Policy Brief

KEY MESSAGES

The IGAD region is experiencing an increase in frequency and severity of climate extremes necessitating a regional response to climate -related security risks.

Drivers of climate-related security risks include threats to food and water security, climate-induced mobility, historical grievances and cultural practices and governance and fragility issues. These factors must be holistically addressed in policy and planning.

Addressing these risks will require a multi-agency, regional and systematic approach to address climate-related security risks and to coordinate and design responses that are appropriate to the specific local contexts of the Horn of Africa.

Addressing Climate Change, Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa

Climate change, population growth and economic development are some of the major forces driving the need for improved security in the Greater Horn of Africa. The region is vulnerable to natural hazard-induced disasters such as droughts and floods. Increasing urbanization and industrialization have led to greater demand for food, water and power. In addition, increased migration from rural areas to cities will put an added strain on public services such as health care and education. Addressing these challenges is critical to ensuring the long-term stability of the region. This policy brief summarizes the climate, environmental and related risks and their possible interlinkages to the peace and security sector based on an accompanying background paper and a regional consultation on climate security.

There is an urgent need for a regional response to climate and environment-related security risks as environmental stresses and competition over dwindling resources present some of the most pressing threats to the peace and security of the region. The scale of the challenge calls for a systematic regional approach to climate change, peace and security.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has been at the forefront of assessing climate-related peace and security risks led by the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) and the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), with support from the Land Governance Unit, and the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE), among other offices.

To better coordinate multilateral efforts to address climate change, peace, and security in the Horn of Africa, IGAD and the UN Office of the Special Envoy (OSE) for the Horn of Africa convened a regional consultation in July 2022. This Policy Brief presents the consultation's findings and recommendations for IGAD, Member States, United Nations, African Union, and other development partners to adopt.

Climate change and variability significantly impact economies and livelihoods in the Horn of Africa, as most activities directly depend highly on the total seasonal rainfall and its distribution in both temporal and spatial domains. Climate can also negatively impact the availability of natural resources, which often contributes to inter-communal conflict by worsening livelihood conditions and pushing people to resort to alternative sources of livelihood. This can have far-reaching consequences on, for example, the environment, communities, and service delivery

The communique of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) meeting held on 26 November 2021 recognised the risks that climate change pose to human and state security, hindering the achievement of the 2030 goal of 'Silencing the Guns'. The communique notes that these risks manifest as food and water insecurity, loss of livelihoods, failure to manage natural resources, water resource scarcity, and climate-induced displacement. It further highlighted the importance of a Common African Position on Climate Change in the context of Climate Change, Peace and Security and reiterated the need for mobilizing predictable and sustainable climate financing.

The IGAD Member States, through the Kampala declaration in July 2022 and in October 2022 through the ministerial meeting on the Food Crisis and the inter-ministerial meeting on Land Conflict in the Horn of Africa, have stated their deep concern for the adverse effects of climate change and its impact on displacement, food security, and conflict.

Climate Change, Peace and Security Pathways

During the July 2022 regional consultation, IGAD member states identified gaps in the existing regional response, including;

• Communication barriers;

• Divergence in systems of governance and policies;

• Geopolitics and alignments that affect approaches to national security;

• Demographic and cultural diversity;

• Different financing mechanisms and economic diversity;

• Focus on conflict resolution and drivers of violence;

• Difficulties in accessing and interpreting climate information and declining meteorological station network;

• Competing priorities and protracted humanitarian crises;

• Challenges in stakeholder coordination;

• Absence of policies addressing climate change, peace, and security.

However, IGAD member states have also identified existing and potential opportunities to improve the regional response, including:

• Regional integration mechanisms, including AU, EAC, IGAD, and COMESA;

• Growth in youth population;

• Partnerships with international and multilateral organisations;

• Growth in awareness, especially through media and ICT;

• Opportunities through technology to speed up development;

• Integration of aerospace technology for early warning, mitigation, response, and recovery mechanisms;

The discussions between IGAD member states found that while the linkages between climate change and human security might be complex, some common pathways are emerging. Intersections can be found between all the pathways and should be approached more holistically in policy and planning.

Climate Security Conceptual Framework
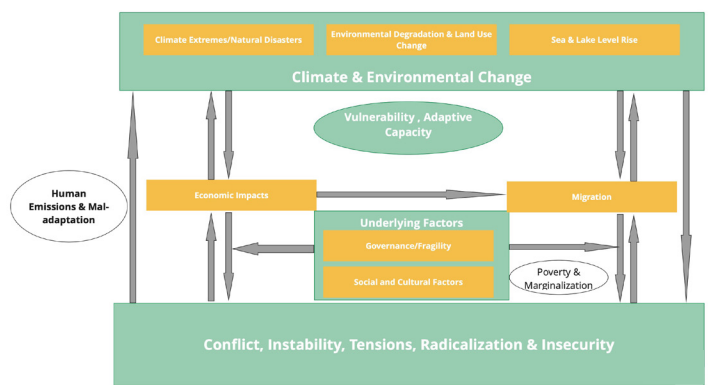
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Climate Security Drivers

Climate/Environmental Factors	Economic Impacts	Social & Cultural factors	Governance/ Fragility
• Drought • Flooding • Heatwaves • Cyclones • rising sea/lake levels • Pollution • Wild fire • Land Use Change • Degradation • Landslides • Desertification	• Food Insecurity • Loss of Livestock • Loss of livelihood • Poverty • Pest and Diseases • Water Security	• Cultural practices like cattle rustling and raiding • Overstocking • Youth unemployment • Youth bulge • Limited access to education • Limited access to health services • Energy poverty • Population increase • Technology • Historical Grievances • Erosion of indigenous practices and systems • Migration & Displacement	• Armed Groups/Militia • Weak Governance • Political grievances • Corruption • Limited Industry • Limited Land Tenure/Rights • Inflation • Marginalization

Climate security drivers include environmental, economic, social, cultural and governance factors that encompass food and water insecurity; induced climate mobility; culture; and issues of governance and fragility which must be holistically addressed in policy. (Discussions were guided in harmonization with CGIAR ClimBeR's Climate Security initiative in Kenya.)

Threats to Food and Water Security

Climate extremes and environmental degradation can lead to food and water insecurity making it difficult for vulnerable populations to break the cycle of poverty. Impacts on food productivity could lead to inflation.

Drought, for example, has led to lower productivity, deteriorated health, and body conditions in livestock, susceptibility to disease and livestock mortality. The challenges to the blue economy, including the bleaching of coral reefs and depletion of fish stocks, are an additional threat to livelihoods and local economies that depend on it.

Reduction of biodiversity due to temperature change is, for example, negatively impacting the fishing industries. Environmental degradation including soil erosion and desertification has contributed to water and pasture shortages and reduced productivity. Youth unemployment is increasing, creating an enabling environment for radicalization and recruitment into armed groups.

Climate-Induced Mobility

Multiple climate-related hazards are contributing to the displacement of people and loss of assets across the region, including wildfires, drought, floods, cyclones, increasing lake levels, and sea level rise. Environmental factors like deforestation and land degradation have also led to increased mudslides in the region.

Movement by pastoral populations is indigenous to many communities in the Greater Horn of Africa. Population increase, in addition to land use changes over the years, has led to a decrease in pasture and water availability, which, exacerbated by drought, has led to increases in resource-based conflict.
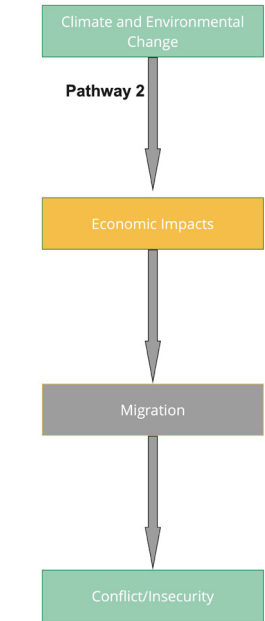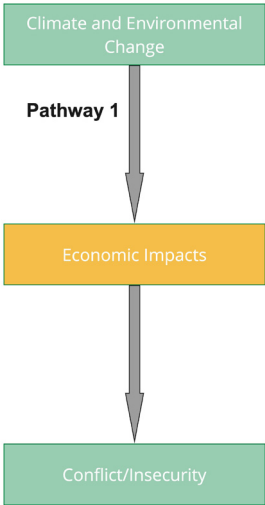
🎭 Historical grievances and cultural practices:

One of the pathways identified is driven by historical and cultural factors. Cattle rustling/ raiding, for example, is a cultural practice amongst some pastoral communities that is commonly used to restock livestock. Climate extremes such as floods and drought have increased the need to restock lost cattle, triggering conflict.

Climate and Environmental Change

Pathway 3

Economic Impacts

← Social and Cultural Factors
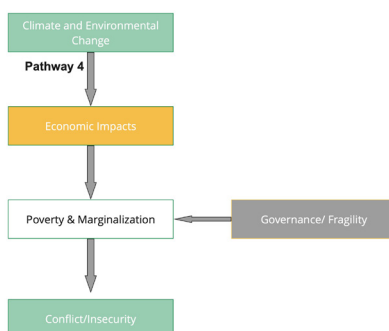
Conflict/Insecurity
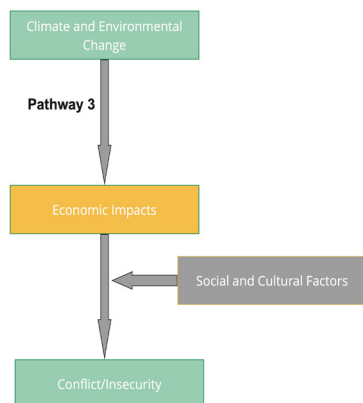
Climate extremes easily create conditions to trigger historical grievances and mistrust among bordering communities and countries when shared natural resources are affected. Transboundary conflict over natural resources like pasture and water threatens to escalate tensions in the region. As the region continues to explore adaptation and mitigation strategies, such tensions are bound to increase within and across borders.

🏛 Governance and Fragility

Where climate variability and change have not directly led to violent conflict, their interaction with other factors such as weak governance and fragility, can exacerbate drivers of conflict and insecurity, having negative impacts on peace and security..

Climate and Environmental Change

Pathway 4

Economic Impacts

Poverty & Marginalization ← Governance/ Fragility

Conflict/Insecurity

The proliferation of small arms, armed groups, and illicit trade, together with marginalization and lack of access to social services, have kept traditional practices such as cattle rustling/raiding alive. Lack of uniformity in the disarmament of firearms contributes to armed conflict among pastoral communities in the region..

The climate crisis has been exploited by actors, including political actors, extremist groups, commercial groups, and organised criminal groups, among others, to incite conflict and insecurity for their personal gain, particularly in the context of weak governance and fragility.

The presence of state and non-state armed groups in some areas has contributed to increased vulnerability of communities by preventing humanitarian aid and building long-term resilience.

In some cases, extremist groups take advantage of the humanitarian crisis resulting from climate extremes to provide aid and strengthen their strongholds. The linkages between climate, insecurity and conflict are becoming cyclical.

Increased conflict often exacerbates food insecurity and economic poverty, increasing communities' vulnerabilities to other shocks such as climate extremes. Some contexts identified as having weak governance structures are characterized by limited access to basic social services like energy, education and health.

Land access and rights are critical underlying factors contributing to mistrust in governments, conflict over boundaries, and pastoral and wildlife conflict.

Policy Recommendations

Several recommendations emerged strongly from the consultation process and with broad consensus among participants. These are listed below.

1. Strengthening the shared understanding of climate change, peace and security in the IGAD region: A lack of clarity remains on the terminology, data, evidence available, and a common framework for addressing climate, peace. and security risks:

Developing this understanding between IGAD, AU, UN, and the Member States is important to:

• Increase awareness and improve communication and information sharing between these entities

• Avoid making assumptions in assessing and addressing risks that lead to unintended outcomes or 'business-as-usual' interventions

• Sharpen the collective ability to translate scientific data and evidence into actionable advisories and policies

2. Improving coordination on climate, peace, and security in the IGAD region: There is a call for clarification of mandates and joint strategy. IGAD, AU, UN, and the Member States all need to continue working towards structuring themselves internally on this issue, identifying focal points and cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms.

These focal points must then connect across the organisations, forming a working group at a technical level that can clarify respective mandates and inform the respective policy organs.

3. Towards a common regional position on climate, peace, and security: There was consensus across all stakeholders for a unified, common position for the IGAD region on climate, peace and security. Where global efforts have stalled for example, at the UN Security Council, African Union has been quick to step in with subsequent communiques on climate, peace, and security in November 2021 and April 2022. Member States have identified the issue as critical to their national security and development.

4. Identifying international law principles and developing a regional legal framework on climate, peace, and security: It is essential to assess which legal tools that are currently applied at the international level may need to be redesigned to fit the specific contexts faced by Member States.

For example, recognising global efforts to promulgate law and practice guides such as the 27 Draft Principles of the International Law Commission (ILC) of May 2022 on the Protection of the Environment in relation to Armed Conflict, Member States may, under the leadership of IGAD, develop common regional principles on climate, peace, and security.

Moreover, legal mechanisms may be necessary to create both intra-national and international dispute resolution mechanisms and forums in the region to facilitate peaceful determination and settlement of climate-related conflicts

5. Increasing access to finance and capacity building for addressing climate, peace and security: Beyond these next steps, the urgent need for financial and technical resources at all levels remains and must be addressed.

Each organization must play its' respective role in assisting Member States and regional bodies to access available climate finance to address identified climate, peace and security priorities.

About ICPAC

ICPAC is a specialised IGAD institution which covers IGAD members' states plus Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. The mission of ICPAC is to foster climate services and knowledge to enhance community resilience for prosperity in the Greater Horn of Africa. ICPAC Services cover six main sectors, that include, Climate Forecasting and Early Warning, Hydrology, Agriculture and Food Security, Climate Change, Environmental Monitoring, Disaster Risk Management and Climate Information Dissemination.

About UN OSE Horn of Africa

Under the leadership of Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Horn of Africa Hanna Tetteh, OSE Horn of Africa is mandated by the UN Security Council to support the region in sustaining peace and security. As such, OSE Horn of Africa is responsible for working closely with and supporting IGAD, in line with the framework for cooperation between UN and IGAD signed in 2015, in promoting peace and security across the Horn of Africa.

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ICPAC

Federal Foreign Office

Office of the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa