

Step 5: Start the drafting process

Once the trigger and early actions as core elements of the EAP have been defined, you can start drafting your EAP.

The EAP constitutes your overall action plan for activation. The following components ensure your NS is well-prepared to activate and monitor early actions once a trigger has been reached. In addition to the risk analysis, inventory of forecasts, trigger model and early actions, your EAP should contain the following elements to enable everyone involved to know what will be done, where, when and by whom.

M&E plan

Building evidence about the impact of FbF systems is a priority. Therefore, the EAP should include an M&E plan to 1) assess the impact of the early actions and the extreme event after each activation and 2) identify if all activities were carried out as planned and document how early actions were implemented 3) and to learn from the process to improve the system in the future.

[Chapter 4.3. Design M&E plan](#) provides guidance on the development of the plan and available tools.

Activation plan or implementation process chart

One of the most important objectives of the EAP is to clearly define all steps, roles and responsibilities for EAP activation. For this, an implementation process chart or activation plan should be drafted outlining all activities from the moment the trigger is reached (Day 1) to the completion of post-impact surveys (Day X) with clear timelines and responsibilities. Each step of the activation must be considered, from staff/volunteer deployment, to transport, distribution and post-impact assessments. Ideally for most steps and activities, there should not only be a Plan A, but also a Plan B or even C, taking into account scenarios such as rapidly worsening weather conditions and limited access.

In order to ensure everyone is aware of their tasks, it can be a good idea to distribute the plan or process chart widely, or design tailored training materials for staff and volunteers, such as a “pocket EAP”. Example of the Latin America FbF Pocket EAP “PAT de bolsillo “ [here](#).

See also [chapter 3. Make your National Society FbF ready](#).

Stop mechanism

For forecast triggers with a lead-time exceeding three days, the EAP must include a stop mechanism. This means that if a later forecast – prior to the start of activities related to the early action implementation indicates that the event is no longer likely to occur, or will occur with less strength or in a different location, the activation of the EAP should be stopped to avoid generating further use of resources, and reduce reputational risks of distributing assistance in a location in which it is no longer needed.

For example, if the 6-day forecast on Day 1 of the activation indicates high risk of heavy rainfall and thereby triggers the activation of the EAP, but the updated 6-day-forecast released on Day 3 indicates that the risk has significantly lowered, the trigger level will no longer be reached. If the start of distributions was planned for Day 4, activation should be stopped. Items that have been purchased based on the trigger being reached should no longer be distributed due to the stop mechanism, and rather stored in the warehouse for a future activation.

For forecast triggers with a lead time of less than 3 days, the EAP should consider what the National Society would do if the forecast changes in strength or location within the last three days before the event. The stop mechanism should be included in the activation plan/implementation process chart.

Contact list/ Communication protocol

Given the very limited time available for the implementation of the early actions, efficient and timely communication is essential. The communication plan or protocol, indicates who should communicate to whom, what and when (from the forecast monitoring, trigger activation, fund release, warning messages, implementation of early action(s), monitoring through the evaluation and lessons analysis of the intervention). This can also be part of the activation plan.

Distribution plan (including targeting and selection of people served)

The distribution of relief items or CVA assistance to families at risk is often the key component of early actions. However, given the short lead time for many hazards, related distribution activities must be carefully planned beforehand.

The distribution plan should clearly answer questions such as:

- Which criteria will be used to identify the targeted households?
- How many and which staff and volunteers will be needed?
- How will local authorities and community groups be included in selection of households

and distribution?

- Who will register the target families with which tools (e.g. paper forms or digital systems)?
- What information is needed from people served (signature, name, age etc.)?

The distribution plan may also be included within the activation.

Security plan

Assuring safety of staff and volunteers and not creating risks for communities and vulnerable population is key for all Red Cross and Red Crescent activities. A security plan should be in place addressing identified security risks, and detailing safeguard measures and respective roles and responsibilities. In some countries, security conditions might already be fragile before an extreme weather event approaches and special considerations should be taken into account, for example for distribution, in others, past events might have shown that security incidents increased as soon as there was a warning of an extreme event. These factors should be considered.

Budget

For an EAP to be approved for financing, the EAP budget must consist of all the costs linked to the activation of the EAP, as well as readiness and prepositioning costs. For FbA by the DREF, the budget cannot include costs for the development of the EAP and the setting up of the FbF system in a country (e.g. initial trainings of volunteers, etc.). This process should be financed by other sources of longer-term funding. The maximum amount of funding available for each EAP from the Forecast-based Action by the DREF is 250,000 Swiss francs.

Readiness costs: cover costs related to the upkeep/maintenance of the FbF system in-country once it has been established and the EAP has been developed. This refers to the required costs to ensure that the NS is “ready” to implement the EAP at any point during the five-year lifecycle of the EAP. These could include, for example, costs for refresher trainings, warehouse costs, and costs for staff to keep the system ready and update data. , Readiness costs are limited to 25% of the total EAP budget over the EAP’s lifecycle.

Prepositioning costs: In order to ensure the feasibility of the rapid distribution of items in the short timeframe between forecast and event, prepositioning of goods might be necessary. They should normally have a lifetime of at least the lifecycle of the EAP and should only be replenished after an activation. The FbA by the DREF covers these costs to a maximum amount of 40% of the EAP budget.

Early action costs cover all expenditures that are linked to the activation of the EAP, once the trigger has been reached. This can cover identification of target populations; CVA; distribution of items and/or cash, and provision of services; deployment of volunteers and staff; reporting and

M&E, such as implementation monitoring; and impact survey data collection and analysis.

For more information on the budget requirements of FbA by the DREF, see chapter 5. Approve and Finance.