

# Climate, Peace and Security Programming in the Arab States:

## Considerations for integrated programming in Jordan, Yemen, Iraq and Somalia

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## Introduction:

The link between climate change and peace and security is becoming increasingly evident as the world grapples with the consequences of a warming planet. Climate change exacerbates existing inequalities and conflicts, and acts as a catalyst for new ones, as competition for dwindling resources, such as water and land intensify. Rising sea levels and extreme weather events displace communities, straining host communities' resources, leading to potential social unrest. Additionally, climate-induced food and water scarcity can spark conflict over access to these essential resources. Furthermore, climate change can amplify existing social and economic inequalities, which can contribute to instability and unrest. Understanding the climate, peace, and security linkages, and developing integrated policies and programmes across this nexus, is critical to ensuring global peace and security, and addressing humanitarian needs while supporting sustainable development.

In collaboration with:



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## Background:

As part of the SDG-Climate Facility: Climate Action for Human Security project which is funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), in 2021 WFP and UNDP initiated a research initiative to investigate integrated climate, peace and security programming in the Arab States, focusing on Jordan, Yemen, Syria, Somalia and Iraq.

Conducted by the CGIAR FOCUS Climate Security research consortium, the research investigates the extent to which climate-related security risks are integrated in country policies, strategies and recovery plans across 5 Arab States, it also makes policy and programmatic recommendations to advance this critical work.

The research has highlighted priority opportunities and good practices for advancing integrated climate, peace and security programming in the region. The findings summarized in this report are rooted in key informant interviews and validation workshops with government stakeholders and provide critical insights for taking this work forward to meet national needs.



**200**  
policy documents reviewed and analyzed

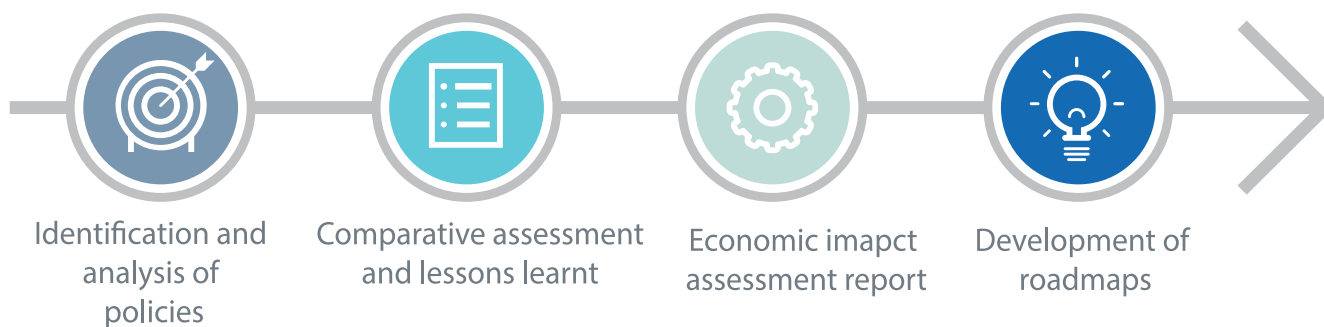


Series of interviews, horizon workshops and discussions with multiple stakeholders



Validation workshop with government representatives from Jordan, Iraq, Yemen and Somalia

## Methodology:



## Findings:

# The case for integrated climate, peace and security programming in the region

Climate change and related impacts in different countries across the Arab States are exacerbating pre-existing environmental, socio-economic, political, institutional, and conflict-related stressors and tensions. The research highlighted how, for example, the impact of droughts and increased water scarcity is not only undermining food security, but also heightening resource competition within and between communities, undermining social cohesion and increasing the risk of violence.

Climate change-related impacts are also likely to impact the trajectories of currently ongoing conflicts and security dynamics. For example, different groups may seek to take advantage of the detrimental effects of climate shocks on a government's legitimacy, in scenarios where the government is increasingly unable to manage the shocks and provide for its population.

While climate, peace and security are increasingly interconnected, progress towards integrated policies and programming across the nexus is limited. The CGIAR research in Jordan, Yemen, Syria, Somalia and Iraq found that none of the countries had as yet developed a designated, structured, and integrated policy approach on climate, peace, and security. Overall:

- Climate-related security risks and concerns have not been mainstreamed across policy documents.
- In cases where there is awareness of climate-related security risks, translating awareness into concrete, climate security-sensitive programmatic design and implementation remains a challenge.





## Findings:

# Entry points for integrated climate, peace, and security programming

Country stakeholder discussions with governments from Jordan, Yemen, Syria, Somalia and Iraq have highlighted the following key entry points for accelerating integrated climate, peace and security programming across the region. Focusing on these key areas can support targeted resource mobilization and effective programme decision-making. Priority entry points for accelerating integrated programming include:



**Developing sub-national level climate and security action plans: Integrated programming is currently held back by lack of planning and unclear roles across different sectors and across 1 different in-country contexts. Developing subnational plans is a critical entry point to:**

- Provide a policy instrument for convening diverse stakeholders.
- Set out clear responsibilities and mandates across scales and sectors.
- Act as an anchor point for funding and financial support.
- Facilitate the design and implementation of programmes that produce co-benefits for climate resilience and peacebuilding.



**Strengthening capacities of national designated authorities and other accredited institutions to access climate finance in conflict-affected and fragile settings. Accessing climate finance is a common barrier for national ownership of climate security programming and for shifting towards long-term resilience-building. This is critical for contexts where most international aid is disbursed for emergency response, and where entry points for climate security programming must be identified and leveraged. Capacity strengthening may entail:**

- Technical assistance in procedural matters such as proposal writing.
- Supporting the development of infrastructure for evidence-based decision-making and for effective monitoring and impact evaluation.
- Supporting channels for informed engagement with international financial actors and other funding streams.



**Raising awareness on climate, peace, and security considerations both at the community and national level. Understanding of climate, peace and security linkages and their implications for programming remains limited. Targeted awareness-raising for different stakeholders:**

- At a community level, foster trust and local buy-in for climate security programmes, and potentially encourage behavioral changes such as over-exploitation of natural resources.
- At a national level, raise political interest and capital around climate security, advocating to national decision-makers how working at this intersection can yield real human development outcomes.

## Findings:

# Recommendations for effective programming

The entry points above provide priority areas that can be leveraged for taking this work forward. More broadly, climate security work across the region can benefit from incorporating the following programmatic recommendations, which were identified as good practices in consultations with national stakeholders during the research process.



### **Enable community-driven programming:**

**Community-driven programme design and implementation in order to develop context-specific programmes that respond to local needs, promote local buy-in and support program sustainability.**

- Consultation and co-designing the programme with communities.
- Actively pursue community engagement throughout the programme cycle and include awareness-raising activities.
- Involve and coordinate closely with local authorities to support a relationship of trust between implementers and beneficiaries.
- Promote co-financing initiatives with community investment where possible to support programme sustainability (supported by external start-up capital where necessary).



### **Support effective coordination between government and international partners:**

**Effective infrastructure to be in place to facilitate coordination between government authorities and international partners, to support the achievement of programmatic outcomes and national ownership.**

- Align programme design and implementation with national plans, policies, priorities and capacities.
- Promote co-financing between international partners, the local community and national or subnational government actors.
- Operationalize a coordinating structure for the programme, such as a multi-stakeholder steering committee (where appropriate).





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Good practices

**Develop integrated, multi-dimensional programmes:**

**Development of integrated, multi-dimensional programmes that provide both short-term and long-term benefits. This supports programme responsiveness, community buy-in and trust, and ultimately the sustainability of impacts and outcomes.**

- Technical capacity strengthening e.g. for improved water management practices.
- Short-term income generation opportunities to provide immediate programme dividends e.g. employment opportunities from programme implementation.
- Climate-sensitive solutions to diversify livelihood opportunities long-term e.g. investing in ecosystem services to support green job creation.
- Conflict sensitivity and transformative peace responsiveness e.g. facilitating community-level water conflict mediation dialogues.

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Good practices

**Support institutional coordination and coherence: Effective and unified institutional arrangements are critical for achieving effective coordination across diverse stakeholders, who may have different strengths, understandings of key terms, internal processes and information systems.**

- Involve a broad array of stakeholders to promote a collective mindset for overcoming issues across the climate, peace and security nexus.
- Develop a unified coordinating platform at national level that can house - and has the capacity to mainstream - a climate, peace, and security mandate (e.g. a national climate change committee or council).
- Clarify key concepts for the climate, peace and security nexus e.g. by developing sector-specific explanations of their operationalization.
- Create standard procedures on specific actions and decision-making processes to support stakeholder ability to prioritize and coordinate.
- Develop a cross-ministerial database for climate/ecological data to support coordination, decision-making, and fundraising.





**Disclaimer:** This product is one of the outputs of the 'SDG-Climate Facility: Climate Action for Human Security' project. With financial support from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), the project is a multi-partner platform focusing on the impacts of climate change on human security in the Arab region, especially in the context of countries in crisis. It brings together the League of Arab States (LAS), Arab Water Council (AWC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme - Finance Initiative (UNEP FI), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Office for Disaster Reduction (UNDRR), and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), to deliver climate-oriented solutions that address climate challenges and bring co-benefits across the SDGs. In doing so, it aims to scale up access to and delivery of climate finance, including through innovative partnerships with the private sector.