



Federal Foreign Office



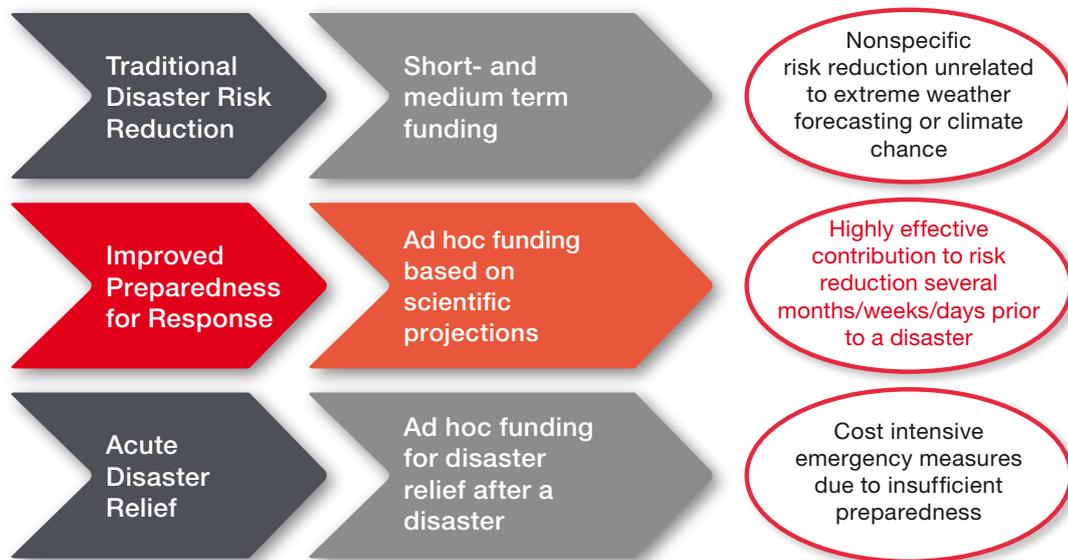
German  
Red  
Cross

# Framework

Action Plan of the  
Federal Foreign Office  
for Humanitarian Adaptation  
to Climate Change

# Background

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**Figure 1:** Using scientific forecasts of extreme weather events for improved preparedness for response and targeted reduction of suddenly-increasing disaster risks.

The need for humanitarian funds and the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance have steadily increased over the past ten years. Climate risks in general are partly responsible for this tremendous increase and they are being amplified by climate change impacts. Current and future risks of climate change in combination with often unplanned urbanisation, limited food supplies, poorly managed natural resources, population growth and extreme poverty represent major challenges, particularly for people in developing countries. These developments are confronted with the reality of stagnating funds for humanitarian assistance. This situation calls for innovative solutions in order to use scarce resources more efficiently and more effectively, to achieve a more favourable ratio between efforts and outcome. The Federal Foreign Office takes a leading role in this regard.

The already visible negative impacts of climate change on the living conditions of people in developing countries will further increase and most likely result in more humanitarian disasters of catastrophic proportions and an increase in small to medium-sized disasters caused by climatic conditions in regions currently considered to be safe.

**At the same time weather-dependent risks can be predicted with increasing accuracy. Climate researchers and weather experts are now able to determine the probability of extreme weather events for specific regions based on forecasts up to six months in advance. By operationalizing and using this scientific information as a tool it offers days, weeks or even months for a more efficient and effective humanitarian response by taking additional measures for risk reduction and preparedness of countries, regions and communities.**

In terms of more efficient use of existing resources the Federal Foreign Office is therefore seeking to improve the utilisation of existing short, medium and long-term (seasonal or otherwise) extreme weather forecasts in order to take action towards effective preparedness in threatened communities, regions and countries prior to a disaster.

The Foreign Office Action Plan presented here is implemented to develop and test innovative approaches in four to six high-risk pilot countries which will help to improve the use of scientific extreme weather forecasts and develop specific actions that are based on early warning mechanisms. In the event of such a scenario happening pre-prepared packages of measures (Standard Operating Procedures, SOPs) are put into action to reduce risks and prepare communities and local partners for disasters.

The Federal Foreign Office will also work on improving the dialogue between humanitarian actors and climate researchers for the purpose of developing multi-dimensional approaches dealing with the subject of climate change and displacement, and taking into account the humanitarian consequences of climate change while shaping the international agenda.

## Actors and Priorities

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The **German Red Cross** (GRC) coordinates the implementation of the Action Plan and already works together with a multitude of actors at different levels on the subject of climate change in a humanitarian context.

This involvement is part of a broader commitment by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The implementation of the Action Plan will take place in cooperation with the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** and the **Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre (RCCC)**. Main partners from the United Nations are the **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)** and the **World Food Programme (WFP)**. The **Climate Services Partnership Network (CSP)**, a network aiming to improve the access and utilization of climate information, plays an important role in the Dialogue Platform.

### Focal points of the Foreign Office Action Plan are:

- Creating a **dialogue platform** in Geneva for improved interaction between climate scientists and humanitarian actors, for the use of synergies and as a critical support of pilot projects.
- **Implementing pilot projects** in four to six high-risk countries in order to combine climate risk analyses, improve the use of extreme weather forecasts, identify forecast indicators for improved early warning systems and to develop special preparedness measures (SOPs) to respond to improved early warnings.
- Developing an **innovative mechanism to finance preparedness measures** (SOPs) based on indicators for climate risks and their forecasts (Federal Foreign Office).
- **Supporting the Nansen Initiative** which works in the area of climate change and disaster-induced displacement.
- **Continuing the paradigm shift** in humanitarian assistance as part of the renewed Hyogo Framework for Action 2015 and the preparation of the World Humanitarian Summit 2016.

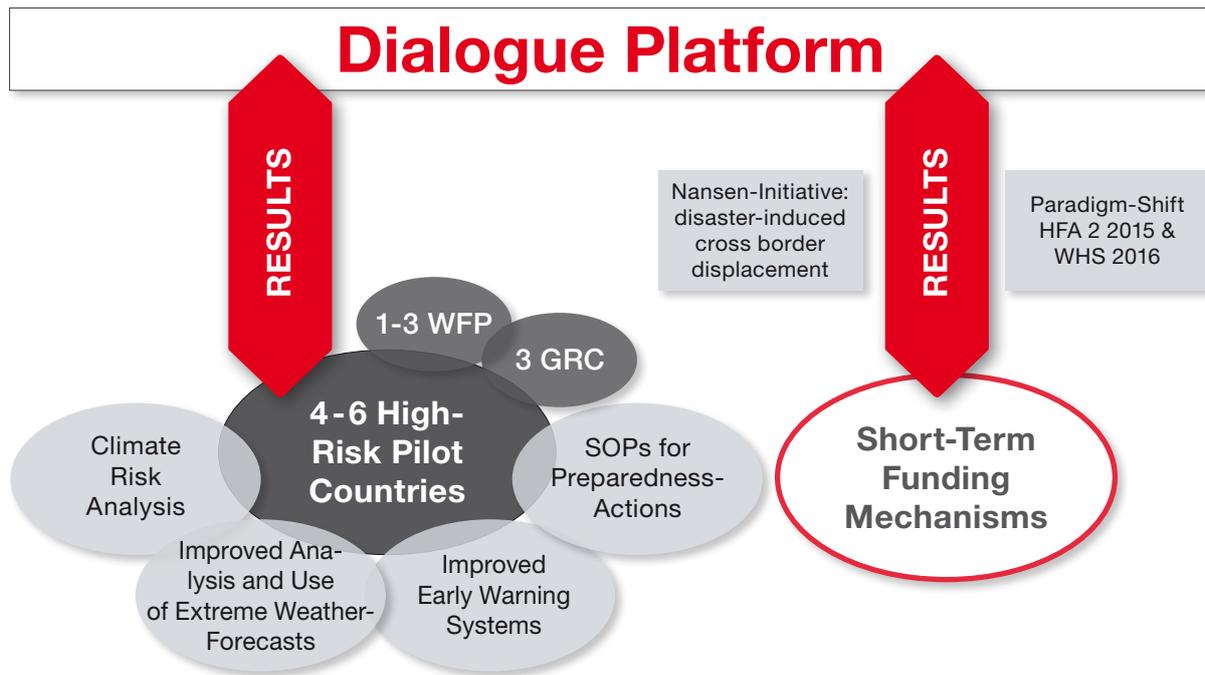


Figure 2: Overview of the components of the Foreign Office Action Plan.

## Components of the Action Plan

1. **Creating a dialogue platform to provide a network for humanitarian actors and climate and meteorological experts:** This dialogue platform will deal with the value of climate research for humanitarian assistance. It will bring together meteorological experts and climate scientists (such as the World Meteorological Organization and national weather services), humanitarian actors within the UN system and civil society (e.g. members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, IASC) and progressive humanitarian donors twice a year and thus improve the dialogue between the different humanitarian and scientific actors. Methods to be developed and specific results from the pilot countries will be presented and discussed.

Three working groups will work on scientific topics in the humanitarian context. The dialogue platform will be attached to the IFRC in Geneva. Concepts and methods for the improved use of weather and climate data in humanitarian assistance will be developed. Methods and results will be discussed with specific examples from the four to six pilot projects and brought together at the end in a lessons learnt workshop.

### Measures:

- **Dialogue platform in Geneva:** Kick-off event, semi-annual events and lessons learnt workshop
- Creation of **working groups** and regular meetings (also virtual) bringing together climate scientists and humanitarian actors
  - ▶ **WG 1:** Forecast-based financing in practice (methods and lessons learnt)
  - ▶ **WG 2:** Linking the humanitarian assistance system with science
  - ▶ **WG 3:** Strategies – Permanent implementation of the concept in the humanitarian system and governments

- 2. Conducting national climate risk analyses in pilot countries:** The Federal Foreign Office supports the process of national climate risk analyses in high-risk countries and will ensure that successful examples of such climate risk analyses are better integrated with each other.

Due to their already extensive experience, the Welthungerhilfe and the GRC will conduct joint climate risk analyses in selected pilot countries. These analyses will be coordinated with UNOCHA and will serve as the basis for all further projects financed by German humanitarian assistance in these countries. Furthermore, the results of the climate risk analyses will be presented, discussed and circulated through the dialogue platform.

- 3. Strengthening early warning capabilities and improving the use of extreme weather forecasts in pilot countries:** Due to their special relevance for improving the responsiveness of humanitarian assistance, the Federal Foreign Office will work to improve the utilization of extreme weather forecasts and to identify regionally specific early warning indicators in selected pilot countries. This improvement of the use of forecasts, the identification of special preparedness measures as well as the climate risk analyses will be embedded in the implementation of projects in the pilot countries.

WFP and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (GRC in cooperation with the RCCC) will be supported in their efforts to improve the accessibility of existing seasonal extreme weather forecasts in the pilot countries.

Additional support is provided for special preparedness measures that are implemented in pilot countries as 'no regret/regret' measures and coordinated with UNOCHA using previously-identified early warning indicators (based on forecasts). This strengthens local early warning capabilities for the purpose of improved preparedness for response.

The dialogue platform in Geneva will serve as a critical support for the implementation of ventures in project countries and particularly for the development of early warning indicators and corresponding preparedness measures in working groups.

### **Measures:**

- 3 pilot countries led by the GRC / 1 to 3 pilot countries led by the WFP
- **Execution of climate risk analyses** in coordination with UNOCHA
- **Expansion and improvement of existing or new early warning systems**
  - ▶ Improving the use of extreme weather forecasts and access to these by the humanitarian system
  - ▶ Development of special early warning indicators based on extreme weather forecasts
  - ▶ Development of ad hoc preparedness measures (SOPs) and 'no regret/regret' measures as a reaction to early warning indicators

4. **Innovative financing mechanisms to improve the reaction to (seasonal) extreme weather forecasts:** In terms of its paradigm shift towards improved preparedness the Federal Foreign Office will not only provide conventional project financing for measures of immediate, emergency and transitional assistance. It will also provide financing based on previously developed indicators, allowing the partners of humanitarian assistance to respond to seasonal, medium-term and short-term extreme weather forecasts which indicate that certain regions face an increased risk of disaster in the medium to short term.

Specifically, this means building and delivering a financing mechanism for 'no and low regret' measures situated between extreme weather forecast and the acute risk of a disaster. The pilot countries mentioned above are used as a reference for this purpose.

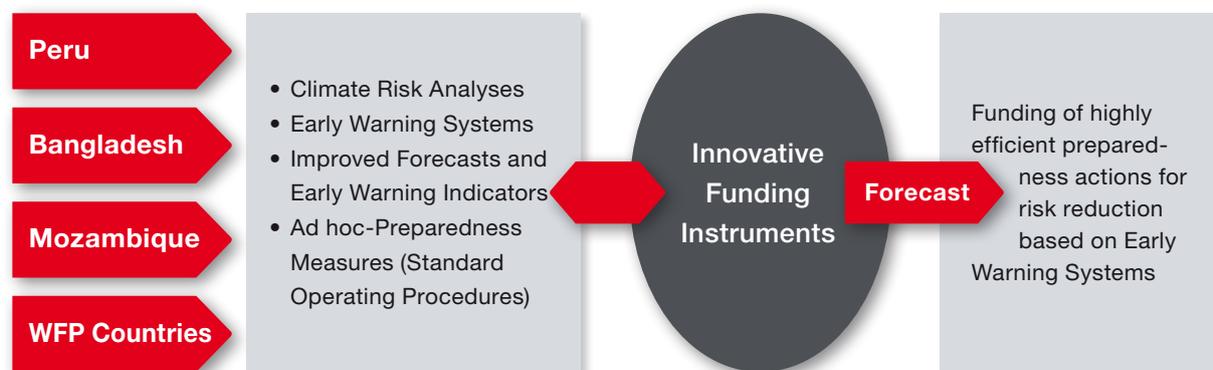


Figure 3: Innovative financing mechanisms for the realization of preparedness measures based on extreme weather forecasts.

5. **Involvement in the Nansen Initiative:** The results of the Nansen Initiative will be incorporated into the implementation of the Foreign Office Action Plan. The Federal Foreign Office will help to ensure that multi-dimensional approaches dealing with the subject of climate change and displacement are further developed in the Nansen Initiative.
6. **Developing an anticipatory humanitarian system:** The Federal Foreign Office will continue its efforts to establish an anticipatory humanitarian system which is not only more far-sighted but also emphasizes the humanitarian dimension of climate change and humanitarian adaptation measures. Two political processes in particular offer opportunities for increased involvement: the negotiations for the new framework agreement on risk reduction in March 2015 at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, as well as the ongoing advisory process resulting in the World Humanitarian Summit 2016 in Istanbul.