



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

# Adopting anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection to strengthen disaster preparedness and resilience: Learning from the ASEAN region

Webinar – 4 April 2022: Key takeaway messages





### **Moderator:**

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### **Presenter:**

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### **Opening and closing remarks:**

- Susana Juangco, Director - Office of Civil Defense, Philippines, Co-Chair ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) Working Group on Prevention and Mitigation
- Davide Zappa, Thematic Expert - Disaster Preparedness, DG ECHO
- Hang Thi Thanh Pham, Senior Resilience Officer - FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP)

### **Speakers:**

- Riyanti Djalante, Assistant Director - Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division, ASEAN
- Emma Flaherty, Thematic Lead - Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP)
- Tran Thuy Anh, Program Analyst - UN Women Viet Nam
- Lyca Sarenas, Chief of Staff - Ministry of Social Services and Development (MSSD), Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Philippines

This webinar was co-organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat, in close collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Regional technical working group on anticipatory action and support from the European Union. The contents of this webinar are the sole responsibility of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.



## Background

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This webinar, the fifth of a series on anticipatory action, entitled “Adopting anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection to strengthen disaster preparedness and resilience: Learning from the ASEAN region”, was organised by the [Association of Southeast Asian Nations \(ASEAN\)](#) secretariat, in close collaboration with the [Asia-Pacific Regional technical working group on anticipatory action](#) and with support from FAO’s Office of Emergencies and Resilience’s Knowledge Sharing Platform on Emergencies and Resilience, [KORE](#).

## Introduction

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Since May 2019, the FAO-led consortium of United Nations agencies, (WFP, UNICEF and UN Women), Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (German Red Cross and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) and NGOs (Save the Children International, People in Need, and Dan Church Aid) have been implementing the DG ECHO-funded project: Scaling up anticipatory action and shock responsive social protection with innovative use of climate risk information for disaster resilience in ASEAN. The ambition was to introduce new and innovative approaches in the implementation of the ASEAN agreement on disaster management and emergency response (AADMER) and its work programme.

Since its inception, the project has been implementing the ASEAN guidelines on disaster responsive social protection (ASEAN DRSP) to support country roadmaps in incorporating anticipatory action. Specific target countries included: Cambodia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Viet Nam.

In mid-October 2021, the project commissioned an independent external evaluation to assess the: (i) relevance of ECHO-supported interventions since 2017; (ii) efficiency and effectiveness of implementation encompassing partnerships, operational arrangements and resource utilization; (iii) achievement of results and impacts on capacity building of ASEAN member states, particularly project target countries and ASEAN; and (iv) cross-cutting issues including, inclusivity and resilience. The participatory review process involved all relevant stakeholders: beneficiaries, government officials, ASEAN sector bodies, implementing UN agencies, NGO partners, and others.

Against this background, the webinar specifically aimed to:

- present the key findings on the progress of advancing anticipatory action and SRSP in ASEAN and beyond, through an institutionalized approach;
- illustrate project results and lessons learned relevant to the adoption, institutionalization, and sustainable financing of anticipatory action and SRSP, including meaningful evidence of the project's COVID-19 cash transfer impacts on beneficiaries; and
- discuss recommendations for ASEAN member states, ASEAN, and humanitarian/development partners, for further scaling up and sustaining the proven approaches.

## SOME FIGURES

**343**  
Registered

**60**  
Countries  
represented

**+20**  
Organizations/ institutions



**212**  
Participants

Source of map: United Nations. 2020. Map of the World. Cited 6 April 2022. [un.org/geospatial/content/map-world](https://un.org/geospatial/content/map-world)

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# Key summary points

## Glossary

Collated messages from the speakers

**\*Anticipatory action:** actions triggered by a forecast and anticipate a shock

**\*Shock-responsive social protection (SRSP):** social protection systems and programmes that have been scaled up in order to provide support before or quickly after a shock

### 1. Reflecting on anticipatory action and shock responsive social protection in the ASEAN Region

Considerable progress has been achieved in advancing the concept of anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection (SRSP) at the regional level. Implementation of the approach at country level however, has been challenging as this requires major changes in government machinery and coordination with key stakeholders. Predominant donor-led financing of anticipatory action has been partly because major reforms in public financial management to support the flow of funds are required. This takes high-level commitments from, and collaboration with, multilateral development banks (MDBs) and Ministry of Finance (MOFs).

At the ASEAN level, the [AADMER Work Programme 2021-2025](#) supports disaster risk reduction and disaster management through inter-sectoral coordination, capacity building, innovations, and partnerships. The ASEAN disaster risk financing and insurance (ADRFI) provides an opportunity for taking anticipatory action financing forward in the region.

The COVID-19 pandemic offered governments an opportunity as well and the necessary incentives to put SRSP into practice. Furthermore, the timing of the COVID-19 cash transfer influenced beneficiaries' spending choices - preferring to spend on sustaining their livelihoods, contrary to prior the pandemic when acute basic needs were priority. While the cash





transfers shielded beneficiaries from negative coping strategies as a result of the crisis, the benefits were short-lived. In addition, capacity building supported through this emergency cash transfer provision was limited. Notwithstanding, there is an opportunity to set in place a systematic approach for building capacity while delivering cash transfers in the future.

In the Philippines, the MSSD - BARMM cash assistance program is used for anticipatory actions before crises occur and/or as part of the early recovery package from a disaster or internal displacement situation. The MSSD pilot program under the joint project on shock-responsive social protection has strengthened existing social protection systems in the Philippines. The project focused on:

- I. Mainstreaming risk informed social protection,
- II. Building capacity of the institutions,
- III. Improving poverty registry systems, inclusive targeting, and effective monitoring.

## **2. Main challenges and lessons learned**

- The concept of anticipatory action needs to be comprehensible and cohesive. Confusion over terminology has created a barrier for stakeholders to adopt and implement anticipatory action.
- Given the complexity of public finance management, securing more financial commitments from governments requires fostering trust and confidence in forecasting.



- Equally essential is the government and policy makers' political will to include anticipatory action in the government's regular budget. Similar to the case of MSSD in the Bangsamoro region of the Philippines, it is hoped that the pilot program on anticipatory action shall serve as proof of concept for inclusion in the government's annual budget.
- The expansion of eligibility, considering blind-spot groups such as near-poor (incl. informal workers) and newly poor households, is critical for improving inclusivity within the cash transfer scheme. Additionally, timely communication using local language through both digital and non-digital channels is required.
- To deliver anticipatory action (e.g., cash transfer) through social protection systems, the flow of funds through the public financial management at multiple administrative levels needs to be considered beyond changing anti-corruption laws.



### 3. Proposals for next steps and uptake

**Launch of ASEAN Framework on anticipatory action in disaster management:** The framework will guide the implementation of the approach at the regional level, whilst considering national level implementation, as more coordination at national level is required to decide on definition and decision on the trigger points for the anticipatory action.

**Evidence generation and sharing:** Strong evidence generation and sharing the evidence are recommended for government officials to push the anticipatory action agenda and implement the policy. It is also important to identify gaps and needs in types of evidence to enable government decision-making rather than feeding to already existing evidence.

**Uptake and promotion of anticipatory action and SRSP:** The sustainability of anticipatory actions will require the uptake of anticipatory action and SRSP by the governments, humanitarian and development partners. Both anticipatory action and SRSP should be widely advocated and promoted to ensure effective and efficient financing in readiness for disasters.

**Diverse stakeholder engagement:** The importance of considering layered risks and the complexity of risk financing cannot be stressed. For this reason, engaging and collaborating with various key actors including private sector, governments, and humanitarian organisations as well as supporting capacity building of these actors is essential.





## More information

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**Title:** Adopting anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection to strengthen disaster preparedness and resilience

**Subtitle:** Learning from the ASEAN region

**Date and time:** 4 April 2022

**Number of participants:** 149

**Collaborations:** FAO, UNWOMEN, ASEAN

### Resources

- [FAO Early Warning - Anticipatory Action \(EWAA\)](#)
- [Association of Southeast Asian Nations \(ASEAN\)](#)
- [Asia-Pacific Regional technical working group on anticipatory action](#)
- [ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response \(AADMER\)](#)
- [ASEAN Guidelines on Disaster Responsive Social Protection \(ASEAN DRSP Guidelines\)](#)
- [Anticipatory action for livelihood protection: A collective endeavour](#)
- [Anticipatory action, shock-responsive social protection and cash transfers in ASEAN: what are we learning and where do we go next? - Anticipation Hub \(anticipation-hub.org\)](#)



- [Changing the way we manage disasters: linking anticipatory action and social protection to protect agricultural livelihoods from shocks in Asia \(swapcard.com\)](#)
- [Early Action: The State of Play 2021](#)
- [Anticipatory Action: The Enabling Environment](#)
- [Linking Social Protection and Early Action - a game changer for people centred climate action?](#)
- [Key Messages: Linking Social Protection and Early Action - a game changer for people centred climate action?](#)
- The evaluation will be published soon. In the meantime, the related resources are available at: [Anticipatory action, shock-responsive social protection and cash transfers in ASEAN: what are we learning and where do we go next?](#)



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