



REPORT: **ANTICIPATORY ACTION AND RESILIENCE CONFERENCE**

27, June 2024, Nairobi, Kenya

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AA	Anticipatory Action
BRCiS	Building Resilient Communities in Somalia
CHC	Centre for Humanitarian Change
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EACRN	Eastern Africa Child Rights Network
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
JO	Jameel Observatory
IAWG	Inter-Agency Working Group
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
NLRC	Netherlands Red Cross
NDMA	National Drought Management Authority
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
SCI	Save the Children International
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TWG	Technical Working Group
WHH	Welthungerhilfe

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations..... 2

Introduction..... 4

Session Highlights 4

Session One: Opening Statements.....4

 Statement of the IAWG Director: Peter Burgess 4

 Statement of Save the Children International Regional Director: Yvonne Arunga 4

 Statement of the Head of Jameel Observatory: Guyo Roba 5

Session Two: Presentations5

 Presentation One: How can Anticipatory Action help prevent extreme weather events from turning into disasters that harm lives, livelihoods, and children’s futures?..... 5

 Presentation Two: Institutionalizing Anticipatory Action with Welthungerhilfe's Custodian Approach..... 6

 Presentation Three: The continuum of resilience, DRR, and anticipation from the BRCiS consortium perspective..... 7

 Presentation Four - Anticipatory Action for Displacement 7

Session Three: Panel Discussions8

Session Four: Wrap-Up and Closing Recommendations8

Appendix..... 10

Appendix 1: Speaker Profiles.....10

Appendix 2: List of Participants11

Appendix 3: Summary of Panel discussions13

 Panel One: What do we need to dial up to ensure that AA can contribute to resilience? 13

 Panel Two..... 16

Appendix 6: Forum Photos.21

Introduction

The Anticipatory Action and Resilience Conference took place on 27th June 2024 in Nairobi. It was convened by Save the Children International (SCI), in collaboration with the Jameel Observatory for Food Security Early Action (JO) and the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG). The conference brought together representatives from development partners, international aid agencies (I/NGOs, UN Agencies, Red Cross), donors, research institutions, and representatives of county governments (Kenya).

The hybrid workshop featured interactive panels, plenary discussions, and presentations. The consultations revolved around three main objectives: showcasing recent research on Anticipatory Action (AA) by the Jameel Observatory, providing a platform for other NGOs in the region to present their research and pilot initiatives on AA, and exploring how AA can be integrated into broader humanitarian and development initiatives – all with a focus on East Africa. The goal was to identify opportunities to scale up anticipatory action within wider resilience-building efforts. This report outlines the presentations and discussions that emerged from this forum.

Session Highlights

Session One: Opening Statements

Statement of the IAWG Director: Peter Burgess

This conference on Anticipatory Action (AA) and its potential contribution to resilience building is organized by the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG), a coordination and advocacy platform of NGOs working across Eastern and Central Africa, and co-convened by Save the Children International and the Jameel Observatory. The conference initially aimed to showcase recent research on AA by the Jameel Observatory but was expanded to provide a platform for other NGOs in the region to present their research and pilot initiatives on AA.

In addition to NGOs, the conference brought together other key stakeholders across the AA value chain. The aim was to move beyond showcasing individual NGO efforts and explore how AA can integrate into broader resilience initiatives to address recurrent and protracted crises in the region. The goal of this conference is to scale up anticipatory action within wider resilience-building efforts.

Statement of Save the Children International Regional Director: Yvonne Arunga

With the increasing attention to Anticipatory Action, humanitarian actors are increasingly addressing shocks based on reliable forecasts of events, rather than after them. This implies shifting from a reactive to a proactive approach, saving more lives, alleviating suffering, enabling quicker recovery, and reducing costs. However, Anticipatory Action has yet to reach its full potential due to several significant challenges. Key obstacles include a lack of predictable financing and fragmented coordination efforts. There is also a disconnect between the traditional humanitarian system, the development community, and national and

local levels of government. Additionally, issues such as insufficient cross-border collaboration and frameworks, leadership gaps, and a lack of evidence on best practices further impact on progress.

While the anticipatory action community has discussed AA for some time, it is now crucial to turn rhetoric into action. This requires a willingness to adapt financial instruments, as investing in AA is evidenced as more cost-effective than response efforts. Strengthening collaboration is also essential, as effective AA relies on data from a diverse range of actors working together to improve risk prediction accuracy. Additionally, a community-centric approach should be prioritized in AA interventions. Today's forum hopes to address these challenges, drawing on research and evidence to drive the momentum of AA, and to promote the integration of AA into overall programming.

Statement of the Head of Jameel Observatory: Guyo Roba

The Jameel Observatory (JO) is a research consortium focused on using data to catalyze Anticipatory Action and promote its integration into national processes and institutions. Through its research, the AA community has identified many longstanding issues, with financing being a primary concern; though evidence shows that AA is a cost-effective approach in Disaster Risk Management, there is a need to encourage further AA financing by deepening the evidence base. Many of JO's PhD students are dedicated to this and related efforts.

AA should not be viewed as an isolated intervention; it needs to be institutionalized and embedded in national approaches and structures. The current evidence supporting such integration is weak, highlighting the need for stronger evidence-based approaches to institutionalize AA at the national level. This forum aims to foster dialogue on collaborative approaches to address these issues.

Session Two: Presentations

Four presentations were delivered by NGOs working on Anticipatory Action in Eastern Africa. The presentations are annexed to this report, and a brief overview of the key points from each is presented below. The first two presentations were followed by a Q+A session, the most salient points of which are included in Session 4, Wrap-Up and Closing Recommendations.

Presentation One: How can Anticipatory Action help prevent extreme weather events from turning into disasters that harm lives, livelihoods, and children's futures?

Stephen Mutiso, Senior Food and Security Livelihoods Advisor, Save the Children.

With six years to the 2030 deadline, the SDG 2 of Zero Hunger is at risk of not being achieved. According to the latest [Global Report on Food Crises](#), nearly 282 million people in 59 countries/territories faced high levels of acute food insecurity. Although half of all crises are now predictable, anticipatory action has yet to be scaled up, with insufficient pre-arranged finance or systems in place. In response, Save the Children and the Jameel Observatory under the Food Security Early Action Partnership conducted three research studies on AA in extreme weather contexts (drought and floods, across Kenya and Somalia). The key emerging priorities and findings of this research are summarized below.

- **Support local actors for AA:** The tracking of early action in Kenya and Somalia and the [Dangerous Delays 2 research study](#) (2022) established that although local actors were the first to respond, the early warning did not lead to AA at scale in part due to funding limitations. Where funding exists, it is highly segmented into climate change, response, & resilience. *To scale AA, it should be integrated into broader disaster risk management systems, with flexible, coordinated and increased funding.*
- **Enhance access and trust in localized early warning information:** A [2023 research study on Anticipatory Action during protracted droughts](#) found that, although early warning information was available, it was often too scientific, technical and inaccessible, leading to low awareness and trust among the communities at risk. *Efforts should focus on making early warning information more accessible and trustworthy for local communities.*
- **Embed AA in wider disaster risk management systems:** the research showed that longer term interventions and systems are needed to support Anticipatory Action such as Disaster Risk Reduction measures for flooding, as well as the development of livelihood protection strategies for families to turn to when crises loom. To this end AA must be a focus of humanitarian, development and climate actors.
- **Embed AA in Government Systems:** Save the Children has collaborated with Wajir and Garissa County governments in Kenya (whose representatives attended the conference) to integrate anticipatory action into county-level plans, policies, and budgets, particularly within County Integrated Development Plans (CIPD). This project demonstrates that mainstreaming AA into government processes is feasible, as shown by Wajir County, which has allocated funds specifically for Disaster Risk Management interventions.

Presentation Two: Institutionalizing Anticipatory Action with Welthungerhilfe's Custodian Approach *Camilla Schynoll, Programmes Expert, Welthungerhilfe.*

The ["Anticipatory Action in 2022: A Global Overview"](#) report revealed that 71 organizations had active Anticipatory Action (AA) frameworks in 2022, including 13 by WHH, with 7 implemented by local NGOs. In Kenya, WHH is implementing AA in Marsabit, Samburu, and Isiolo Counties, a cross-border project in Marsabit (Kenya) and Oromiya (Ethiopia), and a pilot project in Turkana County. These projects use the custodian approach, which supports localization by having local at-risk communities act as custodians of Early Action Protocols (EAP). Priority recommendations for expanding AA, as identified through the implementation of the custodian approach, include:

- **Expand the Custodian Approach in AA:** Initiatives should actively involve local actors in anticipatory humanitarian action planning, learning, and EAP development. This ensures AA activities are culturally sensitive, contextually relevant, and incorporate local knowledge and expertise. Incorporating local knowledge and expertise is crucial, as demonstrated by successful trigger activation through community involvement in WHH's projects in Zimbabwe.
- **Integrate AA into National and Local Policies:** Increase support for incorporating AA into government-led systems including policies, laws, and frameworks. It is particularly important to advocate for dedicated AA financing within government disaster management budgets. For instance, in Kenya,

funds allocated for emergency operations cannot be used for AA, despite a strong interest in building community resilience.

- **Expand AA to Various Hazards:** Apply Anticipatory Action to a wide range of hazards, including drought, flooding and conflict, as demonstrated by WHH's project in northern Kenya.
- **Possibility to run AA on a cross-border basis:** Enhance collaboration to develop AA frameworks on cross-border projects.

Presentation Three: The continuum of resilience, DRR, and anticipation from the BRCiS consortium perspective

Perrine Piton, BRCiS Chief of Party, Norwegian Refugee Council.

Building Resilient Communities in Somalia (BRCiS) is a humanitarian consortium established in 2013 to help Somali communities develop capacities to manage hazards and shocks for a better future. The consortium implements continuous projects and is currently implementing the BRCiS 3 project which is the subject of this presentation. Key highlights of the project from the presentation are summarized below:

- **Continuum vs. Contiguum:** While "contiguum" is an ill-defined term, it is used in BRCiS to describe the holistic and complex nature of responses in Somalia, as opposed to a linear "continuum" approach. Unlike a sequenced response of before, during, and after crises, "contiguum" captures the simultaneous and overlapping actions required in Somalia, with development actions continuing or even starting in emergency phases, and continuing under a long-term commitment.
- **Resilience Thinking - Keeping eyes on the shock:** The BRCiS project emphasizes flexibility, focusing on evolving priorities rather than rigidly adhering to predefined phases of humanitarian, resilience, or development work. BRCiS teams are trained to prioritize actions that support existing resilience capacities without undermining them, adapting to what is most important at any given moment.
- **Localized Context Monitoring:** The project employs community-led early warning systems, where local communities collect data and are involved in dialogue to understand their roles. This localized approach builds trust in early warning systems and fosters community-led responses, as local data collection encourages active involvement in AA.
- **Funding Strategies:** Due to limited funding, clear prioritization of actions is important. During the El Niño response, the project set aside funds for specific pre-determined triggers, highlighting the need for strategic action when resources are scarce. The project also underscored the importance of multi-year funding and flexible/ open-ended budgeting to adapt to evolving needs without rigid activity descriptions.

Presentation Four- Anticipatory Action for Displacement

Harriet Holder, Regional Head of Programmes, Danish Refugee Council.

The Danish Refugee Council has been implementing Anticipatory Actions to address both climate hazards and conflict-induced displacement. The organization has been testing various AA models across different countries in the region. However, it continues to face challenges, highlighting the need for further research. Here is a brief overview of the key takeaways from this presentation:

- **Factoring AA in conflict situations and linking AA to resilience:** To ensure that Anticipatory Action is relevant and integrated into resilience programmes, it must address conflict-induced displacement, especially in the context of East Africa. Currently, AA approaches focusing on such displacement lack sufficient evidence for broader credibility within the humanitarian community. While AA initiatives for displacement are present in the region, they are predominantly focused on climate hazards rather than conflict. To fit AA into a broader resilience framework, which encompasses more than just climate resilience, AA must also address conflict. For example, in South Sudan, DRC is piloting protection and peacebuilding activities in anticipation of conflict events.
- **Putting communities at the heart of AA to ensure effectiveness, and inclusion of the most vulnerable:** This should entail the establishment of local community-level committees, to be involved in the design of EWS and triggers, the identification of appropriate AA – Early Action interventions, monitoring of the situation vis-à-vis the triggers, and activation of the response plan.
- **Building enough evidence for AA and crowding in additional funding without reducing emergency funding:** To support the scaling of AA effectively, especially in displacement, it is vital to gather enough data on its effectiveness and cost-efficiency compared to traditional emergency responses. This evidence will also highlight how AA can provide a more dignified response. DRC presented the specific example of the impact of AA to floods in Somalia, compared to standard emergency response measures, The goal is to attract additional funding for AA without reducing existing emergency funds, and not viewing it as a zero-sum game. It is also important not to divert emergency funding to AA with the hope it will prevent the use of emergency funds, but to secure new resources specifically for AA initiatives.

Session Three: Panel Discussions

Two separate panel discussions were held, addressing the overarching theme of “What do we need to dial up to ensure that AA can better contribute to resilience?”

A total of six panelists were asked to address a series of questions, and Q+A sessions followed. The discussions have been summarized in Appendix 5, and the key recommendations captured in Session Four, below.

Session Four: Wrap-Up and Closing Recommendations

Acknowledging that Anticipatory Action is not a new concept or approach, the conference identified several emerging priority issues to be addressed, both through the ongoing research agenda and as best practice, to generate evidence to further advance Anticipatory Action as an effective and cost-efficient approach to Disaster Risk Management. No single solution can effectively scale up AA and enhance its contribution to resilience, and research and evidence must be translated into action to make a tangible impact. The following are the key recommendations from the conference:

- **Localizing Early Warning and Anticipatory Action:** The importance of drawing on, and building, local capacities was emphasized, including acknowledging existing local knowledge and practices, and effectively incorporating them when establishing early warning systems and AA frameworks at local,

national and regional levels. Local actors should be active participants in the decision-making, design, and monitoring of AA, rather than just end beneficiaries. There were several requests to showcase examples of locally-led early warning systems and AA initiatives, moving beyond theoretical discussions.

- **De-mystifying Research and Data:** Research is often done in silos, and remains disconnected from practitioners, be they humanitarian agencies, development partners, or government; it is critical to have harmonized and shared data repositories. Additionally, the data and methodology underpinning Early Warning Systems and AA need to be accessible to, and understood, trusted and accepted by, local communities – and there needs to be clear transmission of locally-generated early warnings into national EWS systems (and vice versa). Furthermore, there needs to be a shift from predicting hazards or conflict to forecasting their potential impacts.
- **Institutionalizing AA:** AA should not be seen as a standalone project-based intervention. It needs to be embedded in local, national and regional frameworks, policies, plans and systems to ensure ownership, nurture its further scale-up, to promote a harmonized and agreed approach and to enhance its contribution to resilience-building, including through linkages to safety nets and other social protection mechanisms.
- **Integrating AA into broader Disaster Risk Management Frameworks:** With the climate crisis, conflict, acute food insecurity and displacement all becoming part of a “new normal” in Eastern Africa, there is a need to ensure that AA forms part of a holistic and risk-informed approach to DRM, encompassing preparedness, mitigation, response and ongoing resilience and development support after the initial shock and AA intervention.
- **Coordinating AA:** At present, there are too many individual AA policies, approaches and guidelines. Common frameworks, triggers and response packages are needed at both aid agency and donor level, to promote a harmonized and agreed approach, leading to increased effectiveness and impact in saving lives and livelihoods.
- **Addressing AA in Conflict Situations:** Conflict-sensitive AA programming in the Horn of Africa was highlighted as a gap, which needs to be addressed. The establishment of community-level peace committees can facilitate preemptive dialogue, reducing tensions and mitigating conflict risks. Particular attention should be given to the integration of Protection, as well as the role of cash as an AA modality, in conflict contexts.
- **Implementing Cross-Border Interventions in AA:** There is a need for increased attention to cross-border interventions, both for climate-driven crises (drought, floods) and conflict – and especially for mobile populations such as pastoralists. There is a specific role for Regional Organizations, such as IGAD, in this.
- **Contextualizing Anticipatory Action:** For AA to be effective, it needs to take into consideration the different social contexts including the economic, geographic, and gender contexts.
- **Funding:** Additional funding is required to scale up AA, but there are several barriers to be overcome. At the government level, there are challenges in reallocating budgets designed for emergency response to AA, or from one administrative level to another. Governments are often reluctant to declare emergencies in advance: under an AA approach, donors should not wait for such declarations

before releasing funds. Also at donor level, there is a need for more flexible, multi-year funding and better engagement of development donors, including IFIs. This latter is vital to ensure continued engagement with communities after the AA and emergency response. At responder level, given the increasing role of climate as a driver of crisis, agencies should also seek to access and leverage climate financing to further scale up AA.

- **Linking Research to Curriculum Development and Education:** There is a significant body of research into AA, and it is important to integrate this research into curriculum development at schools and institutions of higher learning to ensure that the findings continue to be amplified, applied and to shape trainings at various levels.

The conference re-affirmed the importance of developing a structured research agenda into AA and resilience, and shaping an action agenda that builds on this research.

In his final summing-up, Guyo Roba, Head of the Jameel Observatory observed: Although this was a small dialogue, in future forums we need to embrace and continuously address these critical questions together. There was significant learning in this conference on both emerging and longstanding issues. We need to build on these insights, continue the conversation, and integrate it into other areas within the AA ecosystem. In the long run, it is essential to align AA with government frameworks for development and to advance their understanding of AA as a vital approach to addressing climatic and other crises.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Speaker Profiles

Sirak Temesgen is a development professional with 20 years of extensive experience in Disaster Risk Reduction, Anticipatory Action, Climate Change Adaptation, nature-based solutions, and resilience building in different contexts across Africa and the Middle East. He currently serves as a Roving Resilience Advisor for the Netherlands Red Cross, based in Nairobi, Kenya.

Tahira Mohamed serves as a post-doctoral fellow at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Nairobi. She examines the nexus between development programmes and humanitarian support, exploring the institutional barriers to linking development-humanitarian in preventing food crises among the pastoralists and agro-pastoralist communities in the Horn of Africa.

Olivier Brouant is the Rapid Response Coordinator and Disaster Preparedness Thematic Expert in Eastern and Southern Africa for the ECHO Regional Office. He has extensive knowledge and over 20 years of experience in project management, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation during major disaster response, in multiple different contexts across Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Guyo Roba is the Head of the Jameel Observatory, hosted at ILRI in Nairobi. He is a dryland specialist, with over 13 years of professional experience in natural resources and drylands management and livestock value chain development, with different international organizations. Guyo originates from

Borana pastoralist community in Northern Kenya and has specific technical experience working with pastoralist and agro-pastoralists in East and Southern Africa.

Brenda Lazarus is a Food Security and Early Warning Economist with FAO's Subregional Office for Eastern Office and is based in Nairobi, Kenya. Brenda advises on emergency needs assessments, early warning systems, and food security analysis to advance FAO's Anticipatory Action programmes in the East Africa region. She also co-leads, along with IGAD, the East Africa Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG).

Benedict Odiga Omillo is the Executive Director of the Eastern Africa Child Rights Network (EACRN). Benedict has extensive experience in project management, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. He is a strong believer in CSO partnerships and collaborations for greater impact and transformation.

Appendix 2: List of Participants

No.	Participants Name	Organization
In-person		
1.	Abdihakim Khalif	Wajir County Government
2.	Abdikadir Hussein Alasow	Wajir County Government
3.	Alfred Ejem	Mercy Corps
4.	Benedict Omillo	The Eastern Africa Child Rights Network
5.	Camilla Schynoll	Welthungerhilfe (WHH)
6.	David Njomo	Save the Children
7.	Dennis Wangai Njoroge	The Eastern Africa Child Rights Network
8.	Enock Nyakundi	Save the Children
9.	Esther Waithagu	Save the Children
10.	Hannah Ndungu	ADRA
11.	Jessica Saulle	Save the Children
12.	John Mwangi	Save the Children
13.	Khangai Odima	Norwegian Refugee Council
14.	Lucy Kithinji	Events Consultant
15.	Mohamed Omar	Islamic Relief Worldwide
16.	Olivier Brouant	DG ECHO, EU
17.	Peter Burgess	IAWG
18.	Sapenzie Ojiambo	CaLP Network
19.	Sirak Temesgen	Netherlands Red Cross
20.	Stephen Mutiso	Save the Children
21.	Tahira Mohammed	Jameel Observatory
22.	Thomas Lay	Save the Children

23.	Yvonne Arunga	Save the Children
On-line		
1.	Andrea Martinotti	INTERSOS
2.	Maurice Onyango	PLAN International
3.	Guyo Roba	Jameel Observatory
4.	Barzil Mwawughanga	World Vision
5.	Shaswat Saraf	International Rescue Committee
6.	Aya Mohanna	UNDP
7.	Alexander Fenwick	Welthungerhilfe (WHH)
8.	Harriet Holder	Danish Refugee Council
9.	Justus Rinnert	DG ECHO, EU
10.	Lameck Asava	Save the Children
11.	Maina Kingori	CARE
12.	Olga Petryniak	Mercy Corps
13.	Martin Muthukia	International Peace Support Training Centre
14.	Calogero Di Gloria	DG ECHO, EU
15.	Karoline Rosholm	Norwegian Refugee Council
16.	Lieke van de Wiel	UNICEF
17.	Alistair Cowan	Danish Refugee Council
18.	Martina Granato	COOPI
19.	Amina Abdulla	CONCERN
20.	Kim Kristensen	FAO
21.	Simon Girmaw	UNHCR
22.	Brian Kisorio	CARE
23.	Dorcas Wangu	OXFAM
24.	Alexander Kjaerum	Danish Refugee Council
25.	Raymond Muhanji	World Vision
26.	Leah Wainaina	Welthungerhilfe (WHH)
27.	Oscar Tapera	UNICEF
28.	Baseme Kulimushi	UNHCR
29.	Perrine Piton	Norwegian Refugee Council
30.	Joanne Grace	Save the Children
31.	Laura Swift	Save the Children
32.	Brenda Lazarus	FAO
33.	Donald Otieno	World Vision
34.	Tesfaye Lakew	WFP
35.	Abnet Mulugeta	WFP
36.	Alex Okello	UNICEF

Appendix 3: Summary of Panel discussions

Panel One: What do we need to dial up to ensure that AA can contribute to resilience?

This panel focused on what Anticipatory Action actors need to enhance to ensure that AA contributes more effectively to resilience. Three panelists were each asked two questions; their responses are captured below, and a Q+A session followed. The session was moderated by Jessica Saulle, Humanitarian Technical and AA Lead at SCI.

Panelist 1: Sirak Temesgen, Regional Integrated Risk Management Delegate for East Africa: Netherlands Red Cross (NLRC)

a) *From the presentations and your own experience, what are the necessary developments enabling the contribution of Anticipatory Action to the larger resilience agenda?*

- **Strategic development:** There has been good momentum in the last few years supporting AA, especially with the institutionalization of AA, as demonstrated by the embedding of AA into the CIPD in Wajir and Garissa Counties. The Netherlands Red Cross has been active at the continental level, developing a Climate Change and Adaptation Resilient Strategy that has AA as one of the foci. Additionally, the NLRC has engaged with the [IGAD roadmap on AA](#) and participated in country-level initiatives, such as [Ethiopia's Multi-Hazard Impact-Based Forecasting and Early Warning Roadmap \(2023-2030\)](#). It has also been involved in [Ethiopia's recent development of the National Anticipation Framework for drought](#), which brings together various actors to create a harmonized AA approach.
- **State of AA funding:** There has been a notable shift among donors towards supporting Anticipatory Action. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has exemplified this by allocating 12% of its funding to AA whereby in 2023, 9 million CHF (\$10 million) was designated for AA. The goal is to increase this allocation to 25% by 2030.
- **Shift to Impact-Based Forecasting:** The focus is transitioning from predicting weather conditions to forecasting the potential impacts of those conditions. Although collecting impact data is challenging, it is more beneficial as it provides insights into effects such as lives saved.
- **Increased Recognition of Local Actors:** There is growing acknowledgment of the crucial role that local actors and communities play at the operational level, particularly in early action and response. The Red Cross movement consistently promotes not only response efforts but also anticipatory actions when working with National Societies and communities.
- **Codesigning Early Action with Communities:** Collaborating with communities to design early action strategies addresses challenges related to the accessibility, understandability, and applicability of early warning information.

b) *We have heard today that there is often a lack of functioning coordination around early warning information, triggers, and anticipatory actions at various levels. What can be done to improve this gap?*

Addressing this gap requires addressing underlying challenges:

- **Capacity Building:** While governments should lead AA coordination, many countries lack sufficient capacity. Aid agencies should support government institutions in this coordination mandate. For instance, NLRC prioritizes enhancing coordination capacity within Ethiopia's Disaster Risk Management Commission.
- **Information Sharing:** Effective AA coordination is hindered by inadequate information sharing among agencies where at times agencies don't know what others are doing or supporting. Establishing a common platform for information exchange, such as NLRC's support for Ethiopia's Emergency Operations Centre and IGAD's Hazard Watch, can alleviate this bottleneck.
- **Political Commitment:** Encouraging agencies to collaborate on common triggers necessitates political commitment. The question is whether agencies are willing to be coordinated and to have common triggers. Donors can leverage their influence to incentivize coordination mechanisms, ensuring agencies align their efforts.

Panelist 2: Tahira Mohamed, Research Fellow: Jameel Observatory.

a) From the presentations and your own experience, what are the necessary developments enabling the contribution of Anticipatory Action to the larger resilience agenda?

- **Local Agency Empowerment:** The prominence of local agencies in the localization agenda has been growing, as demonstrated by recent presentations and practices on the ground. However, to boost this agenda, several key issues must be addressed. It is crucial not only to work with communities but also to integrate their practices into planning to ensure local practices are incorporated into broader policies and frameworks. For example, my PhD research on moral economy highlighted practices such as social solidarity, distribution, and livestock transfer, which are vital in pastoral communities. Anticipatory actions like loaning animals or veterinary supplies before a crisis are common but often overlooked in major documents. We need to find ways to build on and support these practices. Although there is amazing research on subjects like community needs and early warning systems, it often remains unintegrated into frameworks like the IGAD AA roadmap. Addressing this integration gap for local knowledge is essential for effective anticipatory action. The "[Dangerous Delay 2](#)" report by Save the Children, for example, emphasizes the importance of local practices such as diaspora remittances and wealth distribution taxes, which can be utilized to protect livelihoods.
- **Changes Among Pastoralists:** Pastoralists have undergone significant changes, particularly with increased access to technology, such as mobile banking platforms like M-Pesa, which play an important role in social assistance. Anticipatory Action activities need to evolve and align with these community changes, ensuring they are relevant and effective in the current context.
- **Harmonizing Data Management:** although there is extensive research, especially on communities and AA, this research is often done in silos and is fragmented between different agencies such as development partners, and the government. It is critical to have harmonized data management to facilitate the effective dissection and dissemination of data to communities.

b) *Given your experience in working with pastoralist communities in Northern Kenya and your current role as a researcher, what are the shifts you would wish to see in DRR to scale AA and make it more effective for communities?*

- **Create Civic Awareness:** Facilitate community understanding and internalization of AA through civic awareness campaigns. Despite the availability of information, local communities may not fully internalize it without targeted awareness efforts.
- **Contextualize Frameworks:** As there are different frameworks and guidelines, there is a need to merge them to prevent agency silos and achieve collective goals more effectively.
- **Shift to Outcome-Based Analysis:** Move from input-focused to outcome-driven analysis in research and programme implementation. Connecting research findings directly to existing programmes, for example, ensures research ideas are utilized effectively and sustainably.
- **Understanding Different Social Contexts:** For agencies that are working in conflict settings, their AA approach is different from stable states. Similarly, social differentiation in the community should be taken into account such as women's needs, as exemplified by the presentation where men responded better to early warning as compared to women. For AA to be effective, it needs to take into consideration, the different social contexts including the economic, geographic, and gender contexts as well as timeframes.

Panelist 3: Olivier Brouant, Rapid Response Coordinator: DG ECHO

a) *What do you see as donors' main barriers and enablers to scaling up Anticipatory Action? And where do you see opportunities to draw on climate financing for AA?"*

ECHO, as a donor, has been supporting initiatives by organizations like the Red Cross and DRC on displacement and conflict risk, and has institutionalized Crisis Modifiers to allow early action. Moving forward, ECHO plans to assess its role in AA and strategize on scaling up support. ECHO believes in the effectiveness of AA, emphasizing the importance of acting preemptively to build community resilience and reduce reliance on humanitarian aid.

Currently, AA initiatives exist at the project or organizational level but lack cohesion and synchronization in response or triggers. To scale up AA effectively, the following steps are proposed:

- Involve authorities to integrate risk analysis into development planning,
- Engage communities in defining trigger systems that are easily understood and enable rapid responses.
- Establish unified trigger systems with harmonized definitions to ensure that responses will not be isolated but integrated among different stakeholders.
- Incorporate climate sensitivity into all projects to enhance resilience-building efforts and also leverage opportunities in climate financing to scale up AA effectively.
- Advocate for central authorities and development banks to allocate a significant portion of budgets towards AA, acknowledging that the increasing frequency of disasters cannot be met by humanitarian assistance, despite increasing allocations.

Panel Two

Three panelists were each asked 2-3 questions; their responses are captured below, and a Q+A session followed. The session was moderated by Thomas Lay, Regional Humanitarian Director at SCI.

Panelist 1: Guyo Roba, Head of Jameel Observatory

a) The Jameel Observatory has been researching the climatic effects of livelihoods across the region. Drawing on this research, do you have any insights on how we can scale Anticipatory Action?

The Jameel Observatory (JO) is an international research programme led by the University of Edinburgh. Over the past two years, the programme has involved multiple PhD students and two post-doctoral fellows conducting action research. The research presented today, on AA in the context of extreme weather phenomena, is part of the Observatory's work. Additionally, the post-doctoral fellows have submitted the initial findings of their fieldwork. Samuel Derbyshire has been assessing the triggers used in drought early warning systems and exploring how to develop these triggers from below. Tahira Mohamed has been examining the nexus between resilience programming and humanitarian responses in the Horn of Africa.

Although there is no current research output, a study in Turkana examined the consistency of drought triggers at the macro level and what local people consider important triggers. Early findings suggest a gradual shift in drought response over the past few years, moving from food aid to cash transfers. Previously, food aid was quickly reinvested into local response mechanisms and redistributed to other community members who had provided support during times of need, in a traditional reciprocal arrangement. In contrast, the cash transfer system is highly individualized. While cash transfers contribute to resilience building, they do not align with traditional local response mechanisms. This understanding is crucial for assessing how our drought responses either distort or build upon locally appropriate responses, and for understanding how to establish a nexus between resilience programming and humanitarian efforts.

When the Observatory began, its activities were guided by five research questions: data for effective AA, financing for AA, effective early action at the community level, coordinating for effective AA, and trust in data for early AA. The latter is being explored through small projects and impact collaboration. PhD students are also investigating the alignment between local responses and contemporary early warning systems, focusing on how AA can be made more cost-effective by improving current models. Although early findings from the PhD studies are not yet available, the observatory has several ongoing projects. However, more evidence is needed to guide the scale-up of AA. Further exploration and evidence-building through the observatory's ongoing research and smaller projects are necessary to generate outputs that can inform AA scaling.

b) Can you identify the political barriers we might see in taking AA to scale and are there any other barriers?

When the JO began, it initiated mini-dialogues to ground AA discussions and refine research topics for PhD students. One dialogue focused on enablers and blockers of AA. Key barriers identified include:

- **Political Structure Fragmentation:** in terms of how government connects at the national, sub-national, and local levels and how politics are structured across this. In Kenya for example, some mandates are delegated to the county level, yet the resources are at the national level. In such scenarios, political structures can either support or hinder AA initiatives.
- **Institutional Rigidity:** National frameworks define institutional mandates of different institutions at the local and national levels, influencing how institutions operate within the AA space. This rigidity can impact the advancement of AA agendas, depending on how institutions leverage their mandates and power.
- **Capacity Challenges:** Despite increasing awareness of AA, there remains a perception that AA is entirely new rather than an evolved approach. Clarifying the operational aspects and value of AA is important to address this capacity barrier. JO is actively researching these barriers, particularly focusing on early warning systems from below through an impact collaboration project.

c) What ideas or topics do you think are important but haven't been discussed today that could influence the next steps of our deliberation?

Over the last two years, significant progress has been made in gaining traction on AA knowledge and evidence, using it to advance the course of AA. However, there is a pressing need to move beyond this momentum and make sustained investments in both standalone and regional projects. AA stakeholders in the region have actively participated in global platforms such as the Anticipation Hub. Currently, the regional AA TWG led by IGAD is a positive step towards bringing regional-relevant knowledge into a space where it will be absorbed and utilised.

It is however important to consider: do we view knowledge and evidence as mere add-ons or as strong pillars in the AA discourse? While AA is gaining traction, without robust evidence, the agenda risks losing momentum. Therefore, sustained investments in knowledge and evidence are essential to solidify AA's foundation and upscaling.

Panelist 2: Brenda Lazarus, Food Security and Early Warning Economist: FAO

a) What do you see as some of the key opportunities to better connect AA to wider Disaster Risk Management systems, and at scale?

AA is a component of the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) system, but many current projects are small-scale and struggle to scale up AA. Proposed strategies for scaling AA and integrating it into wider DRM systems include:

- **Improving Coordination and Harmonizing Approaches for AA:** In 2021, IGAD and Tufts University conducted a [study on the challenges of linking early warning systems in the East African region](#). Despite having effective early warning systems, these often do not translate into AA. One key takeaway

from the study is the lack of harmonized AA frameworks and systems in the humanitarian sector, resulting in a fragmented approach where agencies use different early warning systems, triggers, and definitions of AA. To upscale AA, there is a need for joint AA frameworks to create a harmonized approach, similar to the emergency response sector. The question then is how to improve coordination. At the regional level, efforts are underway to develop an AA technical working group to establish these frameworks. Notably, the absence of these coordinating mechanisms presents an opportunity for AA actors to establish them according to their needs and preferences.

- **Embedding AA into Relevant National Policies:** This involves ensuring government ownership and will require capacity-building efforts. The IGAD roadmap outlines numerous activities aimed at integrating AA at the national level¹.
- **Addressing Financing of AA:** One reason AA is not scaled up is the reliance on multi-year pre-arranged funding, which often arrives too late, turning AA into emergency response programmes. To address this issue, AA funding should be shifted from the humanitarian side to the development side. This shift would promote an integrated approach within the DRR system and reduce competition with the humanitarian side for AA funding.
- **Timely Implementation of AA:** To ensure successful AA programmes, it is crucial to act promptly when triggers are activated. As we work on scaling AA, we must equally prioritize preparedness despite its challenges, scaling both aspects together.

b) How can we best apply what we have heard so far today in a conflict situation?

- **Ensure Conflict-Sensitive Programming and Integrate Protection Components into AA:** In the East African region, many areas experience conflicts related to armed disputes or natural resources. However, many programmes lack experts in conflict analysis and protection. It is essential to involve these experts in planning AA programmes to ensure that conflict sensitivity and protection are adequately addressed.
- **Ensure integration of context analysis in AA** to assess the potential impact of programmes on conflict dynamics. Additionally, ensure active community involvement at all stages of programming and planning.

c) Can you identify the political barriers we might see in taking AA to scale and are there any other barriers?

- **Challenges in Funding AA and Preparedness:** Funding anticipatory action and preparedness is often overshadowed by easier funding for humanitarian responses due to political dynamics. Donors typically wait for governments to declare states of emergency before supporting AA programmes. For example, despite worsening conditions evident after two failed rainy seasons a few years ago, many donors hesitated to fund the large-scale AA initiatives needed because governments had not declared emergencies.

¹ IGAD were invited to this conference to present the AA Roadmap and to introduce the Technical Working Group, but were unable to attend.

- **Politicization of Early Warning Information:** Early warning information is heavily politicized in East Africa and globally. Implementing AA based on early warning systems is politicized posing challenges in trigger mechanisms. For instance, during last year's El Niño, despite clear indications of its approach to East Africa, political factors delayed adequate preparedness and the timely implementation of necessary AA activities.
- Apart from political barriers, challenges include capacity gaps, coordination issues, and communication gaps between early warning staff, programme personnel, and other development/humanitarian actors.

d. What ideas or topics do you think are important but haven't been discussed today that could influence the next steps of our deliberation?

We've discussed numerous challenges facing AA. Let's shift focus and highlight the success stories of AA in the region, exploring how to build upon them. There are many examples of successful AA initiatives in the region, like linking AA with social protection schemes in the East African region.

Panelist 3: Benedict Omillo, Executive Director: EACRN

a. Given the diverse AA ecosystem, what advice would you give to multilateral actors that would like to be involved in the AA space to enable a flourishing ecosystem at the local level?

To foster a thriving AA ecosystem at the local level, multilateral actors should consider the following:

- **Collaboration and Multi-Faceted Approach in Bridging Knowledge Gaps:** One of the key requirements at the local level is capacitating Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), starting with foundational AA understanding and expanding to broader contexts beyond extreme weather events like droughts and floods. Wajir County is a good example, as embedding AA in the county started with knowledge acquisition.
- **Child-Centric Approach to AA to Address Their Vulnerability in Disasters.** Meaningfully engage children and youth to incorporate their perspectives and participation in AA recognizing that youth ownership can foster community-wide ownership of AA initiatives. Notably, inclusivity should be broad and incorporate other aspects such as gender dynamics in addressing knowledge gaps: one of the presentations indicated that men responded better than women to early warning systems.
- **Political Understanding of Issues Impacting AA.** Acknowledge and navigate political dynamics impacting AA at the local level. Local administration involvement is critical; understand local political structures and influencers to effectively implement AA measures that are more effective.
- **Importance of Data in AA:** Data plays a vital role in AA, particularly in assessing impacts and determining necessary responses such as identifying affected households and required supplies during disasters. Despite its significance, data is often overlooked. Therefore, AA actors should prioritize leveraging local knowledge to better understand ground realities and enhance the effectiveness of AA interventions.

- **Enhancing a Localized Approach in AA:** To complement expert AA knowledge, prioritize a localized approach. Identify community ambassadors who can offer local insights, translate information, and advocate to other stakeholders, including youth. This approach supports effective responses to early warnings, such as through evacuation initiatives.
- **Promote both Local and International Organizations:** Begin by building capacity across all levels to ensure effective coordination. This collaboration should be inclusive and mindful of intersectionality and capacity gaps.

b. What ideas or topics do you think are important but haven't been discussed today that could influence the next steps of our deliberation?

To reiterate the importance of collaboration, disseminating AA knowledge, engaging with local communities, leveraging local knowledge, and integrating AA into government policies with dedicated budget allocations. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) also play a critical role in scaling AA; when fundraising, they should prioritize including an AA component.

Appendix 6: Forum Photos.



Camilla Schynoll (WHH) giving a presentation on Institutionalizing Anticipatory Action with Welthungerhilfe's Custodian Approach.



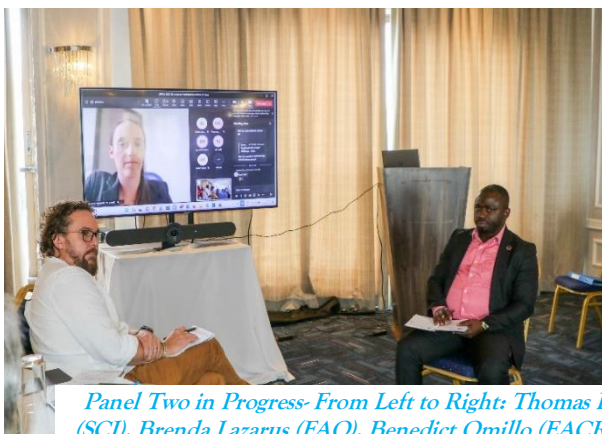
A cross-section of the attendees engaged in the plenary discussion.



Stephen Mutiso (SCI) presenting research done for AA in the context of extreme weather.



Panel One in Progress- From left to Right: Jessica Saulle (SCI), Tahira Mohamed (JO), Olivier Brouant (ECHO).



Panel Two in Progress- From Left to Right: Thomas Lay (SCI), Brenda Lazarus (FAO), Benedict Omillo (EACRN).



Peter Burgess (IAWG) giving the opening remarks.