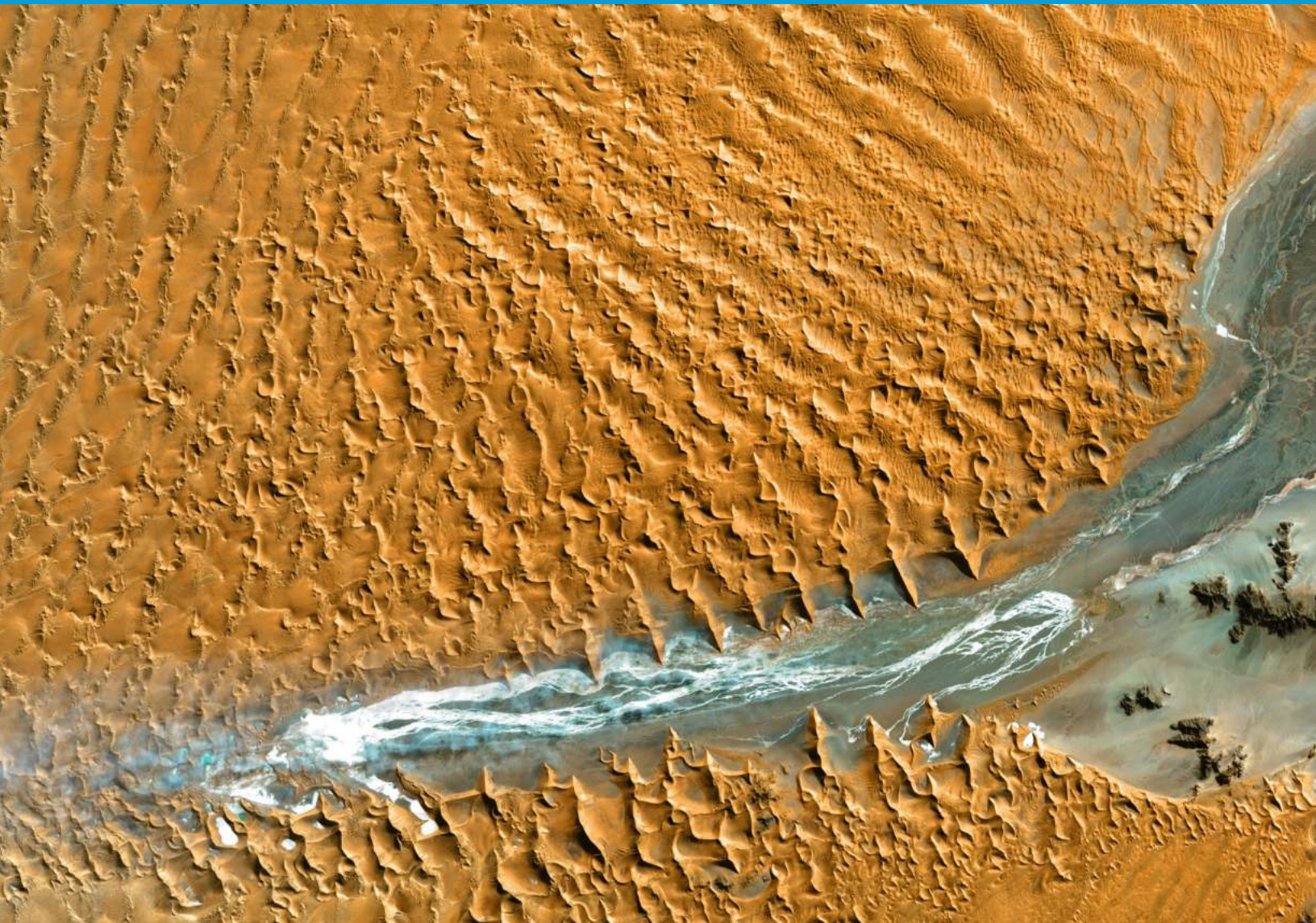


# Weathering Two Storms

DPPA Practice Note

## Gender and Climate in Peace and Security



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Drafted by the Policy and Mediation Division, UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. The Policy and Mediation Division is grateful to all who contributed valuable advice and comments throughout the consultations for this practice note.

Cover image: USGS. Namib-Naukluft National Park, Namibia. Published on November 11, 2019, downloaded from Unsplash

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# 1. Introduction

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The world is facing unprecedented risks from climate change. Droughts, erratic rainfall, and extreme weather events affect people, livelihoods, and economies across the world. Populations in fragile contexts, where past or current conflicts have undermined the capacity of institutions and communities to adapt to the changing environment, are particularly affected. In many places, climate impacts are compounding existing grievances and exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities, including those linked to gender and social inequity.<sup>1</sup>

Of the close to one billion people who live in areas with high exposure to climate hazards, 40 percent also face low levels of peacefulness,<sup>2</sup> which in turn correlates with low levels of women's inclusion, participation, and security.<sup>3</sup> It is no coincidence that the majority of United Nations (UN) field based special political missions and peacekeeping operations are deployed in contexts affected by the compounding effects of gender, climate, and security risks. Several recent studies, including by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and UN Women in 2020,<sup>4</sup> stress that recognizing gender differentiated experiences of climate risks can help identify entry points for conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacebuilding. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change also notes that the gendered nature of vulnerability and access to natural resources influence the efficacy of conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, and that this offers potential new avenues to build peace in conflict-prone regions vulnerable to climate change.<sup>5</sup>

Understanding and unpacking this confluence of risks has become increasingly important in conflict and political analysis, in identifying peacemaking and peacebuilding opportunities, and in building resilient, peaceful, and inclusive societies. This practice note aims to contribute to this area from a peace and security perspective and responds to a growing demand from UN political affairs teams in the field and at headquarters for practical guidance. It identifies different ways in which peace and security, climate change, and gender can intersect and provides suggestions on how to think about these intersections in conflict and political analysis, as well as conflict prevention and peacemaking strategies.



In many places, climate impacts are **compounding existing grievances** and **exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities**, including those **linked to gender and social inequity**.

The questions discussed in this practice note are meant as a food for thought for peace and security practitioners. The analysis draws on emerging work on the linkages between insecurity, gender inequality and climate vulnerability, as well as a series of interviews with practitioners and researchers in this field. This work is part of a broader effort by DPPA and the Climate Security Mechanism (CSM) – composed of DPPA, UNEP, UNDP, and the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) – to advance policy and practice on the interlinkages between climate change and peace and security.

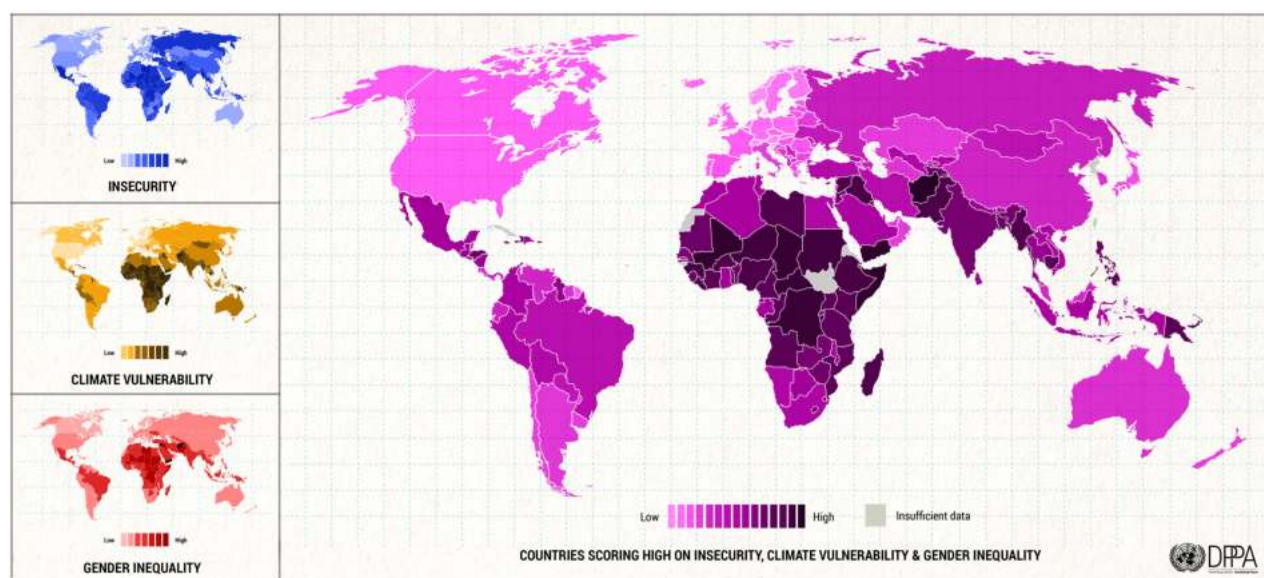


## 2. Context: Interlinkages between peace and security, climate, and gender

Climate change alone is rarely the root cause of conflict and insecurity. However, through its interplay with social, political, economic, and demographic factors, it can create cascading effects that undermine conflict prevention and peacemaking objectives. Climate change can drive displacement and involuntary migration, food insecurity, loss of livelihoods, and resource competition, both through longer term shifts in weather patterns (for example, desertification) as well as shorter term shocks from climate events (for example, hurricanes and floods).<sup>6</sup> Not everyone is affected equally. Gender inequalities, along with other inequalities and marginalization – connected for example to ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity, religion, and socio-economic status – can worsen climate vulnerability.<sup>7</sup>

A review of existing data demonstrates the intersection of climate vulnerability, gender inequality, and security risks. Of the ten countries ranking lowest globally on women’s inclusion, justice, and security,<sup>8</sup> eight also rank in the bottom ten countries globally on fragility<sup>9</sup> and climate vulnerability.<sup>10</sup> The confluence of gender, climate, and security risks underscores the need to better understand their implications for peace and security.<sup>11</sup>

**How insecurity, climate vulnerability, and gender inequality overlap**



**Sources:** *Climate vulnerability:* Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative. Country Index Scores (2019). *Insecurity:* Fragile States Index (2021). *Gender inequality:* Women, Peace, and Security Index, Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and the PRIO Centre on Gender Peace, and Security (2021).

**Disclaimer:** This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not imply official endorsement by the UN.

Gender norms and power dynamics play a critical role in shaping women and men’s vulnerability as well as their capacity to cope with climate risks. A joint study by UNEP, UN Women, DPPA, and UNDP identified different ways through which this intersection plays out: through their differentiated access, use and control of natural resources, physical mobility and migration, decision-making power, and household or community expectations.<sup>12</sup> Climate-related impacts may for example result in increased time required for caregiving activities which are usually

carried out by women, including securing water, food, and firewood. Women and girls also face particular risks during and after climate-related disasters, including due to restricted mobility options, and greater prevalence of gender-based violence following climate-induced disaster.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, women's lack of access to relief and assistance compromises their prospects for recovery and lowers their survival rates.<sup>14</sup>

The effects of climate change have also been observed to trigger changes in gender roles and power dynamics among women and men, including expectations about masculinity and femininity. For instance, climate change may lead to a loss of livelihood, via loss of land and other assets, and affect men's ability to act as a provider in a household or a community. Where men are traditionally dependent on natural resource-based livelihoods, the loss of a provider role may detrimentally affect their identities and social relations, which may have negative impacts on local security.<sup>15</sup>

At the same time, the linkages between climate change, gender, and peace and security can also open entry points for conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacebuilding.<sup>16</sup> For example, women's roles in society – including in relation to water and food provision and in agriculture – uniquely position them to anticipate climate issues. The legitimacy conferred on women from these social roles related to natural resources can also position them as leaders in dialogues on the management of climate-related risks and conflict resolution related to natural resources. A recent practice note by DPPA highlighted how climate-informed mediation can open the door for more inclusive peacemaking by bringing in women and other critical actors in natural resource management.<sup>17</sup>

### 3. How peace and security, climate change, and gender intersect

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Understanding the ways in which peace and security intersects with climate change and gendered inequalities is critical for effective conflict prevention and peace efforts. This note identifies four such critical intersections.

#### *Natural resources and livelihoods*

Climate stressors such as drought can increase the time women and girls need to spend to secure water, food, and firewood. In contexts affected by conflict and fragility, longer travel times combined with structural power inequalities expose women to increased risks of sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence.<sup>18</sup> The increased workload also puts pressure on women and girls and limits the time they can spend on other activities, such as education or income generating activities.

In many contexts, women do not and are not allowed to own land. Even if they have formal inheritance rights, this does not guarantee access to land. Women in indigenous communities, who traditionally play critical roles as leaders, forest managers, and economic providers, are even less likely to have recognized land rights.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, while they do not own the land, women often cultivate and rely on it to feed themselves and their families. Because land rights are connected to people's ability to make changes to land use that can advance adaptation to climate change, for instance by planting drought resistant crops in response to decreasing yields, lack of land ownership not only increases women's social and economic risks (e.g. land and property grabbing), but also decreases their adaptive capacity.<sup>20</sup> Lack of land ownership also impedes women's participation in conflict

resolution processes related to land and natural-resources, as well as their inclusion in post-conflict consultation processes on the redistribution of land or in the design of land- and agriculture related projects, for example as part of broader Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) processes.

Women, including indigenous women and young women, are often at the frontlines of the fight to defend land and the environment. Women environmental rights defenders and women peacebuilders working on climate-related issues face specific forms of gender-based violence including from state actors and beneficiaries of contested natural resource trades. Although men in similar roles also face threats and killings, women defenders in particular are subjected to smear campaigns, intimidation, and violence, including rape, or threats of rape. Lethal attacks against environmental defenders are on the rise with both men and women victims, especially in contexts where they stand up to extractive industries on indigenous lands. According to a recent report by Frontline Defenders (The International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders), 59 per cent of human rights defenders killed in 2021 worked on defending land, environmental and indigenous peoples' rights.<sup>21</sup>

### *Climate-related displacement and human mobility*

Millions of displaced people are caught at the frontlines of climate change and conflict. Ninety per cent of refugees come from countries that are highly climate vulnerable,<sup>22</sup> most of which are also affected by conflict, such as Afghanistan, Syria, and South Sudan. Among the countries most exposed to the impacts of climate change, many also host large numbers of refugees and internally displaced people. Bangladesh hosts more than 870,000 Rohingya refugees who fled violence in Myanmar, and are now exposed to increasingly frequent and intense cyclones and flooding.<sup>23</sup>

Host communities are often inadequately prepared to accommodate newcomers with basic shelter and sanitation facilities that are safe for women. Many host countries and communities also see high rates of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and score low on gender equality indices themselves, which further exacerbates the risks for displaced women and girls.<sup>24</sup> Research found that displaced women and girls experience a 24 per cent higher risk of intimate partner violence, economic marginalization, and financial exclusion than women in the host community.<sup>25</sup>

Displacement exacerbates gender imbalances and risks of exploitation, including through human trafficking and forced labor, with particular risks for women and girls. While the link between climate change and human trafficking remains understudied to date, there is consensus that forced migration and displacement increase the risk of vulnerability to trafficking and modern slavery. Human trafficking, in turn, can provide a source of income for organized criminal networks and conflict parties, which can also contribute to broader insecurity.<sup>28</sup>

Gender roles and responsibilities affect people's decisions and ability to migrate for environmental reasons as well as their migration experiences. Expectations for men to be the main breadwinner in areas where livelihoods are threatened by scarce access to land and water may incentivize men to migrate in pursuit of alternative livelihoods.<sup>29</sup>

“**Women, including indigenous women and young women, are often at the frontlines of the fight to defend land and the environment.**”

Women often have fewer opportunities to migrate, as migration requires economic capacities, access to information and social resources that might not be available to them due to structural inequalities. In the Dry Corridor of Central America, conversely, economic opportunities for migrant women in domestic work, caregiving and sex work have led to increasing feminization of migration patterns.<sup>30</sup> Feminized migration patterns can bring their own risks, as women's labour is often devalued and precarious, taking place in the informal economy.

In other contexts, such as in the Pacific, planned relocation has become a last resort strategy to address current and projected climate impacts such as sea-level rise.<sup>31</sup> For example, the Fijian government identified over 40 low-lying coastal villages for planned relocation,<sup>32</sup> and the government of Kiribati purchased land in Fiji in anticipation of its population's future needs. In instances where communities relocate collectively, either in a forced or voluntary manner, women and men may have different experiences of relocation. Following the relocation of the Vunidogoloa community in Fiji to an area further inland, men, who were primarily engaged in agriculture, did not need to change their livelihoods; women, who used to fish, were now further away from the sea meaning that fishing would involve a longer time commitment.<sup>33</sup> This shows how gender roles influence patterns of mobility and relocation experiences.



Ugandan climate activist and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Vanessa Nakate briefs reporters in New York on her recent trip to the Horn of Africa. UN Photo/ Manuel Elías.

## *Sexual and gender-based violence*

In fragile and conflict affected contexts, climate change is increasingly recognized as an aggravator of conditions which contribute to increased violence against women and girls, as well as various vulnerable groups.<sup>34</sup> A recent report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls notes that "climate change and biodiversity loss aggravate all types of gender-based violence against women and girls, which are exacerbated by discriminatory legal systems and governance structures and unequal power distribution".<sup>35</sup> When these implications of climate change further intersect with conflict, women and girls face heightened risks of experiencing SGBV, including conflict-related sexual violence. Such attacks on women may further escalate violence when norms of protective masculinity impel men to retaliate when "their women" are attacked.<sup>36</sup> Climate-induced resource scarcity also creates opportunities for those in control of resources to abuse their position by demanding sexual favors. Around Lake Victoria, for example, dwindling fish stocks and water scarcity were found to have led to an uptick in sexual exploitation of women in exchange for access to fish or water.<sup>37</sup>

During and after extreme weather events, women and girls are at increased risk of domestic violence, harassment, sexual violence and trafficking.<sup>38</sup> In South Asia and the Pacific, where rates of SGBV are already high, studies have shown notable increases in sexual violence and exploitation in the form of human trafficking after climate shocks.<sup>39</sup>



After Cyclone Sidr struck Bangladesh in 2007, for example, criminal networks were found to force women and girls into prostitution along the Indian border at a higher rate, and following Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, human trafficking increased in parts of the Philippines already suffering from high levels of poverty.<sup>40</sup>

Climate-related economic insecurity can also lead to an increase in the number of child marriages, which disproportionately affects girls. Child marriage is increasingly being documented as a survival tactic when droughts, floods, and other climate-related stressors push families to marry their daughters early in exchange for livestock or food.<sup>41</sup>

### *Changing gender roles*

Climate change impacts can impede men and women's abilities to live up to their traditional gender roles.<sup>42</sup> For example, men might lose their agricultural livelihoods and thereby their traditional "provider" roles, or might migrate, whereas women might have to take on new roles as heads of households. On the one hand, the evolving expectations around masculine and feminine roles can cause friction; on the other hand, they can also open space to increase women's participation in decision-making.

In Pakistan, for example, damages from extreme flooding were found to result in loss of income and prevented men from fulfilling their prescribed roles as breadwinners. Both women and men explained that the anxieties and frustrations associated with this lack of fulfillment of their socialized responsibilities could lead to domestic violence.<sup>43</sup> In other countries, such as Mexico, where climate-dependent livelihood strategies (e.g., agriculture, livestock, forestry, fishing) are predominantly considered men's activities, poor harvests and livestock loss were found to result in lower earnings and food insecurity, putting pressure on men's traditional role as providers and compromising their breadwinner identity.<sup>44</sup> This was found to raise men's poverty and psychological stress, and also increased their likelihood of perpetrating intimate partner violence, usually against women.<sup>45</sup>

Struggles over expectations around masculinity and femininity can also aggravate climate-related conflict and insecurity at the community level. For instance, in the Horn of Africa, severe drought followed by above-average rainfall severely impacted livestock herds and made acquiring social status, including through cattle wealth and getting married, increasingly difficult.<sup>46</sup> The inability of young men to live up to gendered expectations and to attain adulthood through traditional mechanisms can have severe

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Women's roles relating to **natural resource management** in households and communities may encourage **women** to **mobilize** as **leaders in climate action** or **conflict resolution**.

security implications. The violent raiding of neighboring pastoralist groups, for instance, is a regularly used measure to re-stock cattle when a significant portion of the herd perishes during a drought.<sup>47</sup>

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Increasing challenges for men and women to live up to their traditional gender roles and expectations, combined with promises of protection, income, and justice by non-state armed groups, have lowered the opportunity cost of both men and women to join such groups. In Northern Nigeria, research found that when one marker of becoming a man – for example, through marriage which requires a bride price – is no longer available, a different, militarized, marker of manhood can become an alternative.<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, women and girls have also joined armed opposition groups to seek some (relative) empowerment and status, and to be part of political and societal change. Research in eastern Chad found that the economic stress and challenges of households and communities to adapt to environmental change, was one of the driving factors for women and girls to join armed groups, which were offering girls and women education and alternative livelihoods and increased status in their communities.<sup>50</sup> The turning of women and men (for different gendered reasons) to armed groups can strengthen the armed groups and contribute to increased security risks.

However, changes in gendered roles can also create opportunities for equality and peace. In several contexts, climate change has been found to lead to societal transformations in women's roles and representation in economic sectors and in the household. In Central America, an increasing number of women have been found to lead agricultural undertakings, as a result of the migration of men to cities.<sup>51</sup> In parts of Sudan, the combined impact of violent conflict, climate change and environmental degradation has been a push factor in the migration of men to other parts of the country and contributed to increases in women-led households and local communities.<sup>52</sup> A UN joint programme found that in this context, natural resources provided a strong entry point for women's empowerment in peacebuilding and natural resource management.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, incidences of drought in the Horn of Africa have led to changes in the socio-cultural and socio-economic organization of pastoral communities, with women playing an increasingly active role in diversifying income generating activities to ensure family survival after the loss of cattle and other livestock.<sup>54</sup>

While shifts in social norms regulating gender behavior may enable women to enter different sectors, women might also experience new forms of abuse and increased pressure to acquire income and fulfill gendered roles within the household.<sup>55</sup> Identifying measures to strengthen opportunities for inclusive peace will be important to encourage positive shifts during times of change, whilst at the same time being mindful of new pressures and risks for women.

## 4. Considerations for analysis and action

The full, equal, and meaningful participation of women is at the core of inclusive conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacebuilding, including in climate-affected contexts. However, targeted measures are required to overcome entrenched obstacles to women's participation and rights. Integrating gender and climate priorities throughout political and conflict analysis, as well as in designing peacemaking and peacebuilding strategies, can strengthen conflict prevention and peace efforts. For these efforts to succeed, it is crucial that peacemakers understand how the intersection of gender and climate can present opportunities – and obstacles – for peace.

### *Climate and gender considerations in conflict and political analysis*

Gender-blind analysis can lead to ineffective or even counterproductive efforts at conflict prevention and peacemaking. The following questions and their implications can help make conflict and political analysis more climate-informed and gender-responsive:

***If climate stressors are evident, how do they exacerbate existing gendered vulnerabilities to security risks?***

#### ***Possible implications:***

- Climate stressors can contribute to women's increased exposure to risks of sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence depending on the context, as they are forced to cover longer distances to collect water or procure food.
- Longer travel times of herder families in search of pasture means increasingly limited access to government-provided services such as healthcare, including maternal care, and education, increasing marginalization and impacting women and children specifically.
- Men and boys may find themselves exposed to new risks when forced to move through insecure areas in search of fresh pasture or alternative livelihoods.

***What is the impact of climate stressors on women's participation in peace and decision-making processes, and in the management of natural resources (and related disputes)?***

#### ***Possible implications:***

- Climate stressors may increase the time and energy women have to spend on securing water, food, and firewood and diversification of income, thereby decreasing time to engage in decision-making processes, including over natural resources and peace.
- Discriminatory laws and customs governing property, land and other resources can preclude women's voices in the redistribution of land or the design of DDR processes and resolution of

land-related disputes.

- Women's roles relating to natural resource management in households and communities may encourage women to mobilize as leaders in climate action or conflict resolution. Women are often well-placed to participate in natural resource related dialogues, and through their societal roles can influence outcomes in a way that advances environmental protection and takes into account the concerns of the whole community.

***Do climate stressors influence mobility patterns? If so, how do gender and security risks intersect?***

***Possible implications:***

- Women may have fewer opportunities to utilize migration as a strategy to cope with climate change, as migration requires economic capacities, access to information, and social resources that might not be available to them.
- Women and girls can face particular risks during and after climate-related disasters, including due to restricted mobility options and limited access to relief and assistance, reducing prospects for recovery.
- Displaced women and girls can be at particular risk to exploitation, human trafficking and forced labor, intimate partner violence, economic marginalization, and financial exclusion.

***To what extent are gender roles and expectations changing due to climate impacts? What is the effect of such changes on conflict dynamics and insecurity?***

***Possible implications:***

- The loss or degradation of livelihoods can incentivize young men and women seeking to support themselves and their families to join armed groups. The growth of armed groups, in turn, exacerbates insecurity.
- Tensions between communities may increase when climate stressors impede young men to attain adulthood through traditional mechanisms. For example, if livestock perishes due to drought, young men may resort to using increasingly violent means to acquire social status.
- Lower earnings and food insecurity may put pressure on men's traditional role as providers, raising poverty and the psychological stress of men, and in combination with resource scarcity and women's inability to procure water can increase domestic violence.<sup>56</sup>
- Gender roles may change and open up new decision-making spaces for women and facilitate their engagement in community-level conflict resolution mechanisms.



## **Climate and gender considerations in conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacebuilding strategies**

Peace and security practitioners should assess synergies between initiatives to address climate security and gender equality, to identify entry points for collaboration. For example, the inclusion of climate-related provisions in a peace agreement might open space for more inclusive implementation of the agreement, involving actors that are not traditionally part of peacemaking.<sup>57</sup> To identify such entry points and other shared priorities, it is crucial that gender experts work together with climate security experts, and that both work closely with political officers and mediation teams. In UN special political and peacekeeping missions, gender advisers and climate security advisers, and relevant focal points, should work together closely.

The following questions can help strengthen gender-responsive and climate-informed conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacebuilding in contexts affected by climate risks:

### **Are women included in key stakeholder mapping to ensure comprehensive overview of actors who contribute to anticipating and responding to climate-related challenges?**

In many societies, women are expected to be responsible for the provision of water and food for their households and/or communities, which can provide them with unique experience, knowledge and insights regarding the adverse impact of climate change. Existing early warning mechanisms, and dispute resolution and peacebuilding efforts could be strengthened by enhancing the integration of the perspectives of women and consideration of gender and women's rights issues. Ensuring women's participation in such mechanisms and efforts – as well as those of youth, indigenous people, and other marginalized groups – could help anticipate and reduce the impact of climate-related risks on local communities.

#### **Example:**

*A Peacebuilding Fund Project implemented by FAO and IOM in Yemen achieved the institutionalization of women's role in the resolution of water conflicts through "Water User Associations" so that they gain acceptance within their communities. By leveraging women's traditional role in conflict resolution and building on a previous success story (the Malaka dam), the project had a transformational impact by making women's participation in the Water User Associations a practice.<sup>58</sup>*

### **What measures can be taken to fast-track women's full, equal and meaningful participation in preventing and addressing climate-affected conflicts?**

Where women are typically excluded from decision-making spaces, their traditional resource-related roles can provide new entry points to overcoming structural barriers to inclusion and meaningful participation in peacemaking. Knowledge of the environment can confer legitimacy on women addressing these issues and present entry points for women's participation in political dialogue and mediation processes, including in relation to conflicts with a natural resource dimension. The climate crisis may also contribute to the softening of social restrictions toward gendered divisions of labor and facilitate

women's enhanced participation in sectors and decision-making processes that were previously predominantly reserved for men.

Identifying measures to fast-track women's participation and leadership are key to overcoming entrenched obstacles in peace and political processes. To minimize the risk that changed gender roles will revert, it is important to also take measures to ensure that an enhanced role for women in decision-making is institutionalized. The success of efforts to enhance the participation of women partially also depends on the sensitization of men. Engaging men as partners in advancing gender equality, including by raising their awareness on the knowledge and skills that women can bring to the table to prevent and address climate-related tensions, is an important part of overcoming social obstacles to women's meaningful participation.

**Example:**

*In North Kordofan, Sudan, resource scarcity – the result of conflict, drought, and exclusionary decision-making processes – has forced some pastoralist communities to change their migratory patterns, often leaving women behind in settled villages to manage households while men search for grazing land. In the absence of men, women have taken on new responsibilities, traditionally carried out by men. Women in some communities have become actively involved in facilitating dialogue over natural resource disputes, a role previously entirely reserved for men.<sup>59</sup>*

**What measures can be taken to engage women environmental defenders and peacebuilders as leaders in mobilizing for climate justice and inclusive and sustainable peace?**

Women's civil society organizations and networks (including young, indigenous, and LGBTIQ civil society) and local environmental defenders can possess deep knowledge of community needs and priorities that are necessary to build resilience and reduce climate-induced tensions. Identifying, supporting and partnering with existing women civil society groups on climate, peace and security issues can be a good starting point to inform the development of initiatives to advance climate sensitive and gender responsive conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Engagement should also take measures to address protection concerns – particularly for women land defenders and indigenous women – in order to prevent or address any attacks and violence they may face as a result of their participation

**Example:**

*Women in Mali have organized themselves into the “Coalition Malienne Genre, Sécurité et Changement Climatique”. They advocate for building the capacity of rural women and girls on the nexus of gender, security and climate change, and for action to involve women's and girls' platforms, networks and groups further in emerging policy processes.<sup>60</sup>*

**What steps can be taken to strengthen coordination and advance locally rooted, gender-responsive and climate-informed conflict prevention and peacebuilding?**

Meaningful consultation with local and regional climate and gender experts and initiatives is critical to ensure that activities are built from the outset on diverse local knowledge and experiences. However, modalities to ensure coordination and coherence are essential to prevent gender and climate from being ad hoc initiatives and to ensure these priorities create strategic impact.

**Example:**

*Some countries and regions have seen the establishment of climate, peace and security working groups, such as the UN Regional Working Group on Climate Change, Environment, Security and Development in West Africa, co-led by UNOWAS, IOM, UNFCCC, and UNEP.<sup>61</sup> The inclusion of UN Women has ensured gender expertise and helped the group provide a gender lens into the Call to Action that emerged from the April 2022 Regional Conference on Climate Change, Peace and Security in West Africa and the Sahel, which called for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in efforts to address climate-related security risks and highlighted the importance of women-led programmes.*

## Endnotes

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