

Step 3: Identify and brainstorm potential early actions

As soon as you have selected the priority impacts related to the hazard and risk factors you are addressing, you can begin to explore early actions that might reduce those disaster impacts. The following methods (described above) can also be used to identify or brainstorm potential early actions. Be sure to involve experts from relevant sectors, such as shelter, agriculture, WASH and health, or disaster management. From our experience, many stakeholders tend to bring up traditional response actions only, as that is what they are familiar with. Especially in workshops and focus group discussions, but also in interviews, try to make participants also think outside the box and consider new solutions.

Method H: Policy and practice review

While this could be considered part of an extensive literature review, consulting local policy documents can be a source of potential early actions and help you to understand how FbF will fit within existing systems.

Documents to seek out include the following:

- **Disaster risk management rules, regulations, and plans:**
 - It is important to understand how the overall system works in order to ensure that actions complement existing structures.
- **Contingency plans:**
 - These will help you to understand existing responses from the national to the community level.
- **Climate change adaptation plans:**
 - Although usually aimed at longer-term interventions, they may include plans for acute response or contain actions that could be adapted to different timeframes.
- **Evaluations of previous programs or humanitarian interventions:**
 - These will help you to understand what has been tried, what has worked, and what has not worked in your context.

Method I: Consult global early action database

In addition to context-specific exploration outline above, the DREF FbA and the Anticipation Hub are developing a real-time early action database to serve as a means of sharing between FbF projects and across contexts of potential early actions that have been used or suggested in other contexts. This database will continue to grow as FbF expands to new areas and hazards. As with the early action ideas

arising from the methods above, the feasibility and relevance of any action in the Database should be carefully assessed in relation to your context before being selected as an early action.

Other organizations have also created lists of early actions that you could consult. See for example [the IASC SOP for Early Action to El Niño/La Niña Episodes](#) that includes sample early actions in Annex 1.

Method J: Community ranking activities (See VCA)

Participatory community ranking exercises, whether in the context of a focus group discussion or not, may also be helpful in identifying priorities at the community-level. The [IFRC VCA Toolbox](#) offers valuable guidelines on how to conduct such activities.