

# COMPOUNDING CHALLENGES IN CONFLICT SETTINGS

## LOCAL VOICES REFLECTING ON CLIMATE, PEACE AND SECURITY INTERLINKAGES



### THE UNDENIABLE REALITY: CLIMATE, PEACE AND SECURITY

Environmental crises are highly varied, both in their nature (whether they are human-made or natural disasters) as well as in the consequences they have. These phenomena can jeopardize peacebuilding efforts, either by being an additional trigger of violence or by being one of the primary sources of conflict. The management of both natural risks and resources is therefore crucial to maintain a sustainable society that does not generate scarcity or conflict. Its potential to cause increased fragility and inequality makes environmental concerns a priority for both civil society and governments. The Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) is a global network of civil society organisations supporting peacebuilding efforts in fragile and conflict-affected settings, and throughout the years, we increasingly see that climate change, conflict and fragility are compounding crisis posing severe risks to global peace and security.

Climate change is today widely recognised as a “threat multiplier” for international peace and security. How climate change accelerates conflict and insecurity, and the interrelation between climate change, peace and security is not a new phenomenon among CSPPS’s members. However, despite the realities on the ground, we operate in a world where institutional silos hamper true integration, where – despite the recognition of climate change as a threat multiplier – there is still a lack of awareness of the linkages and pathways towards addressing these. Also, interlinkages between the global level and the grassroots level are continuously lacking, yet persistently needed. Some of our members who participated in earlier COP discussions have increasingly developed a critical viewpoint of the Conference due to a continuous lack of action from the international community in addressing the impacts at the local level, which has exacerbated and persisted inequalities and injustices

amongst the most vulnerable communities. The international community and governments widely fail to adequately resource and take conflict-sensitive, but also gender transformative approaches in climate change programming, and climate-sensitive approaches to sustaining peace. Considering this, CSPPS and some of its members are attending the COP28 in Dubai to highlight the importance of bringing civil society and local actors into international dialogues, and not least to address and recognise the undeniable linkages between climate, peace and security.

It is the first time in history that the COP is holding a thematic day on peace. CSPPS considers this a crucial milestone in recognising the interlinkages between climate, peace and security, in which conflict-sensitive approaches to climate change actions and climate-sensitive approaches to peacebuilding efforts and conflict prevention programming are essential. Integrated programming remains pivotal to ensuring a sustainable and liveable world. In line with our joint position paper issued in collaboration with [Cordaid](#) and the [Peace@COP28](#) statement CSPPS has endorsed, we urge attention and action to the international community on the Climate, Peace and Security nexus. The COP provides a platform for exchanges and dialogues, yet it is time we turn our words into action as we cannot continue to disregard the undeniable realities on the ground.

To illustrate the urgency and reality of the compounding impact of both climate change and manifestations of fragility, violence and conflict we hereby feature some stories from the members of our Platform. The case stories below narrate how the nexus plays out in day-to-day work, illustrating the undeniable reality of the interlinkages between Climate, Peace and Security.

# CONFLICTS OVER NATURAL RESOURCES AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



## THE CASE OF CAMEROON

Climate change has been a major challenge for Cameroon for several decades, and its effects have greatly affected security in the country, particularly in the Far North region. In addition to the insecurity faced by the region as a result of repeated incursions by non-state armed groups, Fidèle Djebba from the Association Rayons de Soleil explains that Cameroon is experiencing a climate crisis. With temperatures rising sharply and steadily, natural resources are increasingly scarce, which is leading to new challenges and inter-community conflicts. Against this backdrop, the country has been hit by intense flooding, which has had a considerable impact on agriculture. Droughts and water shortages have also intensified competitions over resources and led to inter-community conflicts in the Far North of the country, around the Lake Chad region. The seasons are less predictable, crop insecurity is increasing and famine is on the rise.



PHOTO CREDITS: KALDAOUSSA

***“For a process to be sustainable, local authorities and populations must be directly involved and consulted in the process and management [...] an early warning system would help prevent tensions and conflicts.”***

Fidèle Djebba, Executive Director  
Association Rayons de Soleil

These conflicts and tensions have a disproportionate impact on women and girls, explains Fidèle. In Cameroon, women are responsible for the water supply. This means that they have to walk the extra kilometres to new wells when neighbouring wells are hit by drought. The combination of climate change and rising tensions has led to an increase in gender-based violence against women and girls on their way to the wells. However, Fidèle explains that the sources of tension and conflict do not only derive from the scarcity of resources, but also from poor management of existing resources. To adapt to the water shortage, new wells are regularly built, but most of the time without consulting the local population. As a result, tensions have risen because the wells were not located in beneficial areas to serve the local populations, the infrastructure was not of good quality and/or the managers in charge of building the wells did not respect the rules in ensuring a sustainable process.

In this context, civil society has the role and responsibility of monitoring the work and advocating for the funding of new wells. For them, it is necessary to adopt a long-term approach that takes into account the nature of the conflicts and their historical and economic underpinnings. Understanding the underlying causes of conflict rather than its sporadic manifestations would enable sustainable solutions to be devised. More inclusive approaches that take into account the role of community and religious leaders in resource management and conflict prevention are needed as they are best placed to organise reconciliation processes in which their communities will trust and participate.

Read more about our CSPPS-member, [Rayons de Soleil](#)



## THE CASE OF CHAD

Chad is another country strongly affected by climate change, which has amplified tensions, insecurity and conflicts. Mouldjidé Ngarygam, from CEPSEDA, explains that the links between climate, conflict and security are extremely marked in the country. The scarcity of natural resources as a result of climate change is leading to a recurrence of conflicts between those who use them. Due to less available grazing land, conflicts between farmers and herders, and between herders themselves, are on the increase, with incalculable consequences in terms of loss of life. Next to rising temperatures and drought, Chad is also affected by armed conflict, in particular by extremist movements such as Boko Haram which increases the tensions in the country and the wider region. In addition, the massive arrival of Sudanese refugees will strain relations with the host population as a result of the pressure they will exert on available resources. This situation is also affecting local livelihoods.

Joël Yodoyman from EVS states that the effect of new insecurities on livelihoods has ultimately resulted in mistrust between communities. In this context, extremist movements have led to mass migration to urban areas of the country, creating new insecurities and conflicts in the cities. Joël also tells us that because of the drought, some herders have also migrated to new agricultural areas with new communities, but that these migrations have led to armed conflicts. In 2023, more than 200 people died as a result of this type of conflict. This situation has had an overall deteriorating effect on livelihoods, ultimately affecting living conditions and national security. Mouldjidé Ngarygam explains that this is an interdependent issue involving national security, but also at the international level because of the transnational consequences climate change and accompanying risks lead to. It is thereby necessary to address the impacts of climate and conflict through a transnational approach.

***“Without sustainable development, there will be no peace. [...] People need to understand that the issue of peace is interlinked with the environment.”***

Joël Yodoyman, Executive Director of Espaces Verts du Sahel (EVS)

***“This is a question of social justice. We are letting people starve to death. Where is the moral? We must appeal to the international community to respect the polluter pays principle.”***

Mouldjidé Ngarygam, Executive Directeur of Centre d’Etude pour la Paix et la Sécurité (CEPSEDA)

In this context, Joël from EVS and Mouldjidé from CEPSEDA stress the importance of including women and young people in programmes and decision-making processes, as they are key players for any public policy. Youth often resort to negative coping mechanisms due to a lack of opportunities. Thus, their meaningful integration, in addition to women’s active engagement and participation in political transformations remains essential to prevent this and promote inclusive and sustainable solutions. If the country is to achieve sustainable development, it is important to raise young people’s awareness of global and environmental challenges.

Read more about our CSPPS members in [Chad](#)

# INDIRECT EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE: YOUTH AND MIGRATION



## THE CASE OF NEPAL

Nepal has a varied landscape, which reflects different challenges concerning climate change. From a discussion with Sharad Neupane, from the Asian Academy for Peace, Research and Development, arising and evolving conflicts between local communities because of unusual weather events and lack of resources, showed to be affecting lower-income households predominantly. This has in consequence resulted in major impacts on livelihoods and induced migration, especially amongst the youth. Countries like Qatar, Malaysia and the United Arab Emirates are common destinations amongst the youth, as they seek new opportunities. As a consequence, Nepal is losing skilled and semi-skilled labour within the country. An importance therefore lies in including the youth in income-generative work to prevent youth migration and promote social cohesion in-between different regions.

Whilst there are governmental efforts in Nepal in early warning and irrigation systems, Sharad puts the importance of having grassroots-to-global dialogues in which linkages and dialogues between the local, national, regional and global levels must be adopted to influence the work and policies at all levels. The necessity to understand the realities and the root causes on the ground for migration amongst youth, or other, is essential for political transformation. With this in mind, the Asian Academy for Peace, Research and Development recently hosted its second Nepal Dialogue Summit 2023 to promote a culture of dialogue for conflict transformation and political change. Integrating climate-sensitive approaches remains essential to prevent induced migration and ensure a sustainable future for the youth.

***“There is an essential need for grassroots to global dialogues to be organised and be aware of what is happening on the ground.”***

Sharad Neupane, Executive Director  
Asian Academy for Peace, Research and  
Development

The Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) is a global network of civil society organisations supporting peacebuilding efforts in fragile and conflict-affected settings to amplify and strengthen the voice and agency of local civil society in fragile settings. In our work we increasingly see that climate change, conflict and fragility are compounding crisis posing severe risks to global peace and security. CSPPS is managed and coordinated by Peter van Sluijs, Expert in Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention at Cordaid. Please find the relevant contact information to the Secretariat linked to the icons below during COP28.

