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STEP 6: IDENTIFY AND BRAINSTORM POTENTIAL EARLY ACTIONS

Step 6: Identify and brainstorm potential early actions

As you begin to understand and prioritize the impacts of most concern and relevance to communities and your National Society as well as which actions are already being or have been implemented, you can dig deeper into early actions that might reduce those specific impacts. Be sure to involve experts from relevant sectors, such as shelter, agriculture, WASH, health, or disaster management. The following methods can be used to identify or brainstorm potential early actions:

- Literature review
- Semi-structured, key informant interviews
- Focus group discussions
- (Post disaster) Community visits
- (Participatory) Stakeholder workshops
- Policy and practice reviews
- Early action database
- Community (or stakeholder) ranking activities

The way early actions are identified may differ slightly depending on the anticipatory action approach. For example, community-based anticipatory action may rely strongly on participatory consultations or ranking exercises and local knowledge, while government-supported anticipatory action may build on national standard operating procedures that are developed and agreed on within Technical Working Groups or other coordination mechanisms.



Practical guidance: Brainstorming early actions

In our experience, when brainstorming early actions, stakeholders tend to default to traditional response actions, as that is what they are most familiar with. During workshops, focus group discussions, interviews or other consultations, push participants to think outside the box. This could include proposing new actions or shifting the content and timing of existing actions to make them suitable for anticipatory action.

Try asking: Are there things you do not currently do, but that you could do (between the forecast and hazard onset/peak) to mitigate impacts if you had additional resources or support? Are there actions that are currently implemented only after a disaster but that could instead be implemented earlier to reduce impacts? Is this action more effective as an early action or as a response?



Mozambique: Government-led coordination on anticipatory action

In Mozambique, all anticipatory action initiatives are formally coordinated by the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGD). INGD chairs a Technical Working Group where different partners, including the Mozambique Red Cross (CVM), work on national-level Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for different hazards. As of early 2026, such SOPs were in place for floods, droughts and tropical cyclones.

These national-level SOPs include harmonized trigger thresholds and transparent decision-making rules as to when the government will formally declare an activation and partner organizations initiate implementation of early actions as spelled out in their respective frameworks and protocols. Building on these existing SOPs and the actions included in different protocols, INGD are working towards a standardized catalogue of early actions for each hazard. This ensures that early actions implemented in Mozambique are aligned, coordinated, and tested. It also avoids creating conflicting expectations among at-risk communities across different activations, contexts or implementing partners.

Additional partners starting to work on anticipatory action in Mozambique might therefore not determine “new” early actions on their own but rather implement actions from the SOP catalogue in accordance with their respective mandate and expertise.



Practical guidance: Connecting early warning messaging to Public Awareness and Public Education (PAPE) through the Prepare Messages platform

Early actions identified by National Societies often include the distribution of early warning messaging to help inform

communities on actions to take to help keep them safe in hazard scenarios.

When developing these messages, reference the PAPE guide (Public Awareness and Public Education for Disaster Risk Reduction) for guidance on adapting and adopting messages at the national level. A link to the guide can be found in the [toolbox](#).

The IFRC's Prepare Messages platform (link in the [toolbox](#)) is a database tool for National Societies to publish their early warning messaging. Published messages can be distributed via multiple channels, including through Google SOS Alert, local media, and IFRC digital platforms. Connect with the [Global Disaster Preparedness Center](#) for support on developing messages and distributing messages on the Prepare Messages platform.