

IMPACT STORY
**FROM PILOT
TO POLICY: HOW
GOVERNMENTS
ARE LEADING
ANTICIPATORY
ACTION**



Credits

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Cover photo: Magdalena Innocent, 42, a mother of eight, lives in Boronji, a flood-prone community in Yola North LGA, Adamawa State. With anticipatory cash assistance from WFP, she was able to buy a goat, essential food items, and airtight containers to safely store grains in preparation for potential flooding. Credit: UNOCHA/Onwe

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“When we stood together in Adamawa, humanitarian partners and Government officials side by side, we didn’t see the usual aftermath of floods. We saw families who still had their homes, farmers who still had their seeds and resilient communities who still had their dignity... We refuse to return to a system that only arrives after hope has drowned.”

Inna Audu, Special Adviser to the Vice President of Nigeria

Following the activation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)-facilitated anticipatory action framework for flooding in Nigeria in September 2025.

Summary

Moments like this are becoming more common as governments around the world begin to act before a climate disaster.

The trend is clear: climate shocks are coming in faster cycles. In Cuba, Hurricane Melissa struck communities as they were still recovering from Hurricane Oscar and months of drought. In Mozambique, three cyclones hit within a single season. In the Philippines, six successive cyclones struck the country within five weeks. Across countries, people face shocks that are more frequent, severe and overlapping.

Yet alongside the growing risk, is growing hope. Countries are discovering that taking action in the critical window between forecast and the peak of impact can mean the difference between families coping and families becoming destitute.

Over the past decade, OCHA and humanitarian partners have been testing how to act in that way: using forecasts to trigger pre-agreed actions and financing before a hazard strikes, and generating evidence on what works. Scaled through the United Nations Global Emergency Fund (CERF) since 2020, these anticipatory approaches have shown that acting early saves lives, time and money.¹

As climate impacts deepen, governments and local actors are increasingly taking the lead. In 2025, governments in Burkina Faso, Cuba, Fiji, Mozambique, Nigeria and the Philippines took on central roles in designing and leading anticipatory action, supported by humanitarian partners.

This story highlights that shift. It shows how catalytic CERF financing, coordinated and inclusive processes, and strengthened technical capacity are helping governments embed anticipatory action into national systems. The six country case studies in the annex illustrate how these approaches are being put into practice. Although this story focuses on those six, they are not alone. Countries such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Palau, and Somalia are advancing along similar paths, each with its own story of national leadership and collaboration.

Together, these experiences demonstrate that investing in anticipatory action through OCHA-managed pooled funds and technical expertise strengthens not only early action, but national leadership and the systems needed to support it.

¹ OCHA, FAO, WFP, [Saving lives, time and money: Evidence from anticipatory action](#), May 2025.

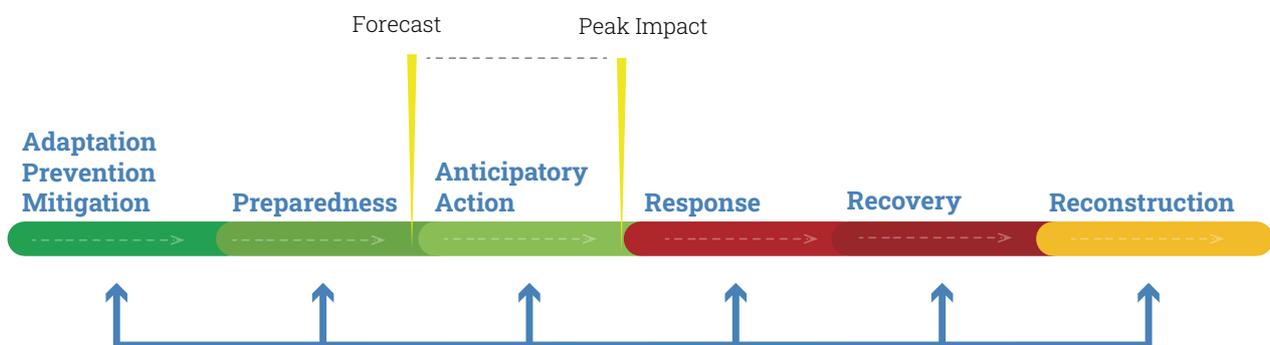
The Challenge

Governments and partners understand that the humanitarian impact of climatic shocks must be reduced for those most at risk. Climate adaptation aims to strengthen long-term resilience, and many governments have improved preparedness measures. Authorities often issue evacuation orders and open shelters when a storm is forecast. These actions are all important.

Yet, in most countries highly vulnerable to climate change, there is not an institutionalized system that delivers fast, targeted and life-saving support between the forecast and the peak impact of a hazard—the critical window where anticipatory action can reduce harm.

Shifting from crisis response to acting ahead of an imminent disaster remains difficult for several reasons.

Anticipatory Action within the disaster management cycle



Source: Adapted from UNDRR, *Anticipatory Finance: An Introductory Guide* (2024), p. 10. Available at <https://www.undrr.org/publication/anticipatory-finance-introductory-guide>

Lack of data and technical capacity

Anticipating impact requires more than a forecast. It requires understanding who is likely to be affected, where, and how severely. Few low-and-middle income countries have reliable national forecasts with sufficient specificity, historical impact data, or the capacity to develop monitoring systems.

High-quality data is the backbone of acting ahead of climate shocks. Without this data and technical capacity, it is difficult to link forecasts to expected impact or to identify the actions that could reduce harm for the most vulnerable before a disaster strikes.

For example, half of the initial 30 countries selected for the UN Secretary General’s Early Warnings for All initiative operate with only basic monitoring and forecasting capability.² And only 56 per cent of World Meteorological Organization members report using hazard, exposure and vulnerability data in their forecasts.³

² The Early Warnings for All initiative aims to ensure universal protection from hazardous hydrometeorological, climatological and related environmental events through life-saving systems by the end of 2027. For more information see: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/early-warnings-for-all>

³ World Meteorological Organization, [WMO and the Early Warnings for All Initiative](#).

Limited or no financing

Even when governments have plans to act ahead of an imminent climate disaster, financing remains a challenge. Overstretched budgets make it difficult to pre-allocate funding for a climate shock that may not occur. Legal restraints can make it difficult to release emergency response funds before a disaster strikes. In the Philippines, for example, prior to the adoption of its new law on anticipatory action, strict processes and audit rules made it difficult for local authorities to release funds for anticipatory action, leaving portions of disaster budgets unspent when they could have been used to act early and mitigate harm.

Silos across government

Acting ahead of a climate shock requires coordination across multiple ministries—finance, disaster management, social welfare, meteorology and hydrology and agriculture. It also requires alignment across national, regional and local levels of government. Without senior political leadership to prioritize anticipatory action and bring these institutions together outside of crisis response, it is difficult to

establish and shift systems from being reactionary to anticipatory.

Need for evidence and confidence

Anticipatory action is a relatively new concept. Governments and other national and local partners need time to understand its principles and require proof that it can work in their own context and how to best finance it. Many remain hesitant to allocate scarce resources to a new approach without international financial support and clear evidence of its impact or cost-effectiveness.

Consequently, even when countries want to act ahead of a climate shock, actions often stop at early warning and perhaps evacuations.

The Solution

Building on earlier anticipatory pilots, OCHA and its partners have collaborated with governments to overcome barriers to acting ahead of disasters. They have strengthened technical capacity, established coordination platforms between national and international stakeholders and secured seed financing necessary to move from planning to



Collaborative efforts of the government, UN Entities and local partners strengthened the anticipatory action response in Cuba. Credit: United Nations

implementation. What began as a humanitarian innovation is now becoming national policy and practice.

Catalyzing government ownership through pre-arranged financing and frameworks

Pre-arranged financing, through CERF and OCHA-managed Country-Based or Regional Pooled Funds (CPBFs) has been the primary catalyst for scaling anticipatory action and elevating the approach with governments. By committing funds in advance of climate shocks or disease outbreaks through coordinated frameworks, OCHA provides the structure and incentives needed to design triggers, activation protocols, and pre-agreed activities that make acting early possible.

In the **Philippines**, an initial \$US7.5 million CERF commitment in 2021 transformed small pilots into a national process, expanded the Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action into a diverse coalition of government, local and international partners, and helped to position it under the National Disaster Risk Management Council. This coalition later played a central role in securing the world's first national law on anticipatory action in 2025. The law enables disaster authorities to release funds before severe storms strike, rather than waiting until after impact.⁴

“This law establishes the institutionalization of anticipatory action,” said Harold Cabrerros, Administrator Undersecretary of the Philippines. “It enables us to take proactive measures before severe disasters occur.”⁵

In **Cuba**, CERF's pre-arranged \$4 million enabled partners to build on the country's long-standing culture of anticipatory action. The collaborative design process with the government strengthened coordination and contributed to addressing logistical challenges, allowing assistance to reach

communities days before Hurricane Melissa made landfall—a major improvement in response speed, compared to previous support that could take more than six months to arrive due to external unilateral sanctions and operational challenges.

Francisco Pichón, UN Resident Coordinator, Cuba, said:

“The swift response to Hurricane Melissa was possible thanks to the activation of our anticipatory action framework five days before the impact. The activation contributed to the fact that up to now no hurricane-related loss of life has been reported in Cuba.”

The framework also helped the World Food Programme (WFP) mobilize an additional \$4 million and enabled UNICEF to secure a \$500,000 loan, expanding immediate post-storm assistance.

In **Mozambique**, CERF's \$6 million pre-commitment for cyclones in 2024, alongside \$980,000 from WFP, operationalized the Government's Standard Operating Procedures for early action. When Cyclone Jude approached in March 2025, CERF released funds immediately, enabling one of the fastest cyclone responses in history.

In **Nigeria**, a combined \$7 million commitment from CERF and the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund (NHF) helped elevate anticipatory action to senior political levels. The Government then announced a National Action Plan and committed \$113 million, including \$102 million for cash assistance, in domestic financing.

4 [An Act Establishing a Mechanism on the Declaration of State of Imminent Disaster, Providing the Criteria for its Declaration and Lifting, Enabling Anticipatory Measures, and Appropriating Funds Therefor - Republic Act no. 12287](#); A third anticipatory action framework for tropical storms was endorsed in October 2025, with CERF pre-committing \$6 million, complemented by \$4 million from partners.

5 <https://mb.com.ph/2025/10/25/ocd-finalizes-irr-of-imminent-disaster-act>



Woman collecting cash from the bank. Anticipatory action helped reach households faster with essential cash assistance as they faced the Super Typhoon Uwan. Credit: WFP

“We saw families who still had their homes, farmers who still had their seeds, resilient communities who still had their dignity,” said Inna Audu, Special Adviser to the Vice President of Nigeria. “It proved that partnership is not about dependency; it is about learning what is possible together. The 166 billion Naira Nigeria has committed is our answer to what we witnessed.”

Building on this momentum, Nigeria is working toward fully institutionalising anticipatory action within national disaster risk management frameworks starting in 2026.

In Burkina Faso, an OCHA-facilitated framework for drought with pre-arranged financing from CERF sparked government interest in applying a similar approach to floods. A \$1 million pre-commitment from the Regional Humanitarian Fund for West and Central Africa (RHF WCA) then became the only available financing to operationalize the Government’s National Flood Plan.

These examples highlight a core lesson: it was not the release of OCHA-managed pooled funds that motivated governments, but the pre-commitment of finance and the structured, inclusive and coordinated process led by OCHA that together created the momentum, confidence and ownership.

Creating space for government leadership

Sustained advocacy and inclusive processes have enabled governments to lead.

In Fiji, a two-tiered model placed the Government at the centre. A humanitarian technical group developed proposals, while a government-led

multi-stakeholder forum reviewed and endorsed them. Line ministries actively participated in planning and readiness activities, ensuring ownership beyond United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

As one Government Official from Fiji said:

“This was not just for the UN—line ministries were engaged in actual planning, not just signing off.”

This approach secured Government ownership and Cabinet approval, opening legal and administrative pathways to embed anticipatory action within national disaster management systems.

In **Nigeria**, joint advocacy by OCHA and partners led to the creation of a National Task Force on Anticipatory Action and regular engagement with the Office of the Vice-President, culminating in the

development of a National Action Plan and domestic financing commitments.

In **Burkina Faso**, OCHA and partners aligned behind the Government’s National Flood Anticipatory Action Plan, supporting national and district officials to understand how anticipatory action works, identify high-risk communities, design triggers and monitoring systems, and agree on early actions. When thresholds were reached on 8 September 2025 and the Plan was activated, the funds from the RHF WCA were immediately released to two national NGOs, marking the first-government-led and nationally delivered anticipatory response.

Providing data and technical capacity

Designing triggers and thresholds requires forecast, observational and historical data, as well as close coordination among scientific, humanitarian and government partners. OCHA’s Centre for Humanitarian Data has supported governments in assessing forecast and data availability, identifying and addressing data gaps, and building monitoring



Lautoka, Fiji, December 2012. Tropical Cyclone Evan hit the Pacific islands of Fiji, Samoa and the French territory of Wallis and Futuna in December 2012 leaving a trail of destruction. Navutu settlement was impacted by storm surges. Credit: UNOCHA/Watabe

systems tailored to their context. Wherever possible, OCHA has worked with national data to reinforce national systems.

In **Burkina Faso**, OCHA identified viable alternatives to national flood-risk forecasting and created a monitoring system to support the activation of the National Flood Anticipatory Action Plan, until a national model becomes operational.

In **Fiji**, OCHA augmented cyclone forecasts by combining them with population and vulnerability data, and built automated monitoring and dissemination systems to support the Government and partners in identifying who is likely to be impacted.

In **Cuba**, OCHA added new monitoring layers, including data on population exposure to wind speed and rainfall at the municipal level. It also provided rapid flood exposure estimates based on satellite data. As Hurricane Melissa approached, and after its impact, this information was critical to helping national authorities and partners to estimate needs and move supplies to where they were needed most.

Francisco Pichón, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Cuba, explained: “The forecasts and analysis from OCHA’s Centre for Humanitarian Data helped the UN and the Government to have a shared understanding of what communities would be most impacted and to prioritize anticipatory action and response.”

Building coalitions of support for anticipatory action

Collaboration has been the cornerstone of success. Progress has happened because governments, national institutions, humanitarian partners, civil society and technical experts have worked side by side.

In **Burkina Faso**, a national Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action united government, NGOs, academia and humanitarian and development partners in designing the National Flood Anticipatory Action Plan. Three Burkinabé universities

are now exploring how local knowledge can be combined with scientific models to improve early action.

“Anticipatory action cannot be done in silos,” said Dr. Diakalia Son, Executive Secretary of the National Food Security Council (SE-CNSA), Chair of the Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action (GTTAA), Burkina Faso.

“The contribution of all stakeholders in Burkina Faso working on anticipatory action has demonstrated the added value of a coordinated approach, allowing each to contribute within their area of expertise. This collaboration represents the strength of our commitment to anticipatory action in the country.”

In the **Philippines**, a coalition of local, national and international partners presented white papers and testified before Congress, playing a vital role in passing the law on anticipatory action.

In **Fiji**, the framework brought a diverse group of actors together, as one humanitarian shared: “the framework allowed civil society organizations, UN agencies and government to sit at the same table, not something that always happens.”⁶

These partnerships have gone beyond frameworks. They have helped build a lasting culture of acting early, owned by governments, civil society, and communities.

Generating evidence and trust

Since embedding anticipatory action into national plans, five of the six frameworks or plans presented here were activated in 2025. Each activation

6 University of South Pacific, [Process Learning Report: Anticipatory Action Framework for Tropical Cyclones in Fiji](#), 29 July 2025.

confirmed that acting ahead of predictable disasters is possible: systems worked, lives and assets were protected, and response was faster. These activations have reaffirmed government commitment and strengthened trust in anticipatory action.

“The most important thing is that we were able to help people quickly and effectively,” said Marbelis Rodríguez, Head of International Cooperation, Civil Defense, Cuba, following the activation of the framework for Hurricane Melissa. “Resources were pre-positioned in a very short time and, in the case of food, for example, distribution had already begun a week before the hurricane hit. The anticipatory action framework facilitated the provision of assistance to these people.”

In **Mozambique**, an after-action review for Cyclone Jude reinforced national leadership and refined priorities for wider geographic coverage and longer lead times. Similarly, in **Burkina Faso**, the activation reaffirmed strong national commitment, and national authorities are now revising the National Flood Anticipatory Action Plan, based on lessons learned from the September 2025 activation.

In **Nigeria**, following the activation of the framework in September 2025, the Government expanded the National Plan nationwide and pledged \$113 million to support a further 800,000 people.

Takeaway

Government leadership in acting ahead of imminent climate shocks is accelerating. The examples of Cuba, Burkina Faso, Fiji, Mozambique, Nigeria, and the Philippines demonstrate three decisive elements behind this shift.

CERF financing and OCHA-facilitated frameworks have provided the critical spark. They supply seed funding, structure and the momentum needed to bring government and humanitarian partners together around a shared goal. In just five years, CERF has helped anticipatory action grow from small pilots into a catalyst for government investment. In countries such as the Philippines and Nigeria, this is now translating into significant domestic financing for early action. Notably, across all six countries, what motivated governments was not the activation of a framework and release of CERF funds, but the pre-commitment of financing and the structured, inclusive development process, which together created momentum and confidence for action.

Sustaining this progress will require continued momentum and expanded support from other financing institutions so government-led anticipatory action can take root for the long term, particularly in countries most vulnerable to climate and other hazards. Since OCHA-facilitated frameworks financed by CERF focus on more severe shocks, additional financing will also be required for national plans designed to act ahead of more frequent and seasonal climatic events.

A global technical hub has strengthened national forecasting. OCHA’s Centre for Humanitarian Data has helped governments identify and address data and technical gaps, and tailor forecasting, triggers and monitoring systems to their contexts. Investing in this global and centralized capability has made the work more efficient over time. The Centre can now adapt models quickly across countries, apply lessons learned and innovative approaches and draw on existing tools and partnerships rather than starting from scratch. Governments receive stronger, faster support, which is both effective and more cost-efficient.

Collective action has been pivotal. Across all six countries, progress has been driven not by any single institution but by national authorities, UN agencies, local NGOs and scientific institutions working side by side. Institutional silos and mandates have often been put aside in service of a shared goal. In the years ahead, this can be strengthened through more collective targeting, increased use of multi-purpose cash assistance, and more open data sharing. Anticipatory action has already shown

what is possible when the right actors are in the room and committed to the same outcome: acting before a disaster, not only after.

This is the path forward. Investing in collective anticipatory action and OCHA-managed pooled funds, including contributions to the CERF Climate Action account, is not only an investment in early action, but also in national leadership and in the systems that will sustain it long into the future.

ANNEX
CASE STUDIES





Burkina Faso

OCHA | OCHA-facilitated Drought Framework to a Government-led National Flood Plan

Burkina Faso, like much of the Sahel, is grappling with frequent and intense climate shocks. Prolonged droughts, floods and heatwaves are now hitting communities with devastating regularity. With more than 40 per cent of the population living below the poverty line,¹ and rain-fed agriculture and pastoral livestock farming as the main sources of livelihood, the poorest households in rural areas are the most exposed.

Burkina Faso has received eight allocations from the United Nations Global Emergency Fund (CERF) for drought, totaling more than US\$32 million. Recognizing the country's vulnerability to drought, an OCHA-facilitated anticipatory action framework was adopted in March 2022 and revised in 2025, with CERF pre-committing \$15 million.² The framework has not yet been activated, but something important happened in the process: Government officials began asking whether a similar approach could be developed for floods, this time led by the Government itself.³

The need was clear. Over the past decade, nearly 300,000 people have been affected by flooding in Burkina Faso, with more than 7,000 hectares of crops destroyed.⁴ For a country where 80 per cent of the workforce depends on agriculture, the toll on lives and livelihoods has been immense.⁵

At the end of 2024, the Government launched the National Flood Anticipatory Action Plan, led by the Ministry of Agriculture. To guide the process, it relied on the Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action, established in May 2023, which met regularly to bring together Government officials

across different departments, local and international humanitarian partners, academics and development actors. Together, they identified the areas and communities most at risk, developed scenarios, agreed on activities, defined trigger mechanisms through collaboration with OCHA and its Centre for Humanitarian Data, as well as monitoring and learning mechanisms. Meanwhile, joint training by the working group was provided to officials at national and district levels to build a common understanding of anticipatory action. The National Plan was endorsed by the Minister of Agriculture in September 2025.

In 2025, the Humanitarian Coordinator committed up to US\$1 million from the Regional Humanitarian Fund for West and Central Africa to two national NGOs, with 20 per cent of the funding allocated to support their preparedness.

On 8 September 2025, the flood-risk thresholds were reached in the two target regions, triggering the release of funds. The national NGOs, working with village councils and community groups, quickly rolled out anticipatory action, including public awareness campaigns in local languages using radio and theatre. Nearing the end of the rainy season, partners secured crops and livestock, improved sanitation facilities and reinforced shelters.

National engagement on anticipatory action goes beyond the Government. Three universities co-organized with the Government an international symposium to explore how local knowledge and indigenous weather prediction could be combined with scientific models to improve early action.

1 World Bank, [Burkina Faso Overview](#).

2 OCHA, [Anticipatory Action Framework - Burkina Faso](#), February 2025.

3 The framework has not been activated as of December 2025.

4 Government of Burkina Faso, [National Flood Anticipatory Action Plan](#), 6 October 2025.

5 World Bank, [Burkina Faso Overview](#).

“Anticipatory action cannot be done in silos,” said Dr. Diakalia Son, Executive Secretary of the National Food Security Council (SE-CNSA), Chair of the Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action (GTTAA), Burkina Faso. “The contribution of all stakeholders in Burkina Faso working on anticipatory action has demonstrated the added

value of a coordinated approach, allowing each to contribute within their area of expertise. This collaboration represents the strength of our commitment to anticipatory action in the country.”

The Geoscience department of University of Joseph Ki-Zerbo is currently promoting anticipatory action as a key theme for master’s theses, evidence that Burkina Faso is not just participating in anticipatory action but leading its future in the region.



In Koulsé, floodwaters erode the land and destroy crops. Anticipatory Action intervention, supported the community to clear waterways, plant trees, and use special bags to store vital possessions from water damage. Credit: UNOCHA



Cuba's location in the Caribbean makes it highly exposed to tropical storms. Over the past century, the country has been struck by more than 50 hurricanes—half of them intense (category 3 or above).¹ Since the establishment of the United Nations Global Emergency Fund (CERF) in 2005, UN agencies in Cuba have received CERF funding for ten major storms, making it the second most frequent recipient of CERF storm funding worldwide.

The Government of Cuba has a long and robust culture of early action. It closely monitors storms, issues early warnings, organizes evacuations and helps communities protect their homes and livelihoods before landfall. But as storms become more frequent and severe, limited financial resources, an ongoing energy and fuel crisis and sanctions-related constraints have made it increasingly difficult for national authorities and partners to pre-position supplies, carry out anticipatory actions and provide a timely humanitarian response.

In April 2025, recognizing the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) expertise in facilitating anticipatory action frameworks in the region, the Government requested support to develop a framework that could unite national authorities and partners behind a coordinated approach. The Emergency Relief Coordinator committed US\$4 million in pre-arranged CERF funding to underpin this effort.

National authorities led the development of the framework with OCHA's support, ensuring it built

on Cuba's experience, existing systems and aligned with national preparedness and response strategies. The Office of the Resident Coordinator and the UN Emergency Technical Team provided strong support. OCHA facilitated coordination and technical support, including the design of triggers in collaboration with Cuba's meteorological and hydrological surveillance institutions. Under the framework, OCHA provides nationwide monitoring to identify areas most likely to be affected based on storm trajectories. Once thresholds are reached, OCHA alerts national authorities and the Resident Coordinator's Office and national authorities validate activation.

The process generated immediate benefits. It prompted updates to national protocols and the integration of anticipatory action procedures at both national and local levels. Coordination between the Government and humanitarian partners improved, opening new dialogue on logistics and cost-efficiency. Together, they tackled long-standing operational challenges to ensure that assistance could be delivered within a five-day window before landfall of any potential major storm.

Two months after the framework was endorsed, it was activated as Hurricane Melissa approached. Days before landfall, CERF financing enabled national authorities and partners to supply evacuation centres with food, water, generators and lighting equipment. Communities in the projected path of the storm were pre-supplied with food, water, health and sanitation services, with additional medical supplies flown in from Panama.

¹ [OCHA-facilitated anticipatory Action Framework for Hurricanes](#), August 2025.

“The most important thing is that we were able to help people quickly and effectively,” said Marbelis Rodríguez, Head of International Cooperation, Civil Defense. “Resources were pre-positioned in a very short time and, in the case of food, for example, distribution had already begun a week before the hurricane hit. The anticipatory action framework facilitated the provision of assistance to these people.”

Accurate forecasts were central to targeting assistance. In the days before and after the impact, OCHA’s Centre for Humanitarian Data combined wind and rainfall hazard information, providing it to national authorities to help identify the municipalities with the largest populations at risk. This

analysis supported early response planning and informed the Government’s and UN broader Response Plan.

With supplies already in place, assistance began immediately after the storm. Families received hygiene kits, roofing sheets, food and medical supplies, significantly reducing delays seen in past emergencies due to external unilateral sanctions and limitations to access to international markets and financing mechanisms. Under the framework, assistance reached people from five days before landfall through the first month after, marking a major improvement in response speed.

The framework also leveraged additional resources. The World Food Programme mobilized an additional \$4 million for the response, UNICEF secured a \$500,000 internal loan, enabling more people to receive support immediately after the storm.

Cuba shows how strong government leadership, paired with international resources, UN technical support and a shared plan, can significantly expand a country’s ability to save lives, protect assets and reduce the humanitarian impact of climate-related disasters.



Houses and crops destroyed by hurricane Melissa. Credit: United Nations



In Fiji, cyclones are not a question of if, but when. These storms destroy homes, devastate livelihoods and push vulnerable families deeper into poverty. Tropical Cyclone Winston in 2016, affected over 60 per cent of the population, underscoring the urgency of acting early.

In March 2023, the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) co-led the design of a Collective Anticipatory Action Framework for Tropical Cyclones—the first government-led system of its kind in the Pacific.

The framework was developed through a two-tiered model. A humanitarian-only Technical Working Group (TWG), led by OCHA, designed the trigger, targeting, activities, delivery partners and financing. A Government-led multi-stakeholder forum, chaired by NDMO, reviewed and endorsed TWG proposals, ensuring alignment with national policy and placing the Government firmly at the centre.

As one Government official said:

“This was not just for the UN—line ministries were engaged in actual planning, not just signing off.”¹

To develop the trigger mechanism, OCHA built on the Fiji Meteorological Service’s forecasting capacity by augmenting its models with population and vulnerability data and creating automated monitoring and dissemination systems to support national authorities and partners.

In June 2023, the United Nations Global Emergency Fund (CERF) pre-committed US\$2 million (later

increased to \$2.4 million), alongside more than \$1 million in co-financing from UN agencies. In February 2024, Fiji’s People Cabinet endorsed the framework. Partners began pre-positioning relief items, training staff, testing standard operating procedures (SOPs) through simulations and preparing early warning messages.

Even without activation, the framework delivered tangible benefits. It shifted Fiji’s disaster management mindset from reactive to proactive. As one Government official noted: “Anticipatory action is now part of how we think about response, before the shock even hits.”²

Cabinet endorsement gave the framework political traction and legitimacy, opening legal and institutional pathways to embed anticipatory action within Fiji’s disaster risk management architecture, including embedding forecast-based early action in Fiji’s National Disaster Risk Management Act 2024.

The design process made the framework nationally owned, strengthened coordination between international and national actors and clarified roles and reduced duplication across the preparedness and response cycle. The consensus-based trigger mechanism earned strong trust and became a practical tool for real-time planning and targeting.

The process also brought diverse actors together, as one humanitarian shared: “the framework allowed civil society organizations, UN agencies and government to sit at the same table, not something that always happens.”³ United behind a shared goal, UN agencies and partners went beyond sectoral mandates, coordinating and testing early warning messages, and investing in training, and post-activation protocols and studies for the system.

The CERF pre-allocation galvanised coordination and readiness, enabling UN agencies to procure

1 University of South Pacific, [Process Learning Report: Anticipatory Action Framework for Tropical Cyclones in Fiji](#), 29 July 2025

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

pipelines, secure standby agreements, and build readiness capacities. Co-financing by UN Agencies supported simulations, line-ministry and non-government organization training, and SOP testing. Even without disbursing funds, CERF drove system change.

The framework also became a bridge between humanitarian and development objectives, by creating a platform to integrate anticipatory action into broader resilience-building goals.⁴ As another official said:

“Anticipatory action changed the way we talk about risk—it is no longer just humanitarian.”⁵

In December 2025, a revised two-year framework was endorsed with CERF pre-committing \$2.4 million. The Government led the process following an academic independent evaluation and extensive consultations. The revised framework includes funding for NGOs, provisions for community-led anticipatory action, and fully aligns with national policies and national disaster risk financing.

Fiji’s experience shows the value of national leadership backed by inclusive and coordinated planning, pre-arranged financing and strengthened technical systems. By building a framework before disaster strikes, Fiji strengthened coordination, increased readiness and embedded anticipatory action into policy and practice. The investment has already accelerated preparedness and created a lasting foundation for acting ahead of imminent climate shocks, protecting communities and reducing the humanitarian and financial cost of cyclones.

4 For example, in a global first, the Department of Social Protection and WFP developed a system for the Government to deliver immediate cash transfers to up to 15,000 families once the trigger was met, giving people the cash they need to prepare ahead of the cyclone. See: World Food Programme, [Supercharging social protection systems with anticipatory cash – Case study on Fiji’s Anticipatory Action Framework](#), April 2024.

5 University of South Pacific, [Process Learning Report: Anticipatory Action Framework for Tropical Cyclones in Fiji](#), 29 July 2025.



Lautoka, Fiji, December 2012. Damage to a local school caused by Tropical Cyclone Evan. Credit: UNOCHA/Watabe



In March 2019, Cyclone Idai struck Mozambique, killing more than 1,000 people, disrupting the lives of three million and leaving unprecedented destruction in its wake. Six weeks later, Cyclone Kenneth hit, marking the first time two major cyclones had made landfall in the same season. With limited systems in place to anticipate impacts or mobilize resources ahead of time, humanitarian partners led the response.

Six years later, when Cyclone Jude made landfall on 10 March 2025, the story was different. The Government was ready and this time it was in the lead.

Mozambique's shift to anticipatory action began with drought, another recurrent climate shock. In 2020, the Government and the World Food Programme (WFP) designed an anticipatory approach for drought and soon after established a National Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action (NTWG)¹. Recognizing the value of pre-arranged financing, the NTWG expanded its focus to floods and cyclones. With support from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, WFP and partners, the Government developed a Manual of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for these hazards, later endorsed by the Council of Ministers.

The SOP aligned Government and partners on triggers, pre-agreed activities, and activation protocols. It provided a national plan that anticipatory action mechanisms could align behind, including the OCHA-facilitated framework for cyclones supported by US\$6 million from the United Nations Global Emergency Fund (CERF) and \$980,000 from WFP in co-financing. Using the same triggers as the SOP, OCHA monitored potential cyclone forecasts and alerted the Government when thresholds were

reached, with national authorities responsible for activation.

Before the framework was finalized, Tropical Cyclone Chido struck in December 2024, affecting 1.7 million people. Because OCHA was already tracking the storm through the draft framework's monitoring system, the Emergency Relief Coordinator approved CERF funding two days before landfall, conditional on sustained high wind speeds. Once confirmed, CERF released funds immediately, allowing field operations to begin within two weeks of landfall compared to nearly two months in previous allocations.²

The framework was formally adopted in February 2025, just weeks before Cyclone Jude. With only 36 hours between the trigger and landfall, anticipatory activities focused on preparation of evacuation centres and issuing early warnings. Because financing was released early, supplies were pre-positioned and roles were clearly defined, decisions were swift and the response was immediate.³ As the Director of District Planning and Infrastructure in Ilha de Moçambique observed:

“Assistance arrived much faster than in past cyclones. Partners arrived on time and were involved directly in the assistance, which was crucial.”⁴

Communities felt the impact of the speedy response, having endured three cyclones in as many months.⁵ One woman from the Entete resettlement centre in Ilha de Moçambique stated: “I remember

1 WFP, [Building systems to anticipate drought in Mozambique](#), September 2023.

2 CERF, [Mozambique - Final Report on the Use of Funds and Achieved Results](#), 2024.

3 Anticipatory Action and Early Response Framework for Storms in Mozambique – Report of the After-Action Review conducted on 3 June 2025.

4 WFP, [Joint Post-Distribution Monitoring \(PDM\) of Anticipatory Action for Cyclones](#), 2025.

5 On 13 January 2025, Tropical Cyclone Dikeledi also made landfall on Mozambique.

that as soon as we arrived at the school, we received food. WFP provided the 15-day kit, IOM provided tarpaulins and lamps and others provided buckets.”⁶

In June 2025, the Government convened its first national after-action-review, bringing together ministries, humanitarian organizations and the Mozambique Red Cross Society. The review reinforced national leadership and set priorities such

as extending the lead times to 96 hours, refining triggers and expanding coverage from pilot districts to provincial readiness.⁷

Mozambique’s leadership marks a decisive shift—from being unable to act ahead of a Cyclone Idai in 2019 to taking full ownership of anticipatory action and embedding it as a core element of national disaster management.

6 WFP, Joint Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) of Anticipatory Action for Cyclones, 2025.

7 Anticipation Hub, [Mozambique holds its first national after-action review of anticipatory actions for cyclones](#), 20 August 2025.



Food distribution underway in the Nampula province of Mozambique in the aftermath of Cyclone Jude. Credit: WFP



In 2024, severe flooding swept through nearly every state in Nigeria, displacing hundreds and thousands of families, destroying farmland, and triggering a nationwide cholera outbreak. The disaster hit as communities were still recovering from the 2022 floods, which displaced four million people and wiped out vast areas of croplands.¹

With climate hazards such as floods, storms, ocean surges, droughts and wildfires expected to increase and intensify, since 2021 humanitarian partners have laid the groundwork for anticipatory action. Through early action pilots, they tested ways to mitigate the impact of climate disasters on the most vulnerable.²

This momentum converged in 2024 during the development of the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) 2024-2025. Determined to reduce humanitarian needs and costs, the humanitarian community made anticipatory action one of its three strategic priorities in the HNRP, dedicating 5 per cent (\$45 million) of total requirements to acting ahead of predictable climate shocks. Throughout the process, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) engaged with Government counterparts, advocating for an anticipatory approach and demonstrating its value. By the end of 2024, the Government had established a National Task Force on Anticipatory Action.

While the HNRP identified floods as a major risk and outlined a monitoring framework and activities, it lacked pre-arranged financing. To address this, in early 2025, OCHA began facilitating a collective

anticipatory action framework with the UN pre-arranging \$7 million (\$5 million from the United Nations Global Emergency Fund (CERF) and \$2 million from the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund (NHF)). The framework was designed in close collaboration with the National Task Force. A Government-chaired Trigger Task Team designed the trigger with OCHA's Centre for Humanitarian Data using Government-provided data, while the national social safety-net registry supported beneficiary targeting.

Recognizing that true national ownership required leadership at the highest level, advocacy efforts turned toward the Office of the Vice President. In April 2025, Vice President Kashim Shettima convened a high-level workshop with Government ministries, announcing plans to develop a National Action Plan for Anticipatory Action. On 11 August 2025, the Emergency Relief Coordinator endorsed the framework. Less than a month later, it was activated after river levels in Adamawa State exceeded thresholds indicating major floods were imminent. CERF and the NHF funds reached 400,000 people at risk, including 140,000 people with cash assistance.

In October 2025, the Government expanded the scope of the National Plan nationwide, with an additional \$113 million pledged to support 800,000 people. Each state and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) will receive \$2 million to strengthen preparedness, and all are required to allocate 1-2 per cent of their budget toward disaster readiness. Nearly 90 per cent of the anticipatory action budget will go toward cash assistance. OCHA is supporting the Government in designing triggers, with implementation expected in 2026.

1 [Nigeria Anticipatory Action Framework \(2025\)](#).

2 Partners such as the Nigeria Red Cross Society, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Save the Children, the International Rescue Committee, and Welthungerhilfe and Oxfam through the WAHFA Facility have all piloted anticipatory action endeavors in Nigeria since 2021.

“When we stood together in Adamawa, humanitarian partners and government officials side by side, we didn’t see the usual aftermath of floods. We saw families who still had their homes, farmers who still had their seeds, resilient communities who still had their dignity,”

said Inna Audu, Special Adviser to the Vice President, Nigeria.

“That joint mission changed me. It proved that partnership is not about dependency; it is about learning what is possible together. The 166 billion Naira (US\$113 million) Nigeria has committed is our answer to what we witnessed. We refuse to return to a system that only arrives after hope has drowned.”

Nigeria shows how sustained advocacy, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and strategic investment can catalyze government leadership. At a time of shrinking humanitarian budgets, Nigeria offers a model of how humanitarian partners can support governments with the systems they have and need to lead and sustain anticipatory action.



Anticipatory cash assistance helped 67-year-old Ibrahim Lawan buy essentials, giving his family security and dignity as they prepare for potential flood displacement. Credit: WFP/Oni



Philippines

OCHA | Pioneering the World's First National Law on Anticipatory Action

Ranked first globally for disaster risk¹, the Philippines faces an average of 20 tropical cyclones each year, five of which are potentially destructive. In just five weeks in late 2024, six cyclones made landfall, affecting more than 13 million people. One year later in 2025, the pattern repeated. Typhoon Kalmaegi (Tino) and Super Typhoon Fung-Wong (Uwan) arrived within days of each other, following two additional typhoons only weeks before.

The Philippines' exposure to typhoons, along with hazards such as volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, stretches national and local responders to their limits. These compounding disasters reinforce the need to act ahead of predictable shocks. Recognizing this, in 2017, the Philippine Red Cross and the German Red Cross began working with the Government to develop Early Action Protocols (EAPs) for floods and cyclones². The EAPs enabled communities to harvest crops early, reinforce homes, evacuate livestock and temporarily relocate businesses.³ Between 2017 and 2022, the pilots supported thousands of people and showed anticipatory action could work, but they remained small in scale.

To scale these efforts, in 2021 the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) facilitated the development of an anticipatory action framework with the Government, supported by the United Nations Global Emergency Fund (CERF) pre-committing US\$7.5 million—the largest pre-arranged financing package for anticipatory action in the Philippines. The National Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action (AATWG) was expanded to include all actors working on anticipatory action, including OCHA, and strategically repositioned under the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council to help shape policy.⁴ This diverse

coalition of advocates—from Government agencies to humanitarian and local partners—proved pivotal in building the case for legislation.

The process catalyzed national dialogue on anticipatory action and revealed significant barriers to acting early. While forecasting capacity was strong, systems for linking forecasts to pre-arranged financing and pre-agreed activities were not. Strict audit rules also made it difficult for local authorities to release funds ahead of a disaster, leaving local authorities unable to use existing budgets for anticipatory action when they could have reduced harm.

In 2022, the AATWG drafted a bill to institutionalize anticipatory action within the national disaster management framework. Members presented evidence, community examples and testimonies before Congress. In June 2025, the Bill on the Declaration of the State of Imminent Disaster was passed, and the President signed it into law on 12 September 2025—the first legislation of its kind globally.

“This law establishes the institutionalization of anticipatory action,” said Undersecretary Harold Cabrerros, the Philippines’ OCD Administrator. “It enables us to take proactive measures before severe disasters occur.”⁵

The new law empowers the Government to act before disasters strike. It mandates standardized triggers, allows disaster funds to be used pre-impact

1 Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft and IFHV, [World Risk Report 2025](#), 2025.

2 Anticipation Hub, [Forecast-based Financing in the Philippines](#).

3 Philippine Red Cross, [Flood Early Action Protocol](#).

4 FAO, [Concept Note: The Philippines, Pilot Programmatic Partnership](#).

5 Manila Bulletin, [OCD Finalizes IRR of Imminent Disaster Act](#), 25 October 2025.

and requires Government agencies to allocate portions of their budgets to anticipatory action. It also encourages non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UN agencies to do the same, creating shared responsibility between the Government and partners to act early.

Alongside the new law, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) with support from the World Food Programme and Green Climate Fund financing, is developing a Multi-Hazard Impact-Based Forecasting and Early Warning System that combines scientific data and local knowledge to predict community-level impacts. This tool aims to become the standard for all anticipatory action by 2026.

In parallel, humanitarian partners continued aligning behind Government leadership. In October 2025, the Emergency Relief Coordinator endorsed a third anticipatory action framework for the Philippines, pre-committing nearly \$6 million from the CERF, complemented by \$4 million from partners.⁶

Less than a month later, Typhoons Tino and Uwan struck. Three days before Uwan made landfall, the anticipatory action framework activated. Within two minutes of activation, CERF released the funds, enabling UN agencies and NGOs to provide cash, temporary shelter and secure income-generating assets such as boats, equipment and crops. The Government scaled up pre-emptive evacuations, moving more than 1.5 million people to safer ground before the storm. While both storms caused significant damage, anticipatory action contributed to far lower mortality than in previous events.

This Philippines shows how a shared national vision, championed by Government and humanitarian actors and driven by advocacy, financing and learning, can move anticipatory action from pilots into national law. When governments lead and partners align behind that leadership, acting ahead of imminent disasters becomes systematized and sustainable.

6 [OCHA-facilitated Anticipatory Action Framework Philippines](#), October 2025.



Boats are being secured as communities prepare for the Typhoon. Credit: FAO



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