



Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken

# Report: Learning Session on Climate Change & SRoL

## Context

On Wednesday 22 June, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) collaborated with International Alert and the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law on a learning event on the effects of climate change on Security & Rule of Law (SRoL).

The meeting's goals were to (1) explore relationships with climate change per SRoL subtheme, (2) exchange current practices of including the 'climate factor' in our work and (3) identify where learning is needed.

## Presentation

The effects of climate change are more and more visible. Coinciding with a growing population and energy needs, pre-existing tensions become even more apparent through this 'threat multiplier' and puts pressure on the social contract. This especially tests the resilience of the most vulnerable, who have fewer resources to adapt.

Climate change therefore overlaps with SRoL subthemes in a myriad of ways:

- Governance: Promote fair distribution of scarce resources, strengthen responses to climate risks.
- Stabilization: Deal with shifting and potentially destabilizing power balances, or with unrest due to changes in livelihoods (a.o. loss of income, rising food prices).
- Justice: Support traditional and non-traditional justice systems to address disputes over land access and rights, secure rights and status of displaced persons, recognize and promote climate justice (fair share of burden and responsibilities).
- Security sector: Strengthen institutions that protect against disasters, preventing the reductionist 'securitization' of the climate discussion.
- Peacebuilding: Provide alternative conflict resolution mechanisms, support dialogue and mediation processes.
- Conflict sensitivity; Ensure climate mitigation and adaptation efforts are conflict sensitive.

## Discussion

The discussion started with a question on balancing the acute short term needs with the long-term angle of climate change. It seems like we're stuck at analysis-level, just confirming the complexity of the 'threat multiplier' relationship. Therefore, the need is to combine this better, with a focus on intersectional vulnerability: use existing analyses of

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<sup>1</sup> [USAID Country Profiles](#), [Agrica \(sub-Sahara Africa\)](#), [Climatewatch Country Profiles](#), [World Bank Country Profiles](#), [UNDP Country Profiles](#), [African Development Bank Country Profiles](#), [World Bank Climate and Disaster Risk Screening Tools](#).

which groups are most vulnerable to climate change and integrate that into the subtheme action listed above.

However, a lot is already being done. From the MFA's side, action has for example already been taken on:

- Identifying climate change as learning question in DSH' Annual Plan 2022.
- Including climate as a threat multiplier in the SRoL theory of change, accompanied with learning questions.
- Erecting a self-organizing team on climate change to exchange and coordinate.
- Providing input on the International Climate Strategy.
- Write a paper on the intersection with DSH' and IGG's work in the Horn of Africa.
- Including a conflict sensitivity question for IGGs climate targeted projects.
  - IGG also encouraged the SRoL team to consider the effects conflicts have on climate (current prominent example: Ukraine). Organizations like PAX and Conflict & Environment Observatory are active on this matter.
- Climate change is taken into account as a factor in mediation with Clingendael.
- DCAF is doing a study on climate change in relation to the security sector.

### **Follow-up**

Although initiatives are sprouting throughout the different teams, they predominantly remain in the realm of exploration and mapping. In the coming months, these steps could be taken:

- Include the country profiles on climate change and the described potential risks to SRoL in the discussions around Multi Annual Country Strategies.
- Share various initiatives with the DSH ZoT (self-organizing team) Climate, so they can coordinate better cross-sectoral policies.
- Approach SRoL partners in regular dialogues to ask them to look more specifically at the intersection of climate change and their work. Ask embassies within the SRoL CoP on their in-country perceptions of the linkages of climate and conflict.
- Consult International Alert with specific follow-up questions and accompaniment.