

Reaching Last Mile with Early Warning Information for Anticipatory Action

In 2024, World Vision (WV) implemented a pilot project on Anticipatory Action (AA) in Marsabit County, Kenya, focusing on communities where WV has ongoing long-term development programming. Funding for the project was provided by Aktion Deutschland Hilft (ADH). The project focused on building local ownership and capacity, while ensuring that anticipatory actions benefitted all members of the community, including those most marginalised and hardest to reach. This paper outlines this approach and illustrates some of the positive impacts of the project.

Our Approach to Anticipatory Action

World Vision Kenya embraced a multi-stakeholder approach while working with the community structures for Anticipatory Action implementation. We strived to ensure there is an empowered resource at the community level as a critical sustainability pillar. The approach sought to build upon existing structures that WV uses in its development programmes where we work with Community Development Facilitators (CDFs) who represent the respective sub-location within the Area Programme (AP). The CDFs are part of WV's development model whose primary role is community engagement for development activities. They serve as a link between WV and the community.

The CDFs were trained by World Vision in close collaboration with National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) and Marsabit County Government on Anticipatory Action approach to take up the role of Trainers of Trainees (TOTs) and community engagement. WV took a multi-stakeholder approach in establishing the triggers and generally, the Anticipatory Action Protocols. The process was primarily led by the local government with active participation of the community leading to greater local ownership of AA Programming. The multi-stakeholders also reviewed the triggers and communicated activation of the AA Protocols when the thresholds were met.

The success of anticipatory actions is anchored on a solid and robust early warning system reaching last mile. The project connected the CDFs to access information from Kenya Meteorological Department weekly weather forecasts and NDMA Monthly Bulletins by creating an AA WhatsApp Group which served as a platform for sharing early warning information and for related discussions. The CDFs were also linked to other early warning tools like M-shamba which would send periodic messages to them for their specific locations. They would then inform the community on the forecasts in their sub-locations through the community meetings/barazas. This would be done in conjunction with local administration and leaders. This approach enhances the flow of information in formats which are well received and understood by the community. The same information would also be shared using radio broadcasts as a supplement, reinforcing the messaging.

One other key lesson from implementing DRR and Anticipatory Actions across WV Partnership, we learnt that children in schools play a critical role in early warning dissemination. Strengthening School Clubs on DRR and Anticipatory Action results in early adoption by children having right mindsets around disaster management. Parents reported to receive early warning information from their children who got the information from schools. The school-model for early warning information is a key supplement for reaching last mile.



Anticipatory Action monitoring meeting between World Vision staff and Anona women group in Sololo, Marsabit County, Kenya

Community Based approach and Capacity building of CDFs at community Level

- The Anticipatory Action Project Implementation in Kenya took place in Sololo Sub County in Marsabit County. The community are predominantly Pastoralists who get affected by perennial droughts, negatively impacting their livelihoods.
- World Vision Kenya's 3-year presence in the community actively engaging the communities for long-term development was a platform in which the Anticipatory Action (AA) project leveraged on.
- The AA project targeted 47,249 people (7875 HHs) to be directly impacted by the interventions. A cascade model approach was utilised whereby the project team mapped out community facilitators from the 10 Primary Focus Areas (PFAs) – administratively known as sub-locations.
- 3 CDFs were targeted from each PFA and trained comprehensively on AA in coordination with the County government of Marsabit.

- The CDFs were then tasked to develop a workplan for community sensitisation through the platforms existing at the community level.
- The CDFs continued with a series of engagements in dissemination of Early Warnings and mobilising the community for Early Actions.
- The CDFs hold regular review meetings to share progress and emerging issues.
- The CDFs have managed to reach all the villages within their Primary Focus areas hence AA understanding is widely spread and communities are engaged in early actions. (This has enhanced uptake of the pre-agreed activities).
- AA has been institutionalised in the community and this will help sustain the gains realised.



Impact of the Approach

Using the approach of “communication by locals, in the local language, through local channels”, the AA pilot project in Marsabit, Kenya enabled at-risk communities to be more resilient in the face of a predicted drought. This approach resulted in effective uptake of early warning information by community members, especially the Women Groups, who mobilised to undertake early actions which included harvesting and hay baling as well as water conservation measures.

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Theory of Change

IF drought affected communities are mobilised and organised in a timely manner,
IF early warning information and seasonal forecasts messages reach the hard-to-reach people,
IF stakeholders are well coordinated and complement each other's efforts,
IF preparedness and coping mechanisms are mapped and earmarked for improvement post-trigger,
IF there is pre-arranged financing and
IF essential response commodities are procured and strategically prepositioned,
THEN early life saving actions can be effectively implemented, thereby reducing the adverse impacts of the drought
AND minimising disruption to development gains.