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WHY SHOULD WE LINK ANTICIPATORY ACTION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION?

## Why should we link anticipatory action and social protection?

By integrating anticipatory action and social protection systems, we can harness synergies for taking anticipatory action before disaster impacts materialize, playing a critical role in reducing disaster impacts, building resilience and protecting development gains, especially by supporting some key aspects:

### Timely response

Anticipatory action relies on predictive models to anticipate in advance of disasters. By coupling it with existing social protection systems, support can be provided in a timely manner to vulnerable communities before a disaster strikes. As people are already in the social registry, targeting becomes faster. This pre-emptive action can help save lives and minimize the impact of the disaster.

### Speed

In the last years, many governments and donors have invested in making social protection programmes shock-responsive to ensure they are able to rapidly scale up during a crisis and scale back once the crisis is over. An anticipatory action mechanism would be a key piece of such a system, helping establish objective indicators and pre-agreed plans of action as well as ring-fenced financing to enable anticipatory action through social protection.

### Scale

Social protection, where they exist for a long time, comprise of large scale, long-term, nationally owned systems. These systems can reach significant sectors of the population: Safety net programs, for instance, cover 2.5 billion people globally currently ([Banerjee et al., 2022](#)) and are continually being expanded. Anticipatory action programs that use existing social protection programs can reach larger populations and newer geographies.

### Risk reduction

By using anticipatory action, social protection systems can be equipped to reduce climate/disaster risks by allowing investments in preparedness measures, such as cash for work schemes that help in reinforcing community infrastructure before a cyclone or offering training on disaster risk reduction that helps in adopting appropriate coping strategies.

### Enhanced Resilience

When both systems are linked, communities can become resilient over the long term, across the overall disaster management cycle. When anticipatory action works through social protection, it in turn focuses on strengthening systems as well, which over time **is better equipped to** manage residual impacts and improve resilience.

### Cost efficiency

Integrating these systems can result in cost savings by reducing the expenses associated with setting up parallel emergency response and recovery efforts after a disaster. Costs for registration, verifications or communications needed for anticipatory action can be reduced by piggy backing on existing social protection programs components like beneficiary databases.

### Improved coordination

Linking anticipatory action and social protection can promote the coming together of country actors and stakeholders in a meaningful way, to coordinate and achieve co-benefits across sectors that contribute to a long term and shared vision of resilience.

### Inclusivity

Social protection systems often target the most vulnerable groups in a society who are also most at risk from climate related shocks, as they are likely to reside in exposed areas, have pre-disposed vulnerabilities, and limited adaptive capacity. Linking these systems ensures that the most vulnerable populations are targeted for support and protection even under anticipatory action programs.