**Quality criteria for the Simplified Early Action Protocols**

The following quality criteria are used by the IFRC delegations and the Validation Committee as a benchmark to determine if the simplified Early Action Protocol (EAP) is eligible to be funded by the anticipatory pillar of 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, further information may be required or additional work to demonstrate that the criteria are justified.

*Please note that technical feedback should be provided on the Validation Committee Feedback Form, and not made directly on the simplified EAP.*

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| **Overarching quality assurance** | **Comments** |
| All sections of the simplified EAP need to be completed including IFRC sectors, enabling approaches and budget. |  |
| Check the feasibility of the fund transfer to the National Society in the lead time to fund the early action activities. | IFRC Finance needs to confirm the transfer timeframe. Where a simplified EAP has a short lead time, an alternative plan needs to be developed to get the funds in country to fund the early action activities.    The alternative plan could, for example, involve PNS prefunding early action activities, being reimbursed when the DREF funds arrive in country, or IFRC delegation prefunds early action activities from other projects, being reimbursed when the funds arrive in country, and/or framework agreement with goods and service providers, with payment terms that mean that services can be paid two weeks or even a month after the services are delivered. |
| **Risk analysis and Trigger Model** | **Comments** |
| Hazard selection is supported with evidence related to the historical disaster impact. | The simplified EAP should provide sufficient justification of the prioritized hazard and explain the negative impacts of the hazard on lives, livelihoods and wellbeing.  The evidence provided should demonstrate that the impacts were above average strength or magnitude and have warranted humanitarian assistance.  For certain types of hazards (such as drought, food security, population movement crisis), there may be limited historical disaster data available. The simplified EAP may consider profiling proxy data/ reference data from other countries/ regions with a similar context to support this analysis. |
| The risks being prioritized are relevant to the hazard’s main impacts. | There must be a clear connection between the hazard’s impacts →the prioritized risks → selected early action. |
| The simplified EAP has a clear trigger statement, including who will be responsibility for monitoring the trigger. | The trigger statement should be one or two sentences stating precisely when the EAP will be triggered using what information/forecast.  If the EAP has more than one trigger (i.e., a phased or staggered triggers) then each trigger should be clearly explained.  If qualitative information is included in the trigger, it should be from a reliable, creditable and independent source.  The trigger should be set taking into consideration thresholds that have had significant humanitarian consequences in the past. |
| **Early actions** | **Comments** |
| Selected early actions seek to reduce the possible impacts of the risks prioritized by the National Society. | The early action activities aim to reduce the impact of the selected hazard.  In case evidence is available, there should be a description on the effectiveness of the action in reducing the targeted impact.  If evidence is not available, further information may be requested on how the National Society foresee that the action chosen will reduce the specific risk. |
| Selected early action activities are planned in accordance with identified standards. | If relevant for the type of intervention, actions should be 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) and the principles of Do No Harm. |
| **EAP activation** | **Comments** |
| National Society aims to implement the early action activities in the lead time, between the trigger and the impact of the event. | Early actions should be implemented with sufficient time for at risk communities to make use of the assistance received.  For slow onset or complex hazards, the impact may be interpreted as a spike or expected peak of impact which overwhelms the targeted community to cope. Therefore, the early actions should be activated with enough lead time to reduce impact of the hazard. In the case of drought, consider greater flexibility as it is challenging to identify the specific spike/peak as each will be context specific. |
| The simplified EAP clearly explains who will be targeted with the early action activities and should target at least 2,000 people. | The National Society can use forecast information, expert judgment and vulnerability/exposure indicators to explain the process of deciding how they will select where the action will take place. The simplified EAP should explain the rationale of ‘at risk’ communities, should focus on the most vulnerable (rather than blanket coverage).  If the selection of people targeted cannot be done in advance of an activation, then the selection process needs to be feasible within the lead time.  The selection process should be coherent with IFRC minimum standards, including the [Minimum Standards for PGI in Emergencies](https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/Minimum-standards-for-protection-gender-and-inclusion-in-emergencies-LR.pdf). |
| **Monitoring and Evaluation** | **Comments** |
| The simplified EAP includes a post-activation lesson learned workshop. | The simplified EAP must include a reasonable budget for a lessons learned workshop with partners and IFRC.  The simplified EAP could include a reasonable budget for monitoring early action activities of National Society staff and volunteers, with potential support from IFRC. |
| **National Society’s capacity** | **Comments** |
| The National Society explains its capacity to implement the early action activities and/or minimum conditions needed to deliver on the early actions. | The simplified EAP describes the National Society capacities related to sectoral (Cash, WASH, Food Security, Shelter etc.) and administrative (Finance, PMER, Human Resources) capacity and experience to implement the EAP.  If there is no or limited capacity, the simplified EAP describes how readiness activities will address these limitations in order to ensure that the early action activities can be implemented effectively and efficiently. |
| **Budget** | **Comments** |
| The simplified EAP includes a budget in the IFRC template, detailing the costs for the readiness, prepositioning and trigger-based early action activities. | The simplified EAP budget is capped at CHF 200,000 and should target a minimum of 2000 people (CHF 100 per person).  The allocation for readiness and prepositioning costs combined will still be capped at 65% of the budget but National Societies can use discretion regarding the split between the two types of expenses. For example, readiness could be 30% of the budget and pre-positioning could be 35% of the budget.  Some hazards may require a longer timeframe or more expensive or intensive activities. With appropriate justification, the Validation Committee might accept exceptions to this criterion. |
| The shelf life of pre-positioned stock equals or exceeds the simplified EAP 2-year lifespan. | The stock planned for early action has a shelf life of at least 2 years. |
| **Coordination** | **Comments** |
| The simplified EAP outlines coordination with relevant stakeholders related to the planning and activation of early action activities | The simplified EAP has been prepared in a participatory manner with involvement of key stakeholders, Movement components and external actors, especially Hydro-Met agencies, disaster risk management authorities, government ministries, etc.  To avoid creating parallel systems and to minimize negotiation on the mandate/permission, etc. to act early when a trigger occurs, all relevant key stakeholders should be involved in the development, and when necessary, the activation of the early action activities. |