CONTENT

04. Get to know the EAP criteria and the management process

Summary

The process for accessing funding from the Anticipatory Pillar of the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) involves several key elements. In this chapter you will get to know why it is important to engage with your IFRC delegation early on, learn about the differences between the available funding mechanisms, understand the s/EAP review and approval process but also respective management processes until resubmission after an activation (kindly note that s/EAP refers to both EAPs and simplified EAPs). In the toolbox you also find links to all relevant templates and resources. For any approaches to anticipatory action other than an EAP, please visit the later chapters of this manual.

Step 1: Reach out to IFRC delegation

For National Societies choosing to pursue anticipatory action through the development of an s/EAP, early engagement with the IFRC is essential. Every National Society is covered by an IFRC Country Delegation, Country Cluster Delegation or Regional Office. Engaging with the IFRC should start from the beginning of the EAP development phase. The IFRC can provide technical support, including coordination with other in-country capacity strengthening initiatives, advice from IFRC sectoral experts, explanations of IFRC standards and guidelines, providing lessons learned from response operations and anticipatory action.

Support on the IFRC operational matrix and budgeting structure can be provided by the IFRC focal point at country or regional level. The s/EAP budget should be developed using the IFRC budget template (see toolbox), and advice on the budget can be provided by IFRC finance staff. Ultimately the finalized s/EAP will be submitted to the IFRC delegation for technical review and funding from the IFRC-DREF. Not involving the IFRC early in the s/EAP development process could result in delays in the technical review and approval of the s/EAP. The IFRC-DREF does not provide funding for development of plans for anticipation or for response. National Societies should look for different sources of funding for these activities.

Funding your Anticipatory Action Plan

The IFRC DREF is only one funding mechanism open to National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies. It is also the funding mechanism that the manual will look at most closely.

Other funding options that may be open to National Societies include funding from:

- national government or local authorities
- crisis modifiers in existing operations or projects
- the National Society's own resources
- private or institutional donors (including UN)

Step 2: Familiarize yourself with s/EAP templates and eligibility criteria

Since 2018, the Anticipatory Pillar of the DREF has provided funding for developed EAPs and since 2022, has provided funding for developed sEAPs. The sEAP is an additional ex-ante funding mechanism for National Societies and seeks to complement the other funding mechanisms under the DREF including the 'longer term' EAPs (i.e., five years) and 'shorter term' DREF for imminent events (i.e., 1 to 4 months).

The EAP and the sEAP have separate templates and eligibility criteria which can be found at the end of this chapter or on FedNet (see the toolbox). Technical review and approval of the s/EAP is based on the respective quality criteria. It is important consider each of the quality criteria when developing the s/EAP.

Each s/EAP should usually focus on one hazard, but a National Society may develop multiple s/EAPs for different hazards. At this time, a National Society can have an unlimited number of both full EAP and sEAP.

The s/EAP is made up of three types of activities: prepositioning activities, readiness activities and early action activities.

- The **stock activities** are allocated in the first year following approval for both a full EAP and sEAP, however the full EAP can budget a second round of stock for a second activation. Stocks should have a shelf life of five years for a full EAP or two years for the sEAP. The National Society should pre-position the materials needed to undertake the selected early actions, especially those that may require a longer procurement process such as shelter or hygiene kits. A second allocation for stock will be done for a full EAP, following the first activation.
- The **readiness activities** should be done annually to ensure that the National Society remains ready to act early. These activities may include refresher training, coordination meetings, and simulations. Readiness may also include any ongoing costs and services (human resources and logistics) that are deemed indispensable for subsequent trigger-based activation of an s/EAP. Readiness activities are capped around 35% maximum. The National Society will need to provide justification for readiness costs that exceed 35% of the total budget.
- The balance of the budget (at least 35%) is earmarked for**early action activities** which are done in the lead time, between when a trigger is reached and the impact of the hazard. The early actions will be unique to each hazard and context but should reduce or mitigate the impact on at risk communities. Examples of early action activities include evacuation of at-risk communities and/or livestock in advance of a cyclone, early harvest of crops in advance of cyclone or floods, and / or the covering water sources and provision of water treatment, hygiene kits or mosquito nets in advance of floods.

A full EAP can include a second round of early action activities (early action + prepositioning activities).

Key conditions of the full and simplified EAP

	Full EAP	Simplified EAP
Available to:	Any National Red Cross Red Crescent Society	Any National Red Cross Red Crescent Society
Duration / Lifespan:	5 years	2 years
Activation(s) within Lifespan:	2 times (in 5 years)	1 time (in 2 years)
Total Budget:	CHF 950,000	CHF 220,000
Budget for NS:	CHF 845,070	CHF 187,793
Budget for IFRC:	CHF 50,000 max	CHF 20,000 max
Targeted Population (min.):	10,000 people	2,000 people
Eligible Activities:	Readiness, Stock, Early Action	Readiness, Stock, Early Action
Assessed against:	EAP quality criteria	Simplified EAP quality criteria
Reporting:	Annual, final report or activation report	Annual, final report or activation report

	EAP and sEAP	DREF allocation for imminent crisis
Timing	early actions are planned well in advance of the forecast. The approved EAP and allocated funding give the National Society additional time (and funding) to include actions that may require more long-term preparatory work and pre-positioning of stock required for the early action.	Can only be requested when the hazard is on the horizon, that is once a forecast has been issued, which limits the time for planning, approval and implementation of the early actions.
Vulnerability assessment	more rigorous analysis of the historical impacts and vulnerability of the population leading to a more targeted and potentially effective intervention	
Capacity	The Forecast-based Financing process takes a holistic approach, often starting (but doesn't have to!) with a Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) assessment with the aim of develop the best possible EAP for the hazard and the context and takes time to systematically addressing organizational gaps and capacity development needs. While the sEAP is developed using the National Society's own resources and is planned based on the existing capacity, however annual readiness activities means that the National Society can maintain a good level of readiness.	DREF for imminent event needs to be planned based on the existing capacity and experience of the National Society, due to the limited timeline – however, if a National Society doesn't have a pre-approved protocol, DREF for imminent event enables any National Society to act in advance of a hazard.
Activation	The National Society can initiate the pre-agreed early actions as soon as the pre- defined trigger threshold is reached. There is no need to go through any additional approval processes, thereby gaining valuable time to reduce the impact of a disaster. The financial support is automatically released.	The National Society must develop an Emergency Plan of Action and budget for anticipatory action, which needs to be reviewed and approved, with a signed project agreement in place before the funds are released. There is no guarantee the DREF request will comply with all the requirements for approval.

Step 3: Submit and validate the s/EAP

Only National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies are eligible for funding from the DREF.

Registration of a s/EAP with the IFRC DREF

When a National Society decides to start working on a s/EAP, the National Society or IFRC Delegation are requested to inform the DREF Global team by sending an email to the IFRC DREF email box: DREF.anticipatorypillar@ifrc.org

s/EAP submission process to IFRC DREF

Once the s/EAP narrative and budget have been developed, the National Society should submit the documents to DREF.anticipatorypillar@ifrc.org for technical review and funding from the IFRC-DREF.

Upon submission, the s/EAP will undergo a simultaneous technical review (conducted by the IFRC Delegation, the IFRC Regional Office and Validation Committee), which will take 14 days. The technical review is based on the quality standards outlined in the quality criteria for an EAP and a sEAP (there are separate versions for both, see the toolbox below).

Who is the Validation Committee?

The Validation Committee is comprised by members of the IFRC, the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, Netherlands Red Cross 510 Initiative, the Red Cross Livelihoods Centre and National Societies active in anticipatory action.

Once the technical review has been finalised, the feedback will be sent to the National Society. The National Society has three months to address the feedback directly in the checklist and make changes in the s/EAP narrative in tracked changes. At any stage during the validation process, the National Society can request an *optional* feedback call with the Validation Committee. Within the three-month deadline, the National Society should submit the:

- s/EAP narrative with tracked changes;
- s/EAP budget;
- s/EAP review checklist with detailed comments

The package of documents should be sent to DREF.anticipatorypillar@ifrc.org.

The Validation Committee will then take 7 days to review the changes made and will decide to technically validate the s/EAP, technically validate the s/EAP with conditions that need to be met in advance of s/EAP approval or may send the s/EAP back to the National Society for further work.

If the s/EAP is sent back for further work, the National Society will have one month to revise and resubmit the s/EAP for technical validation. Again, the Validation Committee will take seven days to review the changes made. At this stage, if the s/EAP cannot be (conditionally or unconditionally) technically validated, the s/EAP may be sent back one further time with a deadline of one month. If, at this stage, the sEAP cannot be technically validated the s/EAP will be closed. The National Society can take as long as required to work on the s/EAP before resubmitting to the IFRC DREF.

For more details, please consult chapter 2 of the IFRC guidance package (s/EAP validation process). This guidance provides a step-by-step overview of the EAP and the simplified EAP approval, maintenance, activation and revalidation process. It is designed for IFRC staff; however, it will also give National Societies and partners an overview of the IFRC processes. However, kindly note that as of mid 2025, this guidance package is under review and being updated to align with the new DREF procedure. For the old version, see toolbox

Imminent DREF

In addition to the EAP and sEAP, the third funding mechanism under the DREF's Anticipatory Pillar is the imminent DREF. Any Red Cross Red Crescent can have access to funding for early action via an imminent DREF. The imminent DREF is for sudden onset hazards and can only be requested when the event is on the horizon. The imminent DREF could be used while developing a s/EAP and can be used to test your early action activities.

For more information on the imminent DREF, review the IFRC-DREF procedures (see the toolbox) or visit the IFRC website.

Step 4: Get IFRC approval and sign legal agreements

Once an s/EAP has been technically validated, the s/EAP can proceed through the approval process by the DREF Appeal Manager. Once this process is complete, the DREF's Anticipatory Pillar will allocate the full budget (for annual readiness, for stock and for early action activities) to the IFRC delegation closest to the National Society. IFRC will then produce an EAP summary (for a full EAP) or edit the s/EAP and publish it, along with the budget, on the IFRC website. The IFRC and the National Society (potentially also with a partner) will sign a project agreement and the closest IFRC delegation will disburse funds for the year one readiness activities, including the one-off pre-positioning costs, as outlined in the s/EAP.

Once updated, please refer to chapter 3 of the IFRC interactive guidance (s/EAP Approval) for more detailed information.

Step 5: Managing the s/EAP

Once the s/EAP has been approved, the National Society should procure and preposition the stock required for early action activities. Throughout the life span of the s/EAP annual readiness activities need to be implemented to ensure that the National Society sustains the capacity to act early. Hence, the National Society will need to request the budget from IFRC and implement readiness activities. Reach out to your IFRC project manager to ensure you follow the correct process, including annual financial and narrative reporting.

Once updated, please refer to chapter 4 of the IFRC guidance package (s/EAP Management) for more detailed information.

Step 6: Activate the s/EAP

When an s/EAP's trigger is reached, the National Society should initiate early action activities. The National Society notifies the IFRC of the activation using the activation notification template (this document should be published on the IFRC website). The IFRC will release the pre-agreed funding for the early actions according to the approved budget. In most cases it will either come from the IFRC delegation closest to the National Society, or the IFRC regional office. As all the administrative processes have been taken care of in the s/EAP approval phase, the funding for early actions can be released immediately.

Once updated, please refer to chapter 5 of the IFRC guidance package (s/EAP Activation) for more detailed information.

Step 7: Monitor, evaluate and learn from the activation

The s/EAP includes a basic M&E plan and budget that should include monitoring of activities during the activation, post-intervention assessment, and a lessons learnt workshop or evaluations (please see chapter 9 of the FbF manual). These activities must take place within the operational timeframe of the s/EAP and should feed into a activation report (narrative and financial report) no later than 60 days after the end of the activation (see the s/EAP Project Agreement for detailed reporting requirements and due dates). Completion of the lessons learnt workshop and report is a minimum prerequisite to revalidating the s/EAP.

Full EAPs are eligible for two activations within the five-year lifespan, if the trigger is reached within the five year lifespan of the EAP.

The second EAP activation should be *sequential* and not *simultaneous* with the first activation. That is, funds for second allocation of stock will be transferred once the activation report has been approved. Annual readiness activities will continue, with annual transfers based on the annual reports. If the EAP is triggered again for a second time, then the National Society can activate via submission of the activation notification template. The National Society goes through steps 6 and 7 in this chapter, before proceeding to step 8.

Step 8: Revalidate your s/EAP

Using information from evaluations and findings from the lessons learnt workshop, the National Society should determine what changes need to be made to the s/EAP narrative and budget. IFRC suggests making edits using *track changes* so that it is easy to identify what adjustments were made. Once the revised version is available, it should be sent to the IFRC delegation to start the revalidation process using the quality criteria.

Toolbox

IFRC guidance

- IFRC DREF Procedures (2025)
- IFRC DREF Guidelines (2026)

- FedNet
- EAP template
- sEAP template
- EAP Quality Criteria
- sEAP Quality Criteria
- s/EAP processing guidance
- s/EAP Budget template