

Step 4: Collect information

The information collected in-country is typically gathered in four different ways:

(1) guided feedback after presenting the FbF concept, (2) key informant interviews, (3) focus groups, direct observation and/or transect walks at community-level, and (4) requests for data sets, and written reports.

Guidance on presenting the FbF concept

It is often necessary to present the FbF concept to the wider staff of the National Society, government technical services (e.g. hydrological and meteorological), and any other institutions which may be involved in the set-up of the FbF system. To gather constructive feedback on how the FbF system could work in-country, those giving the feedback will need to have a level of understanding of the concept. The study team should present the concept to the National Society staff at the beginning of the mission using available FbF resources (games, pre-made PowerPoints, printed resources). Inviting representatives of government technical services (hydro and met, DRR etc) and other institutions, or holding separate presentations at those institutions. provides a valuable opportunity to around what FbF can and cannot do, and helps gather missing data as part of the Q&A period.

Resources on how to facilitate FbF games can be found [here](#). For further guidance on FbF capacity building see the following chapters, Making your National Society FbF Ready and Engaging Stakeholders as well as the Climate Centre [guide on Collaborating with national climate and weather agencies](#).

Guidance on selecting key informants for interviews in-country

The bulk of the information that will inform the FS recommendations is likely to come from key informant interviews with authorities at the national and sub-national level. The following persons should be interviewed to get a broad perspective on how the FbF program could be designed:

- National Society senior management (President, Secretary General, head of Disaster Management, Organizational Development Manager)
- National Society mid-level staff covering potential FbF sectors (e.g. health, WASH, cash, social care, livelihood, shelter, disaster risk management,) and general project management/ admin process finance, logistics, MEAL, communications, and (if relevant) security.
- National government authorities responsible for technical services (hydrology and meteorology), disaster risk management, ministry of housing/development, agriculture, public works, health, civil protection, social protection, and the department responsible for

issuing disaster warnings and assisting in evacuations (sometimes defense/police).

- If possible, also approach relevant authorities at lower levels of government (district, municipality) in disaster-prone areas.
- Any institutions already involved in FbF or anticipatory action at country level
- Relevant UN agencies, such as WFP, FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, OCHA, with programming in the early warning space
- Relevant INGOs, such as Start Network, Oxfam, CARE, Practical Action, World Vision, etc with programming in the early warning early action space

Guidance on carrying out community-level research

Community-level focus groups, direct observation and guided transect walks are common methods to gain insights into the lives of potential program beneficiaries that can inform program design (see VCA Toolbox). The research team must accept some level of bias in the responses they receive, and try their best to create the inclusive conditions whereby participants feel at ease to express themselves, share ideas, and so forth.

Many of the questions outlined for the key informant interviews, especially pertaining to potential FbF actions, are also suitable at community level, if adapted to suit the context. In addition to these questions, the following subjects should be explored in the focus group /VCA format:

- Impacts of recent disaster events and their individual experiences of the different disaster events prioritized for deeper analysis
- Any autonomous actions that are already happening at individual, household, group or community level to prepare for, cope with, or respond to disasters
- Whether the participants receive early warnings / forecasts for disasters, the source of those warnings (including tradition warnings), perceived accuracy of the warnings, and any suggestions for improving upon early warning systems
- Any suggestions the participants have about support that would be helpful pre-disaster
- Get feedback on how cash could be used, if provided pre-disaster at specific lead-times
- Any community groups (loans and savings, disaster preparedness groups etc. which could be mobilized for pre-disaster activity)

To triangulate the information presented in the focus group discussions, and to gain further insights of the reality of exposed populations, it is recommended to do direct observations and transect walks. If analyzing floods or cyclones, is often helpful in the context of FbF for one of the locations to be the coastline or riverside. These methods are meant to be free-flowing and allow subjects to be introduced spontaneously. However, asking probing questions regarding impacts (water levels, points of damage), and locations of interest (evacuation areas, grazing areas, markets, potable water sources), may be helpful in soliciting information of interest.

Guidance on requesting data and written resources

Vulnerability, exposure and historical impact data will be central to impact-based forecasting (see Trigger Methodology section) but also to the selection of actions. These outputs are beyond the scope of the feasibility study, however, an initial light assessment of existing vulnerability and exposure data, can be achieved during the feasibility study. This involves asking questions about what mapping products and data sources exist, and where. The indicators of interest will vary per hazard type, (based on the hazard and availability of data). The INFORM index may be used as a useful repository of available data sets and vulnerability mapping products.

Guidance on interview questions

Interview questions need to be adjusted to each participant based on their area of expertise. The guiding questions below are broken up into six sections: hazard, exposure and vulnerability, hazard forecasting, possible early actions, institutional capacities and processes, financing and social protection. The questions serve to guide your light initial assessment of the country context, enabling environment, existing level of data, gaps, to scope how an FbF project should be designed, and from which sources future EAP information may be gathered.

These questions can often not be answered conclusively within the limited timeframe of a Feasibility Study, but the preliminary information gathered through them serves as an important basis for the analysis and data collection in the framework of future EAP development.

Hazard exposure and vulnerability

- Which hazards have historically caused negative impacts in the following categories?
 - Mortality and morbidity
 - Loss of livelihoods
 - Loss of assets Market disruption
 - Damage to infrastructure
 - Health and sanitation Food insecurity
 - Displacement and migration Insecurity
- How have these impacts varied between different geographic areas?
 - Rural, urban, informal settlements, coastal, proximity to markets, placement in relation to large protective infrastructure such as embankments, and other context-specific characteristics?

- How have these impacts varied between demographics of people? Who has been more impacted?
 - Gender, age, disability, ethnicity, caste, marital status, farmers, pastoralists, workers in formal and informal labour markets, poverty status, migrants, refugees, and other context-specific characteristics?
- What sources of data for hazard vulnerability and exposure are available? And how can they be accessed? Which institutions hold the data? And what are the opportunities and limitations to access it?
- Are any institutions (government, UN, private sector or NGO) involved in exposure and vulnerability mapping? If yes, what is the scale of the mapping (national, for specific regions/districts only, or specific localized areas only?) What indicators are used in the mapping? What is the geographical coverage of OpenStreetMap? Is it active in the country and is the NS involved?
- Which hazards are identified within the strategic plan of the National Society as a priority to be addressed? How do the hazards which are a strategic priority overlap with the hazards with high FbF viability?

Hazard forecasting

(For these questions it is often advisable to have a hydro-met expert involved in the interviews, to ensure that clarification and follow-up questions can be asked and to assess the quality of the info provided.)

- Which hazards are currently forecastable? (Ask about drought, flood, cyclone, heat wave, cold wave, and any context-specific hazards)
- What forecasts are currently being produced nationally? At what timescales are forecasts being produced and disseminated to the public? (hourly, daily, weekly, 10 day, seasonal?)
- Do the national technical services (met, hydro) produce extreme weather warnings? If yes, what is the lead time of those warnings and what is the chain of command for disseminating those warnings?
- If weather warnings use danger levels, what danger levels are used, and how were those danger levels chosen?
- Does the government technical service produce a heat index to account for both night and day time temperature (which would be used for heat wave and cold wave)?
- Are there any impact-based forecasts operational, or in development? If yes, how do they work? What impact indicators are used?

- Have the forecasts been verified or skill assessed to understand the certainty with which an institution could use them to make decisions? If yes, what were the results of the assessment for each forecast type?
- If not verified, are they willing to share data and forecasts to allow the study team or others to make an assessment as to whether they would be suitable to inform the FbF trigger?
- Are there operational early warning systems? How do they work? What pre-disaster lead time does the early warning provide? Which institutions are involved?
- What is the nature of the relationship between the government technical services (hydro, met) and others, including Red Cross/Red Crescent, social protection actors, national and international academic institutions, international forecasting institutions like WMO, and ECMWF? Are any of these relationships formalized through MoUs or other means?
- What ongoing hydro-met projects exist?

Possible early actions

- If an advance warning of a disaster (floods, drought etc.) was available and credible, what would be actions that households, and the institutions supporting them, could take to reduce suffering and loss?
- What autonomous actions are individuals and communities already taking to prepare for, cope with, and recover from disasters? Are there any supports which could be provided externally that would enable individuals and communities to take autonomous action more effectively?
- In which sectors do the National Society and other related institutions have expertise (cash, WASH, shelter, livelihoods, evacuations, animal-care, communication, first aid, etc.)?
- If you were given the option to minimize two risks with an FbF system, which ones would you select out of this list? Why? What actions would you do to minimize those risks?
- What evidence exists for the possible early actions and their effectiveness for reducing risk of specific disaster-related stressors? Has the National Society completed any impact evaluations for the actions being considered as FbF actions?

Institutional capacities and processes

- Has the National Society completed any tools under the PER (preparedness for effective response) or another assessment process? If yes, how do the strengths and weaknesses outlined in those reports align with the needs of implementing an FbF program?
- Does the National Society senior management see the FbF concept to have value above and beyond an additional stream for financing?
- Is there buy-in for the FbF concept and a champion with the National Society to spearhead the process?
- Does the National Society have a strong relationship with other disaster management actors, which could assist in the implementation of FbF actions?
- What government authorisations would the NS need in order to carry out early actions? Can they be obtained at short notice or in advance?
- Does the National Society have experience implementing programs over large areas and not only working in a small number of focus communities per program? Similarly, what is the experience in working in communities where there were no previous activities or where there is no presence by the NS?
- What are the areas of strength and weakness of the National Society that would most enable or strain their ability to take rapid action in the lead time of a forecast?
- What is the capacity of National Society local branches? How many active staff and volunteers are there in different branches? Are any of the branches income-generating? What is the level of training of branch volunteers?
- In recent responses, have there been significant delays between when items or finances became available and the receipt of those items, cash or other supports at household level? If yes, why?
- Which partner National Societies are involved with the National Society? Are any of their programs working on specific skills such as cash readiness or MEAL?
- What is the National Society's experience with the DREF? Have they been successful at receiving support from the DREF? If not, why? If yes, have there been any delays in recent DREF disbursements?

Financing

- What is the National Society's experience of managing funds which are similarly sized to FbA by DREF disbursements?

- Has the National Society successfully received and managed funds via imminent DREF and DREF, or Emergency Appeal? If yes, for which hazard and how were the funds managed?
- Have there been recent or current financial management concerns that would make it difficult for FbA by DREF funds to be disbursed directly to the National Society? If yes, does the National Society have the support of a partner National Society that could help manage the funds?
- Are there other sources of financing that could be released based on an FbF trigger to support FbF action apart from the DREF?

Social protection

- Which established social protection programs are operational or in development in the country? This would include cash transfer programs, public works, and school feeding.
- Does the country have a unified beneficiary registry that could assist in the targeting of FbF beneficiaries?
- Do any of these social protection programs aim to scale up in anticipation of, or in response to, a shock? If yes, how do they scale up and which conditions initiate (trigger) a scalability mechanism?
- Do any of these programs aim to support particularly disaster-affected populations?
- Are the populations supported by any of these programs a similar population to the population that would be supported by an FbF program? If yes, which hazards?
- Is there potential to integrate social protection with the proposed FbF system to expand the reach of the FbF system, especially in the domain of targeting or modality of support?

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