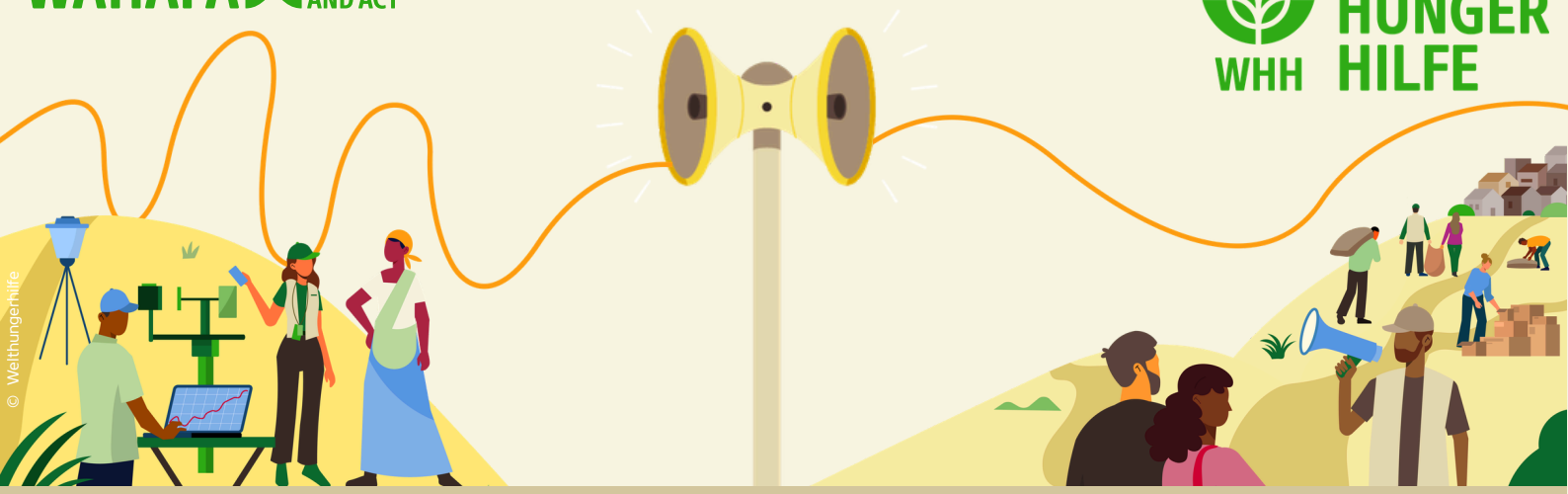
WAHAFA ANTICIPATE AND ACT

WELT HUNGER HILFE
WHH



Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

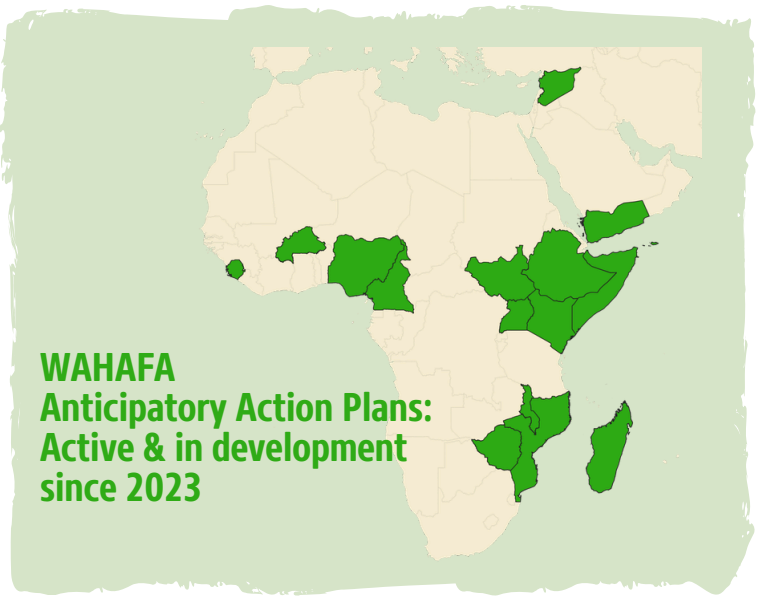
Global Challenges

Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and more severe. The consequences for people are catastrophic. In 2025 alone, there were 358 disasters triggered by natural events worldwide,[1] in which 16,607 people lost their lives [2] and 110.2 million people were affected. The economic damage amounted to around 170 billion US dollars.[3] The demand for humanitarian action is on the rise, yet humanitarian crises are becoming increasingly difficult to manage as the consequences of the climate crisis become more noticeable, conflicts escalate, access to people in need becomes more challenging and funding is cut.

Moreover, humanitarian action usually only reaches people when they have already suffered considerable loss and damage. Today, thanks to advances in forecasting and monitoring abilities, many hazards can be predicted with increasing reliability, especially weather and climate-related extreme events such as floods, droughts and storms, which account for up to 90 percent of the world's natural hazards.[4] These advances enable an anticipatory approach to humanitarian action and can complement reactive measures to reduce humanitarian needs and minimize damage.

Humanitarian Paradigm Change – more anticipatory, less reactive

At the heart of Welthungerhilfe's (WHH) humanitarian strategy is a paradigm shift toward a stronger focus on resilience strengthening, disaster preparedness and Anticipatory Action. Our innovative projects and programs are central to this shift, and spearheaded by our multi-year program "Welthungerhilfe Anticipatory Humanitarian Action Facility (WAHAFA)". The aim of Anticipatory Action is to use risk and vulnerability data alongside forecasting and Early Warning Systems to provide humanitarian action once there is an early warning, meaning before a disaster unfolds its full impact. Anticipatory actions are triggered as soon as a predetermined threshold is crossed, that is, a point at which the probability of the monitored hazard materializing and leading to severe consequences is so high that Anticipatory Action is required. Once a threshold is crossed and an early warning is triggered, pre-defined contingency plans, so-called Anticipatory Action Plans, are rolled out and pre-arranged funds are automatically released. These Anticipatory Action Plans define the use of funds, roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved, as well as pre-determined anticipatory actions aimed at reducing the hazard's impact on people's lives and livelihoods. Anticipatory Action can thus minimize losses and damage and ensure a more efficient use of resources.



Welthungerhilfe Anticipatory Humanitarian Action Facility (WAHAFA)

WAHAFA is a program co-financed by the German Federal Foreign Office, which aims to further advance and geographically expand Anticipatory Action. WAHAFA 2.0 (2026-2029) builds on the regional focus of the first project cycle (2023-2026) in Sub-Saharan Africa, while also expanding the portfolio to include Yemen and Syria. In the selected project countries, potential hazards and their impacts on food security are identified and analyzed, while the development of locally led anticipatory mechanisms is supported and financed through a total project budget of €21 million. Through exchange, knowledge sharing and access to funding, WAHAFA enables WHH country offices, other German humanitarian organizations and their local humanitarian partners to actively shape and advance the humanitarian paradigm shift toward more anticipatory thinking and action.

Locally Led Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

Our approach explained in 2 minutes

Anticipatory Humanitarian Action takes different forms depending on the context in which people live, their needs and priorities and the nature of the risk they face. That is why we place communities at the center of our work to ensure ownership and effective support that meets local realities. The perspectives and ideas of people we work with, as well as existing local strategies and structures, form the foundation of our anticipatory work. Integrating the experience and expertise of communities and local governmental actors is also crucial to ensure that early warnings are effective and contextualized and that Anticipatory Humanitarian Action becomes an integral part of a society's risk management.

Impact and Partners

Following initial pilot projects launched in 2019 in Madagascar, Zimbabwe and Kenya, Welthungerhilfe (WHH) expanded its portfolio in 2023 as part of the first WAHAFA program to include 13 project countries, thereby providing additional support for Anticipatory Action in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Several German humanitarian organizations and their local partners have joined WAHAFA. Projects were implemented in collaboration with five WHH country offices, ten German humanitarian organizations (ADRA, Action Against Hunger, CARE Germany, Christian Blind Mission, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, Kindernothilfe, Malteser International, Oxfam, Plan International and World Vision), as well as 26 local partner organizations. During the first WAHAFA project cycle, these organizations developed and finalized Anticipatory Action Plans (AAPs) for tropical cyclones, droughts, floods and epidemics. During the first project cycle of WAHAFA, we initiated anticipatory support 14 times ahead of predicted severe drought, flood, landslide, and cyclone events across nine countries.

Hundreds of thousands of people received targeted support – including early warnings, cash transfers, livelihood protection measures as well as shelter and evacuation support. An independent evaluation (2025) confirms the significant strengthening of capacities among international and local partners, successful knowledge transfer, and strong local ownership.

With WAHAFA 2.0, WHH is now building on these achievements and taking the next step toward scaling up. With €21 million available for the second project cycle, the program will continue strengthening local capacities and systems and expanding the reach of Anticipatory Action.

co-financed by

german humanitarian assistance
DEUTSCHE HUMANITÄRE HILFE

[1] With the exception of biological and extraterrestrial hazards
[2] Death figures include missing persons
[3] Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT)
[4] United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)

Contact

Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e.V.
WHH Anticipatory Humanitarian Action Facility (WAHAFA)

www.welthungerhilfe.org/anticipation

www.linkedin.com/showcase/anticipatory-action-whh

wahafa@whh.de