CONTENT

STEP 6: ASSESS EXISTING CAPACITIES, STRATEGIES AND PLANS

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Anticipatory action builds upon the existing experience of the National Society in disaster risk reduction, early warning systems and response. Understanding how and where anticipatory action fits into and adds value to the existing preparedness, contingency and response strategies is essential for sustainable implementation. Many of the capacities required for anticipatory action already exist within National Societies. For example, strong volunteer networks, operational logistics systems, or experience with cash assistance or other sectoral interventions can all support anticipatory action initiatives.

The specific capacities required will depend on the approach chosen. For instance, community-based approaches may build on existing community engagement structures and disaster risk reduction programmes; imminent DREF activations may rely on timely decision-making and rapid response capacities; while supporting governments may require strong coordaintion with national authorities and technical agencies. When developing an s/EAP, you will work on strengthening capacities and institutional readiness for anticipatory action throughout the entire process. Both EAP templates include a section on the capacity of the National Society. For example, the full EAP asks you to do the following:

- *Describe how the National Society has operative and administrative capacity to implement the s/EAPs.*
- *Describe the National Society's experience in the implementation of the selected early actions (Livelihoods, including Cash and Voucher Assistance; WASH; Food Security; Shelter; etc.).*
- *If the National Society does not have experience in these areas, indicate the steps taken to improve its capacity in the respective sector to implement the s/EAP effectively and efficiently.*

There are different ways to assess existing capacities, strategies and plans and it depends on the National Society which of the options they would like to choose. It is recommended to build on a tool that your National Society already uses. An overview of the manifold assessment tools (OCAC, BOCA, SAF, CHS) the Movement offers may be found here.

- *Scoping study*: Those National Societies that have conducted a scoping study might already have an overview of operational and institutional capacities that enable anticipatory action.
- *Preparedness for Effective Response (PER process):* Using PER can also show where anticipatory action can contribute to improving the overall capacity of your National Society and provide a baseline capacity assessment against which to measure capacity strengthening down the line even if you do not conduct a full PER assessment. More complete guidance on the various ways to integrate PER and anticipatory action is available in the toolbox. PER processes (including all types of assessments: self-assessment, simulations, operational or post-operational) offer a step-by-step approach to identifying and prioritizing areas that require attention and resources to ensure that the National Society is effective, efficient and timely. A number of National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies are at various stages of the PER cycle. For an overview of the National Societies and their status, visit the GO Platform. For more information on building capacities from the beginning and throughout the process see Chapter 11 .
- *Internal review:* If you either have already a good overview of your capacities, you can also decide to use that or do a lighter internal review process through workshops and working sessions.

The steps described in this chapter aim to create the institutional, operational and partnership foundations required for anticipatory action. In many cases, these preparations will support the development of an s/EAP as the most formalized approach to anticipatory action within the Movement. However, the capacities, coordination mechanisms and institutional awareness developed through this process can also support other pathways, such as community-based approaches, imminent DREF activations or support to government agencies. Specific guidance on these approaches can be found in later chapters of this manual.