement the EAP effectively and efficiently.*

There are different ways to assess existing capacities, strategies and plans and it depends on the national society which of the options they would like to choose. It is recommended to build on a tool that your National Society already uses. An overview of the manifold assessment tools (OCAC, BOCA, SAF, CHS) the Movement offers may be found [here](#).

- *Scoping study:* Those national societies that have conducted a scoping study might already have an overview of operational and institutional capacities that enable FbF and EAP implementation.
- *Preparedness for effective response (PER process):* Using PER can also show where FbF can contribute to improving the overall capacity of

your National Society and provide a baseline capacity assessment against which to measure capacity strengthening down the line even if you do not conduct a full PER assessment. More complete guidance on the various ways to integrate PER and FbF planning is available here. PER processes (including all types of assessments: self-assessment, simulations, operational or post-operational) offer a step-by-step approach to identifying and prioritising areas that require attention and resources to ensure that the National Society is effective, efficient and timely. A number of National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies are at various stages of the PER cycle. For an overview of the national societies and their status, visit the [GO Platform](#). For more information on building capacities from the beginning and throughout the process see [Chapter 11](#).

- *Internal review:* If you either have already a good overview of your capacities, you can also decide to use that or do a lighter internal review process through workshops and working sessions.

## Toolbox

### **Capacity assessments**

[Overview of capacity assessment tools within the RCRC movement \(IFRC\)](#)  
[PER Checklist](#)  
[GO Platform](#)

### **Tools and templates**

[TEMPLATE Milestones EAP Template](#)  
[Model logframe FbF project logframe for national societies with a partner](#)  
[FbF logframe \(empty\)](#)  
[FbF logframe example \(filled\)](#)  
[Job descriptions](#)

### **Workshop agendas**

[Somalia](#)  
[Lebanon](#)  
[Madagascar](#)

