

# Summary: Synergising WPS and Climate Security objectives within HMG Policy and Programming

The UK's foreign policy and development commitments recognise the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on peace and security. The transnational threat of climate change is highlighted within the Integrated Review, Integrated Review Refresh, the International Development Strategy and the Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan (WPS NAP). With the UK developing its approach to Climate Security (at both cross-Whitehall and FCDO levels), there are opportunities for synergies to be made with the UK's WPS policy and programming to ensure an integrated approach to the complex and interconnected challenges of climate change and environmental degradation, conflict and gender.

In this context, this report presents findings from pilot participatory in-context analysis to explore linkages between gender, climate change, vulnerability and conflict. Its findings are drawn from two pilot participatory gender, climate and conflict analysis workshops conducted in Fiji and Nigeria in March 2024. The workshops brought together diverse gatherings of individuals, representative of different areas of expertise and including policy actors, civil society and INGOs/think tanks.

A summary of key findings - which aim to inform the development of the UK's approach to Climate Security - follows:

1. **The complexity of the issue exacerbates silos, leading to a lack of clear ownership or leadership on policy commitments.** With the intersection of climate security and WPS, relevant to teams under three FCDO Directors, the report finds that it would be critical for the FCDO climate security policy to outline a) why it is important to take a WPS-approach to climate security and how this fits into HMG commitments, and b) clear accountability for specific commitments. The articulation of the links should recognise that there are not simple one-way causal links, but that climate change and environmental degradation, conflict and gender inequalities are complexly interlinked. Gender inequalities, weak governance and conflict all exacerbate a lack of climate resilience and provide barriers to effective climate response. However, it was noted that examples of existing FCDO programming (for example the Justice and Stability in the Sahel (JASS) programme in the Sahel) demonstrated silos were not a fundamental barrier and were able to bring together different expertise and perspectives.
2. **The links between gender, conflict and climate are complex and require in-depth context specific analysis to inform programming and policy.** The in-depth analysis in Fiji and Nigeria highlighted unique and specific dynamics around gender, climate and conflict that could be addressed through WPS/climate security programming. For example, whilst climate change impacted livelihoods in both Fiji and Nigeria, the specific challenges and opportunities were different. In Fiji, intergenerational projects were cited as a specific opportunity, given the importance of bringing together very different generational perspectives, whilst responding to traditional knowledge and attitudes. In Nigeria, the interaction between climate change, changing livelihoods and migration and how this interacted with increased securitisation and non-state armed groups, was critical to understanding specific risks and opportunities.

3. **Gender norms and expectations drive responses to climate change and conflict and this is critical to understanding how to minimise conflict risks, support peace and stability and better mitigate and adapt to climate change.** The participatory analysis in Fiji and Nigeria highlighted that responses to climate change often focused on technological solutions, and did not include understanding of how gender and cultural identity informs decision-making of individuals, communities and governments, in particular around land ownership and resource management. In both contexts, climate change had profound impacts on identity, including by making it harder to continue traditional livelihoods or fulfil gendered roles. Likewise, responses to climate change were affected by gender norms, inequalities and weak governance.
4. **Gender norms were highlighted as a barrier to women's participation in decision-making on climate risks, exacerbating exclusionary responses.** Disaster response and climate mitigation/adaptation had failed to account for all needs, limiting the efficacy of responses. In Fiji, examples were given where the lack of consultation with women had led to the failure to include kitchens in new settlements. However, participants in the analysis workshops highlighted that work to address barriers for women also needed to consider men, to avoid backlash on women's inclusion and women's livelihoods.
5. **Globally, whilst the links between WPS and climate security are recognised, very few WPS NAPs have actions/commitments that recognise this link.** The UK and other like-minded partners have an opportunity to use and strengthen their global leadership by highlighting the need for integrated WPS and climate security approaches, and best practices from its experience in doing so.