DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

Lessons Learned Report

December 2024 – Copenhagen, Denmark

Lessons Learned

Anticipating displacement in South Sudan and Burkina Faso

An evaluation of "Enhancing anticipatory response to conflict displacement through community monitoring project"

Funded by European Union Humanitarian Aid

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Report prepared for the Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
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Executive Summary

As global displacement continues to rise, there is a pressing need to effectively anticipate it in order to minimise its occurrence and impacts and support the areas receiving displaced people. The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is one of the few agencies and organisations that has implemented programming to test the relevance and accuracy of anticipatory approaches to prevent or reduce the impacts of displacement. This report provides an analysis of two ECHO-funded pilots undertaken by DRC in 2024 in South Sudan and Burkina Faso. It draws on primary and secondary qualitative research to evaluate the pilots' process and outcomes and provides an overview of lessons learned from both pilots.

Overview of pilots

The South Sudan pilot in Akobo aimed to address conflict leading to displacement between the Lou Nuer and Murle tribes, including through peace dialogues, information sharing with affected communities and prospective hosts. The Burkina Faso pilot aimed to offer support to the areas predicted to host IDPs through a variety of activities, ranging from host community sensitisation to the pre-positioning of items for IDPs. This evaluation found a high level of effectiveness in the community engagement and involvement in the pilot design and implementation in both countries.

Pilot Effectiveness and Outcomes

In South Sudan, interviews and focus group discussions with community members and local stakeholders suggest that the AA pilot was indeed effective at reducing conflict and thereby the numbers of displaced people in Akobo. In particular, the peace committees were seen as effective in reducing overall tension and conflict, reducing cattle raiding incidents, and helping abducted children be returned. When asked specifically about why conflict subsided in June 2024, many survey respondents stated explicitly that the peace committees supported by DRC played a role.

The Burkina Faso pilot represents a valuable example of both the ability to implement AA in complex crises and the constraints that accompany it. Despite challenges, a comparison of IDP household outcomes (n=45) showed significant improvements between the baseline and endline surveys, suggesting that the pilot had a positive impact on targeted households. At the same time, at first glance, results on the timeliness of the pilot activities suggest that it was not in fact anticipatory action: the AA mechanism took 40 days from the moment of trigger for activities to be fully implemented, meaning that many IDPs had already been in Dédougou for over a month before they received assistance. However, the pilot was in fact able to implement activities over a month earlier than average responses. A variety of activities that were clearly anticipatory in scope were also carried out before the displacement occurred, including the activation of Alert Committees, awareness-raising activities, and the pre-positioning of assistance. While illustrating clear room for improvement, this also suggests that an expanded notion of AA as acting earlier rather than always early may be more feasible in situations of complex and conflict-affected contexts.

Recommendations and Take-Aways

DRC's AA pilots to anticipate displacement in South Sudan and Burkina Faso provide a variety of important recommendations and take-aways detailed below related to both DRC's work in particular and wider objectives relating to increasing practice and evidence related to displacement and anticipatory action.

1. **Be prepared for models to trigger quickly…or not**

Both of the pilots triggered 'suddenly' according to informants, which underscores the importance of being prepared for action within any timeframe of the three-month displacement forecast. It is important for DRC to be prepared for both an immediate trigger as well as a slower escalation of conflict wherein a phased approach of anticipatory activities is undertaken. Stress-tests and simulations are valuable activities to help catch details in operational planning that can impact project timing, the safety of staff and AA recipients, and overall increase preparedness for implementation.

2. **Consider scaling based on conflict breadth rather than physical geography**

While the pilots focused on one particular geographic area affected by a wider conflict, it may make more sense for the geographic breadth of a conflict to dictate the scope of geography covered. A specific AA framework could be developed for particular conflict dynamics across a relevant area, with activities for implementation planned to target particularly at-risk communities. If the geographic scope were to broaden, it would be important to still ensure in-depth, quality engagement with communities as part of the AA design and implementation. Based on findings from the South Sudan pilot in particular, selecting locations where peacebuilding activities are already being conducted could help maximise AA impact.

3. **Develop multi-hazard triggers for AA for displacement**

As AA for displacement mechanisms continue to advance and scale, developing multi-hazard triggers could provide more comprehensive and effective frameworks to anticipate displacement. Both short- and sudden-onset climate events could be incorporated into existing models given the high level of overlap between conflict-affected countries and those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Offering multi-hazard triggers within one model represents value for money that could help those tools developed to anticipate displacement be more relevant and widely utilized for different situations.

4. **Conduct communication and advocacy efforts to address both the complexity of AA and the associated risks**

Effective communication and advocacy efforts are critical to help local actors, national authorities, and staff within and beyond DRC understand AA for displacement. To this end, simple and clear written outputs and presentations are needed to ensure that the aims, approaches, and risks associated with AA are understood.

5. **Enhance coordination between AA and different actors**

While AA is a particular type of humanitarian action, it is likely most effective when linked with preparedness, development, peacebuilding, and different types of responses. To this end, it is important that AA for displacement is coordinated with humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts as well as with government actors for different phases of crisis. This includes ongoing peace processes, government development plans, climate adaptation plans as well as the Humanitarian Country Teams (HCT) and Cluster system.

6. **Utilise community perceptions and community-led work throughout the AA process**

A key success of both pilots was the integration of community perceptions and community-led work in both countries to co-design indicators, monitor situations, and implement actions. This approach should be continued and scaled up. Scale-up could take place in different ways, including continuing to integrate Project 21 data into the AA displacement mechanism and increase the amount of data when possible, and partnering with already existing grassroots organisations and networks to inform and implement AA.

7. **Explore alternative finance to support programming and research on anticipating displacement**

Identifying alternative means of finance for anticipating displacement beyond grants is a key element of ensuring sustainability in both programming and evidence generation. Establishing a pooled fund focused either specifically on AA for displacement or for addressing displacement across the nexus, with AA built in as a key programme, is one way to support longer-term action and attract donors. Pooled funds and other grants could then be used to develop public-private partnerships for blended humanitarian financing, outcome-based financing, and/or disaster risk financing.

8. **Continue to refine DRC's objectives relating to AA and displacement**

As DRC's work on AA and displacement continues, it would be valuable to conduct both internal and external discussions to identify DRC's potentially evolving objectives in this space. As practice and evidence grows, it will be relevant to consider whether developing AA to increase the preparation of host communities to anticipated displacement (evinced through the Burkina Faso pilot), explicitly minimize rates of displacement (as the South Sudan pilot intended), or mitigate the impacts of displacement itself, such as needs and rights violations, are desirable or achievable aims in particular contexts. DRC is well-placed to address and advance practice, evidence, and advocacy in this space.

Content

List of Acronyms

AA – Anticipatory Action
AHEAD – DRC's Anticipatory Humanitarian Action for Displacement (AHEAD) model
DRC – Danish Refugee Council
GPAA – Greater Pibor Administrative Area
HCT – Humanitarian Country Team
IOM DTM – International Organization for Migration's Displacement Tracking Matrix
KI – Key Informant
KII – Key Informant Interview(s)
MEAL – Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WACAFI – DRC's West Africa Context Analysis and Foresight Initiative (WACAFI) predictive analytics model

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Introduction

As global displacement continues to rise, there is a pressing need to effectively anticipate it in order to minimise its occurrence and impacts and support the areas receiving displaced people. Currently over 122.6 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide due to violence, persecution and conflict, not including people displaced by natural hazards and other impacts of climate change.[1] While anticipatory action (AA)[2] has traditionally focused on anticipating impacts related to extreme weather events, a growing body of research and practice[3] now examines how conflict forecasting could in fact shed light on the location and severity of future displacement, and in so doing enable a variety of anticipatory assistance.

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is one of the few agencies and organisations that has implemented programming to test the relevance and accuracy of anticipatory approaches to prevent or reduce the impacts of displacement. This report provides an analysis of two ECHO-funded pilots undertaken by DRC in 2024 in South Sudan and Burkina Faso. It draws on primary and secondary qualitative research to evaluate the pilots' process and outcomes and provides an overview of lessons learned from both pilots. It reflects on key questions facing the humanitarian community addressing displacement and exploring the potential, opportunities, and risks related to anticipating it, including:

- How can anticipatory action lead to improve assistance and protection outcomes for displacement-affected communities?
- What role does conflict prediction and monitoring play in enhancing support to forcibly displaced people and the communities receiving them in hosting areas?

This report aims to support DRC and the wider humanitarian community with insights and lessons learned related to the process and outcomes of the pilot project, including reflections on main challenges, successes, and recommendation. The report's objective is to inform future work on AA for DRC and other humanitarians and stakeholders addressing displacement.

The following sections provide a methods snapshot, an overview of the pilots and areas of implementation, followed by findings and key recommendations and take-aways

[1] UNHCR (2024) Mid-Year Trends 2024. Webpage, available at: https://www.unhcr.org/mid-year-trends

[2] AA is defined as acting ahead of predicted hazards to prevent or reduce acute humanitarian impacts before they fully unfold, and is commonly developed with pre-arranged funding, activities, and triggers for action.

[3] For some examples and more information, see UNHCR's Project Jetson website, available at: https://jetson.unhcr.org; the World Food Programme HungerMap, available at: https://hungermap.wfp.org/; Bazzi, Samuel, Robert A. Blair, Christopher Blattman, Oeindrila Dube, Matthew Gudgeon, and Richard Peck. "The promise and pitfalls of conflict prediction: evidence from Colombia and Indonesia." *Review of Economics and Statistics,* 104, no. 4 (2022): 764-779.

Box 1. Overview of the Danish Refugee Council

Founded in 1956, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is a leading international NGO and one of the few with a specific expertise in forced displacement. Active in 40 countries with 9,000 employees and supported by 7,500 volunteers, DRC protects, advocates, and builds sustainable futures for refugees and other displacement affected people and communities. DRC works during displacement at all stages: In the acute crisis, in displacement, when settling and integrating in a new place, or upon return. DRC provides protection and life-saving humanitarian assistance; supports displaced persons in becoming self-reliant and included into hosting societies; and works with civil society and responsible authorities to promote protection of rights and peaceful coexistence.

Box 2. Research Methods Snapshot

This report examines the process of the AA pilots as well as an analysis of the activities and outcomes, as presented in documentation, interviews, and surveys by DRC staff and local participants and stakeholders in both case study areas and at the global level. The evaluation aimed to examine the internal and external coherence of the projects as perceived by different engaged actors within and beyond DRC. The findings are guided by a standard evaluative framework analysing the relevance, appropriateness, and effectiveness of the pilots. In particular, the research process included:

- **Scoping study to identify literature relating to relevant topics to inform the data collection and analysis phase, and to gain information for the final lessons learned report.** A scoping study is a type of intensive literature review akin to a rapid evidence review, which seeks to identify and map existing knowledge on a given topic.[4]
- **Desk-based review of project documents, including inception documents, internal correspondence/updates, and reports.** Project analysis drew on a standard evaluative framework with a particular focus on Relevance, Appropriateness, and Effectiveness, and included focus on the project's level of internal coherence within DRC's programming and external coherence with broader programming in anticipatory action, peacebuilding, and other related fields.
- **Semi-structured qualitative interviews** with relevant DRC staff and external experts.
- **Secondary analysis of primary survey and interview data of key community informants and national DRC staff in South Sudan.**

Annex 1. provides an overview of questions explored in the scoping study and during interviews.

[4] This research follows: Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework. *International journal of social research methodology*, *8*(1), 19-32.

Overview of DRC Pilots

In January 2023, DRC initiated an ECHO-funded project entitled *Enhancing anticipatory response to conflict displacement through community monitoring.* The 24-month project sought to expand existing activities of community-led data collection and disaster predictive modelling to support preparation for and anticipation of conflict-induced displacement through anticipatory action mechanisms. The project aimed to:

1. Further develop a predictive model that includes community-level data to provide insight to humanitarian teams to help anticipate and act in the face of potential movements from conflict events;

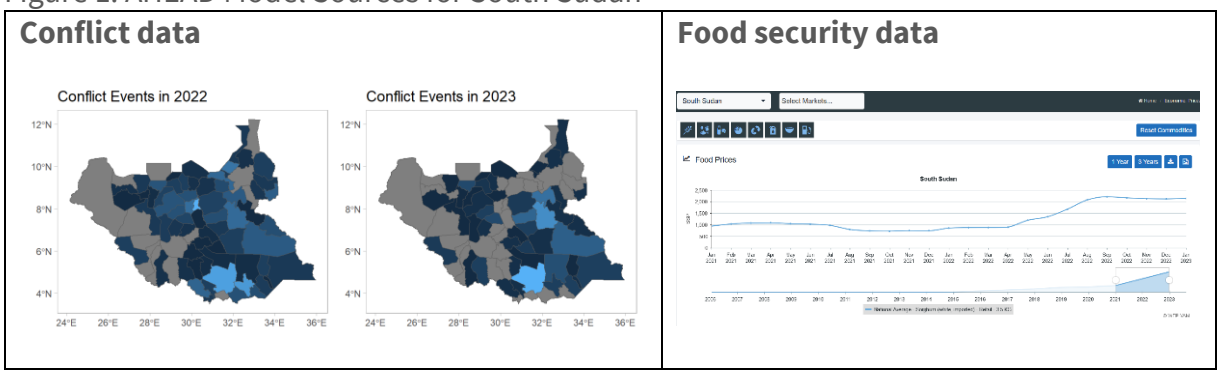
2. Test the model in two contexts in the Sahel and northeast Africa (Burkina Faso and South Sudan), developing learning about the model's replicability and the extent to which triggers and response activities related to conflict can be embedded into early action;

3. Develop a global framework available for use by humanitarian actors that showcases the uses, lessons, and effectiveness of the predictive model.

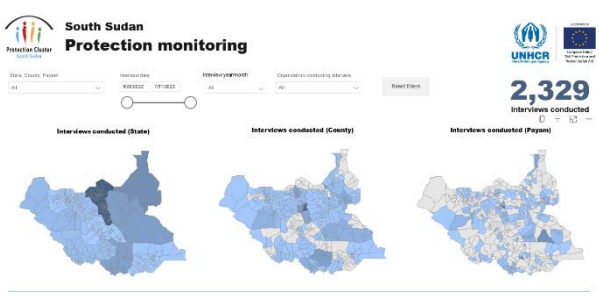
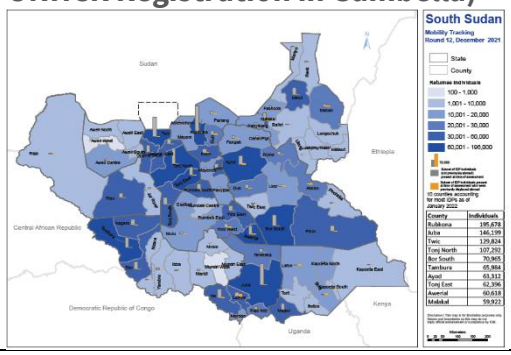
The project was implemented with a combination of global level activities, as well as specific pilot activities in South Sudan and Burkina Faso, which are explored in more depth in the following sections. The pilots differed in their design in one key way: the pilot in Akobo included a focus on the actual *prevention* of conflict in order to prevent displacement as well as, if prevention was not successful, the triggering of anticipatory response to the conflict-induced displacement; in contrast, in Burkina Faso the pilot focused only on anticipatory response and not prevention, with work focused on areas to which displaced people were anticipated to arrive.

Both pilots utilised data from DRC's Anticipatory Humanitarian Action for Displacement (AHEAD) model, which uses machine learning to forecast displacement at sub-national level in the Liptako-Gourma region in the Sahel, South Sudan, and Somalia.[5] This model uses a variety of data, including conflict, food security, protection monitoring, and displacement information to predict displacement three months in advance on a quarterly basis. An illustrative overview of data types for the Akobo pilot in South Sudan can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. AHEAD Model Sources for South Sudan



[5] To learn more about AHEAD and access the model, see: https://drc.ngo/what-we-do/innovation/predictive-analysis/ahead/

Protection Monitoring data	Displacement data (IOM DTM & UNHCR Registration in Gambella)
	
Source: DRC, Akobo Assessment Report.	

Pilot Context and Overview

Akobo, South Sudan

The South Sudan pilot aimed to address conflict leading to displacement between the Lou Nuer and Murle tribes. This rivalry is considered one of the most violent communal conflicts globally and has endured despite interventions from a variety of stakeholders ranging from community, government authorities, the international community, and faith-based entities.[6] Violence is marked by resource conflicts and livestock raiding, along with the kidnapping of children. The impacts of climate change, notably increasing temperatures and increased rainfall variability, are considered to compound existing tensions, including political and military conflicts.[7] Both tribes experience economic and political marginalisation by the Bor Dinka, the majority political tribe; for example, the Murle lack strong representation in local government, leading to fear and tension over decision-making and support.[8]

Akobo county, where the pilot took place, is one of the twelve counties comprising Jonglei state in Eastern South Sudan. The county is divided into two areas, Akobo East and Akobo West, and further into payams. In Akobo East, the Nuer are the main tribe along with a small Anyuak population in Akobo town. This area is dominated by three Lou Nuer clans. The majority of conflicts in Akobo East are caused by Murle attacks and cattle raiding, primarily on the Lou Nuer. Displacement has been a longstanding feature of these conflicts.

The Akobo pilot used four protection indicators as its trigger mechanism (arrivals in Akobo, incidents of violence in communities outside of Akobo, the recruitment of youth to armed groups,

[6] Climate Diplomacy (2025) Conflict between Lou Nuer and Murle in South Sudan. Webpage, available at: https://climate-diplomacy.org/case-studies/conflict-between-lou-nuer-and-murle-south-sudan

[7] Ibid.

[8] McCallum, J. and Okech, A. (2013) Drivers of conflict in Jonglei State. ODI Humanitarian Exchange Magazine, 57(5). Available at: https://odihpn.org/publication/drivers-of-conflict-in-jonglei-state/; Gordon, R. (2014) In the eye of the storm: An analysis of internal conflict in South Sudan's Jonglei State. Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, Working Paper 11. Available at: https://securelivelihoods.org/wp-content/uploads/In-the-Eye-of-the-Storm-an-Analysis-of-Internal-Conflict-in-South-Sudans-Jonglei-State.pdf

and movement restrictions by community members, which was seen as a protective measure due to the presence of armed groups in a given area). The pilot was designed to have a phased approach so that when one of the trigger inputs (the model or community protection indicators) hit a threshold, a series of preventative actions were taken to reduce the escalation of conflict. These included community dialogues led by peace committees and information sharing with affected communities. When both the model and community protection indicators were triggered, actions were taken to mitigate the impact of displacement in host communities, including information sharing with affected communities and host community outreach, needs assessment and recipient identification, individual protection assistance, and the pre-positioning of relief items.

Dédougou, Burkina Faso

Since 2019, Burkina Faso has become a central hub for armed groups, which particularly affect the Boucle du Mouhoun, Centre-Nord, Est, Nord, and Sahel regions of the country.[9] Currently, armed groups control an estimated 40% of the country, severely impacting civilians and limiting humanitarian operations. Sieges, threats, sexual violence, kidnappings, and landmines and improvised explosive devices are all tactics that lead to the harm, displacement, and deaths of civilians.[10] Counterterrorism operations, in turn, have led to human rights violations, including likely war crimes and crimes against humanity, and thus also acted as a driver of displacement. In 2024, when this pilot took place, over two million people had already been displaced since 2019.[11] This situation is compounded by political crisis, including two military coups in 2022.

The Burkina Faso pilot in Dédougou aimed to offer support to the areas predicted to host IDPs through a variety of activities, ranging from host community sensitisation to the pre-positioning of items for IDPs. It used foundational data from the DRC's West Africa Context Analysis and Foresight Initiative (WACAFI), which is part of the AHEAD predictive analytics model. WACAFI aims to forecast on a quarterly basis the number of people displaced in the Liptako-Gourma region at the intersection of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. This model uses a variety of indicators, namely the number of IDPs, protection data drawn from Project 21,[12] the number of civilians killed in conflict, number of violent incidents against civilians, number of clashes between two groups in the area, the number of people at IPC food security stage 3 or above, and the three-month average vegetation health index, which can indicate the likelihood or prevalence of drought.

Data from the WACAFI model was analysed by DRC, and then, if the model predicted displacement, alerts were shared with colleagues or partners in concerned areas. Notably, areas targeted were those where civilians were expected to *arrive to*, rather than leave *from*. Relevant actors in the concerned areas then initiated contact with local Alert Committees established by DRC, which then monitored these areas for established indicators of displacement to determine whether or not to trigger. One example of an indicator to trigger AA was if a local leader was

[9] ACAPS (2024) Burkina Faso. Webpage, available at: https://www.acaps.org/en/countries/burkina-faso#
[10] Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (2024) Central Sahel, Burkina Faso. 1 December, Populations at Risk. Available at: https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/burkina-faso/
[11] ACAPS (2024) Burkina Faso. Webpage, available at: https://www.acaps.org/en/countries/burkina-faso#
[12] To learn more about Project 21, see: https://response.reliefweb.int/west-and-central-africa/protection/projet-21

murdered, or if an armed group came to a village near other villages, as it was then likely that within two to three days pre-emptive displacement would occur in the neighbouring villages. When the assessment suggested a high likelihood of displacement, some preparatory activities were initiated. This included prepositioning items for arrivals, sensitising the host community on the likelihood of incoming IDPs and the need for social cohesion, the identification of areas and houses where IDPs could stay, and the development of a contingency plan to ensure that when people arrived they would have water and basic necessities ready.

Findings

Pilot design process

DRC informants reported that both pilots took a similar design process that began with analysing how historical protection monitoring data related to future conflict. While it would have been ideal to analyse this protection monitoring data with ensuing rates of displacement, displacement data had not been collected frequently enough for this to be possible. The analysis revealed the protection indicators with the strongest correlations to conflict, which were then selected. The following sections detail different elements of the design process.

The Role of Communities

In both South Sudan and Burkina Faso, communities such as peace committee members were consulted on the potential indicators that they thought were relevant for monitoring and to use as triggers. The resulting indicators in both pilots ended up being a blend of those identified through the DRC analysis and those identified by community members. In Akobo, DRC developed the indicator on movement restriction while three others were developed solely by communities. In Burkina Faso, triggers were agreed based on the experiences of DRC, national/local partners, and that of the community Alert Committees, with agreement across stakeholders on the triggers.

An external academic informant working on conflict and peace in disaster risk reduction reinforced the value of engaging with communities when identifying indicators, stating, 'Community perceptions will be really useful if you have trusted people. Ideally you can sample across multiple or all sides of a conflict, and from different perspectives.' While this did not take place for these pilots, the value of community engagement in the design process was clear, as a DRC informant explained:

> Communities give a whole different perspective on indicators; they tell us what we need to be monitoring. It was something we couldn't do on our own – these communities have lived in these cycles of violence for so long, they obviously have intricate knowledge around what the signals are and what should be monitored.

In Burkina Faso, the pilot was developed in collaboration with local implementing actors and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEAL) teams in Ouagadougou through working sessions and meeting to finalise the implementation tools and validate response plans. Working sessions also took place with implementing actors in Dédougou to validate the triggers and monitoring channels. Community Action Plan activities were also discussed with Alert Committee members tasked with monitoring and sharing developments of conflict from the field.

This community involvement was perceived as integral to the project but also necessitated additional time and resources for the myriad workshops, meetings, and consultations that were held. An informant described this process as more time-consuming than if DRC had just implemented normal protection activities. However it was considered to be an important investment in not just the pilot itself but in DRC's future work in both areas.

Box 3. Snapshot: Linking a Predictive Model to Community Monitoring in the Burkina Faso Pilot

The main purpose of the Burkina Faso pilot, a DRC informant explained, was to try to set up a framework for how to make use of the data from the WACAFI model and 'how to transform it into action before displacement' (KI 2). He detailed,

> 'The [WACAFI] model is only usable three months in advance [by annual quarter beginning in January]. We can't just use the data to trigger three months in advance because it is not a live tool. So we thought that maybe we could have improvements. The idea was to link this model with our network of different people in the field. If we activate linked to the prediction, then we could transfer it to the local level with early warning systems in the field [i.e. to trigger community-based conflict monitoring based on the model's prediction]. We worked a lot on that. We decided to have a committee, relay information to people, and then monitor the situation. We needed to find some indicators that could trigger or not before displacement occurred.' (KI 2)

As mentioned above, awareness and knowledge of local contexts was key to the working of the pilot, given both the static nature of the WACAFI model (e.g. the fact that it is only updated every three months) and its wide geographic breadth. A DRC informant in Burkina Faso further explained,

> We know in Burkina Faso that people go to urban centres because there is more security as very often the state forces are present there. They protect people more than in the countryside where armed groups have much more influence. If something happening with armed groups (but sometimes also state forces), in the end, we know they are going to urban centres. But then you need to understand where they will arrive, as some areas are quite large. It will depend then on the profile of people who they are coming because based on tribe they will go to different districts. (KI 2)

This reality reinforces the value of the pilot's Alert Committees, which enabled geographically and culturally relevant monitoring of situations.

The limitations of limited data

A key challenge detailed by informants that impacted the pilot design in Akobo in particular was a lack of systematic data collection. This meant that indicator thresholds needed to be based on historical rather than more recent analysis. Due to a funding gap, no protection monitoring data was collected for March or April 2024. This made it difficult to set the triggers, which could not be determined solely on the protection monitoring analysis. In April 2024, the protection monitoring data and analysis of actual conflict outcomes was redone to estimate thresholds for triggering; these findings revealed that the AA mechanism should in fact have triggered in February based on the protection monitoring indicators selected. However, the mechanism hadn't triggered at the

time as the model utilises a variety of data besides protection monitoring indicators which had not triggered.

In Burkina Faso, one challenge was the scale of the WACAFI model, which operates at Admin level 2 (province level, which ranges in size from 3,000-5,000 square kilometres in the country). This size meant that even when displacement is predicted, it may not be clear where exactly conflict might occur and thus the locations from which the displaced are likely to move. This necessitates understanding smaller-scale dynamics of both conflict and mobility, such as the fact that in many areas of the country people are likely to move from villages to towns and cities for security when faced with the threat of violence. However, given the geographic uncertainty of triggering, a DRC informant working in Burkina Faso explained, 'For me the [WACAFI] model is an indicator, but like a model for climate, for us it should be linked with other models... it's a kind of tool we use from the capital but it's not the only tool we use to guide our work.' Box 3 above provides more information on how the model was linked to community monitoring.

Navigating sensitivities surrounding information

There was awareness by informants working on or in each country of the delicate nature of the pilots, which meant that the activities that could be implemented were constrained by both ethics and practicalities. For example, an ongoing tension was how to balance the importance of sharing information about the pilots with community members with the risk that non-desirable behaviour might be incentivized if people were aware that the triggering of the mechanism would lead to funded activities. While perceived as an unlikely outcome, it was an important consideration that affected the amount of information provided at particular points in time.

Another sensitive area to navigate was the risk that providing individual anticipatory support to potential displacees prior to displacement, might encourage displacement itself, which in turn could have uncertain protection outcomes. It was also acknowledged that knowledge generated from these models could be used to incite harm by other actors, which meant that some information was not shared as widely with all involved stakeholders. One informant working in Burkina Faso detailed,

> A lot of actions could not be done before displacement – this was much more sensitive than AA for floods or other climate hazards. We could not provide individual support before conflict happened or before displacement in terms of ethics, political positioning, and so on. We could be in a difficult situation or push people to move, or people may believe they have to stay in order to receive something, leading them to be in a difficult situation. [Therefore] we have activities that are more community activities in the host community because we cannot provide help to people who will move. We provide collective support to host communities. (KI 2)

Implementation process

Overview of how the AA mechanisms triggered

In South Sudan, the AA mechanism was triggered in the middle of May 2024 when the prediction model forecasted the displacement of approximately 1,500 people in the coming quarter. Inter-community dialogues between the communities were put in place to attempt to de-escalate the tension. In June, the situation seemed to have been diffused in Akobo. Interestingly, however, in the neighbouring payam of Nyandit, violence increased. However, this area was beyond the pilot's reach. In December 2024, the AA mechanism triggered again, although information on this is not covered in this report.

In Burkina Faso, the AA mechanism was triggered in August 2024. The first alert was made on 25 August due to an attack in Kounla, Sanaba (approximately 60 km from Dédougou), when militants entered a church. The militants ordered the women and children to leave, and then detained and killed 26 men. The militants set fire to houses and stole livestock before leaving the village. The second alert occurred on 30 August in Bendougou, a village of approximately 3,000 people, when armed group reportedly gave residents an ultimatum to leave the village.

On 14 September, Committee Action Social, a Burkinabe community organization began registering new arrivals into Dédougou who had fled due to these two incidents. A baseline vulnerability assessment was conducted by DRC on 26 September to identify vulnerable households to be targeted for AA, and the actual AA response of the provision of NFI kits and food security support took place beginning 4 October. An endline survey was conducted on 6 November with a sample of AA recipients.

Timing

When asked about whether the implementation process went as planned, a DRC informant explained of the South Sudan pilot,

> I think we were maybe caught a little off guard to be honest…The peace dialogues were so calm in the beginning that we then assumed the model wouldn't trigger, and that we would need a project extension. But then we started monitoring [again] and [a colleague] went to Akobo and said it was very tense, that we may have missed the boat on this…We thought it would be a linear, phased approach, where the model predicts and a couple of months later the fighting and displacement begins. We thought there would be a long lead time to get things in motion. But when the model triggered, then all of a sudden everything started.

This sentiment was similar in Burkina Faso, where DRC staff were provided with a 3-month forecast for displacement. However, this does not mean that the conflict inducing displacement will occur *in* three months; as one informant exclaimed, 'The model forecasted for three months – but the conflict could happen in month one!' The short timeline between conflict and displacement was mentioned as different from many climate events, where a lead time of 3-5 days (generally for flooding) is generally seen as the shortest possible window in which to implement anticipatory action. In contrast, in Burkina Faso, once the mechanism itself triggers, displacement is anticipated within 24-48 hours, meaning that activities must be ready to be deployed at very little notice.

Additionally, in Burkina Faso, a DRC informant noted that many aspects of implementation were not expected at the project design phase, which in turn impacted the timing of activities. Several informants noted that the pilot was very slow in actual implementation after the model triggered. An informant explained that they hadn't thought through the actual process of implementing activities specifically enough, such as clearing activities with authorities in advance or obtaining a list of registries of programme participants from authorities. This was in part due to the changing context of aid implementation in Burkina Faso, in which the provision of individual support has become the norm, which is not well-adapted for the type of AA planned for the pilot. In particular, individual assistance cannot be provided to IDPs prior to their being registered as IDPs by local authorities. The informant explained,

> The authorities would like the support to arrive the soonest it can. They could facilitate it, but by no means do they have the capacity to implement it. So a lot of organisations will have to be supporting the IDP registration for it to be done as soon as possible.

The resulting delays from registration meant some DRC informants at both country and global level did not consider the pilot activities to have truly been anticipatory. This is explored further in the section on perceived outcomes below.

Role of communities

For implementation, the engagement of communities was also seen as paramount by DRC staff in both countries in terms of both selecting and carrying out activities. A DRC informant based at the global level reflected that the pilots' engagement with communities builds on DRC's longstanding work with community-led mediation between IDPs and hosts. He explained that DRC has often supported local organisations already working with communities to engage with them, providing examples of DRC's work in South Sudan in 2013 when large-scale displacement occurred after the civil war began. 'This is not DRC interjecting itself,' he explained, but, where it already has a presence and is known, interacting with community networks.' This stance was further echoed by a DRC informant who asked,

> What is it that makes sense to do ahead of these conflicts? The community did know that better than us… I can't see how we would be in the position of implementing those peace dialogues themselves. So working with communities gave us an opportunity to do some activities beyond our typical mandate and our typical competencies. Communities were key to the success of the project.

In Burkina Faso, communities played a significant role in both helping identify indicators as well as monitoring them. The locally based Alert Committees were seen as critical to understanding whether the mechanism should in fact trigger. An informant explained of the situation in Burkina Faso:

> It's quite difficult because we don't know if displacement is going to happen, we don't know the size of the potential conflict or attached displacement because it's very linked with some perceptions by the population itself. In one context, if there is fear that maybe this person will be murdered, it can trigger a big displacement – but in other contexts or times other leaders might be murdered but no one will move. So this is where field perceptions really matter.

The ongoing involvement of community committees in relaying these perceptions was seen as a successful component of the pilot project, and indeed one that should be expanded wherever possible in other AA work, as well.

Linkages with peacebuilding and emergency responses

Although both pilots focused on specific activities in particular areas, they took place within wider humanitarian, development, and government processes. In particular, the pilots thematically connected to peacebuilding work in both countries, as well as ongoing emergency responses in different parts of the countries. To a large extent in South Sudan, these linkages between peacebuilding and emergency response staff were made across DRC offices. Discussions and regular updates were held between the pilot implementers and the DRC national peacebuilding advisor, while in Akobo there was also regular engagement with the local conflict and peacebuilding working group. The pilot also connected to national level peacebuilding dialogues that were a result of the Revitalized Peace Agreement first signed in 2018. More broadly, the pilot was perceived by DRC staff as supporting the efforts of the higher-level and longer-term peace process being undertaken at the national level.

Perceptions on outcomes and project effectiveness

South Sudan

Interviews and focus group discussions with community members and local stakeholders suggest that the AA pilot was indeed effective at reducing conflict and thereby the numbers of displaced people in Akobo. In particular, the peace committees were seen as effective in reducing overall tension and conflict, reducing cattle raiding incidents, and helping abducted children be returned. A return on investment analysis conducted by DRC[13] found significant avoided humanitarian costs, with up to 7,000 people *not* displaced as a result of the peace dialogues. It is considered most likely that a minimum of 2,800 people were not displaced, meaning that for every euro spent on the activation, 6.6 Euro were saved by avoiding displacement (the response to which would have cost nearly 250,000 Euro). If this estimate is accurate, then the cost of building the full AA mechanism was recouped, as it is projected to have cost 206,000 Euro up to June 2024. In the most positive scenario in which up to 7,000 people avoided displacement, for every Euro spent during the activation, 23 Euro were saved.

The role of peacebuilding activities that DRC and other humanitarian and development actors had previously undertaken and were being conducted in Akobo around the time of the activation emerge as an important factor in the pilot's success. A DRC staff involved in the South Sudan pilots' inception explained,

> 'It is important not to underestimate the value of all the other actors who were also implementing in Akobo that our pilot were also benefiting from. This is also a learning: to make sure there is a lot more [peacebuilding and other relevant interventions] going on in a selected location to maximise the opportunities to make an impact.' (KI 6)

[13] To learn more, see: DRC (forthcoming) Anticipatory Action for conflict-induced displacement in South Sudan. Copenhagen: DRC.

This perception was reinforced in survey findings, as well. When asked specifically about why conflict subsided in June, many survey respondents stated explicitly that the peace committees supported by DRC played a role. The peacebuilding work of other NGOs such as Peace Canal and the Sheje Salam cash for work programme for youth was also cited as helping demobilize youth. While the role that the pilot itself played in reducing conflict cannot be isolated from the other peacebuilding work also taking place, the overall outcome of lower than average conflict and the survey and interview findings suggest that humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding interventions played an important role.

Informants also mentioned the rainy season and a concomitant decrease in possible mobility and increase in water availability helped reduce tension. As a member of the Nyandit Payam administration stated, 'Yes, I was aware that conflict between the two communities stopped against people in the month of June and was an effort by humanitarian who managed to bring together Lou Nuer and Murle leaders and youths through peacebuilding…'

Informants stated that if peacebuilding activities had not taken place there would have been more displacement, conflict, and death, and that livelihoods would have been affected due to less access to fishing and agricultural areas. The free movement for hunting and fishing that the reduction in violence brought was cited as a key outcome due to it promoting food security for the community. This was explained by the Nyandit Peace Chairman: 'At the time, peace building actions were effective because we the Nyandit community gained a lot of benefit. Children and women were taken to fishing camps. Many youth went to Burmarth for bush cutting in order for them to build their houses. Hunters moved freely.'

A small-scale, non-representative survey with protection staff from a variety of organisations in Akobo who were aware of the pilot provided information on perceived impacts. Many of the answers echo the community responses shared above, with respondents in general highly agreeing that peacebuilding activities significantly reduced the number of people that were displaced and contributed to better relationships between the different ethnic groups in and around Akobo. One survey respondent felt that the peace dialogue held in Likuangule in June 2024 played a significant role in decreasing the conflict between the Lou Nuer and the Murle. The dialogue was organized by the Jonglei State and Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA) governments and involved youth leaders from both communities. The respondent shared key outcomes, which included pledges to end violence, such as stopping hostilities and returning abducted children, and establishing a Joint Committee to monitor and implement a variety of agreed measures to support accountability and follow-through (Email informant). The activities were also seen as contributing to displaced people returning to their homes more quickly than they otherwise might have, with reasons from different respondents provided in Box 4. below.

Box 4. Survey Question: How did the peace-building activities contribute to enabling people to return?

- 'Most of the Murle youth went back to their land when they were reached with peace messages'

- 'Peaceful coexistence enable[d] community members to conduct livelihood activities in their areas of origin.'
- 'The workshop engaged youth leaders from both the Lou Nuer and Murle communities, who pledged to end violence and work towards reconciliation. This commitment helped reduce hostilities and create a safer environment for returnees.'
- 'By having trust the community leaders pledges to carry awareness on the importance of peace building.'

Escalating conflict elsewhere?

A key area that key informant interviews and survey questions with community leaders and protection staff from different organisations in Akobo sought to understand was whether, given the geographical constraint of the pilot, it may have problematically shifted conflict from Akobo to other areas where conflict between the clans also occurs. This does not appear to have been the case, as informants overall felt that the violence that occurred in neighbouring areas would have occurred regardless, and in fact that similar violence would have happened in Akobo had the peacebuilding activities not taken place. However, this risk warrants more examination and monitoring in future pilots and interventions, particularly in areas where an activation may target only one location in a wider geographic area that experiences the same type of conflict.

Short- or long-term outcomes?

While conflict escalation in other areas does not appear to have been an issue, it is unclear whether the pilot led to long-term reductions in conflict and therefore in displacement. For example, in the surveys conducted in November 2024 informants mentioned a rise in abductions of children and animals, approximately 6 months after the anticipatory activities took place. Indeed, as mentioned above, the AA mechanism in Akobo did in fact trigger again in December 2024. As more AA for displacement takes place, monitoring and evaluating the rates of conflict across timescales, ideally beyond just the seasonal timeframe in which conflict and displacement generally occur, will help determine the extent to which AA can be attributed to a reduction in displacement or the negative impacts associated with it. As other work on the potentially short-term impact of AA in complex crises shows,[14] there is a critical need to link AA with longer-term resilience building efforts including peacebuilding and displacement actors.

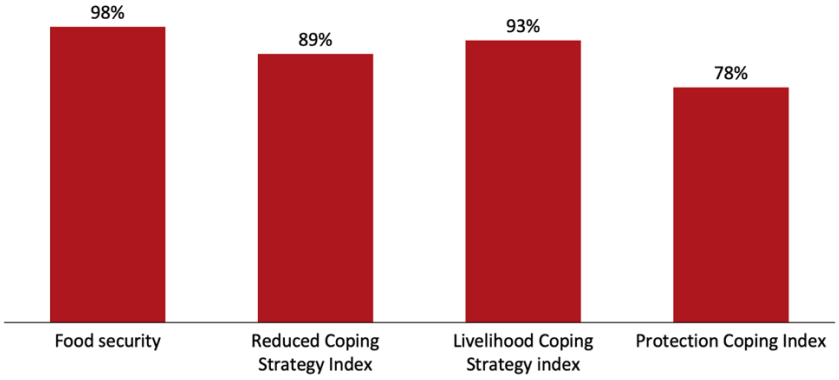
Burkina Faso

The Burkina Faso pilot represents a valuable example of both the ability to implement AA in complex crises and the constraints that accompany it. As one DRC informant in the country summarised, 'This pilot was a very good experience to test the model, develop the triggers, and identify the indicators, but we faced a lot of issues during implementation. We will try to build on that.' Despite challenges, a comparison of some of the IDP recipient household outcomes (n=45)

[14] Easton-Calabria, E. (2024) Possibilities and limitations of anticipatory action in complex crises: acting in advance of flooding in South Sudan. *Disasters*. Available at: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/disa.12654

showed significant improvements between the baseline and endline surveys, summarised in Figure 2. This suggests that the pilot had a positive impact on targeted households.

Figure 2. Percentage of Surveyed AA Recipient Households (n=45) with Improved Scores



Source: DRC (forthcoming) Anticipatory Action for conflict-induced displacement in South Sudan. Copenhagen: DRC.

At the same time, at first glance, results on the timeliness of the pilot activities to the recipient households suggest that it was not in fact anticipatory action: the AA mechanism took 40 days from the moment of trigger for activities to be fully implemented, largely due to delays caused by only being able to provide assistance after IDPs were registered. This meant that many IDPs had already been in Dédougou for over a month before they received assistance. This lag time was fully acknowledged by DRC staff, as discussed in the previous section on the timing of assistance. However, a variety of activities that were clearly anticipatory in scope were also carried out before the displacement occurred, including the activation of Alert Committees, awareness-raising activities to increase social cohesion, and the pre-positioning of assistance. These activities were successfully implemented and illustrate key components of the pilot.

One DRC informant explained that the project was initially designed by DRC staff not based in the field and ongoing challenges with overall access to the area, which meant that critical elements such as the timing involved in IDPs being registered before they could receive assistance was not well understood. This gap in plans versus operational reality were taken as an important lesson that would help future pilots be thought through more carefully. One DRC informant based in Burkina Faso shared,

> This pilot was very small, and so the outcomes are very interesting because we will build on them to scale it up. We were not thinking that we would need a real presence in the field and that the action we could do before the IDPs are registered is quite limited in terms of assistance. Instead, we have learned we can mainly implement soft activities in advance. But these are very useful in terms of social cohesion, limiting conflict, ensuring some public services, ensuring medication in hospitals, etc. (KI 2)

However, it is worthwhile to consider the context in which the AA activities were implemented and the fact that on average it takes DRC 73 days to enact a so-called rapid response mechanism. This is in fact under the average number of days (79) to respond by the 17 main humanitarian

actors operating in the country.[15] When examined from this vantage point, the pilot was in fact able to implement activities over a month earlier than average responses.

While this timing of course represents critical areas for improvement, it is also representative of the challenges faced by humanitarian operations in Burkina Faso, which routinely experience threats and delays due to armed actors. More broadly, it suggests that an expanded notion of AA as acting *earlier* rather than always *early* may be more feasible in situations of complex and conflict-affected contexts.[16]

Recommendations and Take-Aways

DRC's AA pilots to anticipate displacement in South Sudan and Burkina Faso provide a variety of important recommendations and take-aways related to both DRC's work in particular and wider objectives relating to increasing practice and evidence related to displacement and anticipatory action. The following points draw from the evaluation conducted as well as specific recommendations by key project stakeholders and community members engaged in or aware of the pilots. While these target DRC, many are of relevance to the wider AA community of practice seeking to initiate or build on current work to make anticipatory action a relevant and effective type of humanitarian action for displaced populations or those at risk of displacement.

1. Be prepared for models to trigger quickly…or not

Both of the pilots triggered 'suddenly' according to informants, which underscores the importance of being prepared for action within any timeframe of the three-month displacement forecast. It is important for DRC to be prepared for both an immediate trigger as well as a slower escalation of conflict wherein a phased approach of anticipatory activities is undertaken. Stress-tests and simulations are valuable activities to help catch details in operational planning that can impact project timing, the safety of staff and AA recipients, and overall increase preparedness for implementation.

For the Burkina Faso pilot, a recommendation from an informant based in-country is to better understand the profile of people who will be arriving in a given area to ensure the most vulnerable access support as soon as possible. Targeting the identification of children, pregnant women, and other highly vulnerable populations was recommended as a way to have the largest impact by helping them be registered by authorities first in order to then receive assistance quickly.

Given the practical impossibility of providing individual support ahead of displacement or even immediately upon arrival (prior to IDP registration), continuing to focus on robust community-

[15] Internal DRC analysis, BFA AA Results.
[16] A fuller discussion of the implementation of AA in complex crises can be found in: Easton-Calabria, E. (2025). Possibilities and limitations of anticipatory action in complex crises: acting in advance of flooding in South Sudan. *Disasters*, *49*(1), e12654. Available at: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/disa.12654

level activities rather than individual-focused ones may enable the quickest responses after mechanisms trigger in Burkina Faso and elsewhere.

2. Consider scaling based on conflict breadth rather than physical geography

While the pilots focused on one particular geographic area affected by a wider conflict, it may make more sense for the geographic breadth of a conflict to dictate the scope of geography covered. A specific AA framework could be developed for particular conflict dynamics across a relevant area, with activities for implementation planned to target particularly at-risk communities. Communities could, for example, be identified through protection monitoring data in advance, with the plan for activities to be implementable in more than one town or county based on the conflict forecasting and monitoring. If the geographic scope were to broaden, it would be important to still ensure in-depth, quality engagement with communities as part of the AA design and implementation. Based on findings from the South Sudan pilot in particular, selecting locations where peacebuilding activities are already being conducted could help maximise AA impact.

3. Develop multi-hazard triggers for AA for displacement

As AA for displacement mechanisms continue to advance and scale, developing multi-hazard triggers could provide more comprehensive and effective frameworks to anticipate displacement. Informants discussed the value of both short- and sudden-onset climate events being incorporated into existing models given the high level of overlap between conflict-affected countries and those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Offering multi-hazard triggers within one model was also seen as representing value for money that could help those tools developed to anticipate displacement be more relevant and widely utilized for different situations.

4. Conduct communication and advocacy efforts to address both the complexity of AA and the associated risks

Effective communication and advocacy efforts are critical to help local actors, national authorities, and staff within and beyond DRC understand AA for displacement. To this end, simple and clear written outputs and presentations are needed to ensure that the aims, approaches, and risks associated with AA are understood. Recommendations for particular communication and advocacy efforts are broken down further as follows:

4.1 Increasing Advocacy and Learning within DRC on AA for displacement

Informants expressed that DRC has made proper investments in its technical capacity at the global level to develop evidence-driven AA for displacement models. However, more work remains to help these models be understood and taken up as a go-to tool for country teams and partners operating in-country. Alongside improving communication around the AA mechanism, there is value in generating more established guidance and a larger evidence base of both the humanitarian and financial impacts of the models. The AHEAD project, which will pilot AA for displacement in five more countries between 2025-2027, and also continue work in Burkina Faso and South Sudan, offers an opportunity for this to take place, and should

include the development of public communication, internal guidance, and evidence generation as key objectives.

4.2 Communication strategies for external stakeholders

Informants discussed the necessity of discussing and agreeing upon communication strategies for DRC and other humanitarian actors when broaching the topic of AA for displacement with particular government and other stakeholders. The number of IDPs present in a country or potentially generated through conflict was, for example, cited as a sensitive issue for many government authorities, which in turn can limit the productivity of discussions for joint planning and action. Wider political dynamics were also mentioned as an important factor for consideration in scaling up AA operations and engaging with governments.

4.3 Identifying and addressing risks in communicating and sharing information about AA mechanisms

The fact that DRC's approach to AA for displacement also involves conflict monitoring was flagged as creating potentially challenging conversations with governments that might be interested in using this information for security rather than humanitarian purposes. To effectively mitigate these and other risks, the development of joint strategies and descriptions of AA for displacement across humanitarian agencies and other involved stakeholders (e.g. steering committees and regional AA working groups and task forces) could help ensure that AA and other humanitarian operations – and most importantly, affected communities and displaced people themselves – are not put at risk.

5. Enhance coordination between AA and different actors

While AA is a particular type of humanitarian action, it is likely most effective when linked with preparedness, development, peacebuilding, and different types of responses. Indeed, the pilot's success in South Sudan, for example, was likely due to some extent to the previous and ongoing peacebuilding work that DRC and other actors have conducted in this community, illustrating the importance of strong coordination and partnership. To this end, it is important that AA for displacement is coordinated with humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts as well as with government actors for different phases of crisis. This includes ongoing peace processes, government development plans, climate adaptation plans as well as the Humanitarian Country Teams (HCT) and Cluster system. Informants cautioned against a siloed approach that is delinked from rapid response mechanisms and existing humanitarian architecture, and community- and nationally-led support. Ideally, several informants stated, tools developed for the AA mechanism are in fact used by different actors to improve the overall response to crisis situations involving displacement.

Linking the AA for displacement mechanism with broader disaster preparedness and contingency plans, ensuring HCT and Cluster involvement, and more broadly supporting linkages between AA and other types of support, such as referral pathways for healthcare, are important ways to promote the effectiveness of AA addressing displacement and the outcomes it seeks to achieve.

6. Utilise community perceptions and community-led work throughout the AA process

A key success of both pilots was the integration of community perceptions and community-led work in both countries to co-design indicators, monitor situations, and implement actions. This approach should be continued and scaled up. Scale-up could take place in different ways, including the following:

- *6.1 Continue to integrate Project 21 data into the AA displacement mechanism and increase the amount of data when possible.*

Project 21[17] is a regional protection monitoring system co-led by DRC and UNHCR that collects comprehensive datasets to analyse protection situations, risks, and trends. Community perceptions are a key part of the data. Project 21 is currently used in the Central Sahel and Lac region in Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, and currently being introduced in the Central African Republic, Cameroon and Nigeria. The WACAFI model that the Burkina Faso pilot utilized, for example, uses some Project 21 data on protection. Continuing to utilize this data and expanding its usage when possible could offer more comprehensive protection data across countries to complement or adapt existing AA models and potentially help the expansion of the AA displacement mechanism into different countries.

- *6.2 Partner with already existing grassroots organisations and networks to inform and implement AA.*

Expanding DRC's current work of designing and implementing AA with input from communities can take place through identifying and mapping grassroots organisations and networks that DRC has not helped establish or with which DRC has not previously worked. While this approach is already firmly embedded with DRC's peacebuilding work, it has the potential to broaden DRC's other work and also may make it more sustainable: if organically created rather than NGO-supported groups and networks can be accessed, then it is possible that activities such as peace dialogues may have a better chance of continuing even if DRC or other financial support for AA were to cease.

7. Explore alternative finance to support programming and research on anticipating displacement

Identifying alternative means of finance for anticipating displacement beyond grants is a key element of ensuring sustainability in both programming and evidence generation. Establishing a pooled fund focused either specifically on AA for displacement or for addressing displacement across the nexus, with AA built in as a key programme, is one way to support longer-term action and attract donors. Pooled funds and other types of grants could then be used to develop public-private partnerships for blended humanitarian financing, outcome-based financing, and/or disaster risk financing. Another is encouraging investment for the activities implemented through AA, so that donors could fund direct costs with very low administrative costs (if the running of the AA model could be funded elsewhere); this approach might make it more feasible for country teams or local teams to implement AA addressing displacement and could be an attractive form of value for money. Regardless of type identified, there is a need for DRC and other actors working in this area to take both a short- and long-term approach to pursing alternative finance methods to support the continuation and expansion of AA to anticipate displacement.

[17] To learn more about Project 21, see: https://response.reliefweb.int/west-and-central-africa/protection/projet-21

8. Continue to refine DRC's objectives relating to AA and displacement

As DRC's work on AA and displacement continues, it would be valuable to conduct both internal and external discussions to identify and further refine DRC's potentially evolving objectives in this space. As practice and evidence grows, it will be relevant to consider whether developing AA to increase the preparation of host communities to anticipated displacement (evinced through the Burkina Faso pilot), explicitly minimize rates of displacement (as the South Sudan pilot intended), or mitigate the impacts of displacement itself, such as needs and rights violations, are desirable or achievable aims in particular contexts. It will also be important for ongoing discussions to take place to ensure that proposed interventions are adapted to the local context in terms of factors such as climate, culture, and economies. There is huge need and potential connected to the objectives and feasibilities of AA in relation to displacement. DRC is well-placed to address and advance practice, evidence, and advocacy in this space.

Annexes

Annex 1. Questions for Scoping Study and Key Informant Interviews

The following questions were used to guide the desk-based scoping study as well as in semi-structured qualitative key informant interviews to gather data and information for this report. Please note that for interviews these questions were further tailored based on informant, with follow-up questions asked as relevant.

Overall (primarily for external informants)	What role do you feel anticipatory action can play in protecting displacement-affected communities? What limitations does it have? How feasible is "prevent[ing] or mitigate[ing] the impact of displacement" through anticipatory action? What are the main challenges that may reduce or prevent impact? What role does conflict prediction play in enhancing this protection? What risks or challenges do you associate with this, if any? What might help this type of anticipatory action be more effective? (Probe for programme types, particular contexts to implement in, partners to collaborate with/include, etc.)
Process (for internal DRC informants)	Can you share more about the process of the project implementation, such as how the trigger was decided on/what happened when the threshold was reached? Did the activation take place as you had thought or planned for it to go? Why or why not? In your experience, what where the main opportunities, barriers, and challenges of working with local communities and partners on this project? Do you feel that DRC managed to establish links in this project with broader resilience and peacebuilding efforts, as well as emergency responses in the country? Do you have suggestions of how this process could be improved/streamlined for future activations? How do you think these mechanisms can be more inclusive of different types of populations (e.g. women)?

	Do you have ideas or suggestions of how future versions of this project could also be integrated into AA mechanisms for climate hazards?
Activities and outcomes	Would you consider this project successful? Why or why not? Were particular elements of it more successful than others? How appropriate were DRC's activities and delivery modalities for the situation? How appropriate was the timing of DRC's activities and would alternative implementation timelines increase the impact of implemented actions? How can risks be managed and conflict-sensitivity be ensured in future versions of this project in other countries or contexts? How do diverse groups (minorities, women, children, etc.) benefit from the actions? Do you have suggestions of how these benefits could be increased? Do you feel that the project outcomes and approaches are sustainable? Why or why not? What suggestions do you have for project sustainability?

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