Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION

TO PROTECT AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOODS

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATM	automated teller machine
CCRIF	Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility
CCRIF SPC	Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CONRED	national coordinator for disaster reduction
DRM	disaster risk management
DROMIC	Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ECT	emergency cash transfer
EWEA	early warning early action
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FbA	forecast-based action
FbF	forecast-based financing
4Ps	Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program
GBP	British pound sterling
G2P	Government to Person
GTQ	Guatemalan quetzal
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Surveys
HSNP	hunger net safety programme
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MAGA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food
MEB	minimum expenditure basket
MIDES	Ministry of Social Development
NDRRMC	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
NPR	Nepalese rupee
NRCS	Nepal Red Cross Society

NRDS	national resilience development strategy
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODM	office of disaster management
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PAGASA	Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration
PAP	public assistance programme
PHP	Philippine peso
PMEP	Prime Minister's employment program
PRCS	Philippine Red Cross Society
PSNP	productive safety net programme
SCTP	social cash transfer program
REAP	Risk-informed Early Action Partnership
SOPs	standard operating procedures
SRSP	shock-responsive social protection
SSA	social security allowance
SWD	Social Welfare Division
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	United States dollar
WFP	World Food Programme
XCD	Eastern Caribbean dollar

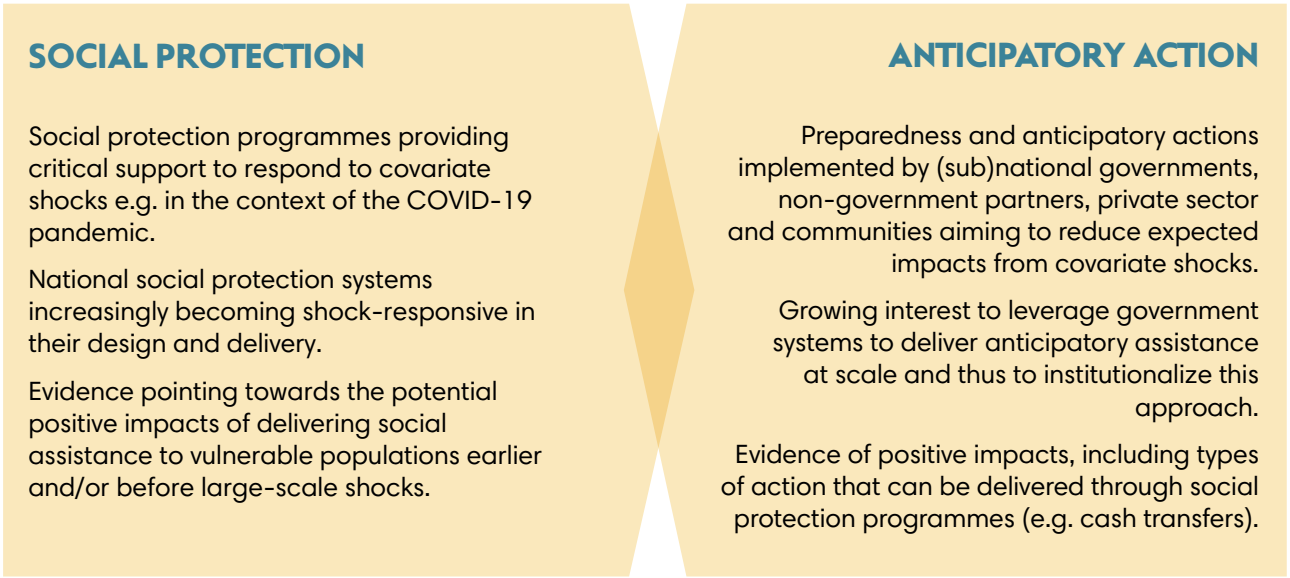
INTRODUCTION

As the quality of climate risk information and scientific forecasting has continued to improve, the imperative to act in advance of an imminent shock in order to protect people, assets and livelihoods has also gained notable attention and increasing investment. Recognizing this opportunity, some governments, and development and humanitarian partners are trying to gain a better understanding of the potential of social protection to deliver support ahead of a forecasted shock (Easton-Calabria *et al.*, 2022; REAP, 2021), including exploring options to systematically integrate anticipatory action approaches within existing national social protection systems.

Pointing to improvements in access to forecasting and risk information, the potential effects of linking anticipatory action and social protection, along with the important role of government-led social protection in disaster risk management (DRM), the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) argues that "increased attention to an integrated approach to early warning and social protection can present a game changer in how we address the risks faced by climate vulnerable populations" (REAP, 2021, p. 5).

In the last decade there has been a rise in delivering social protection through cash transfers and, indeed, cash transfers provided ahead of a shock are a common form of anticipatory action (Anticipation Hub, 2022a). As such, much of the focus of current efforts aimed at operationalizing linkages between anticipatory action approaches and social protection is on leveraging social assistance programmes, particularly those providing cash transfers (REAP, 2021; Easton-Calabria *et al.*, 2022). Recent developments concerning the integration of social protection and anticipatory action are summarized in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS TOWARDS INTEGRATION OF SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION



Source: Authors' figure, based on REAP (2021). Glossary of early action terms. 2022 edition. Geneva. **https://www.early-action-reap.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/REAP_Glossary%20of%20Early%20Action%20terms_2022%20edition_FINAL.pdf**

Currently, only limited research has been conducted to understand if and how populations benefit from the provision of anticipatory assistance delivered through, or aligned with, social protection systems and their delivery chains. The focus of this document is therefore to unpack the concept of linking social protection and anticipatory action, as well as build and expand on the growing literature on the potential benefits, drawbacks and barriers of integrating these two approaches in practice within rural areas. The discussion within this document focuses primarily on the application of linkages between anticipatory action approaches and national social assistance programmes and, in particular, cash transfers unless explicitly stated.

For this purpose, this scoping paper builds on existing literature on shock-responsive social protection (SRSP) and anticipatory action, while applying the findings from papers discussing the conceptual and practical linkages between the two topics. It also draws on four case studies that were informed by existing literature and key informant interviews, with subject matter experts involved in the design and delivery of these programmes at country level. Recognizing the current lack of information on the integration of social protection and anticipatory action in practice, the intention is to provide readers with practical examples of the challenges and opportunities to integrate social protection and anticipatory action across a range of contexts. Hence, this paper's primary audience consists of relevant actors involved in the implementation of social protection and anticipatory action interventions, with an emphasis on those working on the design and delivery of related policy and programmes at country level. It is envisaged that this paper's content will be of use to government and non-government actors alike, as well as humanitarian and development stakeholders working across the topics discussed.

The paper is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 presents a brief overview of the key concepts of shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action before discussing points at which the two concepts converge along the disaster risk management cycle.

Chapter 2 explores entry points and opportunities of linking anticipatory action with national (shock-responsive) social protection systems**.**

Chapter 3 presents a selection of key challenges.

Chapter 4 brings together the lessons from the previous chapters, key-informant interviews and the four case studies contained in the Annex to present a number of discussion points and conclusions.

Chapter 5 contains the paper's references.

The **Annex** presents practical experiences of shock-responsive social protection, anticipatory action and the integration of both in four countries: namely, Dominica, Guatemala, Nepal and the Philippines.

1. SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Acting in anticipation of a covariate shock (O'Brien *et al.*, 2018a),[1] through leveraging social protection systems, brings together several communities of practice within development and humanitarian fields which have often been operating separately or, at best, with limited integration. First, the concept brings together actors focused on strengthening and managing social protection systems to deliver adequate support to reduce poverty at scale. Second, it gathers stakeholders supporting efforts to ensure shock-responsive social protection capacities, who are therefore primarily focused on leveraging systems to respond to shocks. Finally, it brings together actors working on strengthening disaster risk management systems, including building mechanisms to support the delivery of anticipatory assistance before the impact of a forecasted shock is felt by a given population.

These communities of practice are made up of a combination of civil servants, those working in the humanitarian and development sectors, researchers, donors, and climate change and disaster risk management practitioners and experts, who all share the ambition to protect people from the worst impacts of shocks and stresses. However, they regularly approach this common goal using different modalities, terminologies and time frames, and often as part of distinct and separate coordination platforms. The following chapter defines the key concepts attributed to these respective communities of practice as well as their usage in practice, with the intention to ensure a common understanding among readers of the key terms and terminologies used throughout this paper.

1.1 WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SOCIAL PROTECTION AND SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION?

There is no universally accepted definition of social protection. FAO defines social protection as a "set of policies and programmes that addresses economic, environmental and social vulnerabilities to food insecurity and poverty by protecting and promoting livelihoods" (FAO, 2017, p. 6). This definition is broadly aligned with that of partners and other stakeholders. In particular, it is linked to the social protection inter-agency cooperation board's (SPIAC-B) definition, stating that "social protection is a set of policies and programmes aimed at preventing and protecting all people against poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion, throughout their life cycle placing a particular emphasis on vulnerable groups" (SPIAC-B, 2019, p. 2). Social protection therefore covers an extensive array of policy and programmatic interventions aimed at reducing people's vulnerability to poverty and food insecurity through social assistance, social insurance, and labour market interventions. These pillars of social protection, along with examples, are summarized in Table 1.

Access to a set of comprehensive social protection programmes is important to ensure a minimum standard of living, health and well-being, and to protect people from the potential negative impacts of idiosyncratic shocks that can occur over the life cycle, such as unemployment, illness, retirement and death. These shocks are often compounded by structural inequalities, characteristics and social identities, including but not limited to, gender, disability and age. During times of stress, social

[1] Covariate shocks "affect large numbers of people and/or communities at once", as opposed to idiosyncratic shocks, which "affect individual households or household members, for example job loss or the death of a breadwinner" (O'Brien *et al.*, 2018a, pp. 75–76).

TABLE 1: PILLARS OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

PILLARS OF SOCIAL PROTECTION	EXAMPLES OF PROGRAMMES
Social assistance: These programmes are non-contributory and financed through taxes or development aid.	• Cash transfers, including cash plus or public works programmes; • in-kind transfers, including school feeding programmes; • input or food subsidies; or • fee waivers.
Social insurance: contributory programmes established or mandated by governments to protect people from the potential financial losses linked to life cycle-related events (e.g., pregnancy, old age), livelihood risks (e.g., unemployment, illness) or climate-related stresses (e.g., droughts, floods).	• Maternity benefits; • unemployment insurance; • pensions; or • health insurance.
Labour market interventions: measures for the working age population, which aim to enhance employment opportunities, improve skills of workers and offer livelihood support.	• Skills transfer programmes; • employment guarantee schemes; or • self-employment support.

Sources: Authors' elaboration adapted from ODI. *How can social protection build resilience? Insights from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. BRACED Working Paper.* 2016. https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/11123.pdf; World Bank. *The State of Social Safety Nets. 2015.* **https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/415491467994645020/pdf/97882-PUB-REVISED-Box393232B-PUBLIC-DOCDATE-6-29-2015-DOI-10-1596978-1-4648-0543-1-EPI-1464805431.pdf**; FAO & Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre. 2019. *Managing climate risks through social protection – Reducing rural poverty and building resilient agricultural livelihoods*. **https://www.fao.org/in-action/kore/publications/publications-details/en/c/1251012/**; UNICEF. 2019a. *UNICEF's Global Social Protection Programme Framework*. **https://www.unicef.org/media/64601/file/Global-social-protection-programme-framework-2019.pdf**; FAO. 2017. *FAO Social Protection Framework – Promoting rural development for all*. **https://www.fao.org/3/i7016e/i7016e.pdf**

protection can smooth consumption by ensuring people have a predictable source of support that enables them to continue purchasing essentials without needing to sell productive assets or take on debt to meet basic needs (Ulrichs, Slater and Costella, 2019). Social protection is a particularly important income source for women and for single-headed households – the majority of whom are women – as well as other components of the population who may not have other sources of income, such as people living with a disability or older people. Falling into debt, distress selling of assets, reducing food consumption and other strategies people employ to cope are major drivers of vulnerability during times of stress, which also affect future coping strategies and resilience (Cardona *et al*., 2012).

More recently, there has been increased attention on the role that social protection can play in protecting people from covariate shocks and stresses (see, for example, Bastagli, 2014). Evidence is increasingly showing that households receiving a regular social protection benefit are often able to increase resilience to some extent through savings and investments in productive activities, through investments in the infrastructure of their houses to withstand damage from a covariate shock, or via longer-term investments in the education of children and job opportunities of family members (FAO and Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, 2019).[2] Similarly, social protection is increasingly being promoted as an important intervention that can complement programmes designed to specifically reduce climate and disaster

[2] Readers will note that in recent years, two main approaches have been developed that attempt to frame social protection as a tool to reduce climate risks through climate-sensitive programming and improved integration with climate change adaptation and disaster risk management interventions. The first, termed Adaptive Social Protection, "focuses on the potential of linking social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction to enhance resilience to shocks and stresses", and the second, termed shock-responsive social protection, focuses "on the potential for using social protection systems to deliver response to shocks" (FAO and Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre 2019; p. 17). For the purposes of this paper, the term shock-responsive social protection is used throughout, reflecting the focus on the role of social protection systems to support and/or facilitate anticipatory action provided in advance of a forecasted covariate shock.

BOX 1: DEFINING SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION

Shock-responsive social protection is a term used to bring focus on shocks that affect a large proportion of the population simultaneously (covariate shocks). It encompasses the adaptation of routine social protection programmes and systems to cope with changes in context and demand following large-scale shocks. This can be ex ante by building shock-responsive systems, plans and partnerships in advance of a shock to better prepare for emergency response; or ex post, to support households once the shock has occurred. In this way, social protection can complement and support other emergency response interventions (European Commission, 2019, p. 75).

Source: Authors' own elaboration from the European Commission, 2019. *Social Protection across the Humanitarian-Development Nexus. A Game Changer in Supporting People through Crises. Tools and Methods Series: Reference Document No. 26.* Brussels, The European Commission. https://socialprotection.org/discover/publications/

risks and promote adaptive capacity (FAO and Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre 2019).

Another pathway through which social protection can help protect people from the impacts of covariate shocks is through its shock-responsive function (FAO and Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, 2019). Shock-responsive social protection aims to ensure that social protection policies and programmes are able to both continue providing routine support to address idiosyncratic shocks as well as simultaneously expanding and adapting as required to meet needs that arise from the impacts of covariate shocks. The use of a social protection system and the delivery chain features of its programmes (Smith and Bowen, 2020),[3] is increasingly recognized as a particularly important tool to meet the needs of populations facing those shocks that are becoming increasingly "recurrent, protracted, and/or predictable" (REAP, 2021, p. 8; summarizing from TRANSFORM, 2020; Bowen *et al.*, 2020). Importantly, the concept of shock-responsive social protection includes a focus on both ex-ante activities as well as ex-post.

In practice, this means that social protection systems help protect people from the impacts of shocks by reducing poverty and vulnerability through routine and regular benefits, and through the adaptation of a system's programmes and interventions to deliver emergency assistance in the contexts of shocks. This can happen, for instance, by providing cash "top-ups" to people already benefiting from a given social protection programme (vertical expansion), by absorbing additional people who require assistance as a result of an emergency into a specific programme (horizontal expansion) or through other modalities (OPM, 2015).

The past decade has seen a significant increase in shock-responsive social protection in practice. During this period, national governments, donors, and development and humanitarian partners across numerous contexts have been investing in social protection system strengthening and in increasing their shock-responsive functions. These investments are grounded in the assumption – and increasingly, in evidence – that social protection can be a strategic, cost-effective and efficient tool to help societies manage selected risks associated with shocks including the ones associated with climate change (Costella *et al.*, 2021). As indicated in Box 1, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the potential for social protection to respond to large-scale, covariate shocks (Gentilini, 2022), which constituted a timely lesson as climate change manifestations continue to threaten vulnerable communities and undermine their livelihoods. Combined with lessons from previous

[3] The delivery chain refers to the "operational processes for implementing cash transfer programs, conceived as four phases common to most cash transfer programs: assess, enrol, provide, and manage" (Smith and Bowen, 2020, p. 4). Readers are encouraged to consult Smith and Bowen (2020) for a full overview of social protection delivery chains and their design and implementation in practice.

BOX 2: EXAMPLES OF SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION

During the global economic downturn of 2008/9, shock-responsive social protection efforts ranged from scaling up school feeding programmes in Bangladesh to quadrupling coverage of cash transfers for households with vulnerable children in Kenya (Demeke, Pangrazio and Maetz, 2009; Fiszbein, Ringold and Srinivasan, 2011).

In 2013, in response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, the Government provided cash "top-ups" and in-kind support to regular beneficiaries of its social protection system.

Similarly, social protection programmes in Kenya and Ethiopia were recently expanded to increase the amount of support that recipients receive during drought periods, highlighting the role that shock-responsive social protection can play in the case of slow-onset, predictable shocks (OPM, 2017).

The unprecedented economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic also led many governments to utilize social protection systems as one of the most important instruments to reduce impacts on the most vulnerable in the face of a major, global shock. By February 2022, 3 856 social protection and labour measures had been implemented in 223 countries or territories in response to the pandemic and the related containment measures. Over half of these interventions were provided in the form of social assistance, predominantly cash transfers. Indeed, according to estimates by the World Bank, almost 17 percent of the world's population was covered by at least one cash transfer payment between 2020 and 2022 (Gentilini *et al.*, 2022), indicating the operational potential of such systems to support disaster risk management interventions in the case of covariate shocks.

economic shocks, such as global recessions and economic downturns, the rapid scale-ups of assistance used by governments across the world during the initial stages of the pandemic – and the investments in social protection system strengthening that this entailed – have also further contributed to expectations that social protection systems may be a vehicle to deliver anticipatory action to households at scale in the future (REAP, 2021).

1.2 WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ANTICIPATORY ACTION?

Taking "anticipatory action" means acting ahead of a hazardous event, by "using forecasts or early warnings of imminent shock or stress" (Weingärtner and Wilkinson, 2019, p. 6) to trigger a set of previously agreed and financed interventions. The objective of anticipatory action is to prevent, reduce or mitigate the impact of disasters, and enhance post-disaster response (REAP, 2021; REAP, 2022; Levine *et al.*, 2020; FAO, 2017).

In practice, anticipatory actions can be a combination of many different types of activities. For example: (i) distributing cash assistance ahead of an expected flood to exposed households likely to be affected; (ii) providing weather alerts and related agricultural advisory to farmers before planting, on the basis of a seasonal forecast indicating below-average rainfall and therefore a risk of drought periods; or (iii) ensuring drains, irrigation channels and other waterway infrastructure have been cleared and/or repaired ahead of a typhoon and subsequent floods for which a warning with a 72-hour lead time has just been issued.

As these examples highlight, anticipatory action can be taken at different levels, including by individual households, community networks and organizations, or by disaster management and social protection officials responsible for the delivery of assistance. Anticipatory actions can also be specifically targeted, for example, in the form of a pre-designed household assistance package, or through the implementation of actions taken by local government, community

FIGURE 2: FIVE KEY INGREDIENTS OF THE ANTICIPATORY ACTION APPROACH

1 CRISIS TIMELINES

Crisis timelines highlight when and how hazards have impacted people in the past, becoming valuable tools in analysing the evolution of a hazard and how it might impact people's livelihoods in the future. Combined with seasonality mapping and data on past emergency responses, aid actors can project which agricultural assets are at risk at any given time, identify appropriate early warning signs and build anticipatory actions fit for the local context.

2 EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Early warning systems form the cornerstone of any anticipatory action system. They allow actors to monitor and clearly communicate early signs of a growing hazard, and predict when shocks will happen and where. These could be abnormal weather patterns, for example, or worrying levels of locust breeding activity. They could also be the early signs of conflict or economic crisis. Since early warning systems include pre-defined thresholds that raise the alarm, they trigger anticipatory actions as soon as the data exceeds those thresholds.

3 ANTICIPATORY ACTIONS

Anticipatory actions are short-term and time-bound interventions implemented as soon as a hazard warning trigger is set off to prevent or mitigate the impact of a shock. This could, for example, include actions designed to protect the productive assets of farmers, herders and fisherfolk in the form of in-kind distributions or cash assistance. Alternatively, it could include support to evacuations, information and early warning dissemination as well as preventive and risk reduction actions to protect community assets from the impact of a forecasted shock.

4 FLEXIBLE FINANCING

There often is little time between a warning and the full force of a disaster negatively affecting exposed populations. This means the window of time in which to act to protect them against the impacts of a shock, as opposed to responding to the damage after the fact, is short. The more flexible the available funding is, and the speed at which funding flows can be utilized, the more likely actors and populations themselves are able to provide support within the anticipatory window and roll out context-appropriate actions before a shock can turn into a crisis. As such, flexible financing that can be mobilized speedily is a crucial component of the anticipatory action approach.

5 EVIDENCE

The final ingredient of an anticipatory action system is focused on the generation and dissemination of evidence. This includes various research products, including but not limited to, impact evaluations, after-action reviews, return-on-investment studies and recipient interviews, that together allow anticipatory action stakeholders to document, improve and learn from anticipatory action interventions.

Source: Authors' elaboration from FAO. 2021. *Anticipatory action: Changing the way we manage disasters.* https://www.fao.org/3/cb7145en/cb7145en.pdf

networks, private companies or other institutions to protect people, assets and livelihoods from the impacts of shocks and mitigate expected loss and damage. Standard operating procedures (SOPs), or anticipatory action protocols, are often used to define and disseminate the set of pre-agreed actions to be taken when a shock is forecasted, including outlining roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, funding sources and decision-making processes required to ensure their implementation. Figure 2 outlines the five key ingredients required for the design and implementation of the anticipatory action approach.

At the organizational level, anticipatory action has been used as an approach to programming that attempts to systematically link hazard forecasts and early warning systems to pre-arranged financing mechanisms and anticipatory action protocols, all of which identify – in advance – which actions should be taken and when, on the basis of available information (see, for example: IFRC, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre and German Red Cross, 2022; FAO, 2021). Forecasts, early warning systems or real-time risk analyses indicating an imminent threat can also be used to release resources from emergency funds or contingency budgets for longer-term development programmes, including from dedicated shock-responsive social protection budgets to take anticipatory actions.

Anticipatory actions can be channelled through humanitarian interventions, disaster risk management operations or social protection systems to deliver assistance and services in anticipation of a shock. In turn, this can enable individuals, households and communities to take anticipatory actions. This is the case, for example, if anticipatory cash transfers, accompanied by flood alerts and delivered through the payment mechanism and delivery chain of a social assistance programme, allow households to evacuate livestock to higher ground, and to stock food and livestock fodder before roads to the nearest market become inaccessible. In this instance, both the programme and the households act in anticipation of a flood to mitigate expected

impacts. To effectively support the ability of diverse groups to mitigate risks and cope with shocks, anticipatory actions need to take into consideration the likelihood of heightened impacts exacerbated by pre-existing inequalities, risks and different forms of exclusion. This could entail, for example, anticipatory actions involving protection against violence, and ensuring the provision of assistance based on an understanding of people's different needs and decisions, vulnerabilities and capacities. At the same time, the actions would proactively engage excluded and hard to reach populations to design and deliver such assistance. As discussed further in later chapters within this paper, linkages with social protection systems may be especially useful in this regard, because of the nature of many social protection programmes that specifically target recipients who meet certain characteristics and/or criteria associated with vulnerability.

Over the course of the last decade, international humanitarian and development partners have paid increasing attention to anticipatory action, advocating for policies – and implementing programmes – that take preventive and protective steps in the window of opportunity between a warning and the arrival of a covariate shock, to reduce its impacts. The concept has gained traction, and anticipatory action initiatives implemented under the leadership, or with the participation, of humanitarian and development actors such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Start Network and others, have reached over sixty countries globally as of 2021 (Anticipation Hub, 2022b). Impact evaluations and return on investment studies of some of these initiatives have shown that providing assistance earlier, in anticipation of a covariate shock, or ahead of a crisis worsening, can help mitigate expected negative impacts on households and livelihoods (Pople *et al*., 2021; Gros *et al*., 2019; FAO, 2020). Available evidence focuses on a variety of anticipatory action modalities, including in-kind support as well as cash transfers, which is a type of assistance that is commonly delivered through national social protection systems.

Beyond the provision of anticipatory actions that deliver in-kind support, cash transfers, information or other modalities of assistance to selected recipients within the anticipatory action window before the impact of a shock, actors are also exploring how forecast information, triggers and other features of an anticipatory action model can be applied to social protection systems. For example, this could be done by integrating forecasting information and contingency planning within a system's design and delivery functions in order to trigger actions to ensure business continuity of key programmes through a crisis period, or by strengthening the system's capacity and readiness to also support shock response and recovery interventions. While there is some debate as to whether these readiness actions are strictly anticipatory actions, this scoping paper argues that the integration of anticipatory approaches – such as the systematic use of forecasting information by social protection officials and the triggering of pre-agreed actions to ensure business continuity, for example – is one component of a larger whole linking social protection and anticipatory action.

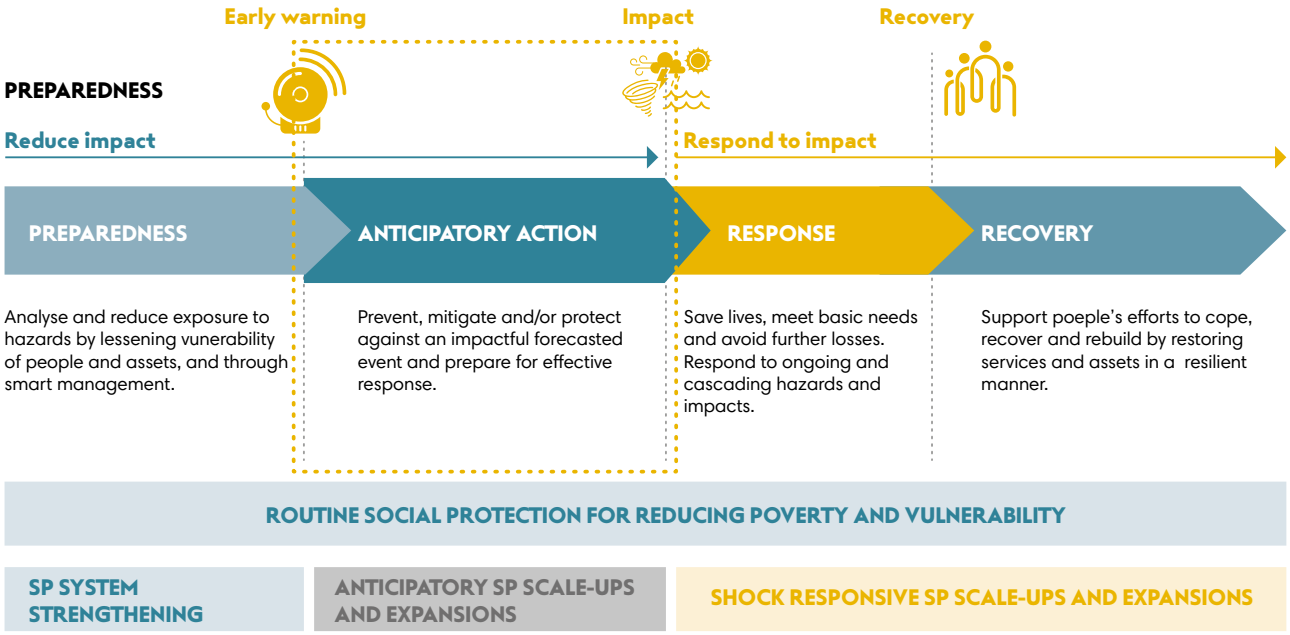
These findings and ongoing areas of investigation have reinforced the importance of acting on increasingly available and constantly improving information that predicts upcoming covariate shocks when there is still time to avoid or reduce their negative impacts, rather than waiting until the impacts have already materialized and can no longer be prevented. Concurrently, it reinforces the need to implement this approach at scale, beyond the limited coverage that pilot projects can achieve. The integration of anticipatory action into national social protection systems and disaster risk management policies and practices has been one pathway for scaling up these interventions (Sengupta and Sivanu, 2022; Anticipation Hub, 2022c; Tanner *et al*., 2019).

1.3 LINKING SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION ALONG THE DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT CYCLE – A VISUAL EXPLAINER

As highlighted in Section 1.2 on anticipatory action, acting ahead of a covariate shock is not a new concept. Many national and local governments take action when facing imminent threats. For instance, they organize evacuations ahead of a cyclone, communicate early warning messages to the public about expected flooding, undertake livestock vaccination campaigns ahead of a forecasted below-average rainfall period to protect animal health, or mobilize social protection programmes to channel direct assistance to selected households. In Kenya, for instance, the Government's Hunger Net Safety Programme (HSNP) delivered cash transfers to vulnerable populations on the basis of El Niño outlooks that indicated above average rainfall and potential flooding in 2015 (Gardner *et al.*, 2017; Weingärtner *et al.*, 2019). Such activities are often embedded within sectoral policies, the emergency plans of national disaster risk management agencies and/or within certain social protection programmes with responsive capacities. As a result, the design and delivery of activities often involve a range of ministries and agencies covering agriculture, finance, home affairs, transport and infrastructure, as well as disaster risk management and, critically, social protection (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2021). Both the concept of anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection can therefore be framed in relation to their contributions to various stages within the disaster risk management cycle. Indeed, this paper argues that framing the points at which these two concepts link or converge within the disaster risk management cycle can also be especially useful.

As such, before moving to the following discussion in Chapter 2, that explores the linkages between social protection and anticipatory action in practice, readers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with Figure 3, providing a visual

FIGURE 3: LINKING SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION ALONG THE DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT CYCLE



Source: Authors' elaboration adapted from Cash Hub. 2022. *Cash and anticipatory action. In: The Cash Hub, hosted by British Red Cross.* *https://cash-hub.org/resources/cash-and-anticipatory-action/page/2/*

summary to frame where social protection and anticipatory action link or converge along the disaster risk management cycle. Readers will take note of the dotted yellow box in the Figure indicating the "anticipatory action window" – namely, the time frame in which anticipatory actions are delivered. The anticipatory action window begins at the point at which a forecast model's trigger is met, and therefore, when early warnings and other anticipatory actions can begin (indicated by the "early warning" icon), and the subsequent end point of the anticipatory action window, at which the impact of the forecasted shock is felt by a population (indicated by the "impact" icon).

When exploring linkages between social protection and anticipation action, actors are often primarily interested in identifying how various modalities of assistance (i.e., in-kind distributions, cash transfers, evacuations, early warning dissemination, etc.) can be implemented within the indicated anticipatory action window. Identifying how such assistance can be delivered through a social protection system or by leveraging certain components of a system's delivery chain is also crucial. Furthermore, beyond the delivery of assistance within a defined anticipatory window, linking social protection and anticipatory action approaches can also involve activities, plans and interventions that make use of forecasts to put in place business continuity plans to ensure that routine social protection programmes continue to function. Similarly, such interventions could also include dedicated readiness activities – also triggered upon a forecast – that are subsequently conducted or scaled up to ensure the capacity and readiness of the social protection system to also support the provision of assistance across the other phases of the disaster risk management cycle, including response and recovery.

2. LINKING SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION – ENTRY POINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Social protection and anticipatory action – which is part of disaster risk management more broadly – converge around a common intention to mitigate the impacts of shocks and stresses on vulnerable people (see Figure 4). Social protection takes a wider view of shocks and stresses than disaster risk management, focusing not only on covariate shocks but also on the idiosyncratic shocks that risk pushing vulnerable individuals below the poverty line, such as illness, disability or other characteristics impacting the ability to work or earn an income. Anticipatory action, as a time-bound element of disaster risk management, is more tightly focused on mitigating the impacts of covariate shocks, which have cascading impacts on food security, livelihoods, and mental and physical health.

2.1 WHY LINK SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION?

Greater integration of anticipatory action approaches within social protection systems would enable social protection programmes to use forecasts and early warning information to improve the delivery of assistance to individuals, households and community structures, so that they may better protect themselves from, and mitigate the impacts of, a forecasted covariate shock.

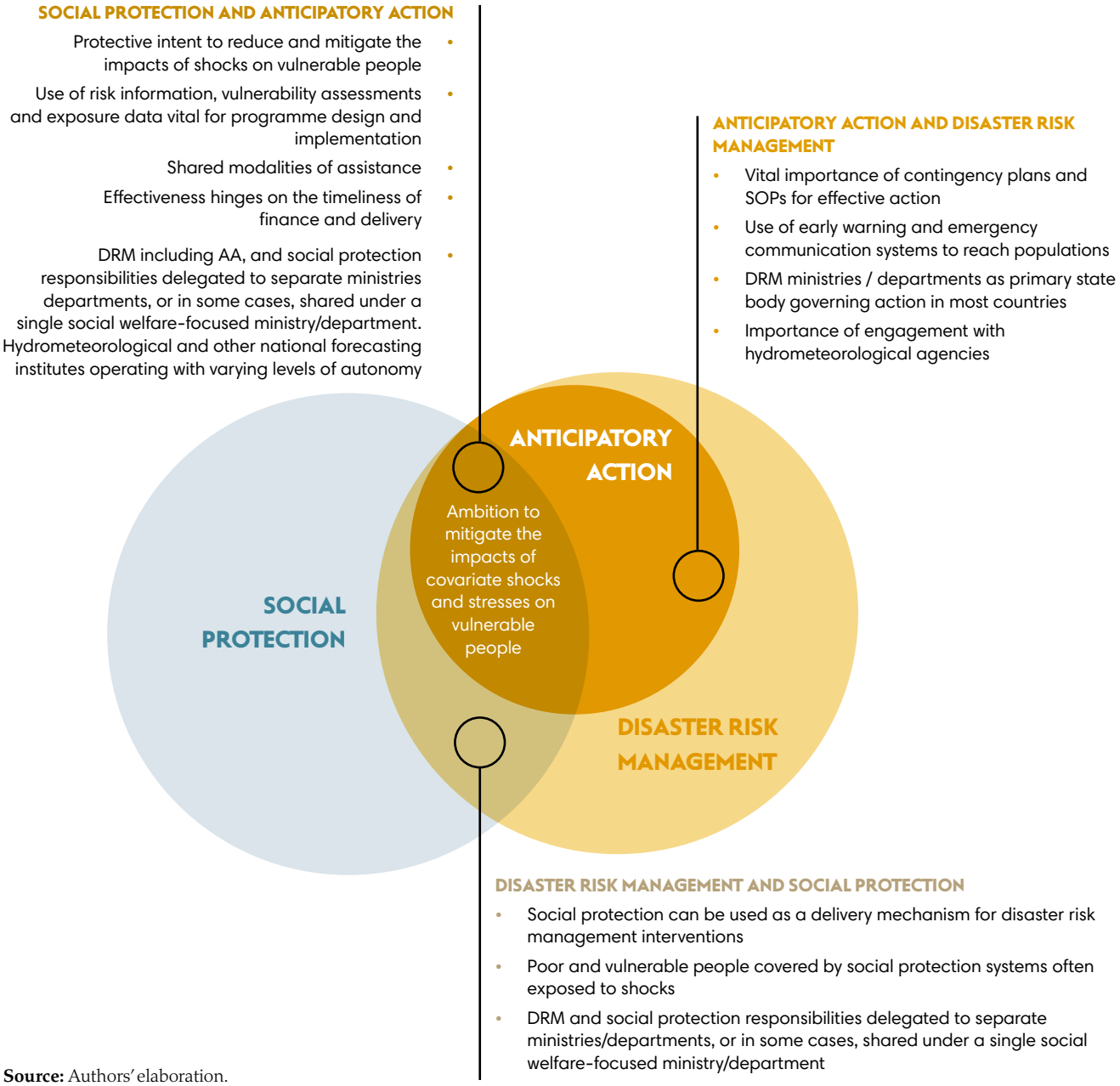
The main driving force behind encouraging these linkages is the expectation that integration will first, facilitate both timely and cost-effective support that can be provided at scale to populations identified as at risk of, and vulnerable to, a specific shock that can be somewhat reliably forecasted. Second, that linkages with social protection systems will offer the potential to improve the efficiency and accuracy with which actors can identify, and subsequently provide support to, recipients who are both at risk of suffering negative impacts resulting from the forecasted shock, as well as in a situation of heightened vulnerability. Furthermore, linking anticipatory action to social protection systems is a way to institutionalize and mainstream within national policies, plans and budgets an approach that has, until now, mostly been driven by non-state actors. Finally, it is argued that fostering linkages between anticipatory action and social protection can also encourage more sustainable solutions through limiting duplication and reducing the need for ad-hoc or parallel humanitarian programming that often relies on unsustainable external funding mechanisms (Costella *et al.*, 2017; Costella *et al.*, 2021). This final point, arising from the humanitarian commitments laid out in the "New Way of Working" policy paper and developed at the World Humanitarian Summit, saw humanitarian actors pledge to increase the proportion of cash-based assistance and reinforce, rather than replace, national systems and work towards collective outcomes (OCHA, 2017). Linking social protection systems and disaster risk management – and therefore also anticipatory action – is seen as one way to deliver on these pledges, especially in the case of ensuring solutions that reinforce national systems and better link recipients to more sustainable long-term support.

2.2 KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN LINKING SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Much of the infrastructure and operational requirements to deliver (shock-responsive) social protection is also crucial to plan for and implement anticipatory action at scale. As such, delivering anticipatory action through, or simply

incorporating anticipatory approaches within social protection systems and their delivery chains, requires the presence of an already functioning and effective system (REAP, 2021). An enabling environment may also be a necessary prerequisite in terms of an historical precedence of delivering emergency assistance through the given system or, at the very least, recognition and investment by relevant stakeholders in ensuring a functioning social protection system with inbuilt, shock-responsive components. It must be noted that ensuring the inclusion of shock-responsive components that are themselves robust to the impacts of shocks, and which do not undermine the "business continuity" of the system, will be crucial. After all, experience highlights that using social protection to provide emergency assistance should be "contingent on the ability of their underlying delivery systems and processes to continue to operate" (Smith and Bowen, 2020, pp. 6–7) throughout both emergency and non-emergency periods.

FIGURE 4: WHERE SOCIAL PROTECTION, DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION CONVERGE



Source: Authors' elaboration.

It is important, therefore, that stakeholders appropriately assess the feasibility and readiness of a social protection system to link to anticipatory action (World Bank, 2021). Where such systems do exist, or indications are that future actions and investments of key stakeholders will ensure a minimum level of shock-responsiveness of a system, anticipatory action may be considered as a complementary component within a country's comprehensive disaster risk management approach, by providing an additional layer of risk coverage that builds on and enhances national social protection programmes and systems as a whole (Costella *et al*., 2017).

Drawing on the above discussions, as well as available shock-responsive social protection literature, Figure 5 provides a visual summary of potential options for when it may be appropriate to link disaster risk management – including anticipatory action – with social protection systems along a "continuum of integration". The "continuum of integration" refers to various levels of functionality, or operational strength, of a social protection system, ranging from:

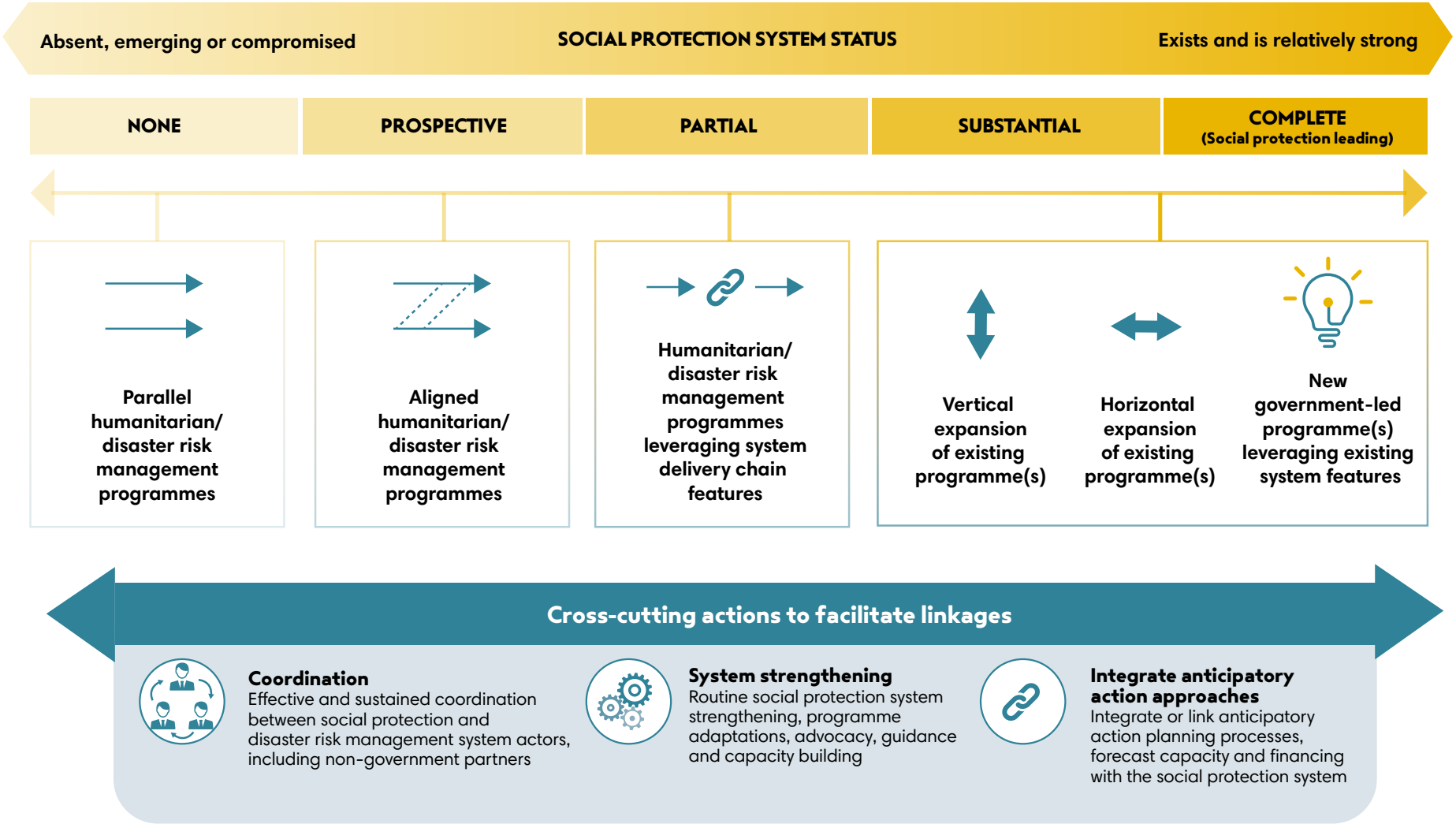
1. A situation characterized by an absent social protection system on the far left of the diagram, in which linkages between social protection systems and disaster risk management initiatives are deemed not at all possible, because of the absence of a functioning system. As such, readers will observe that the Figure recommends the implementation of parallel humanitarian/ disaster risk management programmes as an alternative.

2. Conversely, on the far right of the diagram, the figure presents potential options to link disaster risk management initiatives with social protection systems where systems are noted as existing and strong. In this case, actors may consider substantially or completely integrating the delivery of disaster risk management assistance through the social protection system and its delivery chain, as appropriate and feasible. Figure 5 offers a number of options on how this could be done in practice, through vertical and horizontal expansions of existing programmes (see sections below for a full explanation of these terms and their usage), or the development of new, dedicated programmes.

3. Falling within these two extremes are situations in which a social protection system exists and is functioning, but with certain limitations in terms of its design and delivery. A system falling within this middle ground, may be characterized as compromised or emerging, for example. As such, it is noted that opportunities to leverage certain components of a system and its delivery chain to facilitate the delivery of disaster risk management assistance may be possible, but that any such attempt must be informed through the completion of relevant system functionality and feasibility assessments.

The key takeaway from Figure 5 is that it offers a visual representation of how disaster risk management assistance, including anticipatory action, can be linked with social protection systems depending on the functionality and capacity of the system and its features, indicated here in the form of a "continuum of integration". As social protection system strengthening efforts continue to take effect and/or the operational context changes, the ability to link anticipatory action approaches with social protection systems will similarly change for the positive or, indeed, the negative. Actors will need to recognize that influencing authorities and other relevant stakeholders to adopt and institutionalize linkages between social protection systems and anticipatory action will need to be part of a broader, iterative process of change. Similarly, options to implement linkages in practice will need to be underpinned by appropriate assessments of the system, allowing actors to identify what options are feasible and practical in view of the context and status of the given social protection system.

FIGURE 5: LINKING DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT – INCLUDING ANTICIPATORY ACTION – AND SOCIAL PROTECTION ALONG A "CONTINUUM OF INTEGRATION"



Source: Authors' own elaboration from Smith, G. 2021. Deciding when and how to link humanitarian assistance and social protection: Guidance and tools for response analysis. Social Protection Approaches to COVID-19 Expert Advice Service (SPACE). https://reliefweb.int/report/world/deciding-when-and-how-link-humanitarian-assistance-and-social-protection-guidance-and

2.3 LINKING SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION IN PRACTICE

Building on the contents of Figure 5 and available literature on this topic, there are five options available to actors looking to deliver assistance through a social protection system in the form of cash and/or in-kind *before*, or in *anticipation* of, a covariate shock. The first two options include performing a vertical or horizontal expansion of a routine social protection scheme at the moment when a forecast model's trigger is met, indicating the likelihood of an impending shock. The third option is to create a new social protection programme, developed specifically to deliver anticipatory assistance, and which may or may not leverage certain existing components of a system and its programme's delivery chain features. The fourth option relates to adjusting the design and delivery features of a social protection system so that it can facilitate the activation of anticipatory actions. Finally, beyond the provision of assistance within the anticipatory action window, a fifth option available to actors interested in linking social protection systems and anticipatory action, includes the integration of anticipatory approaches to inform a system's business continuity efforts. This final option would also support system capacity and readiness activities to deliver a range of anticipatory, response and recovery interventions across the disaster risk management cycle.

Option 1: Vertical expansion – defined as:

"[The temporary] increase [of] the benefit value or duration of a benefit provided through an existing programme, either for all or for some of the existing beneficiaries. This can be done via an adjustment of transfer amounts, or through the introduction of extraordinary payments or transfers, to a regular social assistance programme, ordinarily implemented in non-crisis times" (European Commission, 2019, p. 36).

An example of a vertical expansion delivered in anticipation could involve the delivery of a cash transfer "top-up" to current recipients of a given social protection assistance programme in advance of a hazard. It could go to those who have been assessed as being at risk, because they are exposed to the expected impact of the forecasted shock. The benefits of this action and the linkage with the social protection system are clear with regard to providing a means to deliver assistance and information to pre-registered and pre-assessed populations through familiar and accepted payment or delivery systems, and communication and outreach mechanisms, respectively.

BOX 3: EXAMPLES OF VERTICAL EXPANSIONS FROM ETHIOPIA AND MALAWI

The case studies in the Annex provide insights into the application of vertical expansions in practice. Other notable examples linking social protection and anticipatory action are emerging across a range of contexts, such as in Ethiopia in 2021, where anticipatory cash transfers were provided to pre-identified pastoralists in anticipation of a drought, who were both recipients of a livestock management and insurance initiative as well as the country's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) (WFP, 2022).

Similarly, a recent example from Malawi saw the delivery of vertical expansion cash "top-ups" to 74 000 recipient households of the Government's Social Cash Transfer Program (SCTP), in anticipation of a forecasted drought (Chourlarton *et al.*, 2023).

Option 2: Horizontal expansion – defined as:

"The temporary inclusion of new, crisis-affected beneficiaries in an existing social protection programme. This option may involve extending the programme to more people in the same geographical area or an extension of the programme's geographical coverage to areas affected by the crises but not in the footprint of the 'regular' programme. The expansion of the regular programme into new territories can be achieved through either a pre-screening of potential beneficiaries before a crisis event and/or through an extraordinary enrolment campaign to rapidly enrol those who fit programme criteria and who have been affected, or a modification/relaxation of eligibility criteria to allow more people to benefit" (European Commission, 2019 p. 37).

An example of a horizontal expansion could include expanding a school feeding programme that ordinarily only targets poor children, to instead provide meals to all children attending school in a given area when forecasts predict a particularly severe upcoming drought and lean season. Another example could be the temporary expansion of cash support from a country's national poverty reduction social assistance programme to near-poor households when forecasts indicate an upcoming drought period. This example could be refined further, if authorities decide to target the horizontal expansion specifically for near-poor farmers and agricultural workers, for example, using data from available farmer registries or other social registries to target a specific at-risk and vulnerable population in the face of an impending shock.

BOX 4: EXAMPLES OF HORIZONTAL EXPANSIONS FROM DOMINICA AND KENYA

The Dominica case study in the Annex, includes details regarding the government's horizontal expansion of the country's Public Assistance Programme, which provided emergency cash transfers to newly identified households following Hurricane Maria in 2017. Similarly, another example includes Kenya's Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), which is a government-led, unconditional cash transfer programme that targets people living in extreme poverty. The programme registers every household in the programme area, enabling the identification of a "first" group that receives a regular cash transfer, and a "second" group that does not receive the regular assistance, but whose information is included within relevant information systems and provided with a bank account to enable the rapid distribution of emergency cash payments in times of drought (Gardner *et al.*, 2017).

Option 3: New social protection programme

As the name suggests, this third option involves the creation of a new social protection programme, dedicated to the delivery of anticipatory assistance to newly identified recipients. This new programme may, or may not, leverage certain components and delivery chain features of other routine social protection schemes, but its design and implementation remain distinct and separate from other routine programmes. The COVID-19 pandemic saw the creation of many new, dedicated programmes across numerous countries, often developed solely to address the emergency situation posed by the health and socio-economic impacts of the initial stages of the pandemic. Many leveraged certain components of existing systems and delivery chain features of national programmes, such as social registries and other information management systems; outreach, communication and registration mechanisms; as well as Government to Person (G2P) payment processes and other digital transaction technologies. An example of this third option could therefore be the development of a dedicated anticipatory social assistance programme, providing cash and/or in-kind support to pastoralists in advance of particularly high temperatures expected across the region as a result of El Niño.

BOX 5: EXAMPLE OF SET-UP OF A NEW PROGRAMME FROM GUATEMALA

An example of the creation of a new programme includes the case of Guatemala, summarized in the Annex of this paper — an emergency intervention known as Bono Familia, which was launched to provide support to households deemed most at risk of the socio-economic consequences of the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. While not explicitly an example of linkages between social protection and anticipatory action, the described intervention does however present a number of lessons that could apply to the delivery of assistance linked to a social protection system and in anticipation of a forecasted shock.

Option 4: System and programme adaptations

A fourth key component relevant to actors involved in exploring linking social protection and anticipatory action is the integration of system and programme adaptations that better enable anticipatory actions. System and programme adaptations in this context refer to efforts focused on adjusting the design and delivery features of a social protection system and/or a specific programme so that they can integrate anticipatory action approaches, and therefore facilitate anticipatory expansions, as described in the preceding options outlined above. Such adaptations can be taken at the policy, programme design and implementation levels that make up a social protection system. Within each level, programme adaptations can be made to enable linkages with anticipatory action approaches, or to adjust social protection policy and practice for better alignment with anticipatory action objectives and requirements. Figure 6 and the corresponding narrative provides a non-exhaustive collection of examples where modifications of, or additions to, existing social protection systems could be implemented to facilitate the delivery of assistance in anticipation of a shock. The main difference, in terms of what makes the four intervention options outlined above "anticipatory" in comparison to shock-responsive, is therefore, first of all, their *timing*. That is, people receiving cash before a flood, for example, rather than after the flood peak. The second difference is the assistance's *intent*, whereby support is provided with the objective that it can be used to prevent, reduce and mitigate potential impacts before the effect of the shock is felt by the given population. Of course, this is in contrast to assistance provided after a hazard has hit, which focuses on helping recipients to cope, and perhaps recover from, the hazard's impact. However, it should be noted that assistance provided in anticipation of a shock can still contribute to post-disaster coping mechanisms of recipients, and indeed, cash actors in particular have identified the gap-filling role that assistance provided in anticipation can play in early response phases, and before larger response mechanisms are mobilized (Asia-Pacific TWGAA and Asia-Pacific RCWG, 2022). Finally, the third difference is the *input required for action*. In the case of shock-responsive interventions, response actions are initiated on the declaration of a disaster and often use objective evaluations of damage and/or needs assessed post-disaster in order to allocate assistance to affected populations. In contrast, anticipatory assistance is initiated when a forecast model triggers, with assistance provided to pre-identified recipients based on projected or estimated impacts of a forecasted shock.

Option 5: Integrating anticipatory approaches for business continuity and emergency readiness

A fifth component relevant to linking social protection and anticipatory action in practice refers to activities that can be undertaken to support two key areas of intervention. First, actors could integrate the use of anticipatory approaches such as forecast information, triggers and contingency planning to support efforts to ensure the business continuity of key programmes and their delivery chains. In practice, this could mean that in an area consistently affected by floods, typhoons or other such shocks requiring large-scale evaluations of the needs of the population – a proportion of which will likely be receiving regular cash transfers from the government's flagship social assistance programme – social protection officials could use forecast information to trigger business continuity plans. These plans could temporarily relocate the locations of registration, grievance and cash transfer access and distribution points from affected areas to evacuation sites. Similarly, contingency actions could be adopted in collaboration with related ministries and service providers to ensure that access to complementary "plus" components of cash plus programmes remain available and accessible throughout a covariate shock period, or at temporary evacuation sites. Other actions could also include the activation of surge human resource plans, in which additional, specialist staff are allocated to ensure the continued smooth delivery, or crisis management, of a programme. It is not clear from the available literature the extent to which social protection systems around the world are actively and systematically integrating crisis business continuity plans or pre-defined contingency actions into relevant policy, guidelines or standard operating procedures. Assuming therefore that more in this regard needs to be done, the adoption of business continuity plans and contingency actions into relevant system documentation, design features and delivery practices, would benefit significantly from the integration and systematic use of forecast information concerning impending shocks and disasters.

Second, anticipatory approaches, and particularly forecast information and trigger mechanisms, could also be used to activate a set of defined readiness actions to subsequently facilitate post-disaster system or programme adaptations and/or the delivery of assistance within the disaster response and recovery phases of a given shock or crisis. This second point recognizes that beyond the delivery of assistance within the anticipatory action window, linkages can and should consider the broader role that forecast models and anticipatory approaches can play in supporting complementary anticipatory administrative and operational actions. It is through such actions that the capacity and readiness of a social protection system to support actions across the disaster risk management cycle are enhanced. This approach brings the added advantage of explicitly pushing actors to consider the complementarity and coherence of assistance that is provided in anticipation, as well as that which is subsequently delivered in the response, recovery and other phases of the disaster risk management cycle.

Importantly, all efforts to integrate anticipatory action approaches into social protection systems should be oriented towards also strengthening the capacity of systems and the actors managing and implementing them. Any social assistance support delivered in anticipation of a covariate shock is one relatively narrow component of the type of support that social protection can provide, and reinforcing systems can help vulnerable people better manage shocks and stresses by developing and sustaining their overall resilience over time. It is therefore also important that in instances where actors "piggyback", meaning to leverage certain system features and delivery chain components of a system in order to deliver anticipatory assistance, these actions contribute to, and do not detract from, ongoing routine functions as well as system strengthening initiatives. Similarly, in situations where it is not possible to work with or through a social protection system for reasons relating to the humanitarian principles involved, or the limited functionality of a given system, humanitarian and development partners should actively seek

to conduct anticipatory and/or shock-responsive interventions that are aligned to any current or expected future system design and delivery features of a country's system. This could, for example, include ensuring alignment on transfers values, frequency and transfer modalities, social registry assessment questions, and monitoring and evaluation standards, among other features. This point is emphasized consistently in the literature regarding shock-responsive social protection, and it is therefore equally an appropriate consideration for actors exploring social protection linkages with anticipatory action.

The below paragraphs provide an explanation of Figure 6, which outlines a selection of examples of programme adaptations in which anticipatory action approaches could be linked and/or integrated within the key building blocks of social protection systems. While the type and scale of such examples will depend on the context, status and function of the specific system, they are provided to offer readers introductory ideas and foster enquiry and exploration into this topic. Figure 6 is then followed by a narrative discussion providing further detail in relation to the building blocks of the social protection system as outlined in the figure. A critical reflection on potential linkages with anticipatory action approaches is also presented, drawing on examples from the literature, key informant interviews and findings from this paper's case studies included in the Annex.

The "solar system" format used for Figure 6 will likely be familiar to many involved in the field of social protection, as it has been adapted from the paper *Social Protection as a 'Solar' System* (Barca and Jaramillo Mejia, 2023). However, for those new to the topic, the following key, explanatory points provided by the solar system authors may prove useful.

The solar system diagram presents the key building blocks, or components, of a social protection system.

The **gold centre**, referred to as the "Policy level", includes those key building blocks necessary for the institutionalization of social protection within relevant government governance, legal, finance and policy structures.

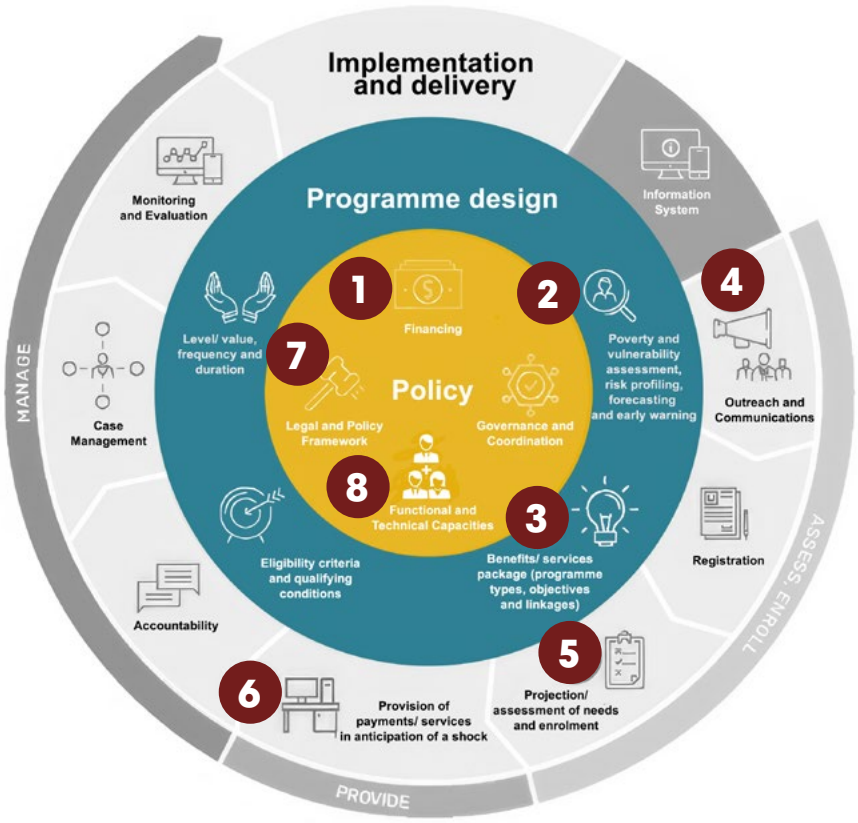
The **blue inner ring**, referred to as the "Programme design level", includes building blocks relevant to the design of a system's programmes providing assistance and/or services to a population, as well as the interaction, complementarity and cohesion of those programmes to maximize outcomes for recipients.

The **grey outer ring**, referred to as the "Implementation/delivery level", includes building blocks relevant to the administration and implementation of a system's programmes. These components are often referred to as "delivery systems", or "delivery chain features", which provide the necessary functions to deliver benefits or services to those in need.

2.3.1 Policy

Legal and policy framework. There has been limited strategic integration of social protection and climate or disaster risk management policies at the national or global levels (Costella *et al*., 2021). Nonetheless, considering that legal and policy frameworks regulating anticipatory action are nascent in most countries to varying degrees, there is significant scope for alignment with social protection once these are under development and/or refinement. It is similarly crucial that social protection is integrated into national contingency plans and frameworks regulating the disaster risk management sector as a whole, with social protection ministries involved in planning, coordination and financing to deploy resources in emergency situations, including in anticipation, response and recovery. In turn, many countries worldwide have established frameworks and guidelines for (shock-responsive) social protection, which routinely need to be reviewed and updated. These initiatives provide opportune moments to incorporate anticipatory action approaches

FIGURE 6: SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION – EXAMPLES OF OPERATIONAL LINKS



1 FINANCING
Incorporating design and language changes to standard operating procedures and rules and regulations of relevant disaster risk management and/or social protection contingency budgets to enable those financial resources to be used to provide anticipatory and shock-responsive assistance through vertical/horizontal expansions of relevant programmes by responsible authorities and partners.

2 POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT, RISK PROFILING, FORECASTING AND EARLY WARNING
Utilise, overlay and where appropriate, ensure interoperability between social protection information management systems and hazard risk, vulnerability and exposure assessments and data sets, in order to improve anticipatory action and shock response intervention targeting efforts.

3 BENEFITS/SERVICES PACKAGE
Work closely with government and other stakeholders to define an anticipatory benefits/service package that is complimentary and, where appropriate, aligned to the recipient population's routine social protection assistance package, as well as any planned shock-responsive support that may also be provided to affected populations post-disaster.

4 OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS
Leverage available information management systems and databases, as well as outreach and communication channels associated with social protection and/or national ID systems, that often provide officials with contact numbers and other means of direct communication with recipients. Explore how these components can be utilised to disseminate early warning messages, provide information related to the provision of emergency assistance and validate vertical/horizontal expansion recipient lists and payment modalities.

5 PROJECTION/ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS AND ENROLMENT
During the assessment of needs and social protection enrollment process, household risk, vulnerability and exposure indicators could also be collected, alongside standard indicators related to poverty and demographic markers to gain a comprehensive overview of a household's 'need' and eligibility for (future) social protection assistance. For example, the information of those assessed as 'near-poor', or not quite meeting the necessary eligibility thresholds, but that are certainly at risk of becoming eligible in the future if there is a shock, could be included in relevant social registries and recipient databases, with their profile remaining 'dormant', but ready to receive an anticipatory horizontal expansion, if a shock is forecasted, for example.

6 PROVISION OF PAYMENTS/SERVICES IN ANTICIPATION OF A SHOCK
Through the use of vertical and/or horizontal expansions of relevant social protection programmes and their delivery chains, populations could be provided with assistance in anticipation of a forecasted shock to support actions to mitigate and protect them from the impacts of the aforementioned shock.

7 LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK
Adaptions to the design and language of relevant social protection and disaster risk management legal, policy and regulatory frameworks could ensure the explicit endorsement of anticipatory and shock-responsive social protection approaches to provide emergency assistance to the population, with subsequent implementation guidelines defining the standard operating procedures for such actions provided to implementing officials of local government responsible for delivery.

8 FUNCTIONAL AND TECHNICAL CAPACITIES
Ensure that all relevant social protection and disaster risk management profiles, at all relevant levels of government, are knowledgeable on the concepts of anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection, and are actively encouraged to explore complimentary and active cooperation with relevant forecasting actors and institutions

Source: Adapted from the diagram developed by SPACE – Social Protection Approaches to COVID-19 (Barca, V. and Jaramilo Mejia, J.G. 2022. Social Protection as a "Solar" System. Social Protection Technical Advice, Assistance and Resources (STAAR) Facility. United Kingdom: DAI Global UK Ltd. https://socialprotection.org/discover/publications/social-protection-solar-system

and linkages within systems, processes and implementation guidelines for social protection, as well as those related to disaster risk management. A key challenge, often expressed by local officials responsible for the implementation of social protection policy and programmes, is the lack of complementary standard operating procedures and implementation guidelines which include anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection components. It is therefore important that any efforts to influence relevant legal, policy and regulatory frameworks that incorporate these concepts, are combined with concurrent and complementary initiatives to translate policy changes into appropriate implementation guidelines to be used by responsible implementing officials.

Governance and coordination. To appropriately lead and manage changes in the legal, policy and regulatory environment on these concepts, ministries that manage social protection programmes may need to develop an appropriate coordination platform. This would include finance and planning counterparts, national disaster risk management colleagues, and humanitarian and development actors, as well as national meteorological agencies, among other relevant stakeholders. It will likely also be productive to ensure the inclusion of various ministries and departments that may be indirectly involved in these fields, especially in the case of ministries of food, agriculture, labour and other rural affairs, responsible for large portions of the population that are regularly in receipt of social protection and/or disaster risk management assistance. Inclusion of these actors will also be crucial to ensure the inclusion of social protection within relevant climate, agriculture and rural development policies and vice versa.

The design, function and membership of these coordination structures will be context specific; some countries may be able to leverage existing platforms, while in other contexts, new coordination mechanisms may be required at various levels and with general or specific technical mandates. For example, an appropriate coordination platform may be required to define funding sources and their flows for anticipatory action through government social protection and/or disaster and contingency budgets, while another coordination group may be required to develop common triggers for anticipatory action that allow for a realistic time frame for vertical expansion of a scheme disbursing cash, for example. However, the key feature of these platforms will be ensuring the right people, with decision-making powers, are present and engaged.

Financing. Financial mechanisms, and in particular the flow of financial resources, will need clear protocols to channel anticipatory action through social protection systems and their delivery chain features. If financial resources for an anticipatory vertical expansion of a cash transfer scheme, for example, are to be mobilized from national contingency budgets, disaster risk management funds, climate funds or dedicated anticipatory action funds, these funding flows will need clear legislation and corresponding SOPs for government officials. Clearly defined funding flows will be necessary to ensure that financial resources can be mobilized in a timely, reliable and secure manner to deliver interventions within the anticipatory action window. While this may be possible in the case of slow-onset shocks such as droughts, the short lead times associated with rapid-onset shocks such as floods and typhoons, for example, will undoubtedly challenge even the most robust and efficient financial systems. As a result, specific design features may be required to ensure that timely dispersal and/or reimbursement procedures are available to officials responsible for anticipatory action implementation, when defined forecast triggers are met.

Country examples, such as the Philippines, have shown that the availability of adequate and flexible financing, owned by and accessible at the local government level, may facilitate the timely disbursal of anticipatory cash through social protection systems. This is especially the case where the approval processes of centrally

held national budgets are cumbersome and slow. In some countries, public financial management systems preclude spending contingency budgets without needs assessments, proof of losses or official declarations of a calamity or national emergency (FAO, 2022). Therefore, in such cases, legal adjustments and integration of flexible design features will be needed as an initial component for any use of a social protection system and its delivery chain features to implement anticipatory action using forecast models and triggers.

Functional and technical capacities. Finally, another key consideration at the policy level, noted by those working across the areas of social protection and anticipatory action, is the importance of ensuring sufficient understanding within each of these respective groups to be aware of the work of the other. Beyond often observed challenges in many contexts regarding coordination between government and non-government actors working on development and humanitarian issues, it is not unusual for social protection actors to have little, or at best a superficial, understanding of the concept of anticipatory action and the components that make up a forecast model and its trigger mechanism. Similarly, anticipatory action, or indeed disaster risk management officials, may be aware of relevant social protection programmes, yet may be less familiar with the specific delivery chain features of such programmes, or how the programmes and their features can be connected and leveraged for disaster risk management, including anticipatory action objectives. As such, integrating anticipatory action approaches within social protection systems will require dedicated activities to ensure that the functional and technical capacities of responsible officials, and other stakeholders at all levels, are developed and maintained. Recognizing the challenges related to staff turnover, finite resources and conflicting priorities, efforts to ensure a "critical mass" of decision-makers and officials within key ministries and departments involved in social protection, anticipatory action and related disaster risk management functions that understand these topics, may be most effective at advancing interest and ultimately commitments to invest time and resources in developing and strengthening the concept.

2.3.2 Programme design

Several aspects at the programme design level offer potential entry points to link social protection systems and anticipatory action approaches. These

include, but are not limited to, the following programme design building blocks of a social protection system: (i) poverty and vulnerability assessments and risk profiling; (ii) benefits and services; (iii) eligibility criteria and qualifying conditions; and (iv) the type/level/value/frequency of the assistance or service. Anticipatory action raises new considerations for each of these components; some of which are described below.

Poverty and vulnerability assessments and risk profiling – Appropriate assessments and risk profiling would need to include risk, vulnerability and exposure data of populations to the hazard in question, and assessment criteria may need to be adapted to include those who are highly vulnerable and exposed, as well as in need of particular routine social protection support (World Bank, 2016).[4] As such, the shock itself will therefore need to be forecastable, and its impacts projectable. The integration or overlaying of risk and vulnerability data with poverty and categorical data from social protection-related registries, for example, offers a number of opportunities that could improve the efficiency, cost-effectiveness and timeliness of targeting and recipient selection mechanisms across social protection and emergency interventions. One prominent example of how such datasets could be used in relation to linking anticipatory action and social protection is for social registries, livelihood-specific registries (i.e., farmer or fisherfolk registries) and other relevant information management systems to include data on assessed "near-poor", or "near-eligible" individuals. These assessed individuals would not receive the routine social protection benefits, but by holding their data (including storing contact numbers, bank/mobile money account details linked with unique ID numbers, for example) officials and other stakeholders could rapidly identify and distribute support to them through a horizontal expansion, in the event that a shock is forecasted. Of course, the points outlined above will only be possible provided that challenges associated with interoperability, resource constraints, data availability and reliability, as well as data protection considerations, among others, can be overcome. However, if solutions can be found, both anticipatory action and social protection actors stand to benefit from the availability of richer databases to inform the design of programmes able to address both risks and needs associated with idiosyncratic as well as covariate shocks.

Benefits and services – Benefits and services will need to be delivered within the anticipatory window between the point at which a forecast model's trigger is met and the occurrence of the shock (for rapid-onset) or its peak (for slow-onset). Furthermore, considerations regarding how anticipatory assistance can be provided in such a way as to be complementary with response and recovery interventions will also be important. As such, it is crucial that when making programme design decisions, or indeed when implementing programme adaptations to allow for anticipatory assistance to be delivered through social protection systems and their delivery chain features, the appropriateness, feasibility and adequacy of the chosen benefit and/or service must be taken into account. At the same time, the preferences of recipients, in terms of the type of assistance and the modality of its delivery, will also need to be considered. Finally, actors should also explore the complementarity of certain benefits and services, or combinations of both, including the delivery of cash plus as anticipatory action interventions

[4] One notable example of this idea put into practice is the World Bank-funded **Can Tho Urban Development and Resilience Project** in Viet Nam, which combines the development of flood risk management and early warning systems, alongside risk, vulnerability and exposure data analysis and GIS mapping to identify possible recipients eligible for vertical and horizontal expansions of Viet Nam's regular social assistance programme in the case of floods. Indeed, the project has produced a number of hazard risk maps with at-risk households GIS-tagged and mapped against various potential flood scenarios, with subsequently identified households included within relevant social protection databases, and provided with access to financial payment service accounts to receive regular and/or emergency cash assistance.

where feasible and appropriate.[5] An example could be an anticipatory action intervention in the case of a forecasted drought to regular social assistance recipients who are also registered as small-scale farmers within a farmer registry. The benefits and services provided in anticipation could be unconditional cash, early warnings, as well as agricultural inputs and advisory services, thereby combining objectives to protect agricultural production, alongside broader outcomes in terms of protecting people, property and productive assets.

Eligibility criteria and qualifying conditions – The eligibility and qualifying conditions of social protection programmes are often focused on proxy means tests and/or demographic criteria. As presented, in the poverty and vulnerability assessment discussion above, overlaying or expanding the type of information collected as part of social protection eligibility assessments to include risk, vulnerability and exposure data points, can be a prudent preparatory action to enable the delivery of anticipatory assistance through social protection programme expansions. While interested disaster risk management stakeholders may prefer to advocate for the adjustment of eligibility criteria and qualifying conditions of routine social protection programmes to account for covariate risks, because of the political environment or perhaps insufficient resources and system capacities of static systems, this may not always be possible. Nevertheless, adaptations to programme eligibility criteria and qualifying conditions that account for hazard risks and vulnerability, as well as factors such as livelihoods, housing characteristics or proximity to risk-prone areas and being able to capture changes in this data over time, may be especially effective in supporting efforts to both build the resilience of a given population as well as provide anticipatory action in advance of a forecasted shock. Similarly, availability of such data and the inclusion of anticipatory action-sensitive adaptations to design and delivery systems, may facilitate complementary assistance by third parties or non-government actors. The latter would then be able to provide additional or specialized and targeted support to especially marginalized and vulnerable groups, both before and after a shock.

Type, level, value and frequency of the assistance or service – Details regarding the type, level, value and frequency of the assistance/service will need to be set in a way that allows them to be delivered within the available lead time, and to be sufficient to achieve the goals of the anticipatory action intervention. It may be that a transfer is designed to support evacuation, prevent debt and borrowing beyond means, smooth consumption for a fixed time period until a larger response can be delivered, or other such objectives to ensure negative coping strategies are avoided, or at least, mitigated. As such, the transfer value should be adjusted accordingly. How the chosen transfer value is calculated may utilize various available methodologies, including, but not limited to: (i) a Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) calculated transfer value; (ii) calculated minimum living standard amount; (iii) transfer value aligned with amounts given under government social assistance programmes or other emergency cash transfer programmes; (iv) agency/sector-specific calculation; or (v) top-up to the MEB using Household Income and Expenditure Surveys (HIES) (Asia-Pacific TWGAA and Asia-Pacific RCWG, 2022). The value of an anticipatory transfer delivered through a social protection system is therefore likely to differ from a transfer provided routinely by the programme or by a shock-responsive intervention.

[5] It may also be useful for actors to consider complementarity between assistance that will be provided in anticipation and support expected to be provided in response, given the projected impacts of the given shock. Lessons from anticipatory cash given in ahead of floods in Bangladesh showed that cash given prior to the shock played an important role in smoothing consumption and mitigating various negative coping strategies, with many effects lasting three months post disaster. However, what was of critical importance and a key finding was that the cash acted to somewhat bridge the gap between the shock event and the eventual launch and arrival of support through the humanitarian response plan that followed almost a month after the flood (Pople *et al.*, 2021).

It is important to note that anticipatory actions do not need to cover routine needs or necessarily all ex-post needs, but instead help people mitigate avoidable loss and damage where possible, while also supporting recipients to rapidly prepare for and cope with the immediate aftermath of a covariate shock. One adaptation often advocated by actors involved in linking social protection and anticipatory action is the temporary adjustment of the delivery dates of a routine social protection benefit. For example, this could include moving the payment date of a cash transfer scheme in advance of the usual planned distribution date, to ensure that recipients have available cash to act in anticipation of a forecasted drought, for example. There is little doubt that such an action may be welcome to recipient households in the immediate term, especially those with limited liquidity with which to take preparatory and anticipatory actions. The availability of sufficient cash in the short-term may also be especially important to avoid particularly harmful loss and damage, and the adoption of negative coping mechanisms.

However, care must be taken if, as a consequence of such an action, the subsequent income gap resulting from the impact of the shock is not supplemented with additional "top-up" support over and above the routine benefit amount that people receive to meet their everyday needs. Indeed, the ability for poor households to plan their monthly expenditure often depends on factors related to the reliability and consistency of known income streams, for which routine social protection programmes may provide an important input. Any unexpected adjustments to income streams, that deliver immediate liquidity but subsequent income gaps in the medium- to long-term, without the transfer of additional resources over and above the routine benefit amount, may ultimately mean a net economic loss to the household. While the answer will be context specific, programme adaptations that seek to adjust the distribution date of a given social protection benefit may be best pursued only after advocacy efforts to adopt anticipatory vertical expansions in the form of cash "top-ups" have been exhausted.

In addition to the above points, anticipatory action brings in new programme design components that must be considered and integrated within social protection systems. The following observations present a number of these new components that actors will need to consider, or at the very least, be aware of.

Real time monitoring, impact-based forecasting, and early warning systems – Monitoring, forecasting and early warning capacities are vital to ensure that anticipatory action interventions support the right people, at the right time, and with the right support in the right places. Social protection systems may already monitor certain food security or poverty-related indicators, but integration of anticipatory action approaches will require new skill sets, information systems and data sources. Importantly, the early warning, monitoring and information systems often developed and managed by hydrometeorological, disaster risk management or climate- and weather-related ministries or agencies, will need to be interoperable with social protection systems. At the very least, they will need to be available to decision-makers responsible for social protection and disaster risk management functions, including anticipatory action and early warning system mechanisms.

Pre-agreed triggers or decision-making processes – Triggers and corresponding decision-making processes that clarify when action is to be taken are, in the majority of cases, critical to delivering anticipatory action on time, especially for rapid-onset events with short lead times.[6] Pre-agreed triggers and decision-making processes,

[6] It should be noted that anticipatory action can also be taken without pre-agreed triggers, for example, when early warning systems indicate a covariate shock is likely to happen and the decision to act is taken subjectively by decision-makers in the moment.

including approval mechanisms for the release of financial flows, may be somewhat familiar to stakeholders involved in shock-responsive social protection programmes. Indeed, the exposure of social protection actors to triggers used to release finance and initiate action is growing across contexts, where increasingly stakeholders are exploring the use of "'hard triggers', which are based on objective data to define a specific criterion that launches the shock response, or 'soft triggers', which leave an element of discretion to individual people or processes to decide whether or not the response should be launched [or a] combination of both" (Longhurst *et al*., 2021, p. 12). Some disaster risk finance initiatives – including the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF), for example – already offer forecasting services and support national and regional stakeholders in their preparedness efforts.

In the case of anticipatory action, however, the difference is that triggers setting the system in motion need to be based on an analysis of what is likely to happen, rather than only making decisions based on what has already happened. Therefore, they include a greater level of uncertainty, an aspect that is relatively new for social protection stakeholders as well as for disaster risk management actors most often reliant on objective needs and/or damage assessments. Close collaboration among all concerned stakeholders is therefore crucial. Social protection actors should, at the very least, be aware of forecast model triggers and have access to information from available early warning mechanisms. Collaboration with national disaster risk management authorities, meteorological agencies and relevant line ministries will be key to ensure the integration of trigger and early warning mechanisms as the basis for linking social protection and anticipatory action. Such action will need to be grounded in reliable and trusted forecasts that are in line with the risk tolerance of authorities, the populations at risk and other relevant stakeholders.

2.3.3 Implementation and delivery

Anticipatory action also conveys new considerations in relation to the implementation and delivery of social protection interventions. Beyond the need for such interventions to be delivered to recipients prior to a shock, the decision to use social protection systems and their delivery chain features must be guided by what actions are *appropriate* to reduce or mitigate likely impacts. In other words, what is *feasible* within the window of opportunity for anticipatory action, and what is *desirable* in a particular context given the expected outcomes of the assistance to be provided. Even where it is not deemed feasible, appropriate or desirable to deliver assistance ahead of a shock, anticipatory action may help ready social protection systems for later provision of assistance. Such assistance would act not by replacing preparedness to respond, but by complementing and intensifying preparedness activities when a shock is imminent. The present section provides an overview of potential options to integrate, or at least consider, anticipatory action approaches within the implementation and delivery features of social protection systems.

Information systems – As touched on in previous sections, system-wide or programme-specific information management systems could hold data on existing social protection recipients, as well as those vulnerable and exposed to specific types of shocks. Such systems could also include appropriate linkages with forecast and early warning systems to ensure that this information is available to both social protection and disaster risk management officials, as well as other stakeholders responsible for managing and coordinating preparatory, anticipatory, response and recovery interventions.

Much has been written on the advantages of the interoperability and digitization of information systems, and their ability to adopt dynamic and integrated components in the way that information is collected, analysed, managed, updated and utilized (Barca and Hebbar, 2023).

However, it should be noted that none of the social protection systems in the four case study countries included in this paper currently collect covariate, shock-specific risk and exposure data in their information systems, nor make explicit use of this type of information in their targeting processes for social protection programmes. This is not particular to these case studies, and, in fact, it is often observed in many contexts. The inclusion of risk-based, rather than solely needs- or means-based targeting, would require an expansion of risk-related indicators or better integration of social protection-related information systems with equivalent disaster risk management databases. Furthermore, such expansions will likely require additional capacity in data processing and protocols for its use by actors responsible for both disaster risk management and social protection interventions, including emergency expansions. The effort and resources required could take shape at different levels of granularity, depending on the nature of the shock and the available data, for example, by identifying individuals, communities or larger geographical areas at particular risk of an imminent covariate shock. The benefits to decision-makers across disaster risk management and social protection spheres are apparent, and as the case studies in the Annex highlight, are as yet, often underutilized.

Outreach and communication – Outreach and communication mechanisms are crucial components of social protection systems, providing important information to current and possible future recipients. Social protection information systems often include contact information of recipients (e.g. mobile phone numbers, etc.), which along with other communication channels at local government levels and/or through community structures, could provide early warning information and tailored advice to populations on how to prepare for an imminent covariate shock. Similarly, these communication channels could also be used to disseminate information regarding planned anticipatory actions, such as cash or in-kind distributions, as well as contribute to recipient validation efforts, or support feedback and grievance mechanisms, for example. If recipients receive an anticipatory cash transfer but are not adequately informed that a shock is imminent, they will not be able to appropriately prepare. Therefore, it is crucial to capitalize on the available

and complementary outreach and communication infrastructure of both disaster risk management and social protection systems, so as to better link the two. By doing so, it would be possible to ensure that populations better understand, and are able to act on, early warnings and information regarding their exposure, risk levels and the projected impacts of forecasted shocks.

Registration – Registration and renewal processes generally include local and/or digital points of access for the public to interact with social protection officials. This could include in-person offices or helpdesks, as well as helplines and dedicated telephone numbers, or online and mobile registration platforms in places where digital penetration is high. As discussed in the related building block section above, registration and renewal capacities and processes could support the collection of a range of complementary data points on relevant populations, as well as support efforts to refer humanitarian caseloads to the social protection system, or vice versa. Consequently, the accuracy of recipient lists for both social protection and anticipatory action, as well as response planning and implementation would benefit from improvements.

Furthermore, building on examples from a selected number of countries using on-demand formats, registration systems capitalizing on digital technology may also be especially useful to facilitate horizontal and/or vertical expansions of selected programmes to issue assistance in anticipation of a shock. It is important to note that registration processes are best carried out well before the release of an early warning and should never impede the implementation of an anticipatory action, such as evacuation efforts, for example. Care may also need to be taken to avoid overwhelming the system's human resources, especially those at the local level responsible for registration, case management and grievance processes that are often under-resourced and understaffed, which limits their ability to contribute to anticipatory action expansions.

Assessment of needs and enrolment – Assessment and enrolment processes often take place in real time during humanitarian response, in contrast to anticipatory action interventions, where potential needs and enrolment are conducted in advance of a shock, given the projected impacts likely to be faced by the assessed recipients and their ability to cope with those impacts. As discussed, these assessments often make use of available historical data on damage, loss and impacts from previous covariate shocks, as well as assessments of possible actions that could help avoid or mitigate them along with consultations with at-risk populations about what their priorities and needs are when a shock is imminent.

In contrast, processes related to the assessment of needs and enrolment within social protection systems can vary. Some social protection systems utilize set periods of dedicated assessments to acquire information on a given population, while other systems rely on census data, which may or may not be collected and updated on a regular basis. Other social protection systems promote universal access or assess needs and enrol participants on a rolling basis, with potential recipients either referred by other officials or service providers, or through self-referral mechanisms. There is much debate in relation to the most efficient and cost-effective method to target, and subsequently assess and enrol, social protection recipients. However, the consequence is that anticipatory action actors will need to work closely with social protection counterparts to understand where linkages can be made, both in terms of the data that is collected by the two groups, as well as the processes and means used to source, assess and update the collected data.

The time frame for anticipatory action, especially for rapid-onset shocks, rarely allows for rapid verification of potential needs, and indeed, when anticipatory action is delivered at scale in these rapid cases – meaning that it provides assistance to a relatively large subsection of a population – verification of all recipients is extremely challenging. This may result in delivering more

generic interventions to a wider group of people, rather than targeted interventions, if available data from previously conducted risk, vulnerability and social protection-related assessments and information management systems are not reliable or simply out of date. Nevertheless, where feasible, making use of complementary information and databases, as well as the structures and mechanisms to source the data and enrol recipients, may offer useful linkages between actors involved in anticipatory action and social protection with regards to improving the respective party's recipient identification, targeting, and ultimately, assistance provision. A "good enough" approach, which is often advocated for concerning humanitarian or emergency interventions, may well be most appropriate, while accounting for and managing the risk aversion that may be expressed by government partners and other stakeholders in terms of inclusion and exclusion errors.

Provision of payments and services – The provision of payments and services refers to the timely delivery of benefits to recipients, whether through in-kind, digitalized disbursement systems or local physical networks. Cash assistance is often disbursed through a combination of channels and means offered by financial service providers, including banks, mobile money wallets, automated teller machine (ATM) cards, post offices, cooperatives and other local savings groups, local merchants, money agents or other institutions. How to leverage these mechanisms for anticipatory action depends on the type of shock and chosen assistance modality (i.e. cash, in-kind, provision of services, etc.), as well as the availability of, and access to, financial services and other required distribution infrastructure by the intended recipient population.

In some cases, such as typhoons or floods, it may be appropriate to provide payments and/or services at evacuation centres, as expectation of payment should not impede evacuation efforts nor disincentivize people from evacuating. In the case of rapid-onset shocks, leveraging digital technologies may be especially important where financial infrastructure is available. It is notable that in many countries around the world, social protection system strengthening initiatives are often a driving force in expanding access to digital financial services and products to recipients who had previously lacked access, along with complementary digital and financial literacy education interventions. Where digital transfers offer a safe, reliable, efficient, cost-effective and timely distribution modality, it may be especially prudent to explore linkages with social protection payment mechanisms. Such transfers are especially opportune where programme recipients are already provided with an ID-linked bank account or mobile money wallet that could be used to deliver anticipatory cash assistance to at-risk populations, for example. Similarly, the delivery structures utilized for routine in-kind social assistance, may also be suited to provide anticipatory in-kind assistance, when leveraged appropriately.

A key point to note in relation to the provision of payments and services to support anticipatory actions specifically, is that the timing at which the benefit or service reaches the intended recipient is critically important. More specifically, it is the moment at which cash arrives in their bank account, or the anticipatory food package is handed over. The timely provision of a benefit or service must include both the time it takes to reach the intended recipient, as well as the period required for it to be used, spent or consumed in such a way to enable the recipient to take action before the arrival of the shock. For example, a cash or in-kind transfer that is provided hours before a typhoon makes landfall has technically been provided in anticipation and it could certainly still be used for response and recovery purposes. However, its ability to facilitate actions that are taken prior to the typhoon making landfall, in order to mitigate its impact, may well be limited if not impossible.

There is an extensive and growing collection of examples in which the payment mechanisms used for regular social assistance programmes (i.e. bank accounts, mobile money wallets, ATM cards, money agents, etc.) have been used to deliver

emergency support to recipients in the case of a covariate shock. This was seen most prevalently during the COVID-19 pandemic, with examples of both cash and in-kind payments and distribution mechanisms used to transfer emergency assistance to large proportions of the global population (Gentilini, 2022). The lessons learned from these shock-responsive social protection interventions are clear in terms of the benefits associated with increased efficiency, speed and familiarity for recipients, and the avoidance of duplication, to name only a few. The examples also provide convincing arguments to reach the conclusion that wherever available, feasible and appropriate, actors delivering anticipatory cash assistance should prioritize leveraging already available payment mechanisms, especially where those mechanisms are part of an already established social protection programme. However, such a recommendation must also be accompanied by a word of warning regarding the importance of inclusion and ensuring that delivery and distribution mechanisms – and especially those leveraging digital technologies – do not exclude certain groups. Even with significant progress made in the expansion of access to bank accounts, and mobile and internet use across the world (Demirgüç-Kunt *et al*., 2022), care must be taken to ensure access to all, especially those hardest to reach, and who often stand to have the most to gain from inclusion in relevant social protection and anticipatory action interventions.

Accountability – Accountability, grievance and feedback mechanisms are important components of a social protection system, enabling recipients to raise problems and challenges, especially on issues related to exclusion or inclusion errors, as well as in relation to the prevention of irregularities or misuse of programme resources. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure a functioning, trusted and accessible system for registering and addressing grievances as a way to not only foster communities› confidence in the system, but also to enhance accountability mechanisms associated with both the provision of social protection as well as possibly disaster risk management-related assistance. Of equal importance will be the provision of appropriate feedback loops, ensuring that recipients' grievances are heard and acted upon, with feasible and appropriate changes being made to the design and delivery of relevant programmes as necessary. The rationale for linking accountability efforts between anticipatory action actors and social protection systems, especially in situations where anticipatory interventions are leveraging system programmes and features, is clear; by utilizing accessible, trusted and familiar grievance mechanisms where they are available, the needs and feedback of recipients may be more reliably collected at scale and in a cost-effective manner. In so doing, this information could benefit both social protection as well as disaster risk management actors, including those focusing on anticipatory action, in the design and delivery of their interventions. These efforts do not come without possible challenges however, including increased capacity pressures and the need to overcome accessibility constraints, all of which will need to be considered.

Case management – Case management mechanisms enable social protection recipients to report changes in their circumstances or to monitor receipt of benefits. For anticipatory action, case management could work as it does in shock-responsive social protection systems without any major adaptations, other than collecting, reassessing and making available information on the status of recipients and their eligibility to be included in future anticipatory action interventions and relevant social protection programmes. Once again, linkages between efforts to source and include information regarding risks, vulnerabilities and other variables of interest to anticipatory action actors, and how these indicators change over time with the arrival of both seasonal and irregular shocks, may be especially useful to social protection actors. These linkages will be equally useful to recipients, in the case of changes in poverty or other socio-economic indicators contained in social protection registries and other information systems.

Monitoring and evaluation – Programme monitoring, and evaluation procedures are important components for all social protection systems. In the case of an anticipatory action intervention, monitoring and evaluation data should inform country level planning of ministries that manage disaster risk management functions and the social protection system (Holmes, Levine and Shakespeare, 2021). Robust monitoring and evaluation can help make the case for anticipatory action to national governments, or conversely, identify when social protection systems are not an efficient way to deliver an anticipatory action intervention. Effective monitoring and evaluation may also offer important sources of evidence to build research and advocacy products such as investment cases, including return on investment calculations. The evidence could, on the one hand, highlight the efficiency and cost savings associated with leveraging social protection systems, while on the other hand, highlight avoided losses as a result of acting in anticipation. Similarly, at the operational level, effective monitoring and evaluation can also support the refinement of social protection programmes, and the design and delivery of complementary anticipatory action interventions, thereby providing useful information to decision-makers to improve future activities and approaches in support of populations.

Each social protection system will require unique modifications to deliver anticipatory action. A feasibility assessment should be used to identify where systems could be adapted to incorporate anticipatory action, and what components of the social protection system are best suited to be leveraged in anticipation of a covariate shock. In addition, determining the type of anticipatory action to implement (if at all) in a given context will be important. Any such assessment should seek to understand both the type and scale of investments required in terms of system strengthening and capacity development, as well as necessary advocacy efforts to influence the broader social and political enabling environment in linking social protection and anticipatory action in practice.

3. LINKING SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION – KEY CHALLENGES

The analysis of available literature on linking social protection and anticipatory action has pointed to several key challenges, many of which were mentioned briefly in the preceding sections. Chapter 3 seeks to present a non-exhaustive list of these key issues, offering potential mitigation actions or solutions, as appropriate.

3.1 UNCERTAINTY, AVAILABILITY AND TIMING OF FORECASTS

A central challenge of anticipatory action is that the time frame for implementation will differ based on the type of shock, the type of actions that can reduce or mitigate expected impacts, and the availability and reliability of forecast models. It is also important to note that clear trigger thresholds, defining when plans to deliver anticipatory actions are set in motion, are not always obvious, especially in the case of slow-onset shocks, such as droughts which are often observed as one component of a chronic and compounding crisis. Together, these factors can all limit options for social protection systems to support anticipatory action. As stated previously, from a forecasting perspective, the potential window of opportunity for anticipatory action opens with a defined activation trigger and closes when peak impacts are reached or when the shock materializes, at which point activities may transition into early response, response and later recovery stages. It is, however, important to recognize that "peak impact" and the materialization of a shock are often somewhat subjective moments in time, especially in the case of slow-onset events. Delivery speed is therefore a key factor in determining whether or not a social protection system can provide anticipatory assistance ahead of an impending covariate shock. The lead time may be as short as hours or days for events such as tropical cyclones or floods, or weeks and months in the case of droughts or economic shocks. This means that delivering anticipatory action through social protection systems may be appropriate in contexts where investments have been channelled into system strengthening, particularly in the case of recipient identification and payment mechanisms. However, anticipatory actions may not be feasible – especially for rapid-onset events – where social protection systems do not generally have the capability to deliver social assistance to vulnerable populations outside of their routine operations with only a few days' notice.

It is also important to note that different types of anticipatory action have their own windows of implementation (Levine *et al.*, 2020). One of the reasons why cash distributions, and by extension, linkages with social protection systems, is of such interest to actors engaged in anticipatory action, is that in the case of rapid-onset shocks with short lead times, delivering in-kind anticipatory assistance at-scale is extremely challenging. Even if previously conducted context analyses of market conditions, agricultural systems and institutional arrangements indicate a preference for in-kind or cash plus livelihood interventions, the procurement and distribution of in-kind assistance becomes increasingly difficult as the scale and geographic spread of the intervention's recipient list increases, even with the use of prepositioning, for example. As a result, the type of anticipatory assistance that can be provided through a social protection system may be further dictated by the limitations of the system, rather than solely based on the needs of the population. Actors engaged in linking social protection and anticipatory action will therefore need to decide where a balance can be achieved, with a population's needs and preferences most effectively served.

Furthermore, uncertainty around the reliability of forecasts, and the subsequent lack of political risk appetite expressed by officials with regards to a "mis-trigger" versus waiting to deliver assistance in response against observable impacts and needs assessments, is also a key challenge. Similarly, worries around the idea of "wastage" if there is a "mis-trigger", and the lack of understanding of the "no regrets" principle of anticipatory action, is often a point not always readily accepted by decision-makers, officials and other stakeholders. Indeed, anecdotal examples from key informants noted comments by government officials responsible for social protection and/or disaster risk management interventions, expressing worries about losing their jobs if there is a "mis-trigger", and being unable to justify expenditures such as cash and/or in-kind transfers to thousands of recipients if a forecasted shock does not materialize. These are legitimate and practical difficulties that become even more challenging as anticipatory action interventions are scaled up. Solutions will need to be found to overcome issues around uncertainty and reliability of forecasts, as well as the perceived risk appetite of officials as they relate to relevant audit and monitoring mechanisms within government systems. In this regard, the ability for social protection systems to contribute to scaling up anticipatory action interventions is not simply about ensuring structural components are in place (i.e. that the design and delivery features of the social protection system are functioning; prepositioning of in-kind assistance has been completed, etc.), but that the people, politics and bureaucratic systems that govern and incentivize their work activities ensure an enabling environment for such linkages and their application in practice.

Finally, a key challenge may also include the availability of forecasts, in terms of geographic coverage as well as the breadth of hazards that can be monitored and forecasted in a given country. Limitations may be driven by the availability of historical data, the necessary measurement and monitoring hardware, as well as the specialist human resource capacity required to build and manage the hazard forecast models. All of these challenges, in turn, may also result in difficulties regarding the availability and dissemination of early warning systems, especially in the case of small- to medium-scale disasters that consistently affect the same communities year after year, resulting in cumulative impacts over decades, contributing to household poverty traps.

Improving the quality of forecasts and effectively disseminating appropriate early warnings that are understandable, accessible, trusted and – most importantly – acted upon by the people they are warning, is critical. This is particularly important in a sector such as social protection, where relevant institutions and civil servants are not familiar with using forecasts and early warnings as inputs for activating emergency social protection interventions. The willingness of different stakeholders to accept uncertainty in the provision of assistance needs to be well understood and reflected in how anticipatory action is discussed and implemented in the context of linking the approach to social protection. Otherwise, competing political and budgetary priorities and "complex interrelated disincentives such as acting under uncertainty with limited resources" (REAP, 2021, p. 10) will remain significant barriers to incorporating anticipatory action into social protection systems.

3.2 LIMITED COVERAGE AND CONVERGENCE IN TARGETING

When utilizing social protection systems to deliver anticipatory action, coverage and targeting are often major challenges. The recipients of social protection programmes do not necessarily correspond to those most vulnerable to different types of shocks. Moreover, there are still significant gaps in the coverage of social protection benefits globally, with only 47 percent of the global population able to access social protection, resulting in an estimated 4.1 billion people remaining unprotected (ILO, 2021). In rural areas social protection coverage and adequacy are low,

where an estimated 80 percent of the poorest households in the poorest countries have no access to social protection, and even for those that do receive assistance, per capita transfer values are relatively low in rural areas (ILO, 2021). Regional differences are stark, with available data indicating that people in African countries (17.4 percent coverage), the Arab States (40 percent coverage), and Asia and the Pacific (44 percent coverage) noted as least protected (ILO, 2021). Furthermore, women are particularly over-represented among the excluded (ILO, 2021),[7] and recent figures show that an estimated 1.46 billion children aged under fifteen are without access to a critical social protection provision – specifically, child benefits (paid in cash or tax credits) (ILO and UNICEF, 2023). This means that in many countries, social protection systems are unable, on their own, to target and deliver assistance that comprehensively addresses the shocks populations face throughout their life cycles or during large-scale shocks (REAP, 2021; ILO, 2021). While not an argument for discounting the role of social protection, rather, this challenge highlights the importance of system strengthening alongside appropriate linkages with disaster risk management interventions and related development sector initiatives.

Examples from a number of countries indicate that the use of social protection systems to deliver anticipatory action support often come with a risk of exclusion and/or inclusion error, as most social protection registries are static and poverty-focused, or perhaps use categorical targeting rather than data that considers exposure to covariate shocks (Patrone, 2021). This is of course to be expected, given the poverty alleviation focused objectives of most social protection systems around the world. However, actors will need to assess the comparative advantages and disadvantages associated with utilizing and validating available data within relevant social protection information systems, against conducting independent assessment and targeting activities, which may or may not result in more reliable and useful data for disaster risk management purposes.

Nevertheless, if effective links are to be made between social protection systems and disaster risk management more broadly, refinement of the data within information management systems using complementary vulnerability assessments and risk profiling tools from both sectors will be required. Such linkage is crucial in improving the availability of convergent data for targeting. Or, at the very least, explicit work will be required to ensure interoperability of appropriate systems and the systematic use by officials of techniques that overlay data and information to inform planning and decision-making for the design and delivery of assistance focused on addressing both covariate and idiosyncratic shocks. Linkages with other related databases and registries, such as land use databases, farmer registries and national ID systems, may also be especially useful to inform decision-making and policy processes (Barca and Hebber, 2023). For instance, increasingly in many contexts, floods and droughts can be predicted, often with estimates of their location, intensity and probability by utilizing historical hydrometeorological data. It may be prudent for governments and partners to explore how overlaying poverty and livelihood data with information on flood exposure and vulnerability data, as well as hazard risk mapping – perhaps through data sharing agreements and collaboration across ministries – can be used to plan and implement anticipatory and response assistance to at-risk populations. Governments and their partners may also find it useful to include subsequently identified at-risk populations within social protection registries (RCRCCC, 2017), if they have not already done so, in order to facilitate future routine social protection assistance as well as vertical and/or horizontal expansions as discussed in previous sections.

[7] There is an eight-percentage point gender gap in the coverage of comprehensive social security between women and men of working age (ILO, 2021).

3.3 UNSUITABLE OR INSUFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY CAPACITY

There are challenges, risks and limitations related to the particular types of anticipatory action that social protection systems can channel. In the case of cash and/or in-kind transfers delivered in anticipation of a shock, it is important that the various components of a selected programme's delivery chain have suitable and sufficient capacity to deliver reliable and timely support to recipients. In many countries, social protection payment schedules tend to be inconsistent, arriving weeks later than the supposed, regular distribution date. As anticipatory action interventions continue to scale up, there will be further capacity requirements expected of social protection systems and their delivery chains. This is of course also a challenge related to shock-responsive social protection, but there are additional considerations regarding lead times especially, in which increasingly larger volumes of anticipatory assistance will be expected to flow rapidly through a system within a limited time period, without negatively affecting the business continuity of routine delivery. As discussed previously, care will be needed to ensure a "do no harm" approach, especially in the case of emergency systems. Nevertheless, the advantages of efficiency gains and economies of scale associated with linkages to social protection systems, may well be a crucial and necessary component to scale up anticipatory action, especially in the case of anticipatory cash, that stakeholders should carefully explore.

Non-governmental actors exploring the provision of assistance through leveraging the payment mechanism of a social assistance programme, for example, will also need to assess whether the rules and regulations of the system, as well as their own institutional guidelines, allow for piggybacking.[8] In some contexts, social protection programme bank or mobile money accounts, for example, are earmarked to only receive the social protection programme's benefits, thereby restricting opportunities to flow irregular, emergency cash assistance directly into a recipient's account through the regular programme's payment mechanism. Data protection considerations will also be important when accessing and managing sensitive information such as recipient IDs and bank account details. Actors will also need to assess whether utilizing the payment accounts of active programmes is more cost-efficient, reliable and feasible, in comparison to other payment mechanisms, although it is recommended that actors systematically explore options that build on systems, rather than duplicating them, wherever feasible and appropriate.

Similarly, care will likely need to be taken in assessing the feasibility of leveraging a system's outreach and communication mechanisms. Where such mechanisms are in place, the benefits are apparent in terms of leveraging local, trusted and reliable communication channels, or utilizing digital technologies, such as mobile phones and SMS to provide mass early warning messages and updates on assistance modalities and timelines. The ability to leverage and utilize these systems, however, will likely be limited by related challenges, such as coverage gaps and incomplete or outdated registry datasets (i.e., missing, incomplete or outdated data on mobile contact numbers and/or locations of recipients), depending on the strength and capacities of the system. This challenge reiterates the importance of seeking feasible and appropriate linkages with the social protection system, given its status and functionality, as well as the complementary role that system strengthening activities can play in facilitating anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection. Nonetheless, utilizing outreach and communication mechanisms of social protection systems are a useful and often underutilized starting point, and good practice should dictate that multiple communication and

[8] Piggybacking is a term used within the shock-responsive social protection literature and refers to a situation where a third party, such as a humanitarian or development actor, makes use of certain components of a system and its delivery chain to support the independent provision of assistance. For example, this could include a non-governmental actor providing cash

outreach mechanisms are explored, especially when intending to reach marginalized and excluded populations.

In cases where populations face several shocks occurring at the same time, or in short succession, anticipatory action options may be limited in terms of their effectiveness, both in terms of positively influencing sectoral outcomes, and the repeated capacity and performance pressures placed on the implementation and delivery features of a social protection system. A case study of anticipatory action in Somalia, where households faced the compounded shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic, locust outbreaks, loss of remittances and a forecast of impending poor rains, showed that there were limits to what anticipatory action could do to mitigate negative livelihood impacts in response to the forecast of poor rainfall, given the chronic and compounding difficulties the population already faced (Levine *et al*., 2021). Anticipatory action cannot be expected to address systematic challenges faced by populations in these contexts. However, linkages with social protection systems may contribute to improving outcomes, especially where humanitarian caseloads can be transferred to more sustainable solutions. This case is perhaps one that most notably demonstrates how the complementary strengths of regular social protection benefits can be effectively leveraged in terms of their preventive, protective, promotive and transformative functions, alongside disaster risk management and broader development initiatives.

3.4 INSUFFICIENT AND INFLEXIBLE FINANCING

Financial flows relevant to the delivery of anticipatory action interventions and conversely those that support social protection systems are, in

assistance to households from their own budgets, using a social protection recipient list to target recipients. This would be an example of piggybacking, by making use of the social protection recipient list to support the delivery of assistance.

most contexts, provided from different sources. To date, anticipatory action programmes are primarily financed through humanitarian agencies and donors, rather than government budgets (Scott, 2022). In contrast, domestic budget allocations or development aid are generally the main source of funding for disaster risk reduction and/or management interventions. Disaster risk reduction, preparedness and other disaster risk management interventions can often include anticipatory actions, even though they may not explicitly be labelled as such. Therefore, anticipatory action programmes themselves have to varying degrees been developed externally to national government systems, in terms of embedding the financing of these actions within national systems and budgets, in many low- and middle-income countries. The model adopted by the majority of humanitarian actors and donors continues to be a "pilot-to-institutionalization model". On this basis, the activities of humanitarian actors are focused on both providing a so-called "proof of concept" of the anticipatory action approach through the use of pilots, tests and simulations that vary in scale, alongside efforts to persuade local and national government entities to then institutionalize the approach into their broader disaster risk management policies, structures and financing mechanisms.

In contrast, social protection interventions are largely funded domestically, with international development assistance playing a significant role in lower-middle- and low-income countries, and in particular, by supporting system strengthening and the provision of non-contributory social assistance (Longhurst *et al*., 2021; ILO, 2021). Yet, in such contexts, social protection and disaster risk management, including preparedness and disaster risk reduction, are chronically underfunded compared to actual need (Kellett and Caravani, 2013; Wilkinson *et al*., 2022; ILO, 2021; Longhurst *et al*., 2021). Therefore, investments in systems that can support shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action in many countries over "the last decade have not been sufficient to enable them to manage large-scale shocks" (REAP, 2021, p. 11). This is despite evidence demonstrating that mature social protection systems are a critical enabler for effective and timely shock response (Longhurst *et al*., 2021; Costella *et al*., 2021; Beazley, Marzi and Steller, 2021). Nevertheless, as summarized by Longhurst *et al*. (2021), there are potential financial sources available to shock-responsive social protection stakeholders. Current and emerging risk financing instruments, and climate mitigation and adaptation-focused funds may also provide an important entry point to finance linkages between social protection systems and anticipatory action interventions. Although beyond the scope of this paper, potential options to fill funding gaps, such as the compulsory social security contributions of self-employed workers, including agricultural workers, and various forms of complementary insurance products, present noteworthy areas of interest that should be explored in combination with the focus of this document, namely non-contributory assistance.

Looking beyond the availability of financial resources and on to operational considerations, it should be noted that while humanitarian and donor agencies have spent years building anticipatory action protocols into their financial systems, public financial management systems in the countries where these protocols are being implemented are rarely designed to deploy resources before covariate shocks. In some cases, anti-corruption laws specifically prohibit releasing finance in advance of a covariate shock (Scott, 2022). Furthermore, countries often have rules and regulations affecting the release of disaster management and contingency budgets, whereby a declaration of a state of emergency or the completion of needs and damage assessments are required before funds can be released. Similarly, the decision by some donors to enact the earmarking of project money strictly to the anticipatory action window and the preparatory activities required to deliver those anticipatory actions, does raise challenges. These challenges arise in contexts where testing the capacity for social protection systems to provide assistance across the disaster risk management cycle, and

particularly in response, may be a necessary first step in persuading officials to consider the system's role in providing similar assistance in anticipation.

Finally, it should be noted that where sufficient fiscal space is available to provide at-scale anticipatory action through social protection systems, actors note that there are often significant challenges associated with the design and activation of financial flow mechanisms. For example, whether anticipatory action and/or shock-responsive social protection interventions are funded through local government disaster management funds or national contingency budgets, or conversely, through social protection budgets, clear financial flow mechanisms and decision-making processes at all levels of government linked with forecast model triggers are required. As touched upon in previous sections, extensive work related to planning, coordination and adjustments to relevant policy, SOPs and guidelines is often required before such interventions can be systematically adopted. These challenges are not unsurmountable, however, as shown in contexts such as the Philippines, where recent changes to the regulatory environment now explicitly permit the delivery of anticipatory actions through government budgets, with the availability of such funds at the local Government unit level seen as crucial to the future delivery of shock-responsive assistance in the country (UNICEF, 2022).

3.5 POLITICAL ECONOMY CONSIDERATIONS – CONFLICTING PRIORITIES AND FINITE RESOURCES

A notable key challenge identified within the literature, and reiterated by key informants, relates to the change process required to institutionalize the concepts of anticipatory action and its linkages with social protection and, in particular, how these concepts factor in political economy considerations. For example, in many contexts, progress in the adoption (or lack thereof) of linking social protection and anticipatory action approaches may be driven by a perception of priorities by the government, especially if there

is extensive ongoing work focused on system strengthening and/or integrating shock-responsive social protection components. Similarly, as with any change process, turnover of key staff and key decision-makers often poses a notable challenge. This is especially the case if the change process is focused on a relatively new and emerging topic, as is the case with anticipatory action, as well as that of perhaps integrating shock-responsive capacities within social protection systems, depending on the country context. Concerted efforts will need to be taken by actors to effectively persuade officials to consider anticipatory action components within their broader social protection related workplans, while recognizing the resource, priority and time pressures experienced by government counterparts. A related challenge that may also limit an actor's ability to influence and persuade government officials and other decision-makers, pertains to the lack of available evidence and good practices on linkages between social protection and anticipatory action. While some progress is being made in this regard, quality return on investment reports, impact evaluations and emerging good practice reviews are still required in order to support advocacy and policy efforts.

Actors should also consider that as shock-responsive social protection has gained growing attention and investment, social protection related ministries and departments are increasingly interacting with a multitude of new actors – including humanitarian actors and their donors – who perhaps previously had no, or only limited, engagement in social protection. Indeed, the topic of shock-responsive social protection and linkages with anticipatory action is often a new topic even for these actors, and many bring their own objectives, priorities and ways of working when interacting with governments. Government counterparts often have limited capacities, time and human resources to take on additional tasks and interventions included in the workplans of these new partners. This factor is relevant in relation to both the implementation of shock-responsive and anticipatory action assistance in practice, as well as the administrative and coordination tasks concerning the necessary development or revision of policy, guidelines and other related standard operating procedures. Furthermore, similar and compounding challenges can also arise in situations where an increasing number of actors have entered the anticipatory action space, and limitations in coordination lead actors to develop and implement their own institutional hazard forecast models, triggers and anticipatory action interventions, with or without the involvement of government entities and other stakeholders.

Together, the challenges outlined in this subsection can cause confusion among stakeholders, as well as the development of unsuitable and unsustainable solutions that limit the ability of governments to institutionalize the approach across both social protection and disaster risk management spheres. As such, it is strongly encouraged that actors are cognizant of available capacities and limitations, and concerted efforts are made to ensure regular and sustained engagement with relevant coordination, governance and communication structures around (shock-responsive) social protection and anticipatory action.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In recent years, attention to shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action as approaches to better manage covariate shocks has been growing in humanitarian, climate change and development communities (REAP, 2021). Ensuring the integration of responsive or adaptive capacities within social protection systems has benefited significantly from the lessons of social protection responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside sustained investment in reliable and robust system capacities, as well as growing ambitions and expectations surrounding the capacity of systems to contribute to positive outcomes across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. Conversely, anticipatory action has been driven by an ambition to improve the way that humanitarian assistance and, in particular, disaster risk management, is designed and delivered. Anticipatory action is about fundamentally changing the way that the sector manages disasters (FAO, 2021), and in this regard, the same can be said about the role of shock-responsive social protection. Both concepts share similar and overlapping objectives, but barring a selection of notable examples, they have often been pursued independently or at best with ad hoc considerations in terms of their integration. However, in some contexts this is changing, with actors exploring linkages between social protection and anticipatory action across policy, programme design and implementation more systematically.

Indications are that where a social protection system is already shock-responsive, including those with a precedence of providing shock-responsive assistance at scale, these contexts provide a stronger basis to build on in terms of the integration of anticipatory action approaches. This is not surprising, given the commonalities in system requirements to deliver social assistance in response to, and in anticipation of, a shock. However, even where these shock-responsive design features are already in place, integrating anticipatory action will take considerable work to align policy, programme design and implementation features of systems with existing anticipatory action initiatives and arrangements. The benefits of doing so however, while as yet arguably unproven when considering the available evidence base, are argued to offer a potential game changer (REAP, 2021; European Commission, 2019).

This section summarizes, and where appropriate, adds further detail to key messages contained within previous chapters, while also drawing on lessons learned, and good practices identified from the paper's four case studies and key informant interviews. The following discussion takes a forward-looking approach, highlighting key considerations for actors working within this space of linking social protection and anticipatory action, with the objective to contribute to inform further exploration of the concept in practice and, ultimately, its mainstream adoption by relevant stakeholders, where feasible and appropriate.

4.1 LINKING SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION – A POTENTIAL WAY TO ENSURE GREATER SCALE, EFFICIENCY, COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND TIMELINESS OF ANTICIPATORY ASSISTANCE?

As governments and their partners continue to invest in social protection systems that are increasingly responsive to shocks, the delivery of assistance in anticipation of covariate shocks is also becoming technically more feasible and reliable across countries and contexts. The advantages afforded to countries able to leverage well-resourced, functional and shock-responsive systems to deliver assistance in response to shocks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, are equally applicable to the mobilization of the

same systems to provide support in anticipation. As such, linkages with social protection systems offer the potential for greater scale, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and timeliness of anticipatory actions, and in effect, also for response, recovery and other interventions falling within the disaster risk management cycle. However, the degree to which these advantages can be realized will depend on limiting factors also observed in efforts to institutionalize shock-responsive social protection, and crucially, with the added challenge of ensuring effective operational linkages with hazard forecasting capacities and corresponding forecast model lead times.

The question as to whether linking social protection and anticipatory action approaches can ensure greater scale, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and timeliness of anticipatory assistance, will depend on numerous contextual and operational factors, as discussed throughout this document. More research is required, both in terms of impact evaluations as well as evidence of good practices in the adoption and application of the approach by government and non-governmental actors across contexts. However, as highlighted in the detailed case studies contained in the Annex, and also mentioned in Chapter 2 within this document, a number of countries continue to make notable progress in exploring linkages between social protection and anticipatory action approaches, often by building on ongoing efforts to institutionalize shock-responsive capacities within systems.

The example of the Philippines is especially relevant in this regard, where stakeholders are supporting Government efforts to institutionalize and scale up anticipatory action by ensuring that the approach is embedded within relevant disaster risk management and social protection policies, frameworks and implementation guidelines. Where feasible and appropriate, disaster risk management stakeholders particularly interested in institutionalizing anticipatory action, may consider a similar strategy, recognizing both the possible operational advantages of linkages, as well as the enabling environment in terms of the

adoption of the approach by government partners, when anchored within both shock-responsive and broader social protection system strengthening interventions.

4.2 LOOKING BEYOND HOUSEHOLD ASSISTANCE PACKAGES TOWARDS BROADER PROTECTION AND ADAPTATION ACTIONS

The focus of the four case studies included in this paper, as well as the majority of the currently available literature on linking social protection and anticipatory action, is largely centred on the delivery of cash-based social assistance. However, there are other types of social protection benefits or services – and other types of anticipatory actions that social protection systems may support – which could help protect people and their livelihoods from the impacts of an imminent covariate shock, especially in cases where cash is neither the most suitable type of support, nor the main constraint preventing populations from taking anticipatory action.

Similarly, at present, the anticipatory action agenda is, for the most part, dominated by a focus on the provision of household targeted assistance packages. Households are assessed and provided with cash, agricultural inputs, food packages, hygiene kits or other such items, as well as information and evacuation assistance in anticipation of a forecasted shock. However, there may be significant scope for actors interested in linking social protection and anticipatory action to explore opportunities to mobilize public work programmes (i.e. cash-for-work, or food-for-work initiatives) or other development programmes (i.e. rural irrigation schemes and agriculture sector initiatives that may fall within social protection systems) and community networks to conduct or contribute to anticipatory actions. The Nepal and Guatemala case studies provide evidence of local government officials and political leaders leveraging equipment, machinery, human resources and other community-level assets and networks to conduct emergency activities. These activities include early harvesting, water infrastructure maintenance or emergency repairs of flood defences, with activities initiated or expanded in anticipation of a covariate shock. In the case of Nepal, this also included the mobilization of locally available assets to repair riverbank defences when early warnings indicated an imminent flood, thereby mitigating the impact of the shock in certain affected municipalities when the flood did arrive. While this is a positive example highlighting the opportunities associated with the mobilization of such programmes, there is little evidence that such actions are being conducted systematically or linked with available hazard forecasts, both in Nepal and other contexts around the world.

However, this is one area in which linking social protection and anticipatory action could have significant positive effects in terms of protecting populations from the impacts of covariate shocks, while also contributing and linking to the climate adaptation objectives of broader climate and disaster risk reduction initiatives (Bharadwaj, 2022).[9] For example, actors may consider exploring the mobilization of public works programmes and other initiatives to conduct the following anticipatory actions for slow- and/or rapid-onset shocks as appropriate: (i) clearing, rehabilitating or building of drains, irrigation channels and other waterways; (ii) providing support to early harvesting and storage activities; (iii) conducting emergency water management and storage interventions; (iv) providing support to evacuations of people as well as household and community assets, including livestock; (v) repairing and/or building riverbank flood defences or specific defences around key community and livelihood

[9] The examples of India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program are two such cases that include benefits from climate adaptation activities by design (Bharadwaj, 2022). As such, these and similar cash-for-work schemes may be especially appropriate programmes that can be mobilized for both anticipatory action and shock-responsive expansions as well as adaptations in the case of covariate shocks.

infrastructure and assets; and (vi) providing support to the transport and prepositioning of in-kind assistance.

In order to deliver such anticipatory actions through public works and other relevant programmes, actors will likely need to advocate for a conducive and enabling policy environment. They will also need to advocate for the adoption of appropriate programme design adaptations by relevant officials that permit the exceptional use of available labour, machinery, equipment and other resources. Adaptations to these programmes will likely require the integration of crisis modifiers, contingency planning, flexible financing mechanisms, adjustments to SOPs and decision-making processes to include emergency waivers and, finally, linkages with hazard forecasts. Nevertheless, the opportunities created by a combination of assistance targeted at protecting and mitigating the impacts of covariate shocks for households and collective community assets, while also ensuring appropriate connections to broader climate, disaster risk reduction and community development initiatives, may prove fruitful.

4.3 PARTNERSHIPS, COORDINATION AND JOINT ADVOCACY EFFORTS

There has been significant progress in recent decades regarding the availability and reliability of hydrometeorological forecasting, with many countries now benefiting from the analyses of dedicated national hydrometeorology institutes as well as other analyses, early warning and research bodies. If social protection and disaster risk management policies and practices are to be adapted to systematically include linkages with anticipatory action approaches and their forecast models, it is crucial that stakeholders at all levels understand and have trust in the forecasting process, and the models' corresponding triggers and early warnings. As discussed in Section 3.1, in many contexts, this remains both a technical and political challenge, not only among relevant agencies and government decision-makers, but also among households and communities, in terms of their willingness to take action in situations characterized by uncertainty. Effectively influencing stakeholders to adopt a "no regret" or, at the very least, a "low regret" approach,[10] is one of the key challenges experienced by anticipatory action actors. Issues concerning risk aversion, social and political acceptability, worries of "wastage" and "misuse" and a general lack of understanding of the concept are often still reported as significant barriers.

This will continue to be the case, and perhaps become increasingly more difficult, as conversations continue to move towards advocating for the institutionalization of the approach by government entities and the delivery of anticipatory action at an ever-greater scale through social protection systems and domestic budgets. It is therefore crucial that anticipatory action actors recognize and adapt their advocacy strategies accordingly to address the challenges expressed by government partners in relation to forecasting uncertainty, risk aversion, domestic political repercussions, and social costs and benefits of applying finite resources. The reasoning employed will need to go beyond the economic and financial rationale of a "no" or "low regret" approach. What is "low regret" for a government does not necessarily correspond to "low regret" for an external humanitarian or development agency. For the scale and exceptionality of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the "no regret" approach was common within the social protection community, including among government actors, but the same may not be applied to the prospect of acting ahead of recurring events, especially when factoring in varying levels of uncertainty that are inherent in any forecasts.

[10] See, for instance, a commitment to the "no regrets" approach here: **https://reliefweb.int/report/world/anticipatory-action-event-2021-high-level-humanitarian-event-anticipatory-action** and a discussion of "low regrets" and the risk of acting in vain in Wilkinson *et al.* (2018), Chapters 3 and 6.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Effective collaboration among actors, and coordination in joint advocacy efforts, will be crucial in this respect, where one unified voice on issues relating to managing uncertainty, the development and application of forecast models, and effectively communicating the benefits of linkages with social protection systems is a determining factor. It could basically make the difference between the institutionalization of linkages in practice, or the continuation of small-scale pilots and simulations by non-governmental actors. Effective coordination on these issues will look different across contexts. Increasingly, it is not unusual to see a combination of various coordination platforms and mechanisms tasked with bringing together stakeholders on topics such as shock-responsive social protection, system strengthening or anticipatory action. This may include dedicated government-led social protection and/or disaster risk management platforms, and specific technical working groups on the two respective topics (that may or may not be linked). Otherwise, where the cluster system is active, shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action may be discussed across various groups of stakeholders.[11] Whatever structure the coordination landscape has within a given country, persistent and sustained efforts by key entities and decision-makers to collaborate, share information and engage in collective advocacy efforts to make the case for this approach, will be crucial to advance linkages between social protection systems and anticipatory action in practice.

4.4 SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM STRENGTHENING – A NECESSARY FOCUS AND KEY ENABLER

There is broad recognition that the development of shock-responsive capacities must be built on

[11] Where the cluster system is active, the recently adopted Cash Coordination Model of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) offers useful guidance and entry points for cash working groups to link their work with social protection, and therefore such groups may provide a useful coordination platform to leverage discussions on linkages between social protection, cash and anticipatory action approaches.

the foundations of an adequately functioning system. Tools are available to support actors to apply objective measures and identify a minimum set of criteria to attempt to answer the question of what constitutes a functioning system – the World Bank's Stress Test Tool and FAO's Social Protection and Anticipatory Action Feasibility Assessment Methodology are two such examples. The ability of a given social protection system to adopt and apply anticipatory action approaches will be driven by numerous factors, such as the functionality, coverage, reliability and robustness of the system and its delivery chain features. In the majority of cases, and especially in contexts where social protection systems are weak or still developing, core system strengthening efforts must remain the central focus and a necessary prerequisite for any ambitions concerning the institutionalization and sustainability of integrating shock-responsiveness and/or anticipatory action capacities.

This document does not argue that linkages between anticipatory action and social protection system strengthening interventions cannot be delivered concurrently, but rather that stakeholders should look to adopt a "do no harm" approach to ensure that, at the very least, system strengthening activities are not overtly damaged, restricted or significantly delayed. In this regard, it is also important to recognize that system strengthening interventions – in the form of efforts to ensure adequate policy, appropriate programme design features, effective implementation mechanisms and delivery chain features – are key enablers to the delivery of effective anticipatory assistance through a social protection system. Finally, when pursuing linkages between social protection systems and anticipatory action approaches, it is crucial that the operational capacities required to deliver linkages throughout the delivery chain, such as the availability of sufficient and appropriately trained human resources, are suitably considered so as not to overburden key delivery functions of regular programmes. This is especially important in terms of the ability of local officials to absorb the expected additional workload of integrating linkages and other adaptations to the design and delivery of programmes.

4.5 GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

A number of the case studies included in this paper, and specifically the one on Guatemala, highlight the importance of considering gender equality and social inclusion when pursuing linkages between social protection and anticipatory action. These issues are also key for the implementation of the core functions of any social protection system itself – such as whether women face disproportionate barriers to accessing and benefiting from social protection programmes because they have lower access to e-payments, and how to overcome these challenges. Other considerations are more specific to linking social protection and anticipatory action, such as, for example, where women or persons living with disabilities are less able to access early warning systems or communication and payment mechanisms within limited time periods.[12] Similarly, considerations about the heightened risks that women and girls face in crises, including increased protection risks such as gender-based violence are all important components of any effective programming, including those focused on linking social protection and anticipatory action.

These factors need to be explicitly considered when developing programmes and interventions that capitalize on linkages between social protection systems and anticipatory action. Learning from integrating gender equality and social inclusion into core social protection programmes and anticipatory action programmes,

[12] Readers will note that there is an active Working Group on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Anticipatory Action, chaired by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Plan International. See https://www.anticipation-hub.org/exchange/working-groups/wg-on-protection-gender-and-inclusion-in-anticipatory-action

can further strengthen ongoing work in this area. For example, by tailoring communication messages to reach diverse groups, or supporting women's knowledge and access to technology for digital payment systems, and other forms of assistance and services. It is therefore crucial that gender and social inclusion topics are considered systematically as part of any efforts to link social protection systems and anticipatory action.

4.6 KNOWLEDGE GAPS

To a large degree, this scoping paper focuses on exploring the conceptual and operational linkages between social protection and anticipatory action, primarily from the perspective of entry points within policy, programme design and delivery chains. Yet it also recognizes that much more remains to be done to establish whether and how anticipatory action delivered through systems can help individuals and communities take action in different contexts, and in anticipation of different types of shocks.

Of critical importance will be the development of further research on good practices regarding targeting and recipient identification and selection, and how these features and capacities within social protection systems can be mobilized and adapted for disaster risk management purposes. Similarly, other unanswered questions include what data, indicators, social registry design features and other information systems and databases can be leveraged to this end in different contexts? What additional data points are needed to support the targeting of anticipatory actions as well as enable broader disaster risk management decision-making processes? Key knowledge gaps regarding delivery mechanisms also exist, in terms of what functionalities and design features of social protection payment and disbursement features are best suited to enable timely and cost-effective anticipatory actions. These are all important operational questions that could have profound implications on the scale, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and timeliness of anticipatory assistance, when delivered through social protection systems.

Finally, key questions also remain on how to best manage the change process required for the adoption and institutionalization of linkages between social protection and anticipatory action by officials and key decision-makers across country contexts and at various levels of government. What works and what does not with regard to institutionalizing this approach? How can the current model used by anticipatory action stakeholders to encourage the adoption of the approach shift from hazard-specific pilots – primarily delivered and financed by non-governmental partners – to sustainable ownership, financing and integration of anticipatory action by relevant disaster risk management and social protection ministries and departments?

4.7 CONCLUSION

This scoping paper discusses conceptual and operational linkages between social protection systems and anticipatory action approaches. The paper draws on existing literature, key informant interviews and experiences from four case studies in Dominica, Guatemala, Nepal and the Philippines. As a result, it shows that countries are increasingly exploring how to link social protection and anticipatory action in practice, often building upon learnings from country experiences in delivering shock-responsive social protection interventions, especially in the wake of the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. While there is still limited evidence and available case studies on this topic where social protection systems – or components of their delivery chains – have been leveraged ahead of a covariate shock to facilitate the delivery of anticipatory actions, there are emerging examples of the convergence of these two concepts. The case studies presented in the Annex include interventions that utilized social protection communication systems to deliver targeted early warnings ahead of flooding, ad hoc mobilization of labour and equipment from a regular cash-for-work programme to implement flood risk mitigation measures, as in the case of Nepal. While another of the promising examples included a simulation exercise implementing cash-for-work for early harvesting of fishponds in advance of a predicted tropical cyclone in the Philippines. Similarly, other examples from Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Malawi touched on within this paper, which included the development of interventions to design and deliver cash and other forms of assistance in anticipation of droughts, highlight the steady progress being made across contexts on this topic, including fragile settings characterized by chronic and overlapping crises.

Nevertheless, what may be feasible, desirable, cost-effective and scalable in terms of linking social protection and anticipatory action in a given situation, will depend on a multitude of contextual and operational factors. Along with the discussions included within the preceding chapters of this scoping paper – in particular Chapter 2 – the following non-exhaustive list of fundamental key factors to consider, and corresponding questions they give rise to, may be a useful starting point for actors embarking on efforts to explore these linkages.

- **The objectives of linking social protection and anticipatory action** – Which anticipatory action assistance modalities are deemed most appropriate given the observed hazards in a country? Can social protection systems and their delivery chains facilitate their delivery to populations in a more efficient, timely and cost-effective manner? What is the intervention trying to achieve, and how will linking the two concepts complement and not hinder their respective objectives? Is anticipatory action delivered through social protection systems cost-effective, compared to other ways of protecting people and mitigating the impacts of an imminent shock? What are the opportunity costs and potential benefits of implementing anticipatory action through a social protection system? Would channelling anticipatory action through the social protection system be a better option than using a separate system, in terms of timeliness, inclusivity and efficiency?

- **The appropriateness of the social protection system as the chosen delivery modality for delivering anticipatory action assistance** – A key question that actors must consider is whether the delivery of anticipatory actions through, or linked with, the social protection system is the right instrument. Does utilization of the system in this way provide, in effect, tangible and measurable advantages that outweigh observable negatives? Linking social protection and anticipatory action will not be appropriate in every context and shock situation, and indeed, the institutionalization of the approach will require significant investment from all involved stakeholders. This latter point should not be underestimated, and actors should not assume that anticipatory assistance delivered through a social protection system is the preferred, "gold standard" modality in all situations.

- **The existing institutional capacities within the social protection system** – Given the nature of the shock and the state of the social protection system, is channelling anticipatory action through the system feasible? What modality of support can be channelled through the system? How does the current social protection system need to change to support disaster risk management, including anticipatory action objectives? Are these changes feasible without overburdening the existing system and without compromising its core functions? What can realistically be achieved in the short-, medium- and long-term? Beyond the delivery of anticipatory assistance, can the institutional capacities of the social protection system be enhanced through the use of forecast data, trigger mechanisms, contingency planning and other anticipatory approaches?

- **The existing technical capacities for anticipatory action** – How reliable are the forecasts, their triggers and the models' lead times? What forecasting data is available, in which geographical areas and for what hazards? For which types of shocks is anticipatory action feasible? What assistance modalities are feasible, most appropriate and/or preferred by the population, officials and other stakeholders? What types of linkages are most relevant and feasible to pursue, given the strength of the social protection and disaster risk management systems, and the risk environment?

- **The enabling environment, in terms of the political economy, to link social protection and anticipatory action** – Is there a political commitment to institutionalize the concepts of shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action or, at the very least, recognize their potential contributions to a comprehensive disaster risk management approach? Is there a willingness by key actors and decision-makers to make the necessary changes to ensure that social protection systems and anticipatory action approaches can be linked in practice? Are appropriate governance and coordination mechanisms in place to advance and sustain this agenda?

- **The availability of financial resources** – Are financial sources and the mechanisms for their mobilization sufficient and appropriate to enable the timely delivery of anticipatory actions linked with social protection systems? What financing is available and within which budgets (i.e., social protection contingency budgets, disaster risk management funds, or other risk transfer products)? Who has access to the funds and how are they released? What can the funds be used for (i.e., cash versus in-kind transfers)? When can they be released (i.e., in anticipation on a forecast versus response) and how speedily can the assistance be made available to recipients?

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ANNEX – CASE STUDIES

In order to complement the conceptual discussions contained within this scoping paper and to ensure that readers are introduced to practical examples of the entry points, opportunities and challenges of linking social protection and anticipatory action across contexts, four country case studies have been developed. Within each of the four countries presented, discussions, pilots, simulations and plans to scale the approach needed are currently ongoing, and therefore, they provide only a snapshot of the work of stakeholders involved in this area. Taking these points into account, this chapter includes four case studies from the following countries:

Dominica and Guatemala, where experiences with responses to tropical cyclones and the COVID-19 pandemic are reviewed with regards to the lessons they offer for potential future integration of anticipatory action within existing (shock-responsive) social protection programmes and systems.

Nepal and the Philippines, where despite both countries being at different stages of progress in terms of the inclusion of shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action provisions in relevant national policy frameworks, both contexts offer important insights on how social protection systems and their delivery chains are, or could be, leveraged to deliver anticipatory actions across a range of slow- and rapid-onset climate shocks.

DOMINICA CASE STUDY

Dominica is highly exposed to natural hazards, especially those stemming from hurricanes, landslides, floods, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and tsunamis (World Bank, 2021). Some of these risks will increase further as a result of climate change: high intensity Category 4 and 5 hurricanes are likely to increase by 25-30 percent (Artelia and CIMH, 2021). In combination with rising sea levels and a potential increase of rainfall rates during hurricane events by up to 30 percent, the potential for storm surge, coastal inundations and flash floods is also heightened (Artelia and CIMH, 2021).

In recent years, Tropical Storm Erica in 2015 and Hurricane Maria in 2017 had devastating impacts on people and the national economy. Hurricane Maria made landfall in Dominica as a Category 5 hurricane on 18 September 2017, causing damage and losses estimated at USD 1.3 billion (equivalent to 226 percent of the country's gross domestic product). About 15 percent of Dominica's housing stock was destroyed, and a further 75 percent at least partially damaged in some form. Transportation, water, sanitation and hygiene, health, energy and telecommunications infrastructure were extensively damaged, causing substantial disruption in the provision of services. Between 80 and 90 percent of environmental resources were significantly affected, causing particularly severe damage to forests (Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, 2017).

Following the devastating 2017 hurricane season, the Government of Dominica produced the National Resilience Development Strategy 2030 (Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, 2018) and the Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan 2020-2030 (Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, 2020). The former sets out social development, social protection and poverty reduction as key contributors to climate resilience, with social protection featuring as one of the seven development objectives of the National Resilience Development Strategy: "Provision of adequate and sustainable social protection systems with the ability to respond rapidly to the impact of shocks at the individual and household levels" (Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, 2018, p. 8). As such, the National Resilience Development Strategy provides a strong policy basis for shock-responsive social protection to assist the poorest and those most vulnerable to covariate shocks. It also lays out strategies to support the adaptability of existing social protection policies and programmes. On the social protection side, the Government is currently reviewing a Draft Social Protection Policy. This will be enabled by a Social Protection Strategy that elaborates priority actions in the context of national development objectives and includes an Action Plan as well as a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework that focuses on outputs identified in the Strategy. It also aims to support the strengthening of a legislative framework for social protection through the preparation of a National Social Protection Act.

Dominica's main social protection programme is the Public Assistance Programme (PAP), which is an unconditional cash transfer programme targeting the extreme poor. As of 2017, just over 2 000 households (of a population of 71 460 people) received regular transfers ranging between XCD 150 (USD 55) and XCD 375 (USD 138) a month through the PAP, which is implemented by the Social Welfare Division (SWD) (World Bank, 2017; cited in Beazley, 2018).

DOMINICA:
BUILDING ON EXPERIENCES WITH LARGE-SCALE HURRICANE MARIA AND COVID-19 RESPONSES THROUGH SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

RISK CONTEXT

Tropical storms and hurricanes, 2000-2021

Total number of people affected: **107 757**

Total Damages, Adjusted ('000 USD): **2 187 658**

SHOCK RESPONSE

Components of the Public Assistance Programme (PAP) leveraged by the Government of Dominica, with support from UNICEF and WFP, in response to Hurricane Maria (unconditional cash transfers):

- PAP beneficiary registry for vertical expansion
- PAP payment systems to implement transfers
- Other PAP administrative systems to manage emergency cash transfer programme

RECIPIENTS

25 000

people reached

3 monthly cash transfers

of USD 90 per household plus USD 50 per child (up to three children)

SHOCK

Hurricane Maria making landfall in Dominica on 18 September 2017

Sources:
Beazley, R., Ciardi, F. and Bailey, S. (2020) Shock-responsive social protection in the Caribbean. Synthesis report. Marine Gardens and Oxford: World Food Programme. Caribbean Office for Emergency Preparedness and Response and Oxford Policy Management; Key informant interviews; EM-DAT, CRED / UCLouvain, Brussels, Belgium: emdat.be

SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION INTERVENTIONS IN DOMINICA

In response to Hurricane Maria in 2017, the Government of Dominica expanded the National Employment Programme, and implemented a horizontal and vertical expansion of the Public Assistance Programme to deliver emergency cash transfers (Beazley, 2018).

The expansion of the PAP allowed for the provision of three-monthly payments of USD 90 per household, with additional payments of USD 50 per child for up to three children, benefiting close to 25 000 people for a total of 7 500 households. For the existing PAP beneficiaries, the emergency cash transfer constituted a top-up to the programme's regular assistance (Beazley, Ciardi and Bailey, 2020; Faisal, n.d.; see Avilar, 2018; and Beazley, 2018 for more detailed studies of this particular intervention).

Building on this experience, the Public Assistance Programme was scaled up again in 2020, as part of the Government of Dominica's broader social protection response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Beazley, Ciardi and Bailey, 2020). Table 2 provides an overview of the various shock-responsive social assistance measures implemented in 2020.

To further institutionalize shock-responsive social protection and integrate it within existing approaches for financing disaster risk management in the country, the Government of Dominica has been working with WFP and the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF SPC) on a pilot programme. This links CCRIF SPC parametric insurance pay-outs to the national social protection system. As part of the pilot, WFP is providing a USD 300 000 premium top-up towards Dominica's tropical cyclone coverage for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 insurance policy years. In case the policy triggers, a share of the pay-outs that the Government of Dominica receives (equivalent to the share of the additional premium contribution) is disbursed through social protection programmes to provide assistance to those affected by the cyclone (Artemis, 2021; WFP, 2019). This premium support is complemented by efforts to strengthen the Dominican social protection system, as well as its capacity to ensure business continuity, and to scale up in response to shocks (WFP, 2019).

Neither this pilot, nor the previous shock-responsive social protection interventions implemented to address the impacts of Hurricane Maria and the COVID-19 pandemic, delivered social assistance in advance of a shock. However, one of the recommendations from the process review of the expansion of the Public Assistance Programme in 2017 was to develop protocols and contingency plans "for vertical and horizontal expansions that can be triggered and integrated with an early warning system and define pre-registration mechanisms for high-risk vulnerable populations and geographic areas" (Avilar, 2018, p. 32).

While triggering the expansion of social protection programmes on the basis of early warning systems is not yet a reality in Dominica, components of the system, such as information management, targeting or delivery mechanisms, are increasingly being explored as tools to deliver assistance. These are important milestones not only for shock response, but also for delivering assistance in anticipation of impending, forecasted shocks.

TABLE A1: SOCIAL PROTECTION RESPONSES TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN DOMINICA

RESPONSE MEASURE	TYPE OF RESPONSE	NEW OR EXISTING PROGRAMME
Self-employed grant offering monthly financial assistance for a period of three months to self-employed individuals with dependents under the age of 18 (XCD 600 corresponding to about USD 222 monthly) and individuals with no dependents under the age of 18 (XCD 400, or USD 148, monthly) whose businesses were suspended as a result of the pandemic, under the condition that the individual was registered with Dominica Social Security before, or at the time, the application was submitted.	Income support to self-employed	New programme
Unemployment grant providing income support in the amount of XCD 600 and XCD 400 per month to individuals with dependents under the age of 18 and individuals with no dependents under the age of 18, respectively, who had either been laid off or whose employment had been terminated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic or government containment measures, and whose total monthly employment income did not exceed XCD 4 000 (equivalent to USD 1 480).	Unemployment benefit	New programme
Support to existing beneficiaries of the Public Assistance Programme through two top-ups of XCD 225 (about USD 83) each, over the course of two months, for a total value of XCD 450 (just over USD 166).	Additional / increased cash transfers to social assistance beneficiaries (vertical expansion)	Existing programme
Temporary expansion of the PAP to new beneficiaries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic who received two payments of XCD 450 each, over the course of two months.	Expansion of social assistance programme to new beneficiaries (horizontal expansion)	New programme
Cash grants valued at XCD 3.5 million (about USD 1.3 million), disbursed to 2 500 crop farmers (XCD 700 for small farmers, XCD 1 400 to medium farmers and XCD 2 800 for large farmers).	Cash transfers	New programme
Financial assistance to small contractors and merchants.	Cash transfers	New programme

Source: Beazley, R., Ciardi, F. and Bailey, S., 2020. *Shock-responsive social protection in the Caribbean. Synthesis report*. Marine Gardens, Barbados and Oxford, UK, World Food Programme, Caribbean Office for Emergency Preparedness and Response, and Oxford Policy Management. **https://www.wfp.org/publications/research-programme-shock-responsive-social-protection-caribbean**, and Ministry of Blue and Green Economy, Agriculture and National Food Security. (n.d.) The CERC Project. In: *Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica*. Roseau, Dominica. Cited October 2022. **http://piu.agriculture.gov.dm/the-cerc-project**

Furthermore, an ongoing project under the umbrella of the French Development Agency's Adaptation Facility and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is exploring the provision of social assistance, such as cash or vouchers, as a possible anticipatory action within a scoping and feasibility study of a regional forecast-based financing mechanism for hurricanes in the Eastern Caribbean (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2021; Wilkinson *et al.*, 2022). On the basis of this evolution, and the past shock-responsive social protection interventions, the following section discusses lessons learned and ongoing initiatives for potentially linking anticipatory action with social protection in Dominica.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM DOMINICA'S SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION INTERVENTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INCORPORATING ANTICIPATORY ACTION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES[13]

Rationale for linking social protection and anticipatory action in Dominica

Leveraging the national social protection system to provide assistance to vulnerable populations affected by Hurricane Maria in 2017 and by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and to mitigate their socioeconomic impacts, was part of the Government of Dominica's wider response to both shocks (see also Table 2; Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, n.d.).

In the response to Hurricane Maria, delivery of emergency assistance through the Public Assistance Programme's components – e.g. using the programme's administrative system – was deemed most appropriate by the Government of Dominica and its partners during initial feasibility discussions in October and November 2017 (Faisal, n.d.). This is because the PAP was already relatively flexible, could be more easily expanded to cover additional people not routinely covered by the scheme. Furthermore, it could facilitate adjustments in transfer value and frequency more than other existing programmes, given its coverage and the fact that it was an already operational, unconditional cash transfer programme (Beazley, 2018; Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, 2017; Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, WFP and UNICEF, 2018).

In addition to social assistance delivered in response to major shocks, a number of potential anticipatory actions could help reduce disaster impacts if implemented ahead of an imminent hurricane event, including through the existing national social protection system. Such potential anticipatory actions were identified in consultation with key disaster risk management stakeholders in Dominica as part of an ongoing hurricane forecast-based financing feasibility study. Potential priority actions include the provision of cash transfers or vouchers to people who are at risk of being impacted and face liquidity constraints in preparing for imminent hurricane impact, through the government's social protection programmes. During the consultations, stakeholders emphasized that "access to resources to prepare, so people can for example get a sheet of plywood, and don't have to worry about money in their pockets, would make a huge difference" (Wilkinson *et al*., 2022, p. 73). Key considerations also relate to other important items that need to be purchased in advance of a hurricane, whether one is going to a shelter or not, including non-perishable foods, medicines and other supplies – particularly in communities that tend to become cut off, often for several weeks. These items may also be delivered through the social protection system by, for instance, piggybacking delivery systems for in-kind transfers, such as networks of stores or supermarkets.

Timing of the response and potential time window for anticipatory action

While scaling up the routine Public Assistance Programme meant that the delivery of the emergency cash transfers did not have to start from scratch, the experience with Hurricane Maria also highlighted the fact that the system was not ready at the time to roll out a response immediately (Faisal, n.d.). Preparing a proposal for the emergency cash transfer intervention, submitting it and having it approved by the Cabinet took until December 2017 (Faisal, n.d.).

In 2017, relying on the PAP administrative system allowed the Government of Dominica and its partners to provide existing beneficiaries with additional payments in a relatively smooth manner after the intervention

[13] Unless otherwise specified, based on Avilar (2018), Beazley (2018), Wilkinson *et al*. (2022) and key informant interviews.

had been approved. In part, this was because they could leverage the existing beneficiary registry, even though this still required verification and digitization at the time, which contributed to delays (Faisal, n.d.). The first top-ups were received by PAP beneficiaries between December 2017 and January 2018, three months after the hurricane had made landfall in the country (Beazley, 2018; Faisal, n.d.). Meanwhile, the horizontal expansion required additional post-disaster targeting to identify those households most affected by the hurricane. This had not been done before through the national social protection system and it therefore resulted in further delays. The first horizontal expansion of the programme was carried out in January 2018 for some recipients – followed by monthly payments in February and March 2018 – while a second group of people received all payments at once in March 2018, a full six months after hurricane Maria had made landfall.

A review of the intervention concluded that these delays resulted primarily from a "lack of ex-ante preparedness" (Beazley, 2018, p. 21). This underscores the importance of strengthening preparedness in social protection systems not only for the timely delivery of shock-responsive social protection, but even more so to be able to act in anticipation of a shock, given the short time window from when a forecast is issued to the occurrence of the event.

Anticipatory actions could be taken as early as five to seven days ahead of a hurricane making landfall; however, at that point in time forecast accuracy (windspeed and trajectory) is still relatively low. Average track record halves between the five-day and three-day forecast, and again between the three-day and two-day forecast. When a hurricane watch is issued by the national meteorological service (48 hours before impact), there is only a 24-hour window that allows people to prepare before the official hurricane warning comes about, which is when all businesses, government and services shut down (Wilkinson *et al*., 2022).

Whether these lead times enable the delivery of social assistance to beneficiaries before a hurricane makes landfall, and whether the preparedness measures needed to enable this are sufficient, would have to be assessed. Nonetheless, even if beneficiaries cannot be directly reached within this window, embedding anticipation more deeply within shock-responsive social protection in Dominica (e.g. using forecasts to set in motion readiness actions when a shock is likely) still carries importance to support the system's capacity to respond more quickly.

Targeting of assistance

Dominica has over a decade of experience with vertical expansions from the responses to the financial crisis in 2008, to Hurricane Maria in 2017 and, more recently, to the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, as discussed above, registries for previous vertical expansions were not immediately functional as registration is paper-based in the PAP (Beazley**,** Ciardi and Bailey, 2020; Faisal, n.d.). This resulted in delayed assistance especially for the horizontal expansion in 2017, when new beneficiaries did not receive the instalment until three to six months after the hurricane struck. At the local level, beneficiary selection committees conducted vulnerability and needs assessments, and pre-selected beneficiaries. The assessments collected information on household demographics, socioeconomic characteristics, and extent of damage. After validation, final beneficiary lists were approved by the Ministry of Social Services, Family and Gender Affairs (Beazley, 2018).

In 2022, a Public Assistance Programme digital registration pilot was conducted. The aim of the pilot was to test the registration form in the field to provide feedback to the Social Welfare Department on the kind of digital data that could be gathered to enable their targeting process. While digital registration is in its early

stages in Dominica, given the requirements for speed in the short lead time ahead of a hurricane, digital registration could be a major enabler for delivering anticipatory action through the social protection system going forward.

Miscommunication and misunderstandings around targeting created further issues in the Hurricane Maria response. Many people thought that by filling out the vulnerability needs assessment they would automatically qualify to receive cash, and this provided one of the main lessons learned from the experience. It became clear that communication needs to be set up well and from the start, to manage expectations and reduce the chance of misinformation spreading early on (Faisal, n.d.).

The Dominica Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan 2020-2030 recognizes these challenges and envisages improvements in this area through a comprehensive registry, which will include data on vulnerable populations who would qualify for social assistance, in order to enhance targeting and reduce exclusion and inclusion errors (Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, 2020).

Interoperability of information systems across sectors

A major stumbling block with regards to the potential for anticipatory action to help protect agricultural livelihoods in Dominica is that there is currently very limited integration of data across sectors that would enable livelihood-specific targeting in advance of a shock. For instance, registries of farmers and fishers that the Ministry of Agriculture holds are not necessarily available to social protection actors, so assessing their vulnerability or understanding potential anticipatory actions that would support them in the run-up to a shock is difficult.

The emergency cash grant support provided to individual farmers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic did not rely on the national social protection registries for targeting. Instead, it relied on applications filled in and submitted by farmers. These applications were then validated against land registration records or other proof of farming activities (listed by reputable organizations, e.g., Ministry of Agriculture units, the Dominica Export Import Agency, or valid produce seller licence) (Ministry of Blue and Green Economy, Agriculture and National Food Security, n.d.).

Agriculture makes up a substantial share of the livelihoods of about 40 percent of Dominica's population. It is therefore likely that some farmers and fisherfolk are included in social protection beneficiary registries if they fulfil the targeting criteria of any of the social protection programmes. However, it is not currently possible to understand the overall level of inclusion of farmers and fisherfolk in social protection, or to target them specifically. This prevents the delivery of anticipatory actions through the national social protection system that are aimed precisely at people engaged in agriculture, livestock rearing or fishing.

The Government of Dominica is currently working on building an information management system for the Public Assistance Programme, which would not only serve as the main information system for the programme, but also it would serve other social protection programmes. To facilitate this interoperability, a multi-stakeholder steering committee was formed that includes personnel from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Youth, Welfare Division and Information and Communications Technology Unit, among others.

Payment systems

The provision of emergency cash transfers in response to Hurricane Maria in 2017 leveraged the Public Assistance Programme's payment delivery system, which makes transfers to the accounts of village councils, which then pass on the transfers to the recipients through cash in envelope. From the post-response reviews, it is unclear how long exactly this step in the delivery process took and, consequently, what this means in terms of the potential of the payment systems to enable transfers to routine and/or new beneficiaries within short time windows. In cases where village councils covered a large number of beneficiaries, capacity to disburse the additional load of payments quickly proved to be a limiting factor (Faisal, n.d.) and would likely present a major bottleneck in attempts to deliver assistance to vulnerable populations in advance of a hurricane. In the social protection response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was observed that cash transfers could be delivered by the Ministry of Youth through credit unions and banks to village councils and end beneficiaries in as few as four to five business days, and up to as many as 24 business days. While this intervention proved to be significantly timelier than the one implemented in response to Hurricane Maria, the implementation time frame was still beyond the typical lead time of a hurricane forecast in Dominica.

Work is ongoing to increase digitization and automation of the payment process in order to accelerate the delivery of cash transfers. More recently, trials with different types of electronic payment systems (e-wallets) have been undertaken. However, their usage among social protection beneficiaries has been limited, so, while electronic payment systems could help make transfers quicker and more efficient overall, and thus possibly a more suitable process for anticipatory action, it is important to consider those who may be left behind by such an approach. It is also crucial to weigh up benefits and costs of such an electronic payment system. For instance, in 2018, this was not considered a "financially attractive" investment because of the related operational costs (Beazley, 2018,).

Human resource capacity and coordination

Small Island Developing States, such as Dominica, tend to struggle with the lack of human capacity to implement disaster risk management interventions. For instance, the standard PAP monitoring mechanism was not used to monitor the roll-out of the emergency cash transfers implemented in response to Hurricane Maria, because of the overload of the system and its key actors, such as social welfare officers, who in many cases were themselves affected by the emergency, and village council clerks, who were focusing on managing the payments. For these reasons, WFP supported post-distribution monitoring efforts (Faisal, n.d.).

Human resource capacity has also presented a challenge for Dominica's Office of Disaster Management (ODM), which has a critical role to play in shock-responsive social protection generally. Given its mandate for coordinating disaster management activities, it would be a key stakeholder in any effort to link anticipatory action to social protection (Beazley, 2018).

The Dominican National Disaster Plan (updated in 2001 and 2009) outlines the responsibilities of different Government departments, agencies and task forces throughout different stages of disaster risk management, including in the alert stage when a shock is imminent (Commonwealth of Dominica, 2001; ODM, 2014). However, the plan is outdated and precedes recent developments in social protection in the country. This means that the specific role of social protection actors and the overall system in the run-up to a covariate shock is not currently well defined within disaster risk management plans and operational processes.

Addressing gaps in an understanding of disaster risk finance generally, and how the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) works, more specifically, is a focus of ongoing capacity strengthening efforts under the CCRIF's social protection pilot in Dominica. With the Ministry of Finance being the CCRIF's focal point, strengthening knowledge of disaster risk finance also in social protection ministries and the disaster risk management agency is important, so that they can have a seat at the table with the Ministry of Finance to discuss the implementation issues they face and how best to address them. For instance, processes between CCRIF and the Ministry of Finance to disburse pay-outs are well established, but how these are then disbursed to the ministry responsible for rolling out the social protection response, and to the final beneficiaries, is still being worked out across all the actors involved. There are currently no emergency funds, budget contingencies, or other dedicated financial instruments, in place in Dominica that are designed to release money to the Government to implement anticipatory action ahead of a hurricane or other major covariate shocks (Wilkinson *et al*., 2021).

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR LINKING ANTICIPATORY ACTION WITH SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS GOING FORWARD

In Dominica, stakeholders identified serious challenges in terms of capacity at both levels of individuals and of Government agencies to respond to hurricanes, which have important, negative secondary impacts that could be mitigated by anticipatory action (Wilkinson *et al*., 2022).

The Government of Dominica has a relatively strong basis of experience with shock-responsive social protection to build upon. Shock-responsive features are becoming increasingly embedded and institutionalized within the national social protection system across its policy, programme design and programme implementation levels. These include many of the components that are critical to potentially deliver anticipatory action through social protection in the future, including efforts towards establishing a social registry. Based on the lessons learned from Hurricane Maria, a PAP operational manual with a dedicated chapter on emergency preparedness was developed (Faisal, n.d.). This provides a concrete entry point for the integration of anticipatory action into social protection plans and procedures.

At the same time, the Government of Dominica already has disaster risk management plans in place. The ODM and other Government agencies are already taking anticipatory actions on the basis of early warnings in line with their disaster plans. However, these do not currently include the provision of social assistance in anticipation of an imminent shock. In combination with the government's clear commitment to resilience building, there is a solid political foundation on which to support integration of anticipatory action with social protection in Dominica.

Given the current state of shock-responsive social protection in Dominica, the major questions regarding the practical feasibility of delivering anticipatory action in the form of assistance through the national social protection system revolve around timeliness. The fundamental question is whether or not it is possible to deliver assistance early enough in advance of a hurricane to support people in mitigating the immediate impacts of the event.

Limited human capacity and challenges around collaboration could present further obstacles in linking anticipatory action with social protection going forward. Regional organizations such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, CCRIF SPC and the OECS, which already provide disaster risk management, including preparedness, support to their member countries, and the Caribbean Community, which is working with countries to strengthen regional coherence and integration of social protection, could all have critical roles to play in supporting Dominica and other countries in the Caribbean in this regard.

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GUATEMALA CASE STUDY

Guatemala figures among the countries with the highest disaster risk worldwide. It is exposed to a range of natural hazards, including volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, floods, droughts, tropical storms, hurricanes, extreme temperatures and forest fires (British Geological Survey, 2018). Extreme rainfall events, floods, heatwaves and droughts are projected to become more frequent and more intense in Guatemala in the future as a result of climate change, with average temperatures expected to rise between 2.5 and 4 degrees Celsius by 2050 (USAID, 2017). Vulnerability to the impacts of such shocks is driven by high rates of chronic child malnutrition – at close to 50 precent and the highest in Latin America as of 2015 – and rural poverty (FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2015).

The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season – the most active in history, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean – saw two major hurricanes sweep through Guatemala within the span of only two weeks, between 3 and 17 November. Hurricanes Eta and Iota brought heavy rains to Guatemala, causing flooding, landslides and mudflows in 16 of the country's 22 departments (IFRC, 2022a).

Rural areas, with high levels of extreme poverty and large indigenous communities, were those most affected. Depending on the department, floods were either caused by large rivers and their tributaries overflowing or resulted from a combination of surface and underground runoffs, reaching a height of up to 2.5 metres in flood water in some places. The floods destroyed or damaged homes, crops and livestock and road networks as well as water, health and education infrastructure (IFRC, 2022b). The total damage, loss and other costs from both events were estimated at around six billion quetzals, or about USD 780 million. In the agriculture sector, estimated losses and damages amounted to over 1.2 billion quetzals, affecting 204 500 families (Bello and Peralta, 2021).

Guatemala's experience with social protection generally, and shock-responsive social protection in particular, is relatively recent. In 2001/02 the Social Development Law and the Social Development and Population Policy (*Ley de Desarrollo Social* and *Política de Desarrollo Social y Población*) were issued, followed by the creation of the first generation of social protection programmes in 2008. The Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) was created in 2012 as the governing actor responsible for social policy, and for the institutionalization of social protection programmes. MIDES has been taking increasing leadership on the social protection policy, including efforts to improve targeting systems and plans to consolidate information from across the programmes into a single registry (Solórzano, 2017).

Since 2019, several anticipatory action projects have been implemented in Guatemala under initiatives promoted by the Guatemalan Red Cross Society, FAO and WFP, summarized in Box 2. According to the available information, none of these initiatives has leveraged any existing national social protection programme, though some of them have built on instruments that could be included in a social protection portfolio, such as a microinsurance pilot led by WFP; or are targeting – in part – on the basis of poverty or other vulnerability indicators that align with those used by social protection schemes (e.g. the FAO project). These initiatives are being implemented alongside emergency preparedness plans and interventions, which already exist at different levels of government.

GUATEMALA

BUILDING ON EXPERIENCES WITH LARGE-SCALE COVID-19 AND HURRICANE ETA & IOTA RESPONSES THROUGH SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

RISK CONTEXT

Natural-hazard related disasters 2000–2021

	Total number of people affected	Total damages Adjusted ('000 USD)
Drought	5 680 081	184 088
Earthquake	1 421 250	250 248
Extreme temperature	12 634	unrecorded
Flood	1 079 346	74 583
Landslide	55 083	627 048
Mass movement (dry)	3 028	unrecorded
Storm	3 920 300	2 583 449
Volcanic activity	1 727 014	unrecorded

ANTICIPATORY ACTION SIMULATION

New *Bono Familia* programme established by the Government of Guatemala in response to COVID-19 pandemic (unconditional cash transfer scheme) and new cash-for work programme set up by the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA), with support and cash+ complements from FAQ, in response to Hurricanes Eta and Iota. Components of these programmes that could be leveraged for future anticipatory action through the social protection system:

- Bono Familia IT systems for efficient management
- Both beneficiary registries to support development of a social registry
- Payment systems, enabling quick access to cash through tokens and different access points

SHOCK

First cases of COVID-19 in Hurricanes Eta and Iota bringing heavy rains, which caused flooding, landslides and mudflows in November 2020

RECIPIENTS

2.7m COVID-19 response

3 000 households in first stage and

35 000 households in second stage of Hurricane Eta & Iota response

GTQ 1 000 (USD 130)

Three cash transfers for COVID-19 response

A one-off payment in exchange for recovery and rehabilitation work of **GTQ 1 000** for Hurricane Eta & Iota response

Sources:
UNICEF (2021) Guatemala. Being prepared and acting fast: A series of case studies on UNICEF's role in the delivery of effective social protection responses to COVID-19. New York: UNICEF; Key informant interviews; EM-DAT, CRED / UCLouvain, Brussels, Belgium: www.emdat.be

SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION INTERVENTIONS TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND HURRICANES ETA AND IOTA IN GUATEMALA

For the first time, in 2020, the Government of Guatemala implemented a large-scale response to a major covariate shock through its social protection system. The different programmes that were included in the response are summarized in Figure 7.

One of the largest programmes implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was the Bono Familia, reaching 2.7 million recipients and their families with three cash instalments of GTQ 1 000 (about USD 130) each. The Bono Familia was designed as an unconditional emergency cash transfer programme to support the segment of the population that was economically most affected by emergency measures put in place to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It targeted households based on their energy consumption as of February 2020: those that did not exceed 200 kilowatts on their monthly bill were eligible for assistance. Registration codes needed by eligible households to register in the programme were sent to them along with their monthly bills. Households without any access to electricity could register directly for the programme and were targeted through a process that involved community ranking and geographic prioritization. People were targeted for participation in the programme on the basis of the following criteria: living in poverty; single-parent households; older adults; persons with disabilities, chronic and degenerative illnesses; and families with malnourished children (excluding public servants, and those already receiving benefits and pensions through other social protection programmes).

Figure 8 shows the different channels used to enrol recipients in the Bono Familia programme, and the number of households reached through each one of them.

Further, social assistance was provided by the Government of Guatemala later in the year following Hurricanes Eta and Iota, which caused widespread flooding in November. Two of the most affected departments in the northern part of the country – Alta Verapaz and Izabal – received particularly large volumes of rainfall, and experienced flooding from large rivers that impacted agricultural livelihoods in both departments.

In the two departments, the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture worked with a range of partners to implement a cash-for-work response, where the Government provided a stipend of GTQ 1 000 (equivalent to about USD 130) to 3 000 affected households in exchange for recovery and rehabilitation work, that encompassed soil conservation, animal recovery and replanting of trees on riverbanks. In the two municipalities of these departments where FAO already had an operational technical assistance project, the stipends were complemented with agricultural inputs, technical assistance and training according to the cash plus approach to support households with the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices. People were enrolled in the programme through several steps outlined below:

- Once the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) activated the emergency protocol, extension workers visited the farmers to verify the type and extent of damages they had suffered. They also collected information related to the farmers' names, personal identification document numbers, and type of crop and type of damage.

FIGURE A1: SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN GUATEMALA

Source: Romero Segura, R. 2020. *Transformando el COVID-19 en oportunidad: ¿Cuál es el futuro de la protección social?* e-Conferencia Global, 5, 6 y 8 de octubre de 2020. Guatemala City, Ministry of Social Development, Government of Guatemala. Presentation. **https://socialprotection.org/es/transformando-la-crisis-del-covid-19-en-oportunidad-cual-es-el-futuro-de-la-proteccion-social**

FIGURE A2: BONO FAMILIA ENROLMENT CHANNELS

Source: UNICEF. 2021. *Guatemala. Being prepared and acting fast: A series of case studies on UNICEF's role in the delivery of effective social protection responses to COVID-19*. New York, USA, UNICEF Social Policy and Social protection Programme Group. **https://unicef.org/media/11071/file/Guatemala-Case%20Study-Being-Prepared-Acting-First-2021.pdf**

- MAGA sent the list to the National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (CONRED) for validation, and this was then sent to the Emergency Operating Committee at the departmental and municipal levels for the same purpose, and to potentially include other affected farmers.

- CONRED officially returned the list to MAGA to enable the delivery of transfers.

On the basis of this experience, the Government of Guatemala decided to extend the programme to a second phase reaching 35 000 households across four departments to address the impacts of Hurricanes Eta and Iota, and to an additional district with high food insecurity rates. Overall, the Government allocated GTQ 35 million (about USD 4.55 million) to the intervention, reaching around 33 000 households (of the initial target of 35 000). An evaluation is currently ongoing to assess the overall impacts of the intervention; and a third implementation stage was underway at the time of writing, where the Government was using the same processes as in the previous phases to extend a cash-for-work stipend of GTQ 1 000 to additional 180 000 farmers to support agricultural input purchases, such as fertilizers. The rationale behind the roll-out of this third phase is to anticipate and mitigate the potential shocks of the conflict in Ukraine on the price of agricultural inputs and fertilizer in Guatemala.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND HURRICANES RESPONSES FOR THE POTENTIAL TO LINK ANTICIPATORY ACTION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION IN GUATEMALA[14]

Legal and policy frameworks and political support

A strong legal framework and political leadership were critical for the implementation of a timely social protection response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Guatemala. This included high-level political support and close follow-up by the presidency during the design and implementation of the Bono Familia programme.

In early 2020, when the impacts of the pandemic were already becoming evident in other parts of the world, but before the first officially recorded COVID-19 outbreak in Guatemala, the Government defined a vision for how it wanted to respond to its socioeconomic impacts, and which groups to target through the Bono Familia response. In expectation of large-scale economic impacts, the emphasis was on providing a financial stimulus to households and, through them, to the economy.

The Government of Guatemala set up a dedicated Bono Familia Fund on 8 April 2020 to facilitate funding and speed up the provision of payments. It also included in the legislation a request to the National Banking Authority to put measures in place that would enable financial entities to open bank accounts quickly and accessibly for new beneficiaries, while respecting social distancing measures (UNICEF, 2021). This meant that the first transfers could be processed by around July/August 2020, about four to six months after the first case of COVID-19 had been recorded in Guatemala in March 2020.

While there was high-level political support for leveraging social protection in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, its leveraging for anticipatory action has not yet occurred, particularly in cases where covariate shocks were expected to have a lesser impact on the economy. However, there are some more sector-

[14] Information from references as indicated, as well as UNICEF (2021), Romero Segura (2020) and key informant interviews.

specific institutional interests in these linkages, such as in agriculture, where anticipatory action is an institutional priority for MAGA in relation to monitoring hazards and issuing alerts to protect and mitigate the impact of rains on agricultural livelihoods. In June 2022, for instance, MAGA issued an alert of potential flooding, which included advice to farmers to carry out soil conservation measures, apply preventive fungicides for the control of pests and diseases and carry out drainage maintenance, as well as to livestock owners to move animals to safe areas, and store fodder in dry and elevated places (MAGA, 2022).

Key informants were generally confident that the technical basis for shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action was improving, and that lessons learned from past interventions were informing the evolution of existing – and the design of new – social protection programmes. However, they were also concerned with how to generate and maintain political willingness and backing for anticipatory action, and its delivery through the social protection system, especially in the face of upcoming elections going forward.

Governance and coordination

Effective partnerships, and the operational presence of partners, played a key role in the speed and the success of the COVID-19 pandemic response. This included public-private partnerships established to set up information technology systems, payment and communication channels, and other components of the response. This was considered a unique alliance and a key factor in expanding cash transfers effectively by stakeholders supporting in the response (UNICEF, 2021). The various options for enrolment and accessing cash transfers that this enabled through ATMs, bank branches and points of consumption in grocery stores,

supermarkets, gas stations and pharmacies, meant that the Guatemalan Government was able to reach close to the number of households it had set out to assist with the Bono Familia programme.

Previous collaborations, such as that among the World Bank, UNICEF and other actors, who had already worked together on the development of an integrated management information system for social protection in Guatemala, could also be built upon. UNICEF concluded that this was particularly helpful to generate collective buy-in among government stakeholders in the feasibility of a comprehensive social protection response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in articulating how such a response would support the desired economic stimulus (UNICEF, 2021).

At the same time, a proliferation of projects on anticipatory action has meant that these are sometimes designed and implemented in isolation. This could be addressed through better coordination in preparedness, planning and budgeting across sectors, including social protection, disaster risk management and agriculture.

Benefits and services provided

The Bono Familia response was unconditional and exclusively cash-based. However, beyond the Government of Guatemala, other interventions were implemented to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, through non-governmental organizations. In some cases, these started out as cash interventions, but fluctuations in market prices, lack of availability of commodities and limited public transport meant that people had difficulties accessing payment points and stores. This led some response actors to adapt their interventions, turning from cash transfers to in-kind interventions (UNDRR *et al*., 2021).

As mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, in the Eta and Iota Hurricanes response, cash transfers were complemented by the provision of agricultural inputs, technical assistance and training, following the cash plus approach. As the cash transfers in this case were conditional to the performance of work, households participating in the programme supported recovery and rehabilitation activities. Technicians from the MAGA verified whether the activities that households committed to were carried out, and subsequently issued codes to households to enable them to collect the cash stipends. Preliminary evaluation findings indicate that the cash transfers were largely used to purchase agricultural inputs, as had been intended.

Registries and targeting

The Bono Familia programme did not use the existing targeting criteria under other social protection schemes, nor a social registry, since it was not operational at the time of the intervention. Instead, the targeting criteria were defined by the Government of Guatemala at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, as part of the legislation it put in place to enable the response (discussed in more detail under a preceding heading, "legal and policy frameworks and political support"). The more specific, two-pronged approach for identifying and enrolling people meeting the criteria, as described in the above sections, had several advantages. The first strand targeted beneficiaries on the basis of their electricity consumption, meaning that the Government had a readily available proxy for poverty-related targeting criteria and at the same time it was able to access existing databases of names and contact information for these people through the electricity companies. Recognizing that 12 percent of households did not have access to electricity in Guatemala and would therefore not be included in the electricity company databases, the complementary targeting process helped reduce exclusion errors.

Nonetheless, some challenges remained along this process. First, people eligible for the programme still had to be actively enrolled through one of the available channels (see Figure 8) before the beneficiary database was validated in June 2020. Furthermore, depending on the specific house ownership, rental and electricity bill arrangements, the person registered with an electricity company and receiving a verification code with their electricity bill was not necessarily the same as the person who was eligible for the programme, thus contributing to some exclusion and inclusion errors.

If the Bono Familia management information system established in this process ever feeds into a future Guatemalan social registry, this could substantially reduce exclusion and inclusion errors. Additionally, it could reduce the time required for targeting and enrolment in future interventions, thus facilitating quicker implementation of social assistance in response to, or even in anticipation of, covariate shocks.

For the purpose of anticipatory action, however, further validation, as well as some expansion of the available information to incorporate criteria relevant for targeting people on the basis of their vulnerability to different hazards (e.g. their geographical location or their type of livelihood) would be required (see discussion on targeting challenges in Chapters 2 and 3). This could include integration of data from other shock-responsive social protection interventions, as well as from risk analyses or situational monitoring systems, such as those maintained by the country's Agricultural Strategic Information Centre or the municipal Emergency Coordination Centres, to potentially inform, target and trigger sector-specific anticipatory actions. FAO is working with MAGA to consolidate information from multiple databases into a single registry of farmers, and subsequently to identify connection points with MIDES. In principle, these databases could be interoperable and matched using numbers from the personal identification documents of people already registered, but this exercise has not been carried out. The registry of farmers is expected to be presented by the Government of Guatemala in the first quarter of 2023.

Information systems

The Bono Familia programme was estimated to have reached 80 percent of the households in Guatemala, and as such, was "the largest social protection intervention in the country's history, in terms of both investment and coverage" (UNICEF, 2021, p. 24). This was also made possible because the programme's information technology platform had registered the vast majority of Guatemalan households. This platform, established with support from the World Bank and UNICEF, integrates information for the identification, registration and payment of beneficiaries, and was hence crucial to improving the efficiency of managerial and administrative processes in MIDES. As such, data and technology proved to be critical in enabling collaboration for shock-responsive social protection. The platform has also given a boost to previous efforts, and renewed intentions in MIDES to establish a social registry that consolidates targeting and administration of the Government of Guatemala's social protection programmes on the basis of the Bono Familia database (UNICEF, 2021; Romero Segura, 2020).

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR LINKING ANTICIPATORY ACTION WITH THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM GOING FORWARD

Both shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action have received increased attention in Guatemala in the past three to five years. The beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 was the first time that the Guatemalan government implemented a large-scale emergency response that was integrated within its social protection system. This renewed the momentum, and enhanced the technical groundwork, for further system strengthening to facilitate future shock-responsive social protection interventions.

The cash-for-work response to Hurricanes Eta and Iota, implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, indicated the potential for sector-specific, shock-responsive social protection interventions. Consequently, it has since been renewed and expanded in coverage for two additional phases.

While not yet linked to the national social protection system, work is ongoing to improve flood and seasonal drought forecasting, in part through the anticipatory action pilot projects led by non-state actors in Guatemala. Currently, a continuous crop monitoring system, a food security monitoring system and climate projections with a three-month lead time are operational in Guatemala. Furthermore, landslide monitoring and real-time flood monitoring are operational in major river basins in the country, generating early warnings at the community level. However, more detailed information is needed, e.g., about the capacities of available forecasts at different lead times, to further assess feasibility and value for money of delivering anticipatory action, and for linking it to the national social protection system. These forecasting modalities could open the door to a future delivery of anticipatory actions through the national social protection system, for instance, by building upon the shock-responsive social protection interventions implemented by MAGA. Building on the investments made to implement the Bono Familia programme could help to consolidate the information management infrastructure. Doing so would increase the efficiency and speed of shock-responsive social protection processes that would also allow delivery transfers to be made within the short windows of opportunity for taking anticipatory action in the run-up to a covariate shock.

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NEPAL CASE STUDY

Nepal is at high risk of floods, earthquakes, landslides, droughts and other hazards, because of its topographic and climatic situations (Government of Nepal, n.d.; CRED/UCLouvain, 2022).

In 2017, heavy rainfall between June and August caused flooding in 35 out of Nepal's 75 districts, mostly in the south of the country. The Government of Nepal estimated that 1.7 million people were affected, tens of thousands were displaced and 190 000 houses were destroyed or damaged (NPC, 2017; Willits-King and Ghimire, 2019). In April 2015, Nepal experienced its most devastating earthquake in recent history, which struck the country with a magnitude of 7.8 on the Richter scale. With its epicentre in Gorkha District, the earthquake killed over 9 000 people, destroying or badly damaging more than 800 000 homes and displacing approximately 2.8 million people (FAO, 2018). In response to the earthquake, one activity of the Government of Nepal and UNICEF involved the provision of cash assistance to affected people who were also regular beneficiaries of the Nepalese Government's social protection child nutrition grant. In phase one of the intervention, 434 690 social protection recipients were supported with cash top-ups, while in phase two, a further 300 000 families with children below the age of five were supported, focusing on expanding assistance to, at the time, non-child grant recipient in affected districts (Merttens *et al*., 2017). The example of these expansions of Nepal's main non-contributory social protection programme provided an important proof of concept: namely, that leveraging Nepal's social protection system to deliver assistance at-scale was key to support response and recovery efforts. Subsequent efforts in the country have seen political commitments to a universal child grant, which continues to be rolled out.

Currently, Nepal's largest non-contributory social assistance programme, by number of recipients, is the Social Security Allowance (SSA). The SSA spans across five cash transfer schemes covering specific groups of people: (i) a child grant for children under five (while originally focused solely on Dalit households, as stated above, efforts continue towards expanding the grant across all groups as a universal child grant); (ii) an allowance for widows and single women above sixty years of age; (iii) an allowance for people with disabilities holding A and B cards (A and B referring to assessed status of full or severe disability respectively); (iv) a senior citizens' allowance for those over seventy years of age, or over sixty years of age in the case of Dalit members; and (v) an endangered ethnicities allowance for highly marginalized indigenous ethnic groups. Under each scheme, beneficiaries receive transfers every four months, largely with the aim of addressing idiosyncratic risks. Some 3.06 million people received the SSA in 2021, which accounted for over ten percent of Nepal's population (UNICEF, 2023). Estimates of the exclusion errors vary by scheme and according to source (Holmes, Bhandary and Jha, 2019a). According to the available information, only 20 percent of children under five were receiving the child grant in 2015 (CBS, 2011; MoFALD data, 2015, cited in Hagen-Zanker, Mallett and Ghimire, 2015); and 58 percent of disability card holders did not receive the disability allowance in 2018 (Holmes *et al*., 2018).

There are a number of challenges that the SSA routinely faces. These include low coverage (with high levels of exclusion errors found particularly in the child grant and disability allowances), inadequate transfer values in the context of high levels of poverty among target groups and limited coordination with other sectors to address multidimensional needs (Holmes *et al*., 2019b).

NEPAL

LEVERAGING THE SOCIAL SECURITY ALLOWANCE (SSA) PROGRAMME FOR FLOOD ANTICIPATORY ACTION AND RESPONSE

RISK CONTEXT

Natural-hazard related disasters 2000–2021

	Total number of people affected	Total damages Adjusted ('000 USD)
Drought	503 000	unrecorded
Earthquake	5 810 099	5 915 176
Extreme temperature	25 200	148
Flood	4 235 687	1 085 648
Landslide	374 896	17 169
Storm	15 029	unrecorded

SHOCK

Unseasonal heavy rains starting on 17 October 2021 in the western part of Nepal, resulting in floods and landslides – Tikapur municipality & Janaki rural municipality

ANTICIPATORY ACTION SIMULATION

SSA programme components leveraged by Municipal Offices, Nepal Red Cross Society and Danish Red Cross for anticipatory action (mass messaging with early warnings) and response (cash transfers):

- Phone numbers of SSA recipients and municipality SMS systems for early warnings
- SSA beneficiary registry (in addition to assessments of flood impacts) for targeting cash transfers
- SSA bank accounts and standard distribution processes to transfer cash in response to flooding
- SSA grievance mechanism

RECIPIENTS

270

individuals and their households who had their homes damaged by floods and are recipients of the SSA in Tikapur and Janaki municipalities

NPR 13 500 (USD 112)

One-off cash transfer

Sources:
Nepal Red Cross Society and Danish Red Cross (2022) Flood response multi-purpose cash. delivered through leveraging Nepal's Social Security Allowance programme. A case study of shockresponsive social protection in practice: October 2021. western Nepal floods; Key informant interviews; EM-DAT. CRED / UCLouvain. Brussels. Belgium: www.emdat.be

These challenges affect the potential to use the Social Security Allowance schemes for shock-response. Indeed, the current set of schemes was not initially designed to assist people in response to covariate shocks, such as floods or earthquakes. As such, they do not include targeting criteria that would identify people on the basis of their vulnerability to such shocks (Holmes *et al*., 2019b). At the same time, the relatively limited coverage of SSA schemes, the inadequate values of the transfers to meet emergency needs and the low capacity to scale up the schemes in response to floods, have constituted major challenges for leveraging them to address the impacts of floods in Nepal (Holmes *et al*., 2019b). Of course, Nepal is not unique with regards to these challenges, yet, there continue to be examples in which cash is "increasingly seen as an appropriate intervention in Nepal" (Holmes *et a*l., 2019b, p. 7). However, concerns expressed by certain government officials relating to issues around wastage, misuse and the social acceptability of emergency cash transfers, especially to the working age and able-bodied population, means that progress remains slow. This was most notably seen during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, where cash as an assistance modality was not permitted by the Government of Nepal.

Nonetheless, the responses implemented to address the impacts of the 2015 earthquake and the devastating flooding in 2017 opened up discussions related to the appropriateness and feasibility of using social protection – specifically the SSA schemes – to provide assistance after covariate shocks as part of a wider emergency response. Such an approach could have a number of potential advantages if the aforementioned challenges were addressed, including increased efficiency and effectiveness as it would rely on established Government infrastructure which, in turn, would also contribute to accuracy in targeting and reduced delays in the delivery of emergency assistance, both in anticipation and response. The transfer itself would provide crucial assistance to meet the immediate needs of SSA beneficiaries, which represent vulnerable groups in the country (Holmes *et al*., 2019b).

BUILDING ON THE SSA SCHEMES TO DELIVER CASH TRANSFERS IN RESPONSE TO FLOODS IN 2021

In October 2021, unseasonal heavy rainfall hit Nepal, which resulted in flooding in different parts of the country (American Red Cross, 2021). Members of the affected population noted, in interviews, that these floods were considered to be the worst instance of unseasonal flooding in the country in thirty years. Flood risk in Janaki and Tikapur municipalities (Kailali District in Sudurpashchim Province) escalated when rising water levels threatened to breach embankments on the Karnali River. This was not captured by scientific forecasts ahead of time, but local monitoring efforts by municipality officials and the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), that incorporated the observations into their early warnings, consequently informed their decisions to take anticipatory action (Karki, 2022). Local municipalities and the Nepal Red Cross Society disseminated early warning messages through both radio stations and sirens, as well as via traditional village informers and door-to-door visits. Municipal offices also issued evacuation orders, and people at risk of possible embankment breaches were evacuated to safe sites and temporary shelters just in time before floods inundated their communities.

In implementing these activities, local authorities and the Nepal Red Cross Society benefitted from the lessons learned in an anticipatory action simulation exercise, which had been carried out a month prior, in September 2021. The simulation had helped clarify roles and responsibilities and facilitated collaboration in implementing anticipatory actions ahead of flooding (Karki, 2022). This experience highlights the importance of preparedness activities, including tests and simulations for ensuring that anticipatory actions are implemented in a timely manner once a shock is imminent, and that roles, responsibilities and preplanned actions are understood and agreed by all relevant stakeholders.

In response to the flood event, the Nepal Red Cross Society implemented a cash transfer pilot, which built on the SSA schemes. Through this approach, the Nepal Red Cross Society supported the provision of cash assistance to 270 people and their families in Tikapur and Janaki municipalities, and who met the criteria of: (i) being Social Security Allowance recipient households; and (ii) were assessed as having fully or partially damaged households by the floods (Nepal Red Cross Society and Danish Red Cross, 2022).

Although the intervention did not deliver cash transfers in anticipation of flooding, it still offered valuable lessons that can be applied to anticipatory action and its potential linkages with social protection, which are summarized in the following sections.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM A PILOT CASH TRANSFER ON LINKING ANTICIPATORY ACTION WITH SOCIAL PROTECTION[15]

Rationale for leveraging the Social Security Allowance components for flood response

The pilot cash transfer implemented by the Nepal Red Cross Society specifically leveraged the SSA's financial, information management, grievance and communication infrastructure. All recipients of the SSA hold a bank account, held in their name and with a unique identifying number, where they receive their routine SSA payments every quarter. As such, the decision was made to flow cash assistance directly to these accounts, which allowed for the quick and safe distribution of assistance to recipient households. While local government officials were initially hesitant, the Nepal Red Cross Society was able to confirm that this action was permissible at the central government level. Hence, it was possible to ensure a distribution modality that was deemed to be both more cost-effective and timely compared to alternative methods, such as opening new bank accounts or mobile money wallets. As some emergency funds were quickly made available through the Danish Red Cross Society, leveraging the SSA provided an opportunity to test the SSA programme's delivery chain as a means to deliver emergency cash transfers. Thus, applicable lessons were learned for both the response and anticipatory phases of future interventions.

Timeliness

From the moment in which flooding began in October 2021, the disbursement of cash transfers took over a month. Within this period, the first three and a half weeks were needed to convince local government stakeholders of the intervention, including time spent clarifying certain perceived ambiguities in the SSA implementation guidelines regarding the use of certain delivery chain features to provide exceptional emergency assistance. A number of discussions within coordination platforms and technical working groups at the country level have noted that the national social protection system's guidelines, and the SSA's ones in particular, require the integration of shock-responsive elements.

Once permission for the pilot had been granted, volunteers from the Nepalese Red Cross Society were able to apply data from completed post-disaster assessments containing information on damage to households, as well as information on whether these same households were recipients of the SSA. Through advanced planning, several of these steps could be sped up to meet the needs of future interventions. For instance, this could be achieved by putting in place agreements with stakeholders in advance, and pre-identifying geographical, risk and vulnerability targeting criteria to be combined with the SSA's beneficiary

[15] Based on Nepal Red Cross Society and Danish Red Cross (2022) and key informant interviews.

registry. Nevertheless, going forward, the lessons from the pilot constitute an important lesson for future anticipatory action and shock response interventions channelled through the SSA.

When the implementation of cash transfers through the SSA was approved as a flood response modality by the local government, an authorization letter was sent to the bank to enact such transfers, which were then delivered to SSA recipients the following day. Once approvals were in place, the cash was transferred rapidly because it was disbursed directly from a Red Cross branch bank account at the district level to the individual bank accounts of SSA's recipients.

Nonetheless, using the same bank transfer modality in anticipation of future floods may not work as well as it did for the flood response in 2021. Withdrawing cash from the bank account to which the transfer is made requires people to go to a local bank branch, which can be difficult on short timelines between a flood warning and its onset. This affects even those people who are already familiar with the process and the location of the nearest banking points, as is the case for those covered under the SSA.[16] In practice, it could require people travelling up to ten kilometres, at a time when they need to be moving assets or evacuating. However, as the availability of financial services and infrastructure continues to expand, the need to travel such long distances is likely to become rarer. In the Red Cross pilot, 84 percent of SSA recipients took less than three hours to make the return journey to access their cash. In other parts of Nepal, distances to ATMs can be much farther, and therefore, interventions will need to assess the availability and accessibility of such services, recognizing pressures associated with hazard lead times and distribution processes. Given that a proportion of the target population of the SSA may face more severe mobility challenges – such as the elderly, people with disabilities and mothers with young children – travel time and cost would need to be taken into account in planning the intervention. This would also ideally require ensuring that there are ATMs at evacuation sites, such as through mobile ATM vans, a point that the Red Cross deemed as an important area to explore for future interventions.

Finance

The speed of disbursement, following the decision to implement the vertical expansion of the SSA, demonstrated the importance of the availability of flexible finance at the local level. While the Red Cross pilot had involved the transfer of cash from the local Red Cross branch bank account to SSA recipient accounts, the intention of the Red Cross project is to facilitate the institutionalization of such interventions by the government. In fact, Red Cross personnel noted the importance of ensuring that financial resources were available at the local level, ideally through the mobilization of district or municipality budgets. The decision was based on the knowledge that the mobilization of national, or even provincial, contingency or disaster management budgets were viewed as less flexible and timely, especially in the case of financing assistance for small- to medium-scale shocks. The lesson from Nepal highlights that exploring the possibility of using local government disaster management funds to finance anticipatory action at the local level, requires certain preconditions. Not only is it necessary to obtain buy-in from local government officials and political figures, but any centrally developed guidelines, standard operating procedures and other policy, legal and regulatory frameworks in relation to the delivery of social protection and disaster risk management interventions must facilitate an enabling environment for local officials to act on uncertainty (i.e. anticipatory action), and do so through the timely mobilization of appropriate financial instruments. It should be noted that the local government did not use its municipal disaster response fund to respond

[16] This poses a challenge not only ahead of the floods, but also afterwards, when people may be displaced, and access roads inundated.

to the flood, despite the severity of the situation. In part, the reasons given by officials were that the fund was insufficient to finance the full response, and that the Ministry of Home Affairs decided to provide cash transfers as relief to flood-affected families based on a loss assessment (even though less than ten percent of the amount required was released in the end, far into the recovery phase, creating tensions with the affected population).

Flood early warning systems

There is some general mistrust in flood forecasting in Nepal, because of the different ways that impacts manifest locally. A follow-up assessment that was conducted after the pilot showed that people had limited trust in the existing, formal flood early warning systems. Even though people received text messages, and local messengers were used to share early warnings, along with the mobilization of local flood siren systems, many households tended not to take the recommended precautionary measures because of the reported costs associated with them. Furthermore, the frequency of false alarms had noticeably reduced their trust in the reliability of the system.

Moreover, there is also a behavioural component for which people generally are reluctant to evacuate until they see the threat manifesting.[17] This can be particularly problematic for the most vulnerable population

[17] Experience from other contexts indicates that receiving transfers alongside early warning messages before the flood may actually motivate people to evacuate, as it adds to their perceived severity of the situation (e.g. in Bangladesh, see Pople *et al*. 2021). Whether a similar effect would occur in Nepal remains to be assessed.

groups, who may not be able to move quickly or independently, such as children, the elderly or people with disabilities. Evidence from Nepal shows that factors such as gender inequality and exclusion also influence the ability to access early warning information and act upon them (Brown *et al*., 2019).

In recent years, the forecasting system of the Government of Nepal has become more reliable. In western Nepal, the Government has been forecasting heavy rainfalls and inundations, and the increasing accuracy in forecasting is supporting discussions around the appropriateness of delivering anticipatory action through social protection programmes. Nonetheless, forecasts are still only available and reliable in some river basins.

Even with early warning systems, the lead times for flooding is usually quite short, between a few hours and about three days. For riverine floods, less technologically advanced and informal early warning systems, such as receiving a call from someone monitoring upstream who observes water levels rising and therefore can inform others of the imminent flood, seems to be a more trusted system in Nepal, although the extent to which this system is working systematically is unclear. However, this emphasizes the importance of working with, and through, trusted community information channels in designing and delivering early warnings and anticipatory action, as it has the potential to increase the likelihood that information will be acted upon.

On the basis of the pilot experience, the Nepal Red Cross Society is revisiting early warning messages and how they are transmitted. To enhance trust in the early warnings, dissemination is being planned through a number of different channels going forward: automated text messages through the government's messaging system, including utilizing the SSA registry which includes recipient mobile numbers, sirens operated by community groups, two-way communication through local volunteers, and working with community leaders and informal traditional institutions.

Appropriateness of cash as an assistance modality in anticipation and response to covariate shocks

In Nepal, there remain reservations within the Government – from local to national levels – about transferring cash to people in emergency situations. As touched on previously, for the COVID-19 pandemic response, the Government of Nepal did not initially implement any cash-based social assistance programme and banned non-governmental organizations from delivering cash. However, under the 2022 fiscal year it set up a relief programme to deliver NPR 10 000 (about USD 75 at October 2022 exchange rates) per household for a total number of about 500 000 households. The extent to which those 500 000 households have actually received the designated assistance is unclear.

Given the government's general reluctance regarding cash transfers – ranging from stereotypes about cash use to concerns related to targeting and implementation – it may be even more difficult to justify using cash in anticipation of a shock, a situation in which fears about cash being misspent are even higher.

Additional concerns are linked to the reliability of the forecast. If cash is disbursed, but floods then do not occur, or the impact of the disaster is not as severe as expected, the experience may reinforce anti-cash sentiments. Indeed, despite recent improvements in flood forecasting (as discussed above), the availability and accuracy of forecasts still presents a technical and political challenge to delivering anticipatory action through the national social protection system in Nepal.

Targeting

Local authorities in Nepal are especially concerned about inclusion errors when implementing emergency assistance, including shock-responsive social protection interventions and anticipatory actions. Hence, local authorities often rely heavily on post-disaster assessments, primarily in the form of household damage assessments, which are seen as particularly reliable as they are conducted when the impact/damage is apparent. This contrasts with the perhaps more subjective assessments associated with forecasted or projected hazard impact assessments, and complementary household risk and vulnerability assessments, that are conducted as part of the development of anticipatory action protocols. Nevertheless, if anticipatory action is to be adopted, uncertainty and some degree of subjectivity within assessment data will be required. As the pilot in Nepal highlighted, the utilization of social protection data may help in addressing some of the worries expressed by government officials.

Building on the SSA's targeting criteria and registry, combined with household damage assessments, indications were that the pilot's targeting mechanism was more acceptable to government authorities. This was made possible because social protection recipients were already seen by local officials as vulnerable to the impact of the shock, and therefore, "deserving" of assistance during the emergency. The same sentiment applied in the 2015 earthquake response, when the SSA's child grant provided an efficient mechanism to target those households deemed especially vulnerable and in need of support – i.e., those with children aged under five living in poor districts. These experiences raise an important point about the need to clearly define the objectives – and resulting targeting approach – of any anticipatory assistance, and that understanding and addressing local officials' motivations and hesitancy concerning uncertainty will be crucial. Social protection programmes and their information management systems may help, or indeed hinder, this process depending on whether officials have confidence in the accuracy of the data and to what degree these systems have the ability to address challenges associated with inclusion and exclusion errors.

There are also issues of constrained resources that have an impact on programme implementation. In Nepal, there may be a preference to provide emergency assistance to support those who are not receiving any type of benefits from social protection programmes. Yet, in other contexts, social protection beneficiaries are often considered by default as those to be provided with support, because of the fact that they are assessed as being the poorest and most vulnerable. However, this reasoning is not applicable to the Nepali context, where SSA's beneficiaries are not poverty-targeted, nor specifically targeted on the basis of their vulnerability to specific shocks; instead, they are categorically targeted. And while the chosen demographic categories are, on average, assumed to be at a heightened level of vulnerability in comparison to the general population, during and immediately after the Red Cross pilot, there was debate about whether SSA recipients are indeed the poorest and/or the most vulnerable to floods and other types of hazards.

Ad hoc leverage of employment and sectoral programmes

In the past, there have been examples in Nepal of local authorities leveraging local employment, agriculture and irrigation schemes to implement disaster risk mitigation activities. These include emergency embankment repairs, drainage and irrigation channel clearance, as well as support to evacuations of people and their assets. However, such activities seem not to be implemented in a systematic manner or officially mandated at scale. The lessons learned from the 2021 pilot have led to the identification of the Prime Minister's Employment Program (PMEP) as a suitable scheme for incorporating such an approach, noting its potential to quickly mobilize human resources, equipment and machinery in the run-up and response to a covariate shock. An example of what could be possible was seen during the 2021 floods in western Nepal, in which one neighbouring municipality of the Red Cross project mobilized locally available assets to avert

the breach of river defences, whilst another municipality did not act to repair damaged defences. Low-lying houses and farming communities in the municipality that acted were not flooded precisely because local officials leveraged local irrigation and community development programmes' assets to conduct emergency riverbank repairs before the peak of the flood. In comparison, the municipality that did not act, saw significant flooding, thereby highlighting the potential for such anticipatory actions to "save many lives and livelihoods when implemented systematically and at scale" (Nepal Red Cross Society and Danish Red Cross, 2022, p. 5). However, the coverage of the PMEP represents a constraint, as the programme covers 200 000 people a year. This means that there may be limitations in the extent to which the PMEP can be mobilized for disaster risk mitigation efforts, because there may not be a sufficient coverage of people to provide them with assistance before a hazardous event occurs.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR DELIVERING ANTICIPATORY ACTION THROUGH THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM GOING FORWARD

Legal, regulatory, and policy changes are required to enable the social protection system to provide anticipatory assistance ahead of covariate shocks in Nepal. While there is increasing agreement about the need to link social protection with disaster risk management at the operational level, there is not yet a policy framework, nor implementation guidelines, in place to support these efforts.

Nonetheless, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority is leading the development of shock-responsive social protection guidelines, which are expected to include components of anticipatory action within broader disaster risk management and social protection interventions. This may thus provide a necessary first step to direct government and development partners towards strengthening the legal framework for using social protection in anticipation and response to shocks. In their current state of development, the guidelines propose four types of cash transfers to be implemented through the social protection system: anticipatory, immediate relief, early recovery and longer-term rehabilitation. However, it is still unclear to what extent the Government would be willing and able to finance anticipatory transfers, especially in the immediate future.

In a context where there is neither a mature social protection system in place, nor a record of large-scale mobilization of national social protection programmes for shock response led by the government, efforts should be concentrated on strengthening the core functions of the social protection system. Such efforts would need to include expanding coverage to the eligible population and strengthening its shock-responsiveness before looking at how to incorporate anticipatory action. Owing to the apprehension around the use of cash in Nepal, and the overly extended time needed to transfer cash from the central level to the municipal level, along with the mismatch between those covered by the SSA and those poor and vulnerable to floods, opportunities for delivering cash through social protection programmes in anticipation of floods in Nepal are currently limited. Nonetheless, leveraging the SSA may still be suitable for local responses to shocks.

As the interventions to address the impact of the floods in October 2021 have shown, leveraging the social protection system to deliver a range of anticipatory action and response interventions in collaboration with municipalities is a work in progress in Nepal.

Following the 2021 pilot intervention, the Nepal Red Cross Society has continued to collaborate with local authorities and partners to adapt plans regarding leveraging the social protection system to deliver

anticipatory action ahead of floods. The hope is that these efforts will provide greater clarity about whether leveraging the social protection system enables a quicker response and helps maximize its cost-effectiveness. Forecast monitoring was expanded to a greater breadth of forecasts and, given the experience of unseasonal flooding in 2021, the time frames during which these forecasts are monitored have been extended until after the end of the regular monsoon period. The scope of actions considered for implementation has also been broadened (summarized in Table 3), with the focus of the project currently targeting the municipalities of Barbardiya, Gulariya and Thakurbaba in Bardiya District, and Tikapur and Janaki in Kailali District.

TABLE A2: PLANNED ANTICIPATORY ACTION INTERVENTIONS AND HOW THEY MAY LEVERAGE THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN NEPAL

ACTION	EARLY WARNING MESSAGING	CLEANING CANALS/ DRAINS AND STRENGTHENING EMBANKMENTS WITH SANDBAGS	EARLY HARVESTING	CASH TRANSFER	EVACUATION RELATED ANTICIPATORY ACTION
Description of how the action would leverage the social protection system	Using telephone numbers of SSA recipients to disseminate early warning messages through the local government emergency communication system. Identifying specific vulnerable groups for targeted messaging.	Mobilizing labour from PMEP, in which people are already registered and ready to work.	Using the SSA registry to identify people who would require assistance or incentives for early harvesting. Mobilizing labour from PMEP to carry out early harvesting.	Leveraging the SSA registry and its payment, communication and outreach, and grievance systems to deliver cash transfers in anticipation of floods.	Using the SSA registry to identify households that would require special help during the evacuation of people, livestock and assets. Using SSA demographic information to identify specific needs in shelters, e.g., around accessibility, food and nutrition.
Expected benefit	Providing people with information before the floods, so that they can take action to protect themselves and their livelihoods and to mitigate the immediate impacts of the floods.	Protecting community assets and water infrastructure, which also acts as a measure to mitigate the impacts of floods.	Saving as much as possible the harvest from inundation.	Enabling people to make purchases in local markets ahead of the floods in case access to markets becomes blocked, or to make purchases once they have arrived at the evacuation centres, before larger response efforts materialize.	Protecting people, livestock and other assets.

Source: Authors' table, based on Nepal Red Cross Society and Danish Red Cross. 2022. *A case study of shock-responsive social protection in practice: October 2021, western Nepal floods*. Kathmandu and Copenhagen. **https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/flood-response-multi-purpose-cash-delivered-through-leveraging-nepals-social-security-allowance-programme-case-study-shock-responsive-social-protection-practice-october-2021-western-nepal-floods** and key informant interviews.

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THE PHILIPPINES CASE STUDY

The Philippines ranks among the countries with the highest disaster risk in the world, topping the World Risk Index in 2022 (Atwii *et al*., 2022). The country is exposed to typhoons, floods, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, droughts, tsunamis, and fires (Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, 2018). The Philippines archipelago faces strong typhoons and heavy rains which can lead to flooding from June through November, with an average of 20 tropical cyclones entering the territorial waters surrounding it every year, and with about eight or nine of them making landfall. Typhoons and floods account for about 80 percent of the natural hazards the country has faced in the last half century (Anticipation Hub, n.d.).

Many of the climate and weather hazards that the Philippines is exposed to are expected to become more intense and frequent as a consequence of climate change. This includes a likely growing frequency in heavy daily rainfall countrywide and extreme daily rainfall in Luzon and Visayas regions by 2050; a rise in average peak wind speed of tropical cyclones associated with warming temperatures; and an increase in the amount of rainfall associated with tropical cyclones (PAGASA, n.d.; AHA Centre, 2020; IPCC, 2012).

In 2013, Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Yolanda) made landfall in the Philippines as one of the strongest typhoons ever recorded. The human toll of the typhoon was immense, causing over 6 000 deaths and with millions of people displaced (UNDRR, 2015). After immediate survival needs were met through humanitarian relief, the Government leveraged the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), which is the flagship cash transfer programme within the national social protection system implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) (DSWD, 2014). While the programme routinely provides cash transfers conditional to education and health of children in the target household, the Government made an informed political decision to make adjustments to the programme to channel relief to affected households following the typhoon. The first tweak operated was suspending the conditionality for receiving the transfers, because the emergency made it difficult for households to meet those conditions. Within three months, PHP 550.5 million (over USD 12 million based on exchange rates at the time) was distributed as unconditional cash transfers to affected 4Ps beneficiaries, representing the first instance of shock-responsive social protection in the country (DSWD, 2014).

The second adjustment consisted in the vertical expansion of the 4Ps: WFP and UNICEF complemented DSWD's efforts by topping up the value of the cash transfer for a subset of existing beneficiaries in the affected areas (Bowen, 2016). WFP provided two top-ups of PHP 1 300 (about USD 30 at the time) to 105 000 recipient households. The first one was delivered between December 2013 and January 2014, and the second one between January and February 2014 through 4Ps' standard payment modalities. From July to December 2014, UNICEF provided cash transfers of PHP 4 370 (about USD 100 at the time) per month to over 5 800 4Ps beneficiary households in Eastern Samar, which was the worst affected region according to DSWD.

The third adjustment was a horizontal expansion of the scheme, which was operated by UNICEF to provide cash assistance to non-4Ps beneficiary households residing in the same municipalities that had been heavily affected by the typhoon (Bowen, 2016; Smith *et al*., 2017).

THE PHILIPPINES

LEVERAGING THE PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM (4PS) IN ANTICIPATION OF FLOODS

RISK CONTEXT

Natural-hazard related disasters 2000–2021

	Total number of people affected	Total damages Adjusted ('000 USD)
Drought	197 687	97 171
Earthquake	4 425 526	160 553
Flood	23 668 793	3 176 847
Landslide	242 377	13 369
Storm	136 187 534	23 647 075
Volcanic activity	1 210 597	80 379

SCENARIO

Simulating anticipatory action to typhoon-induced flooding in 2021

ANTICIPATORY ACTION SIMULATION

4Ps components leveraged by FAD, Philippine Red Cross and German Red Cross for anticipatory action to floods (cash transfers and early harvesting of fish in ponds through cash-for-work) in the simulation:

- Social registry (in addition to other agriculture and fisheries databases) to target beneficiaries

RECIPIENTS

200

households targeted by simulation

PHP 500 (USD 10)

One-off cash transfer in the simulation

Sources:

Auerbach, A. (2021) Philippines Joint Simulation on Cash Early Actions & Shock-Responsive Social Protection for Flood. Anticipation Hub Blog. 25 June; Key informant interviews; EM-DAT. CRED / UCLouvain, Brussels, Belgium: www.emdat.be

Today, the Philippines has made impressive advancements in shock-responsive social protection, with programmes being increasingly leveraged to respond to shocks of different natures, from natural or climatic to economic ones (Pavanello, 2022).[18] Indeed, through the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) Resolution No. 7 in 2021, the Government adopted a five-year roadmap for establishing an adaptive and shock-responsive social protection system to reduce the vulnerabilities of households, increase their risk management capacity, and enhance their economic inclusion and resilience (NDRRMC, 2021).

Social protection represented a major pillar of the government's COVID-19 pandemic response, cementing its role as a key mechanism for providing relief to vulnerable households when covariate shocks occur. The largest cash transfer intervention implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was the Social Amelioration Program. It delivered two cash transfers of between PHP 5 000 and 8 000 each from April 2020 onwards to nearly 18 million low-income households and low-wage earners in the informal sector nationwide, including 4Ps beneficiaries (UNICEF, 2020).

In parallel, the Philippines has been a centre of innovation for anticipatory action. Originally pioneered through agency-specific pilots since 2017, the anticipatory action work has progressively taken on a more coordinated structure under the Anticipatory Action Technical Working Group. The Working Group is currently co-led by DSWD and FAO. Today, anticipatory action interventions are implemented across the country by a constellation of different agencies, including the Philippine Red Cross Society, Oxfam, FAO, the Start Network and WFP. As a result of the disaster risk prioritization exercises conducted by these stakeholders, anticipatory action to mitigate the impacts of typhoons has been prioritized by humanitarian partners, followed by river flooding and drought (UNICEF, 2020; REAP, 2021).

EXPLORING THE USE OF SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS FOR CHANNELLING ASSISTANCE IN ANTICIPATION OF SHOCKS

To date, the Philippines' social protection system has not yet delivered support in anticipation of a covariate shock at scale, although elements of the system are being tested to do so. The roadmap adopted by the Government in 2021 aims to create the conditions to deliver cash-based anticipatory action through the social protection system in a time span of five years from its adoption. The initial years focus on learning through experiences of pilots and simulations. Currently, many of the technical details around budget sources, triggers and coverage have yet to be agreed on, and pilots and simulations offer the opportunity to test different approaches.

The case study presented in the following paragraphs examines ongoing humanitarian initiatives to deliver anticipatory action by leveraging the national social protection system in order to inform the operationalization of linkages between the two sectors going forward.

In March 2021, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) selected the Philippines as a pilot country to test anticipatory action. Making use of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), it brought together five UN agencies, namely, the International Organization for Migration

[18] Besides the 4Ps, DSWD operates other types of regular and emergency cash transfer/cash-for-work programmes. For an overview and discussion of how these have been used to respond to shocks in the past, focusing on experiences from 2016/2017, see Acosta *et al*. (2018).

(IOM), FAO, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFP) and WFP, to deliver cash-based anticipatory action in advance of a typhoon. This represents one of the largest anticipatory action initiatives in the country to date. In June 2022, DSWD established an agreement with UNICEF to enable the delivery of unconditional cash top-ups to about 22 000 4Ps beneficiary households in anticipation of future Category 4 typhoons in the Philippines.[19] According to this agreement, three days ahead of a predicted landfall, PHP 1 000 (about USD 17 as of the October 2022 exchange rate) will be delivered through the Land Bank of the Philippines, using one of the payment delivery mechanisms of the 4Ps (DSWD and UNICEF, 2022).

This is one of several ongoing efforts to link anticipatory action and social protection. Dialogue between DSWD and partners on using the social protection system for channelling anticipatory assistance was first initiated in 2019, with the development of the adaptive and shock-responsive social protection roadmap. Building on this engagement, in May 2021, the Philippine Red Cross Society (PRCS), German Red Cross and FAO,[20] conducted a joint simulation exercise to test operational links between anticipatory action and social protection at the provincial government level in a flood scenario induced by a tropical cyclone. The aim was to act within 72 hours from the issuance of the early warning, by leveraging components of the social protection system to deliver anticipatory assistance. In the simulation, a Global Flood Awareness

19 Covering the provinces of Catanduanes (municipalities of Baras, Bato, San Andres, and Virac) and Northern Samar (municipalities of Catarman, Catubig, Gamay, Mondragon and San Roque).

20 This activity is part of the regional project entitled Scaling up Forecast based Financing/Early Warning Early Action (FbF/EWEA) and Shock-responsive social protection (SRSP), with innovative use of climate risk information for disaster resilience in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), funded by ECHO.

System flood forecast was used to trigger the activation of a cash-for-work scheme, which delivered anticipatory cash in exchange of early harvesting of fish in ponds in three barangays in Camarines Sur, Bicol Region (FAO, 2021).

LESSONS LEARNED FROM SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION INTERVENTIONS AND FROM A SIMULATION EXERCISE LEVERAGING SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM COMPONENTS TO DELIVER ANTICIPATORY ACTION IN THE PHILIPPINES[21]

The Philippines' social protection landscape provides a relatively strong basis for delivering shock-responsive and anticipatory assistance to help vulnerable people prepare for and manage the impacts of covariate shocks.

Presented here are several features, among others, of the Philippines' social protection system that have been identified in past interventions to enable shock-response and anticipatory action.

Existing social protection programme with large coverage and established emergency protocols: The 4Ps has nationwide reach and aims to improve the living conditions of the poor by providing cash transfers subject to specific conditionalities. These conditions include keeping children in school, incentivizing pregnant women to attend health check-ups and prenatal care, and encouraging parents to regularly attend Family Development Sessions to learn about women's rights, childcare and disaster preparedness. The design of the 4Ps includes a provision that temporarily suspends conditionalities when shocks disrupt health and education services, making it impossible to meet conditionalities. Such suspension requires the declaration of a State of Calamity by the Government (Bowen, 2016).

Payment distribution system: Increasingly, 4Ps beneficiaries are given a transaction account (a deposit account or some form of e-money/e-wallet), moving away from the cash card approach that was used earlier on in the programme. This reduces the need for beneficiaries to go to ATMs or banks to deposit the money into their accounts (DSWD, 2022).

National registry: The data of 4Ps beneficiaries are contained in a national registry, the National Household Targeting System, also called Listahanan. The database contains data and information, including the physical structure of houses, number of family members, access to running water, and other living and household-related conditions. Being a social registry, the Listahanan also includes data and information on poor and near poor households that are not enrolled in any social protection programmes but are considered vulnerable to disaster risks based on their socioeconomic situation. The social registry was last updated in 2015, and therefore it is considered to be outdated, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic changed extensively the poverty landscape; nonetheless, it is currently undergoing a process of updating and validation.

The following paragraphs discuss in which ways the above presented, and other features of the social protection system can provide key entry points for the delivery of anticipatory assistance in the country.

[21] Based on references as indicated, key informant interviews and the pilot documentation in Auerbach (2021).

Targeting and coverage

Listahanan holds great potential for targeting recipients of anticipatory action, especially once it has been updated and validated. For the simulation exercise carried out by the Government, FAO, PRCS and German Red Cross Society, DSWD provincial office and PRCS signed an ad-hoc Memorandum of Understanding for sharing beneficiary data. The process worked well, and data could be accessed, though the overall procedure was lengthy.

The area of intervention – three barangays (the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines, consisting of 50–100 households) in the Libmanan Municipality in Camarines Sur – was selected based on PRCS' ranking of vulnerability and risk of floods. The targeting of beneficiaries within these locations was carried out through an exercise that combined data of the 4Ps beneficiary list, data in the Listahanan database, and data on farmers and fisherfolk from the Department of Agriculture's Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. The final consolidated list was verified by the Barangay Committee, which is the lowest local government unit (FAO, 2021).

The CERF 2021/2022 typhoon season anticipatory action framework for the Philippines also built upon Listahanan for the identification of beneficiaries, and specifically for the identification of 22 000 households that received unconditional top-ups provided by UNICEF in collaboration with DSWD. The intervention therefore leveraged the information management system and targeting mechanism as well as the payment system of the 4Ps (OCHA, 2021).

Finance and cash transfers

Putting financing in place remains a bottleneck. To release funds for disaster response, a declaration of a state of calamity must be made, in line with most disaster risk management systems in other countries. To date, public finance cannot be released beforehand in the Philippines, as post-disaster relief assessments are an essential tool to determine how much, and to whom, assistance should be provided. Nonetheless, a potential legal entry point for delivering anticipatory assistance is the Memorandum 60: Revised Guidelines for the Declaration of a State Calamity (NDRRMC, 2019), which has been passed but is not yet operational. The memorandum states that the local Quick Response Fund could be used by local government units based on a forecast, if it predicts that at least 15 percent of the population is to be affected by an imminent shock. This has not yet been used for the implementation of anticipatory action, but there seems to be interest in exploring the possibility. For the moment, the rules and regulations to operationalize the memorandum are not yet completed, so there is no clarity as to whether this will be possible. There are also questions about the appropriateness of using Quick Response Funds for anticipatory action, as they are relatively small and could be easily depleted without managing to cover all needs.

During the simulation exercise, the PRCS team distributed cash in partnership with a pawnshop, Palawan Express, rather than using the ATM cards or bank accounts that are the main delivery system of the 4Ps in some parts of the Philippines (FAO, 2021). This was largely because of the small number of people covered by the pilot, and the fact that putting in place agreements to leverage these payment systems would have required a lengthy agreement process. However, partners involved have suggested that the existing 4Ps payment system would be the best option to deliver anticipatory cash transfers, and that therefore putting such an agreement in place was critical (Auerbach, 2021). However, the ability to channel money through government accounts, and to have this money available quickly after an early warning is issued (e.g., by prepositioning it in an escrow account at the beginning of a tropical cyclone season), may present a challenge for some humanitarian and development partners. What is possible under the existing

financing and accountability frameworks will need to be explored in more detail on a case-by-case basis. Implementation of agreement signed recently by DSWD and UNICEF for delivery of anticipatory cash transfers to 4Ps beneficiaries under the CERF pilot will likely generate useful insights in this regard.

In relation to transferring cash to recipients, a critical lesson learned from the simulation exercise is that logistical support and upfront agreements are required to have sufficient cash locally available. This is a general challenge related to cash transfers, but also one that is exacerbated by the fact that lead times before the occurrence of hazards are often short, and the window of opportunity within which people can take anticipatory action before the shock hits is also limited.

Triggers

DSWD's Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center (DROMIC) is the Government entity tasked with providing predictive analytics at the pre-disaster risk assessment meetings held prior to a typhoon making landfall by the NDRRMC, which is the interagency body that is responsible for disaster risk management. The humanitarian community – including the Red Cross and FAO, as well as other agencies involved in the CERF pilot – combines that information with that derived from an impact-based forecasting model developed by 510[22] so that altogether these can inform the trigger of typhoon anticipatory action.

[22] 510 is an initiative by the Netherlands Red Cross Society, which develops products for risk and impact analyses, trigger models and impact-based forecasting operational dashboards, among other products, to support Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies and their partners (see **https://www.510.global/impact-based-forecast/**).

The Government is not currently using this combined model, but FAO is training DSWD's DROMIC staff on it, so that they can use it also in combination with forecasts provided by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) to inform, and potentially trigger, government-led anticipatory action going forward.

The Government of the Philippines currently uses forecasts of tropical cyclone track and windspeed developed by PAGASA to guide action when a tropical cyclone is imminent. Preparedness manuals define different alert levels and indicate what local government units should do on the basis of these forecasts at each alert stage, such as issuing warnings to communities or proceeding with pre-emptive evacuations (Department of the Interior and Local Government, n.d.). However, wind speed and track forecasts alone do not necessarily provide enough information about the likely impacts of typhoons. The percentage of houses that would be damaged, for example, can differ from area to area depending on housing materials used. For instance, the north of Luzon has the highest exposure to typhoons, but the house infrastructure in that area is more resistant than that of the houses in Mindanao. Hence, a storm with a wind speed of 180 kilometres per hour may damage a larger share of houses in Mindanao compared to a storm with similar wind speed occurring in northern Luzon. Using different wind speed thresholds to trigger anticipatory action in the different areas or combining hazard forecasts with information about exposure and vulnerability, could be options used to address this challenge.

Policy to practice

The Philippines has an advantageous institutional set-up where the same government agency – DSWD – has a lead role in the coordination of social protection as well as disaster response (Bierens, Boersma and van den Homberg, 2020). Meanwhile, the Department of the Interior and Local Government holds the official mandate for disaster preparedness, making collaboration across departments essential for any efforts to deliver anticipatory action through the national social protection system.

While the legal and policy framework for delivering anticipatory action through social protection is nascent or non-existent in most countries, the Philippines has a clear framework, which is set out by the Philippine Roadmap on Adaptive Shock Responsive Social Protection. Aiming for coherence across and beyond government agencies, the roadmap was endorsed in 2021 by two related government entities – DSWD and NDRRMC. The roadmap also defined a common language around shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action, contributing to a "meeting of minds between development partners and government", as described in a key informant interview. Through the CERF pilot, development and humanitarian partners have been providing technical assistance to DSWD, PAGASA, and have supported the establishment of coordination mechanisms to operationalize the provision of assistance in anticipation of tropical cyclones.

Despite the fact that the policy framework lays the foundations for linking anticipatory action and social protection in the Philippines, there is no concrete agreement yet at operational levels on the design of programmes and/or on the tweaks that may be required to enable anticipatory action through the national social protection system, at the central and the local government levels.

Coordination

To date, coordination among actors responsible for anticipatory action and social protection has been a challenge. There is a sense that organizations need to demonstrate their comparative advantage and look at indicators of households' vulnerability that are closely related to their mandate. In the case of FAO, for instance, this would mean looking into vulnerabilities of households employed in the various subsectors of

agriculture and how these may be exacerbated by the occurrence of different hazards. Greater integration of anticipatory action into the national social protection system under the ownership of the Government would help address this challenge.

To enhance coordination, FAO is supporting the development of a Scalability Framework, which is a multi-stakeholder anticipatory action protocol. This would include pre-agreed data and triggers, management systems, financing and delivery modalities for cash-based anticipatory action interventions, for a start. The Scalability Framework intends to set thresholds and triggers for when a programme can scale up, who it should reach, when it should provide resources to households, and the frequency and duration of the transfers. It aims at building greater coherence between the Government and external agencies in anticipatory action. However, budgeting for the development and implementation of the Scalability Framework is still unclear.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR LINKING ANTICIPATORY ACTION WITH THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM GOING FORWARD

The Philippines has a relatively strong policy environment for government-led implementation of anticipatory action, including actions delivered through the national social protection system. However, releasing finance for it remains a barrier.

So far, the Government of the Philippines has not yet funded social assistance in anticipation of major covariate shocks. Nonetheless, past experiences of shock-responsive social protection, and recent tests and simulations of anticipatory action being implemented through the social protection system, e.g., through the joint Government, PRCS and FAO simulation exercise, contribute to inform evidence and practice.

For now, financing for anticipatory action linked to the Philippines' social protection system is provided by international organizations and humanitarian funding mechanisms, such as the CERF. Whether the simulations and pilots will help establish proof of concept and incentivize DSWD to take on more of the cost through its own budget remains to be seen. At the subnational level, the provincial governments of Western Samar and Southern Leyte have recently put in place agreements with PRCS that formalize conditions under which local government units can fund anticipatory actions for typhoons from their preparedness funds (Anticipation Hub, 2021). However, this arrangement with the two provincial governments is very specific to the procurement of house strengthening kits, and it is currently not suitable with respect to also financing the delivery of anticipatory cash transfers through the social protection system.

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