



# Workshop Report

## Multilateral Partnerships on Climate, Peace and Security



## Background

The Horn of Africa, West Africa and the Sahel, and Central Africa are among those regions of the world most affected by the confluence of climate change and insecurity. The mutually reinforcing impacts of climate change, conflict, and socio-economic inequalities compound risks and threaten to trap countries in a downward spiral. Dual approaches to climate action and peacebuilding generate opportunities to increase resilience to interlocking climate and conflict risks.

Cross-cutting analysis, informed policymaking and strong cooperation across sectors and levels is critical to finding sustainable solutions and bridging silos between climate, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention communities. International, regional and sub-regional organizations play an important role in the development, promotion and implementation of such approaches.

In the lead up to the Fourth Edition of Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development, the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCCPA) - in its capacity as the Secretariat of the Aswan Forum and of

COP27 Presidency Initiative Climate Responses for Sustaining Peace (CRSP), the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the United Nations Department of Peace Operation (DPO), the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF) and adelphi held a workshop on **“Multilateral Partnerships on Climate, Peace and Security”** from 14 to 16 November 2023. Gathering Climate, Peace and Security (CPS) Advisors from UN field missions, representatives from regional organizations as well as thematic experts, the workshop set out to facilitate a cross-regional and cross-institutional knowledge exchange and partnership on CPS. **This note summarizes the workshop’s discussions and findings and provides recommendations for further advancing and mainstreaming CPS efforts.**



## Broader Policy Context

In United Nations (UN) peace operations, dedicated CPS capacity across the Horn of Africa, Somalia, West Africa and the Sahel, and Central Africa has facilitated mandate implementation in the face of escalating climate and environmental shocks. With support from the [Climate Security Mechanism](#) (CSM), a joint initiative by the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the UN Department of Peace Operation (DPO), the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), CPS Advisors are currently deployed in the following missions in Africa: the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa (OSE HoA).

The Joint Communication “[A new outlook on the climate and security nexus: Addressing the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on peace, security and defence](#)” adopted by the European Union (EU) in June 2023 highlights its commitment to continued partnerships to address the climate change impacts on peace and security, including through synergies and mainstreaming opportunities created by the deployment of environmental advisors to EU civilian and military missions and operations under the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

At the African regional and sub-regional levels, a number of African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council Communiqués as well as the [AU Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan \(2022-2032\)](#) provide a solid foundation for enhanced regional cooperation and ownership on this agenda. Additionally, increased engagement by Regional Economic Communities (RECs) such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) strengthens the collaborative momentum. These efforts are reinforced by the growing emphasis placed on CPS at national levels, especially by most-affected African Member States grappling with climate change impacts on peace and development.

The [Third Edition of the Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development](#) highlighted the importance of pivoting the narrative of climate and security towards advancing peace, resilience, and sustainable development. Building on this, the Egyptian COP27 Presidency put forward the [Climate Responses for Sustaining Peace \(CRSP\) initiative](#), which is the first COP initiative focusing on sustaining peace and development through nationally owned and context-specific responses in fragile and conflict affected settings in Africa. The [Climate for Peace initiative](#), spearheaded by Germany and the G7 and launched during the [2022 Berlin Climate and Security Conference](#), aims to advance concrete projects on the ground. The UAE Presidency of COP28 has taken this issue forward in 2023 with a dedicated thematic day on “Relief, Recovery and Peace” that demonstrated strong political support with the adoption of a [Declaration](#) endorsed by over 80 countries and 40 organizations.

# Lessons and good practice for implementing CPS in UN peace operations and EU civilian crisis management missions

In facilitating cross-cutting institutional knowledge exchange and fostering a common understanding of CPS, the workshop explored good practices and lessons learned in various contexts, such as UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and special political missions (SPMs), EU military and civilian crisis management missions and within regional organizations. The following good practices were identified.

## **Analysis and Advocacy**

Data-driven, inclusive, and up-to-date CPS analysis is crucial for advocacy and to provide a common understanding of climate-related peace and security and risks and opportunities. Joint analysis and understanding support coordination on CPS issues in what are often crowded spaces with a multiplicity of actors. Locally owned analysis is essential for identifying entry points for action, providing a steppingstone for planning and programming. The cross-border nature of many climate risks means sub-region and/or region-wide CPS assessments can often be beneficial. In mission settings, effective CPS analysis requires adequate and specialized capacities and must link mission and UNCT activities in an integrated manner in line with the principles of national ownership and context-specificity.

## **Inclusion of and steer by local actors and national counterparts**

CPS efforts should include and be steered by local actors and national counterparts to ensure that analysis is translated into action and the work undertaken is sustainable. Local actors, including representatives from indigenous communities and women's organizations, should be included from the analysis stage to ensure initiatives meet communities' needs and integrate learning from local systems, such as existing conflict-resolution mechanisms.

Where capacity challenges may hinder more formal coordination mechanisms and partnerships, personal relationships and informal partnerships are crucial. Hand in hand with the need for inclusion of local actors and buy-in from national counterparts is the importance of mutual capacity building. At times, inclusion can be a type of two-way capacity-building and knowledge transfer in and of itself. In several instances, joint analysis on CPS has served to significantly increase capacity on all sides.

## **Centrality of climate justice**

Climate justice lies at the core of the CPS agenda, especially for regional and sub-regional organizations and affected Member States. It is crucial to effectively engage with issues and questions relating to climate justice when undertaking CPS-related work. For missions, this includes increasing understanding and access to expertise on climate finance, as well as recognizing the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities. Additionally, missions can contribute to ensuring that climate mitigation and adaptation activities do not unintentionally contribute to, escalate, or exacerbate existing conflicts.

## **Multi-level Partnerships**

Collaborative action to address the CPS is critical to the effectiveness and sustainability of any initiatives. While many existing partnerships in the CPS space have arisen opportunistically, a more coherent and unified approach would strengthen impact. The workshop served as a forum to articulate what effective CPS partnerships mean in practice – both across political and technical dimensions - based on existing good practices and lessons learned. One notable example from the Horn of Africa, is the establishment by the Office of the Special Envoy of a dedicated CPS Hub to support IGAD's efforts to



address the impacts of climate change on peace and security in the sub-region. The new Hub will coordinate the UN system at the regional level and incorporate climate considerations into mediation and preventive diplomacy. One key opportunity lies in multi-level partnerships: involving various levels of governance (local, national, regional) and different types of stakeholders (within the climate action, environment, and development communities but also research institutions, and civil society). Moreover, the emphasis on including national and local counterparts, including women and youth, for effective CPS work, as reflected above, is essential for collaborative approaches.

## Recommendations

To build more effective multi-level partnerships and facilitate effective collaboration on CPS, participants put forward the following recommendations for CPS practitioners and policy makers:

- Foster **early engagement** of Member States to ensure ownership and coherence, enabling a unified stance and a shared understanding of the issue.
- **Strengthen coordination mechanisms** at various levels by focusing on joint analysis, and **enhance capacity building for national and local governments**. The role of local governments as ‘implementing partners’ or is crucial for ensuring sustainability and can be a tool to bolster state effectiveness.
- Collaborate to **leverage each partner’s strengths, resources, and knowledge**. This is important amidst capacity and financial constraints and aligned with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, the natural division of labor and responsibility to deliver effectively.
- Ensure strong ties between **policymakers, practitioners, and civil society** to develop a shared understanding of the underlying factors at play (e.g. governance challenges), thereby increasing sustainability of initiatives.
- Establish **platforms for knowledge exchange**, peer collaboration, and dialogue to build an evidence base reflecting different regional experiences while also harnessing science and innovation.
- Advocate for and facilitate **increased climate finance** to conflict affected and fragile countries by supporting the technical expertise of national governments on accessing such finance. Climate funds should also increase their capacity to operate in conflict affected and fragile contexts.
- **Integrate climate adaptation efforts across the peace continuum**. The cross-disciplinary integration of climate adaptation in peacebuilding and conflict resolution efforts could leverage sustainable, context-specific and impactful climate responses.

Climate and environmental advisors are important innovations to foster action and partnership on climate and environment-related peace and security risks. The workshop participants identified the following recommendations for CPS practitioners and policy makers to strengthen the ability of Advisors to deliver results:

- Systematically include climate and environment Advisors into mission planning processes to mainstream consideration of climate and environmental security risks and translate analysis into context-specific action.
- Acknowledge the different expertise needed for different positions, mission mandates, and contexts. It is important to have dedicated environmental management on the one hand, and environmental and CPS expertise and positions on the other hand, as these require different professional backgrounds.
- Ensure continued exchanges beyond the missions. Climate- and environmental advisors can play a key role in advancing the CPS agenda nationally, regionally and globally. Regular exchanges with Member States, including through the Group of Friends on Climate and Security, and direct and regular lines of reporting to mission leadership can also be important avenues.



## A Climate, Peace and Security Partnership Network

Participants stressed the wish to stay engaged and connected as a group of experts on CPS. It is however important not to replicate existing networks. The CSM has established a Community of Practice (CoP) with 550+ members from more than 35 UN entities. Climate Diplomacy, the joint initiative of the German Federal Foreign Office and adelphi, has put together a group of 30 international experts in [The Climate Security Expert Network](#). Other organizations such as CGIAR are implementing regional or local CoPs like in [Mindanao, Philippines](#). The currently biggest and oldest (since 2012) CoP though, on environmental peacebuilding, is a platform called [Environmental Peacebuilding](#) which comprises more than 4,200 people in more than 150 countries.

The group assembled in Cairo was unique as participants were joining from international and regional organizations, peacekeeping operations, special political missions, crisis management missions and the peacebuilding sector.

It included climate and environmental advisors from these organizations and missions. Partnerships on CPS between these stakeholders could foster the exchange of ideas as well as the access to expertise – which remain insufficient in existing networks. In addition, there was a proposition to connect this group to the regional and local experts on climate or environmental security in the field – probably with the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, and West Africa as potential regions to start with.

Participants could agree on how such a network would function and implement a regular virtual exchange. Depending on available funds, a digital platform, and/or another in-person meeting could be another option for 2024. The UN Secretariat, CCCPA, adelphi and ZIF will stay engaged on this, and welcome additional partners to implement a Climate, Peace and Security Partnership Network.



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