

COP27 Official Side Event – 11 November 2022

Climate-resilient Food Systems and Peace: Exploring the Interconnections

KEY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The issue: The interconnection between climate change, food insecurity and conflict, are present in a number of vulnerable environments worldwide, and currently be witnessed in Pakistan and the Horn of Africa.

- About 490 of the 828 million people facing chronic food insecurity in 2021 were located in 21 countries affected by conflict and insecurity¹; continued conflicts across the globe also puts the world's staple crop supplies at risk, resulting in increased food prices and hunger. Weather-related disasters exacerbated by climate change caused acute food insecurity for 23 million people in 2021 in the 53 countries covered by the Global Report on Food Crises, up from 15.7 million in 2020.
- 60 percent of the 20 countries already most vulnerable to climate change are also affected by armed conflict. Yet, on average over the past seven years, people in extremely fragile states only received US\$ 2.1 per person, whilst people in non-fragile states received US\$ 161.7 of climate finance per capita.²
- In fragile and conflict affected settings, impact of climate change related hazards on food security and resource scarcity may push the most vulnerable into a spiral of further risks, insecurities, and social exclusion.

Acknowledging the compounding effects between climate change, food insecurity, and conflicts is key to developing effective multi-sectoral initiatives that contribute to building resilient, food secure and peaceful societies. Whilst there is increased awareness of this interconnection, there is space for much greater integrated action.

Recommendations

1. The peril faced by the world's 828 million hungry people in 2021³ is likely to be exacerbated in 2022 by climate change related hazards and conflicts such as the war in Ukraine. **State and non-state actors must commit to invest in strategic development solutions that help build resilient communities and foster climate action**, through investments in infrastructures such as dams, canalization, and reforestation, or through investments in education, such as contributing to the creation of more diverse diets, reducing loss and waste, etc. This requires improved availability, affordability, and access.⁴
2. Access to finance is crucial in both short- and the long-term transition to climate resilience of food systems, especially in vulnerable countries. **State and non-state actors must support vulnerable and at-risk countries in accessing climate finance** and channelling these at the local levels. In particular, increased access to climate finance is needed for communities in fragile and conflict affected settings.
3. There is a need for better alignment between climate finance and its envisioned impact on food systems as currently **less than one per cent of climate mitigation finance have been allocated to food system transformation**.⁵

¹ Global Network Against Food Crises

² World Food Programme

³ Global Network against Food Crises

⁴ For example, in courses, workshops, organizing markets and safe access to markets and food outlets.

⁵ Global Alliance for the Future of Food

4. **Marginalized groups such as women and youth must be actively included in policy formulation and implementation.** Youth are a key part of the solution: state and non-state actors must invest in this key demographic group as they are the key to addressing food systems transformation.⁶ Furthermore, according to the 2018 FAO report on the gender gap in land rights, women make up for 43% of the agricultural workforce, yet have substantially lower access to land rights and ownership of production factors. **Women and girls must receive special attention in the planning and implementation of food system measures.** They must be included in decision-making and equal access to land should be addressed on government level.
5. **Conflict affected and fragile countries often struggle to be included in global multilateral discussions especially in contexts of civil strife.** We call for the international community to ensure inclusion of all realities in relevant multilateral discussions and policy-making *fora*.
6. Climate has complex interactions within the drivers of conflict and conflict has shown the lack of resilience within our food systems. **We must ensure better synergies at policy level on food, climate, and peace-building efforts,** to implement systemic and interlinked solutions to effectively address the interlinkages between climate change, food insecurity, and conflict.

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⁶ CGIAR. This investment could, for instance, address current shortfalls in vocational training opportunities to instil basic agricultural training for young people in the region.