**Forecast-Based Financing**

**Early Action Protocol**

**Hazard**

**Country**

**Name Organization (XX Red Cross Red Crescent Society)**

**Last update: dd/mm/yyyy**

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# Early Action Protocol Summary

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| **Hazard** | *e.g floods* |
| **Potential high-risk areas where the FbF mechanism could be activated** | *e.g. Buzi river basin, Umbeluzi river basin, Maputo river basin and Save river basin.* |
| **Objective** | *Please provide an objective statement that describes the main goal of the intervention.* |
| **Prioritized risks/impacts to be addressed by early actions** | *e.g.*  *1. Loss of life (due to lack of awareness, people do not apply safety measures)*  *2. Mortality of livestock (due to sickness after the flood)*  *3. Household assets damage (due to water intrusion in the houses)* |
| **Proposed Early Actions by based on the IFRC’s Planned Operation Matrix** | *1. Risk Reduction (Climate Adaptation and Recovery):*  *Awareness messages (Radio, TV, megaphone)*  *2. Livelihoods:*  *Vaccination and veterinary kits*  *3. Shelter, Settlement and Housing:*  *Sandbags, plastic bags, house protection measures* |
| **Potential No. of households to be reached** | *e.g. 50.000 households (XX people)* |
| **EAP budget** | *e.g maximum 500.000 CHF* |
| **Sources of forecast information** | *e.g National: INAM*  *International: GloFas* |
| **Triger statement** | *eg. When [source] issues a forecast of at least [probability of magnitude of event or impact]* |
| **Expected lead time for activation** | *e.g 5 days* |
| **Responsible focal point for this EAP** | *e.g Disaster Management Coordinator of XX RC (name)* |
| **Governmental coordinating agency** | *e.g. INGC* |

**List of Acronyms**

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# Introduction

The Early Action Protocol (EAP) for the XXXX National Red Cross Red Crescent Society is a tool to guide the timely and effective implementation of early actions based on specific weather or climate forecasts predicting events that if they materialize and no proper actions are in place have a high likelihood of generating a humanitarian crisis. These crises could be avoided or minimized by the joint and timely action of the Government of XX, communities at risk, stakeholders and the XX National Society.

This EAP has been designed and will be implemented by several organizations (XXXXX name organizations). Everyone involved in this plan has a key role during the preparation and activation of the Forecast-based Financing mechanism.

Depending on the context, this document should be an essential component of contingency plans at national and local level for the Government of XX and the respective Red Cross/Red Crescent National Society. For the EAP to be financed by the DREF’s anticipatory pillar, it is required to follow the IFRC plan and budget structure. Visit the link [here](https://www.ifrc.org/document/ifrc-plan-and-budget-2021-2025) for more information on the Planned Operation and Enabling Approaches that are implemented as part of the EAP.

The EAP presented in this plan targets XXX (Hazard x e.g floods) and is triggered by a forecast provided by (XX source of forecast) with a lead time of XXX days. This EAP explains the rationale of the prioritization of early actions and provides step-by-step instructions for the selected action(s) to be implemented in a particular fashion and order when activated. The EAP defines clearly: who takes what action when, where, and with what funds.

The EAP does not work in isolation. It needs to be connected to already existing Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plans and Contingency Plans. It ensures that early actions planned to be implemented in the window of time between the given forecast and the potential disaster event are carried out in a timely manner and successfully.

# Key actors

*(max 1 page)*

**Explanatory note:** In order to avoid creating parallel systems and to minimize additional discussions on permissions, etc. when a trigger occurs, all relevant key stakeholders in the country should be involved in the development, and when necessary, the approval, of the EAP. If stakeholders other than the National Society are involved in implementation of the EAP, roles and responsibilities should be determined in MoUs or other appropriate documents. It is key to highlight the importance of involving the IFRC at the country, cluster and/ or regional level early in the EAP development process as these offices can provide technical support.

**Required points:**

1. *Name the external actors and Movement components that have been involved in the development of this EAP. Include international, national, regional and local actors, if applicable.*
2. *In case there are technical working groups for the development of the FbF system in country, indicate which organizations participate in these groups.*
3. *If stakeholders other than RC are involved in implementation/activation of EAP, indicate in one bullet point per organization, their role and list the formal agreement document.*

# Risk Analysis

## Hazard Selection

*(max 1.5 page)*

**Explanatory note:** Which hazard needs to be addressed by FbF in the country as a priority? Provide an explanation on the reasons that the selected hazard was chosen for this EAP and why it is a major problem in the country.

The DREF allocates funding for EAPs to reduce the impacts of extreme events of a strength or magnitude that in the past have required humanitarian assistance. In order to demonstrate that the selected hazard has caused extreme humanitarian impacts in the past, information on the previous impacts of the selected hazard in the country should be provided. This can be gathered from interviews with RC or DRM authorities, archives, records, etc. Other potential sources of information could be National disaster registries, Post Disaster Needs Assessment databases, Desinventar, EMDat, PreventionWeb, etc. For more guidance see the FbF Manual (Chapter 4.1 Set the Trigger)

**Required points:**

1. *Provide a brief rationale about the selection of the hazard for the FbF system.*
2. *Explain the selection of the hazard based on an analysis of historical disaster impacts* *(using the events registered in the below-mentioned table).*
3. *Include a table with the most severe disasters caused by the selected hazard over the past 50 years* 
   1. *Columns: a) Year and Date b) type of disaster with name (if applicable); c) Strength of event if available (e.g. windspeed on landfall); d) potential cascading hazards (e.g floods induced by hurricanes, landslides induced by extreme rainfall) e) Regions affected; f) Number of people affected; g) Most affected sectors; h) Most severe impacts in key words (e.g. 10000 houses destroyed, cholera epidemic with 2000 confirmed cases etc.)*
4. *Describe the extent to which this hazard has produced and will produce negative impacts on lives, livelihoods, well-being and other developmental aspects. Ensure to address these key questions: What are the impacts of this hazard? How are people most affected? What are the largest daily challenges related to this disaster that will jeopardize their well-being and development? What are the most affected sectors?*

## Exposed elements and their vulnerability factors

*(max. 2 pages)*

**Explanatory note:** An analysis of exposure is required to determine who and what is located in the area where the hazard might occur. This will help to determine who and what is likely to be impacted.

In line with the impact-based forecasting logic, it is important to identify the main exposed elements on which the FbF intervention will focus. For example, if the prioritized impact of floods is the *mortality* of children under 5 due to water-borne diseases, then the exposed element will be the *population of children under 5*: or if the most frequently recurring and largest impact due to tropical storms is the damage to houses built with light materials, then the exposed element will be *houses built with light materials*.

A thorough understanding of the levels of vulnerability (of the exposed elements) will help identify the main risks and ensure that Forecast-based actions are well suited. For instance, if children under 5 are susceptible to death or sickness due to floods, describe the underlying causes of the problem. For more guidance see the FbF Manual (Chapter 4.1 Set the Trigger)

**Required points:**

1. *Explain which people are most likely to experience the impacts of this hazard? Where do they live, and why are they vulnerable? Note: This will inform the early action selection.*
2. *Based on the analysis of past impacts, provide a brief overview which population, infrastructure, natural resources, markets, assets (others) were and/or are likely to be exposed to the selected hazard and where are they located.*
3. *Based on past impact and exposure, describe the key factors of vulnerability of the specific population, infrastructure, natural resources, assets (others) that are likely to be impacted.*
4. *Please explain how specific population groups (e.g elderly, children, people with disabilities, IDPs, Refugees, etc.) are most likely to be affected.*
5. *Note: this exposure and vulnerability analysis will be the basis for the selection of indicators used for the trigger model (section 4.4).*

## Prioritized Impact

*(max. 0,5 page)*

**Explanatory note:**

Recognizing that an FbF system will not be able to address all risks and potential impacts, based on the analysis of past impact, exposure and vulnerability (sections 3.1. to 3.2) and the results of the joint identification conducted with key stakeholders, indicate which disaster impacts were prioritized, explaining how and why they were prioritized. For more guidance see the FbF Manual (Chapters 4.1 Set the Trigger and 4.2 Select Early Actions)

**Required points:**

1. *Explain which priority impacts the EAP will address and why (e.g mortality of alpacas due to cold waves, Internal Displacement due to floods, malnutrition of children under 5 due to drought etc.).*

# Trigger Model

The work for the identification of triggers can be very technical and require expert resources. For this process, the National Society can get help from technical experts, Hydro-met services or specialist institutions. The chapter 4.1 Set the Trigger in the FbF Manual can be used for guidance.

## Trigger statement

*(max. 1 sentence)*

*State in one sentence what exactly the trigger of your EAP will be, for example: When [source] issues a forecast of at least [probability of magnitude of event or impact], then we will act. We expect the lead-time to be [xxx].*

## Forecast Selection

*(Table plus 2 sentences)*

**Explanatory note:** In order for the *DREF* to approve funding when a trigger occurs, there must be a certain probability the extreme event will take place. To safeguard this, it is crucial to select those forecasts that have a certain “skill” level (certain level of confidence). If observations are used, these can also be included in the table. Note that this information does not need to be calculated by the National Society but can be obtained by working with hydro-meteorological services, research institutions, experts etc.

**Required points:**

1. *State clearly which forecast(s) and observations will be used and why they were chosen.*
2. *Include a table with all available forecasts for your hazard. The table must include: Name of forecast, Lead time, Source, False Alarm Ratio, Number of times the forecast has been issued for this hazard in the last 10 years*

## Definition and justification of impact level

*(1 page)*

**Explanatory note:** The DREF provides funding for early action for events of a strength that has caused significant humanitarian impact in the past. Explain how a certain magnitude was selected and how the impact level was defined (see guidance in the FbF manual chapter 4.1 Set the Trigger (particularly Steps 6-8)). Define the relationship between impact (utilizing the prioritized impact/s section 3.3) and hazard magnitude to establish which impact can be expected given specific hazard magnitudes.

**Required points:**

1. *Why did you select a certain magnitude of event?*
2. *Explain how your impact level was defined. Explain how much impact can be expected based on the strength of the event.*
3. *Indicate to which return period the selected impact-level corresponds (minimum: 1-in-5 years.)*
4. *Explain how the return period was calculated*

## Identification of the intervention area

*(max. 0.5 pages plus map if possible)*

**Explanatory note:** When an impact level is reached, vulnerability and exposure information is combined with the real-time forecast to identify which areas are likely to be most impacted. In the most advanced form, the forecast would be digitally combined with vulnerability and exposure information, to show which areas are predicted to be most severely impacted. This will provide a map-based tool or a list of prioritized districts villages, municipalities or other geographical areas where the early actions will be activated. Where no digital system is available, the combination of forecast and vulnerability/exposure indicators could also be done manually, e.g. if flooding is forecasted for a certain area, the most vulnerable and exposed communities in that area are selected (for example the poorest if that indicator is used). If different weighted indicators are used to calculate a vulnerability index, check on the index which of the communities in the area for which the event is forecasted scores highest. Ultimately the objective is to know which areas are likely to be impacted and how you will determine which will be targeted.

**Required points:**

1. *Building on the analysis in 3.3. list the vulnerability and exposure indicators/maps that will be used to identify which are the areas likely to be most impacted. Indicate data source and administrative level for each indicator, as well as state how you will update the data.*
2. *Describe how you will combine the forecast maps with vulnerability/exposure indicators.*
3. *Provide an example using a past event (it could be using a sample intervention map).*

# Selection of Actions

## Early Action Selection Process

*(max 2.5 pages)*

**Explanatory note:** It is crucial to select early actions that have the most potential to reduce the identified risks(s) and are feasible to implement given the lead time of the forecast. It is important to describe briefly: Who was involved? What data was consulted? Was research conducted? Were communities involved? For more guidance see FbF Manual, Chapter 4.2 Select Early Actions.

Required points:

1. *Based on the prioritized impacts/risks of section 3, provide a brief rationale (e.g. your criteria) for the selection of action(s), also indicating which actions were considered but not chosen (max. 1 page)*
2. *Describe the process used to select the actions: Who was consulted? Which assessments/research were carried out? (max 1 page)*
3. *Show how the selected action aims to reduce the expected humanitarian impact, by filling out the Theory of Change (ToC) table below.*
4. *Does the FbF activation intend to use government social protection systems? Other State institutions’ databases and/or sources? Provide an explanation of potential number of target population to be selected.*
5. *If CVA is included, has a cash feasibility assessment been conducted (including needs and affected population preference, markets, financial service providers and National Society capacity assessments)?*

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| Theory of Change (ToC) | |
| Early action | Planned Operation [[1]](#footnote-2)(sector) | **Prioritized impact** | **Outputs** | **Outcomes** | **Available capacities to implement this action** |
| Distribute chlorine to at risk people | Health | **Population could be infected by a diarrheal outbreak after a flood event.** | Z% of population has access to water purification system before the event, therefore was able to have safe water immediately after the flood event. | The percentage of population affected by water-borne diseases is X% lower than in comparison communities | -Local suppliers of water treatment tablets  -Volunteer network of more than X volunteers per branch |
| Distribution of animal care kits to protect and increase the recovery of sick animals. | Livelihoods | **Extreme cold and snowfall can decimate the herder’s livestock which is their main source of livelihoods.** | The herder household is able to prevent their livestock from getting sick by using the animal care kit contents. | Herders lose less than 10% of their herds in the event of extreme frost and snowfall. | 1. Previous contact with animal care kits' content suppliers 2. Volunteers at the branch level to support distributions. 3. Logistics capacity to mobilize materials to remote areas. 4. Herders are familiar with use of animal care kits or advise (e.g: IEC or trained volunteers) is available on its use. |

## Evidence base

*(max 1.5 pages)*

**Explanatory note:** It is Important to provide evidence-based information showing that the early action(s) selected are likely to reduce the humanitarian impact of the event.

**Required points:**

*- Explain how the selected actions will reduce the expected disaster impacts with a reference to academic research, empirical studies, interviews with key informants/experts, among other sources of evidence.*

## IFRC Planned Operation

**Explanatory note:**

The EAP includes the decision-making process (triggers), rationale for early action, readiness activities, pre-positioning of materials and the description of roles and responsibilities for activation. To facilitate the overview of all the actions to be taken by sector and their timeline, use the operational matrix below. This operational matrix follows the IFRC programming framework, which should be aligned with the structure of the EAP budget. Support to fill out the operational matrix should be obtained from the IFRC country or regional Forecast-based Financing focal point.

**Required points:**

*Include this same section, as needed, for each of the* ***IFRC Planned Operation****: Shelter, Settlement and Housing; Livelihoods; Health and Care; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery; Protection, Gender and Inclusion; Multipurpose Cash; Education; Mitigation; Environmental Sustainability; Community Engagement and Accountability; and* ***Enabling Approaches*** *including National Society Strengthening; Coordination and Partnership; Secretariat Services.*

1. *Organize the actions according to the IFRC Plan and Budget, 2021 - 2025 sets out objectives for the IFRC Secretariat in support of National Societies and will guide the IFRC in the implementation Strategy 2030 and the Agenda for Renewal.*
2. *These indicate the thematic areas in which the IFRC provides support to National Societies and where consolidated results are measured. Support on the IFRC programming and budgeting structure can be obtained from the IFRC focal point for Anticipation at country or regional level, regional disaster manager, Finance unit and/or Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) unit*

Planned Operation

***Delete sectors which are not used in this Early Action Protocol***

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | **Shelter, Settlement and Housing**  **People targeted: xxxx** | **xxx CHF**  **AP Code: 005** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Indicator: Number of people reached with shelter, housing and settlement interventions in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Priority Actions** | **Year** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Readiness activities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  | | | | |
| *Insert one activity per line* |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  | **Year** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Pre-positioning activities** | 1 |  | | | | | | | | |
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|  | **Timeframe(days, weeks or months – choose most appropriate)** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Early action activities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Icon  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | **Livelihoods**  People targeted: xxx | xxx CHF  AP Code: 007 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Indicator: Number of people reached with livelihoods interventions in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Priority Actions** | **Year** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Readiness activities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  | | | | |
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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | A picture containing text, sign, outdoor, dark  Description automatically generated | **Multi-purpose Cash**  People targeted: xxx | xxx CHF  AP Code: 081 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Indicator: Number of people reached with multi-purpose cash in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Priority Actions** | **Year** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Readiness activities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  | | | | |
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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | A picture containing text, light  Description automatically generated | **Health and Care**  People targeted: xxx | xxx CHF  AP Code: 107, 108, 109 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Indicator: Number of people reached with health and care interventions in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Priority Actions** | **Year** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Readiness activities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  | | | | |
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| **Early action activities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Icon  Description automatically generated | **Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**  People targeted: xxx | xxx CHF  AP Code: 110, 111 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Indicator: Number of people reached with WASH interventions in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Priority Actions** | **Year** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Readiness activities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  | | | | |
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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Icon  Description automatically generated | **Protection Gender and Inclusion**  People targeted: xxx | xxx CHF  AP Code: 114, 115, 117 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Indicator: Number of people reached with PGI interventions in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Priority Actions** | **Year** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Readiness activities** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  | | | | |
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| **Indicator: Number of people reached with education interventions in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
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| **Indicator: Number of people reached with migration interventions in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
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| **Indicator: Number of people reached with risk reduction and/or climate adaptation interventions in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Logo  Description automatically generated | **Community Engagement and Accountability**  People targeted: xxx | xxx CHF  AP Code: 102 |

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| **Indictor: Number of people reached with environmental sustainability interventions in advance of a hazard** | | | | | | | | | | |
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Enabling approaches

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| **Priority Actions** | **Year** | | | | | | | | | |
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## Usefulness of actions in case of non-occurring event

*(max. 0.5 page)*

**Explanatory note:** In cases where the expected event does not materialize, the early actions implemented by the National Society (funded by the DREF) should still contribute to risk reduction and resiliency building.

Required points:

1. *Describe how your selected actions will contribute to the well-being of the population even if the expected event does not materialize. Including a description of the measures taken to ensure that the actions taken will be of maximum use for the targeted population in a future event.*

## Feasibility

*(max. 1 page)*

**Explanatory note**: In this section please describe why it is feasible to implement the selected actions, based on: time to implement the action, capacity of the National Society to implement, available resources (human, logistics, materials, etc.) and access considerations (see FbF Manual Chapter 4.2 Select Early Actions on criteria.)

Required points:

1. *Indicate how feasible it is to implement the proposed early actions in the planned timeframe. Has it been tested? Have similar actions been carried out by the NS in past operations and/or in as short a time with similar resources? If not, was a simulation conducted?*
2. *If Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) is chosen as an early action, describe how necessary information for disbursement is collected in the short period of time and how national legislative requirements are met.*

# EAP Activation Process

## Early Action Implementation process

*(max.1 page)*

**Explanatory note:** As a crucial component of the EAP**,** once the trigger has been reached, everyone involved should be knowledgeable about what will be done, where, when and by whom. The described implementation process shows that each step of the activation has been thought through and considered and that implementation in the lead time available is possible. The set of tasks described in this section should cover all activities from the moment the trigger is reached (Day 1) to the completion of post-impact surveys (Day X).

Required points:

1. *Include a matrix/flowchart for a quick overview of the early action implementation process.*
2. *Describe the step-by-step process from Day 1 to Day X for the implementation of the selected early actions. Indicate the day when the Stop Mechanism would occur. Include all critical and support tasks that are necessary for each of the steps. Each task should indicate the position of the person responsible (including when cash-based actions are planned liaison with the financial service provider).*
3. *For each action, include at which level it will take place (HQ, branch, community).*
4. *Each NS should have a detailed version of this process, including communication flows, for each task and the name of the person responsible with their contact information. This document should be regularly updated.*

## Trigger activation system

*(max. 0.5 page)*

**Explanatory note:** The activation process starts with the message that the trigger has been reached (on Day 1). Ideally, there is a system in place to automatically monitor the forecasts and send an automatic message of alert to relevant actors as soon as a trigger is reached. It is expected that this will be executed by the national meteorological office and/or national DRM authority. If this automatic system does not exist, a mechanism needs to be in place to monitor the forecasts and alert relevant actors as soon as a trigger is reached to initiate the early actions.

Required points:

1. *Describe the automatic system used to monitor the forecasts, generate the intervention map and send the alert message when the trigger is reached.*
2. *If this automatic system does not yet exist, explain how forecasts will be monitored, intervention maps generated and how the relevant actors will be informed that the trigger has been reached.*
3. *Indicate who gives the signal to start the activation.*

## Selection of target population

*(max. 0.5 pages)*

**Explanatory note:** FbF aims to protect the most vulnerable from the impact of extreme weather events. Based on the analysis on vulnerability and exposure (in section 3) and on the described mechanism for identifying intervention areas/communities (in section 4- Intervention area), it needs to be clear, how vulnerability criteria and impact forecasts will be applied to determine who will be targeted.

**Required points:**

* *Provide a short summary of the target population, (the number, location etc.)*
* *Describe how the target population will be selected, with a special focus on feasibility in the short period of time between forecast and event*
* *If the EAP is intending to use Social Protection systems or other government beneficiary databases, indicate how the potential number of targeted households be selected*

## Stop Mechanism

*(max. 0.5 page)*

**Explanatory note:** For forecast triggers with a lead time of more than three days, the EAP should include the description of a stop mechanism. This means that if a later forecast – prior to the start of activities (related to the early action(s)) shows that the event is no longer likely to occur, the activation of the EAP will be stopped to avoid generating further use of resources. For example, if the 6-day forecast on Day 1 indicates high risk of heavy rainfall and thereby triggers the activation and the new 6-day-forecast released on Day 3 shows that the risk has significantly lowered, the trigger level is no longer 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 and are not distributed due to the stop mechanism should be stored in the warehouse for a future activation.

-For forecast triggers with a lead time of less than 3 days, the EAP should include the description of what the National Society would do if the forecast changes in strength or location within the last three days before the event.

Required points:

1. *Indicate on which day of activation the stop mechanism is foreseen, and who is responsible to give the signal to stop.*
2. *Describe when the stop mechanism begins and whether in-kind/cash distribution would be stopped or not. For cash actions cancelled, how would this be coordinated with the financial service provider? For in-kind distribution, what would happen with the perishable items?*
3. *Explain how it would be communicated to communities and stakeholders that the activities are being stopped.*

# Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability Learning (MEAL)

*(max. 1.5 pages)*

**Explanatory note:** 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) learn from the process to improve the system in the future. The *chapters 4.3 Design M&E plan and 6. Activate, Monitor, Evaluate* in the FbF Manual, provide guidance on the set-up and implementation of the monitoring, evaluation, learning tools.

Ideally, the M&E system should be set up to allow comparison of impacts between communities that received early actions and those that didn´t (please refer to FbF manual for more information). This M&E plan should be harmonized with the existing IFRC PMER guidance and tools, available on [FedNet](https://fednet.ifrc.org/en/resources/PMER/pmer-guidance/).

Required points:

1. *Following the guidance of the FbF Manual, describe the M&E plan for this EAP. Including:* 
   1. *EAP Monitoring (between the trigger moment and the implementation of the actions),*
   2. *Impact evaluation plan: how, when and by whom will the robust impact evaluation to assess how early actions reduced the humanitarian impact of the extreme event be conducted. Please note that the IFRC DREF coordination budget for 2020 and 2021 can contribute to the costs of the impact evaluation of the triggered early action.*
   3. *Trigger evaluation by whom, when and how the trigger evaluation will be conducted)*
   4. *Learning (when, who and how the learning will take place. E.g workshop, interviews etc).*
2. *If a more detailed M&E plan is available add it as an annex.*
3. *Describe how the FbF M&E plan is linked to the existing PMER system of the National Society. If the NS does not have a PMER system, explain how the EAP will be used to strengthen this area prior to activation.*

# National Society capacity

**Explanatory note**: Capacity to deliver early action is a key aspect of the FbF system. To have access to the DREF the NS should describe why and how it will be able to implement the early actions proposed in this protocol within the lead time and reaching all of the targeted population. This section could make reference to NS’s experience with previous DREFs (types of disasters, quantity of operations, planned operations implemented, among others). If a National Society has already gone through a Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) assessment process the results of these assessments should be referred to in this section as they provide National Societies with systematic, evidence-based information on their ability to conduct timely early action (looking also at support areas).

## Operational, thematic and administrative capacity

*(max. 1.5 pages)*

Required points:

1. *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.*
2. *If a feasibility study on FbF was conducted, indicate the findings in relation to the capacity of the NS to implement FbF.*
3. *Indicate the number of staff and volunteers available for a potential activation. Explain how they have been trained on FbF/ activation.*
4. *Explain if special structures are foreseen for EAP activation, e.g. NDRTs and specially trained volunteers per branch.*
5. *If selecting a cash and voucher early action indicate findings and recommendations of the NS cash capacity assessment or previous experience with CVA.*

## Strategies and plans

*(max 0.5 page)*

Required points:

1. *Describe how the EAP is aligned with the Disaster Risk Management strategy of the National Society (e.g. in the existing contingency plan, DRR plan etc.).*

## Financial capacity to advance funds

*(max. 1 paragraph)*

**Explanatory note:** While the funds for the readiness and pre-positioning will be transferred as soon as the EAP is approved and the legal agreement has been signed, the funds for the early action activation will only be transferred once the trigger has been met and the trigger notification has been received by IFRC. Please not that while this allocation is done immediately upon notification it may still take a few days for the funds to arrive in country. Therefore, especially for short lead time EAPs it is crucial for the National Society and their partners to plan accordingly.

**Required points:**

1. *Indicate whether the NS (and/or PNS in country) has the capacity to advance funds, to start early actions, in the short duration between trigger and funds from the DREF arriving.*

# Finance and Logistics

## Budget

**Explanatory note:** The EAP budget consists of all the costs linked to the activation of the EAP as well as readiness and prepositioning costs. 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 DREF is 500,000 Swiss francs. The budget will have to include the IFRC indirect costs of 6,5%. The National Society may include administrative costs as well in the EAP which should not be more than 5% of the early action budget. If the 5% rate is not used the National Society will need to list out the each of the admin cost individually. The M&E budget should be maximum 5% of overall the budget.

IFRC finance units at country, cluster and/or regional level can provide technical support and guidance for the budgeting process.

Required points:

1. *Provide the EAP budget as a separate annex using the IFRC standard budgeting template for Early Action Protocol and following the same order (and output codes) as in the operational matrix filled in the EAP activation process section.*
2. *In the budget, make sure to indicate who (Host National Society, PNS, IFRC) will be responsible for each expenditure according to the roles and responsibilities in the EAP.*
3. *The budget groups in the budget template are meant to be a guidance and the most suitable one should be identified and used.*
4. *Avoid using lumpsums as unit measure.*

## Readiness cost

*(max. 0.5 page)*

**Explanatory note:** Readiness costs cover those 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, warehouses, updating data, staff, costs for markets monitoring, costs for updating the cash transfer value etc. Readiness combined with prepositioning costs are limited to 65% of the total EAP budget over the EAP’s lifecycle and are disbursed by the DREF on an annual basis through the IFRC Operational Plan for that specific country.

Required points:

1. *For each item of readiness costs in the budget, explain why these are necessary for the upkeep of the EAP and how these were calculated.*
2. *Indicate who will manage these funds and describe how it will be ensured that they are only used for the indicated purposes.*

## Prepositioning:

*(max. 0.5 page)*

**Explanatory note:** 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 DREF covers these costs, combined with readiness, to a maximum amount of 65% of the EAP budget (combined with the readiness activities). Please note that costs that are not for the procurement of the items but related to the maintenance of the stock, such as warehousing, are part of the readiness costs of an EAP (see section 9.2.)

**Required points:**

1. *If funds for prepositioning are requested from the DREF, explain for which items and why no other option is possible. Explain why standard response stocks cannot be used.*
2. *Expiry date of the items should not be prior to the end of the lifecycle of the EAP*
3. *Provide information about the location of the storage facilities and costs of storage, etc.*

## Early Action cost

*(max. 0.5 page)*

**Explanatory note:** 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.

**Required points:**

1. *In the budget, list all these costs under the section early action costs.*
2. *Indicate activation procedures once the trigger is reached, clearly define the funds release procedures including who initiates the funds request, approval chain/procedures and process of disbursement including time frames from the source of funds to HQ and branches.*
3. *For the items included in the early action budget, indicate how they will be procured in the short activation period (e.g. Are there pre-disaster agreements made with suppliers? Are items readily available in the needed quantities with the identified suppliers? Are agreements with financial service providers ready for activation?) Or will you use the early action funds to replenish items that are already in stock?*
4. *Indicate if other sources of funding were used for the initial purchase of relief items for an activation (in this case the DREF could fund the replenishment of stock only if they are used for the early actions).*

# EAP endorsement/Approval

*(max. 1 paragraph)*

**Explanatory note:** It should be ensured that at the point of the trigger being reached no further permissions are needed. Thus, the EAP should have prior approval from all relevant stakeholders. The EAP must be endorsed by the leadership of the submitting NS. The EAP should also be endorsed by other key relevant stakeholders, such as the NHMS and the respective DRM authorities. If technical working groups have been created for FbF, their members should also endorse the final version of the EAP before submission.

**Required points:**

1. *Describe by whom, how and when the EAP was agreed and endorsed.*

# Annex

## Annex 1: Quality criteria for Early Action Protocol

The following criteria are used by the IFRC EAP Validation Committee as a benchmark to determine if the of the Early Action Protocol is eligible to be funded by the DREF. The ‘comments’ column gives further guidance which should be considered in relation to each of the criteria. If any of the criteria are not adequately met or just partially met, the Validation Committee may require further information or additional work to demonstrate that the criteria are justified.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Risk analysis and Trigger Model | | Comments |
| The EAP triggers are based on a combination of the analysis of risk factors and the forecast in line with the steps of the [trigger methodology](https://manual.forecast-based-financing.org/chapter/set-the-trigger/) outlined in the FbF manual. The EAP contains a clear trigger statement  **(Section 3 EAP Template – Risk Analysis and Section 4.1 - Trigger Statement)** | | The EAP should clearly show how on the basis of available data on vulnerability, exposure and impact of past events the trigger was determined.  The trigger should be clear as this information needs to be verifiable once the trigger is met, so the EAP needs to state in one sentence what exactly the trigger of your EAP will be, for example*: When [source] issues a forecast of at least [probability of magnitude of event or impact], then we will act.*    If the EAP has more than one trigger (e.g. phased or staggered triggers) then each trigger should be clearly explained along with explanation what action will be taken following each trigger and when transfer of the early action funds are required.    For slow onset hazards, the trigger can also be based on a combination of risk factors, forecasts and observation data especially if the impact is a result of accumulative factors (e.g. forecast of second consecutive failed rainy season). If unconventional triggers are used (e.g. combining multiple indicators, including socio-economic indicators like food prices), clear explanation should be given on which criteria/ conditions was used to assign certain weight to each indicator.    In case of drought, it might be more difficult to look back on the historical record of rainfall and its specific impacts and see a clear correlation between the two, as some drought-typical impacts are also highly affected by other socio-economic drivers (insecurity, weather patterns elsewhere that affect local food prices etc). Also consider the links between the effects of dryness and economic, social and environmental impacts and choices. If qualitative information is included in the trigger it should be from an authoritative source. |
| The EAP provides an analysis of historical disaster impact for the selected hazard and provides an evidence-based analysis of exposure and vulnerability.    **(Section 3.1 EAP – Hazard selection and section 3.2 – Exposed Elements and their vulnerability factors)** | | The EAP should have an information management system, which shows how risk data is integrated into trigger model and how the data will be updated on regular basis according to the context.    In the case of drought, there may be limited historical disaster data in some countries due to the complexity of drought and also the fact that drought might be a new hazard in some areas (partly due to climate change). The EAP may consider profiling proxy data/ reference data either in other countries/ regions of similar context or general scientific findings to support this analysis. |
| There is an annex with a menu of forecasts and/or other relevant early warning and /or monitoring/surveillance systems, demonstrating a review of all available forecasts data relevant to this hazard.    **(Section 4.2 EAP template – Forecast selection)** | | The menu of forecasts should include all available forecasts and list for each forecast or observation used for the trigger the lead time, the skill/confidence, the probability (if possible) and the source.    If other early warning information (non-hydro-met forecasts, satellite observation, socio-economic indicators, etc.) are used (e.g. in the case of drought or epidemics), a review of the quality of available early warning and monitoring systems would be needed. |
| Data must be provided that shows that an event of the magnitude/strength of the event that the trigger is based on has caused disastrous humanitarian impact in the region in the past.    **(Section 4.3 EAP template - Definition and justification of impact level)** | | The allocates funding for EAPs to reduce the impacts of extreme events of a strength or magnitude that in the past have required humanitarian assistance. In order to demonstrate that the selected hazard has caused extreme humanitarian impacts in the past, information on the previous impacts of the selected hazard in the country should be provided.    In the case of drought, there may be limited historical disaster data in some countries due to the complexity of drought and also the fact that drought might be a new hazard in some areas (partly due to climate change). Regions that have rarely experienced droughts will be less resilience to these shocks and have less coping capacity and strategies. These may be the most vulnerable to the impacts of drought even though historical data might be limited. In these cases, climate change projections could also be taken into consideration (e.g. changing drought patterns). |
| There is a map or a clear methodology that will tell the NS where action should be taken based on a combination of vulnerability, exposure, and the forecast, when the EAP is activated based on the trigger model.    **(Section 4.4 EAP template – Identification of the intervention area)** | | In the most advanced form, the forecast would be digitally combined with vulnerability and exposure information, to show which areas are predicted to be most severely impacted. This will provide a map-based tool or a list of prioritized districts villages, municipalities or other geographical areas where the early actions will be activated. Where no digital system is available, the combination of forecast and vulnerability/exposure indicators could also be done manually or qualitatively, explaining the process of deciding how the National Society will select where the action will take place. |
| The EAP trigger chapter includes calculations and evidence for the following points:   1. Frequency of the trigger being reached 2. Minimum 5-year return period of the event 3. Probability of acting in vain (false alarm ratio) 4. Lead time | | An extreme event could be forecasted several times in a decade *(frequency of trigger being reached)*, but only happen once in that decade *(return period of the event).*    Forecasts/observation thresholds used for the trigger will provide the probability of the event happening, once the trigger is reached. A 5-year return period means that in any year there is a 20% chance or less of the event occurring. In exceptional cases, in very large countries with distinctive climate zones, the 5-year return period can be applied to separate regions, with appropriate justification.    Probability of acting in vain will need to be calibrated. If a seasonal forecast is used, the probability of acting in vain may be higher, so the EAP needs to include clear explanation if staggered triggers and stop mechanisms have been considered, and strong consideration of do no harm.    In the case of drought there might be more than one trigger, which will help to contribute to a lower ratio of acting in vain. |
| Early Actions | | Comments |
| Forecast-based Early Actions are selected based on the reduction of risk that they will provide. The EAP describes the main steps used to determine which actions were selected to reduce a specific disaster impact.    **(Section 5.1 EAP template – Early Action Selection Process)** | | The FbF design process described in the FbF Manual (chapter 4.2), should be followed and described in the EAP (it can be adapted to the respective context). If some disaster impacts are not addressed, an explanation should be provided and also indicate which actions were considered but not chosen |
| For each early action selected, the EAP must include a Theory of Change and show that the action chosen is appropriate to reduce the specific risk. Selected actions should be socially acceptable according to the context and there should be evidence of its effectiveness.    **(Section 5.1 EAP template – Early Action Selection Process and Section 5.2 EAP template – Evidence base)** | | If evidence is available, it should ideally show that the action has reduced impact in prior (test or real) activations. In case evidence is available, there should be a description on the effectiveness of the action in reducing the targeted impact.    If evidence it´s not available, the EAP should describe in detail how they foresee that the action chosen will reduce the specific risk. |
| Actions are implemented in the window between the forecast and the impact of the extreme event.    **(Section 5.5 EAP template – Feasibility)** | | It needs to be shown that actions can be implemented in the lead time provided by the forecast with enough time for the population to make use of the assistance received.    For slow onset disasters, the timing of impact may need to be interpreted as the timing of an expected spike in impacts or the expected peak of impacts, but the actions would still have to be early enough to reduce impact. In the case of drought, we will need flexibility as it is challenging to identify this specific moment. Each would be context specific. |
| The EAP support the Principles of “[Good Humanitarian Donorship](https://www.ghdinitiative.org/ghd/gns/principles-good-practice-of-ghd/principles-good-practice-ghd.html)” and “Do No Harm”    **(Section 5.4 EAP template 5.4 - Usefulness of actions in case of non-occurring event)** | |  |
| The EAP includes an operational matrix with the activities to be implemented according to the IFRC focus areas and strategies for implementation    **(Section 5.3 EAP template - IFRC Operational Strategy)** | | To facilitate the overview of all the actions to be taken by sector and their timeline, an operational matrix should be used. This operational matrix follows the IFRC programming framework, which should be aligned with the structure of the EAP budget. |
| If relevant for the type of intervention, actions are in line with accepted international and/or national standards, regulations, laws for the relevant sector. E.g. [SPHERE](https://www.spherestandards.org/), [LEGS](https://www.livestock-emergency.net/download-legs/), [Minimum standards for protection, gender and inclusion in emergencies](https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/11/Minimum-standards-for-protection-gender-and-inclusion-in-emergencies-LR.pdf).    **(Section 5.3 EAP template - IFRC Operational Strategy)** | |  |
| The EAP includes a 4W description indicating who does what, where, and when. This should include also actors outside the structure of the National Society.    **(Section 6.1 EAP template – Early Action implementation process)** | | The described implementation process shows that each step of the activation has been thought through and considered and that implementation in the lead time available is possible. The set of tasks described in this section should cover all activities from the moment the trigger is reached (Day 1) to the completion of post-impact surveys (Day X). |
| EAP activation | | Comments |
| There is a mechanism in place to monitor the forecasts (ad /or trigger related indicators) and alert relevant actors as soon as a trigger is reached to initiate the early actions. This implies that the process to trigger the FbF system is clearly understood by all the key staff of the NS and relevant partners.    **(Section 6.2 EAP template - Trigger activation system)** | | Ideally, there is a system in place to automatically monitor the forecasts and send an automatic message of alert to relevant actors as soon as a trigger is reached. It is expected that this will be executed by the national meteorological office and/or national DRM authority. If this automatic system does not exist, a mechanism needs to be in place to monitor the forecasts/indicators and alert relevant actors as soon as a trigger is reached to initiate the early actions    If the trigger is based on a combination of multiple indicators (e.g. for slow onset hazard) and no suitable product exists yet, the EAP needs to explain who will provide the data and how it will be combined and analyzed. This may need to be a consortium of institutions, each providing pieces of information, therefore a clear communication mechanism is vital.    Any risk (e.g. certain data is not collected in time) and mitigation measures (e.g. MOU) be outlined. |
| The EAP clearly explains how the target beneficiaries within the intervention areas will be selected    **(Section 6.3 EAP template – Selection of target population)** | | Once an intervention area has been identified, the NS still has to have a clear process to select which households in that area it will provide assistance to. The selection process needs to be feasible within the lead time. |
| The EAP includes the description of a stop mechanism for forecast triggers with a lead time of more than three days. For forecast triggers with a lead time of less than 3 days, the EAP should include the description of what the National Society would do if the forecast changes in strength or location within the last three days before the event  **(Section 6.4 EAP template – Stop mechanism)** | | If the forecast triggers action, but then in subsequent days the forecast reduces below the trigger, the action should be able to stop. Exceptions might be accepted if the trigger chosen has a very high probability.    In some cases, a stop mechanism may not be possible (very short lead time or limited frequency of forecast for seasonal forecast) |
| M&E | | Comments |
| The EAP includes 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) learn from the process to improve the system in the future    **(Section 7 EAP template – Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL).** | | Ideally, the M&E system should be set up in a way that the impact of the event in the community that received early actions is assessed by using data from comparison communities. Depending on the specific context of the hazard an impact evaluation might only be done several months after finishing the implementations of the actions. |
| National Society’s capacity to implement the EAP | Comments | |
| The EAP describes the National Society operational (Cash, WASH, Food Security, Shelter etc.) and administrative (Finance, PMER, Human Resources) capacity and experience to implement the EAP.  If no capacity exists, the EAP describes how they plan to address this limitation in order to implement the EAP effectively and efficiently.    **(Section 8.1 EAP template - 8.1 Operational, thematic and administrative capacity)** |  | |
| The EAP describes its alignment with the National Society Disaster Risk Management strategy (e.g. the existing contingency plan, response plan, DRR plan etc.)    **(Section 8.2 EAP template – Strategies and plans)** | In the mid-term the EAP should be integrated in the DRM strategy. | |
| Budget | Comments | |
| The EAP includes a budget in the IFRC template, detailing the costs for the readiness activities, pre-positioning and trigger-based Early Action.  The budget upholds to the established percentages: A maximum of 65% of the EAP budget can be allocated for readiness activities and prepositioned stock.    **(Section 9.1 EAP template – Budget)** | The EAP budget consists of all the costs linked to the activation of the EAP as well as readiness and pre-positioning costs. | |
| The EAP should reach ideally a target minimum of 10,000 people    **(Section 9.1 EAP template – Budget)** | If EAPs are foreseen for sparsely populated areas or with high quality early actions, lower household numbers can be accepted.    Given the impacts of drought may be acutely felt for an entire calendar year (e.g. until there is a subsequent good harvest), or longer, it is possible that the most effective actions to support people will be expensive ones, or actions that are staggered and layered one on top of each there (e.g. cash + seeds and fertilizers). With appropriate justification the validation committee might accept exceptions to this criterion. | |
| The shelf life of the items to be prepositioned equals or exceeds the EAP lifespan and there is a plan for stock management    **(Section 9.2 EAP template – Prepositioning)** | 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. | |
| Coordination | Comments | |
| The Forecast based Financing process has been conducted in a participatory manner with involvement of key stakeholders, including communities, movement components and external actors, especially Hydro-Met agencies, disaster risk management authorities, government ministries, development organizations, other hazard specific agencies (local and national level), and other major anticipatory humanitarian actors in the country/region.    **(Section 2 EAP template – Key actors)** | In order to avoid creating parallel systems and to minimize additional discussions on permissions, etc. when a trigger occurs, all relevant key stakeholders in the country should be involved in the development, and when necessary, the approval of the EAP. | |
| The EAP should have prior approval from all relevant stakeholders. The EAP must be endorsed by the leadership of the submitting NS. The EAP should also be endorsed by other key relevant stakeholders, such as the national Hydro-Met agencies NHMS and the respective DRM authorities.    **(Section 10 EAP template – EAP endorsement)** |  | |

1. The IFRC planned operation include: Shelter, Settlement and Housing, Livelihoods, Health and Care, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery, Protection, Gender and Inclusion, Multipurpose Cash, Education, Mitigation, Environmental Sustainability, Community Engagement and Accountability and Enabling Approaches, National Society Strengthening, Coordination and Partnership, Secretariat Services. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)