BACKGROUND PAPER

Integrating climate–security risks into analysis and planning

ABOUT THE EVENT

The Challenges Annual Forum 2021 (#CAF21Berlin) will take place from 1–3 December and discuss how peace operations could more effectively address climate and environmental security risks and opportunities. The co-hosting partner for this year's hybrid event is the German Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF).

Challenges Forum is a global partnership that uses its convening power to generate innovative ideas and promote results for more effective peace operations.

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Climate change is affecting conflict dynamics and posing significant obstacles to peace around the world. It undermines peoples' livelihoods, changes the availability and quality of natural resources and puts additional pressure on state institutions and capacities. Particularly in conflict-affected and fragile contexts, climate change can compound existing instability and conflicts, exacerbate forced movements of people and undermine efforts to sustain peace.

Peace operations and security actors have started to reflect on their own role in driving climate and environmental change through the negative environmental impacts of their operations, as well as consider possible opportunities for addressing the security implications of climate change. While a missions' capacity to address climate or environment-related security risks are limited and lessons learned and experiences are just beginning to be captured and made available, there have been increased efforts in recent years to fill this gap. These include the establishment of the UN Climate Security Mechanism as a joint initiative by the Department for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to strengthen the capacity of the UN system to analyse and address the adverse impacts of climate change on peace and security; the deployment of the first Climate Security Advisor for UNSOM in Somalia; and the introduction of environmental offices in different peace operations.

Against this background, this paper outlines a number of best practices and learnings on how to effectively address climate-related security risks that could be instructive for peace operations. It focuses on two areas:

1) how to analyse climate-security risks, and

2) how to identify entry points that address climate-related security risks.

These two areas are of special importance for peace operations, as environmental and climate considerations are beginning to be included in mission mandates but are rarely clearly defined, which leaves peace operations with limited guidance for identifying and addressing climate-related security risks.[1]
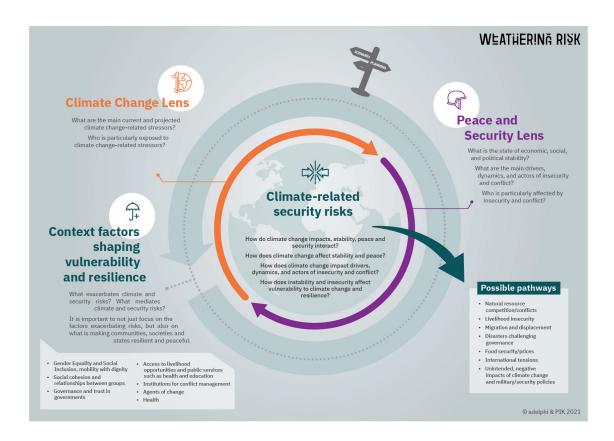
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1. For examples of climate security language in UN mission mandates in the Sahel, see https://climate-security-expert-network.org/sites/climate-security-expert-network.org/files/documents/csen_climate_fragility_factsheet_the_sahel.pdf
2. This is based on the Weathering Risk Methodology, for more information on all the points outlined see www.weatheringrisks.org

How to analyse climate–security risks?

Climate-related security risks emerge through complex interactions between different social, economic, demographic and political factors. In order to understand and unpack these links, any thorough climate-security analysis should cover the following elements (see also graphic below): [2]

· The assessment should include an analysis of the main impacts of climate change (climate lens) and a thorough under-standing of the local peace and security context, including the drivers, dynamics and actors of conflict *(peace and security lens)*.

· Based on this, the *interactions between climate change, peace and security* can be assessed. This includes, on the one hand, how climate change impacts and changes the drivers of conflict, its dynamics and

actors, and, on the other hand, how conflict and instability impact vulnerability and resilience to climate change. While the links between climate change, peace and security are highly context-specific, there are a number of general risk dynamics or pathways that have been identified which can help guide this analysis, including, for example, conflict around natural resources and livelihood insecurity. [3]

· A special focus of the analysis should be put on a number of *context factors* that have shown to play an important role in shaping vulnerability and resilience to both climate change and conflict, and in translating climate impacts into security risks. These include, for example, social inclusion, cohesion and marginalisation, governance capacity and access to services, and gender norms, expectations and power dynamics.

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3. For a more detailed analysis of the main pathways see https://berlin-climate-security-conference.de/sites/berlin-climate-security-conference.de/files/documents/10_insights_on_climate_impacts_and_peace_report.pdf.

In addition to these elements, lessons from the field point to an emerging set of *best practices for collecting and analysing climate-security data.* These include using both quantitative and qualitative methods, combining the latest available climate data with a granular, locally-informed context and conducting conflict analysis grounded in interviews and field research. To capture the unique experiences of different groups of women, men, girls and boys, field research should be gender-sensitive and informed by local cultural and social norms and considerations. It is also key to ensure that the right capacities and skills are available on the analysis team, including[4] both conflict and environment and climate experts, as well as gender and social inclusion specialists, in order to accurately analyse climate and conflict data.

How to identify entry points that address climate-related security risks?
There is no universal set of activities to address climate-related security risks. However, evidence from existing climate change adaptation and peacebuilding programming and research points to some general entry points that can be used to inform peace operations:[5]

> "Climate-resilient and sustainable livelihoods can help reduce resource scarcity, enhance the economic security of vulnerable groups and address underlying conflict drivers."

- Strengthening *natural resource governance* capacity can enhance the sustainable use of climate-sensitive natural resources. If done in a conflict-sensitive and inclusive way, good governance can also strengthen relationships across societies and promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

- *Climate-resilient and sustainable livelihoods* can help reduce resource scarcity, enhance the economic security of vulnerable groups and address underlying conflict drivers. This is particularly the case if they address structural conflict drivers such as marginalisation or inequality, or if they directly target conflict actors, such as ex-combatants, as part of demobilisation and reintegration programmes.

- *Peace-positive climate change adaptation* means implementing climate change adaptation programmes that also contribute to strengthening social cohesion and trust by, for example, putting a specific focus on joint design and implementation of adaptation approaches with conflicting groups, as well as government participation.

For example, the UN in Somalia is collaborating with the federal and state governments, local communities and NGOs to implement a triple nexus approach that brings together humanitarian, development and peace approaches around water management and improving flood and drought resilience to break the worsening cycle of climate impacts, displacement and conflict.[6]

Finally, for peace operations, supporting the fight against *environmental crimes* can also be a good entry point for addressing climate-related security risks. This can include strengthening the rule of law, building awareness and capacity of police officers and military personnel to tackle environmental crime, and the provision of equipment. It is important to remember that peace operations should enable local police forces to better address environmental crime and should not take on police functions themselves.

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4. For a good example of such an analysis see www.shoringupstability.org
5. The following entry points are based on this research https://climate-security-expert-network.org/sites/climate-security-expert-network.org/files/documents/linking_adaptation_and_peacebuilding_lessons_learned_and_the_way_forward_0.pdf
6. For more information see https://climate-security-expert-network.org/sites/climate-security-expert-network.org/files/documents/csen_climate-fragility_policy_brief_unsom.pdf

Conclusions

In order to better analyse climate-security risks and identify entry points, peace operations need to be provided with, and build up, capacities and expertise. Experience from other organisations and crosscutting thematic areas, such as gender, shows that this is best done by a combination of

1) creating dedicated positions and focal points,

2) mainstreaming the topic into existing positions and processes, and

3) enabling external support and partnerships.

The model of the UN Climate Security Advisor in UNSOM can provide an example of how specific climate-security expertise can be deployed in a peacekeeping mission. In addition, training and capacity-building for those who already work on environment, climate and/or peace and conflict issues, such as environmental officers, mediation support units, and peace and conflict advisors, are a necessary part of mainstreaming efforts. Instead of creating additional processes, these individuals can then integrate climate-security analysis and action into existing analysis and planning processes, such as the Common Country Analysis (CCA) and the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System (CPAS). Partnerships with local researchers and organisations, and pulling on UN capacities such as the UN Climate Security Mechanism and UNEP's Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts Global Branch, as well as international expertise and think tanks working on climate-security, can help fill capacity gaps, leverage expertise beyond the UN and ensure that international best practices are considered. It is equally important that lessons learned are fed back into the emerging community of practice.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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