



**FOLKE
BERNADOTTE
ACADEMY**

Concept Note

PDA Fellowship Cohort IV

Climate-related security risks and sustaining peace

2-6 December 2019

Introduction

The PDA Fellowship Cohort IV is planned with Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) in Stockholm, Sweden in the first week of December 2019. The design and execution of this cohort will be largely similar to the previous cohorts except a shorter time frame than 2 weeks. About 5-6 PDAs and 1-2 conflict prevention specialists or UN experts with relevant experience and interest in this area will be selected as Fellows.

Fellows will engage in facilitated reflections with their peers on pre-identified questions of interest within the area of climate change, peace and security. The Fellowship will be geared towards the following learning objectives for the Fellows (and from their perspective): better understanding of the links between climate risks and conflict and the related implications for improved analysis and programming on the ground for peacebuilding; understanding of the terminology; familiarizing with latest research on the topic; tools; existing challenges and how they can be overcome; take into account local / national imperatives; usefulness and relevance of existing guidance; lessons learned and good practices from practitioners. The output from the Fellowship will include individual or joint papers aimed at building up the evidence base on the linkages between climate change, prevention and sustaining peace from the practitioner's perspective.

FBA will work with UNDP OGC to design the structure of this cohort and also lead in executing it, in close consultation with the Joint UNDP-DPPA Programme and expertise of the UN Climate Security Mechanism team.

Cohort IV

The next cohort of this fellowship will focus on the intersections between climate risks and conflict. The decision to go ahead with this topic is based on the needs and interests expressed by PDAs themselves and the resonance of this topic globally. This would include the various manifestations of climate change like extreme weather, sea level rise, impact on freshwater ecosystems, etc. This topic has been resonating in the media and across various policy and research fora. From a programming perspective this topic is also very relevant to the work of the various international development organisations and it may be pertinent to note that the topic has been highlighted in the UN Security Council, and a Group of Friends of Climate and Security established. The 2018 Security Council Resolution on the MINUSMA mandate [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2423\(2018\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2423(2018)) makes reference in the preamble, to adverse effects of climate on other systemic risks, as follows: *'the adverse effects of climate change, ecological changes and natural disasters, among other factors, on the stability of Mali, including through drought, desertification, land degradation and food insecurity, and emphasizing the need for adequate risk assessment and risk management strategies by the government of Mali and the United Nations relating to these factors'*. The Security Council has passed resolutions with similar specific language on climate-

related security risks for Darfur, Lake Chad Basin and Somalia and mandates for related peace operations, UNOWAS, UNAMID, UNSOM and AMISOM.

The greater focus on this topic by the UN has led to the launch of the inter-agency DPPA-UNDP-UN Environment 'Climate Security Mechanism' in October 2018 with the support of the Government of Sweden. Also, climate change is one of the three themes UNDP has decided to focus its external engagement on. This is also in line with the broad vision for prevention articulated by the UN Secretary-General where he made it a priority to improve our ability to address wider stresses and shocks that can exacerbate crises and lead to violent conflict.

Thematic Focus: Climate and Conflict

This cohort will explore the interlinkages between climate and conflict and whether and how the former affects the latter. To understand this phenomenon about a decade of systematic research has been ongoing revealing a number of interesting patterns. Considerable high-quality data is available. A number of programmatic interventions have been ongoing to deal with this phenomenon.

All of the evidence gathered so far indicates to indirect links between climate risks and conflict. The effects of climate change under certain conditions (in particular weak governance and institutions, fragility, insecurity, other conflict factors etc) can become 'threat multipliers' or factors for conflict, e.g. by increasing tensions and conflict over decreasing quality and/or availability of water and other natural resources.

The effects of climate change oftentimes become most evident as the quality and access to natural resources changes/decreases. Issues like access to arable land, water, quality and quantity of crops and the like and the appropriate responses to it from a governance perspective at different levels are oftentimes the questions that PDAs or conflict prevention specialists will have to deal with or address when they design programs or draft project proposals.

Climate -> Conflict? The direct association between one and the other is contested. The most immediate insight gained from quantitative research on climate and conflict is that the two phenomena are not connected in the simple and direct manner. The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Report also notes that several factors that increase general conflict risk are sensitive to climate change, but there is no direct and simple causal association between nature and society.

Indirect pathways between climate stress and conflict: An indirect association between the two variables is most likely. Research has examined 'indirect pathways between climate stress and conflict' — through factors like economic growth, food price shock and forced displacement apart from other types of shock such as: income and livelihood shock (with the accompanying caveats in the table). Climate change can threaten human security by impacting economic growth, food price stock, undermining livelihoods, and prompting displacement.

Recognizing that the impact of climate change is spread unevenly across different regions, it remains clear that this is a global challenge which will affect all countries in the long-term. However, there may a disproportional effect in fragile contexts and/or socially vulnerable and marginalized groups.



Source: Büchtemann 2015. Climate-conflict research: Some reflections on the way forward. WIREs Climate Change 6: 269-275.

As such, fragility or a state's ability to effectively deal with such pressures is an important factor. 'Considering state fragility in this analysis is crucial because a government's ability to manage economic and social processes can impact whether a population becomes more — or less — vulnerable to the climate risks it faces. By assessing how climate and fragility risks intersect, we can identify how poor state capacity and poor state-society relationships make vulnerability worse¹'. In fragile states there could already exist conditions which could get exacerbated

with the onset of extreme weather and/or changing patterns of wet and dry season leading to possible conflict situations. In such countries with high combined state fragility and climate stress, if effective policies promoting peace, stability, and resilience are not in place there is possibility that both sets of risks can contribute to instability.

Even if we accept the general view that there is no 'systematic' and 'direct' causal relationship between climate change and conflict we would need to keep in mind the following:

1. Lack of a general and robust link does not mean that climate variability / change does not play a relevant role.
2. Much of the research considers conflict outbreak: climate variability (as mentioned above) / change may still have a significant effect on conflict dynamics and other security related risks.
3. A broader definition of security and consideration security risks, would include displacement, mass migration, etc. and would allow for a holistic approach and consideration of root causes.
4. Limited evidence for civil conflicts does not mean that climate variability / change cannot influence lesser forms of political violence.
5. The effects of climate change in conflict affected settings interact or influence other cleavages in society (i.e. urban / rural, pastoralists, farmers, gender dynamics, etc.)

There is therefore a continued need to for the development and humanitarian conflict prevention and peacebuilding community to study the potential impacts of climate change on international peace and security. Both in terms of the factors for conflict, also as entry points for prevention and peacebuilding community.

It would also be important to keep in mind the 'P' factor or the politics and policies? which is an often-overlooked element linking climate and conflict. Bringing the focus back on the 'P' factor could mean: improving perceptions of government legitimacy — thus reducing overall fragility — through timely and effective responses to climate risks; directing climate responses through areas of governance where the state has the strongest capacity to act; investing in institutional changes to reduce overall state weakness in countries affected by sustained conflict and build those governments' ability to address climate risks; and shoring up the capacity of states with high climate risks before they become more fragile.

Environmental peacebuilding where issues related to climate change and natural resources are used as entry points to, for example, initiate dialogue processes and/or mediation, etc. can serve as interesting and relevant experiences for PDAs.

¹ Stretched Thin: When Fragile States Face Climate Hazards by Ashley Moran, Joshua Busby and Clionadh Raleigh <https://blogs.prio.org/ClimateAndConflict/2018/11/stretched-thin-when-fragile-states-face-climate-hazards/>

UNDP as well as other UN entities, and other international organizations have been working on implementing effective initiatives to address the effects of climate change. Many of these programmes have been in operation for some time and it would be good to evaluate their effectiveness; while more recent initiatives or strategies may provide interesting insights on new ways of addressing these challenges and practical entry points (analyzing climate-related security risks to develop prevention strategies).

A case in point about how UNDP has tried to address this issue from a programming perspective is the launch of a new "SDG-Climate Facility" regional project (\$7m SIDA; 2019-2023). This is a partnership between the League of Arab States, Arab Water Council, FAO, UNDP, UN Environment, UN Habitat, UNISDR and WFP. The Facility serves as a new regional UN platform to accelerate implementation of the Paris Agreement and NDCs in a way that generates co-benefits across the SDGs, and for crisis prevention/recovery goals in the Arab region.

This is a much-needed initiative given that in the Arab region, climate change and conflict both have serious consequences, and their convergence has now arisen as a major concern. Temperatures in the region are rising faster than global average, and while already the world's most water-scarce, food-import dependent region, climate change is expected to result in a further 20-40% decline in food and water productivity. Unless adaptive capacities are scaled up, the region will see ever-growing risks of mass displacement, famine, social disruption and conflict across the Arab region.

The SDG-Climate initiative will support countries to address these issues, through its activities which include:

- Regional climate security dialogues to *assess the nexus of climate risks with conflict and displacement* trends, determine sensitivity of development goals and social cohesion, and forecast future risks from convergence of climate, conflict and displacement factors;
- A *climate security network* in the region to initiate regional research and a capacity development agenda on managing multi-dimensional risk and building resilience to converging drivers of climate, conflict and displacement;
- Country capacities on the use of *socio-ecological systems* theory to better understand and manage multidimensional risk;
- Country capacities to *integrate climate risks into SDG strategies and crisis prevention/recovery plans*, and address loss and damage to communities and ecosystems;
- Country capacities for multi-hazard *early warning* and climate services to inform decision making, and scale up climate adaptive *social protection* and safety nets;
- *Risk transfer mechanisms* including crop insurance, forecast based finance systems, sovereign risk insurance;
- New country investment platforms mobilizing *partners from banking, insurance and investment* sectors to scale up green finance and de-risk climate investments in fragile contexts;
- Decentralized *solar solutions to empower displaced communities* and help meet energy needs of critical health and education facilities, water pumping units and other basic needs.

Expectations of this cohort

This topic is relevant from a programming and policy perspective in the fields of development peace and security. The analysis generated will also help provide some useful knowledge base to inform UN engagement in this area. Some initial questions that arise are: How are these issues being dealt with at a national level and what are the various challenges? Is there a gap between programming and research in this area that needs to be covered? How can UNDP, DPPA and other partners work in ensuring that a robust policy – practice loop be developed in the future? These are but a few of the emergent questions.

More specifically, with the assembly of highly experienced practitioners working on the ground, this cohort would be well placed to explore:

- Whether and how much of this phenomenon is playing out in their countries of deployment; hand how is the regional aspect of this challenge affecting their context?
- What policy and programmatic measures they have employed to deal with this phenomenon in their contexts? Are there additional measures that can benefit in the future?
- Given that PDAs have a critical role providing analysis to the UN System on the ground, what is the practice and challenges with assessing climate risks and integrating it into analysis and decision-making of country/regional or HQ leadership?
- Is climate change policy and programming informed by climate-fragility/security risk analysis to avoid both maladaptation to climate change and exacerbation of conflict and other security risks?
- What are the specific challenges they have encountered in this area working with their national counterparts and other partners?
- In their view, are there issues that they need to look out for in the future?
- what insights can further inform the UN-wide framework for climate-related security risk assessments being developed?

Methodology

This cohort will explore in-depth this theme, through a mix of both classroom instructive sessions, individual and group research-based assignments, interactive group sessions and presentations from the institution and external speakers. A coordinator will be identified for overall facilitation and coordination and interaction with PDAs.

The general nature of this cohort (like the previous ones) will be informal and interactive. The Fellows and other experts along with the organisers will be together through the various sessions and will:

- Participate in the various activities of the cohort.
- Use the PDA Fellowship Concept Note and other relevant material developed and/or collated as guiding documents to further the interaction through the cohort.
- Help and guide the flow of discussions through the fellowship programme. The Fellows will have access to the subject matter experts and others to discuss conceptual and other matters.
- Participate in meetings with partner organisations in Sweden including Ministry of Foreign Affairs, SIDA and others, as well as accompany the Fellows and OGC staff to the meetings
- Commit to preparing and finalising in due time the agreed outputs of the Fellowship i.e. individual or joint papers.

Next steps

FBA and UNDP OGC will continue to prepare for this cohort and will develop and expanded concept note and programme working with other experts which will be publicly available in due course. Other matters relevant to the Programme will also be covered.

PDAs deployed through the Joint UNDP-DPPA Programme are invited to express interest in participating in this Fellowship Programme by completing this brief survey by 15 August 2019: <https://forms.gle/sT2wdYFfn8UvCZQ99>

UN conflict prevention specialists and other relevant UN experts interested in participating should apply by completing the survey by 15 August, and are also requested to send a copy of their CV (PHP, P11 or other) by the same deadline to Aseem Andrews and Ilona Lecerf (contact below): <https://forms.gle/sT2wdYFfn8UvCZQ99>

Following the receipt of applications, a proper selection of fellows will be done and those successful notified. The expectation from the selected fellows will be to fully participate in the activities of this programme before, during and after (if needed) and satisfactorily complete all the requirements.

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