



Working Group on Locally Led Anticipatory Action

Terms of reference

January 2024

The Anticipation Hub's Working Group on Locally Led Anticipatory Action seeks to accelerate the mainstreaming and integration of locally led approaches in anticipatory action. It will do so by fostering collaboration and community exchange, generating implementation guidance and tools, strengthening the evidence base, and through advocacy.

These terms of reference (TORs) are the result of a collaborative process between participants founding the idea of the group, and at a jointly organized session at the 11th Global Dialogue Platform, 'A collective push for locally led anticipatory action – where do we go from here?', which took place on 10 October 2023. During the session, participants, especially local actors, were invited to give inputs on how a working group focused on locally led anticipatory action should function and to what purpose.

Background

Locally led anticipatory action is a process driven and led by communities and local actors to create an enabling environment for anticipatory action, by demonstrating communities and local actors' capacities to implement their own early actions; identifying and communicating gaps and weaknesses in early warning systems and planning and coordination mechanisms; and advocating for accessible, flexible and, ideally, pre-agreed financing for locally led early action to act ahead of the peak of a crisis caused by forecastable or predictable hazardous events or shocks, in order to reduce their impact.

Locally led anticipatory action has, at its core, early actions by area (i.e., a self-defined or administratively defined community or collection of communities) based on local structures (i.e., local actors with a permanent presence) and community groups, which take place ahead of a forecast or predicted hazardous event.

The scale of locally led anticipatory action is not known, but a broad range of activities exist, such as community-based early warning systems and action plans, which are based on indigenous knowledge blended with local knowledge and scientific information. In addition, a rapidly increasing number of international, national and local organizations and their associated networks are supporting local



structures and community groups to strengthen their own locally led anticipatory action, in collaboration with mandated actors, technical agencies and donors. Key actors include, but are not limited to, local actors.

Locally led approaches are needed to scale up and mainstream current good practice in anticipatory action by enabling more people to access early warnings and implement the related early actions. It is therefore crucial for local actors to lead this process. Local actors have the necessary skills and knowledge, and they can utilize the expertise of communities on the frontlines of disasters and crises. By enabling more locally led anticipatory action, through the rapid disbursement of pre-agreed funding and capacity sharing to further strengthen local structures and institutions, more proactive self-mobilization by local structures and increased community ownership are evident.

Locally led anticipatory action also strengthens anticipatory approaches overall. Communities affected by crises and disasters, and local actors working directly within countries, have valuable knowledge and expertise on what is needed and how to respond to crises. More importantly, local actors are uniquely placed to proactively act in a particular context. Scaling up locally led anticipatory action is therefore imperative to truly mainstream this approach.

Locally led anticipatory action should be understood as an inclusive path to provide more adequate, proactive and decentralized responses, rather than as an add-on or alternative way to carry out anticipatory action. There is not one type of locally led anticipatory action; it will differ depending on the hazard and the location. This should be recognized and seen as a strength of locally led anticipatory action, as it means actions are informed by the specific context, needs, knowledge base and expertise of actors already on the ground.

Locally led anticipatory action is an ongoing process which may not be achieved in the short term, but remains a goal that we must continually work towards. By learning from and scaling up these examples, it is possible to shift towards a more proactive approach to responding to crises, while embedding local approaches and creating resilience among communities at risk.

Aims and objectives of the working group

This working group seeks to accelerate the mainstreaming, integration and scale of locally led anticipatory action, by pursuing the following three objectives:

1. Facilitate a platform for local actors (e.g. from civil society, communities, government stakeholders, National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies) to exchange and collaborate on how locally led anticipatory action can be achieved.
2. Generate and reference guidance materials and tools for local, national and international actors to implement and scale out locally led anticipatory action.



3. Strengthen the evidence base for the positive results of locally led anticipatory action, to advocate for scaling up this approach.

These objectives will be achieved by:

- general promotion of locally led anticipatory action as an inclusive path to provide more adequate, proactive and decentralized assistance
- developing a shared understanding of locally led anticipatory action as a signpost and benchmark for actors willing to engage in this approach
- providing and updating an overview of existing initiatives, funding, tools, guidance, evidence, learning and mapping to mainstream, integrate and scale up locally led anticipatory action
- fostering structured collaboration, capacity sharing, peer-to-peer learning and community exchange, by bringing together expertise from different actors, thus setting individuals and organizations on the path to continuous learning and performance improvement
- inviting external experts to provide inputs on jointly decided topics relevant to the working group, in timely or relevant ways (not in a guiding function)
- updating and maintaining a resource page on the Anticipation Hub on locally led anticipatory action (e.g., publications, videos, events)
- co-creating and jointly (further) developing solutions to drive forward innovation and piloting to mainstream, integrate and scale up locally led anticipatory action (e.g., incorporating indigenous knowledge systems, community systems)
- developing, adapting and implementing guidance, tools and other resources for mainstreaming locally led anticipatory action
- contributing to and/or supporting the evidence base for policy advocacy, from local up to global levels, on mainstreaming, integrating and scaling locally led anticipatory action, especially around entry barriers and solutions for local actors, community-based approaches and capacity sharing.

Suggested ways of working

The group intends to work together by setting up the following elements:

1. A co-chair system with annual rotation. National or local organizations will chair the group, and international organizations will co-facilitate; regional representatives in leadership are recommended; the current interim lead by an international organization will be transitioned as the group continues.
2. Virtual meetings convened by co-chairs on a regular basis, and monthly for the first few months of the group's activity. After this, the frequency of meetings will change to bimonthly.



3. Regional representatives from global organizations need to be involved, and with this in mind:
 - a. language needs to be incorporated; this will be worked out by the working group in due course
 - b. time differences need to be considered; this will be worked out by the working group in due course.
4. Membership of this working group will remain open; active participation is encouraged, but through a voluntarily commitment.
5. A revision of these TORs will take place after a year of operation (i.e., in January 2025).
6. A resource page on the Anticipation Hub on locally led anticipatory action will be created and updated, as a place to share publications, videos and events.
7. A structured online repository on the Anticipation Hub will be created, where members can share documents, tools and resources, loosely organized according to the group's objectives, as well as key documents and information essential to the functioning of the Working Group (e.g., TORs, workplan, contact information).
8. An internal repository will be created for internal working documents.
9. Every member can send ad hoc emails to the group's distribution list to share information, seek guidance, or suggest topics for discussion.
10. Ad hoc meetings can be held when necessary to plan for joint events, joint documents, etc.
11. The working group will use global, regional and national dialogue platforms to hold in-person/hybrid meetings.
12. The working group will develop sessions for the global, regional and national dialogue platforms, with the aim of submitting at least one virtual/hybrid session proposal per year.
13. A work plan will be developed, specifying the joint outputs and knowledge products of the working group (e.g., blogs, events, reports, policy briefs) and highlighting thematic areas that the group would like to promote, support and engage in during its development.

Co-chairs and membership

The membership includes organizations that are working on mainstreaming, integrating and scaling locally led anticipatory action, or have strong ambitions to do so. This working group is hosted by the Anticipation Hub and co-chaired by the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (interim), the German Red Cross (interim), Start Network (interim) and Welthungerhilfe (interim).

Please get in touch with the co-chairs for more information on joining the working group. It is open to everyone, but active participation is encouraged.