



The **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)**, established in 1956, is Denmark's largest non-governmental organization. Its mission is to assist refugees and displaced persons, protect their rights, and empower them to build a better future. DRC supports forcibly displaced populations and their host communities across the entire displacement cycle, working at the intersection of humanitarian response, development, and peacebuilding. The organization delivers assistance through four core sectors: Protection, Economic Recovery, Humanitarian disarmament & Peacebuilding, and WASH, Shelter, and Infrastructure.

Anticipatory Action

DRC's Approach to Averting and Mitigating the Humanitarian Impacts of Forced Displacement

Anticipatory action is emerging as a powerful shift in humanitarian response - moving from reactive aid to proactive, forecast-informed interventions that reduce the impact of and, in some cases even prevent, crises before they escalate. By acting early on predictable hazards like climate shocks or conflict impacts, humanitarian actors can save lives, protect development gains, and uphold the dignity of affected communities, while responding with greater efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Since 2018, DRC has led the way in the application of anticipatory action in displacement and conflict-affected contexts, leveraging machine learning and AI to predict displacement months in advance and trigger early, targeted action. Operating in some of the world's most fragile contexts, DRC links these forecasts to scalable, community-driven interventions that reduce the vulnerability of individuals, communities and national systems, enhance their capacity to anticipate and absorb multi-dimensional shocks and mitigate future humanitarian needs before they fully unfold through proactive and coordinated efforts. Anticipatory actions are strategically deployed across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus to mitigate initial displacement, reduce secondary displacement, and enable durable solutions.

For more information, please see [DRC's global anticipatory action overview](#).

The critical need for Anticipatory Action

Over the past decade, humanitarian needs have surged, with 305 million people projected to require assistance in 2025 - nearly four times the figure in 2015. This dramatic increase is fueled by the convergence of armed conflict and intensifying climate shocks, which have displaced 123 million people globally. As these "polycrises" multiply, they demand innovative, cost-

effective solutions that act before emergencies unfold, especially in the face of widening humanitarian funding gaps. With the scale of anticipatory action systems grown significantly over the past decade, many of the operational frameworks fall short in considering the linkages between climate, conflict, and displacement and have not sufficiently translated to alleviating the needs of displacement-affected communities. This, in turn, has impeded their integration in international aid coordination and policy processes and, thus, their broader application in relevant settings. Given anticipatory actions's potential to save lives and livelihoods, alleviate strain on existing response systems, and support longer-term stability, DRC has a unique role to play in promoting this approach at scale.

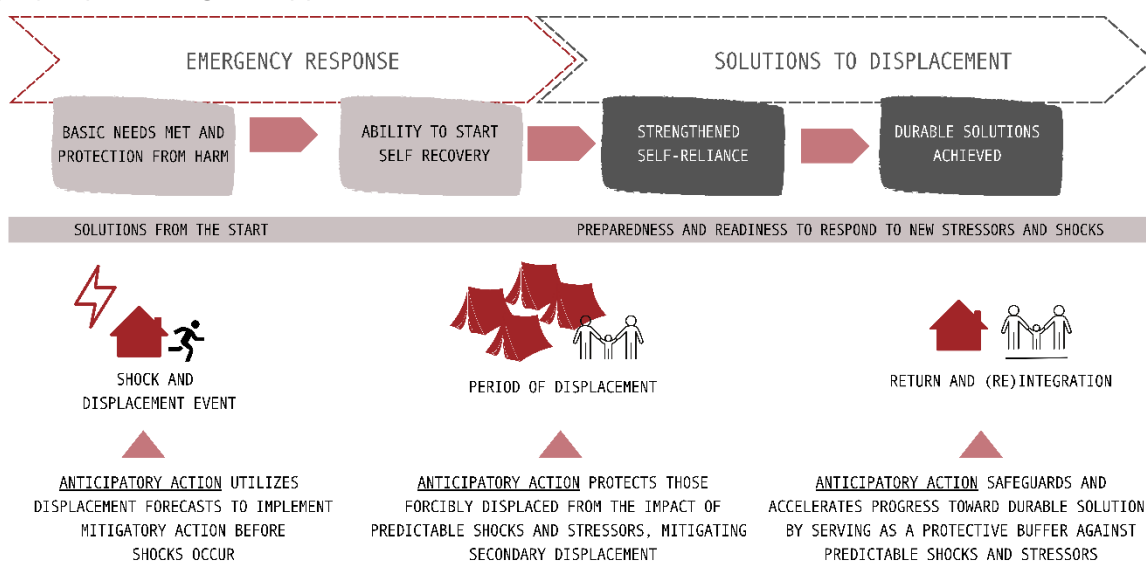


Image 1. Anticipatory Action across the Continuum of Emergency Response and Solutions to Displacement

DRC is committed to scaling anticipatory action as one of the needed solutions to address this complex risk landscape. DRC's growing evidence base demonstrates promising results: in South Sudan, forecast-based actions helped de-escalate violence, mitigate displacement and enable quicker returns. In Somalia, anticipatory action ahead of predicted flood risks improved food security and eliminated child labor among assisted households. With demonstrated cost-benefit ratios as high as 6.6:1, anticipatory action offers a transformative path forward - protecting lives and livelihoods while strengthening the efficiency and dignity of humanitarian response. DRC is currently deploying this approach across thirteen countries, as visualized in Image 2.

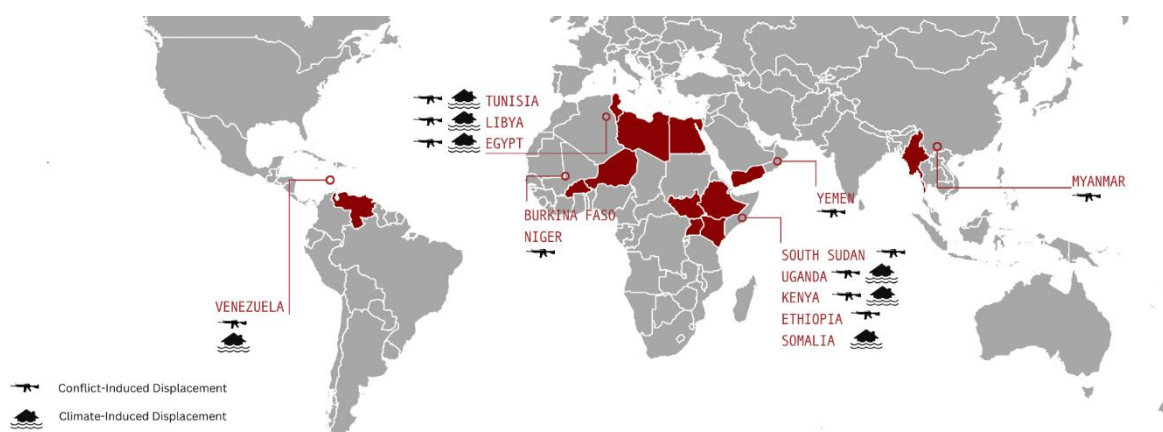


Image 2. DRC's Global Anticipatory Action Portfolio – Status April 2025

What does Anticipatory Action deliver?

DRC's anticipatory action approach is built to proactively address displacement risks by linking data-driven forecasts with timely, targeted interventions. At its core are four key pillars:

1. **Early Warning & Forecasting:** DRC uses machine learning and local knowledge to create context-specific, multi-hazard forecasts. Its four predictive models cover conflict-, climate-, and multi-hazard displacement risks, all ethically reviewed to ensure data protection and responsible use.
2. **Programmatic Mainstreaming:** DRC integrates anticipatory action into its programming through standardized tools, staff expertise at all levels, and participatory design processes. It empowers local communities, engages governments, and even explores diaspora contributions, ensuring anticipatory action efforts are locally owned and contribute towards solutions.
3. **Anticipatory Finance:** DRC is advancing innovative finance solutions for fragile and conflict settings, including pre-agreed funding, insurance mechanisms, and blended financing models that improve efficiency and enable faster anticipatory action across sectors.
4. **Evidence & Advocacy:** DRC is contributing to a global evidence base for anticipatory action, facilitating learning and advocacy through platforms like the Anticipation Hub and REAP. With a focus on displacement and fragile settings, DRC is advocating for policy to embed anticipatory action in humanitarian and development frameworks—driving systemic change from local to global levels.

The Anticipatory Humanitarian Action for Displacement (AHEAD) Programme: Scaling conflict-induced displacement anticipation

The **Anticipatory Humanitarian Action for Displacement (AHEAD)** initiative, supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is a global initiative dedicated to advancing anticipatory action for conflict-induced displacement. Across Burkina Faso, Niger, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, Yemen, and Myanmar, AHEAD focuses on developing national **conflict-relevant anticipatory action frameworks**, ensuring they are inclusive and shaped by multiple stakeholders, alongside in-country pilots.

A strong MEAL approach supports the project by generating evidence from in-country pilots to drive advocacy efforts at national, regional, and global levels. It uses machine learning models developed by DRC to predict displacement 3-4 months in advance and helps inform more cost effective and smart humanitarian responses. The project's focus on advocacy brings with it an opportunity for DRC to share evidence and learning from this approach with humanitarian actors, governments and others to **improve sector-wide responses to displacement**. Ultimately, AHEAD seeks to elevate the role of anticipatory action connected to conflict-induced displacement, positioning it as a key strategy for humanitarian action.

More details on: drc.ngo/what-we-do/innovation/anticipatory-action/ahead/

How DRC delivers Anticipatory Action

With a strong organizational commitment to proactive displacement risk management, DRC has built the operational capacity and partnerships necessary to deliver anticipatory action with technical rigor and impact. Our approach draws on deep in-house expertise and close collaboration with local actors to ensure anticipatory action is effective, inclusive, and sustainable:

- ⇒ **Technical rigor:** Guided by DRC's Global Lead on Anticipatory Action and regional coordinators, technical expertise supports country offices in designing and implementing context-specific anticipatory action systems.
- ⇒ **Predictive analytics:** A global data team - including data scientists, analysts, and IM specialists - develops and refines predictive models and community-based indicators that drive timely and informed decision-making.
- ⇒ **Local expertise & partnerships:** Rooted in displacement-affected communities, DRC works with local authorities and national actors to embed early warning systems and triggers into broader response frameworks, promoting national ownership and long-term sustainability.
- ⇒ **Global Thought Leadership:** Through its co-chair role of the Global Working Group on Anticipatory Action for Displacement next to IOM, DRC is advancing and guiding the systemic adoption in displacement contexts.
- ⇒ **Anticipatory finance:** Innovative Finance specialists at HQ and regional levels support the design of flexible funding mechanisms, including pre-agreed finance, diaspora contributions, and insurance-based solutions to enable scalable anticipatory action.
- ⇒ **Sector and thematic expertise:** Specialists, including but not limited to, peacebuilding, protection, localization, and hard-to-reach contexts ensure anticipatory actions are inclusive, context-sensitive, and reach the most at-risk populations.
- ⇒ **Operational capacities:** DRC's EMPACT surge team enables rapid deployment and response, while strong coordination with emergency units ensures seamless integration of ex-ante and ex-post interventions.
- ⇒ **Advocacy & Policy Influence:** DRC's advocacy team advances global policy change through its global Anticipatory Action Advocacy strategy, geared towards enhancing the wider adoption of anticipatory action in displacement and conflict settings.

Committed to Partnerships: Scaling coordinated Anticipatory Action in the Greater Horn of Africa

The **Scaling Coordinated, Multi-Hazard, and Conflict-Sensitive Anticipatory Action in the Greater Horn of Africa** project aims to transform anticipatory action across the region through a holistic, harmonized approach that addresses the interconnected risks of climate change, conflict, and displacement. In direct support of the **Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Roadmap for Anticipatory Action**, the initiative embeds conflict and protection sensitivity into anticipatory frameworks while strengthening coordination and aligning financing mechanisms at national and regional levels. Implemented by **IGAD-ICPAC, WFP, FAO, IFRC, and DRC**, the project pilots in **Somalia and Ethiopia** to generate robust, scalable evidence and ensure that the most vulnerable populations are protected before crises escalate.

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