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TECHNICAL REPORT

CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONFLICT

AN ANNEX TO THE USAID CLIMATE-RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

FEBRUARY 2015

This publication is made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared by Engility Corporation.

This report has been prepared for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), under the Climate Change Resilient Development Task Order No. AID-OAA-TO-11-00040, under the Integrated Water and Coastal Resources Management Indefinite Quantity Contract (WATER IQC II) Contract No. AID-EPP-I-00-04-00024.

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Irrigated cotton farming in Ethiopia: FESS
Meeting to discuss the effects of climate change in Chuquibamba, Arequipa, Peru: Cynthia Brady, USAID
Two Latin American children play near a water pipe: USAID
A Cambodian forest farmer family: USAID
Workshop meeting: USAID
The Coropuna snow peak seen across the paramo, Arequipa, Peru: Panoramo

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AN ANNEX TO THE USAID CLIMATE-RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

February 2015

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) would like to extend its thanks and appreciation to Geoff Dabelko and Lauren Herzer of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Jim Jarvie of Mercy Corps, Jeffrey Stark of the Foundation for Environmental Security and Sustainability, and Jon Barnett of the University of Melbourne for their input and feedback on this paper. Contributions from Peter Schultz, Charlotte Mack, Miyuki Hino, and Joanne Potter were provided under the Water II IQC Climate Change Resilient Development Task Order managed by Engility (IQC Contract No. AID EPP-1-00-04-00024, Task Order No.AID-OAA-TO-11-00040). This document was informed in part by discussions at two workshops focused on climate change and peacebuilding in Washington, DC, United States in 2012[1] and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2013.[2]

1.Adaptation Partnership (2012).

2.Tadesse & Lyons (Eds) (2013).

ACRONYMS

CAF	Conflict Assessment Framework
CMM	Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation
DCHA	USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LTPR	land tenure and property rights
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Health

TECHNICAL BRIEF

This Technical Brief was produced by the Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) in the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA/CMM). It is an annex to USAID's *Climate-Resilient Development Framework*, produced by USAID's Global Climate Change Office in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment. It is addressed primarily to technical officers at USAID seeking to understand the linkages between climate change and conflict. For more information on conflict-related topics, refer to DCHA/CMM's Technical Publications at http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is growing recognition of the interrelationship between climate change and conflict. Research and field experience are demonstrating that these dynamics are often particularly acute in countries that are fragile or conflict-affected – regions that represent the majority of the countries in which USAID works. It is important, therefore, that USAID and its partners be aware of how climate change may affect security and stability, and how dynamics of conflict, fragility, and peace may either support or hinder efforts to address climate. Examining the climate change–conflict nexus can help avoid unintended outcomes that undermine USAID objectives and illuminate opportunities to strengthen efforts to promote both peace and climate resilience.

This paper provides a set of guidelines for USAID and its partners to employ in planning, designing, implementing, and learning from programs where climate change and conflict have the potential to interact. It is a complement to USAID's *Climate-Resilient Development Framework*,[3](CRD Framework), which outlines an approach for helping USAID and its partners achieve development objectives in the face of climate variability and change. It presents a framework for analysis, illustrates how this framework can be applied, and discusses ways to understand conflict dynamics and be attuned to opportunities for peacebuilding through climate-related activities.

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

The first step in ensuring integrated development approaches that are sensitive to both climate change and conflict vulnerabilities is to analyze the conflict dynamics. USAID's *Conflict Assessment Framework* (CAF 2.0) provides extensive guidance for conducting an in-depth assessment. Using the CAF, it is possible to focus in on climate change and its potential relevance at all stages of the analysis. In brief, a basic climate-sensitive conflict analysis should include consideration of how climate change might influence the following three conflict-relevant factors: the context, institutional performance, and key actors' interests, resources, and strategies. These considerations are valuable inputs to the Scope phase of the CRD Framework.

- **Context** incorporates a range of geographic, political, and social factors that will affect the significance of climate change in a particular setting. For example, climate change can act as a 'multiplier' that exacerbates existing environmental stressors and increases resulting tensions. Understanding the vulnerability of people, infrastructure, and ecosystems to climate variability and change can illuminate the potential for existing social tensions to be exacerbated, or for new tensions to emerge. Conversely, collaborative action to address climate stresses—such as cooperative action to manage water scarcity—can promote increased adaptive capacity while reinforcing peacebuilding.

- Assessing **Institutional Performance** examines the existing societal mechanisms for managing latent conflict among groups. The degree to which formal and informal rules and institutions are in place that address disputes effectively and peaceably is a strong indicator of a country's ability to manage the conflicts that may arise due to climate change; the absence of these societal norms and processes present an additional challenge in addressing any development objective, including climate resilience.

- Understanding the **Key Actors**—the individuals and organizations that have the resources and influence to lead collective action—is critical in designing development programs. Ensuring that key actors

3.USAID (2014).

perceive development and climate resilience objectives to be in their self-interest will help efforts to manage resource disputes through inclusive, democratic, and peaceful processes.

APPLYING THE ANALYSIS

Walking through the implications of context, institutional performance, and key actors using scenarios of climate stress can identify areas of potential difficulty in designing an adaptation response, as well as strengths that can be leveraged to achieve peaceful and climate-resilient outcomes. This paper offers a set of example questions that practitioners can apply to understand in greater granularity the specific potential interactions between climatic changes and conflict dynamics. These questions are demonstrated through four illustrative scenarios in which conflict dynamics are likely to intersect with climate impacts such as increasing water scarcity, changing precipitation intensity, and increasing flooding risk. These examples provide a helpful starting point to connect environmental and climate change factors with conflict assessment.

Common instances in which climate change and conflict connect often fall into one of three related categories:

- **Direct resource competition** in which climate change results in greater relative scarcity or abundance of a specific natural resource.
- **Increased grievances over relative deprivation** in which climate change-induced resource scarcity or abundance (and the ensuing competition) leads to changes in relative prosperity that can reinforce existing feelings of grievance or mistrust between groups.
- **Complex crisis and human insecurity** in which climate change contributes to or intensifies natural disasters, such as floods or droughts, which can have socio-economic impacts.

As all three categories suggest, the countries and regions most likely to experience armed conflict and insecurity associated with environmental stresses are those that already lack capacities and robust institutions for managing their vulnerabilities and maintaining law and order: in other words, fragile states. Unfortunately, there is robust evidence to suggest that a majority of the world's most fragile regions, countries, and communities also will likely be highly exposed to the impacts climate change. It is therefore essential that efforts to address climate impacts be designed to manage and reduce conflict in these communities, and to reinforce those capacities that exist to constructively manage conflict. It is reasonable to think that climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts, properly designed, could serve as vehicles for reconciliation and confidence-building.

CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

As climate change mitigation and adaptation resources are allocated, it is important to recognize that these resources may in themselves contribute to conflict dynamics. For example, incentive payments to stop deforestation and maintain a watershed that is resilient to climate change could be captured by key conflict actors and misused for tactical or political ends. Development practitioners are familiar with the risk of unintended outcomes of assistance; as in other development programs, ensuring that climate-related programs are "conflict sensitive" is a critical first step to avoiding adverse responses. Being "conflict sensitive" means that all program activities are designed and periodically reviewed in light of the changing conflict dynamics to ensure that (1) they do not inadvertently create or exacerbate conflict, (2) they factor in the possible impact of existing or potential conflict on staff, implementing partners and the activities themselves, and (3) seek appropriate opportunities to mitigate tensions and consolidate peace and reconciliation. USAID staff and partners can uphold these principles by conducting a conflict assessment that

integrates consideration of climate impacts as described herein, and regularly reviewing changing conflict dynamics.

ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEBUILDING

Designing climate adaptation and mitigation programs to avoid exacerbating existing conflict is a critical first step in climate-related programs. Beyond this, it is sometimes possible to do more by combining or leveraging resources for conflict mitigation and climate change adaptation to build peace and advance post-conflict reconstruction through climate-related activities. Post-conflict reconstruction activities, for example, can be used not only to restore essential services to communities but also to design and develop more climate-resilient communities. By seeking opportunities to fulfill both peacebuilding and climate development objectives through common activities, USAID and its partners can sometimes achieve more robust outcomes for both objectives. The USAID *Climate Resilient Development Framework* can be applied to help identify how climate change impacts might influence peacebuilding or state-building goals.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Development practitioners have made initial progress in understanding the relationship between conflict and climate change, and in defining opportunities to strengthen USAID activities through thoughtful program design that integrates these factors. The following general principles provide guidance for programming that incorporates climate change in fragile and conflict-affected states. A series of workshops of practitioners and experts from various fields including climate change adaptation/mitigation, conflict, environmental governance, and disaster response, held in Washington, DC and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in November 2012 and October 2013, contributed to these principles.

- Take context as a starting point
- Ensure all activities are conflict sensitive
- Focus on bolstering institutions and good governance
- State a clear, credible theory of change
- Address state and society dimensions of the challenge
- Approach adaptation holistically
- Remain flexible

It is incumbent upon both policymakers and practitioners to recognize the potential intersections between conflict-affected situations and climate change, and to proactively design approaches that minimize negative outcomes and maximize positive ones. The concepts and recommendations in this paper serve as a useful starting point to advance our ability to understand and address the climate–conflict nexus.

1. INTRODUCTION

As with many global issues, climate change has the potential to either exacerbate risks or create opportunities, depending on the local context. Given the role played by natural resources and the environment in conflicts today, many researchers and agencies – including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) – have sought to explore the implications of climate change for conflict, security, and development.[4] To date, research findings on climate change and conflict have been decidedly mixed in terms of a causal relationship.[5] From 2007 to 2014 an increasing number of policy studies have examined the relationships between armed conflict and climate change, employing a variety of methods and producing differing results. Many concluded that there is a strong likelihood that existing natural hazards and environmental stresses will be exacerbated by climate change, potentially leading to destabilizing social and political consequences or even triggering or escalating armed conflict.[6] Other studies, however, emphasized that the effects of climate change will be largely mitigated or exacerbated by local socio-political and environmental contexts, so that the relationship to conflict is contingent upon a host of other factors already known to predispose countries to armed conflict.[7]Analyses looking at the other direction of causality are in general agreement that "violent conflict strongly influences vulnerability to climate change impacts for people living in affected places."[8] In short, analysis of climate change and security is relatively new and, as a result, the science and practice of analyzing the interaction of climate change risk and conflict risk is still evolving.

Consequently, many questions remain about how climate change will manifest in specific locations, particularly in the context of social and environmental issues, what the ramifications will be for economic and social development, political stability, and peace and security, and how drivers of conflict will affect climate change vulnerability.

> USAID and its partners should consider climate change as an important influence leading to complex changes in politics, society, the environment, the economy – and in some cases the security situation.

This paper seeks to provide a set of guidelines for USAID and its partners to employ in planning, designing, implementing, and learning from programs where climate change and conflict have the potential to interact. It is a complement to USAID's *Climate-Resilient Development Framework* (see **Error! Reference source not found.**),[9] which outlines an approach for helping USAID and its partners achieve development objectives in the face of climate variability and change. In this framework, one begins in the *Scope* step with an understanding of the development goals and the factors that can contribute to those goals. In the *Assess* step, one then considers how climate change could affect the achievement of those development goals. In the remaining steps, one designs, implements, manages, evaluates, and adjusts adaptation actions that help to ensure achievement of the development goals. This Climate-Resilient Development Framework should be utilized with an awareness of the ways in which

4. For more information on USAID's general understanding of climate change and development linkages, see USAID (2012b). For links to some of the USAID-funded work on climate change and conflict, see http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications.

5. See for example: Gleditsch (2013)and Hsiang and Burke (2014).

6. See for example: Burke, M. et al. (2009).

7. See for example: Benjaminsen, T. et al. (2012).

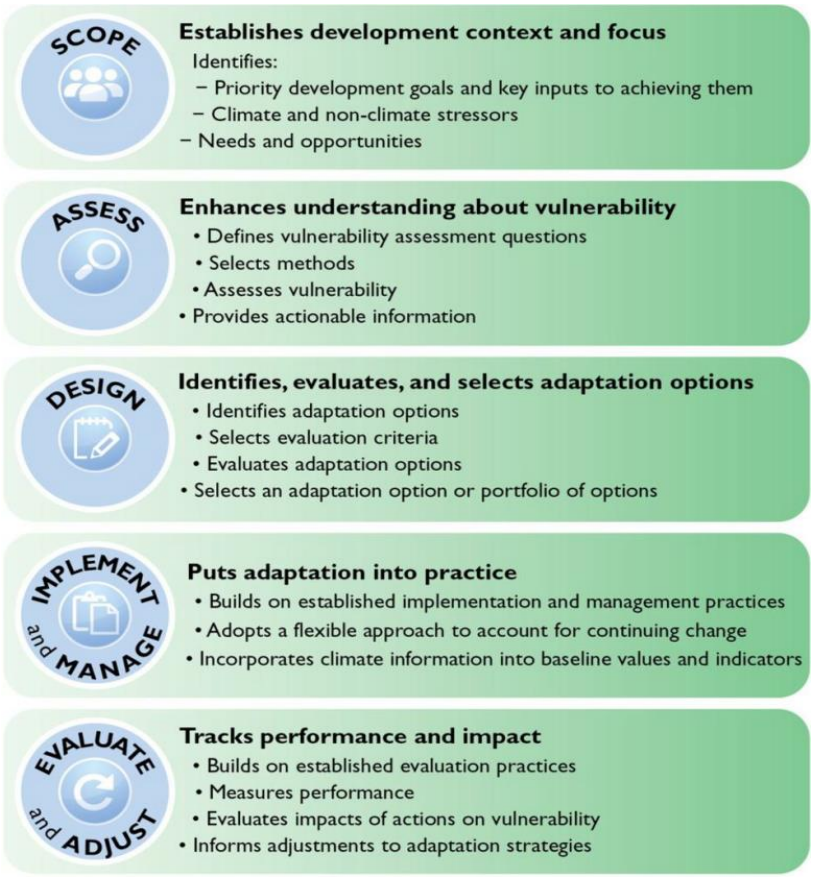
8. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2014).

9. USAID (2014).

climate change may exacerbate existing conflict drivers and ways in which climate adaptation can minimize such exacerbation, as described subsequently in this document.

The effects of climate change will not be universal and they will not be universally negative. USAID and its partners should therefore consider climate change as an important influence leading to complex changes in politics, society, the environment, the economy – and in some cases the security situation. Some of these changes will be foreseeable and others not. Effective management of climate change impacts (reducing vulnerability,[10] while creating and harnessing opportunity) requires long-term strategies aiming to mitigate threats. The framing of the climate-conflict nexus described in this document offers a new lens to understand development challenges and a new pathway to build social and institutional resiliencies and therefore increase adaptive capacity.

EXHIBIT 1. USAID'S CLIMATE-RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK.



10. *Vulnerability* to climate change is the degree to which something can be harmed by or cope with climate stressors. It is generally described as a function of exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity. The more exposed or sensitive a system is to climate change (or climate variability, including extreme events), the more vulnerable it will be. The greater the adaptive capacity of a system or society (e.g., the wealthier, better organized it is), in general, the less vulnerable it will be.

2. A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

The first step in designing conflict-sensitive programs for climate change adaptation is to analyze the conflict dynamics. USAID's *Conflict Assessment Framework* (CAF 2.0) provides extensive guidance for conducting an in-depth formal assessment, and USAID missions in deeply conflict-affected or fragile[11] countries should seriously consider conducting a full conflict assessment that explicitly examines conflict dynamics around natural resources, the environment, and climate change.

In brief, a basic conflict analysis should examine how climate change might influence the following three conflict-relevant factors: the context, institutional performance, and key actors' interests, resources, and strategies. This analysis should be undertaken as part of the *Scope* stage of USAID's *Climate-Resilient Development Framework*, in which the development context is established. It provides an essential starting point for all subsequent stages of climate-resilient development.

2.1 CONTEXT

Armed conflict is always the result of interactions between multiple political, economic, social, historical, and cultural factors. Geography, environment, and climate are also part of the context. They influence the attitudes, behaviors, and governmental and social structures that drive armed conflict – but only indirectly. The immediate effects of climate change will be most directly on the environment and geography, so the function of climate change is primarily as a 'multiplier' that exacerbates current trends, conditions, and hazards. Climate change's influence is particularly pronounced in cases of major, systemic change (e.g., decades-long drought), exceeding critical thresholds (e.g., low water levels in a river that cut off trade), or in exacerbation of extreme events (e.g., the influence of sea level rise on the magnitude of storm surge).

The vulnerability of countries, communities, and households to the effects of climate change will depend, of course, upon the population's exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity, which in turn will be mediated by class, occupation, gender, ethnicity, religion, and political affiliation, among other factors. USAID's *Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment* guidance,[12] which is an annex to the aforementioned *Climate-Resilient Development Framework*, can be used to understand the nature of the vulnerability of people, infrastructure, and ecosystems to climate variability and change.

Communities that are already food insecure or malnourished may become more so, and some communities will end up more exposed to extreme heat, floods, and drought. The contextual changes impacting agriculture, water, health, and infrastructure will create new 'winners' and 'losers.' These could either (1) exacerbate *existing* social tensions related to the environment and natural resources, or (2) create *new* tensions.

Just as climate change effects can aggravate sources of tension and social patterns of grievance, so too can action around climate change serve as a platform for peacebuilding and a source of resilience. Changes to the

11. *Fragility* refers to the relationship between the state and society, especially the extent to which the engagement between the state and society fails to produce outcomes that are considered effective and legitimate. Fragility exists when the relationship between state and society is strained, if not contentious, producing results that members of society deem to be ineffective, illegitimate, or both.

12. USAID (2015).

resource base could alter the dynamics of existing competition such that they move onto a more positive trajectory or generate a sense of common cause thus mitigating existing sources of tension. There is huge potential in climate adaptation initiatives to promote peacemaking and dispute resolution through environmental cooperation. For example, globally, there are many more examples of cooperation over shared water resources than there are instances of violent conflict. From the Nile Basin to the Aral Sea, shared management of trans-boundary water has often produced collaboration rather than conflict. It may be that the dynamics of certain conflicts actually lend themselves to the use of climate-related collaboration as a mechanism to resolve or reduce tension between parties. This is in part the theory of change behind an innovative project in Ethiopia, *Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resiliency*, which acknowledges the mutually reinforcing relationship between peace and adaptive capacity to climate change where pressure on land and water resources is high. At the local level, specific projects – from flood protection infrastructure to early warning systems – can bring adversaries together through collaborative, transparent, and participatory implementation processes. This approach has proven highly successful in the Middle East where the *Good Water Neighbors* program, implemented by Friends of the Earth Middle East, has long sought to raise awareness of the shared water problems of Palestinians, Jordanians, and Israelis in order to leverage mutual dependence on shared water resources as a basis for developing dialogue and cooperation on sustainable water management, even in the midst of conflict. At a higher level, if a government handles major adaptation investments well, it could serve to improve public perceptions of its effectiveness and legitimacy.

Similarly, early research indicates that effective peacebuilding activities will tend to reduce vulnerability to climate change through an increase in adaptive capacity. For example, recent research by Mercy Corps among pastoralists in Southern Ethiopia illustrates how strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms can bolster resilience to the impacts of climate change, including drought. The findings showed that the improvements to freedom of movement and access to water, pasture, and other natural resources brought about by the Mercy Corps programs were key contributing factors to households' drought resilience. The study sheds light on how peacebuilding programming can be done in a way that helps mitigate the effects of severe drought among pastoralists, and likely speed their recovery from drought events.[13]

Another benefit of considering climate and conflict jointly is that post-conflict reconstruction represents a prime opportunity to reduce climate vulnerabilities. Post-conflict situations may include both large infusions of funding and the political will to challenge past assumptions—two factors that can help to set the stage for climate adaptation measures that would otherwise be impossible to implement under the status quo. It may be possible to capitalize on this opportunity to rebuild in ways that reduce climate vulnerability, particularly if the affected region has been engaged in a pre-planning process for climate-resilient reconstruction. Without pre-planning, there tends to be a rush to restore infrastructure identically to pre-conflict specifications. For example, buildings may be rebuilt in areas prone to increasing flooding, roads may be rebuilt using drainage systems not designed for larger storms, and electrical systems may be rebuilt not accounting for increasing demand loads from higher temperatures. A pre-planning process can use USAID's *Climate-Resilient Development Framework* to understand vulnerabilities and develop adaptation options to reduce those vulnerabilities at a time (e.g., post-conflict) when the necessary funding and political will are present.

13. Mercy Corps (2012).

2.2 INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE: IDENTITY GROUPS, GRIEVANCES, SOCIETAL PATTERNS

When changes in context exacerbate or create tensions, the result is a *latent conflict*, or perceived incompatibility of interests. This is a natural aspect of human life that may be managed constructively or destructively. There are many examples around the world where contextual factors of history and geography have resulted in rivers that cross territorial borders, leading to natural competition between upstream and downstream users. Yet, through effective diplomacy and technical input, hundreds of treaties have been negotiated around the world to govern management of the rivers. The basic tensions over usage do not disappear but they can in many cases be managed through negotiation, dialogue, and, in some cases, legal actions rather than war. These treaties are examples of what is meant by *institutions*, or the formal and informal rules and norms affecting how different groups manage their disputes and latent conflicts.

RESILIENCE

From a conflict perspective, societies may have features that mitigate tendencies toward violent conflict by promoting cohesion, unity, order, or stability. Collectively, these features contribute to a society's resilience to violent conflict. They may include such social attributes as a common language or religion, social homogeneity, or widely-shared norms of tolerance and inclusion. The features may also be institutional; ranging from broadly representative legislatures to transparent and responsive bureaucracies that provide government services non-discriminately to all societal groups.

Conversely, when people – especially large groups of people linked together by some shared identity – find the formal and informal rules of their society to be ineffective at meeting their needs or fundamentally unfair, then they are more likely to abandon peaceful means of redress and resort to violence. For example, there are many instances where community and family rights to land are not well-protected in formal law, and where globalization and economic development agendas result in people being displaced from land they believed to be theirs. It is in these instances that one often observes serious social discord culminating in protests, riots, or even more serious threats to national stability. Similarly, when the specific institutions of security are weak or illegitimate, this capacity deficit enables violence and crime.

Whether and how tensions associated with climate change escalate to mass social action or violent conflict depend upon the performance and resilience of institutions for managing disputes and grievances while maintaining security. When institutions operate in ways that are effective and legitimate, as in the example of treaties around rivers, states and communities are more likely to have capacities in place to adapt peacefully to climate change. By contrast, when state–society relationships are fragile as a result of poor institutional performance, as in the example of weak land tenure and property rights (LTPR) regimes, it may become more difficult for certain groups to cope with the shocks and stresses associated with climate change. When institutions fail to perform and coping or adaptation capacities are overwhelmed, the risk of political instability or crisis is increased.

2.3 KEY ACTORS' INTERESTS, RESOURCES, AND STRATEGIES

Key actors are the elite or influential individuals and organizations that have the capability to mobilize large numbers of people to engage in collective action, such as organized violence or peaceful social protest. The nature of the resources and leadership that key actors provide is a critical component in determining how a social movement develops. It is important to ask: what are the incentives and disincentives for elites and other powerful entities in society to employ violence or extremism to achieve their objectives? In most societies, there are powerful disincentives to violence that are rooted in social norms (ethical codes, religious

faith, etc.), as well as practical and material constraints (rule of law, difficulty of obtaining weapons and financing, fear of reprisal, etc.). Armed conflict, however, can be profitable to those at the top, especially when it facilitates access to revenue streams from the state or natural and environmental resources like minerals, timber, or cash crops (whether licit or illicit). When combined with the first dimension of deep grievances among a particular identity group or population, armed conflict can also serve a political purpose.

However, one should keep in mind that the decision to fight or take to the streets is almost never influenced solely or even primarily by environmental and natural resource concerns. A range of attitudinal and structural factors need to be taken into account. More often than not, key actors perceive the costs and risks of violence to outweigh its potential benefits, and they prefer to operate within the status quo to achieve their aims. A key objective for USAID programs therefore is to understand and adapt to the activities of key actors in a way that builds consensus toward peaceful, democratic, and inclusive processes for managing natural resource disputes.

THE HORN OF AFRICA

A look at the drought and food insecurity experienced in the Horn of Africa during 2011–2012 illustrates the importance of effective governance (whether formal or informal institutions are at play) as the intervening variable that either mitigates or exacerbates the impact of weather and climate variability on the population. The drought-related food scarcity in the Horn of Africa during that period can clearly be traced back not just to weather but also to local and regional market access and local and national politics. Notably, although the drought-affected areas spanned regions of Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, the worst of the famine and humanitarian emergency was confined to within the borders of the failed state of Somalia.

Refugees at Dolo Odo camp, Ethiopia. Photo source: USAID

3. APPLYING THE ANALYSIS

The second step to developing conflict-sensitive climate change programs is to examine how the conflict analysis and climate change effects could potentially intersect. The following table provides four illustrative scenarios based on climate-induced changes in context and a set of hypothetical questions corresponding to the analytical framework above to model the specific potential interactions between climatic changes and conflict dynamics. These common examples should help illuminate how common climate change scenarios could have quite different outcomes for peace and security, depending on the local context and conflict dynamics.

Conflict analysis can and should be integrated throughout the entire programming cycle, including into vulnerability assessment frameworks, adaptation planning exercises such as hazard mapping or scenario planning, and monitoring and evaluation. One way to integrate conflict analysis into existing assessment frameworks is to add questions from or build scenarios that include elements of the above framework for conflict analysis. The illustrative questions from the scenarios presented below may be adapted as a starting point for conflict-sensitive assessment and planning.

EXHIBIT 2. EXAMPLES OF POTENTIAL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON PEACE AND SECURITY AND HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS TO UNDERSTAND THE SPECIFIC POTENTIAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN CLIMATIC CHANGES AND CONFLICT DYNAMICS.

Illustrative Scenario #1: A series of droughts in an already arid region reduces available water supply, aggravating long-simmering tensions between farmers and pastoralists	
Institutional Performance: Identity Groups, Grievances, and Societal Patterns	• Why have there been long-simmering tensions? What other issues have led to tensions or disputes? • What are the farmers' and pastoralists' attitudes toward one another? Toward the state? What do they have in common (e.g., religion, ethnicity, historical ties, etc.)? • What are the rules for allocating access to water and land? Formal or informal? How well are the rules being applied? Do they make sense at a technical level? Do both sides agree the rules are fair? What is the process for changing the rules? • Are there (formal or informal) institutions in place to govern shared use of resources and manage instances of conflict (e.g., peace committees, elders' councils)? Are these institutions viewed as effective and legitimate by the affected populations?
Key Actors' Interests, Resources, and Strategies	• When there is violence, who benefits? Who loses out? • Who is most vocal and/or influential in both societies advocating for aggression? For conciliatory gestures? Why? • Are there certain individuals or classes of farmers and pastoralists who share interests or interact frequently in a positive way and could act as mediators? For example: traders who bring goods to market, women leaders, and relatives in urban areas?

Illustrative Scenario #2: Changing rainfall patterns damage agricultural production in formerly fertile areas, decimating local livelihoods and causing food insecurity and out-migration or displacement	
Institutional Performance: Identity Groups, Grievances, and Societal Patterns	• What do those who have been most negatively affected have in common? How do they differ among one another, or compared to others in the country? Consider language, culture, religion, geography, social class, sex, etc. • Is there a history of tension or violence among the affected groups? By the state? • Was the migration planned/managed, or spontaneous? If it was spontaneous, what laws and authorities technically govern the process? If not, why were they not observed? • To where did most of the migrants move? Were the receiving communities prepared to absorb the new population effectively? Why or why not? What are the relations between the migrants and the receiving communities? • Have there been incidences of crime at the point of origin or the destination? What have been the consequences of the crime? Were individuals apprehended and punished? How and by whom? • How do the affected populations view the responsibility of state or informal institutions (e.g., community organizations or governmental organizations)? For example, are there social safety nets? How well have responsible institutions fulfilled their tasks and met population expectations? • Is the crisis perceived to be someone's "fault?" • Do perceptions about "winners" and "losers" differ? If so, why and on what basis? • What rules or legal regimes govern LTPR in the affected area? In the migration or displacement destination(s)? If the affected population wishes to stay or return, what will their rights be? How are these rights changed?
Key Actors' Interests, Resources, and Strategies	• Has the crisis changed the distribution of power in the community? How is it different for men and women? • How do the official security forces (army, police) view the crisis? • Is the state or ruling party threatened by the migration? Opposition parties? For example, is there an election approaching, and how will the displacements and migrants affect voter turn-out? • Are there insurgent or terrorist groups thought to be among the displaced or migrant populations? • Who is likely to participate in protests or violence? How are they organized? • Are there any groups that have benefited from the migration?
Illustrative Scenario #3: Changes in rainfall improve agricultural production in some areas	
Institutional Performance: Identity Groups, Grievances, and Societal Patterns	• What do those who have benefited have in common? How do they differ among one another, or compared to others in the country? Consider language, culture, religion, geography, social class, sex, etc. • Are patterns of relative benefit and relative deprivation similar to existing patterns of elitism, power, exclusion, or marginalization? • What rules or legal regimes govern LTPR in the prosperous area? How secure are they? Are there effective and legitimate ways of challenging rights for those that might wish to make a claim on the fertile land?
Key Actors' Interests, Resources, and Strategies	• Are there armed groups or criminal organizations active near the prosperous area? How might they benefit from the agricultural revenues (e.g., direct ownership, extortion, etc.)? • What interests does the state, the security sector, or members of the ruling party have in the land? What safeguards are in place to ensure tax revenues are well-managed? • Is political violence common among political factions, such as in highly authoritarian regimes or around elections?

Illustrative Scenario #4: Changes in rainfall or sea level rise increase the risk of flooding in densely inhabited areas, leading the government and international donors to take action to reduce vulnerability	
Institutional Performance: Identity Groups, Grievances, and Societal Patterns	• Who specifically will be making decisions about areas for activities and investment? What say will local populations have in these plans? • What values or identity dimensions are likely to connect (or divide) the "providers" of assistance and the "recipients?" What values or identity dimensions might connect the sub-sets of communities that will receive assistance and those that will not? How do these dividers and connectors link to other political and socio-economic patterns of grievance or marginalization? • What steps or measures does the local community currently use to manage risks and vulnerability? Is there a way to support this system rather than build something new? • Are there existing sources of tension between the exposed populations that could be exacerbated?
Key Actors' Interests, Resources, and Strategies	• Are there groups that are advocating for there to be assistance? What other considerations besides climate change vulnerability might influence their positions? And are there groups that oppose assistance? Why? • Are there armed groups or criminal actors active in the area? How might they gain access to the assistance resources being provided? • How might security constraints limit the ability of development actors to undertake a successful project? For example, is there a possibility of crime or political violence in the area? Do men and women have freedom of movement throughout the day?

While the above table is hardly exhaustive, it provides a helpful starting point to begin connecting environmental and climate change factors with institutional performance, grievances, political mobilization, and key actor behaviors.

Although climate change and armed conflict are complex phenomena and no two situations are likely to look identical, it is nevertheless possible to summarize three common typologies that connect climate change and conflict.

BRIGHT SPOTS

Bright spots are instances of "positive deviance," or where a few individuals or groups are exhibiting uncommon practices and behaviors that enable them to achieve better solutions to problems than their neighbors who face the same challenges and barriers. Bright spots can be identified through analysis of resiliencies, including mapping existing capacities for peace – be they key actors or, importantly, informal intuitions seen as legitimate by society. To the extent that there are such positive trends underway or positive actors operating, USAID may seek to find ways to support them.

- **Direct Resource Competition:** Climate change results in greater relative scarcity or abundance of a specific natural resource like water or arable land, thereby increasing incentives to compete directly over that resource. This could occur at a local level, such as between farmers and herders, or at the national level, such as between different regions of a country. Whether that competition turns into destructive conflict depends upon the conflict dynamics. In the worst case scenario, it could involve violence by the state or non-state actors, but in most cases the competition will occur primarily through legal/political or market/economic channels.
- **Increased Grievances over Relative Deprivation:** Climate change-induced resource scarcity or abundance (and the ensuing competition) leads to changes in relative prosperity that can reinforce existing feelings of grievance or mistrust between groups. In this situation, the competition over specific natural assets is not in and of itself the issue that sparks conflict, but instead the associated deepening patterns of

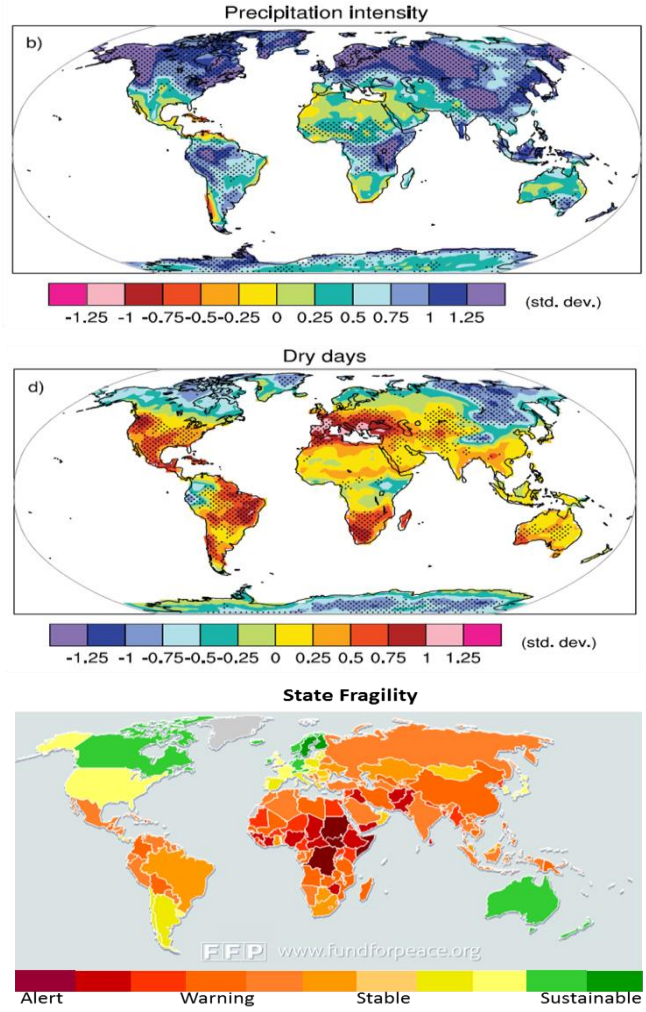
exclusion, elitism, and inequity feed the narratives of extremism, hatred, or divisive ideology that fuel escalation of the conflict.

- **Complex Crisis and Human Insecurity:** Climate change can contribute to or intensify natural disasters, such as floods or droughts, which can have socio-economic impacts, such as migration, displacement, market collapse, infrastructure destruction, etc. The resulting complex emergency can create a vacuum of security and rule of law. During this time, armed groups or criminals can seize the opportunity to use violence to their advantage. The scale, scope, and duration of the violence depend upon the fragility or resilience of the state and official security forces.

As all three scenarios suggest, the countries and regions most likely to experience armed conflict and insecurity associated with environmental stresses are those that already lack capacities and robust institutions for managing their vulnerabilities and maintaining law and order: in other words, fragile states. After all, most countries in the world have mechanisms in place to constructively manage competition over natural resources as well as to provide emergency relief, social safety nets, and support for reconstruction – perhaps with some outside humanitarian assistance. Most also have formal laws as well as shared customs or values that encourage society to find peaceful solutions to disputes and to pull together in response to a disaster rather than fray into anarchy or violence.

Unfortunately, there is robust evidence to suggest that a majority of the world's most fragile regions, countries, and communities – where conflict and violence is most likely and persistent – also will likely be highly exposed to the impacts climate change. The top two maps in **Error! Reference source not found.** show estimates of climate change by the end of the 21st century from IPCC. The upper map is an estimate of the change in the annual 5-day maximum precipitation by the end of century, which is linked to flooding.[14] The map in the middle is an estimate of the change in consecutive dry days, which is linked to drought. The bottom panel is an estimate of current state

EXHIBIT 3. COMPARISON OF PROJECTED CLIMATE CHANGE AND STATE FRAGILITY.



Estimated change by the end of the century in annual maximum 5-day precipitation (top) and consecutive dry days (middle); and current state fragility (bottom).

14. These are figures 12.26 b and c from the 2013 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Working Group I report (chapter reference below). The upper left figure shows the percent change in annual maximum five-day precipitation accumulation. The upper right figure shows the change in the annual maximum number of consecutive dry days when precipitation is less than 1 mm. Both figures show multi-model projected changes for the 2081–2100 period relative to the 1981–2000 period for the RCP8.5 greenhouse gas emissions scenario. In both figures, stippling indicates grid points with changes that are significant at the 5% level using a Wilcoxon signed-ranked test. Collins, M. et al. (2013).

fragility.[15] Areas subject to potential increases in precipitation intensity include east Africa, northwestern South America, and parts of central and south Asia, all areas where fragility is relatively high. Areas subject to increased numbers of dry days include the Mediterranean, northern and southern Africa, and parts of southern Asia, which are also areas where state fragility is relatively high. While most countries in the world will not experience significant violent conflict for any reason, let alone as linked to climate change, most of those countries that already suffer from violence, repression, or weak rule of law will find these existing challenges exacerbated by climate change, whether from river flooding, drought, sea level rise, or other factors. In such locations, adaptation and mitigation will not be the only or even the most pressing problems. Rather, these at-risk or post-conflict states and societies will still be faced with the need to foster more inclusive and legitimate political systems, provide basic security and justice procedures for citizens, establish foundations for a market economy, and build basic, reliable administrative capacity.[16] In the world's most conflict-affected and fragile states and societies, therefore, climate change adaptation and mitigation will be secondary objectives at best.

In these places, there is also a risk that poorly managed climate change adaptation or mitigation programs and policies could themselves *exacerbate* conflict dynamics, for example by unintentionally benefiting one side in an ongoing dispute (e.g., through corruption or malfeasance).[17]Therefore, to the extent that climate resilience can be incorporated into other peacebuilding or state-building goals and be cognizant of and responsive to conflict dynamics, it should be done proactively.[18]Furthermore, it is reasonable to think that climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts (properly designed) could serve as vehicles for reconciliation and confidence-building, for example, by bringing together representatives of belligerent communities to work together on shared adaptation goals in response to the common external threat of climate change.

15. Fund for Peace (2013).

16. International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (2011).

17. See also: Dabelko et al. (2013).

18. United Nations Environment Programme (2012).

4. CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

In addition to the risk that climate change could lead to heightened resource competition or strain state resources and capacities, a significant additional risk exists: namely, that the allocation of climate change mitigation and adaptation resources (financing, infrastructure, etc.) could itself contribute to conflict dynamics. This is related to Illustrative Scenario #4 above. For example, incentive payments to stop deforestation (i.e., in order to promote a climate change-resilient watershed) could be captured by key conflict actors and used for tactical or political ends, such as to support patronage networks and consolidate power bases, or those resources could be allocated on the basis of formal rather than customary land rights thus marginalizing certain groups and fueling land-related grievances.

This risk also exists in other areas of development and humanitarian assistance. As elsewhere, the appropriate response is to strive to "do no harm" or, in other words, ensure that projects and activities are "conflict sensitive."

By "conflict sensitive" we mean that all program activities are designed and periodically reviewed in light of the changing conflict dynamics to ensure that (1) they do not inadvertently create or exacerbate conflict, (2) they factor in the possible impact of existing or potential conflict on staff, implementing partners and the activities themselves, and (3) seek appropriate opportunities to mitigate tensions and consolidate peace and reconciliation.

Fortunately, there are a range of steps USAID staff and partners can take to uphold these principles, beginning with a strong conflict assessment. That analysis would suggest particular factors to monitor during the implementation of a project or initiative, such as the potential for corruption or perceived favoritism of groups, which would then inform project design as well as day-to-day decision-making.

BASIC CONFLICT SENSITIVITY QUESTIONS

- ✓ What types of conflict exist in the area where I am planning my project?
- ✓ How might the conflict(s) affect my project's success?
- ✓ How might my project influence or interact with the conflict context?
- ✓ Can my project do something to help minimize conflict or promote peacebuilding?

Conflict sensitivity can be incorporated at multiple levels, from individual activities up to the country-wide strategy. At the country-wide level, the *World Development Report 2011*[19]and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee's (OECD-DAC's) guidance from the International Network on Conflict and Fragility[20] are useful references. At the project or micro-level, the Conflict Sensitivity Consortium's "How To Guide" and the Do No Harm Project of CDA Collaborative Learning Projects provide other tools.[21],[22]

19. TheWorld Bank (2011).

20. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (2010).

21. Conflict Sensitivity Consortium (2012).

22. CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (2004).

Conflict sensitivity is fundamentally about making foreign assistance more sustainable, effective, and ethical. Integration of conflict analysis throughout the programming cycle helps stakeholders understand conflict dynamics in relation to climate change considerations and make reflective, strategic adaptations in implementation.

There are relatively few case studies and lessons learned available at the nexus of conflict and climate change given the new and evolving nature of research and programming in this area. A bibliography of some of the publications on this topic is available in the *References and Additional Resources* section of this document. One illustrative analysis highlighted here:

International Alert conducted a series of case studies in the Niger Basin and South Asia and also produced a Practice Note on conflict-sensitive programming responses.[23] The Note includes helpful guidance on questions for consideration when planning, implementing or monitoring climate and conflict related actions:

- Will extreme or variable weather conditions undermine your particular strategy or action? How will this affect the social, economic and political resilience of poor communities?
- How significant have past struggles over climate-dependent resources such as water and land been in the region? Will changes in the natural environment contribute to social, economic and political instability? Which societal groups are particularly vulnerable?
- Will your action affect resource competition between different users of the same resource (water, land, forests, etc.)?Will this competition become more pronounced in the face of climate change? Which societal groups are particularly vulnerable?
- Which pathways are likely to contribute to vulnerability to social unrest (social disparities, weak state structures, corruption, ethnic differences, separatist movements, food insecurity, migration pressure)? Which mechanisms can be strengthened to promote resilient and stable communities (governance, social protection, social capital)?
- Which cooperative strategies and institutional frameworks on a national or regional level are appropriate to promote resilience to climate, resource-related and political insecurity at the local and national level? How effective are these strategies/frameworks? How does your action fit within these mechanisms? How could they be strengthened?

23. International Alert (2011).

5. ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEBUILDING

Being "sensitive" to conflict is an important first step. In some cases, it is possible to do even more by combining or leveraging conflict mitigation and climate change adaptation resources or approaches to build peace and advance post-conflict reconstruction through climate-related activities. For example, a project to foster trust and build relationships across divided communities could be structured around improving systems for water, sanitation, and health (WASH), or Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Another example might be to build capacity for negotiation, mediation, and dispute resolution around LTPR or forest management. Each of these sectors is relevant to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

USAID and its partners routinely implement projects in this vein, where a key component of the activities is not just *what* is done, but *how* it is done – through consensus-building, deliberative dialogue between communities and local government, and local-level capacity building. Such programs would represent an opportunity for strategic leveraging of resources by USAID by fulfilling two development objectives through common or complementary activities.

TERMINOLOGY

The terms *management, mitigation*, and *sensitivity* may be cause for some confusion in technical discussions of climate change and conflict. In the context of conflict and peacebuilding, "conflict management" refers to activities designed to respond to shifting dynamics of violent or latent conflict through peacebuilding techniques, such as mediation, designed to change attitudes, behaviors, or institutions. This concept recognizes that conflict is a natural outcome of human interaction arising from perceived incompatibility of interests but it can be managed in a variety of ways, from competition to collaboration. "Conflict mitigation" is a narrower concept describing activities designed to prevent armed conflict or mitigate its impacts. "Conflict sensitivity," described above, refers to how an organization or program understands the conflict dynamics in its area of operations, understands how its activities interacts with those dynamics, and takes steps to minimize harm and maximize the benefit of the activities with respect to the conflict.

In the context of climate change, these terms carry different connotations. "Climate change mitigation" refers to activities to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere or to recapture greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and sequester them under ground, in the oceans, or in ecosystems. "Climate change adaptation" activities, by contrast, attempt to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities associated with climate change. Adaptation actions seek to enhance resilience and reduce climate vulnerability in the near- and long-term by decreasing exposure or sensitivity, or by increasing adaptive capacity. "Climate sensitivity" is a technical term referring to how much the earth's climate will change in response to a particular change in atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations (or other climatic factors). Finally, "adaptive management" is a style of management for dealing with uncertainty and complexity through iterative decision-making, experimentation, system monitoring, and learning.

5.1 CLIMATE-RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT IN PEACEBUILDING AND STATEBUILDING

Many conflict management and peacebuilding activities will not have a direct effect on the environment or climate, as many of those programs primarily concern changing attitudes, behaviors, and structures for violence. However, sometimes conflict mitigation projects do interact with the environment and specific natural resources in meaningful ways, as do many development activities undertaken to advance more general stabilization and state-building goals. For example, post-conflict recovery projects often seek to meet immediate needs such as increasing local access to water by drilling new wells in areas of population return, or building or rebuilding infrastructure for energy, transportation and industry. Peacebuilding efforts could include attention to reforming LTPR laws or supporting the involvement of former combatants in new livelihood activities such as fishing or agriculture. The sustainability of each of these conflict-focused interventions could be impacted by climate change.

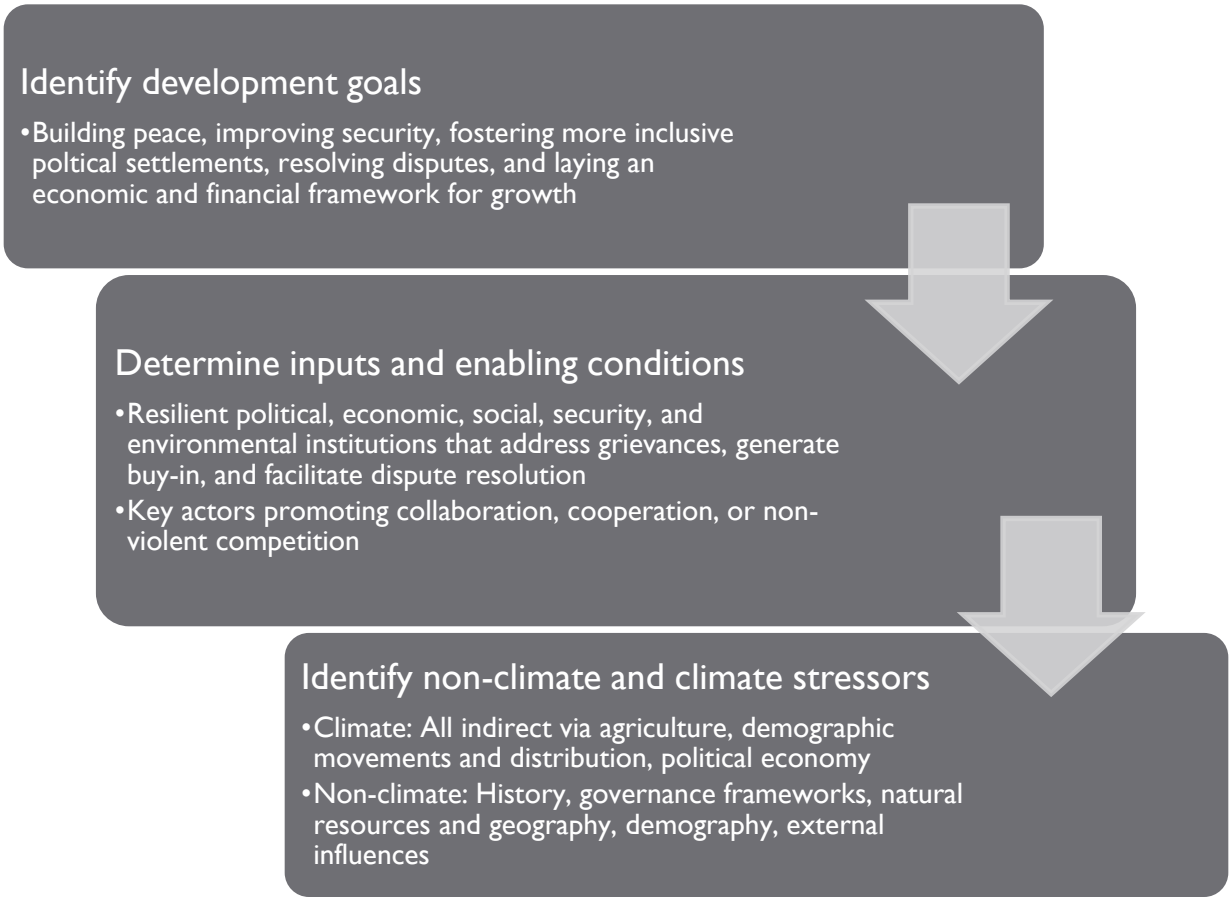
At a minimum, project managers are responsible for ensuring conflict management activities are reviewed for environmental responsibility. In addition, they should consider how climate trends could impact the desired peacebuilding outcomes as well as how the chosen activities might inadvertently be contributing to climate change (e.g., post-conflict collection and destruction of weapons and other materials). The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping, for example, undertook an admirable review of its peacekeeping operations worldwide to identify opportunities for conserving energy and materials.[24] USAID can do the same.

In fact, the USAID report on *Climate-Resilient Development* offers a framework for examining how climate change effects might influence other development goals, such as for peacebuilding or state-building. As a starting point, problem diagnosis should be linked with project design, identifying a development objective in terms of its economic, political, social, and cultural context. Then, a determination should be made about inputs and enabling conditions necessary to achieve that goal. Next, non-climate and climate stressors should be identified. Finally, vulnerabilities to climate stressors must be assessed. A key feature of this process is the emphasis that it places on engaging decision makers and stakeholders throughout. This dialogue not only enhances the robustness of the resulting adaptations but also has the co-benefit that it can reduce tensions through a deeper common understanding of the challenges and the perspectives of all parties involved.

While each context will be different, the following graphic (based on USAID's *Climate-Resilient Development* F*ramework*) provides an abstract outline of common peacebuilding and state-building goals. Note that climate and environmental factors are primarily indirect inputs to peace and indirect stressors or shocks.

24. United Nations Environment Programme (2012).

EXHIBIT 4. COMMON PEACEBUILDING AND STATEBUILDING GOALS BASED ON USAID'S CLIMATE-RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK.



6. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The following table provides guidance for programming in fragile and conflict-affected states and situations, drawing upon the OECD-DAC's *Principles for Good Engagement in Fragile States and Situations*.

EXHIBIT 5. GUIDANCE FOR PROGRAMMING IN FRAGILE AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED STATES AND SITUATIONS.

Recommendations	Guidance
Take context as a starting point	Programming must be context-specific. Programs must take into account the current trends and vulnerabilities operating locally (e.g., political, social, cultural, environmental/climate-related) and where there is social and institutional capacity. Contextual changes impacting agriculture, water, health, infrastructure, and institutions may create new "winners" and "losers." Such contextual changes could either (1) exacerbate *existing* social tensions related to the environment and natural resources, or (2) create *new* tensions. For example, responses to climate change have already begun to play a significant role in development financing. Funding decisions have the potential to influence governance structures and local-level realities, for good or for ill. A conflict analysis must inform development financing in order to avoid a one size fits all approach, especially when financing will be provided to fragile or conflict-affected states and situations.
Ensure all activities are conflict sensitive	Responses to climate change must take into account impacts beyond the climate-focused objectives. Secondary effects, intended or unintended, can have direct and significant impact on development objectives. At a minimum, adaptation to climate change needs to be conflict sensitive and follow the "do no harm" principle. Policies and programs should include consultations with the local population, respond to the needs of the people, take account of power distribution and social order, and avoid pitting groups against each other. Ultimately, given the long-term goals of programming related to climate change adaptation, the key to sustainable outcomes is ensuring that approaches foster or complement efforts to improve governance. Conflict analysis should inform the design and implementation of response strategies in conflict-affected and fragile areas.
Focus on bolstering institutions and good governance	Programs should aim to strengthen local social and institutional capacity to understand and manage climate and conflict risks, including support for effective adaptive capacities and conflict management mechanisms. While the specific and localized impacts of climate change may be uncertain, there are opportunities to bolster general resilience by strengthening governance structures and ensuring that they are capable of adapting to changing circumstances. Numerous tools are becoming available to guide this process and engage governance considerations in vulnerability assessments and their use.
State a clear, credible theory of change	To the extent that climate initiatives intend to influence peace and security dynamics or that peacebuilding intends to, at least indirectly, reduce climate vulnerability, programs must be clear about their theories of change, including appropriate conflict-relevant baseline analysis that will inform indicator development and monitoring and evaluation plans.
Address state and society dimensions of the challenge	A coupled top-down, bottom-up approach to adaptation planning is necessary. An exclusively top-down approach fails to account for local-level vulnerabilities and presumes trust of the state government and other formal structures by local communities, which is often not the case in fragile and conflict-affected states and situations. At the same time, an exclusively local-level adaptation strategy ignores the role and responsibility of the state government for providing local services and ensuring sustainable systemic changes. An

Recommendations	Guidance
	exclusively local level focus risks further weakening the central governance structures and exacerbating local perceptions of an illegitimate and ineffective government.[25]
Approach adaptation holistically	Climate change funding should not be limited to "narrow and technical interpretations of *adaptation*."[26] The ability of individuals and communities to cope with climate variability is linked with the context and trends of their day-to-day lives: the strength of their governance structures, market access, availability of social services, etc. Sometimes a non-climate-specific solution will be the most effective intervention to enhance adaptive capacity (e.g., education, conflict resolution).
Remain flexible	Uncertainty about specific climate changes requires that a significant amount of flexibility and adaptability be built into related funding decisions, policies and program responses. Institutions involved need to adapt and evolve to accommodate such responses in a way that permits flexibility, experimentation and adjustments as they go along."[27]

The relevance of the above general principles to climate change programming was influenced, in part, by a series of workshops of practitioners and experts from various fields including climate change adaptation/mitigation, conflict, environmental governance, and disaster response held in Washington, DC and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in November 2012 and October 2013.

25. Vivekananda (2010).

26. Vivekananda (2010).

27. Smithand Vivekananda (2007).

7. CONCLUSION

The majority of the countries in which USAID works are fragile or conflict-affected. As a result, many climate adaptation programs will be implemented in conflict-affected and fragile situations; this cannot be "business as usual" in terms of sectoral approaches. At the same time, many of those same fragile and conflict-affected situations will be significantly impacted by climatic change. Whether and where the two dynamics will interact in direct and significant ways is context specific. Therefore, it is incumbent upon both policymakers and practitioners to recognize the potential overlap, be proactive in integrated analysis, and be thoughtful about designing and implementing approaches that are cognizant of and responsive to the way the two dynamics may interact – to minimize negative outcomes and maximize positive ones. The concepts and recommendations set out here represent the latest thinking in a fast-evolving field and are meant to serve as a useful starting point in recognizing and addressing the interrelationship between climate change and conflict. As our understanding of the climate-conflict nexus improves through new evidence and analysis, so will our ability to achieve sustainable development outcomes.

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