

# CONTENT

STEP 6: SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS - LESSONS FROM EXPERIENCE

## Step 6: Setting yourself up for success - lessons from experience

If your National Society wants to measure outcomes or impacts, you are more likely to be successful if the parties involved in designing your MEAL plan have already determined the approach and methodology, who will execute it, and when well before your s/EAP is activated or other early actions are implemented more broadly. This means that protocols, surveys and other tools, volunteers, and any necessary materials (e.g. tablets, phones, software licenses) should be pre-determined and ready for rapid training and deployment.

A common mistake National Societies make is waiting until after an activation to think concretely about monitoring and evaluation. While a lessons learned workshop can be organized after early action implementation, your team will get better data if the PDM is developed and planned for beforehand. Because most early actions do not seek to provide long-term impact, timely data collection is essential. For example, to measure whether cash or in-kind items mitigated food insecurity immediately after a flood, you would need to return to the community to collect data on food security indicators before the benefits of your assistance have waned. The precise timing of data collection will depend upon the methods and indicators you are using as well as the counterfactual scenario you are comparing to (when applicable). The table below provides a few (non-exhaustive) examples of common interventions and considerations for when to collect data.

| <b>Intervention &amp; expected duration</b> |                                                                                  | <b>Expected impact Notes on when to measure</b>                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Hazard (if applicable)</b>               |                                                                                  |                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Flood                                       | Water purification kits to last 2 weeks (during and immediately after the flood) | Reduction in cholera cases                                      | Cholera has an incubation period of 12 hours to 5 days. Data on illnesses experienced during and after the flood should be collected as soon as possible following the two weeks to ensure proper recall.                                                                                                                                                           |
| Drought                                     | Animal fodder to last until the next rains produce pasture (e.g. 3 months)       | Improve animal body condition and reduction in excess mortality | For body condition, you would want to measure at the end of lean season but before the rains arrive potentially allowing animals to recover once pasture is more widely available.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Drought                                     | Cash to spend on food / basic needs for 3 months                                 | Improved food consumption or security scores                    | Most food security indicators ask about food consumption for the preceding 7-days. One Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) asks households about the last 30 days. You should therefore collect this data after you would expect food consumption patterns to have diverged between the groups in question but before cash to spend on food has been exhausted. |

For more information on the timing of data collection see WFP's M&E guidance that is available in the [toolbox](#). Waiting until after an activation to begin planning an outcome or impact assessment, when the National Society is likely to be focused on implementation and on-going response, is likely to lead to delays that will compromise what you are able to measure.

No matter what approach you decide to take, defining the following will help to set you up for success:

- Define how and when you will monitor and evaluate your anticipatory action intervention or s/EAP activation (steps 1-3)
- Define/procure equipment and licenses you need (for example, phones, tablets, and/or licenses for digital survey data collection, e.g. Kobo or Open Data Kit).
- Define who will collect data and who will analyze it.
- Estimate a budget and identify where it will come from.

If you or someone on your MEAL team is interested in engaging regularly on MEAL for anticipatory action, the Anticipation Hub's MEAL Practitioner Group meets monthly to share experiences in monitoring and evaluation for anticipatory action. A link is available through the [toolbox](#).