UNIFIED CASH+ FRAMEWORK OF BANGLADESH: FOR ANTICIPATORY ACTION AND RESPONSE

HCTT Inter-Cluster Cash Technical Working Group (CTWG)





























































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HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION TASK TEAM (HCTT)

In collaboration with UN Resident Coordinator Office (UN RCO) Oxfam Bangladesh Asia-Pacific Regional Cash Working Group (RCWG)

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WRITE-UP AND EDITING

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET	5
3. PROPOSITION OF ICCG	8
4. SCENARIO 1: UNIFIED MULTI-PURPOSE CASH PACKAGE	10
5. SCENARIO 2: UNIFIED CASH+ FOR ANTICIPATORY ACTION	12
6. OVERLAP WITH DRR AND RELILIENCE	21
7. MONITORING FRAMEWORK	22

1. INTRODUCTION

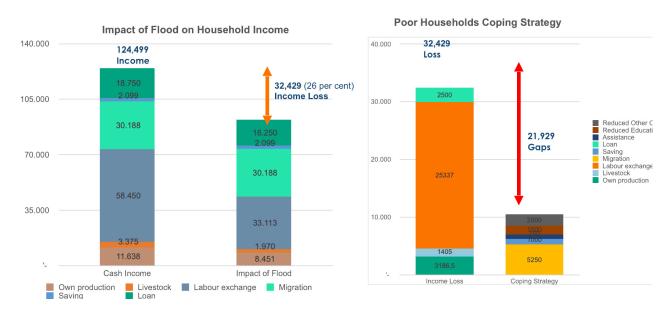
- The Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) Nexus Strategy for climate-related disasters is designed to align with the National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) 2021-25 in Bangladesh. This strategic alignment underscores the integrated approach that targets four transformative changes:
 - Enhancing Early Warning Systems (EWS) to strengthen the multi-hazard last mile and people-centred early warning through comprehensive multi-hazards and cascading risk analysis.
 - Strengthening anticipatory action by integrating it into national disaster risk management systems to prioritize preparedness and resilience building.
 - Building institutional capacity to address the Internal Displaced Population (IDP) by endorsing an Area-Based Collaboration (ABC) framework for Comprehensive Risk Management in Bangladesh.
 - Promoting early response combined with Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) to strengthen resilience building.
- As a part of this strategy, one of the significant elements includes developing a unified Cash+ package. This package is an innovative tool that combines cash transfers with other forms of assistance designed to meet the diverse needs of the people both in anticipation of predictable hazard events, i.e., monsoon floods, as well as during the response phase. The unified cash+ package aims to provide more effective, timely and flexible support, bridging the gap between immediate humanitarian response and longterm recovery.
- It is expected to be a coordinated effort across different sectors and organizations to ensure the efficient use of resources and avoid duplication of efforts. This is especially important in Bangladesh, where climate-related disasters require not only anticipation and immediate response but also long-term resilience-building and vulnerability reduction efforts.
- Pre-crisis surveys are essential tools for understanding the needs and vulnerabilities of communities before a disaster strikes. These surveys provide valuable information to inform the development of unified Cash+ packages for anticipatory action and response.
- This document presents a proposal for a harmonised inter-sectoral approach to cash+ (cash and other forms of support) in anticipation of rapid onset hazard events as well as the response phase. The formulations are based on the HCTT pre-crisis survey conducted in June 2023 and the workshop on the 22nd of June where the initial proposal was formulated.
- The aim of this initial proposal is to be implemented and monitored with common monitoring and evaluation indicators used by all partners and all findings to be used in subsequent revisions of this document.

- Agreement on a yearly revision schedule for this document, when the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), transfer values, and sub-sectoral packages of mitigation support are updated based on the findings of the common monitoring and evaluation activities or, at minimum, harmonised post-distribution monitoring activities.
- This approach described in this framework is based on the monsoon flood scenario for anticipatory actions, but the methodology applies to anticipatory actions for other fast-onset hazards.

2. MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET

- Start Fund Bangladesh in collaboration with the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator and in technical partnership with the Network for Information, Response and Preparedness Activities on Disaster (NIRAPAD) conducted Household Economy Analysis (HEA) 2022 in the northwest and north-central parts of Bangladesh to gain an in-depth understanding of the livelihood and means of survival for different wealth groups, and the seasonality of livelihood strategies.
- The geographical areas covered in this study in the active Brahmaputra-Jamuna flood plain and part of the Brahmaputra-Ganges-Meghna River system. The study was conducted in the two livelihood zones that were identified by the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2016 following a rigorous method involving the government Ministry of Agriculture. The process by which people within a livelihood zone are grouped together using local definitions of wealth and the quantification of their assets extremely poor, poor, middle and rich.
- The primary aim of the study is to furnish the humanitarian community with evidence-based data regarding the challenges faced by households of varying categories, particularly in the aftermath of a crisis. This information will strengthen the humanitarian efforts in Bangladesh to construct and implement support mechanisms that reflect the actual circumstances of the affected population.
- The study provides more evidence-based information to support understanding the impact of medium-scale disasters on rural poor households. During a medium-scale disaster, these households experienced a significant financial setback, losing 32,429 BDT (26 per cent) of their yearly income.

IMPACT MEDIUM SCALE DISASTER ON RURAL POOR HOUSEHOLDS- HEA 2022



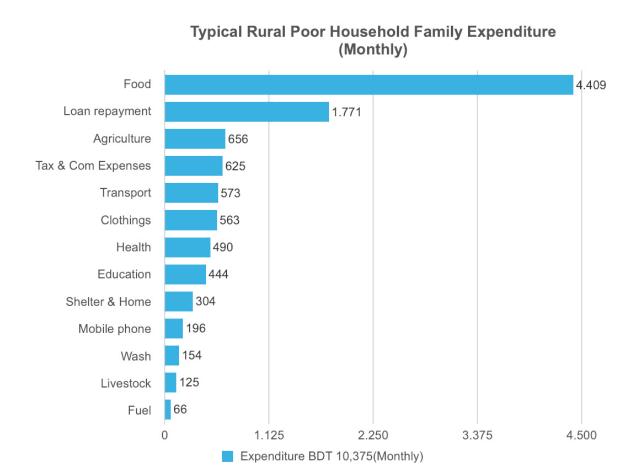
Source: HEA, Bangladesh 2022

Based on the HEA survey, previous floods disrupted agricultural activities, lost livestock, limited labour exchange opportunities, and hindered migration options. As a result, rural poor households faced challenges in meeting basic needs, accessing healthcare, and repaying loans. For survival, poor households adopt negative coping tactics such as increasing migration, reducing basic expenditures, forcing people to withdraw savings, borrowing money, and stopping children's education.

UPDATED MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET 2023

- In April 2023, the cash working group led by Oxfam worked on the updating Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) to facilitate the formulation of the unified Cash+ package.
- The MEB was updated following a series of review documents such as the Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2022, economic vulnerability analysis of WFP 2022 and post-distribution monitoring analysis of the different organisations with the focus on updating the prices while the basket contents remained the same as in the 2022 version. The 2023 MEB revision resulted in the following values:

TYPICAL RURAL POOR HOUSEHOLDS FAMILY EXPENDITURE (MONTHLY)



Source: ICCG workshop on pre-crises survey finding validation and developing Cash+package, Bangladesh 2023

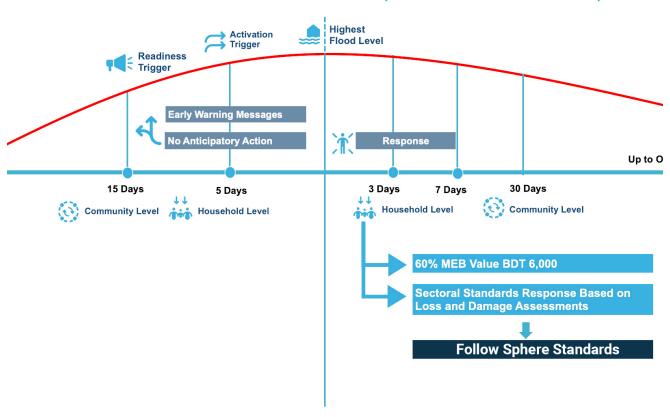
- The monthly expenditure of a rural household in Bangladesh amounts to BDT 10,375. The largest portion of this expenditure is dedicated to food, accounting for BDT 4,409. Other significant expenses include loan repayment (BDT 1,771), agriculture (BDT 656), and clothing (BDT 563). The household also allocates a significant portion of their income to education (BDT 444), health (BDT 490), and shelter and home-related expenses (BDT 304).
- Overall, these expenditures reflect the various needs and priorities of rural households in maintaining their livelihood and meeting their necessities.
- Important to note that these values represent the 'normal' patterns of monthly expenditure to meet basic needs and do not consider additional costs related to household preparations for hazardous events such as monsoon floods.

3. PROPOSITION OF ICCG

- ICCG workshop on pre-crises survey finding validation and developing Cash+ package was organised to agree on a unified package proposal on 21-22 June 2023.
 - The workshop participants were asked to consider: the short timeline of a monsoon flood event, the available triggers, the specific mitigation options available to households, the typical impacts of the flood, and the negative coping tactics quoted by people interviewed in the pre-crisis consultations.
 - The groups' tasks were to design a set of anticipatory actions, not from a sector perspective, but from the perspectives of households, as reflected in the pre-crisis consultations.
- An initial agreement was reached in terms of the planning assumptions and key considerations/principles for designing anticipatory action interventions, as well as the components of the unified anticipatory action cash+ package and multi-purpose cash for monsoon flood. The package was developed based on two scenarios:

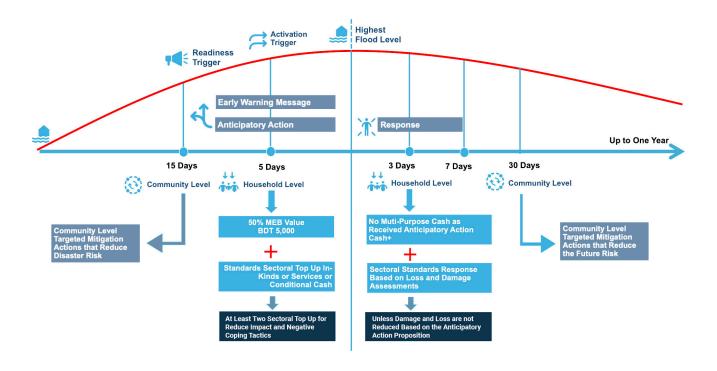
Scenario 1: Anticipatory action is NOT implemented, the emergency runs its course, and the 'traditional' approach to Multi-Purpose Cash (MPC)/sectoral cash, in-kind, and services is utilized but transfer values are based on the updated Minimum Expenditure Basket.

SCENARIO 1: MULTI-PURPOSE CASH+ PACKAGE (NO ANTICIPATORY ACTION)



Scenario 2: Anticipatory action is implemented; the impact of the flood is reduced (physical impact of the flood and households' use of negative coping tactics). This in turn reduces the need for post-flood humanitarian support, and implicitly the response phase MPC and/or sectoral transfer value is less than what would be traditionally, including the need for sector-specific in-kind/service delivery.

SCENARIO 2: ANTICIPATORY CASH+ PACKAGE



4. SCENARIO 1: UNIFIED MULTI-PURPOSE CASH PACKAGE

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS:

- Markets are functional during and after peak-flood and necessary goods and services are available within reasonable prices (i.e. with no or limited increase in prices).
- Multi-purpose cash in the response phase aims to support households to meet basic needs and prevent affected people from using negative coping tactics.
- MPC is the equivalent of a portion of the MEB, based on the gap analysis.
- As per the pre-crisis survey findings regarding the preferences of affected people, MPC forms as the primary modality for response which is complemented by other sectoral assistance for certain periods (initially one month or implemented at later stages based on the household needs).
- Sectoral packages and modalities should be designed to be complementary to MPC and distributed based on specific vulnerabilities.
- All entities engaged in the response effort are encouraged to use the same MPC transfer value for the agreed timeframe (1 to 3 months) and use the same vulnerability criteria.
- The HCTT in Bangladesh aims for the implementation of Scenario 2, shifting the focus from response to anticipation as much as possible, but acknowledging limitations in early warnings and activation of anticipatory action, scenario 1 is developed to guide response efforts.

UNCONDITIONAL AND UNRESTRICTED TRANSFER:

- Multipurpose Cash (MPC) are unconditional and unrestricted cash transfer that people affected by disaster can use to cover their basic needs. By its nature, MPC is the assistance modality that offers people a maximum degree of choice, flexibility, and dignity. There is also growing evidence that it is more cost-efficient and cost-effective to meet multiple needs.
- Outcomes of this unconditional cash assistance will vary, depending on the context, intervention design (e.g., transfer values, number of transfers) and each household's prioritized needs.
- The MPC transfer value is agreed to 60% of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (BDT 10,375), equivalent to BDT 6,000/month/household (round up) for monsoon flood. The workshop exercise was focused on identifying minimum standards that could be applied to the other response scenarios.

The agreement for a unified MPC transfer value of 60% of the MEB considering the remaining 40% would be covered by peoples' own coping mechanisms, local capacities and other assistance including the relief distributed by the Government of Bangladesh.

The minimum beneficiary selection criteria for the MPC are:

- Households affected and/or displaced due to a particular disaster.
- Households who rely on day labour or charity and have no regular income.
- Female-headed poor households (including widows, divorced, separated, and single women).
- Poor households have pregnant and lactating women, Persons with Disabilities, elderly, child-headed chronically sick and economically inactive.

5. SCENARIO 2: UNIFIED CASH+ FOR ANTICIPATORY ACTION

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS:

- The needs of individuals before a flood are different from the needs they will have after the flood. This includes their immediate need for cash. Anticipatory actions are aimed at assisting households in taking pre-emptive measures to lessen the physical impact of the flood as well as reduce the need for negative coping tactics.
- Households that receive anticipatory action support, and implement the mitigation measures, will likely experience a substantially reduced impact from the flood. Ideally, these households will require little to no 'traditional' (e.g. scenario 1) humanitarian assistance after the flood.
- Significant investment needs to be made in community engagement prior to delivering anticipatory action interventions to ensure targeted households have the adequate understanding/skills/ attitudes regarding mitigation measures and they are likely to implement the appropriate measures, in case the 5-day window of activation of the flood or other fast-onset hazard event, such as a cyclone.
- Presently, the majority of anticipatory action assistance in Bangladesh targets house-hold-level mitigation measures and the pre-crisis consultations were designed to determine the most effective household-level anticipatory action cash+ package. The consultations also identified that community-level mitigation options are important as well and further work needs to be done to determine a unified approach to community-level unified anticipatory action.
- Crucial to distinguish between different types of anticipatory action interventions and the time required for their implementation:
 - Household-level mitigation measures: Some mitigation measures are doable after the activation trigger (e.g., 5 days ahead of peak flood), while others require more time. This framework is focused on anticipatory action interventions designed to support household-level impact mitigation.
 - Community-level mitigation measures: Some of these mitigation measures are feasible within a pre-activation window (15 days before peak floods), and their quick implementation could be encouraged through a cash-for-work anticipatory action initiative. However, the most feasible options for community-level mitigation likely involve a more comprehensive disaster risk reduction approach implemented before the monsoon floods, coupled with community engagement in preparation for the upcoming floods.
- Based on the pre-crisis consultations a significant concern was raised that households targeted for anticipatory action assistance, particularly those in the poor or extremely poor categories, may use the unconditional cash received several days ahead of the

- flood to address other urgent needs instead of taking mitigation measures. To address this potential issue, two solutions are proposed:
 - Multi-purpose cash (MPC) for basic needs in anticipation aims to reduce the likelihood of households resorting to negative coping tactics before the peak flood and by default, these are unconditional cash transfers, with the transfer value based on a different gap analysis.
 - Sectoral top-up for household mitigation measures is designed by each sector with the aim of helping households implement the mitigation options available. The top-up composition can be cash, in-kind, services, or mixed modality and is decided by each cluster based on specific vulnerability assessment (if available) or the findings in the pre-crisis survey.
- Final sectoral top-up per each mitigation measure is specified by clusters/lead agencies in the anticipatory action project document and reported at the upazila level
- The anticipatory action readiness (pre-activation) and activation trigger of a 5-day and 15-day lead time is used here as a reference only. In practice, this period can be reduced by other factors.

ANTICIPATORY ACTION CASH+ INTERVENTIONS:

- Anticipatory actions with cash+ are aimed at helping households take mitigation measures to reduce both the physical impact of the flood as well as their need to use negative coping tactics.
- The proposed harmonised approach to anticipatory action interventions in Bangladesh is that all targeted households receive a minimum package consisting of two components:
 - MULTI-PURPOSE CASH (unconditional cash) aims to reduce the likelihood of households resorting to negative coping tactics before, during, and after peak floods.
 - 2. SECTORAL TOP-UP SUPPORT FOR AT LEAST TWO (2) MITIGATION OP-TIONS (top-up cash/in-kind/service/mixed modality). These are aimed at helping households to take mitigation measures to reduce the physical impact of the flood.
- As per the findings of the pre-crisis consultations and workshop, the sectors agree on the need for harmonised targeting, and that the minimum package is relevant for all anticipatory action implementation actors, with sectoral interventions applicable as top-up/ additional support.

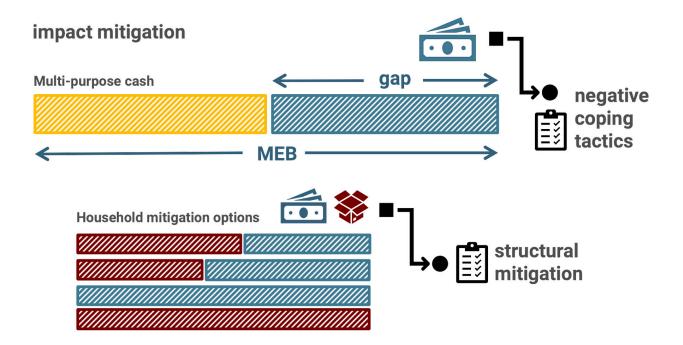
- For special vulnerabilities identified by clusters, other anticipatory action top-up interventions are designed to complement the minimum (MPC + top-up for 2 mitigation options) support.
 - This can include specific forms of support, especially in-kind, where even if it is not intended to help mitigate the impact of the flood, the aim can be to enable early response, e.g. distributing certain food/non-food items that are not typically available on the local markets in the first 1-2 weeks after peak flood.
 - This should still be designed based on the assumption of harmonised anticipatory action implementation, where all at-risk households receive the minimum cash+package implying a reduced impact and reduced needs.
 - Important to note that this approach of anticipatory action as 'enabling early response' is only secondary, the primary aim of anticipatory action is to enable the reduction of the impact of the hazard event before the event occurs.

MUTI-PURPOSE CASH TRANSFER VALUE FOR ANTICIPATORY ACTION:

- MPC transfer value is based on the MEB and gap analysis (what households can produce/source for themselves vs. what they need as external support)
- Gap analysis for households 'at-risk' (before the flood) vs 'impacted' (post flood) is different because people before the flood have access to their typical source of income/livelihoods.
- Transfer Value for MPC in anticipation: 50% of the MEB (BDT 5,000) which is less than the post-response MPC transfer value because people's income options are yet to be disrupted. During the workshop, no specific formula was agreed in terms of how much percentage of the MEB should be considered for MPC in anticipation. However, the key considerations that were used to agree on the MPC in anticipation (and which are to be tested in the field) are as follows:
 - Recipients' income sources have not yet been disrupted.
 - Providing a one-off cash transfer equivalent to half of the MEB reduces the risk of anticipatory action beneficiaries 'de-prioritising' mitigation activities in favour of meeting other urgent needs before the flood.
 - Households have the choice to still implement mitigation options as well as save a portion of the usual one-month expenditure for the time post-peak-flood, e.g. having a portion of the MEB 'in their pocket' can help them deal with increased prices.
 - The overall assumption is that even in the best case scenario where anticipatory

action is fully implemented successfully, this will not fully reduce the impact of the flood, so a reduced form of MPC support will likely still be required by households, at least in the first 2 weeks post flood when rapid assessments are made.

- No estimations are made regarding when and how this money will be spent by the beneficiaries. The rule of thumb is to enable them to have extra cash ahead of the flood to not resort to negative coping tactics.

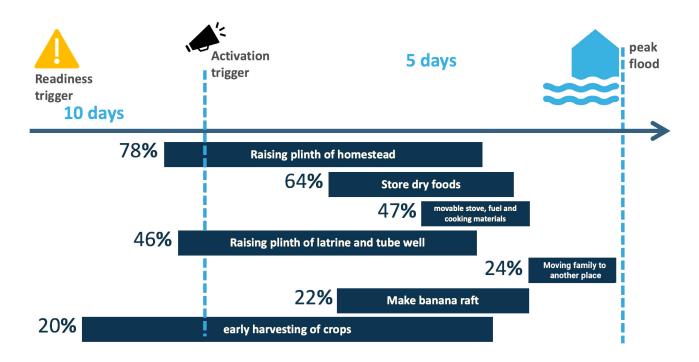


SECTORAL TOP-UP VALUES FOR MITIGATION:

- The framework promotes designing interventions and related sectoral packages for each mitigation measure in turn. The overall assumption which was agreed in the workshop is that this approach will best help households to reduce their vulnerability.
- The cash transfer value (ratio of cash vs. in-kind) is determined individually for each mitigation measure.
- The 'rule of thumb' when deciding what should be covered by cash assistance: if the specific items/services required for the respective mitigation measure are available in the local markets then this should be included in the sectoral cash transfer value. Whatever is not available in local markets should be delivered in kind.
- There can be exceptions to this rule for specific items, such as hygiene products, which households might overlook in favour of other expenditures.

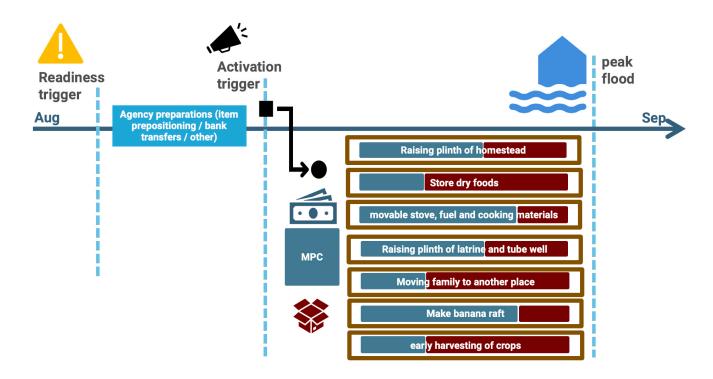
HOUSEHOLD MITIGATION OPTIONS:

- The number of household-level mitigation measures that can realistically be implemented by people several days before peak floods is limited.
- In the crisis timeline below are displayed the measures specified by respondents of the pre-crisis survey.
- The length of each individual measure displayed in the graph below represents the estimated duration of how much it takes to be implemented and their placement in the timeline is based on the estimated 'start' and 'finish' by a household.
- The percentages represent how much households are likely to use each measure, as per the pre-crisis survey results.



THE CASH VS. IN-KIND RATIO PER MITIGATION MEASURE:

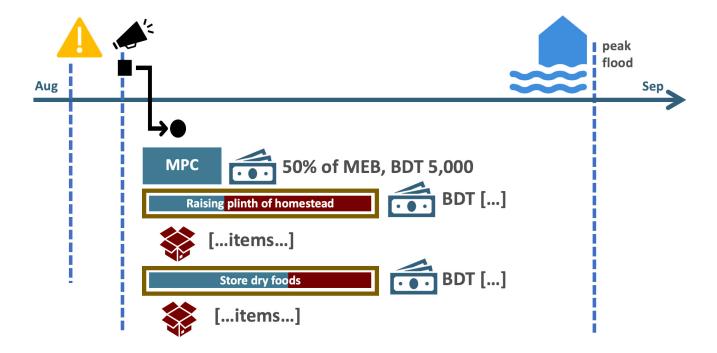
- The framework does not provide a cash+ formula per each mitigation measure but outlines possible activities that can be adopted by implementing entities and coordinated at the DMC level.
- The graph below suggests a (theoretical) split between how much can be distributed in-kind vs. how much can be delivered via cash transfer per each household-level mitigation measure.



17

HOUSEHOLDS TOP-UP ACTIVITIES:

- The table below lists possible top-up activities per each of the household mitigation measures.
- It is up to each sector/lead agency to determine the ratio per activity and specify it in the anticipatory action project document, as in the visual below:



The framework recommends a harmonised approach between all entities working based on humanitarian principles to enable an equitable approach between households and communities.

Household	Top-Up Activities	
Mitigation Measure	Community Level	Household Level
Raising plinth of homestead (house resilience and other infrastructure)	Cash for work to strengthen essential community infrastructure	Strengthen the house by using soil bags and bamboo so that flood water cannot erode the platform of the house
	Raise cattle shed to protect during flood	Prepare a loft at the house to put important things in it
	Construct a twin platform tube well-considering flood level	Food Security
Oberion les families	Essential medicines for first aid	High-nutrient animal feed
Storing dry foods/ medicine /materials	Anti-venom vaccine	Non-Food Items (NFIs)
,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,		Waterproof storage silos
Movable stove, fuel,	Mobile water treatment plants	Jerrican and water purification tablets
WASH, dignity and cooking materials	Temporary/moveable latrine	Dignity kits and cash support
Raising plinth of latrine and tube well		Construct a twin platform tube well-considering flood level
	Ready to eat food	Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF)
	Midwifery service and delivery of materials	Nutritional food specially for lactating mother, pregnant women and children
	Baby kits	Basic first aid support
Moving family to another place	Reproductive health kits	Menstrual health management kits
	Organizing health camps	
	Mobile medical team	
	EPI vaccination as per schedule	
	Lighting facilities (solar, charger and generator)	
	Temporary shelter with separate accommodation for male and female	
Banana raft	Mobilise community volunteer	
	Deploy village police to ensure security	
	Evacuation transportation by boat	
Early harvesting of crops	Labour and logistics support	Multi-purpose cash support

Other forms of anticipatory action interventions complementary to the minimum package (cash+2 mitigation options)			
Information and servi- ce access support	Emergency hotline number for providing information		
	Dissemination of impact-based early warning message		
	Information about the nearest shelter, service sources and other awareness messages		

THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IN ANTICIPATION AND RESPONSE:

- Pre-crisis consultations to design the most appropriate set of interventions
- Design of minimum and sectoral packages for impact mitigation
- Community engagement to ensure at-risk households are equipped with the knowledge and skills regarding mitigation options they have for a flood.
- Agency anticipatory actions to ensure transfers can be made at the time of the activation trigger. These can include FSP arrangements, prepositioning of items, last-mile preparations, etc.
- Cash transfers to households and items/services delivered starting with the activation trigger.
- Households implement x,y,z mitigation measures.
- The impact of the flood was mitigated to a large extent and negative coping tactics are not used by households
- The results of the rapid assessment should confirm that households are able to a certain extent to meet their essential needs with only minor sectoral interventions necessary during
- the response phase, or (ideally) require no response phase 'traditional' humanitarian aid.
- PDMs implemented one month after cash transfers.

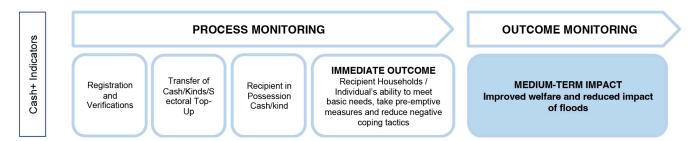
precrisis consulta tions Readiness trigger trigger MPC sectoral in-kind agency anticipatory actions Impact reduced negative coping tactics reduced negative coping tactics reduced

6. OVERLAP WITH DRR AND RESILIENCE

- During the workshop, when discussing disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience-building measures, it was highlighted the importance of distinguishing household-level actions from community-based actions.
- Household-level actions refer to steps taken by individual households to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. These measures may include constructing durable housing, securing personal property, creating emergency plans, and stocking emergency supplies. The effectiveness of these measures often depends on the resources available to the individual household, as well as the specific vulnerabilities they face.
- Community-based actions, on the other hand, are initiatives implemented at the community level to increase the community's resilience against disasters. These may involve developing and implementing community-wide evacuation plans, constructing community shelters or flood defences, and creating early warning systems. These actions are often more effective when they are carried out in a coordinated and collective manner, allowing the community as a whole to mitigate risk and build resilience.
- The overlap of DRR and resilience involves identifying and leveraging the strengths of both household-level and community-based actions. For instance, well-prepared households contribute to a resilient community, and community-level actions can enhance the resilience of individual households. By promoting both types of actions, we can ensure a more comprehensive and effective approach to disaster risk reduction and resilience building.
- The HCTT in Bangladesh aims for subsequent revisions to this unified framework to include recommendations for the unified design, coordination, and implementation of 'community-level' actions for Anticipatory Action.

7. MONITORING FRAMEWORK

- Each agency will use its existing monitoring and evaluation systems to collect and track data on implementation progress and outputs achieved. The M&E system should be coordinated among agencies to allow maximum learning, each to evaluate and report on common indicators across all interventions.
- The final HCTT version of the anticipatory action cash+ PDM indicators and survey questions will be drafted separately by the ICCG in Bangladesh.



Adapted from Multipurpose cash outcome indicators and guidance - Grand Bargain Cash Workstream, 2022

SUMMARY OF THE CORE MPC INDICATORS

Area/Sector	Common indicators (to be updated in separate HCTT Anticipatory Action PDM framework)
Standard Expenditure	 # of the household received standard transfer value (for the anticipatory action cash transfers – both MPC and sectoral cash) # of targeted households with prior information regarding the cash+ assistance and flood mitigation measures # of households satisfied with the amount of cash received # of households continue regular feeding of the children # of women make decisions about the Cash+ expenditure
Welfare Improvement	 # of households received in-kind support/services received Household expenditure patterns monitoring (for the anticipatory action cash transfers – both MPC and sectoral cash) # of households who used the cash assistance to pay off debts # of households satisfied with the cash+ transfer modality meeting its preference # of households continue children's education and recreation
Proactive Actions	 # of households that have adopted flood mitigation measures (minimum 2 mitigation measures) # of households meeting its preferred timeline for receiving flood anticipatory action cash+ assistance # of household timely evacuation or transferred to a safe place
Reduce Impacts	 # of households who report being able to mitigate the impacts of monsoon floods # of households who report being able to meet their basic needs as they define and prioritize them (before, during, and post peak flood) # of households who offset the negative coping tactics because of the monsoon flood









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